PREFACE

There is a wide spread impression in India that of the two major British political parties—the Conservatives and the Labour—the latter has been more favourably disposed towards this country. This impression exists largely due to the fact that the Labour Party was sympathetic towards the Indian freedom movement. In 1947 also the Labour Party actually did the historic task of transferring political power to India. Furthermore, during its tenure of office extending up to 1951, it maintained helpful attitude towards India. However, owing to the changing contours of the world power structure, its approach towards the Hyderabad and Kashmir issues underwent a change contrary to India's interests. Yet, in all fairness, it may be added that unlike the Conservatives, then in opposition and hostile to India, the Labour Party tried to avoid adopting an all-out anti-India stance.

The Indo-British relations suffered a setback after the Labour Party was ousted from office in 1951. The Conservative Government extended an outright support to Pakistan on Kashmir issue. While in opposition from 1951 to 1964, the Labour Party tried to regain the goodwill of India by giving an evidence of a better understanding of India's problems with its neighbours. This goodwill rose to a new height with the Labour Party's support to India.
during the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962. Its leader, Harold Wilson, said in the House of Commons: "There can be no doubt where our sympathies and interests lie in this matter. India is a Commonwealth country. Let us have no sneering about India's traditional neutrality because at critical moments in the history of past ten years that neutrality has enabled India to exert a positive influence in securing peace."

The Labour Party returned to power in 1964 and continued to govern Britain uninterrupted up to 1970. Its victory in 1964 brought great jubilation in India and raised high hopes for improvement of India's relations with Britain. These high hopes were, however, dashed to ground during the Indo-Pakistan War in 1965. At that time the Indo-British relations touched the "lowest-ebb". The Labour Party learnt a lesson and had to concede that it could retain its goodwill by remaining neutral in such conflicts.

This study has been undertaken to analyse the attitude and policy of the British Labour Party between 1964 and 1970. The period started with a very high note, touched the lowest ebb, and evolved into non-sentimental realistic political relations between the two Governments. The study bears immense importance. For, a detailed objective analysis of the Labour Government's policy towards India during this period could help in our understanding of the present
British policies towards this country.

The dissertation has been divided into five chapters. Chapter I gives background of the attitude of the British Labour Party towards India up to 1964. Chapter II deals with the Labour's role in the settlement of the Kutch Dispute as well as its attitude towards the Indo-Pak Conflict of 1965. Chapter III is devoted to the study of the various measures adopted by the Labour Government to tighten the immigration controls and the nature of reactions in India. Chapter IV makes an analysis of the efforts by the Labour Government to join the EEC and its impact on Indo-British relations. Chapter V makes an overall assessment of the Labour Government's approach towards India in the light of the analysis made in the earlier chapters.

In writing this dissertation, I have largely depended on the available secondary sources. However, I have also extensively drawn from the original sources such as the official documents and Parliamentary Debates.

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