

GOKHALE INSTITUTE OF POLITICS AND ECONOMICS

PUBLICATION NO. 13

FEDERATING INDIA

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(Price, Rs.6 or 12s.)

1945

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ASSUMPTION OF UNITY

THE process of federating implies the pre-existence or formation of the primary federating units which participate in the process. The area of a federation is coincident with the sum of the areas of the federating units, and the constitutional arrangements of a federation will be such as the federating units agree to. Therefore, in considering the extent and character of a non-existent federation it is necessary to take account of the potential federating units and their likely dispositions. There are, however, those in India who urge that the extent of the Indian federation must be taken as fixed independently of the wishes of the federating units, and that the area within the present boundaries of India shall be included in one federation. Before beginning a systematic consideration of the problems involved in federating, it is necessary to give some attention to this plea.

The problem, it should be noted, is not of the possible formation at some indefinite point of time, of the optimum, that is, the most convenient or the most desirable single political unit, but one of immediate practical formation of workable political units, taking account of the prevailing condition of political sentiment in the country. The overriding considerations that could be held to impose unity must be shown, therefore, to have the character of affecting political sentiment, or making impossible the constitution of separate units, whatever the character of the sentiment. The first of such considerations usually put forward is the geographic. Much has been made of what has been called the geographical unity of India. The geographical argument turns, on examination, to be nothing more than the fact that the land block south of the Himalayan range stands separated by that barrier from the Asiatic mainland. But the area of this land block is itself vast, its population immense, its contact with the outside world by sea multilateral and continuous. Nobody has ever sought to form political units of areas that were sharply distinguished from other lands by specially formidable natural barriers. If such an argument had been deemed sufficient, the Iberian Peninsula, for example, a very much smaller land block than India, could not house two nations and two states, and it would be a complete argument for the amalgamation of a large number of states in most continents. In an Empire, however, which tolerates an Ulster, or rather maintains it, within a small island, the geographical argument can be deemed to have no importance in respect of conditions such as those of India.

The ineffectiveness of the geographical consideration would be made clear if it is examined in relation to another consideration that is sometimes adduced, the historical. It is a notable historical fact that the geographical Indian unit was never, till the middle of the nineteenth century, embraced in one integrated political state. Apart from whether the evidence of Mohenjodaro and Herappa shows them to have had greater affinity with civilizations in Persia and Mesopotamia than with those of Peninsular India or the Gangetic Valley, the historical record reveals the continuous existence of numerous political units within the Indian continent. Certain facts are specially noteworthy. Sind, for the greater part of known history, had no intimate political connection with the rest of the Indian continent. The territory north-west of Delhi was, for many centuries, connected through membership of a political state with lands beyond the Himalayas rather than with the rest of India. Bactrian rule and the rule of other invading successors of the Bactrians was established in these parts, and the region formed part of Muslim Empires which embraced Afghanistan and countries beyond to the north-west, but did not extend far into the Indian continent. Assam has always had closer connections with North Burma than with most of India beyond Bengal, and the peninsula in the south has always been sharply demarcated, so far as political entity was concerned, from the north. Disregarding the extreme south, it might be pointed out that in the known history of the Poona region for the entire period before the eighteenth century, Poona had formed part of a single state together with territories north of the Vindhyas for only two transitional periods of short duration; firstly, after the overthrow of Ramdevrao Yadav till the establishment of the Bahamani Kingdom, and secondly, from the conquest of the Deccan Sultanates by the Mughals to the establishment of Maratha rule. Geographical and historical arguments, therefore, together constitute perhaps the weakest planks in the platform of those who would plead for a compulsory welding together of the Indian continent in one political unit.

A social organization can hold together only on account of some internally cohesive factor, and the integrity of the Indian unit would depend ultimately on the sense of fundamental unity within it. In actual fact it is more easy to say in what this unity does not reside than where it does. It is clear that from the point of view of racial stock, far from there being prevailing homogeneity or unity, there is the greatest diversity. In point of language the element of homogeneity is greater than in that of race; for, ex-

cluding the Dravidian languages, all the other major Indian languages, including Urdu, would be put by the linguist under the group Indo-Aryan. It is doubtful, however, how far the Indo-Aryan character of Urdu (and perhaps of Sindhi also) would be of avail against the dominant sentiment of the majority of those speaking that tongue in favour of wholesale importations of Arabic and Persian elements. And even the unity of the Indo-Aryan group is no greater than the unity of the peoples speaking the Romance languages. Religion has, instead of unifying, been the great dividing factor, and it is this that threatens to split India now. It is doubtful whether India was almost any time in its history so unified in religion as Western Christendom in the Middle Ages. Apart from Islam, the Jain and the Buddhistic traditions—though the number of people professing these faiths is today small—played an important role through many centuries in pre-Muslim India. Even in matters of purely cultural importance, such as music or dance, we have sharply differentiated northern and southern traditions. Therefore, though it is possible to discern a common residuum of sentiment or approach in our mode of life and habits of thought, the correspondence in these nowhere amounts to such a degree of identity as to compel thereby all of us to join in one political unit.

The unity has, no doubt, appeared as a palpable working fact under British rule, but an examination of the nature of that unity reveals the great limitations of the apparent phenomenon. Fundamentally the unity has resided in certain common negative attributes. We were united forcibly under one common foreign rule and have been compelled equally forcibly to use, for all superior intercourse, one common foreign language. To the extent that a common agitation against the foreign rule was necessary, the unity could be maintained, and it is significant that the moment that the possibility of wielding political power even partially by ourselves was visualized, the illusion of unity dissolved. This Indian unity was one which could be effectively voiced only through English. Nowhere did it result in a new synthesis being attempted or achieved through a meaningful exploitation and development of the natural traditions of the people; for all such attempts inevitably meant the disintegration of the facade of unity, at least for the time being.

In this connection reference might be made to another naive argument sometimes used to support the forcible maintenance of unity. It is that a political unit, however artificial to begin with,

leads in time to the formation of habits of thought and sentimental responses which ultimately justify its existence. It is doubtful how far such an argument could stand examination in the light of historical facts. The bulk of the Austro-Hungarian Empire had been held together for a period longer than the duration of the British Empire in India to date; yet the integrity of its political boundaries was not supposed to have been made sure by this historical fact. And even those who most deplored its break-up have never suggested a revival of it as one sovereign state. Most of such critics have contented themselves with pointing out that certain economic adjustments could and should have been made in the process of forming new states out of the old Empire. Or else take the word "Balkanization" and its historical background. In recent Indian controversy, it has been held enough merely to utter the word to clinch the issue. In the light of known facts of Balkan history, it is difficult to see what exactly is implied by the use of the term. Nobody seems to deny the fact that the Balkan Peninsula is inhabited by separate groups of peoples who have not yet found a way of living peacefully with each other. There was comparative peace in the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire. Do those, one wonders, who use the term Balkanization plead for the revival of that Empire? An Englishman would, of course, never subscribe to such a thesis. But even the liberal Indian who uses the term freely would, one feels sure, protest against the interpretation. If by Balkanization is merely meant the creation of new states following upon the recognition of difference, it is a historical process to which no opprobrium could attach. In fact, the lesson of history elsewhere is that the creation of separate states offers a better prospect to different groups of people living amicably as neighbours than forcing them in one incompatible union. Mere association, however long, unless it has led to the growth of appropriate sentiments, cannot be trusted to become the basis of voluntary political allegiance.

There are, no doubt, a great many excellent reasons which prove the economy or desirability of forming a single political unit for the whole of India, but none of these can be shown to make separate existence of parts impossible, in the sense of being able to vitiate it even if a group is insistent on claiming it and is prepared to make any sacrifices for attaining it. It has to be remembered that the claim to separation arises from a feeling that the specific interests of a group are likely to be sacrificed to such a large extent in the whole that the acceptance of some inconvenience or some

disadvantage is preferable to continuing the unity. In this connection it is obvious that a considerable amount of exaggeration is indulged in by those who expatiate upon the economic and financial difficulties of new independent states. The large majority of independent sovereign states in the world are very small states. It has been often urged that many of these small states would do well to come together for certain purposes or even that contiguous states could in many cases profitably federate. The Arab states are today attempting to form a federation. Primarily the religious and cultural bond urges them toward this step and nobody has argued that such a federation must come about because the independent existence of Egypt, Syria, or Iraq is impossible from either the economic or the financial point of view. Most of even the provincial units in India are larger in population and economic resources than the majority of the small states of the world. If an independent state were formed of the contiguous Muslim block in north-west India, i. e., of Sind, N. W. F. Province, and Muslim Punjab, it would have a much larger population and larger economic resources than any of the existing important Muslim states, e. g., Turkey, Egypt, or Iran.

The strategic factor has been similarly overworked. The number of invasions from which India has suffered in its recorded history raises considerable doubt regarding the real efficacy of the so-called strategic frontier. Also, modern technical advance renders less and less important the existence of natural barriers. Above all, a strategic reason for incorporating any territory into a state is valid only when backed by superior force. If France wants to extend its frontier to the Rhine, it must do so in the teeth of opposition of the German population in the intervening territory and will be successful only as long as it wields superior force. And if the force is not overwhelmingly superior, then a natural strategic frontier, as has been often emphasized, with a discontented or disloyal people behind it, is a much greater liability than a non-strategic frontier defended with united vigour.

II

PROVINCES AND THE FORMATION OF FEDERATING UNITS

NATIONALIST India has always insisted that the new Indian state would not be a mere succession state. It is not so much by a transfer of power that an Indian government takes the place of the British. It is rather by our own volition that we create a new state.

It is also granted that the new state must be federal in structure. Neither the size, nor the diversity of elements, nor the extent of cohesion amongst them would allow for a unitary organization. If a new federation is to be built up independently by free volition, the preliminary quest must be for the proper primary units of which this federation is to be formed. It is obvious that for the working of the democratic process a minimum degree of homogeneity must exist in the primary units. Without such homogeneity the emotional response to the unit-area would be lacking, and in that event democratic forms must fail. It is necessary to insist on this great difference between the formation of administrative or regional units under democratic and non-democratic forms of government. More and more has it come to be recognized that for a proper working of the democratic system even local government areas must be endowed with a meaning to their inhabitants and must evoke spontaneous loyalty. The more are units of administration informed with this characteristic, the more successful is democratic government likely to be. If loyalty and civic pride are felt to be necessary for the working of a democratic constitution in a municipality, how much more vital are they in the formation of the primary unit—the province or state—in a federation? A federation, by the very definition of the term, implies the bringing together in one organization of not entirely homogeneous units. The primary focus of loyalty, therefore, in a federation is more the federating unit than the federation itself. No doubt, in course of time the emphasis may change and the federation may become the unit that evokes greater loyalty. Usually, however, this process is itself the result of the attainment of greater homogeneity of interest and feeling among inhabitants of the different federating units. Historically, it is clear that the initial emphasis is always more on the province or the state which was the federating unit than on the federation. It follows that the federating units of the Indian federation must be so formed as to fulfil these essential primary conditions; that is, they must be largely homogeneous and must evoke an automatic emotional response among the bulk of dwellers in them.

The Indian federation will consist of two groups of federating units—the provinces and the Indian States. The two groups must be considered separately. We shall begin by considering the extent to which the existing provinces could appropriately function as the primary federating units. It has been long recognized that the boundaries of provinces formed by historical accident by the British administration have not all been satisfactorily drawn. The starting

point of the modern discussion in this regard may be taken to be the circular issued on behalf of Lord Curzon's government by Sir H. Risley in 1903. The main concern of this circular was the large bulk of the then-existing province of Bengal. It was stated that this was too large a charge for one man to shoulder, and possible alternatives for reducing it were indicated in the circular, their merits discussed, and the opinions of provincial government invited on them. The initiating impulse for discussing changes was administrative inconvenience. The changes suggested were also supported or opposed, in the main, for administrative or financial reasons. It is noteworthy, however, that in one instance, that of the Oriyas, considerations of a very different character were introduced in the discussion. The great injustice done to the Oriyas by their incorporation in different units and in units in which they played an insignificant part was emphasized, and particular schemes of re-arrangement were favoured because they enabled all Oriyas to be brought under one administration. It is true that these considerations were put forward not as primary grounds for a change, but as incidental advantages resulting from it. No democratic forms of government were then in operation, and the problem was visualized as one entirely of creating convenient units of administration. It is all the more significant that even under such conditions the homogeneity of a unit and the bringing together of all members of one group should have been given such importance. Sir H. Risley's circular was the forerunner of the partition of Bengal. The agitation raised by that step sharply exhibited the emergence of a new political factor. The partition was opposed almost entirely on the ground that it split the people of Bengal into two. The case of the Oriyas exhibited the need for bringing together all contiguous members of one homogeneous unit into one administration. The agitation against the partition emphasized the same point from the opposite side. The agitation had as its aim the continued maintenance of all Bengalis in one provincial unit. The agitation emphasized incidentally the importance of the political sentiment of the people affected. If all Bengalis felt that they were one, they should politically be treated as such. The success of the anti-partition agitation partly established a precedent in this direction. The Hardinge Despatch of 1911, which suggested the abolition of the partition, largely pursues homogeneity though its point of view also is, in the main, administrative.

The announcement made by the Secretary of State in 1917 changed the whole aspect of the question. For the first time the

emphasis was shifted from administrative convenience to political cohesion. In the discussions that preceded the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, the most elaborate and, in many ways, satisfying exposition of this question is to be found in L. Curtis' *Letters to the People of India* (1917). In the section entitled the "Map of India," Curtis starts with the following proposition: "The area and the administrative mechanism developed by a system of paternal government, are utterly different from those developed by a system of popular government." (P. 58.) In working out the implications of the proposition, Curtis reaches broadly the two conclusions that self-government has a better chance if the areas of self-government—the Provinces—are comparatively small and that "the areas of Provincial self-government must be designed largely with a view to making it possible for public business to be discussed in a language which all the legislators can speak with ease, and which the largest possible number of electors can understand." (P. 65.)

The authors of the Report on the Indian Constitutional Reforms (1918), known as the Montford Report, recognized that "the present map of British India was shaped by the military, political or administrative exigencies or conveniences of the moment and (except in the case of the reconstitution of Bengal) with small regard to the natural affinities or wishes of the people." (Para. 39.) It was recognized by them that "the business of government would be simplified if administrative units were both smaller and more homogeneous" (Para. 246) and it was laid down that "wherever such redistributions are necessary and can be effected by process of consent the attempt to do so should be made; and therefore we desire that it should be recognized as one of the earliest duties incumbent upon all provincial governments to test provincial opinion upon schemes directed to this end." (Para. 246.) The attempt at redistribution was not taken up in the report itself because it was felt that it would be "very unwise to unite the sufficiently difficult task of reviewing the constitution of India with the highly controversial labour of simultaneously reviewing the political geography of the entire country." (Para. 246.)

After the introduction of Montford reforms, the question receded somewhat in the background. The Indian National Congress adopted linguistic units for its own purposes and the Nehru Committee's Report generally favoured the reformation of units on this basis.¹ The provincial unit never emerged in the debate, how-

¹ The Report of the Committee appointed by the (All Parties) Conference (1928) to determine the principles of the Constitution for India, 1928, p. 62.

ever, as the primary fact. This was because the tradition of extreme centralisation established in India by the British was tacitly accepted on all hands, and the main concern at this stage was with the extent of power obtained at the centre. The problem was conceived of as one of taking over a mainly unitary government rather than that of the building up of a federation.

There is no doubt that there was also current among many prominent public men the feeling that any step which seemed to attach importance to differences amongst ourselves might lead to an encouragement of "fissiparous" tendencies. Perhaps, the question of the reformation of provincial boundaries was also subordinated because it was felt that the issue was being raised merely as a further obstacle to India's attainment of self-government by the British or by others at their instigation. The latter of these aspects appears in the difference of treatment accorded to the problem in the Majority and Minority reports of the Muddiman or the Reforms Enquiry Committee (1924). The Majority Report definitely notes the fact that the present constitution of the provinces was a difficulty in the working of the existing constitution, and that the question of reformation would probably have to be considered in connection with any considerable constitutional advance (*P. 51*). The comment of the Minority Report on this was that "the consideration of the general redistribution of territories should not precede any constitutional advance, and in any case redistribution should not be effected without the consent of the populations concerned." (*P. 180.*) The fear of encouraging differences is exemplified, curiously enough, in Dr. Ambedkar's note of dissent to the Report of the Bombay Provincial Committee appointed to assist the Simon Commission. Dr. Ambedkar, in his minute, opposes the claim made for constituting Karnatak into a separate province, with the following observation: "The most vital need of the day is to create among the mass of the people of India the sense of a common nationality, the feeling not that they are Indians first, and Hindus, Mohammedans or Sindhis and Kanarese afterwards, but that they are Indians first and Indians last." (*P. 2.*) Dr. Ambedkar, it will be observed, is not content even with reversing the usual procedure, that of going on from the particular to the general, but would indeed go so far as to deny the particular. Possibly Dr. Ambedkar, in view of later history, would somewhat modify his statement today; but it, certainly, still exemplifies the attitude of a large number of public men in the country. Not that the taking of such extremist

attitudes abolishes the working of the particularist sentiment; only it makes its operation more devious and more harmful than if it had been properly acknowledged and allowed its legitimate place. The fear of encouraging fissiparous tendencies was seen to be at work also among those who urged on the British Government in 1935 that no time should be allowed to lapse between the grant of autonomy to the provinces and the formation of government at the centre. It was to be a federation centre which was placed before the federating units as a *fait accompli*. This was advocated, evidently, because not much confidence was felt that these units would accept it if given the time and opportunity to choose freely. It is doubtful how far such a procedure is wise, if the facts are such as are implied in its advocacy. In the settlement of Europe in the period after World War I, such hurry and such distrust of federating units led to many a disaster. The most notable instance is that of Jugoslavia, in which the adoption of an unduly centralized form of government and the failure to base primary units on the traditional racial and linguistic divisions at the outset, led to continuous trouble which ultimately resulted in the disruption of the state.

It is not sufficiently realized that a primary unit which evokes loyalty and is therefore fully self-governed is a greater asset to a federation than a primary unit of diverse elements in which continuous friction must be present. The experience, whether in India or elsewhere, of the history of heterogeneous units of administration has been the same. After more than a century of association, the Oriyas heaved a sigh of relief on being separated from Bengal. The demand of "Bihar for Biharis" is noted in the Hardinge Despatch, and the residual of the Bengali-Bihari controversy has still a considerable disturbing potential. The bickerings of the various elements forcibly held together in the Central Provinces and in the Bombay Province are notorious, and it is only in the Nizam's Dominion, where all the units in a mixed structure are suppressed with equal vigour, that there does not seem to be any friction on account of the mixture. An association, however long, is incapable by itself of building up an emotional background if the ingredients necessary for this are themselves lacking.

In building up a new federation it is not possible to postpone the task of revising political geography to a later stage. For, such a revision, in this case, is a condition precedent to a consideration of the constitutional issues. The present provincial units are not all satisfactory as federating units. The two provinces which are the new-

est, viz. Sind and Orissa, satisfy the requirements laid down above because they were specifically created as homogeneous units. The Punjab and Bengal would seem to be fairly satisfactorily formed but for the religious cleavage in the two, of which more may be said later. Bihar and the United Provinces are homogeneous enough, but it cannot be said whether they are able to call forth the appropriate type of emotional response, nor whether any possible readjustment of their boundaries can do this. The greatest rearrangement seems obviously to be necessary in the three provinces of Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces. Here the old administrative boundaries are the most unsatisfactory, and for the formation of primary units of the federation a radical adjustment of boundaries must be brought about. In seeking the manner in which this adjustment could be made, the first obvious step is to find out the basis of homogeneity. Race, religion, language, common traditions, all of these have formed the basis for forming political units and have served to bind together the peoples within a state. It has been pointed out, however, that none of these is necessarily applicable in each case, and what will work in a particular instance depends entirely on individual circumstances. So far as conditions of Peninsular India are concerned, and this is chiefly the tract covered by the administrative units in question, religion is not an important dividing or determining factor. The vast majority of the peoples is Hindu. It, however, consists of fairly well marked separate national groups who can be easily distinguished by their common language. These separate linguistic groups have also special common and continuous historical traditions—most of them, e.g., the Andhras, the Kannadigas, and the Marathas, boasting of empires and kingdoms with eventful history. The language test can broadly operate in this region for determining the formation of the primary units in the Indian federation. The resultant number will not be very large. The new units formed out of the three old provinces would be chiefly five,—Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnatak, Andhra, and Tamil Nad, with a small residual territory left over of a Malayalam and a Hindi region.² Neither of these five units would be financially weaker than, say, Orissa.

It is necessary in this connection to emphasize that each one of the future primary units of the Indian federation must necessarily

² The formation of a Kerala, i.e., a Malayalam-speaking unit, depends essentially on the attitude of the Indian States of Travancore and Cochin within whose territories the bulk of that region is included. The separation of the Hindi-speaking regions of the Central Provinces will probably lead to the reformation of two or three primary units from among the contiguous block formed by the present United Provinces and this territory.

be a unilingual unit. This would seem to be an ordinary and obvious proposition. But even this has been denied so often that some words are necessary to specially enforce the plea. It might be categorically stated that the democratic process is reduced to a farce if, in the administrative unit constituted, the language of the bulk of the people is not also the language of all administration. As long as English continues to be in use for all the common administrative purposes, so long will democracy remain remote. The hollowness of the pretence of democracy in a system where a settlement report of a taluk is published in English, and appeals are then invited from peasants affected by it, need not be laboured in detail. The handicap to the bulk of the people and the special encouragement to privileged classes which this situation gives, is evident to all. The situation, however, could not be remedied as long as the Provincial or State units are not unilingual. The fact that an administrative area is multilingual is always held to be the justification for the imposition of a foreign tongue, whether English or Urdu, on its populace. Incidentally, it should be pointed out that this quest for homogeneous federating units in India does not lead to either a very large number of such units or a very small size or resources in any one of them as compared with most of the smaller independent states of the world.

The point to be emphasized in this connection is, however, that the quest for homogeneity is a primary necessity of the formation of democratic units of government and a free federation, and that no considerations of strategy or finance can lead or should lead to warranting a deviation from the broad requirements of such homogeneity. Once it is agreed that the days are past when rulers could transfer subjects by treaty from one area to another, or that the forcible incorporation of any people within another by conquest or otherwise is unjustifiable, the principle of self-determination can alone hold the field, and the primary application of this principle in a country like India comes in the domain of the formation of the federating units. To take the present provinces as the basis is to accept the accidents of British Indian history as being meaningful for the purpose in hand.

The logical conclusion of all this discussion is that the process of federating India must begin with the formation of primary homogeneous unilingual units whose representatives must come together and form the federation or federations that they desire and can succeed in building up. Ordinarily the largest possible homogeneous, unilingual area would be constituted as the federating unit.

No demand exists or is likely to arise in favour of a further division of these areas. However, in the bigger unilingual units there might be distinct sub-regional units who would desire some recognition of their individual entity. The requirements of recognizing such a sub-region would be best met by the device of the sub-province, often discussed since the Montford Report. In large unilingual areas the constitution of sub-provinces would both meet the needs of administration and special regional claims. The sub-province would, however, not be a separate federating unit. It is obvious that some of the details of the readjustment of boundaries could not be settled in an immediate once-for-all effort. Provided, however, that the procedure of dealing with all such questions is previously logically formulated, the complete solution of particular problems could take place slowly without hampering the constitutional debate.

The idea of a sub-province might also be suitably exploited in those provinces where the problem of divided loyalties has to be faced. It has been pointed out that the agitation against the partition of Bengal was based on the presumption of a prevailing sentiment of unity amongst the people of Bengal. It had been urged in favour of the partition that it served better the interests of the Muslims of Bengal. However, no substantial volume of Muslim opinion was shown actively to demand or support the partition.³ Possibly, there has been a change in sentiment since that time and the Muslims of Bengal have to choose between forming a federating unit on the basis either of language or of religion. If they choose the language basis, Bengal will remain undivided; if not, a partition might come about. A partition can be avoided even in case the Muslims and Hindus of Bengal feel their interests partially divergent, but are yet united in deciding to join the same federation. In this case the device of the sub-province could meet the requirements without it being necessary to constitute two separate federating units. A partition could not, however, be obviously avoided if Muslim Bengal not only emphasizes the religious loyalty, but further decides in consequence to join a federation other than the one of which Hindu Bengal is a member. The problem of the Punjab is similarly placed. The various schemes for the reconstitution of

³ The main considerations in the reconstitution of Bengal were stated in the following manner in the Hardinge Despatch: "A settlement to be satisfactory and conclusive must (1) provide convenient administrative units, (2) satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Bengalis, (3) duly safeguard the interests of the Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal and generally conciliate Mahomedan sentiment, and (4) be so clearly based upon broad grounds of political and administrative expediency as to negative any presumption that it has been exacted by clamour or agitation." It is interesting to note that throughout the Despatch the term Bengali is used to denote only Bengali Hindus.

the Punjab could be discussed and considered on the basis of the formation of two or three sub-provinces in the area only if all the sub-provinces are agreed in joining a single federation. If this is not so, partition could not be avoided.

III

INDIAN STATES AND THE STATUS OF FEDERATING UNITS

THE Indian States constitute the second group of federating units. There is no question here of forming new units. These petrified eighteenth century units must, for the present, be considered as they exist. The British, it must be remembered, have guaranteed their territorial integrity and must help in maintaining it. There would be no question, therefore, of an adjustment of areas between Indian States and British territory or of the formation of new units from amongst them. Apart from such efforts as have already been made towards the liquidation of the very small units, the numerous Indian States must be taken to be free to join a particular federation or not to join it. That this is a matter, theoretically, at least, of a free choice of the Indian States was emphasized often enough at the time of the passing of the 1935 Act. The position that would emerge in the event of their choosing not to join any Indian federation has not been made clear, however. Three possible alternatives might be suggested. Firstly, the Indian States might, in the event of not federating with British-Indian provincial units, remain in the same position as before. They would, in this case, continue their present relations with the British Government and acknowledge its paramountcy. This would mean the maintenance of some political agency and force by that government even after British rule from other parts of India had been completely withdrawn. Secondly, the Indian federation or federations might succeed, in respect of the non-federating Indian States, to the position now occupied by the paramount power. Thirdly, the withdrawal of the British and the completion of such federating acts as were possible might be presumed to put an end to the relations created by the treaties with the British and the Indian States might be taken to attain the position of independent sovereign units. It is difficult to believe that either the Indian States or the British will agree to the second alternative. The contention of the British that they desire really to withdraw from India would sound

hollow if they persist in the first after the Indian States had been given a proper chance of joining a federation with the Indian provinces or of forming one or more among themselves. Logically, the third position is the only one that should emerge.

