

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes; certainly. That is what I have said.

ALLOTMENT OF TIME FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE CENTRAL SALES TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1958

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that under rule 162(2) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I have allotted one hour and thirty minutes for the completion of all stages involved in the consideration and return of the Central Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1958, by the Rajya Sabha, including the consideration and passing of amendments, if any, to the Bill.

THE BUDGET (RAILWAYS), 1958-59—GENERAL DISCUSSION—contd.

SHRI K. MADHAVA MENON (Kerala): Mr. Chairman, the Budget speech is a very impressive array of the splendid achievements by the Railway Ministry and I also join in the tributes and congratulations to the Railway Minister, the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry for the achievements of last year.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

As the Railway Minister has said, there is no room for complacency but we must be proud of the achievement three major accidents that we had, it is true that the operational efficiency has increased; in spite of the two or three major accidents that we had, I must say that the operational efficiency has increased.

Sir, we, from Kerala, are particularly glad and grateful that the Ernakulam-Qullon railway line has been completed during last year in record time. I understand that there is a proposal for the electrification of this metre gauge line from Ernakulam to Trivandrum and though this electrification proposal has not been abandoned it may not be possible in

the very near future to bring it about. I want to bring to the notice of the Railway Minister certain peculiar features of this area. It is the most thickly populated area, perhaps in the whole of India and there are towns very closely situated in this area. And there is great scope for passenger traffic and in order to compete with the road traffic the speed and efficiency of the railways in that area could be enhanced by putting some diesel cars in this area. Metre gauge cars have been imported in Madras and the best place for an experiment of these diesel cars will be this Ernakulam-Quilon line which, as I have said, is the most thickly populated area in the whole country.

Sir, a provision of Rs. 3 crores has been made for amenities to railway users. The amenities provided at present, in spite of the provision of such amounts, are not adequate, the conditions of third class waiting rooms are still very very deplorable. There is very little attention paid to the amenities of the third class passengers. The crowding at the booking offices is horrible. You can say that the people are not disciplined but still you will find notices at the booking offices that tickets will be issued one hour before the scheduled time of the trains or all the 24 hours of the day but these are more observed in their breach than in their observance. The booking clerks wait till the train is blocked and the result is an actual scuffle at the booking counter, which every one of us has seen.

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Rs. 11 crores have been provided for staff quarters and amenities. The conditions of staff quarters are still very, very unsatisfactory. Every railway official who is working on the line must be provided with quarters, particularly the Class IV and Class III staff. I have seen people transferred from one place to another working on the lines with no quarters to go into. That should not be the case. Every person who is on transfer must be able to get into a quarter at the place to which he is transferred.

[Shri K. Madhava Menon.]

It is a pity that the question of the electrification of the Madras-Egmore-Tambaram-Villupuram line has been slowed down. Electrification has so many advantages—saving of coal, saving of space, increase of speed and more particularly the dust nuisance for the passenger. So, every effort should be made to speed up the work on electrification.

We, the people from Kerala, are glad that the survey work of the Tellicherry-Coorg-Mysore line is over, but it should not end with the survey work alone. May I appeal to the Railway Minister that the report of the survey work may be expedited and the work itself be included in this year's plan, if possible, or at least in the next plan? It will open up an area of the Western Ghats which is full of possibilities and potentialities and it will increase or open up the way for timber traffic for the whole of the country.

The Railway Ministry has to be particularly congratulated on the increase in the indigenous production of railway equipment and the Minister rightly prides himself on the achievements of the Integral Coach Factory. But I must say that the broad-gauge system of the Southern Railway, particularly the Madras-Mangalore line, is not being benefited by any of these improved coaches at all. The Madras-Calcutta line and Madras-Delhi coaches although bad enough are much better compared to the Madras Mangalore and Madras-Cochin B. G. trains. You will certainly join issue with me if I say that every condemned vehicle or coach is put on that line because I have heard him say in this House that no condemned vehicle is put on the railway line. But every possible rickety compartmental coach is relegated to the Madras-Mangalore or Madras-Cochin line. I am not exaggerating. . . .

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH (Madhya Pradesh): Are you sure that they are only your monopoly?

SHRI K. MADHAVA MENON: It has become unfortunately our monopoly. If you want to see lights which would not burn, fans which would not work, taps which would not give water, you have only to travel in the train which goes from Madras to Mangalore or Madras to Cochin. I do not know why we should be treated in this way very badly. The conditions of the first class and second class there are bad enough. You can more or less imagine the condition of the third class. In Kerala particularly from the place where I come from—Calicut—the railway station is more than seventy years old. It is high time it is renovated. I do not think that the population of Calicut would have been even a lakh at the time when the railway came there. The population is about three lakhs now and it is one of the busiest towns in our place. The Calicut railway station requires renovation and improvement very badly.

Passenger amenities are improving but still they are far from satisfactory. This should be looked into from the point of view of the third class passenger. The first and second class passenger is vocal enough. He will fight and ask for what he wants and get it. But the third class passenger has to be helped. What a pitiable sight it is on the platforms, old women and old men running hither and thither to get admission into a compartment. You will find uniformed railway officers, ticket collectors and conductors and all that strutting about, not one of them giving a helping hand to this poor, old third class passenger to find accommodation. You have admitted and admission is no relief of the overcrowding in trains. We realise the difficulty. But if the railway would help passengers to get into compartments which are not crowded, it would be helpful. Now, when a compartment is open, people like sheep rush into the compartment. There will be no space there. If some adjustment could be made by helping people to get into compartments which are not as crowded as the one which they want to enter some relief could

be given. I hope something will be done on that line.

I must congratulate the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry again that the courtesy on the part of the railway servants has improved considerably. That has been my experience at least. But that courtesy stops with perhaps the first and second class passenger, and the third class passenger, again, here has not got much of it. I request the Railway Ministry to impress upon the railway officers that more help perhaps should be given to the third class passenger than to the first and second class passengers.

The departmental catering may be successful. I do not say anything about it. But I must say that the food served in the dining cars in the Grand Trunk Express is far from satisfactory. They have no taste at all. They have one taste. God is said to be *Nirgunam*. Perhaps all the curries taste like the quality of God, of *Nirgunathvam*. They have absolutely no taste. They are all of the same taste.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): Tasteless.

SHRI K. MADHAVA MENON: In this connection I fail to see why a change has been made in the running of the dining car in the Grand Trunk Express. The dining car was running from Madras to Delhi direct. Now, the dining car starts only from Kazipet in the Delhi bound train and it is detached at Kazipet from the Madras bound train. Why are we deprived of our food, at least of getting the tender mercies of the dining car, from Kazipet to Madras? Why this change has been made I am unable to follow. I request that the original arrangement may be continued and we may also be given the benefit of these dining cars.

Well, the Minister speaks much of corruption and the vigilance organisation may be doing good work. But I have my doubts as to whether it is

not working as a sort of inquisition, and is not oppressive to the people at the lower rung of the ladder. But the real culprits are escaping. I called a *safaiwala* and asked him to clean my compartment. As he was leaving I gave him a small *bukhsheesh*. He said, 'thank you, the vigilance officers are behind me. I won't take it.' The vigilance officers should be more behind other people than these *safaiwalas*, to whom we give some *bukhsheesh* out of pleasure, out of our free will and our satisfaction. I feel that the bigger culprit is not really touched by your vigilance organisation. Regarding accidents it is disheartening that about one of the accidents the Commission concerned has said that it is an act of sabotage. It is a matter with which we have to be considerably concerned. We have to be concerned about who is interested in the sabotage because it is not a goods train for pilferage or stealing things. So we have to see where the source of sabotage is.

Sir, I again heartily congratulate the Railway Minister for the institution of pension for the railway servants. The real brunt of railway work is on class 4 staff, and their condition is still far from satisfactory. Their conditions of service are not good, not even as good as those of a post man. Their emoluments are not at all satisfactory. So also is the condition of class 3 staff. Their emoluments are not satisfactory. But they are very hard working, with considerable risks involved in their work. They must be made more contented.

Sir, the housing of the railway staff also is not satisfactory. The provision for education of the children of railway servants should be improved. Sir, in this connection may I request the Railway Minister to see that as far as possible transfers of railway servants, particularly class 3 and 4 staff, are not made during the course of the academic year? They find it very difficult to continue the education of their children if transfers are made during the course of the academic year. Of course exigencies of service

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may demand transfers even during an academic year, but it is not possible for them to put their children in boarding houses. They have not got the wherewithal for it. So I request that sufficient care may be taken to see that their transfers are not made during the course of the academic year.

Sir, one more matter and I have done. My friend Mr. N. C. Sekhar, in the course of his speech, appealed to the Railway Minister that the entire railway system in Kerala may come under one division. I do not agree. At present there are the Quilon, Olavakote and Madura Divisions. As a rule the entire metre gauge system works under Madura Division and the broad gauge system works under Olavakote Division. For various reasons it is better to continue the present system than to change it. Let it not be taken that Mr. Sekhar's view is the view of the people of Kerala.

SHRI N. C. SEKHAR (Kerala): Certainly not yours also.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM): There are sensible people in Kerala also.

SHRI K. MADHAVA MENON: Nor do I claim that my view represents that of Kerala. At least I know the view of the party to which Mr. Sekhar belongs. For various reasons they want the division to be one. As Mr. Pattabiraman remarked yesterday, I do not want this linguistic division even in the question of division of railways.

SHRI N. C. SEKHAR: If they are negligent about Kerala, we will go on pressing for it.

SHRI K. MADHAVA MENON: It is absolutely wrong to say that the Southern Railway is in any way negligent about the development of Kerala, because the metre gauge is in Madura Division and the Broad Gauge is in Olavakote Division. If that is

so, Olavakote Division takes part of Tamil areas also. Are the Tamil areas neglected? It is absurd to say so.

Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There are 18 speakers. We have to sit through the Lunch hour. Each Member will take not more than 15 minutes.

