



An
American Witness
to
India's
Partition



Phillips Talbot



*An American Witness to
India's Partition*



Phillips Talbot, Aligarh, 1939

*An American Witness to
India's Partition*

PHILLIPS TALBOT

With a Foreword by
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and Sectional Prefaces by
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Foreword

This book is in a class by itself. It is a collection of letters written by Phillips Talbot during and immediately after World War II from India to his boss, Walter S. Rogers, Director of the Institute of Current World Affairs, New York. Neither the writer nor the recipient of these letters envisaged their publication; they were intended only for private circulation among the members of the Institute.

I have known Mr. Talbot for many years. Like most of his friends, I knew that he had been a member of the Kennedy administration—Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs—and later President of the Asia Society in New York. On one of his visits to India, he casually referred to his stay in India during World War II and the partition of the country. My interest was aroused by his reminiscences. I belonged to West Punjab, and had seen the horrors of partition on both sides of the border in that province. As a historian, I have had a long-standing interest in this subject. My first book, *Punjab Uprooted*, published in February 1948 (later reprinted as *Witness to Partition*), was about the partition, and I had reverted to this subject in some of my subsequent writings. So I quizzed Talbot on his experiences in the 1940s, and asked him if he would be good enough to let me see some of the letters he had been sending home. He said his old papers had long since been packed and stored away and were not easily accessible; he was not sure whether he would be able to lay his hands on them. Last year, I was pleasantly surprised to receive a large package of papers from Talbot. I found them fascinating—the best contemporary account I had come across of the critical decade which preceded independence and the partition of India. My own interest in these papers was as a historian of modern India, but I felt that they would have a wide appeal, as the partition of India remains a perennially controversial subject in our subcontinent.

Interestingly, Talbot's connection with India was an accident—a happy accident. He was 23 years old in 1938. After graduating in political science and journalism he joined the *Chicago Daily News* as a local reporter.

He aspired to be a foreign correspondent in a European capital such as London, Rome or Berlin, but discovered that he was considered much too young for such an assignment. Just at this time, Walter S. Rogers, Director of the Institute of Current World Affairs in New York, was looking for a young scholar to go to India on a fellowship. India was a British territory, and the government did not encourage American contacts with it. There was no American diplomatic representation in India. There were of course American consulates in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, but they were only for commercial purposes. Mr. Rogers wanted to give the fellowship to someone who could observe and report on the “dynamics of contemporary India” for the information of the Institute. He was impressed by the enthusiasm of young Talbot and offered the fellowship to him. Talbot accepted it not because, as he says, it was India, of which he was ignorant and in which he had no prior interest, but because he hoped that exposure in one country would set him on the road to becoming a foreign correspondent.

Rogers was wise enough not to pack young Talbot straight off to India to fend for himself; he wanted him to acquire some basic information about the society and politics of the country before landing there. Since no American university was at that time equipped to provide this preliminary training, Rogers arranged for Talbot to take a year's academic program offered to Indian Civil Service probationers at the School of Oriental Studies in London.

In 1938–39, about half the probationers were British and half Indian; contact with them was to prove an asset to Talbot in England as well as after his arrival in India, when the ICS officers were posted in different parts of the country and were in a position to facilitate his tours across the country.

Talbot landed in India towards the end of 1939. His first halt was Aligarh Muslim University, where he was based for five months. He visited Tagore's university in Shantiniketan. He spent five months with British officials and a month in an Arya Samaj ashram in Lahore. He visited numerous towns, small and big. All in all, he had ample opportunity to meet Hindus, Muslims, and Europeans.

He was conscious that he was young and inexperienced, but he was not overawed in the presence of top political leaders. In fact, his youthfulness and innocence seem to have given him easy access to Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Jinnah, and other leaders. He was a good listener; his letters show his ability to separate the grain from the chaff in talks with high and low. He visited bookshops to find out what people were reading. He talked to university professors, journalists, politicians and common people from all walks of life.

That Talbot should have come out to India not as a foreign correspondent of a newspaper but as a scholar-observer turned out to be an advantage. He did not have to submit to the rigorous wartime censorship in his dispatches to New York, nor did he have to observe word limits or trim his views to suit the editorial predilections of a particular newspaper or magazine. Luckily for him, no American correspondent was based in India at that time. Eminent American journalists such as John Gunther, Louis Fischer and Vincent Sheehan did occasionally make flying visits to India to interview eminent Indian leaders, but none of them could afford to spend weeks or months at a stretch in the country. Thus Talbot was able to deftly combine the roles of scholar, diarist and journalist. Unlike most diarists he did not scribble down only his own moods and experiences at the end of the day, but events around the Indian subcontinent in this tumultuous decade. Unlike journalists, he did not have to dispatch his story so as not to be left behind by other foreign correspondents; unlike research scholars, he did not settle down in a library to write an article or a book. His job was simply to act as the eyes and ears of Mr. Walter Rogers, his boss in the United States.

Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), the great German historian who has come to represent the pursuit of objective truth in history, defined the historian's task: to write history "as it actually happened."

Talbot wrote about events as they were unfolding. He was indefatigable, traveling from one part of the country to the other. He did not have the "inside" information which historians have today from official and private records—the calculations and miscalculations of the major players in the political drama in India. His account, as we read it today, does not supersede the work of historians but supplements it in a way in which perhaps no other contemporary observer did. He was so unconscious of his achievement that he almost forgot it. His letters to Mr. Rogers were packed in boxes

and buried away and would have never seen the light of day if some of his curious friends had not prodded him to disinter them. Talbot was not writing for posterity; his object was to observe, reflect and then mail his impressions of the changing Indian scene. He did not have access to the records of the major players in the political drama, as we do. For example, he did not know that Winston Churchill had repeatedly frustrated efforts to resolve the political deadlock in India during the war years. In December 1939, when he was a member of the War Cabinet, Churchill wrecked the initiative of Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, to offer a "closer accommodation" to the Congress and bring it into a wartime coalition government. He did not see why the government should encourage unity between Hindus and Muslims.

Such a unity, he said, was "in fact almost out of the realm of practical politics, and if it came about the result would be that both Hindus and Muslims will join together in showing us the door." Another attempt made by Zetland's successor, Leopold Amery, met the same fate in July 1940, by which time Churchill had become Prime Minister.

There was an interval of a few hours, sometimes even of a couple of days or more before Talbot could send off his elegantly written reports to Mr. Rogers, but this interval was useful to him in reflecting on what he had seen and putting it in perspective. He was not a historian, but he saw history in the making. He could take a balanced view of men and events because he had no axe to grind, and was able to interact freely with all sections of Indian society. He did not have to limit his investigations to politics; he analyzed economic and social issues and regional problems during a critical decade. He was in India during the World War, when democratic nations were engaged in a life-or-death struggle with the totalitarian regimes of Germany, Italy and Japan. It was natural for him to view the Indian situation during the war from the American point of view, and consider what India could do to further the Allied cause. In 1941, just before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour, when politics in India were paralyzed by the antagonism of the Congress and the Muslim League, and by the obduracy of the British bureaucracy, Talbot in one of his letters speculated with remarkable foresight upon the possible outcome of the war. The "collapse of British rule could lead to a grab-bag period when aggressors would be active

on all fronts in India.” However, even if Britain was victorious, he envisaged difficult days for her:

Victory will signal the opening of strong nationalist agitation. I cannot see how the British can avoid making important changes in the direction of self-government. The period of negotiations will be difficult, as mass movement of newly-enlightened voters is less likely to be compromising than skilled diplomats. The demand from the Indian side will be strong and insistent. To meet that there is no clear-cut British policy. Home sentiment in England is, I judge, far ahead of the British administrators in India on the question of relinquishing power.

Not the least interesting parts of this book are Talbot's perceptive profiles of Indian leaders—Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Jinnah and others whom he met. He had his first glimpse of Gandhi at the Ramgarh Congress in March 1940 and was amazed at the spell he cast on an audience which Talbot estimated at between 50,000 and 100,000. He had the opportunity of seeing Gandhi at close quarters on a number of occasions. In 1941, he visited the Mahatma's ashram at Sevagram. Gandhi struck him as “the most efficient worker in India,” who had “the knack of resting his body completely while his mind carries on. After lunch, for example, as he reads through his heavy correspondence he lies almost at full length on a pad on the floor dictating letters to his secretary, Mahadev Desai.” Talbot describes at some length Gandhi's Wardha scheme of basic education for primary school children, his schemes of rural uplift and, above all, his doctrine of non-violence. He also mentions occasional rumblings of discontent with Gandhi, such as during the individual *satyagraha* movement in 1941, which jarred upon the radicals in the Congress party as a very anemic form of agitation. “On many sides in India today,” Talbot wrote, “one hears that Gandhi is through, finished. That his era is past, the world has gone beyond him, his old magic won't work any more, the hour of youth is at hand [but] Gandhi, who still holds the masses in his hand is not dead and his robust spirit and frail body that has shown such capacity for punishment may well continue to serve him for some years to come.”

In January 1947, Talbot traveled by air, rail, steamer, bicycle and even on foot for five days in order to walk for an hour with Gandhi and his party in East Bengal. They had embarked on a village-to-village pilgrimage for peace in the Muslim-majority district of Noakhali after an explosion of violence against the Hindu minority.

Talbot first met Jawaharlal Nehru at a peasants' conference in UP that took place in 1939. Nehru took to the young American scholar, and spent three hours explaining to him the Indian political scene. "He is a thorough-going socialist," Talbot wrote, "though he unhesitatingly followed Gandhi in most un-socialistic channels." In April 1947, Talbot accompanied Vallabhbhai Patel to Bardoli, a village which had been the nerve centre of the freedom struggle in Gujarat under his leadership. He describes Patel as "one of the closest disciples of Gandhi. As befits a strong man, he talks little, but when he talks he speaks quietly and to the point. . . . He is stiff towards the British government as well as the Muslim League."

As for Talbot's contacts with the Muslim League, he had the advantage of having learnt Urdu in London. His first halt in India was at Aligarh where he had opportunities to make friends with members of the faculty and talk to Muslim League leaders. He met Jinnah in early February 1940 at a time when the Muslim League was inching towards its demand for partition of the country. Jinnah told him that he could see no other solution than partition. Six weeks later Talbot was at Lahore during the Muslim League session. He was struck by Jinnah's "masterly handling" of the Khaksar crisis, which had threatened to disrupt the momentous session which passed the resolution demanding the partition of India. Talbot had noted Jinnah's swipes at Congress leaders such as his description of Nehru as "that busybody president. . . . He seems to carry the responsibility of the whole world on his shoulders and must poke his nose in everything except minding his own business." In one of his letters we get a profile of Jinnah:

[He] is the mouthpiece, protector and defender of the Muslim people of India. No man in Indian public life today uses such intemperate language in published references for other leaders. Few men could be less compromising.

Yet none surpasses his skill in judging the temper of his partisans. Muslims have long wanted a strong champion and the more Mr. Jinnah is called an obstructionist by others the more many Muslims like him.

This book does not end with Talbot's account of the end of the British rule in August 1947, the transfer of power and the historic ceremonies at Karachi and Delhi marking the inauguration of the two Dominions. In December of that year Talbot visited Pakistan. He could not meet Jinnah, who was recovering from an illness, but talked to ministers and leaders of the Muslim League in Karachi and Lahore.

Pakistan seemed to him a "picture of frustration, cataclysmic change, uncertainty, grave distress, nationalism, hope, and embittered determination to succeed. Its top leaders think it will make the grade; so do a good many other Muslims. If there is no shooting war between the Dominions and if the inter-Dominion 'cold war' can be resolved, many others will feel more hopeful."

Just before his return to the United States in January 1950, Talbot again visited Pakistan and noticed a "buoyant mood" among its leaders and many of its people. He referred to the Kashmir issue and wrote that "the only solution for both countries was to first deal with Kashmir, however arduous it may be, if there was to a prospect of future stability in South Asia and the world."

As for India, Talbot acknowledged the tremendous progress it was making, but he also noted traces of disillusionment. His assessment of the changing moods in the government and among the people in the early years makes interesting reading. New forces were at work that promised basic changes in coming years. He ended on a hopeful note: "While India is going through a difficult period, I leave the country feeling that it holds within itself the necessary remedies, provided that it incorporates more Gandhism than cynicism into its national life."

B.R. Nanda

Preface

This volume brings together letters and reports that I wrote from and about India (and, after August 1947, Pakistan) during the last decade of British rule and the first years of the independence of the two South Asian nations. I offer it because an Indian friend born after independence, Krishen Mehta, has suggested, and others have agreed, that two thirds of a century later a new generation might find interest in an independent American observer's understanding at the time of those dramatically formative years. These writings are presented as they originally appeared, without modification even of matters that have become better understood by later research. To my great pleasure, Krishen Mehta has provided sectional prefaces to and current commentary on my writings from that era.

I need to explain how I happened to be studying Indian developments at that time. Before World War II Americans generally knew precious little about India beyond what they had heard from returning missionaries, seen in travel magazines about maharajas and tigers, or read in itinerant journalists' descriptions of Gandhi, Nehru, and the burgeoning nationalist movement.

India was a British territory, colored red on world maps. To seek an Indian visa an American had to turn to London, not New Delhi. Although the British did not bar Americans from India, they certainly did not encourage them to go there for business or academic study. The United States had commercial consulates in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay mainly for commercial business, but no diplomatic representation in India before World War II. A few (four, I believe) American universities had added a Sanskritist to their faculties, but in 1938 we found none that offered courses on modern India. Nor, outside of the Ghadr in California, were there Indian communities in the United States; just scattered individuals. On the Indian job market, as I later learned, an American degree was then considered just a piece of paper.

At that time the contrast between American contacts with India and those with East Asia was stark. From the nineteenth century Americans had become increasingly engaged in political, business,

academic and touristic linkages with China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and other countries. American sympathies, too, drifted more toward East Asia. The signature book on China before World War II was Pearl Buck's moving account of the people of *The Good Earth*. Compare that with Katherine Mayo's harsh, yet also popular, description of certain alleged Hindu practices in her book *Mother India*.

In that climate a small New York foundation, the Institute of Current World Affairs, persuaded of India's potential significance in the world, decided in 1938 to offer a fellowship to someone to try to learn something of the dynamics of contemporary India. To my astonishment, the Institute offered me this opportunity.

I was a strange choice. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, I had grown up mainly in the Middle Western state of Wisconsin and had gone to public schools in Wauwatosa, a suburb of that state's largest city, Milwaukee. My father, a civil engineer, was a corporate executive who became the director of research of his manufacturing company. Our family had lived comfortably until my last year of high school, when in the depth of the 1930s' Great Depression my father's job was eliminated when his company nearly collapsed. Getting to college in 1932 would have been an impossible dream but for an invitation by my grandfather, a professor of engineering at the University of Illinois, to live with him and enroll in that institution.

My college record (in political science and journalism rather than in my family's traditional subject, engineering) was respectable in both academics and extra-curricular activities, but never got me out of the Middle West. Upon graduation I was employed as a local reporter by the *Chicago Daily News*, then that city's leading afternoon newspaper. There my interest in the world beyond America's shores finally grew, in part as I realized how much of the glamor in journalism rested in its foreign correspondents in London, Rome, Berlin or elsewhere. When I tried for such an assignment, my editors told me, accurately, that I was too young and too green to be considered.

At almost the same time Walter S. Rogers, the director of the Institute of Current World Affairs, visited my newspaper and described the Institute's desire to stake someone to India studies as part of its overall commitment to increase the pool of American knowledge of what we now call non-Western peoples.

The Institute judged that in view of the immense variety of Indian life the fellow to be chosen for that assignment might well be a young journalist, in other words a generalist accustomed to study and write on different dimensions of a broad topic. I grew interested not because the subject was India, about which I was ignorant and had no prior interest, but because I believed this exposure in one country might set me on the road to becoming a foreign correspondent.

How little I understood! The decision at age 23 to take that fellowship transformed my life. Through all these succeeding decades South Asia has been at the center of my interests.

When the Institute tapped this young Midwesterner who had never seen a foreign land, it wisely decided I needed some scholarly discipline on India before being plunged into that land. With no American offerings available, I was shoe-horned into the one-year academic program offered for Indian Civil Service probationers at the London School of Oriental Studies. In that year, 1938–39, about half the probationers were British (all expecting full careers in India), and half Indian. During our year together our small group had contacts with a wide variety of British and Indian officials, politicians, journalists, and other people. A dividend of that year in London was that I had classmates whose assignments in the following years placed them in many of the Indian provinces I visited.

My first two years in India, from 1939 to 1941, were broadly divided between Muslim and Hindu settings. Muslims then constituted about a quarter of the Indian population of 400 million. Except for the 2 per cent who were Christian, a similar number of Sikhs, and smaller numbers of other minorities, the Hindus—including those then known as Untouchables—accounted for the rest. My Muslim experiences included a term at the Aligarh Muslim University, which was India's leading center of Islamic academics and politics; followed by a community study in a rather isolated Muslim village in Kashmir. I also attended some major Indian political meetings. At their climax in March 1940 the latter included the Indian National Congress's Ramgarh encampment, its last annual gathering until after World War II, and the All India Muslim League's Lahore session where it formally adopted the goal of a Pakistan state. During my second year I concentrated on Hindu settings, with stints at a Vedic Ashram (which at that time was still located in Lahore),

Rabindranath Tagore's Shantiniketan center, the Kodaikanal Ashram in south India, on a fellowship, and Gandhiji's ashram, Sevagram. I also did a couple of urban community studies in Lahore and Bombay.

The letters and reports that I wrote during those years for private distribution by the Institute of Current World Affairs make up the bulk of this volume's content. They appear here as they were written from 1938 onward. They have been neither updated nor amended even where information that has subsequently become available might change the analysis. Some of the comments are in the idiom of those days; I hope they will not offend readers accustomed to today's more popular terms.

By mid-1941 I expected to return to the United States and to marry the university classmate to whom I had become engaged in early 1938, before we knew there would be an Indian project. In 1941, however, the prospect of American war with Japan was growing. I was abruptly summoned to Manila, there to be bidden to volunteer for US naval duty. Shortly thereafter I found myself back in India, this time as US Naval Liaison Officer Bombay for the next two years (during which time my fiancée, tired of waiting for me to return home, made her own way from Chicago to India with the American Red Cross, enabling us to be married in Calcutta). In 1943 I was reassigned as Assistant Naval Attaché, Chungking, China. We returned to the United States in 1945, and I was demobilized some months later.

My fellowship studies had created the basis for the rest of my career. In 1946 I rejoined the *Chicago Daily News*, which then made me a foreign correspondent and sent us back to India where I covered the negotiations that ended British rule and brought independence to partitioned India and the new state of Pakistan. It is hard to believe now, but that core event in one of the most crucial developments of the twentieth century—the ending of the centuries-old colonial era—drew only a handful of international journalists to India; for most of that period our Foreign Correspondents Club in New Delhi had only 40 members from Asia, Europe, and North America.

Next came graduate study for a University of Chicago doctorate in international relations with a dissertation on the first years of

Indo-Pakistani relations. In the 1950s I helped establish and for 10 years directed the American Universities Field Staff (AUFS), an inter-university program whose scholar-journalists reported for the sponsoring institutions on conditions and developments mainly in non-Western countries. Several times I stepped away from administrative duties to spend up to a year at a time in India and Pakistan, where I wrote AUFS reports of which some appear in this volume.

In 1961 the Kennedy administration appointed me Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, the bureau that dealt not only with the subcontinent but also with Iran, seven eastern Arab countries, Israel, Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus. Four years in that post proved an education in the complexities of nations' corrosive area disputes. But they also offered useful lessons in the workings of governments, ours and others. My time in Washington was followed by a posting as ambassador to Greece.

Returning to private life in 1969, I became president of the Asia Society, the New York-based nonprofit public education organization that John D. Rockefeller III had founded in 1956 (and in whose launching I had had a hand). Reflecting wide growth in American involvements with Asian peoples, the Asia Society in the 1970s was ripe for a vigorous expansion of its programs to educate Americans in Asian cultures and contemporary affairs and to develop collaborative programs with Asians.

Throughout these decades I have sought paths toward better understanding between Asians and Americans. My hope now is that the writings in this volume, originally from the 1930s to the 1950s, will shed light for the present generation on how their forebears perceived the great issues with which they struggled to create modern free nations in South Asia.

While many have encouraged me, two in particular have helped me assemble these long-archived reports. One is my daughter Nancy Talbot, who has assisted me at every stage. The other is Krishen Mehta, mentioned above, a partner in the Tokyo office of PricewaterhouseCoopers, who was born in New Delhi a month after the end of British rule and graduated from the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology at Kharagpur, Bengal, later gaining an MBA from the University of Denver. He has long been fascinated by stories of the independence period first heard from his father, a native of

Uttar Pradesh, and his stepmother, whose family had had to flee from the new Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province to New Delhi in 1947. On reading my letters he identified those he felt were most likely to interest readers of the present generation, and urged their publication. He also wrote all the sectional prefaces with comments on the present-day implications of the issues I was writing about. During his periodic visits to New York he has made other major contributions to the project.

Among the friends and colleagues on whose helpful comments I have drawn in preparing the Afterword to this volume I want particularly to mention three whose careers have long been closely associated with South Asia: Professor Ralph Buultjens of New York University, Professor Emeritus Ainslee Embree of Columbia University, and retired Ambassador Dennis Kux. Each has encouraged me in this project and illumined my understanding of developments particularly in recent decades.

I take pleasure also in recording my great gratitude to my younger (by a couple of years!) friend, the eminent Indian historian B. R. Nanda, for his readiness to write the Foreword to this volume. His support of this effort has meant much to me. Finally, my deepest obligation remains to the memory of my wise, often feisty wife, Mildred, who in the 60-plus years of our marriage added so much to our South Asian experience.

1

INDIA IN LONDON

This set of letters deals with a tumultuous time—the prewar years in England with a nervous energy about Germany, the demonstrations for independence in London at which the British abdication of India was openly discussed, the fiery speech by Krishna Menon, the future as seen through the eyes of Stafford Cripps, the travel through Europe during the last Christmas before the outbreak of the war, and so on.

It was in this context that the Indian Civil Service (ICS) Probationers' Course was undertaken by Phil Talbot, starting in 1938. On one side was the sense of permanence that an ICS officer could look forward to, with a prestigious twenty-five-year career ahead in India. On the other was the inevitability of war, the effect it would have on the colonies, and the longing for nationhood by a broad mass of humanity. These letters capture the pulse of those moments.

Less than a decade later, Nehru was to stand on the ramparts of the Red Fort, to declare, "A moment comes when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds its utterance." Fifty years after that independence day India's economy, which had largely and deliberately been kept out of the Industrial Revolution, was set to overtake that of Great Britain. Times change, and time marches on.

And yet many things also remain the same. India was then (as it is now) a country with a noisy democracy and considerable poverty, illiteracy, and feudalism. Yet then it was (as now) a boisterous, colorful, vibrant society moving towards change. The letters that follow capture the spirit of a journey that was beginning for Talbot, and which would take him into the heart of India's historic, painful, yet joyful journey.

Krishen Mehta

*School of Oriental Studies,
Indian Civil Service Probationers*

*28, Onslow Gardens
South Kensington, London
October 15, 1938*

Dear Mr. Rogers,

AS YOU LEARNED from my cable, I will study at the School of Oriental and African Studies* in London this year, rather than go to Cambridge. A half-dozen men were helpful in discussions leading up to the decision, but I finally made the shift from our original plans on my own responsibility. The London school offers more of the supplementary work that will benefit my preparations for study in India.

I finally have a mailing address, too. It is:

28, Onslow Gardens,
South Kensington,
London, England.

The "South Kensington" isn't necessary if one adds the postal district designation "SW7." But the post office itself seems to prefer the former village name to the modern code number. The house at 28, Onslow Gardens, is one of a row built some 70 or 80 years ago. The interior has been newly redecorated, and I have a pleasant room on the first floor (second floor in American parlance). A window five feet wide that runs up 12 feet, nearly to the ceiling, provides plenty of light. The room is furnished with a divan, a clothes hanger and bureau, a large work table, and the inevitable shilling gas heater. In every room I considered there was a gas or electric heater requiring a shilling in the slot to make it perform. It costs a tuppence for a hot bath in many places, too. But not here, fortunately.

Of the six other men who room and board here, one, Mr. Meksyn, is a White Russian who came to England during the revolution and has worked here since. Another, Mr. Pridmore, is a clerk in the

*The School of Oriental Studies, founded in 1916, became the School of Oriental and African Studies in 1938.

Air Ministry, and a third, Mr. Hutchinson, is a youth doing advanced study in physics. The remaining three are Italians. Mr. Muratori is a young career man in the London branch of the Commercial Bank of Italy. He expects to be transferred to New York in a year or so. The two Levi brothers are virtual refugees from Italy. Their father was a professor in a university at Genoa, but he has been dispossessed. The older brother is doing post-doctorate study in the origins of Roman Law. He has worked in Italy, Germany, France, and now England. His younger brother, 14, was sent away from home when his father lost his teaching post. Now the older youth is hunting a home in London for the boy, who knows no English yet.

With living details settled, I registered for school on Wednesday and started classes Thursday. The School of Oriental Studies, or SOS, is an affiliate of the University of London. It was founded in 1916, and is located on Vandon Street off Buckingham Gate, near the Buckingham and St. James Palaces and Birdcage Walk. Last year it had 449 students, including five from the United States, who studied in 67 different subjects. The teaching staff totals 112, or one teacher for every four students. Some of the instructors, of course, also have lectures in other divisions of the University of London.

The Indian Civil Service Probationers' Course, to which I am attached, is far smaller. Of the ICS probationers this year, 30 are at Oxford, 16 at Cambridge and 12 at the SOS. For those 12 there are 31 instructors. In one of the courses I have attended so far, there are three other students. In the other two classes I'm the only pupil. The cost of such individualized instruction is borne partly by a stout tuition fee and partly by governmental grants.

My course is built around Urdu, the Arabic branch of Hindustani. The four in the class meet daily with Dr. T. Grahame Bailey, a recognized scholar. After two days of groundbreaking study I laughingly told Tom Blakemore that my principal comfort came in remembering that his language assignment, Japanese, will probably be even harder. But I really think I shall enjoy learning to nasalize every vowel at the right spots, to pronounce such consonants as T and D with four separate intensities and to read and write in the Arabic script.

The other courses, all meeting once or twice a week, are Hindu and Moslem law, Indian history, Hindu worship and festivals, Hindu mythology, Indian economics, Indian social welfare, Islam in India,

and a series of lectures on Indian culture. The classroom day begins at 10 o'clock in the morning, and classes may be scheduled until 7 o'clock in the evening.

Indian economics, and possibly a later seminar in Indian economic problems, will be taught by Dr. Vera Anstey at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Those courses and the ones on Hindu worship and mythology, Islam in India and Indian culture are the ones available in London which I couldn't have obtained in Cambridge. In addition Dr. Vesey FitzGerald, supervisor of the ICS probationers in London and professor of Hindu and Moslem law, is going to give me a special interpretation of Indian law, with emphasis on its philosophy and social effects. That will be better for me than the study of criminal and civil codes made by the regular ICS probationers.

After considering the curriculum I'm convinced, Mr. Rogers, that it would be unwise at the moment to attempt any further study of a technological subject. Some of the present courses will run for only one and a half or two terms, rather than the full session. When they are cleaned up in the late winter or early spring it may be well to start additional work. By that time, also, I'm hoping to have a more definite idea of the right approach for next year. It's a subject that has been much in my mind. But I haven't gone far toward a conclusion.

When you get over here in the spring, as Tom Blakemore and I are hoping you will, I'd like you to meet these ICS probationers. They're all selected men who passed a civil service examination before they were admitted to this one-year training course. The group is split almost evenly between Englishmen and Indians. Of the former, several are of obvious breeding. Two seem to me to be naturals for outstanding careers during their 25 years in India. One of the Indian boys caught me by surprise the other day when in conversation he referred to "one of the villages on my estate". He isn't a prince. But seemingly he's not poor either.

The British government maintains some modest clubrooms for the ICS probationers, and the boys have invited me to use the facilities. The rooms are close to the school, so the group lunches there daily. It affords an excellent meeting ground.

Another gathering place is to be the riding hall. Horsemanship is considered so important in the Indian service that the probationers take two lessons a week. In their final examination, which determines seniority, the riding accounts for a respectable number of points. I'm planning to join the equitation practice. Riding is good sport.

You would have laughed to see how mixed up I got in finding 30 or 40 rooming houses which had been suggested as possible living places. London is a fertile field for street reform. I should think a newspaperman, for example, would be driven crazy by the lack of system. The twisty little streets are so small that many of them don't appear on reasonably good maps. On some streets the numbering is consecutive up one side and down the other. Elsewhere the odd numbers are on one side and the evens on the other, but the 40-odds may be in the same block as the 60-evens. The numbers for Onslow Square not only run around all four sides of the parkway square, but they shoot off for a half-block or so along several of the exits. In the middle of the block somewhere they bump into the numbers from another street, and the street changes name. Onslow Square, of course, is different from Onslow Gardens. And Onslow Crescent, too, has its own numbers.

Hunting Belgrave Road the other night, I got to Belgrave Square, found Upper Belgrave Street, Lower Belgrave Street and Belgrave Place. Walking south, I found that Belgrave Place becomes Eccleston Place for six blocks, then turns into Belgrave Road. After two blocks of Belgrave road, the next block is Eccleston Square on one side, and after that the street is Belgrave Road and both sides for three blocks more. Then it becomes St. George's Square on both sides for a couple of blocks. Beyond that, Belgrave Road again. And so it goes. Thank goodness for the Bobbies.

Unless one wants to get to a particular place, though, it is fun wandering in and out of the quiet residential streets. The guide book identified by number the houses (these are in Chelsea) in which lived Carlyle, Sargent, Whistler, Turner, and earlier Sir Thomas More, Princess—Queen—Elizabeth, Anne of Cleves, Henry VIII's fourth wife, and many others. It's a pleasure, too, to look into the busier institutions of historical note. I ate a meat pie dinner one night

at Ye Olde Chesire Cheese, which announces that it was “rebuilt in 1667; unchanged since.” It apparently was Dr. Johnson’s principal eating house, and he gathered around him there such men as Alexander Pope and Joshua Reynolds. Later Charles Dickens was the Chesire Cheese’s chief character. And despite my antipathy for “Ye Oldes,” which in Chicago usually mark places founded in 1927, I thought the rough-hewn old oak benches and tables, the big fireplace and the sawdust-covered floor fitted pretty well with the pictures along the walls of Dr. Johnson and his mates.

London and England are crammed with institutions and structures whose chief claim to fame is antiquity. I’ve had one thrill after another in naïvely discovering all these places I had read about. But among the ordinary Londoners, of course, the old monuments and buildings attract as much attention as the landing place of Father Marquette does in Chicago. Yet the people I’ve talked with have a common pride in the old institutions, even if they’ve never visited them. More and more I’m getting the impression that in their way the British are as definitely ancestor-worshippers as the Chinese are along other lines.

To get a slant on present-day London I went up the other morning to see Bill Stoneman, the *Chicago Daily News* correspondent here. We talked over lunch and on until 3:30. He had just gone through a busy time keeping on top of “The Crisis,” but was still feeling in top shape after a vacation in Scandinavia. Regarding the international situation he told me some things that the London papers never did print. From what he said I also gathered that much of the published news reached Chicago about a day before it appeared here. Bill was just as anxious to hear about the folks in the home office as I was to hear about his work, so we had a good time together. I haven’t seen Mary Welsh, the other *Daily News*-er in London, yet. When I called at the *Daily Express* office she was in Munich covering the woman angle on the Big Four conference there. Apparently she’s enjoying herself in London. Bill says she has heaps of friends.

George Antonius, who knows a good deal about getting around after his eight years with the Institute, has been extremely helpful in getting me started. This week he has been reading furiously to finish the revised proofs on his book, *The Arab Awakening*, before leaving to meet Mr. Crane in Naples on Monday next. Both he and

the publisher, who is also handling John Gunther's book, have been working to meet a November 5 publication date. Despite all of that, Antonius has made excellent suggestions concerning my study, introduced me to a number of helpful persons and arranged for me to meet other men in the next month. This afternoon he came here at tea time and Tom Blakemore came down from Cambridge so the three of us could have a private Institute rally before Antonius' departure. It was a spirited get-together. Afterward Tom and I went off to a so-so play, *Tree of Eden*.

These early letters have run long, Mr. Rogers, and have covered fields with which I'm confident you are perfectly familiar. But once I get started muttering conjugations of Urdu verbs and taking the same Underground line every day, the letters will probably slim down considerably. In the meantime I'd be glad to hear any reactions to the letters so far and the work as it is shaping up.

Sincerely yours,

Phillips Talbot

Getting Around

28, Onslow Gardens
South Kensington, London
November 27, 1938

THANKS MUCH FOR your November 18 letter, which arrived Thanksgiving night. As you anticipated, I would like to see the reports of the Science Committee of the National Resources Committee. And I will look forward, too, to the receipt of Howard Wiedemann's memo on the interrelations of science and society. There are two or three people in London, who are interested in that field, whom I would like to meet. The memo might give a sound basis for discussion.

Already, though, I'm finding it unwise to seek appointments far in advance. Christmas travels will be started very soon. Cambridge and Oxford Universities come down from Michaelmas Term after

this next week. The London School of Economics closes for the holidays the week after that, while the School of Oriental Studies, for some reason, extends its term still another week. The school year at the SOS is about five weeks longer than at Cambridge. With this language study I can use the whole extra period to advantage.

Wednesday of this week seemed ringed on the calendar as the date for making new acquaintanceships. In the Indian Economics class that afternoon Walter Duffett, whom I had spotted as a resident of the western hemisphere because English natives do not wear rimless glasses, introduced himself. He explained that he is a subordinate of Mr. Parkin at the Sun Life Assurance Company in Montreal, and that he knows something of the Institute's work because of his senior's connection with it as trustee. Duffett impresses me as a capable and likable chap. We have arranged to have dinner together soon. It was just a few hours after we met, by the way, when I returned home to find your copy of Mr. Parkin's letter suggesting that Duffett and I might enjoy becoming acquainted.

From economics class I went to the Pont Street apartment of Owen Tweedy, the British government press officer for Palestine. At the suggestion of George Antonius he had invited me to talk with him. Mr. Tweedy, a highly cultivated linguist with a newspaper background, offered any help he could give and wrote a note of introduction to Mr. A. Joyce, the British press officer for India. I will be pleased to meet Mr. Joyce, especially since all of us understand that my chief interest is not in getting the official British expression on subjects which I run across.

Mr. Tweedy told me that Frank Smothers, the *Chicago Daily News* correspondent in Rome, had just been advised to leave Italy. So when I reached home I telephoned Bill Stoneman, the London correspondent, to find out more about the situation. He explained that "general attitude" plus a story terming the Anglo-Italian pact so much eye-wash were the reasons given for the banishment. Bill hadn't yet heard what staff shifts would be made.

Stoneman invited me to his apartment in Chelsea for the same evening to meet a member of the American embassy staff and his wife. The embassy man, Mr. Harvey Klemmer, a maritime authority, was brought over by Ambassador Kennedy as a shipping consultant.

Mr. Klemmer has also been assisting in the preparation of some of the Ambassador's speeches.

On Thursday—not because it was Thanksgiving Day but for the reason that George Antonius proposed it—I went with him to Cambridge. We had a delightful talk on the train, and spent a pleasant hour with Tom Blakemore. I used Tom's Trinity Hall room to get in a few licks on Urdu while he was attending a Thanksgiving dinner given for American students at Cambridge. Antonius was visiting an old headmaster of his.

That was the extent of the holiday celebration I saw. Somehow the British aren't very enthusiastic about thankfulness *fêtes*.

We returned to London before dinner Thursday, and on Friday I caught up with my classwork. In the evening I started off again. This time it was for Oxford by way of Cambridge, where I spent Friday night with Tom. He introduced me to an extraordinary Indian who described himself as a prince consort of a native state in the Central Provinces of India. His tale of losing political control through pressure by the British government bears investigation before it is repeated in full.

A new three-car diesel streamliner, with seats in the American fashion rather than in the usual English compartments, took Tom and me to Oxford Saturday. We found our way to University College, where Prof. A. L. Goodhart, who told us he is a nephew of Governor Lehman of New York and a cousin of Secretary Morgenthau of the Treasury, was our host at lunch. He fed us richly, and then we became immersed in England's most popular discussion topic—international affairs. The law professor frowned on the strong reaction of the American press after Munich because, he said, (1) morals are not delimited by distance, so that if the Czech affair was counted a moral issue, then the United States was fully as responsible as Britain for the prevention of an international crime; and (2) if the question was considered one of political expediency, then it was none of America's business what was done.

Professor Goodhart asserted that as motives for action morals and expediency are too frequently mixed up. To that statement I could agree. One of the things that irritated me most during the crisis was an expression by confident Britons that “if we decide to go into war, America will come in to help us. She's bound to, just as

she did last time.” The suggestion that when Britain whistles America will dance irked me the more because I’m afraid it may be true. It’s apparent now that England won’t fight until she’s touched at one of her own tender points. When that moment comes there will be a great appeal to the United States to go into action for the preservation of democracy.

Despite their confidence that the United States is an always-faithful, though bashful, ally, these young Britons express great surprise over the way our country operates. Roosevelt is unanimously popular here. Discounting such moronic invitations as “Tell me about the United States,” the most persistent question I’ve met is “How can there be so much opposition to your president?” “To us,” one mature; well-informed gentleman said, “he looks like a twentieth-century prophet. He’s been doing so much that we can’t even keep tab on him. And yet we hear constant stories of bitter attacks against him. What’s behind them?”

My references to flighty finance, uncertainty as to future action, pressure on defenders of the established system and, again, political expediency, didn’t seem to impress the people much. My landlady declared she’d be glad to have Roosevelt take over the British government, anytime.

But I didn’t mean to get launched on a political speech. I’d rather tell you how disappointing Oxford was to me. Substantially larger than Cambridge, the town has a run-down, dirty, industrial appearance that is hardly conducive to academic traditions. Even some of the college buildings, facing rather noisy business streets, seem more anachronistic remnants than examples of medieval splendor. The impression was heightened because the surfaces of many of the stone walls uncovered by ivy are peeling off in great scales. Tom and I wandered through the college areas—stopping for a short call at Merton College on an Oklahoma Rhodes Scholar acquaintance of his—for half an hour before I caught the atmosphere of the University. Finally we arrived at the rear of New College and found a garden, which was delightful. Carefully kept up, it is colorful even at the end of November. Surrounding it is a massive wall, with apertures suitably fashioned for yesteryears’ archers. That sight is impressive. But I thought Oxford University as a whole neither so beautiful nor so stately as Cambridge.

After Tom and I separated late Saturday afternoon, I returned directly to London to do a "spot" of work, as they say here, during the remainder of the weekend.

European Tour

*Hotel de l'Avenir
Rue Madame, Paris
December 27, 1938*

TODAY, VIRTUALLY AT the halfway mark in the holiday tour three Indian friends and I are enjoying, I'm finding the first opportunity to write you something of my impressions.

Since leaving London we've driven through parts of France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. We've seen dozens of small towns and villages besides Berlin, Cologne, and Paris. And we've met the coldest December weather in 80 years (according to the German newspapers); enjoyed enough car trouble to make us accustomed to suspense, and learnt to whip out our passports automatically whenever a uniform motions to us.

My companions are Yog Puri (his full first names are Yogendra Krishna), Ronald Noronha and Kesho Ram. They are all ICS probationers and capable, alert, highly educated chaps who make good fellow travelers. They laugh at my attempts to pronounce Urdu words, but at least they talk a good deal of it in the car and keep me trying to.

Our departure was held up for 36 hours after a clutch plate in Yog's Lincoln Zephyr sedan gave out right at the start. In the interim I attended a session of the House of Commons and heard the D'Oyley Carte Players give *HMS Pinafore*. Finally we drove to Dover on Thursday evening, December 15. Crossing the channel at night (with benches in the second-class saloon as our bunks) we landed at Dunkerke in time to pass the French customs by 6:45 in the morning. We hoped to push far toward Berlin by nightfall. Ten miles along the way, however, we were stopped at the French-Belgian border. The French let us out of their country without trouble. But a Belgian soldier held us at his gate until the frontier officially

opened at 8 o'clock. While waiting we first noticed the use of wooden shoes and of dog carts, two popular and prevalent conveniences.

Yog is a linguist. Each of the rest of us has a tolerable tourist's knowledge of either French or German and a bare acquaintanceship with the second tongue. But at Ghent, where we stopped for breakfast, Yog could even make himself understood in Flemish. Antwerp was easier, for there we found an English-speaking garage manager. In both cities the people were extremely helpful—when we could convey the idea that we wanted to buy postcards, not a Rubens painting.

In comparing notes now we find we have assessed much of our course in terms of the quality of roads and route markings. Holland excels in the latter. And in countryside frequently as flat as the terrain we crossed in Belgium, and far more level than the Illinois prairie, the Dutch highways are ideal too. We appreciated good roads in our attempt to reach the German frontier before too late in the evening. Because of our hurry we didn't stop to admire the precise orderliness and cleanliness of the little country. Nor did we halt in Breda, the largest Dutch town we passed through.

Another of our standards of comparison has been the military. From the time we landed on the continent we have seen army activity. Several times in Belgium we had to slow down to pass a platoon of infantry. Once we passed a column of about two batteries of light artillery. In Holland, where instead of the woolen olive drab of the Belgians a fitted gray uniform is worn, we were stopped twice by detachments posted at bridgeheads. Our papers had all been checked and stamped at the frontier. But both times the passports and the auto carnet* were re-examined. Those posts were "control points," the soldiers informed us.

Crossing the German border was a vivid experience, largely because I hadn't formed a clear conception of what to expect. The first note that struck me was the ubiquity of uniforms and flaming red Nazi armbands. At the border I was impressed by the serious, brisk manner in which officials counted our money, questioned us regarding plans in Germany and put our papers in order. The procedure

*A customs document.

was most impressive when a party representative checked each of our names against a list contained in a small volume he carried. But when the routine was finished, the officers relaxed their tone, asked if we were enjoying the trip and the weather (already cold) and complimented Yog on his use of German.

That night we pressed on to Minden, arriving about 2 A.M. after wasting an hour trying to find the route. In the hotel I was assigned a bedroom fully 32 by 18 feet in size, with several large windows. Happily a down puff was provided for my bed, so sleeping was warm.

Before noon the next day we reached the Reichsautobahn for Berlin. That road, one of the spokes in a roughly wheel-shaped pattern of superhighways, is the best I have ever seen. With a wide lane for each direction of traffic, it stretches 200 miles without any crossing at grade. The entrances and exits are all on the improved butterfly turn pattern. In the whole distance there isn't a curve or a grade that would make a car capable of the speed slow down from 80 miles an hour.

We reached Berlin, a city of broad and straight streets and unusually wide sidewalks, in mid-afternoon on Saturday. After cashing some of the registered marks we had bought in England, we settled in a pension in Kurfürstendamm. And because of the sub-zero temperatures, the Indians stayed there or traveled only by taxi all the time we were in Berlin.

But American friends made my visit there warm indeed. Wallace Deuel and his delightful wife Mary invited me to dinner Saturday night. Together we spent a happy evening of conversation, drifting all the way from our common fraternity brothers to German state policies and back. On Sunday I lunched with Angus Thuermer, a school mate at the University of Illinois. As we walked down Kurfürstendamm he pointed to a second-story window from which the glass was out. "Do you see that?" he asked. "I watched them break that one on the big night." All along the street we noticed places where neon signs and brass markers had been torn down. We saw new plate glass windows in shops whose merchandise shelves were bare. We observed places where canvas awnings had been nailed across the store fronts to keep out the wind. And for each such store there was a special identification. The name of the establishment was painted on the glass or on the canvas in white condensed gothic

letters about nine inches high. Few Berliners could be ignorant of the meaning that this was a Jewish establishment.

Tom Blakemore, who is spending five weeks in Germany, undoubtedly can tell you far more about conditions at the moment than I can. But it would be unfair to mention the evidences of the anti-Jewish campaign without describing some of the other things we saw. In the *bierstuben** and restaurants uniformed and non-uniformed men mix easily in card-playing groups. On the streets most of the pedestrians step along alertly as if important business awaits their care. In the restaurant where Angus and I lunched we were amused to observe the stir of interest when a lad of about 8 entered the room, stretched out his arm and squeaked the universal "Heil Hitler," and then went about asking winter help donations for the poor. Contributions of 10 and 20 pfennigs were frequent. Despite my language difficulty I was certain that the translation of the whispered, smiling comments at a number of tables would be something like "Isn't he just too cute!"

It was after talking with people who are acquainted with the national situation, rather than noticing the men and women on the street, that I recognized a feeling of uneasiness in Berlin. The Germans themselves appear to be sharply awake, ambitious and personally aggressive. When an Englishman finds someone ahead of him in a quest for tickets, a bus, or anything else, he starts a queue and waits his turn. In Berlin I caught more of the rushing, pushing, crowding mob activity that is characteristic of New York and Chicago. Also, the physical results of Nazism seem to bespeak the solidity of the regime. The super-roads, the busy slum clearance and new housing, the bridges and public buildings—all give the country a flavor of newness. Yet some of the stories of methods told by people who should have no ax to grind are chilling.

After a city bus tour with Angus, and more gatherings with Wally and Mary Deuel and some of their friends, I was ready to renew my trek with the Indians by Tuesday morning. With the mercury still nearly hiding, we decided to take the autobahn back to Cologne, rather than make slower progress through more picturesque country. After coming upon the Rhine at night, we stopped until morning

*pub.

for a look at the Cathedral. Then we pushed on across a corner of Belgium and through the battlefields of northern France. The huge world war cemeteries standing hard by signs of modern fortifications are hardly cheering sights this year. It's too easy to wonder how soon we will come for the underground works marked by cave doors in the sides of hills and stovepipes sticking up in grain fields.

But we did find the life of a tiny French village, which we entered for an overnight stay when the car's electrical system went bad, extremely interesting. After a reasonably good dinner we were put up in an unheated building which had electric lights but no other conveniences.

On the third day out of Berlin we reached Paris. This city may or may not be the crossroads of the world, but during the first evening here I met two American friends entirely by chance. The first of the coincidences came while I was having dinner with Louise Grant, with whom I had become acquainted on the boat to Europe in September. Before we had finished eating, Elaine Rogers, who was doing publicity work in Chicago while I was working there, came to our table. We had a pleasant time talking Chicagoana for half an hour.

Later Tom Stathes, another acquaintance who is here under the Prix de Paris architectural award, steered me into a cafe where I immediately saw Dorothy Thrapp, one of a family I had known at the University and in West Chicago. Dorothy, I learned, had been married to Mr. Jedd Reisner after he had been awarded the Plym architectural fellowship by Illinois. Now they are here for his year's study abroad.

Since that first night the entire group, or sections of it, have continued on a round of holiday activities that I've enjoyed thoroughly. On two evenings we've gathered in the Reisners' apartment. Tonight some of us saw a student-night performance of *Cyrano de Bergerac* from two-franc (five-cent) seats in the Comédie Française's third gallery. Our most ambitious evening has been Christmas Eve, when we dressed to hear *Rigoletto* at the Opera. Afterward, we went to St. Eustache Church for a midnight mass, beautifully sung by a large choir accompanied by an organ and full orchestra. The impressively lighted edifice was continually filled with people, although all came

and went as they wished, stopping at the entrance only to purchase a three-franc admission ticket. From there we went to a little spot in Montmartre for supper. We dined on Christmas day in a small Russian restaurant off Boulevard St. Michel on the left bank of the Seine, and then went to the Reisers' for the evening. I enjoyed it all, and was thankful to have friendly folks with whom to spend the holiday.

I like Paris. The policemen all look stoop-shouldered; but that's probably because of their short stature and the bulk of the hooded capes they wear. The city is surely friendly, even though some of the tradesmen seem to have trouble adding a bill correctly and some of the administrative business is conducted slowly and inefficiently enough to qualify for the description picturesque. In the atmosphere here one doesn't feel a city of people surging toward definite ends, as in Berlin. Rather there is a certain light-headed flightiness that is reminiscent of a brood of chicks. And that makes the Parisian scene entertaining—for me, at least.

'Indian Independence Day' Program

28, Onslow Gardens
South Kensington, London
February 1, 1939

UNTIL I SAW placards posted in the School of Economics, I had not known that last Thursday (January 26) was "Indian Independence Day." To celebrate the occasion, which was actually the ninth anniversary of a manifesto issued by the Congress party, Congress leaders in London sponsored a public meeting in a hall off Ludgate Circus. And, since I hadn't attended any similar gathering, I visited the demonstration.

The audience, which numbered 150, was composed of Indian and British students plus a smattering of older natives of both countries. All had come to express their feelings on the Indian question, but the presence of Sir Stafford Cripps as a speaker gave the meeting an additional interest in the field of domestic politics. On the

previous day Sir Stafford had been expelled from the Labour (as they spell it) party for his persistent advocacy of a united national opposition to the Chamberlain government.

The hall was fully decorated for the meeting. Around the walls were hung twenty of the Congress party flags—each with the spinning-wheel symbol drawn in black crayon on the bar of white in the center. The outside lengthwise bars of the flag are orange and green. At the rear of the room was a large crayon drawing of S.C. Bose, president of the Congress party. And scattered about were posters urging all to “Read Stafford Cripps’ Tribune.” The atmosphere of a political meeting pervaded the room.

The Indian speaker was Krishna Menon, chief organizer of the India League here. In a blood-and-thunderish speech he set forth as minimum demands: (1) “a constituent assembly of freely elected representatives of the people” to draft an Indian constitution to replace the present “unacceptable” one; and (2) “one India.” “The princes are not India,” he declared. Like other Congress speakers, he said that the Congress does not mean to intervene directly in the native states, but is glad to “encourage the people to work for their rights.”

Discussing the achievements of the Congress party in the first year of its rule of seven provinces, he pointed to a debt moratorium for peasants and to a number of advances in social reform. The Congress provincial ministries are hindered by lack of power, he said, but “have accomplished what they have because they are subservient to, and the administrators of, Congress party policy.”

In foreign affairs the Congress position, as outlined by Menon, criticizes the British government for “aiding, abetting and supporting the fascist powers.” The Congress itself has supported Indian medical units in China and has favored the Spanish government. But it has abandoned the policy of intervening on behalf of Indian minorities in Africa, Menon said.

Cripps’ unified opposition campaign had been so widely publicized that his reactions to the ouster (“for sabotage of party solidarity”) were eagerly awaited by that predominantly liberal audience. Nor did he disappoint it. In a rousing talk he appealed for the support of the Labour party’s rank and file, and other supporters, and indicted the Chamberlain government for: “countenancing Japan’s

aggression in order to avoid a Russian–Chinese communist bloc; approving Mussolini in Abyssinia to keep from falling in India; helping Franco in order to keep down the Spanish and French popular fronts, and supporting Hitler as the European bulwark against Bolshevism.” I quote that because it represents a viewpoint that is at least vociferously advanced now in some quarters of London.

Turning to India, Cripps spoke in even stronger terms than Menon of the work of the Congress party. “It has restored civil liberties, released political prisoners, freed the press, fostered educational advances, and given much debt relief to the peasants,” he said.

He came out flatly for British abdication in India after a new constitution has been framed. “The Congress will not stand for federation under the India Act of 1935,” he declared, “because that act was set up in such a way that reactionary elements and officials could form a bloc as effective in hindering progress as our own House of Lords.”

These people are talking facts when they report debt moratoria and release of restraint on journals that were suppressed under a former viceroyalty. And even nonpartisans see a continuing growth in the Congress, which already controls the ministries of seven provinces of British India. It would also have the majority of the British Indian places in the Indian Parliament, when and if that part of the Government of India act is put in force. On the other hand essential political weaknesses of the party lie in the disaffection of the Muslims from the Hindu-controlled Congress, and in the division between nominally democratic British India and the autocratic Indian native states.

The Congress statement that it won't participate in a Parliament in which the real control is likely to fall to the princes follows the line the party took when the first part of the new constitution went into effect something over a year ago. At that time there was heated partisan debate as to whether the elected Congress representatives should accept provincial office under the hated act. They finally voted to take the posts on the grounds that half a loaf is better than none. So now the provincial “controlled” self-government part of the federation plan is working, but the rest is not.

One condition of which the opposition makes much is that in the Congress party, great supporter of democracy, the provincial ministries are responsible in policy matters directly to the central committee, rather than to the people who elected them. And despite their attacks on censorship, all seven Congress ministries have banned the film *The Drum*, one youth told me, because it is "untrue and inimical."

The Congress program includes enough plus and minus factors and enough intangibles so that my opinion hasn't crystallized yet. One thing that makes me hesitant is the admission by one man and supporting testimony by others that most students who lead Congress agitation in London were moderates before coming to Britain and learning of conditions here, and that their fellows at home still are. But somehow the Congress party is as inevitable a conversation topic in Indian quarters as are Roosevelt in Chicago and foreign affairs in London.

It was a change of pace from that "independence" meeting to listen to Sir Abdul Qadir, one of the principal advisers to the Secretary of State for India, on Monday afternoon. A scholar in Persian and Urdu literature, Sir Abdul gave a delightful talk in the urbane manner of Prof. W. A. Oldfather, head of the classics department at the University of Illinois. He was speaking to the ICS probationers at tea, and he urged them all to make a life hobby of the native language and literature to which they are being introduced. Urdu and other languages have been enriched, he said, by the addition of English terms used by Europeans in India. But he deplures, he explained, the tendency for Indians to pick up Englishmen's substitutions of English words for perfectly good Urdu expressions.

The other evening I watched a London police exhibition that reminded me strongly of Chicago. There I have seen members of the industrial squad break up a picket line at a dead run and chase men and women picketers for blocks, occasionally swinging billies across their backs and legs. But it was a surprise, when I emerged from the Piccadilly Circus Underground station to post some letters for the midnight collection, to find some 250 policemen filling the Circus. The excitement turned out to be an "Arms for Spain" demonstration sponsored by the Communist district council. Some persons had lain on the pavements to stop theater traffic, and others

were chanting their cry in nearby streets and alleys. What I saw was the mopping-up process. Mounted policemen were riding down sidewalks two abreast, spreading the crowds in all directions. They weren't using nightsticks but they were working efficiently. Half an hour later several hundred marchers gathered in Cranbourne street near Leicester Square, with a dozen mounties controlling either exit, and heard a speaker fling out the same charges of police brutality that were heard in Chicago after the "Little Steel" strike. Fifty participants taken to court, but the papers have reported no formal charges being entered against the police.

Meanwhile the bomb explosions continue in London. Most of my acquaintances comment, "Oh, it's just the Irish again," and go about their business. And still the Empire carries on.

Exploring My Options in India

28, Onslow Gardens
South Kensington, London
April 28, 1939

LIKE COY SPRING, the opening of the third term at the School of Oriental Studies this week brings sudden realization that the last lap of this year in England has already started. During the month of recess just completed I have profited by a good bit of reading and interviews with a number of people who are authorities on different aspects of Indian life and problems.

It was a pleasure, of course, to have a series of meetings with Antonius. Despite the weight of his own work he has been most helpful in giving consideration to my plans. I believe that we agree in a general way that my starting point in India might well be language training in a university, probably in the United Provinces. He and several other men have discussed the advisability of my being first exposed to the Muslim culture and viewpoint, since they represent the expressions of 70 million persons on whose development depends to a material extent India's future. After some months with the Muslims I might shift into a Hindu community. All the men I have talked with agree that knowledge of how the two communities

regard themselves and each other is essential to an understanding of India. On that basis I, too, favor using language study as an entrée to the university leaders of each religion.

When I went for lunch with Antonius last Saturday it was a complete surprise to find Prof. Sam Harper present. I had not known that he was planning a Russian trip this spring, much less that he would be stopping in London for three weeks. The three of us spent a full and pleasant afternoon together. Twice since then Professor Harper has fitted an hour for me into his busy program. One time was the day of Tom Blakemore's return from Germany, when we met to hear of his experiences. I got the impression that on this second trip Tom saw aspects of the country beyond the huge and ubiquitous public works projects that impressed both of us on our December visits.

This business of reaching and meeting people usually follows the chain routine of getting introductions from one man to some others, and from them to still more. The proper introduction is of the greatest value. Yet from a shot in the dark this month has come one of the most satisfying interviews I have yet had. I wrote the editor of the *Times*, by title rather than name, expressing interest in the editorials on India and asking if I might meet the man responsible for them. Within a few days there arrived a tea invitation from Sir Frank H. Brown, who does write the *Times* articles. He is also secretary of the East India Association, a strong body with, as far as I can tell, a generally conservative view toward India. Sir Frank formerly wrote for the *Bombay Gazette* and the *Indian Daily Telegraph* in Lucknow. He was most sympathetic and interested in the work of the Institute. In his opinion my first year in India would profitably be spent in language training and general orientation, rather than in delving into a specific problem. When I advanced the question of the relative value of different study centers, he offered a few suggestions and then gave me a card to Sir Philip Hartog, who was chairman of the auxiliary committee on education for the Indian Statutory (Simon) Commission in 1928–29. I will see Sir Philip next week.

Sir Frank accorded to the view of a Muslim university for a starter. In that opinion he was seconded, though not as strongly as I had

expected, by Sir Abdul Qadir, adviser to the Secretary of State for India. Sir Abdul urged me to get the Muslim viewpoint first “or you might become prejudiced for the Congress.” (He didn’t mention the chance that I might otherwise tend to lean in the Muslim direction.) But he did advise my working in Lahore, the capital of the Punjab, or Delhi, the capital of India, because of the contacts in those cities available with Indian leaders from all over the country. He even agreed to introduce me to Jinnah, the Muslim League leader. But for study in those centers there are three difficulties. First, contact with political leaders is probably not what I will want most next year. Second, it so happens that the leading colleges in both Lahore (Foreman Christian College) and Delhi (St. Stephens) are missionary institutions rather than indigenous universities. Sir Abdul, himself a graduate of the Lahore college, apparently did not see the force of my expression that a completely Indian university would be more advantageous. The third factor is that Punjabi, rather than pure Urdu, is spoken by the people of Lahore and Delhi. Sir Abdul’s other suggestions, the Muslim University in Aligarh, the University of Lucknow and the University of Allahabad, seem better fitted to my needs.

One uncalculated question by me set Sir Abdul off on a lengthy exposition of Muslim doctrines. In summary they are, it appears, that Muslims get no fair deal under Hindus, that the Congress party is communal rather than nationalist, and that the Muslims are not a minority but a separate community. Such credos are the buttresses of the accepted Tory view in England that the British raj must continue to hold on in India if only to keep the peace.

Also I have had a talk with Sir John Russell, director of the Roth Amsted Experimental Station near London and author of a report prepared in 1937 on the work of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research in applying science to crop production in India. As I mentioned a month ago in a letter discussing his talk at the Royal Society of Arts, Sir John feels that in connection with the population question, made pressing by the progress of science against famine and plague, the fundamental problems of India are agricultural capacity and human nutrition. But he stated categorically that the most pressing problem of India is its widespread unemployment and underemployment, caused by increasing population and the impact

of large industry on village industries. He warned against taking too broad a project, but suggested that that question is a most urgent field of investigation.

In the Punjab, Kashmir and some other places work is being done to resuscitate village industries. The means used are frequently governmental subsidies and aid by experts in the different businesses. One difficulty in many districts seems to be the reliance on cotton spinning and weaving, which come in direct competition with India's greatest industrial enterprise. Why, with all the potential market that India holds, some fields not directly competing with large-scale industry can't be chosen and fostered at little greater cost would certainly be a worthwhile topic.

Sir John invited me to lay out a plan for a project, including the names of individuals I would like to meet during its prosecution, and to return to him later for another discussion about it.

Please understand, Mr. Rogers, that I am passing on these observations merely to indicate the direction of my thoughts at this time. I recognize that the course for next year and the following ones won't be plotted out until you and I have had some discussions this summer. And by that time my own proposals for the work may have become crystallized in a somewhat different direction.

National Planning in India

28, Onslow Gardens
South Kensington, London
May 12, 1939

AS AN EVIDENCE of the direction of thought among some of the political elements of India, you will be interested to learn of a comprehensive questionnaire on national planning which has recently been addressed to the provincial and state governments and to industrial, commercial, labor and agricultural interests by the National Planning Committee, a Congress party body.

Many of the questionnaire's 176 questions are so vague as to mean little, or at least to make impossible the task of classifying replies. Other questions demand the accumulation of data already available

in official reports. A number are visionary and some indicate a line of thinking, such as a hint of provincial currency and price control, which is not only radical but foolish. Yet the questionnaire is a significant development. Good or bad, it represents a primary effort to count India's resources and to muster them for social ends.

Setting forth the desirability of national planning, the introduction to this 24-page document defines its object as the improvement of the well-being of the community, principally through intensifying the economic development on an all-around basis, gearing each interest with all the others. Unfortunately, it explains, the goal of double the present standard of living to be attained in five or 10 years at most will be especially difficult to reach in India "because of the vastness of the problem and the heavy handicaps imposed upon the Indian people by the existing Constitution."

The form of the questions, which are frequently over-generalized, needs no consideration. Nor is it wise to make guesses from this scanty evidence regarding the ultimate nature of the proposed national plan. But the questions do suggest that the committee leaders are thinking along rather definite lines. They presumably conceive of the plan as an imposed program covering both the provinces and the native states. They also foresee an All-India Industrial or Economic Council "for the promotion of control, supervision, and regulation of industries and economic relations between the States and Provinces."

One large share of questions can be classified as essentially fact-searching. These include inquiries into production in agriculture, forests and mines, cottage and large-scale industries, and services. They also examine the adequacy of home capital and labor, of marketing, commerce and transport, and of government aids through tariffs, bounties, cheap transports and technical experts' services. Some questions in the agricultural section were answered by Royal Agricultural Commission findings which still cannot be far out of date. Likewise information sought about wages, working conditions, unemployment, labor disputes and trade union developments has been provided by the Whitley Commission and the International Labour Office. Fortunately, the National Planning Committee has invited citations of public documents, rather than quotations from them. Yet, unless it is seeking and gets analyses differing from those

of the official bodies, the Committee can achieve little but further bulk by asking such questions. Already, in the words of Sir Albert Howard, India is cursed with far too much information and too few sound conclusions.

The exploratory questions also touch on technical and vocation education, sources of fuel and power, and industrial and commercial statistics. In each case the typical questions are: What facilities are already available in your province? What further development would be necessary? Is there any new departure which would aid a program of planned development? What incentive is there to research? How far does the government control the existing situation, and how far would it desire to exercise control under a national plan?

Then there is a second type of question. These usually assume a new situation under the national plan, and ask: "How or to what extent would you propose supporting or developing this matter?" Four examples will clarify the picture.

What steps would you suggest to prevent this growing menace of "(India), Ltd." (industries conducted by foreign capital and registered in India as Joint Stock Companies or affiliated to a nominally Indian concern) and what remedies do you suggest and what effective steps would you advise us to take that swadeshi (home) industries as defined by the Congress may grow up in your Province?

How far is it possible, by reorganization of the agricultural population, or introduction of some form of compulsory co-operative or collective farming, to remedy the principal handicaps (of the present agricultural system)?

How far would the existence of free and competitive trade—so far at least as foreign trade is concerned—frustrate any attempt at all round price control within the Province?

In what way would the trade of your Province—local, Indian and foreign—be affected by the modification of the principle of private enterprise, in all branches of production and consumption of goods and services?

Taken all in all, the tenor of the questions reminds me of a comment made by a young Congress party enthusiast several months ago. Said he: "We have much to learn from America, and much to learn from Britain. We have more to learn from Russia." The truth is, of course, that the Congress is as split between left and right as is the American Democratic Party. Not until a plan is formed and approved by the Congress leadership can one indulge seriously in hunting similarities between it and the Russian NEP.*

The valuable outgrowths of this questionnaire are most likely to come in regard to several problems that are particularly pressing. Concerning land fragmentation, a growing bugaboo, reactions are asked to the imposition of legal restraints on inheritance practices. That, in India, would be a large stride forward. Technical and vocational education are examined with a view toward greatly enlarging the present facilities. Inter-provincial economic relations are probed at a time when economists are fearing the effects of provincial self-sufficiency campaigns. Also, the revitalization of cottage industries is a topic of investigation.

You'll note that I've left to last what the questionnaire also puts off until nearly the end—that uncompromising question of finance. The financial section is most lacking of all in indicating possible lines of policy or methods of paying for such an all-inclusive scheme. True, the prospects of financing new industries by the province and by joint provincial and private funds are being investigated. But there is no hint of how the province can get the money for the extension of those practices, both of which are now extant in India. The remaining questions merely ask: "What are the means now available in your Province for financing a planning program? What are the possibilities of attracting outside capital? What are the banking facilities available? How far have existing institutions—cooperative societies, post office savings bank, postal cash certificates, bank savings departments—succeeded in mobilizing the capital of the Province?"

Finance is going to be the keystone of the planning arch, as of every other activity in India. I don't see where the money will be found. If it is, then capitalists may have cause for concern at the

*New Economic Policy.

direction the planning will take (always presuming that the Congress party would be united on such a plan and could legislate it into existence, a questionable assumption). Possibly more important, the peasants and tradesmen may well be wary of the results of provincial barter, for example, which is tentatively proposed "to avoid the influence of outside factors affecting the general price level."

Nevertheless, consideration of national planning, with the emphasis on national, is a good thing for India now. Fundamentally, of course, she stands to gain by organizing and coordinating her future development. From the returns to this questionnaire, when available, we may get a cue as to whether her politicians are likely to work toward that goal under capitalism, socialism or an Indian brand of fascism.

2

MY INTRODUCTION TO INDIA AND ITS POLITICS

These letters cover a panorama of India and Pakistan in their making: a Provincial Congress Conference in Mathura where Talbot first met Jawaharlal Nehru, a meeting of the All India Muslim Students Federation where Liaquat Ali Khan was the speaker, the revelry of a mushaira, a meeting with Mr. Jinnah at the Muslim League Working Committee, the annual session of the Indian National Congress in Ramgarh where Gandhi articulated his vision for the future, and the annual meeting of the Muslim League in Lahore where Jinnah passed through resolutions outlining his vision for a separate country.

All of this took place at the end of 1939 and early in 1940, seven years before independence for both countries. Talbot was reflecting on the possible effect of dividing India into two countries along religious lines and what it may have foretold for the future. His letter of February 6, 1940 states, "My own reaction is that partition is a backward step". Considering the pain and turmoil that befell the two new nations, one can only wonder if something could have been done to prevent this outcome.

On the lighter side, one cannot help but revel in Talbot's picturesque rendition of a mushaira, which makes that event come alive for the reader. His description of the verses, the poetic voice and depth of feeling, has a mastery of its own.

Another recollection is that of Gandhi holding his audience in the palm of his hand as he talks intimately of the sacrifice ahead in the struggle for freedom. Or Nehru's observations (in Talbot's letter of December 3, 1939) that "America and Asia, rather than Europe,

are the continents of the future,” and that “in our battle of freedom the democratic sentiment of the United States of America is with us.”

These are prophetic letters that resonate even today as India wakes from the economic slumber of its socialist era, and both India and Pakistan take their friendship with America to a new level of economic aspiration.

Krishen Mehta

Meeting Jawaharlal Nehru

Muslim University
Aligarh, India
December 3, 1939

A PROVINCIAL CONGRESS Conference is the Indian National Congress's equivalent to a State Democratic Convention. The United Provinces Provincial Congress Conference met last week 35 miles from Aligarh in the city of Muttra, one of the Hindus' seven sacred towns on the holy river Jumna. At the suggestion of Professor Habib I went over to watch Indian politics in action. Nor was I disappointed.

Escorted by an Aligarh party leader who said he could arrange for me to be put up in Muttra for two or three days, I arrived at the Congress camp just before dinnertime. The area was well filled with peasants, many of them preparing meals alongside their carts and camping impedimenta. A volunteer guide directed us to the entrance to a series of large tents, one opening into the next, that looked as if they must house camp headquarters. After a short conversation in Urdu with my escort, another guide took my card, asked if I was a journalist, and disappeared. I presumed he would return with a housing assignment for me. When he did come back he invited me to accompany him. We proceeded through a vestibule tent into an open compound surrounded by a ring of tents. In the center was a covered area with several easy chairs and a sofa. I thought I recognized a figure sitting there.

"Who is that?" I asked of my guide. We were so close that he hardly had time to confirm my first thought, whispering, "Jawaharlal Nehru."

Nehru. Here, without being warned, I was being led into an interview with the man who, except Gandhi, is most influential in Indian nationalist politics today; the political analyst whose *Autobiography* is a textbook of Indian nationalism, whose rich, Kashmiri Brahman origins have been no hindrance in his gaining sway over peasants throughout the country. Naturally I had wanted to meet him during my stay in India, but I didn't think that the contact would come in this manner. And I'm sure it never would have

in the Western world where statesmen hire secretaries to keep people from bothering them.

Pandit Nehru, president of the Conference, had just come into his quarters after a triumphal parade in which, dressed in white *khadi* and mounted on a black horse, he had ridden three miles along an arched and beflagged route that was lined by a crowd estimated by the *Hindustan Times* at nearly 100,000. (Two days later the same daily paper described as of 60,000 a crowd which some friends and I had counted as 10,000; but still there must have been a lot of people on the parade route.) Now he was at rest on the sofa talking with two men standing near by. We shook hands and then he finished his talk, speaking in Hindi. For a mass orator his voice is surprisingly soft, modulated, personal. A medium-sized, healthy, handsome man of 50, he has large and honest features. He smiles easily. I'm told his flashes of anger are also well known, but again they are quiet and pointed rather than boisterous. The gentleness shown in his demeanor (but not in his politics!) betrays a rich cultural background, and I suppose the placidity may also reveal some effect of seven prison terms. He gives no impression of megalomania nor of political stuffiness.

At his invitation I lived in the Nehru tent camp for three days (trying the while to eat vegetarian food with my fingers), observing the president's easy personal relationships with his associates, his conferences with party leaders, his reception of numerous delegations. He is accessible to everyone. The peasants obviously adore him, and they are tickled by his smiling, appreciative way of turning aside their protestations of love. One farmer broke into his presidential address and told him to sit down. Asked why, this simple man made it clear that far from intending an insult his thought was that Nehru should not tire himself even on such an occasion. Nehru's brother-in-law told me that peasants sometimes attempt to kiss Nehru's feet and that mothers will bring their babies for the leader to see, so that the youngsters may not fall ill. I have no doubt that leaders of the opposing Muslim League and also a number of ICS officers can recite similar experiences, though probably Gandhi and Nehru are the most widely revered. The expressions show the depth of the Indian peasant's emotion towards the leader in whom he has placed his faith.

The assistants who work with Nehru—a group including some attorneys, a pair of post-doctorate economists and a former university history instructor—admire him too. Men who can appreciate such qualities note the orderliness and penetration of his mind, the facility and clarity of his expression. To hear his 15-minute history of the Congress movement is to be treated to an exposition of deep-seated causes and effects in Indian affairs that might fill a student's volume. Nehru speaks as he writes, and I'm told that page after page of his manuscript remains clean throughout revision.

During my stay in the camp Nehru spent upwards of three hours explaining to me his view of Indian problems. He is a thorough-going socialist, though he unhesitatingly follows Gandhi in some most unsocialistic channels. Though a nationalist and sturdily opposed to the British government despite his Harrow and Cambridge education, he puts India in an international setting and describes its situation as one aspect of a world imperialist issue. He views America and Asia rather than Europe as the continents of the future. In some of his speeches he tells his peasant audience that "In our battle for freedom the democratic sentiment of the United States of America is with us."

We talked about the communal problem—the difficulties between India's 250 million Hindus and 80 million Musalmans—because that chasm considerably curtails the effectiveness of the Congress party's demand for national independence. The Congress has long claimed to be a national body. But the Muslim League, though it is also committed to the goal of independence, is not cooperating with the Congress on the grounds that the latter is trying to supplant the British raj with a Hindu raj. And it is commonly agreed that the Muslim League greatly and rapidly increased its influence among Musalmans during the two years before the outbreak of war when the Congress controlled the ministries of eight of 11 provinces under the "provincial autonomy" clauses of the Government of India Act of 1935. With cries of "Congress atrocities committed against our minority community" the bitter opposition continues. Why? Nehru lays the cause of communal strife at the door of economics (in accordance with his belief in the Marxist view of history). The Musalmans' political organization, he holds, is encouraged by "foreign" interests and is financed by the *taluqdar*, or landholding, class,

a very important element in the Muslim community. It stands to lose from the advance of Congress doctrinology, with its "End the feudal system in India!" Therefore it may benefit through retention of power by the chief Congress opponent: the British government. But a pro-imperialism stand would be political suicide under popular government in India. Instead, the religious aspect of communalism is plumped for.

So Nehru foresees that the communal problem as such will fade if India is left to settle the matter herself and if economic factors come to the fore, causing groups to unite or divide on the basis of bread-and-butter interests rather than according to religious creed. In other words legislatures will be split by peasant tenancy bills instead of by fez caps and "Ram-Ram" greetings.

In other talks I found among the leaders at the conference a tendency privately to discount heavily the validity of claims put forth by the Muslims that they had been terrorized and discriminated against by the Congress party and that any revision of the political status quo must include guarantees of certain rights and of certain percentages of official positions for the Musalmans. (Questions of validity aside, public and private expressions I hear at this primarily conservative Muslim university lead me to think that the Congress people underestimate the popular support for those claims.) There was also a definite belief that unity attained on almost any terms had become necessary to the success of Congress objectives. However the newly announced call for a Muslim celebration of a "Day of Deliverance"—from governments by the Congress ministries—would indicate the difficulties along that path.

At the general sessions of the Conference I was surprised at the very large number of country folk attending and participating. Many out-of-purdah women and girls were present too, but relatively few townspeople were evident; besides the leaders representation from the more prosperous classes appeared negligible. The president explained that the Congress had been started as an upper middle-class movement, that it had shifted to the lower middle class, and that now it has come into the hands of the peasants. They don't exert leadership yet, but they wield considerable power.

If the country is really going down to the mat for its third civil disobedience struggle with the British, as some of the party men

suggest, then there might be significance in the obvious effort demanded of the leaders in order to sell Gandhi's domination to the crowd. A number of back-bench speakers suggested, withal worshipfully, that the Mahatma has become slow and antiquated, that his era is past. But despite the opposition good support was given to a motion of confidence in the veteran mystical general who since war began has again become dictator of the Congress, though since his nominal retirement from politics five years ago he has not even been a member of the organization.

Liaquat Ali Khan on the Muslim League

*Muslim University
Aligarh, India
January 10, 1940*

SPIRITUALLY DESCENDANT FROM the late-Victorian Aligarh Movement, which originated within its walls to revivify Musalmans in India, is the Muslim University's present position as a conservative stronghold of the All India Muslim League. This week the University was host to a related organization that also boasts the far too common designation "All India." The All India Muslim Students Federation, which communal strife drove from the All India Students Federation three years ago, collected about 50 delegates in one of the larger University halls for three days of party orthodoxies.

As a convention the meeting was not well managed. Advertised speakers failed to appear, the number of delegates was disappointing and it was a rare session that got under way within an hour of the convening time. Still, out of this Indian counterpart of the Young Republicans came some clarification of the Muslim League position.

The most articulate exposition was given by the Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, secretary of the parent League. In a speech and in a tea-time chat we had he put its position thus:

Of something under 400 million people in India there are about 270 million Hindus and 90 million Muslims. These two major communities worship differently, dress differently, eat differently,

read different languages, cling to different social standards, gain inspiration from different ideals and hold different economic interests. Their life, affairs and needs are disparate. They are distinct peoples.

Can they become one nation, living under a single government which does not have external force behind it? Officially the answer is yes. The Government of India Act of 1935 confers on India a measure of parliamentary democracy, a territorial self-government built on Western models. To the Muslim League this is a disaster. Such a system in India, it believes, does not establish a government of the people, but creates a tyranny of numbers imposed by one nation on another. The League fears the Hindus are proceeding to take revenge for the thousand years they have been a subject people under Musalmans and British.

The federal scheme envisioned by the 1935 Act includes so-called autonomous provincial governments—with strictly limited powers—and a central government in which the provinces and the Indian states will be represented. Up to date only the provincial part of the Act has come into operation. In 1937 the Congress, which Muslim Leaguers see only as the expression of Hindu political aspirations, formed ministries in eight out of the 11 major provinces; nor was it long thereafter that the Muslim League began its still-unsilenced cries of “atrocities” committed against the minorities. A League commission sent to six provinces drew up a long charge-sheet against the incumbent Congress ministries, citing house burnings, street fights, employment and schooling discriminations among the Musalman tribulations.

The Congress platform is grounded on democratic government, independence and economic advancement of the country. The Muslim League is attentive primarily to Muslim rights and demands. Several attempts at rapprochement have been made, but each has broken on the preliminary question of status. The Muslim League insists upon recognition as the authoritative representative of Muslims in India; the Congress retorts that it itself claims to be a national body with Muslim members (the solidly Muslim Northwest Frontier Province is pro-Congress) and cannot accept the inference that it may negotiate only on behalf of the Hindus.

The League's war cry, "Safeguard our culture and civilization," lies in the realm of the abstract. Concretely the issue circulates, besides the status claim, around a demand for coalition cabinets, i.e., a share in the provincial governments, and protection of Urdu, mosques, and the Muslim landed estates that might not fare too well under the Congress's peasant policy.

Added to these, of course, are some dozens of sources of irritation—economic, political, religious and social. Hindu mobs have forcibly rescued cows purchased by Muslims for slaughter. Musalmans' prayers have been interrupted by Hindus singing in processions outside mosques. Muslim debtors have become entangled with Hindu moneylenders, and vice versa. It is charged that Hindu factory managers do not employ Muslim labor. The Congress "national song" comes from a poem originally composed against Muslim, not British, conquerors. Muslims don't get their fair share of state jobs. The list is nigh interminable. Nor is it all one-sided. In a recent outburst the death toll at Sukkur, Sind province, was 160 persons, only 12 of whom were Muslims. During the rampage people were roasted in houses burned down over them, bludgeoned, knifed, and maltreated on such a scale that Mr. Gandhi suggested that the Hindus might well voluntarily emigrate from that locality.

There are many elements in India which look upon independence just as a political catchword. If one agrees that influential sections of the Congress really are working for that status, a further point of difference from the Muslim League arises. In this war the Islamic world is on the whole on the side of British arms, so the Indian Musalmans' loyalty is said by many of themselves to be stronger than it was in 1914–18. The eight Congress provincial ministries left office shortly after the outbreak of war to express dissatisfaction with the British response to a request for the enumeration of her war aims (which, it was urged, should include democracy and self-government for India). But in Bengal and Punjab, the two chief Muslim provinces, the legislatures passed resolutions of loyalty and support, and the ministries are still in office. If passive resistance is started, central leaders have suggested that the Muslim League won't join it. The Nawabzada put it this way: "After all, the present government doesn't interfere with my culture and religion, whereas

the new government wants to impose on me the culture and ideals of 2,000 years ago. I shall do whatever I can to resist such an imposition.”

So the Muslim League and the Congress are pulling in opposite directions, leaving the British to keep the peace. And the League's solution for the impasse? To carve India up into a Hindu country and a Muslim country, or at least into two federations within the gossamer net of a confederation. The trouble is that the Muslims themselves—to say nothing of other interests—haven't yet agreed on any scheme which makes partition practical.

A Mushaira Experience

*Muslim University
Aligarh, India
January 20, 1940*

AS A SOCIAL medium in the West poetry seems to have lost much of the sway it once held. It conquers no country; corrects no civilization. Persons who admit to reading fiction and biography, watching *Tobacco Road** and seeing many a film have little time for poets. A hothouse plant, the verse is for the most part handled with care by a selected circle of writers, literature students and gentle-souled women.

Such is the case, at any rate, in the United States. In India the story is different. I knew that. Still, an invitation to a *mushaira* (an Urdu poets' conclave) brought anticipations of cloistered devotees joining muted chants perhaps of the Gardens of Shalimar, or of Kotri, by the River. The tradition of Omar is not dead.

So it was with a degree of amazement that, expecting an evening's dulcet quatrains, I found—a football rally! No less. Six hundred stamping, shouting, cheering students, half of the undergraduate population, over-packed the available hall and oozed out of doors and windows. These auditors shouted and laughed, they booed

*The title of a 1932 novel by Erskine Caldwell about sharecroppers in Georgia, USA. A Broadway play was made from it in 1933, and a film version in 1941.

and whistled. They scraped their chairs on the floor. They gave the chairman a severe workout in keeping order even though he had the public address system in his favor. They almost—and sometimes completely—stole the show.

On the platform the evening's entertainment consisted of recitations of their own works by 20 or more poets. In turn they got up, intoned their writings into the microphone (modern development) and sat down. But it wasn't as simple as that. Everything depends on the first couplet. Since these poets don't just speak, but must sing their lines, voice quality has much to do with their success. The first three words reveal whether a voice is rich, deep and mellow or is high and squeaky. Woe be to the performer with the latter blessing. He may have written the most arresting verse of the evening, but not even a full line of it is heard. When the student listeners have made up their minds, no delay ensues before the outbreak of catcalls and whistling. After that the unhappy artist may carry on for 15 minutes, but student honor would appear to demand that no more than two consecutive words shall be heard through the din.

If a man's voice is liked, he has passed the first hurdle. The students will hear him respectfully to the end of the first couplet. If that's not good the sad fate of his predecessor mantles him and an outsider has another 10 minutes to stand in wonder at such a display.

But when that poet comes who can carry the crowd, the one whose voice is good and whose couplets are exciting, he is rewarded by almost breathless attention unsullied by sophisticated detachment. When he scores a *touche* a deep rumble originates in the back of the room and rolls majestically forward. "Vah, vah," the tribute greets him, "bahut khub, bahut khub", superb, superb. On feeling, more than hearing, the admiration expressed in these vibrations the pleased singer makes a sign of thanks, and moves forward into the next couplet.

On this night younger student poets recited first. They are amateurs who have found beauties in the Urdu language and who have attempted to do much with them. Hardly any, though, received a hearing. After them came some hands more adept at the craft, and then two or three poets—Jigar and Ravish Siddiqi—whose names are known across India. The minstrel Jigar, whose former propensity for drink has been tamed by tea and coffee, cuts an arresting figure

with his hair dropping to curls at his shoulders and his loose, untidy dress. On the platform he gulped down four cups of tea during one recitation. It was such experts as he who kept the interest, until 1 A.M. of 600 students who rise and pray before sunup.

It would be unfair not to add that such vigorous audience reaction to the widely respected institution of *mushaira* is as exclusively characteristic of student crowds as paddling is the trademark of university fraternities. Throughout India delighted congregations give full hearings to performers and judge them more on the quality of their couplets than on their tonal richness.

The *mushaira* is not a contest. But one of its characteristics has long been that a subject and a meter are assigned some weeks in advance; then all participants conform to the standards. Naturally rivalry thrives. And the auditor goes home knowing he won't be able to put the throbbing rhythm out of his head for days. Sometimes, as on this night, freedom of subject is given. It is then that the all-encompassing scope of poetry in the East is revealed.

Yes, there were love poems, verses about pools in the Kashmir forest—lines that even in a skimpy whispered translation were beautiful. But there were metered political works, too: riproaring bloodthirsty poems crying for revolution and power; poems about economics: complaints over the wages of road workers; and on sociology: a gripping drama called "Death of a Laborer." This one had some of the brutal, galling style of di Donato's "Christ in Concrete."

Urdu poetry as doctrinaire teaching developed its greatest exponent in Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, who died last year after attaining a rank with the leading poets of the Islamic era. In front of me is an article called "Iqbal's Message to Muslim Youth." In it the author quotes Iqbal on such a variety of themes as the future and the practice of Islam, Islamic history, the dangers of modern civilization ("it is the greatest enemy of Muslim culture and civilization"), human ego, the narrowness of nationalism, the weakness of non-violence (Gandhi's credo), the unsuitability of present-day education, the falsity of democracy, the necessity of violence in struggle, and the free will of man. In the Western world socialism, theology and economics would find other forms of expression.

Indians enjoy using their language. As to the Arabs of the Prophet's day, so to them real pleasure has come from playing with words,

shaping sentences, building metaphors, pyramiding synonyms, rumbling forth the 99 names of God. Perhaps that explains why poetry is deeply embedded in their lives; why engineering students prefer quatrains to novels for recreational reading. Or it may be the other way around. Songs from the tents of the lyrical bedouins may have nurtured the love of language for its own sake. At any rate the *mushaira*, which is as popular among rustics when village poets compete for honors as it is among the studios, is an Oriental institution that one hopes modern society—that materialist machine age so detested by Iqbal—won't decide to do without.

Muslim League Leaders

*Muslim University
Aligarh, India
February 6, 1940*

DURING THE PAST weekend a meeting of the All India Muslim League Working Committee in New Delhi provided an opportunity for me to meet and have talks with Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the League president, Mr. Fazlul Haq, premier of Bengal Province, and several other members of the League's inner cabinet. Several common strains appeared in the conversations. Expectation of Indian separation from the British Empire, it was held, is premature by a generation, perhaps, or at least by many years. The dominion status officially contemplated for India is unacceptable to the League because it reduces the Musalmans to a permanent minority to the Hindus; so the present constitutional act must be thrown out after the war. No constitutional agreement with the Congress is possible as long as Mr. Gandhi pursues his policy of "subordinating everything else to the establishment of a Hindu rule." Because of the complicated issues, partition of India into distinct Hindu and Muslim lands offers the simplest way out. These were the views put forward.

The League has not yet officially adopted the policy of partition. But it appears to be moving in that direction, and Mr. Jinnah said in our conversation that he could see no other solution.

Sir Abdulla Haroon, chairman of a League subcommittee to examine plans for dividing India, gave me copies of the eight proposals under consideration. They range from a mere further decentralization of government to an ambitious design that would shift the homes of 100 million people. All the plans are based on the assumption that separation would be guaranteed by the British, rather than come after independence.

Musalmsans who want to create their own states find several difficulties. Although there were 77 million Muslims in India when the 1931 census was taken (now they claim 90 million), only 47 million lived in the two tracts where Musalmsans are in a full majority. These two districts are the northwest corner of India (Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, Baluchistan and Sind) and a patch in the northeast (parts of Bengal and Assam), and they are separated by 800 miles at the nearest point. Also, even in the majority areas there are Hindu and Sikh minorities larger than the Musalman minority in the United Provinces, where communal tension has been at its height. These facts mean that if the Musalmsans are sincere in saying that they only want to simplify their politics and rule themselves, some 30 million Muslims will be left out in Hindu India, Muslims won't have anywhere near the one quarter of India that corresponds to their percentage of the population, there is no chance to form a single Muslim state, and there will still be important minority questions.

The arguments in favor of separation are diverse. Apologists, saying that nationality is built on common race, country, language, civilization, culture, religion, traditions, heroes, and economic interests, take pains to point out that the Muslims and Hindus mutually enjoy none of these features except a common country. And, they ask, why shouldn't the Musalmsans have their own country? No European nation except Russia has as large a population as the Muslim community of India. The principles of homeland and self-determination were carried to an extreme in Europe and were even recommended in tiny Palestine. Why not in India? She never was one country until the Muslim nation was converted into a minority by the inclusion of a larger nation. The Hindu masses themselves have always been "highly communalistic," while the Musalmsans in

looking at a world brotherhood under the Quran develop a broader viewpoint. And finally, the Muslims are agriculturists while Hindus are capitalists and industrialists. The Hindu grip is so tight (here the argument runs in channels similar to those of the case made against Jews in some countries) that unless Musalmans get their own homeland they cannot break the closed circle that prohibits them from building up their own business, finance and industry; nor can they protect their agricultural exports from the adverse affects of upsetting foreign trade by high import duties on manufactured goods. The defenders liken their position to that of the agricultural American South, which they describe as forcibly held under the control of the industrial North whose interests conflict with its own.