It would obviously be the best course to merge the territories of the Indian States with those of the provinces of British India and to form the primary federating units from out of the whole country on the basis discussed above. This cannot, however, be done; and the approach indicated above for the formation of new homogeneous units is inapplicable to the Indian States, by virtue of their independent dynasties and their claim to territorial integrity and the guarantees given by the British. The Indian States must all be considered as independent federating units. As independent federating units they must all logically be considered as theoretically being free to join or not to join any particular federation or federations or any federation whatever. While it might appear that the very large number of Indian States might render the situation impossible, in practice not much difficulty is to be anticipated. The possibility of not choosing to join any federation could be contemplated only in the case of very few of them. The large majority must needs join one or the other of the bigger political groups, as their separate existence without the British prop would become impossible. The possibility of the Indian States forming a federation or federations of their own is also remote. There is no marked degree of homogeneity to be found among their governments. Their non-contiguity is an important element also in discouraging such efforts. The common bond between them is today the negative one of the common relation in which they stand, on the one hand, to the British and, on the other, to their subjects. Their dispositions even in the latter respect are not uniform, and the degree of the identification of the dynasties with the subject peoples and their readiness to start quasi-democratic institutions are all very different. Bonds of religion, race, or language do not bind them to one another. And even the possibility of federations embracing particular groups of Indian States, such as Muslim or Maratha States, seems remote. The protracted negotiations necessary, even under pressure of agents of the paramount power, to bring together a number of neighbouring Indian States in even small common or co-operative efforts exemplify the inherent difficulties in this direction. Only two major possibilities might, therefore, be visualized in connection with their federating effort: (i) that all the states would join an Indian federation or (ii) that

some of them might choose to attain the status of independent sovereign states. The latter alternative would not be welcome to the bulk of the Indian people, but seems inevitable in present circumstances.

In this connection another possibility that could be explored is that of inviting, at least, the smaller Indian States to become members of a federating unit instead of being independent federating units themselves. The idea of the sub-province could be suitably elaborated for application to the status of such States. The rulers, especially of such Indian States as have begun to institute quasi-democratic forms of government or whose territories are largely scattered, might find such union with the primary federating unit desirable. An unnecessarily large number at the federating stage might thus be avoided. From another point of view this might lead to making complete the whole of a federating unit. For example, if Travancore and Cochin joined together with the Malabar British District or the State of Mysore with the scattered Kannada Districts in the provinces, this might help in constituting better Kerala and Karnatak federating units than if the provinces and the Indian State units maintained, in these instances, their separate identity. It is obvious that this possibility depends on a previous clear formulation of the status of a sub-province and its acceptance initially by the independent Indian States. It is likely, however, that if such a possibility were present, some Indian States might take advantage of it in order to make the cultural units of which they are parts stronger and more complete federating units. As pointed out above, this takes for granted that the sub-provincial units are all agreed upon joining the same federation.

Another important aspect of the problem of federating with the Indian States is the maintenance of the equality of treatment of members of the two groups. The 1935 Act placed the provinces and Indian States in widely divergent positions as regards the federating act. While the provinces all joined together simultaneously to form a federation, as in other federating acts, the Indian States had the right to accede individually, when they pleased, to the federation, and they could also individually vary, to a large extent, the measure of their commitments in joining the federation. In effect the 1935 Act contemplated bringing into existence a federation of provinces which the individual Indian States were permitted to join fully or partially as they pleased. The position was highly anomalous and led to many peculiarities in the structure of the federation, which were objectionable. Initially the idea of forming

a federation of the provinces and Indian States together, appealed to British Indian politicians, as this alone would, it was thought, lead to complete independence for India as a whole. Subsequently, it turned out that the concessions that it was necessary to make to the Indian States led to a constitution which was illiberal, which unnecessarily weakened the federal government and which was incapable of growth or progression. Careful students, therefore, reached the conclusion that it would have been better for the provinces to have attempted from the beginning to form a federation for themselves without considering the possibility of the accession of the Indian States.⁴ In the new act of federating, this mistake must be corrected. It is not necessary, for the purpose, to deliberately exclude the possibility of the Indian States joining the federation. But it is certainly necessary to make clear that no difference can be made in the position of the Indian States and the provincial units in the federation, and that there can be no partial accession. In legislative, executive, or taxation powers the Indian States that join the federation must concede the same powers to the federal authority as the provinces. It would be far better to put a few more subjects—as long as they do not affect the essential powers of the central government—in the provincial list than to tolerate a difference in the status of the federating units. The events during the war have convincingly demonstrated the need for the central government exercising the same powers over the Indian States as over the provinces. If any Indian States are unwilling to concede these powers to the federal authority, it would be far better to exclude such units from the federation and to proceed to organize it without taking them into consideration than to introduce into the federation elements which must lead to a lack of cohesion and effective action not only in respect of themselves but also, by an inevitable process, throughout the federal structure.

IV

MAIN CULTURAL DIVISIONS

IN A consideration of the practical possibilities of the results of the effort at federating made by the various primary units, it is clear that the most important problem is that presented by the demand for forming more than one federation. The block of Muslim

⁴ For the whole subject see Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: *Federation Versus Freedom*, R. B. R. R. Kale Memorial Lecture, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, 1939.

peoples has most effectively voiced this demand. Other demands which might be made are hardly likely to be really effective. The claim to separate statehood can be established by a group only if it inhabits a compact region and has a majority within it. As long as an independent state is primarily an organization for defence against outside aggression, it must be based on a region or an area. Also each particular region must be under a single political authority, except for those special cases where International Zones have been established or joint authority of two or more states holds sway by common agreement. Therefore, a people that is in the minority in all areas cannot aspire to separate statehood unless, as in the case of the Jews, a special provision is artificially made for it by settlement or otherwise in some areas. In view of these considerations the only real possibility of division is that between the regions inhabited dominantly by Muslims and those in which Hindus chiefly reside.

Some attention must, however, also be given to the claim for Dravidistan. The claim, it might be conceded, has perhaps some ground in a real grievance. The Dravida people might feel that the Hindus belonging to the Indo-Aryan linguistic groups and the Brahmins among themselves, who claim to belong to the Aryan race, have consistently ignored or opposed the full development of, what might be considered, specially Dravidian traits in culture or thought. There is little doubt that the attempt to force the teaching of Hindustani on the Dravidian peoples gave special force to these complaints; for it is clear that Hindustani is extremely foreign in character to the Dravidian languages, and the forcing of its teaching on an unwilling people is an example of those attempts at manufacturing unity which are bound to be self-defeating.

In this connection some observations might be appropriately made on the language question in India and its bearing on the subject in hand. That in course of time the Indian federation or federations will come to discard the habitual use of a foreign language in all intercourse, and will attempt the building up of its own linguistic cultural base or bases, might be taken as axiomatic. In terms of ultimate values there is otherwise little meaning in the claim to independent self-expression and self-government. Granted this, it has yet to be recognized that the difficulties with which this problem bristles are either not understood or are passed over. Take, for instance, the loose use of the term "national" language to denote Hindi, Urdu, or Hindustani. As a matter of fact, there exists no "national" language in India in the sense of the language being

the attribute of the nation as a whole or being the dominant or special vehicle of the expression of its traditions and culture. The claim of the Hindi, Urdu, and Hindustani group or groups is only that the speakers of this group of languages are more numerous than the speakers of any other single language in India. Apart from this, as regards any aspect of our national life, not only are all these languages (Hindi, Urdu, or Hindustani) not the special vehicles of the Indian tradition, but they have perhaps not even been comparatively as well cultivated, whether in historical times or in the recent past, as some of the other Indian languages. In the Indian situation it is hardly possible today even to think of the ultimate emergence of a national language. What might emerge with effort are perhaps two separate or cognate languages, (i) a *lingua-franca* and (ii) a federal language. Hindustani today does operate as a sort of *lingua franca* over most parts of India with the exception, perhaps, of the Dravidian regions. It is not, however, and cannot be the vehicle either of intellectual intercourse or cultural development over the whole country. No doubt in time it might be possible to evolve such an instrument without necessarily crippling the development of other Indian languages. We might call such a language the federal language.

When one approaches the question of a federal language, one is sharply reminded of the fundamental cleavage in two and, possibly three, channels of the flow of Indian tradition. All languages in the position in which most modern Indian languages find themselves today must make an enormous constructive effort at evolving new forms of speech and at expanding their vocabulary. They must, in order to do this, fall back on their proper origins and derive strength therefrom. No ready-made borrowings, however large, from a foreign language could help in the effort. Also the need for the evolution of an adaptable, integrated, and progressive organ would render impossible any effort at calculated mixtures of diverse elements. It might be possible to maintain an exact balance of 50-50 when a government is getting text-books compiled, and to examine each book carefully to see that it contains the proper proportion of Sanskritic and Perso-Arabic words. But this cannot be done when the further development of a language, in order to make it a suitable vehicle of modern, scientific, social, or cultural thought, is being attempted. Here the language must make its proper choice and must seek its own path of development. In this effort all the Indian languages belonging to the Sanskritic group can join together and can aim at parallel or even uniform development. This develop-

ment could be so planned that without attempting any artificial unity their present close connection is not only kept up, but the ease of transition from one to another made even greater by the process. As a result of this effort a considerable common vocabulary of technical and other terms might be built which will make possible the functioning of a language allied to the *lingua franca* as the "federal language."

From this development, Urdu will, of course, stand apart; for it has already decided to fall back not on Sanskritic roots, but to resort to Persian and Arabic, and chiefly Arabic. There can be no quarrel with this effort made by the speakers of Urdu. If the bulk of them feel that their traditions are better expressed and their feelings and personalities better developed by this procedure, they must of course adopt it. But the issue is sometimes clouded by such talk as that Urdu is the product of the joint effort of the Hindu and the Muslim. All that such a phrase can mean is that a large number of Hindu intellectuals had, in some areas where they had lived for generations under Muslim rule and at a time when their intellectual background was more largely formed of Islamic and Perso-Arabic traditions than of Hindu and Sanskritic traditions, played a considerable part in developing the Urdu language and literature. But it would be a curious argument to urge that because a certain section of Hindus whose outlook was and perhaps is dominated by life in communities chiefly Muslim in composition and Islamic in tradition has taken a hand in building up Urdu, that language must therefore be equally acceptable to all Hindus. The extent of influence exercised by Muslims on culture and language differs greatly from region to region in India, and while Hindus in some regions of Northern India might consider Urdu as their mother tongue, they should not be surprised that the Andhras, Marathas, and Kanadigas resent greatly the imposition on themselves of a language which must always remain foreign to them, and the expenditure of their money on its development.

In the face of these considerations it is difficult to think of the future Indian federation as being even federally unilingual. It should be emphasized that this is not necessarily an obstacle to the formation of a single federation for all India. Just as it is contemplated above that a basic federal language for the Sanskritic group will emerge ultimately, so might equally a basic language acceptable to all the Muslim groups. And when that happens there would be nothing untoward or exceptionable in a federation where two federal languages are in use side by side. There are cases of

federations where more than one federal language is current, and for a large and diversified country like India this would not necessarily be a handicap.

When speaking of the Sanskritic group it is not possible automatically to embrace speakers of Dravidian languages within it; for, though it is true that most of these languages have a very large number of words derived from Sanskrit, their structure is entirely different from that of the Indo-Aryan languages. The problem must be left to be solved by the Dravidian peoples themselves. Whether they would co-operate with the speakers of Sanskritic languages in building up a common vocabulary from Sanskritic roots or whether they would attempt to develop their residuum of common Dravidian stock is a question for themselves to decide. In the latter event a third federal language might emerge; but unless further unwise provocation is given to the Dravidian peoples, any decision that they make about their linguistic development need not affect political cohesion. The Dravidian peoples are very differently situated as compared to the Muslims. What affiliations they have outside India are more a source of weakness to them than of strength. It is, therefore, very much more in their interest to be parts of a strong federation than to have a small and weak entity of their own. Finally, whatever may be said about the development of their special traits, their traditions in the main are so firmly Hindu that it is highly unlikely that they will choose voluntarily to separate from the bulk of their co-religionists.

To recapitulate: In the process of forming a federation by a voluntary process, no presumption can be made, to begin with, in regard to the form of the federation or its constituents. The federation can come into existence only by the usual process of negotiation and agreement between the various federating units. So far as the Indian States are concerned, their separate individual existence and their freedom to join or not to join an Indian federation have already been established. They, therefore, constitute a series of independent primary federating units. In the area at present included in the British Provinces, there is no presumption in favour of the present provinces being necessarily treated as the federating units. While some of them might satisfactorily function as such, new units which satisfy the condition of being unilingual and comparatively homogeneous must be formed out of others. The device of the sub-province might be utilized to reconcile special elements of difference within large unilingual federating units of provincial

areas. It might also be utilized for forming federating units out of Indian States and provincial areas which are unilingual and otherwise homogeneous. The decision not to participate in a federation would leave a federating unit, whether an Indian State or province, in the position of an independent state.

In considering the practical possibilities of the federating process in India, starting from the primary unilingual federating units, three broad groups emerge clearly. The first group is that of the dominantly Muslim units who, though all speaking languages that belong to the Indo-Aryan group, are keen on the maintenance of a close connection with Arabic and Persian and of strengthening this connection in the linguistic sphere. The second group is that of the dominantly Hindu regions who all speak Indo-Aryan languages, and who naturally seek to base their further development on Sanskrit and the allied languages. The third group is that of the Dravida peoples who, though overwhelmingly Hindu, speak languages that belong to a stock other than the Indo-Aryan. This last group might seek either to find a common base for itself in the older Dravida stock or might decide, following the practice it has followed for centuries, to increase its borrowings from Sanskrit. These three broad groups must be recognized as the primary facts of the Indian situation. There is no obstacle, except that of sentiment, in embracing all these in one Indian federation. Provided the differences and their basic grounds are clearly recognized and no attempt is made to presume or impose a degree of unity in advance of the state of sentiment, the adjustments on the political or economic plane should not present insuperable difficulties. It should be clearly conceded that while there might be a possibility of developing one *lingua-franca* for the whole federation, in the initial stage, at least, two or possibly even three languages might have to be recognized as the federal languages. As between the Sanskritic and Dravida Hindu blocks, there is little likelihood for difference regarding the federating process. The only care necessary to be taken in this respect is for the Sanskritic block to recognize clearly the divergent Dravida traditions, the possibility that their development has not been fairly treated in the past, and of not committing again the mistake of slighting what appear to be the insignificant beginnings of separatist claims. The main problem of the federation is the remaining one of the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims.

V

HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS—CULTURAL
AND LINGUISTIC ASPECTS

THE possibility of achieving one federation for the whole of India depends on the relation or understanding that exists between members of the Hindu and of the Muslim folds. In this connection it is necessary to emphasize that the situation must be judged chiefly in relation to political facts. Other factors, such as geographic or economic, may themselves have taken a hand in shaping, in former years, present political facts, and might thus indirectly affect the political situation today. We cannot, however, for this reason give geographic or economic facts, which have not appropriately influenced the existing political situation, importance in considering the immediate political set-up. The settlement of various communities in the Indian continent in the past has been guided, in the main, by physical features. Geography may thus have determined the areas of occupation of these communities and might today be reflected in the boundaries that are marked between linguistic or other groups. In the formation, however, of primary homogeneous groups today, such as those based on language, reliance can only be placed on the linguistic and political affinity claimed or avowed by the people of a region. The existing facts regarding this affinity cannot be altered or ignored by reference to some prominent geographical feature. In the same way the economic dependence of one region on another might result in a feeling of unity between the two which might be translated into political sentiment. But as long as, for whatever reason, political sentiment does not follow economic relation, the mere fact of such a relation can be of no avail in the political sphere. The extreme dependence of Ireland on England in respect of most economic matters is notorious. This has, however, not led Ireland to support England in war, because of the sharp antagonism in political sentiment. It would be futile, therefore, to consider the present situation in respect of any other factors than either the political sentiment of the mass of the people concerned or the political wisdom of their leaders.

The relations between Muslims and Hindus in India may be said never really to have been adjusted on a footing of equality in a free regime, so far. During the larger part of the pre-British era, Muslims in India felt themselves and were, in effect, the ruling race.

The times, such as those of Akbar, when deliberate attempts were made to bring about a synthesis on a footing of equality between the two communities, prove the general rule by their exceptional character and comparatively short duration. The rule of Hindus was never extended to areas containing large Muslim populations, and the total period of Maratha power was too short and its basis too shifting for any real synthesis to have come about during that period. When the British acquired dominion in India, therefore, the Muslims for the larger part thought that their position of the ruling race had been taken by the British, while the Hindus, barring the Marathas, felt perhaps no more than that there had been a change from rulers partially indigenous to rulers completely foreign.

During the period of the British occupation of India, while both communities have been politically powerless, a comparative equality of status has been established between them in other respects. The nineteenth century witnessed a considerable Hindu renaissance. In a large number of directions this renaissance moved along lines which did not involve any conflict with Muslim interest. In most social, religious, and cultural matters, the movements were largely reforming or revivalist. In some directions, however, appearance of conflict was inevitable before a stabilized position could be reached. Such Hindus as became aware of the actively competitive character of the relation between religious faiths in the modern world, thought with concern of the loss of members of the Hindu fold as a result of the activities of missionaries of other religions. Steps to prevent this led ultimately to advocacy of proselytization to Hinduism, an entirely novel idea, which was bound to lead to some straining of relations with Muslims. Similarly a number of revivalist moves might take or be given the appearance of being anti-Muslim, as happened with attempts at the commemoration of Shivaji. In other spheres, the Hindu renaissance was to affect even more directly interests which Muslims were bound to consider their own. A notable and an important example is the language controversy in North India. Language is the main vehicle of cultural traditions, and the first efforts of a people-attempting to free themselves from foreign influence is usually towards the revival of a "pure" linguistic tradition. It is evidence of the stature of Shivaji and of the motivation of his activities that one of his first acts on being firmly established was to order a compilation of Sanskrit terms for use in the administration of his dominion. It is not surprising, therefore, that in those parts of North India where Muslim settlement and influence were not all-pervading, a move-

ment to create a standard literary language based on Sanskrit traditions should be made soon after Persian ceased to be the court language on the establishment of British rule. Muslims, however, resented this move. It has been stated that the change in attitude of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, from a broadly Indian to a specifically Muslim point of view, was consequent upon the knowledge of this movement on the part of Hindus.⁵ The Muslim took it for granted that the position attained in all matters in the pre-British period during Muslim rule, was the position that should be stabilized. To the Hindu, the attainment of real spiritual and cultural freedom necessarily involved the removal of shackles imposed during Muslim rule also.

The evolution of the problem of language in the United Provinces illustrates the general trend in all spheres. Till almost the last quarter of the nineteenth century it was possible for government in that province to maintain that the common language of the educated classes in the province was the same whether written in Persian or Nagari characters. It was recognized, even at this time, that the language of literary effort of the two communities tended to diverge into two distinct vocabularies. By the first decade of this century the distance traversed was such that it was no longer possible to enforce the use of the common language even in all standards at the primary stage. The Muslim view of this development is clearly stated in the following terms in a Minute of Dissent to the Report of the U. P. Committee on Primary Education:

"Ancient Bhasha which, like Sanskrit, is a dead language and is intelligible to those only who know Sanskrit, is now being revived in the form of a new language, under the name of Hindi, to the detriment of Urdu or Hindustani, which is the lingua franca of the country and is in itself a compromise between Arabic and Persian on one side and the long-defunct Bhasha and Sanskrit on the other, and has been in common use for the past three centuries."⁶

The resolution of the Government of Sir James Meston on the report of this Primary (Piggott) Education Committee contains an excellent statement of the position in 1914:

"That there is a Hindustani language, spoken and understood by all men of moderate education throughout the province, passes beyond dispute. It has its limitations; for there are certain topics of constant recurrence, such as religion, morals, proverbs, and literary allusions, on which a Hindu would ordinarily use different expressions from a Muhammadan. But, with these exceptions, it is a language which can be used in the every-day business of life by Hindu and Musalman alike.... But, at a certain point, espe-

⁵ Prof. H. K. Sherwani, "The Political Thought of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan," *Indian Journal of Political Science* (Conference Number), April-June, 1944.

⁶ "Report of the (Piggott) Committee on Primary Education," United Provinces, 1913, p. 61.

cially when it comes to handle abstract ideas, the common language fails to provide expressions which are equally familiar or equally congenial to both Hindus and Muhammadans; and recourse is then had, in the one case, to words of Sanskrit origin, and in the other to words of Arabic or Persian extraction. A Hindu fond of Urdu might frequently select the latter; but a Muhammadan would very rarely consciously choose the former. This process of differentiation is stimulated by the natural pride of each race in its own literature; and the bias towards Sanscritic or Persian origins becomes much more emphatic in the written than in the spoken language.⁷⁷

It is clear from this account that with a widened use of the language medium for all purposes, a differentiation between the media used by Hindus and Muslims was inevitable. The language common to the educated classes of both communities, even when it existed, could not go beyond the needs of ordinary civil intercourse. It could not serve the purpose of religious disquisition or literary expression, and it was obviously unfitted to be the vehicle of modern intellectual or scientific education or thinking. Hence for further development Urdu and Hindi had to go their separate ways. The movement in divergence has been rapid. At the beginning of the century the Muslims maintained, as shown above, that the language in schools should be the common language of the province; for, at this time, the progress of Sanskritic elements in the language had not yet been considerable. A quarter of a century later we find them protesting against the concept of a common language and maintaining that, under the garb of a common language, i.e., Hindustani, Hindi was being forced on them. In the meanwhile experience with the building up of the new vocabulary, as, for instance, at the Osmania University, has fully exemplified the extreme limits to which this divergence must, of necessity, proceed. The tie of a common language medium which held together Hindus and Muslims over a large part of North India is thus being loosened. It should be emphasized that this is not the result of any extremist movement on either side, and could not have been prevented by merely an attitude of reasonableness. The movement could cease only if Hindus accepted the importation and enhanced use of Arabic and Persian elements in their language in the same manner in which they had accepted them under Muslim rule, or if the Muslims accepted the Sanskritisation of the common language.

The fact that in some parts of Northern India large numbers of Hindus have absorbed Muslim culture and Islamic traditions, or that in other parts of India local Muslims cannot be easily distinguished from their Hindu neighbours, should not be allowed to obscure the real issue. These facts are the result of historical condi-

⁷ Op. cit., para. 6, pp. 11, 12.

tions and are already in the process of change. In Northern India the acceptance of the Muslim background by the Hindu has been the result of centuries of Muslim rule, and the acceptance has not always been either voluntary or on equal terms. Once the forces that compelled the acceptance ceased to exist, there have been movements for the revival of pure Hindu traditions. That the Arya Samaj should have gained the largest success in the Punjab is of great significance even from the political point of view. On the other hand, the great resemblance of Muslims, in other parts, to Hindus is the result of the conversion of religion having been, in many cases, of a formal nature and of the absence, locally, of strong enough Muslim centres to bring the converted fully within the new fold. In this respect also, recent decades have witnessed the attempts of Muslim leaders and missionaries to see that the scattered Muslim communities in various parts realize their cultural differences from their Hindu neighbours. The insistence on the teaching of Urdu everywhere has been the essential instrument of this movement.

To any careful observer it must be clear that the situation in this regard is extremely fluid today. Mere insistence on economic or political bonds cannot cope with it. If either Hindus or Muslims feel that their cultural development and spiritual faith demand that they sedulously cultivate certain traditions or revive certain practices, the plea must be argued on the cultural or spiritual plane and not on the political or economic; for, after all, political and economic organizations merely afford the structure within which men might pursue their quest of the "good" or the "higher" life, and no sacrifice of ultimate values could be justified on a material basis. Realistically, it must be conceded that there is little chance of an early agreement being reached in this sphere. As has been insisted, there has been no time yet for a stable adjustment of relations on an entirely free and equal basis of the two communities. The process is yet in the stage of the divergences and differences being further emphasized and attempts being made to build up a cultural life on "purer" lines. Therefore, we must proceed on the assumption that Muslims and Hindus in India, for some time at least, must be considered as forming not one united community, but two communities desirous of cultivating traditions which are in the main divergent.

It is still possible for the two communities to form, if not one integrated society, at least a common political state. After the acceptance of the principle of homogeneous primary units forming

an Indian federation in which these units will be largely autonomous and would exercise control over all those departments of state dealing with education and social and cultural life, and after the guarantee of adequate minority protection everywhere, no difficulty should appear for the exploitation of the two traditions, side by side, in one single federation.

VI

HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS—POLITICAL ASPECT

THE history of the efforts to arrive at an understanding between Hindus and Muslims during recent decades, however, shows that the differences between the two are not capable of being easily settled on the lines of freedom being allowed to develop different religious and cultural traditions. Therefore, the enquiry must proceed further into the possible grounds of difference on the political plane. This enquiry is likely to be helped by an examination of the political demands put forward by Muslims from time to time.

The evolution of Muslim demands can be broadly traced in different stages corresponding to the stages of the imminence of grant of additional powers by the British. The first stage is that of the Morley-Minto reforms when separate electorates were first brought into being with the hope that they would prove temporary. The second stage, which forms the real point of departure, is of the period before the Montford reforms and is marked by the only widely accepted agreement between Hindus and Muslims—the Lucknow Pact.

The Lucknow Pact, which registers the first attempt, at that time thought to be wholly successful, to arrive at an understanding between Hindus and Muslims on the political issue, gives safeguards to Muslims chiefly in the form of giving an extra weight to the Muslim voters in provinces in which they were in the minority. It is easy, retrospectively, to criticize the Lucknow Pact; but it must be recognized that the statesmen who shaped it were wise, and that, on the assumptions on which it was formulated, it was not essentially unfair or unworkable. The assumptions obviously were that Muslim interests were not fundamentally incompatible with those of Hindus, and that the objectives of the two communities

were not essentially divergent. It was, at the same time, recognized that where Muslims were in a minority, and in many cases a very small one, the dominant Hindu majority, on attaining power, might be forgetful of its responsibilities towards the Muslim minority. Therefore, it was arranged that where the Muslim minority was very small, it should be converted into a somewhat significant minority by giving Muslim votes special weightage. Muslim representatives might thus be in a position of vantage from which to influence government. As a compensation, and following the same principle, the possible Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal were artificially reduced, so that in those provinces a position was created by which, even theoretically, a Muslim ministry could not do without the co-operation of non-Muslims. It should be emphasized that this was conceived of as a once-for-all settlement, and it was felt that the slight adjustments in political power effected by these arrangements, and the element of artificiality and departure from strict democratic procedure introduced by them, were not too large in the cause of the attainment of permanent Hindu-Muslim understanding.

The authors of the Montford Report suggested implementing the Lucknow Pact even though they did not like it in principle. The ushering in of the Montford scheme coincided with the episode of the Khilafat agitation, and it later emerged that the Muslims were dissatisfied with the settlement made at Lucknow. During the 'twenties, Muslim aspirations slowly took shape, and the concrete demands as they were formulated by 1929 were mainly (i) the creation of the province of Sind, (ii) the introduction of reforms in N. W. F. Province and Baluchistan, (iii) one-third of the total representation in the Central Legislature, (iv) constitutional provision for giving Muslims an adequate share in all services of the state, and (v) at least one-third representation of Muslims in every cabinet, central and provincial. Another demand which claimed that the representation of minorities should nowhere lead to reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even to equality was intended to change the position of Muslims brought about by the Lucknow Pact in Bengal and the Punjab. The Simon Commission in 1930 recommended that, in the absence of any agreement, the arrangements in the Lucknow Pact may be continued, in the main. At the Round Table Conference, in the demands presented jointly by representatives of minority communities, only the first three demands mentioned above were put forward as specific Muslim demands. The other demands were generalized; the demand

for representation in cabinets did not, for example, contain specific percentages and was asked to be fulfilled by establishment of a convention.

