Fabian International Bureau

THE NEW INDIA

COLIN JACKSON

FABIAN TRACT 306

TWO SHILLINGS
COLIN JACKSON is a journalist and broadcaster.

FABIAN TRACT 306

THE FABIAN SOCIETY,
11, Dartmouth Street, S.W.1.

Note.—This pamphlet, like all publications of the FABIAN SOCIETY, represents not the collective view of the Society but only the view of the individual who prepared it. The responsibility of the Society is limited to approving the publications which it issues as worthy of consideration within the Labour Movement.

February, 1957
THE NEW INDIA

COLIN JACKSON

1. INTRODUCTION

Political changes in Asia in the last ten years have affected a greater area and more people than changes in any comparable period of history. The lives of over a thousand million people have been affected.

Briefly, the story of political events in Asia since World War II has been concerned with the interaction of four factors. First, there has been the collapse of colonialism in India, Indonesia and most of South East Asia. This debacle has been in the face of the second factor, the spirit of assertive nationalism sweeping the continent. But this simple conquest of power has been complicated by two new forms of imperialism, each in itself of immense importance. Communism as an international, disciplined creed and power group, emerged from obscurity before World War II and has, similarly, become a vital force throughout Asia today. United States influence in Asia was negligible before World War II except perhaps in China and the Phillipines. Today the ‘anti Red’ designs and economic urges of the United States have pushed American policy and influence into every corner of Asia.

It was against this rapidly changing background that India achieved her independence: and amid a hectic and confused mixture of pressures the government has tried to build a stable regime and advance the welfare of its people. If there have been mistakes and compromises, India may well point to the chaotic condition of Asia in which her effort has had to be made.

Peaceful Transfer of Power

Yet India has had one inestimable advantage over other emerging independent nations in Asia. Freedom came to her peacefully. Unlike the leaders of Indo-China and Indonesia, China or even Burma, the Indian leaders have not had to build against a background of fighting, bloodshed, civil war and hatred. There were admittedly many thousands killed at the time of Partition. But for all its horror this was, in the process of events, the short, sharp surgeon’s knife. Since 1948 India has enjoyed remarkable internal stability. Law and order are more secure than anywhere else in Asia.

Then again, in Indo-China the abdicating colonial power withdrew its financial and political machinery thereby wrecking the new State; and many Dutch stayed in Indonesia merely to sabotage the new nation. But in
India, in an event unique in history, Britain surrendered as master to remain as partner: the former colonial power stayed, but in a new role. The country’s political and economic structure was thus saved from sudden disruption. India has been fortunate in being able to avoid the angry choice between Communism and Capitalism that Vietnam had thrust upon it as the colonial power moved out.

Indeed, the history of India since Independence has been largely the story of the successful attempt to avoid the excesses that the pressure of events have produced in Asia in the last ten years. India has become free, but remains a Commonwealth friend of her former master, Britain; India has taken aid from America and used American technicians, yet is a friend of Russia and China; India has kept to the middle of the road. Her achievement in taking this course represents one of the most significant facts of this century.

2. POLITICS IN INDIA

EARLY in 1952 India held her first nation-wide elections as a free country. Universal suffrage was the rule and women voted in large numbers. The poll of 60 per cent of the adults in a nation of 360 millions made this the biggest democratic election in all history.

The electoral contest passed off very peacefully: it confirmed the status of India as an adult democracy. The result gave to the Congress Party of India a huge majority in their Parliament, Lok Sabha. Congress captured 362 seats as opposed to the Communists 23 and the Socialists 12. In individual votes the Congress triumph was not quite so impressive. It secured 47,528,011 votes, or 44.85 per cent of the total. The Socialist party polled 11,126,344 votes (10.5%), but since the election they have joined up with another party, the K.M.P.P. (Left Wing Dissident Congressmen), whose votes amounted to 6,158,782 (5.8%). The Communists polled 4,712,009 (4.45%). The remaining votes went to small parties. Not only did Congress capture power at the centre, but it won also all the State legislatures.

Since 1952 Congress has remained firmly in office. Now it faces the challenge of the next elections in March, 1957. Careful plans are being made for what could be a decisive contest in Indian political history.

Support for Congress

The Congress Party in India is more like the Democratic Party in the United States than either the Labour or Conservative parties in Britain. It is a loose alliance of interests rather than a compact, politically integrated force. Following the Avadi Conference in 1955, Congress now claims to be a party dedicated to the building of a Socialist pattern in India. A Congress Government has made it clear that it intends heavy industry to be developed under State control. The Central Bank and Insurance have been nationalised, and the whole basis of India’s second Five Year Plan is one of Government controlled development. But this Socialist pattern of develop-
ment probably corresponds more to the ideas and hopes of Nehru, than to
the actual approach of its rank and file members.

Who then support the Congress Party?
First, there is the mass of the peasant population of India whose innate
conservatism puts them behind what is the traditional party for India. The Congress party to them is independent India, for in the years before
1947 all who wanted India’s freedom had worked, at some time or other, in Congress. And so, except in extreme economic distress or because of an
exceptionally independent frame of mind, the Indian peasant until now has
naturally voted for Congress. In fact, a great bulk of the Congress vote
really represents nationalism mixed with gratitude and admiration for people
like Nehru and Gandhi. One of the Congress slogans in the 1952 election
was ‘A vote for Congress is a vote for Gandhi’. This source of strength
for the Congress Party will, of course, get weaker as memories of the fight
for independence and of Mahatma Gandhi fade.

The Congress party depends for much of its finance upon rich indus-
trialists and rural landowners. Great financial figures such as Birla have
always supplied vast sums to the party chest. Birla was an intimate of
Gandhi and Patel, though less so of Nehru. The rich cotton merchants
of Bombay and steel firms like Tata are a source of wealth that Socialists
or Communists cannot possibly equal.

The rural landowners who support Congress are not necessarily vast
estate owners. They are often men of moderate holdings, who are
traditional leaders in their own rural community. And the Indian agri-
cultural population is still sufficiently feudal-minded to follow their lead.
The small landowner in return for his devotion to Congress, becomes either
an elected representative in the State or National Legislature or a party
leader. However, as India wakes up and shakes off the lethargy of its
stifling traditional life, the peasant is gradually becoming a person in his
own right. Another pillar of Congress strength is thereby weakened.

A very significant pointer to Congress strength lies in the Universities,
where it does not enjoy the dominating position that it has achieved in, for
instance, the rural areas of Northern India. At Universities like Delhi,
Madras and Annamalai, the Congress party has considerable support among
the young future leaders of India. But in large industrial areas such as
Bombay and Calcutta, the loyalty of the youth leans heavily toward the
Socialist and Communist parties.

Who are the Leaders?
Now with the elections approaching, Congress is attempting to weld its
scattered and often apathetic followers into a homogeneous, campaigning
force. Dhebar, who took over the Presidency of Congress after Nehru
stepped down, is a bustling, energetic organiser who also has a touch of
the mystic gentleness that is so often part of the character of an Indian
politician. In the Andhra state elections Dhebar took charge of a dispirited
and corrupt Congress organisation and forged it into a victory team. There
are those who say that the Congress party has lost much of its impetus.
But Dhebar’s conduct of the Andhra election shows what may still be expected of Congress all over India in the General Election.

Dhebar has been attacking the tendency for party leaders to move away from the simple dhoti and Congress-cap approach to politics. Ministers, he has said, put a barrier between themselves and their supporters. Official residences, large American cars, and state banquets are signs that the Congress party leaders could lose touch with the mass of the people who can decide their fate in the Elections in 1957. As President of the Party, Dhebar has tried by example to pioneer the way back to simplicity. For all the drawbacks and limitations of his policy, he has succeeded in improving the organisation and fighting effectiveness of his party. Congress is not slowly swinging down into corruption and decay as the Kuomintung did in China. Inevitably, a party that has been in office with a large majority for so long, must develop weaknesses. But these are not yet serious enough in Congress to impair greatly its chances of re-election in 1957.

Nehru’s Unchallenged Prestige

Nehru has been Prime Minister of India since Independence in 1947. His term of office has spanned ten hectic, greatly challenging years for India. He has led the country through the perils of partition and the dangerous conflicts with Pakistan and Portugal. He led at the moment of Gandhi’s death and in the dark, starving years of the early 1950s, and during the gap in India’s life after the death of Sardar Patel. Yet after all these trials and dangers, Nehru is the unchallenged, joyfully accepted leader of the country. The mass of the Indian electorate will vote for Congress simply because it is the party of ‘Panditji’. This affection for Nehru is quite unlike that felt, for instance, for Mao Tse Tung in China with a controlled press and a disciplined people. In the United States there is hero worship for Eisenhower but, despite all the ballyhoo, a far larger proportion criticise him than in India criticise Nehru. Any report stressing this love for Nehru merely records the key factor in India’s present political position and a determining force in the rest of India’s story this century.

It is easier to state Nehru’s unchallenged hold on India’s affection than to explain and analyse it. But one way is to start with a weakness of Nehru’s. He is not a consistent, controlled administrator. He is not a brilliant desk man as, for instance, Earl Attlee was in Britain. He has too much of the rebel in his blood. He grew up a passionate itinerant enemy of the supreme embodiment of detached administration—the British Raj. He came to maturity, was pushed up to power from amongst a mass of applauding, gentle, slightly chaotic Indian rebels.

Now Nehru, although India’s Prime Minister and a world leader, never loses a chance to get away from his desk. He always seizes any excuse to get back to the Indian people in the fields and the masses in crowded squares.

