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THE INFLUENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA

A lecture delivered
at the Naval War College
3 November 1960

by

Professor Edward Younger

Gentlemen: In this lecture I expect to ramble around somewhat. At the end I may have to stop abruptly in order to let you out on time. So, to make certain that I get my conclusions in, I'll give them to you in the beginning. I am here to tell you about the significance and influence of India in the world today—to explain why she is important.

India is important today because she is a stabilizing influence in a chaotic world. She is important because of her great size (half as large as the United States) and population (a seventh of the world's people). She is important because of the tendency among the newly emerging nations today to follow her example. She is important because, unlike most of the other emerging nations, she has reached a stage in which she possesses all the elements of economic growth except sufficient capital.

India has a stable, democratic government with a battery of imaginative and capable political leaders. She has a reasonably honest and a reasonably efficient civil service system. Indians believe their government is more corrupt than it really is. Some petty, institutionalized corruption does exist, and occasionally scandal at the top rocks the country. Still relative honesty prevails. The civil service is red-tape-ridden and somewhat rigid, but still it operates with reasonable effectiveness.

In government, in industry, and in agriculture, India has competent organizers, managers, and technicians. She has a rapidly growing commercial and industrial tradition rooted firmly in both Indian and British experience. Many of her leaders have a high degree of financial and industrial sophistication, and can plan and execute successfully. In addition to all these she has a vast potential home market, one of the greatest labor supplies in the world, and she possesses the will and determination to modernize. And with continuing capital she can look forward with confidence to the coming of industrial take-off.

India is important too, as we can see here on the map, because of her strategic geographical position. I don't intend to elaborate in detail on this obvious factor. But let me remind you that between Ankara and Peking, India has the largest, most efficient, most experienced, and most deployable military force. The Indian Army has the tradition of more than a century of organization, discipline, and battle training. Since this army is determined to defend the Himalayan wall against Red Chinese aggression, it is automatically guarding one half of the uncommitted people. Communist control of India would seal off the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Bay of Bengal, and release millions of Fifth Columnists into Africa and Asia. Should India swing behind the Red Curtain, then freedom would be untenable in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa.

India, moreover, possesses an almost compelling strategic political position among both the committed and uncommitted nations. She is the leading neutralist nation. She has attuned her strategic political position with the drift of world politics and has created for herself an important position of power among the nations of the world, especially among the neutralist nations. Her influence and prestige are great in Southeast Asia where her culture was liberally planted centuries ago. Even in modernized Japan

she is watched intently. Her influence and prestige are also great in the Middle East; Nehru most probably taught Nasser his first lessons in neutralism.

India, moreover, has great influence among the emerging nations of Africa, and she has some influence in Latin America. She is a powerful force in the British Commonwealth. In this important association of nations, she is the most influential Asian country. As we daily observe, she is a vital force in the United Nations and can influence votes there whenever she desires. More important, she is a stabilizing influence in the United Nations and opposes the sinister efforts to destroy it.

India's important strategic geographic and political position therefore makes her the lynch pin for free society in East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa. Remove the pin, let her fall under communist control, and Lenin's road to Western Europe through Peking and Calcutta would be completed. Japan's open society would close up again, and America's isolation from her friends would be assured.

India is significant in the world today because of all these factors but, above all, she is significant because of the great social and economic *Experiment* she is conducting. It is unfortunate that this *Experiment* is considered a race with Red China to see which can industrialize first. If time in the race is the exclusive determinant, then Red China with her lawless, ruthless, violent, godless methods is most likely to win. But India is emphatically not running a race with Red China. India and Red China are not running even in the same direction nor toward the same goal. Red China is seeking to impose a totalitarian system, first over her own people, and next over the world. Lusty for power, she is bartering human liberty for imperialistic and economic ends.

India, on the contrary, is a crucial laboratory where democratic institutions, deeply rooted in human values and operated by free men, give great promise of success. If she does succeed, she proves that in underdeveloped Asia, an economic revolution can be effected without doing violence to the kind of civilization we are determined to preserve in a world shaken by revolution. And in addition, I wish to say now that India's pace toward industrialization is strikingly fast. Later on I shall develop this fact more fully. But here let me hasten to add that her success in achieving her economic and social aspirations and in avoiding communist control, will depend in large measure upon the determination of her leaders and people to resist the threats both from across the borders and from subversion at home, and remain free.

Now let us glance at some of India's problems. There are many—the education problem, the problem of industry, the agricultural problem, the population problem, the language problem, and the problem of government and leadership, to mention what I consider the main ones. Few countries have so many colossal problems to solve; yet India approaches them with considerable confidence and calm.

The problem of education, I believe, deserves more attention than it usually gets either at home or abroad. Let me introduce you briefly to some of the problems of India's system of higher education, which despite mushrooming growth, is not producing an adequate number of technicians. On the other hand, it is producing an unemployable educated class which helps to foment today's student riots and could lead tomorrow's communist revolution.

