

boundary approximating to the Indian line. It was only in official Chinese maps of the twentieth century that the Chinese Government had included large parts of Indian territory in this sector within Tibet. Mr Nehru said that there should be little doubt regarding the boundary between Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in India and the Tibet region. The 1954 agreement between India and China regarding Tibet specified six passes in this area, and these by implication were recognised as border passes. In fact, the Government of India had always been in control of the Indian ends of these passes.

Regarding the eastern sector of the boundary, Mr Nehru said that it was wrong to argue that the 1914 Convention delineating this sector of the boundary was illegal. The arrangements for the Simla Conference were made with the full knowledge and consent of the Government of China. At the Conference, the Chinese representative fully participated and the Tibetan representative took part in the discussions on an equal footing with the Chinese and the then Indian Government's representative.

At no stage, either then or later, did the Chinese Government object to the boundary between India and Tibet being discussed at that conference. The Chinese representative was fully aware of the boundary that had been settled between India and Tibet. But the Chinese Government did not at that time or later raise any objection to this delineation. In the circumstances, the boundary settled between India and Tibet in 1914 must in accordance with accepted international practice be regarded as binding on both Tibet and China. Mr Nehru added that the tribes inhabiting the area south of the McMahon Line were of the same stock as the hill tribes of Assam and had no kinship with the Tibetans. On the other hand, Indian administrations gradually moved up to these areas, which were extensively surveyed in the years 1911-13. It was on the basis of this detailed information that the boundary was settled in 1914.

Mr Nehru rejected the Chinese Prime Minister's suggestion that the boundaries of Sikkim and Bhutan did not fall

within the scope of the present discussion. The Chinese Government recognised as far back as 1890 that the Government of India had direct and exclusive control over the internal administration and foreign relations of Sikkim. There could be no dispute regarding Sikkim's boundary with Tibet, for the 1890 Convention defined that boundary and it was five years later demarcated on the ground. Chinese maps, however, showed sizable areas of Bhutan as parts of Tibet, and under treaty relationships with Bhutan, the Government of India was the only competent authority to take up with other Governments matters concerning Bhutan's external relations. The rectification of errors in Chinese maps regarding Bhutan's boundary with Tibet was, therefore, a matter which had to be considered along with the boundary of India with Tibet in the same sector.

Mr Nehru answered the various Chinese arguments based on maps. Walker's Map of the Ladakh frontier, which the Chinese maps followed, only where it suited them, was based on an earlier map of Strachey, who knew very little about Ladakh, and drew the frontier where he thought the main water-parting lay. Accurate maps of the whole Ladakh area became possible only from 1865, when surveys were undertaken, and most maps since then had been showing a boundary more in accordance with our line. If official Indian maps had been showing the McMahon Line only since 1937, it was because the British Indian Government had hoped that China would accept the Simla Convention as a whole. Another reason for the discrepancy between earlier and later official Indian maps before 1947 was that British cartographers as a rule showed in their maps the administrative boundaries irrespective of the actual alignment of the frontier.

The suggestion that Indian maps since 1947 had been showing more territory within India than the McMahon Line was also baseless. Only in the Migyitun area did the alignment shown in Indian maps differ slightly from the treaty map. This was because in 1914 the exact topographical features of this area were not known; and Indian maps were now showing the boundary precisely.

Mr Nehru also dealt with the Chinese arguments based on maps published privately in other countries. The edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* cited by Premier Chou En-lai showed in the eastern sector roughly the line now claimed by China; but the same map showed the whole of Aksaichin as part of Ladakh. And if such private maps were to be referred to, Mr Nehru said there were a large number in support of the traditional boundary stressed by India and cited some examples.

Mr Nehru emphatically repudiated the allegation that in recent times the Government of India had invaded and occupied "a number of places in Tibet." The note attached to the Prime Minister's letter proved conclusively that it was in fact Chinese personnel that had crossed the Indian border at a number of places. A road had been built across north-east Ladakh and in 1958 Indian personnel carrying out routine patrol duties in this area were arrested and detained for five weeks.

In the Pangong area, also in Ladakh, Chinese forces had been pushing forward aggressively in recent years, and had established a camp on the western bank of the Spanggur Lake, which, even according to some official Chinese maps, was in Indian territory. In 1956 and 1957 Chinese parties were found in the Spiti area in the Punjab State. Shipki is one of the border passes mentioned in the 1954 Agreement; but in 1956 a Chinese patrol advanced well within the Indian side of the pass and on being asked to withdraw threatened to use arms.

The Nilang-Jadhang area, in Uttar Pradesh, which the Chinese Premier had cited as an example of a historical dispute, had traditionally been part of India; but here again armed Chinese personnel were noticed in 1956. Bara Hoti, which the Government of India were accused by the Chinese Premier of having occupied was in fact a small camping-ground in the State of Uttar Pradesh. Even Chinese maps up to 1958 showed the boundary in this sector in a manner which made it clear that Bara Hoti was in India. Yet since 1954, Chinese personnel had been persistently visiting the area.

At a conference held in Delhi in 1958, it was revealed that the Chinese representatives did not even know the location and extent of the area which they were claiming. But the Government of India, in the interests of a peaceful settlement, suggested that armed personnel should not be sent to the area. The Chinese authorities, however, had ignored this agreement. On the eastern sector of the boundary, Chinese troops visited Khinzemane in Indian territory and occupied Longju.

Mr Nehru repudiated charges of violations of air space and of shielding armed Tibetan rebels. He asserted that India had all along pursued a peaceful policy. "We did not release to the public the information which we had about the various border intrusions into our territory by Chinese personnel since 1954, the construction of a road across the Indian border in Ladakh and the arrest of our personnel in Aksaichin area in 1958, and their detention. We did not give publicity to this in the hope that peaceful solution of the disputes could be found by agreement by the two countries, without public excitement on both sides. In fact, our failure to do so has now resulted in sharp, but legitimate criticism of the Government both in Parliament and in the press in our country. Far from using force, we sought a peaceful settlement of the disputes," he said, adding that till recently India did not have military force in the border area.

II

Historically, the background of the McMahon line has to be traced back to the Younghusband expedition and the Lhasa Convention in 1904. In subsequent years the Chinese Government, though in decline, strove to regain control in Tibet. Feng-Chien, the Deputy Resident, was ordered to proceed to Tibet. He took up residence at Batang. The severity and arrogance with which he treated the local Lamas provoked them into revolt and he was killed. This provided Peking with an opportunity to send troops into Tibet. The Chinese army, led by the well-known General Chao Erh-feng,

conquered Batang and occupied the adjoining area in 1906. The General appointed Chinese magistrates in place of the local authorities, introduced laws curtailing the power of the monasteries and sought to settle Chinese immigrants there.

Thus the old Chinese forward policy in Tibet was revived. Dege fell to the Chinese troops in 1908 and Chamdo, Draya and Markan in 1909. In February 1910, the Chinese army marched to Lhasa from Chamdo resulting in the flight of the 13th Dalai Lama. During the subsequent operations in Tibet, the Chinese troops crossed into the Mishmi country, which had never been a part of Tibet. This naturally caused concern in India and then the Government of India came to recognise the necessity of delineating the Indo-Tibetan frontier in order to avoid Chinese expansion in the sub-montane area. At that time Burma was part of the Indian empire. A part of Burma's northern frontier with China had been demarcated following discussions between the two Governments between 1894 and 1900. The last point of the demarcated frontier was located at 27° 40'. From there to the eastern tip of Bhutan was a gap, which had to be filled.

The Government of India proceeded with the task in a scientific manner. Exploration parties surveyed the area between 1911 and 1913 to determine the exact southern limits of Tibetan jurisdiction. Simultaneously, steps were taken to bring the tribal area under the Indian Administration. Sadiya and Balipara areas were constituted into political tracts under the charge of two political officers, who worked under the control of the Assam Governor. When the exact northern limits of Tibet's jurisdiction had been determined in 1913, the Government of India made the move to convene a tripartite conference to settle this and allied issues.

The Chinese Government resisted the proposal for a conference on the plea that the existing treaties had sufficiently clearly defined Tibet's status. While these discussions about the desirability of a fresh treaty were still on, it was reported that acting as the Dalai Lama's representative, the

controversial Dorjjeff, formerly the Dalai Lama's teacher, had signed a treaty on behalf of the Tibetan Government with Mongolia at Urga. Under the Treaty, the two Governments recognised each other's independence. This alarmed both India and China. Since Mongolia had already been converted into a Russian protectorate, an alliance between Mongolia and Tibet revived the fear that the Russian influence would be extended to Tibet. The British authorities threatened to negotiate a new agreement with Tibet alone if the Chinese Government proved obdurate.

Before the Simla conference opened on October 13, 1913, China and Britain agreed that the Tibetan plenipotentiary would participate on equal footing, a fact which the Dalai Lama recalled in his address at the Indian Council of World Affairs in New Delhi on September 7, 1959. This denoted a change in the status of Tibet, particularly in view of the fact that during the negotiations for trade regulations in 1907-08, it had been agreed between the British and Chinese Governments that the Tibetan representative would act under the direction of the Chinese plenipotentiary. In 1912 the 13th Dalai Lama had repudiated the Chinese claims over Tibet and proclaimed Tibet's independence.

At the conference, the Chinese representative accepted the British delegate's suggestion regarding the division of Tibet into inner and outer zones and then the argument became confined to the demarcation of the boundary between Inner Tibet and Outer Tibet. Towards the end of March, the British delegate submitted a draft convention on the basis of the division of Tibet into Inner and Outer Tibet. Outer Tibet was to enjoy autonomy and China was forbidden to send troops, and civil and military officers there. It was initialled by all the three delegates. *But the Chinese representative was later instructed not to sign it. But the Chinese Government informed the British Minister at Peking that except the boundary arrangements between Inner and Outer Tibet all other provisions were acceptable to it in principle.* The British and Tibetan delegates signed it on July 3, 1914. Then the First World War broke out and no one bothered about Tibet.

Under Article IX of the convention, it was stipulated that "for the purpose of the present convention the borders of Tibet, and the boundary between Inner and Outer Tibet shall be shown in red and blue respectively on the map attached hereto." The map was duly signed by the British and Tibetan representatives. It has now been published for the first time in its atlas issued in early 1960. It was a fairly large map—1 inch to 8 miles. Letters regarding the boundary line named after Sir A. H. McMahon, British representative at the Simla Conference, were exchanged.

In fixing the Indo-Tibetan border, considerations of geography and ethnology were given full consideration. Geographically, the line follows the crest of the Himalayas or high mountain ranges. The Burmese section represents the northern watershed of the Irrawady river. From the Indo-Tibetan-Burmese trijunction, it follows in a bulge the crest of the Himalayas and for a considerable distance in the western section the highest ranges there. This line is the northern shed of the Brahmaputra except in places where the Lohit, Dihang (Tsangpo), Subansiri and Namyang rivers break through this watershed. Even there the line crosses the rivers after descending well-defined spurs. There is hardly any gap.