DR. M. D. D. GILDER (Bombay): Sir, almost everybody on this side of the House and very many Members on the opposite side started their speeches by congratulating the Minister on the work that he had done. I was closely watching him and his Deputy, and one could see their chests swelling with pride at the congratulations that they received. But, Sir, a swollen chest is as dangerous in some people as a swollen head in others. I hope the hon. Minister will excuse me if I do not start on the same strain.

Sir, the hon. Health Minister told me this morning that he is spending Rs. 28 crores, of which Rs. 14 crores are coming from foreign countries, for the eradication of malaria. Sir, please note the word "eradication". It means he wants to destroy lock, stock and barrel the malaria mosquito.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: What about flies?

DR. M. D. D. GILDER: Flies do not carry malaria. Well, what does the Railway Ministry do? Sir, at the second Health Ministers' Conference at which Rajkumariji presided and which I attended as the Health Minister of Bombay Government, the railways were accused of malarigenous activity, that is to say they were accused of producing malaria. The Government of India had appointed a committee which had made a report. It was a committee "convened to consider the measures to be taken to prevent the creation of conditions favourable to the spread of malaria during the construction of roads and railways." This committee recommended certain measures. Among the measures was some-

recommendations about removal of "borrow pits". They are dug by the side of the railway line or the road in order to get the earth to make embankments. Going over the literature I was surprised to see that the committee recommended that all "dead men" and *matams* should be removed. I do not know, but I hope the Minister will explain to us how he gets the "dead men" and *matams* in the "borrow pits". It is a technical term, I was told, for getting the measurements of the earth that has been removed from the pits. The Health Ministers' Conference made about ten recommendations about the treatment of these "borrow pits" and embankments.

Sir, today if you go on your way to Bombay, from Mathura to Rutlam where railway work is being carried on, you will see that these pits are full of stagnant water long after the monsoon is over, you will see these pits being freshly dug without any drainage. Sir, the railway authorities are to my mind acting as incubators; hatcheries and nurse maids to mosquitoes, and they will ruin the scheme of Rs. 28 crores that the Health Minister has put forward. Sir, we talk of unity and uniformity all over the country, but here are two Ministries of the Government of India acting not in unison but contrary to each other.

My hon. friend, the ex-Health Minister referred to this matter, and the Health Ministers Conference recommended that whenever new work is going on, it would be helpful if the Railway, in addition to its mechanical engineers, electrical engineers and construction engineers, would employ also sanitary engineers. I should like to know from the Minister how many sanitary engineers have been employed since the recommendation was made in 1948.

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR (Punjab): None.

DR. M. D. D. GILDER: Echo says 'none'. Sir, even preceding this Health Ministers Conference, orders had been issued to the P.W.D. in Bombay that whenever there were schemes of building roads or railways, the Public Health Department was always to be consulted. I hope, Sir, the hon. Minister will issue similar orders here too.

Sir, some of the minor inconveniences of passengers I will refer to now. Once I was travelling by the Central Railway. I had a lower berth. There was a bridal couple who came with the sweetmeats that they had taken during their visit, and that was stored between the two berths right up to the window level and beyond. And the smell of the ghee that came from it, to me was nauseating.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Was it Dalda?

DR. M. D. D. GILDER: I do not know. But I referred it to the Inspector of Trains, and do you know what he did? He did not remove the luggage, but he removed me from that compartment to another compartment.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: You were more easily removable.

DR. M. D. D. GILDER: And, Sir, as it happened, he removed me to a coupe, one berth of which was occupied by Mr. Dange, an hon. Member of the other House. Then, Sir, other people came in with their luggage and they stacked it in such a way that we could not even go to the bathroom till we two formed Congress-Communist axis to prevent luggage from coming in. At the Jhansi station the military came in with their huge beddings. We called the Inspector of Trains and we called the Station Master, and both of them said "Well, you Members of Parliament, why don't you refer the question to the Minister? I asked "Why don't you put this luggage in the brake?" But they said "Sir, the brake is locked." So that was the condition of things there.

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Then, Sir, there have been some remarks about the catering service. You will remember, Sir, that a committee was appointed for prevention of cruelty to animals of which several Members of this House were members.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: We have not seen the report.

DR. M. D. D. GILDER: Well, the report is in the Library. I was a member of that committee and still I have not got that report. That is what the Ministry does. Sir, we were travelling from Delhi to Patna and afterwards from Patna to Calcutta. The dining room servants had long coats on that journey, and I am perfectly sure that they must have slept in those coats. They were in a filthy condition. We went into the dining car and we were given napkins which had already been used, and when we called the dining car attendant and complained to him, he gave us other napkins, but he put the blame on the *dhobi* who, he said, did not know how to wash those napkins. We saw a waiter with the cloth that he carried in his pocket wiping the sweat on his forehead and then wiping the plate in which he served us. Sir, the Frontier Mail and the Punjab Mail were supposed to be the best services in the Railway. But when you sit in the dining car now, the Kitchen mate in his dirty clothes passes through the corridors of the dining car touching people on both sides. And as regards food, Sir, it is true that of late they have been serving chicken almost every time. I and my neighbour had our mouths watering when we saw chicken being served for dinner one day. But when our turn came and we put our knife in it, and more particularly when we put our teeth in it, my colleague remarked, and I agreed with him, that the chicken was a wily old bird that had heard in its youth Sir Stafford Cripps talk about unscrambling a scrambled egg.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: They do not guarantee your teeth.

DR. M. D. D. GILDER: Sir, my hon. friend, Dr. Kane, spoke about Konkani. When I was in charge of the P.W.D. in Bombay, I wrote about that matter to the Government of India. The survey has been done and done over and over again and various other things have been done. But as an ex-Minister remarked to me about something else this morning, "You may break your head, but you will never get it." May I suggest to Dr. Kane, Sir, that Ratnagiri is a great grower of Alfonso and Paheri mangoes, and if he can convince all these mango-growers not to send mangoes excepting by railway, the mango-eaters of Bombay will rise in rebellion and will probably force the Minister to give them the railway?

Sir, have you ever travelled by the third-class Janatas that they have introduced? I have had the occasion to travel by them, Sir. And would you believe it that there is no water? All the mail trains are watered on the way. The Janata has no such water. The lavatories are never cleaned and you find a number of bugs. You catch one here and one there all over your bodies.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: What about D.D.T.?

DR. M. D. D. GILDER: Sir, I was travelling in that Janata with a Railway clerk. He said "Do not blame the bigger authorities. They give you tins of Vim, Phenyle and D.D.T., but the cleaner at the station where he cleans the car gets only pure water. All the other things disappear on the way." Sir, at the stations, for the Mail trains they have got free cleaners who go into the compartments to clean them. But as I complained about it to the hon. Minister, these people clean the compartment, go out and stand there with a woebegone face and say 'Salam'. And on the station, Sir, look at the number of beggars, look at the hawkers in the trains, and the Station Master and the Assistant Station Master are looking at them, not moving even their little finger to get

them out. At the Poona station I tried to complain to the Station Master, and he drove them out of the platform, but they came to the other side of the train and started begging there. That is the way the Railways are managed. Sir, the hon. Minister did me the honour of calling me and allowing me to sit next to him in the train that went to Mahalaxmi and back when he opened Churchgate station. He was good enough to see that everybody was served with food before he touched anything. But, Sir, at that very time I was thinking, what a silly move the railway had taken in building their offices over Churchgate station. They are complaining of the rush hour crowds. They could have built their offices in the suburbs and the rush traffic would then have been in the opposite way. But the excuse that I got from one of the railway servants was "But we have got an office opposite the Churchgate station." Yes, Sir, they have that nineteenth century monumental architecture which is completely out of tune with the surrounding architecture there. That building caught fire in 1905, and I am sorry to say that it was not burnt down. All the records were burnt, but not the building. They could have hired it out and gone elsewhere and thus eased the business quarters position in Bombay. They have lost the opportunity.

Talking of the rush hour crowd, my suggestion is not original. I have seen it in the undergrounds in Paris and other places. During the day time when the seats are empty even then people are standing, standing at the doorways, etc. Can't they not remove the seats and make use of the compartment for the standing people? They can accommodate many more people that way than by keeping all the seats. While I was talking to another Minister of the Government of India this morning, he said that the Government of India authorities took delight in the misery of others. How true it has been shown by the Railways.

Sir, yesterday, there were some remarks about TELCO. I went over the terms of their contract. Sir, Tatas are a firm with a great business tradition. Why did they enter into such an one-side contract with the Railways? I found to my surprise that it has been absolutely confirmed by Mr. Narahari Rao, who was being quoted in the other House against Tatas. He said, "I have yet to meet the Financial Advisers on the other side and ask them how they made this agreement,"—a one-sided agreement like that in favour of Government. The Railway Board asked the Tariff Commission to go into the working of the TELCO and the Railway Board appointed their own man, a foreign expert, to assist the Tariff Commission. The Tariff Commission said that, for instance, Chittaranjan was allowed to use imported components, but TELCO could not do so because the condition was that 75 per cent. of the whole must be made in India. Now, a cost accounting system was imposed on TELCO by the Railway Board, but yet, when it came to their own purposes, the cost accounting system was entirely different. Why? The Tariff Commission report is before us, before everybody, and anybody can see the difficulties that were put in the way of TELCO. Yesterday, my hon. friend behind me was talking about nationalising TELCO, and there was nodding of the heads in this gallery (*pointing to the official gallery*) and . . .

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: They are not to be seen.

DR. M. D. D. GILDER: Like the Bourbons the Railway Board never learn anything; and they never forget anything. I would ask the hon. Minister to have an open mind, go into the question and come to an authentic decision on the matter as to whether the Railway Board has been fair to TELCO. I for one maintain that it has been grossly unfair. If you want to nationalise, by all means nationalise. If you want to hang a

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dog, hang it, but do not call it rabid when it is not. Thank you.