I can illustrate the problems of higher education more concretely by drawing from some of my personal experiences. Three years ago I had the great opportunity and pleasure of teaching American history and government at one of India's oldest universities as

Fulbright Professor. From time to time, also, I gave lectures throughout India, mostly on American foreign policy. My wife and 10-year-old daughter accompanied me, and on these lecture tours we traveled some 15,000 miles inside India.

For most of the academic session of 1957-1958, I was a full participating member of the History and Politics Departments of Allahabad University. This University is located in the city of Allahabad which sprawls out over a large U-shaped area formed by the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna rivers. It is a very interesting spot. Allahabad is an ancient Hindu city, one of the oldest in India. It is a large country town of about 400,000. It has little industry, but is filled with educational institutions and printing presses. It has at least 35 colleges if those of the intermediate (junior college) level are counted.

One of the most famous of these institutions is the Allahabad Agricultural Institute founded by the indefatigable American Presbyterian missionary, Sam Higginbottom. One of the leading schools of its kind in India, it is in part financed by American private and foundation funds. It not only trains future Indian leaders in agriculture, but also young men and women from East Africa and Southeast Asia.

Allahabad is a famous religious center also. Most of the world's great religions are represented there. The name Allahabad, harking back to Muslim rule, means the City of God. The spot where the two rivers converge is one of the great holy places in India. Here Hindus crowd in by the tens of thousands every January to bathe and be purified. In some years these religious festivals attract pilgrims in excess of a million. Although a majority of the people are Hindus, there are numerous Muslims and Christians (both Protestant and Catholic), and some Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsees, and Jews. The great Buddha himself was born, reared, and first began to propagate

his faith in the adjacent state of Bihar not far east from Allahabad. My Presbyterian daughter attended a school run by German Catholic nuns and was taught by sari-wearing Indian women of varying faiths. Among the student body of some 600 little Indian girls, nearly all the great religions were also represented. To live there was in some measure to participate in an experiment in the co-existence of the world's major religions. But it was also a society in ferment, throwing off old traditions, testing new political wings, trying desperately to rise economically.

We lived in a large, joint-family house near the edge of the campus. At the University I gave lectures on American history and government to four large groups (about 70 students each) of M.A. candidates in history and political science. At each of my opening lectures I invited my students to an "At Home," (meaning in India a Tea Party) each Wednesday afternoon. The very first Wednesday afternoon an attractive, sparkling group of students showed up. The next afternoon others arrived, and before we fully realized it we were having "At Home" almost every afternoon—not merely Wednesday. Sometimes faculty members and townsmen joined us, and often they invited us to their homes, tea parties, and wedding feasts. At all times and everywhere we found the Indians curious, gentle, kind, and deeply hospitable. We felt at home among them. At our "At Home," the chief topic of conversation was politics—international politics about America, India, and Russia. The students were gregarious, utterly uninhibited, and owing to the elaborate screening process in India's educational system, they were usually highly intelligent. From them we gained an appreciation of their problems and what we hope are deeper insights into their way of life. The exchange was not a one-way street. We learned as much, if not more, from the Indians than we imparted to them.

Allahabad is the fourth oldest university in India. Over the years it has built up a reputation for

a distinguished faculty, fine scholarship, effective teaching, and for producing a great many of the young men who could pass the competitive examinations and get into the Indian Civil Service. Some twenty years ago it had an enrollment of, say, about 800 students who came from urban middle class, literate, educated families. Now following independence, enrollment has jumped from 800 to 8000. With independence the British vacated high positions in government and business. In the scramble for qualified Indians to fill these posts, the universities were among the first places to be raided. Many of the more mature and experienced professors were lured away, leaving as replacements often the young inexperienced teachers, often graduates of Allahabad University, and sometimes lacking in prestige and confidence.

And while these sudden developments were taking place, the composition of the student body was also changing. Whereas most of the 800 students belonged to educated families from the towns, now they began to stream in from the villages, from families without education and often without adequate funds. Having broken away from the ties and restraints of family and village, these new students were massed into a strange university environment without adequate housing, food, classrooms, books, supervision, and leadership. The result has been some decline of academic excellence and the increase of student restlessness, rowdiness, and rioting.

To make matters worse, great numbers are unable to get employment upon graduation. So, they decide to work for an M.A. rather than return home. Having procured the first M.A., they still may not be able to find a job; so they remain for a second M.A. It is possible to find students with two or three M.A.'s, each in a different subject, and still jobless. Idle, frustrated, and restless, such students are obviously susceptible to communist propaganda and promises; and they help to create confusion and explosive situations

which discredit the present moderate, liberal leadership and invite communist agitation, infiltration, and violence. Although many factors are involved in the student rioting, still student unemployment (or potential unemployment) upon graduation is a constant factor underlying such disorders. Since these students are the future leaders of India, the problem has long-range implications. If these newly educated groups cannot find employment under the present liberal, democratic system, sooner or later they are likely to accept extreme, totalitarian methods, that is, communism.