South of the crest, it is an entirely different country from Tibet. Gone is the high plateau. It is a sub-montane belt sloping down to the Brahmaputra valley. The tribes there—Mishmis, Daflas, Miris, Abors and Monbas—are of non-Tibetan stock whom the Tibetans have kept at safe distance. The Tibetans treated them as Lonpas, counterpart of the Indian concept of *Mlechhas*. Tibet has never exercised jurisdiction over them or over the area. There has undoubtedly been cultural interchange in this border area as is inevitable in any frontier area anywhere. But that has to be clearly distinguished from political jurisdiction.

III

Having made up their mind as to the policy to be pursued regarding India, the Chinese Communists were

not to be influenced by arguments regarding the validity or otherwise of their claims. They continued to push ahead in Ladakh. They were presumably encouraged by the fact that there was no Indian outpost in the area and Mr Nehru himself referred to it in terms which suggested that he did not attach much importance to it. He described the area as very cold, grassless, treeless and uninhabited. In this march forward, the Chinese troops sighted an Indian police party and opened fire on it on October 21, 1959. Nine Indians were killed and ten taken prisoners. They were released on November 15, 1959, after they had been made to sign a confession that they opened fire first and to re-enact the fighting scene so that the Chinese could take pictures for propaganda purposes. The policemen were put to indescribable hardship and humiliation. The incident took place 50 miles inside Indian territory, which showed that the Chinese had occupied nearly 6,000 sq. miles of our territory. Instead of vacating aggression and expressing regret, Peking all along took up the position that the Indian policemen were the aggressors and that the incident took place on Chinese soil. Later it was disclosed that the Chinese were in occupation of Chanthan salt mines area in north-eastern Ladakh as well.

Mr Chou En-lai added insult to injury when he proposed on November 7, 1959, demilitarisation of the Sino-Indian border on the McMahon Line and in Ladakh to a depth of 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) from the existing areas under the control of the either party. At best the suggestion amounted to freezing the *status quo*, which gave the Chinese control over 6,000 sq. miles of Indian territory. To steal a propaganda advantage, he suggested a meeting of the two Prime Ministers. Mr Nehru instead suggested on November 16, 1959, the evacuation of the disputed territories by both sides in Ladakh and of Longju by the Chinese troops.

He said in a letter to Mr Chou En-lai: "A proper understanding of the facts in regard to the Sino-Indian boundary is essential to the consideration of any proposal that is made for the avoidance of border clashes. The facts are that on our north-east frontier, the entire territory up to

the border (which is referred to as the McMahon Line) has been for long years part of India. Our civil administration has been functioning there, and there are important civil divisional headquarters not far from the border. At no point, except at Longju, are Chinese forces in occupation of any area south of the Indian border. The boundary in this area passes over a terrain, the height of which varies from 14,000 to 20,000 feet above sea level. In this extremely difficult terrain almost all our border checkposts are situated on high hill features. We do not know where the Chinese posts are, but I understand that at no point along the length of this sector are posts on the two sides situated within sight of each other. In view of the difficult mountainous terrain, even where the distance between two posts is short in the map or as the crow flies, the actual journey from one place to another might take several days.

"In view of these facts, we think that there should not be the slightest risk of any border clash if each Government instructs its outposts not to send out patrols. It is only when armed patrols go out in these difficult mountainous areas that there is likelihood of clashes taking place. We have, in fact, instructed our border outposts not to send out any forward patrols for the present. It would be extremely difficult in practice to establish a new line of outposts in the rear, whether they are to be 10 or 20 kilometres from the international boundary. . . .

"Longju stands on a different footing altogether. As we have repeatedly stated earlier, we disagree with your statement that it is on your side of the so-called McMahon Line. We have no doubt that it is on our side. But whether it is on your side or ours, the facts are that your armed forces attacked and ousted our personnel from Longju, inflicting casualties on them, and forcibly occupied our outpost. We cannot, therefore, agree to any arrangement, even as an interim measure, which would keep your forcible possession intact. The proper course, which we have already suggested to you, would be for you to withdraw from Longju. We on our part will not reoccupy it. This suggestion, if accepted, will immediately result in a lowering of tension. . . .

I presume that your suggestion for a zone of withdrawal is intended also to apply to the Sino-Indian border in the middle areas. That is, where it touches our States of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. In these sectors also, there is no ambiguity about our border and at no point do the Chinese authorities occupy any area below the boundary. This would apply to the border of Sikkim also. If, therefore, we observe the precaution which I have mentioned above, all risk of border clashes will be eliminated in this sector of the frontier also.

"I shall now deal with the international frontier in the Ladakh area of our State of Jammu and Kashmir. In my letter to you of September 26 and in our note of November 4, we have described in detail the international boundary in this sector, supported by factual data. Unfortunately, we do not yet know with any precision where the frontier line lies according to the claims of the Chinese Government. This is a matter of surmise based on small scale maps published in China. These maps themselves have not always been consistent, and different lines are sometimes indicated in them.... An agreement about the observance of the *status quo* would, therefore, be meaningless as the facts concerning the *status quo* are themselves disputed. As we are at present discussing a short-term interim measure to avoid border clashes, it is essential that we do not get involved in interminable discussions on the *status quo* at this stage.

"I suggest, therefore, that in the Ladakh area, both our Governments should agree on the following as an interim measure. The Government of India should withdraw all personnel to the west of the line which the Chinese Government has shown as the international boundary in its 1956 maps which, so far as we are aware, are their latest maps. Similarly, the Chinese Government should withdraw its personnel to the east of the international boundary which has been described by the Government of India in its earlier notes and correspondence and shown in its official maps. Since the two lines are separated by long distances, there should not be the slightest risk of border clashes between

the forces on either side. The area is almost entirely uninhabited. It is thus not necessary to maintain administrative personnel in this area bounded by the two lines on the east and the west."

Mr Nehru indicated willingness to meet Mr Chou En-lai after the necessary foundation had been laid for a settlement. The proposals were patently reasonable. But they did not suit China's over-all strategy and were, therefore, rejected by Peking in a letter from Mr Chou En-lai to Mr Nehru on December 18, 1959. He reiterated the original suggestions regarding the meeting of the Prime Ministers and demilitarisation and neutralisation of the frontier. He named Rangoon or any place in China and December 26 as the venue and date of the proposed meeting. Mr Nehru rejected these proposals for reasons listed in the previous letter.

CHAPTER X

CPI's Role

TIBET has now become a province of China. The massive colonisation by the Hans will in a matter of a few years reduce the Tibetans to a hopeless minority of *pariahs*. Thus the Chinese forces as firmly lodged on the Indian border, which has already been activated. The Chinese attempt clearly is to gain easy access to the plains. This must focus attention on the possibility of a link-up between the Chinese forces on and inside the Himalayan border and the Indian Communists, who place proletarian internationalism above nationalism. It is in this context that the role of the Communist Party of India should be examined on the issues of Tibet and Chinese incursions into Indian territory.

As soon as the revolt broke out, the CPI lined itself fully behind the Chinese stand. The March 29 issue of the *New Age* weekly, official organ of the Communist Party of India, said in its "Notes of the Week" column: "It is common knowledge that the People's Government of China respects Tibetan customs and autonomy to such an extent that it is not even introducing the reforms and social changes that are being implemented in the rest of China." The columnist, Mr P. C. Joshi, former General Secretary of the CPI, who is known to have staged a come-back to leadership after a long period of disgrace with Chinese help, added that the "Kuomintang and foreign imperialist circles" had combined "with the reactionary elements within Tibet" to stir up trouble. He charged that the "Anglo-American correspondents" had "linked up with right-wing Indian press to build up a terrific press campaign against People's

China." He described the Praja Socialist Party leaders as "warriors of the American lobby," who challenged "India's independent foreign policy."

On March 31, the Communist Party issued a statement completely endorsing the Chinese position not only in respect of developments in Tibet, but also on the questions of Kalimpong being the commanding centre of the rebellion. The statement said: "The people, who are responsible for this considerable and wanton suffering in Tibet, are the same who cause it elsewhere. They are the reactionaries who do not want to move with times, the serf-owners who wish to prevent the dawn of modern enlightenment and equality in Tibet. Misusing the trust placed in them by the People's Democratic Government of China, exploiting the scrupulous regard shown by the Government of China towards Tibetan autonomy, these elements conspired with foreign imperialists to stage a revolt. They had opposed land reform and every progressive measure in the interests of the peoples.

"The People's Government of China, with a full sense of responsibility, has drawn our attention to Kalimpong, which according to it, has become the command centre of the rebels. We all know that many shady happenings are taking place at Kalimpong and that a lot of doubtful foreigners are visiting this place. In the interest of both countries *as well as the inviolability of our national soil*, our Government should immediately investigate the affairs in Kalimpong and place the truth before the people." It charged that the PSP and the Jana Sangh were whipping up anti-Chinese feelings with the aim of sowing "discord between our two friendly peoples. They only bring grist to the mill of American imperialism." The Communist Party extended "warm greetings to the Communist Party of China under whose guidance the People's Government of China is leading the people of Tibet from medieval darkness to prosperity and equality."¹ (*Italics mine*) The italicised part of the statement was clearly a warning that the Indian border could be violated if India did not fall in line with the Chinese policy in Tibet.

¹ *New Age*, Delhi, April 5, 1959.

Mr P. C. Joshi wrote in the April 5, 1959 issue of the *New Age*: "The same reactionary set that seizes every opportunity to change India's foreign policy . . . is behind the Tibet agitation and is very cleverly seeking wider support. The self-styled friends of Tibet are playing the big imperialist game of exploiting the Tibetan tragedy to bring about a change in India's policy towards China and thereby in the world alignment of forces." He endorsed the Chinese case that the Tibetan upper strata reactionaries had taken advantage of the magnanimous policy of the Central Government to maintain "old links with the Kuomintang and the imperialist circles" and to stage the open rebellion. It was remarkable that he should have attempted to place China's aggression in Tibet at par with the arrest of Sheikh Abdullah in Kashmir and action by the Government of India against the Naga tribesmen in the north-east. Mr Joshi added: "It is only the imperialists who insist that we are threatened with aggression from China. The Indian Prime Minister has over and over again stated that there is no danger of aggression from the Chinese side. Asoka Mehta (PSP), however, says: 'Today it is Tibet, tomorrow it may be Nepal and India.' The PSP General Secretary, N. G. Goray, hailed at a Delhi meeting the Tibetan rebellion as a national struggle against 'Chinese colonialism'."