SHAH MOHAMED UMAIR (Bihar):
Sir, the Railway Budget reflects a significant improvement in many directions. Particularly the earnings from passenger and goods traffic show a very hopeful sign. The increase in earnings from passengers is nearly 4 per cent. and the increase in earnings from goods traffic is 13 per cent. This is a good sign in view of the fact that the Planning Commission had calculated the increase in passenger and goods traffic at 50 per cent and 30 per cent respectively. This is a good beginning and a good sign that the railway transportation has come to the assistance of the indigenous industries and factories. It goes to show that our industrial development is going to be very much assisted and helped by the Railways, resulting in an increase in goods and passenger traffic earnings. But this throws a great responsibility on the Railways, and I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to this important point. While earnings are increasing, the burden on the travelling public should also be lightened. When our earnings are going up as is reflected in the Budget then some facility should be given to the travelling public in the form of revised rates and fares. It is a known fact that the rates and fares have considerably increased. People have no doubt taken it as inevitable, but at the same time it throws a very heavy burden on the travelling public, and therefore the Railway Ministry should take into consideration whether facilities to passengers should not be provided in the form of reduced rates and fares. Certainly the Ministry is to be congratulated for having shown signs of improvement in various directions, but this sort of thing is also necessary. It is fundamental that in view of the economic condition of the people in general it is necessary that this burden which is being borne by the travelling public

should be reduced and lessened by reducing the freight rates and passenger fares. There is no doubt that the efficiency of the administration has increased but I find that 27,000 new hands have also been added. These new hands may be required under the new Plan to improve the various types of work and administration but at the same time I say that this addition of new hands has also increased the burden of expenditure to the extent of 7½ crores. This amount of expenditure on additional hands to the extent of 27,000 people could have been at least, if not removed, be reduced by giving greater amenities to the old hands. If the old staff were given proper and additional facilities in the way of allowances and other forms of gratuity etc., I think they would be able to do with redoubled vigour the same amount of work which the additional hands may be able to accomplish. Of course the additional hands will be required but the old staff should not be neglected. Take the case of running staff of railways. The running staff includes drivers and guards only. I will draw the attention of the hon. Minister as to why drivers and guards only should be included in the running staff and why not the T. Ts. who are also running along with the guards and drivers also be given the same facilities and bracketed with guards and drivers for the purpose of amenities and allowances granted to running staff? I am proposing these simply to encourage the old staff so that greater amount of work with redoubled vigour may be done by the old staff in view of the improved and increased amount of work which the administration has to face. The giving of special facilities to guards and drivers excite certainly the jealousy of the other running staff such as T. Ts. particularly when they see that greater amount of facilities are given to guards etc. Whereas they are not being given their due attention. I think this is a matter which requires at least a sympathetic consideration on the part of the Ministry. There

is no doubt that the Railways have improved in almost all directions and they have created, rather they have broken the record. At least in matters of money and the figures of budget which has been placed before us, they have broken all previous records but at the same time I would draw the attention of the Minister about certain matters such as equipment, training colleges, acquisition of private railways, remodelling of old stations etc. These are also matters which will add a great deal to the present credit of achievement of the Ministry if these are also being taken into some consideration. Take the training college. There is only one in Baroda so far as I understand. There is only one college which can accommodate only a few hundred officers. That is for training officers only. May I know why such colleges are not spread over in all the different zones? Only one college at Baroda will not help all officers of the railways to get trained and I think there is scope for spreading such colleges in the different zones of the railways. This will give additional help and the marked achievement which has been before us of the Railways will greatly multiply if the training facilities to officers are also increased in various sectors and zones. Those trained officers will play a greater part for efficiency.

Then, how is it that the Railways have not yet acquired in the last year, any private Railway? These private railways are creating havoc and the hon. Minister might be knowing sufficiently well about some railways which are a disgrace to the administration and to the country. I will name one—The Baktiarpur-Bihar Light Railway—which is a disgrace to the administration that such a railway is existing in the name of railway. If you happen to travel by that railway, you will not find any accommodation in first class. Not to talk of first class, the third class is far superior to the first class. Once I

happened to travel to Bihar Sharif by the Baktiarpur-Bihar Light Railway and when I entered the first class compartment, I found only bags of *boozas* and bundles of straw packed up there. The train was also running without water, light etc. It does not appear that there is any administrative authority exercised over that railway. Practically the officers and workers in charge of that railway don't treat themselves seriously as railway servants and railway officers. They think it is a private railway run by a certain District Board and they are making this sort of shifting arrangement for the passengers. It is a very disgraceful thing. It would have been to the credit of the Railways if at least that part of the Railway—Bihar Baktiarpur Light Railway—would have been acquired. It will not entail on you much trouble or money nor will it be expensive for the Department to acquire it. By its acquisition the system will only be changed and the various arrangements which are now lacking will be fulfilled by simply taking over charge of that from the private railway.

I see that Rs. 25 crores have been allotted in the Five Year Plan for structural purposes of the railway buildings and Rs. 50 crores for quarters of Railway servants. I say that at least so far as the various dilapidated and shabby railway stations are concerned, particularly in the branch lines, they are not given much attention. They deserve much attention because they are situated in the remote parts of the railway area. So if attention is not paid to those parts of the branch lines, then the required improvement in those lines cannot be fulfilled. The quarters of the staff in those branch lines are standing in the same shabby and dilapidated condition at the various stations as they existed some 50 years back. The time has come when those quarters for the staff—the menial staff and the labours who work in the railways—should be made more

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comfortable by spending some money on making some additions and alterations in them. It need not be done by practically changing the whole structure.

This can very cheaply and very efficiently be done if only the administration takes it into its head to make such additions and alterations in the railway staff quarters.

I drew the attention of the hon. Minister last year to the Jahanabad station premises which is six feet below the ground level and during the rainy season it is flooded. That does not look well. I think no remedial step has been taken in this regard. It is very necessary that that very important station between Gaya and Patna, the Jahanabad station, should be tidied up. It has been paying very much to the railways. Lakhs of passengers come and go from that station. Proper attention should be paid to this station.

I am thankful to the Railway Ministry in that at least arrangements for the electrification of that station have been made but the process is so slow that even though they have made all the arrangements, no connection has been given. For want of that simple connection, this electrification is suffering.

I will pass over all the uncharitable remarks made by some of our colleagues here about the efficiency and about the staff. I think such small matters about the staff etc., should not be taken so seriously by Parliament. These are small matters which should be remedied in course of time but even if they are not remedied they will still remain even after hundred per cent. improvement has been achieved on the Railways. In any case, the staff element in the administration should not be discouraged. It is a fruitful sign that the vigilance organisation has at least given this much proof that 150 persons

have been dismissed or discharged for corruption and about four hundred persons have been punished otherwise. All these things are going on in the Railway administration. I think the efficiency is increasing by leaps and bounds and the only thing is that we should have patience and wait for the time when every little bit of our grievance and complaint on every small and minor matter can also be removed and done away with.

I have to convey my sense of satisfaction and relief at the achievements of the Railways in spite of the various hardships existing in the way of the Railways. In spite of the abnormal and upward trend in the movement of passengers and goods, they have achieved what they have achieved. In spite of all these, the efficiency shown by the Railways is a hopeful sign, particularly when the second Five Year Plan expects the same efficiency from the Railways.

With these words, Sir, I congratulate the Railway Ministry and the Railway Minister.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, the railways represent the greatest national undertaking and with their efficient working is bound up, to a great extent, the economic prosperity of our country. Transport is vital for solving our problems of agricultural and industrial production. Without adequate means of transport, the message of the new socialist age, upon which we have entered, cannot be carried either to our villages or to our towns. Even cultural and scientific developments are, to a great extent, dependent upon the adequacy and efficiency of our transport arrangements, in which the railways play the most important part. It would be a wrong policy on our part to discourage inter-State traffic, both passenger and goods. The cultural unity of India, indeed the emotional integration of the country, is dependent upon adequate transport facilities. One of the basic causes of the

growing differences between the South and the North is the fact that people of the South know little about the North and those of the North likewise about the South. For this reason, it is important for us to ensure a high standard of operational efficiency in our railways. For this reason, it is important for us not to discourage travel between one part of the country and another part of the country. I therefore welcome the decision to bifurcate the existing North Eastern Railway and create a new Railway Zone with headquarters at Pandu. There is, I find, to be a full-fledged administrative machinery which can comfortably deal with regional as well as long-term problems. I said that it was desirable for us to increase the operational efficiency of our railways and to encourage, as far as possible, traffic. Though the Zonal system was adopted by us only a few years back, I know it is possible to say that with the bias that the future working should be in the interests of efficiency, the areas of the Zones should be reduced in size; in other words, in order that we might have better operational efficiency and administrative supervision, it would seem desirable to increase the number of Zones into which our Railway administration is divided. At the moment, a General Manager has to look after about 6,000 miles. That I think is a very very large area for any General Manager to supervise with efficiency. I know, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that we are going to produce 258 locomotives, 1,500 coaches and 16,800 wagons as compared to 234 locomotives, 1236 coaches and 15,900 wagons in the previous year. This is, generally speaking, satisfactory because of the need to tackle in a serious manner the problem of overcrowding in our trains. Though we have to some extent increased the amenities for our third class passengers, we cannot be proud of the manner in which they have to travel in the third class compartments. There is far too much of overcrowding there. We may have

limited financial and material resources but even so, I find we need to have more coaches attached to our trains for purposes of carrying third class passengers. I think we can to a certain extent, do without air-conditioned coaches. We need to pay less attention to our first class coaches and more attention to our third class coaches because third class passengers are the persons, I think, who contribute most to the revenues of the Railways. I think, Sir, that more trains should be run on our railways provided the track permits of it.