Many leaders who have climbed in might and power have shut themselves off from the people. Stalin never met the Russian people for a decade; Chiang Kai Chek attended only set worship scenes; Mao Tse Tung
in his old age has left the people behind. But any diary of Nehru's activities shows a staggering, time-consuming, inexhaustible itinerary of travelling and speech making across the length and breadth of India.

**Keeping in Touch**

Nehru's tours take him for three or four days away from the big towns. He goes to the villages, to the community development schemes, to the founding of new dams. Each village gets a brief stop whilst the Prime Minister plunges into the crowd like a diver into the sea. Eisenhower's secret service men would resign on the spot if they had to put up with Nehru's antics. He is piled high with garlands, he is patted and stroked and petitions are thrust into his hands. In Amritsar he had to jump up a lamp post to escape his consuming admirers. In Delhi I saw a huge Sikh crush him in a painful embrace. Nehru often gets angry. He will kick out if people try to kiss his feet: he beats at electricians' heads if the loud-speakers fail: he will flail an adoring crowd with words if they fail to keep quiet or become bored with his details of planning. Yet in all this chaos—the delay of time tables, the receptions that go wrong—there lies the magic alchemy of Nehru's hold on the Indian people. For all his eminence, his Western thoughts, his communion with world leaders, Nehru has remained with the Indian crowd. And from them he draws his strength. As Nehru himself once said, in the appealing intimacy that binds him to Indians of all ages and persuasions, 'I want to share a secret with you, that I have been in love, in love for a long time past, and that love grows greater and greater—with the people of India.'

The supreme achievement of Nehru, not only for his party but for India, is that he has used his hold on the Indian people not for his own glorification, or as a shield to protect a party that has lost touch with the nation. I remember that in 1949 cynics asked, was Nehru going to be the Chiang Kai Chek of India? Today no one asks that question, though some Americans bracket him with Mao Tse Tung! Nehru, a Congressman, has always been a Socialist. As a leader of Congress he has not settled down to a negative conservatism with wealthy businessmen and narrow-minded mystics. He has harried and chivvied his party along the road to democratic socialism and a modern, secular outlook on life.

**Nehru's Policy**

In his speeches on affairs in India a few themes occur with determined regularity. He has attacked time and time again the twin evils of casteism and provincialism, with its insistence on linguistic provinces. The caste system has been declared illegal under Nehru's Government. But the Brahmins and the Untouchables are still there and in the South, particularly, caste is still all prevailing and stultifies the easy movement of people required in a democratic system. So Nehru, in mixing with Untouchables and shunning the more orthodox Brahmins, has tried to break this great drag of history on India.

In 1956, the riots in Bombay and Ahmedabad against the proposed
non-linguistic province of Bombay, undoubtedly deeply disturbed the Indian Prime Minister. Congress Government has already made many concessions to the idea of each separate language group having separate administrations. Andhra, a province, was an example of this. But Nehru knows that if purely linguistic loyalties were to triumph, India would fragment into a series of helpless and hostile provincial administrations. So he has fought harder than any leader against the fissiparous, debilitating result of a too fanatical insistence on linguistic provinces. And he has defended the English language as an antidote to this. As he said in Amritsar at the Congress Conference in 1956, 'English is just as much an Indian language as any of the other tongues within India. If English is given up the country might just as well give up its most important cause of all, the second five year plan.'

'The Plan' is the most insistent of the themes that Nehru rams home. In reports of a dozen speeches in a day throughout any tour of India, the reader will find this constant theme—the Indian Second Five Year Plan must work, it must succeed. India, he insists time and time again, must pull itself up by its own bootstraps and do it fast. Again, Nehru recently said that industrialisation by democratic processes took the West many decades to achieve. Russia in a totalitarian fashion rushed their people through in a headlong dictated process. 'We want to hurry the democratic way,' he explained. 'We have parliamentary democracy, elected municipalities, village councils, but we must hurry. Therefore it is important for the whole world that our country should succeed in this democratic way.'

After Nehru, who?

In all this rush and hurry and insistence it is possible almost to sense a feeling in Nehru that the broad pattern for a modern socialist democracy in India must be set before he dies.

At the moment the Indian Prime Minister seems in good health. In ten years he has hardly missed a day of gruelling work, beginning at six and ending after midnight; he has the approach and the outlook of a young man. This, the perpetual youth of Nehru, his restless energy, is one of the qualities that most endears him to the Indian people. And, in a regime of duties that leave the Indian Prime Minister with almost no time for private life, the only thing that can throw everything out of gear are his grandchildren, or any children he may meet. It is significant that Nehru's birthday, November 14th, is Children's Day in India. On this date his home is given over to one vast, disorganised children's party for himself and his youthful guests.

Yet fit and youthful in mind as Mr. Nehru is at sixty-seven, inevitably the question recurs with relentless, growing insistence—afer Nehru, who? Who can take over the Congress Party when Nehru retires or dies? And this question has an added urgency when another weakness of Nehru's is considered—his reluctance to delegate power. Today he is Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Chairman of the Planning Board, and Head of India's Atomic Energy Authority.

No clear favourite for the succession emerges. Moraji Desai, Chief
Minister of Bombay, is acknowledged as one of India's most skilled administrators. He might push the Five Year Plan ahead with greater ability than Mr. Nehru. He is known for his personal honesty and absolute political integrity. Yet he has none of the personal fire and appeal of Nehru, and outside his own state and the Congress party machinery he is not well known.

Other figures mentioned as successor to Nehru in the Congress party are Pandit Pant, Home Minister, and Dr. C. P. Roy, Chief Minister of Bengal. Yet both these Congressmen are elderly, not in good health and lack inspiration. Krishna Menon is a life long friend of Nehru's. He has a world reputation. But he is not a Congressman by upbringing and he is too westernised for the rank and file of Congress members. After his successes in Andhra, Dhebar has also been entered in the succession stakes. But it is known that, for all their merits, Nehru looks on none of these candidates with favour.

Nehru is in no hurry to name his heir apparent. He enjoys authority; he dislikes intrigue. Yet in 1953 he did attempt to bring in a possible successor. In the spring of that year he held talks with Jai Prakash Narayain, the leader of the Praja Socialist Party, with a view to him joining the Cabinet. The talks broke down, but there is no doubt that Jai Prakash fits most closely Nehru's own ideal of the next Prime Minister.

Jai Prakash's background is similar to Nehru's. He had a western education, blended with a long record of fighting for India's independence. Like Nehru he is a Socialist. His speeches are full of attacks against Zamindaris, poverty and privilege. In the over twenty years that he has been in Indian public life he has, next to Nehru, become India's most popular speaker. For the few hundred that might listen to Mr. Desai, many thousands would attend a speech by Jai Prakash. He has that peculiar mixture of gentleness and dynamic determination to reform and to progress that makes up the magic of Nehru. But Jai Prakash is not available—at any rate not at the moment. He is a devoted and important follower of the Bhoomi movement. With Vinoba Bhave he is fighting for this peculiarly Indian type of land reform. And even more than Nehru he is not a man to be chained to the office, to build slowly through administrative effort. The way in which he left his party to follow Bhave trudging the lanes of India shows a wayward, mystic streak.

So at this crucial stage in the history of democratic India the question of who will succeed Nehru in leading the country remains unanswered.

The Socialists

India is denied debate on succession such as Britain enjoys: not only on who will succeed the leader of the party, but also on which party will win the Election. For no one in India expects Congress to lose. Its majority will probably be reduced, but neither Socialist nor Communist opposition can hope to capture power at the polls in 1957.

The Socialists polled the second largest number of votes in 1952. Since then they have expanded and contracted, had mergers and splits. Soon after
the elections they became the Praja Socialist Party when dissident Congress-
men led by Acharya Kripalani joined them.

As a result, their representation in Parliament exceeded the Communists. 
But then they lost Jai Prakash to Bhooam. Although he keeps his 
membership of the Praja Socialist Party, he takes no active part in its affairs 
—no matter how much the rank and file of the Socialists implore him to 
come back.

The merger or alliance talks with Congress in 1953 unsettled the party. 
Leaders like Asoka Mehta urged a working alliance with Congress on 
economic objectives such as the Five Year Plan; other leaders like Dr. Lohia 
condemned any alliance with either Congress or Communists. In addition, 
the party lacked cohesion, a mass following, and a well organised party 
machine comparable to that of Congress. In 1953, Madhu Limaye, then 
the Socialist Secretary in Bombay, complained to me that his party loved 
talking but hated going out into the villages to campaign for more 
supporters. 'We are armchair Socialists,' he said.

Congress still enjoys a large income from big businessmen in India: 
the Communists, through a compulsory levy of dues and through indirect 
assistance from the Russian and Chinese Embassies, is even less short of 
money. But the Socialists have no wealthy backers. An increase of party 
dues should bring more money for organisation. But in a voluntary 
organisation it might drive the marginal, poverty stricken supporters out of 
the party.

Since the Avadi Conference of the Congress Party declared its Socialist 
objectives, the Socialists have been further weakened. Nehru has stolen 
their programme from them, and he has more personality and money to 
back it up.

**Weaknesses and Divisions**

Now the Praja Socialist party has split. In December, 1955, Lohia, 
complaining of attempts to stifle freedom of criticism in the party, left and 
formed his own Socialist party. Lohia supporters will campaign separately 
in the next Election. His programme is not too clear. There are, of course, 
the usual planks such as India's departure from the Commonwealth: 
although Lohia admires British institutions, he has a loathing of Britshers 
in India and British links with the country—he has even attacked cricket 
as a British fifth column! Other planks in the Socialist programme suggest 
that wholesale trade in all commodities should be nationalised. Land 
holdings, Lohia says, must be not smaller than five acres, or larger than 
30 acres. He has a plan for language states but not a language mentality
whatever this may mean.