He defended the Communist Party's statement about Kalimpong. He said: "We have said nothing new about Kalimpong. Everybody knows Kalimpong is an international centre of espionage. The matter has been raised in our Parliament before. The Deputy Minister, Mrs Lakshmi Menon, has made much of the investigations up to August last, which is besides the point. During the Tibetan rebellion and after its failure, Kalimpong is being misused by the Tibetan rebels and their supporters. All that our Party has demanded is that the Government investigate the matter and prevent the misuse of Indian national soil. Our very talk of a probe has made the friends of Tibetan reactionaries who want the festering sore to survive and spread, start raving."

Equally significant was Mr Joshi's statement: "And for whom in Tibet are they shedding tears? It is the reactionary

ecclesiastics and serf-owners who have misused the unanimity of their socialist Government, resisted even those social reforms within Tibet that we have already put through in every Indian state, who provoked an armed uprising in co-operation with the exiled Kuomintang and imperialist circles, who are out to break up the unity of their motherland and go over to the imperialist camp, only to preserve the dark medieval past of Tibet which they represent."

As noted earlier this issue of the paper carried an article which sought to prove that Kalimpong was the commanding centre of the rebellion and that Indian officials on the north-eastern frontier collaborated with "imperialist agents" and "Tibetan reactionaries" in promoting the rebellion in Tibet.

On April 12, the *New Age* expounded the same line, identical with the Chinese position, editorially. The editorial chided Mr Nehru for having expressed at his press conference on April 5 the view that the Communist Party of India had uprooted itself from national sentiment. This issue also carried an article by Mr Rahul Sankrityayana, noted Hindi writer, known to be a convinced Marxist, which supported the Chinese claim of sovereignty over Tibet. As if to frighten those, who did not view with favour China's policies in Tibet, Mr Sankrityayana reminded them of our long common borders with China. He added: "Only the borders of Bhutan and Nepal separate the two countries. In matters pertaining to external affairs, Bhutan is in Indian hands. Nepal, even when independent, can guard its northern border only with the help of India. Hence, our northern border extending over thousands of miles is linked with the People's Republic of China. Quite a few of our leaders, victims of their own foolishness, are making Quixotic attempts to see that India takes to the path of active opposition to China and make Tibet a pretext for it. But what will be the result of this idiocy? Constant enmity, fear, suspicion! From whatever angle we see there is no need for us to interfere in the happenings in Tibet. Only those overzealous ones, who want India to accept US domination, would disrupt our good relations with China. However, this shall not happen. The revolt of the Tibetan

feudal lords is a water bubble. It would not take long to burst."

Mr Sankrityayana also supported the Chinese charge about Kalimpong. He wrote: "As it is known Kalimpong is a hotbed of intelligence activities and intrigues carried on by foreign agents. Every child in Kalimpong can see with his own eyes the activities of the foreign agents. The common people when they see hundreds of paupers of yesterday strutting the streets like dandies, naturally ask: wherefrom do they get all this money? It is considered a religious duty among the Westerners living in Kalimpong to work against Communism. The foreigners are pouring dollars like water here. The Christians are instigated to declare war on Communists in the name of Christ. The Government of India is probably being told that the number of anti-Chinese people in Kalimpong is negligible. The Government of India should ask more reliable persons to verify the truth. I am stating all this on the basis of my personal experience of Kalimpong."

On May 3, 1959, Mr B. T. Ranadive, who as General Secretary of the Communist Party of India led the insurrection in 1948 and 1949, took up cudgels with Mr Nehru for his statement of April 27, which has been quoted at length earlier. He challenged Mr Nehru's view that China had been primarily, if not wholly, responsible for the deterioration in Sino-Indian relations. In fact, he squarely laid the blame on non-Communist Indian leaders, including Mr Nehru. He wrote: "It would have been less than human for the Chinese to swallow this without a counter-reply. If Indians feel hurt at the charge of expansionism levelled at a few among them, should not the Chinese feel hurt when their Government is attacked as an aggressor and charged by the Prime Minister of India with deception? Of course, we do want freedom of speech and should not stifle free expression of thought. But then we need not complain if people in other countries give similar free expression to what they think."²

Mr Ranadive expressed the view that there was confusion regarding India's "aims in Tibet." Also, "it was highly

² *Ibid*, May 3, 1959.

improper that an official of the Indian Government distributed" the Dalai Lama's statement at Tezpur on April 18. The Communist leader characterised the statement itself as "atrocious" because the Dalai Lama had spoken of Tibet's assertion of the will to independence in the past and of the forcible manner in which the 1951 Agreement had been imposed on the Tibetans. He said: "That statement is more or less a virtual repudiation of the Sino-Tibetan Agreement and a claim of Tibetan independence from China. One cannot permit anybody to draw on India's support to snatch Tibet from China under the plea of autonomy. If our stand is that Tibet is a part of China, then our Government cannot lend even indirect support to a demand for independence and secession. Some interested people in India wish to perform a sleight of hand and equate autonomy with independence. Such an attitude will be an unwarranted interference in China's internal affairs...."

"It is highly improper to suggest that there has been a breach of assurance by China on the issue of autonomy of Tibet. It must be remembered that there is no tripartite agreement between China, India and Tibet. There is an agreement between China and Tibet.... The Government of India obviously recognises this bipartite agreement. The fact that Tibet has autonomy under the leadership of the Central Government, does not mean that a foreign Government can sit in judgement over the functioning of autonomy in Tibet. This is a basic mistake which none should make.

"And yet we seem to be indulging in a lot of gratuitous advice as to whether a particular emergency should be met by political or military or other methods.... *It is evident that even official statements of the Indian Government have tended to go beyond expression of human sympathy for those suffering, and have revealed a distinct political bias.* [Italics mine] There is one-sided acceptance of the rebel story; there is one-sided rejection of all that the Chinese said, including the authenticity of Dalai Lama's letters. In the name of cultural ties, of human sympathy, of religion, there is a tendency to forget political frontiers and to act as if they were no longer there.... Private organisations and

individuals are no doubt at liberty to express their opinions on world events. But no Government can hail a rebellion in a friendly country as a national revolt and escape the charge of intervention in internal matters."

He inevitably raised the question: "With whom do we sympathise?" and said in reply: "And we are today sympathising with those who stand for static society, for serfdom, those who abhor change because it hurts their vested interests. We blame those who stand for dynamic change and seek to lead Tibet out of medieval darkness."³

The *New Age* on May 3, 1959, carried still another article by Ramdass discussing the alleged inaccuracies in the Dalai Lama's statement. It followed the Chinese line that Tibet had been "one of China's administrative areas for over 700 years," that the Sino-Tibetan Agreement was not imposed on the Tibetans and that it had been fully respected as far as the Chinese Central Government was concerned. It repeated the charge that the reactionary cliques in Tibet had in the past been responsible for the premature deaths of the Dalai Lama. Of course, the writer was not expected to take note of the fact that the period in which these deaths took place happened to coincide with the one in which the Chinese rulers exercised considerable power in Tibet. It sought to establish that the Local Tibet Government had been guilty of violating the 1951 Agreement and of sabotaging the decisions of the Preparatory Committee which were aimed at ameliorating the conditions of the common people in Tibet. The article placed great reliance on the Dalai Lama's letters to General Tan Kuan-san, which were evidently written in an extremely difficult situation in a desperate attempt to avoid an open and irrevocable breach, to denounce the Dalai Lama's Tezpur statement.

In this issue the paper carried still another article denouncing the Praja Socialist Party—China's pet object of hate—because it had taken the initiative in holding a meeting of representative citizens of Calcutta, which decided to convene a conference on May 16 and 17, 1959, to

³ *Ibid.*

"ascertain facts about Tibet and to arouse public awareness in the matter so that a correct stand may be adopted." The grievance was that at the meeting speakers had expressed concern over the threat to India's security as a consequence of the establishment of a major military power on her border.

On May 10, 1959, Mr Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the Communist Party, wrote in the *New Age*: "The fate that the uprising organised by a handful of counter-revolutionaries in Tibet has met constitutes a major defeat for imperialists and their allies. With the stranglehold of reaction over the economic and social life of Tibetan broken, the people of Tibet can now go forward." He went on to repeat the view that the "imperialists" were happy because the developments in Tibet had produced a strain in Sino-Indian relations.

Mr Ghosh did not stop at this. He said that most of the top leaders of the Praja Socialist Party, the Jana Sangh and some leading members of Mr Nehru's own party had never accepted the policy of friendship for the "socialist world" and "they, too, aided by the monopolist-controlled press, have let loose a barrage of propagandea against China, and on the plea of 'sympathy' with Tibet, are openly supporting the rebels, and their cause." Mr Ghosh was surprised that Mr Nehru should think that "India's conduct during the whole Tibetan episode has been unimpeachable and fully in conformity with the principles of 'Panch Sheela', while all the blame lies with the Chinese." He refuted Mr Nehru's implied suggestion in his speech in the Rajya Sabha on May 4 that the Hate-India campaign in China had been engineered from the top.

Mr Ghosh said that the Chinese press and leaders were more critical of India than ever before "because, at no time in the past did the Indian Government, as distinct from private individuals, political parties and press, adopt such an attitude towards the internal matter of the Chinese Republic, as they have done now. Even the statements that Mr Nehru as head of the Indian Government has made in the recent period, cannot but be considered as being heavily biased

in favour of the rebels." (Italics mine) The proof, he adduced was that Mr Nehru had not withdrawn "his characterisation of the rebellion in Tibet being a 'national uprising'."

Mr Ghosh tried to explain away the charge of expansionism. According to him, the charge had not been made against Mr Nehru or the Indian Government but against "certain reactionary circles in India." Similarly he tried to explain away the charge of the Dalai Lama being held in duress by arguing that it was not directed against the Government of India but against "the reactionary elements who surround him, who are in league with the imperialists." In conclusion, he opined: "*It is also admitted by all that China's action in Tibet in no way jeopardises the security of India nor does it affect Indian interests adversely.*" This should form the basis of our attitude, our words and deeds." (Italics mine)

Without realising it, Mr S. A. Dange knocked out the bottom of Mr Ghosh's argument on the issue of expansionism. In a speech in the Lok Sabha, he said that the Praja Socialist Party was not "capable of expansionism or anything at all, because to practice expansionism, two things are required: first, political guts, and secondly real, hard guns. Fortunately the PSP has got neither of them. So, I am not accusing them of expansionism, though they may like to bask in the idea of being a great party in the country and all that."⁴

The Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party adopted a resolution on the question of Sino-Indian relations which again wholly approved the Chinese position on the character of the revolt and the Indian critics of China. After referring to Mr Nehru's role in promoting India-China friendship in the past, it said: "It is a matter of deep regret, therefore, that on several occasions in recent weeks, he should have permitted himself to take positions and make utterances which cannot be reconciled with his own foreign policy and its guiding principle, the Panch Sheela, on whose basis alone India's relations with the People's Republic of China can be upheld and carried

⁴ *Ibid.*

forward." The Committee said: "Some unfortunate and incorrect steps on the part of the Government of India are being assiduously exploited by the enemies of India's foreign policy, who would like to see it reversed. It will also be noted that the imperialists are working for a further deterioration of India-China relations and the collapse of the Bandung spirit. No doubt they and their friends will spare no efforts in the coming period to achieve this objective."⁵

Like the Chinese rulers, the Indian Communists were particularly upset over the role Mr Jaya Prakash Narayan was playing in mobilising public opinion on the issue of Tibet. In an article in the *New Age*, on July 19, Mr Zia-ul-Haq described him as the "Prime Minister, of the self-proclaimed, self-exiled 'Government' of Tibet that now sits in Mussoorie." He sought to demolish Mr Narayan's case, which he made in a speech in New Delhi quoted earlier, on the ground that it was not suzerainty but sovereignty that the Chinese claimed over Tibet. Mr Haq demanded that the Dalai Lama should be told to keep quiet, a plea he repeated subsequently in utterly undignified and unrestrained language through the columns of the *New Age*.