In the absence of any agreement between the representatives of Muslims and Hindus at the Round Table Conference, the British Government declared its decisions in this regard through an award given by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. Sind had been constituted, under the new constitution, into a separate province and legislature introduced in the N. W. Frontier Province. This, together with the Prime Minister's award, conceded all the Muslim claims as formulated at the Round Table Conference. The award went even beyond the position taken up by the Simon Commission, in radically revising the Lucknow Pact in Bengal and the Punjab and creating statutory majorities in favour of the Muslims in those provinces. Presumably, therefore, no important Muslim grievance should have remained unremedied under the new arrangements. This appeared to be the general result at the outset. While the Muslim League condemned the new constitutional scheme and termed it retrograde and injurious to the vital interests of British India *vis-a-vis* the Indian States, it accepted the Communal Award, so far as it went.

On an experience of the working of the reformed provincial governments, Muslims began to express renewed dissatisfaction, and a number of further demands were put forward from various quarters. These demands were usually for increased weightage in legislatures and guaranteed weightage in executive government, rising to as much as half at the centre and in all the provinces, or for some arrangements by which the Muslim share in the power at the centre would be more effectively guaranteed, when responsibility was transferred at the centre, than, it was feared, would happen with only one-third of the seats in the legislature. None of such demands were, however, formulated in a representative manner. Instead, there appeared a demand for the constitution of the areas, in which Muslims were in a numerical majority, into independent states. This demand has evidently obtained for it increasing support, and it is this which has precipitated the present crisis.

The demands put forward by the Muslims in 1929 may be said to have had the approval of the leaders of all sections of opinion within the community, including the "nationalists." The "nationalist" Muslims, while not accepting the Communal Award, did not also countenance the idea of any agitation against it. The demand

for partition has not yet been accepted by them. However, the Muslim Majlis, which is the newest organization of the "nationalist" Muslims, passed in May, 1944, a resolution which contained the following two clauses: (i) The units of the All-India Federation should be completely autonomous and all residuary powers should be vested in them; (ii) Every unit of the federation should be free to secede from it as a result of a plebiscite of all its adult inhabitants. The demand contained in the first clause is based on an old Muslim demand which found a place in the 1929 list. In 1929 the demand was for a federal form of Government with residuary powers being given to the provinces, but it did not contain any reference to the degree of autonomy.

In order to understand the source of political differences, it is necessary to analyze these demands and their evolution. To proceed to explain the situation in terms of the obstinacy of the Muslims or their desire to take advantage of a bargaining position, or the cleverness of a leader or a party machine, is bound to be inadequate and unhelpful. It must be remembered that the demands meet with almost complete support from members of a community who have a long and memorable political tradition. Therefore, they must somehow express what are felt to be the real requirements of a satisfactory life by them.

The demand for separate electorates was put forward on the ground that without such a device Muslims could not feel sure of obtaining representation which could be relied upon to look properly after Muslim interests. All through recent decades Hindu organizations have made the most strenuous attempts to bring about an abolition of separate electorates and have been prepared to make numerous concessions in order to persuade Muslims to accept joint electorates. These attempts never succeeded. It is clear, therefore, that Muslims distrust the giving of any share to non-Muslims in the choice of political representatives of the Muslim faith and desire to maintain closely their separate identity within the political organization. How far does this sense of separateness go? It has been suggested above that the Lucknow Pact conceived the settlement in terms of government in no region being of any single community. But Muslims later urged that while the pact only lessened Hindu majorities somewhat in the Hindu provinces, it made impossible a Muslim majority in any province. This feeling led to the emergence of the concept of Muslim regions and to the complete submergence of the idea behind the Lucknow Pact.

The demand for a separate province of Sind could be well justified on the plea of the formation of homogeneous, unilingual primary units elaborated in a previous section. It was not, however, primarily put forward on this account by Muslims. At the 1927 session of the All-India Muslim League, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is reported to have supported the demand for the formation of Sind in the following terms:

"Maulana Abul Kalam Azad declared that by the Lucknow Pact they had sold away their interests. The Delhi proposals of last March opened the door for the first time to the recognition of the real rights of Mussalmans in India... Their existing small majority in Bengal and the Punjab was only a census figure, but the Delhi proposals gave them for the first time five provinces of which no less than three (Sind, the Frontier Province and Baluchistan) contained a real overwhelming Muslim majority. If the Muslims did not recognize this great step they were not fit to live. There would now be nine Hindu provinces against five Muslim provinces, and whatever treatment Hindus accorded in the nine provinces, Muslims would accord the same treatment to Hindus in the five provinces. Was not this a great gain? Was not a new weapon gained for the assertion of Muslim rights?"⁸

The degree of the consciousness of separateness revealed by this quotation is very large. Two ideas clearly underlie this formulation. Firstly, the urge to have a separate Muslim region. The Lucknow Pact is said to have sold Muslim rights because it sought to create everywhere a series of composite political units. This would not satisfy the Muslims. They must have a region or regions which they feel are politically their own. Secondly, it reveals a complete distrust of the Hindu majority and of any possible safeguards that could be devised to protect minority interests. The real effective weapon for the protection of Muslim rights in Hindu regions is what the Muslims could do to Hindus in the Muslim regions. The understanding between the two communities could no longer proceed on the assumption of progressive merger of interest, but had to develop on the principle of balance of power. With these conceptions it is not difficult to understand the progressive evolution of Muslim demands.

Fundamentally the demand is for a substantial share, as Muslims, in political power everywhere, whatever the numerical strength. The extension of particular demands in spheres and percentages is merely the result of the experience of the working of democratic political government. The first realization was that the Lucknow system of weightage was not very helpful, as the small Muslim minorities in most provincial legislatures would not really obtain much power. Even under the Montford scheme the Muslims could not naturally wield much power in provinces where their

⁸ "Indian Annual Register," 1927, II, p. 449.

strength was very small; hence, the demand for substantial representation in all provincial cabinets. The working of the 1935 Act taught two further lessons. Firstly, the inclusion by convention of a Muslim or Muslims in provincial cabinets did not by itself give a sufficiently Muslim character to the cabinet. This, for two reasons,—one, that the proportion of Muslim membership of the cabinet was not large enough, and, secondly, the Muslim chosen might not represent properly what was supposed to be Muslim interest. The working of the party machines in the provincial governments further showed that a number as large as even a third in the legislature might not prove effective in obtaining an adequate share in executive power. If Hindu interests were firmly welded in a close party machine, they could disregard to a considerable extent the real desires of even a considerable Muslim block. This meant that even if Muslims controlled most of a third of the central legislature they might not have an effective voice in it. Logically the only demands that could be put forward on this realization was that at least half the share directly in the executive government, both at the centre and in all the provinces, should be given to Muslims. The genesis of the demand for separation can be found only in a realization that it would not be practical politics to put forward such demands, and that if the Muslims desired to have a free political life of their own they must seek it in an independent state. It is likely that the realization of the extent to which a central government must press on provincial autonomy during war also helped forward the formulation of the claim to independent statehood.

A part of the psychology of the Muslims might be understood by reference to the fact that they inherit the traditions of a ruling race. This might make it difficult for Muslims to contemplate existence in a federation, where, on democratic assumptions, the bulk of the power would be vested in the hands of the much more numerous Hindus. But a more concrete reason might also be found for the Muslim desire for being able to pursue an entirely independent political life. It has been pointed out above that the desire to pursue an independent religious, social, and cultural life could be met adequately in a federation where the constituent units were largely autonomous. The sharing of a common federation would, however, still mean a common policy on the larger political and economic issues. Considerations of a common political policy on the federal plane would be dominated by issues of international relations. And in this important sphere the Indian Muslims have a pronounced policy to which, it is obvious, the Hindus and other

non-Muslims might not always adhere. The Indian Muslims in their conception of international policy are naturally dominated by the thought of the community of Muslim nations outside India. There are a large number of considerations that go to bind the Indian Muslims to Muslims outside India. There is, in the first instance, the natural feeling of a people under subjection toward others who are independent and with whom they share any common attribute. The Hindu, in this manner, makes much even of quasi-independent Nepal. Secondly, there is the sense of solidarity among people belonging to one religious faith which is perhaps much stronger in Islam than in any other religious community. But above all there is the historical fact that the political, cultural, and religious life of the Muslims of India has always depended, to a large extent, on immigration of soldiers, intellectuals and religious leaders from other Muslim countries, especially from Persia and Arabia. The Indian Muslim, especially in the north, has thus habitually come to look to Muslim countries outside and has his opinions shaped to a large extent by what is happening in them. At times of international crisis reaching these Muslim countries, leaders of Muslim India try to express opinions and to influence international decisions so far as it is possible for them. How deeply they are affected and what seem to them the objectives of this Muslim solidarity might be made clear by two extracts. The first, which follows, is from the manifesto issued by the Third All-India Khilafat Conference (1920) held at Bombay:

"The claim on behalf of the Mahomedans in India in connection with the Turkish peace terms may be divided into two sections, one regarding the Khilafat, and the second regarding what is called Jazirat-ul-arab and the Holy Places of Islam.

"The claim regarding the Khilafat consists in leaving the Turkish Empire as it was at the time of the outbreak of the War, except that although the allegations of Turkish misrule are not admitted, the non-Turkish nationalities may, if they so desire, be guaranteed autonomous Government within the Ottoman Empire consistently with the dignity of a sovereign state.

"The second section of the claim consists in the sovereignty over Jazirat-ul-arab, i.e., Arabia as defined by Moslem religious authority and the custody of the Holy Places of Islam. Arabia as thus defined is bounded by the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, the Euphrates and the Tigris.

"The Holy Places include the three sacred Harems, namely, Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, and the Holy Shrines, namely Najef, Karbala, Samarra, Kazimain, and Baghdad. In reality this claim is included in the first, but it is distinguishable from it in that the custody of the Holy Places has ever since the establishment of Islam been under the Khilafat and unlike the boundary of the latter which has fluctuated from time to time, but has never suffered any diminution whatsoever. This claim does not exclude genuine Arab Self-government because those who know understand the unreality behind it. The claim now said to be made by Sharif Hussain and by Amir

Faisal is inconsistent in fact with their acceptance of even the spiritual sovereignty of the Khalifa."⁹

The second is the resolution regarding Palestine passed by the All-India Muslim League at its annual session in 1937:

"The All-India Muslim League declares in the name of the Mussalmans of India that the recommendations of the Royal Palestine Commission and the subsequent statement of policy presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Parliament are in conflict with their religious sentiments, and in the interest of world peace, demands their rescission without further delay.

"The All-India Muslim League calls upon the Government of India to issue instructions to the representatives of India at the Assembly of the League of Nations that, in view of the failure of the present Mandatory to carry out the terms of the Mandate which have never been accepted by the Arabs and the rest of the Islamic world, and in order not to prejudice the civil and religious rights of Arabs, they shall demand the annulment of the Mandate and dissociate themselves from any decision tending to perpetuate it and, thus, to violate the fundamental right of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine to choose the form of government best suited to their needs and requirements as guaranteed to them under international treaties. The All-India Muslim League appeals to the rulers of the Muslim countries to continue to use their powerful influence and their best endeavours to save the Holy Places in Palestine from the sacrilege of non-Muslim domination and the Arabs of this Holy Land from the enslavement of British Imperialism, backed by Jewish finance.

"The League places on record its complete confidence in the Supreme Muslim Council and the Arab Higher Committee under the leadership of His Eminence the Grand Mufti and warns the local administration in Palestine not to aggravate the resentment already created in the Muslim world by a policy of repression as advocated by the Royal Commission against the people of the country, ostensibly to uphold law and order but in reality calculated to further the interests of aliens through the scheme of partition. The League expresses its entire confidence in the leader and members of the delegation selected by the Palestine Conference, held on 24th and 25th September, 1937, and appeals to every friend of Arabs in Palestine to raise a united voice to redress their grievances."¹⁰

It is obvious that in an independent India, not ruled by Muslims alone, not only the Hindus but other non-Muslim communities as well could not be always persuaded to support this stand in international policy. The arguments used to convince the Hindu that he should support the Khilafat agitation were usually along the following lines. "Musalmans must wish well to every Musalman state, and even assist such state if it is undeservedly in peril. And Hindus if they are true friends of Musalmans could not but share the latter's feelings. We must, therefore, co-operate with our Musalman brothers in their attempts to save the Turkish Empire in Europe from extinction."¹¹ It is hardly likely that non-Muslims would, for any length of time, allow their foreign policies to be shaped by such logic. As a matter of fact there emerges in this connection a point where there is very considerable likelihood of

⁹ "Young India," March 3, 1920, p. 5.

¹⁰ "Indian Annual Register," 1937, Vol. II, p. 435.

¹¹ M. K. Gandhi, "The Turkish Question," in "Young India," June 29, 1921.

vital difference of opinion between the point of view of Muslims and that of non-Muslims.

The main aim of a foreign policy and of defensive equipment is the maintenance of the integrity and independence of the state and the prevention of the imposition forcibly on it of the will of those outside it. In the last resort, recourse might have to be had to armed resistance in order to achieve these aims. So far as is known, the aggressions by land against India have almost always come from the north-west. In historical times no aggression has been experienced from the north or the north-east, in spite of the fact that at one time there was continuous intercourse and considerable cultural exchange in this quarter. In the south-east the land-block is small, and the states have never been powerful enough to threaten any substantial part of the Indian continent. These conditions are largely unchanged today. It is the continental area of the north-west that must be reckoned as the most important factor in our land defence policy and the two main forces operating in this area are the U. S. S. R. and the Muslim countries. It might be that Pan-Islamism is a delusion and that there is little cohesion or unity of purpose among Muslim nations today. It might be that the talk of the solid Muslim block from Constantinople to Fiji is merely idle talk. It would, at the same time, not do for those who are responsible for India's foreign policy to ignore a possible revival of aggressive inclinations on the part of peoples beyond India's border.

Given the situation of India, it is inevitable that the land defences of the country should be organized mainly with a view to meeting invasions from the northwest, and its foreign policy should aim at alliances which would check the intentions of any potential aggressors on its borders. In this context the Muslim and non-Muslim interpretation of Indian interest might seriously differ. To many Muslims a strengthening of the forces of potential Muslim aggressors might not appear unwelcome, and a further importation of non-Indian Muslim elements not undesirable. At least, their judgment is bound to be continuously affected in these matters by feelings of solidarity of Muslim countries. To many Hindus and other non-Muslims, on the other hand, there could be no calamity greater than the re-imposition of Muslim rule.

There is little doubt that even though these facts might not be always frankly acknowledged, the differences between Hindus and Muslims today are based to a very large extent on this possible dif-

ference in the interpretation of national interest. It is chiefly in this direction, of the bias to foreign policy, that explanation could be found of the insistence of the Muslims on weakening the federal centre and special weightage in power at the centre. If the Muslims in the dominantly Muslim regions were concerned with no more than the fate of the Muslim in the dominantly Hindu region, mutual guarantees and the fact ultimately of holding "hostage" populations would meet the requirements. If they were chiefly concerned with the freedom of parallel development in the religious, cultural, educational, etc. spheres, a degree of provincial autonomy that would receive support even from some Hindu provinces would amply satisfy the need. But the requirements of developing close contact with Muslim states outside could not be met except by dominant control over foreign affairs.

The latest stage in the evolution of the Muslim demand was reached when perhaps Muslim leaders thought that a mere weakening of the centre would not fully serve their purpose and that even though they obtained a parity of voting right in the federal government, the larger economic and population resources of the Hindu regions would yet prevent the fullest use being made of this parity. It is thus the desire to seek not only their internal development, but also their external ties and relations in their own manner and the realization that it would be impossible to do this on any terms in a federation where they were joined together with large masses of Hindus that seem to have given an impetus to the demand for separation. Any brief account and any attempt at interpretation must by itself be open to the charge that it unduly simplifies facts. It is also likely that this leads to attributing conscious effort to evolution of opinion which might have come about largely unconsciously and gives undue weight to what is perhaps merely make-believe ratiocination. It is yet clear that as long as the political sentiment prevails which leads Muslims to think themselves as belonging to an entirely separate nation, as long as this results in their own peculiar interpretation of Indian interests, and as long as the difference of opinion and of thought breeds the degree of mutual distrust which is evident today, so long will it be neither possible nor desirable for the Muslim and Hindu regions to be forced into a union.

In forming a new federation, compulsion to membership thereof cannot be taken for granted in advance. A federating unit has both the right initially to say whether it will try and explore

the possibilities of federating with certain others or not; and has also the right later to abstain from joining the federation if it feels that any feature of the constitutional or other organization of the proposed federal state leads it to keep away. The right to abstain from joining a new federation stands on a very different footing from the right to secede from an existing federation. There is, however, no necessary presumption even against the right of secession from a federation, and it has on many occasions been prevented from being exercised only by force of arms. It might be remembered in this connection that the Indian National Congress by a resolution had offered unhindered right of secession to Burma if it joined the Indian federation.¹² The right has been categorically provided for in the constitution of the U. S. S. R. The Muslim Majlis, the new organization brought into being to represent the "nationalist" Muslims, has also demanded it for all future constituents of the Indian federation. In case the right of secession is recognized, the right of abstaining from joining a federation must be obviously acknowledged. The right of secession goes much further than the plea for initial abstention from joining. It is, after all, much better that incompatible elements should not at all come together rather than that a state once formed should be disrupted by a later secession. The insistence on all elements initially joining in the process of federating, coupled with the right of secession, would only result in giving, unnecessarily and with perhaps permanently harmful results, a share in shaping the constitution of the federation to parties who had never any honest intentions of remaining its members.

Therefore, if peoples of some groups have no desire to make any attempt to join with some others to form a political state, it is difficult to see how, legitimately or reasonably, they can be forced to do so. It may be that their attitude could be shown to be unwise because it was uneconomic or because it led to a weakening of the opportunities of their own development in any direction. But this argument must convince the leaders of the people and must bring about a change in their political sentiment. As long as the disposition of the people is what it is, they cannot in this matter be rightly prevented from following their inclinations. Those who state that they will not tolerate separation at any cost or who urge that grant of self-determination in this regard is illegitimate, can prove their claim only by producing the means to convince the

¹² The resolution regarding Burma adopted at the Third Unity Conference (December 1932) also reaffirmed "the previous decisions of the people of India that it is the inalienable right of the people of Burma to decide for themselves whether they will be made part of India politically or separate from her."

other party. Force as a means of keeping the Muslims in the Indian federation might be ruled out. The only other method, therefore, by which Muslims could be retained in the Indian federation would be of giving them special concessions to induce them to do so. It would be useful to discuss these possible concessions.

VII

STRENGTH OF THE CENTRE

A POSSIBLE way of meeting Muslim objections to remaining in one federation with the Hindus would be to lessen still further the control of the centre over the federating units. One of the demands on which Muslim leaders laid emphasis before the talk of separation became general was that the powers of the centre should be limited and especially that the residuary powers should rest with the provinces. It might be possible to disregard the debate regarding residual powers. If the specific powers of the central and provincial governments are adequately defined, the disposition of residual powers one way or the other need not materially affect the issue. We might, therefore, confine our attention to the problem of the possible allocation of powers between the federal and provincial governments in the Indian federation. In this matter some reaction against the British tradition of extreme centralization in India could not be considered unwelcome, and a considerable measure of provincial autonomy is justified in the circumstances of India. The degree of autonomy to be allowed or centralization enforced could be discussed in regard to specific items according to what appeared desirable or necessary in particular circumstances. However, an approach which attempted to allocate functions between the federal government and the federating units merely according to considerations of suitability, is not likely to meet the Muslim point of view. The Muslim demand does not rest on grounds of theoretical propriety or practical convenience. It does not even rest on the claim that the exercise by the federal government of particular powers will affect any specific Muslim interest. And it is obvious that if the federal government were a Muslim-dominated government, the Muslim view regarding the allocation of powers would be very different from what it is today. The Muslim demand rests on the simple claim that the Muslim regions within the federation shall be almost completely free from control

from a federal government in which non-Muslims wield considerable powers. In large sections of public affairs where central government exercises power today, no specific Muslim or Hindu interest is touched. In spheres which are purely economic, for example, no special Muslim considerations might be held to emerge. The Muslim provinces would have their specific interests, but they would arise from the economic facts relating to particular regions and not on account of their being inhabited by a dominantly Muslim population. The Muslim plea for a loose federation has thus always rested on the ground that the Muslim regions should be free from any suspicion of control by non-Muslims. The demand for separation made today is only a logical extension of this previous stand. Even the Muslim Majlis, representing the "nationalists," demands today "complete autonomy" for the units. It is not clear how complete autonomy differs from effective separation. Completely autonomous units might be held together by an alliance, but could obviously not be integrated into one political state. Approaching the problem from the Muslim point of view, we can thus obtain no indication that any particular limit laid on central powers would be considered satisfactory by the Muslims and would lead them to join a single Indian federation. In the absence of such an indication, it is necessary to deal with the question from the other end and discuss how far it would be possible or desirable for the non-Muslims to go in order to meet Muslim sentiment in this regard.

The discussion need not be elaborate, passing under review the whole list of central and provincial subjects; for the main essential or, rather, the minimum essential requirements of powers of federal government could be briefly indicated in relation to two important spheres: (1) defence, and (2) economic direction. Nobody has yet disputed that foreign policy and defence matters would have to be entrusted to the federal government. In the absence of a completely effective international order, the strength and independence of the foreign policy of any government is closely dependent on its known capacity for active defence. The latter, in its turn, depends on the extent of the possession of powers and resources by it during war, and also on its capacity to maintain a state of preparedness for war in times of peace. It has been suggested that one of the obstacles in the reaching of a settlement with Indian political leaders by Sir Stafford Cripps was the wide powers proposed to be reserved to the Viceroy in connection with the conduct of war. It would be instructive to note at this stage the definition of the scope of these powers by Prof. Coupland:

"To begin with, the control of military operations—the one exception allowed by the Committee to the working of full Cabinet Government—cannot be completely separated from the control of general policy, and the ultimate decision in both fields must be vested in the same authority. As was pointed out in the discussion on Defence, the whole of the Government in wartime is a Defence Government, and to conduct his military operations the Commander-in-Chief must be certain of support from virtually all its members. He must obtain the pay, the food and clothing, the munitions, the transport, and so forth which his troops will need—all matters with which Members of Council and their Departments are concerned. Somehow or other, in the last resort, all this must be guaranteed."¹³

In the paragraph next to the one quoted above, Prof. Coupland emphasizes, in addition, the responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief for the maintenance of internal security also. Prof. Coupland wrote before the Bengal famine. If he had been writing after the event, he would, one feels sure, have added to internal security, the maintenance of a minimum degree of efficiency in internal administration.

It can hardly be maintained that the conduct of the present war by the Government of India revealed any high degree of efficiency or that the Government exercised too large powers or controlled too effectively the activities of provincial governments. Most of the powers it exercised were essential for obtaining for the troops the specific things Prof. Coupland mentions, namely, "the pay, the food and clothing, the munitions, the transport," and for maintaining a minimum of internal order. In one major respect, distribution of food, it failed to maintain a minimum standard of efficiency whether for lack of powers or the will to exercise them or for lack of understanding. The position of the central government in India today is stronger than the position conceived under the 1935 Act for the federal government. It is, therefore, difficult to contemplate an effective defence of the country and a firm foreign policy with a federal government which possessed less powers than those provided for in the 1935 Act.

It is necessary that the federal government should be in a position to assume large powers and to exercise them during war. The state of being prepared for war requires comparatively wide powers even during peace. The planning and direction of communications and the means of transport, the disposition of economic resources and productive activity during peace times, have to be properly guided in order to fit in with the policy of active defence. It has been the lesson of this war that states which fail to integrate war and peace policies in this manner might be caught unawares, with fatal results. In this regard the federal government

¹³ R. Coupland, "The Cripps Mission," Oxford University Press, 1942, p. 57.

could not rely on issuing mere recommendations to the constituent units, but would have to have the powers in certain essential respects regarding the active conduct of affairs.

This plea for a minimum of powers to the central government is enforced by considerations of even peace economy. There is little doubt that the major preoccupation of most governments, especially governments in India, during the next few decades will be with planning for the increase of national wealth and income. It might also be assumed that the attainment of some degree of self-sufficiency would be one of the aims pursued in this planning. Economic planning in respect of both the pace of development of resources and of the attainment of self-sufficiency is likely to achieve success in proportion to the area and the resources that it embraces. The master-plan of economic development must be country-wide. In particular respects the federating units might be left free to control the pace or direction of development, and the plan itself would pay proper attention to all-sided development of all regions. At the same time all federating units must accept the over-all direction imposed by the master-plan. The federal government must have adequate powers to evolve the general plan of economic development for the whole country, and must also have powers to carry out its essential central features and to supervise and enforce its implementation by the federating units. This is only inherent in economic planning. Large scale plans of economic development do not lend themselves to fractional treatment. The planning of water resources, both for agricultural and hydro-electric purposes involving extensive river systems which cut across several provincial boundaries, can be only centrally controlled and directed; not merely because it involves several federating units, but also because non-cooperation in planning by a single such unit may nullify and waste all the efforts of other co-operating units. In the absence of a central authority equipped with adequate overriding powers, a single intransigent federal unit might effectively block the way of economic development and progress of the other units, and might even retard it. The planning of crop-production also cannot be tackled on a provincial basis. Crop cultivation is by its very nature regional, and the boundaries of crop regions seldom coincide with provincial or political boundaries. As crops, and particularly food crops, are substitutable to a large degree, all crop planning must strike a balance between various crops, and this can only happen if it is centrally planned and the necessary allocations between the federating units are centrally made. For effectively controlling the prices of

crops, the demand and supply in the country as a whole will have to be balanced, and the central government will have to regulate the cultivation of even individual crops. If every federating unit tries to frame its own programme independently of others, planning for the country will be impossible.

The need for central planning in the exploitation of mineral resources is particularly great in India, as these resources are mostly concentrated in a single tract. In the field of industrial development, too, every federating unit cannot have an independent plan of its own. The development and location of industry depend mainly on such non-political factors as natural resources, availability of power, labour, etc. Also the capital requirements of large-scale industrial development would be mostly beyond the financial resources of individual federating units, and will have to be provided by the central government. If this is true in regard to the field of production, it is equally obviously so in the field of distribution. What chaos and human misery is spelled by unco-ordinated schemes of economic control has been made too plain in India during these war years. Again, any plan aiming at the attainment of economic self-sufficiency for the country must co-ordinate the use of all resources in the country. Such a plan cannot proceed on the lines of allowing each federating unit to be self-sufficient, because this will involve enormous economic waste. The federating units in a federation will have to be, to a large extent, complementary to one another.

