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# RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

## Post-war Development Policy

### PART I.—GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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I. **Preamble.**—The first report on the progress of reconstruction planning described the progress which had been made at the Centre up to the 1st February 1944, and indicated some of the problems which the Government were examining in consultation with the various Policy Committees. The present report is a summary of the views of the Departments of the Government of India on the issues that arise in so far as it has been possible to formulate them with the material and in the time at their disposal. It is not however intended to convey specific approval to any particular measures. It is not possible for Government to arrive at final conclusions on matters of policy until a more definite picture of the plans of the Provinces as well as the Centre can be drawn. The report is meant to provide guidance to the Departments at the Centre as well as to the Provinces, on the lines on which they should proceed. It is also intended to invite the expression of public opinion and to enlist public support. When the proposals in the report refer to subjects within the purview of the Provincial or State Governments they are subject to the views of these Governments.

II. **Constitutional aspects.**—(a) There is no need to describe here the constitutional position as regards the respective responsibilities of the Centre and the Provinces. Provincial autonomy exists over a large field of subjects and in regard to their internal administration the autonomy of most States is of course complete. The plans for post-war development have been drawn up on the basis of the existing constitution, as it is not possible at this stage to anticipate what exact form the future constitution will take. It has been the experience of other countries with federal constitutions, the constituent states of which enjoy a measure of autonomy far greater than that enjoyed by the provinces in India, that for the purpose of economic development they have to come together and formulate a common policy in the general interests of the country as a whole.

(b) The proposals now made for post-war planning and development do not in any way affect the constitutional issue, as whatever form the future constitution takes, and whatever autonomy the future Provinces or States or India enjoy, they will all benefit by the measures of economic progress and development contemplated by the Plan. One of the fundamental principles of the Plan is regionalisation so that the different parts of the country benefit in as equal a measure as is compatible with the physical features and natural resources of each part. The ultimate political affinities of the different regions in the India of the future need not, therefore, stand in the way of their benefiting by the schemes of development hereunder proposed.

(c) Although most of the subjects of development are the responsibility of the Provinces, the present position is not as difficult as might appear. There is general agreement as to the measures necessary over a great part of the field and for a task of this nature and magnitude a pooling of all resources will clearly be desirable, if not necessary, and this will inevitably entail a considerable degree of co-ordination. Co-ordination is especially necessary in respect of such subjects as re-settlement, industrial development, electric power, irrigation, road transport and road planning. In certain matters requiring unified direction it may be possible to set up autonomous authorities with powers of an all-India nature in agreement with Provinces and States. In certain cases it may be desirable to set up regional authorities which extend over the territory of neighbouring Provinces and States somewhat on the lines of the Tennessee Valley Authority in the U. S. A.

(d) The need for planning for the whole of India and the exercise of far more initiative by the State than hitherto in matters of social reform and economic