During the nineteenth century Britain gradually introduced Western liberal education in India. As schools and colleges sprang up, Asian and Western thought began to encounter each other in depth as nowhere else in Asia. Because of a wise, liberal, moderate response from the Indians, there developed a fruitful synthesis which makes for common ground and understanding. On the other hand, the British pattern of education was loaded heavily on the side of the arts and classics, on a liberal arts education. Although independence has brought a tremendous expansion, additional trained minds are needed. But sheer size is not the whole problem. Quality must improve as quantity grows, and the content or emphasis needs to be changed at once. India needs more practical training at the elementary level, more science taught in the secondary schools, and a wholly new emphasis on science and technology in the universities. By shifting the emphasis in the universities from liberal arts to science and technology, student unemployment at graduation will be relieved while the nation at the same time is meeting the enormous demand for trained technicians.

In the meantime, higher education will profit from greater firmness from the faculty and other university authorities. Both students and faculties can well afford to be patient, to bide their time while

assisting to bring about these great transformations. The glue of Indian society is still strong. It is easy to convince students with deep pride in being the recipients of an ancient, great civilization to be positive citizens, not agitators and drones, of a self-reliant nation engaged in a monumental process of modernization. They ought to be reminded again and again that for every student who does not find a job at once, four or five others are finding steady jobs which provide security and promise of promotion. And the temporarily underemployed university graduates can take comfort in the fact that the crucial industrial sector is making genuine headway despite many knotty problems.

As in the case of higher education, the British launched the process of industrialization. As early as 1914, India had one of the most extensive railroad systems in the world. Still the British did not modernize agriculture and in no other economic area completed the process of modernization to the point of self-sustaining growth. There was considerable economic stagnation during the decades immediately preceding the Second World War. Independence brought only ambition for dynamic growth; 80 per cent of the people still relied on a static, overcrowded, agrarian economy. Consequently the new Indian leadership struck out with a singleness of purpose to reorder their economy, to bring it fully into the twentieth century, and to achieve the dynamism of sustained growth. The vehicle was to be a series of Plans, conceived and executed by a Planning Commission in New Delhi, and designed to provide a continuous process of economic growth under broad government stimulus and guidance. Industry would be given a "Big Push" and agriculture modernized.

Like the United States, India possesses a vast internal market and abundant raw materials. Her potential market is rising to 500 million people. She has one of the largest iron ore reserves in the world,

ready materials for nuclear power, and adequate resources in coal, manganese, bauxite, and hydroelectric power. Naturally her Plans concentrate on heavy industry and capital goods—on steel, transport, power, trained manpower, and food. Heavy industry and food are the core of the Plans.

The First Plan was begun in 1951, the Second is now complete, and the Third underway. Although expansion has not been equal to the "Great Leaps" claimed by the Chinese Reds, it still compares favorably with the most rapid expansion achieved anywhere else in the Free World. Real progress has been made in the newer industries of iron and steel, transport, chemicals and machinery; older industries such as textiles and coal have grown more slowly. In the eight years following 1951 the general index of industrial production rose over 50 per cent; the process is gathering momentum and is expected to reach much higher by the end of 1961. Iron and steel production have grown by 63 per cent, chemicals by 44 per cent, and machinery by 324 per cent.

Still more encouraging are the vigorous trends toward diversification, the heady growth of small-scale industry, and the rise of entrepreneurs willing to plan and risk. The Indian economy is no longer one of a few isolated industrial lines. Now it is producing final products—sulfa drugs, diesel trucks, machinery and machine tools, and most of the components of sugar mills and fertilizer factories, to mention some of the leading ones. Vigorous government stimulus to investment, as in the past in the United States, is providing an effective spur to private investment as well. Indians with entrepreneurial gifts, long recognized in East Africa, the West Indies, and the Pacific, are rising to the fore in the Indian economy. The upward spiral of the public sector is pulling up the private sector and *vice versa*. As a consequence private enterprise in the last decade has expanded and diversified more rapidly

than ever before. The prejudice against private, and even foreign, capital has somewhat but not fully abated, the appreciation of the complementary character of private enterprise is now openly expressed, and the nationalization process has been slowed down.

Public enterprises have matured to the extent that greater attention should be given at once to their reorganization and to the details of administration. They have now reached the stage where they can become the unproductive creatures of too much supervision from the Center, of rigid bureaucratic rules and controls. They should not be permitted to drift along on a course aimed at merely breaking even. Instead they should be so reorganized and administered as to produce solid earnings for investment in their own expansion, as well as in other areas of the Indian economy. This will require considerable autonomy on the part of each public company and the vigorous application of the most efficient business methods.