All this would necessitate the vesting of the central government with powers much larger than are compatible with Muslim demands in this regard, and even larger in some respects than those actually exercised by the Government of India during this war.¹⁴ The defence and development aspects of national life are both so important that it would hardly be worth while creating a political state if efficacy in both these is to be denied to it. A small state whose resources are properly developed is to be preferred to a larger unit which is cut up in many completely autonomous units. And a small state whose integrity might be well cared for is preferable to a large unit whose internal stability is doubtful and for whom effective action in time of war is impossible.

¹⁴ This was exemplified in the debate on post-war economic planning in the Central Assembly on 2nd November, 1944. The debate was on the resolution of Sir Zia-ud-Din Ahmed (Muslim League) recommending to the Governor-General-in-Council not to entertain the programme of the 15-year Plan prepared by the capitalists of India. The opposition of the Muslim League was based mainly on the apprehension regarding two basic postulates of that plan, namely, it was for the country as a whole and was to be imposed by the Central Government. Cf. "Times of India," Nov. 3, 1944.

TABLE NO. 2. REPRESENTATION OF VARIOUS COMMUNITIES IN LEGISLATURES UNDER 1935 ACT IN RELATION TO NUMBERS IN POPULATION AND AMONG VOTER

Note: The table deals only with general and communal seats. Women's representation and functional representation have been left out of the calculation as for them allocations between communities cannot be definitely made. As regards actual conditions the Federal Assembly under the 1935 Act was never formed and the majority of provincial legislatures have ceased to function since 1939.

[Sources: (i) Census of India, 1941 and 1931; (ii) The Government of India Act, 1935; (iii) Return showing the results of Elections in India in 1937, Cmd. 5589]

Legislative Body	Percentage of members of the community to the total population of the Electoral area														Percentage of voters in various electorates to the total number of voters in general (communal) constituencies (1937).								Percentage of total members representing various classes of constituencies to total number of seats in general (communal) constituencies							Percentage in the total population of members of communities included in the General electorata (1941 census)			less Scheduled Caste voters to the total number of voters in general constituencies, 1937		Percentage of General less Scheduled	
	Total Hindus		Scheduled Castes		Tribes		Muslims		Sikhs		Indian Christians		Anglo-Indians		Europeans		General		Scheduled Castes		Tribes		Muslims		Sikhs		Indian Christians		Anglo-Indians		Europeans		Total General	Total General less Scheduled Caste	Percentage of General less Scheduled	
	1941	1931	1941	1941	1931	1941	1931	1941	1931	1941	1931	1941	1931	1941	1931	1941	1931	Total	Scheduled Castes	Tribes	Muslims	Sikhs	Indian Christians	Anglo-Indians	Europeans	Total	Scheduled Castes	Tribes	Muslims	Sikhs	Indian Christians	Anglo-Indians	Europeans			
Punjab †	27.8	26.8	5.6	—	—	—	57.1	56.6	13.20	13.00	1.70	1.66	0.02	0.01	0.05	0.06	31.1	2.4	—	49.7	18.5	0.43	0.03	0.16	26.1	4.97	—	—	32.2	19.3	1.24	0.62	0.62	27.9	27.3	21
United Provinces	83.3	84.5	21.3	0.5	—	—	15.3	14.8	0.42	0.10	0.24	0.33	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.05	85.6	3.3	—	14.1	—	0.17	0.07	0.10	67.0	9.57	—	—	30.6	0.96	0.48	0.96	84.4	63.1	57	
Bengal	41.6	43.0	12.2	3.1	1.1	—	54.7	54.9	0.03	0.62	0.18	0.25	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.05	44.6	13.1	—	54.8	—	0.16	0.13	0.23	37.0	14.20	—	—	35.5	0.93	1.42	5.22	45.0	32.8	22	
Bihar	72.9	82.3	12.0	13.9	5.4	—	13.0	11.3	0.04	0.01	0.07	0.99	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	85.9	2.8	—	13.9	—	—	0.06	0.06	63.2	11.04	5.15	—	28.7	0.73	0.73	1.47	73.5	61.1	51.5	
Orissa	78.3	—	14.2	19.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.31	—	0.01	—	—	—	98.2	3.8	—	1.5	—	0.14	—	—	81.5	11.10	9.26	7.4	—	1.25	—	—	78.3	64.1	94.4**	
Central Provinces and Berar	76.9	86.0	18.3	17.5	8.7	—	4.7	4.4	0.09	0.03	0.29	0.26	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.04	84.3	7.5	1.0	4.5	—	0.08	0.03	0.03	83.3	19.80	0.99	13.9	—	0.99	0.99	—	77.4	59.2	65.6	
Madras	86.7	88.3	16.3	1.1	0.8	—	7.9	7.1	—	—	4.06	3.71	0.06	0.06	0.04	0.03	89.7	6.4	0.5	6.6	—	3.26	0.10	0.06	77.8	16.00	0.53	14.9	—	4.26	1.07	1.60	86.8	70.4	83.3	
Bombay	79.4	87.1	8.9	7.8	0.7	—	9.2	8.8	0.04	0.11	1.63	1.49	0.07	0.08	0.11	0.10	88.5	4.4	—	9.8	—	1.26	0.12	0.26	75.6	9.90	0.66	19.1	—	1.98	1.98	—	81.2	72.3	84.1**	
Sind	27.1	26.8	4.2	0.8	—	—	70.8	—	0.63	0.47	0.29	0.17	0.07	0.03	0.09	0.17	28.5	—	—	71.7	—	—	—	—	33.9	7.00	—	—	62.3	—	—	3.78	28.7	24.5	33	
Assam	41.3	57.2	6.6	24.4	8.3	—	33.7	32.0	0.03	0.03	0.37	2.31	0.01	—	0.02	0.04	57.4	3.4	5.9	33.7	—	0.73	—	0.31	51.1	—	9.80	37.0	—	1.09	—	1.09	41.5	34.9	54.0	
Northwest Frontier Province	5.9	5.9	—	—	—	—	91.8	91.8	1.91	1.75	0.18	0.18	0.03	—	0.13	0.32	14.3	—	—	79.8	—	—	—	—	18.8	—	—	75.0	6.2	—	—	—	5.9	3.9	14.3	43
Federal Assembly	64.8	65.5	13.7	5.7	2.1	—	26.8	24.7	1.41	1.18	1.10	1.40	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.06	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	49.3	8.90	—	38.3	2.8	3.76	1.86	3.76	70.6	56.9	—	40

* Included in Total General. In Orissa the return contains information relating to only one cast. † Not given. ‡ In the case of Punjab Ad-Dharmis are included in total Hindus and also in Scheduled Castes for 1941. †† i.e. Communities other than those which have separate representation. ** Includes percentage of Tribes also.

VIII

RESERVATION AND WEIGHTAGE

ANOTHER direction in which efforts have usually been made

TABLE NO. 2. REPRESENTATION OF VARIOUS COMMUNITIES

Note: The table deals only with general and communal seats. Women's representation under the 1933 Act was never formed and the

[Sources: (i) Census of India, 1941 and

Legislative Body	Percentage of members of the community to the total									
	Total Hindus		Scheduled Castes		Tribes	Muslims		Sikhs		
	1941	1931	1941	1941	1931	1941	1931	1941	1931	
Punjab †	27.8	26.8	5.6	—	—	57.1	56.6	13.20	13.00	
United Provinces	83.3	84.5	21.3	0.5	—	15.3	14.8	0.42	0.10	
Bengal	41.6	43.0	12.2	3.1	1.1	54.7	54.9	0.03	0.62	
Bihar	72.9	82.3	12.0	13.9	5.4	13.0	11.3	0.04	0.01	
Orissa	78.3	—	14.2	19.7	—	1.7	—	—	—	
Central Provinces and Berar	76.9	86.0	18.3	17.5	8.7	4.7	4.4	0.09	0.03	
Madras	86.7	88.3	16.3	1.1	0.8	7.9	7.1	—	—	
Bombay	79.4	87.1	8.9	7.8	0.7	9.2	8.8	0.04	0.11	
Sind	27.1	26.8	4.2	0.8	—	70.8	—	0.63	0.47	
Assam	41.3	57.2	6.6	24.4	8.3	33.7	32.0	0.03	0.03	
Northwest Frontier Province	5.9	5.9	—	—	—	91.8	91.8	1.91	1.75	
Federal Assembly	64.8	65.5	13.7	5.7	2.1	26.8	24.7	1.41	1.18	

* Included in Total General. In Orissa the return contains information relating to Scheduled Castes and Tribes which have separate representation. ** Includes percentage of Tribes and Scheduled Castes.

arrangements might have remained workable if there had been no extension of weighting beyond the sphere or the scale originally contemplated. The moment, however, the principle of weightage was sought to be applied to more than one community, or much more was attempted to be achieved through it than a slight absolute adjustment in representation, the principle was found to fail. This fol-

lowed from the obvious fact that weighting in favour of any one community affects the entire percentage residual and thus affects the share available not only to the majority community but also to all other communities as well, except the one in whose favour weightage has been exercised. If weightage is considerable, the proportionate reduction in the residual representation available to others is proportionately large; and if many minorities have to be treated in this fashion the cumulative effect on the residual representation is bound to be immense. The approach by weightage thus creates arithmetical problems which are impossible of solution.

The possibility of granting further weightage to Muslims in representation in the legislatures is best examined in relation to the situation that already exists in this behalf. Table Nos. 1 and 2 given below will serve to bring out the relevant facts. The first table is reproduced from the report of the Indian Statutory Commission (Vol. I, p. 189). This exhibits the situation as contemplated by the Lucknow Pact and as it actually existed in the 'twenties. The second table brings out in a similar manner the situation created by the Award of Mr. MacDonald. A comparison of the two tables brings out the increase in complexity result-

TABLE NO. 1. MUSLIM REPRESENTATION IN
LEGISLATURES BEFORE 1935

[Source: Report of the Indian Statutory Commission, Vol. I—
Survey, 1930, p. 189]

Legislative Body	Percentage of Moslem to total population of electoral area (1921 Census)	Percentage of Moslem voters to total voters in general constituencies (1926)	Present percentage of Moslem members to total number of members	Present percentage of Moslem elected members to total number of elected Indian members	Present percentage of Moslem members to total members in seats filled by election from Indian general (communal) constituencies.	Lucknow Pact percentage
	1	2	3*	4*	5	6
Punjab	55.2	43.7	40.0	48.5	50.0	50.0
United Provinces	14.3	14.1	25.0	30.0	32.5	30.0
Bengal	54.6	45.1	30.0	40.5	46.0	40.0
Bihar and Orissa	10.9	10.9	18.5	25.0	27.0	25.0
Central Provinces	4.4	8.4	9.5	13.0	14.5	15.0
Madras	6.7	4.7	10.5	14.0	16.5	15.0
Rajasthan	19.8	17.7	25.5	35.0	37.0	33.3
Madhya Pradesh	32.3	30.1	30.0	35.5	37.5	No provision
Indian Legislative Assembly	24.0	16.5	26.0	34.0	38.0	33.3

* Column 4 includes Indians elected by special constituencies, e.g., commerce, whose communal proportions may, of course, vary slightly from time to time. Similarly, column 5, including also special and nominated non-officials, will show slightly different results at different periods.

ing from the extension of the principle of reservation. We are concerned chiefly with the second table. The working of existing arrangements might be considered in relation to the proportion of the various communities in the population as a whole and their proportions in the number of voters. Apart from Mohammedans there is at present reservation of seats for scheduled castes, backward areas and tribes, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Europeans and Indian Christians. The proportion of seats reserved for the scheduled castes corresponds roughly to their proportion in the total population. The scheduled castes, therefore, could be considered to enjoy weightage only in relation to their proportion in the number of voters. In relation to their proportion in the population, reservation enables them to escape from any reduction in representation consequent upon weightage given to other communities. The proportion of seats reserved for backward areas and tribes is higher than the proportion of their voters in the total electorate, but is much smaller than their proportion in the total population. Thus they enjoy positive weightage in one but negative weightage in another relation. The weightage enjoyed by Sikhs in the two provinces in which they have separate representation is substantial if compared with their strength in the total population, but is small in relation to the proportion of Sikhs in the number of voters. There is weightage in both respects granted to Europeans, Anglo-Indians, and Indian Christians. It is very substantial in the case of Europeans, but less so with Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians, in the descending order.

The cumulative result of all these on the representation available to the general electorate formed chiefly of Hindus belonging to castes other than the scheduled, differs from province to province. In provinces in which the Hindus are in a substantial majority and where neither tribal peoples, Europeans, nor Sikhs are important, the main operative factor is the weightage given to Muslims. In considering the results as relating to the total population in these provinces, the Scheduled Castes representation, which is here proportionate, merely results in passing on the full effect of the weightage given to Muslims to the representation of the general, i.e., mainly the other Hindu population. As in relation to the numbers of voters, however, the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes acts as a further deduction from the proportionate representation of the general voters. The Madras and the Bombay figures exemplify this type. In provinces in which the tribal population is substantial, the fact that their representation is not proportionate

to the numbers in the population releases to the general electorate a larger number of seats than would be otherwise available, and counteracts to a varying degree the effects of the weightage given to Muslims. This is specially noticeable in provinces like Assam, Orissa, and the Central Provinces. In these provinces the general representation is sometimes greater than, or only a little less than, the proportion of the "general" numbers in the total population. It is, of course, substantially less as compared with the "general" proportion among voters.

The effects of the splitting of the electorate in a series of separate electorates, some of which are weighted and others rigid, on the residual representation is fully shown in the situation created in the Punjab and Bengal. In the Punjab the Muslim representation is not weighted in relation to population numbers, but is weighted in relation to the number of voters. The Sikh representation has the reverse relation in both these respects. The Scheduled Castes representation is only slightly weighted in relation to population, but substantially weighted as compared with their population among voters. As a result of all these factors, the proportionate representation of the general electorate is negatively weighted in both these respects. This block gets less than proportionate representation both in relation to its percentage representation in the total population as well as in relation to its proportion in the electorate. The reduction is slight in the former case but substantial in the latter. And the most anomalous feature of the situation is that the reduction in representation has to be suffered by a community that forms distinctly a minority in the total population.

The situation in Bengal is similar to that in the Punjab, but is even worse from the point of view of Hindus. In Bengal there is no representation of Sikhs, but there is the highly weighted representation given to Europeans. In this province, as the table will show, Hindus belonging to castes other than the scheduled get a representation less by nearly one-third, to the one they would be entitled to, whether in relation to their numbers in the total population or among the total number of voters. In respect of the special treatment of some communities, it has been urged that they might be backward, but are numerous, and therefore should be guaranteed representation at least in proportion to their numbers in the total population; in respect of others it has been urged that they are not numerous, but are greatly above the average in economic circumstances and civic attainments, and therefore should have specially weighted representation; in respect of still others it has been urged

that their representation should be weighted just because they are important minorities. The MacDonald Award has brought about in Bengal a situation in which an important minority, whose members are well above the average in economic circumstances and civic attainment, and whose proportion in the total of voters is larger than its proportion in the total population, has obtained a representation substantially below even its proportion in the population! There is little wonder that, in face of this, Bengal Hindus of all parties joined together and firmly refused the proposal of the 1933 Unity Conference to agree to a further reduction of this representation.

The absurdities and enormities, both theoretical and practical, resulting from the MacDonald Award are inevitable in any system of distribution of seats which attempts substantial weightage to any community or communities, or even attempts weightage for one community combined with a rigid proportion for others. Once the principle is accepted that representation is to be, not general but by communities, reservation becomes necessary. As long as the extent of reservation does not exceed the proportion of numbers in the population, the result would not be different from that achieved, theoretically, by a complete proportionate representation of the various population groups. Any weightage in a particular reservation must act as a deduction from the representation of other groups, and if this weightage is combined with guaranteed representation of others, the full reduction of the weightage must fall on the free residual. This would result, in cases like that of Bengal, in negative weightage to an important and influential minority. It needs to be emphasized that even the MacDonald Award does not exhibit fully the difficulties of the situation. To consider only two factors. It has been pointed out that the representation of backward areas and tribes is not yet proportionate to their numbers in the population. It is easy to see that when at the next consideration of the question this difference is demanded to be made up, it would be difficult to resist the claim, now that the necessity of reservation has been granted. Secondly, the scheduled castes have yet been content with representation proportionate to numbers in the population. Their leaders have of recent years begun to put forward a claim to be treated in a manner similar to that of the Moham-medans. The next step would, therefore, be for them to demand weightage. All deduction brought about by such steps must mean a further reduction from the representation of the "general" voter. The distortions brought about by the MacDonald Award in the

pattern of representation are large and, in many instances, indefensible. Once the Lucknow principle of give and take was abandoned, the arrangements became merely parts of a move in the political game. The analysis of the results of the Award clearly indicate the impossibility of an agreed solution along the lines adopted in it.

To return to the specific question of further concessions to be granted to Muslims, the answer to it will, of course, depend on the strength and disposition of non-Muslims. A study of facts could only indicate the cost of further concessions. In the Federal Assembly, for example, the general undifferentiated voters who formed 56.9% of the population in 1941 would have a representation of 40.4%, i.e., a proportionate reduction of nearly 30%. An increase of the Muslim representation, as determined by the 1935 Act, by even 2% would mean a representation of the general voter at a strength even less than that of the Muslim minority. It is interesting in this connection to recall the Muslim claim of 1929 that in no case should weightage result in the reduction of a majority in a region to a minority or even to equality. Presumably, this claim has been conceded by the MacDonal Award. The present arrangements relating to representation of the general electorate in the Federal Assembly already offend against this principle. A slight further concession will make the distortion so large that it will actually lead to the representation of a minority community being larger than that of the majority!

This sufficiently brings out the difficulties of the approach, by way of weightage in representation, to the solution of the problem of minorities. The approach is not capable of generalized application, and creates at an early stage distortions that are indefensible and arithmetical problems that are insoluble. There is an additional result of artificial weighting in political importance of small groups which is of very alarming significance for the future. The table analyzing the MacDonal Award brings out how weightage and separate representation considerably reduce the strength of a majority. Sometimes they convert it into a minority, and at other times they undermine its effectiveness to a large degree. This is bound to lead to weak executive governments in the future. The artificial reduction of majority elements is likely to result in the formation of a number of substantial groups even where the basic situation does not warrant this. Instead of strong, stable, and well-knit executives, we might obtain fleeting coalition governments which are most unsuited, especially to early stages of a democratic

government. The artificial creation of such a situation might be welcomed by external powers and interests, but is certainly not one which should be actively brought on and welcomed by Indians themselves.

The weightage and reserved representation so far given statutorily, has only been in respect of seats in the legislature. It has, however, been realized that even a substantial minority of seats in the legislature might not necessarily result in proportionate or adequate share of ministerial posts and of executive power. Coupled with a demand for representation in the legislatures has gone, therefore, a demand for a guaranteed proportion of cabinet posts. The proportion demanded by the Muslims in 1929 was a third of such posts in all the provinces. The proportion of the Muslim population in the provinces in which Muslims are in a distinct minority ranges from 1.7 to 15.1. The weightage demanded in executive government is thus seen to be much larger than the weightage conceded so far in legislatures. As pointed out above, statutory guarantee relating to representation in executive government was not demanded at the Round Table Conference. In actual practice all provincial cabinets formed during 1937-39 contained some Muslims, though the proportion was not in some instances as large as a third of the total members. Representation in provincial cabinets during 1937-39, however, raised a problem of even greater fundamental importance than weightage.

This turns on what one considers to be the *raison d'être* of communal representation in the executive. It is arguable that society in most parts of India is made up of disparate groups, having little contact with each other, and that it is, therefore, of advantage if the supreme executive of a region contains within it persons from as large a number of such groups as possible. On such reasoning, diversification in the personnel of the cabinet, even when it belongs entirely to one political party, could be advocated and justified. On the other hand, ministers belonging to various social and communal groups could be deemed not so much as bringing a richness and variety of experience to the business of government, but rather as being the guardians of the special interests of their communities and as representing their specific points of view. From the latter point of view it is not enough that a person belong to a certain community, it must be also authenticated that he holds the point of view currently dominant in it. This would be an extension, to the sphere of executive government, of the principle on which separate electorates have been set up. On this reasoning it is not enough

that there should be a Muslim or Muslims in the cabinet; they should also represent the majority of Muslims. The admission of such a principle in the formation of executive government would make impossible the working of representative democracy. An executive in which all the diverse and conflicting political elements were represented in a guaranteed proportion could work neither in the Presidential nor in the Cabinet system of any type. Such an executive could not function even in normal, comparatively static times in any large democracy. It would be out of account in conditions like those of India which, above all, require a strong executive capable of formulating a broad progressive policy and boldly implementing it.

There has been an attempt to compare the demand of Muslims for weighted representation of their specific party in the cabinet to the formation and working of the Swiss Executive and to say that the claim could be met on those lines. Such a plea could result only from a gross misconception of the origin and the conditions of success of the Swiss system. In the first instance, in the Swiss system the cabinet is supposed to follow the lead of the legislature to a much larger extent than elsewhere. This assumes a degree of competence and a tradition of constructive effort in the legislatures which is not present even in many of the advanced democracies of the West, and is certainly almost completely absent in India. Secondly, and this is of the utmost importance to the point at issue, the Swiss system arose and continued because, in that country, party differences were comparatively mild and because all parties inherited and acknowledged similar traditions. The Swiss system, far from being a method of reconciling wide divergences of opinion and tradition, is practicable only where these do not exist. This is why those who framed the constitution of the German Republic in 1920 were almost unanimous that the Swiss example was not one which could be valid for Germany. They pointed out that in Germany such acute differences arose from the extent of territory, the variety of economic interests, the complexities of culture and religion, and the strength of party spirit, that an executive like the Swiss Council could not possibly operate with the soundness and harmony natural to a small untroubled country, and Dr. Finer was of opinion that subsequent cabinet experience in Germany supported this prediction.¹⁶ The difficulties felt by the German constitution-makers are increased manifold in the case of India. That the Swiss experiment was the product of peculiar conditions and could not be ex-

¹⁶ Finer, "Theory and Practice of Modern Government," Vol. II, 1932, p. 1145.

pected to succeed elsewhere was also the opinion of Lord Bryce. He says:

"The conditions are peculiar: a small nation, its citizens not indeed poor, but very few of them rich, highly intelligent, long trained by local self-government, little distracted by party spirit. It is hard to suppose in any other country a coincidence of these conditions sufficient to give such an institution as the Swiss Federal Council a like chance of success."¹⁷

Apart, therefore, from the question of weightage, it would be inimical to the very existence of an efficient and progressive government to accept in principle not only that all cabinets shall be coalition cabinets, but that they shall be formed of coalitions of a specific, predetermined, and presumably unalterable composition. Coalition governments are not necessarily to be discouraged, and in certain conditions they might be both necessary and welcome. Coalitions formed, on the recognition of this need, by parties which have similar programmes, or which have temporarily come together with a definite purpose, have considerable chance of a successful life. On the other hand, coalitions provided for statutorily, of elements known in advance to be antagonistic to one another, can lead to nothing but a deadlock and the continued intervention of third parties.

The executive, in this system, would not feel bound to act on the principle of joint responsibility, nor would the cabinet as a whole or any minister have to resign on any vote, general or specific, of the legislature. The representatives of particular groups in the cabinet would have a guarantee of continuous tenure without reference to the feelings of the majority of the legislature. Therefore, these members of the executive would at no time be under the necessity of being either efficient or honest in the administration of their departments or of actively co-operating with or of even maintaining a semblance of co-operation with their colleagues. As long as they kept their own particular group satisfied, their departments, for all practical purposes, could function as autonomous units bearing no responsibility to any other part, legislative and executive, of the government. These are not speculative exaggerations, but are real probabilities, as will be realized by anybody who has some knowledge of the working of local government or provincial government under diarchy in India.

Apart from the practicability and desirability of further concession in this regard, it has to be emphasized that giving weightage

¹⁷ "Modern Democracies," Vol. II, pp. 519-520. Cf. also, "As a former President of the Confederation observed to me, 'The plan fits a small State where party feeling does not run high. Would it work well elsewhere?' And he added: 'Where grave decisions on foreign policy have to be suddenly taken, would a Council composed of men of different tendencies be able to take them effectively?'"—"Modern Democracies," Vol. I, pp. 500-501.

to the voting strength of a particular community is neither an appropriate nor an effective means of protecting the interests of a minority. Weightage is not likely to prove effective, because it seeks to protect minority interests not by giving direct guarantees or providing specific safeguards for such protection, but by increasing the voting strength of the minority in the legislature. If a majority is otherwise bent on disregarding minority interests, a small increase in the strength of the minority in the legislature is not likely to prevent this from happening. The indirect method of weightage could, therefore, effectively protect minority interests only if it so substantially increased minority representation as almost to convert it into a majority. When the number of minorities whose interests have to be safeguarded is larger than one, an increase of weightage of each is obviously impossible.

Weightage, on the other hand, gives to the minorities and minority interests a great deal more than the situation really demands. In this connection it should be made clear that the minority interests to be guaranteed can be guaranteed only if they are interpreted as specific; that is, as relating to a particular region or as relating to certain special spheres of life. There can be no guarantee of separate interest in the main decisions regarding political or economic policy itself. If the hands of the majority of people are tied in respect of the essentials of political and economic policy, this can only result in a negation of all democratic government. In modern times it might also result in the negation of all effective government. The minority within a state must be prepared to accept loyally the main framework, political and economic, imposed on the state by the majority. There would be ample room within the framework for minority interests being guaranteed in respect of particular spheres of life or the interests of a minority region being assured in accordance with the principles laid down in the general framework. The giving of weightage to the voters of a minority gives them really something to which they are not entitled. The protection of specific interests can be guaranteed by arrangements made directly in that behalf. The interests of particular regions can be assured by varying measures of autonomy. Neither of these methods, however, requires that the reflection of the political influence of the minority section or region in the general councils of the nation shall carry greater weight than that to which it is entitled in view of the ordinary arrangements.

The Muslims, it might be claimed, are numerically small, but are in intrinsic importance equal to the numerically larger Hindus.

In the democratic process the fundamental assumption is the equality of all voters and the entire absence of political privilege. In democratic methods there is neither any measure of intrinsic importance nor any justification for attaching political weightage to it even if measured. The claim of Muslims to their being intrinsically important to an extent greater than their numbers, would ultimately rest on the fact that their co-religionists ruled India for a long time. There is no way of judging of such claims, and once they are allowed and the strict rule of the equality of voters departed from, the situation is rendered chaotic. In such chaos only the strength of bargaining power would count. Fundamentally all oligarchies rest on the possession of superior force, political or economic, by a privileged class or classes. If the Muslims are such a class, and if the non-Muslims feel forced to accept their claims to political privilege, then, of course, there is no alternative to giving special importance to the Muslim voter. But the resulting political state would be not a democracy but a Muslim dominated oligarchy.

