

# How to make an ally of INDIA

By  
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**A** NUMBER of explanations have been offered for the disaster which has now descended upon the British Empire in the Far East. According to Mr. Churchill, the British reverses can be explained by the limited supplies of material and men available for the execution of the gigantic task of defending a line extending from Gibraltar to Hong Kong. Other less official explanations refer to the lard-headed character of the British Administration in London, Delhi, and Singapore. Students of the technical aspects of war believe the fall of Singapore was an incident in the development of air power and in the better co-ordination of all branches of arms and a demonstration of the passing of sea power as an independent factor in world politics. All these explanations are only incidental to a much more fundamental cause of the decline of British imperial power. To even the most casual observer a number of important contradictions present themselves.

India, which is the central domain of the British in the Far East, contains some three hundred and ninety million people, nearly one-sixth of the human race. For all practical purposes, its resources of man power are limitless, and, yet, India has mobilized scarcely one million men, of whom barely one hundred thousand are on active service in a theater of war. India possesses half as much iron ore as the United States. India possesses rich coal fields well located in relation to some of her best ore deposits. Rich oil resources are close at hand in Burma, and still richer resources in the Indies. India possesses water power resources nearly as abundant as those of the United States. India has one-third of the world's supply of manganese. India, in fact, is much more richly endowed with natural resources than Japan, and, in richness of raw materials, is comparable with the principal great powers. Despite these sources of industrial strength, India, at the outbreak of war, produced no gasoline motors, no machine tools, and scarcely any of the products of an industrial nation. Even today, India cannot be compared in any way with the least of

the Axis Powers, Italy, in the variety or volume of her industrial output.

Indians are not without talent. Raman and Tagore, to mention only two famous men recently deceased, were Indians who attained the very first rank in matters of intellectual achievement. Indians even excel at cricket, and they give a variety of evidence of civilized accomplishment. In spite of this, no Indian has an opportunity in his own country to design an airplane, build a steamship, or organize a hydro-electric system. Aside from a few Indian princes who are more at home in a dress uniform than at field headquarters, no Indian has achieved a senior staff officer's rank in the army, and very few have ever risen above the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

Of all the nations of the Far East, India has been longest in contact with Western civilization. Japan has acquired all the technical power of Western civilization; India appears to have acquired practically none. The Japanese are not only able to take care of themselves, but are ambitious to take care of a multitude of others. India, on the other hand, could supply neither the equipment nor the men to defend the outpost of Singapore. Soldiers, equipment, and supplies are being brought tens of thousands of miles from Britain and the United States to protect nations which, by the logic of economy, should be able to defend themselves.

These contradictions between the potential and the actual are so striking that they constitute an indictment, not of a man or a government, but of the scheme of social, political, and economic relationships which are a fundamental part of empire. It seems pretty evident that two hundred years of imperial rule in India and the Far East have produced a state system characterized by political debility, economic poverty, and technical and industrial

backwardness. A small but well organized and industrially progressive power is now demonstrating its ability to expand into this area of weakness, and it has a fair prospect of finding there what it has not hitherto possessed, the means of subjecting not only the colonial areas of the world but the metropolitan nations themselves. The stage has been reached in this war where the weakness, both political and industrial, of the colonial nations, and particularly India, the largest single colonial nation, has become a danger to the liberty of the people of Great Britain and the United States.

India is one of the least known nations of the world. This is not accidental. A small group of investors, civil servants, and army officers have a very heavy stake in the control of India; the rest of the world practically none. This governing and owning class is in every respect conservative. Their interest is to maintain the income from a certain financial and economic set-up and to preserve their power. A system of profiteering in the strictest sense of the term has been maintained. The railways provide an example. Between 1924 and 1938 the total mileage of Indian railways increased 3 per cent, gross receipts declined 9 per cent, but interest payments increased 22.8 per cent. Government loans, which, like railway investments, constitute a heavy proportion of Indian capital, have not been subject to nearly the same vicissitudes they have encountered in other countries. The holder of Indian bonds has had to contend with little in the way of devaluation, or refunding, in spite of the fact that the prices of the agricultural commodities which pay a very large share of India's indebtedness have undergone disastrous declines in the last fifteen years. The Indian governing and investing class both from Britain and in India are predominantly rentiers. The profits they earn are not re-invested in the country, and the policy of charging a generous proportion of the annual national income to capital account has not led, as it has in the United States and Britain, to rapid and mature industrial development.