There are other complaints, including one that the movie industry in the hands of Hindus is surreptitiously replacing good Urdu vocabulary in Hindustani films with Sanskrit and Hindi words that will corrupt the Muslim language.

But the prime difficulty is how to carry out partition. There are three schools of thought. One would divide India into two separate countries, as India and Burma have already been split up. Another would carry the country forward on the present path of federation with a much-weakened central government. Between those limits lie the schemes calling for federation—a series of smaller federations of provinces and states that would have as a superstructure a confederal government to handle only defense and such other subjects as would be specifically voted to it by the federations. One scheme would in addition create a group of free cities, like Danzig, in minority population centers.

The scheme subject to the fewest objections, to my mind, is one of the confederacy type put forward by the Nawab of Mamdot State. Clinging to the ideal of a Muslim country only he slices off the Ambala district of the Punjab, in which the majority is Hindu, and does not demand the Muslim historic centers of Delhi, Agra and Lucknow, which are also populated mostly by Hindus. He would divide India into five federations, of which the Indusstan zone in the northwest and the Bengal area in the northeast would be Muslim. The largest federation would be Hindu India and the

other two would comprise the present native states in Rajputana and the Deccan peninsula. To hook up various units he proposes three corridors, but they are extremely modest in comparison with the corridor demands of other plans. His is less aggressive and displaces the present social and political institutions less than most of the plans.

By contrast Syed Abdul Latif would give the Muslims four "cultural zones" in the country, in two of which the population balance is now heavily Hindu. But he would shift the Hindus out of these areas and bring Muslims in from outside. Another author has estimated that two thirds of the population of India would be affected by the moves. And to take not only Hyderabad State, which is 90 percent Hindu although it has a Muslim ruler, but a broad corridor to the sea which would include the main southern port of Madras would cause the majority community to splutter. Another plan, optimistically described by its author, S. M. Rizwanulla, as "a final solution of communal problems," would create a United States of India with three Muslim states in none of which would there be a Muslim majority. Still another scheme would make only the single change of giving Hindus and Muslims equal strength in the central legislature instead of keeping proportional representation.

Most of these plans have obviously been prepared without examination of all the questions involved. Only in the Mamdot plan is there any consideration of the knotty problems of finance, and even it doesn't tackle such matters as existing provincial debt, control of the railways now state-owned, customs and similar sticky questions. Few give any thought to what the majority community may say to all this, and how agreement on splitting up the country could be reached. The Congress, after all, is flatly opposed to partition and it still is a force in Indian politics. The precedents of Poland and Germany and of Turkey and Greece can hardly be admitted to prove the reasonableness of exchanging population here. Indians are particularly attached to their home communities and I know many Musalmans in Aligarh who wouldn't move to the Punjab just to get under a Muslim government. No money exists in India to carry out large-scale migration, either. That idea must be considered visionary. Another mosquito in the tea is that in the Northwest Frontier Province, which has the heaviest Muslim majority in India,

the Congress is master of politics and the Muslim League has not had a look-in. In addition the whole country is now organized not only politically but economically as a unit. Partition would cause readjustments more far-reaching in such matters as the banking structure than the political theorists seem to realize.

But even its backers don't claim invulnerability for partition. The Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, secretary of the League, says "Our stand is that we refuse to be dominated by the Hindus. If anyone can work out a plan better than partition to achieve that end, let's hear it."

My own reaction is that partition is a backward step. The objections of the Musalmans against the Congress ministries seem to be based on real cases of communalism; a redivision of provinces which would give the Muslims more certain majorities in their own areas plus an increase in self-government would do much to assuage their complaints, it seems. But the impression remains that Muslim difficulties lie deeper than mere politics. When Muslim University arts graduates have no alternative if they don't win places in the government services but to go back to the \$10-a-month jobs they would have taken without university training, and when the Technological Institute is small and weak and there is no agricultural training given at the principal Muslim center of higher education, then there is room for attention to the future of the community in fields other than politics.

The Ramgarh Congress Meeting

*Muslim University
Aligarh, India
March 28, 1940*

THE ANNUAL SESSIONS of India's two large political organizations, the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League, have both been held in the last fortnight, a thousand miles apart geographically and separated nearly that far ideologically. One emphasized anti-imperialism and the other anti-Hinduism. The first was a village gathering largely of village

people; the second exuded a substantial urban flavor. And the Congress thoughts were mostly on future program, while in the League disturbed attention was directed at a *Khaksar* shooting tragedy in the immediate past. It was my good fortune to attend both conventions despite an unscheduled touch of flu in between them.

Because there is a good deal of ground to cover I will leave the Muslim League meeting for the next letter. So come with me now to a railway stop—it's nothing more—on a branch line in Bihar Province, Ranchi Road. Because of one of Mr. Gandhi's bizarre, and sometimes extremely effective, contributions to the Congress program the All India sessions have been moved out of cities into villages. The result is that crowds estimated variously at 50,000, 70,000, and 100,000 worried their way through bad rail connections and inconvenient travel arrangements to this station or another near by. It was a fascinating sight to watch them all in their white homespun cotton dress, most of them carrying a small bundle of belongings to keep them for two or three days. While three of us traveling together took two taxis, at Rs. 3, for our luggage and ourselves, not all of these people could ride in buses for Rs. 3.* The remainder, who didn't want to spend even these 6 cents, walked the three miles to the Congress village—if you can call even a temporary community the size of Lincoln, Nebraska, a village. The happy, kinky-haired, monkey-faced, nearly undressed and guttural aboriginal tribes were the most picturesque example of these classes; throughout the camp it was fun to watch their dancing and listen to their singing. I couldn't help wondering what it is that attracts these cultivators and primitives at such sacrifice to themselves. Why are they willing to stand for many hours in the blazing sun for a glimpse of their Mahatmaji or Nehruji? [DELETED BY CENSOR]

The newly metaled road from the station to the camp leads between the low-lying hills of Chota Nagpur and jungly patches of scrub. A very pretty environment, though economically it is hard to see what the land produces. All along the road knots of pilgrims marched, right up to the long brick-and-steel bridge over the Damodar river, along whose farther bank the village of thatched huts was built. Shops of all kinds, but particularly hotels and restaurants,

*Three annas (each anna was worth $\frac{1}{16}$ th of a rupee).

lined the main road. A constant flow of humanity got in the way of the stream of buses and cars that tried to maneuver about the parking area. In the camp the best huts, but still only straw creations, were those on a particular street of members of the Working Committee and provincial leaders. Mr. Gandhi's house was isolated by distance and guards from the rest of the camp. My hut near the press section of the village, by the way, was shared with Wallace Kirkland of *Life* magazine. All of the accommodations were near outlets of a piped water supply but sanitary arrangements were elementary. Youthful volunteer guides kept the traffic, largely pedestrian, moving easily and without jams along the temporary avenues. An important part of the establishment was a large *swadeshi* (i.e., not foreign-made) exhibition of the products of village, cottage, and other Indian industries. The camp program was busy. Early in the morning a large part of the village population turned out for a ceremonial raising of the saffron, white and green spinning-wheel "national flag" of the Congress on a tall pole modeled on the ancient rock pillars of the great Buddhist king Asoka. Later in the day the crowds broke up into the official Subjects Committee meetings and the subsidiary gatherings of allied organizations concerned with the native states, with peasant movements and with industrial groups.

[DELETED BY CENSOR]

It was in the Subjects Committee, a body of about 5,000 people including the guests, that the issues before the convention were talked out. There, too, where the leaders sat cross-legged on the flag-decked platform, the operation of the political machine of this huge Congress organization became obvious. This has been a big year for the Congress. It has deposed its president and banned him from the organization. It has withdrawn the provincial ministries from seven provinces, and thereby ended a period of cooperation with the established government. It has faced increasing anti-Gandhi pressure from its more advanced elements to take advantage of the war situation and start a mass struggle for independence. Differences regarding some of the steps have been sharp. And yet master strategy hid any indication that the year's disruptive forces remained. The Working Committee, whose 15 members constitute the grand council of the organization, hammered out one official resolution, and no others were permitted before the house. The Subjects Committee

listened to 10 hours of debate on 27 amendments submitted to that resolution, and then rejected them one by one only three, nine or 12 votes short of unanimously. Even the Congress Socialist Party, a small but influential offshoot of the parent body, decided to cast its lot with Gandhi's policy of moderation rather than to pursue immediately its own economic aims. It was Mr. Gandhi's show completely, and after the voting had given proof of that this little man with the exceedingly ugly ears electrified the audience of several thousand by telling them sweetly, lovingly, personally, and withal stubbornly, of the cost in patience and discipline of following him. But first let me explain what this resolution was about.

Adopted by the Working Committee at Patna a fortnight earlier, it asserts that Britain's declaration of India as a belligerent country without reference to the people of India is an affront to the national dignity, that Britain is fundamentally fighting the present wars for imperialist aims which are based on the exploitation of peoples in Asia and Africa, and that therefore the Congress cannot be a party to the war. It further holds that only complete independence, not dominion status within the empire, will satisfy India; that a constituent assembly is the proper means of creating an Indian government; that the "British-created" rulers of the Indian states must not be permitted to come in the way of independence, and that, having withdrawn the ministries from office to dissociate Indian people from the war, "this preliminary step must naturally be followed by civil disobedience, to which the Congress will unhesitatingly resort as soon as the Congress organization is considered fit enough for the purpose, or in case circumstances so shape themselves as to precipitate a crisis."

That is the Congress stand, and on it the leadership gained practically unchallenged endorsement. The majority of the proposed amendments, you will be interested to know, followed the aggressive lead of Communist M. N. Roy in demanding the end of conciliation, negotiation, and Gandhi's uncompromising insistence on the universal use of the much scoffed-at spinning wheel before an active struggle could be started. "Start civil disobedience now," was the cry. But the organization said "No, we'll follow Gandhiji and begin when he orders."

After the voting Mahatma Gandhi, who had sat through part of the afternoon session and had returned in the evening, spoke. At that time I was sitting on the edge of the platform at the rear, so I could face and watch the crowd and Gandhi at the same time. The little man got up from the floor and went to a chair to talk with his people. The public address microphone was placed before him. He let his shoulder wrap fall and, sitting erect with his bared torso, began his plea. He spoke in Hindi, and possibly for that reason I found his language a little more difficult to follow than, say, the Urdu-Hindustani of Jawaharlal Nehru. But his tone could not be misunderstood. Here was a man talking to 5,000 people through a modern electrical amplifying device. And yet he had an intimate home chat with each member of that audience. There was warmth, friendliness, pleading in his voice; not the slightest trace of oratory. He cut sharply through all the barriers that usually separate a speaker and his listeners. As he continued the rustling of the whole long day stopped. The people were sitting up straight on their low stools. For half an hour the eyes of hundreds of them never left Gandhiji's face. Few people, even Jawaharlal Nehru, could give such a demonstration of super-rational crowd control. The delegates kept in tune with Gandhi right through his hearty jokes about the afternoon's proceedings, his pleading for patience and understanding, his imperious demand that his conditions be met if he were to remain general of the movement, and his words of cheer for the future. It was a magnificent performance.

External opposition to that line, by the way, came at the same time from an "Anti-Compromise Conference" held a mile from the Congress camp by Subhas Chandra Bose, the Bengal leader who was expelled from the Congress for indiscipline although just a year ago he had been re-elected its president. A man who has lost health and youth in prison, he has gained a reputation of sacrifice, but also of opportunism instead of fixed faith in principles. Aside from pageantry which would credit Grover Whalen his conference was unimpressive. Some thousands of people who had gone over from the Gandhi camp to watch Bose's opening meeting left again before he had finished speaking.

It was my good luck to have talks with a number of Congress leaders during the session. One was Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan,

the "Frontier Gandhi," leader of the *Khudai Khidmatgar*, or Servants of God, popularly known from their uniforms (not their affiliation with Russia) as the Redshirts. He is a man who has accomplished one of the extraordinary feats of this century. He converted to non-violence his people, the big, handsome, strong Pathans, manly mountain fellows who are accounted among the best individual fighters of the world. For untold generations they have been the terror of opponents. They and their brothers in Afghanistan have given the British armies a rough time in the Afghan wars. [DELETED BY CENSOR] These folk are famous for two things, their amazingly quick trigger finger and knife arm, and their unlimited hospitality. They used to steal rifles from British sentries, killing if necessary. When the rifles were chained to the sentries' bodies, the story is that one soldier was found cut in two, with rifle and chain gone. These are the people to whom Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan went with the Gandhian message of nonviolence. The amazing thing is that he succeeded. In our talk at Ramgarh the man who had been in jail from 1930 to 1936 reiterated his belief in the method.

"In the frontier Province we believe in nonviolence," he said. "We made a good record in 1930, and we can do it again."

[DELETED BY CENSOR]

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his fellows, coming as they do from the mountains, where the winters are not tropical, wear a heavier, coarser and darker grade of homespun cotton than do the plains people. The leader's characteristic expression is a smile that emerges from his thick beard with frankness, friendliness and warmth. There is nothing wily about him, nothing clever. He lives with a deep conviction of God, and believes that difficulties in the path of his followers mean they haven't made themselves worthy of more heaven-sent favors. He shares the Congress interest with his brother, Dr. Khan, who was premier of the Frontier province.

Another leader of some stature, though in many ways the full opposite of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, is Mr. C. Rajagopalachari. Not only aliens but even northern Indians, you will be glad to know, sometimes stumble over his name. He was Congress premier of the Madras Presidency. His mind is like acid that eats away alloy from pure metal. The leading legalist and parliamentarian of the Congress, he has the habit of dissecting every sentence and almost each word

before him. One question from me elicited answers in six parts. Thus, and because he is jocularly called “the keeper of Gandhiji’s conscience” because of his affinity with the 70-year-old leader, his analysis is worth having. He put the position this way: “Gandhiji’s will dominates absolutely, because he knows what the situation is. I don’t know if we will get independence this time, but our goal is not like a ditch over which a horse either can or cannot jump. It is rather like a long road along which every mile must be passed to reach the destination. We really are not bluffing when we say we want independence.” The Brahman ex-premier is the type of man one would turn to for help in the ticklish wording of an important statement or for an examination of the implications of another’s argument.

There were others too. Dr. Syed Mahmood, a former minister of Bihar and a new Muslim member of the Working Committee; Dr. Asaf Ali, another Muslim who is working energetically in Delhi for the Congress; Dr. K. M. Ashraf, a Ph.D. who has gone far leftist; Seth Jarnalal Bajaj, treasurer of the Congress and a rightist; Pandit Govind Pant, a former premier of the United Provinces; and also Jawaharlal Nehru and some of the other UP leaders I had met earlier.

One sharp impression that an outsider must gain is that in the top leadership of the Congress there is unity of thought only on two points: the following of Gandhi’s lead and the ideal of nationalism. Beyond that, on the question of what should be *done* with independence, the disparity of views would seem to forecast the breakup of the Congress as such if that achievement should come. Nehru, a real power after Gandhi, is a Socialist to the roots. Yet practically all the rest of the Working Committee has been either frankly rightist or unconcerned about economics. “C. R.,” as Mr. Rajagopalachari permits himself to be called, said, “In India it is part of our life, our traditions, that the strong shall protect the weak, the rich look after the poor. I believe therefore in a trusteeship of wealth by those who hold it for the benefit of the community.” He agreed that he meant that in the sense in which Mr. Gandhi refers to all the industrialists and landholding *nawabs* as trustees of wealth. Cotton-mill owners and other business men have given a lot of money to the Congress. Yet India is a peasant country and the Congress is becoming more and more the voice of the masses,

and that stand usually leads to leftist platforms. Some day the clash may come within the organization, but not while Gandhi and the issue of nationalism cement the various aggregates. For the present these leaders are held together, too, by their joint histories of years in jails, changes to high government positions and titles of "the Hon'ble," and now again the possibilities of an approaching return to the jail status.

There remains to say a word of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Muslim who was elected Congress president. At this point the Muslim League has taken the stand that the Congress is a Hindu body determined to crush Muslim culture. It would look as if the election of a Muslim president and the addition of three Musalmans to the Congress Working Committee were a master political stroke. I believe it is, too, though Nehru's just protest is that such was not the motive of the election, since Maulana Azad had been pressed for some years to take the presidency, but only this time had been convinced he should accept it. He is one of India's leading Muslim scholars, but the Muslim League looks upon him as a traitor. His presidential address, which was published but unfortunately never delivered because of a deluge that swept (and almost swept away) Ramgarh, was vigorously Muslim. But he took the line that Muslims must join in making a free India rather than segregating themselves through fear and distrust. "We must and shall go forward," he declared.

The rains that came on the afternoon of March 19 broke while more than 50,000 people were standing and sitting in an open natural amphitheater awaiting the presidential address. The crowds took the grass mats off the ground and covered their heads with them, but before many of them got back on high ground they were wading through water knee deep. The pumping system was flooded, some of the streets were rivers, the straw thatched roofs afforded little hindrance to the passage of rain through them—the camp, in short, got wet. In an hour it was evident that no real session could be held the next day, and it appeared that the rain might continue all night. With crowds of others, then, I decided to get away that evening instead of wait until the following afternoon, especially since the water supply had been corrupted. Discretion was a wise course, and I was lucky to come out with only two days of fever.

The Muslim League's Lahore Meeting

Muslim University
Aligarh, India
April 5, 1940

TWO WORDS CAN cover the reasons the Lahore session of the All India Muslim League kept at key pitch for three days. One is *Khaksar*. Thanks to that Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, for whose long life the Muslim Leaguers regularly pray, got a headache that must have matched any he has had since the days of the London Round Table Conference. The second word is *partition*. And that must be a term of some magic, for Muslim League leaders from all the provinces alike rallied around it with tremendous joint enthusiasm. The official launching of the scheme for the division of India, which Mr. Jinnah had outlined in a talk I had with him early in February and which has been described in an earlier letter, is already being acclaimed as a milestone in the history of the League.

But let's look at the *Khaksars* first. They constitute an Islamic social and military organization which has been growing in the Punjab for nine years. Early in March the Punjab Government banned the parades of the *Khaksars*, their symbolic spade and their other private army activities. On March 19 a *Khaksar* force of several hundreds who had gathered to protest the ban marched through the streets of Lahore. An official investigation is now attempting to ascertain just what happened after that. But in short the police ordered the marchers to stop and the *Khaksars* replied by attacking with their spades. The police opened fire, using according to later testimony 377 rounds of pistol and musket ammunition. The casualties included two policemen killed, the senior superintendent and deputy superintendent of police seriously injured (the latter subsequently died and his superior was granted disability leave in England), and more than 30 *Khaksars* lying dead. That occurred three days before the session of the Muslim League was scheduled to start, also in Lahore. The *Khaksars*, while in advance of the League in many ways and committed to action rather than resolutions, have a close affinity with the League and there is friendship and support

on both sides. More than one time Mr. Jinnah has praised the *Khaksars*. On the other hand the Government too is closely tied to the League through the premier, Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan, a member of the Working Committee and the real League power in the Punjab. Immediately the issue was joined between Leaguers favoring the *Khaksars* and those supporting the premier. Rumors were circulated that the League session would be postponed, but it was not. Almost from the moment he reached Lahore, though, President Jinnah began pleading for restraint, fairness and proof that the Muslims could meet "the acid test of a great nation and a great people; the greater the difficulties the more we should keep ourselves calm and cool."

On the first day of the League session a demonstration was held outside the meeting tent at which the most common shout was "Sikandar Hyat murdabad," which means practically "Death to Sikandar Hyat." When I arrived on the third day leaflets were being distributed by the Punjab Students' Association calling on Mr. Jinnah to disavow and purge Sir Sikandar, who twice earlier this year has been named in official resolutions of the League Working Committee and Council for indiscipline and "un-Islamic statements" which developed from his solid loyalty to the British. It was a ticklish situation. If the dispute got out of control the Muslim League might well be split down the middle. For with Sir Sikandar would go the Punjab, leaving the League a rump organization of Bengal and the provinces where Muslims are in a minority; whereas should the *Khaksar* sympathizers become disaffected a lot of strong support in every province would be lost and the forces of disruption would prevail.

Mr. Jinnah's navigation through these shoals was a parliamentary masterpiece. A resolution on the *Khaksar* fighting was imperative; Muslim blood had been spilled and he couldn't get out of it. So on the last night of the session he moved a resolution from the chair, rather than having it come from the floor, and he permitted neither seconding nor debate (with the permission of the house). It had four main items: an expression of sorrow for the shooting and of sympathy to relatives; a demand for an impartial investigating committee to be appointed by the government, an authorization for

further action by the Working Committee when the investigators report, and a request to the governments concerned that the order declaring the *Khaksar* organization unlawful should be removed as soon as possible.

The resolution was a success. Regret had been expressed for the deaths, the League had shown its sympathy for the *Khaksars* in asking that the ban be removed, and at the same time those who demanded vigorous language against the Government and the premier were held off with the promise that the Working Committee would act further when the investigation was finished. By that time tempers will have cooled and representatives of all provinces will not be collected in one spot to do anything drastic in a hurry. The League came out of the affair unscathed, then, and full credit for that goes to Mr. Jinnah.

The other role in which he starred was a happier one from his point of view. Once again he carried the League forward a step which, even if difficult for outsiders to follow, was dramatic. In his presidential address he put the matter firmly: "To secure peace and happiness of the people of this sub-continent," he said, "the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into 'autonomous national States.'"

The text of the official resolution includes these clauses:

Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz., that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the northwestern and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute "independent States" in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

Provisions are added for reciprocal constitutional safeguards for other minorities in the Muslim lands and for Muslim minorities in the Hindu areas, and for the framing of a constitution which will

provide finally for the assumption by the respective regions of "all powers such as defence, external affairs, communication, customs and such other matters as necessary."

The Hon'ble Fazlul Haq, premier of Bengal, moved the resolution and it was seconded and supported by the heads of all the provincial Muslim Leagues and other leaders. Besides hearing most of the speakers I have since read through the arguments of Mr. Jinnah and the other gentlemen. They all rotate about the thesis that there is no such thing as an Indian (in India, that is; they're not concerned with the American variety). There was an intersprinkling of references to Congress oppression and attacks on Muslims, but the main argument always went back to the central point. I have referred to this reasoning earlier this year, but let me quote Mr. Jinnah's reasons at a little length, because they represent the core of Muslim League thought at the present moment.

1. "Muslim India cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. . . . We have had ample experience of the working of the provincial constitutions during the last two and a half years, and any repetition of such a government must lead to civil war and the raising of private armies as recommended by Mahatma Gandhi to the Hindus of Sukkur, when he said that they must defend themselves violently or nonviolently, blow for blow. If they cannot, then they must migrate."
2. "Notwithstanding a thousand years of close contact nationalities which are as divergent today as ever cannot at any time be expected to transform themselves into one nation merely by means of subjecting them to a democratic constitution and holding them forcibly together by unnatural and artificial methods of British Parliamentary statutes."
3. "They (Hinduism and Islam) are not religious in the strict sense of the word, but are in fact different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and the Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality. . . . They neither inter-marry nor inter-dine. . . . They have different epics, their heroes are different and they have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is the foe of the other, and likewise their victories and defeats overlap."

4. Other, much smaller, countries have divided in order to give racial and national homes to different peoples, as Ireland and Great Britain, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Why not India?
5. "The present artificial unity of India dates back only to the British conquest and is maintained by the British bayonet, but the termination of the British regime, which is implicit in the recent declaration of His Majesty's Government, will be the herald of the entire break-up, with the worst disaster that has ever taken place during the last 1,000 years under the Muslims."
6. "The Musalmans are not a minority, as it is commonly known and understood. . . . The Musalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory, and their State."

The advantages of separation, Mr. Jinnah added, would include the settlement of the communal problem. That is to say,

There is no reason why these States should be antagonistic to one another. On the other hand the rivalry and the natural desire and efforts on the part of one to dominate the social order and establish political supremacy over the other in the government of the country will disappear. It will lead more towards natural goodwill by international pacts between them, and they can live in complete harmony with their neighbors.

Every speech touched only the principle of separation. None approached the practical issues regarding its appliance. Unwilling minorities (and the Sikhs have already begun to shout bloody murder against the scheme), finances (the northwest block is now a budget deficiency area even though the cost of northwest frontier defense is at present spread over the whole of India), industrialization, education, relations with the British (who are expected to guarantee and supervise this scheme for "autonomous national States")—these things have not been mentioned by any speaker. Still, I suppose they feel the time for details will come later; they have already given other politicians enough to talk about. And so they have. Newspapers show that the mass blood pressure of Congress statement-givers

has gone up several points, and the partition scheme has been regretted and deplored in London from the *Times* downwards.

I can't complete the description of the Muslim League session without giving you a picture of the setting, a vigorous contrast to the Congress meeting of some days earlier. The League's circus meeting tent—in India called a *pandal*—was pitched in a park close to the center of the big and rushing city of Lahore. The ramparts of the Lahore Fort, inside of which British troops had been stationed for the whole period of the League session in anticipation of possible trouble, looked right down on the League camp from one direction, and from another the minarets of the city's largest mosque threw their shadows almost that far. The camp itself included a number of tents for visiting delegates, but its area did not approach the size of the Ramgarh temporary village, Shops of sellers of sweets, meats, souvenirs, and Islamic literature abounded. Inside the main *pandal* banners of white lettering on the Islamic green background, or of green letters on white, proclaimed verses from the Quran and slogans of the Muslim League party. Green bunting around the dais and artificial flowers strung along wires added to the festive effect. A sterner note was given by the corps of green-uniformed Muslim National Guardsmen, who as volunteers and guides appeared everywhere with their unsheathed swords. To the right of the speakers' stand a section of the platform was screened off for several hundred women in purdah. More than half of the men delegates wore European dress with the distinguishing fez cap. The remainder looked not only neat but substantial in their long Turkish coats. The comparison between Ramgarh and Lahore isn't exactly the distinction between a farmers' crowd in our Middle West and a big city convention, for the American farmer doesn't differ so much from his town cousin. But between the peasant of India and the middle class, between homespun and English-cut suits, between Congress and Muslim League the cleavage is deep. I confess that one other comparison came to my mind, though it may not be justified. It was between the purposeful American farmers' conclaves of the fateful days of the middle '30s when sales were stopped by force and the ordinary Republican and Democratic conventions filled as they are with show, floridness, and froth. Mr. Jinnah did not give the latter impression at all, but sometimes I wasn't so sure about his followers.

3

KASHMIR AND LAHORE

In this section, Talbot relates his experience of living in Salura, Kashmir, a village of 1,400 residents. Both his simple personal life and the meager life of the villagers (such as the Shah family) are explained in a colorful manner. Talbot came back to the same village later in his travels around India, but that is a subject for another day.

In Kashmir, with its mountains and lakes, houseboats and shikaras, Talbot's keen eye on the landscape of the future is very noticeable. He makes the observation that "I can't get away from the feeling that the India I am seeing in the villages and towns represents the end of an era, socially and economically, and that the coming generation will see terrific and perhaps violent changes."

That was written on August 15, 1940, seven years before the independence of India and Pakistan. The haven of Kashmir emerged as a contentious issue between the new nations. To date it has triggered three wars and an arms race that has depleted the precious national resources of the entire subcontinent. Through no fault of their own, generations of Kashmiris have paid a very heavy price for being near the center of these historic events.

Another interesting passage is Talbot's account of the weddings of Kesho Ram and Yog Puri, his colleagues at the Civil Service Probationers course in London. Indian wedding traditions come alive, seen through the sympathetic and observant eye of this foreign participant.

Krishen Mehta

Village Life in Kashmir

*c/o American Consulate-General
Calcutta, India
(Written at Ganderbal, Kashmir)
June 15, 1940*

THE SUSPENSION OF air mail service owing to war developments left me with a distinct feeling of isolation from the United States. But now again a service of some sort is operating through to Hong Kong, and instead of delaying further I'll send this along in the hope that it gets that far to connect with the Clipper. During May I didn't touch the typewriter, and I am afraid that besides answering the few dozen letters that had piled up by this week there is much to write to you.

Your letters of May 2 and May 17 came through all right, the latter just before the service was stopped. Mr. Moe's suggestion that I live in a village for awhile requires different calculations in India than it would in America or in many other countries. Most manifestations of Hindu caste bar an outsider from eating with members of the family or using the same vessels. In Musalman homes the purdah restrictions on women members makes acceptance of non-relatives difficult. A number of Kashmir residents volunteered suggestions. Among them were Sahibzada Sir Abdus Samad, Kashmir's Home Minister; Mr. Brijlal Nehru, a Kashmiri Pandit legal authority; Mrs. Nehru, vice-president of the All India Harijan Association for the uplift of the outcastes; Sheikh Abdullah, the leader of the nationalist movement in Kashmir; and Mr. Saiyidain, an old Aligarian who is now Director of Education for the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It was the Education Director who finally arranged through one of his associates the village situation which I entered this week.

I am not living with a family, since we could not make any feasible scheme for that. Instead they have put me over a village meat shop in a second-floor room of a not-too-rickety building. It is at the edge of the village of Salura, which has 1,400 residents. The position is fortunate, for my glassless windows look out not on the squalor

of poverty but across a meadow and the Sindh river to Ganderbal at the edge of the Valley of Kashmir. Just beyond rises a mountain chain which only a mile upstream joins another range to form the massive, deep-cut Sindh valley. Already I have discovered that the hills with their fast-changing lights and shadows, their colors and clouds, and even their bashful rainbows can be a great comfort.

The amenities of this room I should describe as primitive, though well in line with village conditions. There is a bath, for example, in a little cubby-hole room off the main one. No tub, of course, but room for me to splash myself sufficiently. And the waste water merely drops through the cracks in the floor to the ground a dozen feet below, from where it is drained away with the rain water. Any breeze that happens to come our way fairly whistles through the room, for since this is Kashmir the house is built of wood instead of mud or bamboo matting, and the floor and outside walls all consist of single layers of such assorted planking as deodar, birch, mulberry, and one wood for whose Urdu name my dictionary gives no translation. In most parts of the room, which measures 14 by 21 feet, I can stand erect. But unhewn crossbeam logs are apt to catch the unwary visitor across the forehead. The grass pitch roof above me very successfully kept out a hard rain yesterday.

My food is cooked and all of the other jobs here are done by a village boy of 16 years, Mahamadu, who by working every day from 6:30 in the morning until 9:30 at night will earn a salary of \$1.80 for the month. Incredible as it sounds, it fits in with the other expenses here.

For the entire month I am paying \$1.80 room rent and \$7.15 for all my food. As may be expected, the meals don't sparkle with variety. In the morning I get tea, bread and butter, and two eggs. The tea and bread are repeated in the afternoon. The two real meals of the day come at about 11:45 and 8:30. They both consist of rice,—always a heaping plateful of rice—chunks of mutton, potatoes or turnips, and occasionally peas or the peasants' rough and woody equivalent of spinach, called *sag*. Such extras as fruit, soup or dessert don't exist. The dishes are served on a cloth spread over the mats on the floor, and I sit cross-legged before them to eat. When village

guests are present I follow the approved manner in eating with my fingers. Otherwise I'm likely to cheat a bit and use a tablespoon. On arrival here my weight was 168, about 15 pounds less than when I saw you last. We'll see in which direction it moves during this month.

Though no one else sleeps here, I am alone almost not enough. One of the village schoolmasters, Mr. Sufi, has been given the responsibility of looking after me and he comes twice a day for longish periods. Occasionally we read Urdu together, but more often I try to get clearly from him some information that I have comprehended only foggily from another visitor. Others come, too. Particularly the village head man and his associates of the local aristocracy. The friendliness of my reception has been pleasing, and evidences of doubt and suspicion few.

On the whole this village's poverty taxes the imagination. I'll write you more about it in later letters, but you will get an idea from the annual financial account which we calculated for one Shah family, which was called average. Like everyone else here, the Shahs grow paddy. Their receipts last year were Rs. 156. Out of that they paid Rs. 22 land revenue to the government and Rs. 127 for the expenses of producing the crop. That leaves a balance of Rs. 7, or \$2.20, for the whole family for one year *before* the costs of clothing, food or shelter have been figured. The answer, of course, is that their food comes from their fields and gardens, their clothes, one garment renewed only once in three or four years, from wherever possible, and their houses stay as they stand, without upkeep. During this month I am going to make inquiries in the economic and social organization of the village, individual conditions of work and financial balances, the boys' and women's work, health, diet, housing, welfare facilities, attitude toward life, and the social fabric of the life. I will of course send you a copy of the report I write. I hope it may amount to something.

There is a number of other topics I want to touch on in letters to you, too, including some I ran across after leaving Aligarh on a somewhat unhurried trip through the Punjab on the way to Kashmir. This Kashmir is a wonderful country, as you know; one whose

mountains and lakes, houseboats and *shikaras*, *chinars* and *bulbuls*, Mughal gardens and floating gardens are worth yards of description. But you can read most of that in books.

I was delighted that you visited the family. They were pleased to see you too.

A Mountain Trek

*c/o American Consulate-General
Calcutta, India
(Written at Ganderbal, Kashmir)
June 23, 1940*

BEFORE YOUR LETTER suggesting village life arrived, my tutor in Urdu, Saeed Ahmad Rizvi, and I had enjoyed a very pleasant month of work and play in Kashmir aboard a houseboat in Srinagar, and on trek up the Sindh river valley. We arrived in Srinagar on May 10 after a beautiful 200-mile mountain drive from the rail terminal at Rawalpindi. Much has been written about the mile-high Valley of Kashmir, broad, flat, fertile, bright with the yellow of mustard fields and blue of oilseed and red of poppies, and mirror-like with the reflections of the two bounding ranges of snow-peaked mountains in the water-covered paddy fields. My enjoyment of that scene on the first day was heightened many times thereafter by rides about the countryside seeing handcrafts with Wallace Kirkland.

Kirkland, by the way, was a bright spot of the month for me. He is the *Life* photographer here on assignment to take some 10,000 snapshots of India, a veteran Chicagoan who worked at Hull House for 15 years and later had a studio about 150 yards from where I lived on the Near North Side. He is a friendly and entertaining man who forms sharp impressions of people, events and forces. We hit it off pretty well.

With a minimum of fuss, thanks to an Aligarh friend, Saeed and I got installed in a houseboat by Gagribal Point near Dal Lake, where the sun rose over one mountain and set behind others. Our boat, like hundreds of others in Srinagar, was about 60 feet long

and contained a living room with two overstuffed chairs, two camp chairs and two coffee tables; a dining room; a pantry, and two bedrooms and baths. Tied up behind was a cookboat in which lived and worked the cook, his womenfolk and the sons who served as bearer and sweeper. We were across a 100-yard channel from the road which led to town a mile away, so the trip from our boat to dry land required the use of a *shikara*, a curtained, cushioned conveyance which is a cross between a rowboat and a canoe, propelled by men sitting in the stern using heart-shaped paddles. Our houseboat was hooked up to the power line so with electricity and radio we lived comfortably.

Soon after arriving in Kashmir I was fortunate in meeting Lady Rama Rao, wife of the Indian Agent-General in South Africa and sister-in-law of Mr. B. Shiva Rao, the Indian journalist and authority on labor conditions whom the Cranes have known for some time. I believe you too have met him. (When I saw him in Delhi on my way up here, by the way, he sent his regards to John Crane and Antonius.) Kirkland, Saeed and I were glad to join Lady Rama Rao's party for 10 days of camping near Sonamarg, 35 miles up the Sindh valley from Ganderbal. It was a delightful trip, for Lady Rama Rao is charming and her two English-educated daughters are keen. The younger, Santha, is determined to find a way to get to America and work into journalism there.

Besides loafing and reading in the pines and sliding in the snow on the hillsides some of us did some active tramping. A party basing at Bal Tal, 11 miles beyond Sonamarg, attempted one day to reach Amar Nath, a Hindu ice-cave shrine at an altitude of 12,000 feet which contains an ice *linga* of Shiva. We pushed up a narrow valley for about four miles before an ice bridge that had fallen through barred our progress. A picture of that expedition may someday appear in *Life*, for Kirk took a number of shots. But the failure didn't satisfy two of us who fancied ourselves as ambitious. Finally a guide agreed to take us along a longer and more difficult route on the next day if we would advance our camp seven miles. So after rest we trekked up the Treaty High Road to Ladakh, a grand name for a pony path that sometimes bites its way into the side of a mountain and sometimes merely wanders over a morass of snow and mud, across the Zoji La pass (11,500 feet) to a place a mile beyond whose

four valleys meeting from four directions remind one of Piccadilly Circus. There in a telegraph runners' hut we shivered and slept until 3:30 in the morning when we were called for the biggest day I've had for a while. Starting off by moonlight at 4:30 we found the first two hours easy going along a valley where the hard-crusting snow was thick enough so there was no fear of breaking through. But then we ran against the bottom of a glacier which from that angle looked as if it never stopped going up. For three solid hours we climbed, sometimes pushing ahead with good heart, sometimes stopping to suck in a little more of the thin air. Some 3,000 feet up we met the top and the morning sun's reflection on the snow at the same time. The next stage was across a mile-and-a-half snow field which caught us breaking through the surface as deep as our calves. At an altitude of nearly 15,000 feet it was not easy going, and half-way across my older companion, Sucha Singh Khera, ICS, called a halt for rest and chocolate. Our coolies too required attention, for both had developed headaches from the glare. Started again, we finally crossed the snowfield and climbed another small—but wearying—rise to a rock at a full 15,000 feet. We had come eight miles in seven hours. From where we stood the treeless black and white world gave a glorious view, which after our effort we gulped in. We were eye to eye with many mountain tops, and even the tallest peaks seemed only a little above us.

Now it was easy. Our road lay in a valley half a mile below us, down a steep slope. The guide sat down, pushed off and started sliding down the shute. At 100 feet distance we followed him and for a few minutes enjoyed the wild thrill of traveling down instead of up, and of progressing without effort. But it was too good to last. Suddenly our guide dug in, threw up his hands and stopped. This, we discovered with a shock, was the wrong shute and the leader had come into speaking acquaintance with a crevasse. We spent a bitter 90 minutes climbing back to our rock at the top. Our spirits, like our feet, turned leaden, for noon was past now and the unpleasant yellow dimples of softness were appearing on the snow in all directions. The proper shute was only half a mile to our left, but to reach it, go down, find the cave and get back out of the snows before dark was no longer possible. Regretfully we turned back across that snow lake, softer now so we were dropping through to

the knee and occasionally right down to the thigh. The sun was hotter and faces, particularly my white one, felt it. But getting down the glacier wasn't hard and we arrived back at our base at 5 o'clock. Our camp had been ordered to stay there until mid-afternoon (in case of our failure) and then to go back to Bal Tal to meet us coming out of the other valley. Before we returned it had left, of course. So fortified by a cup of tea and dry socks we hiked the seven miles down to Bal Tal, arriving completely wearied at 8:30. During the day we had tramped 16 hours with two half-hour rests and had covered 25 miles of which 20 were over snows, up a glacier and across a soft stretch nearly three miles high. It was a testing experience which I wouldn't have missed for anything, but wouldn't want to try again immediately. The only sequel was that my face, one day too tender to touch, the next day turned to a leather that cracked and bled for almost a week before it returned to normal.

Srinagar Family Life

c/o American Consulate-General

Calcutta, India

(Written in Srinagar, Kashmir)

August 15, 1940

WITH MY REPORT virtually finished, thank goodness, I have just returned from a visit with Mr. Brij Lal Nehru, an erudite, provocative Kashmiri Pandit. He is one of the rare beings who have a complete philosophy of life; the Vedic principles which guide him will put into perspective everything from the phenomenon of Hitler to the decay of Indian family life among the English-educated classes in this country. His insistence that the latter point has been one of the most significant developments in India in the last 40 years led to a lengthy discussion, for neither in my village survey nor earlier had I noted any great decay in the family institution. By Western standards, certainly, the Indian "family" is comprehensive and well knit. Three or four brothers and their wives and children all live in the same house under the authority of their father, and boys and girls are not permitted even veto powers

in the choice of a wife or husband. But that applies more to the humble people I have met. Mr. Nehru's thesis is that a strong, unified social system is impossible where there exist both the practice of love marriages, with homes in which only the parents and their children live, and the institution of the joint family, which always consists of three generations (and so is self-perpetuating) and is grounded on the absolute discipline of the patriarch. Though the large family is the Indian rule the Indian social fabric is being badly torn by the abdication of authority, the revolt of the youth and the splitting up of units into families in the Western sense, Mr. Nehru suggests. The masses are clinging to the old standards; the classes embarking on something new.

The political application of this schism rests on the theory that an indigenous government is the superstructure of the social system. The Indian governments were always firm monarchies, authoritarian, ruling from above. The British government in India, while in truth acting on the same principles, has offered Indians a share in its work on a democratic basis, and has announced as its goal democratic self-rule. But although democracy fits the new social ideas, autocracy is the logical complement to the old. How, if India is torn between the disintegration of the traditional system and the aggregation of something imported, can its viewpoints meet on the problem of making a government?

I was reminded of two things: the social transformations in England and America since Elizabethan days, and the very apparent revolt of Japan against Westernization. England's shift from the larger, more authoritarian family (of which Old Capulet* may be a symbol) was an aspect of the redirection of civilization toward increased democracy, industrialization and modernization. A new and fairly homogenous order was created. Japan, too, started along that path in imitation, but found it was not her way. Japanese maidens have forsaken frocks now and gone back to kimonos.

So India also may follow the English course and revamp its social structure, or like Japan it may start in that direction but turn back. Already, as in substituting Urdu for English in public meetings, it is showing signs of looking toward the Vedic and Quranic sources of

*A character in Shakespear's *Romeo and Juliet*.

its proud days. But as in all nature the *yin* and the *yang*, the constructive and the destructive, exist side by side. This is an issue of decades and generations, though this war in hastening urbanization and industrialization is affecting it. As you have guessed I can't get away from the feeling that the India I am seeing in the villages and towns represents the end of an era, socially and economically, and that the coming generation will see terrific and perhaps violent changes. The family question, as in Russia, no doubt will be a factor in these.

A word as to my future plans, which are beginning to take shape. I will leave Kashmir within a few days and go to Aligarh to meet my friends, pick up some baggage that I left there and observe the governor's official inspection visit. Then to Calcutta in time to submit applications for the renewal of my passport and visa and to attend to banking matters before the end of August. If there is a favorable reply to a letter I have written to Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, I would like to spend September in his university at Santiniketan (even though meteorologically that month is supposed to be the worst Bengal can offer). I have talked with a member of the poet's staff and feel that the atmosphere at Santiniketan would be conducive to my beginning Hindi, evaluating the job I have done so far and charting the future course. In October I hope a casual invitation will be made official for me to join those of my London comrades who were posted in the Punjab to watch the early weeks of their land settlement and revenue training. I want to see the Indian Civil Service—the "heaven-born" service—in action, for after all it does administer the country. And settlement work is one of its more constructive functions. For November negotiations are under way to discover the feasibility of my spending a month among Mr. Gandhi's disciples and near him at Wardha. His adherents believe his philosophy of nonviolence equals the world contributions of Confucius, Buddha, Jesus and Muhammad. Certainly he is still the primary motive force within India. A month there, particularly to become acquainted with the young men who will carry on his philosophy after he dies, will not be wasted.

Let me emphasize that this outline is tentative. The necessary invitations have come neither from the Punjab nor from Wardha. Hope for the latter may derive from the fact that negotiations are

being conducted by Mrs. Brij Lal Nehru, president of the All India Women's Conference and one of Mr. Gandhi's faithful disciples. But in the present unsettled times one can't tell even where the Wardha people may be residing by November.

India's Educated Classes and Poverty

*c/o American Consulate-General
Calcutta, India
September 30, 1940*

I AM WRITING this on the last night of the Institute's fiscal year for mailing with the annual report and quarterly expense account. Naturally my thoughts this past week have been mostly of the past and of the future, and many of them are set down in the accompanying papers. I shall be glad to get your reactions.

In almost all ways it has been a good year. Or a good 10 months, to count just the time spent in India. Five months in a university, three months in a hill and village setting, one month in and near Calcutta and the other month largely in traveling; the variety has been plentiful. In each situation, too, the response to my presence has been gratifying. Friendly expressions have come from professors and students, from economists and politicians, from retired officials and boys seeking United States stamps; in short from Indians of all degree and from the Britishers I have met. I have been especially fortunate, perhaps, in meeting young men of various camps of public life, youths who from their widely separated viewpoints are thinking of the India of the future. Some of these people are now contributing their strong efforts to the prosecution of the new world war; others are in jail because they chose particular ways of presenting ideas that are different.

If there is one pervading impression that my year in India has brought out it is that the picture of desperately poor cultivators whose lives hardly reach human standards is one-sided. I know now from direct, intimate experience that the tales told by missionaries in their appeals for funds can be duplicated and reduplicated in Indian villages and towns. But to think of India as a starving, bankrupt,

primitive and uncivilized country seems to me to be as narrow as to speak of America as a country only of ironclad Darktowns, Lower East Side New Yorks, and Near West Side Chicagos. The other side of the medal is that India is living up to her brilliant intellectual heritage. She has been called the mother of philosophy, and the debt of her children in other lands has been put by Max Müller in words marked more by fervor than moderation. But the important point today is that the attainment of a world point of view is a serious subject of thought and discussion in India among circles whose counterparts in America ordinarily quibble over the relative merits of Cubs and Giants. Economists working with or separately from British economists have developed an approach to national problems which is sound, progressive and forward-looking. Literature in Bengali, Urdu, and other languages includes modern works that authorities who judge by world standards call significant; certainly Tagore and Iqbal could hardly be called provincial figures. In science too the country is holding up her head, pointing among her sons to three Nobel Prize winners and to a challenge to Einsteinism, which I do not pretend to understand, that has been accepted by academies of at least three countries. India has contributed professors to Oxford and American universities, editors to London publishers, religious leaders to the world. But those are her bright individuals. Among the less select circle of ordinary educated people there is a breadth of culture that is sometimes missed by outsiders because it is not all in English. Few in our country know Greek and Aramaic as some of these people know Arabic and others Sanskrit. Few can recite Latin poetry with the delight that these people find in Persian couplets and the *Ramayana*. But even more general than that, the conversational level among educated Indians is high. Their interests are broad and their tongues usually adept at expression. They are cultured.

And if you ask how such a shining community can permit the continuance of beastly conditions under which the poor live, I can evade the complex answer, parrying the question with one of my own: how can the Christian church and the most materially advanced nation in the world accept the city slums which considering the varying requirements of life are not much superior to those of Calcutta?

In India I have met pettiness and dishonesty, nepotage and graft, and I have heard of theft and murder, of rapacious capital and communist labor. I have seen at least one local self-government institution which appeared to be motivated by no concept of duty to the community. I have heard politics talked, talked, talked in an air of unreality and evasion of essential issues; at times there has appeared to be evidence of the turning of mass movements for personal motives. All these things are present here, and a representation of India that neglected them would be as unfair as the view I criticized at first. But this letter written at the end of a year away from the United States may be the proper occasion for me to say that I like the people I have met and worked with here, and I hope for the opportunity to carry on with them for some time to come.

Two Punjabi Weddings

*c/o American Consulate-General
Calcutta, India
(Written in Lahore)
October 15, 1940*

THE UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY came to me this week to watch the signs of a very great change in Indian social customs. Usually such transitions develop over a decade or a generation. But the wedding of my London class-fellow Kesho Ram broke down traditions that as recently as two years ago would have been honored in his family and the family of his bride. After many preliminary changes that must have caused heartburn in some quarters he broke off even the actual ceremony before it had been finished. To me it was a dramatic moment. In accordance with the Vedic rites whose roots go back three to five thousand years he and his bride had pledged each other eternal faithfulness. They had circumambulated the ritual fire seven times. They had finished the contractual clauses of the ceremony. Many other portions had been deleted. But even as the Brahman went on with the mantras of blessing and worship Kesho suddenly interrupted him, saying: "That is enough.

We are sufficiently married now. There is no need for further recitations.” And the pandit stopped.

Perhaps there are Americans who when involved in marriages performed by justices of the peace express impatience at the readings; such a thing is not often done in the deeply religious Hindu ceremony. Yet from the engagement which followed an active courtship, Kesho’s taking of a wife was marked throughout by modern ideas. The wedding ceremony itself was changed from the traditional hour of midnight (now frequently not observed) to 6 o’clock in the evening, and shortened from four hours to two. The women members of the bride’s family mixed freely with the guests. The new Mrs. Ram’s sisters joked, in fact, with some of Kesho’s school friends about his life in London. Almost all the guests, who sat around the raised altar, received sweet drinks from the hands of low-caste servants. That is an action traditionally inauspicious, at the least. Of course the bride wore a lovely sari (as she will continue to do, for full-blooded Indian women are careful not to wear European clothes). But Kesho was married in a white suit which gave no hint of Indian origin.

Later more new paths were opened. On the morning after the wedding Kesho brought his unveiled bride, Mahini, into public and introduced a circle of us to her at a gathering in Faletti’s Hotel. We lunched at her family’s home, and again she was the only woman at the table. Kesho and she came to our bungalow for tea, and finally we all went to the Cosmopolitan Club where Mahini has been women’s tennis champion. Even her advanced sister objected to the bride’s going into the club on the day after her marriage, but the couple were not to be restrained. I guessed that the desires of Mahini’s family were subordinated to her temperament and the standards of a boy just returned from London.

The wedding three days later of our second classmate, Yog Puri, was not so far removed from tradition. Arranged by the high court justice who is now Yog’s father-in-law, it followed closely the Vedic ceremony as accepted by the reformist Arya Samaj movement. As in the earlier case no images of gods appeared at this wedding; nor was there any feature which would offend a devout monotheist. Mr. Justice Tek Chand had published for his 1,500 guests a pamphlet containing the Sanskrit ceremony and translations into English of

its significant parts. Happily, therefore, we were able to know when the pandit was reciting adorations of God, when he was invoking his blessing, when praying for peace and goodwill. The marriage ceremony itself consists of 12 parts, beginning with the welcoming of the bridegroom to the dais on which sit the bride, her parents, and the priest. In token of hospitality the youth is given a composition of honey, curd, and butter, and a ring or some other gift from the bride's father. Then the father gives away the bride. But before formal acceptance by the bridegroom the couple and the assembly are enwrapped in an atmosphere of purity and spirituality, an atmosphere symbolically created by the burning of fragrant herbs and clarified butter and by the recitation of mantras. Finally the bridegroom takes his bride's hand, and then both give pledges to each other and make offerings of fried rice. What is perhaps the central point of the ceremony finds both principals circumambulating the fire which burns in a brazier in the center of the dais. After each time around they make offerings and recite mantras, under the direction of the pandit. On the final turn they take seven sacred steps, praying:

May the first lead to prosperity, the second to strength, the third to plenty, the fourth to happiness, the fifth to progeny, the sixth to long life. Having completed seven steps be thou my life-long companion. Mayst thou be my associate and helper in the successful performance of the duties that now devolve upon me as a householder. May we be blessed with many children who may live the full duration of human life!

The remainder of the ritual is devoted largely to further pledges. There is sprinkling of water, seeing (or visualizing) the sun, touching the heart, and seeing (or visualizing) the pole star. The traditional attributes of each are called down upon the couple. Finally food is partaken ceremonially, and the benediction given. The sacred syllables *Om shantih shantih shantih* close the service. Throughout in this case the arrangements were lavish, and yet in following the service I felt sincerity and worship showing forth in every step.

One of the distinctions between the two marriages is the difference in responses they evoked from the European guests. A polite tolerance shown at the first was turned into an active appreciation by

Mr. Justice Tek Chand's foresight in arranging for his foreign visitors to understand what was going on. Once again familiarity led to sympathy that would otherwise have been impossible. If the thought were not too idealistically Victorian I should like to believe that more attempts for such mutual understanding would still contribute to the untangling of the complex Indian situation.

A feature that left me a little breathless was the hospitality that has been shown to two or three of us who came to Lahore as former schoolmates of the bridegrooms. In both wedding parties the generosity was unlimited. For four of us Mr. Justice Tek Chand arranged and furnished a bungalow for a week, planned the catering, provided a radio, supplied cards and refreshments, kept one and sometimes two motor cars always at our call, and sent his personal bearer to supervise the establishment. That care was expended on us despite the demands of more than a hundred other stopover guests. We had a number of meals in our host's home, and were invited to tea. I cannot imagine any more complete hospitality, and how he managed it in the rush of one of Lahore's largest and most important weddings of the year I shall never understand.

The night after Yog Puri's wedding and some hours after a large garden party which had been attended by Sir Henry Craik, governor of the Punjab, Yog gave a farewell dinner for sixteen at Faletti's Hotel. And a farewell it was, too, for as the gracious speeches followed the toasts I could almost see the happy-go-lucky, carefree Yog we had long known, with whom I had planned to drive across Europe and the Near East to India, fade away. In his place came the married man, with interests turned in other directions. It is strange that I felt that more with Yog than with Kesho; I wonder if there will be any difference after a year or so.

In all ways it has been a most pleasant week. My London classmates numbered five Englishmen and seven Indians, of whom three of each group have just been gathered in Lahore. I was delighted to find that despite changes in the attitudes of some of them towards this country and its people (and many is the ideal which dried up in last summer's hot weather) none of the fraternizing which made my year in London so enjoyable had been lost. There was no suggestion of division or awkward feelings, and I think one must live in this country to appreciate what that means.

*European Living,
Congress Party Leadership*

*c/o American Consulate-General
Calcutta, India
(Written in Lahore)
October 25, 1940*

ONCE AGAIN I am writing you from Lahore, now with a little uncertainty as to the progress of the plans that I outlined to you in an earlier letter for this cold weather. The land settlement training camps for Punjab ICS officers who arrived in India about the time I did has been postponed. It will not begin until sometime in November; the exact date has not yet been fixed. The officers involved have been expecting orders daily, but all are continuing with their old jobs.

Under the circumstances I have written to Mahadev Desai at Wardha to suggest that perhaps the Gandhi ashram might receive me a little earlier than we had planned. His reply is a little slow in coming, but it should arrive within a few days. On the basis of it more exact plans will become possible.

Meanwhile I am living in a half-house with two assistant superintendents of police, aged 21 and 22. Unlike the Indian Civil Service, which recruits university graduates, the Indian Police most frequently select lads after they have finished a public or secondary school at 19. The youths are brought directly to India (in contrast to the ICS probationary study year in England) for a one-year training course at a police school. Then they go to local districts where, as assistant superintendents of police, they are kept under observation by senior officers and instructed in police administration. After a year or so the successful probationers are confirmed for the Indian Police Service. The police are considered a subordinate imperial service to the ICS, if relative salaries are a measure. Yet a retired ICS officer expressed the opinion that as administrators and rounded personalities the police match the civilians, and sometimes exceed them.

At any rate the two lads with whom I am staying are talented, popular young men. They lead active lives, and it is my good fortune to be able to join them in some phases of it. Particularly do I enjoy the riding, which is at a faster pace than any I have done. Mounted paper chases and weekend rides of upto 25 miles a day are exhilarating.

Already I may confess to feeling as if I were not living in India. By continually meeting senior officials and their families, by going to a club where almost none but Europeans enter, by entering the social life of exclusively European young people, by such little things as dressing for dinner every night is the atmosphere of Britain rather than of Asia established. Such a curriculum has the simplifying effect for those who partake of it of reducing India to an administrative problem to be dealt with between the hours of 10 and 4.

Perhaps I have not written you that in coming to Lahore I have had the chance to renew acquaintance with some people whom I have met earlier. One of them is Mrs. Brijlal Nehru, the president of the All India Women's Conference and a leader of Gandhi's Harijan (untouchable) movement. She is among those who exhibit complete faith in Gandhi, even when they find themselves not understanding him or even disagreeing with his sayings. She feels that the problem of what will happen when Gandhi dies—a question that disturbs many persons—is unreal. His concepts and his philosophy will no more die than did those of Buddha, she believes, so that his influence will remain paramount. I doubt that, because the revolts against his creed are not even now infrequent. (Witness Subhas Chandra Bose challenging him again.) The mahatma beats them down, it seems to me, not by the application of his principles but by his strong personal power derived from his super-rational hold over masses of the Indian people. It is hard to see how that can continue after his death. There is no prominent heir to his concepts. In the Congress the immediate juniors—Nehru, Rajagopalachari, Patel, Bhulabhai Desai—view India in a more frankly political light. Many of the younger personalities, including Subhas Bose, Dr. K. M. Ashraf, Mazhar Ali in the Punjab, and a large number of others not yet tested, are intolerant of Gandhiji and have chafed since long before the war began under his strictures. Gandhi is organizing another civil

disobedience movement. His first was in 1920 and his second in 1930. Now in 1940 he has made an issue of the right of free speech, which he says the government is denying his countrymen by refusing to let them shout slogans against Indian participation in the war. According to press reports the younger element as well as other Congressmen are so far following Gandhi in the defiance of government orders. Those who participate have pledged themselves to be perfect *satyagrahis*, peaceful nonresisters, and to offer *satyagraha*, or the nonviolent breaking of the law, only at times and places appointed to them. I am not sure, however, how many of the followers who intend to go to jail under the Gandhi banner this time are real converts to the philosophy of nonviolence which he is testing in this campaign. Some may have other motives—such as their own future status as mass leaders—for courting arrest. This will be an important and perhaps crucial winter in India.

Young Lahore Muslims

clo American Consulate-General

Calcutta, India

(Written in Lahore)

March 24, 1941

IN SOME FIELDS of social economics in India the materials and patterns are skimpy, and this is particularly true in urban questions. But as a stab in the dark I have begun interesting myself in religious trends apparent in Lahore, which socially is one of the more advanced cities of northern India. With the assistance of a Muslim graduate of the Forman Christian College I have spent this week interviewing *maulvis* and *imams* at various city mosques, outstanding Muslim professors, lawyers and business men, and students of the Islamic faith. I have talked with some Hindus too, but so far not on a large scale. Naturally I haven't yet come to any conclusions, but some interim features might interest you.

First, there has been a large migration from the Punjab villages to Lahore. The bulk of 500 schoolchildren who answered a questionnaire of mine said that their fathers had not been born in Lahore.

Most of them came to Lahore, the sons and daughters said, to seek better employment. In the case of Hindus recent anti-moneylender legislation has deprived them of their village livelihood. Whatever the causes, much of the urban population is newly arrived from ancestral village environments. It is not yet a stable city population.

The cinema is perhaps the most important of the new influences that affect these people. Among its widespread clientele there are many college students and other youths who lose their balance to the degree of seeing three or four films a week. The pictures, English as well as Indian, tend to break down inhibitions that have accompanied migrants to the city. Men see women in roles they have never known them to play in real life. They see sophistication, romance and love, new social relationships, life at a standard of comfort and even affluence: situations that were totally outside their experience in village homes. These things have their effect on youths growing up in the city just as surely as film fashions and the use of cosmetics by leading Indian actresses affect their sisters' habits.

The films tend to pull the younger generation away from ancestral religious beliefs. True, one of the important cycles of Indian films is the series of picture biographies of traditional saints and holy men. Such pictures draw good attendance. But in Lahore the musical comedy and romantic pictures are more popular among the youth.

A second great influence upon religion is politics. The ever increasing political consciousness that has followed progressive reforms since 1919 has largely, because of India's peculiarly discrete composition, been channelized along religious lines. That is, political contests instead of a rising between economic classes or power groups have for the most part been struggles between the Muslims, the Hindus, the Sikhs, and the other minority groups. The preponderantly Hindu regimes of the Indian National Congress between 1937 and 1939 brought new life to the Muslim League, because Muslims could unite in opposing ministries which they thought were ruling according to a philosophy of life entirely different from their own. Political activity, then, has made Muslims more conscious of being brothers in Islam. It has caused some to become fanatically orthodox, others to study their religion rationally in order to find out just why they were opposing the Hindu community.

There is one more influence that may be mentioned. Lahore was the home of the poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal, who preached a message of "Muslim nationalism." The stirrings among the younger Muslims that resulted from his poems have had their reflection in the Khaksar movement, the strong agitation for Pakistan, and a general strengthening of youth activities within Islamic circles in Lahore.

I'm mentioning these elements merely as interesting features that have come up. Not until the evidence is in, can I attempt to evaluate or correlate them. When that is possible, I shall expect to send you a longer paper.

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TOUR OF AFGHANISTAN, NOVEMBER 12–26, 1940

This two-week journey in 1940, as Talbot puts it in his first diary entry, is a journey through “one of the forbidden countries of Central Asia, and even now frequently a question mark in world affairs.” After more than 60 years of turmoil, suffering, and tragedy, that description of Afghanistan still rings true.

Talbot’s first impression of Afghanistan was military, with armed guards everywhere. He noticed immediately that he was in independent Asia. “The people along the road show no recognition that they are inferior to anyone; their mild curiosity is that of free men seeing something they don’t know much about.” These same free men, and their children’s generation, saw the coming of the British, the Russians, the Taliban, and then the Americans and their allies. In spite of it all, their pride, courage, and independence remain.

Traveling with Edward Groth, the American consul, Talbot covered much ground. The journey took them from Peshawar to Kabul to Doab, to the Buddhist caves and monastery at Bamian, and back again. The trip to Mazar-i-Sharif had to be postponed, with good reason. And that reason had a lot to do with their 1938 Buick and their enterprising driver Roshan Lal, without whose ingenuity Talbot and Groth may never have gotten out of Afghanistan! Considering the unfortunate fate that befell the great Buddhist sculptures at Bamian, that section alone is worth the reader’s time. But there are also other gems, including descriptions of Taxila, the Moghul garden at Nimla, the stores and markets of Kabul, and the many people that Phil and Edward met along the way.

I found of particular interest the conversation that Talbot had with Groth about Jiddu Krishnamurti, the young hope of Annie Besant’s Theosophical movement until he renounced it. Krishnamurti

was about 45 then, halfway through his life's journey, with much teaching and writing still ahead of him. The individual's search for meaning appealed to Talbot, and this is evident in the discussions that he and Groth had about awareness and the importance of it in every action. They also spoke of the observation of each new experience in its true reality, free of the layers of past reactions, traditions, or beliefs. Who could have thought then that less than a decade after this journey in November 1940, the path of two people in India's independence movement would cross with that of Krishnamurti. As we know, in 1948, Jawaharlal Nehru sought out Krishnamurti for solace or support after the tragic assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

This diary is also a tribute to Talbot's spirit of adventure as a 25-year-old. He left the security of British-governed India and went to a country where history seemed constantly in the making. It is a treat to observe through Talbot's eyes the events that happened around him. Similar events and experiences might be met with even today, if a person of similar courage took such a journey through Afghanistan. But let us not be in a rush to recommend such a trip to any of our children yet!

Krishen Mehta

*Tuesday, November 12—Lahore
to Peshawar*

THE TRIP TO Afghanistan really started in Calcutta in September when Edward Groth, the American consul, said: "I'm hoping to go trekking after my new chief has arrived. If you would like, I should be glad to have you with me." The next I heard about it was a week ago yesterday when Groth wrote that he was going to Kabul and beyond, and would I like to come along? Through Afghanistan: I wondered whether the cabled permission of New York should be obtained first, but decided to go on my own responsibility when Edward replied to my wire—the first of eight telegrams and letters that have been passed in our week of preparations—that he would be out of India for only a fortnight. The advantages are great: first, to see Afghanistan at all, and second, to have the path smoothed in wartime through the easier entrée gained by Edward's diplomatic passport. Finally, Groth with his broadly-based and enquiring mind is a stimulating traveling mate and a careful, exact planner. The proposal came at as good a time as any, too, because my proposed program had just been upset by the closing of Gandhi's ashram and it was apparent that the launching of an urban survey in Lahore as a substitute job would preclude a Christmas trip similar to those I have taken during previous years. Counted together, it all means that today I am off for Afghanistan, until so recently one of the forbidden countries of Central Asia and even now frequently a question mark in world affairs. My advance concepts are of marauders and riflemen, bad roads and murders, independence and distaste of foreigners. I wonder how mild by comparison the country will actually show itself.

This last week has been crammed full with preparations. My passport and three passport photos had to be sent to Groth in Delhi in order to get an Afghan visa. Groth had also to obtain the word of the Government of India Home Department that it would accede to my return to India. It would be no fun to sit outside the frontier with visa difficulties! In Lahore I had to get authority from the police to leave India. My residence with two assistant superintendents of police helped in that. It was necessary too to send my bearer

to Aligarh, 400 miles away, to get my winter and trekking clothes. There were letters to write, accounts to settle, people to see. And finally I had to obtain permission from the Reserve Bank of India to take Rs. 500 out of India. Groth had warned me about this, but the bank manager denied on Saturday that any authorization was necessary. Yesterday he changed his mind, but most of Peter Ensor's last morning in Lahore was wasted in driving me back and forth between the Reserve Bank and the Imperial Bank of India, where my account is kept. It was 2 o'clock before we had finished.

And so, following a moonlight picnic and some late work in clearing up correspondence, I had a short sleep and started off early this morning carrying Jimmy Campbell's handsome loan of a Zeiss-Ikon f.3.5 camera. My housemate Wilfred Lawson drove me to the station where I met Edward Groth on the Frontier Mail arrived from Delhi.

Never before have I purchased first-class accommodation on an Indian train, much less surcharged space in the air-conditioned coach. But Edward's allergy to dust precluded his descending to my level and he insisted on paying half the difference to get me up to his. The Frontier Mail, premier train of India, carries one air-conditioned carriage. Its stainless steel fittings, wood paneling and blue leather cushions point to a new luxury in Indian travel. The blower can be regulated. Double windows and snugly fitted doors keep out the dust. Comfort is built into the tubular chromium and leather chair and into the long seat. The floor is softened by cork and sponge rubber. Even the jars and shocks have in some way been reduced, witness my addressing Christmas cards while the train was in motion. I cannot imagine a place of greater isolation from India than that air-conditioned compartment.

Again, as last May, I eagerly watched the country change as we left Lahore and the Ravi River, the semi-walled villages, the flat plain with its dust devils, the broad irrigation ditches and the veins of the drainage system. From them we climbed into the heavily eroded hill country of northern Punjab. These are mud hills, not mountains, but monsoon torrents have carved them into the jagged shapes of the Himalayas. Seldom did we meet patches of wood; the land would be more redeemable if there were some. Gradually again

we moved into the cultivated areas surrounding Rawalpindi. At Taxila we looked for the famous ancient excavations, but most of the ruins within sight looked early twentieth century. Then Campbellpur and Attock, names which to Punjab civil officers mean shooting and virility, and finally just after dark the double-decked steel bridge over the Indus River, mother of civilizations. The early moon set the canyon valley into silver relief. From our darkened compartment we drank in the magnitude of nature until we curved into the long tunnel. By dinner time we were in Peshawar and had arrived here at Dean's Hotel, resting place of modern travelers to the Northwest Frontier of India. The hotel has an undainty, masculine air that heightens the impression that the outposts of empire have been reached. But there are hot running water and flush toilets, and what more could we ask?

Wednesday, November 13—Peshawar to Nimla

OUR GOAL THIS morning was an early start. Of course that was impossible; even beforehand we had guessed that the hired car would not arrive on time and ready. Sure enough, it came with only two tire chains, worn spark plugs, and old spare tires. While those matters were being attended to we called upon Mr. Dundas, the chief secretary of the Frontier Province, who telephoned the political agent of the Khyber that we would be going through the Pass about noon. He assured us of every facility at the passport control and customs offices. Then with our duffle packed and the signing and sealing of my Christmas cards finished (that job was done while a barber was cutting my hair short enough to last for the Afghan trip), all that remained until the car was made ready was the purchase of a final few odds and ends—chocolate, camphor ice, a flashlight, Dettol.

Edward is an experienced traveler. That shows in the arrangements he has made for this trip. We expect to be out of India for 14 days, and to be self-sufficient in bedding and food. Here is a list of the stocks he has made up to feed the two of us: 14 cans of soup,

6 cans of vegetable salad, 6 cans of spaghetti, 6 cans of beans, 18 cans of various fruits, 5 pounds of cheese, 4½ pounds of chocolate, 10 cans of grapefruit juice, 2 pounds of Klim, 24 bottles of Evian water, 2 nut breads, 4 pounds of Swedish bread (rye-vita), jam, honey, salt, cashew nuts, and one pound of cocoa. He counts on our getting eggs for some breakfasts, and an occasional chicken to relieve the meatless diet. He drinks only bottled water, which costs space, weight and money, but is safe. With those stores he promises breakfasts of cocoa, eggs, Swedish bread, cheese, jam or honey, and fruit; lunches of fruit or fruit juice, vegetable salad, spaghetti or beans, and chocolate or nuts; and dinners of soup, spaghetti or beans or vegetable salad, Swedish bread and cheese, honey or jam, fruit and perhaps nut bread. It sounds all right to me, especially as we shall be traveling by car.

The automobile we are taking is a 1938 Buick Special. It has done 45,000 miles but still looks well turned-out and in good condition. The Dunlop tyres have a deep tread (and two new tyres were put on this morning) and the fenders are all undented. The driver, Roshan Lal, is the one to whom Mr. Macy, the American consul in Karachi, gave a good recommendation after his Afghan tour last July. A bit of haggling over the price we would pay ended with a settlement of eight annas, or 16 cents, a mile. Since it is 200 miles to Kabul and 400 miles beyond there to Mazar-i-Sharif where we want to go, the cost will be considerable. But with gasoline at 50 to 60 cents a gallon and the charge for a Chevrolet—which we were warned could not make all the hills without overheating—only four cents a mile less, it is not excessive. Nor is there an alternative method of travel, for Afghanistan has no railways and the distances are too great for going by camel caravan in a reasonable length of time.

Fitting our kit into the car was a job. I am carrying only my bedding roll—with five blankets—one suitcase and my heavy winter overcoat. But besides that and Edward's bedding and suitcase the luggage includes a *yakdan* for the cans and a tiffin basket for the other foods, two boxes of water bottles, a camera box, a folding cot, a carry-all, a medicine chest, and a typewriter (unfortunately not mine). With the luggage compartment and half the back seat filled, there is just room for one of us to sit beside the driver and one

in back. Edward's Muslim bearer was disappointed that he could not come along, but there is no place for him. We left the hotel grounds at 12:15.

In the whole British Empire there is hardly a place—with the possible exception of the jointly controlled Suez Canal—that has been so covered in romantic histories with the glamour of empire-building as India's Northwest Frontier and the Khyber Pass. Through that funnel have come the invaders of India since before the lieutenants of Genghis Khan and Alexander the Great. Periodically, until the British came by sea, history has marched through that defile. And now the British have dedicated themselves to the proposition that history in the shape of northern hordes shall not sweep through again while they are in India.

The barbed-wire band that separates Peshawar from the outside plains was the first evidence of preparedness that met us. And no sooner were we outside the gates of the town than we were introduced to Central Asia—an Afghan camel train coming into India. For ten miles we rolled along the fine tarmac road across the plain. The Himalayas coming out of the mists on the right arched across our view and vanished again to the left. Dead forward lay Jamrud, the fort at the base of the hills which is the eastern gateway of the Khyber Pass. When our passports had been checked there the barrier rose for us and the mountains began closing in as we took the motor road upwards.

A marvel of construction is the Khyber communication system. So is the defense, for we saw fort after fort on the promontories; on the rocks through which the road is cut are painted the crests of the battalions that have manned them. But engineers have done their great work in fitting into the defile, frequently narrow and at places precarious, not one traffic ribbon but three: a motor road, a camel caravan road, and a railway. The way those three twist and turn and wind over and under each other, sometimes crossing at right angles and different levels, is a geometrical pattern.

For 20 miles from Jamrud we climbed up and up the gray and buff walls of rock. Along the way we passed fortified villages enclosed in mud, brick, and stone walls 15 feet high, with nothing but watch towers visible above the tops. The people in them live uncertain lives. Very few patches of arable land are near by, and

every movement is hampered by the possibility of a whizzing bullet which through uncounted blood feuds has become almost the symbol of the Afridi tribesmen. The tribal families don't go out at night beyond the fortifications of their homes, which look so much like those of medieval—or perhaps post-1945?—Europe. Farmers in their fields with rifles slung on their backs bring to mind knights and spears. But today's weapons in that gaunt pass and the rest of the Afridi territory are bolt-action pieces that resemble the Springfield 30 caliber.

In an hour from the base we reached Landi Kotal, the fortress whose neat lines of barracks stand hard against the Himalayan backdrop. There we were stopped and warned not to go farther without the permission of the governor. Since our documents were in order up to Kabul, however, we did not hesitate. Beyond the station (the main point on the military railway up the Khyber), we came upon a large walled caravanserai, where all the camel trains rest overnight on their two-day journey through the Khyber. Looking into the large yard from above we could see the shops around the edges, the milling animals and their loads, and people, people, people of all ages, sexes, and degrees of poverty.

We had crossed the hump of the pass by the time we reached Mishni Kandal, two miles beyond Landi Kotal, after zigzagging through a section of concrete barrier posts jutting up in the road. For two miles more we dropped down rapidly to the frontier station of Landi Khana. The political agent of the Khyber had smoothed our way so that passport formalities were quickly dispensed with. In two minutes we were through the bar and past the famous sign, "This is the Frontier of India," off the excellent tarmac road and onto an unsurfaced gravel route.

Afghanistan: country of legend and revolution, of Babar the Mughal and Lowell Thomas the American, of bloodthirsty tradition and present-day comparative safety! We have no intention nor expectation of being held up or shot on this trip any more than in Chicago. And we expect to find friendly, if sturdy, people. But I confess to a tingle in my back when we found ourselves outside the barbed-wire limits of British territory and within the bounds of a country whose people vigorously distinguish themselves from us who don't speak their language, eat their food, wear their clothes,

or most important defer to their Prophet. What would be the point of contact between us and such a place?

Three hundred yards from the fenced frontier we made our first contact: one of the pleasantest border posts I have seen. The office of the official who checked our passports is out-of-doors in a willow grove. His table is near a spring whose continual bubbling filled our ears. The officer speaks nothing but Pashtu and Persian, and we nothing like Persian or Pashtu; but when a friendly basis had been established by smiles all around he took care of us expeditiously. If only the Afghan government filling station had not run out of gas (a significant introduction to Afghanistan!) so we had to wait for a tank wagon to unload, we would have been on our way in a hurry. As it was, a covey of trucks, mostly British Bedfords and Chevrolets, had closed in on us by the time we were serviced.

Our first impression of Afghanistan was military. Scattered everywhere are soldiers with French-style caps, khaki tunics, and unpressed knickerbockers tucked into leggings, and officers with Sam Brownes and peaked caps fashioned along German uniform lines. None of the enlisted men look smart; few of them even neat. Between Torkham, the Afghan frontier station, and Dakka, the customs and passport control office seven miles in, the military men are not so thick. But in the Dakka station a good many more, with holes or patches in their pants and grins on their faces, are to be seen. The Dakka passport and customs inspection was very slow; even so there are grounds for the suspicion that it was hurried somewhat by the judicious distribution of a few Afghanis from the pocket of our driver.

The afghani is the cornerstone of a curious coinage system. It is worth from 6 to 8 cents, or 3 or 4 annas (depending on the exchange at which it is bought), and is represented by easily identifiable notes printed in Zürich. But there are 100 puls in each afghani, and every Afghan amir has amused himself making coins of different denominations. The result is that there are a good many copper pieces floating about without numbers stamped on them, representing variously 10, 25, 30 or 35 (we could get no unchallenged decision on the value of that coin), 45, and 50 puls. It is a great guessing game when the shopkeeper hands out change.

I first heard about Afghan motor roads in London 18 months ago when some of us were planning to drive out to India. Words seemed to fail the earlier travelers who tried to describe them. Tonight I understand why. My back is stiff, my joints ache, my teeth hurt from being knocked together. Even on this chair I have still the sensation of jolting and jarring, plunging and pitching. We have been doing it all afternoon. As we drove across an ancient sea bed and through a broad bleak valley between the barren hills we were conscious part of the time of being on a road. Pits, sharp cavities, washboard and cobblestone were its characteristics. Occasionally loose boulders were scattered across it. We swayed from side to side to avoid them and the worst of the holes. We bounced and tossed and cracked a spring leaf. But still it was a road. The rest of the time there were no signs except rows of rocks spaced along the edges of the trail. With our course thus laid we bumped along or across dry stream beds and splashed through fords. We took to stretches of loose rocks like a mountain goat to the crags. We thundered into and over everything at an average of 15 miles an hour. For getting us here tonight—battered and shaken, perhaps, but here—hats off to the driver.

Not until we approached Jalalabad, 47 miles from the border, did we see cultivation again. The drive that far is along bottom lands walled by conglomerate and the remnants of the oily shale we saw as we left the Khyber. Only in a few spots is there enough vegetation for camel grazing. For miles and miles not a tree stands against the horizon. Humans are not seen. All is desolation. Only near Afghanistan's second city do corn and cotton appear again, and people walking along the road.

Once again passports are checked at Jalalabad. How they think we could have slipped past the previous officials without proper credentials I don't know; perhaps the multiple check is the Afghan substitute for efficiency. With that business finished, though, we enjoyed a 26-mile twilight and moonlight drive into Nimla, where we are staying the night.

Babar, the founder of the Mughal dynasty in India, was here before us. The evidences of his stay at Nimla 400 years ago are still superb. By the light of a moon two nights less than full we turned

into a large wooded garden of the type the Mughals loved so much and drove up a broad avenue of cypress to the government hotel. Later this evening we walked through the garden and found *chinar* trees, the Oriental plane, with which the Mughals made Kashmir so lovely. The cypress sentinels flank both watercourses and falls that lead out from a central pool and fountain. In Mughal style the falls are backed with stone in whose ornate cavities colored lights were once placed to show through the flashing water. Babar, who complained about the drabness of India and its lack of appreciation of beauty, made gardens wherever he went that matched Versailles for formalism and Carolina plantations for beauty.

The hotel we are in has four rooms, no electricity and no running water. The little manager who speaks a bit of English and no Urdu scurries around like a puppy trying to help us get our canned dinner ready and making sure we are comfortable. The bedsheets are clean—happy discovery!—and we have our own blankets to add to those supplied. There is little more that we want. Because we are planning an early start tomorrow we have settled the bill tonight. It comes to the startling: total of 7 afghanis—42 cents—per room plus 4 afghanis for heating our cans and other services. At that rate two of us can get a night's hotel accommodation for less than we pay to run our Buick six miles.

An hour after we had arrived another Buick pulled up from Peshawar. It carried the Hon'ble Mohammad Shafi, the Afghan consul general in Delhi, who had ridden with us on the Frontier Mail and had left Dean's Hotel after us. He had arranged our visas for the trip, so we have been on a thank-you basis ever since.

Though not as cold as it will be, it is fairly chilly tonight. I was quite happy to wear my heavy winter overcoat during our stroll in the garden.

Thursday, November 14—Nimla to Kabul

WHEN WE WENT to bed last night Jupiter and Saturn, the two planets that have clung together inordinately long, were sitting by the side of the moon. This morning when we rose at 4 o'clock Venus, a blue diamond, was blazing

coldly. Toward the other horizon the moon was about to set, and the spiked outlines of the cypress against the deep blue sky made getting out of bed not such a struggle.

Almost immediately after leaving Nimla, where our valley drive was ended last night, we began to climb sharply. Before dawn we reached Gandumak, eight miles along, and soon the night blue had given way to the sun. We crossed the Surkhpul, or Red Bridge, over a stream that cuts deep through barren hills. Small clumps of grass, perhaps mesquite, are the only vegetation visible. The hills in whose midst we drove are bare and slashed by erosion. They reminded me of Nevada and Arizona. The rock is not the granite of Kashmir but stratified sandstone and redstone studded with large conglomerate formations. In the stratified districts the folding is great, some of the layers running vertical. In and out of those hills, up and down, across dry stream beds and through narrow gorges, along precipitous ridges and around hairpin turns we made our way upwards to the Lataband pass at 10,000 feet. The Afghan consul general had left 10 minutes earlier than we, but on a steep grade we passed him sitting waiting for the radiator to cool. Later he made his jump in the leapfrog game.

Today we know we are in independent Asia. There is none of the salaaming to white faces that there is in India. The people along the road show no recognition that they are inferior to anyone; their mild curiosity is that of free men seeing something they don't know much about.

The road up the Lataband is 21 miles from base to peak. We started it up after a sort of practice run over a lower preliminary pass. On such a drive it is hard enough to concentrate on the mere road hazards; the constant camel caravans make it a thousand times worse. Sometimes the train is a slow-moving family with all of its goods, including its babies, tied atop a half-dozen beasts. Sometimes the processions run to 150 or even beyond 200 camels, each carrying its load of dried fruits, skins and hides, or other commodities for the Indian market at Peshawar. For how many milleniums have trains like these been crossing at the same two-mile-an-hour pace these same rocks? The only new element is the motor car, and that is disturbing to the poor beasts. It is rarely possible to pass a

caravan without causing some nervous camel to break its nose-ropes. The burros that travel in bunches either with camel trains or separately are even more difficult. Frequently the combined impetus of an auto horn and severe poking and prodding by their tenders won't make them move from the middle of the road.

The poor people's pilgrimage to India for the winter months is a most impressive march. Mothers carrying their babies for a walk of hundreds of miles, tots tied on the top of the camel loads, gray-beards walking behind while the women prod the camels, masses of human- and animal-kind jammed together in the *serais* or spread in their tents over the plain—all these give the feeling of a people on the march. We felt we had found the right trail towards the crossroads of India, China, and the Roman Empire. Continuing along it, we thrilled more than once to a panoramic view of distant twists of the road lined with camels. To watch them slowly going, going, going, is to make one finally doubt whether it is the caravan which is moving or the road. An awesome sight. Later as we descended into the plain on whose far corner Kabul is perched we saw colonies of the camel-train vagabonds, the Kochis, gathered together in their black felt tents. Full-bearded, stern-looking men, they are herdsmen who break horses, cattle, sheep, camels, and goats, and who travel incessantly to keep within a pleasant climate and good grazing grounds. Their habits have made them perhaps less amenable to government administration than the cultivating classes, but Afghans say optimistically that irrigation and increased farming opportunities are attracting many Kochis to a settled life.

The final 31 miles from the Lataband into Kabul go fairly quickly, although even on that valley stretch the government has failed to provide surfacing to cover the rubble road base. Some three miles out of the city we were stopped again. A running, hand-waving, un-uniformed Afghan suddenly sprang forth from an old fort on an eminence to the right. We stopped at his summons, but argued vigorously, if unintelligibly, when it developed that he wanted to take our passports from us. The police in Kabul, he assured us, would return them within a day or so. But our hope is to leave Kabul tomorrow morning for the northern part of the country, and we do not want to hand over our papers to perspiring strangers, even

when they are in partial European dress. Edward's diplomatic passport solved the difficulty. Our inquisitor was afraid to touch it. By 11 o'clock Afghan time (which probably bears some relation to Greenwich time, though I haven't been able to figure out just what) we passed a column erected to a famous Afghan victory and entered the city of Kabul, capital of Afghanistan.

Backed by two converging ranges of mountains, the town's setting is imposing. But the custom of hiding all residential and business architectural distinctiveness behind block-long rows of blank wall makes the city's interior drab. In the district of government buildings and the new residential section there are some broad, straight, gravel-surfaced streets. The traffic of motor cars, *tongas*, camels, bullock carts, and pedestrians is controlled by policemen in once-blue uniforms. They use the continental, as contrasted to the British, hand signals. There seem quite a number of Europeans in the streets, but the term has a different implication than in India, where Europeans means principally British. Here there are Germans, Poles, Czechs, Russians, as well as the Turks, Iranis, Indians and Japanese. More frequently met on the streets are the handsome higher-class Afghans who wear European suits, well-cut overcoats, and fur toques. It is hard to tell whether the women in *burkas* scurrying behind them are members of the family, for the men and women never walk together. The sidewalks are also filled with military and air officers who display a most imposing array of uniforms. Sam Browne belts are standard, but the variety of colors, shapes, cuts and markings might well prove perplexing to a Gilbert and Sullivan team.

Our first call was the required one: upon the chef de protocol. To await his pleasure we were led into a large ballroom of no known design. Our fleeting impressions included tall pillars, large marble tables, and high Russian stoves covered with blue tiles. In his own small office the official greeted us warmly in French. It is the only medium in which we can meet, for he denied speaking ability in English, German and Urdu. His choice of language put us at a slight disadvantage, yet he followed easily, I am sure, the conversation in English between Edward and me. We discovered that ministerial permission is necessary for our proposed trip to Mazar-i-Sharif. We also learned to our disappointment that the government (and only) hotel in Bamian, which we want badly to visit, has been closed for

the season. If there is anything else we would like, the chef de protocol assured us smoothly, he would make every effort to have it accomplished. In the meantime he would get the ruling of the minister involved concerning our Mazar trip.

In Peshawar Edward had telegraphed one Wilbur Harlan, an American teaching in Habibia College in Kabul, requesting information about accommodation. We went to the Hotel de Kabul to receive his reply. But the manager wandered through a verbal jungle to tell us that he had nothing. The hotel rooms we were shown are singularly unattractive. They are filled with, as Edward said, the smell of a fire sale. So we set upon the trail of Harlan, who was eventually found in his snug little house behind a tall wall. He greeted us cordially, having received our telegram just an hour earlier (two days after it had been sent). A youthful Westerner of 23 or 24, Harlan has the voice and mannerisms of an Oklahoman, but says he is from Minnesota and spent most of his childhood in Washington, where his father is an official of the US Department of Agriculture. We did not give him much chance to refuse, but he showed graciousness in accepting our presence. His mate, though a month overdue, has not returned from home leave, so there is sufficient room for us. We have found a home smacking of American nationality: a small silk flag (made in Japan?) is over the doorway. Spread on tables and window sills are copies of *Time*, *Life*, the *Reader's Digest*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. In India the routine of American homes frequently becomes highly Anglicized because most of the servants are trained by Britishers. But this is not true of Harlan's establishment. Even the meal, which the Afghan cook rustled together in a creditably short time, was served more according to American standards.

Somewhere on the road to Kabul our Buick had landed a little hard from a bump and had broken one spring leaf. In town our driver disappeared with a promise to have everything ready for the trip to carry on tomorrow. Harlan, then, courteously took us in his aging Ford to call again on the chef de protocol. That worthy having granted us permission to visit the north of Afghanistan sent us scurrying to the police office to arrange permission for our driver to take us. Why a man can't keep such items in his mind two at a time I don't know, but the office apparently has got permission for

us to go but not for our driver to take us. Later Harlan drove us to some shops in search of a thermos bottle to replace the one of Edward's that I had stupidly dropped. From there we drove on to see the sights of the town. Through a broad mall flanked by double rows of poplars we drove for two miles up to the shell of a parliament building that was erected by ex-King Amanullah before he was driven out of Afghanistan by the revolution of 1929. A stately graystone building of Germanic stolidity, it stands above the town in blind isolation. For there is no glass in its windows. Radiators for the various rooms, too, are piled in the porticos. It looks very much as if when the building was nearly finished the workers just laid down their tools one evening and never returned. And in fact that is just about what happened, for the fire of revolt swept the country quickly. Still higher on the hill is Amanullah's palace, awesome too in its gaunt, dead dignity. Both buildings, which cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, are mementos of the past. The present royal family, Harlan says, will not finish nor even touch the structures, although they are the grandest buildings in the country. Instead the new king is building himself another palace, lower down and at some distance.

