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# A Treaty Between India and the United Kingdom

*By*

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K I T A B I S T A N  
A L I . A H A B A D

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## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE proposal that future relations between India and Great Britain should be governed by a treaty was for the first time officially expressed in the document which has become known as the Cripps Offer. This document spoke of a treaty, to be made between the British Government and the constitution-making body to be set up in India to cover all "matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands." Here was a new turn in speculation about procedure for constitutional advance in India, for ordinarily the political evolution of a British colonial possession to the status of a self-governing entity is by means of constitutional reforms enacted from time to time by the British Parliament. Dominion Status for India would not constitutionally mean more than this that by an act of the British Parliament, it would be provided that the King would be advised by Indian ministers responsible to an Indian Parliament. To effect this change no treaty would be necessary.

The reasons for suggesting a different procedure in the case of India seem to have been as follows:

(a) The draft declaration brought by Sir Stafford Cripps referred also to the Indian States, which were to be invited "to appoint representatives" to the constitution-making body and which, like the British Indian provinces, were to be free to adhere to the new constitution or maintain respectively their separate entity. In either case, a revision of their treaty arrangements would have had to be negotiated by the parties concerned, viz., the British Government, British India and the States themselves;

(b) Dominion Status up to the present time has been enjoyed only by those countries of the British Empire of which the population is mainly of European origin. India, if it remains in the Commonwealth, will be the first great Asiatic state to belong freely to the comity of free nations known as the British Commonwealth; its

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special circumstances may, therefore, require special provisions.

(c) The draft declaration also envisaged the possibility that India might secede from the British Commonwealth of Nations, while nevertheless remaining in intimate treaty relations with the U. K.

(d) The fact that the treaty was to be made between the British Government and the constitution-making body in India seems to suggest that the treaty was not intended to deal with more important and vital matters like the future relations between the United Kingdom and India, since a constitution-making body seems hardly the appropriate body to enter into negotiations on such matters which would rather be the prerogative of the new Indian Government to emerge from the labours of the constitution-makers. It is sometimes thought that the course of events "connected" with the so-called Irish Treaty in 1922 might throw some light upon the matter. The setting up of the Irish Free State was, however, a very small affair compared to creating a new Indian constitution, the population of the whole Irish Free State being less than that of the city of Calcutta. Next, the British Government were able to deal with a body of men who possessed sufficient unity among themselves to be able to organise and operate a provisional government with a reasonable prospect of success. There was this further distinction between the case of Ireland and the case of India, that the quarrel was between one integral part of the United Kingdom and another, both being under the same constitution; and the legal process involved was the dissection of the Irish Free State out of the body politic to which it had previously belonged.

Whether the treaty procedure is or is not desirable can now perhaps be regarded as a closed question; the British Government has accepted it as the method by which the Indian problem must eventually be solved, and public opinion in both countries has come to regard a future treaty as a thing to be taken for granted.

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It would be out of place in this paper to discuss the general merits of the Cripps declaration, a document which has been very much criticised in India. Discussion has been exhaustive and exhausting of the adequacy of the proposals for taking India a step further in the direction of self-government. But certain aspects of the Cripps proposals have been dwelt on as little as others have been scrutinised excessively. India's future international relations, and its defence position—these are questions of vital interest to India, but what would be the picture of these in the future is not at all clear from the Cripps' plan, nor has public discussion, whether in India or the U. K., given sufficient attention to these matters or to what they would imply in the details of a settlement between the two countries.

One or two instances may be given of conspicuous silence in the Cripps proposals. It has nowhere been stated how the rights of the Indian States, which chose to remain outside the Union, would be safeguarded, and whether this responsibility of protection would fall on British troops or on the forces of the Union. The Declaration made no reference to the position of India and its component states, vis-a-vis the countries bordering on the land frontiers of India, nor did it suggest how the existing relations of India with these countries, which are now conducted through the British Government, would be translated into a more direct connection with India; nor how India would protect herself against future aggression; nor what role it would play in keeping the international peace in this region.

A treaty must provide for all those needs of India which arise from its position as a member of a family of nations. But the attempt to provide for them is of course complicated by domestic discord in India. The main problem facing the country is the Hindu-Muslim issue. In order to enable India, either as a whole or as two separate states, to enter into a treaty with the United Kingdom, the internal controversy must end. This is a problem for India's leaders to solve. But Great Britain cannot assume the role of a mere spectator. She too must make her contribution towards the settlement of this question. Indeed, though it may be painful for India

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to admit, the initiative must perhaps come from Great Britain. Without this initiative, the Indian problem cannot be solved. Without a solution of this problem, Great Britain and India cannot co-operate internationally. Without this co-operation, international security will be in danger.

The pre-eminent need in India is the emergence of a real Indian patriotism. Next to the U. S. S. R., India is potentially the greatest power in Asia. It has a stable administration and a stable judicial system. It has a fine military tradition. The Indian Army will emerge from this war a more powerful fighting force than it has ever been before. The ideas of civic freedom are now deeply ingrained in the national fabric. India has immense economic and industrial potentialities. But it needs to resolve the religious conflict which has poisoned its politics, if its potentialities are to become realities. There is still the hope that the vision of India's national responsibilities and realisation of the dangers inherent in its relations with a turbulent world outside, may bring about a national union and end the concentration of attention upon issues which, to those who take a world-wide view of events, may often seem parochial.

Danger would indeed threaten India, and its chances of success in self-government would be slight, if in drawing up the new constitution it were assumed that the domestic and foreign problems of India could be kept separate, that what happened in domestic affairs would have no bearing on the security of her land and sea frontiers. Muslim India has ideological sympathies with the Muslim countries in the west, while there are signs that Hindu India may develop similar sympathies with the countries on India's north-eastern border and China. Meanwhile there is a large and growing body of opinion within India deeply interested in the Soviet ideology; the cleavage in Indian society which this represents cuts across the communal division. This, if nothing else, should cause the student of Indian politics to ponder on the link between international defence and domestic problems.

Settling these issues the filling in of the gaps in the Cripps proposal—is admittedly no easy matter, the more so because little agreement seems yet to have been reached among the great powers upon the international machinery to

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be set up for the security of Asia. It is therefore difficult for India to arrive at an estimate of its own defensive requirements in terms of men and equipment. During the last three years, India has been attacked both from land and by sea. Some of its cities have been exposed to bombing from the air. It is obvious, therefore, that any scheme for India's defence must include provision against all the three forms of attack. This means that India must have a strong and efficient navy, army and air force. Unfortunately, it will not be ready in the early stages of its Dominionhood to undertake these responsibilities. Some time must elapse before it can develop defence arrangements to an extent which will enable it to dispense with outside help. So far India had relied on a combination of its resources with those of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth.

Thus in a period of transition, India will need outside assistance in carrying out its programme of civil and military development; it will need a big mercantile marine and an elaborate system of civil aviation. The mode of co-operation with Great Britain in all these matters must form an important part of the treaty arrangements between the two countries.

In the following chapters, an attempt has been made to analyse some of the problems which will have to be solved. A study of these problems will, it is hoped, help to make clearer what will be the nature of the new relations between India and Great Britain. At the end of this paper we have suggested that certain declarations should be immediately made by His majesty's Government, and have also made suggestions for the creation of machinery for drawing up the future constitution of India.

The solutions suggested are intended to form the basis of discussion and indeed are in some particulars so phrased as to provoke discussion. The analysis of the problem has doubtless many gaps which need to be filled. If this paper succeeds in stimulating thought, it will have achieved its object. Another caveat may perhaps be added. The views expressed in this paper are entirely personal to the writer and in no way reflect the official point of view, still less the point of view of the Government of India.



CHAPTER I  
DEFENCE PROBLEMS

PAST AND PRESENT

**B**EFORE World War II, India had a small standing army and a small reserve to replace casualties in the event of mobilisation. Its air force was a negligible body and the Royal Indian Navy had only recently come into being. The army was divided into the Field Army, the Covering Troops, and the Indian Expeditionary Force. The role of the covering force was to hold up attack upon India's land frontiers until the Field Army was ready to meet it. Experience of the last war had shown that the defence of the North-West Frontier began in the Middle East, but it was never foreseen that in any of the Asiatic fields the Indian Army would come up against highly mechanised forces. Therefore hardly any attention had been paid to its mechanisation. Not until the danger to Europe from the rearmament of Germany had become painfully apparent did the Army authorities in India begin to think in terms of a programme for mechanisation of the Indian Army. For its sea defence, India depended mainly on the Imperial Navy. No measures of precaution against air attacks in the modern sense of the word were contemplated. Internal security was provided for by the general distribution of the troops between various military stations in the country.

When the test came during the present war, these defence arrangements were found to be inadequate. That they had been so long acquiesced in, was partly due to the pacific policies of Great Britain itself, partly to the unwillingness of the Government of India to incur the odium of an expensive outlay on military matters. In the U. K. no less than in India the British Government delayed the taking of precautions against the tide of aggression which set in the thirties, and showed a blindness and a complacency that will astonish future historians. In India it was argued, not without some reason, that no progress in the field of defence could be made

because of the hue and cry raised in the Indian Legislative Assembly for keeping defence expenditure down. But the fact remains that Government took no advantage which it legitimately could have taken of the sympathies of nationalist India for the cause of Spain, of China and of Abyssinia. Fascism and Nazism had been openly declared by Jawaharlal Nehru to be enemies of human peace and progress. A more farsighted policy of educating public opinion in support of equipping India morally and materially to defend her frontiers from all sides would have received a good response and would have saved thousands of precious lives lost in this war on account of lack of preparation.

Meanwhile Japan was making its plans for the conquest of "Greater East Asia," which included India. Russia was preparing itself for its defence both against Japan and Germany, and China was uniting against and fighting its external enemy i.e., Japan. German agents were sowing the seeds of trouble in the Middle East countries. Hitler and the Japanese warlords concerted the plan of a grand pincer movement to enable their armies to meet in the Middle East, thereby completing military encirclement of India. That this plan did not succeed seems in retrospect a miracle, so near to victory did the adversaries of India at one time come.

The events which saved the country were (a) the British victory in the Battle of Britain, (b) the defence of Egypt, (during one of its most critical episodes, an Indian division with the help of one armoured division attacked and destroyed an Axis force, over 3,00,000 strong, under Marshal Graziani), and (c) the ability of India to fill practically every gap in the cracks of the Empire defences from Dunkirk to Hong Kong.

Starting practically from a scratch, India had by the third year of the war raised a voluntary army of two million men and not only equipped all this vast force (except for its needs in heavy guns, tanks, tractors, lorries and aeroplanes), but was able also to contribute materially towards the equipment of the forces of the United Nations. India's war-time industries expanded beyond all expectations and have continued to work at a pressure which at other times would have

seemed incredible. Gradually the Indian Air Force also received modern new machines and the Royal Indian Navy became an appreciable force within the limits that Indian industrial resources could permit. The names Basra, Baghdad, Tehran, Damascus, Benghazi, Ana Malagi, Tunisia, Italy, and Burma, will remain bright on the regimental colours of the Indian Army. When the history of this war comes to be written, the record of the disasters of Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaya will include, as a kind of melancholy mitigation, the deeds of courage of brave men fighting against hopeless odds through no fault of their own. The defeats in the Far East are now being compensated for by the solid achievements of the Indian troops in Burma and Italy. The Fourth, Fifth and the Eighth Indian Divisions and the Fourteenth Army on the Burma Front have won striking tributes from the Prime Minister himself. The Indian Air Force has acquitted itself creditably both in coastal defence and in the war against Japan in Burma, although it was, at one time, equipped with inferior machines to those that were flown by the Americans and the R. A. F. The Royal Indian Navy had to keep the Arabian Sea routes safe from the enemy and took its full share in helping in the security of the convoys. Railway trucks, wagons and engines were sent from India to the Middle East and by the middle of 1944, India was able, for the first time, to inflict a crushing defeat on the Japanese forces which were attempting to invade her eastern frontier.

#### THE FUTURE DEFENCE OF INDIA

Before the war, the Himalayas could be regarded as a formidable barrier against any attacks from the north and the north-east. The defence of India was, therefore, always considered in terms of the north-west frontier and the sea. Almost all the land attacks on India in the past had come from the north-west. The European invaders had come by sea. The small Indian army was considered sufficient for the defence of the north-west frontier and India had to remain content with making a tiny cash contribution to the Royal Navy for the defence of its sea coast. It had practically no mercantile shipping and could not have a big navy of its own either.

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The present war has made very clear a number of facts which must be borne in mind when considering future defence. These may be stated as facts of military geography, and to enunciate military possibilities is of course not to impute any evil intention to our neighbours.

(a) The loss of Singapore has exposed the coast of India to combined air and naval attacks from the sea; Malaya, Siam, Indo-China and Burma are therefore in the east a sphere of vital interest to India analogous to Persia and Afghanistan in the west. A hostile power in Camranh Bay would be no less dangerous than it would be in the Persian Gulf. What happens in Bangkok is of as much interest to India as what happens in Basra.

(b) The north-eastern frontier of India is no longer impregnable to land attacks;

(c) The Himalayan "hump," over which supplies are now carried to China by aeroplane will no longer hinder the bombing of Indian towns by a strong air force based on Chinese territory;

(d) The defence of the north-west frontier begins in the defence of the Middle East; Aden is the Gibraltar of India and the Persian Gulf and the safety of the Suez Canal are vital to India's security from sea attack.

(e) The long string of landing grounds along the northern frontiers of India has exposed its northern cities to air bombardment and facilitated air-borne attacks on the Punjab. If the Germans had broken through the Caucasus or if Russia had been defeated, the problem of the defence of the northern and north-western frontier of India would have become very serious; and

(f) The command of the Indian Ocean is vital to India's security.

These are military considerations (and they are set out here, as we have already stated, without any idea of imputing hostile intentions to any of our neighbours). But defence is a matter of politics as well as of arms. What force is required depends in part on the sway and movement of political alliances. Thus in planning India's defences, and in co-relating India's political structure to them, one's attention must go beyond the frontiers of India, and one must

even speculate, however diffidently and provisionally, about the combinations of powers which can possibly come into being during the next few decades. It would perhaps not be unreasonable to suggest the following possibilities:

(a) Russia will emerge from this war the greatest military power both in Asia and Europe. Its eastern frontiers will be made secure by the defeat of Japan and its elimination, if only temporary elimination, as a military power. Russia's southern frontiers will have the strongest military and air bases stretching from the Black Sea right up to Sinkiang. It has already found a passage to the Persian Gulf, and the Black Sea route can no longer be completely barred.

(b) China will similarly gain militarily at the expense of Japan. China's future is still somewhat obscure, and few observers suppose that its tribulations will end with the war, or that the tragic disputes between the Kuomintang and the Communists will be easily settled. But of China's power and greatness over a long period there can be little doubt; and the very fact that it will have overcome a turmoil may give the future Chinese state a military character. Inevitably its post-war programme of reconstruction will include the organisation of strong military forces if only to prevent a repetition of such havoc as was caused by Japanese aggression.

(c) Russia and China may therefore be expected between them to control the defensive arrangements in the northern half of Asia. In contrast to this massive military set-up, the southern half of Asia will remain divided and as if it were "Balkanised", except for whatever unifying influence may be exercised by India. The peculiar political structure of South Asia, or the Indian Ocean region as it may be called, has been too little studied by the outside world, as also the danger to peace which it may represent. The southern half of Asia consists of small countries, barring India, with weak military forces. Geographically the problem of their defence is complicated by the configuration of the various peninsulas and islands. Naval defence will thus play an important part in determining the life of this area. Therefore, unless there is throughout the world large-scale disarmament, India, out of regard for its own security, and for the tranquillity of the

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geographical region in whose centre it finds itself, will be called upon to maintain, or to secure the co-operation of, a first class modern military machine, a strong air force, a system of civil aviation, and an adequate navy.

It is obvious that India cannot by itself, undertake the defence of the vast territories of South Asia. Nor would it be in keeping with the spirit of the age for India to assert anything like a "protectorate" over its smaller neighbours. Yet India, as a great power or a potentially great power, has its obligations and it must take its part in a general system of world security. The arrangement which would most likely be proposed to it would be that it should, in co-operation with Great Britain and the Dominions, and perhaps in a lesser measure with the U. S. A., shoulder certain responsibilities for the tranquillity of the region between Aden and Singapore.

The new alignment of military forces in the northern and southern halves of Asia need not necessarily mean the balancing of one against the other in the military sense. The thought of the present time seems to favour a regional security organization which would do away with the necessity for any one country having to keep unduly large forces. But the experience of the period between the present and the last war has shown that general disarmament will not be the solution of the problems of security, especially for small countries. The new alignment of forces on the Asiatic continent might well lead on the one hand to the security of the northern half being made the responsibility of China and Russia, the security of the southern half the responsibility of India in its capacity as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations and with the strength which this will imply. There is no reason why the two regional systems should not co-ordinate their arrangements and be complementary to each other. This would, *ipso facto*, lead to an economy of the forces necessary for the security of the whole continent and to a diminution of the amount of contribution which each country would have to make towards the general pool. Nor would the result be an undue superiority of the great powers over the lesser. Indeed only by a system of this kind can the integrity of the small sovereign states be safeguarded.

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In this analysis no attempt has naturally been made to assess the exact strength of the forces which India will require to discharge its responsibilities. The task must be left to military experts. Here we are only concerned with:

(a) showing the interdependence of Asiatic countries in the matter of their common security;

(b) establishing that India must be strong and united internally if it has to play its obligatory role in the security of Asia;

(c) pointing out that, even if India does not rely wholly on its own strength but remains in the Commonwealth, the requirements of defence will entail a vast-scale programme of industrial development including ship-building, and locomotive, motor car and aeroplane factories. Peace-time industries will have to be so organised that they cannot only change over to war production easily but can also be protected against attacks from outside;

(d) indicating the necessity of close co-operation between India and the U. K. and India and Australia and South Africa in the matter of air and naval defence; and

(e) emphasising the fact that any treaty between Dominion India and the U. K. must include matters of joint interest in the field of defence.