The enormous potential labor force is also developing rapidly. Although the raw recruit from the village finds industrial life strange and hard and is guilty of large-scale absenteeism, still the rising Indian laborer is thoroughly capable of becoming skilled, efficient, and dependable. Both Indian and foreign firms have found the Indian worker as intelligent and adaptable as in the older developed countries. He can acquire skills quickly; and since India's potential labor supply is so large, she has in the years ahead a sharp competitive edge in the production of goods for the world market.

On the other hand, except for isolated cases, Indian labor unions have not done much to build up a skillful, stable, self-reliant labor force. Unions are divided into squabbling, rival factions. In some cases, workers hold the balance of political power. As to be expected, the communists preach class war,

press for wage increases and inflation, and in general create as much confusion as possible, while overtly extolling Russia and covertly praising Red China. In the absence of adequate funds and able labor leaders, the responsibility for industrial peace and labor's progress falls upon the vision and wisdom of the rising managerial class in both the public and private sectors. As in the United States, the Indian Government pursues a pragmatic, fluctuating line toward labor, relaxing here and tightening up there as the occasion demands.

The encouraging advance in industry has not been supported by comparable advances in agriculture, the most deeply traditional, most stubbornly entrenched of all India's activities. Eighty per cent of the population depend upon agriculture for survival. Peasants farm tiny plots under a hierarchical caste system and live mostly in mud huts bunched into some 500,000 straggling villages dotting the Indian landscape. In these villages poverty, illiteracy, superstition, and caste barriers present imposing obstacles to modernization. While the population continues to soar, agrarian depression prevails; each stimulates the other.

One way to break this vicious economic circle is to combine the tiny plots into large working units, organize the peasants into work gangs, control all supplies and materials, put the whole operation in the hands of an efficient farm manager, and ruthlessly drive the farmers and their families to high percentage performance. The Russians and the Red Chinese have done this. The human cost has been millions of lives; and economically, although the immediate results seem spectacular, the long-term results are by no means proven. Food production still lags in Russia and China.

The Indian leaders have deliberately rejected this communist technique. Instead they are in general approaching the course pursued in Japan where

agricultural productivity has far exceeded that in all other Asian countries, and where agriculture is based on small peasant proprietors, utilizing the most modern farming methods and supported by elaborate cooperative services.

In India the most pressing immediate objective has been, of course, to grow more food. But if village life as a whole could not be improved, could the villagers be expected to support forever the more deliberate, democratic, humane way? So, the long-range objective has been to provide a fuller, richer life for the rural millions.

The chief vehicle of rural change is the Community Development Program, under which the villages have been organized into blocks of about a hundred. Over each block is a Project Officer who has to assist him, such specialized activities as agricultural, educational, and veterinary services. At the bottom of the administrative chain is the village-level worker who provides inspiration, advice, and assistance directly to the farmer. Behind each project is the central idea that rural attitudes must undergo universal change before agricultural progress can be made to endure. A change here and there will not assure momentum; the advance has to be on a broad front, each innovation carrying along another. With Government backing and prestige, Community Development workers gently push and hopefully direct the reluctant villager. First goals include better seed, more fertilizer, all-weather roads, village schools, health clinics, rural credits, tubewells, and plots for demonstration.

The burst of enthusiasm which launched the Community Development projects ten years ago has given way to considerable pessimism and communist-inspired derision. Agriculture has not been able to attract its fair share of the best brains and leaders. Small increases in foodgrains and continuing rural underemployment have convinced some that persuasion will

never dispel village backwardness and inertia. Still many of the projects under favorable conditions and in areas with a progressive bent and a business tradition are succeeding beyond expectation. Time, experimentation, continued adaptation, and more competent leaders in the agricultural sector are required.

The Indian Government is now moving toward promoting greater co-operative credit, processing, and marketing which will permit both large and small farmers to achieve greater economies and production by working together. Although the Community Development Program has been disappointing, it has by no means been abandoned.

Other government efforts to achieve at once significant increases in food production have also been disappointing. In the first ten years of the Plans, foodgrains have increased from only 52 to 75 million tons—not enough to go round and stave off starvation, let alone produce a surplus for the market. The present rate of advance holds no assurance that the target of 110 million tons can be hit by 1966 as planned. Unpredictable rainfall, inadequate irrigation and storage, instable markets, and intense speculation, have been formidable obstacles to the production of food for the market. Yet there is room for limited optimism. The Indian Government soon expects to have enough storage space for a large decentralized grain reserve; the farmers' demand for fertilizer is steadily increasing; and massive irrigation projects are in the offing.

And, finally, most timely and imaginatively the United States has agreed to release to India over the next four years, 600 million bushels of wheat and 22 million bags of rice. Here is a reserve which, when properly stored and distributed, can go a long way to stabilizing the Indian food market and to paving the way for the various other means designed to increase food production.