On our homeward trip we saw some state hospitals and a craft and industrial school, evidences of modern developments that are taking place on a fairly large scale in the capital.

Harlan fed us an early dinner, and afterwards we chatted about Afghanistan for a while before climbing into bed unusually early.

Friday, November 15—In Kabul

EIGHT O'CLOCK WAS the hour set when the driver and the Buick, who presumably had spent the night together in a bazaar repair shop, were to have turned up for the trip north. We were afraid we should not leave anyway, because it has turned out that the permit (written in Persian) which the police gave Roshan Lal is good for only two days, whereas our trip will take eight or 10. Today is Friday, the Muslim Sunday, so the offices are all closed. But our problem as to whether to leave without consulting the authorities again was solved neatly when the car itself did not appear.

To fill in the time we called at the British legation to obtain our return visas to India. There we met Major Hailey, with whom Edward had stayed in Leh, Ladakh, two years ago. The result of the reunion was beer before lunch, a pleasant function in the Hailey garden of the legation compound. And my visa was happily arranged without fuss while we were enjoying the Ladakh reminiscences. Later the British minister to Afghanistan, Sir Kerr Fraser-Tytler, was kind enough to invite Edward and me—but for some reason not Harlan—to tea in the afternoon. As trekkers to the wilds of Afghanistan we are not carrying very good clothes, but Sir Kerr and Lady Fraser-Tytler accepted us in the cleanest clothes we could find and entertained us handsomely before a roaring fire.

Before we left—with Their Excellencies' next guests already waiting at the door—the sun had set and it was cold again. Edward's thermometer dropped to 32 degrees Fahrenheit this morning in Harlan's garden. That is chilling to us from India.

During the gaps in today's unhurried program I have been learning something about the country we are visiting. Geographically it is about 500 by 700 miles and is divided into three bands running roughly from northeast to southwest. The upper one is the plain rising from the Oxus River that separates Afghanistan from Russian Turkestan. In the center run the Hindu Kush and its offshoot mountain ranges, with peaks up to 22,000 feet. And in the south there is a plain that dries up into desert as it approaches Iran.

The Afghan capital, Kabul, lies at the apex of a plain between two mountain ranges. The city is separated from Peshawar and India by 200 miles of bad road and the Khyber, Jagdilag and Lataband passes. The plain of Kabul is 6,000 feet above sea level.

Politically the country is ruled by King Zahir Shah. Allah Mohammad Zahir Shah is the son of Nadir Shah, who snatched the rule from his cousin Amanullah in the revolution of 1929. The young king, about 26, has been on the throne for seven years. But real control of the government is said to be in the hands of his uncles, Nadir Shah's brothers, who are the principal ministers. There is a legislative assembly and an electorate, but foreigners observe little evidence of democracy or republicanism. The government has opened up motor roads and radio stations throughout the country

to increase its administrative control, but revolts continue to break out almost every year.

Many of the country's problems lie in the field of economics. Much of its area is barren hills unfit for cultivation or even for grazing. Peasants in many areas have to scratch hard and deep to make a living. In other sections fruits are grown for export and for sale internally. Oranges, pomegranates, quinces, apples, pears, peaches, grapes, raisins, watermelons and muskmelons are produced in quantity. The principal grains—maize, wheat, rye, barley, and others—are also cultivated in the valleys, largely by irrigation. Walnuts are a cash crop, and further income comes from skins and hides. Despite the war's effect on European markets the Afghan *caracul* is still doing well in the United States, agents say. Lapis is the chief item of the precious stone trade.

Afghanistan is still very backward industrially, but new ventures are being encouraged. During our visit a new sugar mill was opened at Pulamunari. Rug-weaving, mitten- and sock-making, silversmithing and other hand industries retain importance. But despite a government policy of support to larger factory enterprises most machinery and manufactured goods are still entirely imported.

With small minorities of Hindus and Jews (the fur dealers) excepted, the country is wholly Musalman. Archeological remains give evidence of earlier Buddhist strength, but now the majority of the people are Sunni Muslims. A community of Shias lives in the west.

Saturday, November 16—Kabul to Doab

ONCE AGAIN WE desired an early start today on our trip into the center and north of Afghanistan. We had to wait until offices opened at 9 o'clock—only to find that our driver's permit was in order after all; it carried different figures because it was a different type of pass. So, soon out of Kabul, we ascended slowly to the Khair Khana pass, a small rise whose far side opens out on the Kohdaman plains which lie between two chains of mountains 20 or 30 miles apart. Not far from the city we saw battalions of infantry drilling by the side of the road. Though not smartly dressed, they were going at their work earnestly enough.

Farther inland we saw comparatively few of the soldiers who make up so much of the street crowds in Kabul. We drove through fertile fields and between two rows of mulberry trees for 30 miles across the plain. Then, after taking on a full load of gas at Charikar, residence town of the grand governor of the Kohistan province, we went on to cross Matak's bridge and enter the Ghorband pass, a rocky defile that leads into a narrow, rich valley some 60 miles long. For the first few miles the valley is hardly more than a gorge. We arrived there while repair crews were blasting at several points. Between rocks, ruts and holes we had our troubles getting past a few spots, but finally they were all negotiated successfully. No sooner had we reached the broader part of the Ghorband, however, than the whine we had heard in low gear began to sound in second gear too. It took 40 minutes for the driver to open up the gear box and fill it with oil. I wonder for how many thousands of miles he had forgotten to do it. The day grew hot as we progressed and later cool as we wound our way higher up the cramped valley. Chahardeh was the largest village we passed through, and one of the few we saw that is not completely fortified. As the shadows lengthened we reached the foot of the Shibar pass, whose summit at 10,000 feet is reached by a series of serpentines and zigzags up the side of the earth mountain. A huge sign "Die Shibarhel" tells what German travelers crossing it in the wintertime have thought of it. The Buick was weakening and so were we, so before starting the climb Edward and I fed on chocolate (our first food since breakfast) while the driver changed the spark plugs. Reaching the top and finding the sun again simultaneously was a warm experience, but temporary. As we crossed the divide between the drainage sheds of the Indus river in India and the Oxus river on the frontier of Russia we ran beside an ice-covered stream. The descent to the east of the Shibar is imposing because part of it is through a rocky gorge that is hundreds of feet high and at places less than 10 yards wide. I don't see how an invading army can be marched through there, for not many pounds of nitroglycerine would surely close the road for weeks and months. And on that route there is no other road; a flanking movement would have to be very wide.

In its lower portions the drive on that side drops a little more gradually. By dusk we reached Bulola, a police station where the

road to Bamian branches off from the main road running north. We pressed forward through the Shikari pass, which should more properly be called a gorge, and on for 30 miles to Doab ("Two Rivers"), where we stopped at the government-operated hotel built neatly of graystone. The trip of 161 miles had been completed in a little more than nine hours, and was finished an hour after dark. We were sufficiently weary to go to bed soon after eating the soup and spaghetti.

Sunday, November 17—Doab to Doab

TONIGHT WE ARE a pair of disappointed laddies; but not so completely done in as we might have been.

It was to have been a fine day when we set off at 7 o'clock for Bamian, 51 miles from Doab. We drove back through the rock canyon we had traveled last night—an impressive trip through walls that rise sheerly sometimes to 2,000 feet above the road. A pleasant stop at the Bamian road junction provided an opportunity for some photographs. We had gone another seven miles when suddenly the right front of the car sagged sharply. There was a rasping, scraping noise. We stopped hurriedly; I thought one of the coil springs had gone. Edward's idea was a flat tyre. But one look showed us that the trouble was worse than either of those. The front wheel, pointed straight ahead, was folded outward at an angle of about 45 degrees and the car had apparently collapsed on it. Broken axle? Not that, but investigation showed that a casting in the jumper arm which holds the wheel vertical had fractured, letting the wheel fall away. A broken casting that far from civilization is a matter for cogitation. Edward and I could do nothing but put our lunch basket and camera box, the only supplies we were carrying today, on the backs of a pair of donkeys that soon came our way. We didn't know whether we would have to walk back the 40 miles to Doab, where we calculated we should arrive—all being well—before midnight, or just the seven miles to the main road. The prospect of walking on the road at night gave me visions of all the ways the Faithful get to paradise by dispatching infidels first; Afghans have before this been

good at that. Nor could we figure out just then how we would get back to Kabul, suddenly so very far away. Mail lorries run three times a week and there are trucks we might commandeer, though such an arrangement would be harder in independent Afghanistan than in India. We stowed our regrets, though, and started to walk at the burros' pace.

Only two or three miles had slipped behind us when we heard, to our marvel, the horn of our car. It was coming up slowly; how the driver had got it running again I could not imagine. But Roshan Lal had managed to tie together two thick steel bars with a piece of clothesline. Since much of the stress of the car's weight is on that joint, I did not think it would hold for 10 miles. But in three and a half long hours we finally got back to Doab.

While we sat about commiserating with ourselves and lazily getting the tin cans, rye-crisp, and cheese ready for supper, Roshan Lal puttered about with the broken casting. Somewhere he clipped some wire from a broken line and used that in combination with the clothesline to tie the rod joint into place. We debated long over what to do next. Afghanistan boasts no welding establishment outside the government garage in Kabul. Our scheme has been to go on from Doab to Mazar-i-Sharif, another 246 miles to the north and west. It is the capital of the northern province which extends to the Oxus river and Russian Turkestan. In it is one of the well-known mosques of this part of Asia. And it is the center of the *caracul* fur trade. Going there would mean completing our crossing of the Hindu Kush to the northern plain.

On the other hand it would be 400 miles from a repair shop if the binding should let go and some other part break under the new strain. With a Chevrolet we might chance it, because Chevrolets are the commonest cars in the country and parts are obtainable even in villages. But not with a Buick. A few substantial persons operate Buicks, but no part replacements lie about the countryside.

If we should chance it and succeed, it would be a wonderful trip. Should we turn back and get to Kabul without trouble, there would be regrets that we had not gone on north. But if in going toward Mazar-i-Sharif another breakdown should befall us, then probably we should have to abandon the car. We would like so much to go

and we feel so strongly that it would probably be unwise that we waver back and forth from one view to the other. We will sleep on the issue and decide it in the morning.

*Monday, November 18—Doab
to Bamian to Doab*

THE MORNING BROUGHT more indecisiveness. We might remain in Doab for a day or so to enjoy the pleasures of unexpected leisure among the colored cliffs of the Hindu Kush. It seemed a good idea. But a cottony ball popping out from between two peaks dotted for the first time what had been a clear sky. It was still a bright morning (the nights here are below freezing, so the after-breakfast sun is welcome!), but careful Edward recognized that the cloud might herald a change of weather to follow the new phase of the moon. We hustled together a cold lunch for packing, our coats, and this time a precautionary blanket apiece. Yesterday we would have been ill prepared to sleep out. But today we were determined to see Bamian before too late. Roshan Lal was sure he could negotiate the 100-mile trip successfully even though he did not want to take the responsibility for the 650-mile drive it would be to Kabul by way of Mazar-i-Sharif.

For the fourth time we drove through the 30-mile canyon. Its stones, ancient fortresses, crags and walls we are coming to know individually. Then we turned off again on the side road to Bamian. Until we had passed the place of yesterday's breakdown we breathed a bit uneasily, but the scenery was too beautiful to let us worry for long. The Bamian river and other erosive influences have cut the most extraordinary patterns into the hillsides. Incidentally they had exposed rock strata of yellow, green and red. Red, in fact, is a predominating color of the valley. Our first great sight was Red City, which is perched high on a mesa-like cliff. The city is rock-cut rather than constructed, and dates back probably almost to the first century. A story is told that while Genghis Khan was taking it in his triumphant sweep down the Bamian valley in 1222 his grandson was killed, and that in retaliation the conqueror ordered every living

thing in the city also killed. Not even the cats escaped. The French Archeological Expedition, authority for the tale, also have told much about the Buddhist caves of Bamian, which we came upon next.

The first sight is a cliff some hundreds of feet high which seems to be peppered with holes. As a backdrop to the other side of the valley the snow-covered peaks of Koh-i-Baba glisten. A closer approach discloses two massive gashes in the cliff. The peppershots grow into cave openings of the monks' cells and monastery common rooms. I don't know how many of them there are; surely several hundreds. The scars turn out to be niches in each of which a giant figure is carved. On the right hand the standing male is a hundred feet high. His brother half a mile to the left, as one faces the cliff, towers another 50 feet higher. Muslims have defaced this sturdy creature, leaving only a flat plane on the front of the head. Much of the mud-plaster coating which shaped his robes is gone too. And the murals on the walls above his head are washing out and fading. Yet the majesty and dignity of the figure remain. After viewing it from below we climbed circuitously to the top, walked through a tunnel to the back of the niche, and stepped out onto the top of the head. From there we could see the detail of the wall paintings and a valley panorama. Both are excellent.

On the path to the top we had stopped several times to investigate cave-rooms that once were used for cells, dining rooms, and study and meditation quarters. Many of the hollowed-out halls have sitting buddhas in them, similar to the ones in Ajanta and Ellora. Bamian probably will not remain so long extant as the Indian caves because it is cut in soft conglomerate. Nor is there the same delicacy of art here. But in size and impressiveness Bamian equals Ellora, at least.

Before returning to Doab we drove across the valley and climbed to a tableland on the far side. A government hotel is set on its edge. Unfortunately its season ended a week ago, else we could have stayed in Bamian instead of 50 miles away. From the hotel promontory one sweep of the eye takes in the two giant figures and all the caves. They make impressive evidence of a civilization of ancient craftsmen.

The drive home, after a nibbled lunch of nut bread and cashew nuts, carried us back through the old familiar gorge. We arrived after dark. After dinner William Faulkner's fast-moving *Soldier's Pay* carried me through to an early bedtime.

Tuesday, November 19—In Doab

DESPITE SEVERAL FULL days of driving we can hardly claim to have been traveling fast so far. Yet today for the first time we stayed in the confines of a village. Nor can I imagine anything more pleasant. The sun was bright and warm. The red band in the mountain range across the way shone like plush. The Bamian river bubbled past cheerily. Every influence favored relaxation. After a late breakfast we dozed and read in the sunny garden for a couple of hours. Later we wandered through the bazaar taking pictures of people who didn't object. We didn't bother to make lunch. We expected more warm lazing this afternoon, but by 3 o'clock the sun had cooled enough to drive us in behind the double windows. So we wrote and read there. (*Wuthering Heights* is my book now.) Edward and I carried on the long and pleasant conversations that touched upon our various attitudes and reactions to life. He has introduced me to the writings of Krishnamurti, a Madrasian who was the young hope of Annie Besant's Theosophical movement until he renounced it.

The change grew from Krishnamurti's belief in what he calls awareness. The way to overcome evil and weakness, he suggests, is not through combating it. By saying "I won't be selfish," the selfish person sets up conflicts, intellectual and emotional, which eventually vitiate or defeat his purpose. It is much better, Krishnamurti argues, to say "I am selfish; isn't it foolish"—to be completely aware of every action while it is going on. To recognize that a rejoinder derives from spite or fear instead of judgment puts it into a proper perspective. That makes the repetition of such a fault less likely. Krishnamurti emphasizes that many new experiences are camouflaged by a layer of past reactions, traditions and beliefs which must be stripped away before it is possible to see the reality. The point recalls Walter Rogers's distinction between the senior and junior J. P. Morgans. The elder, he once told me, presented to every question a mind swept clear of cobwebby former associations. The younger is frequently unable to do that.

Philosophies that particularly concern the individual have frequently appealed to me. So many of the grand proposals for

reforming the whole world first seem to get hold of the wrong end of the stick. Krishnamurti is primarily individual, and affirmative rather than negative. His lectures in the United States, Holland and India are worth reading.

Wednesday, November 20—Doab to Kabul

TO GO OR not to go, that was the issue that plagued us this morning. Doab is such a lovely spot that we had hoped to stay two days more. It seemed the pleasantest solution, since going farther north was out of the question and neither of us consider Kabul the most appealing feature of Afghanistan. But the morning sun was hidden today by black and thickening clouds. If any Wisconsin clouds ever looked snow-bearing, so did these. The Shibar pass at 10,000 feet lies between Doab and Kabul, and in the winter it is sometimes blocked by snow for weeks. Since one snow has already fallen and melted this season, discretion seemed the best course. So tonight we are in Kabul.

Packing our equipment and getting breakfast took an hour. It was the first time we had put a load over the fractured casting; how it would bear up we had no idea. But it rode well up the Bamian valley gorge—trip number *eight* through there—and past the ruined fort and ancient mountain wall that may well have forced many an invader to a wide flanking movement. With the end of the Shikari pass at the road fork to Bamian we felt truly on the homeward journey. The driver with a casual disregard for his clothes rope repairs took the road at least as fast as he had on the outward trip; sometimes faster. We swung back and forth up the Shibar pass, 50 miles out from Doab. The top affords a good view of the snaky descent on the other side and the head of the 60-mile Ghorband valley which leads out to Charikar. Breaks in the clouds during our halt made sun and shadow play tricks with our photography.

The Shibar divides the Oxus river watershed of Central Asia from the Indus drainage area of India. The difference is in a way

symbolized by the tiny streamheads running each way. To the north, in the direction of Russia, the top is frozen over. The water trickling toward sunny Hindustan, however, runs freely from its source. The valley it has carved is rarely a mile wide. Where there are bottoms, however, we passed rich fields in which the maize had recently been cut and patch after patch of winter wheat's fresh green shoots. There are supposed to be silver mines in the Ghorband as well, though we saw nothing of them.

Near the exit of the valley we again met our friends the road blasters. Working more neatly today, they gave us a better chance to negotiate the stretch of road they are re-cutting. We would not even have reached them today but for the sanction of an army officer who had decided not to keep us in the wilderness overnight even though we had aroused him from a siesta. Verily, there are advantages to a diplomatic passport.

Fortunately our gasoline supply was not exhausted before we reached Charikar, although on the outward trip we had had to call on the final two-gallon reserve to get into Doab. After refilling we sped toward Kabul through the avenue of mulberry trees reddened by the late afternoon light. Over the last rise, an hour and a half later, we saw a cluster of lights that made us exclaim, "Kabul." But it wasn't.

It was the British legation compound. We thought it odd that the street and shop lights of the capital city could not be seen from a distance, but when we entered it we found out why. The occasional electric lights at intersections are so dim that they hardly outline the policemen standing below them. The electric power system is so inefficient that Wilbur Harlan, we discovered later, uses a 500-watt bulb for reading in his living room.

Harlan was at home. Our unexpected arrival did not surprise him. "I've been in Afghanistan long enough," he said, "so that the only thing that surprises me is a plan that isn't upset." His dinner and our canned supper were merged. In the end we went to bed without awaiting replies to the notes we had left at the gates of the British legation to tell our prospective hosts for lunch and dinner on Sunday that we would be in Kabul only on Thursday.

Thursday, November 21—In Kabul

ONE REASON WE left Doab yesterday was that we would have to get our car repairs done today or wait until Saturday in this gloomy town. The Friday holiday is as rigidly observed in this Islamic center as Sunday is in Washington offices. It developed this morning that our decision had been right from another viewpoint. A fresh mantle of snow lies on the ranges through which we passed. Since it extends down to about 9,000 feet, I have no doubt that the Shibar is also covered. Perhaps not deeply enough to have blocked our passage, but surely sufficient to have given us some fun in getting down the zigzag at our own pace.

Here in Kabul the most important business has been finished. We went with the driver this morning to the government repair shop. Usually, we had been warned, such establishments have no conception of time. But the manager assured us he could do the job before the 4 o'clock whistle. Sure enough, this afternoon the fracture had been welded and the latest broken spring replaced. Now we are ready for the road again.

After a lazy morning spent partly in writing home, Edward and I went for lunch to Major Fletcher's home in the British legation compound. Having met previously above the northern frontiers of India, those two traded travel stories of Tibet and Ladakh, which they both knew, and Lithuania and Finland, where Major Fletcher had been a language student.

During some sightseeing in the afternoon Harlan, Edward and I suddenly ran into muddy road repairs in which I fancied we would promptly be bogged down. But Harlan's Ford manfully climbed the ridge bounding the subgrade and showed top form in broken field running to reach a highway. Kabul is a great place for all sorts of half-built things. Like palaces, legislatures, and shops, this is an example of ambitious starts and no finishes.

We have brought no dinner clothes to Afghanistan, so Major and Mrs. Peter Hailey dressed to our standard when they gave us a very excellent meal this evening. Since Edward had stayed with them in Leh, Ladakh, two summers ago, again there were reminiscences. Major Hailey was assistant resident in Kashmir until two months

ago, and that brought me for the first time into the travel conversation. Our host and hostess are both strong personalities. They represent the better part of what I am more and more persuaded is a high-calibre establishment. It is the Indian Political Service. It is recruited from selected men with three years' service in the Indian Army, the Indian Civil Service, or the Indian Police. Its members carve out their careers not in rural India but in the capitals of Native States and on the fringes of the country: Sikkim, Tibet, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Iran, and even farther toward the Suez. Instead of administrators of a cumbersome government machine they become diplomats, and their interests are international. I do not mean that they have no dull moments. Mrs. Hailey said that in Kashmir they had a thoroughly good time but in Kabul, where Britishers living in a walled compound have few contacts with Afghan families and meet only certain sections of the foreign community, she sometimes feels imprisoned. But few IPS careers do not also include fascinating years.

Friday, November 22—Kabul to Nimla

HAPPILY EDWARD AND I see eye to eye in relaxing our program when there is any diverting excuse. Before starting back toward India this morning we decided to look at the Kabul bazaar. Our look turned into an hour-and-a-half tour, which I wouldn't have missed for anything. Kabul has a covered bazaar of the old Central Asian type. The long roofs turn the streets into what might be warehouse sheds except for the small shops that line the walls. The shops are all about the same shape. Ten feet wide and 10 or 12 feet deep, they have floors three feet above the street level. Except for the spot occupied by the cross-legged proprietor and his *buqqa*, the floor as well as the walls are covered with wares. It is fun to watch a customer go up to the open front of a shop, ease himself against the edge of the floor, point to an article, and start off the earnest haggling with the most casual question.

The bazaar shops have a welter of goods. In the cloth bazaar are Afghan knitted wool garments, cotton from India and Japan, silks, sheepskins and *postins*,* and suits and coats. More than once we

*A *postin* is a Central Asian sheepskin overcoat.

have commented on the smart cut of suits and coats the Kabulis wear. Here we saw them on second-hand racks—with labels of men's clothing stores in Boston and St. Louis! For the less sophisticated are long, quilted, sheepskin coats. One hundred Afghanis—\$6—will buy one, complete with smells.

The other bazaars have no less variety. Take your choice: silver-smiths, grain dealers, shoemakers, brass workers, novelty dealers, bread makers, butchers, vegetable sellers, furniture craftsmen: there is almost no end to the list. Always the narrow streets between the shops are filled with the rush of animal life. Humans are there, in turbans or *burkas*; dogs; cats; burros; ponies; and camels belching their foul breath down the visitor's back. The animal drivers' shouts of "*Khabardar!*" never cease, but nobody minds until he is bumped. Even without smells and sounds, the scene is photogenic. Despite the assurances of the chef de protocol that there are no restrictions to photography, however, a policeman who saw us take the first snapshot shouted what I am sure is the Persian equivalent of "Scram." We got the general idea, anyhow, and buttoned up our cameras.

Once on the road to India we made fairly good time in spite of frequent stops for snapshots. Again we ran into numerous camel trains winding their slow way towards the Khyber and a warm winter. Although Edward insisted that the driver pass them as quietly as possible, not infrequently a nervous beast slipped its nose-rope and jumped to the side. Fortunately they did not often go far, nor were they hard to catch. But the Afghans have a habit of tying their babies atop the loads. It is not a pleasant sight to watch a flopping child on top of a threshing camel.

Climbing the Lataband pass we twisted back and forth so much that the plain of Kabul was sometimes to our right, sometimes to the left, sometimes dead ahead of us. Its frame is the snow-covered mountain chain. After crossing the pass, we looked only upon eroded, barren hills. These hills have caused trouble to invaders from both directions; even in the future, should assault again come, they might harbor guerillas hitting at communication lines.

At the afternoon's end the sunset blazed to our right over the dark hills beyond Jagdilag pass. A winding descent from there carried us into Nimla and the magic of the Mughal garden just at dusk.

The Nimla hotel isn't nearly so substantial a rest house as the one at Doab. Settled in half its four small bedrooms, we had some

supper and then wandered through the orange-scented garden. Though the moon is finished, Jupiter and Saturn maintain their strange link and Sirius burns with a blue light. It is a bewitching place.

Saturday, November 23—In Nimla

TODAY AGAIN WE decided to steep ourselves in beautiful surroundings instead of packing farther along the trail. Edward's faithful typewriter continued its unending stream of letters while I read the French Archeological Expedition's report on Bamian. It is the first French I have read for a long time. Later Edward and I talked out a bit more of Krishnamurti. Then I too had a session with the typewriter. Release from the tyranny of possessions is a precept of Hindu philosophy, but I can't live up to it. I knew that when coolies carried my typewriter over the hills of Kashmir, but I thought I could rise above my enslavement on this trip. The hankering after it that accompanies my drafting this journal partly in longhand and partly on Edward's machine proved that I cannot.

By this evening Edward and I had lost all desire to move on at all. But since we are carrying a message for a British legation family we have decided to go on tomorrow and deliver it in Peshawar when we said we would. Although we are headed for bed now, fairly early, I cannot promise to be up in the morning, as Edward was today, to see Venus shining brightly.

Sunday, November 24—Nimla to Peshawar

TONIGHT AGAIN I sit in India. In the last fortnight we have driven a thousand miles, had our passports filled with a lot of Persian wiggle-waggles and British Indian stamps, and seen a people sturdily different from the Indian.

Our last day in Afghanistan started leisurely; we wanted the benefit of two or three hours of sun in the Nimla garden before beginning

the day's drive. (We have discovered, by the way, that Babar's authorship of this garden is a falsehood. It was done by his grandson Jahangir and his wife Nur Jahan.) At 11 o'clock we were off, almost immediately to come upon what for us was a strange spectacle. A man was tied on the radiator grill of a motor truck, his head up and his feet out over the bumper. "What happened?" we asked. "Nothing, sahib," was the reply. "a gang tried to rob that lorry last night and the police shot this man. They tied him up there for the villagers to see, and he will stay until the police inspector gets here."

The last hundred miles of the drive out of Afghanistan is chock-a-block with officials who like to study at their leisure the beauties of foreign passports. They practiced this art on us with such success that we became concerned about reaching the British Indian frontier before the Khyber was closed for sundown. Finally we whirled up to the barrier (after being finally checked out at Torkham) with three minutes to spare. On the other side of the gate a respectful official met us. "You should not have worried, Mr. Groth," he said. "We would have let you through anyway." He suggested, however, that we take a *khassadar* through the pass with us, "because it is getting a little late now." *Khassadars* are Afridi tribesmen subsidized by the Government of India to police the Khyber. Edward declined graciously. It seemed even more an excessive precaution as we climbed the pass and found ourselves never out of the sight of one or another of these armed guards stationed along the road.

I find it difficult to describe the responses of our senses, our nerves, our frameworks, our seats, our everything to a road of tarmac. After a fortnight in Afghanistan we had forgotten that a car could move so smoothly at any speed faster than a stop. We had been bounced, jounced, tossed and pitched until our bodies hurt. Now, for once, the car ride felt to us as much like floating through air as advertisers always say it is.

Once again we drank in the sights of the Khyber. On the downward side we bid good-by to the fortified villages with their square watch towers and to the now-familiar flavor of Central Asia. Emerging finally from Jamrud we ran a quick 10 miles over the plain to Peshawar, Dean's Hotel, and a hot bath. The bath was by far the most important, for we had not indulged in that luxury since Doab.

A curious thing happened tonight. Before I left Lahore a neighbor of ours, Mr. Dench, who is in charge of irrigation works in the Punjab, had suggested that in Afghanistan I look up an Englishman named Captain Codrington. In Kabul I questioned some people who knew him. But they had not seen him for some time. Then tonight when the hotel manager put my name on the board I noticed that the one next to it was Kenneth de B. Codrington. He is curator of the South Kensington Indian Museum, and is the Codrington I came to know fairly well in London! As soon as he came in we met, and he turned out to be also the man that Mr. Dench had meant. A long conversation after dinner brought forth the information that when war broke out he had first gone to work in the War Office. Then he had entered the navy and seen service in Norway. After that he was invalided out at a time when the collapse of France resulted in the departure from Afghanistan of the French Archeological Expedition. So he had accepted the Afghan government's call to come out and take over their work. I never thought of him when Mr. Dench mentioned the name, because I thought he was in England. Besides, he is not a captain, having been in the army at a higher rank (major) and in the navy at a lower one (lieutenant commander).

*Monday, November 25—Peshawar
to Kohat to Peshawar to Taxila*

MR. DUNDAS, CHIEF secretary of the Frontier Province government, very kindly arranged for Edward and me to drive today through the Kohat pass and to see an arms factory maintained by Afridi tribesmen. Again in our Buick, Edward and I started out at about 7:30. We were to breakfast with the deputy commissioner in the town of Kohat, 40 miles away. On our way across the plain we had a glimpse through the smoky haze over the city at the snowy peaks behind. Twenty miles out the road enters Tribal Territory, the frontier belt that is under direct Central Government rule rather than being governed as part of the Northwest Frontier Province. Except for the influence of political agents

and subsidies granted to keep the tribes pacified, neither the administration nor the justice of British India applies in these areas. Until the tribesmen raid rich villages in the plains they are left pretty much to their own devices. They resent intrusions. The fine tarmac road on which we drove to the top of the pass is an example of the works that have been bitterly opposed until the way was smoothed with smiles and cash.

At the crown of the pass the road re-enters British India. The wooded mountainsides and the broad sweep of the plain below make the view from that point better, I think, than the panorama seen from the Khyber.

Having made our descent we drove directly to the bungalow of the deputy commissioner, whose name we did not know. Because the trip had taken longer than anticipated we were late for breakfast. While waiting in the drawing room we admired the tasteful Persian paintings, the handsome furnishings, the homey atmosphere and the cheery blaze in the fireplace. Soon a wide and not-too-tall man waddled in and introduced himself as Khan Bahadur Shaikh Mahboob Ali Khan, QBE, the deputy commissioner, I was truly surprised. This was the first time in India that I had walked into the home of an Indian and mistaken it for that of an Englishman. The Khan Bahadur, whose weight must be near 300 pounds, put us at our ease immediately. No city man, he is an Afridi tribesman himself. When his rich family had given him an English education he was selected for the Indian Civil Service. For eight years after a British mission went to Afghanistan in 1922 following the third Anglo-Afghan war, he worked in Kabul. The title of the legation property there, he says, is still in his name because the Afghans would not sell land knowingly to the British government. He was one of the last British subjects to be flown out of Kabul in the Revolution of 1929. A man with the collector's instinct, he has gathered truly beautiful blue Russian China from the Gardner factory. It is not so large as the collection he made in Afghanistan, he says; but all goods were abandoned when the foreigners had to flee. The Khan Bahadur knows how to entertain: he achieved the rare feat of serving a breakfast of distinction. Only the usual porridge, fish, omelette, toast, butter, honey, and fruit were served, yet each dish had special treatment

which gave it character. The porridge, for example, was served piping hot, salted well, and covered not only with warm milk but with whipped cream. What could be better?

The Khan Bahadur knows the tribal people intimately. He kept us entertained for an hour with tales of his fraternity. He agreed that more than anything else economic pressure causes the tribes to raid British India. He recounted prodigious walking feats of the tribesman who cover 40 or 50 miles a night on foot. He discussed the death reprisal that befalls anyone who gets mixed up with a woman not his own. He told how the chiefs administer rough-and-ready tribal justice, and how the tribesmen who make rifles try to smuggle them into British India (where arms are not permitted without licenses). We could happily have kept him talking all day, but he was about to leave on tour.

The deputy commissioner sent a man back across the pass with us to the rifle factory. Located in a mud-hut village on the main road, it is famous as the largest such establishment in tribal territory. At the gate an old man greeted us. He led us through an alleyway to his enclosed courtyard, a place of singular aspect in this completely nonindustrial countryside. Half a dozen men, two of them blind, sit cranking long, spindle-shaped machines. Their hand-power is boring rifle barrels. In another corner two men shape barrel exteriors on an old metal lathe, also hand-powered. Firing blocks and ejector mechanisms are filed and fitted in a second courtyard, where also the stocks are made up. When we had seen all the processes I was handed a completed rifle modelled on the Lee-Enfield .303. The workmanship was perfect, even to the British crown punchmark and the monogram GR. The tribesmen make these replicas to exchange somehow with real British service rifles, which have a very long life compared to the five-shot expectancy of the home-made articles. Frequently the fearless tribesmen are diabolical in stealing a sentry's gun. But when the trade is effected quietly their handi-craft may easily pass inspection, and has even been known to fool a brigadier.

For their own use the tribesmen make a lighter rifle of the same caliber. It does the job they want, lasts longer, and fires refilled British cartridges. Shotguns are also built in this factory.

The factory and similar ones scattered through tribal villages have a broad market. In British India only permit holders are permitted to carry arms, but there is no such regulation in tribal territory. Every male tribesman keeps his gun by him whether he is riding a bicycle, working in his fields, or taking a stroll. With family feuds what they are, the government could not separate him from it. It was only with difficulty that all the households were made to agree to recognize the main road as a neutral zone. It is economical to buy a tribal gun, for good rifles are sold at the factory for Rs. 20 to Rs. 50, that is from \$6.25 to \$15.75. By contrast the frontier price for a stolen British rifle is said to be Rs. 300 and up.

After drinking the tribesmen's tea we returned to Dean's for lunch. Later Edward went off to buy some Russian chinaware while I joined Kenneth Codrington to visit the Peshawar bazaar. We wandered up the street of silversmiths looking at ancient Greek and Buddhist coins shopkeepers had obtained from the many mounds near by. Codrington goes through the bazaar frequently, he says, to see if anything really worthwhile is in the market. He bought a small carved head of the Greek classic style for Rs. 2, but took nothing else during the afternoon.

At dark we all returned to the hotel, and Edward and I set out for Taxila on the 6:45 train. Arriving there at 11 o'clock—after a comfortable trip in a second-class compartment—we found that the dak bungalow where we had made telegraphic reservations is a mile and a half from the station, and that no *tongas* were available. Rather than spending an hour trying to make arrangements, we set up our bedding and went to sleep on benches in the station waiting room. It is quite comfortable.

Tuesday, November 26—Taxila to Lahore

A BATTERED TONGA was waiting when we finished breakfast in our station boudoir this morning. We expected it to get us over the Taxila ruins and back to the platform in time for the Frontier Mail at 12:40. Five miles up a 10-foot tarmac road we reached Jaulian, to which we were introduced with a mere "Here they are." With neither guidebook nor guide, we climbed a

hill to the outlines of an old monastery and a collection of stupas. The stupas, which are monuments built over sacred relics or at holy places, are considerably smaller than the half-domes of Sanchi. They stand six to eight feet high and are shaped like a skyscraper. Several dozens of them were built side-by-side here at Jaulian during the Buddhist age in Taxila, perhaps in the first to fifth centuries of the Christian era.

Jaulian is the outpost of the Taxila diggings. Working our way back we arrived first at Jandial, an unroofed fire-worshippers' temple. In contrast to the ornateness of much Hindu architecture this structure, which might have been Zoroastrian or Greek, is plain and neat.

By far the largest site is the city of Sirkap, where we walked for a third of a mile down the main street. On both sides there remain the bottom three or four feet of walls of houses, shops, temples, and a palace. The foundations so clearly show every building and the town plan is so regular that archeologists have named and numbered every street. The palace, for example, has its main entrance near Thirteenth Street and the High Street. Inner rooms and courtyards are as plainly marked as the exterior walls. The dais from which rulers received their subjects stands intact. The Shrine of the Double Eagle, farther down on High Street, is hardly spoiled. Yet all of these until quite recently had been dead and buried for a millenium and a half; our footsteps today followed the paths known by few since the Greek and Buddhist conquerors and their Hindustani subjects trod them. Much of the city is still not uncovered. Someday I suppose that will reveal even more about the ancient life of the first known Europeans in India.

In the excellently organized Taxila Museum we learned more about the civilizations that had inhabited successive cities in the vicinity. In the eras of the Alexandrian Greeks, the Kushan Buddhists, and the Bactrian Greeks the same dynasties ruled jointly in Bamian and in Taxila. Afghanistan and northern India were parts of the same empires. Before that Taxilan history runs back at least to the fifth century before Christ, and probably much earlier. Taxila's walls were pulled down and the town devastated in the fifth century of the Christian era, almost certainly by the White Huns. Its thousand-year history closed, it was never important thereafter.

And so we saw Taxila in half a day. On the Frontier Mail for Lahore Edward and I found ourselves not in the coupé for two we had reserved, but in a compartment holding six people. Our trip in the air-conditioned coach, supposedly the height of luxury in Indian rail travel, turned into a long, crowded day marked principally by tobacco fumes and the noise of Edward's typewriter. We arrived in Lahore at 8:35 this evening and found Henry Oliver waiting on the platform to meet us. Home again after a fortnight, we washed our necks and enjoyed a very good dinner at 100C Wazir Ali Road.

GANDHI'S ASHRAM; AND ON TO WAR SERVICE

In this section are three main letters: one dealing with Talbot's visit with Gandhiji at his ashram in Sevagram; the second written from Manila, free from the oversight of the British censors, and covering the Indian experience so far; and the third from Bombay when Talbot had returned to India in his new role as US Naval Liaison Officer, and observing the push and pulls of the Indian nationalist movement. The movement was torn between aiding or supporting the allies, which seemed to be the need of the hour, and obtaining some assurances about the future with respect to its own struggle for freedom.

The younger generation of Indians reading these letters will find interesting Gandhi's conviction that "India should have its freedom as a way of justice and truth." One can see Gandhi's faith in non-violence as a weapon, with truth on his side. One wonders why India's current leadership does not similarly approach social inequity, poverty, or illiteracy as, fundamentally, issues of justice and truth.

The dilemma of what to do about India's role in the war, and the nature of support for the British effort, comes through in a very poignant way in these letters. It was not an easy decision by any measure. The eventual path of civil disobedience, the path decided upon by Gandhi, changed the course of Indian history. It resulted in many of India's future leaders spending a major portion of the war in prison. This created an opening for Jinnah and his supporters to consolidate Muslim support for the future. One can only wonder whether history would have turned out differently if Nehru, Gandhi, Patel, and others had had as strong a vision of a united India as Jinnah had of a separate and free Pakistan.

It is a tribute to Talbot's insight in to the people of India when he said, as in these letters going back to 1941, that "there will be no organized revolt, India will remain quiet during the course of the war, and there will be no violence or material embarrassment to the British." That is quite close to how it turned out.

To address India's aspiration for independence, since "its heart is not in this war," Talbot outlined a simple plan, back in August 1942. He suggested that (1) Russia, the US, and China guarantee Britain's promise of independence after the war, and (2) India's nationalist parties be given truly responsible governing powers even during the war, including an important future role for Jinnah. One cannot judge history too harshly on the basis of hindsight, but one can nevertheless admire a simple and elegant solution such as this that could have kept this family of nations together, instead of being torn into the three countries we have now.

There is no letter describing the 1942 Quit India session. The only letter that Phil wrote while he was the US Naval Liaison Officer in Bombay was the one dated August 3, 1942 (included in the collection) that was sent by Naval pouch and thus avoided British censorship. It describes the Indian political scene on the eve of the Quit India session. He attended that session in civilian clothes, learnt that the Congress party leaders were all to be arrested that night and accepted Raja Hutheesingh's request that while the leaders were jailed he keep an occasional eye on Hutheesingh's wife (Nehru's younger sister) and their sons.

Upon Phil's return from his wedding in Calcutta in August 1943, he learnt that the British Admiralty had asked the US Navy to re-assign Phil out of India because of his "unfortunate views and actions." Apparently, Phil's association with the Nehrus and other Indian nationalists was at the heart of it. Innocently, Phil had also booked Vijayalakshmi Pandit's daughters for passage to the US on a returning American troop ship, without knowing that the British had contacted all known shipping agents in India to place a specific block on these girls' departure from India during the war. At any rate, the US Navy concluded that Phil had not breached American rules and appointed him Assistant Naval Attaché in Chungking instead of calling him home.

Bombay Communalism, Hindu Mahasabha

*c/o American Consulate-General
Calcutta, India*

(Written in Bombay)

April 30, 1941

TEN DAYS IN Bombay have been largely filled with the two activities that doubtless are going to be the main features of my summer tour program—talking and looking. I've met and conversed with a number of such people as businessmen, social workers, labor leaders and politicians, and I've visited cotton mills and the tenement homes of Bombay workers. Among the families I was glad to see were Lady Rama Rao and her two charming daughters, with whose party Wallace Kirkland and I camped in the Sindh valley in Kashmir last summer.

Mr. Kanji Dwarkadas, labor officer of the E. D. Sassoon group of cotton and woolen mills, has been of real help. Like B. Shiva Rao, he grew up working under Dr. Annie Besant and the Home Rule League. He was member for labor of the old Bombay Legislative Council and has been treasurer of the All-India Trade Union Congress. A man with a wide circle of acquaintances, he is now trying to develop the job of labor and personnel officer into something like the American industrial conception of that position. We went through one of the mills of his group where the Bedaux efficiency system has gone the farthest. In reducing labor to one man for six looms and 10 men per thousand spindles the firm has more nearly approached Manchester efficiency ratings than has any other Indian group, according to Mr. Dwarkadas. The result in wages is that in 1937 and 1938 the E. D. Sassoon group paid an average of Rs. 38 a month, whereas elsewhere in Bombay the average was Rs. 31. That isn't much with the rupee at 30 cents, of course. The workers pay four to seven rupees a month for the one-room tenements in which 800,000 of Bombay's 1.3 million people live, and the rest of their money goes for food, clothing, an occasional film and a bit of gambling. We visited three tenement chawls. Stone and concrete buildings upto four stories high, they provide single rooms for family groups of four to 12 persons. The ordinary room

has a concrete floor and whitewashed walls. If there is a verandah, cooking is done there; otherwise the earthen stove is in one corner of the room. Bedding is taken up from the floor in the daytime to give room for the family activities. Besides clothes for the family the single open shelf in the room probably holds a kerosene lamp and some pictures of Hindu deities. Chawls have been built by the mill owners, by private landlords and by the government. The government development chawls which stood empty for years because workers refused to live in them are now fully occupied, thanks to the Congress government, according to Mr. Dwakardas, which put windows into the rooms that had been lighted and ventilated only by fixed shutters and arranged cheap transportation from the chawls to the mill areas.

War demands ended what looked like a bad slump for the cotton mills. Now there are 200,000 millhands working in Bombay city, compared with 130,000 in 1938. Housing conditions have naturally deteriorated. The redeeming feature seems to be that the workers, 80 percent of whom migrate to the city for jobs, periodically return to their villages for a season out of doors sowing and reaping a crop. The mills encourage this practice, although it creates a very high labor turnover. By law a 54-hour week is the maximum, except that a 9½-hour day has been approved for war work. Women, who comprise a fifth of the total, are employed for their nimbleness but at lower pay. The husbands of 30 percent of them are also millhands. Of the remaining women most are widows who must support themselves. Each year about one woman in 10 takes maternity leave.

Bombay has suffered this week from a recrudescence of the communal riots that have disturbed her for years. Pitched battles in which the weapons were stones, sticks and soda-water bottles broke out last Friday as Muslims were returning from weekly prayers at the mosques. Since then attacks have degenerated into surprise knifings in the back. Sixteen people have been killed and more than 140 injured. Practically all the shops in borderline districts between Hindu and Muslim neighborhoods have been closed all week. The government firmly posted additional police and called out the military. Some 2,700 persons have been arrested.

I toured the riot area twice, once in a bus and once in a car with a young attorney. We saw no action anywhere; as the 7 P.M. curfew hour approached the streets became deserted. Yet individual stabbing cases continue to be reported.

The Bombay riots came at the end of a bad month of communal outbreaks in many parts of India. Right across the country from here Dacca, the principal city of eastern Bengal, was in the throes of violence for many days, with high casualties and great damage. A government inquiry has been ordered into that trouble. In Bihar province a fight at Bihar Sharif resulted in 15 deaths and 40 injuries. Police opened fire on crowds at Cawnpore and Ujhani in the United Provinces. And here in the Bombay presidency the cotton mill district of Ahmedabad was thrown into turmoil by riots that took a number of lives and caused many injuries.

Mr. V. D. Savarkar, activist president of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, makes out a belligerent case that these disturbances "should not be looked upon as riots but in fact as a general rising of the aggressively minded Muslims against the Hindus on an all-India scale." His theme is: "If you want a fight, we'll give it to you, and we'll get the tough Gurkhas of Nepal to help us." But the charge of aggression is not so simple proved. In Bombay, the acting editor of the *Times of India* told me today, 30 of the first 39 injured persons were Muslims. His theory is that the Hindus, having taken a beating at Ahmedabad, came down to Bombay to get their revenge. It sounds likely, for there has yet been no indication of any material cause for the present dispute in Bombay. Rather, all of these disturbances are surface evidences of the bitter feelings being aroused throughout the country by the passionate inter-communal strife that now dominates Indian politics. Unless governments take a strong line further difficulties are very likely.

Bombay has a good many conveniences that places like Lahore know little about: flush system toilets and running hot and cold water, bus and tram lines, restaurants and pleasant tea rooms and soda fountains, department stores, and many others. But my impression after 10 days here is that studying India in the Bombay University library while living in an ordinary boarding house would be as exclusively bookish as studying India in Columbia University.

Mysore State

*clo American Consulate-General
Calcutta, India
(Written in Bangalore)
July 27, 1941*

WHILE HERE IN Bangalore before I wrote you of my desire to have a longer visit in progressive Mysore State. Since then the situation has been changed markedly by the resignation of Sir Mirza Ismail, the Diwan (Prime Minister), who for the last 15 years had built up Mysore into a model bit of India. His successor is known as an efficient administrator rather than as a great planner, and in every place I have visited during a rapid spin around the State this week I have heard reactions to the change. Unfortunately the 20-day tour I had hoped for had to be trimmed to a week because my remaining time in India is very short. But in company with Dick Keithahn I managed to penetrate each quarter of the State and to see in operation the Kolar Gold Fields, the Bhadravati Iron and Steel Works, a state-owned paper mill and cement plant, state-sponsored rural reconstruction activities, and housing and other private and municipal social welfare projects. For part of the trip, which totalled something less than a thousand miles, the State very kindly made us its guests and provided cars.

What we saw was undoubtedly paternalism of a high order. Mysore is known as a rising industrial State. The basis of its attempt to balance the overdependence upon agriculture is cheap electric power. Sir Mirza took advantage of numerous water courses to establish a power grid that serves even remote villages, and at prices far below those in other parts of India and even in the United States. Village weavers now can put little motors on their looms and run them for 2 cents a kilowatt-hour. The big gold mines, which have been cut as deep as 9,000 feet into the earth, can operate profitably because of cheap power. That also has permitted the State to organize or take large blocks of stock not only in the industries I have mentioned above but in glass, pottery, electric appliances, lacquer, and numerous other enterprises. An aircraft assembling plant is now being worked by American technicians and a motor car factory was all but started this year. Whisperers say that the spark causing

Sir Mirza Ismail's resignation from the Diwanship was the veto by higher authorities of the latter project, which he had encouraged. The industrial development of the State was one of his chief instruments in increasing the prosperity and welfare of the people.

Because of the emphasis on welfare, the social aspects of industrialization have been guided carefully. In the Kolar Gold Fields private companies use 30,000-odd workers to extract the native metal from deposits of hornblende schist, and the basic wage for unskilled work underground is only 18 cents a day. Yet the companies, working under State impetus, have built up a social welfare department that includes not only housing projects but hospital and maternity care, schools, sports, dramas and films, workingmen's clubs, and other recreational facilities. A pure water supply is provided, latrines are used, people have furnished pens for their cattle and water buffalo. The streets of the company towns are well policed. Paternalism, a word that need not have evil implications when used in reference to a working population just a few years separated from Indian village life, has gone a long way. Perhaps also it has reduced labor friction. That strikes still occur indicates, I believe, that the time of organized labor is coming here as it has come in the West.

In the Mysore Iron and Steel Works at Bhadravati, entirely a State industry, another housing project and comprehensive workers' welfare program are in operation. Many of the houses are better planned than those at the gold mines. Even the homes for cheapest unskilled labor have garden plots attached and cooking places and bath cubicles conveniently located. Rental averages 10 percent of wages. The homes are incomparably good in relation to the squatters' huts in which employees who have built their own shacks live. Employees at the works have organized cooperative stores. As elsewhere in the State, recreational and educational facilities provided for the families of workers are good.

Mysore State is also ahead of the parade in municipally constructed hundred-dollar houses for millhands and other urban labor. The slums are not entirely gone from Bangalore, but Chicago could take a lesson from the clearance that has already been done. In Mysore City we saw municipal houses which for some reason, political or otherwise, were not up to standard. Constructed for the city's scavengers, the rows of attached dwellings look as much like pigpens after a year's use as do the tin-can-roofed brush huts that other sweepers still live in.

The State does not give all its attention to industrial workers, however. Between Bangalore and Mysore City there is a rural development center with a health unit in apposition. The work of the latter is particularly well organized, if only because the American-trained Mysorean chief has been able to put vital statistics in his area on a scientific basis. That is a feat in India, where births and deaths are most casually reported. The Rockefeller people helped in the organization of this project, which has now become self-sufficient, and the Rockefeller touch is evident in the reports of malarial and epidemic controls. It would be fine to see Mysore develop into the first place in India where such science was put on a state-wide basis. Many people believe the fruits would outweigh the cost even though the initial expenditure appears formidable.

The agricultural branch of the rural development center has been working on seed strains, plows, rural latrines, and other projects. I could not judge how effective its work is.

We have had many other experiences in this full week. In Mysore City, where we stayed with Gandhi's grandson, a medical student of the University of Mysore, Dick Keithahn and I sat with a circle of 20 liberal arts undergraduates who are directing an urban literacy campaign. They hold daily reading and writing classes for adults in different parts of the city. To teach these groups 200 students have volunteered to spend two hours each weekday evening during term time. It is impressive that so many undergraduates would devote that much time to social welfare work; I don't recall 200 of my university mates going out on similar visitations.

A Stay at Gandhi's Sevagram Ashram

*c/o American Consulate-General
Calcutta, India
(Written in Wardha, Central Provinces)
August 1, 1941*

WHEN I ARRIVED yesterday morning at Mahatma Gandhi's Ashram at Sevagram, near Wardha, 36 hours' journey north of Bangalore, the little man was about to

go to lunch. Wearing a shawl over his shoulders as well as his usual *dhoti*, he stood on his cottage steps, leaning on his staff, watching my approach. "Mr. Talbot?" he queried. "Ah, you have come." That is, it turned out, his favorite form of greeting. During these two days his first words whenever I entered his room have been "Ah, you have come." The other habitual expression that has been loosed several times comes in explanations, which he prefaces with the phrase "for the simple reason that..." It intrigued me to hear that goat's milk is good, or the British should leave India, or the world will yet fall back on nonviolence, all for some "simple reason." But in the first meeting Gandhiji wasted no time leading me to a verandah where 15 or 20 men and women, already seated on the floor, were being served. With a robustness of spirit that has surprised me several times he pointed to an empty place and laughingly said, "You sit down there and you two get friendly with each other." To my astonishment the person he indicated was an American girl whom I had met a year ago at Rabindranath Tagore's university, Santiniketan. She was now wearing an Indian sari, and had stayed nearly a month with Gandhi. The food we were served—well-cooked fresh vegetables, bread and butter, hot milk, and golden dextrose—was of a much higher standard than some I have eaten elsewhere in my wanderings, and I commented on the fact. Gandhi, who was dealing out special potions for his current crop of patients, agreed that he had formerly lived on about \$2 worth of food a month but had now increased the amount and quality to \$5 worth. That is more than twice as much as Bishop Pakenham Walsh spends.* Many of the vegetables at the Gandhi Ashram are grown on the 200 acres of land that the Mahatma was given by a coworker. Besides the crops the Ashram keeps a number of cattle and goats (Gandhi still drinks goats' milk, of course). That is why good food can be obtained for the money spent. It is prepared by some of the 40 or 50 ashramites, all of whom serve in rotation in various housekeeping jobs.

These inmates of the Ashram are an interesting assortment. Their boss may laughingly call them "my lunatic asylum," adding that "I'm the biggest nut of all." They are divided into two classes, the

*Bishop Pakenham Walsh, was a Welsh prelate who had been a long-time resident of Assam. He had committed himself to living on a very simple Indian fare.

permanents and those who come for a few days or weeks or months. The latter are frequently leaders of the national movement who seek guidance, inspiration, or convalescence. Gandhi considers himself a good hand at doctoring, which is one of his favorite occupations. Whenever a leader gets sick, the Old Man of Sevagram has him come to the Ashram for rest and a special diet. Like any other doctor, Gandhiji makes morning and evening rounds of the various Ashram buildings to see his current patients. For those who come to meals he deals out special quantities of particular foods placed around him in an array of pots and pans. The permanents are frequently people who have surrendered abjectly to the force of Gandhi's personality. They mimic him to the extent of their capacity and let their devotion so sway them that, as one woman nationalist is quoted as rudely having said, some wouldn't go to the latrine without "Bapu's" permission. From the queerest specimens that have camped from time to time in the Gandhi Ashram certain American women can not be excluded however. The Mahatma seems to have a fatal attraction for some about whom, I gather, stories go on forever.

The herd instincts of the Ashram are illustrated morning and evening when Gandhi walks several furlongs up the road and back. While he walks blindly with his arms about the shoulders of two friends, his head down and his eyes closed, answering questions from all sides, an entourage tramps after him, matching his speed, his slowness and his turns step by step.

He does not miss a moment to fit in an interview. At lunch today we got off on some topic and then as we walked back to his cottage he asked me about the Institute. As we stood on his verandah talking, he took out his upper and lower sets of teeth, washed them carefully, gargled, and made himself ready for the afternoon's work without missing a word I said.

Gandhi has been called the most efficient worker in India. He has the knack of resting his body completely while his mind carries on. After lunch, for example, as he reads through his heavy correspondence he lies almost at full length on a pad on the floor, with only a wooden support raising his head and shoulders. His wife sits at his feet, massaging his legs, while he dictates answers to his secretary or straightens up to write a note himself. He uses many post-cards, and to friends signs himself "Bapu," father. Besides the male

secretary and his aging wife, two or three woman members of the Ashram squat around him. One may be fanning him while the others read silently. All this is in a room ordinarily used as a hospital, since his own cottage has not yet been repaired after heavy rains. The room contains no chairs and no tables higher than six or eight inches. The only picture in the whole room is a likeness of Jesus as a youth. When I referred to that he replied with a warm appreciation of Jesus's religion. "But I do not mix up Christianity with many missionaries I have known," he added, amplifying his comment with an uncompromising disparagement of the mission system. The book he has published this last year on Christian missions develops his argument more completely than he did in conversation, and I did not press him since my greater interest was in the comprehensive economic program that his associates are now putting on a national basis.

The underlying principle of Gandhian economics is that a money economy is the wrong goal for Indian villages. The greater use of cash requires the sale of more goods to outside agencies and results in greater dependence of the village on the town or faraway district. Dependence is a bad thing in an unstable economic condition; it may leave villagers stranded without means of helping themselves. Also, when money is given instead of goods for the produce of the soil the peasant (*a*) doesn't know how to use it wisely, and therefore lets it dribble away in toddy, gambling and trinkets, and (*b*) begins purchasing more numerous articles from outside, which means paying all the extra production and distribution charges and therefore reducing his purchasing power. The classic example used in India is of the peasant who grows cotton, sells his crop for cash, and buys back shirts made in Birmingham or Osaka. If, Gandhi argues, village industries in India had been permitted to continue thriving, the same peasant could take his cotton to a local spinner (or spin it himself), then to a weaver, and finally, having given a share of the cotton to each one for wages, come back with more shirts than he can possibly get for the same amount of cotton in a money economy. I learned in a Kashmir village how much less a bushel of rice is worth when it must be mortgaged to meet a cash land revenue demand than when it can be bartered locally for commodity needs. To get a clear picture of the desirability of self-sufficiency in many consumption goods, one must remember that the great untapped resource

in India is human labor. The average peasant may have nothing at all to do for four to six months a year. Until such production potentials are made use of, the encouragement of labor-saving machinery is likely further to unbalance the economic structure. I think there is much to be said for a moderate interpretation of the Gandhian point of view.

To make possible a more self-sufficient village economy in India, Gandhi has long fostered small-scale industrial development. His work with cotton spinning is famous. No member of the Congress can hold any office within the organization unless he spins a certain amount of yarn every day. No Congressman is acceptable to Gandhi unless he habitually wears homespun cotton clothing. It has become in a way the national dress. The result is that although homespun is considerably more expensive than mill-made cloth, in one year almost a *crore* (10 millions) of rupees' worth of homespun—called *khadi* or *khaddar*—was sold in total market of Rs. 16 crores. Six percent of the available market may not sound much, but in the face of the price bar it is a triumph in the promotion of village industry. Now the movement has stepped forward into a full-blown All India Village Industries Association, whose headquarters at Wardha I visited for two days before coming out in a horse cart to the Ashram here at the edge of the village of Sevagram, five miles from town. Under its American-trained chief the AIVIA has centers in many parts of the country. It fosters the development of home paper-making, soap-making, oil-pressing, plow-making, paint-making and other occupations. It emphasizes those crafts that can be pursued in spare time in village homes for village consumption.

As another facet of the village reconstruction program, which is dear to Gandhi's heart, an association which fosters the so-called Wardha scheme of education has its headquarters on the Ashram grounds at Sevagram. The basis of the seven-year primary school program that has been started in several provinces is project instruction in crafts that are keyed to peasant life in the locality. The simplest illustration is that schools in cotton-growing areas would emphasize spinning and weaving. Fruit culture would be a central part of the curriculum in citrus districts. The hope is that when all seven classes are functioning older students as well as younger will be making products as part of their lessons, and that the sale of

those will provide 75 percent of the teachers' salary. Since the system has been in operation only since 1938 just the first three classes are now functioning and a fourth will be added when the children who began their education under this system have reached that stage. In other words, several years will elapse before its validity can be proved. But records so far show that the percentage of school-age children who attend Wardha scheme schools is higher than in ordinary schools and that among the children enrolled attendance and punctuality is more regular in the Wardha schools. The directors of the association, Mr. and Mrs. Arya Naikum, are happy and hopeful about the results that have been attained so far.

I have digressed to indicate some of the activities that surround Gandhi, but even on them he cannot talk for long without reaching the subject that really means most to him: nonviolence. Village self-sufficiency marks a less violent way of life, he says, because it obviates many larger-scale economic clashes. Nonviolence is not—to Gandhi—a policy designed to help unarmed Indians gain independence. It is a way of life that leads him to say “India should have her freedom as a matter of justice and truth; I will not permit our people to try to gain it by embarrassing Britain through taking advantage of her present stress.” Nonviolence is a way that all men could live together harmoniously. But it is also a strong weapon of the righteous. With truth on her side, Gandhi avers, a nonviolent India could stop a German invader in his tracks. In the campaign of complete non-cooperation thousands of men, women and children would die as they are dying today in Europe, but they would die nonviolently. If every Indian were ready to be shot rather than drive a train or carry a cup of water for a German or Japanese, the invader would be left helpless against such force and would have to withdraw. Gandhi admits that the trouble with this optimistic defense picture is that few people have shown themselves able to attain his standards of nonviolence and the rest of the population would, by resorting to violence, lose the fight. I was interested in Gandhi's “simple reason” why nonviolence is not fully successful in the Indian independence campaign. Because many people in the Congress consider it just a weapon rather than a creed its force is weakened. And then in 150 years the British have managed to ally to themselves different groups of Indians so that the nation does not stand united

in opposition. If the Germans were to march into India there would be no such attachments and the country could put up a common, nonviolent, front with more success than with any other kind of resistance of which she is capable. So says the Mahatma.

On many sides in India today one hears that Gandhi is through, finished. That his era is past, the world has gone beyond him, his old magic won't work any more, the hour of youth is at hand. This old cry was sounded after the civil disobedience movement, again when he resigned from the Congress in 1934, again when the Congress Working Committee temporarily divided from him (soon to scurry back rapidly under his leadership) after this war broke out, and again and again and again. True it is that in many ways he seems old-fashioned. A surprising number of his ideas, such as the conviction that Paul was the first saboteur of the religion of Jesus, can be traced to reading he did in early youth. His judgments of people and institutions are still highly colored by his prewar experiences in South Africa. It is also true that he has seemed to bungle at times and has changed his ground so that even Jawaharlal Nehru was hard pressed to keep in line. And certainly many youthful nationalists have gnashed their teeth at the moderation he has forced upon them in this crisis which seems to them the golden opportunity to seize power and hold it. Plenty of people say they would like other leadership. But there is no individual who can command the loyalty and following of so many of the 400 million people of India as Gandhi, and everyone recognizes that fact. Perhaps after Gandhi dies someone else like Jawaharlal Nehru, if in the meantime Nehru can resolve the doubts and cross-currents of Gandhism and socialism that have been pulling at the moorings of his philosophy for the last two or three years, can take over a similar position of leadership, perhaps the present conservative leadership of the Congress, men like C. Rajagopalachari and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, can take over. It is also possible that the much more radical younger group can gain control of the national movement. But that is all for the future. Gandhi, who still holds the masses in his hand, is not dead and his robust spirit and frail body that has shown such capacity for punishment may well continue to serve him for some years to come.

Writing from Outside India

Manila, PI

September 20, 1941

ON MY FIRST trip out of India in nearly two years I should like to give you random impressions I have been reluctant to record inside the country. Unfortunately this note will have to be less documented than I should wish, partly because when I left Calcutta on short notice many of my papers were already boxed and directed to Bombay in anticipation of my departure from there, and partly because censorship officials would not pass a file of clippings on the ground that there was insufficient time to scrutinize them before my flying boat took off. Censorship in Calcutta is well organized. The captain (a former principal of Islamia College, Peshawar) who examined some of my old notes—and finally passed them after questioning whether my attitude was sufficiently pro-British!—knew that I had once prepared an article for the *Chicago Daily News*. He also possessed copies of at least some of the letters I have sent to you.

Censors aside, the governments in India have treated me well and afforded all facilities, to the extent of arranging for the issuance without delays of a return visa to India when I want to go back.

To help you judge the background on which this note is based, I may recall to you that after entering India in November, 1939, I spent five months at the Aligarh Muslim University, three months in a village of Kashmir, a month and a half in Calcutta and at Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's university at Santiniketan, five months among British administrators in Lahore, Punjab, 40 days in the Arya Samaj Vedic Ashram in Lahore, and a final four months touring 60 towns in the central and southern parts of India.

Thus I have lived in close relationship with Muslims, Europeans and Hindus. Besides language studies, which I continued until leaving Lahore, my investigations have included both village conditions and urban economic and social developments. I have visited all sections of the country except the provinces of Sind and Assam and the western Indian native states.

The major fact in economics and politics in India today is the war, naturally. War orders rescued the large cotton industry from the doldrums, threw the steel industry into full capacity so that such developments as the state-owned Mysore Iron and Steel Works operated out of the red for the first time, turned railway workshops into 24-hour munitions factories, spurred automobile assembly plants to capacity production, initiated an aircraft industry, absorbed huge numbers of such artisans as tailors and iron workers at twice or thrice their private wages, provided a bonanza for contractors of all kinds: food, clothing and timber, filled the railways with military personnel and material, and vastly increased the cost and the size of the government establishment.

On the other hand, war effects unsettled the jute industry—ranking with cotton in importance—killed coir (coconut fiber) exports and curtailed the *copra* and coconut markets so that several thousand people are literally starving on India's southwest coast, caused a glut of the export crop of peanuts that are grown throughout the South, increased commodity prices, and opened the gates for profiteering to such an extent that, in the judgment of a responsible government official, price control is on the verge of breaking down.

The higher prices, while squeezing urban purchasers of rice and wheat, operate only after considerable time lag to give relief to producers who have been in bad circumstances since the agricultural depression of 1930. This is because many peasants must mortgage most of the half-crop that does not go to the landlord, and loan rates on future crops are usually based on the previous year's prices unless the new ones are likely to be lower.

The war, then, has provided some stimulus for capital industry and for business and trade directly affected by the defense effort of raising and equipping a million men and keeping tens of thousands of Italian prisoners. It has tended to disrupt the export of foodstuffs and other primary goods on which India depends for cash to meet international obligations. It has dislocated a goodly amount of internal trade. It has also, naturally, increased the cost of government, and in addition has drawn out considerable private wealth in the shape of "voluntary" war contributions.

Economic nationalists, an important group in the nationalist movement, decry one other aspect of the war effort. Despite industrial

expansion, not much industry that might compete after the war with works elsewhere in the Empire is being permitted to develop. Instances are the blocking of a proposed automobile industry in progressive Mysore State (one of the issues over which Sir Mirza Ismail, the Dewan, or prime minister, resigned), and opposition to the development of an Indian shipbuilding industry.

A committee to plan the economic rehabilitation of India after the war has been established by the Government of India, but as yet has made no report. Popular enthusiasm for its possibilities has heretofore been slight on the ground that it is an "all-white" board. Nationalists point to it as another evidence that Indians are not to be allowed to direct Indian economic policy.

Politically the country is in a morass. Since the Congress ministries in eight out of 11 provinces resigned a month after war broke out, no party has effectively moved until this August to arrest the deterioration of a situation generally admitted to be unsatisfactory. While former premiers and other leaders sit in jail for having made anti-war speeches, British governors have had to go back to the political arrangements of 30 years ago and step in as provincial autocrats. Indians are disgruntled because they were given no voice as to whether India would become a belligerent and because it immediately became evident that Indian war policy would be dictated from London. Britishers are disgusted because the Indians have let them down and sabotaged the Government of India Act, 1935, by resigning their posts; they think Indians ought to see that a British victory is to their best interests, and that therefore they should work for it without demanding self-rule or even a national government as a price.

Finally in August this year the Government of India made a gesture of associating Indians with the war effort. The Viceroy's Council, which had contained three Britons and three Indians bearing the approximate relationship to the Viceroy that American cabinet members bear to the President, was enlarged to contain eight Indians and three Britishers. One of the new appointees, M. S. Aney, publicly declared that if he found the innovation to be merely a blind rather than a real transfer of power he would resign.

There are certain broad aspects that need to be considered before the political ups and downs of the last two years are detailed. Among these are nationalism and the attitude toward the war.

Nationalism dominates the minds of men over the length and breadth of India. Beyond release from imperialist control, not everyone thinks of nationalism in the same terms: the Muslim League has taken a stand for the creation of a separate Muslim state; Jawaharlal Nehru and many who are more radical than he want a socialist state; Gandhi foresees a state of nonviolence; some Indian Christians want to be assured that nobody will trample on precious rights. The fundamental fact remains, however, that most Indians want to be rid of British rule.

There are several proofs of that statement. Complete independence is the creed both of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, although the latter in 1940 went a step farther to demand an autonomous Indian Muslim state, "Pakistan."

No Indian politician can capture votes on a platform of cooperation with Britain, naturally; nationalism does not express itself that way, even in the Philippines. But whereas there are substantial blocks of Filipinos who privately argue against American withdrawal (on grounds of self-interest, of course), the sincerity of Indians crying for autonomy can hardly be challenged. In my travels I have heard explosions of emotion from university professors, illiterate villagers, industrialists, religious leaders, educationalists, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, government officials, poets, economists—the list is very long.

Men whose interest in the status quo is strong naturally still look toward Britain. This body includes the Indian princes who rule two-fifths of the area and a quarter of the people of India. It includes large landholders, who bind peasants to them in a near-serfdom that riles socialists. It includes some industrialists and commercial men. But others take a different view.

A fairly senior official in one branch of the great Tata organization explained one afternoon that his undoubted nationalism has developed because he finds that the economic life of India has been and continues to be shaped primarily by British control for British, rather than Indian, advantage. An Indian official who has been knighted and has represented the Viceroy abroad revealed a strong sense of oppression under British rule. Another Indian member of the Indian Civil Service, highest in the administrative establishment, made the statement in private conversation one night that, with

exceptions he named, Indians in that service in his province do not care who wins the war. While I am sure that assertion is overdrawn, there are many Indian ICS officers who are not strongly pro-British by conviction. They do the job for the money, power, and prestige it gives them. One of the last public statements of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore was a rejoinder, in a tone unusually sharp for him, to a call for Indian war aid made in London by Ellen Rathbone.

India's heart is not in this war. The move by the Congress high command prohibiting any Congress member from taking part in the war effort was popularly approved. Some Congressmen have participated, of course, to get on the right side of the British. Yet it remains true that almost all of the former Congress provincial premiers and ministers, many members of the legislative assemblies and councils, and such leading directors of policy as Jawaharlal Nehru and other members of the Congress Working Committee are now in jail for having, nonviolently, given anti-war speeches.

Apart from the Congress, the sons of Punjabi veterans of 1914–18, while loudly protesting their loyalty whenever officials came to visit, did not for many months volunteer for service in anything like the numbers that their fathers had come forward in the last war. I do not know what the situation is now. The authorities have repeatedly stated that so many men can hardly be quickly absorbed in this age of mechanical war. But political consciousness has grown, and only a few months ago the Punjab was treated to the spectacle of a Sikh leader protesting on the one hand that the recruitment quota given the Sikhs was not commensurate with the great military tradition of his community, and pleading on the other hand that young Sikhs come forward and fill the gaps in existing allotments.

There has not been, so far as I know, any question of the loyalty of the Punjabi after he has enlisted and while he is fighting outside of India. He is almost a professional soldier. He thrives under the discipline of British officers, and the records made by him and his brother Indians at Keren and elsewhere in this war match those of the Indian forces in 1914–18.

Up to the present few Indians at home have thought of the Indian forces in Africa and Malaya as defending their own people. They see them as part of the imperial defenses to save not India, but the

Empire and its trade routes. Nor can the civilians be whipped to the thought that they must cooperate in the war to defend themselves. A common attitude is this:

It is obviously vital to Britain to defend India. If we fall to the enemy, British power in the East is gone. Besides, we have been disarmed so we could not fight even for our homes. Therefore Britain, which took away our weapons, is morally bound to defend us. When you come right down to it, Britain is going to win in the end, anyway, because the United States will not let her lose. So the question of how we would defend ourselves after her defeat caused by our lack of help does not arise. And when Britain becomes victor, how will our case for independence be strengthened by having licked the chains that bind us and helped the country that enslaves us to win an imperial war?

That statement shows conclusively that the present apathy is not to be interpreted as pro-Nazi sympathy. I queried people everywhere about their desire for liberation by the Germans or the Japanese. Except for one man who had actually fought with the German army in the last war to vent his repugnance for the British and for some others who were merely displaying bravado, most agreed without second thought that of course they would not welcome other conquerors. What they want is independence.

Financial support for the war is another indication of the temper of the people. As in 1914, princes of the 560-odd States have considered it wise to contribute well to war funds. Their security, more than that of any other single group, depends upon the continuance of the British raj.

Collections have also been made from individuals in British India. I sat in a circle of administrative officials once and heard them tell how some war fund gifts were obtained. One village headman applied for renewal of his gun license, and found it advisable first to make a contribution to the war fund. A city man wanted his driving license extended. A landlord wished to apply for remission of his land revenue tax. They also made donations. Still another wanted this and another that; there is a constant flow of requests across the administrator's desk. The war fund receipt book is frequently in use when these arrive.

The young Britisher's point of view in this procedure may be summed up this way:

These people are totally unrealistic in regard to the war. They don't dream of what would happen to them under German occupation. We are fighting for them just as much as for ourselves, and it is only right that they should share the burden, even if we have to use the heavy hand to persuade them to do so.

So much for the broad outline of the Indian picture. In order to examine some portions of it in more detail, I should like to turn first to the Indian National Congress. This organization was formed in 1885 largely under the inspiration of Mr. A. O. Hume, a British official who felt there would be value in forming an association of cultivated men to present the Indian point of view in public questions of the day. By present standards it remained generally moderate until M. K. Gandhi's star suddenly shot up in the civil disobedience movement of 1920. From a conservative middle-class organization the Congress has moved steadily leftward until now its mass strength stems from agrarian and proletarian support. Its leaders and its apologists continue to be mostly middle- and professional-class people. Since 1934 Gandhi has not been even an ordinary member paying annual dues of 8 cents, but unquestionably he remains the dictator of the Congress today. He alone has directed the present non-cooperation movement in which hundreds of leaders have made political capital out of going to jail. He alone, now that much of the Working (executive) Committee is imprisoned, is shaping Congress policies and determining reactions to British moves. His absolute control has been admitted several times in the course of this war by other Congress leaders who have had to retreat and bow to his will after advocating policies at variance with his.

Gandhi, the master, wants independence for India. He insists, however, that it shall be obtained as a matter of justice and not through power politics. Uncannily astute where his conscience allows him free action, he will not now take advantage of British embarrassment to advance his cause. He fought with dissenters at the last open session of the Indian National Congress in March, 1940, because they wanted to answer the knock of opportunity by what amounted

to open revolt. Their arguments were loud and, to a Western mind, reasonable. Yet he won his point. After the war, however, he is likely, if he retains his vigor, to be an implacable champion of greater Indian autonomy. With the force of the Congress nationalist movement behind him, he will no longer be known as "Britain's best friend in India." Only if he sees internal weaknesses in India which appear difficult of solution will he make one of his dramatic compromises.

When Gandhi is removed from the picture his mantle may fall upon representatives of one of three groups. There are the older conservatives led by men like C. Rajagopalachari, former premier of Madras, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel of Bombay. Furnishing a lot of brain power, they have been the wheelhorses of the Congress movement.

Then there are the adherents of Jawaharlal Nehru, a group which believes that economic reorganization must accompany political independence. Nehru, who has had a great following of youth and has attained the first position behind Gandhi in the Congress, went through some difficult days before he was jailed for the eighth time last cold weather. His philosophy of social and economic reorganization has been the driving force of his political crusade, but it clashes with Gandhi's economic concepts. Recognizing that any move away from Gandhi would serve to split the nationalist movement seriously, Nehru has fought between his beliefs and his loyalties. He was heard to say, in 1940, "I could not write the *Autobiography* now. I am not sure enough of my ideas any more." One leftist laborite European expressed the opinion that Nehru was showing symptoms of schizophrenia. I think that unquestionably his term in jail (for making a speech he was sentenced to four years) will enable him to resolve his conflicts so that he will come out again a dynamic leader.

The third possible group of heirs to Gandhi's sway includes those young extremists like Subhas Chandra Bose (now presumably in exile) who are still in their thirties and who have already gained followings among people not content to sit twiddling their thumbs under the nonviolent program of the Old Man of Wardha. If the Congress continues its steady drift leftward they may be in just the place to take over its leadership. Their chances will be best if Britain after the war approaches India in less than a fully friendly spirit.

Before leaving the Congress I should point out that its membership of several millions (the figures vary greatly from year to year) does not measure its strength in the country. In the primarily Hindu provinces no party has yet been able to stand against it. Congressmen do not merely belong to a political party; they follow a crusade that makes them wear homespun cloth and buy village-made products. Just before this war when Congress ministries held power in eight provinces, there were a number of bandwagon-clamberers, as was to be expected. The strength of the movement, however, has been the little people who fight with their leaders because the latter will not let them give anti-British demonstrations and go to jail.

The Muslim League is quite a different organization. It was organized in 1906, at a period when some Muslims and a number of Britons felt the need of an organization to rival the Congress and believed it could best be built on the virile, intellectually backward minority community of Muslims. The modern Muslim League, however, rose in 1937 in the United Provinces, where the Congress had just walked away with the first election under the new Government of India act. Hypnotized by its unanticipated steam-roller majority, the UP Congress parliamentary committee forgot campaign promises to divide power with the Muslim League. Irked Muslim politicians joined hands with landowners who feared the Congress's agrarian policy, and the result was a new and forceful opposition.

To understand the position of Muslims in India, one must remember that their upper crust is the smashed former Mughal aristocracy of the country, and the great bulk of them are descendants of converts from the lower castes of Hinduism. The ex-rulers did not take kindly to the new order. They refused to learn the English language and the non-Persian sciences, they avoided participation in the new government long after Hindus recognized from where the cake was going to come, they held back from the modernization of their life, mental equipment, and outlook. The low-caste converts, like many Indian Christians drawn from the same levels, had no education and were not fitted to take places of leadership. The result has naturally been an academically-backward community. Because they couldn't get their share of government posts in open competition, Muslims have had to have special places reserved for them. Whenever any new benefit was desired, they have had to ask it as a favor.

This position has bound Muslims together in a common defensive spirit of inferiority; the same feeling on a larger scale unites the whole Indian nation in respect to the British.

Fanned by the propaganda of the renovated Muslim League, community consciousness has spread more widely through the Muslim population (which now numbers something like 90 million) in the last four years. I feel that if the Muslim League was favored by outside interests to oppose the Congress, Whitehall and Delhi now wonder if it has not got out of hand to the extent of becoming a problem greater than they foresaw.

If that is true, the cause is the League's president, Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Mr. Jinnah, a slender-fingered, patrician, brainy, bull-headed man, is not turned from his tenacious purpose by anything less than overwhelming force. Sharp critics say in awe, "You can't buy him." He has never accepted an honor from the British government; the prospect of personal gain or favor seems hardly to have affected his policy. Yet he is undoubtedly a megalomaniac (and a shrewd one). That is his driving power.

Once Mr. Jinnah was with the Congress. He worked with Gandhi in 1920. Disappointed, he withdrew. Now, as a wealthy London-trained barrister who never in private life wears Indian dress and who can barely make a speech in his newly learned Urdu (which is being put forward as the Muslims' national language), Mr. Jinnah stands as the mouthpiece, protector and defender of the Muslim peoples of India. In that capacity he castigates Gandhi, Nehru and what lesser Congress lights he deigns to notice. No man in Indian public life today uses such intemperate language in published references to other leaders. Few men could be less compromising. Yet none surpasses his skill in judging the temper of his partisans. When, soon after war broke out, it looked as if a common front of Indian leaders might advance the independence issue and Mr. Jinnah refused to associate himself with any parleys except as the recognized sole representative of the Muslims in India, observers said: "This time he has gone too far. Even the Muslims want freedom from Britain, and they won't hold it up just on this point." But Mr. Jinnah had sensed the spirit of at least a large mass of Muslims, and gained great support for his stand.

The Muslim League is not the sole organization of Muslims. In the Northwest Frontier Province, where the population is 95 per cent Muslim, the Muslim ministry (under the brothers Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan—the “Frontier Gandhi”—and Dr. Khan Sahib) was a Congress party ministry. The Premier of the Punjab, Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan, is a member of the Muslim League Working Committee, but he has been censured three times for nonconformist actions and his ministry is a coalition bench with Hindus and Sikhs sharing the power and responsibility. Fazl-ul Haq, the premier of Bengal, is another member of the Muslim League who has frequently wandered from the party line. And the province of Sind has a Muslim premier who stands closer to the Congress than the Muslim League.

For these reasons the Congress has never recognized the Muslim League as exclusive spokesman for the Muslim community. Also, should the Congress accede to Mr. Jinnah’s claim, it would thereby label itself as a Hindu organization and lose its standing as an all-India nationalist body.

Repeated attempts to bring the Congress and the Muslim League together have collapsed on this point. Each new effort gives Mr. Jinnah another opportunity to slap on the wrists the Hindu leaders (and the “renegade Muslim,” Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the imprisoned president of the Congress) for being audacious enough to assume an all-India representative character.

Muslims have long wanted a strong champion, and the more Mr. Jinnah is called an obstructionist by other interests the more many Muslims like it. They realize that now they constitute a tail which in the end may be able to wag the dog. For that reason the Muslim League is gaining strength where previously there was mostly bluff and loud talk; lower-class townspeople and villagers are entering the movement that started with politicians and anxious landowners.

Intercommunity tension has long disturbed the internal peace of India. Brushes between parties of Hindus and Muslims have been frequent, and at times clashes have assumed serious proportions. In the spring of 1941 a wave of communal riots started at Dacca, in eastern Bengal, and swept right across India through Bihar and the United Provinces until finally Ahmedabad and Bombay city were in turmoil. The immediate issue linking all of the riots together was

not evident on the surface, but it is apparent that rising political consciousness is serving to put nerves on edge, so that the economic, social and religious causes of difference strike fire more readily.

The strongly communal Muslim League has naturally inspired the rise of a virulent Hindu community body. It is the Hindu Mahasabha. The Mahasabha ("great association") takes for its creed "India for the Indians; let the foreigners go back where they came from." The reference is plain; high-class Muslims are proud to have centuries-old origins in Central and West Asia. The Mahasabha's definition of a Hindu is "anyone who claims India for his homeland." That broad classification, which is most unsatisfactory to many groups, would include Christians, Parsis, Buddhists, Sikhs, and those Muslims who consider themselves true Indians. The Mahasabha is one organization that has supported active participation in this war. Its aim is to train Hindu soldiers for the war that it says publicly must some day come against the Muslims.

The belligerent attitude in internal affairs is very pronounced now. But it is significant that almost the only constructive contribution to the Indian political situation in the last year has come from a group of moderate leaders of both communities. The so-called Non-Party Leaders' Conference was initiated last spring by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, a veteran well respected by the British for his work at the Round Table Conferences of a decade ago. He is old and ill now, and extremist politics have swept away his popular following. But he gathered a group of people, some like himself and some who although influential have not taken part in active politics in recent years, and tried to break the deadlock. This body sent definite proposals to London outlining modest minimum conditions for Indian cooperation in the war. The effort was not successful. Like the Congress and the Muslim League before it, Sapru's group felt that its propositions were manhandled in London. Its object had been to try to get popular governments working in the provinces again during the war. The final effect was to influence the decision to enlarge the Viceroy's council. The Sapru group is still meeting at intervals, and its pressure is going to be felt increasingly.

The efforts of the moderates succeeded a series of futile moves by other parties. The Congress provincial ministries resigned office not over any internal difficulties in their administration, but as a

protest against the automatic enlistment of India in the war. There was no suggestion that India would not enter the war if the Central Assembly or the provincial governments had voted on the question; Nehru had led an anti-fascist crusade since the early days of the Spanish and Chinese wars. But it is likely that conditions would have been asked in return for Indian support.

In March, 1940, the Congress held its first—and, until now, last—wartime general meeting at Ramgarh, Bihar. At that time no active resistance to the government had been started. Despite careful steering by the Working Committee, which wanted to hold off until a propitious time, there was strong agitation from the floor for direct action. Only half a mile away Subhas Chandra Bose harangued his “Forward Bloc” in just as colorful a *pandal*, demanding that the British be given a six months’ limit in which to grant India a degree of autonomy, failing which revolt would follow.

During the following week the All India Muslim League held its meeting at Lahore, capital of the Punjab. The divergencies between the two large organizations reached their widest when the Muslim League adopted a platform calling for the creation after the war of “Pakistan,” an autonomous Indian Muslim “holy land.” A good many of the delegates voted for the measure with their tongues in their cheeks; the events since then, however, have made some people think that the leaders really believe in this hardly practicable scheme, and are not merely using it for political capital.

During the summer of 1940 the Congress moved closer to cooperation in the war effort than it had gone before or has gone since. It offered to participate with the Muslim League and other parties in a national government which would be responsible to the Central Legislature. Since the Government of India Act, 1935, does not provide for a Central Executive responsible to the Legislature rather than the Viceroy, the offer was not long pondered before being dismissed.

The next move came from the British government. In August, 1940, the Viceroy proposed that he would reaffirm the objective of Dominion status for India, accept revision of the 1935 act and an undertaking that “the new constitutional plan to be framed after the war should be drawn up by Indians in India and should originate

from Indian conceptions of the social, economic and political structure of Indian life, subject to the proviso that it would not be repudiated by large or powerful elements in Indian national life," and enlarge his Executive Council by the inclusion of Indian political leaders as heads of departments.

The Muslim League turned down this offer, after asserting that if it were to join with the Congress in such a plan it should have an equal number of representatives and if the Congress did not participate the Muslim League should have majority representation, because it "could get no assurance of just how important a role we will play."

The Congress rejected the bid because no executive responsibility to the elected representatives of the Indian people was involved.

All parties still consider, I think, that by making that offer Britain has pledged herself in any case to permit a constitutional convention in India after the war.

In the autumn of 1940 Gandhi finally launched a campaign of *satyagraha*, or nonviolent civil disobedience. The issue he picked was free speech: Indians, he said, were not being permitted to discuss their participation in the war. Unlike the great mass movements of 1920 and 1930, this civil disobedience campaign was limited to persons individually approved by Gandhi. The chosen ones—provincial ministers and legislators, and other leaders—performed the rite by informing the proper officials that at a certain place and time they would shout anti-war slogans. When the performance was completed, policemen arrested them and they were sentenced to jail for contravening the Defense of India Act. After a time the police began to arrest them as soon as notification of intention had been received, before the act. Eventually, however, the Lahore high court ruled that a mere letter does not constitute an offense. At each of the meetings where a *satyagrahi* is scheduled to speak and be arrested, friends and protagonists gather to give a fitting farewell as policemen step onto the platform to seize the offender. Up to date there have been no instances of violence in this procedure.

No further moves of consequence were made until the non-party liberals assembled in the spring of 1941. Their efforts and the eventual enlargement of the Viceroy's Council, without any simultaneous change in the power of the Council, have already been reported.

The political outlook, then, might be summarized in this way. Presuming there will be no British collapse and in the end the Allies will gain victory, I believe India will remain quiet during the course of the war. Internal disorders are likely, but organized revolt is not on the horizon at this time. The Gandhian will that there shall be no violence or material embarrassment to Britain is one strong influence. Another is the basic fact that the nationalists are still organized on an opposition and not an affirmative basis. The third is the lack of internal unity, which makes a common front—except in the face of a catastrophe—virtually impossible at this time.

If Britain's power fails in the war, three possibilities exist. The Indian leaders might recognize that for their own preservation they must run parliamentary governments. The Congress and the Muslim League could probably achieve a working agreement in this contingency, for Mr. Jinnah once said to me that he should like to see provincial governments in office in case British rule were to blow up without warning. The second possible action is spontaneous civil war between Muslims and Hindus. Local clashes could grow into warfare, but in the early stages it would be spasmodic and un-integrated, especially as most Indians under arms, both Hindus and Muslims, are now serving out of the country. The third and a likely chance is that the collapse of British rule would inaugurate a grab-bag period when aggressors would be active on all fronts. Probably several hundred of the Indian native states would fall immediately of their own weight. The five or six largest—Hyderabad, Baroda, Gwalior, Nepal, and some Rajputana principalities among them—would use existing state troops not only to hold their present frontiers but to recapture former territories lost to the British in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Perhaps some would go on to the conquest of fairly large areas. Hyderabad has been recruiting Pathans from the Northwest Frontier for its army, which could be an effective fighting force threatening much of southern India. In the Punjab the Muslims would not have it all their own way, for fanatic Sikhs would engage them immediately. The United Provinces has a strong agrarian movement that might flare into a socialist or communist uprising. The unity of India might be lost permanently, or one strong force might eventually emerge to dominate the whole country.