The new Socialist Party has a seven year plan with an aim of 300,000 
paid supporters by 1961. Just how successful these Socialists will be in the 
Elections of 1957 depends on how they can get their case over to the Indian 
people, what money they can raise for the campaign, and how they can 
distinguish themselves from the Socialist Congress, the Praja Socialists and 
the Communists. At the moment the chances of Dr. Lohia and his 
supporters would not seem to be high.
The Praja Socialist Party has equally doubtful prospects. Men like Mehta have so much sympathy with Nehru that they might easily make common cause with the Congress party. Jai Prakash has attacked Lohia as a disrupter of Socialism: he has said he will vote for the Praja Socialist party at the next Election. But there are no signs that he will leave Bhoo dan to campaign actively for his party. Yet gloomy prophets should note that the Praja Socialists have won a number of by-elections since 1952. They are also strong in Universities such as Allahabad, Hyderabad and Bombay.

So, despite the break up of Socialist unity in India, and the disputes and defections amongst the leaders, it by no means follows that the Praja Socialist party will lose in votes or seats in Parliament at the next Election. But it is one of the major weaknesses of the Indian scene that, just at the moment when the Congress party might be nearing the end of its span in office, and when Nehru needs some relief, a real, democratic alternative government does not exist.

\section*{Vacillations of the Communists}

In India today Communism is almost certainly weaker than at the achievement of independence in 1947. Nehru, in a moment of dispassionate honesty, has called the Indian Communist Party the worst and most stupid Communist party in the world. Certainly it is one of the least disciplined in the Communist hierarchy and it gives the most consistent impression of confusion.

In 1941, the party that, up to then, had been attacking Britain's war against Germany as merely an imperialist quarrel, now when Russia herself was attacked by Germany, suddenly had to call this battle a struggle for freedom against Fascism. Thereafter the Indian Communists supported Britain in the war against Japan, whereas the Indian Congress Party, leading the National Independence movement, demanded big concessions in the field of self-government before they would consider backing Britain in the war. The vast majority of the Indian people thought that the Communist Party had, on orders from Moscow, betrayed the national interests; as a result, they were considered traitors.

After 1945 the Communist Party attempted to win its way back into favour through advocating a United Front with Nehru in the advance to independence. No sooner, however, was India granted self-government within the Commonwealth, than the Communist Party on orders from Moscow came out in open opposition to Nehru's Congress Government. 1948 saw the ill-fated Telegana revolt when the Communists attempted to seize by force large tracts of Hyderabad. The moderate Communist P. C. Joshi was forced out of the Secretary General's post by Ranadive who advocated all out opposition to the Congress Government. This move coincided with Marshal Stalin's onslaught in Europe, his occupation of Czechoslovakia, his attempted seizure of Berlin and the violent attacks on Yugoslavia. Ranadive said, 'We characterise the National Government as a Government of national surrender or collaborators. It has shipped arms to the aid of the reactionary Thakin Nu.'
But by 1953 the Indian Communist party had called off armed violence. There was to be a united front of all anti-Congress forces. Then in the spring of 1955 the new line in Soviet foreign policy forced the Indian Communist party to change their tactics once more. Pravda began to call Nehru a ‘Partisan of Peace’ and an ‘enemy of the American warmongers’. The Congress party leaders were not slow to make capital out of this divergence between the local Communists and Moscow. In meetings held by Communists in Andhra during the elections, Pravda quotations lauding Nehru were hurled at the bewildered Communist candidates. The result was a large increase in seats for Congress and a corresponding slump for the Communists. The next two months were taken up by the Indian Communist party in holding post mortems on its defeat. They were divided on the future attitude to be adopted towards India now that Russia had changed her policy.

Militant Communists such as Dange have now been discredited: the Moderate United Front Wing under Joshi has regained the ascendancy, albeit a precarious one.

The Official Line

The official new Communist policy, determined at Palghat, whilst calling the Congress party ‘The Political Party of the Bourgeoisie’ says that amongst its rank and file ‘significant headway in support of anti-imperialism, friendship with the Soviet Union and Socialism has been made’. Evidently the Communist party policy is reverting to that of the United Front days of the 1930s and directly after World War II. As the Party Executive spokesman said, in future Communists would form democratic fronts seeking alignment with progressive sections of Congress also. Nehru is no longer to be called a ‘capitalist stooge’. He is now a ‘champion of world peace, Asian solidarity and world freedom’.

However, this official line is by no means unanimously supported in the Indian Communist party. Its main backing comes from the North, in particular from P. C. Joshi and the Secretary General, Ajoy Ghosh, who has recently been to Moscow.

In the South, the forces led by P. Sunderayya that supported the Communist revolt in Telegana still remain strong. (The Communists in Madras, in Malabar and in Hyderabad have always been the most militant.) Nehru’s support for India’s membership in the Commonwealth and his view that private enterprise has still a part to play in India, has been attacked by Southerners. It was from the South that the strongest criticisms of concessions to ‘feudal landlords’ and ‘foreign capital’ by Congress were made.

The influence of the militant section of the Communist party of India can also be seen in the Party’s attitude to Stalin. Whereas other Communist parties seem ahead of Moscow in condemning Stalin and his ‘cult of the individual’, the Indian Communists are still praising Stalin for building socialism in the Soviet Union.

Obviously the last has not been heard of the disputes at the Palghat Conference. But for the moment the Indian Communist party has decided that, as Russia is determined to woo Nehru, so must they.
The prospects for the Communist party, like those of the Praja Socialists, at the Elections are uncertain. Jai Prakash has urged an understanding to avoid the Communist and the Praja Socialist Party contesting the same areas. Where one group is strong he suggests the other should not stand—thus both parties will avoid frittering away opposition votes. Communist party headquarters have endorsed this view. It remains to be seen whether it will work in practice.

However, it could mean increased Communist representation in Parliament in Calcutta and Hyderabad for instance, in return for the Communist party giving the Praja Socialists a free hand in Bombay and Kerala.

The Communist party with its programme of nationalising foreign firms could easily gain strength in Bihar and West Bengal as a whole. Their strength amongst landless labourers in Andhra, where despite their defeat they still total 30 per cent of the poll, is strong. And the Five Year Plan notwithstanding, under-employment and unemployment may increase. The leaders for this potentially Communist support can come from the mass of unemployed, frustrated students. The cadres of the Communist party today come not from the peasantry or even the industrial workers. Usually they are failed B.A.s or out-of-work M.A.s.

So just as the Socialists and Praja Socialists may gain strength at the next Elections, so could the Communists gain increased representation. With the overwhelming majority that Congress enjoys at the moment, it could afford to lose some members at Delhi. Where the Praja Socialist and Communist party electoral understanding, if it worked, could more surely threaten Congress, is in the States. Andhra could become a hopeful Yenan of India, Kerala a socialist enclave. Yet even this prospect would not shake the overall dominance of Congress. Despite ten years in office, Nehru's party can claim still to be the most truly popular party in India. The elections of 1957 are likely to give it another five years of power.

3. THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

India's motto in the economic field might well be, 'So much to do and so little time'.

For when India became independent she was faced not only with political problems—the need to consolidate the hold of the government internally and establish its prestige abroad—but also with a nation on the verge of mass starvation. This was not all the fault of an indifferent British administration. In fact many millions of acres of land had been brought under cultivation during the Viceroyal days.

India was threatened by disaster in the years after independence through a combination of factors. They were World War II, Partition, an increase of population of four million a year and a series of poor harvests, especially
in the South. There was a gap between the estimated increase of population and food supplies of between 5 and 7 per cent. In human terms this meant the appalling poverty and misery of thousands in cities like Calcutta and Bombay: and in the countryside, a slow and unobserved death through malnutrition, with an infant mortality rate of over 50 per cent in many areas.

Five Year Plan

So it was hardly surprising that India’s first Five Year Plan from 1951 to 1956 placed the emphasis on survival alone. Agricultural schemes made up one third of the total expenditure of £1,800 million. Then, of course, there was money to be spent on transport to move food, to prevent gluttony in one area and starvation fifty miles away. I remember being told by the planners in Delhi that they aimed to increase the annual production of cereals, which was then 54 million tons a year, by an additional 7.6 millions. Thirteen million extra acres of land were to be irrigated. In all the discussions, industrialisation took second place. Food was to have priority and, if the plan could keep pace with the growth of population, India would be satisfied.

In the result India has not only cause to be satisfied: she feels elated and confident in looking on the next five years. For food production even by 1954 was up to sixty-eight million tons. Far from survival on a reduced diet, India has given more to each of her citizens. They still live on the rim of life but the danger of mass starvation has been largely averted. It is true that India succeeded in achieving the basis of her first Five Year Plan in growing enough food, partially because of favourable monsoons. And this year the weather has been unkind and food will be harder to come by. But India will not starve, as her first Five Year Plan also saw successful efforts to improve seeds, to introduce new agricultural techniques, to develop co-operative farming and to fertilise the soil.

The Second Plan

Now in the second Five Year Plan further schemes have been prepared for agricultural expansion. There can be no relaxation with a population increase of 1.2 per cent a year. The food production target for this plan has been fixed at seventy-five million tons. This should mean an increase to provide for 2,450 calories a day compared with the present intake of 2,200 calories. (Consumption in Western Europe is 3,600 calories a day.) Even so, with this slight increase India hopes to diversify its consumption—to provide for its people more fish, more meat, more milk and to reduce the dependence on a single debilitating diet.