We have quoted these writings in the principal organ of the Communist Party and its resolutions at such length to underscore the fact that the CPI more than endorsed the position of Peking in total disregard for the sentiments and views of the Indian people. A comparison of the writings in the Chinese press and the speeches of the Chinese leaders on this issue with the writings and speeches of the Indian Communists is an education itself, particularly in view of the fact the latter were running the grave risk of being isolated and thus being weakened in their struggle for power. The apparent implication is that Peking had managed to acquire considerable influence in the affairs of the Communist Party of India. This inference is reinforced by the performance of the Indian Communists on the issue of Chinese incursions into Indian territory was no better.

A statement issued by the Secretariat of the CPI on August 30 did not make any reference to the McMahon Line as being

⁵ *Ibid.*

India's frontier. Instead it reiterated the Chinese case that a great part of the northern Himalayan border has not been clearly demarcated. "Moreover, the absence of any formal agreement between free India and the People's Republic of China in this matter is liable to give rise to confusion and misunderstanding. The recent incidents involving the border patrols of India and China have taken place in this background," it said in an obvious attempt to confuse the issues and place at par the aggressor and its victim. The statement was made after Chinese troops had forcibly occupied Longju outpost in NEFA.

Subsequently the Central Executive Committee of the CPI met in Calcutta to review the situation arising from the Sino-Indian border dispute and Chinese incursions into India. The resolution, which it adopted on September 25, 1959, illustrated the CPI's disregard for the country's interests. It expressed "concern over the deterioration in the relations between India and China in recent months." It deplored "particularly the recent unfortunate border incidents and disputes between the two countries." The developments, it added, were a matter of concern for all "freedom-loving Asians because India-China friendship has been the corner-stone of Afro-Asian solidarity and freedom." The CPI Executive Committee said: "These incidents are being exaggerated beyond all proportion by interested parties to create an atmosphere of suspicion and tension between Asia's two biggest countries." It reiterated the view that the trouble had arisen because the "areas involved have never been properly surveyed or delineated" and the "problem has not been taken up and negotiated." It felt that "*these differences can be resolved through friendly discussion without either side making prior acceptance of its own claims viz. the McMahon Line in one case and the Chinese maps in the other the pre-condition for commencing negotiations.*" (Italics mine) Thus the CPI would desire India to give up the existing frontier and agree to its being made uncertain and fluid, an objective for which the Chinese Government has been working since 1950.

As a sop to the national sentiment, the Executive Committee of the CPI said that the Communists would defend the country's territorial integrity. But it added immediately: "But the Committee is confident that Socialist China can never commit aggression against India just as our country has no intention of aggression against China." This subtle distinction between the position of China and India is noteworthy. Also in the absence of aggression, there is no question of defence.

The Committee inevitably charged the "imperialists" and Indian "reactionaries" with allegedly attempting to wreck the country's foreign policy and drag the country into the "net" of the "imperialist" powers. What was even more significant, it said: "*Moreover, these lamentable developments in India-China relations are being deliberately magnified and exploited for diverting people's attention from the problems of their life and living, for disrupting and suppressing the country's democratic movement and for inciting the people against the Communist Party which today stands as a powerful unifier of the democratic and patriotic forces, as also the defender of the rights and interests of the masses.*" (Italics mine) This was an open indictment of the ruling Congress Party, which was thus equated with the "imperialists" and the "reactionaries."⁶

Even before the Calcutta meeting, pro-Communist elements sought to create the impression that the party leadership was split on the issue.⁷ Mr S. A. Dange, Mr E. M. S. Namboodiripad, Mr Govindan Nair and Mr Z. A. Ahmed were described as the leaders of the "nationalist" wing. The "internationalist" section was said to be led by Mr P. C. Joshi, Mr Jyoti Basu and Mr Basavapunniah. The General Secretary, Mr Ajoy Ghosh, fresh from Moscow, it was reported, took up a middle position. Subsequently when the General Council met at Meerut in Uttar Pradesh

⁶ *Ibid.*, October 4, 1959.

⁷ *Link* weekly, New Delhi, September 20, 1950. The editor, Mr Edata Narayanan, was a member of the CPI for years. He then "ceased" to be a member. Several members of the staff are card-holding members of the CPI.

deliberate leaks were organised to give substance to these reports of differences in the leadership. Even the official party paper, *New Age*, referred to these "differences."

No one would explain why no leader left the party. Clearly the differences, if they existed at all, reflected divergent tactical approaches. In practice they did not amount to anything. In the history of the Communist movement, no Communist Party has ever split on the issue of nationalism. In fact one cannot be a Communist unless one is able to overcome this "bourgeois weakness." It may be recalled that the second international had been split by Lenin on this issue. His slogan of converting the First World War into an international civil war meant that the workers should turn their guns not on the national enemy but on their "bourgeois" Governments.

In spite of these stories of split and differences, the fact remained that the CPI leadership was enthusiastic about China. An editorial in the *New Age* on September 27, 1959, paid the warmest tribute to the Chinese Communist Party and its leader, Mao Tse-tung. It spoke of "Asian solidarity with India-China friendship as its bed-rock." It said: "*This friendship is a most cherished possession of both our peoples and no imperialist robber, no lurking reactionaries will ever be allowed to snatch it away. Temporary disagreements about the borders between the two countries can and will be settled through friendly discussions and negotiations. Let not the imperialists and their allies nurture any hopes of soiling this great edifice of friendship. . . . The defence and strengthening of this friendship is the highest patriotism, the biggest contribution to Asian and world peace.*" (Italics mine)

The editors of the *New Age* were even more enthusiastic about Communist China in the next issue dated October 4, 1959. On the crucial border issue, the editorial said: "The recent border disputes between India and China cause concern precisely because it is being utilised by imperialism and the reactionaries to drive a wedge between the two countries." The issue, wholly devoted to China, carried an article by Mr Liu Ning-yi, a member of the Central

Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, which said: "The imperialists and their agents in India have done their best to give the Indian people a distorted picture of the truth of the rebellion in Tibet and of Sino-Indian boundary question in an attempt to interfere in China's internal affairs, sow dissension between China and India and undermine the Five Principles of peaceful co-existence."

On October 21, 1959, Chinese troops opened fire on an Indian police patrol in Ladakh. Nine Indians were killed. The Secretariat of the CPI's National Council issued a statement, which was a masterpiece in vagueness. Of course, it did not use one word which could even distantly be regarded as critical of China. It was "of the opinion that there was no justification whatsoever for opening fire.... We hope that such incidents will not occur again and firing will not be resorted to under any circumstances." The question who opened fire first was conveniently slurred over. The Secretariat also urged the meeting of the Indian and Chinese Prime Ministers, a plea which Mr Chou En-lai himself made later.

Finally on November 14, 1959, the National Council released its resolution. The resolution was interpreted as a victory of the "nationalist" group in the CPI, which was indeed amazing. The resolution said: "Whatever the origin of the McMahon Line may be, the fact cannot be ignored that for several years this has been the frontier of India and the area south of the line has been under Indian administration. The National Council holds that the area south of the McMahon Line is now part of India and should remain in India." But even this grudging concession to public opinion was wholly negated by another part of the resolution, which said: "The Governments of India and China should start negotiations without either of them making the acceptance of its own stand by the other as a condition precedent to the starting of negotiations." This was reiteration of the earlier view that China need not accept the McMahon Line as the valid frontier with India.

The National Council said in the same resolution that in the eastern sector of the frontier (one covered by the

McMahon Line), there had been no mutually agreed border. In the western sector, the traditional frontier was vague and had never been delineated. Further, it urged the maintenance of the *status quo*, which meant that China should remain in occupation of Indian territory in Ladakh. The resolution, if read together with Mr Chou En-lai's letter of November 7, 1959, would clearly show that the CPI's "nationalist" stand was not at all different from the official Peking line.

The CPI endorsed China's charge that the reactionaries in India were working to ruin relations with China. The "reactionary forces . . . whipped up war psychosis and raised the false cry of Chinese aggression and threat to India's territorial integrity," the resolution said, adding "these developments are being deliberately magnified and exploited for diverting people's attention from the problems of their life and living and suppressing the country's democratic movement." Thus China was absolved of all responsibility for the border incidents and deterioration in Sino-Indian relations.

The Prospects

THE PRONOUNCEMENTS and activities of the Communist Party of India lead inevitably to the inference that they are closely co-ordinated with those of the Chinese Communists. Since the Communist movement has not ceased to be international in its character, it is only natural that it should be so. This is not to suggest that all Indian Communists serve consciously as agents of the Chinese policy of expansionism. The charge of Communists being fifth-columnists derives from an ignorance of the character of the movement. Communists everywhere firmly and wholeheartedly believe in the desirability and inevitability of revolution all over the world. Countries where the revolution has already taken place are regarded as citadels to be defended in the interest of the continuing battle. The successful Communist parties, on the other, owe it to themselves and fellow Communists still struggling to capture power to assist them. Tactics change, not the objective.

But the international character of the Communist movement is only one aspect of the matter. A Chinese or a Russian does not cease to be a Chinese or a Russian on becoming a Communist. His approach to the problems of the movement itself is greatly influenced by the history, tradition and the situation of his country. Being human, he is likely to hold that his own experience is valid for fellow Communists in other countries. This trend is likely to be aggravated in the case of a party like the Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese have always regarded themselves superior to others. This feeling of superiority is reinforced in the case of the Communists by the confidence that they

alone hold the key to the knowledge of social developments in Marxism-Leninism as interpreted by Mao Tse-tung. This is not a matter of conjecture. Ever since they came to power in 1949, the Chinese Communists have consistently emphasised that they alone could show the path to revolution to Communist parties in the under-developed countries of Asia and Africa. From the Communist point of view, there is considerable truth in the claim. Also being the stronger party in the alliance or partnership, the Chinese Communists can lay down the line for the Indian Communist Party. Again this should not be interpreted to mean that they impose a decision on the latter, for the process is far more complex.