A British and Allied victory will signal the opening of strong nationalist agitation, I am convinced. I cannot see how the British can avoid making important changes in the direction of self-government, for Indians know it is to the advantage of the Allied powers not to permit further aggression in the world and they will not therefore hold their demand for independence until they have full defensive forces of their own. The period of negotiations will be difficult; a mass movement of newly enlightened voters is less likely to be compromising than skilled diplomats. The demand from the Indian side will be strong and insistent. To meet that there is no clear-cut British policy. Home sentiment in England is, I judge, far ahead of the British administrators in India on the question of re-linquishing power. Empire economics as well as empire politics comes into the issue, which is certain to be highly complicated. The position of men charged with formulating policy is not to be envied.

India Enmeshed in the War

August 5, 1942

YOUR CABLE AND letter have been very much appreciated. The news of George Antonius's death saddened me, however, for I had felt that he would be an important factor in Middle East negotiations at the end of the war. His knowledge of that part of the world might have been greatly valued by a weary world in search of peace. If you have any further information as to how he died, and whether war causes were responsible, I should be glad to learn of it.

Time and this job have swept me along so fast that much of what I have to tell you seems almost in a past epoch. The trip to and through the Philippines while the Navy was in process of commissioning me, for example. After that delightful interlude my five weeks' training period in Singapore was in fact spent on the brink of the holocaust, although later events confirmed my impression at the time that whereas in Manila the attitude in places I habituated was that war with Japan was inevitable, in Singapore the people I met considered the situation delicate, but the die by no means cast.

The impregnable fortress of the East had not been tested in November, so it did not consider itself to be found wanting.

After flying to India over territory from Penang to Bangkok and from Bangkok to Rangoon and Akyab that the Japanese so soon afterwards infested, I made the usual official calls at Delhi and arrived at Bombay to open this office just three weeks before December 7. Since that date the scope of work has continued steadily to increase. Until the end of March an exceedingly capable chief yeoman and I were alone in the office, but gradually relief has been afforded until now I have two junior officers and a total staff of nearly a dozen.

The routine functions such as naval liaison and merchant ship control have left sufficient time for me to watch a steady worsening in the general Indian situation. This has been a season of mishandled crises and lost opportunities. It is now well established that Sir Stafford Cripps early in his conversations gave an impression of the amount of power that would be transferred to Indian hands that he subsequently had to circumscribe, for one reason or another. On the basis of his early statements there was one day during the negotiations when an agreement was definitely in the minds of the Congress leaders. This is fact, not conjecture. In the party councils individuals were discussing how the portfolios would be distributed. The way in which the final collapse came about no longer has a bearing on the problem; nor does the fact that rejection of the Cripps proposals was the Congress's most grievous error, since regardless of constitutional restrictions on a popular government no Viceroy could stand against it in the face of a determined effort to prosecute the war effort in India. What is important is that naturally anti-British distrust increased as a result of the failure. The Indian Congress, swayed on the one hand by a sincere anti-fascist spirit and stymied on the other in its relations with the British, reached a point of complete frustration. Nehru had the greatest difficulty coming to the viewpoint of Gandhi, who moved inexorably toward a new civil disobedience campaign. Tonight we are on the eve of the meeting of the All India Congress Committee at which it is expected Gandhi will be given authority to start the movement. The country is restless and uncertain of the future. Most of the non-Congress parties and leaders oppose the plan, and in dealing with the movement the Government appears to be relying heavily on

that opposition. There appear to be two possibilities if the movement really begins. Either it will be a success, and will paralyze a number of war industries and seriously disturb transport, merchandizing and other fields, or else it will bring on inter-party and inter-communal clashes that may develop into riots and make martial law necessary on a widespread scale. In either case military energy would be so hampered and dissipated that it could not be brought to bear in full strength for operations on the eastern or western Frontiers. Even if by some standards the movement proves to be a failure, it cannot fail to stir up passions against the Allied war machine operating in and from India.

With the mood of Indians what it is, the Government, which raided Congress headquarters and took many papers, has chosen to release long sections of the secret official minutes of a meeting of the Congress Working Committee in Allahabad in late April which purport to show that Nehru and Gandhi were in strong disagreement about policy and that the former accused the Mahatma of believing that the Axis would win the war and permitting that belief consciously or unconsciously to color his whole thinking. The release of this statement may help the Government's case in the foreign press, but I cannot see how it can do anything but harm in India. From a man who saw Nehru today I learned that Nehru, who is capable of white-hot temper, was in a blazing mood over what he considers the Government's despicable trick. Anger at the Government for using means they consider mean and unfair will not put the Congress leaders into a mood for negotiation or compromise at this crucial moment. In addition the propaganda effect is terrible, for it is inevitable that thousands and millions of Indians will now say to each other, "Well, if it is true that Gandhiji thinks the Axis countries will win, they obviously cannot be defeated." Nothing can eradicate widespread faith in his opinions.

My personal view is that events having run their course the Indian nationalists have us, the Allies, in a screw vice from which we cannot get out. If we permit them to embroil themselves in domestic upheavals of the scope of civil disobedience, the country can in no way resist invasion and the Allied troops who on its behalf try

to fight off the invader will be faced with an intolerable situation. If we cannot fight in India, our last effective base between Germany and Japan is nullified. If we lose that base and the Axis powers manage to join hands across it, our war difficulties become incalculably greater; our survival less certain.

Therefore we must, at any price, appease the Indians today. If there is any prestige left to throw away, we must throw it to the winds. We must take two practical steps: (1) Russia, China and the United States must guarantee Britain's promise of independence to India after the war; and (2) the Indian nationalist parties must be given truly responsible governmental powers, subject only to the stipulation that they get on with the war. Complications such as the Muslim League attitude could be got around by making Mr. Jinnah the prime minister, an arrangement which the Congress has already accepted in theory. If the Viceroy has suddenly to be reduced to the regal position of a 20th-century king, and if General Wavell must find himself under the orders of an Indian war minister, still, if the matter is handled so as to align the country with the Allies, the result counted by the success with which the war against the Axis is fought will be good.

Many of my Indian friends who, unlike C. Rajagopalachari, will subscribe to the party line are nevertheless unhappy about the approaching civil disobedience. It is the counsel of frustration that nobody wishes for. It is urgent that some way of avoiding it be found.

You may have heard that the US Foreign Information Service, which is now a division of the Office of War Information, has established a working branch in India headed by Robert Aura Smith, the former Manila newspaperman and author of a book on America's Far Eastern policy. Up to the present Smith has been working entirely with and through the Government of India. He approached me on the question of my joining the organization. Although I then presented to him a memorandum which I believe set him back on his heels, he held open the offer and mentioned a remuneration figure in the neighborhood of \$7,000. For a number of reasons, including some personal ones, I should be disinclined to work in his organization. Besides, having begun this Navy job I should like to finish it.

I finally told him that I could not consider the matter now, but inasmuch as I am convinced that American publicity in India is extremely important, I would talk with him again if the Navy post dwindled to mere routine of no particular value to anybody. That was before the increased functions, staff and rank had come to me.

I am delighted that my family is now located in a place where it is possible occasionally for all of you to meet together. How I should enjoy joining you!

INDIA AFTER THE WAR

In these letters from the period just before independence are preserved the drama and bitterness of the times, side by side with hope for the fulfilment of dreams that generations had nurtured during their long struggle for freedom.

The letters chronicle the events leading to the fateful day when the two nations would take birth. They take us through the failure of the Simla conference after the war, the efforts at compromise by the Cabinet Delegation from England, the formation of the provincial ministries in the 1946 elections, the uncompromising faith and belief of Jinnah in a Pakistan, the tragedy of Direct Action day, the healing sought by Gandhi in his journey to Noakhali, the decision by Prime Minister Attlee to leave India by June, 1948, and finally the bringing forward of that date by Lord Mountbatten, leading to Independence.

Talbot felt in the air the political frustration and tension, and saw for himself the results of the communal riots in Calcutta and the spiritual damage that they caused. He talks of the carnage that brought out the best in some men just as it brought out the bestial in others. Two or three generations later it is heartening to read of Muslim families who took Hindus into their homes to protect them from Muslim mobs, and Hindus who offered asylum to their Muslim neighbors. But the tragedy was there for everyone to see and was greater than words could describe.

An important letter from this collection is the one dated February 16, 1947. Talbot had traveled for five days to walk for one hour with Gandhi. He came away convinced that Gandhi was clinching his place in the Hindu pantheon in his efforts to bring about healing between Hindus and Muslims. If those relations could be moved from a religious to a political level, Talbot says, perhaps there would

be an alternative to partition. In speaking of Gandhi he says, "his approach is that of a prophet to a basic human problem, and prophets work for future generations."

To those born after Independence, the letters outlining the choice between a central government, an Indian federation, and outright partition seem nostalgic in part. One wonders what might have been done to keep the nation together.

These letters also offer insights into the free India that developed, and the self-imposed constraints that were placed on us. From an economic perspective Talbot identifies socialism and state planning as the likely path that Indian politicians would pursue toward social equity. He observes the role of communist-led unions in the textile, railway, and other industries.

Significant challenges remain for all the three nations that emerged from this period. No one can disagree with Talbot's conclusion that for any country "independence is not a magic formula to solve all its problems."

Krishen Mehta

India in the Spring of 1946

*c/o American Mission
Bahawalpur House
New Delhi
(Written in Simla)
May 27, 1946*

FROM THE FEW stories that have appeared in the *Daily News* you already may have gained some idea of my activities since reaching India. We arrived in Calcutta at a crucial moment, when the British Cabinet Mission seeking an Indian solution was just managing to bring Muslim League and Indian Congress delegates to the same table. I rushed directly to Simla to observe the conference and ever since then I have been busy getting up to date with the present situation. That is the main reason you have not heard from me earlier.

Your letter of April 27 came in excellent time; I received it two weeks ago. As the expanded Institute program develops, I shall be eager to hear of its progress. In a short time I hope to be able to suggest a feasible way of training a new man in Indian affairs. Recruitment for the Indian Civil Service no longer follows the traditional pattern, and wartime beginners have been trained in India rather than in England. At this moment members of the service are unsure how much longer the ICS, always the steel framework of the Indian empire, will continue to exist. For our purposes it may be necessary to choose a new approach to the country. Of course it is even more important now than before that anyone who desires to dig into India should get an idea of Indian history, economics and social structure in a relatively dispassionate atmosphere before being tossed into the maelstrom of current partisan conflicts.

Doubtless you have already heard from Professor Fisher of my breakfast visit with him at Stanford's Hoover library. He is interested in collecting materials on the Indian renaissance for his library. I agreed to be on the lookout for the type of documents he desires. Subject to your approval, I suggested that I would meet any costs involved from Institute funds, and ask the Library to reimburse the Institute.

The changes in India during the last three or four years have been profound. So far I have sensed rather than documented them, but they are apparent at every turning. The war has introduced new and strange elements, excited political passions, sharpened loyalties and enmities and intensified struggles for power. At the same time it has disrupted the economic balance of the country and transformed Indo-British relations, all the time disguising the fundamental social changes to which it was giving birth.

The stage setting of the Indian drama has changed almost out of recognition since 1939. Then the British were firmly in control, protecting the European investment in India and maintaining enough peace and jobs so that the country remained an asset of the Empire. One organization, the Congress, all but dominated the political field by virtue of the technique it had developed for acquiring mass support. The competitive Muslim League was judged by many to be a useful counterbalance to the Congress; it was in the main a landlords' effort to fight a peasant and worker movement. Lesser minority groups were given much attention, but exerted little power. Though the economic pattern was defective and a source of political irritation, it had the familiar outlines of the preceding 20 years. The nationalist tide was certainly rising, but each wave swept a little higher on the same beach.

The immediate background of the present British cabinet discussions with Indian political parties is strikingly different. Take the position of the Muslim League as an example. The League, an old organization, was resurrected in 1937 after the Congress party, with its mass-support technique, had swept the first popular provincial elections. For three years it grew slowly, broadening its base and capitalizing on every instance in which a Hindu member of a Congress provincial ministry could be charged with discrimination against Muslims. Then, in 1940, the League adopted as a creed the idea of a separate Muslim homeland to be carved out of India. "To be ruled by Hindus is death for Muslims," its propaganda said. From then on the old war cry, "Islam in Danger," worked its ferment. The League apparently penetrated urban Muslim classes and even to some degree the villages. This spring I return to India to find that the cry for Pakistan has become a Muslim article of faith. Except in

the Northwest Frontier Province, where the Congress mass movement reached the Muslim Pathans many years ago, the League in the recent elections carried practically all of the legislative seats which are reserved for Muslim constituencies. Taxi drivers and shopkeepers know the League now. Yesterday I asked the coolie who had carried my baggage to this hotel if he would take a letter to the Yarrows. He was an ordinary load carrier who had demonstrated no particular personality up to then. But when by way of clarification I explained that the Yarrows is Mr. Jinnah's house, he pulled himself up straight, gave me a terrific salute, and said the equivalent of "Yes, sir." In 1939 I might have elicited a similar response from a servant-class Indian if my letter had been for Gandhi or Nehru. Now, obviously, the League too has become a mass organization.

The League's metamorphosis does not mean it is equal in strength to the Congress. The Congress has won control of eight out of 11 provincial ministries in the 1946 elections, and is the most important member of a coalition which has kept the Muslim League in the opposition in the militarily important Punjab. The League controls only the Bengal and Sind ministries, and both of those, I believe, shakily. Yet the League's new strength is a political fact of major importance to the British, who have wrestled with it in the present negotiations, and to the Congress, some of whose leaders seem unable to adjust their thinking to the idea that a second mass organization has arisen in India.

Contrariwise there is an utterly new force which I am not yet able either to understand fully or to evaluate. The Japanese-sponsored Indian National Army, created from perhaps 20,000 Indian prisoners of war captured in the 1942 Malayan debacle, has returned in a heroic role. Whatever its fighting record in the late Burma campaigns may have been, it scored a signal political victory when public resentment forced the Government of India to release some INA leaders, all former officers of the Indian Army, who had been convicted by court martial of waging war against the King. The INA, hailed as patriotic fighters for freedom under Subhas Chandra Bose (who himself has posthumously achieved greater prestige among Indian nationalists than he ever possessed before he went over to the Axis), purports to place India above Hindu or Muslim interests. The few

of its Muslim officers with whom I have talked claim to be non-communal (and therefore anti-League). The Congress has actively feted and assisted the INA. The future role of this organization will be worth watching. Will it become the strong arm of the Congress, as the *Khaksars* were once expected to be the Muslim League's army? Or will it dwindle and fade in India's present situation? I don't know. But its importance goes beyond its numbers; it goes into the morale of the whole Indian military establishment. The regular forces are already observing investigations of recent "strikes" or "mutinies," as the case may be, in the Indian Army, Air Force, and Navy. It is unlikely they are unaware that the Congress is the strongest candidate for power in the coming interim government and constituent assembly. If I were among them, I would wonder about my loyalty to a government whose leaders had made a great fuss over troops who had deserted and gone over to the enemy in time of war.

That the British situation in India has been transformed is apparently recognized to some degree by almost everyone. A few Englishmen and more Indian politicians seem unable to grasp the full implications, however Nehru talked to me of getting the British army out of India as a major issue, whereas to me that seems to be a minor point in the *force majeure* of circumstances. The main point is that Britain's whole financial relationship with India has been turned upside down. The long story of extension of British control over India in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is closely related to the protection of British investments in this country. Since British goods first appeared in Presidency ports, Britain has been India's creditor. This war changed all that. The profitable British official investments in India have been swept away. In their place, owing to wartime expenditures on behalf of His Majesty's Government, has come a vastly larger debt amounting to more than \$5 billion, or enough on the basis of prewar budgets to finance the Central Government for 20 years. The debt is in the form of sterling credits, which are bookkeeping balances that may be adjusted and certainly will be haggled over. It does not affect British private commercial investments, which are still sizable though shrinking. The important point, however, is that the new circumstances release Britain from the necessity of protecting her investment in India and provide her with potential economic controls of a new sort. A debtor of such

magnitude can usually threaten nonpayment in order to gain the trade terms it needs. This is a complicated subject which I am handling superficially, but it adds up to one reason why political control over India will no longer be profitable to Britain. There are other reasons as well, of course. Indian nationalism and sectionalism have been so inflamed by the war that keeping the peace will be a much more costly business than it was 10 years ago, particularly if principal reliance must be placed on white troops. The international pressure on Britain to readjust her colonial policy is far more severe than it was before the war. Unrest in India would adversely affect other colonial areas, and a peaceful India is vital to the preservation of any semblance of British influence from the Middle East straight through to Southeast Asia. And finally, only an India that is not at continual loggerheads with Britain will be a fruitful field for the market development which Britain needs so badly.

I would add just a paragraph about the economic consequences of the war. It apparently is an exaggeration to say that the war gave vast impetus to Indian industry. Rather, industrial output was diverted from civilian to military functions. The country today suffers from a severe shortage of consumer goods of all kinds, to a degree unbelievable in the United States where we think we have the same problem. The food shortage seems to be caused by continued lack of imports, serious crop failures in both the rice and wheat zones, and the old bugaboo of inefficient production in the face of a rising population. I have the impression that the administrative machinery is working better now than it did in the Bengal famine of 1943, and that assistance from the Combined Food Board may yet get the country through this year without mass starvation. The cloth shortage, however, is unrelieved. In building materials there are the same difficulties. At the same time there is a vast amount of new money about. Currency circulation has increased five times, I believe, by the inflationary device of printing notes against the sterling balances. The official cost of living index is above 250, using the price structure of September 1939 as a base of 100. The pressure for goods has stimulated a vast black market which is at least no better controlled in this country than are the similar phenomena in the US and UK. War profits have created a class of *nouveaux riche*, while war prices have depressed the ordinary standard of living below prewar levels.

Even officers of the highly paid ICS protest that their salaries no longer cover their expenses. The middle-class clerks and school-teachers are severely pressed, people tell me. India is expecting her railroad strike, too, next month. Everywhere industrial workers are in turmoil. The economic upheaval is one of the results of the war. It is also inevitably intermeshed with the political struggle.

In the framework of my *Daily News* stories, where I must stick tolerably close to verifiable facts, I find it hard to put across the political frustration, bitterness and tension that one feels in the air here. Even white-faces on the spot are saying, "The silly fools: we're offering them independence for the taking; why can't they get together and settle on it?" What must readers in Chicago be thinking? But it is not quite so simple as that, partly because historically disruptive factors have come into play and partly because Indians are Indians. I've mentioned the rise of a second mass-contact party in India. The ambitions of the Congress and the League, always incompatible, have crystallized into unalterable opposition with this development and with the approaching demise of the outside power which both have fought. These are natural phenomena. But for the genius of three or four individuals no United States would have emerged from the colonial union which had fought the revolutionary war. For 35 years since the Manchu dynasty was destroyed Chinese competitors have tussled to inherit the mantle. The united maquis and resistance movements of the European war have been succeeded by a disorganized France and an unhinged neighbor where, as Max Ascoli said, "There is no Italy, only Italians." Today the greatest powers on earth are struggling to discover whether a wartime *entente* in opposition to other powers can be preserved as a postwar alliance to lead the world to peace.

The problem is just the same in India. The British are about to leave: that is evident to all parties. At this moment, should the Congress which has fought and filled the jails since 1919 for an independent united India compromise its principles and agree to the partition of its homeland? Or should the League, which has captured the imagination of millions of Muslims and gained one political concession after another with its demand for Pakistan, suddenly cave in and join the Congress campaign for a unitary government just when power may be at hand? No, I fear the Congress dream of

governing the second-most populous state on earth and the Muslim League vision of creating the greatest Islamic state of the world are too opposed and too grandiose to coalesce at this moment in history.

A compromise may be possible, but to succeed it must be based not on earnest hopes that the two parties will get together in the best interests of their country. It must be based on an exact analysis of their relative strengths. This is what the British Cabinet Mission has attempted to make, and I for one read in the recently published Simla conference correspondence a shifting estimate in which the Cabinet Delegation discounted the League a little more at the end of the conference than it had done at the beginning. Neither side can be satisfied with a compromise, especially when it is a compromise of principles and of power. If the balance is so finely struck that neither side can ultimately afford to reject it, the British Cabinet Mission will have succeeded. You will know the answer probably before this letter reaches you. At the moment the prospects do not look good.

The Cabinet Delegation led by Lord Pethick-Lawrence and sparked by Sir Stafford Cripps has been working in India for two months now. I shan't go into its activities in this letter. But a sidelight that has to do with the destruction of old shibboleths may be of interest. Always before in political negotiations in India, two concepts have been sacrosanct. One maintained that the ancient treaties between the British throne and the Indian States were inviolate, so that no political change could touch the maharajas without their consent. The other cited Britain's special responsibilities to the various minority communities and interests. This time the Cabinet Delegation proposed to snap off the British relationship with the native states, leaving the princes to deal with an entirely different and probably unfriendly authority. And while every possible minority was heard from in early consultations, the serious political planning was done only with the Congress and the League. The others were let off with promises of constitutional safeguards.

I have not as yet heard any convincing exposition of what is likely to happen if the Cabinet Mission fails to reach a generally acceptable solution. People in many areas are plainly in a jittery mood. Two Muslims were killed in a communal fight in Delhi the other night after, according to the police, a goat had wandered onto a Hindu

playing field and some Muslims had chased it, interfering with the Hindu games. In Allahabad Hindu and Muslim workers have had fatal clashes this week. Curfews are in force in several other cities to prevent isolated incidents from growing into general conflagrations. Recent disturbances in Kashmir between rival political organizations, one pro-Congress and the other pro-League, are being described in some places as containing elements of an incipient revolt against the maharaja. Other instances could be cited. Sixty-nine-year-old Mr. Jinnah, who looks much older and more drawn than he did when I saw him six years ago, says that if a settlement is "imposed" on the League (i.e., if the British government decides the League's price is too high and settles with the Congress), the League will fight. Somehow it is difficult to visualize this shrewd parliamentarian as a revolutionary leader, but it may be that from the League's new following a fighter will turn up if the occasion should arise. That is one of those matters which the Cabinet Delegation must judge. I couldn't hazard a guess before doing considerable traveling through the provinces. And by that time the new status may be self-evident.

Nobody thinks the existing situation is easy. Yet some of the Labour government's strongest brains are out here working at it, and there is no real yearning in any quarter for a disintegration of the country's stability. I have outlined these problems for you not to indicate their hopelessness but to demonstrate why neither the British nor the Indians can achieve a workable solution as easily as many outsiders must expect.

Calcutta Riots

*New Delhi, India
August 30, 1946*

WATCHING A GREAT city feed on its own flesh is a disturbing experience. In spite of our war heritage of callousness, I know that I was not alone in sensing profound horror this last week as Calcutta, India's largest metropolis and the second city of the Empire, resolutely set at work to

cannibalize itself. After four days of uncontrolled fury a shattered city remained. Many months must pass before it can recover from the material despoilment that overtook it. But far more serious, I am afraid, is the spiritual damage. Dazed, suspicious survivors showed none of the camaraderie and mutual sympathy which tends to spring up among victims of a severe bombing, Instead their eyes revealed hatred, bitterness, distrust, and fright. I cannot guess how long the city will need for the recovery of its soul.

Riots are nothing new to Calcutta, of course, although half a dozen Indian cities are considered more inflammable. From the time the British started building a city around the old Hooghly village of Kalikatta, history books tell of sporadic clashes either between Indians and Europeans or between hangers-on of the old Muslim gentry and the newer Hindu trading barons.

In 1891, for example, Hindus thought their religion was endangered by a new legal code which raised the bridal age of consent to 12 years. In 1905 Indians began protesting the partition of Bengal by terroristic acts directed against Britishers. In 1926 Hindus and Muslims tangled. There were other clashes during the 1930s. And twice during the last year, in November and again in February, Hindu-Muslim and anti-European riots seriously interrupted the life of the metropolis.

To disturb the pulse of a civic organism which is as large as Chicago is no small matter. Calcutta, once the capital of India and still its financial hub, is to 200 million Indians what Shanghai is to as many Chinese: the gateway between the hinterland and the outside world. Large exports of tea and most of the world's supply of jute pass through the port, which is one of the largest in the Orient. Besides trade, the city's prosperity is built on both heavy and light industries. Employment is large, and the laboring force includes many non-Bengalis. By any standard Calcutta is a rich city. One of its characteristics is that most of the moneybags are held by Europeans and Hindus.

At the same time it is a poor city. Into an area half the size of New York's Bronx more than 3 million residents are crowded. In other words, a whole family lives in Calcutta in the space available for one individual in the Bronx. Highly inflated living costs test householders' cleverness in keeping their families housed, fed and decently

covered with cotton cloth. This year, as during the great famine of 1943, many have been unable to obtain the most elementary necessities. These difficulties are common to poorer Hindus and Muslims. Yet there is always danger of friction because of "communal" difficulties.

(Let me digress for a paragraph to explain this term which appears constantly in Indian usage. "Communal" is defined in my Macmillan's dictionary as "of or relating to a commune." In India the word has no relation to such political phenomena as the Paris communes; rather, it is a term packed with the dynamite of social tensions which threaten to tear this country apart. Here, communal refers to communities of different faiths, e.g., Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Parsis, Anglo-Indians. But it is not limited to religious significance. Both Hinduism and Islam, for example, establish whole patterns of life. Their tenets extend, in theory or in practice, to the regulation of customs of housekeeping, laboring, doctoring, washing, dressing, eating, marrying, reproducing, and what have you. You can tell an orthodox Hindu from a Muslim by the style of his haircut. "Communal" includes all such matters plus economic rules, methods of education, schools of philosophy, and—always to be remembered—religious conviction. A communalist believes that these features form the true stuff of life as contrasted to political democracy, majority rule, unity of the working class, etc. When a man thinks in these terms he is communalistic whether he belongs to a large community or a tiny one such as the Parsis. But in ordinary speech "the communal problem" usually refers to Hindu-Muslim relations. A communal riot, therefore, is generally a clash between Muslims and Hindus.)

In Calcutta the communal problem is aggravated by the city's position as capital of Bengal province. The city itself has three Hindus for every Muslim. But the provincial government is always Muslim-dominated because of the preponderance of Islamic converts who live in rural eastern Bengal. The Muslim League ministry now in authority attempts, naturally enough, to improve the lot of the Bengali Muslim; also naturally, its efforts do not always avoid offense to the Calcutta Hindu. In short, Calcutta is a permanent jousting ground between Hindu economic and cultural domination and Muslim political authority. These are the main

permanent features of Calcutta's communal position. Recent political developments in India have accentuated them strongly, particularly since the British Cabinet Delegation arrived in India last March.

The immediate train of events started with the Muslim League's Council's meeting in Bombay at the end of July. There Mr. Jinnah, embittered because he thought the Viceroy had cheated him of a chance to form an Indian cabinet and angered because both the British government and the Indian Congress seemed ready to override him, put the League on the warpath. As you recall, the frenzied Council delegates rejected the British constitutional scheme which they had accepted only six weeks before. After a career which has on the whole been advanced by constitutional methods, the League, they declared, was now prepared to launch revolutionary "direct action" to achieve its goal of Pakistan, the independent Indian Muslim state. That was a grave decision. In the midst of great political changes it immediately increased communal tension by placing the League in direct and apparently unalterable opposition to the Congress party, whose Hindu-controlled India-wide majority the Muslim League fears, and to the British government, which by then seemed thoroughly willing to turn over political power to any authority which could keep the peace. Mr. Jinnah, flush with the Council's enthusiastic reception of his defiant attitude, designated Friday, August 16, as "Direct Action Day" to mark the League's adoption of a revolutionary character. He said nothing, at that time, about how the day should be observed.

Disturbances were expected at many points. A favorite game of foreign newspapermen in the intervening weeks was to guess where the hottest spot might be. Possibilities were Bombay, where Mr. Jinnah lives and where there is an active League organization among Muslim working-class families; Delhi, where Hindu-Muslim feelings have frequently been pricked; Lahore, where the League complains of oppression by the Congress provincial government.

The first tip on prospects in Calcutta came from Bengal's chief minister H. S. Suhrawardy, who visited Delhi a week before Direct Action Day. Suhrawardy is a central figure in Bengal politics. A man of vigor, singleness of purpose, and political acumen worthy of a Tammany boss, he manages almost single-handedly to keep a

Muslim League ministry in power although he can rely on only a plurality, not a majority, in the provincial legislature. Inevitably, the administration of this Bengali Pendergast is preoccupied with politics. He is such a master at the game that he saved his own career even though he served as food minister in Bengal at the height of the admittedly mismanaged Bengal famine of 1943. He is a strong Muslim Leaguer, and holds a significant place in the League's inner circle by virtue of being premier of a province of 60 million people. (His ministry, incidentally, is the only real political plum—not counting tiny and uncertain Sind—which the League has yet grasped.) He has threatened to declare Bengal independent of the rest of India if a Congress government takes power at New Delhi.

One correspondent asked Suhrawardy in Delhi whether the chief minister was anticipating disturbances in Calcutta on Direct Action Day.

“It will be fairly hard to prevent them,” he answered. “Feelings are running high.” He had remarked earlier that Muslims would show the Hindus that they could not be pushed around. Knowing Suhrawardy, we should have realized then that an outbreak was likely in Calcutta.

Tension mounted all over India in the days prior to the direct action observance. Muslims, in the middle of their holy month of Ramzan, were fasting throughout the long, hot daylight hours. As always, many were edgy. And political events were moving rapidly. The Viceroy's house announced that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress president, had been asked to submit proposals for an interim government. Jinnah, commenting on the Congress Working Committee meeting at Wardha which decided to accept the Viceroy's offer, said “We are prepared for any situation that may arise.” Another Muslim League spokesman declared that Muslim League provincial ministries (in Bengal and Sind) might disobey Central Government orders as a form of direct action. Restraint fled out the window when *Dawn*, Jinnah's Delhi newspaper, challenged what it called an anti-Muslim conspiracy in these terms: “The British–Congress axis is formed and the rape of the Muslim nation is to begin in a more ruthless and criminal manner than Hitler and Mussolini dared in Europe. . . . So be it. Muslims have accepted the

challenge because they must. . . . The moment that a Hindu government is set up without the consent and collaboration of the Muslims the first shot of aggression will have been fired against them. And that will be the signal for the Muslims—to do or die. It is inevitable.” Such talk was not calculated to soothe Muslim tempers, particularly during Ramzan. Nor was the gloating in non-Muslim newspapers that finally, after 60 years of struggle, the Congress had been asked to form a government. Most Muslims whom I met during those days were angry, a little frightened, and belligerent.

On the day before Direct Action Day, newspapers published a directive from Mr. Jinnah enjoining all Leaguers to observe the 16th by holding peaceful meetings and in a completely disciplined manner “in order not to play into the hands of our enemies.” Speakers, he said, were to speak of the need for direct action but not to practice it until the call came from headquarters. Even this order was diluted, however, by the news which was broadcast the same evening that Nehru and Jinnah, in a brief talk in Bombay, had failed to agree on a coalition interim government. Compromise, which would have taken the sting out of Direct Action day, had again proved impossible. The final word was spoken by *Dawn*, which in a special four-page display spread called upon Muslims to die for Pakistan. The day’s cartoon showed a large fist, labeled “direct action,” being shaken under the terrified noses of a pair of pals, John Bull and Jawaharlal Nehru; the caption was “Good Heavens! The Fellow Means Business!”

Meanwhile Suhrawardy’s government, over strong protests from the legislative opposition, had declared the 16th a public holiday in Bengal. The chief minister said later that he had decided on the holiday to minimize chances of friction between the communities. But friction developed early in the day. By late afternoon we who were in Delhi knew that a major riot was in progress in Calcutta, though elsewhere, Direct Action Day was being observed in accordance with Mr. Jinnah’s instructions.

Undoubtedly all correspondents in Delhi should have rushed to Calcutta as soon as the proportions of the outbreak became visible. For personal reasons—the marriage of George Jones of the *New York Times*, and our own wedding anniversary for which Mildred had come to Delhi—and for professional reasons—Nehru’s anticipated

arrival in Delhi to discuss the interim government with the Viceroy—most of us delayed. By the second night, however, we knew that Calcutta was experiencing a convulsion rather than a street riot, so some of us, including the bridegroom, maneuvered a ride to the Bengal capital in the Jam Saheb's Lodestar.*

After a delay at Allahabad, we reached Dum Dum airfield at 10 o'clock in the evening. To get into Calcutta, 12 miles away, we had to wait four and a half hours for a military convoy guarded by an armored car. It was an eerie drive. The city, under complete curfew, looked dead. We drove through deserted streets in which nothing moved. Then suddenly a military barricade, dominated by medium tanks, loomed out of the dark. We stopped, were checked, went on. After a little distance, more troops standing by armored cars looked us over and let us pass. Occasionally the sweeping headlights of one of our vehicles picked up the bare walls of a corner shop, obviously stripped clean. Finally someone, seeing what we had all been sensing, muttered, "There's one." Visible momentarily in the beam of the headlights, avoided by a slight swerve, the body was again swallowed up in the darkness. "Four on this side," someone else said. In a moment we were in the thick of them, weaving to miss the ghoulish forms which flashed into view and as quickly merged into the night behind us. The stench—a noxious odor of disregarded death—filled our bus. By the time we reached the Grand Hotel we had ceased to take note of individual corpses and had developed a great need for disinfectants.

After an hour's sleep I traveled around the city with a dawn MP[†] patrol. It would be impossible to describe everything that we saw. A sense of desolation hung over the native bazaars. In street after street rows of shops had been stripped to the walls. Tenements and business buildings were burned out, and their unconsumed innards strewn over the pavements. Smashed furniture cluttered the roads, along with concrete blocks, brick, glass, iron rods, machine tools—anything that the mobs had been able to tear loose but did not want to carry off. Fountains gushed from broken water mains.

*Propeller-driven airplane owned by, one of India's middle-ranking maharajas.

†Military Police.

Burnt-out automobiles stood across traffic lanes. A pall of smoke hung over many blocks, and buzzards sailed in great, leisurely circles. Most overwhelming, however, were the neglected human casualties: fresh bodies, bodies grotesquely pleated in the tropical heat, slashed bodies, bodies bludgeoned to death, bodies piled on pushcarts, bodies caught in drains, bodies stacked high in vacant lots, bodies, bodies.

The credible reports I gathered were worse than the sights. At the peak of what the *Calcutta Statesman* called "The Fury," large gangs, either of Muslims or of Hindus or Sikhs, had collected and swept down streets and alleys, snatching and usually dispatching any member of the opposing community who was within reach. They put houses to the torch, and either killed the occupants as they came out or forced them to remain inside. They threw victims off the high Howrah bridge into the Hooghly. They (Muslims, in this case) descended on a dairy colony and killed both herdsmen and herds, down to the last calf. They stopped and ransacked trains. They killed occupants of motor cars which they then burned. They stripped food markets. They cleaned the shelves of jewelry and silver shops. They broke into liquor shops and drank much of the stock on the premises (but enough was left over so one Sahib's bearer offered to obtain Scotch for him at \$3 a case). Everywhere they looted, looted, and looted.

To escape the wrath of roving mobs, 150,000 people or more left their homes in panic. Some found military escort as they flowed toward neighborhoods in which their own community was in a majority or toward Howrah railway station whence they hoped to return to their ancestral villages. Most of them knew that apart from what they carried their belongings would disappear from their houses almost as soon as they left; yet they feared that the alternative to losing all their goods was violence to themselves.

At the end the material loss was incalculable. In many wards the petty shopkeeper class had been wiped out, financially and even physically. Householders lost their homes, or at least their furnishings and personal possessions. The channels of neighborhood trade had been wiped out, and some larger financial and industrial interests also suffered.

In human terms, estimated casualties ran from the provincial government's absurdly inadequate report of 750 dead to military

guesses that 7,000 to 10,000 people might have been killed. Already more than 3,500 bodies had been collected and counted, and no one will ever know how many persons were swept down the Hooghly, caught in the clogged sewers, burned in the 1,200 fires, or taken away by relatives who disposed of their bodies privately. A reasonable guess, I think, is that more than 4,000* people died and 11,000 were injured in what is already being called the Great Calcutta Killing, or the Week of the Long Knives.

What had happened? How had such destruction been loosed, and why had it continued so long? Naturally, evidence is conflicting. Suhrawardy now blames the Hindus, who he says were lying in wait for the Muslims on Direct Action Day. His government apparently informed the Viceroy that Muslim casualties were heavier the first day. Other persons saw loaded trucks flying the League flag roaring around the city, "Just like the Brown Shirts did in Germany." Muslim crowds, it was said, went into action after hearing a rumor that a mosque had been set on fire. The independent *Statesman*, whose attacks on the Suhrawardy administration for incompetence and gross neglect in dealing with the riots have been a feature of the Calcutta Killing, published charges that paid thugs had been imported from Bihar to participate. Perhaps the facts will come out eventually. What is plain now is that the orgy began Friday morning, early on Direct Action Day; that the police promptly lost control; that imposition of a curfew was delayed; and that military forces remained idle long after civil authorities had become helpless. Eventually, when the troops were called out, battalion followed battalion into action until three brigades, one division, were used to bring the city under control as well as to direct rescue work, dispose of corpses, and handle other jobs that no one else was doing.

The civil administration virtually ceased to function during those days. Suhrawardy and Hindu leaders jointly toured the city, appealing for order. Department heads held conferences. But the secretariat closed for five successive days to observe Muslim, weekend, and Hindu holidays. Government grain ration shops were closed, if not looted, by rioters. And at the police riot control room, even a government official could not find out which were the worst-affected areas.

*Later raised to 5,000, but no accurate count was possible.

It is certain that the Suhrawardy government will face a vote of censure when the legislative assembly reconvenes early in September. Criticism is also likely to fall on the provincial governor, who under the existing constitution has special responsibilities in the prevention of any grave menace to the peace and tranquility of the province.

Such a gross fit of civil destruction can never be reduced to simple cause-and-effect, of course. In the main, the riots unquestionably reflected a smoldering, dangerous bitterness between Hindus and Muslims. That is the heritage of recent political history in India. But a large share of the destruction must be charged to *goondas*, the Indian equivalent of Chicago's racketeers and gangsters. *Goondas* can always fish to their own profit in troubled waters. Their catch this time, by good accounts, made it worthwhile for them to stimulate the riots and keep them going. *Goondas* had a field day. Many private scores were settled, too. Many corner shopkeepers who were also moneylenders felt the full fury: their shops were looted, their financial records seized and destroyed, and they themselves were killed by mobs. The only group that emerged unscathed was the European community. This time, unlike some earlier disturbances, a white face gave immunity—this battle was strictly for Indians.

Like war, the carnage brought out the best in some men as it brought out the bestial in others. Throughout the city there were Muslim families who took Hindus into their homes to protect them from Muslim mobs. Hindus, too, offered asylum to Muslim neighbors in many instances. Many individuals risked their motor cars and even their lives in rescue work and in attempts to quiet disturbed neighborhoods. Homes and office buildings were turned into emergency receiving hospitals for the care of the wounded. Many such cases came to light when the worst of the killing was over. On them must rest Calcutta's hope to get corporate life functioning again. For in Calcutta neither community can carry on without the other.

I have written at length of the events in Calcutta not because the death of 4,000 people in a city halfway round the globe overwhelms Americans in these cynical times; many a battle has cost more casualties. But I fear that these events represent a trend now developing in India. On all sides one observes inflammatory speeches and writing tossed off without regard for consequences, exaggerated claims and counterclaims, political willingness to let issues come to a head,

and above all suppressed bitterness in urban (and perhaps rural) quarters that translates any spark into a flaming clash. The sudden and apparently unplanned riot in Delhi the other night, when six were killed and 70 injured, is an example of simmering communal antagonism easily fanned into fire.

Police officials say that throughout the Punjab there is ferment just below the surface. In Delhi and the United Provinces, the story is the same. We have seen the condition of Bengal. It is difficult to tell at this moment when a new Indian government is taking power, how the country can find real peace until a settlement is reached between the majority Hindu and Congress politicians and the Muslim League, which has now undeniably won the support of the bulk of vocal Muslims.

Muslim League in NWFP

*c/o American Mission
Bahawalpur House
New Delhi, India
November 30, 1946*

SOME WEEKS AGO a friend in Simla showed me a 60-year-old letter, turned up by chance in his mother's bomb-torn attic, in which Lord Curzon epitomized in two blunt, frank sentences the nineteenth-century British policy toward India's Northwest Frontier Province. In essence the man who was to become one of the strongest viceroys of India wrote this: the new Russian advance into the Pamirs can be explained only as a threat to India. Let us look to our defenses.

That kind of Russian bogey is a little shopworn today, but in the Northwest Frontier Province the heritage clings. As Viceroy, Curzon carved out this province from the Punjab for strategic reasons. He insisted on bringing it under Central Government rather than provincial control. It is neither self-sufficient nor was it intended to be so. Moreover, the province is split into two segments between which only incidental intercourse was permitted before the new interim government came into power a few weeks ago. On the east are the

settled Indus Valley districts, where a provincial government functions under the Act of 1935 with a popular ministry comparable to those of other provinces. West of the "administrative border" along the edge of the foothills, however, lies the mountainous tribal belt where the Government of India's External Affairs Department exercises exclusive authority. Outward to the Durand Line, which arbitrarily separates India from Afghanistan, the Pathan tribes are controlled through an indirect administration headed by the Frontier Province Governor in his second capacity as Agent of the Governor General. Here political agents, against whose autocratic authority Indian nationalists fulminate, labor to maintain their influence over the tribesmen who are officially described as British-protected persons rather than as subjects of the Crown.

In such a setting, it was nearly inevitable that the administration should reflect strategic interests. Both political specialists and the Army made a fetish of this outpost of empire. Today, of course, air power and global warfare have reduced it, militarily speaking, to a glorified Maginot Line. None but the Afghans, still a weak and primitive people, would now choose this route for an intrusion of India, even though it was used by all invaders from the earliest Aryans down to the time of the Europeans. High military planners, recognizing the impact of two world wars, are now prepared to yield their favorite frontier to civil armed forces. They agree that new weapons and increasing mechanization make it absurd to keep regular troops locked up in what is really police work in tribal areas.

Possibly for the first time, therefore, frontier policy can be built more on the interests of the inhabitants than on strategic considerations. This development—which was one of the factors impelling Nehru's trip to the frontier—opens up a whole new approach to the sturdy, independent-minded, backward, and impoverished Pathan tribesmen who live unto themselves in nearly inaccessible mountains.

No people have reminded me more of pre-reservation American Indians than these tribal Pathans. As we penetrated the rugged wastes of Waziristan I heard their protestations of independence and their anger that a "Hindu government" should try to dominate them. Their challenge to far greater world forces than they understood was impressive, but futile. While they described how their

village-made, hand-bored rifles would ward off any "invader," they also petitioned the British political agent for higher tribal allowances and more of the jobs and largesse that are handed out as the sweet part of the "big stick and lump of sugar" policy.

They live in village forts, cut off from outside influences partly by fear and partly by the limitations of their primitive agrico-pastoral economy. Plainly it cannot nowadays be sustained without outside wealth, which has heretofore been obtained either by raids on prosperous bazaars in the plains or by government subventions. Local resources must prove increasingly inadequate as demand grows for the two first intruders of village self-sufficiency: mill-made cloth and kerosene. In Waziristan I felt I was watching the end of an era. Whether these tribesmen know it or not, they are about to feel the touch of the outside world.

This may be a good thing, but the chances seem equally great that harrowing confusion will develop before a new adjustment is found. Nehru's advisers misjudged the situation and were surprised when tribal *maliks* (the chiefs; naturally not the stuff of which revolutions are made) spurned their approach made "with love and a desire to help." The same initial reaction can be expected in respect to administrative reforms, schools, hospitals, new roads, agricultural experiment stations, irrigation schemes, and hydroelectric grids. The tribal Pathan whom we met does not live in an age of science, mechanics and interdependence, but rather in a rigid, semi-theocratic, fear-governed feudal society. Individually he is tall, strongly built except when tuberculosis has attacked, clannish, extremely hospitable, and equally quick on the trigger. Alien rulers have always regarded him as hard to control and harder to assimilate. We observed how his fundamentalist Islamic doctrine is overlaid and in places almost obliterated by a sort of Old Testament tribal law. The blood feud is characteristic of his society, and it is a rare male who walks in the daytime without his rifle or wanders outside the mud walls and watch towers of his village at night. Only murder repays murder, and maiming, maiming. The tribal code, a copy of which accompanies this letter, discloses the primitive concepts which cause few men to trust their neighbors and many to doubt their relatives.

These are the people who have suddenly become the target of high-pressure political campaigns apparently coming from all sides.

They themselves talk of remaining independent or of going under the protection of the Amir of Afghanistan, a solid Muslim monarch and the ruler of a nation of Pathans. The Nehru contingent in the interim government profess a desire to raise the standard of their people with constructive, civilizing assistance. Now the Muslim League is moving in with a communal offensive.

Most of the outside influence will naturally come from the adjoining settled Indus districts, which in politics are 50 years farther advanced than the tribal areas. Their political expression has followed the normal Indian pattern; that is to say, advanced elements have alternated between prison cells and ministerial chairs. The distinctive organization of the region is the Society of the Servants of God, or *Khudai Khidmatgar*, who are otherwise known as the Red Shirts because their uniforms are dyed in a brick-dust solution. In a violent age and arena, this body of several thousand men grew during the 1930s into a spearhead of nonviolent opposition to British rule. They won village support by their anti-British stand and by a novel program of social service to the villagers. In the 1937 elections and again last winter, their campaigning was credited with bringing victory to the Congress party.

Noble-faced Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the man who taught the Gandhian principles of nonviolence to so many rifle-carrying Pathans, directs the Servants of God with the peculiarly personal guidance that is characteristic of Indian leadership. With his brother Dr. Khan Sahib, the Congress premier of the Frontier Province, he long ago became the nationalist spokesman of the Frontier, to be seriously challenged by Indians only when the Muslim League grew strong. His burning resentment against everything British (unlike his brother he avoids even personal contact with Britons) is matched only by his devotion to Gandhi. It is odd to see this giant of a man, broad-shouldered, long-legged, and physically hard, sitting next to the little, stooped, unhandsome ascetic. Yet probably the central Gandhian ideal has few more devoted supporters than the man who himself came to be called the Frontier Gandhi.

The *Khudai Khidmatgar* is peculiarly *Pathan* in outlook, ambitions, and methods. Yet, like the Congress, it has an appeal that undercuts men of substance—landlords and the like—who had previously counted as the natural leaders of the country. The very strength of

its organization, therefore, threw such interests into the opposition. They became the core of the Muslim League in the Frontier Province.

To understand the growth of the Frontier Muslim League it is necessary to look at events in other parts of India. From 1937 onwards, and particularly since the Pakistan declaration of 1940, League politicians have been stimulating Muslim clannishness. But the effective fillip to their campaign was given by this year's communal riots. The whole Pathan community was agitated by the deaths of Pathan laborers and moneylenders in Bombay; stories of Muslim victims in Bengal intensified the anti-Hindu upsurge. What will happen when news of the really large Muslim casualty rolls in Bihar trickles through to the Frontier people, officials fear to think.

With the people in this mood the Frontier Muslim League has obviously made great strides. I heard pro-Pakistan arguments unceasingly from professional and bureaucratic men of superior and inferior rank. It was no surprise to count among them the lawyers and landowners who would gain personal power if the League were to prosper. But I took note when the same talk came from subdistrict revenue assistants, subordinate inspectors, secretarial clerks and similar people who before the war were outside the main streams of Indian politics. Partisan feeling is running not only high, but deep.

Besides the power clique of lawyers and landlords and the professional-bureaucratic underlings who have really become frightened of Hindu ambitions, a third element is infusing strength into the Frontier Muslim League. Significantly, onlookers agree that one of the strongest men on the Frontier today is a young *mullah*, the Pir of Manki Sharif, who I believe is still in his 20s. Like the *mullahs* before him—from those who brought down King Abdullah to the Faqir of Ipi—his cry is simple and direct: “Islam is in danger”—“Muslims will be slaves in the Hindu raj”—“Organize before you are crushed.”

The Pir of Manki gathers large crowds. He is said to command a growing corps of disciplined—but not nonviolent—followers. Some believe he engineered the attack on Nehru in the Malakand agency. His ultimate appeal is yet to be measured, and will depend somewhat on the state of passions in the rest of India. Yet it may be significant that the other day 135 Red Shirts were reported to have gone over in a bloc to the League.

What does all this mean? I should think, to start with, that the interim government under External Affairs Member Nehru will find it extremely difficult to begin a constructive program in the tribal areas while communalism runs so high. Almost any move could be misinterpreted and add fuel to what is already a forced-draft flame. The provincial Congress government and the Red Shirts themselves may succumb to this alliance between bureaucrats and *mullahs*. Abdul Ghaffar Khan a few weeks ago felt it necessary to deny that the Red Shirts would ever fight against other Muslims. In the sad eventuality of a Hindu attack on Muslims, this symbol of Gandhian nonviolence added, his men would stand shoulder to shoulder with their brothers in Islam. Finally, should a civil war break out, I think it is clear the Frontier would provide considerable strength to the Pakistan force. Leaguers admit they are anxious to bring in the tribesmen "because Muslims in India may need them," and they know that the Khyber pass would be Pakistan's only gateway to the Islamic countries to the northwest from whom support would be begged.

Such is the Frontier today—upset, unsure of the future, and so fearful of the day's problems that it is being driven into a retrograde communalism.

This picture is alarming and I confess it may be somewhat off balance. I was not able to make a realistic examination of Abdul Ghaffar Khan's assertion that the Red Shirts still hold the loyalty and support of sub-bureaucratic villagers and townsmen. He argues that whatever reception Nehru might get from people who can be roughly lumped together as of the middle class, the Red Shirts could win another victory for the Congress tomorrow as they have done twice before. To these declarations I can counter only with my impression that the Red Shirts (many of whom went to jail in the 1942 anti-government agitation) have not yet recovered their prewar strength and that they are finding their appeals for service and sacrifice decreasingly effective against the League's bald communal approach.

Lest this letter should give you the impression that Muslims alone are responsible for the troubles of India, I would remind you that the region we are discussing is a solid Muslim bloc. Hindus are

limited mostly to traders and writers and are under the half-contemptuous "protection" of the Muslim Pathans. Probably I shall deal with Hindu communalism in a later letter.

In writing this letter I am indebted to Institute of Current World Affairs fellow Dick Morse, who traveled through the Frontier with me and who capably set down the basic factors in his own letter to you, leaving me free to comment on these other aspects.

With Gandhi in Noakhali

22 Ferozshah Road (Rear)
New Delhi, India
February 16, 1947

TWO WEEKS AGO I traveled for five days in order to walk for an hour with Gandhi.

The journey was worth the effort. It was revealing to watch Gandhi throwing himself during this critical season into the remoteness of East Bengal's Noakhali district for a barefooted village-to-village pilgrimage in search of Hindu-Muslim amity. Here was a 77-year-old ascetic, rising above the physical ordeal, immersed in a peculiarly Indian approach to the cleavage that threatens the country. His quest had both a political and a religious appeal. After feeling the atmosphere around him and watching his pilgrim's progress, I came away convinced that the aging leader is clinching his place in the Hindu pantheon. Whether he will achieve equal political results in this manner will be examined later in this letter.

In New Delhi one hears sharply divergent views on Gandhi's latest enterprise, which he set upon while his disciples here were making rough passage on the political seas. *Dawn*, the Muslim League daily, quickly diagnosed the mission as a flop. Pointing out that Muslim visitors had walked away from Gandhi's prayer meeting, *Dawn* scolded Gandhi for grouping Quranic quotations with readings from other scriptures, and its views were echoed by Muslims whom I know. (Gandhi answered *Dawn's* complaint about an unbeliever's commenting on the Quran by referring to Quranic judgments handed down by the unbelieving British Privy Council.)

In contrast to Muslim reactions, several intelligent Hindus warned me against underestimating the Gandhi March. One called it the most significant mission of Gandhi's life. Others agreed that its impact might be slow to appear, but predicted that it would be deep and long-lasting. The reactions of many foreigners and some Indians were less complex. They regarded the aging leader's absence from today's political arena as a demonstration of weakness or caprice. "He's dotty," was the simple expression of one official.

The region in which Gandhi has secluded himself is deep in the Ganges–Brahmaputra delta, one of the least accessible flatlands of India. To reach his party, I traveled by air, rail, steamer, and bicycle, and on foot. The flight from here to Calcutta used up one day. The second morning I crossed the fields of central Bengal by train, and at noon reached the junction of the Ganges and Brahmaputra. An ancient side-wheeler (one of a fleet of paddle boats that range in age from 20 to 80 years) bent its way for the rest of the day down the broad, winding river to a stop called Chandpur, where I spent most of the night in a waiting-room chair. In the early hours, I left on a meter-gauge train for a small deltalands station named Chitosi Road. There the bicycle that I had carted from Calcutta came into use. Tying my bedding roll on the luggage carrier and my typewriter and briefcase in the basket, I set off just as the sun rose. The "road" for which the station was named turned out to be an earth *bund*, about 10 feet broad and rising 10 feet above the surrounding fields. The object of startled stares from Bengali peasants whose language I do not know, I steered along the single footpath that cuts its grass surface. But for me, everyone within sight was walking. Fortunately they all pointed in the same direction for the village whose name I shouted. I couldn't ride the whole distance. Once a hand-poled ferry carried me across a rather large stream. Frequently cross-ditches which broke the *bund* forced me to dismount, wheel the vehicle down the side to the field level, hoist it across the ditch, and push it up the other side onto the *bund*. One willing peasant carried the loaded cycle across a running stream that I waded. After about 10 miles I could cycle no farther. Then, leaving the machine at a medical relief center (which is operated by Communist party workers with government assistance grants), I set off across the fields on foot. In the three-mile walk we crossed several streams on bridges that were

constructed by laying one or two bamboo poles along the fork made by supporting cross-poles. We managed well except when a log that had been thrown across a brook snapped under my ample bulk, dropping me neatly into the water.

Hardly a wheel turns in this teeming, jute- and rice-growing delta. I saw no motorable road. The bullock cart, one of India's truest symbols, does not exist here. The civilization is amphibious, as fields are always flooded between April and October. In the wet season little remains above water except occasional ribbons of *bund* and isolated village clumps marked by coconut palms, bamboos, and betel trees. People stay at home or, at best, move about in hand-hewn skiffs. Though some of their crops grow under water, they farm mostly in the winter dry season. Here, in an entirely rural area about 40 miles square, are jammed nearly two and a half million people: 1,400 per square mile or more than two per acre. (I wonder what Illinois farmer could feed, clothe and house 90 people on the yield from the south forty.) Eighty percent of these peasants are Muslims. Apart from a few wealthy families they "have nothing but their numbers," in the words of one senior Muslim official. Impoverished cultivators racially indistinguishable from their Hindu neighbors, they suffered severely in the 1943 Bengal famine. Many watched their relatives die while, as is frequently the case, hunger put profit into blackmarketing. The tiny Hindu minority in this region is divided into two groups, of whom the more numerous are also peasants and low-caste village artisans. With the upper crust of landlords, moneylenders, grain merchants, and lawyers, peasants of both communities had shared little sympathy for many years past, I judged.

In this closely packed, rupee-starved, isolated district terror struck last fall in the wake of vicious riots in Calcutta and other Indian cities. It was the first real flare-up in a rural area. Roving bands paddled over the flooded fields from village to village, killing Hindus, looting and burning their property, abducting some women, and registering conversions from Hinduism to Islam. Many of those murdered and robbed were the wealthy who had incurred the peasants' ire in 1943. The movement took a communal twist, however, from politicians (since disowned by the Muslim League) who led the village crowds with the cry of Pakistan. In some villages mobs burned huts even of outcastes.

Frightened and unable to run away because of the floods, many Hindu households sought safety by professing Islam. Their tormentors sometimes sealed the "conversion" by putting Muslim caps and wrap-around *lungis* on them, feeding them beef, and in at least two verified cases conducting marriages between new converts and established Muslims.

The upheaval, in which the president of the district bar association and a well-known landlord were among those killed, swept over about half the district. Perhaps a million people were caught up in the turmoil and refugees eventually were counted in tens of thousands. This was bad enough. But the effect was multiplied a thousandfold across the breadth of Hindu India by exaggerated, inflammatory reports of what had occurred. The Bengal Congress Committee's president told the press that 5,000 innocent Hindus had been slaughtered. J. B. Kripalani, president-elect of the National Congress, visited the area and returned describing the tragedy as "worse than the 1943 famine that took 3 million lives." Avoiding a direct estimate of murders, he justified his conclusion with the assertion that "if all the people forcibly converted and all the women abducted and forcibly married had been done to death, in my opinion, that would have been a lesser tragedy than their yielding to force."

These statements, which were prominently published all over the country, may be compared with final casualty and loss figures agreed to by the Bengal (Muslim League) government, the British governor and his staff, and the military authorities in the area, both British and Indian. They have now reported that the total number of people killed in the uprising was not more than 200. Two cases of abduction and marriage were proved. Of the conversions which were unquestionably on a large scale among low-caste or outcaste Hindus in the region, only isolated individuals had held to the new faith.

It might be added, *inter alia*, that these reports must have contributed to the uprising of Hindu peasants in Bihar province during the following weeks, when it is established that the number of Muslims killed ran into thousands.

This was the pitch of feeling in India when Gandhi decided to go to East Bengal himself. A few days before he left Delhi Mildred and I walked with him for half an hour in the sweepers' settlement where he stayed and talked of the wave of mass fratricide which was then rolling over the country. Although he denied letting emotions affect

his judgment, we sensed a feeling of frustration, if not of failure. This had nothing to do with the validity of the creed of nonviolence itself. Its truth, he repeated, could never be challenged. But he could not be happy with the way in which his teachings were being flouted.

To test the applicability of his faith, therefore, he went to the heart of the trouble. He chose East Bengal, and when people asked why he had not gone to Bihar province where the damage was greater and the culprits were Hindus, he replied that the people of Bihar had repented. Besides, he said, he could control the government and people of Bihar from Noakhali, but had no special powers over the people of Noakhali. In a tiny village that suddenly acquired fame, bustling visitors, police attendants, press observers and even telegraph facilities, the old man settled into a hut and began meeting people, hearing their stories, and assessing the task ahead of him. Finally, early in January, he began the trek that will take its place in the Gandhi epic as the East Bengal March. By now he has established a routine. Rising at four, he finishes his morning prayers, takes a glass of hot water containing honey, and works at correspondence for two hours or so until dawn. At 7:30 he sets off on the day's walk across newly plowed dew-soaked fields to the next village on his itinerary.

The Gandhi march is an astonishing sight. With a staff in one hand and the other on his granddaughter's shoulder, the old man briskly takes the lead as the sun breaks over the horizon. He usually wraps himself in a handwoven shawl, as the January mornings are cold enough for him to see his breath. But he walks barefooted despite chilblains. This is a fashion he started in order to relieve a blister, but continued because he liked the idea of walking as Indian pilgrims normally travel. Clustered about him is his immediate party: his Bengali interpreter, a professor of geography at Calcutta university; a Sikh attendant who fawns as much as Gandhi will permit; a retired engineer-turned-swami; and one or two youths. The dozen Indian pressmen who are following this trek walk behind. Sometimes this little body of the faithful, like other truth-seekers before them, sing of God as they walk. His name here is Ram. A squad of policemen, detailed (against repeated protests from Gandhi) by Muslim League premier H. S. Suhrawardy to accompany and protect the Gandhi party, mix with the group. As the sun begins to climb, villagers from

places along the way join the trek. They come by twos and fours or by dozens and scores, swelling the crowd as the snows swell India's rivers in spring. They press in on the old man, while their children dance around the edges of the moving body. Here, if I ever saw one, is a pilgrimage. Here is the Indian—and the world's?—idea of sainthood: a little old man who has renounced personal possessions, walking with bare feet on the cold earth in search of a great human ideal. Sometimes a new arrival drops to the ground in front of Gandhi in an effort to touch those feet, but the big Sikh gently lifts up the man. As Gandhi nears the day's destination, another crowd from that village surges toward him, singing their own hymns, waiting to greet and welcome him. They lead him to his new hut, where three or four peasant women give him the special Bengal greeting, a high, warbling trill that I have heard nowhere else.

This is the Gandhi march, one of two highlights of the Mahatma's day and the act that has caught the imagination of many conationalists, and particularly co-religionists. After arriving at the new village, Gandhi rests while his granddaughter bathes his feet. He meets his hosts. Then, at 9:30 he gets a massage and bath, and at 11 he takes a meagre lunch which is usually a boiled paste of scraped and ground vegetables, moistened with a glassful of hot milk. After another rest (during which he indulges himself in his widely known "nature cure" consisting of mud plasters on his forehead and stomach), Gandhi works at correspondence and interviews until the time for evening prayers.

In his daily prayer meeting Gandhi meets the world; this is his best platform. Welcoming all who will come to his open-air meeting, he proceeds through a ritual that reveals his eclectic faith. One by one, the audience hears an extract from Buddhist scriptures (suggested by a Japanese monk who stayed at Gandhi's ashram until he was interned at Pearl Harbor); several recitations from revered Hindu writings; ashramite vows (truth, nonviolence, nonstealing, celibacy, nonpossession, removal of untouchability, etc.); readings from the Quran; a Zend Avesta (Zoroastrian) quotation; a hymn which may be Hindi, Bengali, or some Christian song in translation; and a joyous tuneful recital of the name of Ram, to the accompaniment in cadence of hand-clapping. This devotional exercise is followed each day by a talk in which Gandhi gives expression to almost any

thought exercising his mind. Listeners may hear of village sanitation, women in purdah, Hindu–Muslim relations, reactions to the latest Muslim League resolution, a hint as to what new course the Congress will adopt, and observations on London's policy. Taken together, reports of these after-prayer talks furnish perhaps the best guide to the trend of Gandhian thought. These reports, I might add, are authentic. While his Bengali interpreter translates his remarks to the village crowd, Gandhi sits crosslegged on his small platform, penning out the authorized English version of what he has said in Hindi. He writes in third person and refers to himself by his initial. "Addressing the prayer gathering at Bansa this evening, G. said. . . ."

After the prayers, Gandhi takes another brisk walk. Except on his weekly day of silence, he uses this exercise period to talk with villagers and visitors who half-trot at his side. Then Gandhi returns to his hut for another footbath and more correspondence and interviews. Later one of the Indian pressmen arrives to read the day's news to him. Gandhi usually sleeps at about 9 o'clock.

A word might be added about these newspaper reporters. Many of them have been with Gandhi for long periods and regard him with an affectionate and familiar, though reverential, air. Tending their aches and pains, scolding them for their little luxuries (three blankets instead of two), he makes them feel part of the family. Most of them would be incapable, I think, of giving him a bad press. They are Indians, and he is India. Yet they are sufficiently human to protest at the need to lay their bedding rolls side by side on earth floors of peasant huts just because he sleeps simply. City youths, they find it distasteful to go through three or four villages in a row without finding pond water clean enough for a bath. Least of all do they like the frostiness of mat huts in January. Yet, clinging to the old man, they find material for daily dispatches and hammer them out on typewriters set up on pillows. As their joint runner must go miles to the nearest telegraph office, they turn out their stories just after finishing the morning march; almost daily, they lead off with Gandhi's comments at the previous day's prayer meeting.

Gandhi's decision to bury himself in this nearly unreachable corner of India at a critical hour in India's destiny distresses even some of his closest associates. Speaking for them, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote

Gandhi a few weeks ago in this vein: One hardly knows what to say to you. You are needed in Noakhali, but you are also needed in Delhi, in Wardha, and everywhere.

Twice the non-ascetic Congress leadership has found need to refer crucial issues to East Bengal and wait days for replies. During the December crisis, when the party's high command could not agree whether to bow to London's interpretation of the Cabinet Delegation's constitution-making scheme or to disavow it and carry the fight to the country, Nehru and Congress President Kripalani had to fly to Bengal and seek out Gandhi in his remote village to reach a conclusion. Now again, when the Congress is pressing Whitehall to eject Muslim League members from the interim government, it looks as if new direct conversations may become necessary at any moment. Wherever he may be, Gandhi remains the high priest of Congress policy. And Congress policy needs more far-seeing, shrewd control at this transitional moment than ever before.

Yet in the opinion of his associates nothing in the outside world will draw Gandhi from his immersion in rural East Bengal so long as he feels his task there unfinished. They know of course, that many people fail to understand why he stays there.

Two answers may be suggested. Politically, Gandhi has concluded that Hindu-Muslim bitterness threatens to postpone Indian freedom, and perhaps undercuts the role India might otherwise play in Asia. Having failed to bring the two communities together through high-level negotiation, he is testing his nonviolence and seeking a solution at the familiar village level. As a Hindu, moreover, he is incapable of ignoring the threat to his culture that arises from forced conversions. Wherever they occur, he must stamp them out.

The first objective, obviously, can be attained only by winning the support of Muslims. Gandhi has consciously set out to do this. As the primary step, he is working to lift Hindu-Muslim relations from a religious to a political plane.

Time after time, Gandhi has told Bengali prayer audiences that Hindus and Muslims must settle their dispute or continue to be saddled with foreign rule. He seems to expect an early end of domination by war-weakened Britain, but to fear genuinely that internal dissension might open the door to some other agent of foreign imperialism, perhaps in the guise of a UNO trusteeship. Gandhi assures

his listeners that freedom is theirs to grasp, if they will but take it. This is true, he argues, both at the government level and in the villages. At the top, he suggests that popular pressure can shape any existing provincial ministry into a true Indian government. To give emphasis to this point, he deals at governmental level just with League premier Suhrawardy, whose politics he opposes. Neither the British governor nor the British army commander found Gandhi willing to accept their help; all his requests go directly to the Muslim League ministry. He entreats people to support this government because it is Indian, or to turn it out for a better Indian government. Let the ministry call its rule Pakistan or anything else, he urges with persuasive Gandhian argument; he would not oppose it so long as it protected the people's fundamental rights. (He always stipulates that Pakistan should not be sought until India is free and that it should assure friendliness to its Indian neighbors.) This is his appeal to Muslims on the ideological level.

Talking to villagers, Gandhi gives full rein to his anarchist instincts. A firm believer that no government is good government, Gandhi admonishes these peasants to live together quietly and to rely on themselves. "If a neighbor was ailing, would they run to the Congress or the League to ask them what should be done? That was an unthinkable proposition," says the report of one prayer speech. "They should in such matters [a solution of their daily problems of life] look toward themselves and if they did that, then their desire for neighborly peace would be reflected by the leaders." If the Hindu and Muslim inhabitants of one village can begin practicing what he calls the nonviolence of the strong, Gandhi believes, the path to communal peace throughout India will be open.

What progress has he made with this doctrine? Gandhi himself has never underestimated the task. Writing to a relative in December, he explained:

My present mission is the most complicated and difficult one of my life. I can sing with cent percent truth: "The night is dark and I am far from home; Lead Thou Me On." I have never experienced such darkness in my life before. The nights seem to be pretty long. The only consolation is that I feel neither baffled nor disappointed. I am prepared for any eventuality. "Do or die" has to

be put to test here. "Do" here means Hindus and Mussalmans should learn to live together in peace and amity. Otherwise, I should die in the attempt. It is really a difficult task. God's will be done.

When Gandhi began his village tour, Muslim listeners left his prayer meetings in protest against the multi-faith ritual which, to a monotheistic Mussalman, would appear sacrilegious. His chroniclers tell of his meeting surliness in the early days. He was sometimes held up by destroyed bamboo bridges, brambles were strewn on his path and boycotts became blatant. Even today *Dawn* demands the removal of "this unwelcome visitor" from Bengal. Its editor chides Mr. Suhrawardy for observing that Gandhi's presence has helped restore calm to the district. Several of Gandhi's followers are scattered through Noakhali villages for independent work. They have reported hostile demonstrations against them and against Hindu families returning to their looted homes. (The earrings of one woman reportedly were cut off her lobes when she arrived back at the village from which her family had fled.)

I walked with Gandhi and sat at his feet during prayers in the twelfth week of his stay in East Bengal and the fourth week of his village-to-village pilgrimage. No difficult incidents had then occurred for many days. Carefully watching faces in the gathering of 700 villagers at the prayers, I thought I detected a spirit of neutrality mixed with curiosity. Some Muslims glared at the Ramdhun praise, but I saw none leave the open-air meeting. They stood passively during the ritual, listened quietly to the after-prayer talk and its translation, and then went away. Few but Hindus trailed along for the evening walk.

Even an advance from expressed opposition to neutral silence is progress. Given the months that Gandhi might be prepared to stay in the area, the process may go further. Gandhi's personality is strong and vibrant. By direct contact he can often win over the unfriendly and the uninterested. This is obviously his great effort to prove to Jinnah that a single appeal can be successful with both Hindus and Muslims. It may be one of his last exertions against the threat of civil war. And yet, if Gandhi is striving for the magical touch that will transform the situation in this critical year of 1947, long odds

stand against him. His approach is that of a prophet to a basic human problem, and prophets work for future generations. It is almost as if Gandhi had already admitted that India will miss this opportunity to become a free, united nation and had started—at the age of 77—planting his seeds in preparation for the next chance. If that is true, he must bear part of the blame for rousing profound suspicions among Muslims during the last 10 years. More than once he has torpedoed a prospective inter-party agreement by declaring a partisan view. But Gandhi is not so defeatist as to give up hope. He is unquestionably deriving from his present experience a fresh, sensitive responsiveness to village mentality: this will stand him in good stead in judging the mood of the country for future action. Yet in the week-by-week degeneration of political prospects, one could wish with many of his followers that Gandhi might apply his mind and heart to a national settlement which would bring inter-party cooperation without incurring what he calls appeasement at the cost of honor.

No such tangled analysis is necessary in respect to Gandhi's religious mission in East Bengal. Here he is Defender of the Faith, and Hindus across India recognize him as such. Witness the frequent references to the well-known reformer and revivalist, Shankaracharya. This Hindu saint of the eighth century reputedly walked barefooted to the four corners of India in a pilgrimage to free Brahmanism from the smothering embrace of Buddhism. When Hindus today draw analogies between his march and Gandhi's, they demonstrate their fear that Islam, too, may be capable of a bear's hug.

To the relief of one Noakhali village Gandhi sent a Muslim member of his ashram, Miss Amtus Salam. She found the local Muslims still acting aggressively toward their neighbors. In the Gandhian tradition she decided not to eat until Muslims returned a sacrificial sword which during the October upheaval had been looted from a Hindu home. Now, a fast concentrates very heavy social pressure on its objects, as Indians have long since learned. The sword was never found. Possibly it had been dropped into a pond. Whatever had happened, the nervous Muslim residents were almost ready to agree to anything when Gandhi arrived in that village on the 25th day of Miss Salam's fast. Her doctor reported that life was ebbing.

After hours of discussion (which reporters said Gandhi took as seriously as the Cabinet Delegation negotiations) Gandhi persuaded the village leaders to sign a written promise that they would never molest Hindus again. Then he put the whole issue into a capsule. According to a report which I believe is the self-written authorized version:

Gandhiji explained the significance underlying the demand for the return of the stolen sword. What was being demanded, he said, was freedom for the minority community to practice their religion and worship their gods in any manner usual with them, and freedom to pursue their normal avocations. Gandhiji laid special emphasis on religious toleration. . . . The essence of Miss Salam's demand, he told the Muslims, was an assurance that they would use all their influence to see that no member of the Hindu community was obstructed from performing his religious rites and worship in any manner he liked.

In other prayer talks Gandhi returned frequently to this theme. People had told him, he stated one day, that if Muslims asked Hindus to accept Islam if they wanted to save themselves or their property, and if Hindus responded, there was no compulsion. What Gandhi wanted to say, according to the approved report,

was that this was acceptance of Islam under the threat of force. Conversion, Gandhiji held, was made of sterner stuff. The statement reminded him of the days when Christian missionaries, so called, used to buy children in days of famine and bring them up as Christians. This was surely no acceptance of Christianity. Similarly, the acceptance of Islam, to be real and valid, should be wholly voluntary and must be based on proper knowledge of two faiths—one's own and the one presented for acceptance. This was the view Gandhi had held all his life. He did not believe in conversion as an institution.

Gandhi and all Hindus deplored the killings in Noakhali. But it is clear that to their minds the deaths were less atrocious than the conversions. These were a real threat to Hinduism, not merely as a

faith but as a social organism. Should they be allowed to stand, it seemed to Gandhi, other Hindus might find themselves forced to profess Islam in order to live peacefully where their lands and homes are. Already Muslims number 80 percent in Noakhali, a corner of India in which their claim is staked for a completely Islamic Pakistan. Conversions, if unchecked, would mean the disappearance of Hinduism in the region. And once it were proved possible to "Islamicize" an area by show of force, many Hindus fear that the process would spread to other areas in which Muslims are in a heavy majority. In the belief that Gandhi is preserving the spark of Hinduism against the blast that would try to extinguish it, they are already canonizing him.

The Independence of India

22 Ferozshah Road (Rear)

New Delhi, India

March 19, 1947

AFTER THE FIRST impact of the British Government's announcement of its impending departure from India, I sat down to write a letter telling you something of my reactions. Like Topsy,* the letter grew and grew. Finally it became a paper, which I am sending herewith under the bold title "The Independence of India."

In this paper I have tried to do three things. I wanted to set down the factors which led to this abrupt amputation of the Indo-British connection; to describe some of the forces at work in India today, and to suggest trends that may have a bearing on the shape of things to come.

It is clear that the war finally took the profit out of imperialism. The re-establishment of British authority in India would have taken prodigious effort, especially as the "steel framework" of administration was badly rusted out. The weary, nearly bankrupt British

*A character in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

victors found no taste for such a task. On the Indian side, the two-generation-old nationalist movement had risen to a new pitch as a result of the economic, social, and political influences that grew out of the war. Great changes were inevitable.

The transition, however, is far from easy. One reason is the vigor achieved by the Muslim self-determination movement under the firm guiding hand of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The present communal cleavage in this country has cut so deep that almost no room remains today for the operation of what we should regard as normal secular issues of national life. It helps little to point out similarities between the Muslim League's tribal propaganda or its current mass assaults against several provincial ministries and the philosophy of *Mein Kampf*. Taking the Congress, the Muslim League, the Indian States, the capitalists, the leftists, and other forces as they exist, the problem is to achieve acceptable government out of the anarchy which envelops India. Despite their troubles, Indians want British rule to end. After it does, a high degree of regionalization is indicated and it remains possible that the India we know will be broken into at least two states in the next 15 months.

Perhaps it was a mistake to treat such a broad subject in a single paper. There are oversimplifications and, undoubtedly, distortions arising from compression and omission. A fully rounded report would take a book: I have not even mentioned, for example, the Indian educational system or the products it makes available for the work of building a new nation. I shall be fortunate if even a general idea is conveyed.

The Independence of India

For Asia, the British decision to give up India in June 1948 is probably the most significant consequence of the last two world wars.

Like most turning points of history, Britain's declaration of February 20 was primarily an acknowledgement that the world's circumstances had changed drastically. Prime Minister Attlee seemed to be presiding at the obsequies of the Asiatic colonial age, dead of strong doses of science and political consciousness. It was not argued that the strong would no longer dominate the weak: even Britain

feared a new financial imperialism with which she could not compete. But the stuff of empire was gone. Eastern raw materials were less essential to the West than when colonies were being staked out, and nationalist movements had demonstrated that colonization was no longer the profitable way to develop and secure markets.

Thus does India come to the end of the road that her nationalists took 60 years ago. She has the right today to decide her own future. Will she remain in the Empire as a self-governing Dominion, or leave it to set her own course? Will she survive the transfer as a single, united country? Or will division and possibly fragmentation be the result of the upheaval that has created today's situation? Will independence mean progress, a better standard of living for her people, the advance from medievalism to modern life? Or will her stagnation turn into frustration, her good intentions into chaos?

The end of the British raj in India will create a profound reaction not only in India but in countries near and far. Suddenly the Asian Relations Conference to be held in Delhi late in March assumes unexpected consequence. Delegates will make speeches about culture but hold backroom sessions on the shifting balance of power. In chanceries everywhere similar questions must be under discussion. Will India become the new hub of Asia, or a void that sucks the whole southern shelf into its vortex? What is the Soviet interest? The Southern Asian interest? The Chinese? Australian? American?

For Britain herself the proposed departure ends a long and prosperous era. An empire and much that goes with it are lost. But she will have shed an increasingly costly and embarrassing administrative responsibility. In international councils she should now hear the imperialist indictment less frequently. These changes will relieve her. On the other hand her whole strategic position requires re-examination. Does she retain Far Eastern interests with which the homeland requires a link? If so, where will the link be? What about manpower for any future struggle? In the last two wars India's 2.5 million soldiers were not only procured cheaply for Britain (and the Allies), but, had they been unavailable, could not have been replaced from any other Empire source.

The British Plan

It obviously was not easy for the hard-pressed Labour government to reach this drastic decision. Balancing all considerations, however,

Prime Minister Attlee announced to the House of Commons on February 20, 1947, that "His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that it is their definite intention to take necessary steps to effect the transference of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948." The terms of the statement deserve study. The Prime Minister outlined the steps taken since the first World War towards the realization of self-government in India. He referred to his own announcement of a year ago outlining the Labour government's conviction that Indians themselves should choose their future status and that the time had come for responsibility for the government of India to pass into Indian hands. Recalling the visit of the Cabinet Delegation to India last summer, its plan for an interim government and constituent assembly, and the inability of the major parties to reach agreement on constitutional issues, Mr. Attlee emphasized that "The present state of uncertainty is fraught with danger and cannot be indefinitely prolonged."

He called on all parties to sink their differences and prepare for the changeover. The Prime Minister then laid down the basis on which Britain would transfer authority to Indian hands. He expressed the hope that a "fully representative" Constituent Assembly would draft an agreed constitution by the handover date. If that did not happen, he said, His Majesty's Government would have to decide whether to turn over authority (*a*) as a whole to some form of central government for British India, or (*b*) in some areas to the existing provincial governments, or (*c*) "in such other ways as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people." The efficiency of civil administration should be maintained and the defense of India should be fully provided for, said Mr. Attlee, yet it would be increasingly difficult to carry out to the letter provisions of the existing constitutional act, the Government of India Act of 1935. Again, as in an earlier statement, the government spokesman brushed lightly over the question of the Indian States. The Crown's paramountcy, he declared, would not be transferred to any government in British India; paramountcy as a system would survive until the final transfer of power, but in the meantime adjustment of relations between Britain and the States could be started. British commercial and industrial interests in India were offered no safeguards. Their home government believed they could look forward

to "a fair field" for their enterprise under the new conditions. Finally, Mr. Attlee gave expression to a feeling that has already been reciprocated in this country: that the British people offer their goodwill and good wishes to the people of India at this final stage and wish to do all in their power to further the well-being of India.

As a corollary, the Prime Minister announced that Viscount Wavell's wartime appointment as Viceroy was being terminated and that the Field Marshal would be succeeded by Admiral the Viscount Mountbatten, who "will be entrusted with the task of transferring to Indian hands responsibility for the government of British India in a manner that will best ensure the future happiness and prosperity of India." Lord Wavell was let out with words of faint praise and an earldom.

Thus does Britain propose to walk out of India after a connection that had its beginnings 350 years ago, sprouted into regional government nearly 200 years ago, and became the responsibility of the Crown in 1858, 90 years before the departure date.

Before discussing some of the factors that will be important in the critical months ahead, I should like to review the conditions and events that brought Britain and India to this point.

The British Position

Britain, it is evident, was nearly exhausted by her effort to win the war. Even during the struggle many Tommies in this part of the world were "pretty bolshie," in the words of their seniors, about fighting for the sake of the Empire. The net effect, according to many intelligent persons who have come here from Britain in recent months, is an incredible weariness widely exhibited over "the Indian problem." Financially and psychologically, I have been led to believe, British voters would now be most unwilling to support a policy that would amount to the reconquest of India.

British officials here cannot rely then on strong support in the United Kingdom; and in India they are faced with critical depletion of the physical elements of administration.

Take the main girders of the "steel framework" of British authority in India, the Indian Civil Service and the Indian police. (Specialized services—Forestry, Railway, Engineering, Veterinary, Educational, and Agricultural—need not be considered, as regular recruitment

of Britons into them stopped more than 20 years ago.) The Indian Civil Service, a corps of professional administrators who man the key executive, judicial and revenue posts throughout the country, has a normal cadre of 1,060 officers. Last December 520 of them were British and the remainder Indian. In an ordinary year the service loses 42 officers who are replaced by fresh recruitment. Wartime pressures, however, prevented the Secretary of State for India from recruiting British officers after 1939 and Indian officers after 1943. The deficit was met partly by holding in service senior officers due for retirement. At present, as a result, about 150 officers have completed more than 25 years' service, the minimum required for retirement on full pension. The lifting of the wartime ban on retirement would in any case probably remove the top end of the service soon, even if other factors had not come into play, and the service would be depleted. But the war also created a host of new vital administrative jobs involving such matters as military supplies (and later disposals), civil supplies, and financial and economic controls, rationing, etc. In 1939 the Central Government's Secretariat was run by 30 senior administrative officers; the *Eastern Economist* estimates the current number in the same grades at about 300. Provincial government activities have expanded similarly. As a result, ICS officers have tended toward secretariat jobs while physical administration of the country—the district and subdivisional responsibility—has largely gone into the hands of the so-called subordinate services. In the past these provincial and local civil servants have perhaps been undervalued as administrators. But whatever their capabilities, they have in recent years shown themselves more susceptible than the ICS to political winds blowing through the country. Even more nationalist or communal are the people on whom they have to rely to execute policy: the circle and village headmen. A similar tale could be told of the Indian police. In the 1930s, and even in 1942, the Viceroy and the British governors of provinces could enforce a policy which the major political parties opposed. That such a course would be practically impossible now was admitted to me in January by the governor of one Congress-controlled province, and it is reported that the Viceroy advised the Labour government to the same effect.

Labourites and Tories recognized the realities of the situation. In a House of Lords debate last December, Lord Linlithgow, Lord Wavell's immediate predecessor as Viceroy, said he feared that years might pass before the Indian parties could come to an agreement on an authority to which the British responsibilities in India could be handed over.

In such circumstances we should soon find ourselves confronted with the formidable alternatives either of withdrawing British armed forces from India, whatever the consequence, or of reasserting our authority and reestablishing our prestige, not with the intention of remaining in India for all time, but with the purpose, boldly proclaimed, of waiting until an appropriate and competent Indian authority can take over. . . . It might, indeed, be that we in this country were no longer willing to supply the necessary support. In that case, my advice would be that we should frankly restate our policy, renounce our pledges as being beyond our capacity to discharge them, and, having given our warning of a due date, march out.

The Indian Position

So much for the British position; from the Indian side the war had greatly strengthened a belief in what many Indians regard as their manifest destiny. It is wise for a Westerner to remember that in Asia—not least in India—the Japanese victory over Russia in 1905 remains a landmark of recent history. Then, finally, after a series of reverses throughout the imperialist age, Asians concluded to their own satisfaction that the West held no inherent superiority over the East and that its forces were not necessarily invulnerable. The national sentiments which began to grow in passive Oriental groups were stimulated by the first world war. The 'tween-war period held suggestions that a new era was approaching, but it was left for the 1939–45 war to undercut the old basis completely. Especially after 1941, peoples of colonial Asia (who now insist on being called Asians rather than Asiatics) found their existence becoming important to others. Contending forces appealed to them; their nationalist movements

were supported from outside, either by the Japanese as an anti-Allied weapon or by the Allies as resistance movements. Momentum increased because old restraints and controls either slackened or disappeared. Thus the effect was the same, though patterns differed, in the Philippines, Indonesia, Indo-China, Malaya, and Burma.

Except for hilly fringes on the Burma frontier, India was never occupied by the Japanese. Yet the psychological forces of East Asia swept into this country. Subhas Chandra Bose, whom followers of Gandhi had forced out of the Congress Party presidency just before the war, became a national hero when he organized a Free India government and army under Japanese protection. The march of Asia against the West was popular here, as it was elsewhere in the East.

Yet India had been the leader, not the follower, of nationalism in colonial Asia. That is natural; it has one fifth of the world's population, an ancient culture, and long tutoring in Anglo-Saxon concepts of political responsibility. Gandhi had shaped the national movement into a formidable weapon long before 1942. Its great wartime advance is not solely attributable to his efforts, however, nor to an ideological impact from outside.

Economic

The economic consequences of the war violently disrupted Indian life. Printing-press inflation paid for war supplies, but also broke old patterns of life. A critical shortage of goods—not commodities like refrigerators but necessities like cloth and food—touched the whole society: in Bengal more than 1 million people died of famine and malnutrition, for example, and in some provinces cloth rations have dropped so low that a man can buy only one *dhoti* or a woman one *sari* per year. Kerosene, which lights Indian villages, became scarce along with edible oils, matches, and other ordinary necessities. Prices at three times their prewar level severely squeezed fixed-income groups—mostly the middle classes who provide much leadership and strength in political movements. Although wages of the working class were doubled, their real wages decreased. At the same time entrepreneurs were helped by the inflation and war business to amass unimagined fortunes. The economic unrest that arose from these various factors spread through the whole community.

Social

Purely economic influences were augmented by social changes. The concentration of productive capacity on war goods meant new factories and new demands for labor. People flowed from villages to cities; wartime Bombay and Cawnpore doubled their previous populations. In substandard urban conditions (for no city adequately coped with such problems as the increased need for housing, sanitation, and other personal matters), these people came under new pressures, including political ones. At the same time the Indian armed services were providing new ways of life for villagers and townspeople by the hundreds of thousands: 2.5 million in all. Many of these traveled to distant places for the first time. Large numbers came under the impact of mechanization, for modern warfare invalidated old ideas of a peasant army. Most of the leaders—even platoon leaders—had to be alert, schooled youths who knew arithmetic. These, naturally, were also the lads who recognized and felt the fresh breezes sweeping across India. Their moods and loyalties could not fail to be transmitted in some degree even to rustic privates, and some of the soldiers' experiences seeped back into village life as another challenge to the old, stable way of doing things.

Political

Added to these various factors was the war's profound political impact. By 1939 Indians had reached a stage of political progress which included control of provincial ministries (under, but in day-to-day working fairly free of, British governors) but afforded no voice in the Central Government. After two experience-filled years, ministries under the Congress party control resigned in the autumn of 1939 in protest against the Viceroy's summary inclusion of India among the powers fighting Germany, without reference to representative Indian political opinion. Indians were essentially against the Axis, but Chamberlain, Churchill, India Secretary Amery, and the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, failed to win the support of these politicians. They evidently regarded them as of small importance; even in March 1947, Churchill told the House of Commons these were "men of straw" whose opposition had hardly interfered with the recruitment of the world's largest volunteer army. Yet circumstances made Indian opposition awkward. In April 1942, when the Japanese

were hammering at the gate, Sir Stafford Cripps carried to India his offer of Indian Dominion-hood to be attained through a constituent assembly at the end of the war. Special clauses promised protection to the minorities and the States. Cripps nearly succeeded in bringing the Congress and Muslim League into agreement with His Majesty's Government. His eventual failure—which some Indians still attribute partly to a check rein that they believe Churchill applied to Cripps in mid-negotiations—increased the bitterness in the country. The party which had declared its belief in democracy and had called for a statement of British war aims now turned strongly to the opposition. Explosive forces generated rapidly, culminating in the Congress's "Quit India" resolution of August 8, 1942. The arrest of all leading Congress personalities on the following morning and subsequent days set off a riotous uprising that widely challenged and in some places temporarily usurped the existing authority.