But the second Five Year Plan is to spend £3,600 million—twice that of the period 1951/56. So despite this increase for agriculture, it is obvious that much more must go to the industrial sector. Indeed, if the emphasis of the first Five Year Plan was primarily on food, this second Five Year Plan highlights industrial production.
TABLE 1
Investment in the Two Five Year Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st Plan Total Provision (million rupees)</th>
<th>2nd Plan Total Provision (million rupees)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural and Community Development</td>
<td>3,570</td>
<td>5,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigation and Flood Control</td>
<td>4,010</td>
<td>4,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>4,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industries and Minerals</td>
<td>1,790</td>
<td>8,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and Communications</td>
<td>5,570</td>
<td>13,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services, Housing and Rehabilitation</td>
<td>5,330</td>
<td>9,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>23,560</strong></td>
<td><strong>48,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B.—A rupee is roughly equivalent to 1s. 6d.

Expenditure on industry is to shoot up from £130 millions to £668 millions. Agriculture claimed twice the total of industry in 1951 to 1956, but in the next period industry will spend half as much again as farming. The result is that India’s planners hope that, compared with a national income rise of 3 per cent in the first Five Year Plan, this second period will see an increase of 5 per cent.

Steel production will rise to six million tons of ingots and 4.5 million tons of rolled steel. Coal output is planned to rise by 22 million tons to 60 million tons a year.

In addition to providing for a planned expansion of all sections of the Indian economy, the second Five Year Plan defines the achievement of a socialist pattern of society as the basic objectives of economic policy. It states specifically that ‘the basic criterion for determining the lines of advance is social gain rather than private profit’.

The Industrial Policy Resolution presented to Parliament in April, 1956, divided industries into three categories. The first category contained seventeen industries, including atomic energy, munitions, iron and steel, heavy plant and machinery, mining, air and rail transport, aircraft, ship-building, telephone and wireless apparatus and electricity generation. These formed a sector whose future development would be the exclusive responsibility of the state.

The second category consisted of 12 industries, including road and sea transport, machine tools and aluminium. In this sector it was stipulated that ‘the state would generally take the initiative in establishing new undertakings, but private enterprise would also be expected to supplement the State’s efforts’.

The third category consisted of all remaining industries ‘whose future development would generally be left to private initiative and enterprise’. It was added that ‘a steadily increasing proportion should develop along co-operative lines’. The effect of this will be that the state will own and finance all the more important sections of industry, and India will have a larger public sector of industry than any other democratic country.
### TABLE 2
Second Five Year Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Finance</th>
<th>Amount (in Millions of rupees)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surpluses from current revenues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) at existing rates of taxation</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) additional taxation</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing from the public</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) market loans</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) small savings</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other budgetary sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) railways' contribution to development fund</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) provident funds and other deposit sources</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,000</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External assistance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deficit finance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uncovered gap</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>48,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mood in India as she begins her second Five Year Plan is one of quiet confidence. In 1951 the plans for India's food and industrial expansion were described as over-optimistic by experts from outside. Yet now these pundits from overseas, with traditional economist hindsight, are saying that the 1951/6 plan was too cautious! But they say again today that the next Five Year Plan is too demanding on India’s economy: there are the dangers of deficit financing; there is the threat of mass unemployment; there are the perils of inflation and transport bottlenecks. India's planners may perhaps be entitled to reply 'If we were right once, might we not be right in our plans for this five year period?" However, any planner in Delhi will admit that in his nation's agricultural and industrial future there are a number of grave problems that must be faced.

Agriculture, for instance, still remains backward and unproductive compared with say, that of Japan and China. The Japanese farmer produces at least three times as much rice per acre as his Indian counterpart. The Japanese method of cultivation has already been introduced to over a million acres in India, but in the next five years it could, and should be expanded far more.

Then the fragmentation of Indian farms has been a constant worsening and wasting process. Already the size of holdings is only .82 per acre per head. And inheritance rules tend towards the creation of impossible patchworks of uneconomic plots. In the Damodar Valley, an Indian specialist showed me a map of a village which had been split up in this wasteful fashion, until he had, through long and patient negotiation, persuaded the villagers to rearrange their divided plots. They had also come together to cultivate and market their crops in a co-operative enterprise. This re-integration of holding units and co-operative farming is amongst the most urgent needs facing Indian farmers in the next five years.
Community Development

Of course, no mention of the problems and achievements in Indian agriculture could possibly ignore the Community Development programme and Extension Service. This programme has already reached nearly 88 million people living in about 160,000 villages. Its success has encouraged the government of India to extend the community projects to the whole of rural India, and to give intensive development to 40 per cent of the area in the next five years.

R. K. Chaterjee, Director of Information Relations in the Community Projects Administration, has described in official phraseology, the aim of this programme as ‘to arouse in the people a consciousness of their own condition and to develop in them a desire for self help’. In human terms I saw one of these schemes in operation in a remote village near Delhi—one that had been backward and neglected. The Social Education Officer from the Extension Service who accompanied me said that, like thousands of others, this village had sunk into its own abject misery and defeat. Now with the Development Officer and with the help of the villagers’ own representative things have changed. First the villagers in their own time, away from their fields, had built a hard surface road to connect their village with the road running to Delhi. And as the road was built, heavy equipment came in to sink a tube well bringing more water for their plots than the villagers had ever known, and bringing more food to their houses, too.

The ‘Gram Sevak’ or village level worker, was busy with a team of helpers when I arrived. They were building a school with bricks from their own kiln. To a sophisticated westerner it looked more like a shabby shed, but to the villagers, it was a chance for their children which they and their ancestors had never known and at night it was to be a community centre. The village was still muddy and dirty: the farmlands were still poor. But hope had come for the people. And the same is true, as any visitor to India will confirm, in thousands of other villages around India. In practical terms the value of the peoples’ contribution to these Community Projects up to September, 1955, in cash and labour had come to over £13 millions, i.e., 50 per cent of the total Government expenditure.

Too Little Work

Yet even the Community Development Programme in helping the villagers to plan better farming, schools and roads, is not enough. There is still the problem of village unemployment and under-employment. Of the total labour force of 150 millions no more than three millions are employed in organised industry. But each year there is an annual increase in the Indian labour force of two millions.

Many very sensational figures have been given of unemployment in India. Fifty millions was one estimate: some official government sources put it at five millions. These figures make the mistake of cataloguing employment in India in Western terms. For what is really chronic in India is not orthodox Western urban unemployment—though this is severe amongst the small middle class—it is under-employment in the rural areas.
that is most dangerous and needs most urgently REMEDYING. It has been estimated that on an average an agricultural labourer will be working for only 218 days a year. Other calculations SPLIT up his labour INTO five months regular farm work, two OR three months maintenance jobs, and the remaining time idle days.

So in the second Five Year Plan, great stress is laid on the development of village industries.

It is the aim of these to BEGIN to fill this wasting and humiliating void in the Indian farmer's life. The second Five Year Plan describes the purposes of developing small industries in rural areas as “to extend work opportunities, to raise incomes and standards of living and to bring about a
more balanced and integrated rural economy’. The Indian Government is prepared to make an allocation of £150 millions to help fill the gap of empty, wasted days in Indian rural life. For whatever the pace of industrialisation, there is bound to be unemployment. These cottage industries can help to reduce it.

I saw one of them near Delhi. The villagers were running a small footwear factory in a shed. It was elementary work and the output was fit only for local consumption. But it gave the villagers self-respect and a sense of purpose in their idle months. In the second Five Year Plan cotton weaving, hand pounding of rice, and cotton spinning alone should provide employment for 5,800,000 people.

One of the most serious industrial problems facing the country is the transport bottleneck. If steel production is to soar, agricultural and industrial output and exports increase, a tremendous strain will be put on India’s transport system. Can the networks of road, rail, air and sea surfaces expand and keep pace?

**Transport Problems**

Traffic on the railways has increased by 25 per cent in 24 months. Yet the second Five Year Plan only allows for a 5 per cent annual increase in rail traffic in the next five years. With many narrow gauges remaining and with much out-of-date equipment, trying to cope with an avalanche of extra traffic, India’s development could easily be halted by a rail bottleneck.

Even allowing for increased costs, road transport is unlikely to be able to take up a great deal of the railway surplus. Existing motor roads are estimated at 150,000 miles. But 500,000 miles are probably the minimum needed to sustain adequately India’s expansion. The Indian Institute of Transport estimated recently that 300,000 new vehicles were needed. The total number in regular service today is only 150,000. The second Five Year Plan allows for over £1,000 millions to be spent on transport and communications compared with just over £400 millions in the first Five Year Plan. Yet of all the factors making for the success of the plan, transport remain one of the most doubtful.

Finally in considering India’s economic future there comes the question: What part will foreign firms and foreign investment play in it?

The present position is relatively simple. Overwhelmingly the largest proportion of investment in India today is British. The latest figures show that, at the end of 1953, out of a total foreign business investment of £315 millions, Britain had a £250 millions share. In the five and a half years previous to this, Britain had invested £100 millions in India, a figure ten times as high as that of the United States, next on the list.

Since then, German, Eastern European and Russian contributions have undoubtedly increased. Yet even today Britain’s share of India’s imports is 25 per cent, a 9 per cent increase on 1951. All Commonwealth countries together accounted for a share of 45 per cent of India’s imports and 51 per cent of her exports in 1955/56. In 1955 the mutual trade between Britain and India amounted to slightly more than £300 millions, compared with a figure for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe of £8 millions in the same
period. These figures at any rate show that in foreign trade and investment, Britain still plays a major part. The grandiose claims of Russia and the panic accounts of British reporters are both untrue.