There is evidence of greater energy and purpose in contemporary farm plans, and in the Third Plan more funds have been allotted to agriculture and greater priority given to fertilizers, irrigation, and improved agricultural implements. The Indian leadership seems determined to come to grips with this most vulnerable sector of the Indian economy.

A product largely of poverty-ridden, illiterate village life is India's bursting population. As I have already suggested, the relative peace imposed by colonial control and the health measures introduced from the West were accompanied in India by only partial modernization. Health improvement and increasing longevity thus preceded a real economic breakthrough, and economic advancement failed to keep pace with the population spiral. The resulting vicious circle has been almost disastrous. Decade after decade the population increased, land values rose, the peasant was squeezed off the land, and mass poverty became all-pervasive. A half century ago the population was less than 350 million; today it is estimated to be 430 million, but the count next spring may show it to be much higher. The dizzy increase is wiping out much, but not all, of the economic gains made under the Plans.

Although this dilemma is staggering in magnitude, we can misunderstand it and seriously misjudge it. Nothing is to be gained and much to be lost when we carelessly wound Indian sensibilities by blaming them for incontinence and family irresponsibility.

Communist agitators keep drumming into Indian ears the theme that mass poverty is not a product of overpopulation, but of capitalistic imperialism, exploitation, and faulty distribution. But the Indian leaders know better, and they are trying to solve their population problem realistically. Their Third Plan calls for an eightfold increase in expenditures on birth control clinics and counseling. Although the

Hindu religion does not bar family planning, yet Indian leaders realize that government policy and even birth control facilities will be effective in a democratic society only when the people want smaller families. As shown in Japan, underdeveloped communities are willing to rear fewer children once they are modernized and achieve literacy and some security. A low birth rate is often the consequence of economic growth.

The population problem is not insoluble, but its solution requires continued economic growth, education, birth control facilities, and the desire of parents for smaller families. The Indian Government today seems determined to approach the problem from all these angles.

As I indicated at the beginning, India's greatest lack is capital. Although it is difficult to get poverty-stricken men to save for investment purposes, still the Indians have in recent years been contributing to a primary accumulation. During the Second Plan, all categories of private investment were higher than expected. Villagers often saved ten per cent of their incomes though some may have spent the margin on costly weddings and funerals instead of productive investment such as fertilizers and tube-wells. In 1951, five per cent of the national income was saved for investment. At the end of the first two Plans, the rate rose to 11 per cent. By 1970 it is expected to reach 17 per cent, the level estimated to be required for steady growth. Meanwhile in what amounts to an internal austerity program, the Indians are taxing themselves to the bone. Their direct taxation is the highest in the world, and the poor man contributes through excise and sales taxes, and compulsory savings and insurance.

Through all these efforts, India's national income has increased 42 per cent since the beginning of the First Plan in 1951. This takes care of the

annual increase in population, allows a small amount for consumption, and a little for savings. It adds up to an economy that is moving ahead slowly, but lacks the momentum essential for a take-off. All along, meantime, the Indian currency has remained stable, the Indian rupee holding up as well as the West German mark and slightly better than the U.S. dollar.

Time and again in recent years, the shortage of crucial foreign exchange has proven the main obstacle to private investment, not a lack of savings as often assumed. Only with foreign economic assistance has India been able to meet this problem. And in reality, India's whole Experiment depends in large measure on foreign aid. With it, properly planned and used, India can confidently expect industrial take-off in time; without it, the experiment within a democratic framework is likely to fail. Up to this point, Free World assistance has far outstripped that of the Communist bloc.

The United States leads all other nations in the amount of aid given India. Yet it is doubtful that this fact is fully recognized and appreciated in India. Russian aid, though meager in comparison, has received much more attention. Russian aid has been directed toward strategic public industries such as steel and thermal power plants. American aid has not been promoting national industrial growth so obviously and in such a way as to appeal most effectively to the climate of opinion in India. Much of it has been going to agriculture and private American or private Indian firms, or to Indo-American combinations. In India, the private sector is controlled in the main by the Marwaris, a small, wealthy, closely knit social group. Since this group is believed to hold a near monopoly of economic power and since business is held in low esteem in India, the Marwaris are always vulnerable to political attack. Although many of them are in reality enlightened industrial statesmen, in the popular mind the group as a whole are "robber barons," the natural scapegoats for social grievances.

The Russians capitalize on the popular mood and appeal to the masses. The most persistent theme in communist propaganda is that Americans in their aid program have ulterior and insidious imperialistic designs. They boast that Russia was the first to build a publicly owned steel plant and thus break the boycott of the West against aid for the public sector. This steel mill, the Bhilai plant, is the showpiece of Russian aid, and has been propagandized to symbolize India's aspiration for national progress equally shared by all.