It is, therefore, highly likely that the Chinese rulers are seeking to help repeat their own performance in India. An army with a safe base and hinterland for retreat and replenishment is the pre-requisite for accomplishing such a task. The consolidation of their rule and military strength in Tibet and its extension in the sub-Himalayan belt, a large part of which is tribal, would clearly place them in a position from which they can provide the wherewithals of a long-drawn armed struggle to the Indian Communists.

This view might look far-fetched on two counts. First, it is widely believed that the Indian Communists are firmly committed to the policy of seeking power through the ballot box. Secondly, the view is held in even top official circles that since the establishment of a neutral bloc is the principal objective of Soviet foreign policy in Asia and Africa, Moscow cannot afford to allow Peking to push India to the point where she has no choice but to line up firmly with the West in self-defence. We hold both these views to be erroneous from the long-term point of view, though they have relevance for the present.

It is common knowledge that it was for the first time at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in February 1956, that a reference was made by Mr Nikita Krushchev to the possibility of a peaceful socialist revolution. Till this point in the history of international Communism, violent insurrection was regarded as an article of

faith. Anyone who hinted at the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism was regarded as a renegade and a revisionist. But on the crucial questions of where and under what precise conditions the peaceful transition to "socialism" might occur, Khrushchev himself was silent. He merely asserted that it was possible in "many capitalist and formerly colonial countries." Mikoyan was more specific. He said that it was possible in "certain countries" on the border of Communist States. Peaceful socialist revolutions in these countries could, he said, be supported by "victorious socialism in neighbouring countries."

The example of Czechoslovakia was cited by Mikoyan in support of this thesis. As is known, the Communists were able to seize power in Czechoslovakia after they had as partners in a coalition Government under President Benes, armed their partisans and infiltrated into the army and the police. The Soviet army was lodged on the border, which demoralised the democratic forces. They gave in to save the country from being involved and ruined in a civil war. Thus, the Communist control of key Ministries in a coalition Government and the presence of a friendly army on the border are on Mikoyan's own showing, the preconditions of a peaceful "socialist" revolution. In the case of India, one of these preconditions has been fulfilled with a massive Chinese concentration on the Sino-Indian border. Once they are there in the sub-Himalayan belt, they can hope to influence decisions in New Delhi in favour of the Communist Party. The other condition of armed Communist partisans and infiltration into the security forces has yet to be fulfilled.

Apparently, the Communist Party of India was influenced by this formulation at the 20th Congress of the CPSU. The exigencies of the existing situation in the country—a fairly stable administration, a well disciplined army and absence of involvement in a war—and those of the Soviet foreign policy of professed friendship for India compelled a re-orientation in the stated programme of the CPI. The statement of principles in the preamble to the Party constitution was revised at the Amritsar Congress in April 1958.

to state that the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism (based on the inevitability of class war) must be integrated "with the realities of the Indian situation, with the experience of India's history, with the traditions of the Indian people, with India's national peculiarities." It asserted that the Communist Party "strives to achieve full democracy and socialism by peaceful means."

The resolution on "current political situation" adopted at the Amritsar Congress provided the background in which the Communists talked of peaceful transition to socialism. The resolution repeated the view that "the forces of peace, national independence and socialism have grown more powerful than ever before," but "the forces of war and colonial enslavement have not reconciled themselves to defeat." India had followed an independent foreign policy, which had enraged the "imperialists" but "US imperialism has recently decided upon large-scale financial 'aid' to India to create a favourable atmosphere for their machinations and to put a brake on India's foreign policy.... The new imperialist manoeuvres against our independent foreign policy and the activities of pro-imperialist Right reaction within our country demand that these imperialist manoeuvres are ruthlessly exposed...." Significantly, the resolution added: "It is unfortunate that the Government of India has not come out in condemnation of US interference in the internal affairs of Indonesia and instigation of and aid to the rebels. So also there is hesitation to work for another Afro-Asian conference." It was naturally the task of the Communists to attempt to commit India more fully to these Soviet bloc positions. The resolution added: "The sweep of the popular movement for peace and Afro-Asian solidarity must help to remove these hesitations so that India may play an even greater role than today in world affairs."

The Communist Party's analysis of the situation at home was more significant. It noted that with the formation of the Communist Ministry in Kerala, the Congress monopoly of Governmental power had been broken. The Communist Party had emerged as the main opposition and the Congress

Party had been weakened. Because of the continued impoverisation of the people, they were becoming more and more radical. "Increasingly isolated from the advanced democratic masses, corroded from within by dissensions and factional squabbles, the Congress is in a state of political and moral decline, in a state of chronic crisis which has deepened after the General Election," it said.

The resolution said that simultaneously "parties of communal and feudal reaction . . . are utilising the situation to consolidate their position and further their own disruptive aims." Also "seizing upon the difficulties in which the plan has landed and frightened by the growth of the democratic movement and the Communist Party, extreme reactionary forces have intensified their activities." These "reactionary" elements advocated greater economic aid from America to accept which, in the opinion of the CPI leaders, would be suicidal because America was the "most aggressive force in the world" and because the American economy was in the slump. The resolution warned: "The reactionary forces hold a strong position in our economic life. They have powerful supporters and representatives not only outside but also inside the Congress leadership and Congress Governments. They have close links with many higher officials in all spheres. . . . *Their strength lies in their links with the reactionary elements inside the Congress itself, which is securing increasing grip over the Congress organisation. Further, they have attained their present strength and dare to launch attacks on the second plan because of the support and encouragement from the weak and reactionary policies of the Government itself such as concession to private capital in the plan, the heavy dependence on the foreign capital. . . . The extreme Right, therefore, cannot be defeated without a simultaneous battle . . . to defeat the anti-people policies of the Government.*" [Italics mine]

Thus on the showing of the Communist Party itself the situation was not wholly favourable to it. This analysis did not warrant the view that it could come into power through the ballot box. But what is even more noteworthy, the Communist Party, on the basis of its experience in Kerala,

asserted in this very resolution that "the verdict of the ballot box in favour of popular forces [Communists and their allies] is not necessarily respected by the vested interests. It has to be defended by mass actions." It was alleged that the "reactionary forces" were trying by all means, fair and foul, to dislodge the Communist Ministry and that the Central Government in New Delhi adopted a discriminatory attitude towards it. The resolution recommended united front with "democratic forces." The Party asserted its faith in Marxism-Leninism, class war and proletarian internationalism.

Clearly, the professions of peaceful transition to socialism on the part of the Indian Communists was an expedient. Mr Ajoy Ghosh removed whatever scope there could be for taking these professions seriously. In the May 18, 1958 issue of the *New Age*, he wrote: "A question, which has been posed by many is: 'Have you, Communists, adopted peaceful means as a creed or a tactic, i.e. a manoeuvre?' Our frank reply to such a question is: It is neither. To accept non-violence as a creed means to assert that we are certain that under no conditions and at no stage in the development of the struggle for socialism, will the ruling classes resort to arms with a view to thwarting the will of the majority of the people.... Only those who have an unbounded faith in the *bona fides* of the bourgeoisie and landlords can make such an assertion.

"As for peaceful methods being just a 'tactic' everyone knows that ours is not a party that says one thing and means another.... What then is the position? Do we say that since the ruling classes have not been known to surrender peacefully, therefore, violence and civil war are inevitable? No, we consider that in the present historical condition, the possibility exists in many countries of achieving socialism peacefully and of defeating attempts of the ruling classes to force civil war on the people. The possibility exists of parties and elements who stand for socialism securing a majority in Parliament and overcoming the resistance of reaction by means of mass action. We shall try our best to make this possibility a reality in our country.

In other words, peaceful methods for us are neither a creed nor a tactic. It is a policy—a seriously meant policy." He did not say what would happen if the policy did not succeed in persuading the opponents to surrender.

In spite of their professions of peaceful transition to socialism, the Soviet leaders bitterly attacked the draft programme of the Yugoslav League of Communists in early 1958. One of the crimes of the Yugoslav Communists was that they had expressed the view that the capitalist societies were "evolving" towards socialism. The Soviet view was that nationalisation of individual industries only strengthened the economic power of monopoly capital and did not in any way affect the character of a bourgeois state. "Historical experience teaches us, and an analysis of modern social developments from the stand of Marxism-Leninism reveals that in all cases the necessary prerequisite for the transition to socialism is the conquest of state power by the proletariat, headed by its vanguard [the Communist Party], establishment of the political sway by the working class, dictatorship of the proletariat in one or the other of its forms, and the turning, through this power of the means of production into national state property."¹

The Indian Communist Party accepted this view and boycotted the Congress of the Yugoslav League of Communists. Thus the line of the CPI remained the same as before. It should be obvious even to a political novice that the goal of total, unchallenged and unchallengeable power cannot be achieved without the use of violence. The dismissal of the Communist Ministry in Kerala on July 31, 1959, by the Central Government on the charge of its having violated the Constitution and using the state apparatus as a vehicle for the extension of the power of the Party led the Communist leaders to make statements, which exposed that their professions of peaceful struggle were nothing more than an expedient.

In the wake of the dismissal of the Communist Ministry in Kerala on July 30, 1959, grew the demand in the

¹ Article by P. Fedoseyev, I. Pomelov and V. Cheprokov in the *Kommunist*, Moscow, as reproduced in the *New Age*, May 5, 1959.

Communist Party that the Amritsar thesis should be scrapped. This demand was reflected in an article in the September issue of the *New Age* monthly, the theoretical organ of the Communist Party of India, by Mr B. T. Ranadive, former General Secretary, now a member of the all-powerful Secretariat. Mr Ranadive said that the Amritsar thesis was "correct if all classes and parties are prepared to abide by the verdict of the ballot box." He asserted that the ruling party was not prepared to do so, for he added: "Kerala events have shown that the Congress considers nothing sacred except its own domination. It is prepared to violate the Constitution to keep itself in power."

The conclusion was stated in the context of a general theoretical discussion. Mr Ranadive took it for granted that the Congress Government was a "bourgeois-landlord Government" which "could not do without this all-pervading bureaucracy lording it over the people." He added that "after securing popular votes, the Congress had to rule in the interest of the alliance" of the bourgeoisie and the landlords. In this context, he quoted Lenin in support of his thesis that the bureaucracy and the army had links with the bourgeoisie. According to him, the Central Government was "incensed" because the Communist majority in Kerala showed "scrupulous regard for individual liberty, freedom of press and association."