The argument in the preceding paragraphs might suggest that India is about to embark upon a programme of armament which would lead to India itself becoming an aggressor and an imperialist nation. Those who know the people of India and their ideologies would have no such fears. India is peace-loving. It has always been its tradition to advocate peace. Were it not for its awareness of the havoc caused by Japan and Germany, India's natural inclination would be towards general disarmament. It cannot, however, afford to expose itself to the hazards of the post-war world, scarcely likely to be an age of tranquillity, without at least as much regard for security as is shown by other great powers. India's policy would therefore be to use its influence to promote disarmament, but especially to support a system promising general security; and this, it is generally assumed today, requires that some effective force shall remain with the peace-loving powers. So far as India's future relations with the U. K. are concern-

ed, the *Times* in an article dated the 2nd of August has summed up the position admirably:

“Success in the declared British policy towards India is a matter of first importance to the United Nations. Upon it depends the ability of India to discharge in the international sphere obligations to any future world order which her natural resources and her geographical position combine to impose upon her. They will be heavy. Her potentialities as the greatest power in South East Asia make her an indispensable factor in any plans for the protection of that area against aggression....Whatever the future relations between India and Britain, and the interests of the civilized world postulate a true partnership, it is clear that at the moment Indian difficulties cannot be solved either by British or Indian statesmen acting apart. Britain’s good intentions will not of themselves effect anything and India, however complete her future freedom, needs and has the right to demand British assistance now to put her house in order. For real progress two things are requisite. There must be readiness on either side to understand the difficulties of the other and there must be determination to allow no question of personal, sectional or even national prestige to obscure the larger interests involved.”

## CHAPTER II

# INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

### THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

**I**NDIA'S foreign relations are still conducted to a large extent under the general guidance and supervision of the Foreign Office in London. His Majesty's Government's representatives in foreign countries look after the interests of India.

The functions and importance of the External Affairs Department of the Government of India have however steadily increased. Originally intended to deal primarily with the local administrations on the north-west frontier and Baluchistan, the tribal areas and the frontier states the Department has now wider interests. Their enlargement began when Afghanistan and Nepal became fully independent states after the first world war, and when the selection of British representatives for those countries continued to be from amongst the members of what has now come to be known as the Indian Political Service. There has been a noticeable tendency for the relations between these two countries and Great Britain to be defined more and more in terms of India's external relations. The present war has brought home to the Government of India the need of extending its vision far beyond its immediate frontiers and its immediate neighbours. China, Russia and America became India's allies; economic and cultural ties between these countries and India were strengthened; the despatch of Indian troops abroad to the various theatres of war caused new interests and raised new problems. The Government of India is now in direct diplomatic relations with the Governments of the U. S. A. and China, and doubtless it will not be long before similar direct relations are established with the nearer countries of the Middle East and South East Asia; in addition, India is appointing High Commissioners in the various Dominions though it is to be noticed that relations with these are the charge not of the

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External Affairs Department but of the Commonwealth Relations Department.

The present External Affairs Department is an off-shoot of the old Foreign and Political Department, which was designed to deal both with external matters and the Indian States. By the Act of 1935, matters affecting the Indian States were removed from the scope of the Governor General in Council and are now the responsibility of the Crown Representative, whose office is distinct from that of the Governor General. The Political Department was separately constituted under the Crown Representative and the Viceroy holds the portfolio of the External Affairs Department. Both these Departments are officered by the Indian Political Service which is being gradually Indianised.

The External Affairs Department advises His Majesty's Government on India's foreign interests and requirements. But with the promise of Dominion Status after the war, the activities and the responsibilities of this department are daily increasing. The spasmodic and haphazard extension in its work have suggested the need for a complete survey of India's special interests abroad. The present identity of interest in foreign affairs between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India cannot be disturbed for a long time to come without causing a disruption of India's foreign relations. If India is to continue to align itself with His Majesty's Government's diplomacy, it will be necessary for it, in formulating the policy dictated by its own interests, to familiarise itself with the vast and accumulated experience of the British Foreign Office. Above all, it will be necessary to create a nucleus of young Indian "career" diplomats and to train them to take diplomatic posts in foreign countries. Experience in all countries has shown that there is risk in entrusting representation in foreign lands to politicians, no matter how able and eminent they may be in public life, unless they have on their staff, men trained in the technique of diplomatic policy and procedure.

During the last decade or so, India has been gradually assuming direct control over her overseas trade. Indian Agents and Trade Commissioners are now stationed in the U. S. A., Canada, South America, Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan

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South Africa, East Africa and Australia. Before the war, Indian Trade Representatives were also in Tokyo, Berlin and Milan. These Trade Commissioners in foreign countries have at present no diplomatic status. They are therefore handicapped in dealing with matters which fall outside the pale of trade, and unless diplomatic status can be secured for them they will not be able to perform consular work. Trade and economics are now becoming an integral part of diplomatic relations. A clearer understanding seems to be needed between the Commerce Department and the External Affairs Department whereby our trade representatives can discharge this dual function to the satisfaction of both; the best plan might be for young Indian diplomats to receive a course of training under Commerce Department and for Commerce Department officials to familiarise themselves with the functions of the External Affairs Department.

What are the special subjects of contemporary interest in the External Affairs Department? The larger international problems will be discussed in their proper place. These are the great problems that are ever present and which India shares with the rest of the world. But there are certain particular, traditional, and expert matters with which that Department is concerned arising out of Indian's immediate frontiers. These require to be dealt with in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER III  
TRIBAL TERRITORIES AND FRONTIER  
STATES

**B****O****T****H** on the north-west and north-east borders of India, there are belts of what are known as tribal areas which separate the administrative limits of British India from India's external frontiers. Except for two small pieces of land, one in Baluchistan and the other lying near Teri Garwal, in no other place does the administrative border coincide with the external frontier. These tribal areas are inhabited by semi-independent people whose relations with the Government of India are conducted through Agents to the Governor General, within whose jurisdiction these areas lie. It has been the Government of India's policy gradually to introduce in these areas a more settled way of life, and it has built roads, hospitals and schools, thus developing the territories economically, without disturbing too abruptly the local tribal structure. The main problem which faces the local Political Officers in these areas is that of watch and ward. Being in a semi-primitive state and living in tracts which are economically undeveloped, the tribesmen sometimes carry out raids in the adjoining British districts. This problem of security on the frontier has given birth to a very fine civil force, which has built up a remarkable tradition for efficiency and valour in discharging its responsibilities of policing the border. This force is organised on semi-military lines, but relies chiefly on its mobility and physical fitness to beat the tribesmen at their own game of skirmishing. The names Tochi and S.W. Scouts, the Kurram Militia, Chitral and Gilgit Scouts and Assam Rifles are too familiar to require any elaborate description. Young military officers who are imbued with an adventurous spirit are attracted to service in these bodies. The internal administration of these areas devolves on the local Political Officers, who settle their local affairs through their tribal headmen in accordance with the local custom. Some of these tribesmen make very fine soldiers. Their

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goodwill and friendly relations form a valuable asset from the point of view of the defence of India and the safety of India's frontiers. The helpful attitude of the Naga Hill tribesmen in the present war must and will not be forgotten. Maintenance of peace and administrative control over these areas are therefore an integral part of India's security and peace.

### THE FRONTIER STATES

Of these the most notable are Kalat, Lasbela, Kharan in Baluchistan; Dir, Swat, Chitral in N. W. F. P.; Hunza, Nagar, Puniyal and Kohghizr in Gilgit Agency; Sikkim and Bhutan along the fringes of the Himalayas. These states enjoy the status of Indian States under the Crown Representative. But owing to their peculiar situation, their affairs are conducted through the External Affairs Department. Their position on the frontiers of India gives their problems a "foreign" aspect. Actually very little interference is necessary in the internal affairs of these territories. The tribesmen living within these boundaries have been fortunate enough to throw up natural leaders who rule over them. The chief value to India of these States lies in their ability to maintain peace on the frontier within their areas. They also save the Indian exchequer the cost of punitive expeditions, which are sometimes inevitable in those cases where tribes have no ruler to control them and where the responsibility for watch and ward devolves in consequence on the Government of India. Some of these frontier rulers are enlightened men with remarkable administrative ability. They have introduced an efficient system of administration into their territories. The most notable example is that of the Wali of Swat, who has not only solved the problem of watch and ward in his territory by disarming the tribesmen, but has also set an example of how to pacify and control the frontier by encouraging peaceful pursuits, e.g., agriculture and cottage industries and by building roads and installing an efficient system of telephonic communication. Unfortunately in the case of tribal areas which have no rulers of their own the people are so individualistic as to be unable to produce leaders strong enough to command the allegiance of all. With these tribes, therefore, direct dealings by the Government of India are inevitable.

## THE BUFFER STATES

(1) *Afghanistan*

Towards the end of the 19th century, after the British had established their rule throughout the length and breadth of India, there remained no power in Asia which could imperil the safety of this land except Russia. Rightly or wrongly the British came to regard Russia as the greatest menace to their possessions in Asia. The Afghan Wars, and the interest which Britain was compelled to take in Persia's affairs, were the natural consequences of this fear.

India's relations with Afghanistan have passed through several phases. By a special treaty the borders of Afghanistan adjoining Russia and India were defined and the inviolability of Afghan frontiers was guaranteed by these two powers. Afghanistan's independence was recognised by the British after the Third Afghan War of 1919, and there is a treaty between India and that country which allows a free corridor through this country for Afghan imports and exports. Afghanistan is a hilly country, the eastern and southern tracts of which are inhabited by Pathans, or Afghan tribesmen, who have close affinities and also social and economic ties with similar tribesmen living on the Indian side of the border. They are armed with modern rifles, and have a tradition of turbulence; and any disruption of the internal peace of Afghanistan has repercussions on the peace of India's north-west frontier. Northern Afghanistan is inhabited by the Tajiks and Uzbeks, who are people of Turki origin, sections of whom also live in the U. S. S. R. On the west and south-west the inhabitants are akin to Persians. Ever since the invasion of India by Ahmad Shah Durrani the ruling family of Afghanistan has belonged to one or the other of the Durrani tribes. The present ruling family belongs to the Mohammed Zai section of the Barakzai tribe which inhabits the Kandahar area. Almost all Afghans are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi school. Of late strenuous efforts have been made by the ruling classes to introduce education and ideas of modern civilization in the country.

There is a large-scale trade between India and Afghanistan. The main exports from Afghanistan are wool,

furs, carpets, fresh and dry fruits. India exports to Afghanistan petroleum, sugar, tea, wheat and a variety of consumer goods and machinery. Afghanistan has no sea-port and depends, upon Indian ports for her overseas commerce. There is thus also a close economic bond between that country and India.

The independence of Afghanistan and her friendly relations with India are indispensable to the defence of India. Military, political, economic, commercial and cultural considerations make it necessary for India to do everything in her power to strengthen the ties of neighbourly relations with that country.

## (2) *Nepal*

On the north and north-east India's borders adjoin those of China. Along the Himalayas the autonomous territories of Nepal and Tibet separate India from that country. India was brought into contact with Nepal as a result of two wars, both fought in self-defence by this country. The Treaty of Sigowli gave India certain territories and placed her relations with Nepal on a firm basis of friendship. The Gurkhas who fought the Indian and British troops with exemplary bravery, subsequently became a principal part of the fighting forces of India. India has absorbed hundreds of thousands of Nepalese in various civil occupations. The independence of Nepal was recognised after World War I, and later a commercial and economic treaty gave Nepal the same facilities for imports and exports through India as are enjoyed by Afghanistan. Nepal is a Hindu state and, although the inhabitants of its hilly tracts are mostly Buddhists and of Mongolian origin, it has come to regard India rather than Tibet and China as its natural outlet. Nepal is an undeveloped country and stands in need of industrialisation. Anything that India can do to help it towards modernization will indirectly benefit India by increasing the volume of trade and employment of skilled labour. The goodwill of Nepal is therefore invaluable to India. Politically Nepal forms a buffer state between India and the north. Culturally it is in close affinity with Hindu India. It is the site of the early peregrinations of Lord Buddha. Gurkhas will always form

an asset to India's land forces. It would be a pity if Indian nationalism does not take a broader view of India's relations with Nepal and Afghanistan and it would be a tragedy of the first order if the friendship of the whole of India for these two countries was spoilt by an attempt to align Muslim India with one country and Hindu India with the other. The ruling classes of both Nepal and Afghanistan are fortunately more far-sighted in this respect than some of the disruptionist elements in India's political life. The Governments of Afghanistan and Nepal concede India to be a single country and its people to form a single nation. They do not distinguish between Hindu India and Muslim India. Many Indians of vision and intelligence respond by checking the tendency amongst some of their less far-sighted countrymen to import sectarianism into international politics.

### (3) *Tibet*

Nepal and Tibet have been described above as autonomous. The position of Tibet needs some explanation. China considers Tibet to be a part of itself. But in 1912 the Tibetans drove out the Chinese troops and subsequent effort by means of a tripartite conference at Simla, in 1913-14, to settle Tibetan status and boundaries vis-a-vis China was repudiated by the new Republican Government of China. The British Government's position is that they are prepared to recognise Chinese titular suzerainty over Tibet, if China for her part will recognise and respect *de facto* Tibetan autonomy. Since then Tibet has preferred to conduct her foreign relations through the Government of India rather than through China. The question of the status of Tibet should, however, no longer form the basis of a misunderstanding between India and China as both are interested in its local autonomy and both are anxious to see it develop in accordance with its own traditions. Tibet is an inland country and its outlet to the sea is shorter and more direct through India than through China; it is therefore easier for her to trade with India. Indian traders export salt, spices and consumer goods to Tibet; while Tibet exports silk and wool to India. Some portions of the frontier between India and Tibet still remain undefined, but this has never been a matter of mis-

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understanding between the two countries; this question will be resolved by friendly negotiation. The Government of India's representation at Lahsa enables both the countries to strengthen their political, economic and cultural ties. Tibetans are known to be in some ways the nicest people in Asia. Their political and governmental affairs are dictated by Buddhist ideals, as is manifest by the theocratic form of government of the Dalai Lama and his subordinate Lamas. There are ideological affinities between the people of India and the people of Tibet, for instance, the Tibetans use the Sanskritic alphabet, and Buddhism was born in India. With the development of new forms of transport, the Himalayas are no longer the same barrier as formerly. Only a year or two ago India witnessed a large-scale incursion of hordes of Kazaks which wandered through Tibet into Kashmir by the northern routes. There are great possibilities of development of trade in Tibet of which India can take the fullest advantage provided it maintains its relations with that country on a friendly basis. Already India is sending supplies to China through Tibetan routes.

CHAPTER IV  
INDIA'S NEIGHBOURS

(A) PERSIAN GULF

**T**HE territories in Persia and Arabia which surround the Persian Gulf, including the island of Bahrain, are generally known as the area of the Persian Gulf. In the main this region consists of Arab principalities. In contrast to the Beduin Arabs of central Arabia or the tribes which inhabit the hinterland of the south coast of Arabia, the Arab population of the Gulf is cosmopolitan, sea-faring and devoted to trade and business. Shrewd businessmen can be found in the Gulf markets. Bahrain has become the central point where American business interests are bringing a further impetus to the modernizing influence which the British political interests have exercised over this area during the last hundred years or more.

There have been centuries of trade and intercourse between India and the Gulf. India has spent much money and blood in this area in combating piracy and keeping the sea routes safe, and this effort has gained for it a political Residency, and the Gulf has been gradually brought within India's political influence. India exports spices, rice, wheat, cloth, consumer goods and machinery to the Gulf and imports oil and dates, etc. The pearls of Bahrain are world famous. The gross trade between India and the Gulf has recently been estimated at Rs. 2 crores per annum. Indian firms, both Hindu and Muslim, have established for themselves a good reputation and are locally respected. Indian pilgrims to Iraq follow the Gulf route. Nor is the connection between the two countries a matter chiefly of the past, but is likely to become more intimate with changing conditions of transport. The Persian Gulf lies on the air route between India and Europe.

India's interest in the area is not only on account of economic matters; its defence requires the liveliest interest in the security and independence of the Gulf region. Both during the last war and the present, the battles for the defence of the

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western frontier of India were fought in the Middle East, and the Gulf route is the one which the Indian expeditionary forces took in order to meet the enemy which threatened the safety of India. It was in this area that the Japanese intended to join forces with Germany in the event of the latter breaking through the Caucasus. It is thus clear that whoever is in command of this area and Aden will be able to menace the sea routes between India and East Africa and England and Australia. To safeguard these interests India has developed a policy and a machinery for its execution. Relations with the local Sheikhs and rulers are conducted through the Resident in the Persian Gulf under whom are a number of political officers. In considering India's future relations with Great Britain the treaty rights of these princes will need to be kept in view. India offers many opportunities for people from these areas to learn modern scientific methods and acquire general education which would help to develop their own countries.

### (B) PERSIA OR IRAN

The geographical position of Persia makes her an important neighbour of India. The Trans-Persian railway has opened up a new route linking Russia with the Persian Gulf, and other routes developed for the transport of war supplies pass up the Persian Gulf and via Nushki, Zahidan and Meshed. The Persian oil fields are among the richest in Asia, and employ a large number of Indians. They are one of the principal suppliers of fuel to India, and as Indian industry develops further the oil of Persia will become increasingly its motive power. India exports tea, coffee, foodstuffs and consumer goods to Persia. Indian pilgrims going to the holy places in Iraq and wishing to visit on their way the holy places of Meshed and Qum follow the Zahidan-Meshed route. Persian culture has had a deep influence on India and has helped to enrich her heritage in poetry and architecture. There are many social habits common both to Persians and Indians.

Between the two World Wars, Persia had embarked upon a policy of state monopolies which had almost strangled India's trade with that country. The policy of westernization enforced by Raza Shah, though its effect was only skin-deep

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on the Persians, gave them a false sense of superiority and aloofness in their dealings with Indians. It is hoped that better counsel will now prevail and a new chapter will open which will bring about a better understanding of India amongst Persians.

Persians are a delightful and charming people. In spite of the Arab influence brought about the advent of Islam in Persia, they have always managed to keep up their own way of life. Their poetry and literature art and culture have been a source of inspiration for the whole world. It would be a pity if superficial aping of the West is now allowed to spoil this wonderful heritage of Asia. Persia and India have much to give each other. Nature has designed Persia and India to be good neighbours and the future salvation of Asia lies in their close collaboration. The recent visit to India of the Persian Cultural Mission has helped greatly towards this understanding and it is hoped that a return visit by an Indian Mission will pave the ground for lasting friendship between the two countries.