It is clear from the above that not only is it not possible to accommodate the Muslims by giving them increased weightage in legislatures or in executive government, but also that it is high time that the method of weightage was itself given up. It introduces into the democratic structure an element of privilege which is objectionable in principle and which renders in practice stable government increasingly difficult. Weightage as a means of guarding minority interests must, therefore, be given up, and more direct methods adopted for the purpose. Where weightage is asked for not in order to guard minority interests but in order to recognize the special importance of the members of a community, the claim must be firmly repudiated unless, of course, the majority feels itself really inferior, or is forced, for other reasons, to concede it.

IX

REGIONALISM

THE other method by which it has been sought to give weightage to Muslims at the centre has been that of adjusting, for the purpose, the constitution and number of federating units. This approach results in attempts at increasing as largely as possible the number of federating units that would be dominated by Muslims and at keeping down the number of those that would be dominated

by Hindus. The creation of the Province of Sind was a step in this direction. It has been argued above that the constitution of federating units must follow the path of the creation of unilingual homogeneous units. Given the facts of the Indian situation, the total units on this basis would amount, in the provincial area, to between 15 and 20, of which the Muslim-dominated areas could not be larger than one-third. The Muslim opposition to the creation of these units might, therefore, be strong, and it is for the Hindus to decide whether the constituent units of the non-Muslim region shall be denied the proper opportunities for development for all times in order to retain the Muslim region within the Indian federation. It is obvious that the main hardship resulting from such a decision would operate on the Hindu peoples of Peninsular India.

It might not be possible to oppose, forever, the rearrangement of provinces, and even if the opposition was partly successful the non-Muslim units in the federation would always outnumber the Muslim units. Therefore, proposals have been made to rearrange the federating units in such a manner that the desired weightage in federal government might be given to Muslims. The suggestions have usually aimed at creating an intermediate unit between the primary federating units, i.e. the provinces and the Indian States, and the federation itself. The best known of such proposals are the late Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan's regional "zones" and Prof. Coupland's "regionalism."

In Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan's *Outlines of a Scheme of Indian Federation*, apart from the idea of regional zones, the most significant proposals are: (i) for the association of provinces and Indian States in the regional authority, and (ii) for the maintenance of a certain representation of communities in the composition of the Indian army. The regions contemplated by Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan are seven in number. Only two of these would be definitely Muslim regions. Thus Sir Sikander's regional division would not by itself have created the desired balance between the number of Hindu and Muslim regions. He evidently expected to bring about a balance of power between the two communities by balancing them in the army. The proposal of Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan regarding the composition of the Indian army is as follows:

"The composition of the Indian Army [as on the 1st day of January, 1937] shall not be altered. In the event of a reduction or an increase in the peace-time strength of the Indian Army the proportion of the various communities as on the 1st of January, 1937, shall not be disturbed. This condi-

tion may be relaxed in the event of a war or other grave emergency which may arise on account of a threat to the safety of the country."¹⁸

It is unnecessary to comment on this provision at length. It shows the attitude of an eminent Muslim leader who was opposed to separation and who ran a comparatively successful government composed of elements from all communities. The late Sir Sikander, by Indian standards, could not be labelled as an extremist. Yet he laid down as an essential of policy that the gains that had accrued to Muslims in army recruitment as a result of the turn of events since 1857 should be permanently stabilized in their favour, in the political sense. When the control over the army passes into Indian hands, the composition of the Indian army need no longer be based on considerations of the safety of the British. There would be then no justification for continuing differentiations in recruitment to the army originally based on the measure of disaffection for the British. The insistence on a certain composition of the army could, in this instance, proceed only from the conviction that the ultimate seat of power was the army and that the recruits of a certain faith would be specially solicitous of the interests of that faith and would always listen to leaders of that faith.

The idea of regions put forward by Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan is elaborated into a "regionalism" by Prof. Coupland. The elaborateness with which this scheme has been developed and the source from which it emanates, necessitate a somewhat detailed examination of it. We might begin with an enquiry into the current meaning of the term "regionalism" by which Prof. Coupland calls his scheme. The regional idea and regionalism have attained a vogue in recent decades in many countries in the world, and seem to satisfy a widely-felt need in the orientation of social policy. A regional scheme, therefore, presumably starts with a bias in its favour. Before conceding the bias, it is, however, necessary to see whether the term is or is not being used appropriately.

Regionalism attained prominence in recent years, in the first instance, in connection with the reformation of the areas of local government. In France, at the time of the Revolution, there had taken place rearrangement of local units on abstract principles in

¹⁸ "Outlines of a Scheme of Indian Federation," Section 18, p. 23. Sir Sultan Ahmed, another eminent Muslim who also opposes the idea of a separate Muslim federation, goes even further than Sir Sikander and suggests the following provisions relating to the Indian Army: "Army Services: The composition of the Indian fighting forces will be as follows: Muslims 50%, Non-Muslim 50%."

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

"A Treaty Between India and the United Kingdom," pp. 92, 91, 1944.

disregard of historical association or geographical unity. It was in France, therefore, that the demand for a regional regrouping of local areas was the earliest and the most widely heard. From the sphere of local government the transition to other domains of local grouping was but natural, and the extent of ground covered in recent years might be indicated by reference to the suggestion of the English Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population (1940) that the adoption of a regional system would materially facilitate the solutions of problems faced by it. In the U. S. A., with their vast expanse, their varied resources, and their mixed population, "regionalism" had a specially wide scope, and it is in the U. S. A. that regionalism has been most systematically studied and developed. The U. S. A. National Resources Planning Committee defines it in the following comprehensive fashion:

"'Regionalism' is a clustering of environmental, economic, social and governmental factors to such an extent that a distinct consciousness of separate identity within the whole, a need for autonomous planning, a manifestation of cultural peculiarities, and a desire for administrative freedom, are theoretically recognized and actually put into effect. Regionalism is something which remains to be realised and further developed, as well as a phenomenon which has already appeared and taken form."¹⁹

The term is now used also in the sphere of international organization as in connection with the Caribbean Conference or the wider proposals framed at Dumbarton Oaks. Here the word was used to denote the coming together, for certain economic and other common purposes, of the representatives of various political units in a geographical area.

It is easy to see a common thread running through all these uses of the term. Regionalism is based on ties of common sentiment, interest, or purpose which exist, and which, at least partially, have already become manifest. These indicate the boundaries for the formation of a unit for a purpose, and the claim is usually based on the greater propriety and efficacy of the regional unit proposed in serving a need than existing units. It might be added that in a large number of instances it is a claim to supplement rather than to supplant existing units.

We might now turn to an examination of Prof. Coupland's proposals.²⁰ The main features of Prof. Coupland's scheme are, firstly, the creation of four regions called (i) Indus, (ii) Ganges, (iii) Delta, and (iv) Deccan, as the federating units of the Indian

¹⁹ "Regional Factors in National Planning and Development," National Resources Committee, U. S. A., December 1935, p. 138.

²⁰ R. Coupland, "Constitutional Problem in India," being a Report submitted to the Warden & Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford, part III, chapters X. XI. XII. 1943.

federation (the regions are based on the suggestions of Mr. Yeatts, the Indian Census Commissioner for 1941), and, secondly, the establishment of an "Agency Centre" as the federal authority.

In Prof. Coupland's scheme the suggested regions have, in the main, to serve a political purpose. The Yeatts-Coupland regions must, therefore, prove their right to the status of political regions. To be politically useful a region must be able to claim a greater commonness of political sentiment within than without. None of the regions suggested by Prof. Coupland could claim this essential quality. The Muslim claim to Sind, Punjab, N. W. F. Province, and Baluchistan can at least be substantiated on the ground of considerable homogeneity of religion and culture and, recently, a large degree of oneness in political feeling. The addition, however, that Mr. Yeatts would make of Rajputana to this Muslim-dominated region, in order to form the Indus area, makes nonsense of the whole scheme. It is curious that while Prof. Coupland dwells with complacency on the fact that the constitution of the Indus area automatically lets the disputed Ambala Division out of the Punjab, he makes no adequate comment on the gratuitous addition of the whole of Rajputana to this area. Within the proposed Ganges region dwell the bulk of the people speaking Hindustani and Hindi. Up to the confines of Bihar, therefore, the "Ganges area" formed by Mr. Yeatts has a uniform cultural base. The inclusion of Orissa in the area, however, can hardly be justified except perhaps on the ground that it had to be put somewhere. On geographical grounds the Orissa tract falls south of the Gondwana, and may therefore be said to belong to the Deccan. On linguistic grounds Oriya is, in the classification of Dr. Grierson, an outer language, together with Marathi, Bengali, etc. and, therefore, does not belong to the Gangetic *Madhyadesh*. The Deccan area of Prof. Coupland includes the divergent cultural elements of the Indo-Aryan speakers and the Dravida speakers, and also includes Gujarat, which historically and culturally has greater affinities with the north than with the south.

The first point to be remembered in judging of Prof. Coupland's scheme is, thus, that the suggested regions do not exhibit within themselves any distinct identity from the point of view of cultural or linguistic affiliations and, therefore, no gain in political sentiment is achieved by their formation. Not only is there no present feeling of commonness among the peoples within these regions, but there is no basis even for the creation of such feeling in the future. There is no reason why the Rajput should ever feel

closer to the Baluchi than to the Bihari, or the Tamil to the Oriya than to the Bengali.

Not that the Yeatts-Coupland regions are really homogeneous from even the economic point of view. Mr. Yeatts, as the Census Commissioner, should have known the large number of natural divisions in which the country has been divided by Census Commissioners for many decades past, and should have realized the large diversity within the four regions recommended.²¹ Rajputana, not only culturally but also geographically, does not form part of the Indus valley. Again, the uplands of Chota Nagpur and the Gondwana area, included in the proposed Ganges unit, have nothing in common economically with the rest of that area. The Assam Hills, with their tea plantations, have little to do with the riverain economy of East Bengal. And as for the Deccan, it is homogeneous only in the sense that all the land lies between certain latitudes. The heavy rainfall strip on the west coast, the rich alluvial lands of Gujarat and the Tamil country, the extremely precarious tracts of the Bombay and Madras Deccan, are lumped together in one region which is supposed to be economically homogeneous, by Messrs. Yeatts and Coupland.

However, even if the quest of the homogeneous economic region had been successful, there would have been no justification from the political or the economic point of view for constituting a separate political unit of it. Whatever the basis of the regions, it may still be insisted that the purpose of their formation is political as they are proposed to be the most important political areas in future India; and an economic region, in the sense of a region with certain homogeneous economic features, has not on that account been ever suggested as suitable for becoming an independent or quasi-independent political unit by itself. The relevance of the reference made by Prof. Coupland to the T. V. A. in this connection is difficult to understand. There is no doubt that the T. V. A. shows, in many respects, the desirability of planning economic development as a whole for a valley region. But the Tennessee Valley Authority is not an independent political unit, and its creation has not resulted in disturbing the existing political structure of the state and the local government authorities over whose areas it operates. Even though the T. V. A. is clothed with certain powers of government, it is built up and administered as a government corporation and not as a separate political unit. Legally the corporation is

²¹ For a study of the physical characteristics, agricultural and industrial resources, etc., of various regions in India, see N. V. Savani, "Population Problem in India: A Regional Approach," Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Publication No. 8. 1942.

under the control of the President of the U. S. A., and is regarded "as in no wise differing, except in degree, from any other administrative office or agency."²² While the authority has made strenuous attempts to gain democratic collaboration with existing public agencies and the people in the Tennessee valley, it "is not politically removable by the local inhabitants through any agency or procedure they can use, and is accountable only to the federal legislature and executive."²³ And this absence of political relationship has been often claimed as one of the main factors in the success of the experiment. Moreover, it should be noted that the Tennessee Valley, a backward tract, could not have progressed if it had been a self-contained political unit. It was the federal government with its resources that could alone have launched a scheme such as the T. V. A.

The political implications of the regional authority experiments are best brought out in the following extract:

"A regional organization, whatever its varied form, should not be considered as a new form of sovereignty, even in embryo. It need never develop to the stage where it will have elected officers, a legislative body, and the power to tax. Consequently the region need not have fixed boundaries. By the same token the region need have no definite body of citizens. Many citizens may consider themselves as belonging to one region for one purpose and an adjoining region for another."²⁴

The problems raised by economic planning today have never been sought to be solved by attempting to approximate political areas to the economic. All that has been insisted is that the division of a political unit into administrative areas should not be allowed to come in the way of planning for larger regions, and that when necessary suitable sub-area governments or suitable joint authorities of various local areas should be set up for implementing an economic and regional programme. The acceptance of the idea that a political unit might be appropriately constituted out of the valley area of a river and its confluences might lead to political unification of, for example, the Danube area; but such a proposal would not have justification in political facts and, indeed, would not be gravely made by any serious student. When it is proposed to set up a D. V. A. for the Danube Valley, all that is suggested is that the authority should derive clearly defined powers from the various central political authorities in whose territory it operates. The measure of cogency in Prof. Coupland's proposal will be realized fully when one considers the feasibility or advantage of the

22 H. Finer: "T. V. A. Lessons for International Application," I. L. O., 1944, p. 146.

23 Op. cit., pp. 117-118.

24 "Regional Factors in National Planning and Development," National Resources Committee, U. S. A., 1935, p. DL.

formation of political units in, say, North America on the basis of his regional proposals for India. The biggest political units would, in this case, be the whole of the Mississippi region from north to south combined in one, or, in the east, the basin of the St. Lawrence.

When talking of regionalism it is necessary to remember that the regions formed on different tests would be different, and that the division of regional boundaries would not be the same even for all economic purposes. The National Resources Committee of the U. S. A. has exhibited, with a series of maps, how numerous are the tests that could be adopted and how different the consequent regions would be.²⁵ It is for this, among other reasons, that nobody advocates the setting up of even local area governments entirely on the economic criterion. The main insistence today, in either the local or the provincial sphere, is that the administrative unit shall not be treated as the only basis for all activity, and that readiness should be shown to facilitate co-operation between various authorities, and to set up, where necessary, joint authorities for the purpose. The numerous considerations in this regard have been well brought together in the following paragraph from Dr. Finer's study of the T. V. A. experiment:

"This discussion of the relationship of the T. V. A.'s own specific area to its concern and responsibility for parts of the United States beyond its boundaries suggests several conclusions. First, that the Authority's area has been necessarily restricted in order to secure a sharp focus of attention upon its resources and problems. Secondly, that while an area of special development need not necessarily be based upon electric power or the control of river, the development agency must have authority and power to deal with its problems in terms of the area that these problems affect, and there may be sub-areas or trans-areas to meet special problems involved in each of its several powers. A small valley authority may have to fit into a larger entity; an immense valley may need sub-regions; plain and country may need division; mountain masses may need a single control though they are under several sovereignties. Thirdly, the delimitation of the area lies, to a very large extent, in the discretion of the Government; it depends upon what the Government wishes to secure. Fourthly, any one area is necessarily embodied in the intendment of the total economic system of a nation, is affected by the rest of the economic system, even as it affects and contributes to it; hence, there must always be problems of adjustment. And, finally, the machinery of adjustment may take the form of a voluntary agreement between the development area and its neighbours, but in the last resort must be operated by the Government of the whole nation."²⁶

Further, whereas geographical or economic factors might sometimes be allowed to mould the political pattern in an entirely new country, this cannot happen in an ancient land where political traditions and lines of affinities are already firmly set.²⁷ The whole trend

²⁵ Op. cit., Chap. XV, "Regions in a Planned National Programme."

²⁶ Op. cit., pp. 124-125.

²⁷ How "regionalism" is unable to override political factors even in a "new country" might be made clear by reference to a recent decision relating to a problem in an area completely controlled by the British Government. The project for the amalgamation of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland has been finally given up because of a fundamental difference in native policy between the territories concerned.

of Prof. Coupland's discourse is to accept the existence of divergent sentiments as an established and unassailable political fact. It is, therefore, surprising that he should suggest the grouping together of several distinct areas into one political unit on the basis of such an irrelevant consideration as that they form parts of a river basin.

For understanding the full significance of Prof. Coupland's regionalism it is necessary to take account of his proposal for setting up an "Agency Centre." The regional division and the agency centre are counterparts of each other. The powers of the Central Government in Prof. Coupland's scheme are to be restricted to (1) Foreign Affairs and Defence, (2) External Trade or Tariff Policy, and (3) Currency. It is not expected to control even railways or posts and telegraph. In the economic sphere the future state in India, as conceived by Prof. Coupland, would be no more than a customs and currency union. The ordinary economic policy of all states today looks much beyond the instrument of the tariff. Discussions of even International Monetary Plans show how closely linked with one another are the various aspects of economic life and how widespread is the net of economic controls, even in countries with traditions opposed to regulation by the state. For economic planning the powers enjoyed by the Central Authority, as shown above, must be even more all-embracing. According to Prof. Coupland's scheme, therefore, the effective unit for economic planning and policy would be, not the whole of India, but each individual region. It is possible that even the Muslims would object to this separation of their two non-contiguous regions for vital purposes. And there is no reason whatsoever why the large non-Muslim contiguous block should be so artificially broken up. Economic planning is likely to achieve results in proportion to the area and the variety of resources it commands, and it is highly wasteful to restrict deliberately the area of the planning effort. No demand has been made by any part of the non-Muslim area to plan for itself as an independent entity. A proposal which, in the supposed interests of unity, creates a fundamental division in a respect where none is even imagined, must indeed be curiously conceived. It might perhaps be said that there would be no objection to two contiguous regions more closely co-operating with each other than with the rest. But this, in effect, would amount to no more than arriving, only by a devious route, at the division of India into two regions, one Muslim and the other non-Muslim.

For political purposes also the Region would be the dominant unit. It would not be amenable to control from the Central Gov-

ernment in any sphere. The Regions would control all resources and possess all powers. The centre would presumably be financed by the income from customs duties, but for actually obtaining the "food, the clothing, the transport, the munition" for its troops, it would depend on such voluntary co-operation as it is able to obtain from the Regions. It is not difficult to imagine how vigorous the foreign policy and how effective the defence of such a centre would be. Indeed, with Prof. Coupland's "Agency Centre" we reach the dividing line between the federal state and a confederation of states.

It cannot be that Prof. Coupland had given careful consideration to the premises elaborately worked up by himself, before evolving his scheme of the agency centre. The main insistence of Prof. Coupland is on the recognition of the Muslim complex of pride and fear. He also agrees that the process of constitutional advance has been accompanied at each of its stages by an almost automatic growth of communal self-consciousness and antagonism. Distrust breeds distrust, and as a counterpart to the Muslim complex is to be found a similar complex in the minds of Hindus. Muslims traditionally look outside the land for inspiration and for bonds of religious and cultural life. Their leaders talk of a continuous Muslim land-block in Asia and Africa. They express the fear that a Hindu-dominated central government would create difficulties in the way of the development of their own cultural life and of these external ties. Most of these facts Prof. Coupland notes. The corresponding Hindu fear is the result of this very insistence by the Muslims on the importance of their external ties; for, the Hindus remember that most of their external invaders in recent centuries have come from this Muslim hinterland. A thesis, therefore, that starts with the acceptance of these aspirations and the mutual distrust as concrete political facts, as matters of ingrained sentiment that could not be disregarded, could certainly not logically lead to the provision of an agency centre for a common foreign policy by Hindus and Muslims. For, if these are concrete political facts, the foreign policy of the Muslims must diverge entirely from the policy appropriate to the Hindus. The Muslim foreign policy must, in the event, be dominated by the concept of pan-Islamism and by the effort at building up of an *entente* of Muslim states. The Hindu policy as a natural reaction must aim at internal strengthening and external alliances in order to keep in check the continuous threat of the Muslim border overflowing its bounds. And on those suppositions, for the Hindus to accept an agency centre as an instrument of Indian foreign policy and defence would be an act of unwisdom which would have few parallels even in Hindu history.

Prof. Coupland's proposals, it is clear, cannot be properly designated by the term "regionalism." His regions show no indications, actual or potential, of a distinct political identity, and they are not at all suited to the purpose for which they are intended. They do not also solve any of the problems of federalism. The division of powers between the central and the provincial units is today rendered difficult by the Muslim apprehensions regarding the vesting of a dominantly Hindu centre with large powers. The Regional proposal does not really solve this difficulty. It makes the centre an Agency Centre. But this will still leave unsolved the problem of division of powers between the provinces and the Region. Presumably it is expected that the Muslims, being now given two dominant Regions as against the two of Hindus also, would consent to vest the authorities of the Region with larger powers than they would be prepared to give to the Indian Federal Centre. The Regions would thus become, for all practical peace time purposes, the independent units. The Regions are unsuitable units for these purposes, and there appears no reason why either Muslim or non-Muslim India should accept such an artificial and irrelevant division among itself. Thus the idea of the Region as an intermediate political unit is unacceptable because it corresponds to no political facts. It does not create a unit which is, on ground of sentiment or any other political reason, likely to be more homogeneous than the whole federation. The so-called economic grounds for the formation of the Regions are untenable and irrelevant. The proposed Regions are not really homogeneous; and even if they were so, there is not the least justification for forming the areas of independent political units on the ground of commonness of some single geographic or economic factor.

The association of the Indian States with Provincial areas, which is claimed to be one of the advantages of the Regional idea, could, it has been pointed out, be brought about more appropriately at the stage of the formation of the primary federating units. The incorporation of such Indian States, as agree to this procedure, in the homogeneous unilingual federating unit would help the strengthening of these primary units and would serve as the proper transitional phase, it is hoped, for the eventual disappearance of the difference between the Indian States and non-State areas. Such an association of the Indian States with non-State areas, which are, from the point of view of language, culture, economic development, etc. similar to themselves, would be mutually helpful and would make for a proper integration of federal units. It is also possible

to push the same idea further and to contemplate the Rajputana and the Central India States forming either one or two primary federating units among themselves even without the nucleus of any non-State area. It is only in exceptional instances, such as that of the Nizam's Dominions, that such a procedure would not be found suitable. But that State must in any event be treated exceptionally and must be taken, to start with, as an independent federating unit in itself. The association of the Indian States with non-State areas in the proposed Regions, on the other hand, would have no special significance because of the absence of an appropriate degree of homogeneity among them. Such an association would not differ in results from the association in the Indian federation itself.

However well intentioned, therefore, the scheme of Prof. Coupland may be, it is not based on either a proper appreciation of the facts or a complete understanding of the methods of economic development. It is essentially a political device to get over what looks like a dead-lock. It is an attempt to obtain patched-up unity by offering Muslims command over extra regions and a weighted balance at the centre without, however, explicitly saying so. But all parties to the federation must carefully consider what price to pay for the maintenance of a facade of unity. Even the most ardent champions of unity should hesitate at the implications of the artificial balancing of communities and the deliberate emasculation of the federal government proposed by Prof. Coupland. While federation may be an excellent device to join together diversity, it is fatal to try and reconcile incompatibility therein.

It might be suggested that unity might be maintained by combining a modification of the regional idea with the practice developed under the 1935 Act of different units not choosing all to federate for the same or all purposes. A difference sprang up in the 1935 Constitution between the position of the provinces and that of the Indian States. The Indian States under this constitution were permitted not to federate in respect of certain subjects, i.e., to reserve to themselves powers relating to certain functions and not cede them to the federal authority even if other units had agreed to cede them. It might be suggested that the exception might be extended in favour of the federating units within the Muslim region, so that the federating units within the non-Muslim region might form a closer and more inclusive federation, while the Indian States and the Muslim units came in only for a minima of subjects. This suggestion would, however, prove neither acceptable in theory nor workable in practice. In the first instance there is

considerable difference between leaving the latitude to the Indian States and that to the Muslim units. The power of the Indian Government at the centre today does not depend, in the main, on the Indian States; so that even their abstention would not subtract from it materially. Further, the Indian States, though important *en masse*, are for the larger part unimportant individually. They are again not strategically placed with regard to the foreign policy of India or its defence. Above all, the reluctance on the part of the Indian States to accede was not based on any fundamental difference in objective or interest. Therefore, though it would have led to greater cohesion and strength at the centre if all the Indian States had come in for all subjects, their non-accession might not have been considered a decisive factor. This is not so with Muslim India. A federal government, in which the Muslim regions federated for a few subjects, would remain weak even though the non-Muslim regions cohered to a large extent; because for foreign policy, defence, etc., the divergent Muslim point of view would make a unified and vigorous policy impossible, and for actual preparation for peace or war the Muslim regions would remain outside the effective orbit of the federation. Thus such a state would be even weaker and more vulnerable than a state which did not include the Muslim regions for any purpose. It has been already indicated above that the concessions given to the Indian States under the 1935 Act were ill-advised. They led to a position which would have prevented for all times the proper development of an Indian constitution. The grant of such concessions to the Muslim region would be even more objectionable than their grant to the Indian States.

It has been pleaded in favour of preserving, at least, a semblance of unity at some cost, that India would otherwise not attain the important position it should in the affairs of the world. A state, however, is regarded and respected not in relation to the area, population, or resources it formally controls, but in relation to the unity of its purpose, the vigour of its policy, and the strength of its action. The position of China today indicates this sufficiently. Therefore, a formal unity that is achieved at the cost of vigour and cohesion in policy or decisiveness in action will certainly not raise India high in the opinion of the nations. On the other hand, it will make impossible the contribution which the two separate units, each of them still large and powerful enough, could make to the progress of the world.

X

MINORITIES

IT SEEMS unfortunate that all negotiators and framers of schemes since the days of the Lucknow Pact have not learned fully the lesson of the history of that Pact. The Pact was based on the assumption of unity of purpose and objective in the larger political and economic sphere, and it was thought of as a once-for-all settlement. The Pact failed to last because such unity of purpose did not in reality exist. Political expediency rules the minds of negotiators at all particular times; but decisions or agreements arrived at by leaders today do not and cannot bind the future; and unless the evolution of the future is such that it accords with assumptions made in the present, attempts must continuously be made, successfully or unsuccessfully, to upset these decisions. If provincial boundaries are imposed today, which do violence to the aspirations of the people, no quiet settlement within them can be expected unless continuously imposed by force from above. In the same manner if weightage is given now to elements which are numerically, i.e., democratically, not important in the country or in particular parts, the results of that weightage must continuously be maintained by force or distortion of some sort, or a revision of the artificial decision would be inevitable. This is not to subscribe to the over-optimistic view that ultimately all arrangements tend to accord with fundamental facts. It is merely to point to the important consideration that unless they do so accord, their maintenance can only be brought about by continuous use of superior political force, and, further, that unless the measure of such force is overwhelming, the political atmosphere will be continuously troubled by attempts and agitations at revision. The working of the phenomenon of irredentism in Europe provides a useful illustration in this regard. Therefore, any serious departure that is made from what is required to build up a properly grounded democratic federation in India in the cause of the placation of the Muslims is not likely to be accepted for all times, or to prove stable. The attempt to render the federal government a weak government, the acceptance of the principle of weightage, the refusal to readjust provincial boundaries, or the creation of artificial intermediate regions in order to attain a balance of power, are all so fundamentally opposed to the requirements of a modern democratic and federal state that any settlement arrived at today on concessions in this regard must be considered in the long run as lacking in stability.

