

In incorporating, though with many reservations and exceptions, in Part XIII of our Constitution, provisions to secure the freedom of inter-State commerce from restrictions, some flexibility will be imparted to the economic life of the country to enable its freer growth.

The Congress Working Committee's decision to establish a Central Planning Commission has almost coincided with the inaugu-

ration of the new Constitution. The need for a new statutory body of this kind would show that the plans that had been made from time to time were largely unrelated to available resources. A Constitution or a plan or even the presence of men with the necessary vision and drive cannot achieve a rapid growth of economic prosperity until there is the willingness on the part of the majority of the people to restrict present consumption, which

means a desire to save and invest. In a totalitarian economy, it is brought about by State compulsion, by rigidly enforced austerity but with our democratic liberties assured by Constitutional guarantees, the main task of the Planning Commission would be to mobilise our resources for the success of planned economic progress. It is a task which needs the free and voluntary co-operation of a people willing to advance on the economic front and ready for the endeavour.

THIRD FORCE COMMITS SUICIDE

NINETEEN-FORTY-NINE will go down to history as the year in which the common man became vividly aware of the yawning gap between the promise of the twentieth century and its performance. It was the year in which statesmen of the Western Powers lulled themselves into the false belief that world problems could be solved merely by a statement of what these Issues were. President Truman has repeatedly affirmed his and his country's faith in the United Nations Charter. It is now a commonplace that world peace and prosperity are indivisible. Peace as well as prosperity still eludes the common man, and a sense of frustration haunts the world.

Twelve months ago, President Truman announced his plan for Fair Deal to the world. Point Four was a message of cheer and hope to the forgotten man. It was hailed as a faint glimpse of America's realisation of her destiny. It was a promise of America's preparedness for assuming moral leadership of the world. As months rolled by, it became apparent that the common man was over-optimistic. Point Four was an imaginative plan whose broad outlines were skilfully sketched by President Truman in his message to the world. As it has gradually emerged, Point Four has got enmeshed in technicalities and technicians

Stared of capital, which alone

could clothe it with flesh and blood, Point Four has been reduced to a shadow. Suspicion grows that while America is lavish with money of political origin, she is stingy with money of economic origin. Suspicion deepens that America is either unwilling or unable to accept the challenge to its world leadership and transform it into an opportunity. Nineteen-forty-nine may well be docketed in history as the year in which America failed to fulfil her great promise.

Disillusioned and disappointed though the common man is today, he is wiser by the events of 1949. He is no longer deceived by the pretence of an ideological war between the West and the East. Implications and nature of the East-West conflict are now better appreciated. That conflict is now assessed in its proper perspective: a cold, relentless fight for supremacy between the Great Powers. It is significant that this interpretation of world developments is endorsed both by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Trygve Lie, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

There is no doubt that the Secretary-General of the United Nations is of the opinion that the difficulties besetting the world stem from the continuance of "the Great Power conflict." There is an implicit assumption in Pandit Nehru's recent statements that the East-West conflict is a reflection

of the struggle for supremacy between some Great Powers with which the small Powers have no direct concern. The latter, naturally, hope that the dispute will be solved without hostilities, but they are reluctant to take sides or to participate in conflict or wars which, to them, seem nothing more than dynastic or imperialistic wars of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century.

Political reactions in the West to developments in 1949 confirm this interpretation of contemporary events. It is widely accepted that the Communist victory in China and the manufacture of the atomic bomb by Russia have fundamentally altered the world balance of power, though it is frequently emphasised that the Tito-Stalin schism is the first, faint signs of creaks in the solid monolithic Communist bloc. Whether or not Titoism is the beginning of the end of Stalinism, the exaggerated significance attached to the Tito-Stalin controversy is both an admission by the Western Powers that the "cold war" is a reflex of power politics and a hope that the division in the Communist bloc may tilt the balance of power in favour of the Western Powers. Whether there is any basis for this hope or whether it is merely an exercise in wish fulfilment, remains to be seen.