In the past a principal interest of India in Persia has been its position as between Great Britain and Russia. Happily the old rivalry between these two powers is disappearing and has been replaced by the 20-years' Treaty of friendship and by the Tripartite Treaty between Russia, Persia and Britain, which guarantees the independence of Persia. America has endorsed these agreements and this may perhaps be a sign that the change will be lasting. Persia need therefore have no fear of losing her independence and integrity. The interplay of diplomacy in this area will henceforth be triangular instead of being two-sided. In post-war reconstruction India can be of great service to Persia, and in return Persia may continue to radiate its cultural inspiration towards India. Politically and economically India and Persia may come closer together so that, in the general chain of security set-up in the southern half of Asia, the two countries will form close and important links.

### (C) SINKIANG

Sinkiang is a province of China and as such India's relations with that part of Central Asia should be considered as

part of the whole Indo-Chinese relations. But this is the only part of China with which, until the present war, India's relations have been close. Indian traders have contributed a great deal towards the prosperity of the country and have also in the process suffered unspeakable losses in life and money. The lot of Indian traders was particularly terrible during the immediate pre-war period. The local administration had then assumed a status of its own, paying no more than lip homage to the central Government. It had embarked upon a policy of harassment and ill-treatment of law-abiding Indian traders. In spite of these hardships, Indian enterprise has gained for India a position of her own in central Asia and brought her a Consulate-General at Kashgar.

Some people maintain that Indian trade in Sinkiang has now been killed for good and that Russian trade will henceforth take its place. This is a pessimistic view. India can still find a market for her goods and machinery in Chinese Turkestan provided the right steps are taken. The unenlightened days of profiteering are over and Indian traders must be prepared to readjust themselves to modern ideas of efficiency and competition. Kashgar silk, wool and "namdahs" will always find an easy market in India; Kashgar will need machinery and consumer goods from India. There are good landing grounds in the Gilgit area and Sinkiang; the Leh route is already a prominent feature of communication between India and central Asia. It would be a great pity if India lost its footing in central Asia where the Consulate-General at Kashgar keeps it in touch with what is going on in these remote parts of Asia. Already India is exposed to danger because of Japanese penetration in Manchuria and its intrigues in outer Mongolia and Sinkiang. If Russia, China and India are going to be good neighbours, Sinkiang offers the most suitable meeting ground between these three great powers of Asia.

CHAPTER V  
SOUTH EAST ASIA

**I**NDIA'S neighbours on her eastern side, a group of small states forming a kind of Balkans of Asia, constitute a peculiar region, and may therefore be considered separately. The countries in question, Burma, Siam, Indo-China, Malaya and Dutch East Indies are sometimes known as "Further India." Evidence of the nexus between India and her past colonial possession in the Far East can be found in the fact that the Dutch refer to their possessions in the East Indies as "India," while India proper they distinguish as "British India." The Hindu prohibition of foreign travel and distaste for the "Black Water" is a relatively new peculiarity, and Hindu sailors two thousand years ago navigated distant seas. Certainly they carried Hindu colonists to the Indo-Chinese peninsula, the Indonesian islands and to the Philippines, and probably even further into the Pacific. The states which they organised in this region followed the Hindu model; Sanscrit names abounded; the worship was Hindu. So it continued for over a thousand years. The Sri Vijaya Empire of Java under which the famous temple of Borobodur was constructed was a Hindu kingdom, as was also the medieval kingdom of Cambodia which built the temples of Angkor Wat.

Indian influence in these regions weakened after the war in the 11th century between the navies of Indonesia and South India and the supersession of both in the next century by Arab corsairs. Communication with India being thus severed the inhabitants gradually ceased to be Hindu, or allowed their Hindu culture to be overlaid by Islamic, Chinese and finally western characteristics. The extent to which Hinduism has survived should however not be underrated. In Siam the Royal palace still supports a Brahmin community for the performance of certain state functions. The Siamese alphabet has an Indian origin. The people have Sanscrit names. They regard India as the home of their civilization. In the ancient kingdom of Cambodia which now forms part

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of Indo-China, the old Hindu court ceremony is said to be preserved in a kind of fossil form.

India's contemporary interest in this region may be examined country by country. The Indian population in these lands was before the war estimated as follows:

Burma	..	..	..	..	..	10,17,825
Malaya	..	..	..	..	..	7,50,000
Siam	..	..	..	..	..	55,000
Indo-China	..	..	..	..	..	5,000 to 6,000
Dutch East Indies	..	..	..	..	..	28,000 to 30,000

Trade relations may be summarised as follows:

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1938—39

Country	Export		Import	
	Commodities	Value Rs.	Commodities	Value Rs.
Burma .. ..	Coal and coke; Fish; fruits and vegetables; wheat flour; iron and steel; groundnut oil; paper; groundnut; betelnut; sugar; tea; cotton yarn; piece-goods; jute manufactures; tobacco and cigarettes .. ..	8,76,90,000	Fruits and vegetables; pulse; rice (in husk); rice (not in husk); matches; lead; kerosine; lubricating oil; petroleum. etc.; teak wood .. ..	22,14,94,000
Malaya .. ..	Coal and coke; ropes; cotton manufactures; fodder; grain (rice); hides and skins; jute manufactures; seeds ..	2,03,97,000	Canes and ratteen; fish-dried; tin; mineral oil; provisions and stores; spices .. ..	4,13,06,000
Siam .. ..	Cotton manufactures; jute-gunny bags ..	69,64,000	Teak wood .. ..	9,42,000
Indo-China ..	Jute manufactures ..	68,24,000	Misc. items .. ..	13,93,000
Dutch East Indies	Coal and coke; rice; jute-gunny bags ..	82,73,000	Mineral oil; liquors; sugar .. ..	1,74,15,000

## BURMA

Burma was separated from India in 1937. Since then, India and Burma have had several problems of common interest to settle on a neighbourly basis. That of Indian immigration into Burma will be the first requiring decision in the postwar period. While, on the one side, exploitation of Burmese by Indian capitalistic interests will have to be ended, on the other, it may be hoped that the Burmese will adopt a broader outlook towards Indian settlers in their country. India's self-respect demands that it should secure that Indians long resident in Burma should be allowed a fair share in the opportunities which Burma can offer. Both countries can render services to and are dependent on each other. India depends on Burma for oil, rice and timber; in return India can assist Burma to develop and to evolve a common policy in defence against aggression from the East. Burma was conquered by Indian troops in the 19th century and India had to bear the whole burden of the cost of two Burmese Wars. The loss of Burma in the present war formed a direct threat to the safety of India. The withdrawal from Burma has cost India much in life and property. It will take India long to forget the tragic fate of Indian evacuees after the Japanese occupation of the country. India cannot afford a repetition of the Japanese attack on her eastern frontiers and may therefore be prepared to take a big share in the responsibility for the future defence of Burma both by sea and land. Details of co-operation have still to be worked out, but a probable arrangement would be that the resources of the two countries would be pooled, and a friendly and neighbourly understanding would be reached on all future problems of common interest. India will always remain interested in the freedom of Burma and the fact that the two countries will enjoy Dominion Status after the war should lead to a closer understanding. After all there was always a considerable body of opinion in Burma against separation from India. This obvious sign of goodwill on both sides should now be used to bring the two peoples together on a basis of closer collaboration, particularly in the sphere of security.

MALAYA

Malaya consists of two modern cosmopolitan parts, of Penang and Singapore, built up as a result of a century of British political connection and commerce, and of a hinterland of nine Muslim Sultanates, whose institutions and ways of life have remained almost untouched by the conditions of the modern business world. In the past, British rule, unlike Russian, has interfered as little as possible with the unsophisticated inhabitants of the countries under its control and has allowed modern civilization to penetrate only gradually, and education to spread without its pace being forced by artificial means. The British power in Malaya does not seem to have been challenged so far effectively from within. The lessons of the present war must however have brought home to the British authorities the necessity for planning a more rapid modernisation of the country, and India would welcome this no less than all other manifestations of liberalism within the Commonwealth.

Malays are actually in a minority in the country. They number 2.2 million, but the Chinese, in the most recent census, numbered 2.3 million. The Indian community was also large, numbering 750,000. The Chinese, by one of the strangest anomalies of the British Empire, may enjoy Chinese as well as British nationality, and that is perhaps why the interests of many are not in Malaya, but in China. The Indian population consists chiefly of Tamil coolies engaged in the rubber plantations and a leaven of professional men and money-lenders; unhappily it has not made for itself a place comparable to that of the Chinese. India's interest in Malaya, as in Burma, is mainly military. Though Singapore fell in 1942, this was due not to the defects of its own but to the lack of adequate forces to defend it. The naval base can still be the key to the eastern seas and, therefore, to India's security. To underrate its future importance might indeed be for India a greater disaster than was its loss in 1942.

SIAM

Small as it is, and mild and amiable as are its people, Siam seems to have a certain inner toughness, enabling it to

survive as a viable state while others perish. Siam is an ancient monarchy, but is governed by a clique of politicians. The present king belongs to the Chakri dynasty whose authority and prestige amongst the entire Siamese people remains unaffected by the events of the past fifteen years. The liberalisation of the monarchy has in no way diminished its prestige although it has put an end to absolute rule. The first few years after the revolution of 1932—the liberal stages—helped to cleanse the monarchy of not merely autocratic traditions but to liberate it from the influence of an exclusive group of royal relatives who had monopolised the great offices of the state. The fact that the reigning king Ananda Mahidol is a minor and was in no way connected with the policy of the dictator Marshal Pibul Songgram, should enable him to serve as a rallying point for the revivification of the nation after the war. All evidence available to the outside world points to the fact that apart from a certain army clique which until recently controlled the machinery of government, the population in Siam is indifferent to the war and, at least in a measure, hostile to the Japanese. If there is anywhere a case for condoning the acts of those who declared war against the democracies, it is in Siam. This small country found itself in a helpless state. Neither Britain nor America was able to provide it with military equipment. Its repeated requests for aeroplanes and oil had all to be rejected. Japan started interfering in its internal and international affairs without the Allies being in a position to render any aid on the other side, and finally Japan presented it with the choice of a more or less formal declaration of war against the Allies or the forfeiture of its existence.

One of the problems with which Siam will be faced in the post-war period, will be that of its Chinese population of 2,500,000: An exact computation of the Chinese population is difficult since Siam is the only country of the orient which has been able to assimilate the Chinese and it is often hard to say whether a particular person is Chinese or Thai. A small country like Siam will naturally be always afraid of the pressure of its Chinese neighbour and will feel itself endangered by a possible torrent of Chinese expansion. So far only by strong measures including a persistent refusal to have diplomatic

relations with China, has Siam been able to resist the pressure of Chinese population.

Indians enjoy an honourable place in Siam, the cultural traditions of the country being Hindu. India's main interest in Siam is, however, in defence and in this respect Siam is for India in much the same position as Malaya and Indo-China. Siam was always looked upon by India as a buffer state. Its fall led to the fall of Burma as the fall of Burma exposed India's eastern frontier to invasion. India must therefore use all its influence to see that Siam is always free from alien military control and encourage it to link up its defence arrangements with those made by India. In return Siam should allow India free transit for its air lines eastwards, and now that the railway linking Burma with Malaya has been completed, for rail traffic as well. For international misunderstanding may well be avoided if it is comprehended that a self-governing India intends to protect its position vigilantly, and by a strengthening of the economic and commercial relations between itself and its smaller neighbours assist them in preserving their integrity.

#### INDO-CHINA

French Indo-China has no geographical or ethnographical unity and no political cohesion apart from that enforced by French administration. It is a mosaic of peoples and cultures. Today it consists of five units: the kingdoms of (1) Annam, (2) Cambodia, the protectorates of (3) Laos (4) Tonkin, and the colony of (5) Cochin China. The French have a respectable record of material achievement and they have built railways, roads, dykes and irrigation canals, and have also attempted to spread higher education and fostered oriental studies and archaeology. But it must be added that in many respects the French rule has been illiberal and even, as some say, predatory. It has encountered a fairly strong nationalist resistance from the Annamite middle class. The Cambodians however have been inclined to acquiesce more readily in foreign rule; France rescued Cambodia from constant attacks from Annam and Siam and has moreover conciliated the Buddhist monks in Cambodia.

## SOUTH-EAST ASIA

The culture of the Annamites is Chinese: for nearly 2,000 years the Annamite kingdom was a tributary of the Chinese Empire. Its language, though non-Chinese, was until the French period written in Chinese characters. Its monarchy which the French have preserved maintains a court whose ceremonies are described as an exact copy of those of Peiking and are still celebrated. The culture of Cambodia, on the other hand, is Indian. Cambodia indeed is the last of the Hindu kingdoms which once covered the entire region, and its court functions, purely Hindu, are said to date from the 5th century.

India's main interest in Indo-China is in defence; Indo-China is the principal bastion to Singapore. Camran Bay has all the natural qualities to be the naval base for dominating the South China Seas, though it has not yet been fully developed as such. India's defence, therefore, requires that it should either be in the hands of a power entirely friendly to India or of a power without naval ambition. It would, therefore, be in India's interest to press for self-determination of Indo-China and to encourage the formation, if necessary under the supervision and guidance of an international body, of some sort of a federation between the various political units free from interference by any outside power.

## DUTCH EAST INDIES

Of all the countries in South East Asia, India's sentimental and cultural ties may be described as the strongest with the Dutch East Indies. Hindu India has always been attracted to its culture which is Hindu, while Muslim India has religious affinities with the population of the country which is mainly Muslim. The present war has shown that a hostile power in occupation of this territory will always be a serious threat to the safety of India's eastern frontiers.

The natural wealth of the Dutch East Indies is proverbial. The lessons of the present war should bring home to the Dutch the importance of helping the people in the achievement of self-government, without which they cannot become really strong enough to defend their country and its wealth. There is a strong nationalist movement in the country which will find great sympathy in India after the war. Whatever the fu-

ture connection of the Dutch with the people of the Netherlands East Indies, India cannot afford to allow a hostile or imperialistic power, whether eastern or western, to gain a footing in the Dutch East Indies. The future of this country is as important to India as to Australia, and the desirability of Australia and India evolving a common policy towards this territory is indicated.

Such are the main interests of India in these countries. How is one to sum up India's interest in the region as a whole? Except for a brief period when a rather unnecessary fear existed in the minds of the British that France planned to use its possessions in Indo-China as a base from which to avenge its defeat in India a century earlier, much less thought has in the past been given to the problems of India's eastern neighbours than to those of its neighbours in the west. Hitherto the Government of India has disinterested itself in what lay beyond its eastern frontiers, chiefly because no menace seemed to come from its petty neighbours and no power stood in the background to manipulate them. The mountains which lie between India and China, Siam and Burma, the sea barrier against Japan at remote Singapore, the complete lack of attention to the long planning and undermining which preceded the Japanese aggression relieved the Government of India of all anxiety. How deep was the belief in security, and how late it continued, is shown by the decision in 1937 against the building of an Indo-Burma railway.

Now the awakening has come. The fall of Indo-China to Japan in the middle of 1941 led to the fall of Siam six months later, the fall of both these to the fall of Malaya, and the fall of Burma to the acutest threat to India for more than a century. The Japanese army and navy have convinced the most sceptical where India's interests lie.

Japan will be defeated at the end of this war and the renewal of its imperialist exertions will be unlikely though not altogether impossible. Can India then safely return to its indifference? It would perhaps be well to recall the house into which, after one devil had been evicted, seven worse ones entered. The policies of other powers who are showing interest in the future of this region, though as yet wavering and

uncertain, turn in a direction which, if they should develop force behind their policies, might not be convenient to India. The security of India demands the security of this region. The security of this region indicates a policy of close collaboration between India, Australia and U. K. This collaboration might well take the form of a regional organisation in South East Asia.

Beyond China there is U. S. A. which is showing interest in the future security of South East Asia. America's own foreign policy may be uncertain. A recession to isolationism may remove any active American participation in the security of South East Asia. Yet if America is interested anywhere in the world, it would be in the Pacific and, if it is interested, it will partly be for reasons of trade and business, and mainly to make America's position safe and strong in this area. India has confidence in America and has no fear of the bogey of American domination. Yet it would be idle to pretend that India would regard without dismay or worse any countenance given by the U. S. A. to expansionist ambitions of other powers which seek to encroach upon this area.

As in the case of the Middle East, the future diplomacy in this area is bound to run on a triangular plane—America, China and India within the British Commonwealth, being the chief collaborators. But India cannot afford to lose time. She must make her presence felt as actively in the East as she does on the west in Persia and Afghanistan. The first step would be to arrange for Indian diplomatic representation in the whole of this region. Nor can an Indian government fail to encourage the interest in the country and abroad in India's vital interests in this area. India must be always ready to correct any misapprehensions created by other powers. Its industrialists may legitimately hope to inherit the trade markets left open after the elimination of the Japanese. Its financiers may find a profitable outlet for their capital. India will be very much interested in the plans of His Majesty's Government for eastern airways and will claim its rightful place in their operation. Only by taking these steps, will its defence and trade interests in South East Asia be stimulated and sustained.

## CHAPTER VI

### CHINA, RUSSIA AND AMERICA

**T**HE problems discussed in the preceding chapter may seem parochial in contrast with the more massive problems of India's relations with the powers that are destined to rule the world of tomorrow. India must adjust its relations with these giant powers. The mode of collaboration with them will indeed be the gravest subject for decision in the whole field of India's foreign policy. The facts which must determine India's attitude towards each one of the powers may now be examined.

#### CHINA

There are many similarities between India and China. Both contain enormous populations; between them they comprise two-fifths of the population of the world. Both will have to face large-scale programmes of reconstruction after the war. Both have a history of internal dissensions. Both have a predominantly agriculturist economy. Both are now facing a common enemy in Japan. Nor, though they have widely different cultures, have they failed to influence one another. India is the birth-palace of Buddhism which is one of the predominant religions of China. Chinese Muslims have assimilated Chinese culture and ideology. In the past century both countries have had to adapt themselves to the impact of the west and in doing so both have desired that the new generations should absorb all that is good in western civilization without abandoning entirely their own traditions. Neither India nor China has ever been engaged in a major dispute. When Japan invaded China, India was the first to show sympathy for China in a practical way by sending a non-official medical mission, and that at a time when the western powers were still following the policy of appeasing Japan. In the present war, Chinese and Indian troops have fought side by side. India has become the base for supplies to China both by air and by land. New routes have been opened through Tibet, and Burma, and the present postal route

to China via Gilgit and Sinkiang passes through India. Chinese students have come for training and study to universities. Indian students have likewise gone to China.