In the next five years it has been estimated that foreign exchange earnings will fall short of requirements by £825 millions. Obviously there will be room for a greatly increased rate of industrial development. There will be demands by the Indian Government for loans from international agencies, and borrowing on a government-to-government basis.

In the Five Year Plan only £75 millions is allowed for net private foreign investment. But the sterling balances are likely to be run down by more than £150 millions, and this will mean a largely British-directed trade and possibly investment in India.

How Britain and the West will react to the investment and loan prospects, both in private and public spheres in India, could be crucial for the whole future orientation of India’s trade effort. Many businessmen in Britain and in America have been disturbed by Congress’s Socialist attitude to state control of basic industry since the Avadi Conference. Mr. Geoffrey Tyson has summed up the question in this way: ‘The foreign investor is backing his judgment as to the length of time it will take India to achieve a fully socialised economy and the kind of treatment private enterprise will receive in a period of transition’. The British businessman must make up his own mind just what this length of time and prospects are.

But in terms of general trade and willingness on the part of India to exchange goods, there can be no doubt. British manufacturers could, if they have faith in India, find an almost limitless market in the field of engineering goods, in metals and heavy machinery. The question is, will the individual merchant and the British Government accept what is both an invitation and a challenge?

4. EDUCATION

In the next Five Year Plan, India has set her sights high. She is determined to increase her agricultural and industrial capacity and for this she needs more scientists, engineers and agricultural specialists. So one of the key factors, if not a determining point, in India’s expansion will be her ability to improve and expand her educational system.

At the moment the situation is stark and simple. Out of the 370 millions population, 300 millions can neither read nor write. This includes an illiteracy rate amongst women of 90 per cent.

At the moment only one in a hundred Indian children goes on to higher secondary education. Backwardness is not evenly spread. Western and Southern India, for instance, are more than twice as literate as Northern and Central India.

This illiteracy cannot be blamed on the present Government of India. It was inherited from the British. Compulsory education has never in the past been a duty laid on Britain for Asian or African subjects. When she handed over power after 150 years of control, Britain had taught less than 15 per cent of the population to read. To be fair, however, this was
nearly three times as high a literacy rate as Holland had produced in Indonesia after 300 years of rule.

**School Places**

Table 3 shows the progress in providing schools during the first Five Year Plan and the targets for the second. This aspect of the plan has been heavily criticised in India. Some critics feel that the Plan should aim at providing schools for all children in the primary stage, as is envisaged in the Indian constitution. But it would be unrealistic to expect to achieve this by 1960.

![Table 3](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) 6-11</td>
<td>18,680,000</td>
<td>24,812,000</td>
<td>32,540,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of age group</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) 11-14</td>
<td>3,370,000</td>
<td>5,095,000</td>
<td>6,387,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of age group</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) 14-17</td>
<td>1,450,000</td>
<td>2,303,000</td>
<td>3,070,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of age group</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>1950-51</th>
<th>1955-56</th>
<th>1960-61</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Primary Schools</td>
<td>209,671</td>
<td>274,038</td>
<td>325,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Basic Education Schools</td>
<td>15,347</td>
<td>39,275</td>
<td>61,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Secondary Schools</td>
<td>7,288</td>
<td>10,897</td>
<td>14,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Universities</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Engineering Institutions</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Technological Institutions</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education in India is the responsibility of the State and not the Federal Government, so there is no set pattern of national education as in England. (The same, incidentally, applies to the Social Services generally in India. With an 80 per cent rural subsistence economy, any national plan of health services, insurance and pensions is out of the question. But there are certain limited benefits for urban workers.) Whether the plans for education by 1960 are sufficiently high is a matter of constant debate. The states are only spending 10 per cent of their budget on education. The excuse presented by the planning commission is that economic development must inevitably claim a large share of the nation’s resources. But one of the problems facing India in the years to come is the shortage of skilled manpower. The pyramid of knowledge is already far too narrow at the top; already projects are held up because of lack of skilled personnel. In the next five years, India’s educational outlay may well be found to be one of the weakest points in her whole development programme.

One of the acute problems facing Indian educationalists is the supply of teachers. At the root of this is a simple economic power. A basic elementary school teacher can only expect a starting salary of 50 rupees a
month; a trained matriculate teacher will get only 60; even a graduate teacher with training at a secondary school can expect a starting salary of no more than 130 rupees; and headmasters can claim a mere 250 to 500 rupees a month.

The problem of the teacher—the white collar worker who can afford nothing but a collar—is one of the basic weaknesses of Indian education plans. A parsimonious attitude towards teachers is not, of course, confined to India. The United States is a glaring example of this. But in India a mixture of basic national poverty, teachers’ loyalty and a ruler’s contempt, has thrust the status of the teacher lower than almost anywhere else in the world. Today the newly enrolled teacher in the elementary school is either a dedicated person or, most often, someone who cannot get a job in a factory or is useless in the field.

The effect on the pupils of this latter type of teacher has already been noted at conferences of headmasters in India. They have complained of increasing indiscipline and of the exploitation of teachers and pupils for election purposes. The Communist party of India has always cultivated the under-privileged, ill-paid, dissatisfied teacher.

**Basic Education**

One of the most impressive and practical of all developments in India has been in the field of basic education. It is planned that within ten years all of India’s primary teaching should be on the lines of basic education. In simple terms basic education in India means an integration between school and community. India is predominantly still a country of villages: over 80 per cent of the people live and earn a living off the land. A school in a village that concentrated solely on teaching primary school children reading and writing, history and geography, would be operating in a vacuum, isolated from its environment.

Through basic education, the primary school pupil in a village is to be taught a craft as well as to be made literate. He will learn cotton spinning or some other skill. In addition, the sale of proceeds of this work will help the pupils; it will buy more furniture or equipment; it will help the impoverished teachers.

When I visited a village in the Damodar Valley which had opened its school only three years before, I saw the value of basic education. The village carpenter had spared an hour or two each day to teach those who wanted a little elementary woodwork. In both classrooms, there were simple cotton spinning looms. The students themselves were building after hours, with the help of their elders, an extra classroom, bigger than either of the other two. Here they were to learn other crafts and at nights the classroom would be used as a village meeting hall. The one teacher was a respected member of the community. His school was a part of the village and the villagers knew his worth.

There have been excesses and weaknesses and mistakes in the implementation of the basic education plan. Some primary schools have become little more than glorified factories employing child labour.
They have made a fetish of cotton spinning or have concentrated too much on making large profits on the sale of school produce. And often the sale of produce has reduced the income of the villagers themselves with resulting bitterness.

Yet for all its faults basic education has found a way to combine practical and theoretical training. India is evolving a system whereby learning can be allied with the life of the village and not divorced from it even if the exact balance and relation between school and village has not yet been achieved.

The Universities

India had the advantage of inheriting from the British Raj an extensive and nation-wide system of higher education. Of course, Indians will always tell you, correctly, that India had university education two thousand years ago. During the British period, the first university in India was founded over a hundred years ago, in Calcutta; and in the years that followed, great universities arose in Madras, Bombay, Benares, Allahabad, Aligarh and other centres. There was a two-way process. Many of the wealthiest Indians sent their sons to university in Britain—Nehru was one of these privileged offspring.

On the other hand, Vice-Chancellors at most Indian Universities during this period were British. A visitor to an Indian University will see in many a long corridor today rows of solemn-looking English academicians peering down from fading photographs. And for all their autocratic limits, their narrow academic outlook and their pukka-sahib approach, these Vice-Chancellors gave to Indian education a heritage that is today at the root of her freedom and her strength. In the field of literature, history and law, the generations of Indian students that passed in their hundreds of thousands through the British administered universities, learnt the pattern of constitutional democracy. They left their studies often ill-prepared, unduly academic. But in later life as politicians, as lawyers, or, now, as Ambassadors abroad, they have adopted that peculiar attitude of moderation and tolerance that, combined with their own innate characteristics, have made Indian intellectuals so formidable and nearly always friendly to Britain.

All this may seem a somewhat laboured defence of an out-dated Raj. But it lies at the root of India’s friendly membership of the Commonwealth. It also accounts for the fact that, amongst the Asian peoples, the Indian elite understands Europe best and is most likely to prevent a real split between Asia and the West.

Wrong Attitudes

India has inherited the virtues of the old British universities in India, but she has also taken over the defects of the system. Many jokes have been made about the Indian students’ undue obsession with degrees, including those he fails to obtain, and they are mostly unfair. But even Dr. Mudekar, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Madras, has said that he considers that the Indian student looks on exams as more important than any other student in the world; while Himayun Kibir, Permanent Secretary
to the Ministry of Education, himself an Oxford graduate, has complained repeatedly about the undue emphasis in Indian education on abstract logic. During visits to India I have come across centres of learning such as Delhi, Madras and Bombay, with excellent academic standards. But all too often I have found students obsessed by a process of parrot-like learning from a single recommended textbook. Perhaps this is a defect picked up from the United States! But the result is an unnecessary and exaggerated determination to learn and reproduce a limited amount of theoretical knowledge. Examination questions asked from outside the textbook have been the subject of strikes. Strikes, too, have come about in quarrels with the Vice-Chancellor over the pass mark—whether it should be 36 or 34 per cent. The acquisition of knowledge and of intellectual discipline is all too often of secondary importance at an Indian university. What matters most to students still is the tag, 'B.A.' or 'B.Comm.'