I should also like, Mr. Deputy Chairman, to refer to the problem of overcrowding on our railway platforms. This overcrowding increases the difficulties of the railway staff, of the travelling public and the passengers. It adds to the inconvenience of everybody concerned. I have, Mr. Deputy Chairman, seen passengers travelling on foot-boards and I think severe notice should be taken of persons who travel on foot-boards. I myself had an uncomfortable experience once when I was going to Lucknow. I was in a first class compartment and when I woke up suddenly at about 12 o'clock at night, I found a boy on the footboard when the train was running fast.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY in the Chair.)]

1 P.M.

I caught hold of the boy's hand and the only thing holding him to the running train was my hand and if my grip had slackened, the fellow would have fallen and died. I was in a very uncomfortable position. It is not right that human life should be thus treated and anybody found travelling on footboards should be dealt with very very severely in the interest of the community at large.

I would also like to know what action is taken against corruption. I think there has been a lot of

[Shri P. N. Sapru.]
exaggeration in talk about the extent of corruption in our railways. Our railway men and our superior railway officials are by and large, a good class and an honest class and we should give them credit for it. But cases of corruption should be dealt with severely.

I find that claims for compensation for goods lost or damaged are on the decline. This shows that the claims preventive organisation created in 1955 and the re-organised police protection force have been of some value.

Unfortunately, Mr. Vice-Chairman, the number of railway accidents was rather high. We have had three railway accidents of a serious character. On the Bombay—Calcutta route, the derailment was, it was found, due to sabotage, a deliberate act of sabotage. This report is a disturbing document. What is the Government doing to find out who the persons responsible for this sabotage were? Vigorous efforts should be made to find them out and have them suitably punished. These acts of sabotage are diabolical. Therefore, I would like to know whether these acts of sabotage are due to any dissatisfaction with the conditions of service of the railway staff. I am glad that the Government has accepted the interim proposals of the Pay Commission and speaking for myself, my sympathies are very much for the poor man. I should like these poor men to get adequate relief and I hope that as a result of the Pay Commission's Report, the emoluments of the railway staff will be of such a nature as to enable them to have a living wage.

I know, Mr. Vice-Chairman, that there has been an expansion of medical facilities and particular, attention given to the treatment of T.B. I think it is essential for us to continue to recruit a good class of doctors for our railways and I would like to suggest that there should be

some liaison between railway hospitals and general hospitals. In fact, my feeling is that these special hospitals should be done away with and the entire administration. I mean the medical administration, must be vested in those who are running general hospitals, with more hospitals and more beds attached for railways and other institutions attached to them.

I would like, Mr. Vice-Chairman, to invite your attention to the problem of leprosy in our railways. I was told by a railway doctor of some experience that he had come across various cases of leprosy among railway men. We are tackling the problem of T.B. and that is all right. But we should also tackle this problem of leprosy and some attention should be paid to it.

I am glad that we have built about 10,000 quarters in 1956-57 and provisions have been made in the budget for 15,000 quarters. But I would like the Railway Minister to give us some idea of the type of the quarters built for our railway men. I think that the old type one-roomed tenement is not exactly the type of tenement we should have for people aspiring to have a welfare State and I would like some idea to be given to us about the nature of these quarters.

I am glad that there is a proposal for 1,000 scholarships ranging from Rs. 15 to Rs. 50 for technical education under consideration. I would like to emphasise that attention should be paid in awarding these scholarships to the needs of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. I think that they need encouragement so far as education is concerned. We have neglected them in the past and we cannot afford to neglect them in the future.

I would also like to emphasise, Mr. Vice-Chairman, that it is essential for us to provide facilities for the needs of the children of the employees

for instruction in their mother-tongue when they happen to be serving outside their State or their particular linguistic area.

I would like to congratulate the Labour Minister upon the fact that there was fruitful cooperation between labour and management in this year. The management in this case is the railway authority and it is directly administered by the Minister and this cooperation between the administration and labour shows that the State is capable of undertaking big industrial concerns and running them efficiently. I agree with the view that the interests of the railway workers will be served by only one federation of all railway workers' unions. Speaking for myself, I feel that it is heartening to know that the representatives of the Federation have agreed to implement by 31st July, 1958 the unity agreement made by them in May 1957. It should be our policy to encourage healthy trade unionism and we should work towards a state of affairs in which the workers begin to participate in the management of the industries or undertakings we are running. In fact, I visualise the time when the distinction between worker and management will ultimately disappear. I would like to say finally a few words about the food arrangements in our railways. My experience as a traveller is that the number of waiters in our dining cars is far too small and there are not enough waiters going round the platform either. I do not know about the quality of food on the various railways in this country but I have some experience of the Northern Railway and I would say that the quality of food on the Northern Railway is fairly good; I do not feel dissatisfied with the quality of food there; I have taken food on the Northern Railway and I did not feel dissatisfied with the quality of food. I have travelled on the Western Railway also and I was satisfied on the whole with the food arrangements on

the Western Railway. I will just say a word about the Southern Railway. I think some attention should be paid to the needs of travellers on the Southern Railway. I cannot say that the standard is as good as it should be. It may be that liking for North India food disqualifies me from talking about South India food, but I do think that the food arrangements there require supervision.

Then I would like to give expression to a feeling which I have had whenever I have wanted to take water from railway platforms. I do not know whether the water which is supplied to people by the *paniwalas* is boiled or not. I do not know whether the water which is served in our dining cars is boiled or not. I think it is desirable in the interests of the general health of the public to insist that *paniwalas* should boil water before they serve it to the people.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate our distinguished Railway Minister on the lucidity of his statement. He has produced a surplus budget. We are in the midst of the second Five Year Plan and the progress of our Plan is bound up to a large extent with the way in which our railways are worked, and we have received some financial assistance for our railways. So there is no reason to take a pessimistic view of the future. With these words, Mr. Vice-Chairman, I would like once again to convey my congratulations to the Railway Minister for his able stewardship of the Railway Department. I would like also to convey to the railwaymen, big and small, Members of the Railway Board, General Managers, and the vast body of railway servants, our thanks for their efficient running of our great national enterprise, the Railways of India.

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI (Nominated): Sir, the discussion on the Railway Budget provides a very good opportunity of bringing to the notice of the railway authorities some

[Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji.]

of the local points and complaints regarding the working of the railways.

The first point that I wish to place before the House is this that they should try to speed up the communication between Calcutta and Darjeeling. On this communication depends the welfare of the entire Eastern India so far as economic conditions are concerned, and therefore I think the Railway Administration should abridge this connection between Calcutta and Darjeeling by time as far as possible; of course, it is not easy now to abridge space but at least abridgement of time may be possible to achieve so far as the Railway Administration is concerned. I would here suggest that a regular Darjeeling Mail should be run between Calcutta and Siliguri and the stoppages of this mail train could be very much reduced so as to give at least a three hours margin of time to be saved in the journey between Calcutta and Darjeeling. In that way some amount of the tourist traffic that is lost to Darjeeling will also be recovered. Of course, now-a-days there are conveniences of air travel but that does not suit people who have to bring to the hill station ample luggage which has to be carried by aircraft. So this is the point that I wish the Railway Administration to take note of, and this is a very serious problem so far as conditions of Eastern India are concerned, and as is well known to the House, the conditions there are not very stable. These conditions sometimes invite the intervention of external forces, and if we really want to check these troubles that are expected from the different quarters, I feel that we should even from now see that Eastern India is made really an integral part of the system of communication by which the different parts of India are so well brought together.

My next point is a very small one and that is about the abolition of the

railway between Basirhat and Baraset. This area is very congested and if the only railway communication that is available is abolished, it is time that something is done in the place of this means of transport so as to relieve the congestion from which Calcutta has been suffering for a long time.

My third point is, I understand that the proposed electrification schemes for Sealdah and the suburbs are being postponed again. I do not know whether the Railway Administration is alive to the necessity of eliminating the abnormal overcrowding of trains that ply between Sealdah and the suburban stations. I think this is one of the worst congested areas in the whole of India, and I understand also that Sealdah, by steam traction, handles the largest volume of railway traffic in the whole of India. I think the number handled far exceeds that handled by any other station. So under the conditions of this abnormal congestion I think that the electrification of Sealdah and the suburban trains should not be held up on any ground whatsoever. I do not know, but from the papers I see that there is some talk of postponing these electrification schemes.

Now, besides these local points, I wish to draw the attention of the House to certain fundamental points revealed in the Railway Budget. At the outset I must say that the entire Railway Administration is entitled to our wholehearted congratulation on the level of success achieved by them in the working of the railways committed to their care. I find that the railways have been able to earn quite a lot so as to be able to finance their own immediate requirements, and they do not depend upon the Central Government for all these developments. For instance, there is an automatic depreciation reserve fund to which is contributed Rs. 45 crores. All these contributions are earned by the railways. That is, they are provided by the railways from their

own earnings. Of course these funds should have separate accounts. I find that the surplus in the Depreciation Reserve Fund amounts to Rs. 92 crores. This is extremely creditable to the Railway Administration that the Administration has been able to find out of its own traffic earnings so much for the capital expenditure that is required in order that these conditions of successful working of the railways may be maintained. There are really three funds which have been built up by the railways. The first fund is the Depreciation Reserve Fund to which Rs. 45 crores have to be contributed out of its earnings. The second fund is what it pays as dividend to General Revenues which means relieving the Central Government of its duties towards the maintenance of the railways on a proper level of efficiency so that the railways themselves are able to finance their own development. And not merely that. They are paying the required dividend to the General Revenues. This is a very large sum. The net railway revenue is estimated at about Rs. 77 crores after making these due deductions. Then, there is also a third fund, the Development Fund. The Development Fund also shows a surplus. I wish that the budget of the Railway Administration should present a careful account of the progress of these different funds, so that we may know how these funds are being utilised for the purposes for which they have been established. So, my point is this that the Railway budget does not give a proper account of the successful manner in which, as a business concern, the Railway Administration is able to work the railways under its charge. Now, if you find that the railways are able to make sufficient earnings by which they are able to finance these important requirements such as the Depreciation Reserve Fund, the contribution to the General Revenues and even Development Fund, then, I think, the Railway Administration deserves the congratulations of the country and the whole House on the successful manner in which they