Economic assistance ought to involve a two-way street. Not only does the donor have the right to expect solid economic achievement from the recipient, but also good will and appreciation—not suspicion and distrust. America's aid to the private sector is sound investment in economic terms. But the economic test should not be decisive. American aid to the public sector, which is now receiving even increased emphasis in the Third Plan, would also be sound economic investment, and in addition it would appeal to the mass aspirations in India.

Overweighted aid to the private sector is regarded by many as political intervention on the side of a privileged class or social group. American reluctance to aid heavy industry in the public sector has not only kept the United States from receiving the popular good will the American program deserves, but it has also permitted the communists to gain the mass political capital which rightfully belongs to the United States.

The Free World, as a whole, should undoubtedly give high priority to a comprehensive program of economic assistance for India, shared co-operatively by all Free World governments. Yet it should not be a never-ending affair. Nor should Indians ever forget that responsibility for their success or failure rests on them, not the donors.

Although the Free World has been generous in recent years, its efforts have had the character of provisional thinking and emergency measures. It has not committed itself to seeing that the Indian Experiment succeeds. The Free World has seen that the Indian economy is half-launched, but the trouble is that an economy like a plane cannot take off when only half launched.

A more critical problem perhaps than food and foreign exchange lies in the disruptive tendencies of intense linguistic and regional pressures. India's problem of union is more complicated than was that of the United States which was largely responsible for the American Civil War. Like Europe, India is a continent of diverse language groups. Over the millennia of Indian history, she has possessed religious and cultural unity, but never for very long political unity. Even today, in some ways India is a group of individual countries, each with its own distinct language and culture. More than 800 languages or dialects are spoken; at least a dozen are major and distinct languages. Since independence, the number of states has been reduced until now there are 14, each conforming closely to linguistic boundaries. Regional patriotism rivals all-India loyalty in these diverse regions with their proud history and literary heritage. To many individuals, cultural and linguistic matters are more important than the survival of the Indian nation.

In North India, some 155 millions can speak Hindi, a Sanskritized version of Hindustani; and consequently Hindi was designated in the Indian Constitution to become the official language after 1965. To expect other proud language regions to commence the widespread use of Hindi so soon was perhaps a delusion. In any event, while Hindi has been catching on but slowly, English, presently the only effective national language, has declined precipitously, and the regional languages have gained rapidly. Many Indians,

of course, are still learning English, but the number taking it and the quality of instruction have declined, as more schools, colleges, and state governments with each passing year adopt the popular language of the region or state. Without English, there is growing up a generation of regional and state élites whose interests are so vested in a language region that they are becoming unable to talk meaningfully with each other on the national stage. As English declines, even the national Civil Service is threatened with the parochialism of these regional élites. Regional hardening, moreover, is promoted by the caste system which holds both high and low castes in horizontal regional caste units. A Brahmin from Madras, for example, is reluctant to marry a Brahmin from Assam.

These deeply rooted centrifugal forces of language, region, and caste are, of course, egged on and manipulated by the Indian communists who have deliberately adopted the strategy of sponsoring regional grievances and regional patriotism. Under these divisive stresses the survival of India as a single national state will depend, of course, on the strength and viability of her system of government to resist such forces. Fortunately it is demonstrating real staying power.

India today is a sovereign, democratic republic and a union of states. Her government is based on a written constitution embodying American and British features. The structure is federal but the spirit unitary. The Center (central government) is patterned after the British cabinet system, with a president, prime minister, cabinet, and parliament of an upper and lower house. There is a strong judiciary anchored firmly in long, British tradition and safeguarded by the Center. A supreme court of seven members guards the Constitution. There is a comprehensive bill of fundamental human rights as in the United States Constitution. State governments are also

parliamentary in character with a chief minister and a legislature. There are only limited state rights, and residual powers go to the Center. The Center appoints the state governor and can empower him to seize the state government in case of chaos and extreme failure on the part of the local officials. Universal adult suffrage prevails, and more people (a hundred million) vote in Indian national elections than anywhere else in the world, past or present.

India today is a voluntary society from the Center down to the village council (panchayat). The two mainstreams are the liberal constitutionalism of Europe, Britain, and America, and the religious, social, and ethical values stemming from Indian history and religion and from the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi. Over the years the Western and Indian traditions have fused, and today they support each other in their fundamental attitudes toward the ultimate purposes of society. In my talks with Indians, I found great deference to the rule of law, strong belief in the rights and dignity of the individual, and in the immortality of the soul, the wish to see government operate as the servant of the people and not the master, and dedication to nonviolence, tolerance, and compromise as the only desirable means of politics.

