

following among the railwaymen. By forcing it out of the organisation, the ruling group in the N F I R has served only to reduce the representative character of the union.

The question that confronts the Government right now is not the academic one, i.e. whether there should be one or more than one union of railwaymen. The question is one of recognising the existing position wherein the railwaymen are split into two unions, each with substantial membership and therefore possessed with comfortable negative powers. While attempts must continue to be made to persuade the leaders of the two unions to come together and weld themselves into one organisation, it would be most unfortunate if only on the score of the Government's refusal to recognise the A I R F, the union is forced to resort to strike. Granting that such a strike will not affect the entire railway system but would affect only some of the regions, it cannot be denied that the threatened strike is likely to cause a considerable slowing down of the railway system and in some regions it might mean a virtual stoppage of the railways. This surely will have serious repercussions on the rest of our economy.

One thing is definite that the slowing down of the railways would affect adversely the execution of the Plan and also current industrial production. And such a possibility as this cannot be viewed with equanimity. It calls for, on the other hand, maximum possible effort to resolve the causes of the present conflict. However much the Government might dislike the existence of multiple unions and that too in perhaps the most important of the public utilities, the facts of the situation can be ignored only at the country's cost.

This should not be misunderstood as advice to the authorities to surrender to threats; for in spite of all efforts made so far, it has not been possible to restore unity, it is only proper that the right of representation should not be accorded indefinitely to only one of the unions. To do so places the onus of compromise entirely on the union that is not recognised, whereas the one that basks in the sun of official recognition is encouraged to adopt an attitude of indifference to compromise. That certainly is not the way unity could be restored.

Muslim League's Come-Back

SEVEN days is not a very long period for finding out a Prime Minister. France has been without a Prime Minister for weeks on end. Right now a Prime Ministership is going a-begging in that country. It is not yet certain that M Pinay who has accepted the President's invitation to try to form a Cabinet will succeed in obtaining the Parliament's confidence vote. So what if it took General Mirza a week to pick on Mr Chundrigar to succeed Mr Suhrawardy?

Mr Chundrigar is not a stranger to India. He was a great favourite of Mr Jinnah and was therefore included in the Viceroy's Executive Council immediately before the partition as a Muslim League representative. After the formation of Pakistan, he has held a number of important posts, ministerial, gubernatorial as well as ambassadorial. But he never forsook his membership of Muslim League while so many other colleagues of his did. This steadfast loyalty of his has brought him to the fore of the party and now of the country. And in negotiating his way to the Prime Ministership, he has proved the better of others who are joining him in coalition. The Muslim League is numerically much weaker than the Republican Party, and still the latter has given in on all important points, whether it is Prime Ministership, the question of joint electorates or the dismemberment of West Pakistan.

As for foreign policy, there never was a dispute between the Muslim League and the Republican Party. Both the parties are committed to a policy of military alliances. The League started the policy and the Republicans have assiduously been following it. On Kashmir, the Muslim Leaguers will probably be more active than the Republicans. But they could not perhaps find a better man than Noon to keep the Kashmir campaign alive. Noon has all the fight in him and just does not bother about the means he adopts. Therefore, we in India should not expect any gesture of friendliness from the new Government of Pakistan. In fact it is quite likely that the present campaign of vilification of India and sabotage in Kashmir may be further intensified. The redeeming aspect of the new Government in Pakistan is that its leader has a reputation for

balance and sobriety and he may not commit the blunders of Suhrawardy the blunders which have alienated most of the Arab World from Pakistan. But there is no prospect of an easing of tension on Kashmir. Also, India has to be more watchful of the interests of the minorities in East Pakistan, because it is the Muslim League which has done its maximum in the past to make things hot for the minorities, and who knows that now with power again in their hands the Muslim League may not play the same game, if not with the direct purpose of driving the minority community out of Pakistan, with that of wresting power from the Awami League in East Pakistan? And they certainly are past masters in this game a game they have been playing for decades on end.



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