Indian industrial backwardness is not due solely to the parasitic, rentier character of capital invested in India. India is valuable to Britain as a market. The cotton textile industry is the only modern machine industry which has developed on a scale adequate to supply India's needs. India relies on Britain

for nearly all the products of heavy industry. Deliberate over-valuation of the rupee in terms of sterling, the credit policies of the Reserve Bank of India, the refusal of the Government to erect tariffs, and the direct and indirect power of the Government to determine the letting of contracts for public works, such as harbor improvements, railways, irrigation projects, and hydro-electric developments, have conspired to prevent the growth of indigenous industrial capital. Capitalism in this great colonial nation has never been truly competitive with the result that India suffers from all the evils and has few or none of the benefits of capitalist enterprise. Indian economic life operates under the handicap of checks far greater than American economy endured prior to the American Revolution.

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IT is not treason to the cause of the United Nations to point out the political, economic and military weakness that two centuries of imperialism have produced. That weakness opens up limitless strategic and economic possibilities to the Axis Powers. The continuation of the present system of social, economic, and political relationships which prevail in India is not any longer a matter of morality or political principle. If India is to be defended, a political leadership has to be established which can mobilize a high proportion of the Indian population so that every village and every jungle trail will be a death trap for the Japanese. Japan has demonstrated her capacity to beat the Western Powers whose main strength in men and supplies comes from continents thousands of miles away. She has also demonstrated her incapacity to beat a numerous and determined people who, enduring invasion and destruction, will not yield. The question is, therefore, whether the United Nations wish to employ methods in India which have a high probability of success, or those which have a record of disaster.

The present Anglo-Indian Administration cannot mobilize the people of India. Even if the Indian people are fully seized of the danger which Japan presents and even if they perform the miracle of forgetting completely all their past history and future hopes, the present Government of India cannot carry out the tasks of the moment. A well-organized bureaucracy with the best will in the world can-

not provide careers open to the talents for all Indians. It cannot organize a *levée en masse*. It cannot create racial equality. It cannot summon the people to resist because it does not speak the language of Indian civilization, one of the oldest in the world.

Much of the weakness of India is due to defects of development which have a history of many decades. These defects cannot be made good overnight, and such reforms as the industrialization of India cannot be achieved in time to have much meaning in the context of present events. India has to be prepared for resistance such as that which has been made by China. The principal action of the moment must be political. If the villages and the city masses can be mobilized, even if there is but one rifle for every ten men, anything the United Nations can add to the war potential of three hundred and ninety million people by way of military assistance will represent so much to the good. A concentration of Anglo-American forces in the Southwest Pacific should be able to keep the supply lines to India open. India compared with China should not be difficult to help. If Japan is forced to plunge into the morass of a resurgent India she can be hacked to pieces by the Anglo-American forces in the Far East. If, however, the United Nations disperse their forces so that part of them have to function with one eye on India and the other on Japan, the possibility of disaster will be enormously increased.

To timid and conservative people the immediate liberation of India may appear impractical. The great social and economic changes which political liberation will involve will, they are sure to argue, produce internal dissension and weakness well calculated to assist the Axis Powers. These arguments would be well-founded were there no alternative to the present administration. Fortunately there is such an alternative: the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress is a provisional government.

Unlike the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League, or the Indian Liberal Federation, the Indian National Congress has no religious, racial, or class bias. It is at truly national mass organization with proven public support. In the only election held under the India Act (1935), the Indian National Congress won a decisive majority. It won clear majorities in six provinces of the eleven and had the

largest total vote in eight provinces. This was the verdict of the fifteen and a half million enfranchised Indians and it is generally acknowledged even by the London *Times* that the popularity of the Congress is much greater among the unenfranchised populace than among the small minority which has a vote.

It is the only party which stands for a united India and the only political organization that has a following in every province and in the Native States. It has a progressive social program, and in the formulation of policy the Congress leadership has shuffled off the incubus of Gandhism. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Abdul Kalam Azad, and Rajagopalachari have a strong sense of the practical and the possible. The Indian National Congress is the only large Indian party which has a consistent record of opposition to fascism. Of the great political parties of the British Commonwealth, it has been the most persistent and consistent in its support of the struggle of the Chinese people for national independence. The Congress has eschewed chauvinism and narrow nationalism in international politics. On the basis of its record it would appear more ready to accept the Atlantic Charter than, say, the British Conservative party.