It should also be emphasized that the very acceptance of the concept of balance in the formation of a state is subversive of its integrity or continued peaceful existence. One lesson can be confidently said to flow from the experience of the working of the new states created by the treaty of Versailles. It is that any artificial balancing of divergent forces within the state leads inevitably to its disruption at times of stress. All political states can live through difficult times by the successful imposition of the will of the rulers on the governed. In non-democratic states this is dependent on the possession by the rulers of superior force: In democratic states such possession of force is itself dependent on the backing of a secure majority. If by the creation of an artificial weightage in favour of minorities, or because of any other factors such as special army recruitment, the action of the majority is rendered precarious, the fundamental condition for the continued existence of the state is denied. This is also the lesson to be learned from the working of all systems, democratic or non-democratic, where the question of minorities has been successfully tackled. The Turkish *millet* and the Russian autonomous area or cultural units have been often cited as examples of successful solutions of the minority problem. A feature common to both these is the implicit obedience in all matters of general political and economic policy expected of and exacted from the autonomous minority groups by the central Government. In the Ottoman Empire the *millets* had no voice in matters of high policy. In the Soviet federation of republics the minority groups participate on equal terms with others in arriving at political and economic decisions. No claim, however, is made or entertained on behalf of a minority group for special power in the formation of political or economic decisions, and, in fact, no hint would be tolerated that in these fundamental matters the interests of the minority are different from those of the whole, or that national policy is, in effect, not to be determined by the decisions taken by the majority. Granted the general background of acquiescence by minority groups in the general policy of the state, the problem of the guarantee of specific interests is not really insoluble. On any other assumption it is not possible to form a stable state; for, the lack of this fundamental assumption means that there continuously exist potentially disloyal elements organized as minorities within the state. The Muslim question is not a minority question at all. It is insoluble largely because the usual guarantees provided for the minorities, even in their fullest measure, would not satisfy the Muslims. It is insoluble because the Muslims resent being treated as a minority and claim a highly privileged political position or, in its ab-

sence, separation. There is no difference of opinion among Muslims themselves regarding the demand for special political privileges. All sections of Muslims are united in demanding a weighted political vote both at the centre and in the provinces. Beginning with the claim to separate electorates for representation in the legislature, they have gone on to claim that they should have not only weighted but also authenticated representations in all the cabinets.

Muslim claims are incompatible with the formation of an integrated political state; but it is too late in the day to dispute the fundamental Muslim thesis. The term "nation" is so ill-defined that no time need be wasted on debating the cogency or otherwise of the "two-nation theory." It is at the same time incontrovertible that the Muslim claim to independent statehood has, in essentials, been already conceded by responsible leaders of Hindu opinion. The chief sign of the need for independent statehood is the claim to an independent foreign policy. This was completely conceded when responsible Hindu leaders actively stimulated and supported the Khilafat agitation and, incidentally, publicly defended pan-Islamism at the time. The possibility of independent statehood is established when a people can lay claim to a separate region. This claim was put forward in the plainest terms by leaders like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (see above page 34) in asking for the separation of Sind, and was conceded, however grudgingly, by Hindu leaders.²⁸ The claim born of the Khilafat agitation was given a habitation by the separation of Sind and was merely logically extended by the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League.

The Muslim claim must result in, at least, temporary separation. But minorities would still continue to exist in the two Indian federations, and something must be said relating to their problems. The various directions in which minority interests might require being safeguarded are indicated by the elaborate system of guarantee of

²⁸ Report of the Committee Appointed by the All Parties Conference, 1928, Chap. IV. It is interesting in this connection to note the following contemporary comment by Dr. Ambedkar: "Knowing the real purpose of the demand, the question is, Should it be sympathized with? I, for one, am unable to sympathize with it, and no person, I venture to say, who has at heart the interests of good administration will consent to it. It will no doubt be said, as is done by the Nehru Committee which has expressed itself in favour of separation, that the manner of putting it forward does not necessarily weaken the merits of a proposal. I take exception to this position. I hold that the manner discloses the motive, and that motive, far from being a small matter, is important enough to change the face of the situation. For it cannot be gainsaid that the main force which sets an institution in motion and also fixes its direction centres round the motive which brings the institution into being. The motive that lies behind this scheme is undoubtedly a dreadful one involving the maintenance of justice and peace by retaliation and providing an opportunity for the punishment of an innocent minority, Hindu in Mohamedan provinces and Mohamedan in Hindu provinces, for the sins of their co-religionists in other provinces."—Report of the Committee Appointed by the Bombay Legislative Council to Co-operate with the Indian Statutory Commission, para. 6.

general and special rights built up by the League of Nations during the first decade of its existence. The general rights guaranteed in this system were the rights to (i) nationality, (ii) life, personal liberty, freedom of worship, (iii) equal treatment (a) before law, (b) in the matter of civil and political rights, (c) in law and in point of fact, (iv) the use of the minority language and adequate educational facilities therein, (v) an equitable share of public funds devoted to educational, religious, charitable purposes, etc., (vi) public employment, functions, honours, exercise of profession or industry. Among the special rights guaranteed in certain individual treaties were those relating to family law and personal status, local autonomy in religious and scholastic matters, and the formation of local, autonomous, political units in cases of regional concentration of minority populations. In connection with political and civil rights, equality was insisted on and proportionality, in such matters as a share of the funds spent on educational purposes. In the League of Nations arrangements it is, however, nowhere held that fair or just or even generous treatment involved a more than proportionate share of political rights or of public employment or funds.

It was an essential part of the policy evolved by the League of Nations for the protection of minorities that the insistence on the just treatment of minorities should be joined to an equal insistence on the loyal co-operation given by the minorities to the state. The Report of a Committee of the League of Nations, which passed in review the evolution of policy, has the following:

"The purpose of the Treaties was to ensure that the minorities should, for the future, enjoy conditions which would enable them, without loss of their religious or cultural heritage, to bring to the State of which they now form a part, that loyal co-operation on which the Assembly laid stress in its resolutions of 1922. In the view of the Committee, it is of great importance that nothing should be done to impair these principles.

"In the second place, both the authors of the Treaties, and the Council in developing its procedure, have been at pains to avoid creating a situation which would place the Government of any State having undertaken obligations, and any minority or member of a minority within that State, in a position analogous to that of parties opposed to one another in legal or arbitral proceedings.

"The authors of the Treaties deliberately rejected any proposal which could give countenance to the conception of any minority forming a separate corporation within the State."²⁹

The Muslim claim, it should be noted, goes beyond even the claim to be treated as a separate corporation.

²⁹ Protection of Linguistic, Racial or Religious Minorities by the League of Nations, Resolutions and Extract from the Minutes of the Council, Resolutions and Reports adopted by the Assembly, relating to the Procedure to be followed in Questions concerning the Protection of Minorities, League of Nations, Second Edition, 1951, p. 100.

The attempt of the League of Nations to guarantee minority rights failed because of the failure of the League itself. There has, however, been general agreement that the League of Nations' system was properly conceived. Any Indian federation or federations will include to a smaller or larger extent minority populations. Therefore, provision for the protection of minority rights would have to be made and would best be made on the lines of the above system. It has already been indicated that if it were not for the special claims of Muslims, there would be no inherent difficulty in providing for the religious, cultural, linguistic, etc. development of the Muslims under such a system.

Among minorities other than Muslim, the position of the Depressed Classes deserves special attention. The problem of the Depressed Classes is essentially a social rather than a political problem. It is a problem almost entirely of the reconditioning of Hindu Society. Political adjustments would not by themselves solve it, and if the social problem is dealt with successfully, the political problem would cease to exist. It is, however, obvious that proper guarantee of political and public rights in law and in fact would make quicker the movement of social forces within Hindu Society. Experience demonstrated that in Bombay province the reservation of seats for Marathas and allied castes was unnecessary as the voters of these castes exercised their franchise in such a manner as to send an adequate number of representatives to the legislatures. Ultimately, the special representation of the Depressed Classes would become unnecessary in the same manner. In the meanwhile it has to be maintained as long as this section of the Hindu fold remains definitely in a depressed social condition. Also, while it is considered desirable, on account of the large disparities in the educational and economic conditions of various sections of the community, to maintain some reservation in public employment, public educational facilities, etc. for the less favoured classes, the claim of the depressed must receive special attention in this respect. It is likely that both in the improvement of economic conditions and of social status large and assured public employment will help the Depressed Classes more than almost any other section.

Provision for the reservation of seats in proportion to numbers in the population is something which is very different from the acceptance of weightage. Reservation does not distort the main facts of the situation. It merely means that the influence of some factors which would prevent a group from exercising its political power to the full, is by anticipation prevented, and the representa-

tion proportioned to the strength in the group of the community is guaranteed. Though reservation does involve departure from accepted democratic principles, it is justifiable where, in a community, the constituent groups are on very different levels of social development and economic power.

Equally important with these reservations, is the obtaining of equality of treatment in fact for these classes in the use of educational facilities and of public buildings, wells, etc. all over the country. In these directions more is to be expected of a drive toward the creation of social consciousness both among the depressed and among the higher castes in Hindu Society. The state might not find it possible to do a great deal directly except by way of watchful, zealous action in activities and institutions directly or indirectly controlled by it. But the problem of the Depressed Classes is a major responsibility of Hindu Society and consequently of any state where the Hindus find themselves with substantial political power. The claim of Dr. Ambedkar that the Depressed Classes should obtain special weightage and treatment if the Muslims obtain it, is both cogent and irresistible. If the Muslims can claim weightage on the ground of former superiority, the Depressed Classes could also ask for the oppression of centuries being compensated for in a similar manner. As our argument has so far moved in the direction of demonstrating the unwisdom of the grant of political privilege, this aspect of the question need not detain us.

The other important minorities are mostly religious minorities such as Sikhs, Christians, Parsees, etc. The educational and economic conditions of most of these do not, on an average, fall below the average of the populations in which they live. The main guarantees required by them are, therefore, equality of treatment, in fact, in relation to economic activity, public employment, share of educational expenditure, etc. Safeguards in these respects would have to be constitutionally provided. The tradition of respecting and giving effect to the personal law and custom of the different communities is a very ancient one in India, and would, of course, be continued.

The two main aims of the system of minority rights are to provide for (i) the free development of the religious, cultural, and social life of the minority, and (ii) the guarantee of treatment on an equal basis with members of the majority in sharing political and economic power and administrative posts and privileges. The administrative solution with regard to these that seems to be gen-

erally accepted as the most successful, is the Russian one of the creation of special autonomous groups and regions. The groups would be based on the special affinities within a region so that certain types of schools, places of religious worship and social intercourse within that region would be autonomously managed by persons belonging to particular groups. Moreover, when a small enclave is dominantly populated by persons belonging to a particular group, an autonomous region for most purposes of local administration could be specially created in favour of the group. The working of these types of guarantees are required in India chiefly in favour of the Muslims in the Hindu regions, and the Hindus in the Muslim regions. Special group institutions and special area units working autonomously would meet the fullest requirements of this case. The other important community in whose case the operation of the idea of autonomous groups or regions would prove useful is that of the Sikhs. The tribal and backward areas constitute a special problem by themselves. In these the idea of the autonomous region would work successfully only if, as in Russia, special help and direction is given to their development from outside. The members of other minorities are, for the most part, not heavily concentrated in particular areas, and the concept of the autonomous region could not ordinarily be adopted for their needs. Even they could, where necessary, be formed into autonomous groups for specific purposes such as educational and cultural development. The second type of guarantee, that of equal treatment, is the one chiefly required by other types of minorities.

Providing adequately for the protection of the rights of minorities should not prove a difficult matter. The provision would have to be made for both the federation as well as for the individual federating units. The problem of linguistic minorities would be a special problem for the federating units; for, however carefully the boundaries of the provinces or federating units are drawn, some linguistic minorities will be found within each such unit. The provision for the use of the minority language and of educational facilities through it on lines of the League of Nations' system, could easily meet the requirement. The operation of the guarantees in the federating units could be subject to the jurisdiction of the federal judiciary. This provision could apply also to the federal guarantees, but these might, in addition, be referable to an international authority as in the League of Nations' system.

XI

PROBLEMS OF SEPARATION

THE differences between Muslims and Hindus in India rest on a deep-rooted sense of separateness. In religion and in social structure the divergence between the Muslim and Hindu folds is immense. In language and culture, especially the former, the difference is smaller, but is in the process of being widened. This process of widening could be stopped only if the Hindus in Northern India were prevented from developing on original Hindu lines, and if the Hindus of Southern India accepted Muslim elements in their language and culture which they had historically succeeded in resisting. The possibility of unifying these two somewhat divergent units into one state is made difficult by the Muslim demand for complete autonomy for Muslim regions and for a large share of political power for Muslims everywhere else. The demand for the creation of Muslim regions and the demand that they should be practically free of central control arise from the desire to be free of the control of a central government in which non-Muslim elements would be important. This can only be interpreted as meaning that even in the sphere in which central government wields powers, i.e., spheres which are, in the main, political and economic, Muslim interests are thought to be distinctive in character. A large section of Muslim opinion has gone on to the stage of demanding an independent federation. Even the minority of vocal opinion that does not support this demand insists upon complete autonomy of units and freedom to secede at any time.

In these circumstances, it has to be considered whether the non-Muslims can offer any special concessions or privileges to the Muslims that would induce them to remain in the federation. A review of possible concessions shows that any further weakening of the powers of the centre is most undesirable for both political and economic reasons and in times either of peace or of war. The grant of increased weightage in legislatures to Muslims is impossible whether in the provinces or at the centre. As a matter of fact the situation demands as quick a withdrawal as possible from the principle of weightage. Weightage and authenticated representation in the cabinets is even more unfair to other communities and more inimical to political stability and economic progress than weightage in legislatures. The so-called regional schemes put forward to solve the problem are found on examination to have no sound basis either

in political or economic facts, and to be merely indirect ways of weakening the power of the central government and giving a weighted share of political power at the centre to Muslims. Also these schemes involve the effective break-up of India into more units than two. The semblance of unity purchased at the cost of such concessions does not appear worthwhile on any reasonable calculations. Therefore, if the Muslim masses in the Muslim regions fully support the contentions of Muslim leaders, there seems no alternative but to face calmly the prospect of the formation of one Muslim and another non-Muslim federation within the present boundaries of India.

Before we go on to consider the issues resulting from bringing these two federations into existence, it is necessary to say something about the special problems of the Punjab and Bengal and of the Hindu and Muslim minorities in the two federations. Barring the peculiar problem of the Sikhs, which must be treated separately, the problems of the Punjab and Bengal are similar. The two provinces of Sind and the North-West Frontier are overwhelmingly Muslim, with no Hindu population concentrated in any region contiguous to non-Muslim India. No difficulty, therefore, arises in the continued existence of these provinces as separate entities. In the Punjab and Bengal, as constituted at present, the Muslims are in a majority, but large regions of these provinces are inhabited by non-Muslim majorities. The question, therefore, is whether the constitution of a separate Muslim federation must lead to a splitting-up of the two provinces. It has already been indicated above that the problem could be solved only on the lines of deciding by each group within the province which it considers as the dominant loyalty. At the time of the partition of Bengal, the unity of the Bengali-speaking people was greatly emphasized. It was said that, whether they were Muslims or Hindus, Bengalis as a whole desired to share in the same administration and that both the communities would resent the division of the province into two. If, now, the Muslim Bengalis want to join the Muslim federation, they must either persuade their non-Muslim co-provincials also to join that federation or must separate the Muslim regions of Bengal from the non-Muslim regions of that province. Either the Bengali Muslim or the Bengali Hindu must agree to part company from the bulk of his co-religionists in the Muslim or the non-Muslim federation or must agree to a partition. It is obvious that if the Muslims as a body insist on a separate federation, there can be no solution of the problem created thereby in Bengal or in the Punjab on any other lines.

The problem of the Sikhs is even more intractable. The Sikhs do not form a majority in any region in India. It is, therefore, not possible in existing circumstances to form a province or a sub-province in a federation in which the Sikhs are dominant. There are certain districts of Sikh concentration where they form a large part of the population, but in no case a majority. Political government having to be regionally based, it is difficult to see how an independent Sikh unit could be constituted. Also, if the districts of the Punjab in which the Sikhs are concentrated, but in which the Muslims are in a majority, decide, because of almost complete unanimity among Muslims, to join a Muslim federation and the opposite course is taken by the districts in which the Hindus are in a majority, it is difficult to see how the splitting up of the region of Sikh concentration between the two federations can be prevented. No special consideration could be given to Sikh interests in these districts, because this must lead to a denial of the ordinary rights to the non-Sikh communities who form large portions of the population of the districts. If the Muslims in all Punjab districts vote solidly for a separate Muslim federation, the only manner in which the Sikhs can keep their block intact in one federation is by voting to join the Muslim federation. In this case the frontier of the Muslim federation would rest on the Ambala Division. If, however, they throw their weight with the Hindus in the districts where the two together are in a majority and remain in the non-Muslim federation, then a solid vote of Muslims could still cut away from the non-Muslim federation such districts as Lahore, Sheikhupura, Gujranwala, Sialkot, and Gurdaspur, in which the Sikhs have a large population. It is likely that these considerations of the concentration of their population may weigh with the Sikhs, and that this situation might lead the Muslims to offer the Sikhs some special inducements in order to persuade them to vote with the Muslims in the border districts in the matter of joining the Muslim federation. Either way the Sikhs will find themselves in a minority and the most that they can hope for is to obtain a sub-region in either one or both federations, in which they hold a position of almost equal importance with both the Muslims and the Hindus. Such, in effect, was the intention of a scheme for the readjustment of Punjab boundaries presented by a Sikh delegate to the Round Table Conference.³⁰ In view of the distribution of their population it is for the Sikhs to consider whether they would rather have their whole community in a Muslim federation or have the large bulk

³⁰ A Scheme of Redistribution of the Punjab, Memorandum by Sardar Ujjal Singh Indian Round Table Conference (Second Session) Proceedings, Appendix XVII, 1932.

of it in a non-Muslim federation, leaving, however, substantial numbers in the Muslim federation.

In Bengal and the Punjab or the region inhabited chiefly by the Sikhs, just as in the case of the geographical entity of India, a mere general plea of integrity can be of little avail; for any integrity that is alleged to exist so as to affect the immediate political situation, must exist as a political fact and must be reflected in the political sentiments of the people inhabiting the regions. The agitation against the partition of Bengal rested on the clear basis of the sentiment of the people in favour of the integrity of Bengal. If, with change of times that sentiment has changed materially, and there exists a sharp division based on religious loyalties which leads the two sections to prefer to join two separate federations, there seems no possibility, without coercing one or the other section against its will, of achieving a maintenance of this integrity. The sentiment of integrity cannot be expected to have force if expression is not given to it by the populations directly concerned. It is, therefore, not a question so much of what either Muslims or Hindus outside the two regions feel, but as to which is considered to be the dominant loyalty by the people of the region themselves.

It has been pointed out with much reason that even if a decision were taken to form more than one federation, the problem of Hindu-Muslim relations would not disappear. The Muslims in the non-Muslim federation would be very considerable in numbers, and the proportion of Hindus in the Muslim federation would be substantial. In some areas such as the residual portions of Bengal and the Punjab, the proportions might be specially high. Therefore, it is said, the constitution of separate federations is no solution to the problem of the relations between Hindus and Muslims. It has been emphasized in the discussion above that this problem is not to be visualised, in existing conditions, as a problem of dealing with a minority, and cannot be effectively tackled with the technique developed in this direction. The whole trend of Muslim demands shows insistence on a separate set of political affiliations and objectives which are very different from those of non-Muslim residents of India. The divergent interpretations of fundamental political interest create in India a situation which has no special concern with safeguards of minority rights. The constitution of the two federations cannot abolish the existence of minorities, but it would help in restoring the status of a minority problem to the Muslim-Hindu relations in the two federations. In the non-Muslim federation the residual Muslim population will in proportion be of a magnitude

which can be considered as definitely a minority. All the guarantees and safeguards pertaining to a minority would be granted to it without it being felt incumbent to give to it a politically privileged position. The majority will determine, in the main, the general framework of economic and political conditions, and the minority might be expected loyally to accept them so long as all special interests or activities pertaining to itself were duly safeguarded. Correspondingly, the Hindus and other non-Muslims in the Muslim federation would accept the fact of the Muslim point of view dominating the political policy of that federation as part of the expected and normal course in their political status. They would affect this point of view only to the extent that their numerical strength entitled them to. For the rest they would have to be satisfied with the safeguards and guarantees in behalf of cultural and other interests corresponding to the safeguards and guarantees obtaining for minorities in the non-Muslim federation. While, therefore, minority problems would still have to be faced by the two federations, there is little doubt that the sharp conflict between important interests would be very largely removed and the two separate federations would be put in a position of attaining, each for itself, unified political policies, and of being able to implement them vigorously.

It is sometimes complained by Hindus that in the event of a separate Muslim federation coming into existence, the interests of their co-religionists in those regions would suffer grievously. The proper maintenance of minority guarantees depends essentially on two factors,—the temper of the majority and the extent to which it feels it necessary because of either internal or external conditions to respect the guarantees. That the majority should itself feel bound to treat co-citizens with respect and consideration is obviously the best guarantee. Under existing conditions the need felt by the majority, because of internal or external considerations, to respect the guarantees is an additional salutary safeguard. It is said that the presence of the British safeguards minority rights today in a certain measure. This guarantee will, it is presumed, vanish. In the future, the predominantly Muslim and non-Muslim regions will obviously be constituted into separate federating units whether they form part of one federation or not. It is a moot question as to whether Hindus in the Muslim units will be better treated if the Muslim units have a separate federation with an independent non-Muslim federation as its neighbour, or if they form part of one federation of Muslim and non-Muslim units. If present experience counts for anything, the complaints made by the Hindus

in Sind or the Hindus in Bengal and the Punjab do not provide proof of any effective enforcement of protective safeguards because of the operation of the British guarantee or of the continued integrity of an Indian Empire. The Muslim League has also officially complained that the rights of Muslims were not at all looked after by Governors in the provinces in which Congress cabinets held power. On the other hand, it is relevant to note that the Hindus in the Dominions of the Nizam had a better guarantee of good treatment when an independent Maratha federation existed side by side than they have today or ever had during the last hundred years. Therefore, while it would be too much to say that the existence of separate federations would necessarily better the conditions of Hindus in the Muslim regions of India, at least there seems no sufficient reason to believe definitely to the contrary. In the last analysis, the position of either Hindus or Muslims as minorities is dependent on their own strength in the particular region and on the effectiveness that their co-religionists in other regions show in resenting ill-treatment. It is dependent, that is, on the feeling of solidarity within each religious group and its capacity for effective political action. These are factors largely internal to the constitution of the social or religious group, and they would not be much affected by either the maintenance of the integrity of India or the splitting of it into two federations.

In addition to these internal guarantees it seems desirable to provide for an external guarantee in the shape of possible review of the working of minority safeguards by an international organization. The talk regarding "hostage" populations that has been indulged in by responsible politicians in India, foreshadows the possibility of constant friction, on this account, between the two federations. If the Muslims in the non-Muslim federation habitually looked to the Muslim federation as the protector of their rights, and Hindus and others in the Muslim federation similarly to the non-Muslim federation, a situation would be created in which the two federations would be bound to come into conflict continuously. The only way in which this could be avoided would be to vest, not a particular political state, but an international authority with the role of protector. The resemblance of this aspect of the Indian situation is very close to that created in Europe by the Treaty of Berlin. The following description of the origin of the League of Nations' system, makes clear the necessity of an international agency on this matter:

"In the first place it is clear that the system which was devised for guaranteeing the stipulations of the treaties and for making that guarantee

effective was planned with a view to avoiding one great difficulty which had been felt in connection with the parallel clauses of the Treaty of Berlin of 1878. The obligations relating to the treatment of minorities undertaken by certain States by the terms of that Treaty were undertaken by the individual States signatory of the Treaty. Accordingly, any question concerning the execution of those obligations was the concern of the individual States in question. The result was inevitably that any action taken by the States in question for the benefit of the minorities was likely, in fact, to be based or, at best, was certain to be generally believed to be based, not simply on their desire to see that the rights of the minority were properly safeguarded, but on considerations arising from their individual political interests. The authors of the Minorities Treaties found in the creation of the League the means of escaping from this difficulty, and the system which they devised was intended to ensure that, in the future, action taken in defence of the rights of minorities should, both in fact and in public opinion, be taken without reference to the special interests of any individual Powers. At the same time, they secured the not less essential result that the loyalty of the minorities to the State of which they form a part should not be exposed to the special temptations arising from a faculty of direct intervention given to a neighbouring State with which they might have special affinities of race or of sentiment."³¹

Note: A statistical examination of the size of Muslim and Hindu minorities in the possible non-Muslim and Muslim federations is difficult because it is not possible to determine with certainty the areas that might be contained by the two federations. Even the assumption that all areas in which Hindus constitute more than half of the total population will form part of the non-Muslim federation, and the areas in which Muslims are in a corresponding proportion will form part of the Muslim federation, leaves out the problem of areas in which neither Hindus nor Muslims are in a distinct majority. An attempt might, however, be made at indicating the possible range and the probable proportions. Confining attention to statistics relating to districts in British India (for details see Appendix) it is found that in all the districts in which Hindus form more than 50 per cent of the population the proportions of the two communities in the total population of the districts are: Hindus 81.3 per cent, Muslims 12.3 per cent. The corresponding figures for all the districts in which Muslims are in an absolute majority are: Muslims 71.7 per cent, Hindus 23.8 per cent. On the added assumption that all the districts in which neither Hindus nor Muslims are in an absolute majority will join the non-Muslim federation, the resulting proportions in the non-Muslim federation will be: Hindus 77.0 per cent, Muslims 13.2 per cent. On the other hand, if all these districts are taken to join the Muslim federation, the proportion of the two communities in that federation will be, Muslims 61.5 per cent, Hindus, 25.2 per cent. On the basis of these calculations it might be safe to assert that it is highly unlikely that the proportion of Muslims in the non-Muslim federation will be larger than one-

seventh, or that the proportion of Hindus in the Muslim federation will be larger than a quarter of the population of the respective federations.

XII

PROCEDURE OF SEPARATION

IN case the formation of two federations is found inevitable, problems relating to the methods by which, and the principles according to which, the areas of the two should be determined, will have to be faced. The principles according to which the matter will have to be resolved follow from the basis already adopted. The whole argument proceeds, so far, on certain assumptions which are treated as axiomatic. Firstly, that the political affiliation of a region should be determined according to the wishes of its inhabitants. This democratic principle might be taken as well-established. In ascertaining the opinion of the people of the region, democratic procedure further implies that all the inhabitants in an area have an equal vote in arriving at the common decision, and that the voice of the majority should prevail.

As to the first, except such persons as are obviously only temporary immigrants, all the permanent residents of a region, whatever the legal definition of the term, must be entitled to take a part in the decision. There can be no question of saying that persons belonging to a particular language, race, or religious group have any special claim to deciding the future of an area which is superior to that of others, who are equally, with members of this group, permanent inhabitants thereof. The admission of such a claim would mean the creation in that area of a politically privileged class and thus fly in the face of the fundamental democratic assumption.