The Unemployed Intelligentsia

These criticisms of Indian university education today lead on to the whole question of the Indian approach to higher education and the opportunity for employment.

One of the causes of the unsatisfactory situation in Indian university education is that the amount of available buildings and equipment has not gone up in proportion to the increase in students. Another arises from the exaggerated emphasis laid on the possession of a university degree in Indian public life, and in business. This is largely the fault of the old British regime. But it also fits in with a certain pedantic, over-scholarly approach by many Indians. The result is that any young Indian who wants to advance either in industry or general commerce feels that he must go to university. He goes, not because he wants to study, but because he must obtain a label for a job that is, nevertheless, very often poorly paid. So the whole process of passing through a university is a drudge and a grievance rather than an enlightening educational experience. It puts the young Indian in a mood to strike, to subscribe to extremes, to be disillusioned.

Even worse follows when the Indian student does in fact pass his degree examinations. Far too heavily weighted in favour of the Arts, the graduate finds when he leaves university that even the lower administrative or business posts are not open to him. Any British business man in Clive Road, Calcutta, knows that for every minor clerical post there will be five M.A.s applying. When touring the Bokaro power plant, I was shown some young Indians manhandling a piece of equipment into position. Up to their knees in mud they looked like some typical, under-privileged village labourers. But my engineering graduate guide told me that they were M.A.s from Calcutta. 'The pay is good here for labour,' he said, 'much higher than an Arts graduate would get in an office in Calcutta!'

This lack of opportunity and heavy unemployment amongst the middle-class Indian graduate, is one of the most serious threats to the future stability of India. As Dr. Mudcliar has said, 'The sense of frustration of a young man who believes that he is educated and cannot find employment
but wastes his time hunting for jobs, from place to place, high and low, is one of the greatest dangers to society. He feels that everyone is against him.'

President Prasad in a bitter moment has said that India is producing a race of unemployables, of misfits in society. His solution, although applied to India's society generally, is also of immediate significance regarding Indian universities. He said that the system needed to be changed, so that the manual worker was no longer stigmatised and the younger generation would have a healthy attitude towards handicraft and cottage industries.

Reforms Required

What reforms are needed in the Indian university system?

First a more rigorous selection of students even amounting to a reduction in numbers. It is, after all, most unfair to admit a young man to university, knowing that he will waste three years and not find a job when he leaves. Higher educational entrance qualifications, plus better training while at university, is one answer to the present educational crisis. It would require political courage, though, and this is not in great supply in the ranks of some Ministers in the States. Second, is the need to switch students entering university from the Arts to the Sciences. 'The doctrine of the dirty hand' as it is called in India is one of vital importance to India's second Five Year Plan. A mixture of caste prejudice, and memories of the administrative order of the Raj, combine to make many able young Indian students reluctant to take up courses such as engineering and agricultural science. But a switch of 10 per cent in the next five years could make a marked difference to the chances of India's industrial progress and her scientific and agricultural advance.

English—The Principal Language?

Finally, one other question particularly affects Indian university education—the medium of instruction. The reader of reports of academic meetings might be forgiven for thinking that many Vice-Chancellors are more interested in sterile debate about the relative values of Hindi, English or, say, Tamil than in concentrating on the vital balance between the Arts and the Sciences.

At the moment the vast majority of the universities still teach in English. But the medium of instruction is a State responsibility, and in Madhya Pradesh and in Bombay there have been moves to introduce instruction in the regional language.

But as has been pointed out, the standard of textbooks in the regional language is usually very low. There is a tug of loyalties between Indian nationalism as expressed by the Hindi-speaking academicians and the educated, and no less loyal, leaders of the Tamil-speaking south, for instance, who refuse to see their language taking second place to Hindi. The latter fall back on English as a medium of instruction that all students at university all over India can understand. As the Chairman of the Madras Legislative Council and Vice-Chancellor of Annamalai University has put it, 'English has become an international language and does not at the present moment belong to any nation. We have been taught for several generations
in English. Most of the important textbooks are written in English. It will be advantageous for even a generation or two more to continue to use textbooks in the English language."

Yet if the English language is to continue as the medium of instruction at Indian universities, the standard of instruction in English at secondary schools must improve. At the moment, although more and more people in India each year learn some English, the general standard declines. India is the third largest English speaking country in the world, but any lecturer at an Indian university will tell you that his first-year students can barely grasp the outlines of what he is saying.

Conflicting Views

India, both in the universities and in the country at large, is in a strange mood of divided loyalties over the English language today. No longer the 'King Emperor's tongue', leaders like Mr. Nehru realise that English can be a great unifying force for India, and is a linguistic gift that many nations in Asia envy. Scientists and engineers, the architects of India's Five Year Plan demand that English must remain. So do the armed forces, whose officers have been brought up in the British tradition. But against them are set the Hindi and Sanskrit scholars—persons like the gentleman at Nagpur who was being paid by the State Government 150 rupees a word to invent Hindi equivalents for English words such as 'fountain pen' and 'taxi'.

At universities and elsewhere, English it seems, at the moment, will win the battle. It has survived the first decisive testing years since Independence. Newspapers, radio programmes, school lessons bring it into the heart of India. It may in time yield first place to Hindi, but in the classroom, or in the street it can never become just a first foreign language. English has become Indian.

5. THE ROLE OF FOREIGN POLICY

Indian foreign policy is seldom discussed with detachment and in an objective fashion. Nehru's policy seems to elicit either angry opposition or fervent support. Such feelings usually spring from approval or disapproval of the way in which India's foreign policy affects the country of the critic concerned. But from India's own point of view, her present foreign policy suits both the nation's moral outlook and its realistic political and economic needs.

Take, for instance, Nehru's consistent condemnation of all forms of atomic warfare and test atomic explosions. A Congress businessman, a student or a peasant farmer would say the same thing. A Communist who attempted to defend the Russian tests would be assailed as much as an American explaining his Pacific explosions. The principle of non-violence is firmly embedded, however loose a hold Hinduism may now have on the people of India. The philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi seems to run through the life of most hard-headed businessmen as it does with the gentle Vinoba Bhave. I talked to a manufacturer of ball bearings from Orissa who had
been an airline pilot. This tough, six foot sportsman condemned the atom bomb because it was morally wrong to use a violent force in world affairs. He was not a supporter of Nehru and admired Western industrial techniques. But Gandhi was opposed to force and therefore so was he. That was the reason why he had left the airforce and been imprisoned by the Raj in World War II.

Non-violence and friendship

Nehru has said that it is possible to conceive India fighting only three nations in all the world, Portugal (over Goa), Pakistan and South Africa. With all the other nations, he has said, India has nothing but feelings of peace and friendship whatever their political systems. This moral pacifism is genuine and widespread in India. It is founded on the spirit of the Hindu and Buddhist religions and has been consolidated by the success of Gandhi in achieving independence by non-violent means, and the virtual deification of him that has taken place since then. This moral basis of Indian foreign policy was summed up by Nehru when he said, 'What you give you receive. If you give affection you get back affection. If you give hatred you will get back hatred.' This may seem to be a singularly unrealistic and woolly philosophy to a hard-headed politician. But however much the West may criticise this insistence on moral force in world affairs, and however much the Russians may secretly scorn it, the fact remains that the viewpoint does command the overwhelming support of the Indian people. It is not something that Nehru could bargain away.

Non-violence and friendship towards all also fits the practical requirements of India's domestic and external situation. Mr. Dulles denounces this neutrality as immoral (apparently condemning thereby his own country to 150 past years of sin). But Nehru would not agree that his neutrality is passive: he has called it dynamic neutrality. India's primary concern is that the two power blocs—based on Britain and America versus Russia and her supporters—should not polarise into two all-embracing, irreconcilable groups. India does not want to have to choose. If she were to sign up with Dulles, India would lose all her moral leadership in an emerging nationalist Asia. But an unquestioning devotion to the Kremlin could involve Nehru in liquidating the parliamentary democracy and free society that he is labouring to build in India.

Live and let live

Besides, the Indian view is that if all nations sell their souls and independence to one side or the other, tolerance and debate in world affairs are bound to disappear. There will be no buffers, or cushioning forces, and sooner or later a world armed conflict for total domination might ensue. In the process any progress, politically or economically, that India has made would be wiped out.

India sees her role as one of active friendship with all nations. The famous Pancha Shilas now given lip service by Russia, America and Britain, represent to India more than just harmless promises without binding force. They embody the doctrine 'You leave us alone and we'll leave you
untouched'. Nehru has made it clear that he does not agree with the political regimes of China and Russia. But in return for these two nations leaving India alone, he will do likewise. The more India emphasises Pancha Shilas, the more awkward it would be for the major powers to interfere with India's political and economic independence.

At the same time these principles represent something more than just a guarantee of internal independence. In the eyes of Indian leaders they form a bridge between the moral and realistic wings of India's foreign policy. Live and let live as a principle also involves active friendship and cultural and economic intercourse. If these concepts can spread from India's relations with other nations to the dealings of all nations with each other, then moral force asserts itself internationally. The world becomes non-violent. If it does, then India can cut down on her navy and build more schools.

India's foreign policy may seem to some Western observers either hypocritical or impractical. It is certainly an unusual blend of high morals and shrewd, realistic reasoning. Yet Gandhi achieved unusual things inside India. So why should not Pancha Shilas succeed, the Indians argue, around the world? At any rate no one can claim that India's reputation and influence in the world has diminished in the last few years as she has pursued this special policy of hers.

