

Mr. Jagjiwan Ram will continue to be a senior member of the Cabinet. The creation of the new Ministry of Steel and Heavy Industries, of which Mr. C. Subramaniam will be in charge, is a recognition of the vital importance of this sector in India's developing mixed economy. In having to pilot these major industries through their difficult early years Mr. Subramaniam inherits a difficult task success in the handling of which may well mark him out for greater responsibilities in the coming years. The new list of Ministers is by no means complete, and apart from the names of Deputy Ministers, of whom there were twenty-one in the old Cabinet, it is likely that more Ministers of State may be appointed in addition to the six whose names have been announced. In the choice of Deputy Ministers, Mr. Nehru is likely to look for new talent from among the 182 Congress members who will be making their debut in the new House.

Apart, however, from the size or composition of the Cabinet, what is going to be crucial in the next five years is the sense of dedication and unalloyed devotion to the national interest which every member of the Government and of Parliament is going to bring to the discharge of his or her responsibilities. The country to-day is in a critical stage of transition from the break-up of the traditional economic and social set-up to the building up of a modern, democratic society in which we must seek to preserve the best part of our national heritage. The strains and stresses of this transition are all too obvious. There are at the same time challenges from without which have to be met with courage and unity if we are to survive as a free people. In his moving message to the members of the Congress Parliamentary Party, which was read at its meeting on Tuesday last, Mr. Nehru said: "I hope that in our working in Parliament we shall keep the wider objectives always in view and not be led away by petty or vested interests or by caste and other disruptive influences. Our party in Parliament should be a closely-knit, disciplined group taking counsel with each other and profiting by this joint consultation. Within the party there should be a broad harmony of outlook and an earnest desire to achieve the objectives for which we have pledged ourselves to the people. To other groups in Parliament we should be friendly and try to win them over to our view-points. Thus, we shall establish further the supremacy of Parliament and democracy in this country of ours." It is in this spirit that the Congress members should work in the next five years.

MR. NEHRU'S THIRD TERM

The nation's good wishes will go forth to Mr. Nehru as he enters on his third term as Prime Minister of our country and his sixteenth year as the head of its Government. His recent illness, which prevented him from attending the first meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Party after the general elections, may have been due partly to the great strain which he had to bear to carry the Congress through to its victory in the elections. In the Government, inside Parliament and within the party, Mr. Nehru has had to bear for many years a formidable burden which would have broken the health and energies of a lesser man. In a unique way his robust health and his remarkable capacity for carrying on under the most trying circumstances have enabled him to meet the growing demands of Government and party. But age is bound to tell and it is extremely necessary that he should seek as far as possible to rid himself of the routine burdens of office and conserve his energies for attending to major questions of policy. He must also set his face more sternly against yielding to the importunities of organisers of ceremonial functions of various descriptions who assume that no function is complete without the Prime Minister being in the centre of it. While his fundamental democratic instincts will not permit him to keep away for long from direct touch with the people, he has to bear in mind that his increasingly precious time must be devoted in future to the most vital national purposes.

Mr. Nehru has made very few changes in his new Cabinet. With the Congress continuing in power in the new Parliament and committed to the implementation of programmes and policies largely initiated during the Second Five-Year Plan, it is understandable that most of those in the old Cabinet who were in charge of specific portfolios should be allowed to carry on as before. In enlarging the size of the Cabinet from 12 to 17, by creating a new Ministry of Steel and Heavy Industries and upgrading four Ministers of State to Cabinet rank, Mr. Nehru may appear to have gone against his own advice to the State Ministries. The circumstances which have necessitated the expansion of Cabinet posts are obvious, and for a country of India's size, with a growing public sector and with various regional claims to be harmonised, a Cabinet of 17 cannot be considered too large. The only reshuffle among the older members of the Cabinet is the transfer of Mr. Jagjiwan Ram from Railways to Transport and Communications—which was held by Dr. Subbarayan in the old Cabinet—and the appointment of Sardar Swaran Singh, who was formerly Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel, as Railway Minister. There is no need to read any serious meaning into this change, as