have been able to make earnings to the extent that they are able to finance their own requirements. Now, they do not depend upon the Central Government for financing these paramount needs of the railways. After all, the Railway is the most important concern of the Central Government. For instance, take the case of Civil Aviation. How much money has the Central Government to spend in order to keep that Civil Aviation department going? You always write off crores of rupees of loss per annum on that account. Similarly, I ask whether the Postal Department will compare favourably with the railways as a commercial department? If we really place the accounts in a proper manner, we are bound to give credit to the railways for realising traffic earnings to the extent which will really yield, on calculation, about ten per cent. return on the capital-at-charge. Supposing we take the capital-at-charge for the time being at one thousand crores of rupees, it is easy to calculate that the Railway has been able to achieve, to realise a net earning of about Rs. 104 crores, according to my calculation. Therefore, my point is this that perhaps in their Explanatory Memorandum the Railways may do more justice to themselves, in these days of criticism that is levelled against nationalised undertakings. The Railways must stand forward and claim the credit of being the most successful national undertaking imaginable, since it does not depend upon the Central Government for any kind of financial aid. On the contrary it is fulfilling its own obligations to the Central Revenues and to the Central Government by being able to finance its own development—its Depreciation Fund, its contribution to General Revenues and its own Development Fund—so that the Railways really have made themselves quite independent of any financial aid that the Central Government might have been required to provide in case the Railways were not able to show this prosperous finance and its ability to earn so much profit. I therefore still think

[Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji.]
that perhaps by some kind of remarks in the Financial Memorandum of the future the Railway finance may be put in its proper light, so that the Railway must be admitted by all critics, by even the most carping critics of Government undertakings, of nationalised undertakings,—and they will all be ready to acknowledge that the Railway at least is the most successful national undertaking that stands to the credit of the Government of India. I thank you.

SHRI T. V. KAMALASWAMY (Madras): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I rise to congratulate the Railway Minister and the Railway Administration on the very excellent work they have turned out during the past year. They have to be congratulated for the remarkable progress that they have made not only in the last year but also in the preceding years, because it is a record of continuous progress. Immediately after partition the position of our railways was in a very pitiable state. Our finances were crippled and the future seemed dark, but due to the untiring watch and efforts of the administration we not only tided over the crisis, but we are well on our way to become one of the best managed railway systems in the whole world. Though we have been very severely handicapped for want of new locomotives, wagons and coaches, we have been fully armed with what we have and we have made the best of a bad bargain. Our performances, no doubt, would have been much better, but the Railway Administration cannot be blamed for the state of affairs, because the percentage of old stock in use is still about 31 of the total. And now though our Government have got the funds and we have sent our best men abroad for making purchases to replenish our stock, we have not been able to procure the necessary rolling stock because of conditions prevailing in the world markets. From the report of this year we find that the Railway Purchase Mission . has

succeeded to a remarkable extent in its efforts and that deliveries of the same are to be completed in this budget year. I am sure that with the arrival of the new locomotives, wagons and coaches, and supplemented by our own production in indigenous workshops, quick progress will be made not only in rolling stock but also in the track renewal programme and strengthening of the existing lines.

During this debate many Members complained about the unpunctuality of trains. This is due not merely to the inefficiency in the performance of engines but also due to the series of accidents which took place last year which resulted in the resignation of the then Minister. These major accidents resulting in heavy loss of life and property gave rise to serious criticism and misgivings in the minds of the public with the result that they lost confidence in the Ministry as a whole. That is why the Railway Board gave instructions for reducing the speed of trains during night time, during the monsoon period, and restricting the speed also on certain tracks. This is as it should be because the public confidence and public morale should definitely be strengthened and although there may be inconvenience to the public due to late running of trains and due to the slowing down of passenger trains, I think, we have to bear with it in the larger interests of the administration.

Speaking about accidents, I feel that there is no reason to be alarmed because the analysis of the accidents will show that the human element has played a very large part in these accidents and it is not due to any defect in the general set-up of the administration. I am afraid that the Railway Administration has been too lenient in its dealings with the labour force now-a-days with the result that

there is a decline in the sense of responsibility shown by the running staff and generally by the railway labour force and there is lack of discipline. Therefore, the superior officers should be given more power to take summary action against subordinates who fail in the discharge of their duties, thereby endangering the safety of the travelling public. Sir, I also suggest that both the Railways Act and the Indian Penal Code should be suitably amended so that wherever there is a case of wilful negligence on the part of railwaymen or where in a case of sabotage it has been found after enquiry that loss of life has been caused wilfully, the maximum death penalty could be awarded.

Then, Sir, the Railway Ministry sometime back announced that there was a side collision in a particular accident. During my frequent journeys I find that the staff in the station yard are a little negligent because I found empty wagons and coaches being kept much beyond the pooling point. Such act on their part leads to accident, and greater supervision should be exercised over the marshalling yard staff also.

Sir, speaking of accidents there are nearly 2,220 minor accidents due to the failure of the engines because of faulty material in the workmanship, and operations arising from the running staff constitute 23 per cent. of the total accidents. Similarly there are a large number of accidents due to hot axles and hot boxes. These could have been prevented by proper and effective steps being taken in the workshop itself to ensure the safe running of trains. I am sure, Sir, that suitable action would have been taken against those persons who are responsible for putting on the line these faulty rolling stock. Moreover, Sir, reference was made to the training schools in the railways. The refresher course for the railway personnel should be more frequent, and the existing number of schools are

not sufficient. I suggest that mobile training schools should be started at least as an emergency measure. This was suggested even by the Accidents Enquiry Committee, and I do not know whether it has been accepted. Moreover, to improve the safety of running as far as possible all the stations on the main line should be provided with interlocking signalling arrangements, and this has been admitted even by the Railway Minister himself. But the lack of availability of signalling apparatus and interlocking equipment is deterring them from making better progress in this direction. Also, every station on the main line should have the system of single central cabin; instead of having cabins on either side there should be only one cabin in the centre. This will reduce expense and also ensure co-ordination between the station master and the cabin operators.

Sir, I wish to submit one fact about the relationship between the employees and the administration. We find from the budget, Sir, that there has been a progressive increase in the expenditure on the staff in recent years, and this is bound to go up in the near future. This year it is likely to be Rs. 268.35 crores. The interim recommendation of the Pay Commission will account for Rs. 4.4 crores more, and when the final recommendations are made, it may cost the administration a few more crores. No wonder, Sir, that the anticipated surplus will most probably be wiped out, and I will not be surprised if the Railway Minister comes to this House with a deficit budget when presenting the Revised Estimates. But even after spending more and more money on the amenities and increased pay of the staff, it is very regrettable that the administration report should reveal that more than 10 million man days were lost in 1957 alone out of which 230 thousand man days were lost due to strikes and lock-outs. In this field also the South Eastern Railway stands first with 180 thousand

[Shri T. V. Kamalaswamy.]
man days lost. It is worth pondering how much, to what extent national productivity and wealth has been lost by this unpatriotic action of a section of the railway staff. I am sure that while this House will be happy to accord its approval for providing better conditions and emoluments to the railway men, this House and the public have got a right to expect from the railway men a higher sense of devotion to duty and loyalty to the State.

Sir, much has been said about ticketless travelling. So long as there are trains there will be ticketless travellers, and the administration cannot be blamed too much for this. I can understand people travelling without ticket because of their poverty, but we find that most of the guilty persons are students and well-to-do people who do it just for the sake of fun or for bravado. Our educational institutions should educate our boys and girls more in the sense of responsibility, and they should be taught that it is unpatriotic to travel without ticket. Effective public co-operation and public opinion alone can lessen ticketless travelling which is costing the exchequer several crores of rupees every year.

I am happy that departmental catering on the railways has come to stay. The railways cannot absolve themselves of the responsibility to feed the railway passengers, because when they undertake to transport them from one place to another, it is their bounden duty to see that the passengers are properly fed, and there is no use of having a separate account for the Catering Department to see whether it is running at a profit or loss. It is one of the elementary duties of the railways, and I suggest that in future the Catering Department should not be treated as a separate department for purposes of accounting but its accounts should be merged with the general accounts, because it is the duty of the railways to see that

wholesome, clean and good food is given to the passengers.

Lastly, Sir, I have to make one or two suggestions. Regarding wagons, we find that although in the Plan period fishery finds a very large place as a supplemental food, no attempt has been made by the railways to provide refrigerated or insulated wagons on the railways for the transport of perishables like fish, fruits and things like that. In fact the Ministry of Food and Agriculture used to complain that because of lack of refrigerating facilities they are not able to transport large catches of fish in Calcutta and Bombay resulting in a colossal waste of food. As far as Kerala State is concerned, they have now a railway from Ernakulam to Quilon, then right down to Cape Comorin. They will connect Thirunelveli also. They are having intensive deep-sea fishing operations and the large amount of food, in these days of food scarcity, will not be allowed to go waste, and the railways will step in and provide the necessary refrigerated and insulated wagons for the transport of this fish.

Sir, I once again congratulate the Railway Ministry on their excellent performances. I thank you, Sir.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK (Orissa):
Sir, I join hands with the hon. Member who has just preceded me in congratulating the Railway Minister and his administration for the record of achievements he has given in his review for the last working year as well as for his forecast for the next year. The achievements may not be very spectacular, but then they cover all sorts of fields in the railways' working, and, modest as they are, they have nevertheless got a solidity of their own and they will certainly go a great way in shaping the future economic structure of our country. The records show that passenger and goods traffic has already established a record figure which was probably

never before attained in the administration of railways either under Government or under the Companies previously. The passenger and goods earnings have also gone up which was never achieved before. Anyway, these are the achievements which have shown certain record figures and they have been very highly spoken of by many hon. Members of this House. So I do not like to dilate upon all those things. But all that I wish to say now is this that the working expenses have also shown a similar record achievement from 1956-57. The working expenses appear to have gone up from Rs. 234 crores in 1956-57 to slightly over Rs. 259 crores in 1957-58 and they are expected to be of the order of Rs. 268 crores in the year 1958-59. The last-named figure includes certain commitments which the Pay Commission has recommended for some increased dearness allowance to the railwaymen. But that again does not take into account the future commitments which the Pay Commission might further impose. I do not know, Sir, to what extent these impositions will raise the figure of working expenses. Sir, the House and myself will be very glad to know the extent to which these working expenses will go up. At least some idea of that will relieve to a great extent the anxiety of all sections of the railway users.