We are, it might be noted, seeking the basis for the formation of a territorial state and must reject any notions inimical to this fundamental purpose. A "nation" has, for example, been defined by some as composed of members of a group with certain common attributes, whatever their permanent habitat. Such a definition of the term "nation" makes it obviously unsuitable as a basis for modern political organization. Sovereign states, as conditions exist today, must be organized in respect of territories with definite

boundaries, and a person cannot owe allegiance simultaneously to more than one independent sovereign state. Further, each person is ordinarily entitled to the rights of citizenship of the political state to which he belongs by birth, residence, etc. The acceptance of the concept of nationality, carried as a personal attribute of the members of a group and denied to its non-members, involves the upsetting of the entire basis of the organization of modern states. It involves the denial of the right of nationality to persons outside a group in a state in which the members of that group are in a majority and hold the dominant political power. This runs counter to the very first essential general right guaranteed to all minorities in the League of Nations System. The League of Nations guarantee relating to the "right of nationality" provides that, in the case of new states, persons habitually resident in the territory of the state or having rights of citizenship in it at the time of its creation, will acquire the nationality of the new state, and that all persons born in the territory of the state and not born nationals of another state shall *ipso facto* become nationals of such a state. Without the enforcement of such a provision, large numbers of persons in some states will never acquire any nationality.

On the other hand, nationality considered as the permanent indivisible personal attribute of members of a community or religious group will mean that members of such a group who permanently reside in areas where their group is not in a majority, will never acquire rights of nationality of the state of which they are permanent residents. They must, consequently, be always treated as aliens, and such provisions as those for the protection of minority rights can never become operative in their favour. No special protective rights can be created in favour of persons who do not profess to be nationals of the state in which they reside. In view of these considerations it is impossible to accept and give effect to the above definition of nationality for the purposes of practical political organization in the modern world. The right of nationality for this purpose must be defined as in the League of Nations System, and all persons having that right must also have equal political status without distinction of race, creed, etc.

In democratic procedure, with the principle of universality and equality of voting rights, is equally implicit the principle of the rule of the majority. The only basis for the reaching of decisions in the democratic process is that the voice of the majority shall prevail. Except in a limited number of special circumstances, it is the simple

arithmetical majority that counts. A special majority is provided only where, in the absence of such a majority, there is a presumption in favour of the *status quo*. For example, changes in important provisions of a constitution previously agreed upon and set up might require a special majority. However, in this matter of determining, in the first instance, the political affiliation of a region, the ordinary majority must be allowed to decide; for the existing affiliation, it must be agreed, has not been voluntarily accepted, and there is, therefore, no presumption in favour of it. Also the claim to create a new state involves the dissolution of the old. There would be thus no organization left in whose favour the presumption could operate. Asking for a special majority might thus leave the question regarding the affiliation of a region or its part undecided either one way or another, and this would obviously be most undesirable.

It has been the explicit basis of all the argument so far that the formation of a political state must essentially depend on the will of the people and that no consideration of geography, of economics, or of strategy could be allowed to alter such a decision. For economic and strategic purposes, independent contiguous units could, if they agree, devise measures or action in common. The boundaries of political states could not, however, be made dependent on such factors. A powerful state might impose an alteration of boundaries on a neighbour, weak in strength, for its own strategic ends. But the limitation of frontiers to suit strategy comes about, in this case, not by voluntary agreement, but by the forcible imposition of the will of one people over another. Where strategic frontiers coincide with divisions among groups of people themselves, they might become readily acceptable. Where, however, this does not happen, the attempts to adjust frontiers on strategic considerations must lead to perpetual discord.

On these premises the problem of the determination of the frontiers of the Muslim and non-Muslim federations presents no complexities. Once the principle is established that no economic or geographical or strategic considerations can be allowed to influence decision regarding the "integrity" of the present Indian Empire, and that the votes of all the people shall alone determine the issue, the application of the principle will remain inexorable throughout. It then plainly becomes, for each region, the decision of the majority that determines affiliation, and when it comes to the demarcation of the frontiers of new sovereign states, the integrity of no old unit can be presumed. If, for the integrity of India, no

arguments can prevail, there is nothing to be said for presuming the integrity of a province or a division or a revenue circle. The demarcation must reach down to the smallest regional unit, i.e., the village.

The problem of the determination of areas and frontiers was faced at the provincial level in the creation of the new provinces of Sind and Orissa. With Sind no difficulty was experienced because the region already existed as a separate division in a province. In the formation of the province of Orissa, however, a government committee had to work out the boundaries in detail and as, in a number of instances, the conflict of claims was acute, none of the older boundaries of even talukas were respected. In forming Orissa, the basic consideration was only what areas were dominantly inhabited by Oriyas, and there was no attempt to take into account the wishes of the people. This additional factor would play its part in the determination of the frontiers between the two federations. Plebiscite may, therefore, have to take the place of government enquiry, in this case, in the disputed areas. The definition of the boundary by this method will, of course, have to be as detailed as in the division of the Ganjam District between Madras and Orissa.³² There will be, however, an added consideration. In the determination of boundaries of federating units, slight adjustments might be thought possible because the loyalties disturbed are intermediate and not ultimate. When it is a question of the boundaries between the two federations, the delimitation concerns two sovereign states. What is under consideration is which area legitimately belongs to one state or the other, and no sovereign state is likely to adjust its frontiers and give up its rightful claims merely to oblige another. Not only so, but even the majority in a state has no moral right to dispose of the allegiance of any part, however small, of its people. If the right is one of self-determination, it pertains to the smallest unit in a region, and if the people of a locality declare their loyalties in a given manner their decision cannot be changed even by a majority of their own people; for that would be forcing on them an allegiance which they do not avow and which, by the principles agreed upon in constituting the two federations, they are entitled to resist.

There can arise, therefore, in this regard no question of the adjustment of frontiers. The only question is the determination of their exact location. No doubt, an elaborate machinery must be

³² Government of India (Constitution of Orissa) Order, 1936, First Schedule, Part II A.

brought into existence to determine the manner in which the detailed count of votes in disputed cases shall be taken and an independent, perhaps an international, tribunal entrusted with the work. Once, however, the principle is accepted and the details of the method fixed, it is a question of awaiting the results of plebiscites rather than of negotiating a frontier settlement. In this matter we must be careful to bear in mind the strength of the force of irredentism and to see that no hasty decisions are taken which leave grounds for complaints that blocks rightfully belonging to one state have been incorporated into another; for such a situation would create elements of discord between two states from the time of their coming into existence.

It is likely that the attempt to form federations with the grant of free choice to the federating units might result in federations having territories with non-contiguous frontiers. In the north-west the Muslim federation would have a solid block of territory whose easterly frontier will depend on the decision largely of Sikhs and Hindus in Eastern Punjab, and whose northerly frontier will be determined by the decision of Kashmir. In the east the Muslim federation would have a solid block of contiguous territory in case the Bengal Muslims decide upon joining the Muslim federation. This block will, of course, have no direct connection by land with the main territory in the north-west. Assam is, in the main, non-Muslim, and if it elects not to join the Muslim federation it will be separated, for the most part, from the non-Muslim federation by the interposition of the Bengal Muslim block. Assam, however, might not be entirely without land connection with the rest of the non-Muslim federation, as it is likely that the most northerly districts of Bengal having a definite Hindu majority will elect to keep in the non-Muslim federation. These districts will then form the land bridge between Assam and the rest of the non-Muslim federation. In the south, apart from the possibilities of a solid block of Dravidiastan, which, however, seem distinctly remote, the only problem presented is that by the Nizam's Dominions. As long as accession or non-accession to a federation depends on the decision of the ruler of an Indian State, the possibility is always present of this unit electing to join the Muslim federation. It is, however, more likely that it will try and attain the status of a sovereign state by itself. Whatever is done by this state, the continuity of the non-Muslim federation will not be broken. The non-Muslim federation is not, therefore, likely to be presented with the problem of non-contiguous constituent units. In case of the Muslim federation, the

main problem that is likely to arise is the cutting off of the Bengal block from the rest of the territory in that federation. Obviously there is no means by which the difficulty of non-contiguity could in this case be got over. It would be for the Bengal Muslims to decide whether they should form parts of a Muslim federation whose interests will lie chiefly in the north-west, rather than that of a bigger non-Muslim federation which is contiguous to itself and is much larger.

It is obvious that in case the separation comes about by mutual agreement, it would be possible for the two federations to enter immediately into a number of understandings with regard to such matters as communications by land, sea or air, and even perhaps with regard to a Customs Union. It has been suggested that some exchange of populations might take place as between the main Hindu and Muslim blocks. The experience of large forced migrations of this character has not been very happy so far, and even the exchange brought about between the Greeks and the Turks is reported to have been only partially successful. Except, perhaps, in the immediate vicinity of the border, any large interchange seems unlikely. Further, if, as has been pointed out, it is correct to say that the main grievance of the Muslims is not so much the lack of guarantees as a minority but the fact of minority status itself, the formation of a separate Muslim federation should go far to remove that sense of frustration. The Muslim minority in the non-Muslim federation would also be reduced to a comparatively small proportion, and it is likely to accept, in the event, the principle of majority rule with greater readiness. Given proper guarantees of fair treatment and proper execution thereof, the ease with which a state is able to deal with any continuously recalcitrant minorities would depend entirely on its strength and internal cohesion. The separation of the Muslim federation should make for both these to a much larger extent than with the present state of tempers in India as a whole.

XIII

THE NEXT STEP

THE whole of this discussion rests on the acceptance of certain principles which are usually called democratic. It rests on the assumption that in the formal exercise of political power all the adult inhabitants in a region are placed on a footing of equality, and that

the fundamental decisions in all respects are such as will obtain the assent of a majority of inhabitants in a region. At various times it has been alleged that the democratic principle is unworkable in India and that some modification thereof is necessary. Of no society in existence in the world today could it be said that representative democracy works with ease and certainty within it. In India, of course, the difficulties are even greater than elsewhere. Poverty and ignorance, which are obstructive to the proper operation of the democratic principle everywhere, are perhaps more widespread in this than in any other important country. The same might be said of lack of continuous traditions of self-government. In addition we have special features, the chief among which are the caste structure of Hindu Society and the place of the Depressed Classes in it. The wide variations in the quality of the Indian population in every kind of development must also act as a considerable handicap. Granted all this, it is yet difficult to find an alternative to the democratic way. Democracy might not work smoothly, but in its general introduction lies at least the possibility of well directed social and political development in the future. Those who oppose it will, on examination, be found to do this mostly on obscurantist or interested grounds. The plea of the special importance of a group or a people is usually the plea for the creation or retention of political or economic privilege. All concrete suggestions for a departure from the strict application of democratic principles will be found, on examination, to be no more than devices to distort the location of political power away from that determined by the ordinary democratic pattern. It is perhaps not necessary to labour the point further, for it is not too much to expect that at the end of a war in which Indians have fought side by side with others, supposedly in the interests of the surer establishment of democratic principles, the fundamental position will not be allowed to be denied.

We do not, of course, refer to any special constitutional arrangements. The type of political machinery is for each people to decide. What is emphasized is that all main decisions regarding allegiance and the mode of governance must, in the ultimate analysis, be tested by reference to the will of the people in a region, and that no peaceful way of properly ascertaining this other than that of counting of votes has yet been generally established as safe.

The views put forward so far have been actuated not by any desire to be satisfied with the attainment of a political unit covering less than the present extent of India, but by the conviction that

the method indicated above is the only one by which that goal might be ultimately attained. Beginning with the formation of the primary federating units, and theoretically visualising all of them as endowed with the power of choosing to join or not to join the federation, might seem to be the prelude to the creation of highly anarchic conditions. In effect, it is an all necessary preliminary before the process of real integration can begin.³³ Political history, since the introduction of the Montford Reforms, shows clearly that the various units in India are held together not by any internal bond but merely by externally imposed force. In case it is felt necessary to do without this external force, the measure of unity and integrity attained can only be such as internal conditions warrant.

The emphasis on the maintenance of integrity of the present unit, in face of existing conditions, must lead to alternatives which all seem equally undesirable. They may, in the first instance, lead to a continuance of British rule because of the want of agreement. The British have constantly emphasized the fact that unless they are satisfied in respect of their two responsibilities, the minorities and the Indian States, they would not be prepared to withdraw from the country. An insistence on the part of any section on the formation of a single federation, while another section insists equally on not joining in the effort, seems to provide completely for the perpetuation of the British power in India. Obviously it is not part of political wisdom to reach such a position. In the alternative an outsider might be asked or might find himself in a position to give an award. It must be realized that the possibility of international arbitration in this case is highly remote. This, for two reasons. For one, the British are likely to insist that the dispute in India is internal to the British Empire, and hence should not call for the intervention of outside powers; and they are likely to succeed in their insistence. Secondly, the dispute is of a character in which international arbitration is not likely to be attempted with much chance of success. Arbitration is likely to be successful in matters which are capable of being decided on the analogy of disputes at law. This matter is, however, very different. It does not take the shape of a dispute between two independent parties which can be settled by reference to principles or practice accepted by the two parties or established elsewhere. After the two parties had agreed to separate, the settlement of the boundaries be-

³³ It might, parenthetically, be pointed out that after acquiescing in the right, to accede to the federation or not to accede to it, at will, of six hundred odd states of various sizes, to deny it vehemently to groups with the strength and characteristics of independent nations is very much like straining at a gnat.

tween the two could be referred to an impartial international tribunal, but international intervention could not go beyond the offer of good offices as intermediaries in bringing about an agreement between two regions regarding the formation of a state. Arbitration can lead to a fair settlement at the dissolution of a partnership; it cannot settle the terms on which a party that does not want to enter a partnership should be forced to join it.

Therefore, if a position of deadlock is reached, it is likely that this might result in the British giving an award. An award by the British is not likely to be an impartial award. The British cannot be considered in this context as disinterested parties. The interpretation of their interest by the British might, of course, differ somewhat according to the complexion of the then dominant party in British politics. But the possibility cannot be ruled out that the British interest in the award might be interpreted as interest in guaranteeing that India remained under the British sphere of influence for as long a period as possible. Such an interpretation would lead to an attempt to balance internal forces and, therefore, to artificially depressing the position of the numerical majority. The British bias must be presumed against a strong India and thus in favour of Muslim demands in a united India. That this is not fanciful theorising may be proved by reference to the detailed analysis given above of Mr. MacDonald's Communal Award. The proposals put forward by Prof. Coupland must also be taken to have greater significance than mere academic discussion. The alarming nature of these proposals has been indicated by us in some detail because it was felt that they had this significance. Therefore, the prospect of an award by the British is one which could not be faced by the non-Muslim regions and interests with equanimity.

As a further alternative, a solution of the problem might be obtained by making extravagant concessions to the Muslims. It has been urged above that extravagant concessions, apart from being intrinsically unfair to future generations, can never afford the basis of a stable solution. They must and will make impossible a stable state because their withdrawal will be continually desired by one party. In this connection it is necessary to remark that the talk of a blank cheque often indulged in by some politicians can only be a sign of political bankruptcy or disingenuity. In the flourish of political speech-making such statements may pass muster, but as the basis of sober negotiations they are utterly worthless. To say that Hindus would be glad to share on just and equitable terms

political rule with the Muslims is a proposition that is fair and honourable to both sides; but to say that Hindus would readily submit to Muslim rule is humiliating to one and insulting to the other. In the same manner there can be no talk of transferring a part of any dominantly Hindu region to Muslim rule against its wishes. Transfers of territories by negotiations or by succession under dynastic rulers have been likened by morally indignant historians to treating humans as chattel. The fundamental nature of the transfer cannot change, because what happens takes place not between two dynastic rulers, but between leaders of political parties in a hurry to reach a settlement. If there is a fundamental incompatibility between two peoples, no concessions and no temporary agreements can really bring about a union.

It must further be remembered that any party which starts negotiations with saying that it must at all costs reach agreement, places itself in an impossible position, entirely at the mercy of the other party. The events leading to the framing of the 1935 Act have taught some lessons in this direction. The Princes were satisfied each with his own State. The British Indian Provinces seemed to be eager to win them over to join the federation. The result was a number of concessions which doomed to ineffectiveness the federal government even before it was formed. The negotiations with Muslims since the repudiation by them of the Lucknow Pact point to the same moral. The Hindus, following the will-o'-the-wisp of joint electorates, made concession after concession which entrenched the position of Muslims leading to the Award of the Prime Minister. It seems likely that men of good-will among the Hindus might now follow the phantom of Indian integrity and agree to a basis which would prove fundamentally unsound for any political organization.

The non-Muslims as a body have accepted the established pattern of political evolution. Any demands from their side, such as the reformation of federating units, do not involve a departure from, or a break with, the general lines of probable development of a federation for India. The demands of Muslims create a situation where the only alternatives seem to be (i) concessions which will permanently render impossible the building of a healthy democratic state, or (ii) the formation of two federations in India. The obvious course for the non-Muslims is to state what appear to them to be the fair and just conditions on which all elements could live amicably in an Indian federation, and if these conditions are unacceptable to Muslims, then regretfully agree to separate. Of course, there will have to be an agreement even in respect of the

principles and procedure to be followed in bringing about the separation. Unless any extraordinary claims are put forward, agreement regarding the latter should not be difficult, and a joint scheme for the two federations could be placed before the British.

The position of the Indian States needs to be simultaneously clarified. It has been indicated earlier that the acceptance of the status given to the Indian States in the 1935 Act is inimical to Indian progress. This is a view with which the Muslim League would presumably agree. A federation in which the participating units are divided into distinct classes must lead, in working, to a large number of difficulties. The administration of economic controls during the war has not been smooth because of the claims of the Indian States. The Indian federal government would have neither the power nor the strength, possessed together by the present Government of India and the Viceroy, as the representative of the paramount power. In a loose federation the centre would find it much more difficult, than under the present Government, to deal with the Indian States. It is, therefore, necessary to define the fair terms on which it would be worthwhile for the British Indian federating units to seek to federate with the Indian States also, and in the absence of agreement it would be necessary to contemplate a federation in which the Indian States do not enter.

The possibility of non-agreement with the Indian States regarding these terms and also the possibility of non-agreement with Muslims regarding the principles and procedure of separation must both be contemplated. It is necessary that a position of deadlock is not allowed to be reached, and that some course of suitable positive action is evolved even in this event. The only realistic step to be taken at such a time is to try and form as large a nuclear federation as possible on an agreed basis, which, while guaranteeing considerable autonomy to constituent units and the protection of minority and other interests, yet leads to the formation of a federal government strong enough to discharge the obligations of a modern state. In the formation of such a nuclear federation the Indian States will, in the first instance, have to be ignored. Among the new federating units, Hindu Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, the Hindi and Hindustani block of the Gangetic basin, Hindu Punjab, Gujarat, and Maharashtra may be counted on as original units. In spite of the talk of Dravidistan, Karnatak, Andhra, Tamilnad, and Kerala should be persuaded without much difficulty to adhere. Assam also would most probably come in. Such a combination, with or without any Indian States willing to join it, could certainly

demand from the British the fulfilment of their promise to withdraw. It would be an easy thing for these groups of Indian peoples to offer guarantees for the proper treatment of minorities; for in the past, the people of most of these territories have shown themselves tolerant and even hospitable to peoples of other faiths. The minorities' guarantees and the guarantees to the Depressed Classes could be even placed under the surveillance of any competent international authority. No attempt need be made to specially induce any Indian State embraced within this territory to join the federation by concessions which would weaken the federal authority. At the same time, readiness should be shown to make such adjustments as might be necessary to suit the special conditions of Indian States in order to enable them to join either the federation or, even better, the primary federating unit to which they properly belong. Once such a nuclear federation is formed, it might only be a question of time for it to gain the adhesion of other units and to grow in area and strength. Once such a federation is formed, it will also be in a better position to negotiate with Indian Muslim regions and to offer them terms and guarantees for bringing about a union which they would think both fair and effective. Also it would be only a federation that grew in this natural manner that would have the capacity of expanding still further, and gaining the adhesion, in time, of Ceylon and of Burma and lands beyond Burma and playing its proper part in the affairs of South-Eastern Asia. It has been often said that the modern epoch is one essentially of the federating idea. Federalization is a process of continuous growth and adaptation. It does not remain content and could not remain content with any particular geographical limits, however well defined, but tends to flow over the boundary. To be capable of this, it is, however, necessary that the formation of the original nucleus and the process of later accession shall be both natural and voluntary and not doctrinaire or externally imposed. Even among old historical sovereign states there are now talks of federating. Therefore, any agreement to separate now must not be taken as meaning a necessary separation for ever. An agreed separation today envisages the possibility of an agreed union tomorrow. A forced unity today makes inevitable disruption under conditions of stress in the future.

It might be urged that the British would never agree to the process indicated above. It is difficult to see why, if they are honest and sincere, they should obstruct it. When the British promise withdrawal from India on the attainment of agreement with proper

safeguards for minorities, they cannot also impose as a necessary condition of fulfilment the obtaining of these conditions for the whole of India simultaneously. If they did so, they would patently lay themselves open to the charge of insincerity; because it could be proved that they knew this condition to be impossible of fulfilment. They must fulfil their offer towards any substantial group within the present Indian Empire which shows its willingness and ability to form a modern state of adequate strength, and which gives all the guarantees that the British desire. Indeed, a counter offer in these terms from the Indian people would be the best test of British sincerity, and would also be the necessary first step in political organization of non-Muslim India whether the British are sincere or not. The immediate step that seems necessary, therefore, is, in the event of failure to reach an honourable agreement with Muslim leaders, for all the leaders of the remaining parts to come together and evolve a workable plan for an Indian federation to be presented to the British in particular and to the world at large.

It must be admitted that such an approach might lead to an insistence on the part of the British to retaining certain strategic claims justified on the ground of maintaining relations with the Indian States or the Muslim regions. Concessions, as in the Egyptian Treaty or the initial Irish Treaty, might obviously have to be made. It is, however, worth while making these so as to have an opportunity of building up a political structure with a secure basis on principles which do not perpetually hamper future growth. Such concessions, no doubt, render a revision of absolute demands of independence necessary. But this is inevitable if the politics of the dead-lock are not to be perpetuated.

The politics of the dead-lock usually result from the dominant political influence of two types,—one of doctrinaires and the other of sections which do not stand to gain from the direct acquisition or exercise of political power. The large majority of the modern Hindu peoples have never wielded political power. It is no wonder, therefore, that they should produce doctrinaire political leaders. Doctrinaires, however, could not succeed in maintaining dead-locks unless this result was also desired by important sections dominating the political scene. In India it happens that financial interests, which have come to be so important, especially during the last twenty-five years, find themselves in this position. British rule, with its indifference to disintegration of regional societies, has been favourable to the spread everywhere of aggressive non-indigenous

moneylenders and other financial interests. These interests have now attained a position undreamt of under indigenous Hindu or Muslim rule. They have been indifferent to the exercise of political power themselves as long as the growth of their financial interests was unchecked. The politics of the deadlock have retarded the growth of the interests of the intelligentsia and professional classes, of the peasants and of the labourers; for, all these depend on state patronage or active state intervention. The interests of the financial exploiter are, however, bound up with the maintenance of a *laissez faire* regime. The speculator and the trader does not desire more from the state than that it shall not look too closely into his dealings. Even the industrial capitalist desires help chiefly of the passive sort. The politics of the dead-lock have indeed ideally served the interests of the capitalist and industrialist financiers. The ferment in the country has just been sufficient to force government into the adoption of such policies as that of tariff protection, but government has neither been interested in nor strong enough to follow up state help by a policy of state regulation and control. The situation has been made most clear by events during the war period. The politics of the dead-lock are no bar to financial activity, and the fruits of these activities could be used to perpetuate the dead-lock to weaken the power of government to control. A run-away inflation, the virtual absence of all regulation until the situation led almost to disaster, and the inability of government even subsequently to really control speculation and black markets, have created a situation that cannot, for financial interests, fall far short of the ideal. Possession of political power and the shouldering of political responsibility by parties connected with them will disturb this happy position immediately, and must embarrass these interests. There is, however, the possibility that the industrialists and the financiers might now desire the transfer of political power to parties connected with them so that they might consolidate and expand the position gained during recent decades. Therefore, they might not be as keenly interested today in maintaining the dead-lock as formerly. On the other hand, the politics of the deadlock have recently gained support from unexpected quarters because of the mysticism that has gathered round the concept of Indian integrity. The prospect is consequently somewhat uncertain. It is only if the intellectuals and the masses realize their joint interest in the planning of progressive development, demanding a re-orientation of political aims and methods, that we could look forward to being lifted out of the present morass.

APPENDIX

Note on Statistics and Map. The Appendix contains detailed information relating to the composition of the population by community and mother tongue of each district in British India and of all States and of each district in some important States as recorded at the Census of 1931 and the Census of 1941. The published returns of the 1941 Census do not contain statistics regarding mother tongue of the total population. For this and for general comparative purposes the 1931 Census data would be found useful. From the 1931 data relating to communities, only the Muslim percentage in the total population has been given, as the enlarged definition of Tribes in 1941 reduced the 1941 Hindu percentage considerably below the 1931 percentage and made the two sets of figures non-comparable.

The map is based on the district statistics. The statistics of the 1941 Census have been used for showing distribution of communities in the country. The map denotes (i) areas in which Hindus form more than 50 per cent of the population, (ii) areas in which Muslims form more than 50 per cent of the population, and (iii) areas in which neither Hindus nor Muslims form more than 50 per cent of the population. It also indicates the areas in which Sikhs or Tribals are present in significant proportions. For lack of full later information the 1931 statistics had to be used for indicating the language division. In drawing the boundaries of linguistic divisions, areas have been classified according to the mother tongue of the most numerous population within the area. Areas in which the percentage of those having as mother tongue the language of the linguistic division in which they have been included was less than 50, have been specially indicated. The statistics for some groups of small scattered Indian States were available for the group as a whole and not for each State separately. The classification in the map of such States has been based on data relating to contiguous States or districts for which full information was available.

In the table, P = Province, S = State, and C. P. = Commissioner's Province.