In the meanwhile, hopes raised by Third Force have been dashed to pieces along with the expecta-

tions encouraged by Point Four. In 1949, Third Force committed the same mistake made by social democrats in Europe in the period immediately preceding the emergence of Mussolini and of Hitler; it committed suicide by default. Meant as a positive, democratic alternative to totalitarianism of the Right as well as of the Left, Third Force died a natural death because of its policy of negation. It ignored its main purpose of building up a firm foundation for democratic peace and plenty, and used up its energy in the negative policy of neutralising Communism.

That negative policy has succeeded in Western Europe. Marshall Aid has helped this region's economic recovery. Its defence preparations have been strengthened by the conclusion of the Brussels Pact, the formation and gradual integration of West Germany into the Western European defence system and the conclusion of the North Atlantic treaty.

Never before in history have the Great Powers undertaken such gigantic military preparations in peace time. Whether or not military preparedness will discourage, or be regarded as a warning by potential aggressors—history does not encourage any such facile assumption—this is an open admission of the failure of Third Force.

Experience in Western Europe is both a lesson and a warning. It emphatically demonstrates that Third Force cannot survive merely as an economic influence when its political basis and implications are ignored. There is the danger that, faced with the fast developing Communist threat to Asia and the East, the Western Powers may repeat the mistakes they committed in Western Europe. Conditions in Western Europe and in Asia and the Far East are not similar. Though the policy pursued in Western Europe has partially succeeded, it may fail completely if adopted in the

East.

In the East, military security or even economic progress is not as significant as political progress. First things must come first. Colonialism, foreign domination, feudal and reactionary political regimes must be abolished first. Only the future will reveal whether the East will pass through an intermediate stage of semi-authoritarian, semi-oligarchic form of government in her evolution from feudal colonialism to full-fledged democracy. But that possible intermediate stage can probably be by-passed through simultaneous efforts to encourage the growth of Third Force Governments and to enable such Governments to perform their economic purpose through massive aid in men and money from the West. That way and not through military or strategic pacts or through financial aid in exchange for air bases, lies the path to political and economic stability in the East as well as to world peace and security.

FIFTY-TWO ISSUES

The Economic Weekly was launched a year ago with the audacious claim of aiming at "Light without heat" Friends who dabble in physics warned us then that that no light can emanate without some heat being generated in the process. It is for others to say how far we have been able to keep out of the heat of controversy. We may as well own up that we have on occasions lapsed into heat. But to little effect.

Looking in retrospect, the emission of heat was an expense of spirit in a waste of shame. A year has rolled by, but we are precisely where we started from: price reduction, stepping up production, collaring of black money, healing the wounds of partition, are still the problems.

THE *Economic Weekly* came out a year ago on the confident assumption that "the existence of an independently weekly to deal primarily with economic problems of the country was a dire need." For all the 52 weeks in 1949 it surveyed the economic scene through the eyes of its correspondents and contributors. Lest it might be accused of slacking, it did not even skip an issue on the occasion of the Divali, and only after having completed all the 52 issues,—the allotted span of weeks in a year,—the staff allowed them-

selves a holiday in the week of Christmas.

As the weeks rolled by, the over-confident hope that the *Weekly* was a dire need sank. Neither could we continue to emit light without generating any heat in the process. Our very first editorial was thoughtlessly, it now seems, given the title "Light without Heat". We have been critical of the policies pursued by the Government but in that very process, we have sought to outline the pattern we would like to place

before the public. The outline may not have been very clear; some thought that it was too tenuous and gossamer-like to provide a blue-print for action. We may as well confess at the outset that one can only feel one's way and proceed tentatively when the facts themselves are not all brought to light, when statistics are manifestly inadequate, unreliable, and often woefully out of date. It has amazed us, time and again, how our Ministers of Finance and Commerce could plan measures to fight inflation,