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SOURCE NINE

[Transcript](#) | [Useful notes](#)British government paper on the strength of democracy in India in 1959
(PRO ref: CAB 21/4571)India

21. The monolithic party which gained independence for the country remains unfragmented under its original leadership. With the exception of the Communists, who are the only effective contenders for power, other parties have been steam rolled out of existence. Within these limits, and with acknowledgment to the flavour of authoritarianism which is becoming increasingly conspicuous under Congress rule, India has so far succeeded in maintaining not only the form, but also much of the substance, of democracy, including universal suffrage. How far this record will endure in States which have elected Communist Governments, of which Kerala was the first, remains to be seen. The real test will come when Mr. Nehru goes. It is unlikely that any of his possible successors will then have sufficient authority or personal magnetism to preserve Congress Party as a monolithic bloc. Indeed, if, stable democratic government is to survive, it would probably be in India's best interests if the Party did divide into a left and right wing and so provide a healthy effective opposition party.

How to use this source

1 Study this source carefully. Ask yourself whether the source supports or contradicts the view that:

- The British left India as soon as the people wanted them to
- The British left because of the actions of important individuals
- The British were forced out by peaceful political protests
- The British were forced out by armed resistance
- The British wanted to leave because the area was causing them problems

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