There is also another aspect of it as to how far these expenses relate to inflationary pressure. There are rising prices and there is much talk of inflation in the air all over the country, and it is my honest desire that the Railway Ministry should enlighten the House about the extent to which this inflation will affect the ultimate Second Five-Year Plan targets also. The prices are going up and the Railway Minister has already stated that he is going to get more money on account of the Second Five-Year Plan targets. But he has not mentioned whether the existing allotments for the Second Five-Year

Plan targets are enough or whether the physical targets of the Second Five-Year Plan are going to be curtailed, owing to the inflationary pressure, in order to accommodate these targets to the financial availability. I think, Sir, we have a right to know the extent to which we will be able to achieve our physical targets.

Sir, I am constrained to find that the Railway Minister has given no indication in his speech as to what will be the gap between the demand and supply of railway transport by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan, and how far the existing resources of our country as well as the resources that we are going to get from foreign countries are going to meet the shortage that is likely to occur in view of the railway facilities that we want to provide for the country as a whole.

Sir, another discomfiting feature that I noticed from the speech of the Railway Minister is that he wants to give much more preference to the goods transport than to the passenger transport. Already, Sir, our trains, whether Mails, Express or Passenger, are overcrowded and this aspect has been elaborately dealt with by several of my predecessors. I do not like to go into all those things. But then why is the human element being altogether ignored in preference to transport of goods? Sir, I do not like to speak more with regard to the general aspects of the Railway Administration. But I would like to say something about the local grievances and local problems that are there.

Sir, the Railway Minister says that already 500 miles of new lines are in progress. I come from that part of the country—Orissa—which, if you look at the railway map, looks like a desert so far as the railway lines are concerned. The areas which have been merged into the Orissa State are said to be full of numerous potential resources, mineral, industrial and others. These resources

[Shri Maheswar Naik]
have not been properly developed and there is no scope to develop these resources because the railway transport is absolutely conspicuous by its absence. Not only that, the road transport also is very meagre in those areas. If we want to promote our exports of ores and earn more exchange, then naturally we have to develop these resources and these resources cannot be developed unless transport facilities are provided. because railway transport plays a great part in transporting these exportable products to the ports from which they can go to the foreign countries and thus enable greater and greater earnings of foreign exchange.

Sir, in regard to the development aspects of railway lines, I have got to say something. One of my predecessors over there was speaking of a light railway owned by private people. But here is a light railway line which extends from Rupsa on the east coast section to Baripada about 50 miles further. This is also a light railway and I find here locomotives which have been in use probably since the inception of those lines and they have never been changed; they are over-aged and they have already outlived their usual span of life, and even then are being run on those lines. As a result there is a breakdown every day, every week, not to speak of every month. The fact is that passenger traffic and even goods traffic is being diverted to roads, and you can easily imagine the exorbitant cost which road transport involves. Some years ago, when Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri was the Railway Minister, he visited this area and he promised that not only he would look into the matter but that this light railway would be converted into a broad gauge line and extended further to link up with Tatanagar-Badampahar section so as to get to the core of the mineral areas for mineral development as well as for other industrial development for which these particular areas are most

suited and have got numerous potentialities. This has not come. Some time ago, I raised that question but unfortunately the Railway Ministry seems to have no knowledge of that.

Similarly, there is another section of railway line which happens to be a broad gauge line, the line from Tatanagar to Badampahar. That was established for the transport of ores to the Tata Iron and Steel Co. at Jamshedpur some thirty years ago or even more. There used to be two passenger services before the last war. When I brought it to the notice of the Railway Ministry—it was again my bad luck—the Railway Ministry did not seem to have any knowledge of the fact that there was any second service over that line. It is a distance of about 56 miles and for the passenger train it takes something like 7 hours, which is for one forward journey, and similarly a little more than 7 hours for the return journey to Tatanagar, an average speed of 8 miles per hour. If the existence of light railways in the private sector is a disgrace, I do not know what to call this speed on this line. I brought this to the notice of Mr. Mathur of the South-Eastern Railway at Calcutta, and I was shocked to hear from a person who was the Chief-Operating Superintendent that he would be pleased to see the entire passenger traffic diverted to road transport. Here is a high officer of the Railway Administration who not only does not like to make any improvement whatsoever as regards the speed in the railway over this line but wants the entire passenger traffic to be diverted to road transport. We do not mind being diverted to road transport, but what about the cost which is involved there? Not only that, the convenience of rail transport cannot be compared to the convenience of road transport. There is another point also. Latterly the Orissa Mining Corporation and the S.T.C. are working certain mines, the ores of which are being transported to the railway head at Badampahar which is

the terminus of that railway line. They are carrying their ores by lorries and trucks. Then, naturally the cost becomes exorbitant. If we can save this exorbitant cost which is likely to occur because of the transport over lorries, those savings we can take to ourselves so that at least to that extent, we can get more foreign exchange. These ores are being exported through Calcutta and other minor ports there, and the extra cost involved in carrying these ores by lorries and trucks, if saved, can easily give us some extra foreign exchange earnings.

Sir, these are vital matters, though local, and they must not be divorced from national interests. After all, the railways are now a national undertaking, and every tax-payer has got a right to demand from the railway administration that at least those facilities which are now being concentrated on certain areas where already such facilities are available to a sufficient extent, should also be provided to areas where there are absolutely no facilities available at the moment. So, when I bring these matters to the notice of the Railway Minister and the Railway Ministry, I hope they will be taken into consideration in the context of national development, because after all the strength of a chain lies in its weakest link.

I have not much to say. Before I sit down, I again congratulate the Railway Minister on the achievements he has made and for the rosy picture he has drawn for the future. Sir, I have done.

SHRI S. PANIGRAHI (Orissa): Mr. Vice-Chairman, like the other hon. Members who have already congratulated the Minister for Railways and the Railway Ministry, I also congratulate them on the Budget that the Minister has presented and for his successful administration and management of the railways. He has achieved success in so many respects.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. B. JOSHI) in the Chair]

2 P.M.

Of all the Ministries, the Railway Ministry appears to be the most successful one. It is the Ministry which has earned the confidence of the people to the maximum extent. The Railway Ministry deals with a nationalised industry which has enhanced the confidence of the people and which has proved that nationalised industry also can very well be taken up by the State. We have heard so many things from the Railway Minister in his budget speech about the electrification schemes, introduction of de-luxe trains, programme for the provision of passenger amenities and also at the same time problem of over-crowding. I thank him that he has been aware of all these aspects of the Railways. In my opinion there are some merits and also there are some demerits in the railway administration. In comparison to the merits, of course the demerits cannot outweigh the merits. There are over-crowding, ticketless travel, large number of accidents and unpunctuality of the train services. If we look into the catering arrangements also, at most times in most of the places it is not satisfactory. If we look into the figures supplied by the budget speech of the Minister and also the report of the Railway Board, we learn that the number of accidents is increasing day by day. We also learn that the number of deaths and injuries due to accidents is also increasing. This is not a credit to the Railway administration and we should be very cautious about it in the future. From the report of the Railway Board, we find that in accidents on railway premises in which the movement of trains and vehicles was not concerned, the number of railway servants injured increased by 1577 due mainly to the undermentioned causes—while loading, unloading or sheeting of wagons, while attending to stationary engines in sheds etc. This shows that the victims of this type of accidents must have been drawn from the

[Shri S. Panigrahi.]

labour class and they must have been wage-earners. So after the death, what compensatory aid has been given to them? It is impossible to know that from the report. If it was given, if any arrangement for compensation has been made then I have nothing to say but if it has not been given, then I request the hon. Minister to look into it and to make some arrangements for the compensation of the deceased persons. We are also anxious to know the reasons and the steps which are going to be taken to eliminate the accidents in future. We find from the report that because of the misadventure or accidental acts of employees, 150 persons have been killed in 1955/56 and 182 persons in 1956/57. The number of people injured is 4,800 in 1955/56 and 6600 in 1956/57. So we cannot encourage such type of adventure at the risk of life not only to those who took the risk but also to the railway administration and to the entire nation. These figures show that the number of injured and the number of deaths are on the increase. I hope the Railway Minister will take sufficient steps to see that the number of accidents decrease in the future. At the same time whenever it is due to some acts of Government employees and whenever it is found after due enquiry to be so, then they should be sufficiently dealt with.

Then I come to overcrowding. When this question is dealt with, most of the people imagine that it is only due to the uncivic nature of the travelling passengers. Overcrowding or chain-pulling or such things happen but when we talk of it, we forget that man is subject to circumstances. All these things happen because of the circumstances prevailing at that time and because the travelling public are subject to very odd circumstances. The real problem is overcrowding. If this could be eliminated, then most of the so-called offences would not have arisen in railway coaches and bogies. It is not for the want of facilities, or luxuries

or well-equipped and luxurious coaches for which people are anxious. It is due to want of space. People want living space at the time of travelling. If we look at the condition of third class passengers, it is very much miserable. Nobody can sit there and travel for a long distance. So over-crowding should be dealt with seriously and as far as possible maximum number of coaches or trains running on new lines should be arranged.

After taking over the catering arrangements, generally the arrangement is satisfactory no doubt but at places, it is found that sufficient personal attention is not being paid as was being paid by the private enterprise previously. This also is not a good sign on the part of public management.

