

# The Economic Weekly

A Journal of Current Economic and Political Affairs

(Established January 1949)

September 3, 1955

Volume VII—No. 36

Eight annas

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## Loose Ends

DRAWING up of the Second Plan could be organised a little better, not merely to enable the public to follow its development more intelligently but also perhaps to help the planners themselves to clear up difficulties and resolve their differences step by step. There is no reason to doubt, of course, that in the end everything will fall into its proper place and the Draft outline of the Second Plan will be ready in due time and maybe according to schedule, that is some time next month. But because some steps are skipped, or the participants do not have all the data before them they cannot come to a final decision, many points are left loose or hanging, and issues which should have been decided and closed are re-opened again and again.

The manner in which the Companies Bill is being handled is an example of this sort of thing. True, the Companies Bill is not an integral part of the Second Plan, but management of industry cannot be treated as a thing apart, when the main emphasis in the next Plan is on industry. This is also evident from the fact that the Finance Ministry has now set up a separate wing for company affairs. The manner in which the Bill was changed in the Select Committee stage was unusual, but it would not have been so bad, had the changes fully reflected a consensus of opinion in Parliament, so that Government could know and the country could know the role that had been given to management in the private sector in the Second Plan period. At one time it seemed that Pandit Nehru was himself opposed to changing horses in mid-stream and that the Congress had made up its mind that it could not risk a violent change in management, having decided on a mixed economy which left a large part, in fact the more important part, to the private sector. In view of the long period of gestation through which the Bill had passed, the Finance Minister's readiness to yield and accept amendments appeared to be somewhat inexplicable.

There were points on which he admitted that the drafting had been faulty and loop-holes had been left open which should have been plugged at an earlier stage. But the subsequent career of the Bill in Parliament left no room for doubt that the measure of agreement achieved was not what it was taken to be. That a crisis was averted through the personal intervention of the Prime Minister does not speak much either for the cohesion of the party or for Governments appreciation of the seriousness of the measure. The future of managing agencies not only concerns the country but also foreign capital which is already invested and the continued inflow of which has not only been accepted by Government but on which Government has been banking to a considerable extent.

The progress of the formulation of the Plan, it is not possible to follow so closely. The draft Plan-frame was accepted by the National development Council, This being the highest authoritative body in the country, its acceptance of the Plan-frame could be taken to imply that details and internal consistencies alone remained to be worked out. The Standing Committee of the National Development Council at its July-end meeting also approved the financial targets. The Committee is meeting on Monday next but it would be wrong to assume, judging from past

experience, that it would come to grips even with the basic problem of equating the financial and physical targets. For, the Planning Minister himself is reported to have submitted a note which would seem to re-open all these questions. He has now come to the conclusion, it appears, that the targets of employment and national income set out in the Draft Plan-frame cannot be achieved. The conflict between the two targets, physical and financial, cannot be resolved by raising the latter but every attempt will be made to attain at least the financial targets.

Little progress seems to have been made towards arriving at firm figures. The programme for industry approved by the Central Advisory Council does not exactly square with the provisions of the Draft Plan-frame. The competing claims of the different States are, of course, never easy to reconcile and though during the last few months the States have presented their case to the Planning Commission and have had a series of discussion, the upshot of it cannot be known until the basic frame-work, into which these claims are to be fitted, is made more

firm than what it is today. Surprisingly enough, unlike the States, the other claimants on resources, particularly the Central Ministries of Transport and Communications, have been strangely silent, while all along complaints have been flowing in from various quarters that the provisions for transport are woefully inadequate.

As the date for finalising the Draft Outline draws near, demands are being put forward by different sections. The Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the All-India Manufacturers' Organisation, the Millowners' Association and the Khadi and Village Industries Board have all published their plans during this week. The Federation wants an even more ambitious plan than the Draft Plan-frame, but naturally it wants the job to be handed over to the private sector. On the question of employment, however, the Federation has no further light to throw. In its own Draft Plan published earlier, the Federation claimed a multiple effect on employment if its pattern of investment was accepted; now it uses a different language and

talks about the snow-ball effect of employment in consumer goods industries on other sectors of the economy.

The Khadi and Village Industries Board is prepared to silence the critics that hand and household industries would neither be able to deliver the goods nor provide substantial employment. Indeed not to speak of 4 million jobs estimated under this head (including construction industries), the Board claims that it would be able to find employment to 7½ million people during the Second Plan period for the modest outlay of 300 odd crores, of which a little more than half will be given out as loans and the balance distributed roughly in equal proportions between development and administrative set-up and field organisation. All that it wants is, apart from modest finance, appropriate changes in Government policies, a common production programme and a common price policy.

The time has come now for tying up all these loose ends into a knot. Will the Standing Committee attempt it at its next meeting?

## Myth of Greater France

BRITAIN quitted India immediately after the war. End of British colonialism in Asia was a direct sequel to the peoples' struggle for independence in this part of the world. It was partly due to the late President Roosevelt's insistence, on behalf of America, that colonialism must go. It was at the Instance of America that a Good Offices Commission of the United Nations was appointed to facilitate transfer of power by Holland to Indonesia. Burma, India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Indonesia became independent nations. Despite the willing withdrawal of Britain and the forced retreat of Holland from Asia, other European metropolitan Powers continue to administer their colonial territories in this region. Belatedly, France withdrew from her "possessions" in India. Unlike France, Portugal has never even made a pretence of offering a theoretical alternative to colonialism. She still claims sovereignty over her "possessions" in India.

Portugal is a fascist State and an unabashed colonial Power which recognises no humane or political obligation to end the colonial status of her "possessions". But the massive massacre and blood bath

in French North Africa are poignant reminders that colonialism persists as a threat to peace. Colonialism has retreated from both East and West Asia. But it plagues Africa. Neither Britain nor France admits that it is their intention to perpetuate colonialism in the Dark Continent. But both Britain and France have advanced sophisticated political theories in support of their hold on territories in Africa. In Malaya and in the British territories in Africa, society is multi-racial. There is, difference in the multi-racialism in Malaya and in the British areas in Africa, But Britain pleads that it is her intention to create multi-racial States and political entities in areas where society is multi-racial. Such a political solution poses entirely different problems for Malaya and the British territories in Africa. There have been sporadic attempts to implement this political theory in practice in both the regions. But the efforts have been half-hearted, and the progress toward self-government remains tardy and tortuous.

Under the force of compelling circumstances, France has now changed her policy to Indo-China. Recent developments are ominous. But

there is still hope that the future of the Indo-Chinese States will be shaped and influenced by the gradual implementation of the Geneva Agreement. Latest developments in French North Africa and the influences which led to the subsequent fall of M Mendes-France would seem to lend weight to the suspicion that the Geneva Agreement on Indo-China might not have been concluded had M Mendes-France not then been the French-Premier. M Mendes-France was voted out of power, when he was at the height of his glory, on the issue of his policy to French North Africa by the combative Colonial Lobby in the French National Assembly. It is this powerful Colonial Lobby, fortified by the support of the French settlers, which is now prolonging the Cabinet crisis on the Moroccan issue.

Though compelling political circumstances have forced France to shift her ground, it is interesting to examine her plausible alternative solution to colonialism. To criticisms of the French policy to Indo-China and French North Africa, Paris has always replied that the