He argued that the Congress was losing the support of the people because "its anti-people economic and political policies are coming home to roost. Faced with economic debacle, it relies on American imperialism; faced with a political debacle, it relies on the forces of communalism and the Catholic Church," which "act as agents of foreign imperialism." Mr Ranadive expressed the view that democracy was under attack in India and related General Thimayya's resignation to this "ominous development." He contended that army generals were intruding into politics.

In his attack on the Congress and the Government, Mr Ranadive did not draw any distinction between Mr Nehru and his other colleagues. He charged that "Mr Nehru joined this unholy game" to discredit the Kerala Ministry and

"as days passed by he developed a strange anti-Communist accent." Also "it was left to Mr Nehru to correct the crudities of his followers and give this unholy alliance (in Kerala) suitable slogans to screen the real demands." The dismissal of the Communist Ministry, he added, resulted from a "plot engineered by the Congress High Command and the leaders of the Central Government, including Mr Nehru."

The Congress was accused of practising "demagogy to cheat the masses" and to "hoodwink them." The Congress in power had "done nothing to implement the directives of the Constitution or rights guaranteed under it. On the other hand, it has done its best to suppress them." Further, he added that the Congress-led alliance in Kerala "made every issue a class issue and attempted to carry on a ferocious class struggle all along the line." The implication clearly was that the CPI, "the party of the working class" should be prepared for an intensification of the "class war."

Stating his position in unambiguous manner, Mr Ranadive said that the "issue in Kerala was between democracy and reaction and not between Communism and democracy." The Communists had "agreed to form a Ministry under capitalism—with a bourgeois-landlord government controlling the Centre and with effective power in the hands of a handful few," because "people had not yet lost faith in the Constitution or the elections." He did not say specifically whether in his view this faith had now been shattered. But in the forthcoming elections in Kerala, he did not expect fair play. "It is obvious that every unconstitutional measure will be resorted to by these people to influence the electors and falsify the results."

The Communist leader did not spare organisations like the Praja Socialist Party. The PSP was attacked because it combined with the Congress in the attempt to overthrow the Kerala Ministry. Mr Ranadive found nothing surprising in such an alliance because "on every critical occasion, reactionary leaders of social democratic parties have stabbed the working class and the people in the back betraying them into the hands of the capitalist class." Accordingly, the social democratic parties "constitute the second line of

defence of the bourgeoisie." Mr Ranadive identified the CPI with both democracy and nationalism. He dubbed the Congress-PSP alliance in Kerala as "anti-national" which, he added, "it is the task of all nationalists to defeat." The influence of Maoism is apparent in this article. These were by no means Mr Ranadive's personal views. They reflected the views of the Party leadership as a whole as stated in the CPI's resolutions and statements on Kerala.

The second objection that the Soviet Union's and Communist China's policies in respect of India do not concur raises two issues: Soviet view of neutral nations and the relations between Moscow and Peking. In 1959 it was seriously contended by leading authorities on Communism that Russia and China were tending to fall apart. Mr Nehru apparently shared this view. It was argued that Peking was unhappy over Mr Khrushchev's efforts to reach a *detente* with the West, particularly America, and wanted to create a situation in which America might not be able to make any concession or give up what was called its rigid position. The Chinese incursions into Indian territory, the propaganda drive against India and the support to the Laotian rebels through the Viet-Minh were seen as part of this strategy.

There is no positive evidence to support the presumption of Moscow-Peking rift. At best only some vague and inconclusive evidence can be advanced by raking up the past and projecting one's mind into the distant future. In the past, Russia and China competed, even fought against each other for dominance in Turkestan. One of the primary objectives of Russian foreign policy in Central Asia then was to prevent the consolidation of Chinese rule and its colonisation by the Hans. Soviet Russia returned to this policy and promoted the independence of Outer Mongolia, after a brief flirtation with the concept of surrendering advantages gained by the Czars at the cost of China. From this it can be inferred that with the consolidation of Chinese hold in Sinkiang and massive colonisation in the areas bordering on Russia, Moscow is really beginning to feel concerned.

Geography, history and ethnology are undoubtedly compelling factors. It is likely they will assert themselves

in the long run and gain precedence over ideology. But it was extremely doubtful if that point has been reached. Supposing it were reached, we should have looked for evidence of Russia's becoming cool towards China and not the other way round. For it is of the essence of this argument that Russia is getting nervous and would like to keep the Chinese leviathan in check. It hardly needs to be emphasised that China, still totally dependent on Russia for the supply of capital goods, long-term credits, outright grants, military supplies and both military and diplomatic support in her continued struggle with America, should in fact attempt to cover the cracks in Sino-Soviet unity and not seek to expose them to public gaze. Also, if Peking is really keen to compel America to stick rigidly to its cold war positions, the logical step would be to renew hostilities against Formosa and the offshore islands where America's commitment is direct. The tightening of pressure against South Korea and South Vietnam would serve this purpose far more effectively than incursions into a country whose Government does not even threaten to seek Western assistance.

The advocates of the view that Peking is unhappy over Moscow's moves to seek an agreement with the West do not state what would be China's loss in the event of a *detente* between Russia and the West. On the contrary, she would gain immensely. If the American shield is removed from Asia, the countries there, all weak economically and militarily, would offer a rich field for expansion to China. China in that event would not need to move a single soldier to take them over. It could promote trouble from within and secure the disruption of the existing regimes through support to the rebels and intimidation of the Governments. The end of the cold war, if it were indeed possible, which is highly unlikely, could prove disastrous for the non-Communist countries in Asia.

It is argued that Stalin did not wish China to go Communist because that would have meant the emergence of a strong and centralised state on Russia's borders. That was why after 1927 till the last but one stage before the Chinese

Communist Party's rise to power, he did not provide it with the much-needed assistance. And it is also sometimes whispered that the men in the Kremlin are heirs to that Stalinist legacy. This is a surprising argument indeed. The Chinese leaders explicitly and repeatedly admit their debt of gratitude to the Soviet Union. The Chinese Communist army would have been annihilated if Stalin had not delivered to it the Manchurian base with the plants set up by the Japanese and the arms and ammunition captured by the Soviet army from the Japanese forces. How absurd was the talk of ideological differences between Mao and Stalin has now been amply proved. China under Mao has followed the traditional Stalinist line in every field. In fact, she can claim to have improved on it.

The argument that since Russia and China are in two different states of socio-economic development, they are bound to follow diverse courses is too nebulous to merit serious consideration. This does not mean that the Chinese leaders can help being Stalinistic in their approach or that the Soviet Government cannot afford, up to a point, to relax tension at home. But how can the Soviet Union retain its hold on Eastern and Central Europe except in the context of the continued presence of Soviet troops in those countries? Poland and Hungary are grim reminders. If that is so, she cannot afford to settle real issues like German reunification which have led to tension in Europe. Also, in traditional geo-political terms, Japan has been Russia's problem for several decades. A strong China is a guarantee against the revival of imperial ambitions in Japan.

On September 7, the Soviet news agency *Tass* issued a non-committal statement, which was hailed in India as an unprecedented step for Moscow and indirect support to her. In fact it was nothing of the kind. If the statement was read along with the CPI's resolutions quoted above, it should have been clear that it was a directive to the Indian Communists. The CPI resolution faithfully followed the line handed down by Moscow. Such an open intervention by Moscow was necessary because of the differences in the CPI. This was not the first time that Moscow was compelled

to act in an open manner. The famous article which appeared in the January 27, 1950 issue of *For People's Democracy, for Lasting Peace* was one such instance. Earlier and even later articles by Mr Palme Dutt, who held a watching brief over the CPI on behalf of Moscow, served a similar purpose of resolving disputes in the CPI.

Even otherwise what did the statement say? It called the Sino-Indian border dispute deplorable, did not apportion blame, and called upon India and China to settle it, keeping in view the "mutual interests and in the spirit of their traditional friendship," that is through negotiations. Thus the operative part of the statement, "settlement through negotiations" endorsed the Chinese position of "settlement step by step." Significantly, the *Tass* referred to the dispute as an "incident." One could only speculate whether the reference was confined to the forcible occupation of Longju by the Chinese troops. It blamed the West for building up a "noisy campaign around the incident" with "the purpose of driving a wedge between the two biggest countries of Asia—the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India—whose friendship is of great importance for safeguarding peace and international co-operation in Asia and throughout the world." The West was also blamed for seeking to discredit the idea of peaceful co-existence and to "prevent the strengthening of the Asian peoples' solidarity, the struggle for the consolidation of their national independence." The statement drew a significant though subtle distinction between Russia's relations with China and Russia's relations with India. With China the bonds were unbreakable "on the basis of socialist internationalism"; with India only "friendly co-operation" was developing.

Anyone familiar with Communist semantics could not miss the essence of this statement. It was not China, a member of the family of socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union, that could be blamed for falling into the trap of the "reactionary" West. Also, it was not she that could be accused of giving up the cause of peace and national independence, thus facilitating the task of the

"war-mongers" and "imperialists." The conclusion was inescapable that the statement was a reminder, if not a chiding, addressed to India. It was couched in phrases which held undisputed sway in this country for well over five years. In fact, a careful perusal of this statement would seem to imply that India was warned against being a victim of Western machinations.

The *Tass* statement should have been seen in the context of the fact that the Soviet Government and the Governments of Eastern European countries had for purposes of their atlases accepted the Chinese version of the Sino-Indian boundary. The Government of India's protest to Moscow did not persuade it to modify its maps. The plea that the Soviet maps had been drawn on the basis of the Chinese maps was indeed very thin. Why did the Soviet authorities copy Chinese maps and not Indian maps? Or, at least, they could have shown the disputed areas as such.

All this was neither here nor there. The *Tass* statement and the general silence of the Soviet press on the Sino-Indian border issue did not conclusively prove or disprove anything. But is it impossible that Moscow and Peking are playing with divided cards? If once this is agreed that it was Moscow's and Peking's purpose to establish a Communist State in India ultimately, it should not be difficult to imagine a division of roles between them.

In the latter part of 1949 both Moscow and Peking came to the conclusion that an armed insurrection was not possible in India because the Communist Party of India did not possess a base in an area contiguous with a socialist country. The writings in the Communist Press of that period clearly reflected this view. It was stated in so many words in the policy statement adopted by the CPI in 1951. The deficiency has, therefore, to be made good. In view of the geographical positions of India, China and Russia, only Peking can do so. The Chinese policy of keeping the border fluid and to occupy the submontane belt fit remarkably into this theory about the desirability, from the Communist point of view, of establishing a base in India.