From the report it is found that there has been a slight drop in the punctuality of trains. It is a discouraging sign. It is found that some of the important trains like the Grand Trunk Express, are late by four to five hours. At times this train is late by four to five hours. (Interruption) Thank God it is not late by a day. A stage may come when it may be late by a day. This type of unpunctuality is not desirable when it is considered on a national scale, because people are trained by such things, trained socially and culturally. So the effect of such unpunctuality on the people will not be good, and we cannot in future train their minds to be socially well behaved and punctual.

There is another item to which I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister and that is about the publications of the Railways, for example, the time-tables and other such publications. They should be published in all the regional languages recognised by the Constitution. I do not think at present it is so. If the cost of publication is too much, then, as one of the Members of this House suggested the other day, a

cheap edition of the time-table should be printed and published, and at least that cheap edition of the time-table should be published in all the languages. When we look at the signboards and other such things in the Railway stations, we find so many incorrect things, and when people ignorant of the language write or paint these things, it looks very odd and it attracts the attention of all the people. Care should also be taken in that regard.

I want to submit to the hon. Minister through you, another point. That is a local problem and it has also been dealt with by some previous speakers. I have also had occasion to deal with that subject previously on many occasions. In Orissa, throughout the eastern parts of Andhra, throughout the eastern parts of Madhya Pradesh, there is a big area which seems like a big desert in the railway map. It is not only a desert, Sir, but my submission is that the area has been deserted by the Railway Ministry and the administration, the Central Government. The area is required to be industrialised, and if the area is required to be industrialised, expansion of railway facilities is a prerequisite. It is essential. Iron ore is available in Bonai, in Sukinda, coal is available at Talcher and iron is available at Mayurbhanj. It is a rich mineral area and unless the entire area is connected by railway lines and unless a port is developed near Sukinda for purposes of exporting the iron ore, we cannot develop that portion of the country and we cannot say that the economic condition of the people will be raised.

Although there are some more points for me to speak about, I take leave of you and request the hon. Minister to pay attention, especially in regard to expanding railway lines in that area.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, the 118R.S.D.—4.

very fact that we have decided to have the Railway Budget treated separately gives some importance to the department whose budget we are now considering. The House will probably remember that in the pre-Independence period also, this was treated separately, but the reasons were entirely different. When in December, 1954, both the Houses passed a Convention Resolution and decided to continue the same practice, they had certain very good reasons. To me, Sir, two such reasons are obvious: one is that when the nation has decided to go on the road of a socialistic pattern, it is extremely desirable that an organisation which was run by the State should be so run that it runs well and it establishes a precedent which would give encouragement for other undertakings to be taken over by the Government. The other reason was that the nation had decided to launch on an economic programme to fight with the difficulties of poverty, illiteracy and so many other economic ills. For that purpose it was decided to have planning and the most essential consideration in that planning was that our railways should develop. We have made a programme in the second Five Year Plan for the development of the railways as a whole. While considering the Railway Budget, I would confine myself only to two tests. The first is that the second Five Year Plan has set a target for the development of the railways which is very intimately connected with the development of the whole country. The second is last year's record. During the last year, it is true that the income and expenditure side is showing a very welcome feature as it is surplus budget. I am very happy about it but then that is a very secondary part of it; the main part of it is, how far it has developed the country, how far it has progressed and how far it has given amenities for the public and how far it has improved the condition of these poor people who work in this big organisation. Having that in view, Sir, we have to look at things,

[Shri Akbar Ali Khan.]

We have decided that by the end of the second Five Year Plan, we should have to cater for an increase of 30 per cent. in regard to passenger traffic and 50 per cent. in the case of goods traffic. In addition to that, Sir, we have also decided that there should be 842 miles of new lines laid, 8,000 miles of renewals, 1607 miles of doubling and about 265 miles of conversion from the metre to the broad gauge. A length of 826 miles is to be electrified. We aim at producing 2364 locos, 11,575 coaching stock and 170,247 wagons. After reading the lucid speech of the Railway Minister, except in the matter of renewals and electrification, I am inclined to think that the progress during these two years of the plan and particularly last year, has been satisfactory and I join with other friends in congratulating the Railway Minister and his department and the whole staff. I also hope that those things that are lacking will be checked up and every effort and every endeavour will be made to see that we fulfil this target.

Next I come to the efficiency or to the record of work of the department during the last year. Before I go into that there are a few things on which I would like to have some clarification. I am very happy to learn that the Railway Minister has decided to have pensions for the servants of this department. But it is not clear as to who are included in this scheme, and I would like to know whether all, from the lowest rung to the highest, are included in it, or what is the position.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: Yes, all.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: I am happy to learn that. The other thing is the age of retirement. Has the age of retirement been fixed and will the pension go only to the retired servant? Suppose he dies, will it go to his family also? Why I ask this question is this. I remember that we had in the old Hyderabad rules a rule to the effect that if a man drawing

pension died, leaving behind a widow and unprotected children, then they used to be given a part of his pension. I would like to make this suggestion here to the hon. Minister that, when framing the rules for the grant of pension, this matter also may be taken into consideration so that in case a widow and unprotected children are there they also may have some provision in case such misfortune should fall on them.

The other thing on which I would like to get a clarification from the hon. Minister relates to freights. While dealing with the Freight Structure Committee, which is also called the Mudaliar Committee, he has been pleased to observe:

"In regard to the Committee's recommendations pertaining to the revision of the rates structure, the examination is now in the final stages, and decisions thereon are expected to be taken and implemented in the near future."

I know that last April or a few months earlier, this report was submitted, and it has taken some time. I also concede that it is a very difficult question to have a freight structure for all the commodities, and naturally it takes certain time. But if this means that these freight rates will be laid down by the Government themselves without their coming to the knowledge of the House or approval of the House, then I would request the hon. Minister to see that, before those rules are enforced, they are placed before this House. If I remember aright, in another form my hon. friend Dr. Kunzru also referred to this fact. Speaking subject to correction, I remember the hon. Minister said that he will take the House into confidence. I do hope that, in view of this passage in his speech, the matter will be further cleared up in his reply.

The other thing about which I want a little clarification relates to training of persons of different grades; for

whatever I have read, is not at all clear to me. I think it is high time that the Railways have different institutions in different zones and in different States so that more and more people can be provided with education and training right from the very beginning—even from gangman or whoever it may be requiring training. This is necessary, particularly on the technical side. So I would like to have further clarification. In this connection I am glad that a college has been formed for signals and telecommunication at Secunderabad for the training of officers and staff of the Signals Engineering Department. I am very grateful to the hon. Minister that he has thought of the forgotten Secunderabad and established this college there. I would also like to know what will be the personnel it is meant for, I mean, how many persons will be trained there. He may tell us and also if possible give us other details so that we may know more details of this institution which is a very welcome feature.

Sir, I will now confine myself to broad observations. I propose to deal with the question of labour, the labour unions and the federation. I must congratulate the Ministry, the Department and the Railway Federation and all the workers that last year also they have remained as a very contented family. They have settled their question like those in a family, as if it were all a family affair. As I said while discussing the President's Address, I may particularly appeal to my friends sitting opposite that, when we have launched on economic reconstruction, let us for a time, at least for 10 years, decide that there will be no strikes, that there will be no political propaganda and no advantage will be taken by one party or the other party, by the Government or by the labour unions.

I very much appreciate, and I am sure my friends of the Communist Party will also appreciate the steps that the Department has been taking,

particularly those relating to the scholarships which were introduced by Shri Lal Bahadur and which are being implemented by the present Minister. This is a very encouraging element. The students should be given these scholarships and I am sure the number of scholarships will be increased. So also in the matter of housing accommodation and medical facilities. Whatever has been done is not fully satisfactory, but I am really happy that a progressive step, a right step in the right direction, has been taken, and if this trend and this speed are maintained, I am sure the contentment of this family, the happiness of this family will grow and it is very essential that there should be that family feeling in this whole organisation which is a national industry.

Next I come to the public. I am sure the Government, the opposition party and the labour unions will fully appreciate the appeal of the Railway Minister; when he says that while facing the question of accidents full cooperation is needed on all hands while discussing this matter with the general managers of all the railways, the main element was the human element. No doubt every step will be taken technically to see that these mishaps are prevented. But it is also very necessary on the part of the Department to have greater vigilance, greater supervision and on the part of the unions and all others to see that if anybody falters in performing his duty, in the realisation that we are now all partners and that we want to rebuild India, and that in that adventure we are all equals. The stress should be on duty and not on rights. If that feeling is created in our labour, I am sure, our difficulties will also considerably decrease and the country will also feel proud of this, that the labour and the administration have contributed to reduce as far as possible these mishaps that have really given a very serious blow to the country.

(Time bell rings.)

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

[Shri Akbar Ali Khan.]

Just a few minutes more and then I conclude.

Sir, besides that there are other questions but I would not like to go into all of them because there are other speakers.

Now, take for example the question of general amenities, amenities in the ordinary way; leave aside the big things. Wherever you run a train, let it be efficiently run, efficiently from the point of view of punctuality, from the point of view of cleanliness, from the point of view of the necessary things that ought to be in the compartments. These are matters that should be looked into.

Last time when I was discussing the Budget, I referred to the question of overcrowding. I am happy to note that as a result of increased number of trains—Janata trains and others—that problem has been met but still, as has been said, we have a long way to go.

I would also remind the hon. the Railway Minister that at the time of the last Budget I made a particular reference to a particular fact about which he was pleased to promise that he would look into the matter but a year has passed and I have not heard anything. And the matter is this. When there was financial integration of the old Hyderabad, the sum of Rs. 6 crores which was in our Reserves was taken with a definite understanding that that sum will be spent on the old Hyderabad, meaning thereby that Rs. 4 crores will be spent on Telangana, Rs. 1 crore and forty lakhs on Marathwada and about Rs. 60 lakhs in the Karnatak part of it. Now, our Ramagundam scheme which is essential for the development of industries in that area has not been taken up due to lack of finance.