Here, in this community of interests and ideals, is surely a foundation for building up a lasting friendship between the two countries. The war has opened possibilities of trade and opportunities for India to help in the industrialisation of China. Their destinies require that India and China should evolve a common plan for the security of Asia. Such a concert between the two countries would lead to economy of forces. To the diplomatists of both countries will fall the responsibility of ensuring that the few points of friction—Tibet, trade in Sinkiang, and the independence of India's neighbours in South East Asia—do not stand in the way of a co-operation so useful to either country, and so essential for world tranquillity.

#### RUSSIA

Before the war, Russia was a closed book to India. Russian thought had an ideological appeal to certain sections of the Indian population, but in general, Russia was to India what she was to the west, a mystery and an enigma. The German invasion of Russia has lifted the curtain. The way Russia was able to withstand the German onslaught and the manner in which the whole nation rallied round Stalin, every citizen giving his best towards halting the German advance and then turning it into a retreat, was something which opened the eyes of the world. We are now beginning to understand how during the past twenty-five years Russia has solved many of the problems which today are among the gravest in this country. The chief amongst these are the spread of literacy, housing, food, sanitation, industrial development, a balanced economy between agriculture and industry and the fusion into a homogeneous whole of local national units of the various regions, which at the same time are encouraged to preserve their cultural identity. All this has created for the Soviet ideologies a certain appeal which must have repercussions on the internal politics of this country. Hitherto the divisions in India have been based on religious and social differences:

now they tend to be ideological, especially in the case of the younger generations.

In spite of this, and in spite of the contiguity of the Russian and Indian frontiers and India's part in sending war supplies to Russia, ignorance about the details of the life and the polity of Russia still prevails. Similarly it seems that Russia has nothing like a true picture of the actual conditions in India. Much requires to be done in both countries to bring about an exchange of knowledge and a better understanding of each other.

When the war is over, the large scale air development which has taken place in Russia will be turned into commercial and peaceful channels. Great airlines will operate through the vast stretches of Russian territory. Should Russia decide to extend its commercial airlines towards the south, this would provide corresponding opportunities for India to run its own airlines to the Russian commercial centres. This would open to both countries great opportunities for commercial aviation and trade, and in any case both will remain interested in the trade of the rest of Asia.

The military arrangements for purposes of security which may exist in the north under the aegis of Russia will perhaps suggest or lead to corresponding arrangements in the southern half of Asia, and the main centre for them will be this country. Russian diplomacy in the Middle East and Afghanistan will have its counterpart in joint British and Indian diplomacy in that area, where the U. S. A. would also have their interests. It is hoped that the concert between these countries brought about by the war will continue in the era of peace. The British 20-year treaty of amity with Russia is binding on India also. It is therefore for India to take an increasing interest in this powerful neighbour of hers. Friendship between the two countries must remain an important factor in Asiatic security for a long time to come.

#### AMERICA

Americans are often the first to admit that the foreign policy of their country is not lacking in paradox. The U. S. A. has come to exercise an enormous influence over the affairs of the world. While American tradition is genuinely

opposed to imperialism, huge tracts of American territories were acquired by methods which were hardly different from those of the old imperialist powers. Whether an entirely happy settlement of the Philippine problem will be reached, has still to be seen. In the meanwhile some exponents of American foreign policy maintain that the U. S. A. should not relinquish any of the islands that fall into its hands in this war, and that she should also acquire air and sea bases throughout the world. The people of Asia have the deepest respect for American liberal ideas, and for their apostles, such as Lincoln, ideas on which has been built the marvellous political edifice of America. But notwithstanding these liberal ideas, in the countries outside America, e.g., Palestine, a different picture of American policy appears. It may perhaps not be uncharitable to say that American liberalism has never become unambiguously free from the influence of American economic practice. The consequences of American capitalist enterprise to the economic condition of such lands as it flourishes in cause sometimes an uneasiness in Asiatic minds about the entire philosophy of Americanism.

Another paradox is noticeable in the history of American relations with Japan. The U. S. A. supplied the Japanese with their war potential, because it paid the American big business to do so, and it was not till Pearl Harbour that the U. S. A. stopped sending scrap iron to Japan. Doubtless, it is hoped, in the post-war world the American resolution to promote world peace and prosperity will curb the desire to make profit at the cost of the people of Asia. But a frightened world needs reassurance. An eminent Indian statesman speaking in Bombay the other day compared the Atlantic Charter to an Atlantic liner which contains First Class, Second Class, Third Class and Fourth Class passengers. The people in the East were presumed by the speaker to belong to a class widely different from that reserved for the big European powers. Recently the world has seen some correspondence from which it appears that freedom for India was urged upon the President of the U. S. A. by his Personal Representative in this country. Indians naturally claim that the freedom of their country is something worth supporting on its own merits, but they have noticed with dismay that the reasons for

which freedom for India was urged were not that the people of India were deserving of freedom, but that it would help the U. S. A. in waging its war against Japan. Indians have no desire to cultivate any but the warmest feelings for Americans; but in order that these may grow unimpeded, let it be understood that to call the Indian soldier mercenary, when he is shedding his blood for the cause of the United Nations and the cause of the freedom of his country after the war, is at least as ungenerous as it would be to cast doubt upon the sincerity of professions of the Four Freedoms offered to the world by the U. S. A.

India is a poor country. It has a big leeway to make for raising its standard of living. The war has proved very costly to it and its people have suffered many privations—heavier indeed than those of the people of U. S. A. If in spite of all these sacrifices, India's claim to a due place in the political and economic reordering of the world is not met, how can India dopt enthusiastically the role of a "good neighbour?"

The foregoing paragraphs may perhaps give a somewhat sordid picture of what an average Indian thinks of and hopes from America; and it is not the whole picture, for the Indian knows that America's internal politics are so complex that what he sees in the American press does not always faithfully represent the views of the whole country or the civilisation and philanthropy of its entire people. Therefore he is not really shocked when he sees statements such as that made by an important American personality that America had not entered the war to take a glass of milk to every Hotentot! The Americans are the most generous, the most kind-hearted and the most hospitable of all peoples. They have no airs about them, and their courtesy and goodwill towards Asiatics strikes the visitor as finer than that which he experiences in European countries.

It is sometimes said that America is not really interested in India and that the Indian issue is merely being used as a device to embarrass the Britishers, or alternatively to promote a particular cause at an election. India hopes that this is not true, because America can give to the world, and particularly to India, a new enlightenment in liberal ideas, in education,

## CHINA, RUSSIA AND AMERICA

agriculture and in material techniques. India stands to gain politically also by its contact with America. Its example of fusing a heterogeneous collection of people into one nation will be to India a perpetual inspiration. The freedom for every American citizen, no matter of what race, creed or religion, to aspire to become the President of his country similarly has a lesson for Indians.

After the war India will need American capital and capital goods. It will need American technicians and technical advice. The joint war effort of India and America has brought the two countries so close that each is bound to have gained some understanding of the other's point of view. India desires that the U. S. A. should appreciate some of its fears and uncertainties, as a means to promoting the more effectively an understanding cordial and enduring.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH, AND THE WORLD

**I**NDIA and Britain have been brought together, and together still they remain. Call it a plan of Providence or the logic of history, it is their destiny. They both need it, and World Order needs them both. It is in this light, against the world background, that I visualize the partnership or alliance between Britain and India as coming and enduring.

This conclusion becomes inescapable as we follow the whole trend of evolution, of the increasing unity of man and his world. While the radio and aviation have made world-wide contacts easy and instantaneous the radiant ideal of a World State is well on the human horizon, struggling along through wars of liberation. From the 'cave man' to the 'world man,' the glorious destiny moves on.

For ourselves, however, the steps are clearly marked out; from Hindu-Muslim India, through the British Commonwealth of Nations, to the Human Commonwealth. For the world at large, from tribal units man has scaled the heights of the United Nations, the largest human grouping hitherto brought about. And today he stands on the brink of an epochal transition.

But periods of transition are generally replete with sharp contradictions. In Europe, countries once units have been dismembered into smaller sovereign states in deference to the principle of 'self-determination.' The Treaty of Versailles made the minority problem a major political problem, but the principle of national self-determination did little to solve it. Bad politics and worse economics have thrown the new states, along with the old, again into the melting pot. And the Europe of the Versailles settlement has failed to clear the atmosphere of antagonism. To many minds the present war was a foregone conclusion,

“Europe, then, as now reached a point at which it would seem, as never so clearly in past history, that two alternative and sharply contrasted destinies await her. She may travel down the road to a new war or, overcoming passion, prejudice and hysteria, work for a permanent organisation of peace. In either case the human spirit is armed with material power. The developing miracle of science is at our disposal to use or abuse, to make or mar. With science we may lay civilization in ruins or enter into a period of plenty and well-being the like of which has never been experienced by mankind. In the mean time the war has left us an evil legacy. The moral unity of Europe is for the time being broken.”\*

It is sad. It is serious. But it is the paradox of European civilization. With more and more conquest over nature outside, man is ever more losing his grip on nature within. He explores the bottom of the seas; he invades the stratosphere; but all the while he is more and more missing the approach to the heart of man. His whole outlook is woefully material. He is in hot pursuit of the superficials, and these he invests with the splendour of his intellect. He ridicules love as a vague ideal, and rejects religion on the ground that it cannot produce a certificate from science. So he goes on in tragic earnestness, experimenting with sordid deities of politics and economics, that are torn asunder no sooner than they are moulded. To him anything that is not material is immaterial. So whenever he makes an alliance he does it by creating interests, for that is his knowledge of what he complacently calls human weakness. Shared interests are not shared long; shared ideals are. But who in politics cares for ideals? And the result is, there is peace only to punctuate wars.

In fact, there are thinkers who have very great doubt if the Great War was fought to make democracy safe. Instead, soon after peace, it was assailed by Nazism, Fascism and Communism, which arose as so many types of challenge, so many outlooks of protest against the old democracy. Neither was internationalism free from entanglements. † Instead,

\* H. A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1222 (1935).

further disintegration resulted from the creation of a number of small new national states. These states were set up without regard to their military and economic security—almost on the textbook principle, so to say, of national self-determination, that a nation has a right to constitute a state. It is indeed remarkable that some in India should be thinking of treading the road that Europe has trodden, at the very moment when the end to which it has brought Europe, and might so easily bring India, is plain for all to see. The principle of unrestricted or at least of un-coordinated national sovereignty is dead, and without the widest practicable measure of international co-operation, prospects of the new post-war world will be darker than were those of the old. The forces of disintegration inherent in absolute self-determination have helped to bring about the world war of 1939. Yet, however costly the blunder may be, it will be amply compensated for, if these dangerous experiments lead to the evolution of a genuine international order.

Leadership in the planning of peace lies with the Allies. But they may quite easily defeat the peace after this war too, if they think in terms only of Europe and America. If they cannot transcend the white world, it will be far from a world order that they can construct. The representatives of the forces of the European civilization should realize that if they impose a European order on the rest of the world it will fall far short of a world order, and until a real world order is established Europe will not be free from wars. Of course, Europe and America are fully entitled to preserve their own individual solidarity. But that must not be exclusive but a part of the recognition of human liberty; and liberty demands equality. Is a European order to derive inspiration from the opportunity it may afford to exploit non-European countries? A well-known exponent of international politics regrets:

“It was silly for European countries to fight against one another when they could still keep the wheel of progressive prosperity revolving and maintain social cohesion by continuous expansion in Asia and Africa.”\*

\* E. H. CARR, *Conditions of Peace* p. 113.

If this were to be the logic of the European order, Europe might have to be enshrined in silliness as long as such an order persisted. There can be no peace as long as there is a dominant power, for the psychology of domination militates against peace. It is only in an open understanding of a common problem of all peoples, forward and backward, that a true, organic, world community can be established.

The Rights of Man, not merely of Frenchman, were declared on August 1, 1789. The next important French Revolution as well as the German Revolution, took place in 1848; and in between were fought the Napoleonic wars. With these revolutions some new nations were born. National wars grew more varied and virulent—the most famous ones were those of 1859, 1866, 1870, till we come to the Great War of 1914. National sentiments and national aspirations gave a new grandeur to man, but they also kept the flames of war in continuous and hectic blaze. Human efforts for peace and freedom, of course increased, but along with them increased hatred and wars. As inventions developed and communications and contacts became more far-reaching, any particular war tended to involve more nations. And as nations waded through wars they loved nationalism all the more! Between citizens of different nation-states were raised the barriers that are respectfully called the 'defences'—armies, navies, air forces and impregnable frontier lines. Nevertheless, internationalism was being invisibly forged, as the mind of the common man throughout, and the world was becoming linked together in a common loyalty to mankind. Let us hope, we are now witnessing the last of nationalism's ghastly battles.

It is debatable if modern wars are, as a rule, for settlement of rival philosophies. If so, it is but a modern translation of medieval wars of religion. What then is the value of our much-vaunted advancement if we have devised no other means than blood-shedding for resolving disputes of ideals. The situation lends support to the fear that we are yet in the labyrinth of power politics. The Axis nations started their career with little ideological differences from others. But they were soon overwhelmed by the baneful effect of scientific industrial civilization. Christianity and anti-Christianity

are not in it. What are in it are tin, oil, rubber, petrol, land and such other possession. It is the greed of power—exclusive and therefore aggressive—that makes war.

Yet war is not always an unmitigated disaster. At times there are moral functions that only a war can perform. And this war, in spite of its taint of power politics, has a great moral aspect. We see before us the malignant Axis organization summoned to do the work of destruction, trampling over the Rights of Man. And those who value these Rights must together speed along the road of construction, and in the blood-soaked earth put in the seed of a purer world. Greater human unity can be achieved on the defeat of Hitler and his racial cult.

In the whole process, along with the defeated nations, the winning nations of the West too will pay for their sins and emerge nobler and abler to take up the great task of re-ordering the house-hold of the human family.

The divinities, arms, efficiency and diplomacy, that the modern world has set up, are now exacting terrible offering from their votaries. The white races are in mortal grip of one and another, and the black and the brown have been called to their aid. Colossal competition is in progress between different sets of efficiencies in tearing up the solidarity of the West. Europe's precarious power technique is recoiling on herself. The much ridiculed East looks bewildered at this spectacle of the mighty West, and asks in hushed voices if all this really is the picture of the sublime. But so, through war probably, the time has come for the west and the east to compare traditions and exchange values. That China and India have joined America and Britain augurs well.

Whatever may be the cause of the war, it exemplifies the adage that out of evil oft cometh good. Europe has to recognise the limits of her science as well as to recast her conception of 'race.' The consideration of race is freely imported into politics. The word 'race' is of Latin origin and the idea is old and universal. But the so-called Nordic Aryans have fabricated a new dogma of race, culminating in Hitler's conception of master race and subject races; and Japan has an equally uncouth version of her own. Yet the problem of race, in some form or other, preys upon all countries. It

acquired seriousness with the conquering and colonising westerners. Sometime ago America had to set up a Pacific Race Relations Committee. Where the issue has been that of domination by the white over the coloured, it has caused exploitation, creating "eastern slaves for western profits."\* Where it has been confined to the white sphere it has produced wars of various degrees and dimensions. When the war is over, it will be realised that brotherhood can be shut up in the white compartment at the risk of its own health and that it would need the open air of humanity. Thus at least this war will have served a purpose and justified itself.

It is this racial business, again, from which has originated the problem of Indians overseas. Yet, it is not India's problem only. It is essentially a problem of the British Empire. India's grievances against Great Britain on the external side arise mostly from the treatment which Indian nationals receive in the Commonwealth countries and colonies of the British Empire. Great Britain though not responsible for this treatment, has not been able to pull her weight against it. The peoples of the Dominions and colonies, are unable to rid themselves of their racial inhibitions. The fact remains that India has so far not succeeded in making satisfactory arrangement for protecting adequately the welfare of its nationals abroad; and the status of Indians in the various countries in the British Commonwealth is not such as to make Indians enthusiastic devotees of the Commonwealth ideals.

In South Africa, Indians suffer from disabilities in political life, municipal affairs, and in matters of immigration, property, commerce and education. In Ceylon they have not equal rights of citizenship with the Ceylonese. In Canada in the province of British Columbia, Indians have been denied the municipal, provincial and federal franchise. In British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica, Indians are not allowed to cremate their dead—a serious matter, since cremation is religious obligation with the Hindus. In Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda, Indians are discriminated against in admission to the public services. Indians cannot buy land in Fiji.

\* Wilkie, *One World*.

They are not permitted to enter Australia for purpose of settling permanently.

All these restrictions and racial discrimination are not only very humiliating and irritating but they also raise the fundamental question—What does the Commonwealth stand for? Indians' status is the test of whether Commonwealth is a reality or a phrase. If our nationals are to be regarded, to use the words of Viscount Peel at the Imperial Conference in 1923, "as a foreign body politic of these Dominions", it is time we asked ourselves, should not India keep out? I make this momentous issue a matter of sentiment, of status, of honour and even of principle, as five out of every six of His Majesty's subjects are Indian, because primarily the problem is one of these. Politics and economics come in later. India, however, does not wish that its nationals should be free from such reasonable restrictions as may be prescribed by the various dominions and colonies for safeguarding their long-term interests, but at the same time it feels that some clear understanding of the point of view of its nationals should be arrived at. By sending special representatives to these countries India has already shown its willingness to cooperate in removing any difficulties that may arise as a result of Indian immigration. But there is a limit to the patience which India can show in these matters. It has waited long enough for a gesture of goodwill from the other side.

In spite of all this, India has certain solid inducements for remaining inside the Commonwealth. Defence and cultural relations seem to form the strongest of these links. But if this happy union is to be achieved, some more satisfactory scope for Indians inside the Commonwealth will have to be contrived. For example, India must have a voice in framing common defence and foreign policy; unless it has this, it will never feel a proprietary interest in the commonwealth. There must be permanent representation for India in the British War Cabinet and also an equal voice in the Dominion Prime Ministers' Conferences. Indians should be appointed in the British diplomatic, consular, colonial and civil services. The Government of India employ Englishmen in the Indian civil services; His Majesty's Government should also employ Indians in services under their control. Given this

administrative bond, the link between India and U. K. and the rest of the Commonwealth will remain strong; but even so, it should be immediately fostered by contacts of a cultural nature.

