

## SOUTHERN RAILWAY LABOUR UNION

**\*146. Shri Nambiar:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government have so far taken to recognise the Southern Railway Labour Union whose recognition was withdrawn in 1949;

(b) whether it is a fact that a large number of Railwaymen have submitted mass petitions to the Railway Minister for grant of recognition to the above Labour Union;

(c) if so, what action has been taken on the above petitions;

(d) whether the Railway Board has issued directions for the recognition of such labour organisations as have the maximum support of the employees;

(e) if so, whether a ballot of the staff is taken to ascertain the representative character of the respective organisations;

(f) whether Government are prepared to state what Labour Organisations on the Southern Railway System are recognised at present with the reasons for grant of such recognition;

(g) whether Government have received complaints of discrimination shown in the grant of recognition to labour organisations on the Southern Railway; and

(h) if so, what action has been taken on such complaints?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan):** (a) Government have not taken a decision as regards the recognition of the Southern Railway Labour Union.

(b) A number of petitions bearing a large number of signatures have been forwarded by the hon. Member himself.

(c) No action has been taken as Government do not at present propose to consider the recognition of unions other than those formed in consequence of regrouping by amalgamation with, or of one or more unions which are already recognised, keeping in mind the decision to deal at the Ministry level with only the All India Railwaymen's Federation and the Indian National Railway Workers' Federation.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) The hon. Member is referred to the reply given on 23rd May, 1952 to part (b) of his starred question No. 128. Government have no information regarding the reasons for the grant of recognition to each railway union.

(g) Yes, from the Southern Railway Labour Union.

(h) This complaint was taken into account before Government reached a decision on the subject.

**Shri Nambiar:** May I know whether the petitions given by the railway workers are signed by the workers or by the hon. Member; or is it that they were presented by the hon. Member here?

**Shri Alagesan:** The petitions were presented by the hon. Member.

**Shri Nambiar:** What was the number of the signatories? Is it something like 15,000 or 20,000?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Member knows the petition he presented. If it is a question of propaganda or a question of information to the House, there are other ways of doing so. I would only make this request of hon. Members. Every day I am able to get through only twelve or thirteen questions out of 29 or 30. In other Parliaments they get through thirty or forty. Therefore, if an hon. Member who presented a petition knows that there are 15,000 signatories, there are other ways of informing the House outside. Wherever an hon. Member has got information, I would request him not to make it appear that he wants the information. He knows it.

**Shri Nambiar:** But from the answer it looked as if the hon. Member petitioned.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** We did not understand it that way.

**Shri Nambiar:** I want to know whether the policy of the Railways is to recognize unions on an all-India basis, that is Central Federations, or on each Railway.

**Shri Alagesan:** I shall repeat my answer to part (c).

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** It has already been given. The hon. Minister is considering only those applications from persons who wanted to re-start or amalgamate unions as a consequence of regrouping, not those unions for which recognition was refused or withdrawn long ago. That is a matter still under consideration.

**Shri H. N. Shastri:** Have Government tried to ascertain if any of the persons who are said to have signed the so-called mass petition are actually members of the union concerned?

**Shri Alagesan:** That is a very difficult job to do. It contained a large number of signatures. We have no means of finding out whether those signatures are of the members of the union.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** When it is said that the hon. Member presented a representation with a number of signatures, we need not go into that matter. We are not passing or delivering a judgment whether those signatures are right or wrong.

**Shri H. N. Shastri:** It is not a question of authenticity. What I want to know is if the persons who have signed the said petition are actually members of the Union or whether they are not members of the Union?

**Shri Alagesan:** We have no means to find it out.

**Shri Nambiar:** Will the decision of the Government that only Central organisations will be recognised prejudice the decision of recognition of the Labour Union?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** It does not. Each will be decided on its own merits.

**Shri K. K. Basu:** May I know whether Government has any intention to recognise any Unions other than this Union?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** It is a matter of general policy. It does not arise out of this. This arises only with respect to the South Indian Railway Labour Union with respect to which the Minister has already given answers.

**Shri Raghavaiah:** Is it a question of policy?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** No question of policy.

#### STAFF TRIBUNAL

\*147. **Shri Nambiar:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have appointed a Staff Tribunal to go into the disputes between the Railway Board and the Railwaymen;

(b) if so, who are the personnel of the Tribunal and the issues referred to the Tribunal;

(c) whether Government have received complaints about the manner in which the Tribunal has been constituted;

(d) if so, what action has been taken on such complaints; and

(e) whether Government have given representation to organised labour other than those affiliated to the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and the I.N.R.W.F. in the Tribunal?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan):** (a), (b) and (e). Though Government have agreed to the setting up of an *ad hoc* Tribunal, its composition and the subjects for reference have yet to be finalised.

(c) Yes, one from the Southern Railway Labour Union.

(d) No action was taken, as it is our policy to deal formally only with recognised unions.

**Shri Nambiar:** May I know whether it is a fact that a large number of railwaymen who do not come under these recognised unions are to be given the benefit or representation in this Tribunal or not?

**Shri Alagesan:** As I said, the composition and the terms of reference of the Tribunal are still under consideration. No representation will be given to people who do not come under these two.

**Shri Nambiar:** What is the means whereby these railwaymen who do not come under these two recognised (so-called) Unions do get their representation?

**Shri Alagesan:** They may put their case before the Tribunal. They will not have any representation.

**Shri Nambiar:** Why they will not have any representation?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** We are not arguing. It cannot be asked.

**Shri Raghavaiah:** Is it the policy of the Government to compel this worker or that worker in the railway to become a member in one or the other Union?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** No question of policy. The Trade Union Act is there. It will be in the interests of the workers themselves to organise themselves on trade union basis. That is what they have done.

**Shri Nambiar:** For the workers who organised themselves in the Trade-