(Time bell rings.)

May I appeal that this matter be given immediate and earnest consideration

so that we may have that amount. Not only this Ramagundam part of it but the area of Nalgonda where we are having this Nagarjunasagar Project is also undeveloped so far as railways are concerned and I do hope that this matter will receive your urgent attention and before at least the Rajya Sabha disperses I would know definitely the details of your plan in this matter.

I am sure that the comments made in this House will receive your fullest and serious consideration and once again I am happy to congratulate you, your Department and the railway workers for the success of this great national enterprise during the last year. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA (Bihar): Mr. Deputy Chairman, two years of the second Five Year Plan have passed and now we are stepping into the third year and I am very happy that the railways have been doing well and they deserve our warm appreciation. I would like to join my other colleagues who have offered congratulations to the Railway Minister for the all-round improvement in the Railway Administration. I have noted with great delight the various indicators which go to show that the operational efficiency of the Indian Railways are in no way less than most of the railways of other countries.

Sir, in this connection I would like to mention that the net ton miles per wagon day, the net ton miles per goods train hour, wagon loading including the coal loading, all these have recorded improvement this year. I would also like to note with great satisfaction that the indigenous supply of the railway materials, particularly rolling stock, has been very satisfactory and we are now practically becoming self-sufficient in this matter. I would like the Railway Minister to examine the possibilities of introducing second and third shifts in most of the factories under the Railways producing rolling stock. We shall be requiring them not only for our own

country, but there may be a possibility of exporting rolling stock that we may be making to other countries and thereby earning foreign exchange.

Sir, but there are also weaker spots to which I would like to draw your attention which are indicative of the fact that there is room for improvement in the Railway Administration. In this connection I find that the percentage of wagon loaded and moving by block trains has gone down. Now with the steady improvement in traffic, with the large number of wagons now moving from one direction to the other, it should be possible to move a larger number of them in block trains which will facilitate movement and at the same time give a better turnover to our wagons.

Then, I find that the engine miles per day per engine in use and the engine miles per day per engine on line have both been steadily going down since 1954. This also requires special attention on the part of the Railway Administration. Then the unproductive engine mileage has also been deteriorating; I mean to say the unproductive mileage has increased from 22.8 to 22.9. This is a slight increase of course, but this should be arrested. I have also noted that the speed of our passenger trains has been going down. The Railway Board may give the justification that our train load and the quantum of total traffic moved have improved but I do not see what justification there is for unproductive engine miles deteriorating. In this connection I would like the Railway Minister to place on the Table of the House the Technical Co-operation Mission's Report so that we may know what the Technical Co-operation Mission investigation has disclosed so far as operational efficiency of the railways is concerned. These weak spots are a pointer to the fact that there is need for a proper assessment of workload at different levels and also for the norms of management to be fixed.

My hon. friend, Pandit Kunzru, has been pointing out that the Railway Zones are quite big and that they must be reduced in size. The Mudaliar Committee have also reported that this should be brought to 3,000 miles limit. I would like the Railway Minister to examine this question whether a smaller zone or a greater divisionalisation of zones will not give a better grip to the Railway Board on these matters which I have pointed out.

Now, Sir, coming to the financial results of the Railway, here also I find that the experience of the last two years points to the fact that there is lack of discipline so far as the financial control is concerned, because I find that the gross receipts have been more than offset by the increase in the ordinary working expenses for the year 1956-57 and also for the year 1957-58. Although there has been an increase in the traffic receipts, it has been more than offset by the increase in the working expenses. Well, the Railway Administration may say that the increases in the working expenses are due to factors which are beyond their control like the implementation of the Pay Commission report, the higher charges for repair and maintenance and the higher fuel costs and some other items which they have explained in the Explanatory Memorandum. But certainly the extra salary bill for additional staff ought to be more than offset by earnings from additional traffic. In a phase of exceptional developmental expenditure, it is imperative that strict economy should be maintained. A watch should be kept so far as our expenditure is concerned. Unless tangible economies are demonstrated by the Railway Administration it will be very difficult for the Railway Administration to persuade this House or, as a matter of fact, the public at large to accept any increment of the freight structure of the Railways as suggested by the Mudaliar Committee.

Now, Sir, I would like to touch upon another point, tonnage lifted by the Railways. I am glad that the

[Shri Rajendra Pratap Sinha.]

Railways have now been lifting every year greater and greater quantity of traffic. That is to say, from 114 million tons in 1955-56, they are expected to move 133 million tons in 1957-58, and the expectations are that in the year 1958-59 they will be moving 145 million tons. But we have also to remember that, as the Railway Minister has himself said, the extra 12 million tons will be taken up by steel and coal traffic and nothing will be left for the private sector or even for the other public sector products. And the Railways will continue to deny their services for the additional traffic that may be generated as a result of the Second Five Year Plan. Now, you will remember that we have set our target of 162 million tons to be moved by 1960-61. Although the Railways in their Rs. 1,480 crore Plan had estimated that the traffic generated would come to about 180·8 million tons, the Railway Board itself, after a re-assessment of the position, have come to regard it as an under-estimate. They have estimated that the additional traffic requirements will be nearly 70 to 75 million tons. Now, it was very heartening, during the last budget session, to learn from the Railway Minister that they would be allocating another Rs. 200 crores or near about which would enable the railways to reach this figure of 180·8 million tons. Now, certainly the Railway Minister should tell us what they are thinking in terms of the target for the year 1960-61, whether the Planning Commission has backed up their idea of providing more funds for the Railways. As a matter of fact, I have been always pleading that the Railways must receive top priority so far as the allocation of the funds is concerned. As it ends up there should be re-phasing of the Plan priorities and the railways must receive a higher allotment in order that they can meet the demands of the traffic. Now, if only Rs. 200 crores are required, either the Railways must raise resources or the Planning Commission must

allocate more funds from the general exchequer.

Well, Sir, Pandit Kunzru very rightly pointed out that the Railway Administration's delay in accepting the recommendations of the Mudaliar Committee is unpardonable and he rightly gave vent to our anxieties in this connection. We are anxious that the Government should let us know as to how their mind is working so far as the Mudaliar Committee's recommendations are concerned. They have said that they expect a gap of about Rs. 300 crores. Do the Government propose to raise this amount during the balance period of the Plan? It is important that the Railways must have the necessary funds to implement their developmental programme. But they also must bear in mind that there is a limit to which the freight structure could be revised upward. They must strike a balance between the needs of the Railways and the capacity of the traffic to bear. I may warn that if the freight structure is drastically revised upward, it will spell ruin all round because it will affect both the production and the consumption of goods.

I think that on the whole the principles laid down by the Freight Structure Enquiry Committee in the matter of freight should be accepted, that is to say, the principle should be accepted that there should not be—as it exists now—a general surcharge imposed upon all the freight traffic alike, but it should be such that the commodity is in a position to bear the freight. Now, an arbitrary surcharge on all commodities weighs equally upon all commodities moving by the railways and the sooner we give up the surcharge and accept the principle of the Freight Structure Enquiry Committee the better. It will go a long way to help the industries and the agriculture in this country.

There is another point. The 12 million tons of additional traffic that will be carried by the Railways will mostly be low-rated but high priority.

commodities, which will endanger the financial resources of the railways. That is to say, the amount of money by way of goods traffic they could expect, if these 12 million tons were dispersed through very many commodities, will be very much less, because they will be carrying low-rated commodities. Therefore, it is essential that the Government should make up their mind so far as the Mudaliar Committee's recommendations are concerned so that the finances of the railways may not be put in jeopardy.

Now, Sir, I would like to make one point in connection with my today's observations. I would like to invite the attention of the Railway Minister to the report of the Rail-Sea Co-ordination Committee. I would like to know what is the decision of the Government in connection with the recommendations of this Committee. The Committee has envisaged that the coastal shipping should get additional 8.4 lakh tons of traffic—6 lakh tons from east to west and 2.4 lakh tons from west to east. Now, they have also suggested that it is possible that the 6 lakh tons of traffic requirement of coastal shipping from east to west could be given to them from the coal traffic alone. So far as the traffic from west to east is concerned this could be given in respect of salt, cement, bitumen and petroleum products. They have made a positive recommendation that the railways should adopt a policy of diversion of this traffic to the shipping companies from east to west and west to east. Now, the railways must make up their mind to see that this extra 8.4 lakh tons of traffic is made available to coastal shipping which will not only relieve the railways of the traffic but will give the coastal shipping a good share of the traffic and will rehabilitate them financially, because we all know that unless we give them ample traffic and assistance the coastal shipping companies are bound to suffer. In all other countries we find that the coastal shipping has been encouraged by giving such diversion of traffic from the railways to the coastal shipping.

Our outlook in the matter of transport policy should be for the economy of the nation and not for a section thereof.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Jagjivan Ram will make a statement.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER REGARDING ACCIDENT AT SONARPUR STATION ON THE SEALDAH DIVISION OF THE EASTERN RAILWAY.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM): Sir, I very much regret to inform the House about an accident which occurred at Sonarpur station on the Sealdah Division of the Eastern Railway this morning.

While S. 241 Up Canning to Calcutta local train was moving out from the branch platform line at Sonarpur station across the Down main line, S.370 Down local train which was approaching from Calcutta collided with the fourth bogie coach of S.241 Up at 6 a.m.

As a result of this accident 5 passengers were killed, 10 received grievous and 37 minor injuries. 17 passengers with minor injuries were treated locally and discharged. The injured requiring hospital attention have been removed to the N.R. Sarkar Hospital and the B.R. Singh Railway Hospital at Sealdah. 27 have been admitted into the former and 3 into the latter.

The General Manager is making immediate arrangements to make some *ex-gratia* payments to the persons or the families of those involved in this accident.

It is difficult, at this stage, for me to say anything about the cause of this accident which will be fully enquired into by the Government Inspector of Railways.