So important, if the British connection is to be retained, is the organisation of closer cultural relations, that the present paper, which deals with a possible treaty between India and the U. K., cannot be complete without some suggestions as to how these relations are to be improved. Without the union of hearts in both countries, no treaty will be lasting. When India achieves Dominion Status or Independence, the link with Great Britain will depend on (a) sentiment and mutual regard, and (b) perception on both sides of the advantage of maintaining the contact. ★

In India there is a widespread demand for immediate transfer of power to Indian hands. But there is no agreement as to the manner in which the transfer is to take place. The latest criticism from abroad takes the line that the British have done little or nothing to promote the welfare of the people socially, educationally and economically. It now seems to be the policy of His Majesty's Government to help India to become, within as short a period as possible, a happy and prosperous member of the British Commonwealth of Nations—a goal with which the intelligent opinion in India, irrespective of caste and creed, cannot disagree. Unfortunately, in the dust of controversy, the goodwill which exists both in Great Britain and India for one another has been overshadowed: and nothing has so far been done to focus the goodwill of the British people on to the people of this country. Indians are therefore becoming suspicious of the post-war British attitude towards their country.

The undoubtedly low percentage of literacy in India is more than offset by the increasing number of radio listeners. Cinemas are having their own educative influence. Indian soldiers who have been fighting in practically every theatre of the war and sharing the trials and triumphs of their comrades from other free nations overseas, have also come to share their faith with their comrades of the United Nations that the cause for which they are fighting is a just one. The habit of holding lectures on political, social, economic and cultural subjects is increasing in every big city. Indian mass opinion

is therefore becoming more and more well informed and the desire for better things that life can offer more and more intense. Indians are therefore in a receptive mood and will listen avidly and intelligently to any word of sympathy and encouragement which may come to them from Britain whom they regard as the main source of western civilization and culture.

In India the masses are very poor. Their standard of living is very low. They are suffering from all the consequences of malnutrition. In a society like this where the incidence of wealth is so unevenly distributed, contrasts easily exacerbate feelings. The desire to improve this state of affairs is therefore increasing. Since the Government of India do little direct publicity to the masses, the field is left to political propagandists. There is therefore a growing feeling that the cause of all these miseries lies in foreign rule—a feeling which constantly fanned by the overstatement of the case often in the bitterest terms, by a certain class of Indian politicians and also by a certain section of the Indian press. The present state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue without courting disaster. Civil war may follow, but in a big country like India that will provide no solution. It is therefore all the more necessary that the people of Great Britain as the trustees of Indian welfare should help in the general uplift of this country. The voice of Britain must be made to reach India.

Apart from other advantages which have accrued to Britain from Indo-British partnership, India has now fought two major wars on the side of Great Britain. In both the wars, the issues involved affected not only the very existence of Great Britain, but also the ideals on which modern civilization depends. The moral issues have never been clearer than in the present war. After the last war India reaped fruits of victory in the form of political reforms, and it enabled her to improve her economic and social conditions. In the war of 1914-18 Indian troops filled the gap between the German forces and London, and also saved the Middle East against the combined onslaught of Germany and Turkey. In the present war, at a time when Britain was standing alone, Indian troops were filling the gaps throughout the empire defences, from Dunkirk to Hongkong. Recruitment

in India had reached its highest peak figure in August 1942 when the Congress launched its civil disobedience movement. Already one can find even in the remotest villages of India grim souvenirs of the battle field brought back by Indians in the form of maimed and crippled soldiers. Indian widows and mothers who have lost their husbands and sons would gladly welcome any word of appreciation from their sisters in England who have suffered in the same cause. This co-operative and friendly side of India is sometimes lost in the mist of anti-British sentiments expressed by Indian politicians. After all our politicians are also the creation of British rule. The Indian people have been taught by Britain to believe that self-government for India will be a natural part of the peace this time. It is sometimes said that the Indian soldier is mercenary and some British people have come to think that this may be true. Actually the bulk of Indian soldiers are agriculturists and unlike the average Industrial or town labourer, they have a stake in the country. India's contribution is reflected not merely by the part played by her Army, Navy and Air Force, but also by the number of labourers working in factories, the voluntary subscriptions to the Viceroy's Fund, the magnificent part played by the Princes and the Indian State Forces, and the way in which India's industrialists have co-operated in running the war-time factories at full speed. Here then is a story of the majority of Indians who believe in the joint destiny of Britain and India which deserves to be projected on to the people of Great Britain. The value of this story is heightened by the fact that Indian effort has been voluntary.

On the other side it is well known that there is a widespread sympathy and goodwill in Great Britain for the people of India. India has gained much from her partnership with Great Britain. The way in which Britain stood up to Hitler's might and the manner in which her people have organised themselves and set to work for the cause of freedom has won the admiration of everyone in India. Indians would welcome the translation of that spirit of patriotism and unity to their own country. Apart from this, there is the cultural side of Great Britain which is even more important for being interwoven in India's own heritage. The intellectual ties

between Britain and India can be and should be strengthened. It is a pity that the Ministry of Information has done nothing so far to present these pictures to India.

∴ Apart from the community of interests which obtains on the material side, the common ground on the spiritual and human side also needs stressing in order to strengthen the case for India to remain within the British Commonwealth. The long period of political agitation in India and the controversy between the warring factions within the country have tended to make the people introspective. India needs to be told by the senior partner of her vital importance within the comity of the British Commonwealth as a pivot of Asiatic security and progress. So far, the liberal ideas of Britain have benefited only those dominions which are inhabited by European races. It will be a great thing if the people of a different race, like India, could share in the democratic legacy of Britain, the common ideals of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

These are some of the considerations which make out a strong case for presenting:—

(a) to the people of Great Britain the part played by Indians in this war; how the war has affected their homes, their economy and their general outlook on life; how but for India's contribution to the war in men, money and material, her effort could have been harnessed for her own progress; and for presenting

(b) to the people of India the sympathy and goodwill of the people of Great Britain for India. By translating all this goodwill into action the people of Britain can help India to overcome some of the colossal difficulties with which this country is faced, e.g., in the removal of illiteracy and poverty, introduction of sanitation and hygiene, better housing, more food and clothing, and employment. When the war is over, could not the people of Britain send out qualified men and women to help Indians in the solution of these problems in a spirit of service and mutual co-operation?

Such, as objectively as an observer can describe them,

seem to be the realities of India's international environments today, the perils it faces, the interests it must safeguard. The constitution and future arrangements with the U. K. must be framed in such a way that the perils can be overcome, and the interests safeguarded. The two are underlinked one with the other and that is why it is that India's internal and external problems are inseparable.

On India's external problems there is a great deal of agreement but unhappily little interest; on its internal problem all too much interest and all too little agreement. Only when the balance of concentration upon internal and external problem is redressed, may they both be happily solved.

What, in precise terms, does the study of India's external relations suggest for the regulation of its domestic problems and its treaty with the U. K. ? The reply cannot but be controversial; for although the inference from our external survey is clear, it is apt to be obscured or distorted because of the violence of opinions of those who dwell only on the internal state of affairs. The aim of this paper is however to state this inference, undeterred by domestic considerations. The prime inference is the need for maintaining the unity of India. Security and military considerations make this imperative. World interest requires that India should be a great power and not a Balkans.

What is it that stands in the way of Indian unity ? This is not a paper on domestic affairs, but, because the external problem cannot be dissociated from the internal a brief review of the latter is imperative.

## CHAPTER VIII

# THE BASIC INTERNAL PROBLEM—HINDU MUSLIM RELATIONS

### (A) OUR GOOD OLD DAYS

**T**HE Hindu-Muslim differences of to-day threaten to undo the historic fellowship between the two communities that, beginning under the Mughals, has existed for centuries. It is seldom realized that to disunite Hindustan would be to work against the one constructive factor of the history of Muslim rule in this country. The Indians of to-day certainly possess far more knowledge than their ancestors, but the picture of their ideas is dwarfed by the large canvas on which is imprinted the Aryan-Saracenic conception of unity. Indian leaders and thinkers of a remoter age sought to establish harmony between the two religions. Prince Dara Shikoh, compared them two confluent rivers, *Majma-ul-Babrein*; Kabir and Nanak tried to fuse them together and imported into their prayers the names of "both Allah the bountiful and Ram." The Hindu and Muslim *Masters* were inspired to bring into existence common arts and crafts that touched the souls and satisfied the utilitarian needs of both Hindus and Muslims. Common notions of joy and beauty were evolved. The Indian of to-day is out to destroy the edifice built for him by the hand of history. Unable to appreciate that history, he gives it a bad name.

It is strange that Hindu-Muslim unity should be going to pieces in spite of the existence of so many common points between the Hindus and Muslims. It should have been our duty to use these points for broadening the basis of unity. A common cultural heritage in music and literature, painting and architecture, was not the only treasure bequeathed to us. A common political destiny too was evolved as the Hindu and the Muslim fought together in many a battle. In social life, again, the traditions and practices of the two communities were interwoven one with the other. Common ways of life were already in evidence even as early as the days of the

Emperor Baber, who facetiously described them as "the Hindustani ways," in which both Hindu and Muslim traits were found freely mixed up. Then came the Urdu language beginning as the language of the camp. Even in religion, in those days the most cherished of all things, the two influenced each other. The Muslim gave a new turn and a new tinge to the religion of the mass of Hindus; his own in turn took on an Indian complexion. This change was noted by his ultramontane co-religionists.

The Muslim in India became the son of the soil. This course was irrevocably decided for him when Qutbuddin<sup>1</sup> separated the Sultanate of Delhi from the Ghazni-wide Empire. That a Muslim king should not discriminate against any section of his subjects was an injunction, clear and definite, for he was enjoined to "regard all sects of religion with the single eye of favour, and not bemoan some and bestep-mother others." It is interesting to trace the growth of the love for India as the mother country as we compare Baber's *Memoirs* and Abul Fazal's *Ain-i-Akbari*. The founder of the Empire complains: "Hindustan is a country that has few pleasures to recommend it." But gone was this new-comer's attitude by the time that Akbar came to the throne, whose historian is carried away by "the beauties of Hindustan," and apologizes for a digression which "proceeded from the love of my native country."

### (B) OUR PRESENT DESPERATE POSITION

Nor has this homeland been disowned or ceased to inspire us today. As late as January 19, 1940, Mr. Jinnah wrote: "To conclude, a constitution must be evolved that recognizes that there are in India two nations, who must share the governance of their common *motherland*." His 'two nation' idea has indeed made its appearance, but the common motherland has not yet disappeared, and sharing in the common governance is still a live faith. Barely<sup>4</sup> two months later, on March 23, 1940, at its Lahore session the Muslim League decided on Pakistan; the idea that India is the

<sup>1</sup> *Akbar Nama*, Beveridge, Lxi, 285

motherland of the Muslims still persists as it underlies the conception of Pakistan, although the idea of a common motherland is no longer there. Pakistan merely localizes the motherland of the Muslims in those parts of India in which they are in a majority today; and having localized it claims complete separation of it from other parts of India so long sung of as *Hindustan Hamara* (Iqbal). The purity, or the quality of *pak*, depends on the fact of there being a Muslim majority in it.

While at Ramgarh, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, presiding over the Congress, spoke of "an Indian nation, united and indivisible," Mr. Jinnah, in his presidential address to the League Conference at Lahore said: "It is only a dream that Hindus and Moslems can ever evolve a common nationality." The idea of sharing a joint government was abandoned in favour of a separate national status for the Muslim. He now wants a sovereign state. There was no use any more for a Federation. The League resolution, moved by Mr. Fazlul Huq, demanded:

"that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the north-western and in eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute 'independent States' in which constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."

Yet, a look back to the Nehru Report reveals that it was the Muslim League that, in reaction to it, decided on Federation. The Nehru Committee, by a majority, moulded their ideal "on the model of the constitution of the self-governing Dominions," and viewed the attainment of Dominion Status "as the next immediate step." A desire for a strong Centre, able to maintain an effective unity of India, dominated the Committee, and the proposed constitution was of a unitary character. Federation was not seriously considered. The Government of India Dispatch (September 20, 1930) on the Simon Report also regarded Federation of all India as a distant ideal. In their opinion it was not advisable "to sacrifice the spirit of national unity which has gradually been developing under the centralized British administration." The authors of Nehru Report, however, could not reconcile this

view with 'separate electorates' and recommended that the device might be revised after ten years. They might have had in their mind the theory expounded by Sir Austin Chamberlain on behalf of the League of Nations:—

“It was certainly not the intention of those who have decided on the system of minority protection to establish in the midst of a nation a community which would remain permanently estranged from the national life.”

In following this theory the Committee followed logic too far. For a political compromise one has to take into consideration the immediate environment, to make some adjustment to the mental climate of the time:

“A dispute about practical solutions in politics is difficult to settle, as it is usually a question of people agreeing not about an absolutely just solution, but on the degree of that justice.”<sup>1</sup>

The reaction to the Nehru Report brought the two wings of Muslim politics—one led by Sir Muhammad Shafi (Muslim Conference) and the other by Mr. M. A. Jinnah (Muslim League)—together; and on January 1, 1929, under the presidency of H. H. The Aga Khan, it was resolved that “the only form of Government suitable to Indian conditions” was a Federal system. It is interesting to note however that the Muslim League later repudiated the Federal scheme envisaged by the Act of 1935.

The resolution was endorsed by the League session at Allahabad, next year in 1930. Its president, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the poet, produced a plan for a ‘North-West Indian Muslim State.’ He argued that the device of separate electorates was adopted in order to adjust the balance of representation in favour of the Muslim, who was adversely affected by the existing distribution of population in the provinces. That difficulty could be overcome by a reshuffling of the provinces without tampering with the principle of representation. His Muslim State was to be only a new province and as much a part of India as ever before. It may be mentioned that the

<sup>1</sup> (Edward Benes, *Democracy Today and Tomorrow* p. 22.)

Nehru Committee had suggested a redrawing of the provincial boundaries with a view to balancing Muslim majorities with Hindu majorities. A more comprehensive scheme of redistribution of provinces is to be found in the *Outline of A Scheme of Indian Federation* published by Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan in 1939, and discussed in a speech on March 11, 1941, in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. What he envisaged was a regional redistribution of the whole of India. There were to be as many as seven regions covering more or less an equal area, containing at the same time a balanced population for the purposes of securing equitable representation of each community. Each region was to have its own Assembly and all were to be linked to a Federal Assembly. Professor Coupland has reduced the regions to four. But both these schemes contemplate a Centre.

A strange fatalism seems to have seized us. A painful doubt arises in one's mind: Is our inability to agree inherent in our lack of enlightenment, or in the circumstances under which we have been asked to come to an agreement or is it due to our selfishness? 'Quit India' has been suggested by some to be the panacea for all our ills. Many fear that it is too drastic a remedy, one that would all but kill the patient. And it has also been urged that 'God or anarchy,' would take care of us. One wonders if things are as bad as all that? Can despair possibly lead to a settlement? Yet it is a fact of history that at times the very helplessness of a case, the immeasurable difficulty of it, proves the saviour of the situation. This is exactly what happened "in the English Settlement of 1689, in the Union of England and Scotland in 1707, and in the creation of the United States of America in 1787."<sup>1</sup>

All are agreed that power must be transferred to Indian hands. As yet however there is no agreement as to how and to whom it is to be transferred. Once an agreement as to 'how' is reached the prevailing distrust of Great Britain will disappear, like mist before the rising sun. We asked for freedom to plan our own constitution, to be the architects of our future history. That freedom is there in the Cripps Proposal, if we would but care to make use of it. In us is

<sup>1</sup> Coupland III, p/178.

reposed the expectant, inarticulate, trust of posterity; on us are fixed the eyes of the post-war world community. Is the task too big for the great communities of India and Great Britain?

(C) 'THE 'SELF' IN THE STRUGGLE FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

The political unity of the Hindu and the Muslim began to disrupt at the very first sight of the little speck of power and privilege that were transferred to them by the British. The question was: in the matter of self-government, who represented the 'self' and to what extent? Communal conflicts were thus a corollary of the constitutional reforms. Let us trace their course and see how the two went together.

The Charter Act of 1833 envisaged a future when India would become fit for representative government. For the time being, however, it conceded no more than throwing open all high offices under Government to Indians. At the end of the Mutiny, by the Act of 1858, the Government passed from the hands of a trading corporation to those of British Parliament. Shortly afterwards, by the Act of 1861, the association of Indians, in however faint a manner, was actually introduced into the Indian constitution. In 1885 the Indian National Congress came into being with the blessings of the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. The first session was eloquent about "the phenomenon of national unity among the Indian populations." The Councils Act of 1892 introduced the representative principle however feebly and enlarged the Council and its debating privileges. With the partition of Bengal, the Government and the Congress parted ways. The Congress itself was sharply divided between the Extremists and the Moderates, as a result of what is known as the 'Surat Split.'

The Act of 1909, which enacted the Morley-Minto Reforms, opens a critical chapter in the history of Indian constitutional reforms. In introducing the device of communal representation by separate electorates it went basically against the code of democracy. A Muslim deputation waited on the Viceroy, Lord Minto. The deputation urged that the Muslim should be represented in the Legislature in greater numbers

than his numerical proportion permitted, in recognition of the historical importance of his community and his services to the Empire. So far the claim was just and eminently reasonable. But the device of separate representation sowed the seeds of a growing separatism and the progressive growth of separatism has rendered the device inadequate. Seldom was so just and right an end vitiated by so wrong a means.

During the first Great War, when the talk of more reforms was in the air, Indian Leaders made a solemn effort to set their house in order. In December 1916, presiding over the Muslim League Conference at Lucknow, Mr. Jinnah communicated his impression of a "new India under the influence of western education, fast growing to identity of thought, purpose and outlook." The Congress was also in session in Lucknow at the same time. And there was evolved the famous Congress-League Pact, known to history as the Lucknow Pact. 'Separate electorates' could not under the circumstances be done away with. But the parties showed excellent common sense and a spirit of mutual accommodation. The Congress rose to the occasion and made relatively large concessions to the League. Under the Morley-Minto scheme, the Muslim representation was in Bengal 10.4 per cent and in the Punjab 25 per cent; they were now raised to 40 and 50 per cent respectively. The Muslims also fared equally well in the provinces in which they are in a minority; for instance, in the U. P. with 14 per cent population, the Muslims were to have 30 per cent representation. In the Centre, Muslims were to have one-third of the elected seats in the House. And, in the Congress constitution it was registered that no bill affecting a community would be taken up if it had not the approval of at least three-fourth of the elected members of that community. ✱

The authors of the Reforms of 1919 welcomed the Lucknow agreement "as a testimony to the growing force of national feeling." And while deprecating the retention of 'separate electorates,' they provided in the Act for the same separateness of interests, though the provisions were not of the Lucknow variety.

— Meanwhile the Congress was seized with a revolutionary outlook, and the Rowlatt Act gave stimulus to it. Mr.