There is some sign that Britain intends to take steps in the direction suggested. It is unlikely that Sir Stafford Cripps would have consented to enter the British Cabinet unless some fundamental changes in Anglo-Indian relations were guaranteed. Chiang Kai-shek would hardly have spoken so frankly had he not expected some wholly new developments. However, there is a danger inherent in all British thinking about India that the antagonisms and differences of a religious, social, and class character may be regarded as a permanent part of the Indian political landscape and that attempts will be made with all the good will in the world to work out a compromise between such diverse tendencies as those represented by the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha, on the one hand, and the Indian National Congress, on the other. India can only be converted from a weak and divided neutral into a strong and united ally by putting all the aid of the United Nations, without stint and without question, behind the one political organization which believes in and practices a policy of Indian national unity, progressive democratic reform, and industrial development.

# KOREA

## Our Potential Ally

By

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**W**HEN a nation and people have been in almost total eclipse for three decades, any discussion concerning them must be predicated upon an historical resumé, however brief. Therefore, as the developing international situation brings Korea back into public consciousness and conscience, the method popularized by our President of taking globe or map in hand may well be followed in reviewing Korea's geography and history.

A glance at the map will show Korea's strategic importance: In one direction as the military highway into Manchuria, Mongolia, Siberia, and indeed the continent of Asia; or, *in reverse*, a "dagger pointed at the heart of Japan." Koreans call it the Gibraltar of Asia. They point to the fact that as long as this outpost stood intact, China was not menaced by Japan. Once this citadel was razed, Japan was able to plan for her empire on the Asiatic mainland.

Korea is about the size of Utah or Kansas, with a population of approximately 21,000,000 people. For more than 4,000 years Chosen, Land of the Morning Calm, enjoyed a remarkably democratic culture. The recorded history goes back to a wise man, Tanguon, (2333 B. C.) who taught the people the relation between king and subject, the rite of marriage, the art of cooking, the science of house-building. A wise man, indeed, and from all reports a kindly king. Six periods of Korean history carry us from the Tanguon era to the Yi Dynasty, lasting until Japan's annexation in 1910.

During all these years and periods, whether the capital was in the southern kingdom of Shilla, where ancient ruins testify to skill in architecture, sculpture, mural painting, and silver and gold crafts, or in the north at Songdo, the people were industrious and peace-loving. Depending on agriculture for their livelihood, they were also adept at arts and crafts including sericulture and silk-weaving. Like the Chinese they exalted the pen rather than the sword, venerating scholarship. The Congressional Library in Washington holds a

Korean book in 112 quarto volumes published 500 years ago. The Natural History Museum of New York has 53 pieces of movable metal type invented in Korea in 1406 A.D., antedating by 50 years Gutenberg's contribution. More remarkable still was Korea's phonetic alphabet. The Chinese characters were so difficult that, as in China, only the wealthy leisure class could learn to read and write. The King sent a group of scholars to Tibet to study the alphabet derived from the Sanscrit.

Somewhere in the sands of Korea's southern shore lie relics of the first iron-clad warships ever made. Though under Emperor Hideyoshi in 1592, Japan had invaded Korea and massacred three million men, women, and children, 90 per cent of them noncombatants, his generals bearing home 100,000 ears and noses as symbol of their sanguinary raid, Admiral Yi Soon-sin's iron-backed boats annihilated the Japanese fleet. Modern naval experts say the battle was equal to that of Trafalgar, that it did for Eastern Asia what the battle of Salamis did for Europe. Through all these years Chosen desired only to be left alone. Choosing to remain detached from other nations in splendid isolation, she earned her other sobriquet of the Hermit Kingdom.

From the four points of historical, cultural, political, and geographic relationship, China and Korea have been bound in almost identical destiny. The fate of one affects the state of the other, illustrating an old Chinese proverb, "When the lips are destroyed, the teeth are cold." During the Ming Dynasty, China referred to Korea as the "brother state," the Oriental counterpart of our expression "sister nation." What some regard as tribute from the King of Korea to the Emperor of China was more likely a friendly exchange of gifts. The envoy from Korea brought rich gifts to