A separate political force was boiling up in the Muslim community. The Muslim League stood aloof from the Congress party's anti-British agitation. But during the war years quickened political consciousness helped consolidate the strength the League was winning with its demand for separate, independent Indian Muslim states. A steady barrage against Congress and Hindu political aspirations further advanced the cause of the League.

Leftists, too, expanded their activities during the war, though in different ways. The so-called Congress Socialists won renown by leading the 1942 rebellion. The Communist Party of India, shown in prewar conspiracy trials to have ambitions but no organization comparable to those of the big parties, supported the war effort after Germany attacked the Soviet Union. While the Congress leadership sat in jail for the rest of the war, the Communists bored deep into the labor movement and spread into peasant and student organizations.

When the political prisoners were released by the Viceroy in 1945, they came out to see an Allied victory but no apparent progress in Indian affairs. The old hates, fears, and doubts still filled them. Only with difficulty did Lord Wavell convince some Congress leaders at his first Simla conference in the summer of 1945 that Britain wanted to bring about a new relationship in India. Even then Indians found it difficult to recognize Britain's new position, or their own. The Congress left wing never did accept British *bona fides*, while the

right kept nervously hunting the hidden joker. Partly for this reason, and partly because the Congress and Muslim League were unable to understand each other's points of view, the 1945 Simla conference failed and political tension began to grow as it had grown in 1942.

The Political Maze in 1946

To understand the spirit and mood in which the major parties will embark on the critical tasks relating to the transfer of power, it is necessary to follow the tortuous course of political negotiations through the last 15 months.

At the beginning of 1946 a dangerously restless temper gripped the country. To restore normal political activity, central and provincial elections were held during a period of several winter months. The attendant campaigns exacerbated both nationalism and communalism. Then followed the Royal Indian Navy mutiny and "strikes" in the army and air force, together with widespread flaunting of the authority of official regimes. Unwilling to face the consequences of existing trends either toward revolution or toward civil war, the new Labour government sent a Cabinet Mission of three ministers to India in March. After consulting all shades of opinion, the Mission in its concluding stages dealt only with the Congress and the Muslim League, which thus became counterpoised. It is fair to say that the Mission's three-month effort bent the main lines of Indian political thought back to constitutional channels. At moments the parties approached agreement. They failed to achieve it partly because of their growing partisan spirit and partly because of the British delegation's tactical errors.

In May, after the parties had proved unable to present a joint scheme, the Cabinet Mission proposed its own plan. This provided for a high degree of regionalization by means of (1) a weak center responsible only for foreign affairs, national defense, and communications, (2) autonomous provinces with all remaining authority, and (3) possible groups to which individual provinces might assign authority in order to obtain regional government. This triple-decker arrangement was intended to retain the unity of India and also to give the Muslim-majority regions an opportunity to conduct for themselves all governmental affairs except in the subjects reserved to the central government. Complete Pakistan was described by the Mission as impracticable.

For the period required by the proposed constituent assembly to draft a new constitution, the Cabinet Delegation suggested an interim government representing the major parties.

From the day the plan was announced, partisan jockeying was intensified.

The Muslim League Council, meeting in Delhi on June 6, expressed bitter resentment at the harsh things the Cabinet Mission had said about Pakistan. But despite this affront and “inasmuch as the basis and the foundation of Pakistan are inherent in the Mission’s plan,” it voted to accept the constituent assembly scheme. The Council left the decision on the short-term plan to its president, Mr. Jinnah. Some days later (June 25) the Congress Working Committee agreed to the constitution-making program with some conditions, chief among which was the assertion that no province could be forced to enter any group. The Congress then rejected the interim government proposal as giving inadequate immediate powers.

Within a few hours Jinnah accepted the short-term plan as well and thereby posed a pretty problem to the Viceroy and Cabinet Mission. Should the interim government be handed over to the Muslim League in accordance with their earlier statement that the British government would go ahead with any party that accepted the Cabinet Mission plan? The League controlled only two of eleven provincial ministries. It had no hope of gaining the support of the country in an interim government.

Faced with this dilemma, the British team issued a statement on June 26 regretting its inability to form an interim government, but promising to renew its efforts after a cooling-off interval during which elections would be held for the constituent assembly.

Jinnah promptly accused the government of breaking its pledge and declared that the Viceroy was “honor bound to set up an Interim Government with the League.” In late July he called the Muslim League Council to meet in Bombay, where in a shouting, floor-stamping session it reversed its earlier position. While members flashily renounced British-bestowed titles, the League now rejected the Cabinet Mission plan *in toto*, resumed its positive demand for sovereign Pakistan, and designated August 16 as “Direct Action Day.” “Never before,” said Jinnah, “has the League done anything except by constitutional methods. Today it is, however, obliged and

forced to this position and to fight on both fronts, namely against the British government and the Hindu Congress. Today we are saying goodbye to constitutional methods and constitutionalism.”

Next came the turn of the Congress. Its Working Committee met on August 12 at Wardha and passed a long resolution reasserting its demand for a free, united India and repeating its acceptance—with reservations—of the Cabinet Mission's constitutional scheme. During the meeting a communication was received from the Viceroy bidding Jawaharlal Nehru (then selected for his fourth term in 17 years as Congress president) to propose names for an interim government which should, if possible, include representatives of all major parties. The Congress accepted this offer.

This same week saw the start of the country's greatest holocaust since the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Touched off by the declaration of “Direct Action Day” as a public holiday in the League-governed province of Bengal, the bloody terror struck down more than 5,000 men, women and children in an orgy of communal hatred in Calcutta. Once started, the fever spread to East Bengal, where Muslims are in a heavy majority; to Bihar, where Hindus are equally predominant; to the United Provinces, Bombay, and now, the Punjab. No one knows today how many Indians have died from the flashing knives of their compatriots. Communal rioting has become the grossest, most persistent fact of the political scene. What hope of accommodation and understanding might have existed previously has for some time at least been washed out with blood.

After a fruitless Nehru–Jinnah interview in Bombay, a Congress-selected Interim Government team took office September 2. For the first time since the rise of British rule, Indians with representative capacity held authority in the central government. While Congress organs cheered the occasion, the League greeted it with an old Indian symbol of resentment, black flags. Nevertheless Nehru, as Vice-President of the Viceroy's Executive Council (the Viceroy is President), formed his colleagues into a cabinet. At daily tea-time sessions the cabinet plunged into the new responsibilities. Their freely reached decisions were later registered with the Viceroy at weekly formal sittings.

This dream world in which many Congressmen thought they had won independence was destined to collapse. On September 12 the Viceroy, on his own initiative, invited Jinnah to come to Delhi for



Y.K. Puri became India's Ambassador to 4 countries, Ian Arnold, until 1947 became Home Secretary, Government of Bengal; Kesho Ram became Private Secretary to PM Nehru



Phillips Talbot enroute India, SS Victoria 1939

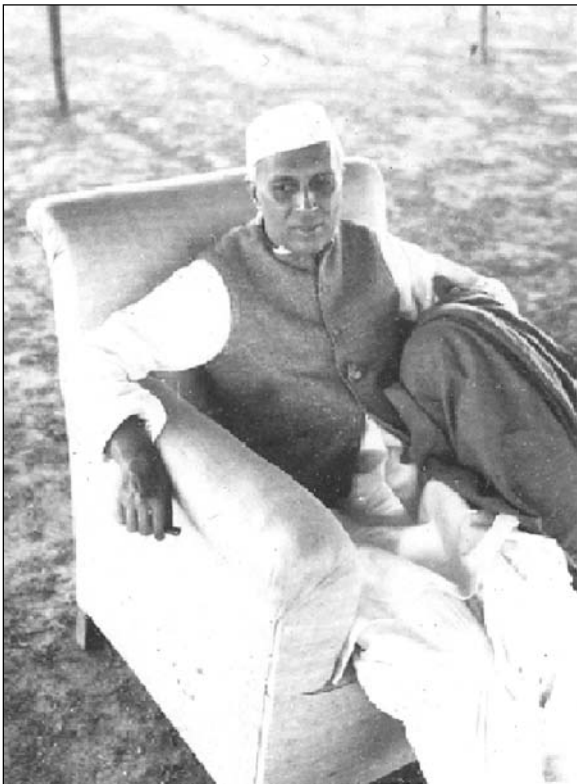
UP Congress Session, Muttra 1940



Stalls and Shops



Women Visitors



Jawaharlal Nehru

UP Congress Session, Muttra 1940



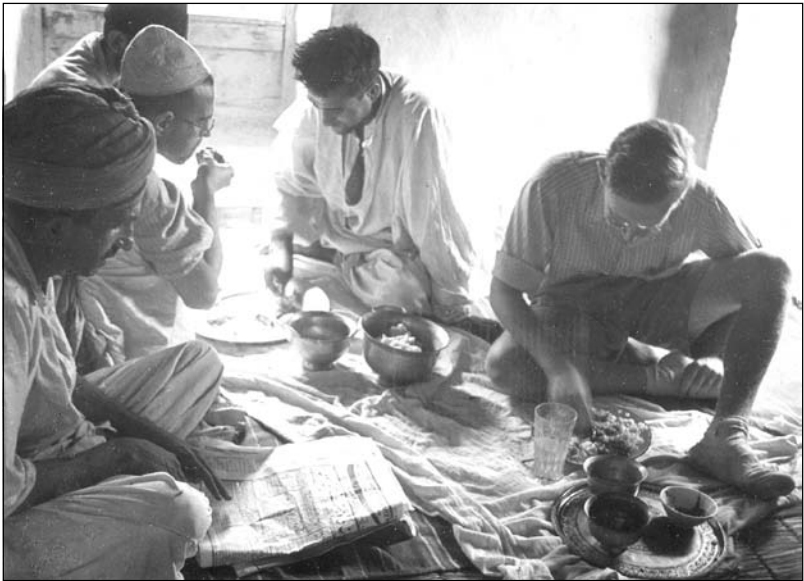
Tent Camp



Delegates



My village room in Salura, near Ganderbal, Kashmir, June–July 1940



Phillips Talbot at meals with Salura villagers, Kashmir 1940

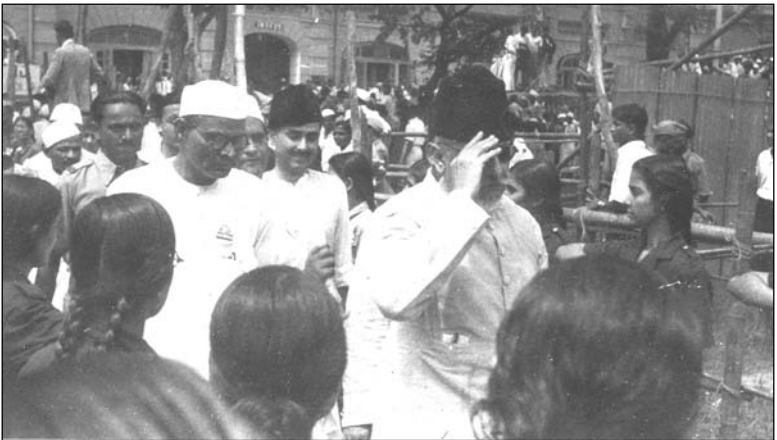


Phillips Talbot interviewing Kashmir villagers, Salura village, near Ganderbal, Kashmir 1940

AICC, Bombay, August 7, 1942



Gandhiji



Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, President
of the Indian National Congress (saluting)

discussions with a view to bringing the League also into the Interim Government. Lord Wavell conferred separately with Jinnah and with Congress leaders, but gained no agreement between them. A mediation effort in October by His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, also failed, partly because Congress party objections caused Gandhi to withdraw support from a document which he and Jinnah had each initialed and which might have given the basis of a settlement. Finally, on October 26, the Viceroy virtually thrust the Muslim League into the cabinet. A misunderstanding that caused later trouble occurred when the Viceroy informed the Congress that the League, as a condition of entering the Interim Government, had agreed to participate in the Constituent Assembly. At the initial press conference held by League members of the Interim Government, League secretary (and new finance member) Liaquat Ali Khan denied that the League had made any commitment. Nor was it interested, he said, in the "cabinet" myth. League members, according to him, would take care of their own departments and report to the Viceroy; the vice-presidency of the Executive Council meant nothing to them. Later Jinnah repeated that the League had made no promise about the Constituent Assembly.

At times this composite cabinet (it was never a real coalition) worked well. It stood together on questions relating to sterling balances, remuneration for departing members of the services, and similar subjects. But at the first postwar session of the full Congress, held at Meerut in November in the shadow of communal rioting, Nehru declared: "All is not well with the Interim Government." Attacking his League colleagues as "the King's party," he revealed that the Congress members had twice threatened to resign unless the League adopted a more cooperative attitude. This speech compounded the malaise which now progressed so rapidly that Whitehall, in an effort to avert an open break, called leaders of both parties to London. There they continued to debate the question whether the Congress had nullified its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission plan by the reservations it had included. The immediate issue was the interpretation of the grouping clauses: the Congress argued that individual provinces enjoyed a permissive right to join or to remain out of groups while the League insisted that no province (Assam was the primary point of contention) could opt out of a group until

the new constitution had come into force. The Labour cabinet again stated that the view held by the League was correct. Attlee urged the Congress to accept it also, and appealed to the League to give up boycotting the Constituent Assembly. Nehru flew back to India just in time for the opening of the Constituent Assembly—without the League—December 9. Congressmen grumbled about the London decision, but a tendency developed in the first session to go slow on matters that might cause offense outside. Only after leaders had flown to East Bengal to consult Gandhi, who had meanwhile begun a walking tour there in search of Hindu–Muslim amity, did the Congress grudgingly accept the London interpretation. After reading its resolution, Jinnah, a tired and ill man in Karachi, did not bother to call his League Working Committee until after the short second session of the Constituent Assembly, which met January 20 again without the League. This time a go-ahead mood led to the passage of a resolution declaring the objective of the Assembly to be the creation of a sovereign Indian republic.

Jinnah was not amused. At the end of January his Working Committee passed a lengthy, wordy resolution which lashed out at the Congress. It called upon Britain to

declare that the constitutional plan formulated by the Cabinet Mission has failed because the Congress have not accepted the statement of May 16 nor have the Sikhs nor Scheduled Castes. The Working Committee is of the opinion that the elections to and the summoning of the Constituent Assembly were *ab initio* void, invalid and illegal and that continuation of the Constituent Assembly and its proceedings and decisions are *ultra vires*, invalid and illegal and it should forthwith be dissolved.

This broadside naturally inflamed the Congress high command. In an official letter to the Viceroy all non-League members of the Interim Government bluntly said that the League resolution had created “an intolerable situation.” “The Congress members feel,” Lord Wavell was informed,

that the time has come when the Viceroy should make it clear beyond doubt to the League’s nominees in the Interim Government that they should either reverse their Karachi resolution and

enter the Constituent Assembly or resign their places in the Interim Government.

Home Member and party boss Vallabhbhai Patel underlined this declaration by telling an interviewer that the Congress members would resign if the League did not give satisfaction.

In the meantime the League had begun in the Punjab its first civil disobedience campaign, a mass effort with the ultimate goal (admitted by some leaders though denied by others) of unseating the provincial Unionist ministry, the inter-communal coalition in which it had no share. Things looked as though the Punjab might erupt in flames any day, and as though the Congress, whose left wing had been mouthing threats of open revolution, might take to the warpath across the country.

By mid-February it was clear that no further useful compromise was possible. The League stood pat on its demand that the Constituent Assembly be dissolved, while the Congress threatened precipitate action if the League did not either enter that Assembly or leave the Interim Government.

This was the position that faced the Viceroy and the British Government when it was decided to cut the Gordian knot by announcing the withdrawal from India.

The Parties Today

It is through this tanglewood jungle that Lord Mountbatten has been commissioned to find a path which in 15 months will lead to self-government. His own attitude toward the Labour Government's intentions is the subject of intense conjecture here. Whether India will be united or divided, stable or disrupted, will depend partly on the detailed instructions he carries and on his skill as a negotiator. Fundamental to the situation, however, are the Indian forces that will inherit the authority now held by the British Crown. The most important of these are the major parties whose representatives will be the direct heirs. It is now necessary, therefore, to examine in greater detail these political organizations as they exist and operate today.

The Indian National Congress

The Congress, founded in 1885 at an English official's instigation for the purpose of venting upper middle-class Indian opinion, grew

into a revolutionary omnibus containing the vast conglomeration of interests that saw reason to oppose British rule in India. In its current election manifesto the Congress describes itself as "the living and vibrant symbol of India's will to freedom and independence." Identifying itself directly with the "dumb, toiling, semi-starving millions" whom Gandhi has long asserted that he represents, the party stands for a federation of India based on the willing union of its various parts and on the guarantee of fundamental human rights for every citizen. Holding that "the most vital and urgent of India's problems is how to remove the curse of poverty and raise the standard of the masses," the Congress supports state control of key industries and state planning in social, industrial, and scientific fields.

As a generalisation, the Congress is now largely financed by capitalists, managed by middle-class professional men, and supported by peasants, clerks, students, laborers, shopkeepers, mystics, terrorists, poets, and a heavy majority of other politically-conscious Indians—barring in recent years most Muslims. In 20 years the number of people willing to spend eight cents a year for Congress membership has varied with changing political stresses from half a million to more than 5 million. The party's true strength is better measured, however, from election results. In the 1945–46 elections to legislative assemblies in the 11 provinces, Congress candidates won 923 seats* compared with 425 for the Muslim League and 237 for small parties, special interests (such as Europeans and Anglo-Indians) and independents. In 303 constituencies Congress candidates were returned unopposed. The total vote polled by other Congress nominees exceeded 19 million out of a full electorate which was slightly above 30 million. In the separate Muslim constituencies the Congress fared badly. The Pathan Servants of God (Red Shirt) movement in the Northwest Frontier Province gave it 19 Muslim (and 11 non-Muslim) seats there, against 17 for the League. But of more than 450 Muslim legislators elected in the rest of India, only five were Congress nominees. Later other Muslims elected on small-party or independent tickets agreed to cooperate with some of the Congress legislative parties.

To seek and claim its mass support the Congress has created a pyramidal party organization that at every level mixes limitless ideals

*Cf. 714 Congress seats in the previous elections, 1937.

and hard-boiled politics. At the base hundreds of unpaid and partly-paid workers in white Gandhi caps have made Gandhi's name a magic symbol of incalculable worth to the party. Their appeal to patriotism and the will to freedom is backed up by emphasis on the Gandhian "constructive program" of village reconstruction, Harijan uplift, basic education, spinning, and similar activities. They organize village and ward Congress Committees, and, on the side, represent their members in claims for food and cloth rations, jobs for relatives, and such other petitions as tax relief. These primary committees are affiliated to a District Congress Committee, which is responsible for the execution of Congress policy in a region containing an average of about a million people. The district committees, in their turn, are represented in a provincial Congress Committee which heads up party activities in each of the 20 administrative and linguistic "provinces" into which the Congress has divided British India. The committee form of organization rises to the national level, at which the All India Congress Committee, a body that now has 390 members, affirms important items of party policy between the annual sittings of the full Congress. Suspended during the war and resumed in November 1946, under conditions of severe communal tension, the full Congress used to attract visitors by the hundred thousand. The annual Congress session elects a national president. Under the present party constitution he nominates the members of his party cabinet which is called the Working Committee. This committee, which usually includes about 15 veteran party chiefs, is the party's central executive. It functions almost as a politburo. In recent years, at least, the Working Committee has made Congress policy; here the Indian revolution has been organized and directed. Here, too, Gandhi has exercised profound influence on the national movement. Though not a party member for the past dozen years, he has continued during this past critical year to guide the Working Committee through most of its crucial decisions.

In these days of popular ministries the hard core of much Congress authority is wielded by an all-powerful three-man Central Parliamentary Board that functions within the Working Committee. The current members of this Board are Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the party's so-called iron man; Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 1940-46 president of the Congress, and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the Bihar leader. All are now members of the Interim National Government.

The Central Parliamentary Board finally approves all candidates for the provincial and central legislatures, settles intra-party election disputes, monitors the eight Congress ministries to assure general compliance with the Congress manifesto, and coordinates the policies of these ministries on such all-India matters as labor legislation, prohibition, and abolition of landlordism. In theory the Board exercises purely advisory authority in provincial matters, except in national or party emergencies. In practice, however, observers know from past experience that it can make or break the political career of almost any Congressman, ranging from a first-term aspirant to a provincial minister.

One development that might be noticed here is the growth of volunteer organizations built on programs that emphasize physical training and social work. The Congress Seva Dal is such a body. Members serve as guards and guides at party meetings, do village uplift work, and carry out other elements of the Congress program. More vigorous is the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, a militant Hindu organization that has been temporarily banned in some provinces for conducting communal activities. (The Muslim League sponsors a similar brigade, the Muslim National Guard.) Members of these organizations usually wear uniforms, carry staves, and march in formation. While such corps may be started for worthwhile purposes, they sometimes differ only in name from private armies and are giving concern to many thoughtful men.

Inevitably, the Congress represents a movement whose members are united by opposition to a common object but not by agreement on a positive program after freedom is won. With the approach of independence, fissiparous trends are showing themselves. They fall into several classes including economic, self-seeking, and communal. I shall have more to say of Indian leftists later, but here it may be noted that the Congress old guard has been increasingly challenged by the party's socialist wing. The United Provinces affords a striking example. There the Congress ministry (endorsed by the Central Parliamentary Board) is staunchly old guard while the Provincial Congress Committee is controlled by a Socialist-led coalition. On the labor front Sardar Patel sponsors a trade union movement, the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, which is based on Gandhian ideas

(that worker, firm, industry, and state should each get its due share, with no element coercing another). The Socialists, however, like the Communists, concentrate on organizing straight trade unions appealing solely to the workers' interests. Politically, the Socialists polled from one fifth to one third of the All India Congress Committee vote up to February 1947 with a campaign slogan that Britain could be ejected only by violent revolution. The Prime Minister's declaration of February 20 cut the ground from under the Socialists—as Mr. Attlee may have intended—and reinforced the transition-period leadership of the group who have come to be regarded as middle-of-the-road: such men as Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, and J. B. Kripalani.

Another type of division within the party concerns ordinary love of power. In Madras, where the Congress holds a dominant majority in the legislature, the party is so badly split that Congress president Kripalani has just negotiated the resignation of the premier, T. Prakasam, as the first step toward patching up the quarrel. In the Punjab two power-seeking factions have nearly rent the Congress. The Congress premier of Orissa threatened some weeks ago to present his resignation, apparently for similar reasons. But especially grave for the party, many of its leaders feel, is a rush of new types of people into its ranks. In January the United Provinces Provincial Congress Committee Council authorized its president to take disciplinary action against any Congressman who was found taking part in undignified party politics and to oust "all undesirable elements who had recently strayed into the organization." The president had complained that eight separate parties existed within the United Provinces Congress and that each was going its own way. The difficulty (which is also found elsewhere) seemed to be that persons who had had nothing to do with the Congress in its revolutionary days were climbing on the bandwagon now that the party was obviously coming into power and gaining control over contracts, rationing distribution, and other plums.

At the same time the Congress has become more nearly a Hindu body than before. The rise of Muslim clannishness in India has inevitably evoked increased fraternal consciousness among Hindus. Even in the diffuse mold of Hinduism, the clan spirit has surged so violently that it has penetrated the thinking of Congress party policy

makers. Nehru has not willed such a development, nor, certainly, have ex-president Maulana Abul Kalam Azad or the Khan brothers of the Northwest Frontier. But in bargaining against the Muslim League they themselves have necessarily done the work of the Hindu communalists. Hindus have always been dominant in the Congress movement, partly because Muslims were generally slower to accept the West and its political concepts. Hindus form the bulk of society in the two thirds of British India where Congress strength is concentrated. If Indian politics had divided on economic lines, the parallelism between Hindu and Congress political aspirations might have been avoided. As it is, the communal virus has done its work.

Whatever form independence may take, the Congress is clearly ripe for change when the British withdraw. Some of the mutually incompatible interests must break off. Whether these elements drop away like a chick's shell, revealing a healthy and hardy young party remaining, or whether the party cracks to bits like a smashed tumbler really depends on the same forces that militate for and against the unity of India. There are many divisive factors: left and right, town and country, caste Hindu and Untouchable, Brahman and non-Brahman, language-native and outsider. If the Congress were relieved from attack from outside, any one of these might boil up and threaten the existence of the party. So long as the country is in a chaotic state, however, and the rule of Indians is not firmly established, the present leadership believes it can strengthen and use the party undoubtedly as an instrument of authoritarian control. One-party government is already functioning *de facto* in provinces where the Congress is strong. Many Indians with whom I have talked regard Patel as strong enough to extend that principle to a national administration that would brook no effective opposition. "Do not be misled by internal differences in the Congress," Patel said to me in February, "the organization is strong enough to weather them and continue to play its part."

All India Muslim League

While many names come into a description of the Congress, a discussion of the Muslim League elicits one above all others. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a cold, proud, meticulous, rational barrister, has been made by his community of 90 million people a sort of Gandhi of

Musalmans: their accepted dictator, preceptor, and protector. Once a Congressman who was often called an apostle of Hindu-Muslim unity, he has become the uncompromising Muslim, the generalissimo of a fight to regain Mughal glories. Supporters are persuaded that his place in history will be that of the father of a new nation. At any rate, in the past 10 years he has taken the generation-old All India Muslim League largely out of the privileged hands of ancient, aristocratic landowning families. He has gathered into its fold Muslims of the business and professional classes, government officers and employees, students, and recently even laborers and peasants. The Muslim League is organized much like the Congress, with local leagues, district leagues, provincial leagues, and, at the top, the All India Muslim League Council, a party parliament similar to the All India Congress Committee. The League, too, has its Working Committee. On it are generally old-line representatives of Muslims in the various provinces, but no man who can be said to stand near Jinnah in influence. The League's General Secretary (and Finance Member of the Interim Government) Liaquat Ali Khan, heads the Central Parliamentary Board, while Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan of the United Provinces directs a new planning group called the Committee of Action. Since the epochal Lahore resolution of 1940, the League has concentrated its creed, its propaganda, and its strategy on one objective: a separate Muslim state.

Pakistan, the League has now made clear, is intended to be a state covering two separate regions. In the northwest of India, where invaders from Central Asia always first spread their influence, the League claims the Northwest Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Sind, and the Punjab, a solid bloc of about 37 million people. Possibly the central-government province of Delhi may be demanded, while the predominantly Muslim Kashmir State and other, smaller states might later be absorbed. At the eastern end of India where there is another large concentration of Muslims (almost exclusively Bengali converts), the League bids for Bengal and Assam, a region of 70 million people, of whom 52 percent are Muslims. Eastern Pakistan, in the League view, would certainly include Calcutta, the second city of the British Empire. At different times Leaguers have urged the need of a Pakistan corridor to connect these two units, though for the moment talk of this sort is silenced. Such a corridor would

be 700 miles long and would necessarily extend through the United Provinces and Bihar, two primarily Hindu provinces.

At first the cry for Pakistan seemed political bluff; at the now-famous Lahore session I watched the enthusiastic display (much like that of an American political convention) and heard the off-stage remarks of some of the organizers. My impression was that many of the leaders themselves looked on Pakistan as a useful political slogan. But the idea proved overwhelmingly popular among Muslims. In the provinces where Muslims are in a minority the League had already increased its strength by attacking seemingly discriminatory policies carried out by the Congress ministries that held office in 1937. But the League had made little progress in the majority provinces where Muslims were already in control of the ministries. Since the Pakistan resolution, however, the League's influence has grown to a degree inadequately measured even by the 1945-46 elections, when the League polled 75 percent of all Muslim votes and won seven eighths of the Muslim seats in provincial legislative assemblies; non-League groups have since joined the League in Bengal and Punjab while in a fresh election in Sind the League swept all Muslim constituencies but two and established for the first time a potentially stable ministry. But the greatest force in solidifying Muslim support behind the League has been the communal riots during the past year. (The same can be said of Hindu support behind the Congress.) Whatever else the riots have effected, they have caused people to choose sides.

Jinnah organized and hastened the development of Muslim solidarity with master strategy. By shrewd, brainy bargaining, cold-blooded astuteness, an absolute refusal to be panicked, and perceptive recognition of the strengths and weaknesses of both himself and his opponent, he has turned every opportunity to the advantage of the League. In negotiations he has consistently proved a match for the Congress high command with all its talent. "I am constitutionally and by long habit a very cold-blooded logician," he told an adulatory Muslim gathering last November. No one could have analyzed him better.

Jinnah is all in all in the League. As I write nearly a month has passed since the British declaration that India will be free next year. In these weeks no important Muslim Leaguer has publicly expressed

his reaction to the statement. The reason? Jinnah has kept mum, probably as a matter of tactics. In the United Provinces the deputy leader of the League Assembly Party told two of us in January that he favored a coalition in the provincial ministry with the Congress Party and that, left to himself, he could swing his party to the same view. "But if Mr. Jinnah said a word opposing this scheme," he added, "I would not have a vote with me." Although New Delhi is a poor capital for political jokes, or even possibly apocryphal stories that indicate local trends, one which has recently gone the rounds may clinch this point. At the time the League entered the Interim Government Mr. Jinnah was asked by the Viceroy to nominate five individuals for the posts allotted to the League. At a Working Committee meeting a few hours before Jinnah was to present his suggestions, a list was decided upon. A prominent Leaguer, a former chief minister of Bengal, dined modestly that evening with a friend who may not have known that his guest was about to become a member of the national government. The guest remained quiet as they sat down to hear the late radio news. One by one, the names of the new ministers were read out: Liaquat Ali Khan, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, I. I. Chundrigar, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, and from Bengal . . . J. N. Mandal, no Muslim but a Depressed Caste representative. The tale-bearers, mimicking the expression they believe to have seen on the guest's face when he heard the announcement, suggest that in the intervening hours Jinnah had decided it would be cute tactics for the League to put up a spokesman for the Untouchables, whose protector Gandhi has long fancied himself to be. This story may vary from the truth; now, certainly, Leaguers would deny it. But its estimate of the League president's dominance is correct.

What will happen to the League when Jinnah leaves the scene? He is over 70, and after returning from London last December he was exhausted and ill. His latest photographs show a drawn and haggard face. Yet there is no heir apparent for his mantle, nor any strong figure (such as Nehru and Patel, for example, in the Congress) who is obviously prepared to take his place. Some of his admonitory talks to purely Muslim audiences (as contrasted to his political speeches) yield the impression that he is straining to bring about an Indian Muslim state and government during his lifetime in order to give the Muslim community a banner of success and rallying point.

If he can get Muslims over this hump, he seems to believe, they may really enter a new era. Otherwise, their traditional divisions and internal conflicts suggest that they might slip back into unhappy lethargy and dissension, as they have done after several previous periods of unity and strength.

The Leftists

In a consideration of Indian political forces, a paragraph is due the Left. Most thinking Indians with whom I have had contact expect their country to embrace some form of socialism and state planning after the main political issues are settled. In no less drastic way, they believe, can this backward country catch up with the times—nor will political forces let it try. Already we have the Communist Party of India, the Socialist Party, the Revolutionary Socialist Party, the Radical Democratic Party, and various local groups. M. N. Roy's Radical Democrats seem to have had their day now that the Congress is out of jail and again actively competing for support. The Revolutionary Socialist Party is still at the radical fringe. To be considered seriously are the orthodox Communists and Socialists. They mutually detest each other. *People's Age*, the line-fixing Communist weekly, probes Socialist inconsistencies in a regular column entitled "Where Stands the Left?"; while the Socialists revile the "Moscow-dictated" thinking of the Communists. The Communist Party of India and its members were officially ejected from the Congress early in the war. Their support of the war effort when Congressmen were fighting the British is one of the reasons Congressmen bitterly oppose them. During the war the Communists won control of the All India Trades Union Congress, the largest of several union federations which have sprung up among India's still primitively organized labor. In railways, textiles, leather works and other industries, Communist-led unions now favor a policy of strike and disruption. With real wages substantially below prewar levels and consumer goods in grossly short supply, it is not surprising that this program gains support. The Communists have also moved into peasant organizations. In Bengal they are now leading a peasant revolt against existing share-cropping percentages. The Bombay Congress ministry arrested Communist leaders in connection with an anti-landlord agitation of Warli aborigines. Travancore's famed prime minister, Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, took a commission as

Lieutenant General of the State forces in order to employ troops against what he described as a communist-led rebellion; casualties included 300 dead. Congress ministers of Madras tried some weeks ago to break up the provincial Communist Party with raids and arrests. Communism, many Indians insist, does not fit Indian soil: in their view, the peasants' unshakable attachment to private possession, especially of land, nullifies the propaganda of any collectivist philosophy. But the fact is that the Communist Party, which claimed 30,000 members in India a year ago and now claims 60,000, is thriving in a number of fertile fields.

Compared to the Communists, the Socialist Party is in many ways a body of intellectuals. Take two examples. In Cawnpore Communists penetrated a textile mill by installing a tea shop at the gate and working on laborers who were obviously popular and respected among their fellows. Socialists in the same factory area spent more time issuing pamphlets and making speeches. In Bombay Communists have dug into mass industries while Socialists specialized in the organization of clerks, office hands, and so forth. This stage is passing, however. The Congress Socialists, as they called themselves until last month, have embarked on a campaign to seize the All India Trades Union Congress. If they fail, they threaten to boycott it in favor of a new organization. Their village contact program is taking shape too. But they have a hard row to hoe. Hemmed in on one side by the Communists, they are close-pressed on the other by the orthodox Congress, whose Gandhian labor federation, the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, has the support of top Congress leaders and provincial ministries. Congress Socialist labor leaders have in recent weeks been arrested under the authority of Congress ministries in Cawnpore, the largest industrial center in north India, and in the Jharia coalfields of Bihar. Politically, too, the Congress Socialists are trying to catch their breath. Meeting shortly after Attlee's announcement had destroyed the basis of their partisan campaigning, they took a new tack by voting to drop the word Congress from their title. Orthodox Congressmen had already suggested that separate parties should no longer be permitted to function within the Congress. The Socialists, protesting that they were still loyal Congressmen, decided that the time had come for them to challenge the official Congress policy of compromise and negotiation (with "reactionary elements in India" as well as with the British). They also

announced themselves ready to seek additional strength from Muslim leftists and from liberal elements in the Indian States, two groups who play a small role in the Congress. Meanwhile the party expects to concentrate on labor organization and village work. A satisfactory estimate of the Socialist Party strength is hard to achieve. Its ideals are popular, and there is some evidence to back the assertion of its leader, Jaya Prakash Narayan, that half the ordinary town and village workers of the Congress favor the Socialists. But the orthodox party machine is strong. It therefore remains to be seen whether the Socialists can organize themselves to take advantage of the passive support that exists in the country.

The Indian States

This discussion of party politics has so far been confined to what is called British India, a patchwork of 11 self-governing provinces and five small centrally administered provinces. "British India" contains 54 percent of the land area and 76 percent of the population of the whole country plus a great share of the natural and man-developed resources. The remainder is broken up into an astonishing variety of semi-autonomous, mostly feudal, States and Estates, whose total number is usually given at 562. Thanks to a policy of attachment of many of the smallest units to larger States, only about 200 entities remain. Of these, 140 are represented in their own right on the unofficial consultative body known as the Chamber of Princes, but only ten States have a population of more than 3 million and an annual State revenue of more than \$4 million. Hyderabad, the largest State in India, approximates in population and area Yugoslavia or Korea. These numerous separate States, each under its Oriental potentate, were found or formed by early British administrators and have remained as individual pockets in which the maharajas, rajas, or nawabs rule in internal affairs but surrender external matters—even relations with their own neighbors—to the British Crown. Now that the Imperial raj is to disappear, each State and each ruler must decide how to face the new and largely uncertain world. Plainly few States, if any, can maintain an existence separate from the surrounding British India. Most are landlocked, none is self-sufficient in present-day requirements, and the residents of many are subject to the political tides sweeping over their fellows across the artificial borders.

The Cabinet Mission proposed that, as a general rule, the States should prepare to affiliate with the free Indian Union by handing over authority in the three subjects to be centrally administered and retaining all others. The Crown's existing paramountcy, the Mission declared, would not be transferred to any government of British India. When the British departed, paramountcy would lapse. This decision, which in theory would make the States individually quite independent after the British departure, was thought by some to give them a better bargaining position *vis-à-vis* the British Indian constitution makers. To consolidate this advantage, rulers were advised to work quickly at improving the level of administration in their States, to consider the grouping of small States into effective blocs, and to establish representative parliaments. States were to have representation in the final deliberations of the Constituent Assembly in the same ratio as British India—one seat per million population, or 93 seats in all. Spokesmen for the Viceroy's Political Department assured the princes that if they stand together they need not despair of the future.

Some of the Princes cannot see ahead so clearly, however. They note the profound personal loyalty their presence continues to inspire, but see also that human forces at work in the rest of India and Southeast Asia are penetrating their own borders. They watch carefully the activities of such peoples'-rights organizations as a 20-year-old adjunct of the Congress, the All India States People's Conference, which asserts that it has branches in 80 larger States agitating for a greater degree of self-government. The rulers are divided as to what course to follow if the Muslim League and Congress fail to agree on constitutional arrangements. Some believe that disagreement would pave the way for them to retain their present powers. A few are frankly expansionist; to them it seems possible that, if India should break up, they could regain the territories their ancestors once ruled. Others reflect on the vulnerability of their States if the surrounding provinces were to take an unfriendly attitude. To them the wisest course seems to make their peace with the powers that will control India after the British have left.

The Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes, which undertakes to speak for the Rulers, accepted the Cabinet Mission's proposals for constitution-making. Protests that the States would not accept "compulsion" or "dictation" from British India were not taken

too seriously by the major parties, though there were sharp exchanges in an argument whether sovereignty rests with the people or the ruler. Several groups of smaller States, conscious that without protection they might easily be assimilated by neighboring provinces, made plans for the future. Already blueprints for a union of Deccan States and a federation of small Rajputana, western Indian, and central Indian States have appeared. In the former case it is proposed that individual State boundaries be obliterated and that a single constitutional government be established under a Board of Rulers which would have strong reserved and veto powers. The Western Indian Federation expects that each state will retain its identity but participate in joint administration. Dynastic rights, including privy purses, are fully protected in both cases. The Chamber of princes's Negotiating Committee has recently discussed with the Constituent Assembly Negotiating Committee (consisting of top Congress and some independent members) the manner in which the States will be represented. At least half of the States' representatives, it has been agreed, will be chosen by some method of election rather than by the rulers. Some States' rulers held out for standing completely on what they consider their rights, but others carried the day in agreeing to proceed with entry into the Constituent Assembly. The discussions left the impression that the States' rulers will act more according to their individual ideas of the best way to survive than as a united, single bloc.

Outside influences are already playing a large part in the States. Muslim League spokesmen have referred to some Muslim States (notably Hyderabad, where the ruling house is Muslim though the population is 84 percent Hindu) as possible pockets of Pakistan in essentially non-Muslim areas. Industrialists have begun to drift into States to avoid the British Indian tax structure. Commercial interests are considering the possibilities of customs-free ports in State territory when paramountcy lapses. The great majority of States, however, are located in regions where Congress authority appears to be the natural successor to British rule. The Congress stands officially not for the early elimination of the princes, but for responsible rule of the people under the ruler's aegis. It has confidence that this objective can be attained. "The Princes are not a source of worry," Vallabhbhai Patel said recently; "they will fall in line."

The Prospects

In previous sections attention has been paid to some of the complexities with which those who would liquidate an empire and build a nation must deal: the break-up of colonialism, the impact of science and technology, the weakening of Britain, Congress nationalism, Muslim League self-determinism, the Leftist movements, the princely states, Indian capitalism, and the great, slowly awakening mass of peasantry.

Now we come to fundamental questions. Can a single nation take shape in this amorphous confusion? If there is division, will it be ordered and will it preserve a degree of stability? In the future India or Indias, what sort of general governmental and economic conditions can be expected?

Even under ideal conditions, it is already clear that the task of transferring authority will be fantastically difficult. Consider, first, the armed services. Rather more than half the officers on duty with the Indian Army are still British. Each of the 50 generals, lieutenant generals, and major generals now serving is British; the senior Indian officers are 10 brigadiers. A colonel whom I know has begun training an Indian captain as his replacement, and his major general is under orders to prepare an Indian lieutenant colonel for his job. In the Royal Indian Navy the senior Indian officer is a commander; if India leaves the Empire (rather than remaining as a Dominion) senior British officers of the RIN see no possibility of keeping the service at its present six-sloop strength, much less of transferring any of the three British cruisers which have been promised. Even if line officers could be promoted to take the new commands, the necessary dockyard and engineering staff would not exist. The Royal Indian Air Force now has in commission ten squadrons. All but one, whose members are being trained to handle C-47 transports, fly single-engine fighters. The RIAF, an incomplete arm, could not even maintain this strength, however. Most of its communications, engineering, ground operations and other technical functions remain in the hands of the Royal Air Force. Obviously, there is almost no chance for the Indian fighting forces to retain their present efficiency after a complete transfer of power. The plan now being most widely discussed proposes that part of the British element will remain in India as a military mission. Its present command function would be relinquished

for shadow control, but at least it might stiffen the services as American forces did in China during the war.

A similar story can be told in respect to civil administration. Top-ranking police officials throughout the country are still British. Their departure will place the various provincial forces in the hands of comparatively junior officers. In the provinces and at the center British officers are still holding many of the most vital jobs. The hard-pressed civil service could barely avoid collapse if the number of officers represented by the British element were withdrawn; the loss of their experience and ability would be an even more staggering blow. The country is faced with what the army would call a logistics problem. To solve it Indian policy-makers now expect to offer good terms to British officials who will stay as agents of the new Indian government. Sentiment among these officers is running against further service in this country. Even if many of them decide to stay, there are hundreds of posts for which currently inexperienced Indians must be trained before the departure date.

Indians who think along these lines, foreseeing a drastic drop in efficiency, take comfort in the expectation that at least India's government will be managed by Indians and in the realization that India's near neighbor, China, has got along with a "bamboo framework" of administration rather than a "steel framework" such as India has had. Indians also expect that if the country remains stable, the level of civil and military administration can be gradually raised.

These are the transfer problems to be faced if conditions are ideal. Many people would like to see such conditions appear.

Last May the British Cabinet Mission, after examining witnesses of every available political hue, reported that it had found "an almost universal desire, outside the supporters of the Muslim League, for the unity of India." The British government also desires a united India. Gone are the days of Viceregal glee (as in 1906) over divisions between Muslims and the Congress. "Divide and rule" suits few Britishers now; disruption in India would further undermine Britain's crumbling world position. But it is my impression that no possibility remains for the emergence next year of a strong, single Indian government which could command the willing support of all major elements of the population. The spokesmen of many millions of Muslims have demonstrated that their community will resist

any national government in which power goes to those with the most votes. They would be unwilling subjects, not useful citizens, of a highly centralized Indian republic. The minimum concessions that might satisfy their present mood would vitiate the authority of the central government.

Broadly speaking there are, therefore, three main lines along which the transfer of power might be accomplished.

The first is to hand over completely to whatever central government may exist at the time. So far as can be foreseen, this move would amount to furnishing full authority to the majority community to enforce its will so far as it is able.

The second choice is to follow the Cabinet Mission plan by providing a central government to deal with foreign affairs, national defense, and communications, and leaving all other powers to the individual provinces or to regions within the country. This arrangement would bring into being an Indian federation.

The third possibility is the partition of India, with an acknowledgement of the sovereignty of each unit. This is the Pakistan proposal of the Muslim League.

Transfer to Single Authority

The first proposal, that the country should be handed over intact to the most powerful authority available, finds many supporters. It is contended that only by this means can the administrative organization of the state be kept tolerably strong and the defense of the realm provided for. Many Indians in Delhi believe that the central government with such a mandate could enforce its will over the whole country, despite early opposition. They point out that the Muslim element in the Indian Army has been reduced to 34 percent, and that the Muslim-majority areas are vulnerable economically to pressures which the central government could apply. In pursuing this policy they would expect the support of the important Hindu elements, whose entire political philosophy is based on a united India. This is the ultimate ideal of the Congress, and its younger, currently vocal supporters express themselves in positive terms. Many older heads think the goal may be achieved not immediately, but after an intervening period which might see even partition. They believe that if the Muslim areas do not join the Indian Union immediately,

it will be possible to construct a strong central government in their absence. Later, in their reading, the isolated Muslim areas would find themselves so hard-pressed that they would apply for readmission, thereby acknowledging the importance of a strong, united India. Most political leaders outside League circles (and, of course, all within them) believe that an immediate attempt to impose a powerful central government on a single India would cause considerable bloodshed. Even if successful, it would consolidate within the borders of India a bitter, frustrated potential fifth column numbering in the tens of millions.

Transfer to Federal Authority

The second possible course would provide a federation center, obviously inadequate for a national effort to modernize and renovate this old, outdistanced country. This scheme is popular neither with Muslims, who fear that despite limitations it would give the "brute majority" ample scope, nor with the non-Muslims who believe that strong states require strong governments. The very fact that both are wary of it makes its middle-of-the-road suggestions still the possible basis of a compromise. Top-ranking Congressmen, who for seven years have fought a defensive action against the demand for partition, hope yet to persuade Jinnah that the Cabinet Mission scheme will work out to the ultimate advantage of the Muslims. Barring the centrally administered subjects, they point out, the Muslim-majority areas will have practically full powers of self-government. The scheme provides for the possible formation of group governments in three sections of India; in two of these the Muslims would be in control. Both of these sections include regions where Hindus are in a majority, and as it happens those parts give a degree of economic stability to the sections. Take this plan, the Congress is now pleading, and you will have economically integrated groups. If you insist on partition, we will amputate those Hindu areas from your Pakistan, leaving you weak and unstable. Other arguments in favor of this scheme, from the Congress point of view, are that it leaves the armed services under single command and with united organization and it makes possible the transfer of British power to a single superior Indian authority. There would still be enormous problems: powers now held by the central government

would require decentralization and long debate might be expected over such questions as the division of central revenues and the method of financing the limited central government. Congress leaders are frankly looking toward strengthening the center, once it is established. Should not foreign affairs, for example, include import and export controls, trade treaties, and customs? On the same line of argument, national defense might be interpreted to embrace a degree of control over heavy industry and equipment-supplying factories, over power resources, and over conscription. To function properly, the government would require its own taxation authority. The Muslim League, however, holds the opposite view. Let the central government do nothing beyond the formal requirements of its functions. These would be financed by contributions from the component parts. Such differences can be solved, advocates of this scheme urge. The main weight of their argument is that economically the ordinary Muslim would benefit more from federation than from partition. He would have the advantage, they assert, of the country's resources for the defense of vulnerable frontiers and for planning and progress toward a higher standard of living.

Partition

Last summer the Cabinet Mission assessed the argument for Pakistan. It was evident, the Delegation set forth, that partition would not solve the communal question. New minority problems would be created if Pakistan were formed with all of the Punjab and Bengal, but to divide those provinces would present fresh difficulties. Communications and defense systems exist on the basis of a united India and could be separated only at grave cost. Other criticisms were made: the northwest and northeast frontiers could hardly be defended in depth within the confines of Pakistan; the princely states would find greater difficulty in associating themselves with a divided India; and, the two parts of Pakistan would be separated by more than 700 miles.

In spite of these arguments, an eminent Hindu jurist remarked to me last summer that before long the Hindus would plump for Pakistan as much as Muslims do. In a sense, this prediction is coming to pass. The February 20 statement has at least given reality to political appraisal. When a friend saw Jawaharlal Nehru some days

after the British declaration and asked whether the Congress would now make a grand gesture to the League in order to bridge the old gulf, he said that Nehru replied: "What gesture? What can we say or do? How can you deal with a man like Jinnah? Many times I have talked with him and asked him what he wants. One can never get anywhere with him." Nehru, my informant said, privately expressed the fear that at the pitch of today's passions nothing could be done to keep the Muslim-majority areas in a single India. However, Nehru is quoted as adding, the force of circumstances would bring these areas back into the fold after they had met the difficulties of getting along alone. To accept the idea of partition is still a Congress heresy, and I doubt Nehru would want to be quoted yet on this point. But even if his reported comment represents—as I think it does—leading thought in his camp, the hurdles have not yet all been crossed.

Two Types of Pakistan

The Muslim League insists that Pakistan will comprise the Muslim-majority *provinces*, while its reluctant opponents may be prepared to yield at most, sovereignty over Muslim-majority *areas*. The differences come in the Punjab, which would be the heart of northwestern Pakistan, and in Bengal, which by itself forms six sevenths of the proposed Eastern Pakistan. The assets of Bengal, a province of 60 million people, include Calcutta, India's largest city; a flourishing steel industry; coal fields; and access to the entire Ganges Valley market, which covers one of the most densely populated regions in the world. If this were all in Pakistan, however, the Muslim majority would be only about 55 percent of the total population, for one third of the province and part of adjacent Assam are predominantly Hindu. The division of Bengal on religious lines would rob Pakistan of the great port of Calcutta, most of the province's natural resources, and the great bulk of its present taxation capacity. Remaining would be a jam-packed breeding ground of 40 million people, 70 percent of whom are Muslim.

Similarly in the Punjab, a bare (57 percent) majority of the province's 30 million people are Muslims. And the Punjab is in a special situation. This province is the homeland of the virile, ambitious, close-knit Sikh community, which totals about 6 million people.

Before the British reached the Punjab a little over a century ago, the Sikhs had snatched from Mughal control the whole area from the Sutlej to the Khyber. The Sikhs are raised on a martial tradition; every Sikh man wears a dagger by religious sanction; implements of war are revered. Naturally, the Sikhs play a prominent role in the Indian Army. Sikhs are the followers of a holy man who tried to merge Hinduism and Islam by taking the best of both. In a sense, therefore, their sympathies lie between those of the larger communities. In fact, they are closer to the Hindus and carry into their present thinking some of the bitterness that accompanied Muslim-Sikh struggles for the control of the Punjab. In today's politics they line up sharply against the Muslim League, largely because they themselves covet leadership in the Punjab and cannot tolerate the idea of falling under Muslim Pakistani rule. This conviction makes them valuable allies for the Congress and Hindus (into whose organizations the Sikhs do not, however, merge their personalities completely). Although the Sikh population is only a sixth of that of the entire Punjab, the community's influence is increased not only by its concentration on martial ambitions but also by the fact that Sikhs are very extensive landowners. Hindus and Sikhs together have a combined majority of 63 percent in 12 Punjab districts in the southern and eastern part, bordering on other predominantly Hindu provinces. Much of the provincial wealth lies in these districts. Both Pakistan and Hindustan are bound to claim them, therefore, if it comes to the division of the country.

Provincial Partition

A preview of what is possible in these potential zones of conflict is the trouble that has already broken out in the Punjab. Since provincial autonomy came into force, the Punjab has always been governed by a coalition representing Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus. After the Muslim League pulled down the coalition Unionist ministry with a month-long civil disobedience campaign in February, its own efforts to establish a ministry resulted in such heated Hindu and Sikh opposition that communal rioting flared across the province. To restore order the British governor suspended popular government under his emergency powers, and now it is hard to see how normal ministerial government can be resumed. To govern in the Punjab,

the League must not only get a majority of the legislature behind it (a task which it has only barely accomplished, if at all), but it must either suppress the Hindus and Sikhs or make peace with them. The current Hindu-Sikh price for cooperation, it is reported, is a League commitment to abandon the goal of Pakistan. To make such a promise would mean political suicide for the League leaders, and they have so far shown no signs of committing it. There is perhaps a chance that the parties will agree to defer the issue, but the implication seems plain that if India is divided, an unlimited effort will be made by non-Muslim elements to divide the Punjab also.

The Muslim League Prime Minister of Bengal, H. S. Suhrawardy, apparently already sees a similar tendency developing in his province. In several recent speeches he and other Bengal Muslim League ministers have urged that for effective administration a coalition should be formed of the major parties. By that means, he may feel, an incipient Bengal partition movement might be stayed. There are indications, however, that Bengal Hindus are about to launch such a movement, which by a quirk of history would be diametrically opposed to the violent and successful agitation that their fathers waged against Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal in 1905.

Naturally, the division of these provinces would cause tremendous difficulties. In the Punjab the network of irrigation canals—the greatest system of its kind in the world—spreads over Muslim and Hindu-Sikh districts indiscriminately. The high-power electricity grid does the same. Provincial administration functions as a whole; files cannot be bisected to deal with the northwestern or southeastern portions of the province. Revenue and appropriations, police and civil services, judicial circuits—all these are unities. To fracture them would be to destroy them; the parts would have to be built anew. In Bengal similar conditions hold.

On a larger scale, equivalent problems are involved in the partition of India. The country now possesses an integrated, campaign-tested army. What happens if all the Muslims suddenly leave it? After separation what resources would the Muslims have to start their own army? How can the Indian railway net, which was laid out completely to meet the needs of one country, be divided? Or the telegraph and postal systems? What would be done about the national debt? Or customs revenues and defense charges? What of

subventions currently given by the central government to impoverished frontier regions? What would happen to national experiment and research stations? How would natural resources be divided? How could the two distant parts of Pakistan be linked without infringing the sovereignty of Hindustan? And, not least, what of the great minority pockets running into millions of people—in both nations?

Regionalization

Whatever comes out of the negotiations that will fill the air after Lord Mountbatten's arrival in India, the people of this country can look forward to much more highly regionalized life than they have experienced under British rule.

Hindustan

For the sake of discussion, therefore, let us consider the regions separately. "Hindustan" would comprise the heartland of India, with a population larger than that of the Soviet Union. It would include the present provinces of Madras, Bombay, the Central Provinces, the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, possibly parts of the Punjab and Bengal, and Indian States within the area. Indians offer strong evidence that Hindustan, a compact, busy zone containing the bulk of India's resources, wealth, industry, and visible enterprise, would have national entity despite differences in language, race, and culture. To give these differences adequate play (and incidentally to forestall the explosive development of regional forces against the central authority) the Congress is committed to a policy of linguistic provinces. Elements now strong in the Congress and in the country's industrial and commercial structure are at one, however, in supporting the idea of a national economic policy. Many favor centralized control over Hindustan's coal, iron, chemical, and other resources. Their common objective, in general terms, is to pull ancient, rustic Hindustan into the twentieth century. As a first step they talk of doubling the national income from its present paltry level within a generation. Technology would have its share in this assignment, for the industrial revolution, where it has touched Indian life, has made itself felt largely in the Hindustan area. A war-rich class of industrialists and commercial leaders show interest in exercising influence in national planning. The bulk of India's organized labor

is also in the Hindustan part, however, and leftist influence is strongest there. Socialist planning is the aim of a considerable part of the younger political leadership in Hindustan. As soon as political stability is achieved, current evidence suggests that economic planning and control will become the main arena of partisan debate.

As India is still in a primitive stage in supplying her own capital goods, Hindustan will depend heavily on imports of machines and technicians. As part payment she will rely on liquidation of Britain's \$5 billion war debt to India. Exports and de-hoarded bullion can be taken as other assets for the reimbursement of foreign enterprise.

To carry out such ambitious programs—and, indeed, to avert chaos—realistic Indians expect a strong, tough-minded government to administer the Hindustan section. Political democracy is a rudimentary, though growing, political concept in India. Current trends suggest that the most likely initial form of government is an oligarchy based on the consent of middle-class elements and spokesmen of peasant and worker movements. Opponents, it may be expected, would call it a dictatorship; at least the signs point to strongly authoritarian rule. At first this would probably be rightist, for the revolutionary young lieutenants of Gandhi's early struggles have become a "government of grandfathers" in the interim cabinet. That many of them listen carefully to the call of big business is underscored by the Congress party's present active, almost violent, resistance to Muslim League Finance Member Liaquat Ali Khan's "soak the rich" budget proposals. The oligarchy can be expected to resist disruptive forces within Hindustan. Opposition to it might become difficult. But individuals with whom I have discussed this question feel generally that with the inevitable early disappearance of the present top leadership (possibly except Nehru, the youngest, who is 57), the next generation of men who are farther to the left will penetrate the oligarchy, eventually bringing about a Socialist authoritarianism. This seems to me to be a reasonable guess, as the testimony of the last strike-filled year suggests that both in towns and villages the techniques of mass organization are progressing.

For any Hindustan government problems would come thick and fast. Among the major ones would be the presence of some 20 million Muslims within the state's borders. Few expect the Muslim

demand for self-determination to end with the division of the country, particularly if Jinnah wins only "truncated" Pakistan (i.e., Pakistan without southeastern Punjab and western and northern Bengal). If Hindustan and Pakistan fail to adjust their relations peacefully, many Hindus see in the Muslim residents of Hindustan a fifth-column virus of incalculable magnitude. A major effort would be expected to bring Muslim leaders under the government's sway; failing that, harsher methods might appear to neutralize the community. Transmigration of Muslims from Hindustan into Pakistan and of Hindus and Sikhs in the reverse direction seems after the riots of recent months to be a real possibility, whatever the arguments may be against large-scale movements of peoples.

Granted the establishment of a stable government in Hindustan, observers might expect the development of an increasingly strong line about the Indian States within its area. In the view of many Congressmen, the individual sovereignty of any ruler can be subjected to step-by-step penetration even if the States retain their present form. From the beginning the central government would expect to administer the central subjects proposed under the Cabinet Mission's plan: foreign affairs, national defense, and communications. The government's right to impose taxation to support these functions might be an entering wedge. Afterwards, many economists and politicians in British India anticipate, may come intrusion of control over such things as tariffs and customs, food-grain procurement and rationing, industrialization, and the like. Except for the few largest States which have substantial internal resources, it is felt that any unwilling ruler could be brought into line by the sponsoring of a vigorous political movement within his State, if not by more direct sanctions. It is, however, also conceivable that the retention of a few States as entities might suit some interests in Hindustan, just as many Chinese have found advantage in the continuance of British jurisdiction in Hong Kong.

In international affairs, the forces now visible in Indian policy can be expected to continue under a Hindustan government. Indians who look beyond their own village or town tend to regard themselves as the natural leaders of their continent. "India as she is situated geographically and situated economically inevitably will become the center of Asia," Jawaharlal Nehru told the Federation of Indian

Chambers of Commerce some days ago. Hindustan may be expected to exert its influence on the grounds that Indians have blazed the path of political advance for colonial Asia; that they maintain strong connections especially in Southeast Asia through hundreds of thousands of Indians overseas; and that they are the natural producers to step into the void left by Japan in furnishing consumer goods for East Asia. The successes already achieved by Indian delegates at UNO meetings suggest that Hindustan will consciously develop a role as an opponent of imperialism, defender and protector of backward areas, and advocate of an Asian continental consciousness. Much of Hindustan's attention would naturally be directed toward Southeast Asia; already Nehru has established a sort of political kinship with Dr. Shahrir of Indonesia, for example. Friendly relations with China will continue to be regarded as important, though to cultural and personality differences between Indians and Chinese may be added competition or jealousy arising out of their respective continental ambitions. Realistic Indians expect Hindustan to maintain close ties with Britain and the white Dominions. British standards and specifications are deeply imbedded in Indian financial, industrial, military, and other structures. Particularly with the \$5 billion war debt, Britain's chance to participate in the development of India is expected to be excellent. For American enterprise the leaders of Hindustan would undoubtedly offer the same welcome, though on somewhat different terms because dollar resources are scarce. Much goodwill for America and much respect for American scientific and industrial competence remain in India; students are anxious to study in the United States. But Hindustan is likely to be wary of the dollar diplomacy, or financial imperialism, that many Indians believe to be associated with American policy. Similarly, Hindustan's attitude toward the Soviet Union, it can be deduced, would be a mixture of friendliness and wariness. Soviet planning and progress in education, science, and industry have received rapt attention in this country, and Soviet achievements inspire many Indian planners who hope to rejuvenate their own land. Indian leaders want to get on with the Soviets, not just because they are one of two great powers in the postwar world, but because they are the one big power in this continent. The mass of Indian sentiment nationalistically opposes Russian interference in Indian affairs, as

might be expected. Interests which are likely to govern Hindustan at first are those which have shown themselves anxious to root out the growing Indian communist movement.

I have emphasized trends that are visible in the Hindustan area because of the zone's inherent importance. If India remained united, much of the national force would generate, as it does now, within this national heartland. If the country were divided, however, the same elements could be expected to operate in a similar way, though, in a more limited area.

Pakistan

Of the two Muslim-majority zones, the eastern region is regarded as little more than an appendage of the other. Should Bengal be partitioned, the resulting Eastern Pakistan would have little dynamic importance to the rest of the world, except as a main supplier of jute. Its 40 million people live in a riverine delta that has few cities and little industry. All Bengal is today, as compared to a generation ago, in a cultural slump. Public life is poorly integrated, unsettled, and of uncertain morality. With Calcutta and the resources of western Bengal, Eastern Pakistan might have somewhat more character, but more than a political solution is required for the ills that affect Bengal today.

More robustness, a higher standard of living, and more room for development are visible in the areas that would constitute northwestern Pakistan. The Pathans, Punjabis, and Baluchis are vigorous racial types, compared to Bengalis. Sindhis and possibly Kashmiris would lend their qualities to this state. Its resources are limited—though if southern and eastern Punjab were included, the situation would be better—and it would find difficulty in maintaining financial strength. Young Muslims recognize this hard prospect, but especially since the riots became severe it is not uncommon to hear one of them mutter, "What if it will not be any better than Afghanistan; it will be ours." Many Muslims, as might be expected, have much grander ambitions. Looking backward to the times when Mughal emperors ruled India from the Khyber to Madras, they say, "Give us any region for Pakistan. In 20 years we will control the whole country again." For the initial period, if Pakistan comes, such expansionist dreams seem destined for cold storage while Muslim leaders

expend their whole energy in establishing a new state. If they can sustain Mohammad Ali Jinnah's cold fervor, the new Islamic country may take shape. Inevitably, if he is alive and of sound health, Jinnah will become head of state. Muslims believe it possible to establish a modern, semi-socialist government. Private finance and business, which even in the Muslim areas is largely in the hands of Hindus, should in the view of League planners be substantially nationalized. To get the country on its feet, the state can be expected to take to itself strong economic as well as political powers.

In addition, however, there is considerable testimony and good reason to believe that Pakistan would make a strong bid for foreign assistance in many fields. Particularly if the parting from Hindustan is bitter, Muslims will attempt to free themselves as much as possible from dependence on the other Indian nation. Muslims express themselves as anxious for a continuing defense arrangement with Britain, particularly as the Pakistan army would, in effect, need to be created from the third of the Indian army not retained by Hindustan. Financial and technological aid from abroad would also be a goal of the Pakistan government. Lacking Hindustan's resources, it might have to make fuller provision for the grant of monopolies and exclusive licenses to foreign firms working within its borders. Oil and mineral prospecting, for example, might come under this heading. Pakistan policy would also aim at close ties with the Muslim countries to the west. It is already clear that Jinnah's state would be conscious of being the largest Islamic nation in the world. Whether Arab countries would abdicate leadership of any pan-Islamic bloc is another question, but Pakistan's leaders would expect the very existence of their new state to strengthen Islamic politics in the world.

If, under the federation plan, the Muslim areas have limited autonomy, similar social measures can be expected to come into force and Indians assert that there would be equal exploitation of these underdeveloped regions. Main fiscal policies, however, would probably be more closely related to those of the rest of the country.

One trend deserves comment in a discussion of Pakistan. An element of *mullah*-ism has appeared in the League campaign for a separate nation. Especially among Pathan tribesmen in the North-west Frontier Province and in other less advanced areas, *imams*, *maulvis*, and *pirs* are gathering considerable political strength with

the blatant cry that Islam is in danger. The Pir of Manki Sharif, perhaps the foremost example, rallies something like 100,000 followers, who according to his lieutenants are ready to fight and kill for him. They are the men capable of responding to a call for *jihad*, or holy war. These *mullahs* and their disciples think of Pakistan in terms of a true Islamic state governed in accordance with the Shariat, which lays down domestic and social law. The head of the state, an *amir* or caliph, would exercise theocratic as well as secular powers. Non-Muslim residents would be subject to the *jazia*, or head tax, though it might not be regularly levied. Such a governmental form is favored to a greater or lesser degree by many Muslims. In an extreme degree it would lead to thorough-going *mullah* influence in Pakistan. Compromises between the ideas of this band and the problems of modernization might be difficult.

Indian States

The dependence of the smaller States on neighboring provinces cannot be denied. In the event of a break-up of Indian authority, however, certain larger States or federations of States might take their own way in regional governments that would operate in an environment of national chaos. Such a situation would give opportunities to adventurers, so long as no modern foreign power stepped into the vacuum.

Disruption

Complete failure of the major elements in India to agree on their future status would open the way for a reversion to the national disruption that is familiar in Indian history, as at the time British power was advancing through the country. Already the administration of India is so far run down that, as one Indian expressed it to me, "The only reason we have not fallen into anarchy is that people have not yet realized we are already there." The traditions of government and authority are proving more valuable than current administration in carrying the country through this transition period. If for any reason the transfer of power is delayed or a successor government or governments do not appear promptly, the chances of disruption will increase by the equivalent of geometric progression. If the big party leaders and Viscount Mountbatten can reach any

workable accommodation, Indians believe there is a good chance of avoiding chaos. On this they are pinning their faith.

Conclusion

Time alone will reveal all the consequences of the British Labour government's decision to abandon the Indian Empire in June 1948. Already, however, it is evident that the decision came just in time, if then, to arrest a dangerous drift toward anarchy and chaos. There is reason to believe that the transfer of power may be easier now than it would be two years hence, but riskier than if it had been accomplished 10 or even five years ago. Born of necessity, this decision marches with the times after a war that affected the economic, social and political life of India more than may be visible to a casual observer. The transfer of power will be fraught with the greatest delicacy even under the best circumstances now possible. If the Indian parties and the new Viceroy fail to reach a mutual accommodation, the difficulties will be compounded. Indians today know that there is little hope of maintaining the prewar efficiency of the civil services or the present cohesion of the national armed forces; the amputation of the British element will inevitably leave its scar. Most Indians now realize, too, that independence is not a magic formula to solve all their problems. The days of blaming everything on the British are almost gone. Looking around them, Indians see their own country in turmoil with the possibility that the upheaval will spread. Within 15 months of the deadline for freedom, they see British troops protecting some of their countrymen against others. They recognize that deep-running passions have put residents of the same village at one another's throats. They see, in short, a black and dismal picture about them.

One fact, however, should remain clear. The vast majority of articulate Indians want independence. Whatever security the reimposition of British rule might give them could not, in their minds, balance the loss of the freedom that now seems at their threshold. The thought that an upheaval here might result in application of a UNO trusteeship to India frightens them. Above all else, most want the chance to face their own problems, make their own mistakes, and hope that somehow they can reach better times ahead.

The main problem is to establish a balance between the too-apparent diversities and the important, though frequently overlooked, elements of unity in this vast and complex country. A successful solution would enable one fifth of the human race to play a worthy role at home and in the world.

(March 18, 1947)

INDIAN ASHRAMS, 1947

Talbot undertook this journey to the Swaraj Ashram to observe at close hand both ashram life and the unique contribution being made by Vallabhbhai Patel. What he describes is a microcosm of modern-day India and offers hints as to how it can address its current problems and challenges. There are important lessons to be learnt here.

What was the Swaraj Ashram, and what role did it play in the independence movement? Like many other contemporary ashrams, it was a community center with many functions. It was a dispensary, meeting the primary and preventive health needs of the villagers. It was a place where primary school teachers received training, in a special program. At the ashram peasants got assistance with rationing, seeds, farming, and controls. There was a cooperative store selling produce grown or made in the vicinity, practically at cost. And there was also a branch of the All India Spinners Association, which helped the farmers to achieve self-sufficiency in clothing.

Talbot writes about many ashrams, including the Bardoli Ashram where Gandhi's first experiment in nonviolent civil disobedience took place. Fundamentally, the ashrams were a grassroots approach intended to nurture an economic connection with the farmers and also to be close politically to their way of thinking. The main ashrams had branch ashrams in outlying villages, to further contacts at the grassroots level.

As India looks to its future, and seeks the same close connection to its villages, one of the challenges that the government has undertaken is Mission 2007. The goal of this mission is to have all of India's 600,000 villages networked with computers that not only connect them but also enable access to micro-credit loans, current information on prices for produce, birth and land certificates, health information, etc.

The Ashrams of 50 to 60 years ago and the current Mission 2007 initiative both have the objective of connecting better with India's core, which to many remains the key to its future. Unfortunately, politicians pay not much more than lip service to the needs of the farmers, and much remains to be done. India's villages and towns need investment in schools, health care, freedom from moneylenders, protecting the girl child, improved irrigation, clean water, up-to-date farming techniques, reliable electricity, and so on. All of this is still critical today if India is to achieve its development goals.

The India of today, with a population of over a billion, has almost 250 million citizens under the age of 15, and a total of about 500 million under the age of 25. Many of these young people, our hope for the future, live in India's villages, the same places where the independence-era ashram idea first took root and flourished. Many modern innovators have pointed to the importance of addressing health and educational needs as a precondition for further development. Without passing judgment on what should come first, what is evident is that the ashram idea, and its role in serving the heart of India, is one from which many lessons can be learnt.

Krishen Mehta

Travels with Vallabhbhai Patel

April 22, 1947

IN THIS DIFFICULT transitional period in India, it is useful to be familiar with the sources of strength of the leaders who undertake to speak for the country. From time to time, therefore, I have traveled with Gandhi, Nehru, various Muslim Leaguers, and some of the leftists.

This last week, in fulfilment of a long-standing desire, I accompanied Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, home member of the Interim Government, to Gujarat, his province, and especially to Bardoli, the village that he made famous in the early days of the Congress party's anti-British agitation.

After a 165-mile train journey from Bombay I arrived at 3:30 in the morning at Surat, the Gujarati town that was the English traders' first western Indian base in Mughal times. As always, I was impressed with the sudden coming to life of an Indian railway station platform when a train comes in. As Surat is roughly a mid-point on the through runs, the Frontier Mail and other key passenger trains always pass through late at night. Before a train arrives, the station lies dark and silent, with sheet-covered forms huddled together in family groups asleep on the platform. Here and there a mother stirs to feed her infant, but to a person picking his way over and around the quiet bodies the scene looks like nothing so much as a down-at-the-heel police morgue. A clanging warning of an approaching train brings the platform to life. Intending passengers gather their families and parcels for the onslaught; hawkers light the oil lamps on their pushcarts; auxiliary policemen start strutting the platform. Then pandemonium breaks loose. Before the non-corridor carriages stop moving, side doors fly open in overcrowded third-class compartments. At every entrance a battle royal breaks out between boarding passengers, who fight to seize any possible seat space, and detraining passengers whose way is barred. There is no thought of courtesy; the ones who get in first get the seats. Apparently oblivious to the pushing, hauling, kneeing, elbowing crowds, white-uniformed train guards walk through the *melée* waving their lanterns. Food vendors set up their raucous cries as they roll bicycle-wheeled pushcarts

along the platform. Hot tea, they shout; oranges, plantains, guavas, betel nuts, cigarettes, fried rice and wheat cakes. No attempt is made to maintain quiet for the sake of through passengers sleeping on the train. The upper-class carriages, in fact, are full of dark mystery that the traveling peasant carefully avoids. More interest is centered on the silk-clothed girl bride, who looks miserable, probably because of the unfamiliar train journey and the unseasonable, inauspicious rain storm.

On the early morning that I arrived, the station was decorated with *salupalu* leaves and branches hung on strings above the platform. The long green "good luck" leaves had been plucked for Vallabhbhai Patel, who arrived in Surat the preceding day. He came again, after the station platform population and I had slept for two or three hours more, to catch a train for Bardoli, 20 miles away. I took the same train.

Bardoli is a well-known name in Indian nationalist history. Deep in the Gujarat countryside of northern Bombay province, it is an ordinary village whose 5,000 people grow and market cotton, millets, and garden crops. An Arabian Sea storm off the Kathiawar coast had turned Bardoli's single dirt road into a slithery mud track. In a quarter-mile ride from the station, we passed under more *salupalu* streamers glistening in the rain and under strings of soaked miniature homespun Congress party flags. Even the flower rosettes on the foreheads of the oxen drooped damply. Yet there was no denying the warmth of Sardar Patel's welcome.

His destination was the Swaraj Ashram, whose name can be translated as "Abode of Independence." The Ashram includes a compound of about 10 acres on which are several large brick-and-plaster buildings, a residence for Patel when he is there, and a truck gardening farm. Dominating the scene is a flagpole from which the Congress flag flies. For an Indian rural setting the Ashram is extremely trim. Its buildings are connected by graveled walks that are edged with alternately whitewashed bricks laid obliquely to give a red and white saw tooth appearance. There are no electric lights, but an American gasoline pump provides running water from a deep well for drinking and kitchen use and for irrigation. Latrines are neat and clean, as are the kitchens. The vegetarian food that we were served was exceptionally good.

A quick look around the establishment revealed that the Ashram is a first-class community center. In a country where little outside aid is given the peasant, the Ashram has a dispensary that provides most of its treatment free and sometimes helps to send patients to city hospitals. In the Ashram there is a branch of the All India Spinners Association which helps to spread the Gandhian cult of self-sufficiency in clothing. A government-aided teacher-training program helps primary school teachers to learn the Wardha basic education scheme. In a regional Congress party office peasants get assistance in their problems of rationing, controls, and adjustments to the Bombay provincial Congress ministry. Soon, according to Sardar Patel, the Ashram is also to have a cooperative store in which the produce of the Ashram gardens and other goods will be sold practically at cost.

For all these activities, the normal population of the Ashram is 60-odd people. Patel's visit after an interval of about 18 months naturally attracted great crowds of other visitors. From the moment he reached his house, peasant farmers and aboriginal forest tribals queued up to talk with the Home Member of the Government of India. Patel was obviously at home among these people. His daughter, who is his constant companion and scribe, spoke most affectionately of the Ashram. Living in the huge government mansion in New Delhi, she said, "is part of the cost we pay in our political work."

In New Delhi Vallabhbhai Patel is very much the Congress party disciplinarian and strategist. At 71 he is still one of the closest disciples of Gandhi, from whom he derives part of his authority. In party caucuses and private conversations he converts into solid, practical politics the Working Committee's policy decisions. He is a pillar of the conservative wing of the party. As chief of the Central Parliamentary Board, he sits in judgment on Congress aspirants all over the country. His influence on the party is, therefore, enormous. At the same time he has a record of consistently pressing for a stiff party policy toward the British government and the Muslim League. As befits a strong man, he talks little and, when he talks, speaks quietly and to the point. An interviewer rarely gets verbiage from Patel.

Here in his own home Patel was far more informal. Laughing and joking easily, he talked enthusiastically and at length of the gardens,

of the constructive contact program of the Ashram, and of its political past. From him and from Ashramites who have been associated with him for more than 25 years, I learned something of the Ashram's role in the Congress party's struggle.

Bardoli is famous in Indian nationalist circles for two spectacular episodes. In 1921 Gandhi, who like Patel is a Gujarati, chose this village for his first experiment in India of a nonviolent civil disobedience campaign. From that effort, in which a few thousand people defied government orders as a group, grew the large-scale India-wide civil disobedience movements which not only embarrassed the government somewhat but greatly developed Indian political consciousness.

The Bardoli Ashram was established by Patel, then a young follower of Gandhi, shortly after that campaign. It progressed to become the center of Congress political agitation throughout the Gujarat region. For a generation it has been important. The year about which its members still speak, however, is 1928. At that time Patel made the first serious effort in Indian politics to organize a large mass of peasants for effective agitation against the government. Previously the nationalist movement had been largely a middle-class and urban affair. When the government, in a periodic reassessment of land values, announced a 25 percent increase in land taxes, Patel resorted to a "no tax" campaign. He was working in a good field: it is an area of peasant proprietors rather than of large landlords, so that the tax increase was widely felt. Patel organized the peasants to refuse all payments to the government. He established branch ashrams in outlying villages, and operated his own messenger service in the district. For weeks Patel was the dictator of Bardoli. "It got to the point," he said in happy recollection the other day, "that even government officials had to get chits from here to obtain provisions." Despite arrests, confiscation of property, tax sales, and all the pressure that a government is able to bring on individuals in a poor country, he held the peasants firm until Gandhi eventually stepped in with a proposal of mediation. The ultimate result was the reduction of the increment to $6\frac{1}{4}$ percent and the establishment of a pattern for peasant agitation that was later copied in the United Provinces, Bihar, and other provinces.

From this campaign Patel acquired from his followers and admirers the title of Sardar, which means “commander” and is sometimes a British-bestowed honor for military officers and other favored individuals. To this day he is referred to as the Sardar of Bardoli, and his name regularly appears as Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

All through the quarter-century of Gandhi-led agitation against British rule, the Bardoli Ashram was the nerve center of the movement in Gujarat. During these years the government seized and occupied the Ashram four times, and most recently it was returned to Sardar Patel and the Congress only after his release from prison in 1945. At the height of political agitation, 16 branch ashrams in all parts of Gujarat stemmed from the mother institution. Workers in these ashrams moved in the villages and among the peasants. They carried on the Gandhian “constructive program” to help the villagers and to gain the people’s confidence for the political message that they also carried. Their grassroots approach kept them in close touch with the cultivators’ line of thinking. Shaping their political propaganda to attract the peasants, the workers also reported back to headquarters on the mood and temper of the countryside. As a result Patel, himself a lawyer born of an agriculturalist’s family, became an infallible interpreter of and spokesman for the Gujarati peasant. Nothing could happen without his knowing it. His grip on the countryside became closer than that of the government, and his authority greater.

This, then, was the basic sanction for his strength in national politics. As president of the Indian National Congress and, 15 years later, as Home Member of the Government of India, he was strong in the center because he was invincible in his own province.

The Ashram technique of political organization is not exclusively Patel’s. Ashrams, of course, are one of the oldest forms of human association in India. As hermitages, they were early the seats of religious learning and faith. Even today Hindu and Buddhist ashrams remain the centers of strong religion. Many Christian missionaries who have really got close to India believe ashrams to be a far better vehicle than Western-style churches for the propagation here of Jesus’s faith. Gandhi was the one who took the ashram concept and gave it a political twist. Ever since he became active in Indian political life, he has maintained his own ashram where more than one future

national leader has been trained. It is typical of Gandhi that his ashrams have encompassed a strong nonpolitical program as well as the political activities. Similarly, Babu Rajendra Prasad, the Bihar provincial leader who in these days of nationalist authority is Food and Agricultural Member of the Interim Government and president of the Constituent Assembly, organized his political campaign from an ashram near Patna. C. Rajagopalachari, former prime minister of Madras and present Industries Member of the Government of India, is another leader who had an ashram. Even Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the so-called King of Khans on the Northwest Frontier, and a staunch Muslim, maintains an ashram-like center at Sardaryab on the Peshawar plain. Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the few leading Congress personalities who have eschewed the ashram technique. Nehru's Western training has always inclined him toward a direct political approach to potential Congress party supporters.

What is the role of the ashram in the new political era of approaching independence? Its function has already changed. At Bardoli, Ashramites are concentrating on the spinning, farming, medical practice, and teacher-training. As Patel keeps telling them, they have no further need to rouse the peasants against the government; the government is now theirs. The workers not only help peasants with rationing troubles, but attempt to convert the Congress ministry's paper reforms into actual practice. At the afternoon meeting that Sardar Patel addressed, for example, another speaker who also displayed a parental attitude toward the peasants urged them to accept the new Hindu monogamy act even though it would change some of their ancient practices. "I have two wives myself," he declared in an oration filled with broad rustic humor, "and I stand here as the first to advise you to obey this new law that says every Hindu should marry only once."

Patel himself told me that the ashrams still have a great role to play in educating the country people to the better life ahead. But some other workers in the Ashram confirmed that the brightest young nationalists in this generation were not following in their fathers' footsteps. With the Congress controlling provincial ministries and in power at the center, many nationalist youths of today seem to feel that there is more promise in a career that is more closely under the eye of the ministers.

Although ashrams are so essentially Indian that they can be expected to continue even in a political form, I find it hard to believe they will demonstrate the same vitality in seeking popular support for an Indian ministry that they did in the crusade against alien rule.

None of this softening is evident, however, when Patel is in residence at Bardoli. The common affection between him and the peasants is based on pride in what they have accomplished together. During his brief visit hundreds of them came to the Ashram and sat unmoved and unprotected through a rainstorm for the privilege of hearing him scold them and lecture them on their new responsibilities under an Indian government. The old revolutionary has become the apostle of order. He told his followers that they must now obey the law, instead of breaking it. During the day he had heard both sides of a local wage dispute between the peasant proprietors and neighboring forest tribals who work as agricultural laborers. Just because the farmers were the heroes of Bardoli, Patel told them, they could not expect freedom to exploit the aborigines. Under the new order the government would have to protect the weaker people, and the peasant proprietors would have to obey the government.

The peasants were gravely impressed with these words. So was I.

ASIAN RELATIONS CONFERENCE AND BEYOND

The Asian Relations Conference took place in the spring of 1947. Talbot's thoughts and observations about it make up one of the most interesting letters in this collection.

Men and women from newly formed governments, unsteadily taking their first steps, are looking to the future with both optimism and deep concern. That is very evident in these pages. All the delegates knew, as Talbot points out, that "they are struggling through a period of vast and fundamental change." This change would require a different type of foreign help, particularly in the form of capital, that brought its own risks. The delegates "feared a new style of financial imperialism that might grip their nations tighter than the old political regimes." Who could have predicted then the Asian financial crisis 50 years later, and how the economies of Indonesia, Thailand, and Korea would be affected as a result of this financial dependence?

At the same time, there is a sense of Asia's destiny in these letters. It was evident to the delegates that the Asian countries needed each other, both for their own development and to gain a voice in the international forum. There was also a fear of what was happening around them, with British, French, and Dutch forces (substantially equipped by America) fighting to hold on to their colonies. The delegation sent by Dr. Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam made an anxious plea for help from other nations. The stormclouds were already visible on the horizon, and this war eventually saw some 3 million Vietnamese lives lost over three decades, along with hundreds of thousands killed or wounded on the French and American side. This was a tragedy waiting to happen.

Talbot observed "how conscious the new Asians are of their dependence on the rest of the world for a long time to come . . . in the areas of heavy industry, finance, managerial capacity." Some of the delegates, back in March 1947, were even lining up trade agreements for their infant republics. What we see today of many free trade agreements within Asia, and the earlier formation of ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) itself to further cooperation both on the economic and the political front, is an extension of that sense of dependence. Whether these steps will eventually result in a pan-Asian economic free trade zone, or a union similar to that of Europe, only time will tell.

There are many other observations in this letter that apply to the current day. The Chinese delegation was "not eager to encourage Indians' bid for the leadership of Asia." This is true even today, as the two countries compete in the areas of trade, energy, and political legitimacy. The issue of political alliances among these soon-to-be-independent nations is also raised by Talbot, when he wonders if "the successor to feudalism is more likely to be capitalism, socialism, communism, or something new." It is not surprising that in the 1950s and 1960s the Non-Aligned Movement came into being and gained momentum, under the leadership of leaders such as Nehru, Sukarno, Tito, and Nasser.

Much of the future in the making, our past half century, is pre-figured in the letter of April 27, 1947 that follows.

Krishen Mehta

Asian Relations Conference

April 27, 1947

FOR ABOUT A month the Asian Relations Conference has absorbed a good deal of my interest. I attended its sessions (as an observer for the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations) during the last week of March and early days of April and since then, between other chores, I have been writing various notes and reports on it. Some of these may have been published, though no one has yet said so. In any case I should like in this letter to make a few further comments, including some that are perhaps too subjective to have been incorporated in a published report.

The IPR, the only American organization officially represented at the Conference, had also designated Mr. and Mrs. Richard Adloff as observers, while William C. Johnstone, chief of the US Government Information Service in India and an IPR board member, and his wife attended many sessions and maintained close contacts with the planning group. The five of us spent several daytime and midnight hours comparing our information and conclusions, and much of what appears below is the result of joint effort.

There are difficulties, of course, in putting such an event as this Conference into perspective. Judged strictly by the scope and quality of the work it accomplished, the Conference seemed to me to be unexceptional. I felt, too, that the delegations from various countries were mixed lots of strong, weak, important and unimpressive men and women. There were also muddy little details that indicated cliquishness and self-seeking interest on the part of the sponsors or similar personal ambitions among the visiting delegations. Some of these explain why a number of observers will tend to discount the Conference.

To my mind, however, this was not a conference that should be assessed by those standards, any more than our daughter Susan should have been criticized for walking so unsteadily three days before her first birthday. The thrill of baby achievement came from taking her first steps—doing something that she could not have done before. This was exactly the case with the Asian Relations Conference,

particularly because of the participation of the colonial-belt countries of Southeast Asia. Men and ideas that took the rostrum in Delhi could not have made public appearances in Asia before the war.

Sometimes I wonder whether many Europeans and Americans know how truly they spoke when they talked of fighting for democracy. In this part of the world one has but to look around him to see two wars' tremendous effect on the Asian half of the world's peoples. Perhaps Western-style democracy has not been the immediate result, but indigenous governments have sprung up where a generation ago Europeans could not have expected to see them. In short, these wars have destroyed the basis of political imperialism, and released new forces that are not yet fully guided nor even adequately described. Remembering our war aims, it is instructive to look at the record. India, keystone of the whole colonial arch between Europe and the Far East, is about to achieve independence, however troubled and divided that may be. Burma, her next door neighbor, is ready to draft a free constitution. Ceylon and Malaya, with more self-rule than they have known since European power came east, are agitating for more. The Indonesian Republic has now won full recognition from the Dutch government and, according to its leaders, is working to consolidate its strength not only in Java, Sumatra and Madura but also in the eastern islands where Dutch control remains. In Indo-China the Vietnam republic was once recognized by France, but now is in a military contest with French forces. Philippine independence is a fact. Farther north, Korea has been freed from Japanese rule (only to come under divided Soviet and American zonal administration) and Outer Mongolia has been detached from China. These developments do not all make for order, but they signify tremendous, deep-working, widespread change. It is this that the Asian Relations Conference reflected.

In the winter of 1945–46, when Jawaharlal Nehru first began urging such a conference, the mortal wounds inflicted on imperialist rule in Asia were not fully visible. True, the Japanese had encouraged and sponsored nationalist regimes throughout the occupied colonial belt; true also, the Allies had added fuel with their support to underground and resistance movements. But British, French and Dutch troops (with substantial American equipment) seemed to be fighting their way back into possession of prewar colonies. If Nehru did

not conceive the Conference as a whiplash against Western occupying powers, his mind was running in less concrete channels than usual.

By the time the Conference met, however, it was clear that no return to the good old days was possible. The frontal attempt to regain authority had failed. Everywhere the great powers had begun compromising with or fighting rearguard actions against nationalist movements whose chief agitators had become heads of recognized governments. Thus the events of quite recent months permitted the Conference to look forward rather than backward.