Gandhi now took up the leadership of the Congress, and this was signalized by the policy of Non-co-operation. For a time there was a Hindu-Muslim accord, in the form of joint non-co-operation, on the Khilafat question. The abolition of the Caliphate by Mustafa Kemal Pasha proved to be abortive. From then on communal riots began to break out in great fury. They were ever there on the other leaf of the non-co-operation movement. Lord Irwin, addressing the Indian Legislature on August 29, 1927, appealed for unity and understanding.

A group of Congress-men had formed the 'Swaraj Party,' and often successfully attacked the constitution in and through the Legislatures. Mr. C. R. Das carried on a spectacular fight in the Bengal Legislature. Lord Irwin, in announcing the appointment by Lord Birkenhead in November 1927 of the Simon Commission, stated: "considerable pressure has during recent years been exercised to secure anticipation of the statute."

Meanwhile, partly to accept the challenge to Indian constructive political thinking thrown out by Lord Birkenhead, and partly to prepare the country for the next instalment of reforms, nationalist leaders set about to draft a constitution for India. For this purpose a Committee with Pandit Motilal Nehru as its chairman was constituted in February 1928. They made out a case for Dominion Status. In a speech on October 31, 1929, Lord Irwin declared, on the authority of the British Government, that Dominion Status was implied in the Montford Reforms. The Viceregal announcement was necessary to clear the misunderstanding that had arisen from the silence of the Simon Commission on the question of Dominion Status.

The next stage was set in London. Here at a Round Table Conference, the Hindu, the Muslim, the Princely order and the Briton met to discuss difficulties and hammer out a workable constitution, satisfying the political aspirations of India and reconciling with them the interests and responsibilities of Britain. Noble in its outlook, massive in its industry, true in its devotion, the Conference attacked the task before them with surprising earnestness. Yet the Round Table Conference failed to make history. It was not without

achievements, however. Federation was accepted as the goal, though it was not to operate until a specified number of States had acceded to it. Provincial autonomy was at once established and Diarchy abolished.

But after all, the crux of the problem was the communal question. Here the work was disappointing, and even distressing. A minorities Committee was appointed with a view to explore all avenues for a solution. For one extra seat in the Punjab and in Bengal Legislatures, the Hindu and Sikh delegates at the Second Round Table Conference rejected the Muslim offer of joint electorate and this was an irreparable blunder committed by them. The history of India would have been different today, if the Muslim offer had been accepted. Mr. Gandhi, with a Congress mandate, was in the Conference. But he eventually had "to announce utter failure to secure an agreed solution of the communal question." He urged, however, that constitution-making need not wait for a communal settlement, which could be entrusted to a judicial tribunal after the constitution was framed. A Minorities Pact was concluded between the Moslems, Depressed Classes and others, all ranged against the Congress, to fight for 'separate electorates' and 'weightage.' The Government in the end prepared a Provisional Scheme of representation for the minorities, and it was announced by the Prime Minister at the Round Table Conference in August 1932 under the title of the "Communal Award." ❧

The Communal Award was modified by the Poona Pact (25th September, 1932) in so far as the Depressed Classes were concerned and a movement was also set on foot to replace the Award by an agreement. The task was essayed by a Unity Conference under the leadership of Pandit Malaviya. It also failed, and the failure was followed by the formation of the Nationalist Party, whose creed was to oppose the Communal Award, as distinguished from the Congress attitude that "neither accepted nor rejected" it. The Hindu Mahasabha erected its platform on the opposition to the Award. But it "thought only in terms of what the Hindus got or did not get."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pundit Nehru, 29th November, 1933.

The Congress had little love for the Reform of 1935. But while the League desired to give a trial to Provincial Autonomy, the Congress made it a point to contest elections with a view to "wreck" the constitution. The election yielded Congress majorities in Madras, Orissa, Bihar, U. P., N. W. F. P., C. P., and Bombay. According to convention, the Congress was invited to form ministries in these provinces. They demanded an undertaking that in practice the Governor or the Government would not use the 'safeguards.' A demand of this nature, the Muslim thought, meant that the 'safeguards' might not be used in his hour of need. The Governors, at first hesitant, set up minority ministries, then assured the Congress that they would not have recourse to 'safeguards' in minor and day to day matters, and finally these interim ministries were replaced by Congress ministries. Now the Congress launched the "mass contact" movement. It was understood to be a movement to "congressize" the Muslim in the countryside, and the League reacted to it by winning a number of by-elections. The Congress refused to agree to coalition ministries and maintained pure Congress ministries; this was interpreted as Congress wishing to monopolize administrative power and machinery.

These were the psychological effects of some of the activities of the Congress. Strictly speaking, from the point of view of party system of government, they could not be blamed; but both from the moral point of view and from the point of view of expediency they committed a blunder. The attitude they adopted was inherent in party government, and illustrative of the old saying of Halifax that 'that the best party is a conspiracy against the nation.' The anxiety of the Congress to have a more massive backing on the rural front was influenced by the third party complex, for it was from the third party that the delivery of goods was to come. So, the goodwill of the second party was unnecessary. The third party was to be overwhelmed and with this idea the Congress made a bid for the 'delivery of goods.'

"The British Government would not ask for a common agreement, if they recognised any one party to be strong enough to take delivery. The Congress, it must be

admitted, has not that strength today. It has come to its present position in the face of opposition. If it does not weaken and has enough patience, it will develop sufficient strength to take delivery.”<sup>1</sup>

The anti-national way the Congress ministries functioned in the Provinces drove the last nail into their coffin. The Muslim felt that he was being oppressed under the Congress administration. His feeling was inflamed. Mr. Jinnah’s demand for a Royal Commission to investigate the “atrocities” was rejected by the Government, but ‘Pirpur Report’ and ‘Sharif Report’ containing a catalogue of atrocities were published by the Muslim League. We are not concerned with these Reports, but the discontent was there. It is significant that, at the order of Mr. Jinnah, throughout India, there was observed ‘a day of deliverance,’ when the Congress Ministries resigned. It is no less significant that the Muslim of the minority Provinces, particularly the U. P. and Bihar, has been the loudest in proclaiming his faith in Pakistan, though he stands to lose and certainly not to gain by it. In fact, the inglorious regime of the Congress ministries led the Muslims in despair to proceed headlong towards the abyss of partition of India into sovereign states.

#### (D) PARTY GOVERNMENT UNSUITED TO INDIA

The Congress administration in the Provinces provided the real foundation of the doubt of the Muslim that democracy of the variety imported from Britain, i.e., the party system, was not suited to India. It is, however, more or less universally true:<sup>2</sup>

“Parties, we should all admit, are a necessary means of democracy. But the means may become the end. This is what happens when electorates, parliaments, and cabinets are all, in their different ways, subordinated to the exigencies and bought under the control of party. In the same way and by the same process that the means may become the end, the part may become a whole, and

<sup>1</sup> *Harijan*, June 15, 1940.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Ernest Barker, *Reflections on Government*, P/88.

assume what is nowadays called a 'total' or 'totalitarian' character."

The fundamentals of democracy—and in the last analysis they are moral—are indisputable and undisputed. But to suit our needs some of its forms must change. In the twenties of the nineteenth century "Parliaments were thought the panacea of all ills; now they are recognized to be the origin of some of them."<sup>1</sup> One world war has been fought and another is now being fought to combat the forces brought about, if not by failing, at least, by ailing democracies. Democracy is still in many countries an affair of propertied voters; mass democracy is yet to be born and when mass democracy is born, vote for power for some men will be replaced, let us hope so far as possible, by vote for food for all men. However, that is a consummation that the leading democracies of Europe should strive for. For the dynamics of democracy will have to be released and a long vision to be applied to the task:

"Democracy requires rethinking in relation to the changing world. . . . Democracy must extend into the economic and social and all other aspects of life if it is to be complete. . . . Every human being born into the world has in the eyes of true democracy a certain individual birthright—a birthright of health, strength, intelligence, varied enjoyment, and free interest, which must not be denied or stunted if the society into which he is born lays claim to being democratic."<sup>2</sup>

As the representative system led the Congress to concentrate on 'one party rule,' the fear of majority rule drove the League from 'separate electorates' to the 'two nations' theory and to 'Pakistan.' But what is strange is this: When he asks for Pakistan, the Muslim virtually asks for a majority rule for himself. And what is stranger still is that from Pakistan he proceeds to enter into a pact with the Hindu for a joint attack on the Briton:

"Why should not the country say, 'Unite and drive the British out?' If we cannot secure power

<sup>1</sup> Grant and Temperly, *Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, p. 598.

<sup>2</sup> Julian Huxley, *On Living In a Revolution*, p. 11.

as a united India, let us take it as a disunited India.”<sup>1</sup>

(D) DISTRUST—THE CAUSE OF THE DEADLOCK

In this background of Hindu-Muslim differences must be considered the problem as between India and Britain. And in its own way this problem has given rise to anxiety and apprehension:

“The Empire has always been the fertile mother of new States, but in ancient times the children often rent the parent. The great anxiety of the modern Empire is to prevent such disruption, and to discover how far it can retain its suzerainty without provoking rebellion and its own downfall. This, for example, is the present attitude of the British Empire to India.”<sup>2</sup>

The principle that won the Empire must be kept active in order to prevent such disruption. Here it is: “India fell to British Character.”<sup>3</sup> Hegel observed that British took upon herself the mission to civilize the world, the opportunity for which was afforded to her by the contacts she made and pursued in the wake of her expanding trade. Her success in India was overwhelming:

“Familiarly acquainted with us by means of our literature, the Indian youths almost ceased to regard us as foreigners. They speak of our great men with the same enthusiasm as we do.”<sup>4</sup>

While political contact created a British India, cultural contact gave a modern India. Leaders like Gokhale had a living faith in the civilizing values of Britain. But the tide turned. Lord Birkenhead, who suffered his Simon Commission to be boycotted, had to refer to “Indian politicians as mostly educated in the school of that Western learning which

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Jinnah, *the Times of India*, April 26, 1943.

<sup>2</sup> R. M. MacIver, *The Modern State*.

<sup>3</sup> Emerson, quoted by Marquis of Zetland, *Steps Towards Indian Home Rule*.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Charles Trevelyan, *Political Tendencies of Different Systems of Education in India*, a paper to the Parliamentary Committee in 1854.

they pretend so much to despise.”<sup>1</sup> Why has the tide turned? The transition from Gokhale to Gandhi must be accounted for and explained.

That explanation is to be found in “the history of relations.” These words are of Sir Stafford Cripps, who learnt from the events he had to cope with. It was to combat the implications of the history of the past twenty years that Sir Stafford had commended the Draft Declaration with the appeal:

“There will still be difficulties perhaps—the result of distrust which has grown up between us in past years—but I ask you to turn your back upon the past, to accept my hand, our hand of friendship and trust and to allow us to join with you for the time being in working to establish and complete your freedom and your self-government.”

Indeed, England had for some time been seeking to emphasize that friendship. “Partnership between India and the United Kingdom” is the ideal enunciated in the Instrument of Instructions issued to the Governor-General. Lord Linlithgow drew inspiration from this ideal as he expounded the war aims (October 17, 1939). Efforts were made at different stages of progress to remould this partnership and readjust vision to the approaching goal. The pledges of Dominion Status “were repeated time after time” (Sir Samuel Hoare, October 26, 1939). These started with Lord Irwin’s Pledge. Lord Linlithgow’s “August Offer” followed up the line. So far, the last word is the Draft Declaration, embodying the pledge of the War Cabinet. That word is not dead yet. It cannot die and should not be allowed to die or be whittled down<sup>2</sup> But what is not sufficiently alive is mutual belief and trust. Just as India is prevented by her view of the history of recent relations from trusting Britain,

<sup>1</sup> *Last Essays*, ch. iv.

<sup>2</sup> On the 10th September 1942 the Prime Minister emphasised that the broad principle of the Draft Declaration in their “full scope and integrity” represented “the settled policy of the British Crown and Parliament”.

Britain in turn is prevented by her cross-purposes of the traditional role of a liberator and an empire-owner from giving any but halting support to India's claim to independence. India's apprehension was expressed in the ominous phrase "the post-dated cheque" and England's in the no less ominous phrase "the liquidation of the Empire." The only corrective of the national States is an international order in which none is weakened by the freedom of another. India's freedom need not be at the cost of Britain, rather, India's strength, as that of the other Dominions, should be a gain to the Commonwealth. If the freedom of the whole is not sustained by the freedom of all its component parts, the Atlantic Charter will be but written on water and the Four Freedoms will go the way of Fourteen Points.

#### (E) THE CAUSE OF DISTRUST

So the negotiations broke down because of distrust. But distrust is only a symptom. What is the cause of it? It lies to a large extent in the official handling of the Hindu-Muslim problem. The way the problem was tackled gave rise, rightly or wrongly, to the suspicion that Britain meant to use the plea of communal difficulties to bar the progress of self-government in India. But Britain protests:

"If there were difficulties in the way, they are not of our making. They are inherent in the many divisions between the classes and communities in the great subcontinent."<sup>1</sup>

And also protests Congress India:

"But it will be well for the British Government and the Allied cause, if minority argument were not flung in the face of a credulous world."<sup>2</sup>

So also said Mr. Jinnah in March 1932, just after the conclusion of the Second Round Table Conference, in the Central Theatre of King's College:

<sup>1</sup> Sir Samuel Hoare, House of Commons October 26, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> M. K. Gandhi, Segaon, October 26, 1939.

“And to make matters worse, the question of Hindu-Muslim settlement is brought over and over again. . . . In all sincerity I want to ask if you think that we can possibly get an agreement on a question like this without there being any sanction behind it or any instrument with which you can enforce the decision arrived at. . . . And once again, I repeat my question to British public, why do you go about talking of the Indian communal question when you yourself cannot settle the much vexed tariff question?”

Anti-British feeling will be there, justly or unjustly, as long as there is Hindu-Muslim antagonism. The only evidence that Britain can produce to show that she has helped India to overcome communal difficulties is just this and no more:

“We have shown our good faith in the matter. We showed it when we made the Communal Award. At that time, supposing we had wished to divide and conquer, we might very well have said, ‘settle your communal difficulties first; until you have settled them there can be no constitutional advance.’”<sup>1</sup>

Be that as it may. After the breakdown of the recent Gandhi-Jinnah talks, it has become abundantly clear that without outside help and without others interesting themselves in the solution of the problem, no advance in solving it is possible. It is also equally obvious that Britain cannot afford to allow her present negative attitude to continue for long. Britain in her own interest, in the interest of India and of the peace of the world must make her contribution to the task, though this need not necessarily take the form of another benevolent arbitral award. While she may not impose a settlement, she can and must provide the atmosphere for arriving at an agreement, and even give a lead in evolving one. Mr. George Gibson, Chairman of the Trades Union Congress, is reported to have told the Dominions and Indian Press representatives:

<sup>1</sup> Sir Samuel Hoare, House of Commons, October 26, 1939.

“Unless Britain solved the Indian problem her Empire would break up. It was up to Britain to help India find the right solution, and not sit back saying: ‘unless you agree, we cannot do anything.’”<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, Sir Walter Layton suggests that without any Indian settlement the task of building up a permanent world order will be much more difficult, if not impossible.”<sup>2</sup>

The rigid view that inter-Indian ill-will has nothing to do with the lack of goodwill for Britain has kept both sores running. And they not only run together, but run into one another. The peculiarity of the situation requires a joint frontal attack on both problems:

“Given courage to break with conventions, we may yet together achieve Indian unity as well as the unity of Britain and India within the commonwealth.”<sup>3</sup>

It is as much Britain’s interest to make a common cause.

“We have to support unity and suspension of political and personal controversies. We say to the nationalist, ‘Set aside these things, and during the war unite and face the common peril.’ How can we expect them to respond to this? The way forward is not so simple as England seemed to think. I say, if India can build up her own essential unity nothing on earth can prevent her having independence if she wants it, and it is our duty to do everything we can to build up her strength and unity. She will see that it is to her advantage to remain linked to our group.”<sup>4</sup>

But the school of politics that dominates still clings to the fallacy that the Hindu-Muslim question is totally different from Indo-British one; that they are entirely distinct and unconnected. It serves no useful purpose to ignore the constant interaction between the two problems. The exponents of the separate issues theory cannot simply expect that the Hindu and the

<sup>1</sup> *The Hindustan Times*.

<sup>2</sup> Sydeny Ball Lecture, March 3, 1944.

<sup>3</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, October 14, 1939.

<sup>4</sup> Sir George Schuster, House of Commons, February 24, 1940.

Muslim should be between themselves disunited and with the Briton united. That will be too metaphysical a trick even for oriental abstraction to perform. It is impossible by the laws of pathology. A septic focus always carries over and contaminates the far ends of the organism, if the opportunity is there. The poison in the body politic that vitiates inter-Indian relations readily spreads out and runs down to the root of Indo-British relations. The grounds of antagonism may be real or imaginary, just or unjust, but in as much as it is there and active, the antagonism has to be combated. The grounds will vanish as the view-point becomes correct.

#### (F) SOME COMPLEXES AND THEIR CORRECTIVES

The Hindu and the Muslim somehow began to view any transference of power as a gift from the Briton. Whether the third party is guilty or not guilty of 'divide and rule,' the centre of gravity lies with it. And the two parties, consciously or unconsciously look up to the third in a sort of rivalry for recognition. The demoralization that is natural to a subject people is there, but something also is there in the very position of the third party, as holding the strings of power over both. But whatever it is, the fact remains that the third party complex could not have been there when Akbar ruled and unity reigned, although in Akbar's time this kind of agitation would never have been tolerated.

The third party complex has been considerably fed by the history complex. It has been part of a cultivated propaganda on the part of some historians to refer to the Muslim regime "as that dark period of Indian history. And this has been done to popularise British rule to the Hindu at the cost of the Muslim. But rewriting history alone will not do. A country-wide organization would have to be set up to create the feeling that unity is abroad. From all points, the mind of the people would have to be exposed to the dynamic influence of a great change over, that unity is out to achieve itself.

The organisation will have to create the belief that things are going to be done and to set men thinking hard as to what is to be done. There is so much bewilderingly loose talk going on that one can hardly make out what the point is. Differ-

ent groups formulate their grievances in different terms, often contradicting one another. At the same time to meet reasonable objections is not enough. Unreasonable ones too have to be met; for they too produce mischief. In fact, one cannot get over the trouble until one finds out what it is that prompts men to be unreasonable.