Magna Carta has become a natural part of the Indian heritage. For more than a century young Indian students have been learning that they are the children of a single, great Indian community with inalienable rights; and while accepting Western ideals, government structure, and science, they have not abandoned the deep religious and ethical insights of Indian society. The resilience and wisdom of her own leaders and traditions have helped her to avoid the extreme forms of totalitarianism which bid for acceptance—violent, godless communism on the one hand and fanatical, communal conservatism on the other. More than a century of political practice in a

democratic environment has given Indians a framework of modern politics.

The Congress Party is the engine of government. For more than a half century it was the movement of nationalist protest and pressure. A school for practical politics, it also produced the generation of "tall men"—Gandhi, Patel, Nehru, and others—who led India to independence and who have governed her since. Even in the struggle for independence, Indian politics followed the course of give and take rather than trying to force mass conformity. Although the Congress Party has been the only party in power since independence, it is not monolithic in terms of competing ideas. Vital political discussions take place among its several factions. Vigorous exchange of views go on at its annual conventions, at meetings of the All-India Congress Committee, and within the élite leadership group of the Working Committee of the Congress Party. Nehru and his colleagues, moreover, are fond of public discussion and have established a pattern of thinking out loud. Hence, the inner politics of the Congress Party stimulate discussion until a consensus is reached. In elections the people eventually in a kind of referendum vote upon the consensus. In this way the functions of multiparty politics are performed.

In many ways the Congress Party resembles the great political parties of the United States. It is a loose, voluntary, federation of different regional, economic, and social interests flexible enough to include Rajasthan industrialists, Gandhian hand spinners, Kanpur factory workers, Hindus and Muslims, Brahmins and Untouchables, Bengalis and Malayalis.

The Party's *élan* is generated from the consensus that the main task of the new state is to modernize the economy. The main cement of the Party, the independence struggle, is now being eroded by the discontent inherent in long tenure. The Congress Party is

losing popularity rapidly, and its hold on the country grows weaker year by year.

Unfortunately no strong opposition party has yet developed. On the left is the communist and several minor socialist parties; on the right, a few extreme groups advocating in the main regional autonomy or Hindu theocracy. Of these minor parties, the Communist Party has shown the greatest promise of becoming the successor. When I left India three years ago, the communist threat seemed imminent. They had won control of the state of Kerala and had strong blocs of strength in Calcutta and Bombay, and in the states of East Bengal, Orissa, Andhra, and Madras. Subsequently, however, communist misrule in Kerala and the outrages of Red China in Tibet and along the Indian border have halted the communist gains, and the Central Government has seized control of Kerala.

The communists consider this a mere temporary setback and, of course, are biding their time. They are a dangerous element in India which has aggravated the patient Nehru government from the beginning. Although claiming to be the party for union, they are in reality the champions of disunion. Although they have tried hard, they have never been able to identify themselves convincingly with Indian nationalism, a near monopoly of the Congress Party. And they are not today a cohesive national movement. Their real danger lies in their clever manipulation of the discontents resulting from extreme poverty and regional linguistic nationalism. Invariably they have been able to increase their following most rapidly in those areas where these two divisive elements are most prevalent.

As the wise and indefatigable Nehru and the other "tall men" of his generation grow older, the question of what follows when they are gone takes on greater significance. We are by no means certain that a rising group of young leaders will emerge to face up to the staggering internal stresses, stave off communist subversion, and hold the Congress Party together.

Yet despite declining popularity, the Congress Party has dominant control throughout the country, holds in its fold a majority of India's powerful leaders, and retains an organizational apparatus which blankets the whole country and seeps all the way down to the village level. It has mastered the technique of financing large-scale political campaigning, and in the absence of a more substantial All-India opposition, is likely to maintain its control for several more years. And to assume that vigorous, young leadership will not arise to assert itself when the proper time comes is too pessimistic to suit me. It denies the natural and proven ability of democratic society to achieve continuity of leadership; and in suggesting that young leaders cannot face up to great problems, it defies the lessons of history in the United States and elsewhere.

The Indian leadership today towers far above that of the other emerging nations. It commands the confidence and broad support of the people because they have been given a sense of individual participation in a new society devoted to the main task of national growth. India's institutions are viable, I believe. Her political leaders have been trained in the school of experience. They have been tried, as in the case of Kerala, and proven. Highly centralized, with a loyal and competent Civil Service and military organization, the Government ought to be able to cope even with the most desperate acts of disunion. In the years ahead there will be many crises no doubt, and we must temper our hope for India's stability with the prospect that her democracy will undergo great change, perhaps veering toward greater centralization and even stronger leadership from the Center. While the forms of democracy may change radically, the signs indicate that India will strive hard to retain her independence, maintain freedom, and keep alive the spirit of democracy. We should neither naively expect the best nor resign ourselves to the worst. The most certain thing about the future is that the Indians themselves

will largely determine their own destiny. Still the West, with its great wealth and technical advance, holds one of the keys to India's economic stability—to the success of her great Experiment—a co-ordinated program of economic and technical assistance so planned and executed as to assure industrial take-off.