The Commonwealth Tie

India's relationship with Britain and the Commonwealth has been on the whole a close and friendly one. Nehru summed up this relationship when he received the freedom of the City of London. He said that people were often asked what were the bonds binding the Commonwealth together. 'It is,' he said, 'difficult to describe them. It is a recognition of our variety. How being various we must pull together. It is tolerance of each others opinion and the desire not to impose one on the other. I would imagine,' he added, 'that with all the agreements and alliances we have, probably this invisible association is stronger than any other.'

In part, in these remarks, he was merely stating the fact that the Commonwealth countries in their relation one to another accepted the 'five principles'. Yet in detail the relations between India and Britain represent something more than this vague friendliness. In granting independence to India, the Labour Government paid that country the rare compliment of adopting the methods of their most beloved leader, Gandhi. As Nehru said again in London, the change-over from submission to partnership with Britain was due, in part, to the good qualities of the British people and, perhaps, to those of the Indian people. 'But most of all,' he said, 'it is due to the means adopted to solve the problem. It was solved in a way that left no other problem.' This he felt was real human history. Lord and Lady Mountbatten 'achieved the remarkable feat of becoming the rivals of our own leaders in the favours of our people.'

Indian and British affairs have coasted along up to now on this wave of goodwill. They were reinforced by mutual trade interests. They were bound more closely by a similar outlook in the administrations, the universities and the armed forces of the two nations.
Until 1951 there were no major distracting clashes of interests to mar this new found partnership. Nehru's westernised, sophisticated reasoning found a ready ear in London whilst Mr. Attlee was at No. 10. Then the election of the Conservative government brought a challenge to Indian/British friendship. After all, Sir Winston Churchill had been the grimmest of opponents of the independence aims of 'that caste Hindu', Nehru. Yet the surface of friendship was barely ruffled. Sir Winston has a gift of forgetting and forgiving when necessary. This appealed to the Indian Prime Minister, and the Commonwealth Conference early in 1955 was reported to have produced an active partnership between these two Harrovians. Under Sir Anthony Eden, Britain and India began to drift apart, and it is too soon to say whether Mr. Macmillan can reverse this.

Friendship with Britain Tested

There were small, but badly handled quarrels, over for instance the India House Library. More important, whilst the Soviet Union was praising the Indian attitude of Goa, the British Government found Portugal more necessary to placate than India. The Baghdad Pact, decided on without more than a cursory warning to India, brought the strongest criticism from Nehru. SEATO had been bad enough he complained, but this new Pact brought the danger of war and of conflict between rival groups right to the doorstep of India. Pakistan, a neighbour, and member of both SEATO and the Baghdad Pact, might try to use her armaments aid against India. The Karachi resolution on Kashmir after the SEATO Conference, confirmed the Indian leader's worst suspicions.

Then the consistently hostile tone of most of the British Press towards India has begun to tell. At the Suez Conference in London, India tried to continue her role of the honest broker in friendship. Yet in addition to the lunatic fringe of papers which demanded India's expulsion from the Commonwealth, most of the rest of the Press also attacked India over her efforts. India's achievements in her Five Year Plan get the briefest mention in the British Press. Linguistic riots get full play.

The Indian diplomatic staff consists mainly of persons educated at British Universities. Steeped as they are in the British approach to foreign affairs, they look instinctively towards working with, and agreement with Britain. Yet in a widening field of affairs, SEATO, the Baghdad Pact and Suez are only some examples, they find themselves lined up with Russia against Britain. The use of force over Suez offended India more than any British action since Independence. The patient efforts of negotiation by Khrushna Menon were disregarded. India, so dependent on Suez for her Five Year Plan, saw the Canal blocked in a quarrel between the British Government and one of India's closest friends—Egypt. While Nehru is alive, the Commonwealth link is likely to stand these strains and the return of a Labour Government would swing the viewpoints of the two nations closer together again. But at the moment, Indo-British relations remain friendly only through drawing on a fast-diminishing bank of past goodwill. Few in India want a break with Britain and the Commonwealth: Indians complain that few in Britain seem to care what happens.
With the United States, Indian relations have followed an uneven path. Before Independence, the United States was a friend of Nehru backing India's drive for freedom. Later, as Prime Minister, he returned only to get the brash and friendly treatment of another applicant for dollars. The Indian Prime Minister retorted, 'I have not come with a begging bowl,' and went home suspicious. When Chester Bowles was American Ambassador in Delhi, Indo-American relations were very friendly, but since the advent of Mr. Dulles, relations between Delhi and Washington have cooled rapidly.

The two questions of China's admission to the United Nations and military aid to Pakistan cause a direct clash between India and the United States. There have also been Mr. Dulles's blunders, including his statement that Goa was a province of Portugal, just at the moment when Khrushchev was lauding India's claim to this colony. There has been coolness in India over SEATO and the Baghdad Pact. The American Press, like the British, has been hostile and Congress has more than once threatened to stop all aid to Nehru, 'a Communist fellow traveller'. United States' support in Asia has gone to nations like the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand, not to India's friends like Burma and Indonesia. And officials in India all too often have been of poor quality, badly briefed, unsympathetic, impatient, and arrogant. Most Americans have tended to play down Nehru's role in world affairs. In return India has found herself drifting more into sympathy with Moscow, whose controlled press and radio never ceases to laud 'the great peace-maker, Nehru'. The visit at the end of 1956 of the Indian Prime Minister to Washington, and the United States attitude over Suez, has partially halted this drift. But the main pattern seems to remain.

Relations with the Soviet Union

India's relations towards the Soviet Union have improved as her relations towards the United States have deteriorated. As Nehru said to me in Delhi, whilst Stalin was alive there could never be any real democracy in Russia or genuine friendship. Now the Russia people are getting free the clock cannot be put back. 'The Russians want no more war.'

The Russians also profit from being the remote, well-wishing unknowns. American aid has been given; mistakes have been made and are remembered: the Russians are only just arriving. The British are known as colonial rulers over coloured peoples: the Russians have colonised people of their own colour, and to this the Indians are indifferent. An endless stream of criticism from noisy, democratic nations like America and Britain is bound to offend the sensitive Indians. The Russians, controlled and contriving, play on every Indian prejudice, play up to every Indian foible.

Things may change as Russia, through aid teams, cultural missions, and every form of personal contact, becomes better known to the Indians. In Peking, or in Warsaw, the Russian is not often a sensitive, kindly or popular person. The Russian crushing of the Hungarian revolt came as a shock to Indians. It produced some of the harshest criticism of Moscow ever heard in Delhi. But in the larger field of the balance of power, Russia need not worry too much. More through the actions of Britain and America than their own, India is being pushed step by step towards the Soviet Union. It
is a process that Nehru certainly does not want and probably the Conservative Government regrets the parting. Yet today, this all-important move in world power relations is undoubtedly taking place.

Pakistan and Kashmir

No account of Indian foreign policy can leave out her relations with Pakistan. Here and over Goa, Indian policy seems to lose its detached, often supercilious, approach. When I visited Srinagar in Kashmir last year, one person out of ten was an Indian soldier. Few Indians mention there being any question of self-determination for the Kashmiris. An Indian Vice-Chancellor, noted for his earnest advocacy of non-interference and non-violence said, 'After all, we are in Kashmir, not Pakistan.' And this seemed to him to end the argument.

Yet this territory has an 80 per cent Moslem population, and certainly the understanding was, at partition, that those States with a majority of Moslems, with territory contiguous to Pakistan, should accede to that country. But once leaders such as Sheikh Abdullah (for long a friend of Nehru) began suggesting autonomy for Kashmir or a link with Pakistan, they were detained without trial.

The Indian Government undoubtedly has put through many reforms in Kashmir: for instance, free education, including university studies. It has also split up the old feudal States.

But to Pakistan's persistent requests for a free, impartial plebiscite, Nehru has returned a consistent, if evasive, 'No'. Perhaps one of the reasons why India was reluctant to vote for Russian troops leaving Hungary, and for a free Government there, is that the Indian Prime Minister is not prepared to withdraw Indian forces or allow free elections in Kashmir.

Over such matters as refugees, the division of the waters of the Punjab and Pakistan's military aid, it is difficult to find a detached, fair-minded Indian to talk to. The general feeling in Delhi is that the military aid to Pakistan given by America will be used to attack India. They ignore, or seem to wish to forget, that such a move would be more likely to spell the end of Pakistan than of India. Again India supports Afghanistan in her attempts to set up a Pashto state. To attempt to discuss such a flimsy and unfair move against Pakistan with an Indian diplomat is rather like trying to persuade an American statesman that he should recognise Communist China!

While Liaquat Ali Khan was alive, Indo-Pakistan relations improved. Since then statesmen on neither side seem to have had the desire or the will to stop the mutual traffic of uneasy fear and hatred. But as India is the larger country, the greater share of the blame must lie with her. India has set up to conduct all her affairs on a high moral plane. Yet she hangs on to Kashmir by old fashioned force.

If Nehru were to allow free choice for the Kashmir people, he might retain certain areas, such as Jammu. And against the bulk of the territory he would lose, he would gain the confidence of his neighbour, Pakistan. Leaders such as Major General Iskander Mirza are not anti-Indian. But they dare not contemplate any real partnership whilst the Kashmir dispute remains unsolved. Through his insistence on retaining Kashmir by force,
Nehru has found himself permanently confronted with a hostile Pakistan. It may be that the long-term Indian aim is thereby to undermine the existence of Pakistan altogether, but such would be a very risky policy. For there is no guarantee that in the collapse of Pakistan, India would succeed to power in that area.

