

that all progressive States assume the responsibility of providing the fundamental or basic security to the common man in the economic sphere. A sound and well-integrated programme of social security will contribute much to vase the transition of deficit-economy to that of self-sufficiency; what is more, "it will prevent social disorder and social dissension by effecting an early and effective compromise between the apostles of self-interest and those of human rights."

It is hoped that the problem of

industrial efficiency in India which is so vital in the context of the present grievous economic situation in the country, will be viewed in its wider perspective and efforts will be made by all concerned, to remove the unwholesome features of our industrial system and attain a high order of industrial efficiency and self-sufficiency in material goods, social services, public utilities and civic amenities so as to raise the general standard of living of the people as a whole and to ensure useful employment for all.

From the Washington End

Economic Aid To South East Asia

THE State Department's economic study group has recommended to Secretary Acheson that \$64 million aid be given to Indo-China, Indonesia, Burma, Thailand and Malaya, to provide economic and technical assistance for a 15 month period. "The study group suggests that the sum may be released from the \$100 million provided for in the pending ECA bill for the general area of China.

It is believed unlikely that any of the \$75 million available to President Truman for economic and military aid to the Far East will be used for the Economic Aid Programme for South-East Asia. Out of the \$64 million aid suggested, about \$23 million would be given to Indo-China, the rest being divided about equally among the other countries.

It is suggested that, to be effective, the aid programme must be started quickly though it is doubtful whether at the present time more than \$64 million could be spent with full effectiveness. Among other things, the economic study group has suggested that schools be established in Burma and Indonesia for teaching government administration and business practices. The Under Secretary, Mr. Webb, has announced that such a proposal is at present under contemplation for Europe. The State Department's proposal, it is significant to note was made public in part immediately after Secretary Acheson announced in Paris that economic and military aid would be given to S.E. Asia.

Revival of International Cartels

A ten-man Committee, appointed by the Swedish Government, has published, after two years' research, a report on "The Capacity and Competitive Position of Swedish Electrical Industry." The report reveals the revival of an international cartel arrangement to restrict competition in various branches of the electrical goods manufacturing industry. The cartel originated as early as 1946 when there was a pitiful shortage of nearly all electrical goods in Europe.

The cartel builders have tried to conceal their activities and aims by making continuous use of high-sounding phrases in their agreements--phrases which were taken from the ITO and Atlantic Charters, as it were.

The agreement involves three Belgian companies, one French national cartel group of fifty companies, an organisation of ten British companies representing 85 per cent, of British non-ferrous metal output, two British export companies controlling too per cent, of British exports, a group of Swiss companies, and a leading Swedish company. No German companies joined in 1946 but some may have joined later.

In order to give everybody the so-called *unrestricted access* to world markets, the cartel has divided these markets into the sections the home market of cartel members and the markets that have no members in the group.

As regards prices, it is agreed that

in the markets of members, no other member may sell below the member's price—the member being itself a cartel that sets national prices or has them set by government machinery, which it usually controls. In other markets no member may sell below an agreed price list, kept up-to-date by a permanent secretary.

The agreements now in force affects components, not finished products, bought by consumers, and they require a minimum of enforcement or of formal written agreements or records.

The Government committee un-animously found that participation in these arrangements by Swedish companies was contrary to the Swedish public interest.

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