We have earlier referred to the Soviet view of peaceful transition to socialism. From that it clearly emerged that there are two parts of the programme for effecting a "peaceful transition" to socialism: (1) entry of the Communists into the administration through the formation of a coalition Government and infiltration at its various levels; and (2) establishment of a people's liberation army in a secure base in an area contiguous with a socialist country. It might not always be possible to combine the two approaches. But, surely, that is no reason why the Communists would not try.

It might well be that while China seeks to fulfil the second condition for the "liberation" of India, Russia follows a line calculated to achieve the first objective. Moscow's unwillingness to join the hate campaign against India and silence on the border issue, and continued economic support to the Government of India might well be calculated to create a situation in which she can hope to induct the Communists into the Central Cabinet. After all, even a few billions of roubles, would not be too high a price of this country! In any event, in course of time India's industrial life might in Russia's possible calculations become dependent on Russia's to such an extent that a Government in New Delhi would have to think twice before rejecting Moscow's advice. The odds would be in favour of the Communists if the other parties are weak and ill-organised and if the former are able to whip up an anti-West and anti-Pakistan campaign on the plea of threat to the country's security. Already there are "leftist" ministers in the country.

The commentators and political leaders, who see a growing estrangement between China and Russia, miss altogether the significance of the new relationship that has developed between the two regimes and parties in the post-Stalin era. Gradually Moscow has agreed to allow a status of equality to Peking. The joint Sino-Soviet companies, which had been set up to exploit the national resources of Sinkiang, have been transferred to Peking. Similarly Peking has gained full control over the Manchurian railways and the Port

Arthur naval base. The Russian leaders refer to a joint Sino-Soviet leadership of the Socialist bloc. Implicit in this new relation is the right of Mao Tse-tung and his colleagues to pursue a line of their own as long as it does not militate against the over-all interests of the Communist world.

The international situation, particularly after the Hungarian uprising in October-November 1956, warranted that the Communist leadership should follow two sets of policies. In Europe, it is no longer possible to spread Communism any further. It is essential, in fact, to hold the line, which can best be done by persuading the Atlantic Treaty nations to accept the *status quo* in Europe. The threat of the remilitarisation of West Germany makes it compulsory for Moscow to seek an agreement on the basis of *status quo* with the West. Mr Khrushchev's insistent plea for a summit conference has to be viewed in the context of the search for *status quo* in Europe.

Asia and Africa, on the other hand, offer field for Communist expansion. Since Russia is seeking *detente* with the West, she cannot wholly be free to promote disruption and insurrection in Asia and Africa. It is not necessary for her to ruin the chances of understanding in Europe for the sake of assisting the spread of Communism in Asia and Africa. China, a loyal ally, can easily fill the gap. It would be the height of stupidity to imagine that China in 1957 began to play a decisive role in the Middle East, an area of traditional Russian interest, without the consent of Moscow. China's activities have grown and extended to North Africa and Latin America. Peking's well-publicised assistance of £10 million to the Algerian rebels is a point in illustration. It is inconceivable that Peking is acting in this manner on its own initiative and strength.

It also deserves to be noticed that the policy of co-existence in Asia and Africa has yielded but limited dividends. With the probable exception the Communist parties of Iraq in the Middle East and Indonesia in south-east Asia, the chances of no other Communist Party for coming into power have improved. In fact it is becoming clear that in Asia the alternative to democratic regimes is not

Communism but some form of military dictatorship. Since 1958, the army even in Indonesia has been increasingly more influential. In India the calculation of the Communists is that the "Right reaction" has steadily consolidated its position. Thus unless the international Communist leadership give up the goal of spreading the ideology further, they have no alternative but to return to the path of struggle. Even if such an analysis can be presumed to have been provided by the ideologues in Peking, the leaders in Moscow could not but concur. It is significant that Asian and African Communist leaders visit not only Moscow but Peking also frequently for discussions, consultations and advice.

The rumour was strong in informed circles in India that during their visit to Peking in October 1959, Indian Communist leaders, including the General Secretary, Mr Ajoy Ghosh, were told by Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi that they could not hope to come to power by supporting Mr Nehru and his policies. They had to build their party in the tradition of the Communist parties of Russia and China into a militant fighting organisation. Moscow must have concurred with this view. Otherwise there was no reason why the CPI should have followed China's lead. The rumours regarding the discussions between CPI and Chinese Communist leaders were confirmed by the pro-Communist weekly, *Blitz*, Bombay, in its issue of February 13, 1960.

Liberals and democrats, who think primarily in terms of elections, fail to understand why the CPI should follow China's lead at the risk of popularity. They miss the essence of Communism. Communism does not depend on popularity. It thrives on the strength of a militant cadre. The history of the CPI itself should be a reminder to them. The CPI apparently courted disaster by supporting the British Government against Gandhiji's "Quit India" movement from 1942 to 1945. Instead its membership and influence among the working class and peasants grew. The policy of insurrection in 1948 and 1949 was believed to have wrecked the CPI. Instead its membership was almost doubled. Communist parties prosper on antagonism. If there is no

antagonism, it must be invented or manufactured. That is the logic of the concept of permanent revolution. It was not in a fit of absent-mindedness that Stalin propounded the thesis that class antagonism grew sharper with every success of socialism.

It is of the utmost significance that Communist leaders from the border provinces of Bengal, Assam, UP and the Punjab constitute the "internationalist wing" in the CPI. The Communist-organised riots in Calcutta in September followed the Chinese incursions into NEFA. The Chinese push in Ladakh was followed by a massive rally in Calcutta on November 22, 1959. The Assam Communists gave a call for a general strike in Siliguri town, which occupies a key position in the communication system linking the Gangetic plains with north-east border regions. In December 1959, they were able to win a by-election in Assam.

The conclusion seems irresistible that the activities of the Chinese authorities in Tibet, incursions into India and the policies of the Soviet Government and Communist Party of India have to be viewed as parts of an over-all plan, which is to subvert democracy in favour of "people's democracy" in India. Communist expansionism should not be confused with either feudal conquests of the past or Western imperialism of the nineteenth century. Also India will have to face the fact that there is no security for her as long as Tibet remains enslaved. Our response has to be determined by the nature of the challenge. So far the appreciation of the challenge has been inadequate and so the response.

CHAPTER XII

Epilogue

IN PURSUIT of its policy to prevent the crystallisation of opinion in New Delhi on the question of China's aggression and occupation of nearly 12,000 sq. miles of Indian territory, the Soviet Government pressed Mr Nehru that he should agree to meet Mr Chou En-lai and thus attempt to resolve the border dispute. A host of delegations from the Soviet Union and East Europe descended on India exuding goodwill and friendship in January, 1960. They were apparently preparing the ground for the then Soviet President, Marshal Voroshilov's visit. This visit itself was a kind of reconnaissance for the visit of Mr Nikita Khrushchev, Soviet Prime Minister and First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party.

Marshal Voroshilov arrived in India on January 20, 1960, on a two-week tour. He was accompanied by two members of the all-powerful Presidium of the Soviet Communist Party, Mr F. R. Kozlov and Madame E. A. Furtseva. They held discussions with Mr Nehru. An impression was sought to be created that the Soviet Government was so keen to assist India in her economic development that it was prepared virtually to underwrite the third Five-Year Plan. Apparently this was a bait to Mr Nehru and his colleagues that they would do well in their own larger interests to heed Soviet advice on the issue of relations with Communist China.

It is unlikely that Mr Nehru would have yielded either to pressure or temptation. But he could not escape the logic of his own past and present policies. He knew that militarily the country was not in a position to compel the Chinese to vacate their aggression. He was not prepared to

jettison the philosophy of "Panch Sheela," though he was aware that the people's faith in it had been greatly shaken. He was not even prepared to precipitate a diplomatic crisis to exert pressure on Peking. In the final analysis, therefore, he had no option but to agree to meet Mr Chou En-lai in the distant hope that a basis of settlement might emerge. He probably calculated that the Soviet Government would use its good offices to persuade Peking to settle the dispute with India.

Apparently, Mr Nehru's assessment of Soviet policy was influenced by two factors. First, he calculated that having achieved industrialisation at considerable cost, the Soviet people were primarily interested in enjoying the fruits of their exertions in peace and security. They had joined the group of "have" nations and were no longer keen to promote revolutions which involved the risk of aggravating tension. This desire for peace on the part of the Soviet people, Mr Nehru felt, was reinforced by the fact that they had experienced the horrors of war. Secondly, he felt convinced that Moscow was unhappy that the Chinese rulers were still deeply attached to the ideal of conquering the world for Communism. In its own interest, the Soviet Government would like to restrain the Chinese rulers.

Partly in response to Soviet advice and partly in obedience to the logic of his policy, Mr Nehru agreed to invite Mr Chou En-lai to New Delhi in the latter part of March. His letter to Mr Chou En-lai was dated February 5, 1960. This was accompanied by a note setting out India's case in detail in reply to the earlier Chinese note of December 26, 1959. The letter and the note were both delivered in Peking by the Indian Ambassador, Mr G. Parthasarathy, on his return from New Delhi on February 12, 1960. That was why the note came to bear the latter date.

Apparently, Mr Nehru was in two minds. He wrote in his letter to the Chinese Prime Minister that though he welcomed meetings and informal approaches, "I found that the respective positions were so wide apart and opposed to each other that there was little ground left for useful talks." He recalled that his earlier suggestion of November 16, 1959,

regarding the neutralisation of the disputed area in Ladakh had been rejected by China. He reaffirmed that India could never accept the Chinese plea that the entire boundary had never been delimited. "On that basis, there can be no negotiations." He expressed his keenness for a peaceful settlement and added: "But for the moment I do not see any common ground between our respective viewpoints."¹ All the same he invited him for talks in New Delhi.

The tone of the note, accompanying the letter, was firm. In fact, the Government of India went further than before in the assertion to its claim that the McMahon Line was valid. It asserted that Tibet was virtually a sovereign nation at the time of the Simla convention in 1913-14 which fixed the Indo-Tibetan boundary east of Bhutan. The word "sovereignty" was not used in the note, but the statement could not admit of any other interpretation. It said:

"This was not the first time that Tibet conducted negotiations and concluded treaties, on her own right, with other States. For example, Tibet concluded a treaty with Nepal in 1856 and another with Great Britain in 1904. These treaties were never objected to by China and were fully operative. At the Simla Conference, the Tibetan and Chinese plenipotentiaries met on an equal footing. This position was explicitly and unequivocally accepted by the Chinese Government. . . . *The credentials of the Tibetan representative issued by the Dalai Lama made it clear that Tibet was an equal party at the conference with the right 'to decide all matters that may be beneficial to Tibet' and the Chinese representative accepted the credentials of the Tibetan representative as being in order.*" (Italics mine)

The note repudiated the Chinese statement that agreement on the boundary issue was arrived at secretly between the Governments of India and Tibet. It added: "Moreover, the Indo-Tibetan boundary was delineated on the map appended to the tripartite convention, which was signed by the Chinese representative on April 27, 1914." It characterised as fantastic the Chinese argument that the "McMahon sector of the red line on the convention map represented

¹ *The Times of India*, Delhi, February 16, 1960.

the boundary between Tibet and China."² It could not be in a fit of absent-mindedness that the Chinese Government had advanced this argument because it returned to it in its note of April 3, 1960, on the eve of Mr Chou En-lai's visit to New Delhi.