Planning the Conference was a most difficult affair. No such gathering had ever been held; no one in India even knew what organizations in other countries upheld interests similar to those of the sponsoring Indian Council of World Affairs, a study body formed in 1943 by Indians who disapproved of the existing local offshoot of Chatham House, the leading British institute of international affairs. In line with Nehru's dream, the Conference was extended to continental limits though realists pointed out that the main interest would center in Southeast Asia. Eventually, however, selected universities and cultural organizations in all Asian countries were invited to send spokesmen, while special invitations went to a number of well-known individuals and some governments were given the chance to send official observers. Besides the IPR contingent, the only non-Asians invited were representatives of similar British, Australian and Soviet study bodies.

Paralleling a sense of Asian destiny in the planners' minds was a strong desire to keep the Conference quiet, mannerly, and away from divisions on controversial issues. Though some of the big figures of Asia were invited, the agenda, methods of procedure and other mechanics were organized on the lines of the IPR's Hot Springs Conference in 1945. This dualism of purpose continued right through the Conference, in which one group clung to the idea of safe objectivity while another tried to shape the session into a flaming sword-edge of Asian renaissance.

Another embarrassment that faced the organizers was the rapidly developing schism in India. Since the interim government was formed last September, both major parties have thought about foreign affairs in more immediate terms than ever before. If world-minded Nehru

worked hard to develop his international contacts, Jinnah and the Muslim League evidenced a new wariness about Indian foreign relations and particularly those with other Muslim states. The League decided that the Conference was an evidence of Hindu imperialism. Calling it such things as "a fraud on Asia," Leaguers boycotted the Conference and called on Muslim organizations of other countries to do the same. When, in spite of this, foreign Muslim delegates appeared, they were treated to such a torrent of propaganda that most of them worked hard trying to walk a tightrope. As one cynical Iraqi explained the position to me, the Middle Easterners could not ignore the Conference invitation because Nehru was External Affairs Member of a government on which they depended for cloth, cement, matches, and other necessities. At the same time they could not scorn Jinnah, because who could say when he might become head of the largest Muslim state in the world? This dilemma partly explains the quiet attitude adopted by most of these delegates. Spokesmen from other parts of Asia paid little attention to the League's attacks, however, and continued to treat Nehru as an authentic giant of the New Asia.

The Indian Muslims, of course, made capital of the facts that the Conference was being largely financed by contributions from the same group of wealthy industrialists who have poured money into the Indian Congress and that, however unofficial the Conference might declare itself, substantial aid came from the part of the Indian government, over which Nehru presides. The first accusation was pointed up sharply, observers thought, by the choice of Sir Shri Ram, a Delhi cotton-mill owner, as chairman of the local reception committee. The Government of India on its part chartered a plane to fetch Shahrir from Java, cleared the passages of Vietnam delegates who were in Bangkok without travel credentials, and provided local facilities such as Constitution House, a former American army officers' barracks that now houses members of the Indian Constituent Assembly when that body is in session. Delegates and observers were quartered there.

These were all incidents of planning that suggest the temper of the country but do not seriously affect an estimate of the Conference. It is more important to examine the nature of the delegations that came to New Delhi.

The Chinese, for example, were obviously attentive to their own interests and un-eager to encourage Indians' bid for the leadership of Asia. "It is an interesting experiment, and it makes a good platform for Nehru," one Chinese observer commented about the Conference. This blasé attitude disappeared, however, when delegates from Southeast Asia began questioning the role of Chinese residents in their countries. The leading Chinese delegates joined hands to ward off any criticism of their country. When it became clear that a permanent Asian organization would develop out of the Conference, the Chinese changed their tactics and bid to have the next general meeting in China. As might have been expected, the Chinese delegates, who were briefed by George Yeh, Foreign Office counsellor, showed themselves friendly to the US and aloof to the Soviets.

Delegates from six Soviet Asian republics kept much to themselves. Despite the language barrier, they seemed willing to discuss cultural topics with other delegates but, so far as one could judge, consistently shied away from political and economic discussions. Their reports of achievements in fields in which the rest of Asia is still primitive made some impression, but the finality of their presentations left some irritation. I could not see that a strong link was forged between the Soviet and non-Soviet groups.

The Mongolian People's Republic representatives, a professor of "new" (post-1921) history, a philologist working on the Mongol language, and an economist, made it clear that their country is not linked to the USSR. To reach Delhi, however, they flew from Ulanbator to Moscow where they picked up an interpreter who spoke Russian and English, but no Mongolian. The Mongols said little on the Conference floor.

From West Asia (and Egypt) came a composite delegation of Egyptian feminists, Arab League spokesmen, and representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood, a revivalist body that is trying to spread throughout the world's Islamic regions. Exception was taken to the fact that Palestine was represented only by a delegation from the Hebrew University. An Iranian cultural mission now visiting India attended the Conference but said little. A group of Afghan professors made even less vocal impression, though some of them had contributed articles for publication at the Conference. Bhutan, a little-known state on the northern fringe of India, sent observers who

made few comments, while the delegations from Nepal and Tibet (in respect to whose presence the Chinese protested) were equally silent.

With the blessings of Aung San, who stayed at home to fight Constituent Assembly elections, a strong and active delegation arrived from Burma. This group made it clear that Burmans will watch both Indians and Chinese for signs of new Asian imperialism. It was one of the few delegations who were willing to raise questions relating to intra-Asian discord. Anxious to show their support for the UNO, the Burmans were also keen to rally the assistance of current Asian members in getting a UNO seat for Burma. This line was undoubtedly adopted at the prompting of Aung San, who I think deserves watching as one of the coming young leaders of Asia. He is even younger than Premier Sutan Shahrir of Indonesia, who is also still in his thirties.

Like the Burman group, the Indonesians present at the Conference made efforts to impress other Asians with their world-mindedness. They too support the UNO and would like to be in it. Indonesian delegates, who were finally led by Shahrir himself, busied themselves lining up political support and trade agreements for their infant republic. Their discussions revealed socialist ideals, but they were careful to temper them with enough support for private enterprise to attract foreign assistance. The Indonesians struck me as a young, competent, and practical group.

From Vietnam, in contrast, Dr. Ho Chi Minh sent two less effective envoys. Their mission was a frankly anxious plea for help from other Asian nations, but they got little but good wishes and moral support because the only other delegations present who might have spoken for their governments felt unable to do anything effective. The unfortunate Vietnamese also had to cope with another Indo-Chinese delegation, which they charged was French-sponsored, from Cambodia, Cochin, China, and Laos.

Malaya was represented by a group which, like other Southeast Asian delegates, had marked political implications. I was assured, however, that the Malayan delegation was lopsided, radical, and unrepresentative of either of the colony's two largest parties, the United Malay National Organization and the Communists. The delegates talked little of internal politics, but emphasized a point

that was repeatedly made about the accelerating effect of Japanese occupation on nationalist movements.

The Ceylonese delegation, which reflected the political life of that colony more fully, was perhaps therefore more divided. The Tamil and Singhalese wings split sharply over many points. All agreed, however, that Ceylon is making real progress toward self-rule even though one speaker voiced a presentiment that Britain will build up Ceylon as the new principal base for control of the Indian ocean.

The delegates from Siam were quiet and meek.

The Filipino delegation arrived late, but made its weight felt. Although the three top members were all from the opposition camp in their islands, they fought aggressively against Indian doubts that America would let their country be really free. The most self-righteous American would have been pleased with their vigorous denials of American imperialism. In an atmosphere of resistance to imperialism, their views caught wide attention. The Filipinos seemed to be watching carefully to see how important this Conference might be for the future of Southeast Asia, an area to which they apparently would not be averse to offering leadership.

A group of American-trained Christian College Koreans appeared at the Conference, also several days late. They did not know quite what they should say, but showed that they have become restive under the Soviet-American two-zone occupation. Their concern with their own problems left little energy for support of Asian unity, while they had no intercourse with the Soviet delegates who were present.

Finally, the Indian delegation. It was the largest and most heterogeneous of all; and the arguments between various Indian delegates were sharper than those between different nationalities. Other delegations commented on the amount of time consumed by Indians either in exposition or in quibbling. One of the difficulties was that the inner circle of organizers, who had carried the whole weight of the Conference with great enterprise and success, insufficiently briefed the Indian educationalists who were invited to join the delegation. Another was that many of the Indians, strong in numbers, playing on the home ground, and confident in Nehru's conviction that India is the hub of the new Asia, felt that this was their show. The Indians were responsible for most of the papers presented at

the Conference (and in some cases professors had dug out old papers that they had not published elsewhere). On economic topics they favored a generally socialist approach, though Nehru warned economists not to rely too heavily on governments doing the main job of remodelling Asian society. In politics the Indians were strongly anti-imperialistic and careful to avoid being drawn into a discussion of communalism.

These were the people who attended the Conference. With a few exceptions, they did not even represent the Roosevelts, Stalins and Churchills of Asia. Yet they were not merely cloistered scholars. Though most of them spoke without governmental authority, the sentiments they expressed probably reflected the aspirations and irritations of a good many Asian people. In this lay the importance of the Conference.

There is no need in this letter to report on the various discussions; the Institute of Pacific Relations has received a full statement and various American journals have covered the Conference. Although interesting debate developed on such subjects as national movements in Asia and the transition from colonial to national economy, I should prefer to direct your attention to some of the attitudes that became visible during the 10 days of the Conference.

One of Nehru's ambitions in calling this Conference was to establish a permanent Asian organization. In this design he had the enthusiastic backing of most Indian delegates and varying degrees of support from other delegations. There was great divergence, however, in views on the type of organization that should be started. Some conservatives wanted a research body which might become a sort of IPR for Asia. Others pushed for a "little UNO" for the continent. The same dualism that touched the Conference affected planning for the permanent organization. Eventually the Asian Relations Organization was agreed upon, but nearly all details were left to an international committee of which Nehru was made chairman.

Most of the delegates expressed themselves several times in favor of supporting the UNO to the hilt. They wanted greater Asian association with the world body, so that this continent could influence not only matters relating to itself but world affairs as well. Some skeptics felt the new Asian Relations Organization should be prepared to become a regional assembly if the UNO fails, and other delegates admitted privately that such a thing was in their minds.

One of the matters always near the surface was the attitude toward the West. One part of the Indian delegation favored a strong line against Western powers. Others, however, including several old-time revolutionaries, counselled patience. "Asia for the Asiatics" was nowhere emphasized beyond what I would regard as healthy nationalism. I think many observers were surprised to see how conscious these new Asians are of their dependence on the rest of the world for a long time to come. They admitted frankly that, outside the Soviet and Western zones, Asia lacks the heavy industry, liquid finance, and managerial capacity to pull itself up without outside help. This realization modulated many otherwise socialist views.

Toward the USSR the attitude was mixed. No one said a word of criticism. The communist movements that are developing in most of the young countries were not mentioned. The Soviet Asian delegates were welcomed and their views were heard; but they evoked little discussion. Throughout the Conference the Soviet delegates remained mostly apart from the rest, though since then some of them have been having an active tour through India during which they have received warm ovations. Few southern Asians with whom I talked felt that they had come to grips with the Soviets.

There were marked differences in the various attitudes toward Japan. Some Indian delegates took the line that SCAP* had insulted Asia by refusing to let Japanese travel to India for the Conference. I understand that an American with a connection with the World Council of Churches became exercised over this point. So far as I could find out, delegates from the formerly occupied countries would have found the presence of Japanese distasteful or worse. If the Japanese ever achieve martyrdom in Asian eyes, I found no evidence that the process has yet begun. Some people at the Conference had worked with Japanese occupational authorities. Their only comment that I heard was that there is nothing like military occupation to stimulate nationalist movements.

As I indicated, the general view about Western political imperialism was that it is finished. Delegates agreed that the major problem facing several Asian countries now is a peaceful and orderly transfer of power to new indigenous regimes. But they recognized that their

*Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, the head of the Allies' transitional authority during the postwar occupation of Japan.

troubles would not then be automatically solved. They looked, in fact, with some confusion and uncertainty toward the conflict between their future requirements of foreign help and their fear of a new-style financial imperialism that might grip their nations tighter than the old political regimes. Some far-sighted delegates saw clearly that the answer may lie in raising the appalling living standards of common men in the fields and towns. Solid progress, they acknowledged, will go very slowly until the people of the continent begin to share its fruits. This is an approach to Asia which at least holds promise.

Running through the Conference was a sense of Asia's destiny coupled with the awesome realization that the forces at work may be greater than the men now in the saddle. Delegates held a conviction that the old moribund condition of Asia had ended and could not be reimposed. At the same time, there was conscious and unconscious recognition of many uncertainties in various nations. If India were to bridge the transition to full self-government successfully and peacefully, for example, her role in Asia would unquestionably be great. But if like China she fell into chaos, then who would lead the Asian upsurge? Could the young nations of Southeast Asia band together to work out their destinies even if their big neighbors played no role in this coming generation?

Along another line, many delegates observed that in large parts of Asia the traditional feudalistic pattern of society is breaking up. New forces arising at the village level are showing strength. Some delegates who came to Delhi knew that they were struggling through a period of vast and fundamental change. Should their countries dissolve into a generation of chaos and anarchy, it would be unfortunate (although, Asians pointed out to me, Europe took longer than one generation to achieve stability upon awakening from the Dark Ages). But one of the matters they wanted to consider—even though no clear-cut answer is now possible—was whether the successor to feudalism was more likely to be capitalism, socialism, communism, or something new.

It is in this context of uncertainty, this great earnestness to understand what is going on about them, and this feeling that some of the growing forces need guidance, that the Asian Relations Organization will be formed.

Mountbatten, Especially as Viewed by Indian Politicians

*Bombay, India
June 17, 1947*

I AM MOST ANXIOUS to apologize to a number of people who have written to me in the last three months. Some of their letters have gone astray and others have reached me only now, though they had been airmailed in March or April. A failure of my mail forwarding arrangements from New Delhi has caused the mixup. If any of my correspondents who happen to see this letter have not received direct responses to recent letters, will they please take note of the chance that the mail was lost before delivery? I know that has happened in the case of some letters from my family and of at least one letter containing a personal check. For future mail, our address until the end of August is 20 Raj Mahal, Churchgate Reclamation, Bombay. Letters written in care of the American Embassy, New Delhi, should always reach us eventually. Please ask people not to use our old Ferozshah Road address for any purpose any more.

As you can imagine, the two weeks since Lord Mountbatten announced the Indian settlement have been busy. Mountbatten himself is more than an incident in this story. With the personality of a waltz king and the showmanship flair of a Barnum, he has achieved an agreement that cabinet ministers and his predecessors in the Viceroy's House had tried for but failed to obtain.

Already the stories about Mountbatten are legion. He arrived like a knight on a white charger, looking dramatic in his white rear admiral's uniform with rows of ribbons and the blue sash of the Garter as he stood before the red velvet backdrop behind the throne chair to which he had fallen heir.

In the next 10 weeks, he conferred steadily with Indian leaders, toured critical areas, and returned to London for a visit to put across his conclusions. Then he abruptly announced that British power would leave India not in June 1948, but in about another 10 weeks.

“Mountbatten’s amazing,” Khwaja Nazimuddin, former Bengal premier and a member of the Muslim League high command, said to me one morning. “He knows when to listen to Jinnah, when to agree with him, when to take his advice, when to bully him, and when to let him down with a bump. The extraordinary thing is that Jinnah likes him and thinks he’s fair.”

Jawaharlal Nehru in an off-the-record talk also reflected his enthusiasm for the new Viceroy. The main reason that the Indian States are still getting away with murder, he intimated, is that Mountbatten had been too preoccupied with other chores to look into the workings of the Political Department yet. Nehru gave Mountbatten high praise.

One of the most surprising group of converts to the Mountbatten style is the Viceregal permanent staff that nursed Lord Wavell through the difficult years after 1943. Wavell’s integrity had so impressed itself on many of these advisers that they felt it a personal affront when their chief was summarily recalled in favor of the handsome young admiral. But at dinner the other night, after one of this group had been expanding enthusiastically about Mountbatten’s great capacity, clarity, and drive, a close friend of mine asked him how the new regime compared with Wavell’s. The man looked at him, my friend said, as if to say, “Wavell? Who’s Wavell?”

Since Mountbatten’s arrival, Viceroy’s House has brightened up with a series of parties that would never have been organized in a regime noted for its conscious regard for rationing rules and lack of ostentation. “We’re going,” Mountbatten told a friend, “but that doesn’t mean we should slink out with our tails between our legs, does it?”

He and Lady Mountbatten are two of the best people I have ever seen receiving guests. Although some of their lines are reminiscent of the prewar White House visitors’ lines, they manage a good hand-grip and a warm smile even for the last hundred guests. This is one of the perceptive touches that have helped them on their way even with such humble individuals as Indian soldiers.

The soldiers, who went to a Viceregal reception on the anniversary of the final British success in Burma, were further tickled when the Viceroy, who obviously had had little time for language lessons, gave

part of his address in Hindustani. Though he read from a romanized script and his accent was atrocious, the effort paid dividends.

Similarly, the "Court Circular" which records Viceregal actions and visitors has changed its tone under the Mountbattens. No longer is it reported that "Her Excellency honored Lady So-and-so with her presence at tea." Now the Circular states that "Her Excellency called on Mrs. Sarojini Naidu." As a Viceregal visitor, Mr. M. K. Gandhi has now become—thanks partly to a newspaper's suggestion—plain Mr. Gandhi, on the ground that initials are superfluous as India and the world have only one Mr. Gandhi.

One day when I was in the Press Attaché's office an approved copy of a communiqué came down from the Viceroy's study for release. The previous midnight Liaquat Ali Khan had got through to the Viceroy to say that Muslims were getting a bad deal in rioting in Gurgaon district, less than 30 miles from Delhi. The Punjab governor was to tour the district during the day, and so, soon after dawn, the Mountbattens drove out to join the tour. On their return a communiqué was drafted that included the sentence, "At Her Excellency's direction, much-needed supplies are being sent to the area." The approved copy, however, had a penciled modification. That sentence read: "Her Excellency arranged for much-needed supplies to be sent."

One of the stories going the rounds of Delhi involves the press conference that Mountbatten gave after the plan was announced. Only once before had a Viceroy met the entire press. To prepare himself for the ordeal, Mountbatten, it later transpired, had called his staff around him on the previous evening and told the members to fire questions at him. Perhaps he instructed them to include enough silly queries to make the performance realistic. At any rate, the result at the real conference was a magnificent performance. From his introductory statement Mountbatten dominated the assembly. With the arrogance of a supremely good actor, he turned on at will flashes of warming good humor, a sharp and pungent wit, a few acid rebukes, and several forthright comments. He exposed to ridicule some of the most senior Indian correspondents present for rhetorical questions, and took straightforward questions most earnestly. In the end he had won the crowd, including, I believe, even those whose egos had been piqued.

It is not true, of course, that a toothbrush smile is Mountbatten's key to success. He has two great virtues for the kind of job he has been doing. One is the ability to carefully define zones of agreement, and to narrow the gaps of disagreement by a constant attrition process. The second is the capacity to inspire staff work of a caliber not before seen, so far as I know, in the Government of India. At every stage of the negotiations, apparently, his staff has been able to furnish him and the Indian leaders with appreciations of different problems more complete, more succinct, and more definitive than anything the party leaders had themselves been able to get together, owing to their preoccupation with politics and their lack of similar staffs. It was the inevitable result that Mountbatten should win the initiative in the discussions. So far as one can see, he continues to work at the same pace with equal determination to keep that initiative until the day of final transfer of power.

When Mountbatten came out here, he confessed later, the Labour government had given him six months to study the situation before advancing proposals. It took him almost no time to discover, however, that India would not stand still while he spent 180 days studying; if he dawdled that long he would be lost. He set to work with the major party leaders, therefore, getting their views, finding a little island of agreement here, a willingness to concede a point there, and a possible compromise somewhere else. As the days went by, he and the Muslim League and Congress leaders built up the skeleton of an acceptable compromise. At times one party or the other suggested a way over a knotty point, as in the case of Jinnah's proposal for a referendum in the hotly-contested Northwest Frontier or of the Congress delegates' views on dividing Bengal and the Punjab. Sometimes the Viceroy himself made a point, as apparently he did on his own authority when the matter came up of separate dominions in the British Commonwealth. But steadily there was progress in a sort of race for time, as the situation in the country was deteriorating critically and rapidly. When bargaining failed, the Viceroy sometimes bullied. Finally, in less than two months, Mountbatten had enough of a plan to take to London. When he returned, the parties all accepted it (and have since ratified it, though grudgingly because none has achieved its full aims). In another 10 weeks, he said, it would be brought to completion.

Whether the new plan is the best solution for the Indian people is too large a question to enter in this letter. Whatever its merits, and it has many, the astonishing feature of the inter-party agreement is that this sea-going rear admiral, a cousin of the king who lacks a commoner's experience in parliamentary politics, has fulfilled a political mission that had confounded some of the most illustrious of his countrymen, and has done it with a speed that would have been unpredictable three months ago.

Food Situation, Pakistan's Prospects

*Bombay, India
June 30, 1947*

THIS LETTER DEALS with the Indian food shortage. It is, therefore, intended primarily for Ted Schultz who has paid close attention to this subject.* Yet the matter should also be of general interest to citizens of the country that has become the world's chief provider of foodgrains.

When Schultz and the American Food Mission came to India last summer, the threat of an Indian famine had received wide publicity. *Harper's Magazine*, describing "The Impending Horror in India," evoked memories of the million or more who died of starvation in the streets of Calcutta and in Bengal villages in 1943. Well, in 1946 the impending horror did not materialize. Despite a crop shortage approaching 7 million tons there was some carry-over from the preceding year in millions of peasant huts; furthermore, the eternally undernourished Indian scratched up food for survival even when statisticians said it wasn't there. By far the most important and impressive factors in saving the situation last year, however, were the grain procurement and food rationing systems. Food controls reached the highest stage yet seen in any major country with the possible exception of the Soviet Union, as Schultz said. In deficit areas farmers who were themselves a little hungry were forced to sell to the government their entire crops beyond basic needs, while

*Theodore Schultz, professor of economics, University of Chicago.

towns and many rural areas were placed under universal rationing that cut back individual diets to 1,000 or 1,200 calories. Although several areas worked down to within a few weeks of exhaustion of supplies, there was no major breakdown of procurement or rationing.

This year India is again a mendicant in the world food marts. Once more there is talk of the threat of famine. Under the circumstances Americans are entitled to ask whether an overzealous government has fallen into the habit of crying wolf.

What is the real situation?

As an essentially vegetarian country—by economic necessity as well as by the convictions of a large part of its population—in which even vegetables are luxuries, India depends unduly on soft and hard foodgrains, particularly on rice, wheat, and millets. Even before the war she suffered a net average deficit of 1.5 million tons a year between production and consumption of these grains. The difference was made up by imports, largely of rice from Burma and Siam. Halting efforts, which followed Japanese closure of those sources, to expand domestic production have so far barely kept pace with the rapid increase of population. Nor is there immediate promise of greater success. Machinery and other farming aids are only very slowly becoming available while political preoccupations are likely to push land tenure and similar agrarian reforms into the background.

There is, therefore, almost no expectation that India will be able to feed herself at least until well into the 1950s.

It is similarly unlikely—though here I depend on second-hand reports—that free and sufficient imports can be obtained in the next two or three years from Burma and Siam, whose export crops are reappearing very slowly.

The inevitable result, if starvation is to be prevented, therefore, is that India will continue to depend on imports from other zones.

This is true if crops are normal. Whenever nature or man shrinks the Indian crop that reaches the market, a major crisis develops.

Now, in 1947 the carry-over of foodgrains from the previous year was markedly lower than it was in 1946. Last year's near-famine had exhausted reserve stocks. On top of that, a moderate rice crop was followed by a critically short wheat crop.

At the end of May the Indian interim cabinet was informed officially, and secretly, that "a very considerable disaster" had overtaken

this year's hard grain crop. Rust had severely damaged wheat not only in central India, where it had been perceived early in the season, but also in the Punjab, India's principal wheat belt. In addition, civil disturbances had so interfered with procurement that the government gave up hope of much help for deficit areas from north India, which in normal years supplies 700,000 to 1 million tons of grain to the south.

It looks, therefore, as if the arrival of self-rule in August may be accompanied by a food crisis of the first magnitude in deficit areas of central and southern India. With stocks now in sight from domestic procurement and from imports, widespread ration cuts will become inevitable, although the present scale of 12 ounces of food-grain per adult per day is regarded as a famine scale.

Specifically, the picture looks this way:

Punjab

Heavy rust. Crop shrivelled and light weight. Civil disturbances had prevented accurate forecasting of crop, and led to severe setback to procurement. Hindu-Muslim troubles and market resistance to compulsory sales to government agencies at fixed prices undermined the system.

Madras

Rice crop nearly 1 million tons better than in 1946, so that theoretically the province should be practically able to take care of itself. Yet it is seriously in trouble. One of the best procurement systems in India in 1946 has been mauled on the rack of politics. Ex-premier Prakasam, who lost his job in a Congress party row, and Professor Ranga, the agrarian leader, have whipped up a peasant anti-procurement campaign in Andhra, Madras's best rice region, on the ground that government prices are too low. Rajendra Prasad, the central food minister and a veteran Congress leader, is determined to hold the line on food prices; any relaxation, he believes, would blow the Indian economy sky-high. As a result, procurement has been totally inadequate in relation to the province's need and to the size of the available crop. A showdown is likely in Madras, as the present Central Government Food Department is neither able nor prepared to allocate extra stocks to make up for poor

procurement. Rations in Madras have already been reduced in some districts from 12 ounces to 10 or even eight ounces.

Bengal

Also has reaped about 1 million tons more than in 1946. But the shaky food administration has hardly improved and the province remains on the central government's danger list. As last year, the food position in Bengal depends largely on public confidence and on the *aus* crop,* which forecasters so far regard as hardly promising.

Hyderabad

Another bad spot this year. The wheat crop has almost completely failed while *jowar*, a millet, also did badly. Up to latest reports of a month ago, however, the state administration was conducting intensive procurement.

Bombay

Maintains its excellent procurement and rationing system. Bombay complains that it is penalized for its efficiency because extra allotments go to areas where breakdowns are feared. Owing to shortages in the major grains, wheat and rice, the Bombay ration is now being revised to include a higher percentage of substitutes such as millets and gram.

A special factor that may be mentioned is the extra large demand for wheat seed occasioned by rust. The government estimates that 100,000 tons of wheat will now be diverted for seed instead of being used for food.

The domestic picture, it is plain, is bad. As for imports, India has again appealed to the International Emergency Food Council for emergency allotments. Direct approaches have been made to Ethiopia, Iraq, East Africa and Ceylon, from where scraps are hoped for, as well as to Australia, Canada, Argentina, and the United States. Argentina is offering about 50,000 tons of wheat and 100,000 tons of barley and maize in return for jute. This may be accepted, though the Argentinian wheat price is roughly 10 cents a pound compared to the Indian domestic price of 4 cents a pound.

*The first and smallest paddy crop of the year.

In studying the Indian food problem consideration must be given to cost. India is one of the relatively few countries in the world that paid full price for all the foodgrains it received. Neither UNRRA* nor Lend-Lease of foods apply to India. As a result, heavy amounts of foreign exchange have been devoted to the purchase of food. Now that sterling balances are, it appears, to be blocked, the question of obtaining foreign exchange with which to purchase food becomes serious.

But an even broader factor is the political situation that is rapidly maturing. In August India will be promoted and divided into two self-governing dominions of the British Commonwealth. As the division is taking place in an atmosphere of bitterness, the possibility of economic conflict between the two dominions cannot be ruled out. If that develops, food will be affected.

It now appears that Pakistan, the Muslim-governed dominion, will comprise two thirds of the Punjab (including almost the whole surplus-producing part of that province), Sind, the Northwest Frontier, and Baluchistan in the northwest. More than 1,000 miles to the southeast, it will have another area in eastern Bengal and probably one predominantly Muslim district of Assam.

The northwest zone is a good surplus area. The Punjab, as I noted earlier, exports from 700,000 to 1 million tons of wheat, barley, gram, and rice in a normal year. From Sind other regions can normally buy 500,000 tons of wheat and rice. The Northwest Frontier Province is frequently deficit, but its small population of 3 million never requires large amounts of the Punjab and Sind surpluses. The same is true of Baluchistan. The northwest zone of Pakistan, therefore, would normally have over 1 million tons of food grains which, in the event of economic strife, might go to the Middle East or elsewhere rather than to the remainder of India. This would be a material loss to the other dominion, which presumably would have to increase its purchases by a similar amount outside the rupee currency area.

In the eastern block of Pakistan, a rich jute-growing area, the cash crop now fills enough acreage to make the area deficit in rice. Ordinarily the balance is made up from Burma. The establishment

*United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

of trade barriers between eastern Bengal and the rest of India would force East Bengal to barter jute (of which it has a large, though unprocessed, part) for rice, or to get it by ship from northwestern Pakistan.

The effect of partition, therefore, will be to disorganize the Indian food administration unless "stand-still" agreements are executed. On balance, Pakistan will be far better off so far as food is concerned than the other Indian dominion. The plight of the larger Indian dominion, in fact, may be severe. Not only does it stand to lose supplies from the Punjab (or at best to get them as imports from a foreign country), but it also will probably lose a great part of its best barter crop, jute, which falls into Pakistan.

For several years, therefore, it can be expected that the new, truncated Indian dominion will become a more earnest applicant for shares of the world's food supplies than the entire country has been, and that its credit line will be less firm than heretofore.

In the short term, the world will probably see India showing signs of starvation distress very shortly after British rule is withdrawn in August. Food shortages at the difficult moment of the transition, moreover, may have serious repercussions on public stability. I do not believe that a major famine is inevitable this year. With the general decline of administrative strength complicated by the disruption and preoccupation caused by partition, however, it seems possible that there will be breakdown of rationing in some areas, food riots, some starvation deaths, and indirect stimulus to civil disorders.

In calculating the world food picture, the United States should be prepared for such developments.

Dividing Bengal and Punjab

July 22, 1947

IN THE LAST month I have been in Calcutta, Lahore, Delhi, Bombay, Hyderabad State, the Northwest Frontier, Delhi again, and finally Bombay. It has been a busy and fruitful period though it is impossible for one man to keep up with the speed with which the transfer of power and partition of India are progressing.

In riot-swept Calcutta the Bengal provincial legislature took the first formal step in bringing Pakistan to life by voting to divide the province between the mainly Muslim eastern part and the predominantly Hindu western part. Forty years earlier Bengalis had united in a vigorous anti-British agitation which forced the government to revoke Lord Curzon's division of Bengal. Now the same nationalist party compelled a bifurcation that makes no sense except in the context of today's bitterness and distrust between Hindus and Muslims. Although the award of the Boundary Commission has not yet been made, it is assumed that Calcutta will be included in the West or Hindu part of Bengal. This city, as large as Chicago, is India's first seaport. Much of its prosperity depends on its near world monopoly in shipping jute. All jute-processing mills lie on the Hooghly River above and below Calcutta but a heavy percentage of the raw jute is grown in the area now part of Pakistan. Economic war between the dominions could reduce densely populated East Bengal to an even simpler rice-growing area and could destroy the industrial importance of Calcutta, a city that has already been gravely wounded by communal disturbances. The two parts of Bengal are similarly interlocked in other matters. All coal to operate the railways of East Bengal comes from the western part. Tea, though grown largely in the Hindu areas, can reach Calcutta port only on railways passing through Pakistan. Bengal is, perhaps, a prime example of the supremacy of psychological factors even over solid self-interest when passions are sufficiently aroused.

From Calcutta several of us flew directly to Lahore in north-west India to watch a similar act of provincial division in the Punjab. Again the spirit of the times outweighed the advantages of retaining economic balance and unity. It is curious that Bengal and the Punjab should be the provinces to be divided because over many generations Bengalis and Punjabis, more than almost any other Indians, have developed a provincial identity which has heretofore transcended religious considerations. Once the tide turns, however, it turns quickly. We saw fires burning in the walled city of Lahore which is supposed to be one of the few places in the world where 100,000 people live in a single square mile. Lahore's restlessness was accentuated by an apparent Muslim determination to stake an unquestioned claim to the Punjab's chief city while Hindus and Sikhs could not give it up

so easily. One of the interesting factors of the Punjab situation has been a rapid flight of capital. Hindu-controlled banks and insurance companies are shifting their head offices from Lahore to Delhi which will remain within the Indian Dominion. Trains and planes are loaded, according to local stories, with gold bullion, jewelry, and currency. Bank accounts are being transferred in large numbers. Houses which sold six months ago for \$60,000 are being offered for \$20,000 if their owners happen to be Hindus and anxious to get out of Pakistan. No good estimate of the amount being transferred is available, but inasmuch as Hindus had a great share in the financing and developing of the Punjab and Northwest Frontier, the amount can safely be estimated at tens of millions of dollars.

Lahore was terribly hot. The previous week a London *Times* string correspondent had died of heat stroke. This summer, I might say in passing, has been the most prolonged in many decades. In Bombay there was less rain in June than in any other June for 90 years. In Delhi the night temperatures averaged the highest for over 100 years. I mention this to give you an idea of the circumstances in which the leadership cadre of India has gone through its busiest and most crucial months.

In Delhi I found everyone extremely tired. A viceregal adviser who is the essence of politeness yawned in my face. Jinnah looked haggard and drawn. Nehru's always explosive temperament had, according to people working with him, got the best of him more frequently than usual. Some feared he was nearing a nervous breakdown. Everywhere weary, worn men were struggling with problems that were too vast and too complex for them to comprehend fully in the available time. It is well to remember that just a handful of men are carrying the major burden of the transfer of power and the division of India. The latter is by far the more difficult task. Not only must revenues and liabilities be divided, but also every last instrument of government running from the armed forces to the single tide predictor that exists in India.

It was refreshing for me early in July to spend a couple of days with Mildred and some friends at the Ajanta and Ellora caves in northern Hyderabad State. There in the wild countryside where the caves lay forgotten for centuries before they were rediscovered about 100 years ago, it was possible to regain a sense of the eternity

of India. We looked at paintings and carvings done 2,000 years ago and thought of the uncounted dynasties that have ruled India between those days and these. Among them, the British are merely another court that has come, laid its stamp upon the land, and departed. No doubt the order that succeeds it will give way in its turn to later and different forces.

The partition of India took me traveling again to the Northwest Frontier. Enroute I stopped for a day in Delhi to enjoy with all of the other Americans there a Fourth of July party given by Lord Mountbatten in the sumptuous style that has come to be a trademark of the new regime in the Viceroy's House.

Peshawar when I reached there was exercised by the referendum that was to determine whether the Northwest Frontier Province should join the Pakistan Dominion or the Indian Dominion. I always get a feeling of masculinity in Peshawar. The Pathans are big, broad-shouldered and sturdy. Like few peoples in the world these days, they carry rifles as easily and naturally as Londoners carry umbrellas. They live in a barren land and consequently show themselves as self-reliant, self-confident, and equal under Allah to all men. For 18 years the major political force in the Frontier has been the red-shirted Khudai Khidmatgar organization led by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. His brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, is premier of the province and leader of the majority party in the legislature. This movement has long been associated with the Indian National Congress and has participated in the various nationalist struggles of the Congress. The Muslim League, in contrast, was slow in gaining influence in the Frontier. There the League was, in truth, an organization of the landed interests. Even in the Frontier, however, where 95 percent of the residents are Muslim and political conflicts arise between Muslim and Muslim rather than between Muslim and non-Muslim, the League's Pakistan cry made headway. We saw that last October when we went to the Frontier to observe Nehru's disastrous tour. The Pakistan cry was much stronger this time—so strong, in fact, that the Red Shirts boycotted the referendum. We watched Pathans going to the polls. The voting was peaceful. Sherman tanks discouraged those who might have wanted it otherwise. But it was amply clear that there was a strong trend for Pakistan. Since then the result of the referendum has been announced. Of the total electorate

50.49 percent voted in favor of being a part of Pakistan. As the combined vote for all parties in the last general election was less than 65 percent of the electorate, this is regarded as a sweeping Muslim League victory. It remains to be seen how quickly the anomalous position of Khan Sahib's ministry will be resolved. He still commands the confidence of the legislature, as the referendum was not an election. Yet he has obviously lost the support of the voters. Presumably he will resign though there may yet be some trouble in the Frontier.

One interesting sidelight was Pathan resentment against an Afghanistan government note officially supporting Abdul Ghaffar Khan's cry for Pathanistan, a fully self-governing Pathan state separate from both Pakistan and the rest of India. Muslim solidarity may be an important factor, but in the streets of Peshawar Muslim Pathans were shouting slogans which meant that if the present regime in Afghanistan tried to interfere with the Frontier, Pathans would know how to bring back the deposed King Amanullah and help him to regain the throne of Kabul.

After a few days more in Delhi, I am now again in Bombay for what may be the last time until after the 15th of August. In order to keep up with events I am planning to return to Delhi before the end of this week. Then I will probably go to Karachi on August 9 to see the opening of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. After Mountbatten transfers authority for Pakistan to that Assembly on August 14, the viceregal party and all press men will fly to Delhi for the transfer-of-power ceremonies of the Indian Dominion on the 15th.

Then, 350 years after first taking an interest, 190 years after consolidating authority, and 90 years after assuming the country for the Crown, British rulers will finally retire from India.

FINALLY, THE ARRIVAL OF INDEPENDENCE

These letters chronicle the “delirious, tumultuous days” of independence, the partition that resulted from it, the elegant farewell by Lord and Lady Mountbatten, and the difficulties and challenges faced by the two new nations now that they were finally free.

It was the belief of many that the June 3 announcement by Mountbatten of early independence for India and Pakistan forestalled a real civil war on the subcontinent. No one could predict then that the first 100 days of partition would see 10 million citizens uprooted, and close to half a million killed or murdered. The scars left on both nations would make their future as tumultuous as their painful birth.

As independence itself dawned, there were many observations and reflections for Talbot: the many unplanned demonstrations to celebrate the new beginning, the five leaders who made that beginning happen, Hindu–Muslim amity of a kind not seen before, and Mountbatten saluting the new Indian flag and shouting “Jai Hind” in response to Indian cheers.

The account of those days by Talbot’s wife, Mildred, is equally captivating. She recalled people marveling at the “mere right to raise the flag,” the crowds cheering the transition of power at midnight, the events of the Assembly meeting the next day, and the reception given by Mountbatten for Nehru. In her own words, “goodness and friendliness flowed everywhere.” In her letter one can sense the emotion that Nehru must have felt when Talbot held his hand and offered him his heartfelt words of congratulations.

But behind that goodwill a tragedy was unfolding. To millions of people, freedom also meant one of the greatest convulsions of

modern history. My generation, born after independence on the Indian side of the border, has never had a clear appreciation of the difficulties that Pakistan faced at its birth, with its economic base in the Punjab collapsing, its 6 million incoming Muslim refugees, and its bitterness and anger at the unfolding events in Kashmir. Reading these letters, one can understand the raw determination that Pakistan needed in order to succeed, in the face of great odds. As an Indian, looking back at those times of my parents' generation, I cannot but feel a deep sense of respect, admiration and affection for the people of Pakistan at the time of its birth.

Krishen Mehta

Indian Independence: Gandhi and Jinnah

India
July 22, 1947

ON THE OPPOSITE side of the globe from America five men—three celebrated Hindus, a Pakistani, and a royal Briton—are shouldering responsibility this month for the destiny of 400 million people, the fifth of the human race that lives in the Indian subcontinent.

British rule in India is over. Parliament has yielded its authority over Indian policy while English civil servants, clutching handsome compensation for loss of career, are lining the docks for passage home.

From the Khyber pass to Cape Comorin, the once-undisputed Union Jack has been hauled down from government buildings, halls of justice, and military fortresses. In its place now flies the green star and crescent flag of the new Pakistan dominion or the saffron, white and green tricolor of the truncated dominion of India.

And into the hands of these five individuals, each with his own ideas about the shape of things to come, has been delivered the future of the two infant dominions.

The quintet is a study in contrasts. On the one hand is venerated, ascetic Mohandas K. Gandhi, who in his 78th year retains a unique position as counselor and conscience of the Congress-led nationalist movement. With him march Jawaharlal Nehru, the imaginative, sensitive, impulsive, and somewhat socialist idealist, and the unshakable Vallabhbhai Patel, authoritarian, anti-Communist “iron man” of the Congress whose first faith is in order and discipline.

Across the new international frontiers of Pakistan power lies with uncompromising, cerebral Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the single-minded Muslim who divided India and now takes on the job of building a separate, two-piece Muslim state whose borders encompass 70 million residents.

An important role remains to be played, moreover, by the comparative newcomer to Indian politics, dapper, successful Rear Admiral the Viscount Mountbatten of Burma, cousin of the King and Britain’s last Viceroy of India. By invitation of the Congress party he stays in India for a time as the first governor general of the Indian dominion.

These five. Around them considerable influence will be wielded by hundreds of others, including maharajas and their ministers, professional politicians, industrialists, trade unionists, lawyers, scientists, and educators. With the arrival of independence new leaders are likely to spring up. Already a number are on the horizon. Some may gain stature rapidly. But now, at the beginning, the important decisions will be made largely by the septuagenarians Gandhi, Jinnah and Patel, and by the younger Nehru and Mountbatten.

Of the group it is strangest that Mountbatten should continue to be important. The great grandson of Queen Victoria, who assumed India for the British crown, the uncle of the intended Prince Consort of Britain's next queen, and the only member of British royalty to hold a major combat command in the last war, Lord Mountbatten is an authentic symbol of the Britain that Indian nationalists battled for their freedom. Yet four months after he arrived in India as Viceroy, men who had suffered political imprisonment for half their mature lives asked him to stay on as their first constitutional governor general.

The proposal was a personal tribute to Mountbatten's qualities. Tall, with a cleanly chiseled face, broad shoulders and an air in wearing uniforms that could hardly be matched by Clark Gable, the admiral promptly on arrival loosed a story-book personality that is apparently equally effective with Hindus and Muslims, men and women, and politicians and pressmen. In no time he was the talk of Delhi dinner tables. After a spectacularly successful press conference (for which, it transpired, the Viceroy had prepared by having his own staff fire questions at him the previous night) he won over the usually critical Indian press.

Appearing at a moment of nearly complete frustration in the Indian political world, Mountbatten showed immediate sensitivity to other persons. He seemed to know instinctively how to deal with them. "Mountbatten's amazing," one Muslim Leaguer confessed as the inter-party conferences went on. "He knows when to listen to Jinnah, when to agree with him, when to take his advice, when to bully him, and when to let him down with a bump. The extraordinary thing is that Jinnah likes him and thinks he is fair."

The Viceroy emphasized this characteristic throughout his contacts. At big receptions ("Though we're going out, there's no reason to leave with our tails between our legs," he told a friend) the

Mountbattens managed a warm smile and firm handshake even for the last hundred guests. When Indian soldiers came to commemorate the Burma victory, the former Supreme Allied Commander of the Southeast Asia Command addressed them partly in Hindustani. Though his accent was atrocious, the effort tickled their fancies.

Their Excellencies refused to “honor” hosts “with their presence at lunch,” in accordance with traditional terminology of the Court Circular. Under the new dispensation they merely “called on” Indian or European friends. One after another, the royal Viceroy swept away the outmoded, useless phrases of royalty that custom had attached to Viceregal activities.

The secret of Mountbatten’s success lies far deeper than a Hollywood personality, of course, though that helps. More solid reasons are needed to explain how, within 10 weeks, he got the Muslim League and the Congress to agree on a compromise plan for India, though his predecessors had been wrestling unsuccessfully for years with the same problem.

Time was with him; everybody knew that the country was drifting into anarchy unless some agreement was reached.

But, more important, Mountbatten rapidly comprehended issues and points of view. He could also carefully define zones of agreement and narrow the gaps of disagreement by steady attrition. “I can work with this man,” said a senior Indian official, “He senses the difficulties and gives us a free hand to search out compromises.”

Mountbatten’s other great advantage in his killing but delicate job was an elaborate, bright “Quiz Kids” staff. It provided him with appreciations that quickly gave him the initiative over party leaders, who for the most part had to do their own staff work. Under the severe pressure of organizing the country within weeks both for freedom and for partition, the difference between having a good staff and lacking one was important.

Yet more than any other quality, Mountbatten’s visible fairness commended him to both parties. Although Pakistan ignored hints that the Viceroy would be prepared to accept invitations from both new dominions to be their governor general through the initial transition period, Mountbatten’s continued presence in India is expected to provide a link between the dominions. That will be his major role now that self-government has come. As constitutional governor

general, he will not rule the larger Indian dominion. But as the man who presided over the dissolution of the Indian Empire and who will continue to preside over the Joint Defence Council, he is in a position to influence strongly the early relations between the Pakistan and Indian dominions.

Mountbatten's equal and opposite official in Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, has different ideas about the governor generalship. "As governor general designate," he said at a press conference during the last weeks of British rule, "I am getting deeper and deeper into politics. I shall have to deal more with realities now."

With his cold, legal brain Jinnah quickly noted the special powers available under the Indian Independence Act to the dominion governors general during the period until constitutions are written, legislatures elected, and permanent state administration is functioning. The governor general, in other words, could be a powerful head of state. As the Qaed-e-Azam, or Chief Leader of Indian Muslims, Jinnah took the post.

The decision fits the Muslim League president's temperament. He is a tall but exceedingly spare man with iron-gray hair and a perpetually aloof attitude. From a high, broad forehead his lined face tapers down over prominent cheekbones to a firm mouth and pointed chin. His eyes can be intense, but are rarely warm. With his sister, Miss Fatima Jinnah, who devotes herself entirely to his service, Jinnah lives comfortably but simply in one or another of his palatial houses in Delhi, Bombay, and Karachi. He is still frequently seen in a well-tailored suit, high collar, and precisely knotted tie, though nowadays he frequently wears the Indian *achkan* frock coat and a *caracul* headpiece known throughout India as the "Jinnah cap." On the day the Muslim League accepted the Mountbatten plan, Jinnah appeared in an *angrakha*, a sheer muslin gown that was the favored court dress of Mughal nobles in pre-British days. "You can tell that Jinnah is punctilious," a follower once commented, "just by looking at his dress and the way he lives."

In conferences and in conversation the Muslim leader habitually speaks quietly, deliberately, determinedly. Usually he talks in English, his real mother tongue; for his north Indian followers still regard his lately learned Urdu with indulgence. But he regularly talks like

the successful lawyer that he is, supporting a brief vigorously and silencing opposition by a word of ridicule or rebuke, or merely by ignoring it. "You don't converse with Jinnah," a high official once said. "You put a proposition or ask a question and get his response. There is no give and take—no real blending of minds."

In a public meeting Jinnah once described himself as "a very cold-blooded logician." He was right. By sheer cerebral power, without benefit of magnetic personality or even of warm friends, he pushed himself and his community from strength to strength. A member of a Bombay sect of Shia Muslims, he entered politics long after he was called to the bar 51 years ago. At first with the Congress, he found his stride in awakening the Indian Muslim community which was on an average behind the rest of the country in education, commerce and industry, and political consciousness. Step by inexorable step, Jinnah upped the Muslim demand. Eventually the cry of Pakistan was raised. It became so strong that it could not be ignored or silenced, whatever the economic, social, and military consequences of partition.

Jinnah did this job almost single-handedly. Strong lieutenants were slow in rallying to his cause. In time they came. But even in the last crucial year the Muslim League executive working committee and the larger Muslim League Council, "parliament of the Muslim nation," have met, paid their tribute to democracy, and then done what Jinnah wanted.

Since 1937 Jinnah has won fanatical support from Indian Muslims by his steadfast refusal to be bought, bullied, or flattered into devious sidetracks and by his ability to get results. "In the course of ten short years," the Muslim League paper *Dawn*, founded by Jinnah, observed editorially on his 70th birthday last Christmas day, "he has been able to weld disunited, unorganized and politically frustrated Indian Musalmans into a strong, virile nation whose prestige today stands high in the comity of nations. Is that not a miracle?"

Jinnah's single-minded absorption in the advancement of Muslim interests—in contrast to Indian interests—fascinate friends and foes alike. Opposition newspapers call it "obstinate intransigence," and "dictatorship." The League leader is compared to Hitler and Mussolini. "Jinnahism," a Sikh journal affirmed last year, "is the

science and art and technique of exploiting the British Government and the Congress." Jinnah is universally credited with, and denounced for, splitting India.

This is the man who now takes responsibility for breathing life into the state he has created. For more than 70 years he was an Indian citizen; now he calls himself a Pakistani. His dominion extends over four agricultural provinces in the northwest and a teeming riverine region in East Bengal and lower Assam. Few industries dirty its cities; there are, in fact, few cities. Coal and power are in extremely short supply, while its ports are small. Pakistan lacks even land communication between its two areas, which lie more than a thousand miles apart. But the dominion is predominantly Muslim, and it will make the largest Islamic state in the world. In these facts Muslims glory.

Jinnah's triumph is Gandhi's grief. Hardly a mile from the great pile in which the Mountbattens live elegantly and just a little farther from No. 10 Aurangzeb Road where Jinnah works in his air-conditioned library, India's little Mahatma stays quietly in a tiny schoolroom alongside the Balmiki temple and compound intended for outcaste sweepers. This is his Delhi observation post. Through his 78th hot weather Gandhi has alternated between it and the riot-torn villages of Bihar.

Yet, for his age, the little man's health is good. He is stooped, and when he walks he usually leans on companions for support. But on last winter's village-to-village tour in disturbed East Bengal he strode barefoot three to five miles every morning. Though he wears glasses, his eyesight is good. His eyes twinkle and his big ears seem to waggle when he laughs heartily at a good joke. Gandhi's skin glows from daily massage which keeps his muscles firm and pliant. If, as opponents suggest, senility is at hand, his physical appearance does not reveal it.

Gandhi: the name most commonly associated with India. The saintly politician who raised a nationalist spirit and broke the British power with simple, nonviolent civil disobedience. This is the traditional picture of Gandhi.

In recent years, though, the focus has slightly shifted. Young students are sometimes scornful of their fathers' idol. "The Gandhian era in Indian politics is over," they pontificate. In a sense they already speak truly, though so long as he lives Gandhi can never be dismissed

that easily. In spite of his astonishing revolutionary career, the founder of the *satyagraha* cult would probably make a miserable administrator in the new free government. Even in political matters members of the Congress high command, his closest allies for 30 years, sometimes disagree with the old man. The Mountbatten plan, which finally yielded Pakistan, was accepted in spite of Gandhi's grave doubts. Sometimes they ignore plain statements in his daily after-prayer talks. Occasionally they are pained when he gets hold of an inaccurate story, as on the day he told his listeners that the Muslim League had first accepted Lord Mountbatten as governor general of Pakistan, and had then reneged in favor of Jinnah.

But still they go to him. When Gandhi is in Delhi, Nehru, Patel, Rajendra Prasad, the president of the Indian Constituent Assembly, and visiting provincial leaders are his almost daily visitors. These busy men leave their government offices not just to give obeisance, but to obtain guidance in their major problems. In spite of differences and passing time, Gandhi remains their guru—their teacher and counsellor.

The reason is not far to seek. Wrapped in a loincloth with, perhaps, a wet cloth over his head when the weather is hot, the little man can still sense India's pulse more keenly than most of his fellows. "The heart of India is in her villages," he repeats constantly. And there he is most at home.

When he tours, the children, women and men flock to him. He knows their problems, their sympathies, their complaints. There is much that he can tell his seniormost followers who, though once village workers themselves, have immersed themselves for the last year in the pink-taped files of the Secretariat and in high-level political negotiations.

For Gandhi this should be a time of great rejoicing. After a lifetime's struggle, he has seen the end of British rule. Yet he emerges as a tragic figure. He fought for freedom, and got partition. He taught nonviolence, and lived to see the bloodiest, grossest human slaughter in India's recent history.

"This much I certainly believe," he said a few weeks before the transfer date, "that August 15 should be no day for rejoicing, whilst the minorities contemplate the day with a heavy heart." At 78, Gandhi still looks to the future. Although many recent actions stemming

from his eclectic philosophy have excited bitterness and recriminations among Muslims, he clings to the ambition of bringing Hindus and Muslims back together. In the meantime, Gandhi continues to be Gandhi. "No matter how much he seems out of date or out of tune," as a friend said, "just the moment you start to ignore him, you misjudge the whole Congress position."

A few years ago Gandhi's political heir, world-minded Jawaharlal Nehru, titled the revised American edition of his autobiography *Toward Freedom*. In it he told how a patrician Brahman lawyer had gone into the villages and the jails for the cause of self-rule. Now that freedom has been reached, Nehru must look back with nostalgia on the quiet, undisturbed months he spent in a great variety of cells. In a city of weary men who have worked through one of the century's severest hot weathers at the arduous tasks of transferring power and dividing the country, Nehru is one of the weariest. As independence approached, his lined but sensitive face could be seen on an ordinary day in Delhi in a dozen different places. He would labor at his ministerial job in the external affairs and commonwealth relations department, attend a political conference with the Viceroy, and appear at the Legislative Assembly—where he was leader of the house—or at the Constituent Assembly to guide a particularly ticklish debate. He would sit on constitutional committees and on committees to decide the design of India's flag or the dominion's relationships with Indian states; attend Congress party caucuses; draft policy statements in the party's high command; consult with Gandhi; attend to diplomatic protocol; and, when he could not avoid it, lunch or dine with some foreign attaché. In between times he spoke on subjects close to his heart, such as the need for developing India's power resources and science facilities.

This is Nehru, a bundle of hustle and bustle. His interests are manifold. Under the homespun *khadi* Gandhi cap that covers his balding head, his mind works unceasingly from early morning until after midnight. He is impatient of others who do not keep up or are too bumble-headed to understand. Frequently he shows exasperation. Yet his smile, when he relaxes for a moment to wear one, is warm and engaging.

Nehru's boyish enthusiasm sometimes outruns his discretion. This happened last year, when he went tilting stones at the Maharaja of Kashmir at a moment when the British Cabinet Mission and the

Indian parties were engaged in crucial negotiations affecting the future of the whole country. It happened again when Nehru bravely, foolishly revealed his anger at unfriendly receptions by Pathan tribal *maliks* in the rugged mountains of India's northwest frontier.

Usually he comes out on top, but in his desperate eagerness to turn his hand to everything that comes along he is willing to spend his energy without caution. Lacking staff assistants, he did the work of three men during the days leading to self-rule and partition. The exertion showed itself in the droop of his shoulders, in nervous gestures, irritable responses, and in general explosiveness.

"Yet Nehru is the generous one," a negotiator not of his party said of him. "He will blow up on a question of principle, such as the right of the Muslim League to represent every last Indian Muslim. But when partition is accepted, he won't wrangle about whether Pakistan should be given one or two of the Government of India's printing establishments."

The socialism of Nehru's youth has somewhat cooled with age and administrative responsibility. Now the leftists are hoping he will stand on their side, rather than expecting it automatically. A lifelong habit of compromising his views to prevent splits in the nationalist movement has made him something of a moderate. He tends to be impatient of party details. No political machine, as such, exists as his personal instrument of power. He even forgets or is irritated by practical, hard-boiled politics. Yet he is still the man with a vision of the future of India. If his associates can provide stability and resources for constructive work, Nehru will busy himself in building a better country and improving its prestige in world councils.

Stability, however, is a fundamental problem of the moment. As Britain steps out, the national administration is sagging critically. It has been vitiated by riots, by fragmentation, by loss of key personnel, and by general decline of morale. Government has become a matter of desperately trying to maintain or restore law and order. At this point the Gujarati leader Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel comes into the picture as the one man on whom the Indian dominion pins its faith for the re-establishment of peace and authority.

Rugged Sardar Patel carries an air of stability. Look at his square, full face with its heavy-lidded eyes and fleshy lips. Observe his stocky

body. In every line they reflect strength. Whether behind the barbed-wire fence of his official residence in Delhi or in the informality of his ashram retreat at Bardoli in the heart of his home province of Gujarat, Patel is rarely rushed and never harried. A quiet word from him is a command that goes to the limits of the Congress party. Through his position on the party's Central Parliamentary Board, he influences provincial ministries across the land, oversees candidacies for public office, and wields party discipline. It takes a brave Congressman to offend Patel.

The Sardar of Bardoli, as Gandhi labeled him after he had led the first large-scale peasant revolt against British administration in 1928, ranks as perhaps Gandhi's most faithful follower. Therein lies much of his strength.

Little nonsense about "isms" bothers Patel. Socialists fear and detest him. They regard the branch of the labor movement that he heads as reactionary, though to fight the Communists they now seem on the verge of making a truce with him. To Communists Patel is the symbol of repression—their principal Indian enemy. Muslims of Pakistan persuasion regard him as an uncompromising, down-the-line Hindu. They expect nothing good from him, and declare they get it. Industrialists think they have Patel on their side, but they would not like to say so out loud for fear of a slip.

Essentially Patel is a nationalist and commander of troops against the opponents of nationalism. While these have included the British, the Muslim League, the Communists, the princes and many others, they now embrace all the forces of disruption. Patel believes that to fight an enemy, you need discipline in your own organization. He has always worked on this basis in the Congress party, and he is prepared to follow a similar line in the country. "We need authority," he told an acquaintance when the Bengal and Bihar riots were at their height last year. "If it were not for provincial autonomy, we could move in with Central Government forces and control the situation."

He does not intend that under the new constitution the central government should be hamstrung in such matters. A strong center, in fact, was one of the advantages he discovered in the refusal of the Muslim League to participate in the Indian confederation suggested by the British Cabinet Delegation in 1946.

Thus, rather than chaos, Sardar Patel will take—and make—authoritarianism.

Patel the disciplinarian is sharing the load in the Indian dominion with Nehru the planner and Gandhi the inspirer, while Jinnah the Pakistan boss and Mountbatten the moderator find their respective functions in their own spheres.

How long these five dynamic men will continue to rule the subcontinent is uncertain. Except for Nehru, the only top Indian leader under 60, and for Mountbatten, who will go for other reasons, their ages are against them. Both in Pakistan and in India younger men are coming along.

But a more positive reason for change arises from a simple, but sometimes overlooked, fact. The political transformation of which these five are instruments is only one part of a much larger revolution that is now going on in India and other parts of Asia.

Tremendous social modifications such as the weakening of caste and family ties are quickening the tempo of change. The entire fabric of Indian princely states, which occupy 40 percent of the area of the Indian subcontinent and include a quarter of its population, is twisting and stretching to meet the new situation. Elsewhere, too, there are fundamental upheavals in the medieval agrarian relationships and in the new, primitive labor force.

After centuries of Rip Van Winkle somnolence, India is awakening to find herself in an industrial, atomic world. Men who understand the newly released forces at work in her vitals will, if the country is to survive the turmoil, be the next group to rise to leadership. They will succeed the initial five.

Taking Power in Pakistan and India

*20 Raj Mahal
Churchgate Reclamation
Bombay, India
August 19, 1947*

THESE HAVE BEEN five delirious, tumultuous days. In city after city lusty crowds have vented the bottled-up frustrations of many years in an emotional mass jag. Mob sprees have

rolled from mill districts to gold coasts and back again. Despite doubts about the truncated, diluted form of freedom descending on India, the happy, infectious celebrations blossomed in forgetfulness of the decades of sullen resentment against all that was symbolized by a sahib's sun-*topi*. In this culmination of the Attlee–Mountbatten policy some of my friends saw the justification of their earlier convictions about the Baldwin–Chamberlain–Churchill line toward India. Mostly heedless of such philosophizing, however, Indian crowds just celebrated independence.

In widely separated Karachi, Delhi, and Bombay, I watched as much as possible of the arrival of self-rule. Dick Morse,* who stayed on in Karachi for the actual birth of Pakistan, will doubtless describe his experiences in a separate letter to you. Unfortunately neither of us found opportunities to witness village reactions to the profound political changes, though I have since heard tales of national flags being tied to trees amidst rural festivities.

In Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and probably other major cities, celebrating crowds numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Two common, astonishingly bright threads ran through the demonstrations nearly everywhere: a sudden, unpredicted return to Hindu–Muslim amity and a warm outflowing of friendly expressions toward Britain. C. Rajagopalachari, whose long and useful career has now led him to the governorship of West Bengal, called what he saw in Calcutta “a miracle.” A year ago this week India’s mass political–religious guerrilla fighting broke out in full force in that embattled city. For 52 long and bloody weeks after August 16, 1946, Hindus avoided entering Muslim neighborhoods and vice versa. Communal clashes and deaths were almost daily occurrences. Yet at the climax of the independence celebrations this week Hindus and Muslims mixed together freely. Many Hindus visited mosques on the 18th and distributed sweets to Muslims who were observing their ’Id festival at the end of Ramzan. It was a spectacular truce, if not a peace treaty, between the two communities. Similarly in Delhi and Bombay I saw Hindus and Muslims playing hand in hand.

*The person who traveled through the Northwest Frontier Province with the author in 1946 (see letter dated November 30, 1946, in chapter VI).

Reports of the same nature came from most places except the still-troubled Punjab. There, where a boundary dispute aggravated communal tension throughout the independence holidays, killings have continued. In the country as a whole, however, Hindus and Muslims buried the hatchet and at the same time extended a cordial hand to the white residents of their new nations. In Karachi Lord and Lady Mountbatten received a satisfying welcome, but in Delhi and Bombay they were greeted hilariously. Bombay has been a strong center of nationalist agitation; I well remember the 1942 "Quit India" uprising here. Eighteen months ago the American flag was ripped down during the Royal Indian Navy mutiny against British authority. This week, however, instead of "Death to Englishmen" and "Britishers: Go Back," Bombay crowds raised the shout "Hail England". A senior British official was misty-eyed when he told me about it later.

Today both Indians and Englishmen are mulling over the significance of these obviously-unplanned demonstrations. I shall have more to say of Hindu-Muslim amity and Indo-British friendliness later in this letter. The spontaneity of both is well established. In official, sometimes stodgy New Delhi, for example, a high-powered committee including Mrs. Sarojini Naidu (who is now acting as governor of the United Provinces' 60 million people until Dr. B. C. Roy returns from the United States) arranged to handle 25,000 people at the initial public flag-raising. Dazed officials later estimated that nearly a half million had turned up. In Bombay when Lord Mountbatten, making a quick post-independence visit to bid farewell to the first departing contingent of British troops, drove the five-mile horseshoe route from the Taj Mahal Hotel around Back Bay to Government House, crowds that police described as "in the hundreds of thousands" so impeded his progress that the trip took nearly an hour. . . to the ex-Viceroy's intense delight. These were the Indian people welcoming independence. Spontaneous enthusiasm is not necessarily, of course, either deep-rooted or long-lasting. Even today, when workers find themselves returning to the same old round of severe rice and wheat rationing, "key money" rackets for getting rooms, and spiralling living costs, some may wonder what all the shouting was about. Yet it seems clear that the Attlee concept of giving India independence to save her as an associate of the English-speaking world stands a chance of bearing fruit.

Watching the Delhi celebration, a highly placed British official quoted the Quality of Mercy speech to me. Independence is the same as mercy, he remarked (in what amounted to a *volte face* from his prewar attitude). It blesseth him that gives and him that takes. Dutch and French authorities, studying the contrasts between their present colonial policies and those of the equally hard-pressed British, must sometimes have cause to ponder.

In the final days of British authority, which was already so Indianized that one could no longer call it British rule, I went to Delhi to watch the ripping apart of the ponderous administration that had governed this country. I should like to send you a separate note on the bifurcation in 70 days of this government of 400 million people. It involved first separating all the officers and clerks and other employees according to their own preferences; this meant that neither of the successor governments in the Indian or Pakistan dominions could expect any functional consistency in division of staff. Next all the typewriters, desks, radio stations, agricultural research centers, taxation sources, national debts, sterling balances, etc. *ad infinitum* had to be divided up—somehow. The partition of even a provincial government would ordinarily take years. Yet this national job had to be done in 10 weeks. Civil servants and politicians strained at the task. Despite severe testing of tempers, however, even the most rough and ready partition was hardly completed by the transfer date. A reorganized Partition Council and an Arbitral Tribunal headed by the recent Chief Justice of India, a Briton, will try to finish the work.

The partition process was further complicated by the political decision to divide the Punjab and Bengal provinces and to amputate most of the Surma Valley from Assam. Besides breaking up the three provincial administrations, it was necessary to establish new inter-Dominion boundaries through their territories. Inevitably the conflicting claims of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims quickened local passions.

Another major problem to be solved quickly was the future of the Indian States. Under British rule the 500-odd principalities had existed in subordinate association with the British Crown through the Crown Representative, who was always the Viceroy acting in a second capacity. With freedom, Crown paramountcy lapsed. An energetic effort (which despite official protestations did not entirely

eschew the use of pressure) was therefore made to create a new policy embracing the princely states as well as the constitutional provinces. Again, I should like to write for you a separate note on the subject.

In spite of these preoccupations, national attention generally shifted in the final days toward the ceremonies to take place in Karachi and Delhi as direct British rule disappeared.

Along with other correspondents, I flew to Karachi on August 9, the day before the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan was to be convened. There was a good deal of confusion in the provisional capital of Pakistan. Karachi was not designed to hold a national government. A city hemmed in by the Arabian Sea on one side and the Sind desert on the other, it has barely managed to keep housing, water supplies and food imports level with the rising population, which advanced from 350,000 to more than a half-million during the war years. Though spacious with wide streets, large open grounds, a first-class international airport and a busy seaport capable of expansion, Karachi is still essentially a camel-cart town. The governmental headquarters, located there, of tiny Sind province have insufficient facilities even for a major provincial capital, much less for the prospective Pakistan national government. Yet, as when the US Army arrived in 1942, Karachi was preparing to make do in the best way possible. Garrison troops in the city were shifted to the hulks of a wartime camp outside, while the Sind government took over the army's local barracks in order to make room in its official buildings for the new Pakistan administration. Sweeping requisitioning orders left Indian and foreign residents homeless to provide residences for Pakistan officials. For offices and less pretentious quarters one-story concrete-block row houses were erected in 10 days. Extra food shipments were ordered from Baluchistan.

To carry Pakistan governmental staff and effects to the new capital, daily special trains rolled from Delhi. But in that first week officers who arrived by air worked without secretaries. Stenographers had no typewriters. The governmental public relations officer lacked an office; he sat under a tree at the Palace Hotel writing instructions with a borrowed pencil or pen. Among the Pakistanis there was a good deal of resentment arising from a belief that non-Muslims in Delhi had obstructed the shipment to Karachi of even the simplest

governmental equipment before August 15. That was the explanation given for the government's lack of a duplicating machine on which to issue orders and the daily agenda for the Constituent Assembly. The whole procedure reminded me of the first days of a military command when soldiers would not know whether the tent in the distance housed the intelligence officer or a latrine. Presumably organization will settle down and improve quickly as additional staff and supplies arrive.

From the beginning the birth of Pakistan was Jinnah's show. While his ministers attended to details and worked at developing enthusiasm, he played his role with monarchical aloofness. As Governor General-designate of Pakistan he installed himself in the local Government House, a new, ample building. The panoply of British governorships continued. The new resident kept the same police guard at the gate, the same impassive doorman, the same jeep and motorcycle escort when he drove in the official Humber. Though looking tired and far from well as he neared 71, Jinnah held a firm grip on the governmental reins. Not only would he direct the administration in a far more active vein than one usually associates with governor generals of British Commonwealth dominions, but as president of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan (an office to which he was unanimously elected during the week) he would chart the course of constitution-making and probably do much of the drafting himself.

Somehow a rumor got about town that unfriendly elements (perhaps the *Khaksars*), imitating Rangoon, might try political assassinations during Mountbatten's pre-independence visit to Karachi. Jinnah, who sustained one personal attack three years ago, apparently took it seriously. While the Muslim League and the new Pakistan flags flew over public buildings, the official functions on the eve of independence were reserved, formal and well patrolled by police and military escorts. The highlight before I left was the Assembly session on the 14th, addressed by both Mountbatten and Jinnah. For the first time, units of the Pakistan defense forces, partitioned from the Indian military establishment, appeared in public. Soldiers, sailors and airmen lined the streets. With their colors and their bands and bagpipes, they brightened the state drive. But the celebrants were kept behind them, on the sidewalks. These crowds,

though cheerful and enthusiastic, were thin in comparison to those we saw in Delhi later. They acted as if they knew that policemen with Sten guns were on the roof of the Assembly building and in the galleries during the historic session.

To be fair I must say that at an evening reception for the Mountbattens given by Jinnah and his sister Miss Fatima many hundreds of guests mixed freely on the Government House lawn. In that gathering of Pakistan officials and the substantial landed and business interests of the Muslim community, I felt an atmosphere of solid satisfaction at the creation of the Muslim state. "This is what we've been waiting for," people seemed to be saying. In both Muslim and British circles at the party that evening there was a sense of quiet gratification that impressed me. Many non-Hindu officials expected a happier atmosphere in Karachi than they had found in recent months in New Delhi.

After covering the Pakistan Constituent Assembly's formal session, at which Mountbatten offered good wishes to Pakistan and Jinnah responded with cordial sentiments about Britain, most of us correspondents took an afternoon plane for Delhi. Dick Morse stayed on to see the remainder of the Pakistan program.

In New Delhi the problems of organization had been much smaller. There was no question there of setting up a new government; administrators faced merely the inconvenience of getting along without staff officers and employees who had left for Pakistan. The old-guard nationalists were fully in control in Delhi: Jawaharlal the premier, Vallabhbhai Patel who was to be the deputy premier, Rajendra Prasad the Constituent Assembly president, and their colleagues. It was their party—and Mountbatten's.

Some days earlier astrologers had discovered that the morning of August 15—the day designated for the transfer of power—was an inauspicious time. Partly for this reason and partly because they were well aware of the drama of the occasion, Congress leaders decide on a midnight session of the Indian Constituent Assembly to assume authority at the stroke of 12. The program was carried out to the letter inside the brightly lit hall. New national flags—saffron, white and green with a blue Asoka wheel of life in the center—hung in the chamber and against the wall panels that formerly held portraits of British viceroys. All India Radio and the BBC had their

microphones and sound cabins in place. Guests crowded the galleries and overflowed onto the sides and back of the floor. Members' families, diplomats, officials, press men, and all others who could wangle tickets were there. Inspired by the date, the hour and the crowd, Jawaharlal gave another and perhaps the best of the sensitive, heart-warming, destiny-conscious speeches that have marked his public life this year. In contrast to Nehru's personal testament, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, the recent vice-chancellor of Benares University and one of India's most prominent philosophers, delivered the oration of the evening. Chaudhri Khaliq-uz-Zaman, who years ago was one of the early supporters of Pakistan and is now leader of the Muslim League party left in the Dominion of India, promised loyalty to the new state in an impressive speech in Urdu. As the chimes of midnight were broadcast an excited Hindu member blew the conch to call the gods to witness the occasion. All members rose at the same moment to pledge themselves to the service of India, and the Assembly was duly declared the sovereign body of the just-born dominion. Nehru and Prasad were then instructed to proceed to the ex-Viceroy's House and inform Lord Mountbatten of the assumption of power and of the Assembly's desire that he should become the first Governor General of self-governing India.

That was the scene inside the Assembly chamber. Outside, in the streets leading around the circular building, near-bedlam had broken loose. Earlier in the evening Mildred and I had ridden with a wild taxi driver down Chandni Chowk, one of the famous trading streets of Asia. The happy crowds there had given me the first inkling that this would not be like Karachi; they also furnished the first tip that Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were celebrating happily together. Outside the Assembly building the scene was the same. It was Times Square on New Year's Eve. More than anyone else, the crowd wanted Nehru. Even before he was due to appear surging thousands had broken through police lines and flowed right to the doors of the Assembly building. Finally the heavy doors were closed to prevent a probably souvenir-hunting tide from sweeping through the Chamber. Nehru whose face reflected his happiness escaped by a different exit and after a while the rest of us went out. During the last year a crowd in India has not always been a force to be regarded lightly, but this night was different. Even while shoving and pushing for

position the laughing people kept their good humor. As we could not immediately find our taxi I sent Mildred back with a friend, but eventually we all got home safely.

If that day, begun in Karachi and ended in Delhi, was a study in contrasts, the next was a panorama of mass enthusiasms. Naturally, the 15th was a busy day, and I was not surprised when the taxi that carried me from the Cecil Hotel at 7:30 in the morning was still moving me around town at 1 o'clock the next morning. The driver could probably buy a new engine for the fare he charged. But I'll come back to him later.

The official program included the swearing in of the Governor General and the ministers at Government House, a special Constituent Assembly meeting that culminated in the breaking of the national flag over the Assembly building, a public flag-raising in the afternoon, and an evening reception by the Mountbattens for several thousand people.

The beginning, at least, was orderly. Four hundred invited guests gathered in the high-vaulted, marble-columned durbar hall of the ex-Viceroy's House, now called Government House. They watched the Mountbattens, both consciously resplendent in white, march in procession to the thrones where, only 20 weeks before, the Viscount had been inducted to the Viceroyalty. As before, the dress-uniformed bodyguard Lancers stood at attention and bugles rang through the hall. But this time Mountbatten had come to surrender power. After being sworn in as a constitutional Governor General (his commission as Viceroy having lapsed the night before) he administered the oath of office to Nehru as the first prime minister of self-governing India, and to other ministers. The contrast between the Admiral's white uniform, bedecked not only with many medals but with the blue sash of the Order of the Garter, and the *dhotis* and shirts worn by some of the ministers was more striking than anything we had seen in Karachi. As someone remarked, this looked like more than a transfer of power from white-faced sahibs to brown-faced sahibs.

When we reached the Constituent Assembly hall an hour before the morning ceremony was to begin, a crowd was already gathering outside. By the time the leaders arrived, the space between the building and the Buddhist-style (Sanchi) wall on the far side of the broad

boulevard was packed with humanity. The police were overwhelmed in their efforts to keep open a lane to the main entrance. Army troops had slightly more success. But when the Mountbattens drove to the Assembly in their open state carriage much of the path had to be cleared by the mounted Bodyguard.

Those of us standing on the roof of the portiere first heard a rumble of crowd noises in the distance. Excitement mounted when the official procession came into sight. As shouting and cheering broke over the bows of the Admiral's carriage, both Mountbattens stood and waved to the crowd. This was not enough for the people. From both sides enthusiasts (who in their day have probably spat on Englishmen) reached up to shake hands with the Governor General and his Lady. The celebrants pressed against the carriage. Nehru, waiting to welcome the couple, looked tense. But not the Mountbattens. Apparently as happily excited as any of the thousands of people around them, they finally made their triumphal way to the entrance.

Mountbatten, who in Karachi had formally relinquished authority to Jinnah, seemed much more in his element in Delhi where, with obvious popular support, he would remain for some months as Governor General. His inaugural speech to the Assembly reflected the warmth and enthusiasm with which he had guided the Indian leaders to this day. He was a symbol, yet the people were cheering something far greater. At the climax of the morning ceremony, when the national flag broke over the Assembly building, I felt a tremendous stir both inside the House, which I left at that moment, and in the packed grounds outside. This was the visible symbol of independence, and it made a profound impression on the people who watched it unfurl. This particular flag means a great deal to many Indians because, with small modifications, it is the banner under which the Congress party whipped up this colonial people to a firm demand for self-rule. Americans will remember the picture of the Marines placing the Stars and Stripes over Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima. If they can recall the glow that that photograph produced in patriots' breasts, they may have just an inkling of how an Indian nationalist felt when he saw the saffron, white and green tricolor flying over the central seat of authority in the land.

In the afternoon, when the day's big story had been filed, Mildred and I made our way to what was to be a military parade and flag-raising by Nehru for the public. The arrangements committee, as I remarked earlier, had planned for a crowd of 25,000 people in the spacious Kingsway plaza at Princes' park. From the time we left Old Delhi, 7 miles away, however, we passed people trooping to the display in overcrowded buses, trucks and horse *tongas* or on foot. The four-lane road was choked several blocks before we reached Kingsway, and as we walked closer to the flagstand the streets were blotted out by humans. As a monsoon storm seemed about to break, we hung back for a while. But soon, holding the neat blue cards showing our specific reserved seat numbers, we plunged into the sea of bodies. At first it was no worse than trying to get into a college stadium at the moment a football crowd is leaving it. Then the crowd thickened. When we reached the reserved seat section, we found two and three people standing on a single chair. Everyone held everyone else up, so that the pressure was toward the aisle along which we were trying to make our way. At one place two young men were straddling the aisle, with a toe on a chair on either side. Still we pressed ahead, as I hoped we could find a free place near the flagpole. We bucked a stream of people who were already trying to break through the crowd to the rear. Finally we stalled. It was impossible to push farther ahead yet the crowd behind us prevented our returning. A little boy near by cried with fright. His father tried to protect him. Three women, apparently dizzy, strove to find an open space for themselves. There was no fresh air. From behind people pushed forward, while in the front police and officials tried to push the crowd back. Nehru himself, in his accustomed tempestuous manner, plunged into the struggling mob in an effort to make the front ranks sit down. He penetrated for some distance, led Pamela Mountbatten, who had been caught in the crush, out by the hand, and then had to be rescued himself. Lord Mountbatten picked up a child who seemed in danger of being overrun. Fainting women were brought to the flagstand to recuperate. Extra hazards were provided by a few intoxicated fellows who were throwing their weight around. While straining against the tide to keep from being overrun, our main concern was possible panic. As part of the amazing mass change of heart, there was not the slightest indication of ugly moods. There

were no other white faces in sight. Yet neighbors helping to brace me smiled encouragingly and tried to make an extra inch of space for Mildred. And as individuals were thrust past us by the human pressure from behind, they apologized for the bumps.

If there was ceremony to the hoisting of the flag, I missed it. Fearing an incipient police thrust to control the mob, I was just then trying to lead Mildred out across the chairs between aisles. The colors, I believe, were run up in a hurry to help break the tension. Just as they flapped free, a rainbow appeared in the sky, and when Lord Mountbatten pointed to it, the crowd went happily wild. Then the exodus began. (I never did find out what happened to the military parade. All we saw were the aircraft that crossed in formation.)

A few minutes later we found Sir George Abell, private secretary to the Viceroy, sitting on top of a bus as currents of people eddied about it. On his last afternoon in India after a distinguished career he was understandably happy at the successful completion of his mission and the unprecedented salute to his chief. To the Mountbatten legend much had already been added during the day. As a climax, a good many of the 500,000 people around us were running after the Governor General's carriage at that moment. While the horsemen struggled to calm their mounts, the people thronged around the vehicle. Nehru, who had been unable to find his car in the crush, was sitting atop the landau, while two Indian women, a man and a child had also got aboard. There was hand-shaking and saluting all the way along. At Government House Lord Mountbatten spied a *chaprasi* (messenger) who had followed the carriage the entire way, and decided he looked tired. So he invited the \$10-a-month government employee into the big house for refreshments. "I wanted to touch his foot," a young Indian said about Mountbatten later, "not to humble myself before him but because after what he has done he is one of us now." The Indian capacity for offering affection took on a mass aspect that day. The afternoon ride itself will probably rank with the most striking ovations that Indians have ever given Englishmen.

There was hardly strength remaining to attend the reception in the evening. But when we watched Lord and Lady Mountbatten and Prime Minister Nehru shaking hands with the hundreds and

hundreds of people who walked through that line, we knew that those three tired people counted the day a triumphant one.

The mass excitement and joy and cordiality failed to wipe out all the unpleasant realities of Indian life today, of course. Though Hindus and Muslims celebrated together in Delhi, news of serious riots filtered through from the Punjab. I was most sobered, however, by my own taxi driver, who steered me through celebrating crowds for most of 18 hours that busy day. He was a Muslim, recently released from the army. While he worked in Delhi his wife and two children, aged 7 and 1½, lived in the state of Alwar which is south of Delhi on the edge of Rajputana. Just a week earlier the driver had suddenly been called to Alwar where, according to his story, state troops of the Hindu principality were looting Muslim villages and killing their residents. He had succeeded in rescuing his wife from the reign of terror. "And your children?" I asked, already sensing the answer. As usual we were driving in a merry-making crowd that paid little heed to motor cars, so the driver had to concentrate on his work. He barely whispered the word, "Gone."

This is the tragedy of India today. It is a sick country. The new government takes over a crippled administration, a blood-stained heritage of the recent past, and only the slimmest resources to re-establish decent civilized order. Yet events might help. The June 3 announcement of quick independence probably forestalled a real civil war. The arrival of independence itself might turn the tide.

Despite incidents in critical border areas, there is evidence to sustain hope that the general situation in the country may improve. I've already mentioned the joint celebrations in Delhi and in Calcutta, an even worse plague spot during the last catastrophic year. In Bombay it was the same.

None of the top national leaders was in Bombay for the independence celebrations. Yet the town went wild. As befitted a big city, it put on much more elaborate illumination than Karachi and Delhi. Crowds from the mill districts spread through the city in the thousands. They roared around in crammed-full trucks and climbed in dozens to the tops of streetcars. So far as I know the souvenir collecting that nearly stripped the Calcutta Government House (paralleling, if I recall rightly, the citizens' visit to the White House when Andrew Jackson moved in) was not repeated in Bombay, though one group did try to go through the Taj Mahal Hotel. As in Delhi,

the crowds were big and boisterous, but I was surprised to learn later that many fearful British and American residents holed themselves up at home during the celebrations. Those who did go out had the soul-satisfying experience of readily proffered friendliness. And when the Mountbattens arrived on the 17th to see the troops off, Delhi scenes were nearly repeated. A member of the Governor General's staff reported that the Admiral shouted "Jai Hinds" the length of Marine Drive in response to Indian cheers. Her Excellency waved an Indian national flag the whole way. A British police officer estimated the crowd lining the route of that drive as half a million. I was more interested, though, in his comments on the celebrations during the preceding days in the mill districts and *bazaar* areas where for a year curfews, extra police precautions and all the other measures that could be devised had failed to stop communal stabbings and shootings. "In 34 years in India I've never seen anything like it," he said. "It was wonderful. They all mixed together—Hindus, Muslims, everybody. I can't describe it. Words fail me." He was right, too. Words did fail him. When I pressed for details about the celebrations, all he could say was, "It was wonderful." But I got the idea.

Thus, then, independence came to India.

Three features deserve, I think, further comment. First, why were the celebrations in Indian Dominion cities so much more vociferous than in Karachi where Pakistan was born? In a sense, this was contrary to form. The Muslims, after all, had won separate nationhood by the June 3rd plan which paved the way for self-rule in August, while the Congress had lost its struggle to keep the country united. Opposition to the plan was greater in the non-Muslim camp than among Muslims, and even the week before independence the Hindu Mahasabha, as much a communal body as the Muslim League, had defiantly threatened "direct action" against the Congress governments of the United Provinces and Bihar. The explanation of the different responses on August 15 is complex. In Pakistan the first difficulty was that Karachi, the capital, has itself a majority of Hindus who have held controlling interests in civic life and from whom has come vigorous opposition to the Pakistan concept. Pakistan leaders hesitated to whip up Muslims for fear of clashes. This worry was enhanced because the Pakistan government was not yet adequately organized to enforce security measures if popular demonstrations

should get out of hand. Further, Muslims had reached the last Friday of Ramzan, their month of daytime fasting, so that instead of celebrating on the 15th all families were looking forward another three days to the 'Id on which, according to custom, they would feast and wear new clothes. Their leaders and responsible members of the community also understood, of course, that the joy of creating a new nation was balanced by the grave difficulties involved in making it run. Finally, Jinnah's austere personality, so alien to the concept of the populace dancing in the streets, dominated the scene. Muslims, I feel sure, would bitterly oppose any attempt to reduce the jurisdiction of their newly won Pakistan. But they were satisfied for the moment with subdued satisfaction at having won it. The Congress, on the other hand, had every interest in encouraging popular celebrations. Concentration on the fact that independence had come would perhaps divert attention from the partition of the country. Long a mass-movement organization, the Congress wanted maximum popular support for the difficult period ahead; real enthusiasm would help. More than that, the ordinary celebrants in Delhi, Bombay, and Calcutta had no worries about majority local populations who might oppose their aspirations. They were themselves the majority. As a result, the celebrations of independence came into the foreground and the disillusionment associated with partition dropped into the background.

The second interesting feature of the celebrations was the cordiality demonstrated toward the British and particularly toward the Mountbattens. As you know, this country's record has at times equalled Palestine's for instances of personal spite against the British. Besides occasional, but fortunately rare, assassinations there have been minor annoyances when crowds knocked sun-*topis* off white men's heads, clipped off their ties just below the knot, or forced them to get out of their motor cars and bow to a party flag. Even such incidents have been spasmodic and rare. Much more widespread have been sullen resentment against the authority and privileges of Europeans and deep-rooted suspicion of their motives. One of the hurdles that Lord Wavell failed to remove was widespread, perhaps partly unreasoning, doubt that Britain really intended to give India self-rule. The dramatic announcement in February that India would be free next year and the arrival of Mountbatten were the first partly

successful attacks on that psychological barrier. Its stubborn hold was illustrated by an incident that occurred after announcement of the June 3rd plan, which practically stuffed independence down Indians' throats. A respected Indian political analyst, whose memoranda have been called for even by Attlee, said to me: "You do think they're really going, don't you; this is not just a subterfuge so they can come back when their crisis at home is over?" He himself recognized that the steps already taken made abandonment of political control inevitable, but his years of suspicion made him seek the comfort of a concurring opinion. Other and less sophisticated Indians found it even harder to believe that Britain was sincere in her determination to leave. Perhaps Mountbatten's greatest contribution, therefore, was to convince Indians as a whole of this definite fact. For persuading them that Whitehall meant what it said, he won their warm affection. Once he had done that, the resentment against Britishers dissolved rapidly. The cultural ties developed by two centuries of association (e.g., the designing of the entire upper public educational system of India on the British model) began to assert themselves. The intelligentsia (including major party leaders) got down to thinking how much more closely allied they were with Britain than with any other country. Once that stage was reached, events released one of the Indians' most pleasing virtues—a capacity for warm-hearted friendship. This was what happened to most Indians. The unreconstructed minority remained, of course. Communists continued to see an Anglo-American capitalist plot in the "divide and leave" sequel to "divide and rule". And as we watched the enthusiastic crowds almost mobbing the Mountbattens, the Delhi correspondent of Tass Agency, with whom I was walking, said "Bah, look at them! Indians kissing the boot of British royalty!"

The third impressive feature of the independence celebrations was the country-wide expression of Hindu-Muslim cordiality. The fraternal demonstrations surprised most people, and C. Rajagopalachari was not the only one to call them a miracle. Two days before independence the Calcutta house in which Gandhi and H. S. Suhrawardy, the Bengal Muslim League premier, were staying was stoned by an angry crowd described as a thousand strong. Police and military forces in many centers were alerted for possible communal clashes

on the 15th. Yet—excepting the unfortunate Punjab—a tide that swept over the land brought simultaneous demonstrations of goodwill in far distant places. I don't know how to explain the sudden transformation adequately. It was true that the political parties, which have perhaps not always been above inducing communal agitation for political ends, now wanted peace and friendship between the communities. It was also true that with the emergence of Pakistan and the disappearance of British rule, the minority community in each dominion realized that it would have to make peace with the majority. More important than those factors, I believe, however, was an overwhelming popular revulsion against the constant dislocation and actual fear for life during the last year. Terror is an enervating emotion. I've seen neighborhoods so distraught by the medieval lack of personal security that they could think of nothing else. I think that people everywhere used the excitement of the celebrations to try to break the vicious cycle of communal attacks and retaliations. How permanent the change may be is yet to be seen.