1931 CENSUS

1941 CENSUS

District or State	Area in sq. miles	1941 CENSUS		1931 CENSUS				Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue			Remarks						
		Population in Thousands	Percentage of population of	All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	Muslims	Tribes	Population in Thousands	Per cent of Muslims in total population	Assamese		Bengali	Tibeto-Burmes				
ASSAM (P)																	
Cachar	3862	641		53.2	8.1	36.3	27.3	571	36.4	—	—	—					
Plain	1974	604		36.5	8.6	38.1	24.3	538	33	—	—	—	81.9	—	—		
North	1888	37		14.2		1.2	84.4	33	1.4	—	—	—	62.8	—	—		
Sylhet	5478	3117		36.9	11.7	60.7	2.2	2724	38.9	—	—	—	92.1	—	—		
Khasi and Jaintia Hills	4389	190		2.2	—	0.3	87.3	110	0.8	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Naga Hills	8142	153		1.6	—	0.3	96.2	179	0.4	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Lushai Hills	3969	1014		30.2	2.3	46.2	23.5	883	43.9	18.3	54.0	—	—	—	—		
Goalpara	3840	1264		33.1	4.7	29.1	13.7	977	24.6	66.5	17.5	—	—	—	—		
Kamrup	2804	757		47.2	2.6	11.5	33.4	585	16.4	33.0	16.3	—	—	—	—		
Darrang	3898	711		40.8	8.3	33.2	23.4	563	31.6	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Nowong	5128	1075		59.9	4.7	4.8	33.6	933	4.7	54.0	—	—	—	—	—		
Sibsagar	4158	895		56.0	4.9	5.0	37.5	724	3.6	31.3	—	—	—	—	—		
Lakhimpur	3152	724		6.4	0.4	1.4	88.8	191	3.3	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Garo Hills	3379	60		30.8	6.7	0.9	66.5	35	1.4	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Sadiya Frontier Tract	3379	7		99.7	—	—	58.5	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Balipara Frontier Tract	371	7		99.7	—	—	58.5	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
ASSAM STATES																	
		726		45.2	—	4.4	46.7	626	3.9	—	—	—	—	—	—	71.6	24.6 Manipuri, 33.4 Nalpai, 63.8 Tibeto-Himalayan.
SIKHIM (S)		745		37.8	0.1	—	52.0	110	0.1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
COOCH-BEHAR (S)		641		61.5	32.1	37.9	0.5	591	33.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
TRIPURA (S)		4049		67.8	2.3	24.0	6.6	382	27.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	38.8 Tippera.
BENGAL (P)																	
Burdwan	2705	1891		75.6	22.7	17.8	8.0	1576	18.6	87.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Birbhum	1743	1048		65.7	26.8	27.4	7.1	948	26.7	89.9	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Bankura	2646	1290		83.5	27.5	2.3	12.0	1112	4.6	89.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Midnapur	3274	3191		94.2	10.6	7.7	8.0	2799	7.6	88.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Hooahly -	1206	1378		79.8	17.9	15.1	5.1	1114	16.2	86.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Howrah	561	1490		79.6	12.4	19.9	0.3	1099	21.3	85.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	
24-Parganas	3696	3536		63.3	21.0	32.4	1.4	2747	33.7	88.4	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Calcutta	54	2109		72.7	2.6	23.5	0.9	1164	26.0	54.2	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Nadia	2875	1760		37.4	8.2	61.2	0.7	1580	61.8	98.9	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Vedra	2063	1641		41.7	10.2	56.5	1.6	1371	35.6	92.6	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Murshidabad	2923	1828		50.5	17.3	60.3	0.3	1671	62.0	99.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Khulna	4805	1943		50.3	24.3	49.3	0.1	1628	46.5	99.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	

Bengali

36.4 Hindustani.

APPENDIX

1931 CENSUS

1941 CENSUS

District or State	Area in sq. miles	Percentage in total population of				Tribes	Population in Thousands	Per cent of Muslims in total population	Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue	Remarks
		All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	Muslims	Other					
		Population in Thousands	Population in Thousands	Population in Thousands	Population in Thousands					
Rajshahi	2326	1572	4.8	74.6	4.3	1987	75.8	99.9		
Dinaipur	3953	1927	20.7	50.2	9.5	1762	50.5	87.2		
Jalpaiguri	3050	1080	29.9	23.0	25.6	984	24.0	65.0	29 Naipali; 42 Tibeto-Himalayan.	
Darjeeling	1192	376	7.7	2.4	57.5	320	2.6	11.7		
Bogura	3606	2878	17.2	78.4	0.6	2594	70.8	97.2		
Rangpur	1475	1260	4.8	83.9	1.1	1172	76.9	96.8		
Pabna	1836	1705	6.7	77.1	0.4	1446	75.4	98.4		
Maida	2004	1233	37.8	6.2	56.7	1056	54.3	73.4	19.1 Hindustani.	
Dacca	2738	4222	9.7	67.3	0.1	3447	66.8	98.9		
Mymensingh	6156	6024	21.5	5.7	77.4	5180	76.6	98.3		
Faridpur	2821	2080	18.3	64.8	1.0	2999	63.8	95.5		
Bakarganj	3783	3549	12.1	72.9	—	2939	71.6	97.4		
Tippera	2531	3060	5.9	77.1	—	3056	75.8	99.8		
Noakhali	1658	2217	3.7	81.4	—	1707	78.5	107.0		
Chittagong	2569	2153	2.7	74.6	0.3	1797	73.8	98.2		
Chittagong Hills Tract	5007	247	—	2.8	94.3	213	3.9	48.1	51 Assam-Burmese.	
Hindu-										
tani										
BIHAR (P)										
Fatna	2164	2162	15.4	10.9	0.6	1846	11.0	99.4		
Gaya	4766	2775	16.0	10.6	9.3	2948	10.6	99.9		
Shahabad	4408	3329	15.0	7.6	1.3	1993	7.6	99.9		
Saran	2669	2861	10.8	42.7	0.6	2487	12.4	99.9		
Champanan	3553	2386	15.2	16.9	0.8	2146	15.5	99.6		
Muzaffarpur	3025	3245	13.1	13.1	—	2941	13.0	99.9		
Darbhanga	3947	3457	15.1	14.1	—	3166	13.0	99.9		
Monghyr	3975	2565	16.1	10.3	2.1	2287	10.0	98.7		
Bhagalpur	4248	2409	14.1	18.6	4.4	2286	11.2	98.7		
Purnea	4998	2390	9.1	46.8	4.4	2186	40.5	90.6	37.1 Santal.	
Santal Parganas	5490	2294	5.7	17.8	50.6	2040	10.9	46.0	24.0 Mundari and Oraon each	
Hazaribagh	7016	1751	6.4	12.0	27.3	1867	11.5	30.3	67.5 Bengali.	
Ranchi	7159	1675	1.2	4.6	70.0	1367	4.2	43.3	15.9 Bengali; 32.8 Ho; 18.5 Oriya	
Palamau	4901	913	1.4	2.3	33.4	1811	6.2	17.8		
Manbhum	4131	2032	6.4	2.3	33.4	1811	6.2	17.8		
Singbhum	3805	1145	1.8	3.8	58.4	928	2.9	—		

FEDERATING INDIA

1931 CENSUS

1941 CENSUS

District or State	Area in sq. miles	Percentage in total population of					Population in thousands	Per cent of total population	Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue	Remarks
		All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	Muslims	Tribes	Hindus				

UNITED PROVINCES (P)

Dehra Dun	1202	266	80.2	10.9	15.6	---	14.7	95.7	---
Saharanpur	2134	1180	64.0	23.9	33.6	---	33.9	99.3	---
Muzaffarnagar	1682	1057	68.8	18.8	29.1	---	28.7	99.9	---
Meerut	2323	1897	73.4	18.8	23.4	---	23.3	100.0	---
Bulandshahr	1889	1317	78.4	19.7	18.5	---	18.9	100.0	---
Aligarh	1940	1373	83.9	20.9	13.6	---	13.2	99.9	---
Muzaffar	1447	807	89.4	19.6	9.8	---	8.7	99.2	---
Agra	1861	1290	82.6	20.3	13.3	---	13.1	99.0	---
Mainpuri	1679	873	93.8	17.8	5.1	---	5.4	100.0	---
Etah	1719	985	86.3	16.1	11.1	---	11.0	99.9	---
Bareilly	1591	1176	69.9	12.9	28.4	---	27.4	99.8	---
Bijnor	1869	910	61.8	17.1	36.2	---	37.6	100.0	---
Budaun	1994	1162	79.4	15.5	18.1	---	17.8	99.9	---
Moradabad	2288	1473	56.6	13.6	38.3	---	37.3	99.9	---
Shahjahanpur	1770	983	81.9	16.3	17.7	---	16.1	99.9	---
Pilibhit	1333	491	78.4	13.0	21.1	---	19.3	97.8	---
Farrukhabad	1642	985	86.7	16.1	12.8	---	12.4	99.9	---
Etawah	1669	883	93.2	25.2	6.0	---	7.46	99.3	---
Cawnpore	2372	1356	86.3	22.1	12.9	---	11.0	99.3	---
Fatehpur	1621	807	87.7	21.7	12.2	---	12.0	100.0	---
Allahabad	2798	1813	84.2	24.4	14.3	---	13.7	99.2	---
Benaul	3606	773	91.0	23.4	3.3	---	3.7	99.0	---
Jalaun	1391	482	92.2	28.6	1.2	---	6.8	99.9	---
Hamirpur	2443	576	92.1	26.9	6.3	---	6.5	100.0	---
Banda	2913	723	94.1	23.5	5.8	---	5.8	100.0	---
Benares	1094	1219	86.4	15.5	11.2	---	10.8	98.5	---
Mirzapur	4322	900	89.0	28.4	5.7	---	5.9	100.0	---
Jaunpur	1531	1387	91.0	20.7	8.8	---	8.9	100.0	---
Ghazipur	1306	985	88.6	17.6	9.1	---	9.5	99.9	---
Ballia	1034	1094	88.3	10.7	6.6	---	6.4	100.0	---
Gorakhpur	4324	3964	86.6	18.6	10.9	---	10.5	99.8	---
Basti	2186	2823	82.3	21.4	17.7	---	17.4	100.0	---
Azamgarh	2217	1828	87.7	24.2	12.1	---	12.1	100.0	---
Noida	2627	292	82.8	21.3	15.1	---	18.7	98.3	---

1931 CENSUS

1941 CENSUS

District or State	Area in sq. miles	1941 CENSUS		1931 CENSUS		Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue	Remarks
		Population in Thousands	Percentage in total population of	Population in Thousands	Percentage in total population		
		All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	All Hindus	Percentage in total population	Hindus in total	
Almora	5302	687	20.4	99.2	583	0.5	99.2
Garhwal	3628	602	16.1	96.9	534	0.9	99.3
Lucknow	9716	950	23.2	75.3	787	21.5	98.4
Unao	1762	960	29.7	90.5	856	100.0	100.0
Rae. Bareilly	1765	1065	30.1	90.2	974	9.3	100.0
Sitapur	2207	1294	31.9	83.5	1167	15.2	99.9
Hardoi	2330	1239	31.9	88.1	1128	11.2	100.0
Kheri	2372	1024	30.1	83.6	944	15.5	99.5
Fyzabad	1710	1319	30.6	80.9	1205	11.2	99.8
Gonda	2827	1720	18.2	86.9	1576	17.9	100.0
Bahraich	2634	1241	18.8	77.1	1136	21.7	99.8
Sultanpur	1699	1100	24.7	87.4	1051	11.8	100.0
Pratapgarh	1457	1041	23.1	87.5	906	11.3	100.0
Bareilly	1722	1163	29.3	81.6	1064	17.6	100.0
U. P. STATES	1760	929	16.5	69.8	837	20.9	99.8
DELHI (C. P.)	574	918	—	61.8	636	32.5	92.3
PUNJAB (P)*							
Hissar	5218	1007	12.7	64.8	899	28.2	94.0
Rohatak	2546	936	14.1	81.7	806	17.1	99.9
Gurgaon	2234	831	17.2	66.8	740	32.7	76.3
Karnal	3176	995	13.8	67.0	853	30.5	96.0
Ambala	1851	848	14.6	49.7	743	31.1	63.3
Simla	80	39	2.7	74.3	37	15.8	—
Kangra	9979	899	18.0	74.3	801	5.1	—
Meerharpur	2195	1170	14.6	40.8	1032	31.8	99.8
Jullunder	1324	1127	13.7	27.6	944	44.5	99.5
Ludhiana	1399	819	8.3	21.4	672	35.0	96.3
Ferozpora	4083	1423	5.0	20.2	1157	44.6	90.2
Lahore	2595	1695	2.0	16.8	1379	59.2	86.7
Amritsar	1572	1414	1.6	15.4	1117	47.0	97.9

* Ad-Dharmis are included in All Hindus and Scheduled Castes in 1941.

District or State	Area in Sq. Miles	1941 CENSUS				1931 CENSUS				Remarks	
		Population in Thousands	All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	Muslims	Tribes	Percentage in total population of	Population in Thousands	Per cent of Muslims in total population		Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue
Jammu	12,578	1961	36.5	5.7	61.3	2.0	1788	61.0	—	—	23.3 Western Pabari; 30.6 Dogri.
NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCES (P)											
Hazara	3000	796	3.8	—	95.4	—	670	95.0	—	—	
Mardan	1088	507	2.2	—	95.4	—	—	—	—	—	
Peshawar	1947	852	6.0	—	90.3	—	974	92.2	80.2	—	
Kohat	2707	289	3.9	—	92.1	—	235	97.5	78.9	15.1	
Bannu	1695	296	10.5	—	87.2	—	270	87.9	84.5	—	
Dera Ismail Khan	4216	298	13.1	—	85.9	—	274	86.0	19.6	77.8	
BALUCHISTAN											
(C. P.)	54,456	502	9.0	1.0	87.3	—	464	87.5	52.3	—	26.4 Baluchi.
BALUCHISTAN STATES	79,546	356	2.8	—	97.2	—	405	97.0	29.4	—	42.1 Baluchi; 25.4 Brahui.
SIND (P)											
Dadu	7370	349	15.0	0.3	84.8	—	334	—	—	—	
Hyderabad	4476	759	32.4	5.4	67.0	—	663	69.5	75.0	—	
Karachi	8357	714	31.3	2.4	64.1	—	599	71.4	61.0	—	
Larkhans	2857	511	17.8	0.4	81.8	—	449	83.3	78.0	—	
Nawabshah	584	24.1	3.6	75.0	—	—	497	76.1	70.0	—	
Sukkur	5540	693	28.2	1.9	71.2	—	674	70.6	87.0	—	
Thar Parkar	15,649	581	42.4	16.2	50.2	5.8	468	52.6	40.0	—	
Upper Sind Frontier	1969	304	9.5	0.7	90.5	—	260	89.9	54.0	—	
KHAIRPUR (S)											
	5989	306	16.4	1.3	83.0	0.3	227	82.3	91.0	—	15.0 Hyderabad; 23.1 Rajasthani; 49.0 Marwari.
RAJPUTANA STATES											
	132,559	13,670	75.4	—	9.5	12.0	11,571	9.5	—	—	
AJMERE-MERWARA (C. P.)											
	2400	594	64.5	—	13.4	15.7	507	12.7	—	—	76.5 Rajasthani; 21.9 Western Hindi.
WESTERN INDIA STATES											
	37,994	4904	81.4	7.5	13.6	0.3	4721	14.8	87.1	—	
BARODA STATE	8176	2935	89.8	8.1	7.8	13.2	2448	7.5	93.8	—	
GUJARAT STATES	7352	1459	52.3	3.8	4.0	43.0	1265	3.9	78.0	—	

District or State	Area in Sq. Miles	1941 CENSUS					1931 CENSUS					Remarks		
		Population in Thousands	Percentage in total population of				Population in Thousands	Per cent of total population	Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue					
			All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	Muslims	Tribes			Gujarati	Marathi	Kanarese			
BOMBAY														
Bombay City	30	1490	68.5	8.1	15.9	0.2	1161	18.0	21.0	—	—	—	—	
Ahmedabad	3879	1372	81.7	11.0	13.0	0.6	1000	12.5	88.0	51.0	—	—	—	
Panch Mahals	3198	925	53.7	5.6	15.6	29.1	769	15.9	87.0	—	—	—	—	
Brosach	1617	915	85.7	5.2	9.8	0.6	742	10.0	95.0	—	—	—	—	
Kaira	1695	881	52.2	4.9	8.7	36.4	694	8.5	94.0	—	—	—	—	
Surat	3526	933	63.2	4.7	4.7	27.6	842	4.5	—	87.0	—	—	—	
Thana	153	251	63.7	7.2	11.7	5.5	174	11.9	—	—	—	—	—	
Bombay Sub.	6646	1142	83.2	10.6	5.4	3.6	988	5.1	—	62.0	—	—	—	
Ahmednagar	4598	1928	85.2	10.3	11.2	4.6	1206	10.5	—	88.0	—	—	—	
East Khandesh	5320	912	54.6	5.9	5.3	39.2	772	5.1	—	27.0	—	—	—	
West Khandesh	5922	1114	77.3	10.7	6.1	15.0	1000	5.6	—	87.0	—	—	34 Bhili; 25 Ahiri.	
Nasik	5347	1359	84.7	11.4	5.2	2.7	1170	4.7	—	—	—	—	—	
Poona	4891	1327	94.3	13.2	3.7	—	1180	3.6	—	94.0	—	—	—	
Satara	4372	1015	89.6	16.6	8.7	0.3	1180	8.3	—	—	—	—	—	
Sholapur	4527	1225	85.6	9.1	9.0	0.1	1077	8.7	—	25.0	—	—	65.0	
Belgaum	5704	976	86.9	9.4	12.6	0.1	869	12.1	—	—	—	—	82.0	
Bijapur	4376	1201	83.1	5.6	14.9	0.1	1103	14.4	—	—	—	—	78.0	
Dharwar	3961	441	87.4	3.2	8.0	—	418	7.3	—	—	—	—	55.0	
Kanara	2212	669	84.1	6.7	5.0	—	629	4.9	—	—	—	—	—	
Kolaba	4069	1375	92.5	8.7	6.7	—	1303	6.7	—	—	—	—	—	
Ratnagiri														
DECCAN STATES AND KOLHAPUR CENTRAL INDIA STATES														
GWALIOR (S)	10,870	2785	89.5	11.0	6.5	0.3	2458	6.4	—	68.6	—	—	24.4	58.6 W. & E. Hindi; 24.7 Rajasthan.
	52,072	7512	79.1	13.7	5.9	15.2	6648	5.7	—	—	—	—	—	63.2 W. Hindi; 27.4 Rajasthan.
	26,367	4006	86.3	—	6.0	6.1	3923	5.8	—	—	—	—	—	—
CENTRAL PROVINCES & BERAR (P)														
Sauar	6761	939	83.4	25.1	4.6	8.7	850	4.7	Hindi	Marathi	—	—	—	—
Jubbulpore	3919	911	71.9	11.8	7.4	18.3	774	6.2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mandla	5115	505	58.0	5.8	1.4	60.3	446	1.5	—	—	—	—	—	23.2 Gondi.
Hoshangabad	5707	823	79.7	14.8	4.4	13.1	808	4.8	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nimar	4228	515	64.1	11.5	11.8	22.1	467	10.9	—	—	—	—	—	27.6 Rajasthan.

1931 CENSUS

1941 CENSUS

District or State	Area in sq. miles	Percentage in total population of				Population in thousands	Per cent of population in thousands	Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue		Remarks
		All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	Muslims	Tribes			Hindis	Marathi	
Betul	3885	59.2	11.7	1.9	33.2	406	1.7	37.1	24.0	29.2 Gondi.
Chhindwara	7933	57.0	10.8	4.1	38.3	967	3.5	52.6	18.2	24.7 Gondi.
Wardha	2435	85.4	19.5	4.0	10.0	516	4.1	77.5	77.5	
Nagpur	3836	1060	86.0	6.3	6.2	940	5.7	15.5	75.8	
Chanda	9205	873	20.1	1.8	19.8	760	1.8	17.0	72.1	
Bhandara	3580	863	26.9	1.8	12.0	824	1.9	57.6	74.0	
Balashat	3614	75.8	12.4	2.0	22.0	552	2.0	82.2	28.6	
Raipur	9203	1517	79.8	1.5	18.0	1867	1.3	95.7		
Bilaspur	1350	79.6	24.4	1.5	18.6	1376	1.3	91.2		
Drug	4890	929	17.1	0.9	22.1	818	0.9	94.2	76.6	
Amraoti	4715	908	84.3	10.0	6.4	942	9.2	80.7	80.7	
Akola	4093	84.3	21.9	11.2	3.3	876	10.2	84.4	84.4	
Buldana	3763	821	87.2	19.1	2.4	767	9.4	69.5	69.5	
Yeotmal	5236	888	75.3	15.8	18.2	837	6.1			
HYDERABAD STATE										
Hyderabad City	79									
Atraf-i-Baida	2626	739	49.9	13.6	0.3	467	41.2	37.1		29.9 Urdu.
Nizamabad	2983	612	83.6	19.8	12.9	500	10.1	79.3		
Medak	3055	647	83.4	18.2	9.6	623	7.8	87.5		
Baghat	414	90	83.6	20.5	10.3	739	9.7	86.6		
Mahbubnagar	5326	1088	85.6	21.4	4.1	972	8.7	94.6		
Nalgonda	6049	1275	85.6	18.5	6.5	1153	5.5	90.8		
Warangal	7944	1322	74.5	14.9	7.6	1118	6.1	85.0		
Karimnagar	5722	1355	91.5	19.8	5.8	1241	4.5	94.1		
Adilabad	7294	824	77.1	23.5	6.7	762	6.0	60.8	20.9	
Aurangabad	6212	1072	79.5	13.5	16.0	945	13.2	78.4	78.4	
Parbhani	5125	912	83.4	18.0	13.1	854	10.4	83.0	83.0	
Nander	3771	803	83.4	20.4	12.4	722	11.2	16.7	62.4	
Bir	4132	714	88.7	16.6	10.1	634	8.4	19.5	87.2	
Gulbarga	6975	1312	78.5	17.0	17.6	1225	16.0	25.5	16.3	49.5 Kanarese.
Raichur	6630	1042	85.3	12.2	12.3	938	10.2	16.7	16.3	63.8 Kanarese.
Omransabad	3526	749	85.5	19.7	13.3	691	11.6	79.1	79.1	29.9 Kanarese; 15.9 Urdu.
Bidar	4625	1023	79.8	19.0	17.6	874	15.6	15.3	57.5	

HYDERABAD STATE

1931 CENSUS

1941 CENSUS

District or State	Area in sq. miles	Percentage in total population of				Population in thousands	Percentage in total population				Remarks	
		All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	Muslims	Tribes		Muslims in thousands	Tamil	Telugu	Kannara		
MADRAS (P)												
Vizagapatam Agency	9107	3846	91.3	0.8	7.5	5485	0.2	—	—	—	—	—
Plains	3116	221	36.0	—	63.8	215	1.0	—	—	15.0	—	—
Godavari East	5981	3625	94.6	0.8	4.1	3270	1.0	—	—	96.5	—	—
Agency	6322	2162	92.1	1.5	4.7	1921	1.3	—	—	74.8	—	—
Plains	9575	272	60.4	1.3	35.7	291	1.6	—	—	—	—	—
Godavari West	2647	1890	96.5	21.5	1.6	1680	2.1	—	—	59.1	—	—
Plains	2434	1380	91.5	19.8	2.2	1223	5.0	—	—	94.4	—	—
Kistna	3469	1444	85.3	14.7	5.3	1234	7.7	—	—	91.7	—	—
Guntur	5795	2277	78.9	7.3	8.1	2036	6.9	—	—	91.8	—	—
Nellore	7942	1617	87.6	18.0	7.4	1486	13.1	—	—	88.1	—	—
Cuddapah	5923	1057	81.7	12.6	—	949	14.2	—	—	85.4	—	—
Kurnool	7634	1146	76.3	15.1	—	1025	10.7	—	—	22.5	—	—
Bellary	5714	1051	88.2	14.8	10.7	970	9.4	—	—	79.7	—	—
Anantpur	1171	89.1	14.8	10.1	—	1030	10.8	—	—	—	—	—
Madras	30	777	78.9	13.3	—	647	2.2	—	—	63.5	—	—
Chingleput	3074	1824	95.0	31.1	—	1655	5.5	—	—	19.3	—	—
Chittoor	5951	1632	93.2	16.6	4.9	1447	6.0	—	—	73.4	—	—
North Arcot	4671	2578	91.2	19.5	6.8	2267	2.5	—	—	80.0	—	—
Salem	7073	2869	96.4	15.1	2.8	2434	2.5	—	—	16.7	—	—
Salem	7121	2810	96.4	15.8	—	2445	3.1	—	—	21.7	—	—
Coimbatore	4203	2609	93.9	28.1	—	2455	6.1	—	—	50.1	—	—
South Arcot	3798	2563	89.7	23.7	—	2366	3.8	—	—	—	—	—
Tanjore	4329	2194	90.7	19.3	4.2	1944	6.1	—	—	53.1	—	—
Trichonopoly	4883	2447	91.7	16.8	4.4	2165	4.1	—	—	84.8	—	—
Madura	4831	1980	87.7	15.6	7.2	1859	6.5	—	—	17.5	—	—
Ramanad	4342	2245	81.9	15.9	6.5	2047	5.9	—	—	—	—	—
Tinnevely	989	210	49.0	22.9	—	169	6.5	—	—	—	—	—
Nilgiris	5790	3929	63.1	9.1	—	5134	32.9	—	—	—	—	—
Malabar	4043	1524	72.7	6.4	—	1372	13.1	—	—	—	—	—
South Kanara												95.1 Malayalam. 21.8 Malayalam.
MADRAS STATES	1602	499	89.9	16.7	6.0	435	5.7	—	—	83.7	—	—
TRAVANCORE (S)	7662	6070	58.4	6.5	7.2	3542	6.9	—	—	15.5	—	—
COCHIN (S)	1498	1423	63.2	—	7.0	1205	7.5	—	—	—	—	—

District or State	1941 CENSUS				1931 CENSUS				Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue			Remarks
	Area in sq. miles	Population in thousands	Percentage in total population of			Population in thousands	Per cent of Muslims to total population	Percentage in total population of persons having mother tongue				
			All Hindus	Scheduled Castes	Muslims			Tribes	Tamil	Telugu	Kannarese	
COORG (C. P.)	1593	169	77.5	13.4	8.7	11.9	163	8.4	—	—	38.7	27.0 Coorg.
MYSORE (S)	2858	7329	91.2	—	6.6	0.1	6357	6.1	—	15.7	69.8	
ORISSA (P)									Oriya			
Cuttack	4571	2451	94.7	18.7	3.0	2.3	2317	—	—	—	—	
Balasore	2194	1029	93.5	18.0	3.5	2.9	991	—	—	—	—	
Puri	2451	1102	94.8	14.8	2.4	2.7	1035	—	—	—	—	
Bambalpur	5419	1185	79.5	14.1	0.4	19.6	1066	—	—	—	—	
Ganjam	7668	1835	76.2	13.2	0.2	23.4	1667	—	—	—	—	
Plains	3515	1592	93.3	16.9	0.5	4.3	1727	—	—	—	—	
Agency	4375	463	18.6	2.0	—	80.8	440	—	—	—	—	
Koraput	9875	1128	15.4	2.2	0.2	83.4	950	—	—	—	—	
CHHATTISGARH STATES	37,688	4050	54.3	12.0	0.7	44.8	3548	0.7	30.7	—	—	46.2 Hindustani
ORISSA STATES	18,151	3024	70.8	11.7	0.5	28.6	2693	0.5	76.5	—	—	
MAYURBHANJ (S)	4034	991	27.2	5.1	0.6	72.1	880	0.6	42.5	—	—	28.8 Santali