This resolves the problem into sounding public opinion all over the country with a view to collecting data for a scientific investigation of the problem of Hindu-Muslim-British relations in all its aspects. The task would be to obtain views, compare notes, clarify the anxieties, tabulate the outlooks, eliminate the non-essentials, reduce the debatable points, rationalize the demands and concentrate on common agreements with an eye to their workability. Here is something in which Government must take the initiative, over and above what has been suggested in the last chapter of this paper.

Our problem is no doubt vastly complex. Yet the heart of the problem is the problem of the heart. It is essentially a matter of relations, and so a matter of the mind. No wonder that a mental machinery cannot be run by political engineering alone. Commenting on the failure of the minorities settlement in Europe, Macartney offers his 'basic postulate':

"If once the mentality is correct, the machinery will soon be found."<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately the failure of Europe has not taught us yet the limitations of the upto-date remedies, of facts and percentages. Our indigenous remedies we belittle as quack remedies. Yet it is recorded history that the life and teachings of the Sufies and Bhagats did most to bring the masses of the two communities into close and kindly communion in their days of crisis. But times have changed. Of course, they have. But fundamentals do not change.

As between the Hindus and the Muslim, so between the Indian and the British, the problem has to be solved primarily in the minds of men, in the souls of the two peoples. No political formula can yield a magic cure. At least none

<sup>1</sup> *National States and National Minorities*, p. 468.

of our quick cures of political agreements and constitutional formulas have so far succeeded. It may not be a serious weakness to confess this. But why have they not succeeded? Sir Stafford put the long story into one brief sentence:

“Past distrust has proved too strong to allow present agreement.”

Already a solemn warning had been sounded. “There are few obstacles that cannot be surmounted by goodwill and co-operation.” So ran His Majesty The King Emperor’s Message to India brought by H. R. H. The Duke of Gloucester. It went on to urge that the task before all concerned was “to overcome the impediment that springs from distrust.” But whether it is usual to take expressions of goodwill as rhetoric or whether the administration cannot afford to be too imaginative, the warning was not followed by any goodwill campaign, by setting up a machinery to generate trust. No wonder that Cripps’ Proposal—so noble in its conception—fell on deaf ears and his mission struck blind eyes. A political compromise is the vital necessity. There can be no peace, no progress, without it. Still the compromise cannot be reached unaided by a cultural understanding. Until the mental background is clear, we shall not be able to catch the vision of political fulfilment.

If only an excellent formula could have done, I repeat, there was the one brought by Sir Stafford Cripps. The breakdown of the Cripps Mission should have made it abundantly clear that rebuilding the fund of goodwill and trust is the elementary need of the day. It need not be said that for lack of political training India could not follow the Draft Declaration. But what about Europe where nations produce tirelessly formula after formula and go heedlessly from war to war. In fact, doctoring the mind is the dire necessity all the world over!

Our efforts to formulate suitable terms of agreement will be increasingly successful as we develop the will to agree. Our basic effort must be to fight the battles on the psychological front in such a manner that we win one another. When that is done—suspicion removed and reception implanted—give any formula, however defective, it will work straight in. Unless this is done, we shall be labouring till dooms-

## A TREATY BETWEEN INDIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

day for the perfection of a scheme of union. If political technique alone could do, surely, between England and Ireland there were no dearth of technicians and yet there was a catastrophic separation:

“Probably the best short explanation that an Englishman can give of the failure of the Union with Ireland is that in the relation of nations, as of individuals, there are mistakes which are irreparable.”

I hope and pray, the lesson will not be lost, and there will not be any such irreparable mistakes in the relation between India and the United Kingdom.

## AN AGREED CONSTITUTION

**N**O constitution can be evolved without a basic Hindu Muslim settlement. What can be lines of that settlement?

(A) The Muslim League advocates the partition of India demanding for the Muslim his own separate States with all the implications of full sovereignty; this is the substance of the so-called Pakistan demand. The principle of Pakistan has not been so far accepted by the Congress, the Mahasabha, the Indian Christians, the Sikhs, the Azad Muslim Conference, the Muslim Majlis and some other bodies though Mr. Gandhi recently made an offer to Mr. Jinnah of something akin to it. It may, however, be stated that this demand represents the wishes of a vast majority of the Muslims of India.

(B) The Draft Declaration recommends a Union of India on Federal lines. The recommendation has been rejected by the Congress on the immediate issue of the interim National Government, and by the League because in the proposed scheme, Pakistan was given rather a secondary place.

(C) The Congress stands for a Unitary Government of India the constitution of which is to be drawn up by a Constituent Assembly, based on adult suffrage, (though in its latest resolution it has practically accepted the principle of residuary powers in the provinces). This device of a Constituent Assembly, like that of the constitution-making body of the Draft Declaration, has not the approval of the League.

## (A) PAKISTAN

The objectors to Pakistan have not so far been able to offer the Muslim a suitable alternative, one that *he* may be satisfied with. He is the aggrieved party. As Mr. Gandhi has admitted, the determined demand of ninety millions strong cannot be resisted. At the moment, the Muslim's terms of settlement with the Hindu are Pakistan in the North-West and Pakistan in the North-East of India. In any realistic approach to a settlement his terms cannot be ignored. And if

there are insuperable difficulties in accepting them a substitute has to be found and offered. May be, Pakistan is the last fatal symptom in the communal pathology. Nonetheless, it has to be treated. It is idle to condemn it without understanding how the Muslim has been driven to it and what instead can be given to him.

Though the ideology of Pakistan based on the principle of self-determination is definite enough, its geography is not yet so definite. For all practical purposes, the Pakistan area has yet to be clearly mapped out. One map so far drawn was that of the Seven Regions by which Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan sought to include not only all communities of British India but also the States in a common federal administration. That this plan did not receive the consideration that it deserved, only shows how deeply the Muslim mind is bent on partition. He feels that the safeguards of 'separate electorates' have failed. But the problem of settlement by partition cannot be tackled in a business-like manner until the Pakistan map is placed on the table. Without reference to the Pakistan map, there can be no easy answer to the following questions:

- (a) If the Sikhs demanded self-determination for themselves, what would be their position? If they chose to remain in Hindustan what part of the land do they get?
- (b) In any case, would Ambala and Jallundur Divisions be included in Pakistan? If so, on what principle?
- (c) Would Amritsar be in Pakistan?
- (d) What would be the state language of North-East Pakistan?
- (e) Are the two Pakistans to be linked together by a corridor, and if so what is the proposal about it?
- (f) Will Calcutta be in Pakistan or outside it?
- (g) What will be the position if the Muslims of N.W.F. P. exercise their right of self-determination and decide to remain outside Pakistan?

From geography we may now come to some more serious difficulties which appear to be inherent in the scheme of Pakistan. The first question is whether it is really a prescription for the ills that it seeks to cure, or, in other words,

does it provide any practical scheme for securing justice and proper treatment to the Muslim in the overwhelmingly Hindu provinces? Far from doing so, it not only condemns him permanently to Hindu majority rule, but even takes away the little advantages that he at present enjoys under the Communal Award. What is really required is that his lot in these Provinces should improve so that the history of maladministration by Congress Ministries as in 1937-39 may not repeat itself. Prima facie, the Pakistan scheme does not claim to secure even this. It seeks to create two Muslim States, but it does not appear to solve the problem. Let us now proceed to examine implications of Pakistan in some detail.

#### SOVEREIGN MUSLIM STATES

It has been suggested that the very creation of sovereign Muslim states, in which the Hindus will be in a minority, is likely to result in better treatment of the Muslim in the Hindu provinces or Hindu India as a whole. This argument does not find support from the history of minorities in Europe before or after the Treaty of Versailles. Is Balkanisation that must result from the application of the doctrine of "self-determination" in India likely to yield a better harvest? Recent history answers the question definitely in the negative. Apart from this, a cursory examination of the population statistics of the Punjab, that N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan and Sind will show that the Muslim population in the aggregate will be about 62% only. Is this an adequate majority on which to base such an argument for separation? And when we consider the respective positions of the two communities in the economic field, this majority appears to be obviously ineffective. Even if we add Kashmir to, and delete the Ambala Division from it, the Muslim majority will be more than 68%. The North-Eastern Pakistan again does not disclose more than a 54% majority. The two Pakistans will be separated by the Hindustan peninsula which in the north will be quite 700 miles wide.

— The faint suggestion that the Muslims in the rest of India will be able to migrate to Pakistan is too fantastic to be discussed with any seriousness and must be dismissed without much comment; and indeed it has been ruled out by Mr.

Jinnah himself. The analogy of exchange of populations between Turkey and Greece after the last Great War is sometimes quoted as a precedent. It is however forgotten that it concerned Greeks who had gone to and settled in Anatolia and Turks who had gone to and settled in Greece, while Hindus and Muslims in India have lived together in India for centuries. It has also to be remembered that the exchange concerned only about a million Greeks and about half a million Turks and no less than 10 million pounds was spent by the Greeks alone in settling their repatriates; while in India 30 million Muslims will have to be repatriated, a task no human agency can possibly accomplish.

The supporters of Pakistan also rely on the hostage principle which will not work, and if it does, it will shift the basis of politics from civilisation to barbarism.

#### THE PAKISTAN ECONOMIES

India is soon likely to be exceedingly important in world trade as a source of coal and petroleum, iron ore, manganese ore, various gemstones, chrome ore, bauxite, salt, magnesite, mica, gypsum, monazite and certain refractory materials. Industrial power in the modern world is based on the trinity of coal, iron and oil. Out of these, coal and iron are the basis of industrialisation in the present steel age. Oil though valuable is far less essential. It is possible to convert coal to liquid fuel as has been done in Germany. But coal is indispensable. Both in aggregate value and in distribution the most important single industrial mineral resource in India is coal, and the best and by far the greatest amount of it, more than 98%, is found in the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. By far the largest fields containing coal best suited for general and varied use and especially for cooking and at the same time most accessible by rail and sea are those of Bihar and Orissa and their extension north east in Bengal. The other coal areas are in Central India, Hyderabad, and Madras, all non-Pakistan areas. There is very little coal in the Punjab, Baluchistan and Assam. Iron, manganese ore, chrome ore, gold, bauxite, copper, manganese and mica regions are all to be found in the non-Pakistan area. All that the Pakistan areas can produce is petroleum at Digboi, Badarpur, Khaur,

Dhulian and Chhera. These are in Assam and north-west Punjab.

From this brief survey of India's mineral resources,

“It is apparent that they are so distributed between the parts of India in which Hindu and Moslem people preponderate that if India were divided on the basis of religious population, the Hindu State would be rich and the Muslim State conspicuously poor. In a closed trade system the Pakistan State of Bengal would industrially speaking die. The economic position of the Muslim State of Assam would be also unfavourable. It has no outstanding mineral wealth except petroleum and a little chrome. Division or no division, there would be little need for change in the economy of the Punjab and the Muslim States to the west. They would remain, as they are now, pastoral and agricultural, economically tributary to Hindustan.”<sup>1</sup> ✕

It must also be remembered that as matters stand at present, Sind and the N. W. F. Province receive subvention from the Centre, and Baluchistan is entirely the latter's responsibility. No scheme has so far been suggested by which the economy of those units and the Punjab would be so improved as not only to dispense with Central help, but also to meet the extra heavy financial burden of defence and of other paraphernalia necessary for an independent sovereign state. If the principle of “self-determination” is carried to its logical conclusion and Ambala and Jullundur Divisions go out of Pakistan, the position will become still more precarious. It may be argued that Pakistan “could control its own economy,” but if these two divisions go out of Pakistan, there may be no economy to control. The plums will go to others and the stones and sand of Rawalpindi, Multan and Baluchistan will go to the Muslims. Apart from these, I cannot conceive of any Sikh agreeing to Amritsar being in Pakistan. Then, where is Lahore going to be, in Pakistan or Hindustan?

A cursory examination of the financial position of the North-Eastern Pakistan shows a more gloomy picture. Here

<sup>1</sup> India's Mineral Wealth and Political Future, by Charles H. Behre.

again if Burdwan Division and the 24-Pargannahs, in both of which the Hindus are in a majority, are excluded, the population ratio in Pakistan might be raised but the economic position would become worse. If again, the principle of self-determination is pursued to its logical conclusion, Assam with its 2/3rd Hindu population must go out of Pakistan and the Muslims must deny to themselves the possession of the City of Calcutta with all its port facilities, commerce and trade.

The danger that in a united India, Hindu industrialists are likely to be a dominant factor is a real one, but it presumes that the present economic system would continue. If the future government of India will be a National Government and not a party government, it is bound to curb unrestricted capitalism by state control of one form or another, under which the Muslim and other minorities would have no fear of economic domination by the Hindu majority.

The principle of self-determination is unexceptionable in theory, but when it is based on "bad politics and worse economics" it ceases to be so. Nor does the principle of self-determination become acceptable by simply designating as Muslim homeland areas in which the Muslim majority is no more than 54% or 62%. Self-deception may be attractive up to a stage, but may become disastrous and tragic if it is not called off in time. To suggest that the homeland of the Bihar Muslim is Bengal and that culturally or racially he belongs to the nationality of the Muslim of Chittagong and not to that of the Bihar Hindu and that the homeland of the Lucknow Muslim is Sind, Baluchistan, North Western Frontier Province or West Punjab and that he culturally or racially belongs to the nationality of the Baluchi or the Frontier Pathan and not to that of the Hindu of the United Provinces is a proposition which would appear to many as not quite sound, and even fantastic.

Another argument in favour of the acceptance of the principle of self-determination is based on the recent precedent of the U. S. S. R. But the principle as enunciated by Russia cannot be applied to India. The concessions to communities and, national minorities, are so granted as not to

affect the authority of the Union as a whole. "The State as a whole maintains its unity unimpaired and has even like other federal states increased its centralisation of authority." In India, there is no territorial unit which contains a homogeneous population which could be permitted to exercise the right of self-determination. Besides, this concession in favour of self-determination in the case of the Soviet republics was absolutely unnecessary for (1) every republic has a socialistic economy and would find it almost impossible to exist outside among capitalist countries without a radical change in its economic system, and (2) the Communist Party is the key organisation of the U. S. S. R. and it controls every sphere of political activity and would never permit the secession of any part of the existing Soviet territories. Unless and until, therefore, India adopts the same economy, and the politics of the country is controlled by a well-organised Communist Party, we must talk more of cultural autonomy rather than of self-determination.

The next difficulty in the way of Pakistan is presented by the question of defence and the technique of diplomatic relationship. If the Pakistan states are to be completely 'sovereign,' the treaty to be contracted between Pakistan and Hindustan should be as between two independent states. Such a treaty would be far different from a Minority Treaty between a state and its minority nations. The drafting of such a treaty, indeed, even the cultivation of a mental outlook preparatory to it, cannot be proceeded with until the Muslim League announces in unequivocal terms its proposal for partition, its political, military and economic implications. For, in the case of absolute separation, these implications would present problems that would not arise if Pakistan were to be a unit of an Indian Federation. It is a matter of vital importance to all inhabitants of India that her defences do not become disjointed and manysided, too elaborate to be effective and too expensive to be maintained; her position in the international world must be fully assured. The gravity of these questions has already been dealt with in the earlier sections of this paper.

We shall now close the case against Pakistan by recalling the oft-quoted advice which Abraham Lincoln gave his

countrymen when the North and the South were at war with each other. "Physically speaking," he said, "we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other, but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse either amicable or hostile must continue between them. Is it possible then to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when after much loss to both sides and no gain on either, you cease fighting the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you."

If the North-West and North-East Pakistans are completely independent sovereign states, with no constitutional bond with the rest of India, they must fail as a practical proposition inasmuch as they will have no military security or economic stability, and also because they would not secure peace and justice to the Muslims in the rest of India. Other alternatives must therefore be found and considered. In doing so, we must not forget that we have to satisfy the aggrieved Muslim of India who is afraid of Hindu domination in every walk of life. His experience of two years and a half years of Congress administration has been bitter and he cannot suffer it to be repeated. Whatever may be said about the efficacy of Pakistan as demanded by Mr. Jinnah, any unbiased student of Indian political conditions during the past ten years or so, must recognise that he has completely exploded the Congress claim of representing the whole of India and has shown that by its own actions, the Congress has completely forfeited the confidence of the Muslims and of the other minorities of India.

It is not claimed that the alternative scheme proposed in following paragraphs is either perfect or complete, but, it has, it is hoped, the virtue of being practical and under the

peculiar circumstances of the India of today, it is not unreasonable. We now proceed to state this scheme basing it on the Draft Declaration.

THE UNION OF INDIA

1. The union will be based on a federal plan.
2. The union will be composed of several units as so many sovereign federated states, and will have a centre.
3. The frontiers of the units may be redrawn, where necessary, altering the boundaries lines of the present British Indian Provinces.
4. The provinces in the North West and the North-East will form two such units, with altered frontiers if desired, so that the Muslim majority might be substantially increased therein.
5. These units will be autonomous and sovereign with full freedom in all internal affairs.
6. The external freedom of the units will be subject only to the powers transferred to the Union by common agreement between the units.

(i) *Powers*—The Centre will have powers and authority over the following subjects:—

Defence, Foreign relations, Currency, Customs, Broadcasting, Airways, Railways, Shipping, Posts and Telegraphs.

Residuary powers will be vested in the Provinces.

(ii) *Composition of the Federal Assembly*.—The following will be the ratio of representation for the composition of the Federal Assembly:—

Muslims	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	40%
Hindus	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	40%
Depressed Classes	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10%
The rest such as Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, Sikhs, Parsees, Tribes, etc.								10%

What worries the Muslim is that in a majority rule, where the majority is permanent, he is under the Hindu for ever.

The ratio of representation proposed above would make the majority fluid and dependent on a lively combination with other groups. This arrangement would give an equally good chance of winning a majority to the Hindu and to the Muslim. For, it cannot be said that the Depressed classes and the others will be a regular appendix to the Hindu. Experience of the working of the 1935 Act shows that they are a variable factor. Besides, any majority under this plan would be so narrow as will have always to depend on the goodwill and the moral support of the opposition. Static majority is done away with, and the possibilities of its riding roughshod on minorities are ruled out.

This plan should give distinct satisfaction to the Muslim at least for this reason that it gives him practically equal representation with the Hindu. This should particularly satisfy Mr. Jinnah who, referring to Mr. Gandhi's remark, "I cannot be frivolous when I talk of Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, he is my brother," said in a grim humour, "The only difference is, that brother Gandhi has three votes and I have only one." To the Hindu, too, our plan ought to make an appeal for this reason that while his major community is called upon to make some sacrifice it is not sacrificed.