Independence may solve few of the nearly overwhelming problems facing the infant governments of India and Pakistan. But if even a portion of the potential new energies are released and only some of the tolerance and goodwill shown during the last week remain, well-wishers of the country can be more hopeful than before.

Mildred Talbot's Letter on Independence

The following letter was written by Mildred A. Talbot, the author's wife. In it, she describes her own experience of the events surrounding the handover ceremonies in Karachi and New Delhi. This letter, like all the others in this collection, is addressed to Walter S. Rogers of the Institute of Current World Affairs.

20 Raj Mahal
Churchgate Reclamation
Bombay, India
August 27, 1947

BOTH DICK MORSE and Phil are writing Indian independence letters to you which, I am sure, will cover all of the more serious aspects of that great occasion. Therefore, I will confine my account to the purely personal experiences and feelings that were mine in the closely packed three days during which I visited Karachi and New Delhi.

Early the morning of August 13 I left Susan* behind in Bombay in the care of friends and flew to Karachi. There seemed to be nothing special about my fellow passengers, but the large, perspiring man to whom I loaned my fan during a sweltering stop in Ahmedabad confided to me that four of them, whom he was escorting to the Pakistan ceremonies, were relatives of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. In an attempt to reciprocate for my "act of great kindness" he offered to declare me a member of their party when we arrived in Karachi so my name and picture might appear in the papers. By assuring him that I was delighted just to be present on the sidelines of history, I escaped and he settled back happily in the knowledge that he had more than done his duty.

During the long drive into the city from the Karachi Air Base I had a chance to observe many old familiar wartime haunts. The now abandoned Red Cross clubs and temporary open air theaters looked just as dry, hot, dusty and uninviting as I remembered them. Once more it was my questionable privilege to view fields full of hideous vultures watchfully waiting for exhausted animals that might drop in their tracks or for the "Open for Business" hours at the distant Tower of Silence where the Parsis lay out their dead. The camel trains were moving as silently and slowly along the road as they did in the days when they annoyed GIs who impatiently tried to pass them in racing jeeps or army trucks. I recalled how many an irate soldier retaliated by turning the leading camel around while the guide slept peacefully, thereby heading the entire caravan back in the direction from which it had come. But now the "crazy Americans" are gone and they again move on unmolested. As I looked at the desolate expanse I wondered if even Phil's mother with her love for the desert and ability to see beauty that escapes others could find much to warm her heart in this barren waste of Sind. Therefore,

*Our daughter then 20 months old.

I was glad for the amusement afforded by the sprightly pairs of little gray donkeys driven by youths in true Ben Hur style. They seemed to me again to be the one irrepressibly gay feature in an otherwise depressing atmosphere.

It was interesting to return to the old Killarney Hotel which had been renamed The Palace, refurnished, and expanded by a new wing built after the "destructive Americans" had gone. However, it was not difficult to reflect that undoubtedly the money left behind by those same strange characters had made the rejuvenation possible.

That evening Dick and Phil escorted me to the Government House reception given by Mr. Jinnah and his sister Fatima in honor of Lord and Lady Mountbatten. The several thousands present passed down the receiving line to meet the elegant Viceroy who looked every letter of his astounding name, His Excellency Rear Admiral the Right Honorable Louis Francis Albert Victor Nicholas Viscount Mountbatten of Burma, KCG, PC, GMSI, GMIE, GCFO, KCB, DSO, the ever-gracious Lady Mountbatten, the unsmiling, impeccable Mr. Jinnah and the scarcely noticed Fatima. On an enormous verandah ice cream, cakes, and soft drinks (Muslims do not imbibe liquor) were served and entertainment provided by an Indian band that played everything from "Finlandia" to "A Whistler and His Dog." We found opportunity to chat briefly with Mr. Jinnah whose appearance shocked me so that little else registered on my mind during the evening. I hadn't thought it possible, but he was even more slender and a worse color than when we had seen him in Delhi last November. He looked like a walking, talking corpse. The nightmare I had that night was directly attributable to that vivid impression.

On the morning of the 14th—because of Phil's friendship with one of the Under Secretaries—I was one of the mere handful of people admitted to the tiny assembly chamber to hear Mountbatten and Jinnah exchange verbal formalities. If it were in truth a "parting between friends" as they both declared, it was the coldest friendship I had seen. Jinnah set the tone with his stiff, correct manner. Mountbatten intrigued many of us who know his dramatic ability by matching Jinnah detail for detail in controlled word and action. The only really colorful part of the ceremony was the preparation for and the state arrival of the Jinnahs followed by the Mountbattens. From our vantage point on the roof we watched coolies respectfully

brush the red carpet placed for the footsteps of the exalted. One cavorting American cameraman inadvertently stepped on the carpet and left a big dust smudge. A frenzy of activity followed during which not only were extra brushes plied but an enormous old charcoal iron was produced to re-iron that spot so not the slightest mark would mar its perfection. The entourage finally arrived with the Mountbattens in a fantastically ancient Rolls Royce whose appearance was decidedly enhanced by its occupants. They were both attired in white—he in his naval uniform complete with decorations and sword, she in a long crêpe dress, arm-length white gloves and a jeweled tiara—in fact, the same costumes worn by them at their viceregal inauguration in March. To say that they looked magnificent is redundant, for they always do. The occasion was enlivened by the Royal Highlanders who piped away enthusiastically. To those of us who could see the bronze life-size statue of Gandhi which stood in a nearby circle an amusingly incongruous note was added. (We were told by some Hindus that if an attempt were made to remove Gandhi's statue, there would be civil war within 24 hours. Apparently Pakistan is going to have Gandhi in bronze as well as in the flesh, like it or not.)

After the ceremony while Phil was at the cable office getting off his story to the *Chicago Daily News*, Dick and I went out to watch the state parade. It was a disappointing affair both in size and spirit. Jinnah, whose smile muscles seem to be permanently out of order, had no trouble keeping a reserved attitude toward the mildly cheering crowds, but Mountbatten's ready smile broke through despite what must have been a determination not to overplay his role with a partner who wouldn't act at all. Dick and I agreed that we had been in crowds who were much happier over a first down than the predominantly Hindu population of Karachi seemed to be about Pakistan's birth, its leader, and their ex-Viceroy. However, a counterbalance to the lack of enthusiasm existed in the attitude of the Muslim League leaders whom we saw. They seemed to be meeting this crisis with deep satisfaction and quiet determination, subdued by the prospects of work and responsibility ahead of them. In other words, the celebration was almost a nuisance interlude to be borne with restraint. They had already settled down to serious work. Nevertheless, I was not sorry to move on to Delhi where we hoped

we would see demonstrations which would more nearly match the joy we felt at this juncture in India's history.

By flying to Delhi that afternoon we were there in time for the midnight meeting of the Constituent Assembly in the Secretariat's impressive Council Hall. That evening on the way from the Cecil Hotel in Old Delhi, Phil and I thought it would be interesting to drive through Chandni Chowk, the famous old bazaar street that was out of bounds to us all during the war. It was fun wending our way through the milling, carnival-spirited mobs until we realized that our taxi was not going to make it. Something had happened to the gears and the driver finally was unable to shift at all. Stranded! But from somewhere by what I presume was Oriental magic another taxi was produced. This time we had a reckless Sikh driver who must have trained in a steeplechase. By the time we got to New Delhi I was in a mild state of hysteria, so we stopped at the Imperial Hotel and switched to yet a third cab. At last in exhaustion I followed the ever-enthusiastic Phil into the Council Hall. Something had gone wrong with the arrangements for my entrance ticket! I collapsed into a chair feeling extreme indifference as to whether I was admitted or not. But when Phil came back victorious with a ticket labeling me as a "visiting journalist" I knew my cue and took it. By flashing the card only when challenged and executing such fast footwork that a chase would have been necessary for the guards to catch me, I lost myself in the intricate network of passageways and waiting rooms behind the galleries until I spotted a good vantage point. And I certainly did all right. Only afterwards did we learn that I had selected the center section reserved for "distinguished guests" all of whom were invited by the president of the Assembly or by Nehru himself. But they hadn't looked any different to me than the rest of the people, so I squeezed in beside a barefooted elderly lady who throughout the ceremony squatted on her haunches in the approved Indian manner. I was not a little amused by her until it occurred to me that she had every right to consider me the queer one with my short dress and crossed legs. After all, I was the outsider on this occasion.

We had arrived in good time despite our delays. Jawaharlal Nehru was just beginning his fine and eloquent speech. Only once was the dignity of the program broken by an excited assemblyman who

couldn't resist shouting a cheer for "Mahatmaji." Soon it was midnight and the members of the Assembly solemnly rose in a body to take the pledge of service to their country. At the moment when the clock was chiming the hour there was a rude interruption which startled everyone. A conch shell was blown long and loudly from the rear of the hall. Involuntarily every head turned to see what was happening. It was revealing to witness the looks of relief that passed over all their faces when they saw that it was one of the most highly respected members of the Assembly, a devout Hindu, simply invoking the gods to witness this ceremony in the traditional manner used every time worship starts in a Hindu temple. When I happened to spot Nehru just as he was turning away, he was trying to hide a smile by covering his mouth with his hand. The pledge ceremony passed off without further mishap.

During the final Indian patriotic songs Phil came for me and we went below to the main exit to witness the reaction of the throngs waiting there for a glimpse of the man they idolize, Nehru. All expected him to leave that way en route to the Viceroy's House which is now to be known as Government House. We found ourselves face to face with a mass of humanity surging good-humoredly toward his car and the huge brass-studded doorway into the Council Hall. After watching the wave-like movements of the crowd for a few minutes, Phil advised our keeping near the entrance in case the pressure should grow too great and the crowd break forward and stampede the hall. We didn't have to wait long. Almost immediately the front line started to give way and it was as if a human dam were crumpling before our eyes. We managed to squeeze inside just as the huge doors were clanged shut by the policemen. We went to the second-floor terrace to watch whatever was going to happen below. It's an anticlimax to have to admit that nothing did happen, but such was the case. Nehru had been advised to slip out by a back entrance. The crowd waited for a while, then sensing that the show was over slowly broke away, some piling three and four onto a bicycle for the several miles' distance they all had to cover to reach home. I later inquired from an Indian friend as to why better discipline had not been kept. The response was one of surprise at my question. Apparently when an Indian crowd is happy and friendly no one really wants to keep it in any particular order. The individual

has to accommodate himself to the whims of the group, and that extends even to the highest of authorities. All through the independence celebrations if the crush were too great for the key figure to follow his original plan of going a certain way via certain means, he simply would change those plans and go the best way he could. There were no facsimiles of tough New York or Chicago policemen here; it was everybody's day and if you didn't like the rules of the game you could simply stay home.

I was too tired the next morning to attend the 8 A.M. "swearing in" ceremony of the Governor General and the cabinet members. But Kay Stimson, the American wife of the local correspondent of the British Broadcasting Corporation, and I managed to get to the Council Hall for the 10:30 A.M. meeting of the Constituent Assembly just after the Mountbattens had arrived. After trying unsuccessfully to force our way through the crowd to the main door during which my face was lashed by the switching tail of a mounted policeman's horse, we wangled entrance at a guarded spot. Following the accepted technique we once more divided forces and moved quickly to avoid penetrating questions, and I, as if drawn by a magnet, again found a seat in the "distinguished guests" section.

My attention was caught by our Ambassador Grady who was whispering in a slightly agitated manner with one of the secretaries on the bank of seats just below the president* and the Mountbattens. We later learned that he was lodging a complaint that President Truman's cable of congratulations had been omitted when greetings from other countries had been read. The president was interrupted by a note calling this to his attention, and his reaction was to mutter something into the microphone to the effect that the American note had been misplaced. Mr. Grady is said to have been greatly irritated by this lapse and the way it was handled.

Lord Mountbatten's inaugural speech as Governor General of the New Dominion of India was impressively delivered and well received. Probably every woman present marvelled at the cool appearance of Lady Mountbatten who, in the midst of Delhi's indescribable summer heat, was stunning in gold *lamé*, arm-length gloves, and the appropriate jewelry including a gold tiara. Only those of

*President of the Constituent Assembly, Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

us who had been in Karachi and heard Mountbatten talk in the Pakistan Assembly could fully appreciate by contrast the sincere pleasure he was deriving from his Delhi experience. Here he was relaxed and at home among friendly companions. He displayed warm personal affection toward Nehru. His tones were rich and full, and his good wishes obviously heartfelt. The inimitable Mountbatten charm was turned on to "full."

Although not previously planned, Kay and I were drawn by the same compulsion away from the splendor of the chamber onto the second-floor verandah to watch the effect of the raising of the flag over the Council Hall on the multitudes that had gathered as far as the eye could see in the two-mile-long parkway approach to the Secretariat, on the tops of buildings, in windows, on cornices, in trees, perched everywhere like so many birds. The raising of that first flag was the single most thrilling experience of the entire celebration. The memory of the feelings that surged up within us as we watched their excitement and awe still brings tears to my eyes. The first who spotted it pointed like eager children; others catching the idea looked up and tried to push their way to a vantage point so they too could see this miracle. For a few minutes there was almost a subdued hush over the whole crowd; then a soft bass undertone slowly swelled until perhaps when the flag reached the top (we could not see from where we stood) there was a breathtaking roar of cheering, shouting, and excited cries which others said penetrated to the hall inside and made their spines tingle. While I was being stirred by the sheer power and grandeur of the spectacle, I overheard remarks made by several around me, remarks addressed to no one, thoughts that came out of the depths of souls, that showed the extent to which many were moved by this historic moment. One woman who had favored a liberal policy throughout the war said over and over, "This is vindication, this is vindication." Another who had been attacked and deserted by friends for the attitude she shared with her husband said, "Thank God for people like Jim who had the guts to stand by their convictions." These were "foreigners" speaking. The Indians either stood mute immersed in their own overwhelming thoughts or were shouting almost uncontrollably. It was a grand emotional experience that left most of us with shaky voices or complete inability to speak.

At this tense and climactic moment the Mountbattens appeared at the exit of the Council Hall and descended to their glamorous state coach drawn by six beautiful horses. The crowd spontaneously and joyfully took them to their hearts and gave them the greatest ovation that I have ever seen offered to anyone. From the carriage Mountbatten turned and looking upwards gave a combined salute to Nehru on the balcony and the flag flying above. The roar of approval deafened us. Of course, the Mountbattens, troupers that they are, played their parts perfectly. They grasped the hands eagerly thrust toward them, waved, and saluted. Even their mobile faces could scarcely accommodate the broad, delighted smiles that they wanted to give. This was the richest dividend that Mountbatten could draw for the five months of backbreaking work he had accomplished on behalf of these people. As they drove off in the midst of their splendid mounted bodyguard, watching Britishers were left stunned with amazement to see their royal countrymen accepted wholeheartedly by the Indians as one of their own. Those present can still scarcely believe it, and I'm sure those who didn't see it will never be completely convinced.

I must pause here to tell of an incident that sidelights Nehru's personality. At the height of the ovation for him and for Mountbatten, one of the horses of the bodyguard fell in the crowd. An American friend who was watching Nehru said that a look of horror passed over his face and that he remained masked in distress, completely oblivious to the celebration, until he saw the horse back on its feet moving off with the rest.

That afternoon, still lifted by the spirit of the morning's episodes, we started off innocently clutching our "reserved seats" tickets for the 5 P.M. public flag-raising ceremony to be held in the huge open plaza in front of the Secretariat. On the way there was a blinding dust-storm through which the crowds passed in experienced unawareness. As it moved on the skies filled with ominous-looking rainclouds and a riot of vivid monsoon colors. For a while we hovered near a soft-drink stand in case torrents should break loose. But finally we decided to chance the rain and find our seats before the program started. That was our big mistake. We pushed and wiggled through the crowd until we found what appeared to be a makeshift entrance to the reserved section. Again no insight warned

us to go back or at least to stand still, so we made a bigger mistake—we went in. Soon we were up against what I can only describe by the trite phrase, a wall of human flesh, and were being pushed forward by crowds still coming up from the rear. We were in an aisle with rows of chairs on either side BUT every chair was occupied by two or three standing persons and sometimes even two deep by people standing on shoulders. Right across the aisle a group of youths had pyramided themselves and were swaying precariously above the massed people below. For the first time in my life I was thoroughly frightened by nothing more than the press of a mob. Chairs were breaking under weights they were never intended to bear; as people fell others could not help them nor even protect themselves from the extra crush. Although there was a breeze blowing, none of it reached those of us who were short and standing on the ground. I began to feel faint and tears of helplessness came despite a firm intention keep going somehow. Phil and several other tall men tried to no avail to force a sort of circle for a group of women and children who happened to be pressed in around us. Finally as Phil saw policemen forcing their way back through the crowd with *lathis* (long poles with metal ends, the counterpart of our policemen's billy clubs except far more lethal) we struggled off to the side through a tangled mass of broken chairs and waited until the crowds thinned sufficiently for us to gain the road again. Sometime during this the flag went up but we saw none of it. We spotted our good friend George Abell, the ex-Viceroy's private secretary, who is always dignified and suave, looking slightly boyish on top of a bus where he had sought refuge from the mash. At one stage Mountbatten had sent him back through the crowd to find police to help them manage things on the platform where the flag was to be raised. Of course, he neither found police nor could he get back to the platform. It was he who in a completely awed voice told Phil that there must be 500,000 people present. That figure was later authenticated and considered conservative. Twenty-five thousand had been expected; half a million came. And, again, there had been no plans made for keeping discipline. Only local police were on duty and they had been swallowed up in the crowd long before the ceremony started. Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter, came up to us looking woebegone and bedraggled. Her sari was torn, her hair

straggling, her fingernails ruined. And she was one of the dignitaries of the performance! She had become separated and lost from her family and the official party and had decided to give up and go home in a friend's car. At a distance we could just see the heads of her father and Mountbatten as they managed to move slowly away in the state carriage on their way back to Government House. Indira kindly offered to rescue and deposit me at the Imperial Hotel where Phil could pick me up later after having found our taxi from among the thousands parked in surrounding areas. On the way Miss Naidu, daughter of the acclaimed first lady of India, Sarojini Naidu, talked of nothing except the marvel of the mere "right to raise a flag." She said that not many present could possibly yet know what a truly wonderful experience it is to have, "the right to raise a flag." It would take time to get used to. I agreed with her and also thought that it would take me forever to get used to milling Indian crowds where the intention is not to get anywhere but just to push and shove happily and the worse the crush the better. I went home in dirty perspiration-drenched clothes with the firm conviction that I would never expose myself to an Indian crowd again.

That resolve lasted until exactly 10 P.M. when I couldn't resist accompanying Phil to Government House for the huge reception being given by the Mountbattens for Nehru. And within the first half hour after arrival I was more than repaid for the gamble. When it was our turn to greet Nehru it was a warm and rewarding experience to see his face light up with recognition and to share the emotion which would not let him speak but permitted him only to grip Phil's elbow in response to the few heartfelt words of congratulation Phil spoke. It was a glorious occasion in that magnificent palace. Goodwill and friendliness overflowed everywhere. Stiffness was notable by its absence. People were just plain happy with the changing of the old order and the advent of the new. We said farewell to lots of departing officials who had been in the depths of depression six months before but who were now jubilant over the spirit of comradeship which would be their last impression of India. The lighted fountains in the beautiful gardens even seemed to play more gaily with the spontaneous laughter that rang out. The servants stepped livelier through the groups that seemed to mingle more freely than usual. It was a good party. I was glad I had come.

The next day (the 16th) as I flew alone to Bombay I found myself vividly reliving experiences, repeating conversations verbatim, and recalling incidents that I would like to tell to you, to my mother, or to an old friend. So I started making notes for what I knew would eventually be this letter. I had to get it down in writing to relieve the emotional pressure I'd accumulated in those three days. If I've conveyed even a fraction of the thrill I had from this experience, then I think you will not mind having taken the time to read this non-technical and purely feminine account of one of the real high-lights of my life.

Sincerely yours,
Mildred A. Talbot

Four Months On

*20 Raj Mahal
Churchgate Reclamation
Bombay, India
December 12, 1947*

WHEN I RETURNED to India recently after a six weeks' absence in Southeast Asia, I hardly knew what I should find, for, as you know, this subcontinent's first hundred days of independence had embraced one of the great human convulsions of modern history. Consider what happened. In an orgy of religio-communal madness, some 10 million citizens of the north-western provinces had been routed from their homes. An unknown total, probably between 200,000 and 500,000 (compared to 295,000 American war dead in World War II), had been put to the sword, machine-gunned, or roasted alive. The splintered Punjab administrations were quickly swamped and there even appeared danger that the infant central governments of the Indian and Pakistan Dominions might succumb. Even such large casualty figures were fractional, of course, in comparison to losses in the Bengal famine of 1943 when more than 1 million died and whole villages fled from starvation districts. Yet this year's lustful mass killings were more dangerous for the country.

“Have you ever seen hydrophobia?” Gandhi asked me when we talked about the nation’s troubles. “This situation is analogous. Cures have been known, but they are very difficult.” Gandhi, who said he was “hoping against hope for the end of this madness,” was working his 79-year-old heart to its limit in an effort to teach Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims how to live together again. Sometimes his blood pressure would surge to 220, Dr. Sushila Naiyar said, before she could make him rest and calm it down to 160.

Just here I should like to comment on one snap judgment that seems to be gaining currency. “Churchill was right,” the verdict reads: “Nothing but British glue held India together. Now that Britain is gone, the country has come unstuck.” The inference is made that Britain should not have pulled out. I personally should prefer the statement that Mountbatten was right: a storm that Britain could not control was on its way at least as early as last spring. Some previous British policy-makers had sown not the bulk, but certainly at least some, of the seeds that would shortly reap the whirlwind, Mountbatten felt. The Viceroy believed that nothing less than political freedom could possibly avert the storm; he hoped that full independence might. His gamble on the latter proposition failed, of course. Yet, he just sneaked under the wire on his main effort, which was to extricate British responsibility before the typhoon broke.

After returning to India in November, I revisited Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Bombay, Delhi, Lahore, and Karachi, making a circuit of rather more than 4,000 miles. In this letter I shall largely confine my observations to the Indian dominion, leaving Pakistan for later comment.

Several features of the current situation stood out in the places I visited.

1. India’s near-mortal birth crisis has been survived. Government administration is working again. A semblance of law and order has been restored even in chaotic East Punjab. Such a recovery was possible principally because three quarters of the country (but not 97 percent as Mountbatten asserted) remained stable even at the depth of the Punjab calamity.

2. (a) The princely states have been securely corraled. This fact is of utmost importance to national stability, yet is sometimes overlooked. When British rule ended, the states' treaties of subordinate association with the Crown lapsed; theoretically they could have resumed independence and pock-marked the Indian Dominion with hundreds of autonomous islands. Some of the larger and more ambitious states actually wanted such a development. By a concerted drive, however, Mountbatten, Patel, and a specialist in governmental techniques named V. P. Menon re-subordinated the hundreds of states that lie outside the Pakistan orbit. The exceptions are Hyderabad, where a gloves-off but inconclusive struggle ended in a one-year "stand-still agreement," and Kashmir, now the scene of an inter-dominion tussle.
(b) The second stage of consolidating and rationalizing state administrations is already under way. Menon's plan, approved by Patel, would reduce princely state administrations to about 30, each of which would be comparable in size and strength to some of the smaller existing provinces. Small states are to be administratively lumped together or absorbed in neighboring provinces. Their maharajas will be permitted to keep their Rolls Royces and racing stables, but some will retain about as much power as that of a Russian count. Thus the integration of different types of administration, which was one of the most troublesome stumbling blocks on the road to independence for a generation, has been solved.
3. Initial disputes with Pakistan have been settled. In today's psychological atmosphere financial settlements are possibly not crucial, but each one negotiated is a potential crisis averted. Inter-dominion relations are still extremely edgy, of course. The Kashmir dispute remains unresolved and therefore gravely dangerous.
4. A sharp divergence between Nehru and Patel that threatened to divide their followers, if not themselves, has subsided. Nehru took the view, in brief, that India must become a secular state offering full security and opportunity to the 40 million Muslims remaining outside Pakistan. Patel's followers argued

that Muslims' allegiance would never be divorced from Pakistan, and that therefore at least influential Muslims in India should be regarded as potential fifth-columnists. Gandhi helped ease the immediate split by coming down firmly on the side of Nehru. Both men, who so completely complement each other, are now cooperating actively in the government, other cabinet ministers told me. Yet the issue remains only barely submerged, as the following paragraph suggests.

5. India is undergoing a Hinduistic resurgence. A political generation dominated by the Pakistan issue has stimulated what I suppose may be the most vigorous wave of sheer Hinduism since Buddhism was ejected from India. To take one small example: despite high-level statements of impartiality, the United Provinces has adopted Hindi, the Sanskrit derivative closely associated with Hinduism, as its official language instead of the mixed Hindustani of Sanskritic-Persian origins which Muslims prefer and which Gandhi recommended. Muslims in various Indian provinces are drastically on the defensive; many Hindus act as if they had entered the promised land. (An equal but opposite condition exists in Pakistan.)
6. Politically the Congress remains the dominant organization in India, and one-party rule seems indicated so long as the present veteran leadership keeps its grip. The Congress retains some of its old conglomerate character, but Hinduistic and bloated financial interests are extremely influential despite Nehru's resistance.
7. As elsewhere in Asia, however, leftism is advancing. The Communist Party of India, though still tiny in comparison to the Congress, claims to have doubled its membership from 1945 to 1946 and to have doubled it again this last year, to slightly more than 100,000. Economic difficulties favor the Communists, who can now attack the Congress as the government of the day. As in Europe, however, even liberals have started an anti-Communist campaign. Socialists and some Congress elements challenged Communist control of the primitively organized All India Trades Union Council by splitting it and forming a new organization. Similarly in south India, anti-Communist measures have followed expanding Communist influence. Whether the Socialists, who were badly led in the

last days of British rule, will revive under independence remains to be seen. As a generalization, the brighter young political workers seem to be found more in the leftist than in the rightist organizations.

8. Parties apart, a growing political influence in north India is the small but militant Sikh community, which since the Punjab migration has bunched in double its previous concentration in eastern Punjab. Hundreds of thousands of farmers who left rich, canal-watered lands in Pakistan territory have found only smaller rain-fed fields in India. They are keenly discontented; their leaders are ambitious. Delhi is asking whether the Sikhs in the next year will turn west (against Pakistan) or south (against India). One of Patel's closest associates told me that the hard-fisted Home Minister forestalled at the last moment what appeared to be a concerted Sikh effort to reform the Sikh kingdom that had ante-dated British rule in the Punjab. Patel, according to this story, learned of a secret Sikh Panthic conference at which the Sikh maharajas were present. He stepped into a plane, and arrived in time to lay down the law. If the tale is true, it supports a belief that Patel had firm ideas on when to give the Sikhs a free hand and when to curb them.
9. Difficulties at all levels are compounded by the crippling double amputation of British and Muslim elements from the civil and military services. Temporary deterioration of efficiency had been foreseen and accepted as one of the costs of independence, but with the communal flare-up the blow to the services was sharper than anticipated.
10. Corruption in public life is gross. Large-scale bribery and refusal to pay income tax are phenomena of the final war years of the British period when contracts and the operation of various controls involved millions of rupees. This is an economic factor that the new government has inherited. Important members of the Congress as well as businessmen are involved. Its importance was underlined for me in a discussion one evening with the chief justice of the Bombay High Court, who argued for the abolition of principal commodity controls on the ground that they were corrupting civil servants to a degree that jeopardized the operation of

government. In judging Indian corruption it must be remembered, of course, that nepotism is a virtue rather than a political sin in the East.

11. Inflation and faltering production pose to the new government a grave challenge. Some prices, which a year ago were triple prewar levels while wages had only doubled, are still rising. The squeeze on fixed-income groups is severe, while labor is increasingly restless. No early reversal of the trend is seen. The government is still operating under a deficit budget, while in a country heavily dependent on foreign consumer goods the import restrictions, necessitated by shortage of foreign exchange, are inflationary. So are the decisions to de-control food and cloth production and distribution. Some quarters believe these acts to be pressure plays by producers and hoarders. All leftists are making this a political issue.
12. Generally speaking, Indians' nerves are raw. Every issue tends to produce a crisis. An oversensitive nationalistic spirit is visible. Public irresponsibility surges ahead of government action. (Again, a similar condition exists in Pakistan. Neither Dominion government, therefore, is able to guarantee implementation of its promises to the other, as has been shown countless times in questions of releasing refugees without search and of dividing military and civil equipment. This partisanship in lower ranks—amounting sometimes to evasion of direct orders from above—is one of the most dangerous influences on inter-Dominion relations.)
13. Kashmir is increasingly regarded as a matter of prestige in India. Indian troops, going to the last-minute rescue of the Kashmir ruler's tumbling administration, were in action for the first time without British leadership. The fact that the field of action was ill-chosen made no difference. Neither did it matter that Kashmir is a state largely of Muslims, or that all main roads from Kashmir fell into Pakistan territory, so that India was without a land link to Kashmir except for an emergency military track. Whatever the cost, Indians felt their forces must succeed in Kashmir; under no less authority than the UNO could there be any backtracking. (Once more, equally bitter feelings are popular in Pakistan. Muslims

speak of Indian army troops in Kashmir as “the enemy,” even though Pakistan is not officially involved in the action, which has so far been largely fought by Muslim tribesmen and locals.)

From the 13 points listed above, you will get the idea that India has made lengthy gains since the worst days of September and October, but is still confronted with almost stupefying problems. It would be unfair not to add in this survey that the Indian Dominion's taxation mechanism is largely intact so that the government can continue to support itself through these critical times. It should also be remembered that India's resources in the ground, in industry, and in manpower give it a high survival value, so long as a government continues to function.

Dr. John Matthai, the south-Indian Christian who jumped from a directorate in the mammoth Tata organization to a ministry in the first national government, summed up the situation for me rather tidily.

“We've gripped the security of the state,” he said. “The government is working again. . . . Economically the problem is much more serious, of course. . . . But I am not frightened as I was two months ago.”

As a footnote, Dr. Matthai gave the lion's share of the credit for restoring order to Jawaharlal Nehru. “I've worked with many men in 35 years,” he said in a nicely-turned tribute, “but never with anyone who had more drive, spirit, integrity, and awareness.”

Costs of Partition

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December 19, 1947*

ASI HAVE written you, my last weeks in India were spent on a quick 4,000-mile tour around the country. Unfortunately my coverage of Pakistan territory was sketchy. I did not

revisit, for example, East Pakistan, that teeming ant-hill of 40 million humans on the Ganges–Brahmaputra delta. Nor did I get to the Northwest Frontier Province, where mountain tribesmen are on the move. In Karachi I failed to see Mr. Jinnah. It was explained that he had not yet fully recovered from a serious illness and that interviews made his temperature rise. Despite these lacks, however, I felt able to perceive something of the mood and condition of Pakistan. I did get to the new Muslim Dominion's two chief cities, Lahore and Karachi, and I talked with a number of Dominion and Provincial ministers and with other Muslims who are trying to make Pakistan live or shape it to their own design. Finally, I met Britishers who had returned to help or watch the experiment.

It was immediately clear that Pakistan is in difficulties. Its troubles are partly inherent, but they also stem from wounds sustained in the Punjab upheaval and from what many Pakistanis believe is a calculated Indian effort to smother their Dominion in its infancy.

There are, of course, two sides to the ledger. Perhaps the strongest credit entry is that in a normal year Pakistan can feed its people from its own production. Thus it is spared India's heavy outlay of scarce foreign exchange for cereals. This self-sufficiency is particularly important because in South Asia, where basic needs are few, a country that can feed itself has high survival value regardless of other difficulties confronting it.

A second important point, I should say, is the determination of its Muslim population never again to submit to Hindu-controlled India. The circumstances of Pakistan's birth made inevitable a bitterness which subsequent events have deepened. Pakistan may be subject to bad administration and many other ills, but probably any ministry can popularize itself, at least for some years, by standing up to India. The ministers can be assured of general, even fanatic, support in any conflict with India. Indeed, one of the greatest dangers to Pakistan is that excited Muslim citizens may drive the country to suicide by too much aggressiveness against Indians.

There are other elements of promise. Many Pakistan officials, recognizing their country's weakness, are working actively, for example, to bring in foreign assistance both in government and private development projects. Outside help could speed up the closing of

costly gaps in the national economy. Another and even more important consideration to Pakistani minds is that their strategic position, south of Russia and abutting Afghanistan, gives the Western nations a stake in Pakistan's stability, and that therefore help can be expected from the West.

A list of Pakistan's weaknesses is, unfortunately, much longer. As the junior Dominion cut out of relatively underdeveloped fringe provinces, Pakistan suffers all the same disabilities of partition that India does, but more intensely. Compared to the Indian Dominion, Pakistan has fewer experienced administrators, fewer lawyers, fewer doctors, fewer bankers, fewer traders, fewer mechanics, fewer industrialists, and fewer financiers per thousand people. While India had found it necessary to jump civil servants perhaps three grades to fill secretariat vacancies, Pakistan had to advance them five grades. That's problem no. 1: skilled manpower, desperately needed in practically every field.

Problem no. 2 is lack of facilities and equipment. The partition left most of the factories outside Pakistan. It also left out objects of more immediate need: typewriters, office desks, telephones, railway rolling stock, machine guns, trucks, airplanes, files, paper, X-ray machines, and other appurtenances of government. One of the sharpest inter-Dominion irritants is Pakistan's dissatisfaction with the share-out. Despite high-level agreements, boxes of equipment allocated for Pakistan either never arrived or are discovered to be filled with rocks rather than with the expected scientific equipment. Ask any Pakistani about his Dominion's efforts to get at least one of the old Government of India's six printing presses.

I suppose that problem no. 3 is general inadequacy of resources. For years an argument dragged on as to whether Pakistan would be "viable," a word that became an Indian political cliché. Few expected that the type of Pakistan which came—"truncated Pakistan," from which Calcutta and eastern Punjab were excluded—could carry on at a vigorous level. Vallabhbhai Patel still thinks, he told me, that East Pakistan will reunite with India in a year or two. Muslims will resist that, and they are energetically prospecting, studying trade channels, and seeking new lines of activity to sustain them. But it is an uphill fight, as two examples will show. The principal export

crop, jute, is processed entirely along the Hooghly river above and below Calcutta, outside Pakistan. Thus foreign exchange accrues to India. Similarly cotton, grown in Pakistan's Punjab and Sind, is ordinarily shipped to textile mills in Bombay province and elsewhere outside Pakistan. Until Pakistan can broaden its economic base, there will be difficulties.

As if the general problems were not enough, Pakistan took a much more severe rap than India from the Punjab upheaval. For the Indian Dominion these troubles constituted a major disaster, it is true. But only a quarter, and not the strongest quarter, of its territory was affected. In Pakistan, however, the Punjab was to be the strongest province. It was to carry the neighboring deficit provinces of the Northwest Frontier and Sind on its shoulders, so to speak. When the Punjab economy went smash, as it did to a degree that I noted in an earlier letter, the Dominion's main economic base collapsed. Leaders had little choice but to hang on by their eyebrows until there could be some revival in the Punjab.

The Punjab conflagration also disrupted the young Pakistan army that is being formed out of Muslim elements of the old Indian army with a leavening of British leadership. First of all, the army asserts it did not receive its due share of equipment. Second, a number of ratings, especially technical ones, had been held in the old, war-tested Indian army by non-Muslim soldiers. Thus the new Pakistan army is short of signalers, mechanics and the like. Finally, the army was thrown into active internal security work even before battalions had been formed or started functioning. To meet the difficulties on the new Punjab border, troops were withdrawn from the Northwest Frontier. "This is an absurd situation, but what can I do about it?" the Dominion's defense secretary said to me. "Because we are not sure that the Indian Dominion can even yet prevent the Sikhs from attacking us again, we have to uncover our international frontier."

In another field, the Punjab disaster may be the instrument of profound agrarian changes. The young and inexperienced Muslim ministry of West Punjab is struggling with the basic problem of absorbing 6 million refugees in the place of 4 million non-Muslims who fled out of the province and neighboring zones. It is granted that a good many of the incoming Muslims come from poorer strata

than the once-prosperous Punjab peasant, so that they could be settled on 6 or 8 acres instead of the 12 or 25 that many Sikhs held in the canal colonies. But the demand for land far outruns the supply. In this circumstance an interesting rich young man named Mian Iftikharuddin has come to the fore. In his day he has worn political coats of many colors. Originally close to Communists, he switched and rose to the presidency of the Punjab Congress party. Another jump landed him in the Muslim League at a moment when the League was rising to power. He is bright enough and strong enough so that he rose to leadership there too. When Pakistan and the province of West Punjab were created, he promptly became the provincial minister in charge of refugees. A few weeks ago he resigned from the ministry, and two days later was elected president of the West Punjab Muslim League against a candidate supported by the premier. This would compare roughly to an anti-Hitlerite having been elected Westphalian chief of the National Socialist Party. Ifty, as he is called, denied he was against the ministry; he only wanted to hustle it, he said. In fact, however, his goal is the destruction of great feudal estates held by wealthy Muslims (as well as by non-Muslims now absent). Break them up and parcel them out to the refugees, he argues. Naturally, this campaign is widely popular with all except the propertied classes who have long dominated the Punjab and who now run the ministry. If Ifty succeeds, one of the greatest feudal tracts south of the Himalayas will be opened up.

Pakistan, then, is a picture of frustration, cataclysmic change, uncertainty, grave distress, nationalism, hope, and embittered determination to succeed. Its top leaders think it will make the grade; so do a good many other Muslims. If there is no shooting war between the Dominions and if the inter-Dominion "cold war" can be resolved, many others will feel more hopeful.

Much depends on leadership. Jinnah, at 71, has gone through a series of serious illnesses. Premier Liaquat Ali Khan has recently suffered heart attacks. Finance Member Ghulam Mohammad, a strong member of the team, and Ghazanfar Ali, another minister, are not well men. The field is open for younger men to show their mettle.

Conflagration in Kashmir

*SS Queen Mary
January 15, 1948*

THIS IS THE tale of early stages in the Kashmir conflict, as told me by one of the participants on the Indian side:

We were engrossed in the Junagadh matter (in which a Muslim *nawab* ruling a small state on India's west coast had acceded to Pakistan, to the consternation of the Indian government and neighboring Hindu princes), and thought that fighting in Kashmir was not so serious. Then the Maharaja let out a yelp that the Kashmir State army had been smashed at Baramulla by raiding tribesmen from the Frontier. We could not let that happen, because if the tribesmen broke through the valley they could be transported right across to our East Punjab frontier. We got the news in the morning, and at 12:30 the cabinet decided that I should go up to look the situation over. I took off at 1 o'clock and reached Srinagar at 5 o'clock the same afternoon. After seeing what was happening, I told the Maharaja to leave Srinagar and go to Jammu, where he would be safe. He left at 1:30 that night, taking about Rs. 10 million (\$3 million) worth of jewelry. By then the Kashmir army had deserted, the police had deserted, Muslim heads of departments had deserted, and Kurshid (Pakistan Governor General Jinnah's secretary) was reporting hourly to Jinnah. The only organization still functioning was Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference (a largely Muslim nationalist movement that had been anti-maharaja, anti-Muslim League, pro-Congress; Sheikh Abdullah had been in jail for sedition until the trouble started).

I took off again at first light and flew to Delhi to tell the Cabinet that no civilized government could accept the situation and that the maharaja's administration could not hold out another 24 hours. It was decided that India would offer to help Kashmir provided Kashmir acceded to India and Sheikh Abdullah (a valiant nationalist and old friend of Nehru) was made head of the administration. So I flew back to His Highness and told him to sign the

accession. I even drafted his accession letter to Mountbatten for him. He signed. He was pretty shaken. "I told my wife," he said to me, "'Don't wake me up in the morning. If airplanes are over Srinagar, that means India has come to our aid and we are saved. If they don't come, we are lost—then don't wake me, but shoot me.'" The Maharaja [who, if the reporting was good, was obviously gabbling by that time] added, "My wife looked back from the car as we were leaving the Palace. I told her, 'Don't look back; there's no looking back now.'"

As a matter of fact, we saved the situation just by 12 hours. Soldiers were being flown toward Kashmir before the Maharaja's accession reached Delhi. We got 230 men up that day. One hundred were left to guard the airfield and the other 130 were rushed to Baramulla. They were badly mauled there, and only a few returned. Sharma, the commander, was killed, and Brigadier Sen took charge. It was bad, but it gave us time to fly in more men and materials, so the tribesmen could not come farther.

That is the tale, possibly slightly dramatized, of a man who works at policy level. He told me that he personally favored the partition of Kashmir, yielding the divisions of Poonch and Mirpur to Pakistan and keeping the rest. "Even though Kashmir valley is solidly Muslim," he insisted, "nobody there would vote for accession to Pakistan. The frontier tribesmen looted the Valley so severely that the people are their enemies."

I was out of India when the Kashmir issue flared up. So far as I can judge from recent conversations, trouble broke out in the State about the time of independence. It seems clear that the Maharaja's Dogra (Hindu) troops misbehaved in Poonch, a solidly Muslim *jagir*, or feudal holding, within the State. Kashmir, as you know, has been ruled by a Hindu maharaja and a small clique of Kashmiri Brahmins (the community of which Nehru is a member), though the population is preponderantly Muslim. When Muslims suffered, their kinfolk from Abbottabad direction organized armed gangs to go to their defense. It was a moment when the Northwest Frontier tribes were restless at the political implications of changing governments, and the Pakistan government did not mind their being attracted momentarily by an external issue. Once the "invasion" of Kashmir

started, it caught the imagination of Muslims in Pakistan who had been feeling desperately frustrated in the shadow of larger, stronger India. Excited nationalists helped organize food, gasoline and equipment for the raiders. Some Muslim district officials, newly appointed to their posts, felt it would be the patriotic thing to help. To the embarrassment of the Pakistan government, the deputy commander of the Muslim National Guards, a private army maintained by the Muslim League before the creation of Pakistan, took a personal hand. "Liaquat Ali [the premier] said that if any man should be shot, it was he," a Pakistan government official told me. "He got us involved by leading the tribesmen into Kashmir. But once the thing started there was nothing to do but connive at it. I'll go further . . . there was nothing to do but give it passive support." And so Pakistan became involved, though, officially, the Indian army in Kashmir is merely fighting private insurrectionists.

In both Dominions Kashmir has become a symbol of prestige. On the one hand national policy and the honor of the Indian army, fighting its first action without British leadership, are at stake. Most Indian patriots would regard withdrawal of Indian force from Kashmir as sheer capitulation to bullying tactics from the direction of Pakistan. On the other hand, Muslims in Pakistan regard Kashmir as justifiably theirs on the same reasoning that Hyderabad, a predominantly Hindu state embedded in India though with a Muslim ruler, is linked to India. Pakistanis look to the Indian action in Kashmir as furthering a calculated Indian campaign to undermine—some leaders use the word "destroy"—Pakistan. Many Muslims are so worked up that they want the Pakistan government to go to war with India over the Kashmir issue, regardless of consequences that would be disastrous certainly for Pakistan and probably for India.

Those are the difficulties in the Kashmir dispute. Strategic considerations increase them, for Kashmir faces Russia and neither Dominion wants to abrogate its interests there.

The Indian appeal to the UNO was foreshadowed by my Delhi informant. "We'll ask the Security Council to move observers into Kashmir and supervise a plebiscite to determine which Dominion will get the State," he said. That decision, which apparently had been reached late in November, was reinforced when the Indian

army fell into straits because communications failed. (Both main roads from Kashmir into the plains debouch into Pakistan territory, making India dependent on a hastily scratched, inadequate military track. While all commercial airliners in India were requisitioned to fly troops and supplies to Kashmir at the beginning of the campaign, winter weather over the Himalayas also closed that channel.) That is probably the reason for the Indian threat to invade Pakistan territory unless Pakistan stops helping the raiders.

Both Dominions favor in principle the holding of a plebiscite in Kashmir. Each thinks it could win most of the State easily. The hitch is in the conditions under which the vote should be conducted. Pakistan says not until the Indian army has cleared out. India says its troops won't budge until the tribesmen (who are not responsible to any national discipline) have left. Pakistan Premier Liaquat Ali replies that he can use his influence to recall the tribesmen only after Indian troops have left. And so the argument goes.

Obviously Kashmir now constitutes a first-class crisis. Equally plainly, neither Dominion government now has sufficient control of its public opinion to yield what would be necessary to bring a compromise. Not can Britain intervene openly; too many interests from the USSR to unreconstructed Anglophobes in India stand ready to accuse her of trying to muscle her way back into the subcontinent. The UNO remains.

I should emphasize that Kashmir is not the only issue between India and Pakistan. The two Dominions were born under a blood-soaked moon and every difference still can burgeon suddenly into a crisis. But Kashmir has been the biggest threat at the moment, and if it can be got over there is more hope for both Dominions to develop peacefully to their full stature.

TWO YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Sixty years after independence the governments of India and Pakistan are still struggling with some of the same issues that preoccupied them in 1950. It is almost as if, at the beginning of 1950, Talbot had a clear vision of the moment and understood what it meant for the future. What are some of these issues?

Due to the unfortunate situation in Kashmir, the defense expenditure in both India and Pakistan had taken up over half of the government budget. This outlay came at the expense of investment in meeting real, stark developmental needs. The situation today is not much different—both countries still spend more than they can afford on their militaries and defense.

Constitutional change does not guarantee social change. Talbot writes about the banning of the practice of untouchability in India's new and long constitution, and how that in itself did not bring about social change. The right to equal treatment and other constitutional guarantees such as access to elementary education, health care, and rights for women are promises that still need India's attention and commitment.

Talbot observes that capitalists in India "blame the government for restrictive policies that rob business of all incentive," and that "Indian capital has in effect been on strike against the Indian government." Only in 1990, 49 years later and at a point when the Indian economy was close to collapse, would these restrictive policies be loosened, enabling Indian entrepreneurship to flourish.

In his letter dated January 24, 1959, Talbot speaks of the Maoist insurgency in India which "represents a serious threat to a country that is striving to meet its problems with a non-communist solution."

In an important speech given by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on April 12, 2006, he referred to the Maoist insurgency as being one of the challenges that India faces in addressing both progress and social equity.

Despite these unhappy parallels there are many spirited and treasured moments in these letters. Talbot's return, in January 1950, to the Kashmir village where he had spent three months conducting a social survey 10 years previously is one such moment. He spent some pleasant hours with the villagers; they talked about how their lives had changed between 1940 and 1950, and how they viewed the political circumstances in which they were then engulfed.

From the current standpoint, one cannot but feel that the leadership of India left a huge debt for future generations to pay by leaving unresolved the delicate issue of Kashmir. Even in January 1950, however, Talbot remarked that "I see no likelihood that the Kashmir issue can be left hopefully for disposition by obsolescence." In other parts of these letters he explains how emotional and compelling the Kashmir issue was for the people of Pakistan, a feeling that we never understood growing up on the Indian side of the border and listening to our government and press.

In a sense these letters also amount to a call for the present generation of leaders in both India and Pakistan to learn from history, from the consequences of our actions then, and to act now before it is too late. Both nations are already armed well beyond their normal defense needs, and are on the verge of nuclear catastrophe. Talbot said in January 1950 that "the only hope for the two countries is to first deal with Kashmir, however arduous it may be, if there is to be the prospect of future stability in South Asia and the world." That remains true to this day.

Krishen Mehta

Pakistan's Buoyancy

*c/o American Embassy
New Delhi, India
January 10, 1950*

MY FIRST IMPRESSION of Pakistan after two years is of a buoyant mood among its leaders and many of its people. By their standards, 1949 was kinder than 1948, and even farther above the level of 1947.

This is not to suggest that Pakistan has solved its basic physical, social, and economic problems. On the contrary, more than 100 interviews and uncounted informal contacts in a month of wide travel in West Pakistan have left me feeling that, for the present, certain fundamental difficulties are being pushed aside. The division of the country into two far-distant parts still presents drastic complications. Nor do I mean that the 1947 analysis of underlying national resources has been proved over-cautious. Human talents still need to be organized and trained. Tools of production need considerable sharpening. While minerals investigation is far from complete, it still seems safe to say that Pakistan is essentially, and seems likely long to remain, a country with agricultural surpluses available for export (when the international market takes them) in payment for foreign manufactured goods. Finally, there has been no easing of Pakistan's relations with India. I have been taken aback to discover how sharply the trend is in the opposite direction.

But the buoyancy is a political fact, if not necessarily a permanent one. It is compounded of some general factors and of particular developments in what appears to be a continuing struggle by Pakistan to free itself of vulnerability *vis-à-vis* India. Before discussing the different elements, let me tell you some of the things that have happened to Karachi since I was last there in December 1947.

Before Pakistan was created in 1947, Karachi was a quiet seaport and international airport with about 375,000 residents, only a third of whom were Muslims. The partitioning of India and of the Punjab province set in train a series of events that, among a great variety of effects, transformed the appearance and personality of Karachi. Jinnah made it his national capital, after rejecting the favored site at Lahore

because of that city's closeness to the new Indo-Pakistan frontier. In the turbulence that swept northern provinces, the bulk of Hindus and Sikhs left Karachi. Their businesses, professional quarters, shops, and other property fell under the control of the Pakistan government and of a horde of Muslims who descended on the new capital either as government servants or as refugees from Hindu-majority areas in India. Today Karachi has more than 1 million residents, of whom 85 percent are fresh arrivals. They fill every old house, crowd into "temporary" barracks, cover desert acres with huts constructed of matting and battered-flat kerosene cans or just of burlap stretched across poles, and live in government-operated refugee camps. Officials have struggled constantly to keep pace with the expanding demand for electric power, water, and civil supplies, but the plight of many refugees remains miserable. Having carried virtually nothing from India, they have lived for two years as homeless paupers, earning their coins as hawkers or cycle-rickshaw pushers. They are characteristic of some millions of landless refugees who fled their homes in the great Indo-Pakistan migration of 1947 and who now live rootless in many cities of India and Pakistan.

The Pakistan government has changed profoundly. On Independence Day in 1947 it was mostly a dream. The lack of office space, desks, typewriters, and paper in those weeks has become a folk tale of the birth of Pakistan, I find. Today the government has housed its departments in neat rows of barracks, and has expanded and diversified its activities into a fair replica of the old red tape-bound British-controlled government of India. Diplomatic missions have, in the words of one participant in the cocktail rounds, dropped into Karachi like waves of paratroopers. They are welcome, for Pakistan wants friends; but, as another Pakistani observed wistfully, "it would be nice if we could win friends without giving up the best of our few houses."

Outside the diplomatic set Karachi has taken on the guise of a completely Muslim city. The Muslims have come from many places, especially in the Punjab, Delhi and the United Provinces. But, as might be expected, they appear universally conscious of Pakistan. That is understatement. They demonstrate intense emotional involvement with the concept of Pakistan. An articulate Pakistani seemed not far off the mark when he said to me: "To the ordinary

man here, Islam now means Pakistan. Pakistan is Allah, Muhammad, and the Quran. That is the way they see it.”

From government ministers to refugees, I caught something of that sentiment. The main forces at work in present-day Pakistan could be better understood by a social psychologist, I think, than by an economist or a political scientist. After some weeks in the environment, I can largely subscribe to the further remarks of my informant: “The motive power that brought Pakistan into being has continued to operate,” he said.

Even though nearly every family was split, all have been trying to do their best. The murders of men's sisters and wives gave them a driving determination to succeed. Even messenger boys felt they had a mission. . . . An electrician who came to my house said he could do “better work” and asked my recommendation. He meant that he wanted to fight for Pakistan in Kashmir. Our cook has gathered other servants for regular meetings to talk about the blessings of Pakistan. This sort of thing had never happened to us before.

I do not mean that every Muslim takes such a roseate view of his new, overburdened, and often faltering government. There are many complaints, some of them serious. But I was persuaded of two strong strands of sentiment woven into Muslim society in Karachi and elsewhere. The first is a feeling of tremendous relief that at last the Muslims have a country of their own. Part of such response stems from pleasure in the new promotions, titles, responsibilities, and business or professional opportunities that an all-Muslim society gives to Muslims. Muslims were slow taking to Western education and culture; their upper middle classes available for senior government service or professional life were small; and since the downfall of the Mughals they had felt deprived of their place in the sun. Closely related is a widespread feeling of relief at getting away from Hindus and Sikhs. For some this means sheer physical escape from the massacring majorities of 1947. (It seems a standard characteristic of refugee groups that they blot out the memory of destruction caused by their co-religionists, and remember only the disasters that befell themselves.) For others Hindus had always symbolized a frustrating

superiority that somehow enabled them to defeat Muslims in examinations, outmaneuver them in arguments, and entice them into debt to Hindu moneylenders. Here at last was a society without such irritating know-it-alls.

Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan put the proposition neatly some time ago when he told the Muslim League:

The only reason why we and the Quaid-i-Azam demanded Pakistan was to secure, in this subcontinent, a homeland where Muslims could live in their own way. We wished Pakistan to be a laboratory where we could practise the Islamic principles—the best in the world—and thus demonstrate to the world that what Islam had taught thirteen centuries ago was needed as much now as it was then. . . . We, that is to say, the Muslim League, are pledged to make Pakistan a Muslim State and run it on Islamic principles.

Understandably, ordinary Muslims interpreted such advice to mean that government posts should go to Muslims, businesses should be in the hands of Muslims, and Muslims should get first consideration throughout the country. In the few places where Hindus and other minorities remain in West Pakistan, there are ample reports of incidents in which they are made to feel that they have no priority in Pakistan.

The second strand running through Muslim sentiment is a consuming fear and distrust of India. At first sight this looks strange. Prime Minister Nehru, who is not entirely hated in Pakistan as are some other Indians, has flatly denied that his country entertains any aggressive intentions against Pakistan. Nehru has offered a “peace pact” by which the two countries should bind themselves never to resort to war with each other, whatever their differences. But the Pakistani analysis of the current situation runs on different lines.

I well remember an evening after Indian independence and partition in 1947, when in the Punjab on both sides of the new Indo-Pakistan frontier massacres and mass migrations were making a mockery of civil and military authority. Pakistan's Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan and Finance Minister Ghulam Mohammad had come to New Delhi to consider joint measures with the Indian authorities, and Lord Mountbatten, then the Indian Governor General, had invited some correspondents to Government House to meet

the Pakistan ministers along with Nehru and other Indian officials. Mountbatten gave a characteristically pipe-of-peace introductory statement; Nehru launched out on one of his philosophic evaluations of the problem and its possible solutions; Liaquat in a plain statement said he too wanted to restore order and would cooperate with anybody to achieve the goal. Questions were answered by each side with consideration for the other's feelings. The sweetness and light exploded in my face, however, as we were walking out of the room and Ghulam Mohammad, in answer to a question about pending financial negotiations, said there was no progress and then added, almost ferociously, "Can't you see that these people are trying to strangle us?"

The feeling that India is trying to strangle Pakistan still pervades Karachi. This time Ghulam Mohammad, who remains Finance Minister, said, "We have done a good deal. But how can I find money for development projects when more than half the budget has to go to the Army to keep us strong against India?" Pakistanis argue that every one of India's moves in this junior cold war has been aggressive. I am not here discussing the merits of the charges; the Pakistani view as a psychological condition is all I want to convey. In Hyderabad, Pakistanis say, India broke the rules of international law by aggressive warfare. It did the same in Junagadh. In Kashmir it seeks by a legalistic approach to gain a position that would threaten the main cities and communications lines of West Pakistan. In the canal water dispute, in the trade war, in stirring up Afghanistan, India is motivated by a determination some day to reabsorb Pakistan: so say the Pakistanis. I found these arguments presented not only by cabinet members and army commanders, who elaborate on them, but by petty officials, university instructors, business men, and—in simple form—even taxi drivers, cycle-rickshaw pedalers, and refugee hawkers. It was difficult to say how many times I was told that only by growing strong could Pakistan withstand encroachment by India.

It is against this background of suspicion that my initial statement of Muslim buoyancy needs explanation. The current wave of enthusiasm is, according to testimony by informants whose observations I respect, a rebound from a mood or depression that spread among these volatile Muslims in 1948. Leaving aside for the moment

the contribution made by the course of Indo-Pakistan relations to the air of optimism, let me discuss the general factors.

In many ways the birth of Pakistan was a dismal travesty of what Muslims had expected. Instead of six full provinces, Pakistan got intact from the division of India only Sind, Baluchistan, and the Northwest Frontier Province. The most important provinces, the Punjab and Bengal, were divided, with Calcutta lost to Pakistan. Kashmir came, as it remains, under dispute. Unlike India, Pakistan started life with no existing central government. Even before the state was officially constituted, the Punjab disorders had broken out and started to threaten the whole fabric of civil and military authority. Within days the unprecedented mass migrations, involving 12 million people, were under way. They shortly brought to Pakistan responsibility for 6 million homeless refugees—a burden that might well have toppled the Pakistan government as on the other side a similar load almost overwhelmed the Indian government. During those first months Pakistanis found their prospects unrelievedly grim.

In 1948 the government and the country steadied themselves, but tragedies continued to occur. Fighting in Kashmir which had begun in October 1947 now placed a heavy drain on Pakistan's resources. Almost by surprise, the West Punjab wheat crop failed to provide enough food for West Pakistan, and a grain crisis ensued. Floods caused heavy damage in Sind. The problems of settling refugees and of taking over properties and enterprises of the departed Hindus and Sikhs grew thick and fast: in cotton, for example, unskilled Muslim hands in the fields and at ginning factories hopelessly mixed the long-staple strains which had been developed over decades. As a result, almost the whole crop had to be sold off cheaply as mere "country grown" grade, and fears developed that cotton was finished as an important cash crop. The death of Jinnah, the Quaid-i-Azam and founder of Pakistan, was a further psychological blow, though his lengthy illness had for some months deprived the government of his guidance.

But 1949 was happier. Early in the year the finance minister reported that the foreign trade of Pakistan, a country which skeptics had pre-dismissed as an economic weakling, was surplus both in general account and in the vital dollar account. This astonishing

record may have been accomplished partly by overstuffed prices for Pakistan's main exports and by delays in receipts from hard-currency areas, but it hiked the morale of Pakistan people who saw real prosperity ahead. The optimism was greatly strengthened when the finance minister was able to present a balanced budget. (Actually, balance was achieved in the "revenue" budget. As did India on its side, Pakistan ignored the implications of a heavy deficit in the "capital" budget for the same period.) Railways and posts and telegraphs were restored to normal service. As the spring wore on, it became evident that the Punjab would have a good wheat crop. The final outcome was a real bumper crop, so large that it could not be sold abroad (India refused to buy at the asked price) and therefore provided a rich surplus of food in West Pakistan. For the first time in many years there was so much food that restrictive rationing became virtually non-existent. Material progress was made in sorting out the cotton strains. Cloth, bought out of sterling account, arrived from the United Kingdom when Indian shipments dwindled. Consequently, many people got more of the basic needs of life than they had had since the beginning of the war, and they said, "Thanks be to Allah, Pakistan is good."

Such are the general factors involved in the buoyancy of public opinion in Pakistan. As I hope I have intimated, they may shift. Trade balances have already become adverse in both the general account and the dollar account. All the ingenuity of which Finance Minister Ghulam Mohammad is capable will be required to present a balanced budget this year, even on only one side. Any whiff of depression would have sharp consequences. Storm signals were flying in the jute-growing belt even before the currency adjustments of last September. But Pakistanis begin 1950 feeling that they have survived the mortal dangers of the birth process, and can now take a breath of air and look about them.

On the side of relations with India, the general mood is such that compromise seems weakness, and standing out successfully against some Indian demands seems a victory. The year started well with the Kashmir ceasefire agreement. Later the ceasefire line was successfully demarcated. Apart from these understandings, the year has been marked by almost total lack of agreement. From the Pakistan side, the chief disagreements are four. These may be treated separately.

1. Canal Water Rights

The old Punjab was named after the five rivers that flow out of the hills and finally combine to join the Indus. From the five rivers was built the world's largest irrigation net. Partition of the Punjab meant that the Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi flowed through East Punjab (India) into West Punjab (Pakistan), and many of their canals became international. Pakistan's view is that in the partition arrangements its right to assured continued flow of waters was agreed. On the Indian side water was shut off from three canals flowing into Pakistan for about a month in the spring of 1948, and since then, the two countries have failed to reach any settlement of water rights. Pakistan's agitation at what it describes as India's holding Pakistan's prosperity to ransom is increased because the other two Punjab rivers, the Chenab and the Jhelum, flow into the plains from disputed Kashmir.

2. Evacuee Property

When about 12 million people fled from their homes during the 1947 post-partition massacres, Pakistan claims to have had to provide for more than a million beyond what it lost. But a heavy proportion of the incoming Muslims were peasants and artisans who had owned little wealth in India, while many of the Hindus and Sikhs who left Pakistan were merchants, bankers, landlords, and professional men. The Indian government estimates that its nationals left behind property worth almost 10 times what Muslims forsook in India. The total value mentioned in a recent statement from New Delhi is \$8 billion. If accepted by Pakistan, I suppose that this would stand as the largest international debt in the world. But Pakistan has shown no inclination to acknowledge such a burden. Apart from capital value, Pakistan's custodian of evacuee property has not received even regular rents from many of the new occupants. One present Pakistan argument is that the bulk of agricultural wealth in the West Punjab depends on the successful functioning of canal irrigation, and that no value can therefore be placed on evacuee property until the water dispute is settled. This reasoning does not apply to urban property, but there has been no arrangement for that portion either. In the general context of Indo-Pakistan relations, Pakistan seems content to let this issue drift.

3. Currency Disparity

After partition, the Indian and Pakistan rupees were held at par exchange. The closely integrated economies suggested that the parity should continue, and the first clause of the Indo-Pakistan financial agreement provides that neither country should change the exchange rate of its currency without prior consultation with the other. Even during the period of exchange parity financial differences cropped up and trade barriers began to grow where none had existed before. The big break came when India decided to follow Britain's 30 per cent currency devaluation last September and Pakistan separately determined to hold to the old exchange rate. Each had its reasons. India's main objective was to stay in line with the sterling bloc, with which her close ties include the substantial remaining sterling balances. Pakistan officially took the view that (a) Pakistan's economy showed neither fundamental malaise nor trade disequilibrium which would require depreciation of the currency; (b) Pakistan's export trade, based on raw materials, was not capable of expansion by devaluation, as might be the case in an industrial country; (c) non-devaluation should bring cheaper imports and therefore reduce internal inflation; and (d) non-devaluation would improve Pakistan's exchange ratio with sterling countries and keep it level with hard-currency countries, thus increasing the prospect of obtaining developmental imports. Pakistan officials denied that their decision was made on political grounds. Certainly, they said, it was not intended to cause further difficulty with India, whose exports to Pakistan had already fallen far short of her imports of Pakistan jute, cotton, and other products. The political consequences were immediate, however. In Pakistan the non-devaluation decision was hailed as the first official economic decision that was really independent of India, and that helped morale. Even in villages people have grinned wisely and said, "India said we could not last, but now we are so strong that they have to pay 144 rupees to get 100 of ours!" Officials now think that the non-devaluation decision was one of the most popular acts of the government since its birth. Even under extreme pressure, I believe Pakistan could now reduce its exchange rate only if extraordinarily careful face-saving measures came simultaneously.

The other immediate impact came on trade with India, which is Pakistan's best customer and the most important supplier. The Indian government refused to recognize Pakistan's new relative exchange rate, while Pakistan demanded that it be honored. Implications of the deadlock extended to balances and debts of either country held in the other, and transfers froze. Trade dropped sharply. Almost before they knew it, the two countries were committed to total trade stoppage. While India desperately needed food (and asked a grant of 1 million tons of wheat from the United States), Pakistan's wheat surplus of half a million tons started rotting in the fields, but none moved across the frontier. Pakistan's cotton crop stood in danger of not being sold, while some of India's textile mills closed down for lack of cotton. Most important of all was jute. Some 70 percent of the world's supply is grown in Pakistan, while a high percentage of the world's milling operations are in India. East Pakistan could not survive economically without selling its crop; by the same token, Calcutta's precarious economy would crack if the Hooghly River mills had to be closed for lack of fiber. Both countries got their backs up on this question, and the deadlock continues. India is carefully husbanding the stocks of raw jute already in its possession. Pakistan, so far as I could make out from decisions of its new Jute Board and National Bank, is prepared to spend huge sums buying out the crop from the cultivator and dumping it in the rivers if need be, to avoid capitulating on the issue of its rupee exchange rate.

The currency deadlock is the most serious point of economic crisis for India and Pakistan, but many Pakistanis are glad it has come about. They reason that (*a*) with sufficient food for their people and an essentially agricultural economy, they can hold out longer than India, which needs raw materials for its factories to keep its urban economy functioning; and (*b*) if Pakistan can successfully stand out against Indian pressure on this one issue, it will be in a better position to withstand future encroachment. Apart from the commercial trade stoppage, India's decision to prohibit contractual movement of coal to Pakistan is the most devastating blow to date. Pakistan has no coal itself for its railroads, power generators, and essential factories. So far, India is still passing to Pakistan agreed amounts of canal waters and hydroelectric power.

4. The Kashmir Issue

Elaboration of the Kashmir dispute will be my effort in a future letter. At this point it is only necessary to say that in Pakistan the effort to win Kashmir has taken on vast prestige considerations. The Pakistan government has often been behind, rather than ahead of, public opinion. If Kashmir seemed likely to go to India by default, the government would totter. If Pakistan seemed to be progressing toward "forcing" India to agree to an early plebiscite (which Pakistan is supremely confident it will win), the government's popularity would increase. Some people in Pakistan believe that war may come over Kashmir. They accept, at least verbally, the proposition that war would devastate the young state of Pakistan, whatever it might do to India. Even so, their morale appears lowest when it seems possible Pakistan might have to yield a point in Kashmir, and highest when Pakistan seems to be standing most firmly on its Kashmir platform.

In these four fields of controversy, I have not tried to judge the merits of each case, but to explain the Pakistan point of view. From that, the reason for apparent buoyant national feeling can be understood. If I might presume to give a Pakistani analysis of the present Indo-Pakistan situation, it would follow the line that influential groups in India will that the subcontinent should be reunified, and that Pakistan's only defense against such determination is to make the Muslim dominion strong. Compromise is distrusted. Steps should be taken to hold firm in Kashmir and on the economic front. Every effort should be made to reduce the political, strategic, and economic front. Every effort should be made to reduce the political, strategic and economic interdependence with India even if not sound on theoretical grounds. Top priority should be given to the building of separate and non-dependent nationhood.

Among many groups I gained the feeling that these goals have been accepted. Men who know that it would be cheaper to have an Indo-Pakistan customs union and more sensible to have a defense union stand for the opposite course. They are bouyant now because that opposite course appears to be gaining headway and success. There is, in fact, a definite feeling of national unity in this opposition to India. Support for the government is won on these grounds, and

criticism of authority is modified to avoid the possibility of weakening the government in its fight against India. Hatred of India, as probably many people have said, is the cement that holds Pakistan together.

The current mood reminds me strongly of the type of unity that prevailed in the Indian National Congress before the war, when men and women of many stripes met on a common platform of opposition to the British. As present events in India may indicate, that was the cement that held the Congress party together and it functioned only so long as the common enemy was present.

Whether the Pakistani analysis of the present situation is a correct summation is a different question. There are many problems in Pakistan which some day will require treatment outside the context of India–Pakistan emotions. As in other parts of India, peasants are no longer content with whatever lot may befall them. In the West Punjab some persons are already concerned about the possible consequences of a slump in agricultural prices. In the towns people don't like the housing or educational facilities that are available. Within the dominant Muslim League party scrambles for power have revealed some sorry situations in some provinces. Throughout Pakistan, as in many other parts of Asia, signs are already visible that social reorganization may be on its way. That, there is no need to add, might be more agitating than extreme pressure from India.

The Northwest Frontier: Settled and Tribal Areas

*c/o American Embassy
New Delhi, India
January 15, 1950*

DURING MY PAKISTAN tour I spent several days in the Northwest Frontier Province. Beyond the settled districts, the barren hills and walled tribal villages retain their old fascination even though the flag atop the Khyber pass is the green and white banner of Pakistan's star and crescent rather than the Union Jack that had long seemed permanent.

Once again I was taken to a tribal meal where whole roasted chickens, slabs of mutton and skewered *sheesh kabob* were pressed upon the guests. In a political agent's bungalow that had once seemed to me as British as Piccadilly, I was the guest of a Pakistani political agent who called in Afridi and Shinwari tribal *maliks* and interpreted my questions and their answers in the same old way. I had the feeling that I was seeing a familiar play, but under a new stage manager.

As a matter of fact, Pakistan has taken over the bulk of the British system for control of the Frontier. As in the old days, the Northwest Frontier Province includes the settled districts which are organized and administered just like districts elsewhere in the country and for which a provincial legislature and ministry function. Beyond the settled districts are tribal territories which were under British suzerainty as far as the Durand Line, which Britain has recently again confirmed as the international frontier with Afghanistan. You will remember a long controversy between the "forward" policy of full occupation to the Durand Line and the "close border" policy of emphasis on defense of the settled districts. Finally British strategists compromised by occupying the settled districts and developing a system of indirect influence in the tribal areas. Political agents to the tribes gave direct subsidies to cooperative chiefs, provided schools and hospitals where they would be accepted, and primed the local deficit economy by feeding contracts of various kinds to the right tribesmen. Road-building, trucking, and supplying materials for the armed forces supported many tribesmen. To stiffen the effectiveness of that policy among tribes who tended to be truculent, the British raised militia and posted army units at crucial spots.

Pakistan continues to pay subsidies to *maliks* who behave well. It also distributes contracts for work to be done in tribal areas, and it has pushed forward a program of added schools and hospitals. On Kohat pass Afridi villages are even being provided with electricity for the first time. Units of Scouts—the Khyber Rifles, the Tochi and South Waziristan Scouts, etc.—function as they did before, with a few British officers remaining along with the Pakistani commissioned personnel. Less highly trained militia, the *khassadars*, also operate as they did. The chief difference in Pakistan control is the withdrawal of regular army units from tribal areas. That was a dramatic sign of Pakistan's faith and trust in the Muslim tribes.

Under conditions of modern warfare, however, some British commanders had long been urging the same course, for the Frontier had become a policing rather than a military problem. While Pakistan therefore gets credit for a wise political decision, it seems also to have been a smart strategic move.

As before, the overall pattern of control in the Frontier is built around a governor, who is appointed by the Government of Pakistan. He serves both as constitutional head of the provincial government and as agent general for Pakistan to the tribes. (Some of my information on current arrangements came from His Excellency S. M. Khurshid, a finely mustachioed Pathan whom I had first known as Political Agent, Khyber, and who some months ago succeeded a British officer to become the first Pakistani governor of the Frontier. During my recent call he appeared in excellent health but suddenly, a few days ago, he died of a heart attack.) In the settled districts the provincial prime minister wields more power than he does in the tribal areas where policy guidance is the responsibility of the governor, who is assisted by a corps of political agents and officers.

With this background, I should like to discuss three subjects in this letter. The first is the state of affairs in the settled districts. The second is reported conditions in the tribal areas. And the third is what I could make out as to Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan, which center about these Pathan areas.

1. The Settled Districts

When I was last on the Frontier, in the summer of 1947, residents of the settled districts were deciding by referendum whether the Province should be attached to the new Pakistan or to the shrunken India. For more than 15 years the dominant political party in the Frontier had been the "Servants of God," who were commonly called the "Red Shirts" from the brick dye used in their uniforms (and not because of their ideology). Of the two brothers who led the Red Shirts, Dr. Khan Sahib had been prime minister of the province during the two spells of ministerial rule and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan had earned the sobriquet "Frontier Gandhi" for his campaign to turn warlike Pathans into followers of the Gandhian creed of non-violence. Ever since 1931 the brothers and their party had firmly linked themselves to the Indian National Congress. In the 1945-46 elections the Red Shirts campaigned heavily, and the

Pathans remained the only heavily Muslim community in the country that voted for pro-Congress candidates. By mid-1947 the situation was reversed. Communal feeling ran so high that Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan finally did not contest the referendum; the vote went solidly for Pakistan.

From that election emerged the new strong man of the Frontier, Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan (no close relative of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, despite the similarity of names). Qaiyum, as he is called for brevity, is a pudgy but clear-headed and heavy-handed politician who became prime minister and has run the province ever since. At the political level he has dealt vigorously with his opposition. The Red Shirt leadership, he came to believe, never accepted the creation of Pakistan and worked constantly for an independent state of Pathans, to be called Pathanistan. The extent of such activities fitted Qaiyum's definition of subversion. As a result, Dr. Khan Sahib is now under house arrest at some distance from the provincial capital, Peshawar (while Qaiyum lives in the prime minister's official residence where I last saw Dr. Khan Sahib), and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is in jail with many of his followers. Outside I had been told that thousands of Red Shirt workers had been jailed. The prime minister assured me that only 130 are now imprisoned, and said that they are being gradually released as they sign loyalty pledges for Pakistan and denounce the Pathanistan movement. He said that the Red Shirts are politically dead and that his party, the Muslim League, now controls not only politics in the various districts but in the provincial legislature. No new elections have been held since the 1945-46 Red Shirt victory. But in a House of 50 members, 11 out of 12 Hindu and Sikh members (all pro-Red Shirt) evacuated in the 1947 disturbances, while five Red Shirt members are in jail and eight more went over to the Muslim League. The League now has 22 supporters against a seated opposition of less than a dozen.

With this working majority and his outside political organization, Qaiyum appears to have accomplished a great deal in the last two years. Striking at feudal barons (*jagirdars*), he redistributed land-tenure rights to tillers. Some 55 percent of the land, he says, is now owned by former tenants. At the same time the government is introducing such new crops as Virginia tobacco for cigarette manufacture and is increasing productivity by adding many deep tube wells. To

enhance power supplies, capacity of the powerhouse near Malakand is to be doubled (to 20 MW) this year, while a new installation of similar size is being built at Dargai and a much larger one (100–200 MW) is to be constructed through a Pakistan central government scheme at Warsak. Waters from Warsak are expected to irrigate 60,000 acres. The “largest sugar mill in Asia” is being built in the province, tanneries are developing, and the government has moved into the profitable road transportation business. Education is being pushed ahead apparently more rapidly than anywhere else in Pakistan. The educational budget is reported as higher than before by 50 percent. The province has opened 20 new primary schools, a purdah college for women, two general colleges, and the Jinnah University, the first university on the Frontier.

Compared to the paper plans of other provinces, the Frontier's record of achievement is good. The schemes have cost money, which Qaiyum has found by investing government funds in businesses and by raising taxes. It is said of him that when he explains his taxation program in a crowd he sometimes has a stooge get up and say, “To get all these advantages the prime minister describes, I want to have my taxes raised.” Whatever the system, it has worked so far. Opposition has arisen from a splinter group of the Muslim League, and six members of the legislature crossed to opposition benches over the agrarian reforms. But the man at the helm seems capable of dealing with opposition and of continuing on his course.

2. The Tribal Areas

Since my last visit to the Frontier, tribesmen in their many thousands had broken out of their areas and fought an external war. There seems no question that many Pakistan authorities in the Frontier and the neighboring Punjab approved the tribal incursions into Kashmir and gave varying degrees of aid. In Kashmir large numbers of tribesmen found loot with which they returned contented to their homes. All tribesmen, according to political agents, have been out of Kashmir and back in their areas since last spring. From official sources I found a remarkable unanimity of opinion that the tribesmen had in recent months been more quiet than for many years. “They accept Pakistan and we have very little trouble with them,”

Governor Khurshid told me. That may be an oversimplified explanation, for he commented further that recent reports from Mahsud territory and other parts of the tribal area suggest renewed restlessness. The governor expressed the view that if a plebiscite is actually to be held in Kashmir, the tribes would stay quiet and not intervene. "But if not," he added, "that is a different matter." I thought that I could detect among officials in the Frontier a general belief that the tribesmen are volatile in respect to the Kashmir issue: if events proceed toward a peaceful solution, the tribesmen can be kept at home; but if more fighting is needed, it will be easier to let the tribes go again than to hold them in leash. This mood has, I think, explosive potentialities for Kashmir and for India-Pakistan relations and the world.

In that connection, my own conversation with Afridi and Shinwari *maliks* may be illuminating although I do not present it as significant because the chiefs were probably speaking more for the Pakistan political agent's ears than for mine. For what it is worth, several *maliks* told me that they had been in Kashmir for periods averaging three months, and that they had come out on Pakistan's assurance that there would be a plebiscite. Now things seemed stalled, but they had the arms and ammunition to go back again, "whether or not the Pakistan government tries to stop us."

Apart from the immediate Kashmir issue, the process of "civilizing" the tribes seems to be going ahead, but very slowly. Living as they do in the social age of the mountain rifle and the blood feud, they still show great reluctance to admit the disturbing influences of schools, medical centers, and radios. One gets the impression that for a long time to come, who would rule the Frontier must rule it with rupees and guns.

3. Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations

The loyalties of the tribes are a central point in what has become a sharp and bitter quarrel between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Many a historic attack has been launched from Afghanistan onto the plains of the Indian subcontinent. Three times the British fought the Afghans to achieve or preserve an international frontier. So far as Pakistan officers can conclude, some Afghans are getting ambitions again.

Before Pakistan came into being, the Afghan radio supported the concept of an independent Pathanistan, presumably as a buffer state to the new, stronger Islamic Pakistan. Frontier incidents seemed to Pakistan political agents to be traceable to Afghan activities. In more recent months Afghanistan's propaganda organs have taken up the cause of detachment of the tribal areas from Pakistan. Some of their comments brought the ministerial statement in the House of Commons that Britain regards the Durand Line as the international frontier, and regards Pakistan as having inherited from Britain the same degree of jurisdiction up to that line. Other incidents occurred, including an offensive by the notorious Faqir of Ipi and retaliatory bombing by a Polish pilot employed by the Pakistan air force who struck a concentration, it was proved on investigation, about 1,000 yards on the Afghan side of the mountainous border. Although Pakistan paid compensation for that incident, bitterness continued. Pakistan withdrew transport concessions which landlocked Afghanistan had enjoyed under British rule over India, but officials assert that no trade destined for Afghanistan, even weapons and ammunition, has been stopped in Pakistan. (I had no opportunity to check the assertion, which has been challenged.)

Pakistan officials regard the trouble with Afghanistan as a teapot tempest. To quote Governor Khurshid again, it has been "artificial". If it is a union of Pathans that Afghanistan wants, what are they thinking of? We have the larger number on this side of the line and they are less backward. So why should not the Afghan Pathans join us, rather than trying to entice our Pathans away to them?" But no matter what the estimate, the agitation continues. It may be linked to a party among the tribesmen which is reported to be generally opposed to the opulent *maliks* who have taken subsidies from the British and now the Pakistanis. But the Sarishta party, as it is called, is stated to be small and of little influence. That which many Pakistanis are thinking about runs along different lines. They believe the Afghan agitation makes incredible nonsense unless (a) the Afghans are being encouraged by an outside power, or (b) they are being led to believe that Pakistan's grip on the Frontier is transitory and that some day there may be no organized barrier to Afghanistan's reconquest of land below the Khyber, say to the Indus river. Reasoning along these lines, Pakistanis know what country comes immediately to their minds. It is not Russia. They sometimes wonder out loud whether

Afghanistan's friend India might be letting the Afghans expect that they could have a free hand in a Frontier adventure.

I note these observations only to report as accurately as possible what seems to be the line of thought among Pakistan officials and others. For the general Frontier picture, I have the impressions that—barring Afghan disturbances and barring re-incursions into Kashmir—peace and security are possible under Pakistan rule and that the strong and heavy hand of Khan Abdul Qaiyum Khan is starting the province toward important social change. Along these lines the Frontier may become a useful and increasingly important part of Pakistan.

Kashmir: The Escalating Crisis

New Delhi

January 20, 1950

THERE IS REASON, I fear, to take a grave view of new developments in the 30-month-old dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. In the absence of visible progress by the United Nations toward a Kashmir settlement, in both countries opinion appears to be hardening vindictively. Frustration and bitterness are more evident in Pakistan, which, in respect to Kashmir, is the “have-not” country. From cabinet level in Karachi to tribal areas on the Northwest Frontier, Kashmir is the most provocative symbol of widespread and deep resentment against India. In India—or at least in north India—the most noticeable public attitude toward Kashmir is built on a hard core of tenacity that is frequently strengthened by the Prime Minister's emotional declarations.

At the moment the UN is considering yet another approach to Kashmir. The most promising outcome would be some advance toward a plebiscite. Both countries have agreed in principle to that method of determining whether Kashmir shall accede to India or to Pakistan. But their sharply different concepts of the necessary pre-conditions have so far frustrated efforts to break the impasse. Should that condition continue, I feel it would not be too gloomy to imagine a new flare-up somewhere in Kashmir. I have heard open

talk of such an eventuality. The weeks of this coming spring are mentioned as a possible time.

In today's climate of frustration and vindictiveness, such a local outbreak might occur without prior official instructions. But any violation of the ceasefire agreement of January 1, 1948, would almost certainly involve the Indian and Pakistan armed forces that stand opposite each other along the 1,800-mile ceasefire line in Kashmir. No one with whom I have discussed the question believes that fighting could once more be confined to Kashmir. Hostilities, it is thought, would immediately spill over into the Punjab and bring general war between India and Pakistan. Some minds in India think that a quick and decisive campaign would be possible. I hold with the more general view that the consequences would be ruinous to both sides. Apart from the devastating internal impact, war would destroy all hopes that India and Pakistan might develop some strength and stability to steady the rest of southern Asia in this difficult period. The world would shake with war in this subcontinent.

This, as I said, is the gloomy view. Yet its potentiality is sufficient so that the United Nations and particularly countries friendly to India and Pakistan should exert themselves at a higher level than heretofore. Without reflecting on the personnel of the UN Commission for India and Pakistan, I suspect that our best brains have not yet come to grips with the issue. General McNaughton's unhappy experience demonstrates, of course, that more than intelligent talk is needed. The time has come, I think, for the larger nations to treat Kashmir as a dispute that threatens war, and to deal with it as vigorously as possible.

These impressions have been borne in on me at the conclusion of as broad and varied a study of the Kashmir issue as I have been able to make in the last three months. In Pakistan I discussed the Karachi problem with the Prime Minister, other ministers and officials, and persons in many walks of life outside the government—down to refugees from India. At Peshawar and on the Khyber pass political officers, tribal *maliks* and local newspapermen were my informants. Top officers in the Pakistan Army headquarters at Rawalpindi expressed their views to me. I traveled through parts

of the Pakistan-held "Azad Kashmir" area and talked without interpreters to residents there. I also visited a Pakistan-run camp of refugees from Indian-held parts of Kashmir. On the Indian side I went through a similar process in capital circles in New Delhi. I then visited Jammu and went on to the Valley of Kashmir. Because of the months that I had spent there in previous years I felt able to move around freely and talk with considerable numbers of people, again without interpreters, both in the city of Srinagar and in some village areas. I also had lengthy discussions with some of the Kashmir government ministers, and visited occupation posts of the Indian army in Kashmir.

Part of the Kashmir difficulty stems from strategic considerations. A Himalayan state of about 84,000 square miles and 4 million people, Kashmir lies against Afghanistan, Soviet Russia, and Communist China and also flanks the upper frontiers of both India and Pakistan. Either country possessing Kashmir would control long stretches of the important Central Asian frontier and at the same time enfilade the other country's border.

The larger part of the dispute is buried in history. The general background is no longer so unfamiliar as to require full elaboration, though certain points remain crucial. Nationalist India's relations with Kashmir are the older. In 1940, when I saw Jawaharlal Nehru and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah purposefully sharing a platform in Srinagar, they had already been associated for nearly 10 years. The object of their campaign was the elimination of the authoritarian Maharaja. Nehru, whose forebears had descended to the plains of India from Kashmir, and Abdullah saw eye to eye on the creation of a people's government in Kashmir. Their intimacy continues today to a degree that makes it hard for anyone to impress on Nehru an analysis of the Kashmir situation which differs from that given him by Abdullah.

Pakistan's interest in Kashmir arose from the moment the Muslim League conceived a separate Muslim state to be carved out of India. Kashmir is a heavily Muslim area, and no doubt it entered the minds of Muslim League schemers that Kashmir would become a part of their Muslim nation. The very name Pakistan, which was supposed to suggest the elements that would form the new state, contained

not only "P" for the Punjab, "A" for the Afghans (Pathans) of the Northwest Frontier, etc., but also "K" for Kashmir. Pakistan without the "K" was unthinkable.

In the autumn of 1947, immediately after the partitioning of India and independence of the successor states, the Punjab and neighboring area had succumbed to the disastrous massacres that cost hundreds of thousands of deaths and a transmigration of perhaps 12 million people. Anarchy was almost complete; Prime Ministers Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan met repeatedly to agree on joint remedies, but proved unable to execute their own pledges. Conditions were perhaps nowhere worse than in some of the princely states. The names of Alwar, Bharatpur, Bahawalpur, Kapurthala, and Patiala come to mind. Those of us in the region at the time were therefore not surprised when reports arrived of fighting in Kashmir between the Maharaja's Hindu Dogra troops and local Poonchis, who come of a militant Muslim stock. At the same time both Dominions were pressing to win over Kashmir, which had stood out in July and August, when all other princely states except Hyderabad were acceding to one Dominion or the other. Sheikh Abdullah visited Delhi and had an engagement to meet Liaquat Ali Khan in Lahore. He told me that Kashmir would be "finished" if it had to join one Dominion and thereby incur the enmity of the other. What he sought, he said, was an arrangement by which Kashmir could have normal relations with both countries.

It was at that juncture that Pathan tribesmen swept into Kashmir. The tribesmen had been restless since before independence, and Pakistanis had expressed fears that they might rush in to join the Muslims fighting against Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab. It was felt that all hope of controlling the Punjab would die if the Pathans entered the fray; they are undisciplined and capricious individuals. Their diversion to the Kashmir scene was clearly organized. Certain members of the Muslim League National Guard and officers of the Pakistan Army, not on official duty, participated in the first raids. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali told me at the time that he had not wanted the raids and did not want to help the raiders, but that in the disordered circumstances of the day he could not set the Pakistan Army against them. Other officials whom I had known for some time assured me that Liaquat was very angry that the raiders had chosen

that moment to sweep into Kashmir, without notice to him. Their entry upset Liaquat's timetable and forestalled his meeting with Sheikh Abdullah—a meeting which might have brought some more peaceful understanding of the Kashmir issue. Whether the Pakistan prime minister would have authorized the Pathan incursion into Kashmir later had the Abdullah talks been unfruitful is now just a historical “if.” Certainly there were important influences in the Pakistan government that favored seizure of Kashmir, which Pakistanis considered to be theirs “by rights.”