China: Friend or Rival?

In the field of foreign affairs, perhaps the most important issue for the future will be that of relations between India and China. At the moment they are all light and sweet reason on the surface. Pancha Shilas is the determining factor. There are incidents on the Tibetan border: Communist agents are dealt with in Nepal; Nehru frowns with Rangoon at Chinese activities in Northern Burma. But as yet nothing of major significance disturbs the harmony. Americans who urge India to condemn the wicked tyranny of Peking are either pitied or condemned. In the eyes of India the revolution in China represents a victory for Asian nationalism over Western interference. The Chinese Five Year Plan may seem to some Western nations the biggest effort in ordered slavery the world has ever seen. To India it is a picture of a nation building for the future and reviving its former glory. It is also an economic challenge to India to do better in friendly competition.

But as Western influence wanes in Asia, as colonialism disappears, this friendliness between India and China may not continue. As the spheres of influence of the two countries expand they will meet, and a line between interests must be drawn peacefully or otherwise. As far as India is concerned, Cambodia already falls on her side of this line. Laos is in doubt but it probably goes to China. What of Malaya and Singapore? Will Indians and Chinese continue to leave power in the hands of the Malays? Or will the Chinese try and take over at least in Singapore? And if so would India leave her compatriots and this key strategic point to fall into China’s sphere? These are points that could put a severe strain on the ‘five principles’ that now reflect such harmony between the two still distant giants.

6. INDIA’S FUTURE

The future of India, its success or failure as an independent nation, is vital to the whole political complexion of Asia and to the balance of power in the world. Yet as with foreign policy, from the Sunday Express to the New Statesman, objective estimates are hard to come by. There are few dispassionate observers or prophets amongst the politically articulate in Britain.

Yet in assessing the future, one fact about India can surely be taken as a starting point: that is that India is the most successful working democracy outside Europe and North America. The simplest way to realise this is to sit in the strangers’ gallery of the Lok Sabha and watch the nation’s legislatures at work. Not for Delhi are the riots, the passions, the angry bitterness of Japan, Persia or even Italy and France. Mr. Mukerjee, the Communist leader, will put a barbed question to Nehru. From his seat by the Speaker,
the Prime Minister has his pointed reply and a side dig. There is a supplementary. Communist M.P.'s murmur support. Nehru takes another verbal, civilised blow at Mr. Mukerjee—general cheers—and the next question follows. Many British claim that this Parliamentary manner is a blessing from the Raj, but reason, moderation, a love of the middle way, has been a streak in India's history all the way from Asoka. It is natural for the Indian people to adopt parliamentary democracy. It fits their mood, not only in this century but in all ages. There have been, and are of course today, counter forces. The feudal sway of the Princes in the past, the angry riots of Communist or linguistic fanatics today. But the Princes were tamed, and the rioters end up in front of a moderate middle-aged, rather weary magistrate.

A Democratic Society

Parliamentary democracy in India is not due just to Nehru for all his dominance. Its fabric is made up of countless thousands of local legislators, patient university leaders, students, more restrained and better informed than anywhere in Asia. Democratic discussions and majority decisions are a comfortable milieu for the mass of India today. The violence, compulsion and even energy of the Communist world does not fit India. The administration of India has been called one of the most efficient and uncorrupt in the world. It is also one of the most urbane and moderate. There is inefficiency and corruption as in Europe (and even in Britain). But the Senior Civil Servant is at home in preparing the answer for his Minister in Parliament. It is difficult to conceive of the gentle, determined product of Oxford, Benares or Aligahr preparing in the Secretariat a mixture of dialectic and fact for a Mao Tse Tung to be delivered at a mass rally.

When all the facts and arguments for and against India's continuing as a parliamentary democracy are weighed, it is the vague, indefinable mood of moderation in Indians, high and low, that would seem to be the deciding factor.

Yet India, for all this inner stability, has its urgent problems and dangers. There is the undeniable dependence of India on Nehru. In the early years it has been a blessing, but India must look forward to normal times with no Nehru. It will be the test of India to carry on in its development and to maintain its diffuse freedom with a lesser man at the head. Congress after Nehru will be tempted by the narrow conservative prejudices of some leaders. There could be all the distracting insistence on no cow slaughter, prohibition, khadi. Linguistic passions, still dangerous, could get out of hand without Nehru to pit his prestige against these fragmentary ambitions.

India is such a vast country—ten times that of Britain with a population over seven times as large—that even a stable administration must have great difficulty controlling the nation. Its size and diversity, its many languages, its history of casteism magnify each problem that arises. A Congress without Nehru may not have the ability and the single-minded determination to see the country through its problems. And the resulting stagnation could lead to chaos.

India under Nehru and his present team has insisted on foregoing noisy,
jingoistic ambitions. There are traces of this in Kashmir, over Ceylon and Nepal. But in a massive country like India, successful in economic development, there is a danger that such meagre signs could develop into an absorbing, narrow nationalism.

Nehru in general has eschewed such a policy. But a leader of India after Nehru might, to distract attention from weaknesses at home, follow the line of many Middle Eastern leaders today and pursue a policy of aggressive xenophobia.

Economic and Social Challenge

India is still only a short way away from starvation. 1951-52 showed just how near this peril is. Monsoons in a series of bad years could wreck agricultural development. Another round of world inflation could throw the industrial economy out of gear. The population will increase by over 50 million in the next ten years; it will double its present total by the end of the century if the present unchecked increase goes on; and without more effective family planning, can India's food production, even with good monsoons, keep pace?

And what of India's wasting, bitter, unemployed middle class? Can the Government of India adjust intake and opportunity to give a fair chance to these young men and women? Can the present sterile life of so many thousands of university undergraduates be improved? If it cannot, or is not dealt with in time, then democracy in India is breeding a cancer in its midst. Moderation is the natural outlook of Indians. But it is difficult to remain calm, if you are a starving graduate of Calcutta with no job and no hope.

In all these problems of the future, India needs help—practical aid from nations more fortunate than she is.

Here lies the great chance for the West in the next 50 years. India would like to work with the Commonwealth, with Canada, Britain and New Zealand and the other moderates of the world. Yet a strange blindness on the part of many of our statesmen seems to prevent them seeing the importance of reciprocating this Indian friendship.

The Soviet Union, of course, sees the significance of India: after all, Lenin said that China, India and Russia could rule the world. Now with the cold war giving way to the cold peace in Asia, the great Soviet economic, political and cultural barrage on India has begun. Success will be easier when Nehru, a basically Western parliamentary leader, has gone.

Working Partners

The present British government appears to believe that India deserves a role amongst the larger, second-ranking powers. America looks on India as a temporary nuisance in the great anti-Communist plan for Asia. Yet if India were to join forces permanently with Russia and China the whole of South East Asia would be compelled inevitably to join the Communist grouping. The Middle East is already ripe for such a swing. To ignore India, to let Indian friendship and partnership go by default as so many
British and Americans seem prepared to do, would in the long run reduce
the so-called democratic world to a narrow fringe of Western Europe and
the Americas.

With India as a working partner with Britain and the West, and not as
a hired ally, all of Asia might still have a chance of developing their own
kind of freedom and democracy. What Dulles condemns as neutralism
would mean in reality independent nations such as Indonesia, Burma and
Malaya supporting India and making this part of Asia a stable, moderate
mass in world affairs and a barrier to the hopeless, destructive polarisation
that the extremists in the United States and the Soviet Union so much desire.

The acid test as to how India will move in international affairs will be
decided by the sympathy and practical aid given to her in succeeding Five
Year Plans.

Britain with her political and investment connections in India has a
unique opportunity. The universities ask for our teachers, the research
laboratories look to our scientists for advice. Those people who place large
business contracts, who have usually been trained in Britain, look to Britain
first. Yet we are in danger of being left behind.

German firms are more adventurous, more ready to take risks than
British firms. Our technicians and teachers are reluctant to serve a period
in India. They might lose, they say, their pension rights. What is needed
is a Commonwealth Teaching and Technical Service which would allow such
key personnel to serve for a time in India without losing these welfare state
privileges.

Britain does not have to try to match the United States with her heavy
expatriate staffs and her indiscriminate give-away schemes. And Russian
gifts of hospitals and Presidential aircraft, and her onerous barter agree-
ments, may in time pall in India. Britain can score by detailed government
aid for individual projects at the request of the Government of India; and
also by a far greater effort in investment by large private firms. Finally, if
British export firms showed half as much determination as the Germans
in the supply of capital goods of all sorts and highly specialised machinery,
we could do a vital service for India and immensely profit our own country.

What is at Stake

Britain, Europe and the United States should realise that they can never
again dominate Asia. Any future contest for leadership in that continent
will be between India and China. The role of Britain now must be that of
a sympathetic friend with experience and a chance to help. We will speedily
lose all influence if we continue to act as a reluctant, once powerful,
colonial nation.

Such a role is not beyond Britain's talents. After all, as a country
she has probably survived more political changes in the international balance
of power than any other nation in history. Britain should emphasise her
Commonwealth role in Asia for, in sympathy with the new developments in
India and Asia, she can still retain a significant role. For our own survival
we should try, because if India fails, then freedom throughout the world
could perish with her.
READ

FABIAN INTERNATIONAL ESSAYS

with contributions by

and a preface by
Hugh Gaitskell

Price 18'9 including postage

from
THE FABIAN BOOKSHOP
11 Dartmouth St., London, S.W.1

Printed in London by Devonport Press Ltd. (T.U.) W.12