(iii) *The Constitution-Making Body*.—The question, who should make the constitution, is clouded by the same communal suspicions as affect the constitution itself. The nature of the difficulty in both cases is identical, for the communal situation in the constitution-making body would decide the constitution itself.

The Congress plan was to leave constitution-making to a Constituent Assembly elected on adult suffrage. The Congress accepted separate electorates for the composition of the constituent assembly and in addition provided that matters relating to minority rights should be settled by agreement between the majority and minority, failing which arbitration could be resorted to. The Muslim League is against this plan. Nor does it favour a constitution-making body elected by the Lower Houses of the provincial legislatures, as was proposed in the Draft Declaration. But this type, in our opinion, should be accepted, with some modifications, to

incorporate in it any legitimate and tangible proposals, that the League might make.

It might, however, be possible to reconcile the various conflicting views by adopting the following method:

*We have suggested 80 seats for the Muslims and the Hindus. These 80 seats should be filled up by 40 double constituencies, each constituency returning a Muslim and a Hindu member. Each of these constituencies should be divided into 500 circles. In each circle separate registers should be prepared of adult Muslims and adult Hindus who might be literate or own a house or pay any tax. In each circle such Muslims and Hindus should elect separately a Muslim and a Hindu representative. Thus in each constituency there would be 500 Muslims and 500 Hindus elected by separate electorates. These 1000 persons would form a joint electorate and would elect one Muslim and one Hindu member. A similar suitable method could be adopted for the Depressed Classes, as well as for the others. The great advantage of this method would be that the representatives of the Hindus and Muslims would jointly elect the Hindu and Muslim Members. Separate compartment would disappear and with them mutual distrust and suspicion. Ten per cent or even five per cent of the Lower Houses so constituted might form the Constitution-making Body.*

(iv) *The Executive:*

(a) The Cabinet will reflect the same communal ratio as the Assembly.

(b) The Executive will be responsible to the Legislature.

(c) The Prime Minister will be alternately a Muslim and a non-Muslim.

(d) The Deputy Prime Minister will be a Hindu when the Prime Minister is a Muslim and a Muslim when the Prime Minister is a Hindu.

(e) The Defence Minister will be a Muslim if the Commander-in-Chief is a non-Muslim and vice-versa.

(f) Collective responsibility will be a matter of convention. (This will act, apart from principle, also as a safeguard against any decision affecting a certain community

without ascertaining its will; for, the Ministers of the community concerned resigning, the Cabinet would break up.)

(v) *Civil Services*.—As far as possible and subject to efficiency the same ratio will be reflected in the appointment for the Civil Services. Promotions would generally depend on efficiency and seniority.

(vi) *Public Bodies*.—In all organisations of Local Self-government, Corporations, Municipal Councils, various similar Boards and Commissions, the same ratio as above shall be reflected.

(vii) *Army Services*.—The composition of the Indian Fighting Forces will be as follows:—

Muslims	..	..	..	..	..	..	50%
Non-Muslims	..	..	..	..	..	..	50%

(viii) *Clauses of the Safeguards*.—In this connection reference may be made to the Declaration of Fundamental Rights issued by the Congress in 1933; it was followed in 1938 by a Declaration of Minority Rights. The Congress at Ramgarh in 1940 affirmed: “It has always held to two basic principles in this connection, and every step was taken deliberately with these in view:

(a) Whatever constitution is adopted for India, there must be the fullest guarantees in it for the rights and interests of minorities.

(b) The minorities should judge for themselves what safeguards are necessary for the protection of their rights and interests. The majority should not decide on this. Therefore the decision in this respect must depend upon the consent of the minorities and not on a majority vote.”

The Muslim League in 1928 formulated what are known as “Mr. Jinnah’s Fourteen Points.” and in 1938 presented to the Congress a catalogue of demands known as “Mr. Jinnah’s Eleven points.” These eleven Points are an enumeration of safeguards demanded, (a) religious, social and cultural and (b) political and administrative.

(a) These relate to—

- The Bandemataram song
- The Cow question
- The Azan
- The language question
- The National Flag

The Bandemataram national anthem has already been rid of its objectionable passages. Iqbal's song is also sung. The two songs should now be officially put together. Similarly, Muslim insignia should be given a place on the Congress Flag. Cow sacrifice should be tolerated, and to respect sentiments on both sides, it should be performed without demonstration. The Azan question should present no difficulty at all. Music before mosques is not in Mr. Jinnah's list. But this grievance features largely in the Pirpur Report. However, a lull in the music before a mosque should ensure that Hindu processions would not be disturbed.

The question of language however is a most vital one, and of the script as well. But to avoid controversy, English language and Roman script should be the language and script at the Centre. In the Provinces, the use of local vernaculars might be permitted.

(b) These relate to—

- (1) Territorial redistribution affecting Muslim majority in a Province be permitted.
- (2) A statutory guarantee of the personal law and culture of the Muslims.
- (3) A statutory enactment of the communal ratio in services under the State and local bodies.

The first would not arise if Pakistan were dropped. The other should be admitted. ✕

More grievances may have in the meanwhile made their appearance. Of these the League should prepare an upto-date list. Points of dispute should be scientifically tabulated in order to permit of a reasoned discussion and settlement.

(ix) *Guarantee of Safeguards*.—Great anxiety is felt on the score that safeguards provided in the Constitution might not

be observed in practice. Where is the guarantee and who will be the guarantor that safeguards will be honoured? Minority Treaties of Europe were "obligations of International concern" and guaranteed by the League of Nations. In the case of the Dominion of Canada, the safeguards given to the French minority were guaranteed by Westminster. In our case, the Draft Declaration seems to favour the arrangement of retaining Britain's obligation in respect of minorities. It is mentioned that the Treaty between India and the United Kingdom "will make provision, in accordance with the undertakings given by His Majesty's Government, for the protection of racial and religious minorities."†

India may not accept this position only if she has that respect for the sovereignty of the Union of India, that faith in her full Dominion Status, which can effectively replace the guarantee vested in an outside authority, the United Kingdom or the League of Nations or whatever else it be. If such be the case we shall place our trust in the Law of our Land, and seek redress of our grievances by appeal to the Court of the Units or the Supreme Court of the Union or finally to the International Court.

(x) *Cultural Safeguards*.—More cultural safeguards than are enumerated in the Eleven Points may be needed. Between the Hindu and the Muslim the differences are not so much racial as cultural. The racial content of the two communities does not appreciably differ. And even the cultural differences are not radical. Living for centuries along side with the Hindu the common Muslims have almost lost contact with the lands beyond the Passes. His cultural and social world has been in the main India. Thus on the loom of his life, differences and identities are interwoven. What worries the Muslim in a practical way is the necessity for political and administrative safeguards. We do not hear of an emphatic demand for Cultural Autonomy such as was provided in the Minority Treaty of Estonia or in Soviet Russia. Still, for the small cultural differences that there are, safeguards should be provided. Some of these would relate to:

Freedom of faith,  
Religious institutions,

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Educational institutions and  
Charitable institutions.

On the lines of the Estonian Cultural Autonomy Law, Cultural Councils might well be set up in the Units for the protection and administration of the religious, social and Educational rights and institutions of the Minorities.

(xi) *Political Safeguards*.—No bill may be proceeded with, if it is considered by a community to affect it adversely, unless three-fourths of the members of that community agree to it. (No. 2 of Mr. Jinnah's Fourteen Points).

(xii) Resolutions affecting the Sikh community may be moved only in the Punjab Assembly, and they would be subject to the safeguard in para (xi).

(xiii) Resolutions affecting the Parsee community may be moved only in the Bombay Assembly and they would be subject to the safeguard in para (xi).

### THE UNITS

As regards representation in the Assemblies, the executive and the services of the federated states the following may be considered:

(a) Minorities may retain separate electorates, but may follow the method of representation as suggested under the head "Constitution-making body" for the Centre.

(b) Minorities may retain their present weightage, except that in Bengal the weightage to the Europeans may be substantially reduced.

(c) Boundaries of Units may be altered, but not in a manner which would convert the majority into a minority.

(d) As far as possible and subject to efficiency the same proportion shall be reflected in the Cabinet and public services of the Units.

(e) Matters dealt with in para 6 clauses (iv) (v) (vi) (viii) (ix) (x) (xi) and (xii) under Union of India also apply wherever relevant to the Units, specially minority safeguards.

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This would present formidable difficulties and may not be seriously considered.

#### II

*The Alternative of an Alternating Absolute Majority.*—More than equality can neither be asked nor be given. An equality in the Centre would, however, be managed, by giving an absolute 51% majority alternately to the Hindu and the Muslim. This would be of immediate advantage: In the first place, it would do away with vote-catching manœuvres. Thereby it would release the energy and wisdom of our political craftsmen from absorbing rivalries for votes for positive constructive activity. This would be of tremendous value in view of the task of nation-building that lies ahead. Secondly, it would no longer keep the human elements of our political world in constant friction with each other. The atmosphere would become increasingly congenial for understanding and for joint action for the common good. Lastly, the knowledge that the other party would before long have its turn at the helm of power, and might pay back in the same coin, would serve to maintain a salutary control over the perverse tendencies of either side. Its one drawback is that the other minor parties and groups would be reduced to non-entities, while under the 40%:40% plan these minorities would be left in the important and enviable position of holding the balance of power. No human plan, however, can claim to be perfect. But if this one can help in establishing a reign of agreement between the two major communities, the Hindu and the Muslim, it will have more than justified itself. It would register such a great victory as would at once transform the whole aspect of our political struggle by revitalising our morale. In the atmosphere of sweetness and success, with feeling of a supreme fulfilment, it is impossible that there should lurk a desire to do the slightest injustice to the smaller communities. A high achievement is an incentive to still higher achievements.

## CHAPTER X

### THE INDIAN STATES

**T**O the vexed question of the States, the simple answer is: If our statesmanship can achieve a solution of the communal problem, the solution of the problem of the States cannot be beyond our reach. It must however be remembered that the Federation of the Act of 1935 was virtually vetoed by the States. Now the Draft Declaration does not make the accession of the States indispensable for the establishment of the Union of India. They may wish to preserve their ancient rights, and there are many that are of rare value by retaining the present or a somewhat altered connection with the Paramount Power. But the spirit of the new democracy of the Union is bound quickly and continuously to be transmitted to the States, whether they come into the Union or not. From this point of view they might rather choose to be in direct relationship in order to keep their position less challengeable and assimilate the new spirit more readily. In case they join, they might well be grouped together into important blocs (with minor boundary alternations if necessary) as under:

- (1) Kashmir and the Punjab States.
- (2) Kathiawar and Rajputana States.
- (3) Central India and Eastern States.
- (4) Mysore, Travancore, and Cochin.
- (5) Hyderabad.

It must be admitted, in view of the strategic importance of their territories that the defences of India would be seriously impaired if the States keep out of the Federation. Because of this supreme consideration the States ought to be persuaded to accede to the Union of India. Separateness would make the defence wall porous.

The States forming units of the Union of India should be as autonomous and sovereign as any other Units. But for the sake of uniformity and equality of dignity, they should have as nearly as possible representative Governments like

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the rest of the Union. The sovereignty of the Rulers of these States should generally remain unaffected, except in such matters as their privy purse and in regard to such powers as are transferred to the Federal Assembly or the Union Government.

## CHAPTER XI

### IMMEDIATE DECLARATIONS NECESSARY

**I**T would be wholly impracticable to attempt to put the relations of England and India on a new footing by an immediate declaration of Dominion Status, followed by the setting up of a provisional government and by arrangements for a constituent assembly to complete its work within a period of twelve months. There is no single body in existence in India at the present moment which commands sufficient general confidence to assume the functions of a provisional government; nor is there much, if any, likelihood of a constituent assembly, however constituted, devising a complete constitution within twelve months. On these grounds it would seem that the drafting of the new Indian constitution must precede the setting up of a provisional government, because in no other way can a provisional government which commands general confidence come into existence at all. Nor does it seem possible to consider even the outlines of a treaty between England and India until it is known what form the new constitution is going to take, or how the political forces are likely to range themselves or where the political centre of gravity is likely to be.

No transfer of power on the scale involved in a new Indian constitution could be effected without one or more subsidiary agreements, apart altogether from the constitution itself, and the various Orders in Council made under the Irish Free State (Agreement) Act, 1922, seem to present the closest analogy. These, however, dealt with questions of administrative machinery and not with questions of principle. Only the new Indian government will be competent to deal with the latter.

There is, however, everything in favour of England making a public declaration (she has made it often before, but apparently has not been believed) which might take some such form as this:

“We have no intention of devising a new constitution for India ourselves or of imposing a constitution upon her in

any circumstances. The responsibility for framing the new Indian constitution is henceforward the exclusive responsibility of the people of India themselves; and we are prepared to transfer our powers in India to any new government which may emerge from that new constitution, subject only to the following reservations:—

“(1) We must be satisfied that the constitution is a workable constitution, in the sense that it commands the general assent of those who are going to live under it.

“(2) We must be satisfied that minorities are reasonably protected under the constitution: but here again, if it is generally acceptable to those who are going to live under it, minorities included, that question will not arise. In any event we are clear that the minorities will have to seek for their protection under the constitution itself, since we have no intention of guaranteeing that protection by any collateral undertaking. We are not going to define in any precise and legal terms what we mean by a minority, which is an expression sufficiently well understood in India; but we should not permit any insignificant body of men to hold up all constitutional advance under the pretext that it constituted a minority and that its interests had not been sufficiently protected.

“(3) We must be satisfied that there is nothing in the new constitution which derogates from the guarantees which the British Government have given to the Indian States and also that the terms on which the States are to be invited to adhere to the new constitution are just and reasonable and contain no element of coercion.

“(4) We must be satisfied that any servants of the Crown in India who may be unwilling to serve under the new constitutional arrangements will be adequately protected and proper pensions or other compensation assured to them. We must also be satisfied that rights of other kinds which have been assured in the past to individuals, whether for services to the Crown or otherwise, shall be secured to them and not taken away without full compensation assessed by the courts or other independent tribunal.”

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If these reservations are satisfied, then a day will be fixed within a specified date after the promulgation of the new constitution as from which all responsibilities of every kind will be transferred to the new government. There may be matters of minor importance, which will have to be dealt with as indicated in previous paragraphs, by some kind of collateral agreement; and it may be desirable to mention this possibility, in order that there may be no accusation of bad faith hereafter. But subject to these, the transfer of responsibilities should be declared to be complete and final. The actual procedure would of course be different according as the new constitution made India independent or provided for her continued allegiance to the Crown, as in the case of the other members of the British Commonwealth; but that seems to be mainly a question of machinery.

Lastly, England might indicate to India, when dates had been fixed for their completion, that she would be willing to discuss a commercial treaty, and a treaty relating to matters of defence with the new Indian Government if the latter desired to do so. What steps, if any, England would take if the new Indian Government stated that they had no desire to enter into such negotiations, may well be left for future consideration.

It may be objected that the above suggestions outline a policy which is at best of a negative and barren character. At first sight this may so appear, but a little reflection will show that the objection has little substance. No one supposes that England can by a stroke of the pen, or by any kind of public declaration disinterest herself wholly in the affairs of India after a connection of so many generations; nor, it is believed, would the sounder elements in Indian opinion desire so sudden and complete a rupture. But there seem to be two things above all others necessary to be secured. Firstly, there must be no opportunity given to any element in India to suggest an absence of *bona fides* on the part of the British Government; and secondly, we the people of India must be compelled to face our own problems and take the responsibility for solving them. These two things are in one sense perhaps different aspects of the same matter; for if India is compelled to assume the exclusive responsibility

of settling her own problems, then no one will be able to allege that it is England which is preventing her from settling them. So too with regard to the suggested offer of the two treaties or agreements. It is far better that suggestions as to the contents of these treaties should come from the new Indian Government when formed than that England should put forward a ready-made treaty and invite India to sign it.

His Majesty's Government or the Government of India might further, for instance, in a public statement express its desire that a beginning should be made with constitutional discussions; that experience has shown how desirable it is that in the early stages at any rate the problem should be examined by a small body of persons; that it is prepared to set aside a place where such persons could meet and to provide the necessary secretarial and other facilities; that it would not propose itself to invite persons to take part in such a gathering, but would suggest that they might be selected by various specified parties and organisations up to a number not exceeding such and such a figure; that it should be possible for the selected persons to co-opt a small number of additional persons, if they should desire to do so, persons that is to say, with no particular party affiliations but possessing what is sometimes described as the cross-bench mind. The announcement might also go on to suggest that all the discussions should be held in private and should be regarded as strictly confidential, and that interim reports might perhaps be made from time to time, if thought desirable. It would also be understood that the whole constitutional field would be open for discussion, and that no member of the gathering would commit himself, still less his party, to any particular policy merely by joining in the discussions, the purpose of which would be exploratory, with a view to ascertaining how far there was agreement on all points, but also (not less important) where opinions differed. The British Government would no doubt also be willing to give any further assistance, if asked in terms to do so; but it would be clearly understood that it would offer no advice of assistance unasked.

The possibility must also be contemplated that one of the more important parties would be unwilling to enter into such discussions at all, no matter how great the emphasis laid on

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their exploratory character and the fact that they were entirely without prejudice to any particular party policy. It would no doubt be very regrettable if this were so, but there seems no reason why that should deter others from meeting, if they are willing to come; and it may be that, if the discussions appeared to be serving a useful purpose, dissenting parties would later on be willing to join. It might even be considered whether there might not be two groups meeting for discussions, each engaged in producing its own scheme. Alternatively, it might be made clear at the outset, perhaps by the British Government itself, that, though they expressed no opinion themselves on the matter and must not be taken as supporting one policy or the other, they could see no reason why a body of men, engaged in constitutional discussions should not include discussions upon the possibility of a divided as well as a united India; and that such discussions ought not to be regarded as *ipso facto* ruled out, since the whole purpose of the plan is to secure an objective consideration of every aspect of the constitutional problem by persons competent to discuss it.

No doubt if this small body of constitution-makers arrived at a more or less agreed result, the draft constitution would have to be submitted to a larger and more directly representative body as has been suggested, for instance, in one of the earlier chapters of this paper; but that is a long way in future and need not be discussed here. It must, however, be made clear from the outset that something of this kind is in contemplation, and that the smaller body above described is only intended to do the preliminary work. But if they do their work well, it may even be that the review by a larger body will become not much more than a matter of form.















