

COUNCIL OF STATES*Thursday, 23th May 1952*

The Council met at four of the clock, MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.
4 p.m.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO SHRI SARDAR SINGH

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have to inform hon. Members that I have received the following letter from Shri Sardar Singh :

"As I am abroad at present I shall not be able to return to India in time to attend the present session of the Council. I request for grant of leave of absence from the meetings of the Council under Article 101 (4) of the Constitution."

Is it the pleasure of the Council that permission be granted to Shri Sardar Singh for remaining absent from all the meetings of the Council during this session ?

Leave was granted.

**THE BUDGET (RAILWAYS), 1952-53—
GENERAL DISCUSSION**

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shrimati Mona Hensman.

SHRIMATI MONA HENSMAN (Madras) : Mr. Chairman, I must thank you for giving me this opportunity of speaking on the Railway Budget, but I must confess that it would have been better if one or two hon. Members, far more important than myself, could have been allowed to speak first, so that I could have got the opportunity of hearing what somebody else has had to say.

I will, however, proceed without further ado to the matter in hand, and I therefore wish to deal with the material that has been circulated to us. Railways, Mr. Chairman, are a fascinating subject, but coal, steel, **11CSD**

iron, rails, wagons and locomotives cannot be produced from nothing, and we must seek the source whence Government gets the money for such an undertaking. The gross earnings of all Railways for 1950-51 has been 264-61 crores and the number of passengers carried in the same year— 1307-7 millions. This is significant, Sir, for it translates steel, wood, sleepers, locomotives and coaches into human equivalents. We must congratulate the Government, Sir, on securing the services of an upright gentleman, like the Minister for Railways, after the transfer to another portfolio of his predecessor, whose sagacity and wisdom, vision and commonsense has stabilised our railway system today.

SHRI J. S. BISHT (Uttar Pradesh) : Sir, we on this side of the House are quite unable to hear the hon. Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Will she kindly speak through the mike ?

SHRIMATI MONA HENSMAN : (Through the mike). I was saying, Sir, that since money has to be produced for Railways, it has to come from the public and from the State, or from the reserves of the Central Government, and the public usually contributes its share in the form of a floating loan. This runs the railway system, and there is also a Development Fund. Now, Sir, four per cent, is given back in the form of repayment and half per cent, subsidy goes to the public through the General Budget and is used for the Development Fund. If you will excuse me, I will quote from this blue booklet called the 'Indian Railways'—pages 12 and 13— and tell you exactly what that Development Fund is. This revenue of railway finance meets the cost of all passenger amenity works, whether additions or replacements, the cost of labour welfare works, the excess over three lakhs in the cost of each unremunerative project, and the cost of construction of new lines, which are necessary but unremunerative. Sir, 'unremunerative' is also shown in the note as denoting 'not less than 4*25 per cent.