I have redescribed that period to throw light on India's assertion that Pakistan is the aggressor in Kashmir. When the raiders reached the Kashmir valley, the Maharaja in terror appealed to the Indian government for aid. New Delhi's representative flew to the State and pledged immediate support on two conditions: that Kashmir immediately accede to India and that Sheikh Abdullah (who only a few weeks earlier had been released from imprisonment for sedition against the Maharaja's government) be made head of the state. However distasteful these requirements may have been to the Maharaja, he signed the letter of accession drawn up by the New Delhi official and sat back to wait for aid. On the next day there began the Indian's army's airborne operation which eventually brought some of the most bizarre actions in military history—such as the posting of pickets at altitudes ranging up to 19,000 feet above sea level, and the movement of tanks up the tortuous trail, which I remember as a difficult caravan track, over the Zoji La (pass) at 11,000 feet. Pakistan entered the fighting more and more directly, and the campaign ultimately continued through the remainder of 1947 and all of 1948. I have heard both Indian and Pakistan military men assert that if political considerations had not intervened, they could have taken military control of Kashmir before it became an international issue. Nehru is now on the defensive at home for having referred the case to the United Nations (which India thinks has not dealt kindly with its claims), but perhaps there is truth in his justification that war between India and Pakistan would have been the alternative. Finally, at the end of 1948, military and other factors conjoined to produce the conditions necessary for a ceasefire agreement, which took effect on January 1, 1949. It was then thought that a proper truce would follow shortly and preparations could be started for a plebiscite.

In the succeeding 14 months, however, no further advance has been made on the road to agreement.

The arguments that both sides have presented to the United Nations are well known. I wish to concentrate rather more on the pattern of thinking and the conditions which exist within the two countries. India is, of course, by far the larger and more complex country. In many parts of that amorphous commodity known as public opinion, internal problems take priority over Kashmir. So far as I can judge, there are many people, especially in the more distant central and southern parts of the country, whose major interest in Kashmir is to see some honorable settlement. So long as "face" is not lost, they are not overzealous as to details of a settlement. They are concerned about the top-heavy military budget, which accounts for two-thirds of the nation's expenses.

They are not keen on the prospect of war with Pakistan, and they do not see that Kashmir is of vital importance to the Indian national polity or economy. Some even talk of Kashmir as a "drain," which no doubt it would continue to be.

A second segment of opinion holds that Kashmir has become an object of national prestige. The Indian army, starting with only 12 hours' notice, has fought its first campaign under national leaders competently and at times brilliantly; politicians cannot give away what the army has won. India has been pushed around enough by Pakistan; an elder brother can stand just so much bullying by his younger brother and then the time comes, as it has come in Kashmir, to stand firm on principles. There can be no compromise on this matter of national honor.

A third view—and one which is important to Nehru—holds that India is a secular state and that it is of extreme importance to support Sheikh Abdullah and his Muslim followers who prefer India to Muslim Pakistan. India has never accepted the "two-nation theory"—that Muslims should have their own state because they are Muslims, and that because the majority in India is Hindu, India is therefore a Hindu state. But after partition no major Muslim majority area remained in India. Muslim Kashmir would be a firm proving point for India's secular claims. Having Kashmir in India would also encourage the millions of Muslims who are already imbedded in the Indian national structure.

A fourth line of reasoning looks to the future. If, it is argued, Kashmir should go to Pakistan, then the 1 million Hindus living there would flee the state despite any assurances that might be given. This would be the inevitable consequence of all the bitterness that has grown since 1947. India has already more or less absorbed more than 5 million Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan, but in doing so it has laid hands on every available square foot of land and housing space. Perhaps an extra million might have somehow been accommodated in 1947 or early 1948, before allotments had frozen. Now, however, the impact of this million could do nothing but unbalance the whole new social structure so tediously propped up over the last two years. As a consequence of the new pressures, anti-Muslim demonstrations would be certain to occur and war between India and Pakistan could come in that way.

I shall consider the implications of these arguments later in this letter.

On the Pakistan side different considerations arise. As I have written to you, the prevailing Pakistani mood towards India is sharp and all-consuming and it focuses on Kashmir. Like India, Pakistan is wasting its substance in military expenses and other commitments relating to Kashmir. Yet in Pakistan I did not feel even an under-current of opinion that in the national interest compromise would be cheaper. Rather, a good deal of popular sentiment continues to favor a stronger stand against India. This exists in Karachi and even more in the Punjab and the Northwest Frontier. On the Khyber pass tribal *maliks* insisted to me (through a Pakistan government political agent interpreter) that they were prepared to return to Kashmir, despite government orders, if no vote is held there. They understand a plebiscite, because it was the referendum of 1947 that put the Northwest Frontier Province into the Pakistan nation. Frontier tribal areas are disturbed, partly because of agitation from Afghanistan, and it is not impossible that some adventurer would try to whip up a new incursion into Kashmir. Although I have had assurances from Pakistan ministers and top military officers that they could stop such an adventure now, it would be hard to feel confidence in such assurances if incidents broke out in Kashmir and if public passion went immediately, as seems inevitable, to white heat.

Perhaps the broadest Pakistani attitude is that they have been gypped of Kashmir. By all considerations, Pakistanis tell one another, Kashmir should go to Pakistan: it is an area where Muslims are in a heavy majority; it holds the sources for the main Punjab rivers whose waters provide essential irrigation in Pakistan; its timber exports ordinarily float down the Jhelum River debouching into Pakistan; and its road-borne trade has traditionally and most economically moved on the short and easy route to Rawalpindi, in Pakistan. Pakistanis feel angered and confused at the way in which the Indian Army took over Hyderabad, which had a Muslim ruler and a Hindu-majority population, and the Indian government seized control of Junagadh, whose Muslim ruler had already acceded to Pakistan (whatever the wishes of his Hindu population) while at the same time India seeks by "legal" and "moral"—as the Pakistanis say derisively—arguments to take over Kashmir. The result is to increase the stubborn defiance and determination to have Kashmir.

Another characteristic of Pakistan thinking is supreme confidence that Kashmiris will vote to join Pakistan rather than India. It is this complete assurance that makes Pakistanis press for a speedy plebiscite.* "India and Pakistan agreed to a plebiscite," Prime Minister Liaquat Ali said to me, "let the Administrator come out with full powers to settle whatever procedural differences may come between us. That is all we ask." Again, this optimism is the reason for Pakistan's adamant refusal to consider the partitioning of Kashmir. Half a loaf is not so good as the whole one, Pakistan believes.

I have tried to suggest that thinking on this subject in Pakistan is more monolithic than in India. A plebiscite would suit Pakistan; if none is held, then I suspect that the two possible reactions would be either fatalistic acceptance of the accomplished fact of Indian control or an explosive rejection of that control. But if Pakistan is in the mood for fatalism, that fact was successfully hidden from me. I have the impression that, just as Nehru once could not have yielded Kashmir without yielding his prime ministership also, now Liaquat Ali is similarly tied. A nation does not commit suicide out

*When India and Pakistan agreed in 1949 on a Plebiscite (under certain conditions) in Kashmir, they also agreed to the appointment by the United Nations of a Plebiscite Administrator. Admiral Chester Nimitz of the United States was named to the post, but disputes over the terms of his task prevented his taking it up.

of *joie de vivre*, but I have heard Pakistanis argue that if India is to continue a “slow strangling process,” Pakistan would be better off to meet its fate quickly by plunging the whole subcontinent into war. That is wild talk—yet it is the sort of talk that people who believe themselves frustrated might pick up.

Because Pakistan is so completely intent on its battles with India, I see no likelihood that the Kashmir issue can be left hopefully for disposition by obsolescence.

Meanwhile, what is the situation in Kashmir itself? The western areas in which I toured, which are under the administration of the “Azad Kashmir” regime, are not entirely happy with the Pakistan-controlled government. Some individuals told me they were not getting as large a ration as the government had asserted. Displaced people were anxious to get back to their homes. There may be some resentment—I did not gather enough evidence to be clear on this point—against the service for the army that is required of villagers. But basically the situation seems conditioned by the fact that the western districts are populated by people who are very similar to the Punjab Muslims and who seem to be motivated by the same drive. They talk of India as “Hindu India” and find no satisfaction in the thought of joining it. I have the impression that in the western districts Pakistan could expect a solidly favorable vote. But the numbers there, something under 1 million total population, are not large enough to swing the plebiscite.

On similar lines I think that the substantial Hindu numbers of Jammu province can be expected to vote for India. Residents there, and they have also been infected by the virus of Hindu-Muslim antagonism, say they have nothing to gain from association with Pakistan. On the contrary, they would fight for India.

The real area of decision is the Valley of Kashmir, which is held by India and administered by the government and party of Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. The Valley has the largest single element of population in the state; it is Muslim but racially and linguistically separate from the Punjab and west Kashmir Muslims; and it contains the state's rice bowl as well as the centers of the tourist and artisan industries. Whatever compromises might be made in the disposition of other parts of the state, no yielding is possible to either India or Pakistan as to the Valley.

In the Valley I found the ferment that is to be expected in such a situation. On wanderings through Srinagar—without interpreter or guide—I was shown by nearly every man that he carried a membership card of Sheikh Abdullah's Kashmir National Conference. At the same time I got an almost standard response from individuals in the large groups that depend on the tourist industry: shopkeepers, artisans, houseboat owners, bus drivers, servants. One after another would hear my question, look out hurriedly in both directions for unfriendly ears, and then say diffidently or vehemently, "Kashmir must go to Pakistan." Most of these people live a political double life. A man whom, it turned out, I had known 10 years ago as a youth, picked me up by chance on the road to the Sind Valley and poured my ear full of pro-Pakistan talk. The same evening I saw him in the company of one of the brothers of Deputy Premier G. M. Bakshi, Abdullah's right-hand man, and found him mum on political matters. I was told repeatedly of a pro-Pakistan underground organization in Srinagar. The day after making what I had thought was a discreet evening visit to an individual much involved in the political game, a complete stranger approached me and said, "We are glad you saw so-and-so last night. He tells you the truth." When I asked such people why they were members of the National Conference if they so vigorously favored Pakistan, they replied with a shrug, "We have to get our rations, don't we?"

Three reasons were advanced most commonly for support of Pakistan. There was the constant argument that Muslims are Muslims, and blood is thicker than water. An equally widespread and obviously influential argument was that the tourist trade had died since the Rawalpindi road had become detached from the Valley, and that to revive prosperity the road must be reopened by linking up with Pakistan. I suspect that an important element of pro-Pakistan sentiment is based on that ground, and yet it is fallacious. The tourists that are wanted are those who pay fat wages and *baksheesh*, and those are the British and Americans who stopped visiting Kashmir not because the Rawalpindi road was closed but because the end of the war and of British rule caused them to leave India entirely. No matter how Kashmiris align themselves, the old bonanzas will not fall automatically into their laps. The third reason for pro-Pakistan sentiment was growing discontent with the difficulties that exist in

Kashmir under military occupation. Civil supplies have at times been short and expensive. Pro-Pakistan Muslims fear the police power of Deputy Premier Bakshi. Ten years ago every Muslim I met in these groups favored Sheikh Abdullah; he represented resistance against the Maharaja and the controlling Hindu Brahman and Dogra cliques. Now they talk of his regime by conjecturing what benefits Bakshi's five brothers may get from their multifarious activities.

A Hindu shopkeeper was perhaps wise in local knowledge when he observed that plebiscite would be won by India if Indian troops were in occupation or by Pakistan if Pakistan troops were present. In Srinagar—as distinguished from the more populous countryside—I gained the impression that a free vote would go heavily for Pakistan, but that under some conditions the same people who carry National Conference cards to get their rations might similarly be influenced to vote for the National Conference in the plebiscite.

In the countryside different influences come into play. I had known some Kashmir villages 10 years ago, and in one representative community had spent three months on a village survey. Returning to a friendly welcome this time, I found village leading families split. Three schoolteacher brothers at one place, for example, had always taken the lead in such civic projects as addition of latrines and cleaning manure from compounds. Although (Maharaja's) government employees, they had heartily favored Sheikh Abdullah who, as villagers then told me, "told us we don't have to give a chicken to the cooperative inspector so that he will approve our accounts." Today one brother is high in the local hierarchy of Abdullah's National Conference, another brother reports the existence of strong pro-Pakistan sentiment, and the third seems to have dropped out of political and civic work, perhaps because his mind is in conflict. I found this same division in lesser families. The village also is divided between tenantry and petty landlords (owners of three to 10 acres) as it was not before.

Abdullah's "New Kashmir" agrarian reforms are being felt in the villages. Peasant tenants of larger landlords (those owning more than 12 acres) know that they now have to pay as rent only one-fourth of the produce instead of one-half—though they know also that the government requisitions the intervening quarter at what they claim is one third of the going market price. The tenantry feels that

new things are happening, and tends to like them. At the same time the influence of the village mosque and of many a group talking around a *hookah* is thrown toward Pakistan. I gained the impression that in a plebiscite today, the village vote would be split.

Some members of Abdullah's government recognize the possibility of a deep split and are looking for alternative solutions. Revenue Minister G. M. Sadiq, a man described as having strong leftist inclinations, told me for the record that the United Nations should not try to mediate between India and Pakistan but between the two major groups in Kashmir itself (the National Conference and the Azad Kashmir group). Sadiq supported the reunification of Kashmir to be accompanied by the establishment of joint relations with both India and Pakistan. The idea that Kashmir might become the Switzerland of Asia has intrigued a number of Kashmiri leaders, though it gives comfort to neither India nor Pakistan. For strategic and economic reasons, apart from politics, the scheme appears to be unworkable so long as India and Pakistan maintain unfriendly relations. As in the cases of Hyderabad and the Northwest Frontier, Kashmir could hardly stand alone. But the fact that a Kashmir minister makes such a proposal suggests that the alignment with India may not be as solid as party members hold.

Taking all these factors together, what is to be done? The one point on which the two countries have agreed is the principle that ultimate accession shall be determined by a plebiscite. There is no accord on any other proposed solution. The main clash is over the conditions necessary for the holding of the plebiscite. Pakistan says, "Now, today; under current conditions."

India says: "A plebiscite, yes. But the state must first be restored to its normal condition." In expanded terms India means (*a*) that Kashmir's sovereignty is undivided and flows legally from the official government which acceded to India; *ergo*, that Pakistan is the aggressor, has no rights in Kashmir, and must withdraw before a plebiscite can be held; and (*b*) that the mood and temper of the population must permit refugees to flow back to their homes; i.e., that Sikhs and Hindus of western Kashmir must feel perfectly safe in their old Muslim habitats.

Such conditions, in my view, are impossible of attainment in the near future. I asked a member of Deputy Premier Bakshi's family how long he thought it would take for Sikhs to be comfortable again

among Muslims of western Kashmir. "Oh, give years at the least," he said. Actually, I know of no place in northwestern India or Pakistan where members of a minority community who crossed the boundary as refugees have returned to live at peace with their old neighbors. The scars are as deep as those left by the American Civil War, and it will take them as long to heal. If the Kashmir controversy can await settlement for that long, then there is no reason for the United Nations so to concern itself. Similarly, in an all-out struggle, there is little prospect that either India or Pakistan would withdraw from any position now held except on a firm assurance of an early solution. At the current pitch of feeling I doubt whether either national cabinet could sustain itself after materially withdrawing in the absence of an agreement. That is especially true in the case of Pakistan.

One hopeful aspect is that both sides can think they have some chance of making a good showing in the Valley. If either country felt itself irretrievably in a minority, preparations for a plebiscite could hardly be expected to move ahead. But under present circumstances, that major deterrent does not fully apply to either side.

There is still just time to hold a Valley vote in 1950. To make that possible, the United Nations would have to suspend the judgments that India wants it to make: identification of the aggressor and confirmation of the legal and undivided sovereignty of the Kashmir government. India would not easily accept that suspension, but it should of course be accompanied by a UN guarantee that sovereignty as determined by the plebiscite would be immediately enforced. Thus the sovereignty issue, which has been disputed for more than two years, would remain in suspension only for the few extra weeks required to hold the plebiscite.

In return for this major sacrifice of its position, India, I think, would have to gain the tactical victory of having (*a*) the plebiscite held in regional sections, or (*b*) an advance agreement that the heavily Muslim western districts would automatically go to Pakistan and the Hindu parts of Jammu to India. Such an arrangement would alleviate fear of a new refugee tide sweeping over northern India if the overall vote should favor Pakistan.

Pakistan is deadily opposed to the fragmentation of the plebiscite or of the state. It anticipates winning an absolute majority. But in today's circumstances a large new segment of Hindu population is not essential to Pakistan. Many Kashmiris are also against partition

of the state. In 100 years many ties have grown between Jammu and Kashmir. Yet that was also true of India which was divided. Nehru himself has vigorously resisted the partition suggestion. But when his representatives at Lake Success also criticize the proposal, he is perhaps unaware that other members of the Indian cabinet and officialdom favor it as a way out of the impasse. I was told responsibly that if the Hindu portions of Kashmir could be guaranteed to India, "there is a reasonable chance that the cabinet might get around other barriers to a plebiscite."

Such a solution would meet many of the Indian demands. It would first and most importantly provide an honorable way of disposing of the Kashmir controversy. However the vote might go, Kashmir would disappear as a symbol of conflict between the two countries. India (and Pakistan too) could then reduce its military ancillary expenditures to a level more nearly consonant with its national economic and financial position. The vote should also satisfy national prestige, for it would bring the fulfillment of a commitment of honor. In the same way, a vote would meet the argument that Muslims must be free to choose their own destiny. If they freely voted to join India, there could be no greater acknowledgement of the secular state conception. Finally, the Hindu refugee problem would not come up.

It is of course true that if India were to agree to a plebiscite for undivided Kashmir this year—under conditions which inevitably now exist—the way would be much easier. Such a step by Nehru would be a long advance. But he appears neither free nor in a mood to take it.

From Pakistan's point of view the reduction in internal tension consequent on the holding of a plebiscite should be sufficient inducement to make possible the material concession of separate treatment for the Hindu areas of Jammu. Some people in Pakistan may think they derive some advantage from beating the drum of a possible resumption this spring of war over Kashmir—with all the world-enveloping consequences of such an outbreak. The more frightened other nations become, Pakistan thinks, the more likely they are to apply pressure for an early solution of the Kashmir problem. And that, in Pakistan's current confident mood, is what it wants. There is obviously a propaganda element in Pakistan's case

as it is often unofficially presented. Propaganda aside, however, I feel that sufficient heat has been generated to give reality to fear of an outburst. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali is under extreme pressure to maintain a strong front; even talk of losing part of Kashmir by a partition is regarded as heresy. Yet Liaquat Ali has as much to gain as does Nehru by progress toward settlement. The fact that neither of them can proceed freely is the greater reason why, despite Nehru's railing against international meddling, high-level moves to open the way for a plebiscite are so urgently needed.

Two more points, and this letter will end. This is not the place to discuss the mechanics of the plebiscite, but clearly the Administrator will require a strong independent unit to ensure reasonable protection against various pressures on the electorate. In the Northwest Frontier referendum of 1947 the officer in charge used tank and armored car detachments to investigate reports of trouble. Similar arrangements could be worked out by the Administrator's liaison officers with local army units in the parts of Kashmir where communications are satisfactory and the bulk of the population is concentrated. The Administrator should have ample provision, as in Palestine, for mobility of his staff and for independent telecommunications. Only by such independent action can the threat of charges of ineffectiveness or partisanship be forestalled.

Finally, I must add that I am not among those who believe that a solution of the Kashmir controversy will inevitably bring about good relations between India and Pakistan. The rending process which brought the two countries into being has its deep economic and social as well as political ramifications. Hundreds of millions of dollars worth of property belonging to Indian nationals has been left behind in Pakistan, with little prospect that its real value can be redeemed. The conscious attempts to separate and reorient the once-unified economy of the subcontinent is causing dislocation and general economic malaise, for which each country blames the other. The present currency tangle affects the world trade patterns of both countries. The psychological disharmony between the secular state and the Muslim state is visible daily. And fear, distrust and mutual suspicion warp every effort to improve the climate existing between the countries.

Among these very real barriers, however, the Kashmir controversy has a place of precedence. All the other frustrations tend to be focused in the Kashmir issue. Militarily Kashmir has the greatest explosive potential. Until it is resolved, there is little use even in trying to deal with any other problem.

After the experiences that India and Pakistan have gone through, there is no magic formula to resolve their difficulties. If the first three are solved satisfactorily, the fourth may bring them to disaster. In such circumstances, the only hope for the two countries is to deal first with one problem, however arduous that may be. It is in that direction that there lies the prospect of future stability in South Asia and the world.

Fresh Breezes in a Kashmir Village

*New Delhi
January 20, 1950*

WHILE IN KASHMIR recently I visited the small village where in 1940 I had lived for three months while conducting a social survey. Astonishing changes have occurred.

The physical environment looks the same. The village still is not linked to the outside by a road, and the path leading across the fields from the nearest post office and bazaar is still narrow and muddy. In the village the paths and ditches seem as unordered as before, the pool by the mosque as choked with debris, and the manure and compost piles in the compounds as spread about. A few new houses have been built (of wood and mud) and perhaps a few old ones have caved in. Most look about the same.

The people have of course changed a good deal. Mortality being what it is in India, many old faces have disappeared. Children whom I had taught to play badminton in 1940 are now householders. Boys that seemed to me of great promise have felt the chains of their environment and apparently lost the spark of progressiveness. But one after another of the former youths and the middle-aged people

remembered me as I tramped into the village and I received a welcome more heartwarming than I could have imagined. As I walked from one cluster of houses to another, men sitting around their *hookah* would look up puzzled at the approach of a foreigner, then (despite my extra poundage) recognize me, and then let their faces light up in smiles of great goodwill. The inevitable group began trailing me, and I was led to whose house I don't know and up the stairs to a room above where the livestock is kept. A quilt was spread, a bolster produced, a firepot put between my knees, and another quilt spread over my legs. Twenty or 30 people crowded into the room and squatted in front of me, grinning and talking. Soon the refreshments began to arrive; hard-boiled eggs, cardamom tea, salt tea, and hard-baked biscuits. For the next four hours I sat there, evidencing pleasure in what must have been more than a dozen cups of the local teas and learning remarkable things about village changes in the last 10 years.

Economically, the villagers agreed, they are worse off than before. The main reason is inflation. While local wages and paddy prices have risen two or three times, bazaar prices have jumped five or six times. I learned last time that subjective impressions about relative prosperity are deceptive, and much closer examination would be necessary before I could accept the villagers' assertion that they are in greater difficulties than before. That there is inflation is unquestioned. The needlework done by village boys to piece out family incomes, for example, used to bring in $\frac{3}{16}$ th of a rupee per boy per day. Now it is worth a quarter-rupee. (Dollar equivalents are deceptive, owing to the intervening devaluation.) Similarly, tea, sugar and cloth prices have all risen. On the other hand, some of the villagers have had woodcutting jobs and other work incident to the Indian army occupation of the Kashmir valley, so they may not have fared so badly as they think.

It is in knowledge of the outside world that the most noticeable changes have occurred. In June 1940 these villagers did not know that France was a country fighting Germany, much less that it was collapsing in that very month before the Nazi onslaught. They explained the war to me by saying that "Our King is fighting the German King." They didn't much care which king won, as their present ruler made them poor and the other would doubtless keep them poor.

But they didn't want the Russian king to come over the mountains, as they had heard he would not let them worship at their mosque. Such was the level of their political knowledge.

This time questions in that upper room came thick and fast. How did it happen Sinkiang had gone Communist? Burma was in turmoil—that was a very bad thing, wasn't it? With the whole of China Communist, would India have to take the same road? Why hadn't America done something to stop Communism?

On the subject of Kashmir it was the same. In 1940 they told me with obvious enthusiasm that they liked Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah “because he told us we do not have to give a chicken to the cooperative inspector in order to have our cooperative society books checked.” This time they discussed in detail the “New Kashmir” plan of agrarian reform which Abdullah's pro-India government has introduced. Those who favored Abdullah knew why they support him, and the others let me know they prefer that Kashmir should go to Pakistan. The discussion ranged through the reduced crop shares permitted to landlords and the new system of electing local tax officials who had always been appointed hereditarily. I was thoroughly impressed with the new grasp the villagers have achieved of things beyond their local home and cultivating life.

Again, these impressions need further investigation. In my brief stay it is true that only the more articulate were talking. Further burrowing among the quieter individuals might have revealed the same blankness as before. But certain features did seem to me evident. The first is that the war and the subsequent struggle between India and Pakistan over Kashmir have made their impact felt right down into the village. I saw a government poster showing a gorilla labeled Pakistan standing over a prostrate human form labeled Kashmir. The villagers had their decided opinions about the poster, some favoring it and others being contemptuous and resentful. The arguments of protagonists of both sides have opened up the whole question of the relationship between these villagers and the two countries beyond the Pir Panjal range. Cultivators who in 1940 had never been to the capital city of Srinagar, less than 15 miles away, are now arguing about the relative merits of affiliation to New Delhi or Karachi.

Second, the buttressing of claims by the political "New Kashmir" plan agrarian reforms is shaking loose time-honored and once-rigid village relationships. In 1940 I gained the impression that the relations between tenant cultivators and petty landlords (those owning six to 10 acres, part of which they rented out on shares) were stable and accepted. No one listed any change in this matter when I asked what differences they found in present-day living as compared to their father's and grandfather's times. But today there is a marked change. Tenants are aware of their separate identity and separate interests. Those tenants who cultivate land belonging to "big" landlords (those owning more than 12 acres!) have already enjoyed a reduction of the maximum rental from one half to one quarter of the crop. Tenants of smaller landlords expect the same change in the next year or so. Now at a gathering like the one I met, the tenants good-naturedly taunt the landlords, and get replies in kind. Some of the taunting has an edge to it, I thought. Class consciousness has entered the village.

Similar is the case of the *zaildar* and *nambardar*, two revenue officials that from the state's point of view are petty but from the villagers' vantage, important. In 1940 the fathers occupying these posts and their sons expecting to succeed to them held privileged places in the village. The poorer, less privileged peasants knew their station. Today it is the sons (in both cases, the fathers that I knew have died) who look embarrassed and unsure of themselves. They still have their lands but they have been stripped of their authority and know they are figures of fun among the less privileged.

In this connection a lad who had studied up to junior high school level surprised me by talking of a "Tenants and Workers Association" which he said was active politically and which he described not only in Marxian terms but with a flow of Marxian clichés. Obviously some interests are at work in Kashmir that are not identified in either Srinagar or New Delhi. I much regret that the brevity of my visit prevented my investigating that field further.

Generally my impression is that the village, which was still almost static in 1940, has been thrown into ferment. I am sorry that the pace of my present Indian tour has not made it possible for me to form an idea whether villages in the plains are stirring in the same way. Many of them, of course, had awakened earlier.

I have a strong feeling that on a future Indian trip I should like to return to this Kashmir village for a substantial period to carry out the sort of inquiry I made there in 1940. Comparison of the results should be interesting.

India in Its Third Year of Independence

Calcutta

February 7, 1950

INDIA IN ITS third year of independence is disappointing. Disappointing to large numbers of Indians themselves, I mean; foreigners who judge by alien standards could be expected to be critical. In traveling through the country in recent weeks I have felt that far more than before independence, public and private opinions are divided into many segments. But if I could presume to synthesize the Indian reaction to all that has happened since August 15, 1947, it would run like this: "We have made some notable achievements and their value is enhanced because of the incredible difficulties that it was first necessary to overcome. Independence has proved itself definitely worthwhile. We shall never again accept foreign rule. But in many respects we seem to have lost our sense of a national mission. Our political life has dropped ever farther below Gandhi's standards. Our economic life has proceeded from crisis to crisis. Instead of showing a new path of peace to the world, we seem enmeshed in arguments with Pakistan. Unless we can get a grip on the situation, our dreams may collapse beyond recovery."

Some Indians in discussing their country today emphasize the affirmative achievements. Others turn with bitterness and vituperation against their indigenous government and the influences that exercise power. In general, India is passing through the period of disillusionment that comes when it is discovered that glorious independence does not *ipso facto* solve all problems. Some critics would argue that the leaders of India have already dissipated their chance, as did the Kuomintang party in China, to carry through the social revolution successfully. I have been surprised at how vigorously

certain foreign and limited Indian circles press that point of view. My own impression is that there is a danger that the present government will fail to meet its challenge. More exertions than are visible today may be necessary to avoid a chaotic collapse. But such a fate is not yet inevitable.

India 30 months after independence is still largely directed by the long-time Congress party associates of Gandhi. While others have been brought into the cabinet and there are strong non-Gandhian influences in the background, leadership remains in the hands of men now in their 60s and 70s who have been prominent for a quarter-century or more. One of the most disquieting features of Indian public life is the absence of figures in their 40s and 50s who approach the stature that Nehru, Patel, Prasad, and others had achieved at the same age. Who, for example, will follow on after Patel? As a sick man well past the three-score-and-ten mark, he directs three important ministries, is deputy prime minister, and holds together the Congress party. But he has no heir apparent.

India's achievements are no niggling affairs. The first job after independence was to consolidate the national polity and that has been accomplished with remarkable success. The story of the integration of the princely states is well known. Reducing more than 500 autonomous units into a few components of the national whole appeared deceptively easy because of its rapid achievement. Actually, there have been many snags. Not the least of them has been the failure of democratic processes to replace effectively the old princely authority. In regions where even the rudiments of parliamentary practice and responsibility had not been known, there have been some vicious scandals since the "popular leaders" took over. To prevent chaos, New Delhi has in several cases resiled from its support of democratic institutions and has brought areas back under authoritarian administration, in this case its own. But whatever the difficulties, the States are integrated and are no longer in a position to become focal points of resistance against the nation.

Similarly the makers of the new constitution brought all component units (now called states rather than provinces) under the tightened control of the central government. Separationist tendencies on language, political, and economic grounds have developed in

different parts of the country. In places they are very strong. The regime has assured itself of constitutional powers, however, to cope with the danger of dissolution.

A third factor in strengthening the national polity has been a restiffening of the administrative services. In 1947 there was some doubt that the administration could survive the surgery performed on it by independence and partition. Inevitably it went down badly. But in many parts of the country the administration as such has been more fully restored than I had expected to find it. (I shall refer later to the political influences controlling the administration.)

A great many of the ravages of war and of the succeeding unrest have also been repaired. Railways are running today very much more effectively than in 1947. Telephone exchanges have been materially improved in major cities (except Calcutta, which seems worse than before; this condition is occasioned at least in part by the loss of the main telephone exchange by fire—presumably Communist-directed arson). Posts and telegraphs operate in tidier fashion. A variety of other services has been at least partly restored to prewar standards. These activities are not particularly spectacular. People expect a telephone system to work. But large amounts of capital and energy which were badly needed elsewhere have been poured into routine rehabilitation. Men who have been working frantically on such problems become understandably irritated when they are charged with having done nothing to save India.

There have been other grand projects as well. India has rebuilt its army, spending two-thirds of its budget on the task (almost entirely on account of the Kashmir conflict and bad relations with Pakistan). It has also proceeded, if painfully slowly, with major river valley development schemes and some other development programs.

In the foreign field India has established a chain of diplomatic links around the world. Indians feel that they helped achieve a suitable international climate for Indonesian independence and that in the South African case they have taken an important stand for the dignity of the human individual. They have developed and officially cling to the doctrine of neutrality in the cold war.

These various accomplishments have been attained during a period when the government and the country suffered under a series of shocks of the utmost severity. You will recall that before

independence Hindu–Muslim communal rioting had become a feature of Indian life and that on August 15, 1947, the Punjab was already in the grip of unprecedented massacres and anarchy. The disruption caused by events of the succeeding three months is difficult to exaggerate. It is now most commonly said that 12 million people were uprooted from their homes and forced to cross either to India or to Pakistan, that several hundreds of thousands were killed, and (according to Indian government claims) that property valued at more than \$8 billion was left behind, nine-tenths of it by Indian nationals fleeing from Pakistan. Northern India received perhaps a million fewer refugees than Pakistan had to cope with, but it had less evacuee land on which to settle them. This was because Sikhs and Hindus fleeing from Pakistan were generally more prosperous and therefore owned more land, than the Muslim artisans and peasants who left India. At any rate, the amount of national energy that has gone into the settlement of more than 5 million refugees is prodigious. The new, truncated state of East Punjab is a sick weakling. But Indian leaders and administrators deserve great credit for having kept it breathing through the desperate and unpopular chore of distributing bits of land and urban property to millions of people whose holdings had previously been larger and better.

Settlement of refugees was not the only burden of partition. Reorganization of the administration, finances and defense of the country also drained away energy and resources that were badly needed for more constructive purposes.

I repeat that it seems fair to say that in these 30 months the leaders of India and their government have made an impressive record of achievement.

At the same time, however, new problems have descended upon them and new forces have come to the surface. It is the government's ill success in grappling with some of these that has bred today's feelings of discouragement and disillusionment in the country.

On the political side, most observers would agree that the Congress party, though still dominant, has fallen on bad days. That is not necessarily true at the top, where a band of devoted workers is struggling to save the country from grave ills. The integrity and sincerity of Nehru and Patel are not to be impugned, though others

may not agree with them and they may not always agree with each other. Some of what were formerly called the provincial Congress parties, those in the component states, have stood up well. In Bombay, for example, despite many criticisms and much bitterness against the puritanical bent of the party ministry—and, indeed, despite charges of graft levelled against some important party individuals—the Congress as represented in the legislature and ministry has made a creditable record since independence. Elsewhere the picture of Congress party activities is not nearly so happy. In state after state the party is divided. Opposition between groups in Madras, Uttar Pradesh (the United Provinces), the Punjab, and West Bengal has been so severe as to require the direct personal intervention of Nehru or Patel or both. The significant fact is that even such extreme action has failed to be effective. More often than not quarrels tend to be over jobs and power rather than over principle. British-trained Indian administrators are distressed at the amount of local intervention by politicians in police cases, promotions and transfers of officials, and similar official business. They are even more fearful of the future results of what they describe as widespread bribery and corruption in some of the states. One of the ablest officers I know, an Indian whose loyalty to his country is unquestioned, said to me, “If we go under, this disintegration of political morality may be the major factor; and if it continues, we may well go under.”

From the point of view of the individual peasant or townsman, a more direct cause of distress may be the waves of economic crisis rocking the country. Partition had a more significant effect on the Indian economy than had been realised in advance. Traditionally India, in the classical pattern of a colonial economy, had exported raw materials and imported finished goods. In this exchange India often had a trade surplus; even during the war it contributed more to the Empire dollar pool than it drew. But partition cut away from India one of its great wheat areas, the bulk of its jute-growing lands, and a large percentage of its raw cotton sources. All those went to Pakistan. Now, while Pakistan has neither the people to eat its wheat nor the factories to spin and weave its textile fibres, India has become—like the United Kingdom—a country that must import both food and raw materials which can be paid for only with manufactured exports. The stoppage of trade between India and Pakistan

consequent on their disagreement over currency devaluation has exacerbated an already difficult situation. Bombay cotton mills are now producing cloth for the Middle East and the Far East (while Indians themselves still hunger for larger cloth stocks) so that raw cotton can be purchased from East Africa and elsewhere. Because jute is not arriving from Pakistan and is available nowhere else except from limited local stocks, Calcutta jute and burlap mills are on short rations and labor unrest is growing in that unhealthy city. General imports have been drastically restricted to meet the lower level of exports. Even food imports are being severely curtailed to save foreign exchange. In effect, the country is trying to overcome partition losses by making itself at the same time self-sufficient in foodgrains, cotton, and jute.

On the side of internal economics there are also many discouraging features. The most fundamental, I suppose, is an apparent lack of improvement in village productivity. When I expressed surprise that agricultural acreage and output had apparently actually declined over recent years in Hyderabad, I was told that economists are discovering signs of the same phenomenon in some other parts of India. The upheavals of the last decade are part of the cause. The constantly increasing human pressure is also a factor. It would not be fair to say that overall national productivity has decreased. But even more optimistic analyses do not reveal a rise that is sharper than the population growth curve. Such a trend means that the villages of India are increasingly becoming net consumption units rather than production units. They hold the preponderance of the national population. If they create no wealth for national development, the prospects for capital accumulation are dim.

Two or three rural rehabilitation movements are beyond the paper-planning stage and inquiry commissions meet periodically. A broader basic approach to the problem of village productivity cannot be escaped, however, if India is to have any hope of achieving the future of its dreams.

Similarly, in the towns of India conditions could hardly be called happy. Reconversion problems still plague the country. The existing industrial plant is worn and inadequate. Capitalists blame the Indian government for bureaucratic, bungling, restrictive policies that rob business of all incentive. Indian capital has in effect been on strike

against the national government. On the labor side, the increasing spiral of inflation (perhaps recently brought to a rest on a high plateau) has encouraged unrest. That has been enhanced by uncertainty over work and by government and private failures to cope with gross housing problems. Similar stimuli are at work among government employees in such state enterprises as posts and telegraphs and the railways.

Confronted with such difficulties, the government sees clearly that rapid increase of production is essential to the country. A seeming paralysis has overtaken economic thinking, however, because of the unresolved conflict between those who believe that the industrialists should be unfettered and those who argue that India's limited resources must be husbanded under the overall control of the government.

Widespread suspicion exists in India against the motive of the money-controlling classes who are generally thought to have done quite well out of the war and the postwar shortages. One intellectual expressed the view of many when he said to me, "Why should we turn the country over to the jackals? Let Jawaharlal mobilize us in a real crusade the way he did when he was young and brave." Many people shake their heads: "Jawaharlal is essentially a compromiser. He composes differences, but by yielding to the strongest pressure. It is too late now for him to do anything big." Others follow the line of an individual who commented, "Nehru is the only man who could get us out of this slough of despond, if he were not an economic illiterate. This country is too large and complex to be built up just through the exertions of private business, which is itself so meager here. But as of today, I favor giving Patel and the business people a free hand, so that we can at least do something."

The government has officially determined on mixed economy—partly public and partly private. As of today it has not created any strong incentive for either Indian enterprise or foreign enterprise to push ahead vigorously with the private part, while government development projects have been sharply curtailed by the current financial crisis.

These are aspects of the national economic problem. By itself the country can hardly solve them. Outside help will be needed.

External aid to any country can be fully effective, however, only when it can mesh with local determination, vigor, and vision. Those are needed in India today.

Tied in closely with the economic, as well as the political, difficulties is India's series of disputes with its sibling Pakistan. Finances, material resources and energies are being frittered and drained away in the struggles between the two countries. I have written previously about Pakistani attitudes towards this matter. The most common Indian point of view, I suppose, is that as the elder brother India is being bullied by the younger brother who thinks he can safely take liberties, and must therefore be taught where the line is to be drawn. Most Indians think they have repeatedly shown willingness to compromise, only to be rebuffed by Pakistan. (Pakistanis hold the same conviction, in reverse.) Indians hold that Pakistan has subjected them to undue international censure over Kashmir, that Pakistan has taken an arbitrary and totally unsatisfactory line over the matter of compensation for evacuee property, that Pakistan has seriously mistreated non-Muslims remaining within its borders, and that Pakistan has failed to fulfill its commitments in most of the limited bilateral agreements that have been negotiated since independence. They feel particularly strongly now about the currency issue. India, whose external assets are wrapped up in its sterling balances, felt obliged to follow Britain in devaluation last September and assumed that Pakistan would do the same, particularly as the whole imposing structure of Indo-Pakistan trade and financial relations had unquestioningly been based on the parity of the two rupees. Indians are now convinced that political rather than economic reasons led Pakistan not to devalue its rupee. They believe it was a plot to hold India, which ordinarily sells less to Pakistan than it buys from her, in ransom. To make up the balance of payments at former trade levels but against a more expensive Pakistan rupee would mean that India should gratuitously contribute to Pakistan's wealth at its own expense, Indians feel. That is the reason the government of India declined to recognize the newly evolved exchange rate of 144 Indian rupees to 100 Pakistan rupees. Pakistan refused to permit currency transfers at any other rate. Remittances therefore became impossible and trade stopped, bringing the collapse of a great economic exchange of vital importance to both countries. Under prior

commitments certain strategic commodities, notably coal and electric power, continued to pass from India to Pakistan and were paid for out of existing Pakistan balances held in India. In December even coal ceased to move, when India accused Pakistan of withholding jute supplies which had been purchased by Indian firms before devaluation. All of these economic difficulties add fuel to the fire of resentment and distrust that burns so dangerously today between India and Pakistan. This quarrel, which has important international implications, is one of the basic facts of Indian life today.

In preceding paragraphs I have touched on a number of fundamental problems that confront India. Another matter that needs mentioning is perhaps the foundation of all the rest. Indians seem to have lost their immediate sense of purpose and high destiny. Their national energies are not now concentrated on any significant objective. It is always easier to unify a country in the presence of external opposition, of course. During the fight against British rule Congress party members and other patriots generated a strong sense of purpose even though they held all varieties of economic and affirmative political views. There were divisions, of course, but the hope existed that with independence all Indians could unite in building up their country. This appears not to have happened to a significant degree. Stronger than the unifying convictions are differences as to the "how" of building up the country and sheer apathy toward any further effort outside immediate personal circles. A generation of political instruction on how to frustrate and nonviolently resist the alien government now bears fruit in similar activity against the indigenous government.

The development of a sense of overriding national loyalty supported by national determination to revitalize and develop the country is the prerequisite for the sort of all-out national effort that is essential if the country is to climb out of its present morass.

Despite the frustrations and the crises, many new forces which are at work in India today promise basic changes in the coming years. Wrapped up in the new Indian constitution, which must be the longest and most complicated in the world, are important concepts of social justice, equality, secularism, and complete adult franchise. Constitutional changes do not, of course, guarantee social changes, as the Indians repeatedly remind us in respect to the position of the

Negro. But the legal removal of untouchability in India and the promise of equal rights to Muslim citizens living in the midst of the dominant Hindu society are both gateways to social transformation. India has the chance, if it will, to walk through them.

Some students believe that the greatest immediate impact of the new constitution will come from the provision that every adult can vote. When the first national elections are held—perhaps next winter or later in 1951—about five times as many people will have polling rights as ever before. Nearly all the newcomers will be those who failed to pass earlier educational, property or occupation tests; i.e., the illiterate, propertyless masses of India. The bulk of these masses are, of course, low-caste and outcasts people. The question of what they will do with the vote is perhaps the most dynamic social issue in India today.

Four possibilities seem to exist. Many of the new voters may follow the name of Mahatma Gandhi and vote for “Gandhi” candidates. That is what the Congress party hopes for. In effect it would mean that the new electorate did not basically affect the national political pattern.

But many new voters might also come under the hold of an anti-Brahman party, thus throwing religion back into politics with a vengeance. This is regarded as possible in several parts of the country. Others could readily respond to the leftist call to oppressed peoples against those they consider to be the oppressors. Leftist parties are already studying how to win broad support from the newly enfranchised groups in order to overcome the Congress party’s dominance in the more privileged older electorate. (One of the difficulties, as at least the Socialist party strategists will admit, is that like other political movements Indian leftism has been largely the product of intellectuals, and intellectuals have been largely Brahmans and other upper-caste individuals. Thus though leftist parties profess to ignore caste, they can make no stronger appeal to anti-Brahman elements than can the Hindu Mahasabha or the Congress.) A fourth possibility is that adult franchise may contribute to the fragmentation of India, with local constituencies finding no overall political loyalty and voting instead for independent home-district figures. This tendency may be suppressed, at least in the first election, through the constitutional provisions that candidates need not be residents

of their constituency. The Congress party may be strong enough to blanket the country with a nationally approved slate of candidates who are subject to party discipline.

A number of Indians approve of adult franchise. Whatever it may mean in bringing illiterates into parliament and in debasing the level of political life, they argue, it is almost certain to intensify the pressures against caste and creed distinctions. If you have to depend on a hundred outcastes or Muslims for votes, you cannot indefinitely depress them between elections. Also it is felt that a broader political base, no matter how rustic, will put new vitality and challenge into politics and be the means by competition of bringing forward a new crop of vigorous men.

The potentialities of adult franchise must be held in mind in considering the political life of the country today. As I have indicated, the Congress party is still almost universally dominant although it has declined markedly from the high-water mark of its prestige. Alongside the Congress party there have developed various communal organizations and leftist groups. Of the communal groups, the Muslim League has spent its force in India. After the upheaval over Pakistan, Muslims remaining behind in India are generally regarded as having yielded political initiative, at least for this generation. They think they have the best chance of being left alone by remaining quiet, and that seems to be what they are doing.

The Hindu Mahasabha is another matter. Almost defunct some time ago, it has climbed back into the political arena and is making considerable noise. Its leaders commit the party firmly to a policy of reabsorption of Pakistan into India. Their constantly reiterated demand for reunification of the old India gives, as can be imagined, a profound stimulus to Pakistani suspicions of India. Both Nehru and Patel have scolded the Mahasabha for its "damaging and unrealistic" campaigning, but with little effect. The political strength of the Mahasabha is hard to judge at the present moment; basically, its potential depends on the course of Indo-Pakistan relations. Each new irritation improves its chances. The Mahasabha has strong Brahman following in many areas, but among other Hindus its influence seems somewhat restricted to north India and refugee concentrations, where feelings against Muslims have been highest. In Maharashtra I was told that non-Brahman Hindus are definitely set against the Mahasabha.

If the Hindu communal movement makes material progress, the chief instrument may be the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The militant RSS appeases the frustrations of middle-class individuals in much the pattern of the various youth movements in Europe. The discipline shown at RSS rallies is sufficiently impressive to be frightening. The way in which its fanatical leader crisscrosses the country on tours that he denies are aggressive reminds me of a similar Muslim organization, the *Khaksars*, that ripened nearly a dozen years ago. The *Khaksars* died an inglorious death when they thought themselves bigger than Mr. Jinnah. Whether the RSS could suffer a similar fate at the hands of, say, Patel would depend on whether Patel really wanted to suppress it and on the vigor of the Indo-Pakistan antagonism. One of the most dangerous features of continued controversy between India and Pakistan is the prospect that communal organizations of fascist character may thrive on the disputes.

On the left, the picture is confused. In recent months the Communist party of India appears at least temporarily to have lost some of its influence. The party itself is split. The controlling group, under B. T. Ranadive, has set out consciously to frustrate and disrupt the administration in selected centers—of which Calcutta is one—as a means of bringing on conditions that would allow the Communists to seize power. This is the proletarian revolution method, and many Communists leaders have faced police guns or even rioted in jail to execute it. A growing number of Communists, however, have come around to the conviction that the method is wasteful of party talent and not suited to the needs of the day. They favor a united front of “all opposed to monopoly capitalism.” They analyze the Indian situation as approaching that of China a few years ago, and they think that with a less extreme policy they might win over the large numbers of discontents from all levels of society for a Mao Tse Tung-type “People’s Democracy.” The Cominform is being petitioned by this latter group, many of whose members have had to resign temporarily from the party, to approve their analysis and line of action. Meanwhile the frontal assault of the Ranadive policy has enabled the Indian government to come to grips with Communists in many areas and to break their hold over most of the labor movement. Calcutta and Hyderabad remain two regions where Communist-led insurrectionists have disturbing power.

The Socialist party is more violently opposed to the Communists than to the Congress party. Indeed, I have gained the feeling that the Socialists would like to share power in the government with Nehru. They are, of course, opposed to the Patel faction. In line with much of the Socialist party's history, there appear to be organizational difficulties. The party expects to capitalize on discontent at the next elections, but its own strategists do not expect to see it swept into power.

India has also nurtured a whole host of leftist splinter parties. They range from Leninist-Trotskyites to the Revolutionary Communist and Revolutionary Socialist parties. Some 18 of these splinter parties have recently sought to form a "Left Front." I am not in a position to judge their future impact on the national political life, but their history indicates localized and intensely sectarian influence.

It can be concluded that opposition to the Congress party has not yet crystallized into a single substantial counterforce. In the first elections the Congress party may well carry the new electorate along with the old. But there hardly exists in the country what could be called political stability. The Congress, having accomplished its historic objective of winning Indian independence, has not fully translated itself into the vehicle of a post-independence policy. It is therefore an uncertain factor for the future.

With an internal situation such as I have tried to describe, Indians have had to revise their initial concepts of their country's role in Asia and the world. Regardless of later disappointments, Nehru will stand out as a great figure in the nationalist renaissance of Asia. But the country which so bravely organized the Asian Relations Conference in 1947 and followed with the conference of Asian states on Indonesia in early 1949 is not taking a lead in the world's concern over Southeast Asia in 1950. The impression has spread that at the Colombo Commonwealth Conference a few weeks ago, Nehru was not taking the initiative. What is required for South Asian leadership now is material aid as much as other encouragement. India in its present straitened circumstance does not find it easy to give material aid to anyone.

Similarly, on the world scene, India has not made great progress in developing its "third force," or neutral bloc concept. Its policy

of non-involvement in the cold war combined with the preoccupation forced on it by the Kashmir dispute has not enhanced its influence in the United Nations. There has been some talk in the United States about "lining up India with the democracies" and "making India the bastion of democratic forces that China failed to become." I am persuaded that India is and will remain a very important country. Across the sweep of non-Communist Asia, no country approaches it in size, population or resources. As it grows and matures, India will doubtless exert increasing influence in Asia and the world. At the present stage of India's development, however, many Indians are anxious not to be pressed to play an important international role. They feel, and rightly, that whatever initial ambitions they may have held, the crucial task now is to win the necessary successes on the home front. This course is the more feasible because India can count on the encouragement of Britain and the United States and faces no immediate international dangers apart from the seriously explosive potentialities of Kashmir and the controversy with Pakistan. Resurgent China is not so great and immediate a challenge to India as to such a country as Indo-China. Thus external Communist aggression is not a threat at this moment. In the international field, therefore (always excepting relations with Pakistan), India has still a little time to move independently and give first priority to home issues.

There is much on which I have not touched in this letter. In the weeks that I have spent in India during this visit I have had the opportunity of renewing many old associations and of hearing at length the present crop of ambitions and frustrations. While India is going through a difficult period, I leave the country feeling that it holds within itself the necessary remedies, provided that it incorporates more Gandhism than cynicism into its national life.

Afterword

THE FOREGOING LETTERS written between 1938 and 1950 reflect my efforts at the time to understand and tell about the passions and anxieties of the people of British India as they worked their way toward and into independence. Today, some 60 years later, I find myself pondering which of those dreams and those fears have actually impacted post-colonial India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh and which have proved of little relevance to the post-colonial subcontinent.

In retrospect the independence of India and creation of Pakistan in 1947 symbolized and initiated one of the greatest political changes of the twentieth-century world: the end of the Western imperial age and the formation of Asian and African nation states. The Indian and Pakistani leaders—notably Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, and Jinnah—who guided this profound revolution were giants among men. They were not solely responsible for ending British rule in South Asia. World Wars I and II had so drained Great Britain's strength that in 1945 it no longer possessed either the capacity or the will to re-establish its imperial presence in South Asia. Nevertheless, in bringing independence to India and Pakistan these leaders created states new in structure, in purpose and in ambition. Their achievements leveraged the spreading collapse of colonialism across Asia and Africa. And what they accomplished in the nations they helped create proved more stable than what emerged in many other non-Western countries.

At independence in 1947 India, fragmented by partition but still the second most-populous country in the world, held high hopes for the future. These were built not only on the dreams of freedom but also on past achievements. As a British dependency for nearly two centuries India had partly modernized its mainly rural society. It had built major cities and ports. It had developed substantial urban and village industries. It had generated profitable estate crops.

And its vibrant cultural traditions extending back thousands of years had strongly survived foreign rule.

On winning freedom the Indian and Pakistani people ardently anticipated the arrival of full democracy and vigorous economic development, though both new countries faced overwhelming difficulties. There were the immediate, terrible costs of the partition. Beyond those, both countries were mired in widespread poverty, educational backwardness and poor health conditions—all problems that had been addressed but not solved by the traditional, top-down bureaucracy of British India. Internationally, the new nations were intent on finding a worthy place in the world. Closer to home, however, they could not escape the impact of formerly domestic political issues that were now converted into trans-border India-Pakistan confrontations, notably the unresolved issue of jurisdiction over the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

I

Sixty years later independent India has not only confirmed its regional pre-eminence but has become a significant all-Asian and global presence. Domestically, its democratic political system, though challenged at one moment by Mrs. Gandhi's Emergency rule, has survived as the sturdy framework of participatory government. Along with the trebling of population and of per capita income (adjusted for inflation), India has doubled its citizens' average lifespan, multiplied its schools and colleges and expanded its health services. It has built robust and growing middle classes with strong entrepreneurial skills. Indian writers and other artists and Indian scientists have gained international recognition. It also remains, naturally, a work in progress. More than a third of its population is still locked in deep poverty, and critical deficiencies continue to drag down educational and health services. As the country modernizes, the remaining governmental controls and severe infrastructural inadequacies impede rapid progress. Yet India's prospects for the future are strong.

A survey of these six decades must also note how fortunate India has been in comparison to its neighbors. At independence most of

the major cities, ports, industrial capacity and modern financial fiber of pre-partitioned India remained within the new India rather than going to Pakistan. Post-partition India inherited the great bulk of the existing federal governmental establishment, buttressed by cadres of experienced civil servants and organized military forces. Of particular importance, the new India's world-class leader, Jawaharlal Nehru, was given 17 years as prime minister to build strength, stability and continuity into the new national government.

Arguably, India's greatest glory in these six decades has been its impressive development and consolidation of a democratic system. Few other former colonial countries have done so well. Nor are there many countries where the complexities of racial and linguistic differences or the distinctions among traditional caste and other social structures have presented such challenges to the building of democratic structures. Total adult franchise in free India was the gift of its founding generation, the fruit of a conviction among Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleagues that a modern state's only source of legitimacy could be the people themselves. For India, with its tradition of monarchies, autocracies and other top-down ruling systems, this was a historic advance. It has also provided the heartbeat of India's governing system.

Naturally, there have been difficulties. That democracy is an untidy, often contentious and sometimes corrupt system has repeatedly been demonstrated in post-independence India. If the sharpest breach came with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's declaration of an executive-controlled emergency regime in 1975, reversed in 1977, more pervasive problems have also strained the system. In its early decades, India's political institutions often reflected the controlling interests of mostly upper-caste leaderships. More recently, political power, particularly at the state level, has shifted to the more numerous lower castes and what are called the "other backward classes." As these gain experience of both the responsibilities and the perquisites of democratic government, the interests of formerly neglected classes can benefit. Not surprisingly, the bureaucratic overload at both state and national levels has increased even faster than the expansion of governmental functions. Also, the new officialdom (like the old, but apparently more extensively) has often proved vulnerable to the temptations of bribes and undue influence.

The individual states' roles in national politics have also changed more than might have been foreseen. In the early years the Indian National Congress was the dominant national party, and units in the various states were its local agents. More recently the Bharatiya Janata Party has also achieved national-party status, but neither national party on its own has proved able any longer to win majority support in Parliament. Instead, India has now generated multiple regional parties, each based primarily on a linguistic, ethnic or caste constituency or in an individual state. As these separate units have gained identity and strength, the two national parties have had to form coalitions either to govern or to establish an effective opposition.

The age of coalitions has reshaped the working of Indian politics. National administrations have sometimes built their majorities by bringing representatives of more than 20 parties into their cabinets. This trend has given political voice to broader segments of the body politic. But it has also made governance more difficult. Early twenty-first-century governing coalitions have found themselves vulnerable to the demands of individual member parties, even fringe groups, whose dereliction might end their pluralities. A 2006 example was the resistance by leftist Communist party members to economic reform policies sought by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who as finance minister in the early 1990s had launched the opening of the Indian economy to private entrepreneurs and reduced government controls.

Withal, the democratic system has proved itself the jewel in India's crown.

Looking back, one must credit the founding fathers of free India for creating or adapting the framework that has moved the country this far in six decades. The top leadership of the country's dominant political movement, the Indian National Congress, was cohesive. The leaders generally were mutually supportive and interactive, though their styles, their priorities and their concepts of the future differed materially. It seems clear that India would have been a different nation than it has become had Gandhi lived longer than he did, had Nehru died a year after independence or had Vallabhbai Patel instead of Nehru become India's first prime minister.

Mahatma Gandhi was not only a powerful moral force in the independence movement but also a clever, dextrous political manager. He would have been a remarkable figure in any country. His extraordinary personality and talents brilliantly awoke popular participation in the Indian struggle against British rule. He was often described as frail, but anyone with him was impressed by his robust vigor. His command over audiences of thousands was fascinating to observe. So were his conversations with just one or two or three others. Whether he spoke in Hindi or in English, there were often people who did not understand his words but who gained fulfillment in taking his *darshan*.^{*} His mind held a vast range of interests, yet he seemed never to fail to focus totally on the immediate subject at hand. I recall watching him facing large crowds at major events—say at the Ramgarh Congress party assembly in 1940 or at the pioneering Asian Relations Conference in 1947—and somehow apparently speaking directly to each individual. In his ashram at Sevagram he was completely attentive to whichever of his ashramites needed medical or dietary attention or had some other problem. His sense of humor was infectious, including his indulgence in teasing—not least teasing those in his ashram. His daily prayer meetings were regularly attended by national press representatives, even when he traveled to such distant places as Noakhali in Bengal (where I was not alone in finding the conditions primitive). They clung to him because they never knew whether he would be talking about a matter of religious interpretation, some village uplift question, or, equally likely, a letter he had just received from the Viceroy or a dispute between, say, Nehru and Patel that had made national news.

For a news correspondent, as I then was, getting access to Gandhi or other leaders was easy. They wanted to get their story out to the world. Most often when I met him, Gandhi was in good spirits and reasonably optimistic about the issues we were discussing. When I last interviewed Gandhi a few weeks before he was killed, however, I was deeply saddened to hear him say (about conditions in the aftermath of the partition) that all was dark around him and he could not see anything because men were “behaving like beasts—no, worse than beasts, because beasts do not kill their own kind.”

^{*}Literally, a “sight”.

What direction would free India have taken had Gandhi lived actively through its formative decade? He would surely not have assumed a governmental post, either as prime minister or in the more honorific position of governor general or president. One can imagine that he would have remained the critic of authority he had always been, but would then have been challenging free India's progressive militarization, its burgeoning bureaucracies, its tendencies toward corruption, and its growing consumerism. His efforts to raise standards of public behavior would almost certainly have irritated senior government officials, even of his own party, as they struggled with the realities of governance.

And what would India now be like had Nehru disappeared from the scene a year after independence? Presumably Sardar Patel would have become prime minister. He was close to Gandhi, was Nehru's deputy, and was a leading strategist and disciplinarian of the Congress party. He was also a conservative and more a practical than a visionary leader. He would not have been soft on Pakistan. On an early morning walk one day in March 1947, three months before the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the June 3 plan that set the stage for India's independence with partition, Patel talked with me about his party's determination to have a united country. If Jinnah should force partition, he said,

We will go ahead and frame a constitution for the whole of India, making provision for areas that stay out at first to come in later. Within a year the Pakistan regions will be ready to join the Indian Union. The Muslim-majority areas would find they cannot stand alone. . . . It would be best for them to come in and work out a single union government.

He might already have known that neither of those eventualities would work out.

Patel would surely have been a strong prime minister. As deputy prime minister working closely with Nehru he had guided the integration of India's princely states into the Indian national fabric in and shortly after 1947. His grip on state policy and its execution was very firm. Under Patel, India would surely have pursued a more conservative course than it did under Nehru, putting less faith in a socialist pattern of society than in the vitality of the private sector

as an engine of economic progress. Patel would undoubtedly also have placed less emphasis than Nehru on secular government and given more support to the religious, cultural and political appetites of India's majority Hindu population.

But Gandhi was killed within months of independence and Patel died three years later. Nehru was the survivor. We know, of course, how India fared under Nehru's leadership. This sparkling international figure—who was alternately dazzling, moody, angry at others' stupidities, then apologetic for his outbursts, forgiving, loving and rejoicing in his role as teacher of his nation—dominated the Indian scene as few leaders can. At a public meeting once I observed him jump from the dais when a dispute broke in an aisle, forcibly separate the disputants, then return to his seat with what looked like a small embarrassed smile. Nehru pressed the country toward full democracy. He built up the public sector, bringing to flower some of what became India's major industries. His political instincts were strongly secular. Not all his dreams were realized. His socialist pattern proved inadequate to the modernization of Indian society. He made little progress against the extension of communalism in the country. His muscular foreign policy, which raised the international profile of India, failed to bring peace with Pakistan or, often, to sustain positive relations with India's other immediate neighbors. Yet Nehru guided India through critical times and left it a solid and basically stable independent state. Few nations have had the advantage of such affirmative, effective leadership.

II

Pakistan has not been so fortunate. Its long sequence of authoritarian governments under both military and civilian rulers has reflected the profound problems of an inadequately organized state. When British rule over India ended in 1947 there was a general expectation that Pakistan, like India, would function as a parliamentary democracy, embroidering the limited form of self-government introduced during the British period. Like the Congress party, Jinnah's Muslim League accepted the sovereignty of the people as the reigning political theory. But one can understand why things did not work out that way.

Pakistan had an extremely rough birth and a very difficult time finding its footing as a national state. The post-partition population exchange, one of the twentieth century's most devastating transfers, damaged Pakistan more widely than it did India, as millions of Pakistan's Hindu and Sikh residents, with all their skills, fled into the new India, while millions of Muslims, often with almost no possessions, crossed from northern India into Pakistan territory. Moreover, Pakistan, unlike the new India, had to create a national government from scratch. The pre-existing administrations in the Pakistan territory included only three provincial administrations—in Sind, Baluchistan, and the Northwest Frontier Province—and Muslim elements of the divided provinces of Punjab and Bengal. Pakistan's new bureaucracy had to be fashioned from the Muslims serving with Government of India departments who opted for Pakistan and were transferred to Karachi in the midst of the post-partition violence to create comparable administrative departments there. Pakistan also started without an established military force. Its army, navy and air force had to be built from mainly Muslim units detached from the Indian defense services. An integrated civil service, a national banking system and other key attributes of national life had to be created mainly by the Muslim officials and private executives from India who had joined Pakistan. Besides, the 1947 Pakistan Dominion, which embraced about a quarter of pre-partition India, lacked any major financial or industrial center or advanced communication arrangements between its Indus valley-based western wing and its distant, culturally different, Bengali eastern wing. All this needed to be accomplished taking account of the interests of both the western and eastern wings.

Nascent Pakistan desperately needed strong leadership. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who had dominated and shaped the drive for Pakistan, was clearly to be the grand marshal of the new state. He seemed ready for the task. When Lord Mountbatten formally transferred sovereignty from Britain to Pakistan on August 14, 1947, Jinnah declared his goal was to make Pakistan a national home for South Asian Muslims that would, at the same time, have a secular government sustaining equal rights for all its citizens. His followers seemed to accept that goal.

Jinnah had long been the paramount leader of the All India Muslim League, but my impression was that his determination to create a new Muslim state took shape during the 1937–39 period of provincial autonomy governments under the Government of India Act of 1935. In several provinces where Muslims were in a minority the Congress party won the 1937 elections and, for the first time, shouldered the responsibilities of governance. From the Muslim perspective some of these administrations went overboard in adopting Hindu symbols and laws that favored the majority Hindu community. During those years the Muslim League, which had previously reflected the interests of Muslim landowners and other elites, became a rallying point for ordinary Muslims who heard the call “Islam in danger” and concluded that they did not wish to live under a “Hindu raj.” By 1939–40 (when I was first in India) the Muslim League had become something of a populist movement, not unlike the broad-based Congress party after Gandhi’s arrival in the 1920s. Jinnah picked up the idea of a Muslim state from some students and from the poet Mohammad Iqbal, and found it resonated among the Muslim League leaders.

Whether Jinnah ever considered the Pakistan demand a bargaining chip, as his opponents thought he might, I find it hard to know. Jinnah was a strongly self-controlled, British-educated barrister whose cold public logic often hid his personal views. He listened carefully to his League associates. My impression was that he typically waited until he had clarified his mind, then expressed his conclusion in terms that did not allow dispute. As a tactic in the 1946–47 Indian independence negotiations he often said he could make no commitment without the approval of the League’s Council. He would hear out his associates but in the end it was he who set and declared the group’s decision.

When Jinnah died just over a year after Pakistan was born, some of Pakistan’s potential died with him. His chosen successor, Liaquat Ali Khan, fell to an assassin’s bullet after only another three years. The succeeding short-term administrations controlled by civil or military service leaders brought Pakistan neither stability nor democracy. In 1958, 11 years after the creation of the state, General Mohammad Ayub Khan, the army commander, seized control of the government and instituted military rule, starting Pakistan down

a long stretch of authoritarian government. Ayub's "Basic Democracies" scheme offered low-level public political participation but not parliamentary democracy, for which Ayub thought his nation unready. In contrast to India's non-alignment posture, Ayub strengthened Pakistan's security ties with the United States and with the members of the Central Treaty Organization and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. His 11 years in power gave Pakistan its first extended stretch of stable administration, with many constructive policies but also with no resolution of several gnawing issues, including the prospects of democracy and the growing question of religion's role in government.

When in 1968 Ayub was replaced by the serving army chief, General Mohammad Yahya Khan, the continuation of military dictatorship seemed destined despite a rising tide of political opposition in the country. Yahya, however, took a different course. Dismantling Ayub's Basic Democracies and other institutions, he presided over Pakistan's first real democratic elections in 1970.

That was a fateful move. The civil-military "steel frame" that ruled Pakistan represented mainly the three quarters of Pakistan's territory in the western wing. The government's relative disregard of the interests of the eastern wing brought a strong Bengali demand for autonomy. Yahya thought that he could manage the restiveness in the country without eroding the state's security by bringing the political parties into the governance process.

Promptly, however, he discovered the law of unintended consequences. The Awami League led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman swept the eastern wing constituencies, giving it a majority in the National Assembly. In the western wing the Pakistan People's Party headed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Ayub's former foreign minister who had turned against him, won the most constituencies but ran far behind the Awami League total. The western wing establishment, however, was unwilling to permit Mujib to form the next government of Pakistan. The result was a Bengali uprising that Pakistan's regime brutally tried to put down with army troops (sent around Sri Lanka, since India blocked them from crossing or over-flying its territory). When India intervened militarily in the east, Pakistan suffered a humiliating defeat with the surrender of 93,000 of its troops. The former East Pakistan then declared independence and became the

new national state of Bangladesh in 1971, ending Yahya's grand political gesture with the bifurcation of his nation.

What had gone wrong? Why had the original Pakistan idea of building a state on shared Muslim values failed? In pre-partition India the Islamic appeal had been a powerful unifying factor among Muslims—Bengalis as well as Sindhis—living in a country with a much larger Hindu population. When the Muslim-majority state emerged, however, Pakistanis in the different units discovered that cultural factors could trump religious unity. The Bengalis had their own proud history and were not prepared to be ruled by overbearing agents from the Indus Valley region. It was equally evident that West Pakistani leaders looked down upon Bengalis. Despite the catastrophic nature of the separation, many West Pakistanis were plainly relieved to rid themselves of responsibility for East Pakistan.

The original Pakistan had lasted just 24 years. The issue then was whether the successor Pakistan—consisting of the former western wing with its four contiguous provinces: Punjab, Sind, the North-west Frontier Province, and Baluchistan, along with borderland tribal territories—could create a more stable base.

Pakistan had to make a fresh start. There seemed some promising possibilities. Though diminished, the new Pakistan was geographically and culturally more cohesive than its predecessor. With frontiers that touched Afghanistan, Iran, and China as well as India its considerable strategic significance remained. Under the impact of Ayub's earlier reforms it was making economic progress. The dynamics of politics in Pakistan changed, too. With the exit of East Pakistan the Pakistan People's Party had a majority in the new National Assembly. Its driving leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto took control of the national government.

Bhutto brought in a new constitution and a variety of reforms. When he lifted martial law and reached an agreement with Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for the release of Pakistani prisoners of war in Bengal, Pakistanis looked toward a real experience with democracy. Within five years, however, movements for provincial autonomy and Islamic policies produced more civil disorder. Bhutto sought to put down street demonstrations by reinstating martial law in select cities but the army went further. In 1977 the army commander, General Mohammad Zia-ul Haq, ousted and arrested

Bhutto and, charging him with having ordered a murder, ultimately condemned and hanged him despite domestic and international pleas for his life.

Zia restored military government with a twist. A pious Muslim, he thought Islamic unity could bind together the new Pakistan despite the experience of Bengal. He sought to make the country in every way a more Islamic state. Soviet activities in Afghanistan led his government to become directly engaged in that country. Like Ayub, Zia sustained his rule for more than a decade, giving the country some stability. Yet in the end he too encountered increasing resistance from Pakistani politicians, notably Zulfikar Bhutto's daughter Benazir, and from regional and sectarian activists. In August 1988 a military plane on which he was traveling with many of Pakistan's senior generals and the American ambassador exploded in mid-air. The cause of the crash remains a mystery although many, including virtually all Pakistanis, believe it was no accident.

Zia's death marked the end of an era. The generals likely to have replaced him were on the plane with him. There followed a succession of civilian administrations, none of them long-lived. Benazir Bhutto, who had assumed the leadership of the Pakistan People's Party after her father's death, won elections and lasted in office for 17 months. Her rival Nawaz Sharif took over for the next three years before being ousted. After an effective interim administration led by Moen Qureshi, a former vice-president of the World Bank, fresh elections in 1993 returned Benazir Bhutto to office. This time her government was dismissed after three years. She was again replaced by Nawaz Sharif, who in 1999 was ousted by a coup of military officers led by General Pervez Musharraf. Pakistan had once more fallen under a military dictatorship.

With all their troubles, Pakistanis found reasons for considerable pride in their country. For years economic growth on a percentage basis was greater than India's. Each sports success against an international rival brought joy. Nor can one overestimate the surge of national pride that followed Pakistan's explosion in 1998 of an atomic weapon quickly after India had done the same. This achievement stands high in the national self-image even though it brought

intense international criticism down on Pakistan's head, reinforced when the national hero, nuclear chief A. Q. Khan, was exposed for having run a bizarre network for buying and selling nuclear-weapon components in many countries.

Why were Pakistan's civilian administrations not more successful? Some reasons reflect issues of national identity. Also, the civilian politicians faced the reality that, as in Turkey, the military establishment in Pakistan asserted its position as the strongest national institution and the guardian of public life. It had little hesitation in dismissing civilian governments which in its opinion had proved incompetent. The role of Islam in government has been another persistently divisive issue. The Bhuttos, as governmental secularists, and Nawaz Sharif who saw Islamization as a unifying bond, pushed Pakistan in different directions, as did their personal animosities. (Similarly, the military rulers Ayub, Yahya, and Musharraf tended toward secularism, whereas Zia ul-Haq pressed an Islamic identity in Pakistani schools and public life as well as in the military.) Also, the civilian governments, not unlike some of the military regimes, got into trouble when their leaders proved venal and allowed public corruption to grow.

A critical permanent factor in the shaping of Pakistan's identity has, of course, been its troubled relations with India. Jinnah had argued that the creation of Pakistan, giving a separate homeland to Muslims, would end the communal clashes that had torn Hindu-Muslim relations in pre-independence India. Partition, however, brought explosive new confrontations over the protection of minorities, the control of evacuee properties, the distribution of canal waters and, most urgently and protractedly, control of Kashmir. These disputes set India and Pakistan at each other's throats. Pursuing its perceived national interest against India became a driving part of Pakistan's national purpose.

Kashmir is one of those gut issues that probably did not need to become a huge crisis. The Muslim-majority princely state lay along the borders of both India and Pakistan and each was determined to bring the state within its polity. However, Britain's last viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, had assured Kashmir's Hindu maharaja that if, before the date of independence, he would opt for either India or Pakistan

the British would confirm his choice in accord with the prescription set out for the accession to one dominion or the other by all of the more than 500 princely states in British India. The trouble was that the Kashmir maharaja did not believe that he could survive in either of the newly-independent dominions, so he could not bring himself to an unpalatable choice between them. When he had failed to act before independence was proclaimed, irregular armed forces from Pakistan soon entered the state and India immediately made a counter move. India, having finally gained the belated adherence of the maharaja, secured control of the prized valley of Kashmir while Pakistanis grasped only the state's western and northern districts. This result set the stage for the conflict of the next half-dozen decades. Pakistanis were left frustrated and angry. However, they also found a unified national purpose in their resolve to loosen India's grip on Kashmir.

When General Musharraf seized the government in 1999 he thought he could bring peace and stability to the country. At first Pakistan's interests in Afghanistan and in Kashmir appeared to be his priorities. Perceiving wider security issues after the tragedy of September 11, 2001, he aligned Pakistan with the new American focus on resistance to terrorism. Pakistan gained much from this connection, but its military government became widely unpopular with an increasingly anti-American public. Islamic activists made Musharraf's supposed knuckling-under to American policy the crux of their continued efforts to bring down his government. Even as he modified policy to begin to draw civilian parties back into the political process starting with elections in 2002, Islamists kept up a high level of violence in the society.

So it is that, 60 years on, Pakistan has yet to achieve sustained functioning governance answerable to its citizens. In wrestling with often-horrendous problems, however, it has survived. Even though democratic ideals have often seemed beyond reach, the flame still burns. Each military ruler, having taken over the government at a time of national distress, has wound up with steps directed toward the reintroduction of at least limited parliamentary government. Pakistan clearly has a constituency for a democratic future, but how it will reach that future has yet to be determined.

III

And what of its former eastern wing? Bangladesh emerged as a poverty-stricken country tucked between India and Burma (now Myanmar) with a population larger than that of residual Pakistan but with barely one sixth of Pakistan's area. As it broke away from Pakistan in 1971 this new state saw itself as a nation that was both solidly Bengali and solidly Muslim. Seeking a stable political basis, it declared nationalism, secularism, socialism, and democracy to be its basic principles. Like Pakistan, however, Bangladesh soon fell into political turbulence with elected governments displaced by military rulers who themselves fell from power in the face of national distress.

After leading the fight for independence Bangladesh's first hero, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, head of the dominant Awami League, became prime minister in a parliamentary form of government. The country was soon in difficulties, however, with economic deterioration and civil disorder. Mujib proclaimed a state of emergency followed by a constitutional amendment establishing a one-party system. In 1975 dissident army officers assassinated Mujib and most of his family members.

Against wide but poorly organized civilian opposition, the two military regimes that followed—directed in turn by army chiefs of staff General Ziaur Rahman and Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammad Ershad—each exercised dictatorial powers for several years. Although both had seized power at moments of serious public disorder with the stated goal of establishing stable government, both were also forced to recognize the strength of civilians' quest for election-based constitutional parliamentary politics. Both launched political parties and won elections to become president. Their regimes ended with the assassination of Rahman by an army cabal in 1981 and the forced resignation of Ershad in 1990, followed by fresh elections. At that point Bangladesh had lived under military rule for about 15 of its first 18 years, but Bangladeshis' resentment of the army's role as political manager was no longer to be denied.

Next came an era of civilian politics, dominated from 1991 well into the new century by two intensely competitive women prime ministers who loathed each other. Begum Khaleda Zia, widow of

the earlier president Ziaur Rahman, had inherited leadership of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) that her husband had founded. In the 1991 elections her party won a plurality and, with an Islamic party partner, formed a government dedicated to the restoration of democracy. The Awami League, headed by Begum Sheikh Hasina, a surviving daughter of the nation's first prime minister, Mujibur Rahman, led the opposition—and it opposed vigorously. Complaining of rigged elections and other governmental failures, the League orchestrated demonstrations and general strikes. It also threatened to boycott national elections in 1996.

By then, however, democratic patterns were taking hold in Bangladesh. Parliament put in place a neutral caretaker government to run the elections, which the Awami League won. Sheikh Hasina became prime minister. Now it was the turn of the BNP and Begum Zia to mount protests, charging harassment and the jailing of government opponents. The BNP also staged walkouts from parliament, increasing tensions as new elections approached. In 2001 national elections brought the BNP back into power, with Begum Zia again as prime minister. Once again Begum Hasina and the Awami League took up opposition in the usual Bangladeshi way. Other countries, including India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in South Asia, have had women prime ministers, but none has experienced the dominance of two sharply focused women alternately controlling the government and the opposition.

In its first 35 years Bangladesh proved difficult to govern, with leaders often preferring confrontation to compromise and not hesitant to resort to violence to achieve partisan aims. A confrontational crisis between the two parties over elections originally scheduled for early 2007, brought their postponement and an interim government with apparent military backing. Violence and disorder have characterized political life in Bangladesh but democratic institutions have so far survived.

In summary, one can begin to understand why the peoples of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have had such different experiences of governance during their early decades of independence. In India the resolute commitment to democracy by Nehru's founding generation overcame possible authoritarian challenges from communist

or rightist alternatives. The complexities of Indian society have been served without the perceived need to resort to dictatorships. Moreover, the Indian military with its tradition of British service has fully accepted the authority of the civilian-led government. Pakistan, in contrast, which had initially lacked functioning units of a central government, accepted the army as its sturdiest public institution. When the military came to see its function as the saving of the deeply troubled state, Pakistan began its history of military dictatorships. However, the failure of civilian leaders to create alternatives to military rule did not quench the continuing appetite for sustainable democracy. In Bangladesh, for its part, democratic patterns of government have taken hold but, as of the early twenty-first century, the leaders have yet to create a national consensus for constructive and effective government.

IV

Beyond struggles over their polity lie other tough issues that have powerfully influenced the national life of South Asian nations since 1947. Sixty years of economic development and social modernization in these countries have not yet overcome the burden of large numbers of very poor people. South Asia still has one of the lowest standards of living of any major region. Yet real progress has been made, with each country following its own pattern of growth. Pakistan, which initially had a very small industrial base with few large manufacturers, raised its national income by adopting free-market policies and developing a textile industry based on indigenous cotton. Robust farmers in Punjab and elsewhere also took advantage of the Green Revolution that raised crop yields. After a severe economic slump in the 1990s, Pakistan's economy has again started moving ahead at a brisk pace but for the first time since the early years is lagging behind India's. Bangladesh, with much of its population living in its often-flooded delta land, saw its early international jute market dwindle when supplanted by new materials, but gained a world market in textiles and clothing. Its economy has fared better since it gained independence, than most observers had originally anticipated it would. The condition of its rural and urban

communities has been strengthened by the remarkable achievements of non-governmental organizations such as the Grameen Bank (whose founder Mohammad Yunus won the Nobel Peace Prize) and its largest non-governmental organization, the social service agency BRAC. These, rather than inefficient and often inadequate governmental uplift efforts have been the drivers of economic advance.

India, the big elephant of South Asia, has since the early 1990s achieved a remarkable acceleration of what in its early decades of independence was disappointingly slow economic growth. In those years the economy reflected the Nehruvian ambition for a socialist pattern of society that allocated the “commanding heights” of economic endeavor to government-run public corporations and established tight public controls on private business. India drifted into a “license raj” that gave civil servants a strong management presence and limited the scope of private enterprise. There were successes. India, long subject to famines, became able to feed itself after Green Revolution agricultural gains. Industries grew. But in its first generation independent India could not rise above its “Hindu rate of growth” of about 3.5 percent per year (or, because of population growth, much less per capita).

The pace of growth began to quicken in the 1980s, only to run into the financial crisis of 1990. At that point India was ready to shift some economic management from the government to the vitality of private enterprise. After the introduction of reforms to reduce the government's role and move India into the global marketplace, the economy grew annually by 6 percent. In recent years it has attained an 8 percent growth rate. India's grasp of information technology and of the benefits of Western outsourcing helped the blossoming of an increasingly affluent middle class (defined in India roughly as people living above the subsistence level). This is now said to number some 300 million people, or about as many as the total population of the United States. After its low twentieth-century visibility in world trade and finance India has entered the twenty-first century becoming an Asian, and prospectively a global, economic power.

V

Beyond their domestic political and economic issues the South Asian nations have pursued vigorous foreign policies. Bangladesh, surrounded by India with Myanmar on the rest of its land frontier, has understandably concentrated its concerns mainly on contacts with its neighbors, not least on its periodically thorny relations with vastly more powerful India. Bangladesh takes credit as an original sponsor of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Of late, reports of increasing Islamist activity in Bangladesh penetrating Southeast Asia have attracted international concern.

Pakistan's foreign policy has often seemed to reflect the philosopher Kautilya's ancient advice that princes, when confronted by stronger rivals, should seek allies to strengthen their hand. Pakistan, at odds with India from its inception, has done just that. (India for its part has followed the Kautilyan model for the stronger state by preferring to negotiate with weaker neighbors bilaterally, thus reducing the chance of influence by third parties.) Early on, Pakistan served its own interests by affording international access to the People's Republic of China, which at that time was subject to boycott by other nations. Pakistan also developed effective relations with Iran and Turkey—originally through the Baghdad Pact, which evolved into the Central Treaty Organization—and with Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries. These ties even led to talk of a possible nuclear “Islamic Bomb” at some future time. As noted earlier, Pakistan has also strongly pursued its interests in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

Of special importance to Pakistan has been its up-and-down relationship with the United States. Understandably, each of these two countries has seen these ties from the perspectives of its own national, regional, and cold war interests. Confronting India, Pakistan has sought a strong American presence on its side. In the 1950s, it became a military ally of the United States, receiving security assistance and becoming a member of regional anti-communist pacts with Iran, Turkey, Britain, and Southeast Asian states. In the 1980s, when Russians occupied Afghanistan, and again in the early twenty-first century when Al Qaida used Taliban-ruled Afghanistan to launch

its 9/11 terrorist attacks, the United States upgraded its Pakistan links and the two governments collaborated closely. In the latter case, however, Islamist activists and Pakistani public opinion opposed the American involvement with Afghanistan—and also Iraq—bringing great difficulties for President Musharraf's government and anxieties for the United States. With the Middle East in turmoil and with Pakistan needing help in building nationhood, however, the justification for sustaining effective Pakistani–American relations has remained strong.

For India, too, ties with the United States have not always been a primary concern. Under Nehru's stimulus India was a leader in giving voice to the international voiceless. Nehru's organization of the Asian Relations Conference in the spring of 1947 signaled a new era in Asia and in the world. It was not an inter-governmental assembly, for the delegations who came from across Asia represented countries (including India) that had not yet won their independence. When the 1955 Bandung Conference followed, this novel pattern of international relations—far from the Great Powers of the day—was confirmed. From those path-breaking gatherings emerged the widened sphere of the Non-Aligned Movement, a body of states that eschewed commitment to either of the major power blocs of that time. India has taken great pride in symbolizing this movement that has come to embrace the majority of the world's nations, though not of its power players.

Throughout the six decades since 1947 India has also taken care to pursue its interests with all major powers, to each of which it has related in different ways at different times. Until the early 1960s Indians rated the People's Republic of China as a stalwart friend: "Hindi–Chini bhai-bhai."* The brief, ill-conceived war between India and China in 1962 over Himalayan areas that both claimed broke the bond for years to come, but by the early twenty-first century the two nations were working their way back into a cooperative (though mutually wary) stance. For decades after the mid-1950s India nourished close relations with the Soviet Union. These were brought to a climax in the Indo-Soviet treaty of 1971, signed at a

* "Indians and Chinese are brothers."

time of India's peak irritation with the United States over the Bangladesh issue. The Soviet Union's collapse in 1991 posed a major problem for India's trade and defense relationships, but India has pursued continued ties with the successor Russian regime. With Europe's NATO countries India has generally maintained good though not central relations, with a heavy accent on trade and development. And as India's economic reforms took hold, India greatly expanded its relations with the United States.

Like Pakistan and America, India and the United States have lived through successive ups and downs in their relations. Until the mid-twentieth century America had few connections with India. Indo-American relations opened up during World War II when American soldiers were stationed in India to establish supply lines to China against the Japanese. After that war Americans learned more about India through the independence negotiations. The two nations then acknowledged each other's importance but neither yet really knew much about the other nor was much involved with it. Many Indians perceived America as the imperial heir of the British empire from which, proudly, they were just breaking loose. Indian businesses had few American connections and not many Americans did business in India. American universities were of no interest to those Indian students who sought a foreign education—in Europe. Nor did many American scholars pursue studies in India.

Moreover, many Americans then perceived the new Republic of India mainly in terms of its policy—hard for Americans to understand—of non-alignment. Even high United States government officials would ask why democratic India could not join with other democracies to oppose the totalitarian states of Europe and Asia. Mutually uncomfortable acceptance described the Indian and American views of each other and both gave low priority to the relationship between them.

After the foggy early years the two countries' relations chilled in the 1950s when America included Pakistan in its system of regional security pacts and consequently supplied military aid to India's adversary. In the Kennedy administration the American relationship with India significantly warmed, notably after 1962 when the United States responded immediately to New Delhi's unexpected cry for military equipment and supplies to buttress its hot war with China.

Subsequently, the Johnson administration, especially after the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, lowered its involvement with South Asia by reducing aid programs and putting them on a short tether, forcing the Indians to beg for favorable decisions at a time of severe crop shortages. For the Nixon administration, with Henry Kissinger as point man, India's low standing in Washington was justified by New Delhi's armed intervention in East Bengal in the conflict that ended with the birth of Bangladesh. India's nuclear explosion in 1974 and Mrs. Gandhi's Emergency in the following year generated strong criticism in the United States. During the 1980s Indians were disturbed by American military programs with Pakistan when the Soviets penetrated Afghanistan. In the 1990s, despite expanded economic ties, relations worsened in 1998 after India exploded five nuclear weapons (and Pakistan followed suit).

Throughout these decades, however, there were countervailing influences on Indo-American relations, including such favored programs as the Peace Corps, PL 480 food aid and the growing attractiveness of American universities to Indian students and of American career opportunities to Indian professionals, leading to a large volume of upscale Indian migration into the United States.

Beginning in the 1990s the two countries moved to new levels of political, economic, and even security collaboration. Indian economic reform programs reduced the grasp of the "license raj" and otherwise increased India's economic vigor and appeal to foreign investors. The strength of the United States as the only surviving superpower increased the importance to India of fruitful relations with Americans. The prospects of a broader Asian and intercontinental role for India, a democratic country with more than a billion people, raised the significance of India in American eyes. Consequently, the Clinton and even more the George W. Bush administrations pursued new levels of relations with India.

These have been generally positive. American investment in Indian enterprises has substantially increased. India has welcomed outsourcing opportunities and has become an international leader in information technology, drawing many American partners. The United States has even moved into a strategic partnership with India

that saw resumption of military-to-military relations after a 40-year hiatus. American legislation bringing changes in non-proliferation rules to permit civilian nuclear commerce with India has marked a new stage in Indo-American relations.

In the early twenty-first century India, the world's most populous democracy, is clearly becoming not only the leading power of South Asia, which it had always been, but an Asian power to be compared in ways with China and a political and economic global power. India still wrestles with deep problems of poverty, education, health, infrastructure, bureaucracy, and other conditions that hold it back. As in many countries, the workings of its democratic system are subject to inefficiency, nepotism and corruption. At the start of the twenty-first century four-fifths of its more than 1 billion people were reported as living on an income of less than \$2 a day. Yet the extraordinary recent growth of the economy and of India's burgeoning middle class have brought fresh vitality to the nation. In sum, India still has severe problems to overcome but is taking its place in the first rank of world nations.

How much of India's great progress might have been foreseen in 1947? Independent India's early hopes were high. There were expectations that independence would release the peoples' energies that had been suppressed through two centuries of foreign rule. Even though at the beginning the fruits of freedom seemed to come slowly as the country struggled with its many difficulties, in the twenty-first century one can see that those struggles have brought widespread advances. One can wonder how Gandhiji, were he here now, would perceive the condition of his nation. No doubt his answer would be mixed. He would certainly mourn the continuing poverty and other shortfalls in free India's 60-year effort to better its people's lives. He would loathe such social ills as corruption, consumerism and wealth displays exhibited in the affluent classes. The inability of India and Pakistan to solve the seemingly endless confrontations between them would distress him, as would the resulting militarization of the two nations. Yet in seeing a country advanced in so many ways from the India of 1947, he would certainly take pride in its accomplishments.

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