Today the modern world offers two main patterns of economic development and political control. One is our own involving the experimental, informal mixture of market forces and government direction, resting heavily on decentralized decision-making and private initiative. It is liberal and humane in nature. It relies on persuasion and reason, and allows freedom of choice and personal liberty. It has been dedicated to the principle of equality and the erection of a society in which the material good things can be enjoyed by all.

The people of the emerging countries like India have been taught by the West to expect these things. But having achieved independence, they find that they cannot share fully the benefits of Western technology. The West has whetted their appetites and brought them up to the edge of modernization. But now they may slip back, or, using Western means, fail, and then turn to the other, the communist pattern of economic development and political control.

This pattern is the total state plan imposed from above by a new privileged class with total power. It is dogmatic, anti-religious, opportunistic, and aims at the control of the world. Ruthlessly and violently imposing savage discipline, it relies upon forced labor, forced saving, mass human destruction, and the techniques of wartime planning and mobilization to achieve its goals. The system has yet to demonstrate that it can provide an abundant life for the masses. But, although the human and spiritual costs are enormous, it has been successful in building up and maintaining military strength, centralizing

scientific achievement, expanding heavy industry, and controlling all information. Its gigantic propaganda machine makes its achievements appear more spectacular than they really are. Nevertheless, its methods to achieve modernization in stagnant economies have become glittering products for export to underdeveloped countries.

There is no escaping the fact that these two types of society are engaged in competition encompassing the world. In Asia the spotlight is focused on India and China. The success of the Indian Experiment will help to expose the absurdly fallacious communist dogma that the Western mixed-economy system is inherently imperialistic in nature, that it cannot deviate from the pattern mapped out by Marx and Lenin more than a half century ago, and that it is in imminent danger of collapse. The Indians are definitely not participating in a race with Red China to see which one can industrialize first. They are engaged in an experiment to ascertain whether rising national output and expanding economic opportunity can be achieved through democratic institutions, which, though as time runs along are certain to change in many respects from our pattern of democracy, can still maintain independence and guarantee individual liberty.

The Indians are deciding whether the synthesis of Western liberal ideals and technology and Indian metaphysical and ethical values can produce a full life in Asia and still survive. They are deciding whether the free, open, mixed society in Asia has any future at all. And this, let me conclude, is the significance of India today.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

Professor Edward Younger

Present Position: Ernest J. King Chair of Maritime History, Naval War College; on leave from position of Professor of American History, University of Virginia.

Schools:

Arkansas State Teachers' College, B.A. degree, 1932.

Oklahoma State University, M.A. degree, 1938.

George Washington University, Ph.D. degree, 1942.

Career Highlights:

1928-37 Teacher, Principal, Superintendent in Public Schools of Arkansas and Oklahoma.

1937-38 Teaching Fellow, Oklahoma State University.

1938-42 Teaching Fellow, George Washington University.

1942-45 Lieutenant and Lieutenant Commander, U.S.N.R. On active duty in Naval Aviation during the Second World War.

1945-46 Lieutenant Commander and Instructor in History, U.S. Naval Academy.

1946-61 Assistant, Associate, and Professor of American History; also Graduate History Adviser and Foreign Student Adviser, University of Virginia.

1957-58 Fulbright Professor of American History and Politics, Allahabad University, India.

1961 (Summer) Lecturer, All-India, on American history and foreign policy under auspices of American Leaders and Specialists Program, American Embassy, New Delhi, and Nepal.

Honorary, Professional, and Civic Societies:

Phi Alpha Theta, Raven, American Historical Association, Mississippi Valley Historical Association, Southern Historical Association, Virginia Historical Society, Rotary, Kiwanis.

Publications: A Selected List

John A. Kasson: *Politics and Diplomacy from Lincoln to McKinley*. Torch Press, 450 p. 1955. (Phi Beta Kappa Prize, University of Virginia.)

Inside the Confederate Government: Diary of R.G.H. Kean. Oxford University Press, 244 p. 1957. (Book of the Month Selection, Civil War Book Club.)

"The Unknown Compromise of 1877," *Virginia Quarterly*, XXVII, Summer 1951. (A review article on C. Vann Woodward's *Reunion and Reaction: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction*, 1951.)

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"Indians and Americans: On a Better Understanding," *Allahabad University Magazine*, India, XXXV, January-March 1958. (A lecture given before both Indian and American audiences.)

"American Attitudes Toward Foreign Policy in the Nineteenth Century," *United States in World Affairs*, Madras, India, 1958. (The first in a series of lectures given before South Indian audiences.)

"The Dynamics of Neutralism," *Naval War College Review*, XIII, No. 7, March, 1961. (A lecture delivered at the Naval War College.)