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## Clouds over West Asia

TROUBLE in west Asia is taking a serious turn. The recent tension between Syria and Turkey, as an incidental sequel to the struggle for power between Russia and the Western Powers, is a reminder however that the "cold war" has returned to the point from where it started. It began with the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine. Mr Truman declared America's decision to safeguard Turkey's frontiers. That was even before NATO. Turkey has again emerged as a local point in the "cold war". What is more intriguing is that the Syrian-Turkish tension has provoked the American State Department to emphasise the close relation, and sequence, between the Truman Doctrine and the Eisenhower Doctrine. Europe still continues to suffer from the "cold war". Germany remains divided. In his recent peace offer, Mr Khrushchev blames the Western Powers for the perpetuation of the German problem. But, it is clear from M Khrushchev's interview with the Chief Washington Correspondent of New York Times that the "cold war" has now shifted to west Asia.

In this Interview with Mr James Reston, M Khrushchev has accused America of inciting Turkey against Syria. Moscow's warning to Turkey was coupled with a reminder to Washington that hostilities once begun would spread. Washington has reacted to Moscow's reported charges against America and threats to Turkey by warning Moscow that "despite distances, he (M Khrushchev) should be under no illusion that the United States, Turkey's friend and ally, takes lightly its obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty, or is not determined to carry out the national policy expressed in the joint Congressional resolution on the Middle East (Eisenhower Doctrine)". M Khrushchev was blunt in his accusation that Mr Dulles had instructed Mr Henderson to incite Turkey against Syria after the latter's manouevres to create hostility between Syria and her Arab neighbours had failed. These charges have been denied by the American State Department, though the inter-relation between the Truman Doctrine and the Eisenhower Doctrine has been duly stressed.

Despite denials by the American State Department, the massing of Turkish troops on the Syrian borders. Syria's official protest against such deployment of Turkish troops and the despatch of Egyptian forces and Army officers to Syria underline the tension that is developing in and around Syria. Swift-moving events would seem to lend weight to suspicions about America's designs, if not to substantiate M Khrushchev's charges against Mr Dulles and his State Department. Though the Russian offer of large credits for Syria's economic development had an initial unfavourable effect on the latter's neighbours, the American air lift of guns to Jordan intended for use against alleged Communism in Syria had a boomerang effect on the Arab World. Supply of American war equipment to Jordan was sought to be justified on the ground that Syria's neighbours had expressed "deep concern" that Syria might fall a victim to International Communism. When Damascus let it be known that it would send diplomatic Notes to neighbouring Arab countries about their reported "concern" over Syria, they promptly denied ever expressing any such concern. And now even Damascus has fallen in line with the rest of the Arab States by warning Turkey against any aggression against Syria.

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Washington made no secret of its bewilderment at the hostile statements made by the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Iraq in the United Nations against Western designs to interfere in the internal affairs of Syria, or of any other Arab State. Their forthright denials of any Communist subversion or infiltration in Syria mid their combined vocal support to Arab solidarity and nationalism caused deep embarrassment to Washington. It soon became evident that America's manoeuvres to isolate Egypt and Syria from the other Arab States had, after their initial success, received a major setback. Not only Egypt and Syria but other Arab States became less enthusiastic about the Eisenhower Doctrine. Washington made the blunder of supporting the Doctrine by the movement of the Sixth Fleet to Beirut in April last and by the dramatic and costly air lift to Jordan of war equipment. This show of military might may or may not have frightened some Arab States,

but it has been successfully exploited by Cairo and Damascus as proof of America's "imperialist" designs. As America's diplomatic defeat became apparent, Washington seemed to turn to Ankara. Moscow has openly made such allegations. Despite denials by the American State Department, the fast growing tension in the relations between Turkey and Syria and the Arab States' reaction to the deployment of Turkish troops on the Syrian border reflect the Arab World's tacit endorsement of Russian charges.

Recent developments in west Asia have a lesson for America and the Western Powers. Washington's main mistake is to base its policy to west Asia on a crusade against Communism. Neither Egypt, nor Syria, nor any of the other Arab States is Communist, though Egypt and Syria look to Russia for military and economic help. Unlike America and the Western Powers, Russia exploits the developing sense of nationalism in Arab States. Some of them may or may not be pro-

Russian, but all are fervently nationalist in their outlook. It is the difference in approach that makes the Arab World look to Russia for inspiration and friendship while they remain suspicious of the "intentions of America and her Western allies. Besides, to the Arabs, Russia is the friend against Israel, while the Western Powers are regarded by Arab States as friends of Israel. It would be evident that the Western policy that should pay rich dividends is to let west Asia alone. Arab neutralism cannot be as harmful to the Western Powers as the latter's obstinate refusal to respect the sense of nationalism in west Asia. A policy of non-interference must necessarily start with an agreed ban on supply of arms to west Asia. Russia has more than once proposed such an agreement by both sides. Is it too much to hope that if nothing else, at least the undisputed Russian achievements in science and in technology will provoke a re-appraisal of the Western policy to West Asia?

## *The Wheels May Stop*

IT is unfortunate that the trade union movement in this country has not developed on proper lines because of a number of reasons, the most important being the inability of the working classes to provide a leadership which sprang from their own ranks. This factor alone has been responsible for throwing the control of the trade unions in the hands of the politicians. And politicians have tended very often to use trade unions in pursuing their political objectives, with the result that trade unions have not always acted in the interests of the workers they claim to represent

Since the rift and this rift was due primarily to the political differences of the contending leaderships took place in the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen and the Guruswamy group drifted away by forming a separate union of its own, it had been expected that some trial of strength between the two unions would take place. Naturally the challenge for a bout had to come from the group whose credentials were not yet properly recognised.

Although the National Council of Action of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation (this is how the

Guruswamy group has lately christened itself) has ostensibly decided to serve a notice of strike in order to secure fulfilment of demands like neutralisation of the high cost of living, and revision of the basic scales of pay and payment of interim relief, it is an open set-ret that the basic cause of this decision to go on strike is different. Who does not know that already a Pay Commission is in session just with a view to considering the question of compensating Government employees (including Railwaymen and employees of the Post and Telegraph department) for the rise in the cost of living" and also to recommending, if deemed necessary, the payment of interim relief? Whatever the Pay Commission awards by way of cost of living compensation, whether it is in the form of a separate additional allowance or in the form of a revision of basic scales of pay and also by way of interim relief, the railwaymen will benefit fully from them. The leadership of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation knows this as well as any one else. And in spite of this, the A I R F decides to go on strike, the reason must necessarily be sought elsewhere than in the demands empha-

sised in public. No one will accept seriously the part of the A I R F statement that claims that this action of theirs is intended 'to safeguard the living standards of the working class obtained through years of struggle'.

As for the question of giving official recognition to the A I R F as a representative union of railwaymen one cannot but agree with the Railway Minister that it is in the interests of the railwaymen themselves to have only one union to represent them in all their negotiations with the authorities. By having two or even more unions, the railwayman stand ultimately to lose because no one union can claim to speak with full authority and the other side on the bargaining counter gets a chance to play one union against the other. It was in recognition of the force of this argument that the two unions existing earlier had been dissolved and replaced by the N F I R. Frankly, it does not speak well of the group that got control of the N F I R that such conditions were not created as would keep the minority group or groups within the organization. The minority group, in this case, sets claim to a very substantial