The fact that the invitation had been sent out to Mr Chou En-lai was not publicly known when Mr Khrushchev arrived in New Delhi on February 11, 1960. It deserved to be noted that Mr Khrushchev's visit was not a sudden development. He had expressed a desire to visit India during the previous year. He had virtually sought the invitation to visit India. Obviously it was part of a carefully worked out plan. Mr Nehru conferred with Mr Khrushchev on February 12. The same day in the afternoon, he made a statement in the Rajya Sabha. He said: "Let it be understood quite clearly that when I talk of a friendly settlement, I see no ground whatever at the present moment, no bridge between the Chinese position and ours. That is, the present positions are such that there is no room for negotiations on that [Chinese] basis and, therefore, there is nothing to negotiate about."³

Mr Nehru later denied that he had made the statement as a result of his discussions with Mr Khrushchev. In fact, he said that he had not discussed the Sino-Indian border dispute with Mr Khrushchev at any length. On the surface, the statement in the Rajya Sabha was in tune with the one he had made in the letter of February 5 to Mr Chou En-lai. It was also consistent with the position that he took up subsequently that his willingness to meet Mr Chou En-lai did not mean that he would be negotiating with him on the issue or that he was willing in any way to modify his Government's publicly stated position. But in a sense, the statement did amount to a polite repudiation of the invitation to Mr Chou En-lai the very day it was handed to him. Mr Nehru followed it with repeated statements in Parliament and outside warning the people against easy optimism. The problem would be with us for several years and even decades, he said.

² *Ibid.* ³ *Ibid.*, February 13, 1960.

In spite of this firmness on India's part, Mr Chou En-lai offered to come to New Delhi for talks. Also he said that he would stay in the Indian capital from April 19 to 26. Meanwhile, even before the invitation was extended to him, Mr Chou En-lai had been working to isolate India in her dispute with China by putting up a show of reasonableness with Burma and Nepal, the only other two countries with which Peking had border problems.

The then Burmese Prime Minister, General Ne Win, visited Peking from January 24 to 29, 1960, on the invitation from the Chinese Government. On January 29, an agreement on the border and a treaty of friendship and non-aggression was signed between the two countries. The treaty provided: "Each contracting party undertakes not to carry out acts of aggression against the other and not to take part in any military alliance directed against the other contracting party." The border agreement provided for the establishment of a joint committee to survey and demarcate the boundary. Burma agreed to make over Hpimaw, Gawlum and Kanfang villages to China. By and large, China agreed to accept Burma's traditional boundary on the basis of the watershed principle, though an elaborate attempt was made to avoid any mention of the watershed principle. China agreed to turn over to Burma the Namwan tract, which had been leased in perpetuity to the British Government by Peiping. In return the Burmese Government agreed to make over to China the areas under the jurisdiction of Panhung and Panlao tribes.

China followed this by an agreement on economic aid and the border question with Nepal on March 21, 1960. The agreement provided for an additional grant of Rs 10 crores by China to Nepal within three years and the establishment of Embassies in Kathmandu and Peking. The previous agreement of 1956 had provided for the opening of a Chinese Consulate-General in Kathmandu. The agreement also indicated that a treaty of friendship would be signed in Kathmandu during Mr Chou En-lai's visit from April 26 to 29. The Treaty was in fact signed. The Nepalese Prime Minister, Mr B. P. Koirala, himself disclosed that

Peking had attempted to persuade him to sign a non-aggression pact. The attempt clearly was to render null and void the Treaty of Friendship between India and Nepal (1950), which stipulates that the two countries would keep each other informed in case of hostilities developing on their borders. The *aide-mémoires* exchanged between New Delhi and Kathmandu in connection with the Treaty suggested that the two countries had made firm commitments to help each other in case of aggression against either of them.

The agreement on border said that the contracting parties had decided to determine concretely the boundary between the two countries in the following ways:

(1) In sections where the delineation of the boundary line between the two countries on the maps of the two sides is identical, "the boundary line shall be fixed according to the identical delineation on the maps of the two sides. The joint committee will send out joint survey teams composed of an equal number of persons from each side to conduct survey on the spot and erect boundary markers."

(2) In sections where the delineation of the boundary line between the two countries on the maps of the two sides is not identical, whereas the state of actual jurisdiction by each side is undisputed, the joint committee will send out joint survey teams to conduct survey on the spot, determine the boundary line and erect boundary markers in these sections in accordance with concrete terrain features (watersheds, valleys, passes, etc.) and the actual jurisdiction by each side.

(3) In sections where the delineation of the boundary line between the two countries on the maps of the two sides is not identical and the two sides differ in their understanding of the state of actual jurisdiction, the joint committee will send out joint teams to ascertain on the spot the state of actual jurisdiction in these sections, make adjustments in accordance with the principles of equality, mutual benefit, friendship and mutual accommodation, determine the boundary line and erect boundary markers in these sections.

The use of the phrase "actual jurisdiction" was significant. Even earlier there were indications that the Chinese Government would make a similar proposal to India. In the case of Nepal, the disputed territory did not exceed a few hundred sq. miles. In the case of India, China laid claim to over 60,000 sq. miles of her territory. Clearly, the Government of India could not agree to the Chinese claim that the whole of the 2,600-mile long border needed to be surveyed and delimited afresh and thus provide a measure of legitimacy to China's unjust claims. The acceptance of the principle of "actual jurisdiction" would above all legalise Chinese occupation of over 12,000 sq. miles of Indian territory in Ladakh.

It could not be an accident that the March, 1960, issue of *China Reconstructs* (Peking), carried an article by Anna Louise Strong, well known American fellow traveller, who lives in Peking. The article wholly endorsed China's claims to Indian territory, which was not surprising. But she did not confine herself to a discussion of the rival claims of China and India. She contended that India was deliberately creating trouble on the border out of political considerations.

The article said: "Washington is spending billions to start trouble against China all around the rim of Asia. If Washington wants 'incidents' on the Sino-Indian border, Washington can probably buy them. 'Incidents' are also useful to some Indian political groups. They make it possible to starve peasants to buy arms. They make it easier to beat the Communists in the coming elections, and perhaps easier for the right-wing to beat Nehru with a dictatorship."

Reaffirming China's case that the McMahon Line was illegal and the British Government did not administer the territory south of it now claimed by Peking, Miss Strong said that in 1951 before the Chinese Army marched into Tibet, India "sent troops by surprise attack into Tawang, county seat in the disputed area, and threw out the Tibetan magistrates and Living Buddhas who had run the place and collected its taxes since about 1650 when the fifth Dalai Lama unified the tribes." Since China did not want to change the *fait accompli* by war, her troops did not

cross the McMahon Line. Why was then India raising the outcry of aggression? Her answer was that India did so "when China freed the serfs" in Tibet. She then stated her views on India's basic policy on Tibet.

She wrote: "India, while using China as a bulwark against demands from the West, has always sought to keep China herself at a distance, lest India's peasants be stirred by the cries of 'land to the tiller' and 'free bread.' In Tibet she sought a wide buffer against the Chinese revolution, and Tibet was handy for that, with its size, its regional autonomy, its serfdom

"Her relations to the serf owners' rebellion of March, 1959, is unclear, but elements in India clearly helped it, and Nehru called its suppression a 'tragedy'. When the Dalai Lama fled to India, India tried at once to become mediator between him and Peking, that India might define and be custodian of Tibet's autonomy. When this did not work, and when songs of jubilee from liberated serfs spread across Tibet, nothing remained but to slam that border shut by a physical and emotional storm.

"This, I think, is why India's 'swing to the right' came suddenly. It came not because of any territorial aggression by China. It came to raise a barrier against shouts of 'land to the tiller,' against peasant demands in India, against Communist votes in the coming election. Also, in part, as inducement to Washington to give India more money. For India's last demand, in December, that China get out of her only traffic route to Western Tibet, a road India has no use for, was a straight swing into Washington's crusade, seeking injury to China without benefit to India."

It need hardly be emphasised that this article was in tune with the earlier campaign against India. The charge was that the Indian ruling class, determined to stop the march of revolution at home, had allied itself with America and started a campaign of vilification against China.

On April 1, the *Red Flag* fortnightly, official organ of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party edited by Chen Po-ta, a close collaborator of Mao Tse-tung, carried a major article on "Imperialism—Source of War in Modern

Times; and the Path of the Peoples' Struggle for Peace." The occasion was Lenin's birth anniversary. The author, Yu Chao-li, wholly endorsed Lenin's views on imperialism. Significantly enough, he quoted Lenin on the desirability of civil war in non-Communist countries.

Lenin had said: "Civil wars are also wars. Whoever recognises the class struggle cannot fail to recognise civil wars, which in every class society are the natural, and under certain conditions, inevitable continuation, development and intensification of the class struggle. All the great revolutions prove this. To repudiate civil war, or to forget about it, would mean sinking into opportunism and renouncing the socialist revolution."

It is a matter of conjecture whether the writer, no mere journalist, was seeking to influence the outcome of the debate that has been going on among the leaders of the Communist Party of India on the validity or otherwise of the Amritsar thesis. But he was clearly seeking to discredit the view that a peaceful transition to socialism was possible. For, he added: "The Marxist-Leninist parties do not reject peaceful means for carrying out socialist revolution, but when the exploiting class uses violence against the people, the possibility of employing other means has to be considered namely, the transition to socialism by non-peaceful means. The historical experience of mankind shows that the ruling class will not give up state power of its own accord." This meant that the talk of peaceful transition to socialism was not to be taken seriously. That has been the argument of a section of the CPI leadership in the intra-party discussions.

These were broad enough indications that Mr Chou En-lai would not offer a basis for settlement during his talks in New Delhi. Then came the Chinese Government's note of April 3, 1960, in reply to India's note of February 12, 1960. It reiterated the familiar stand that the entire Sino-Indian border had never been delimited and that China was not bound to honour the agreements and treaties that the Government of India had been quoting in support of its case. The note contained veiled attacks on the Government of India. For instance, it said:

"Some people seem to think that differences between China and India are almost impossible to solve. The Chinese Government disagrees with this view. The Chinese Government feels that no matter how great the present difference between China and India on this particular question, it is after all an issue of limited and temporary nature compared with the fundamental need of the two peoples to maintain friendly co-operation for thousands and tens of thousands of years to come. *Provided the two sides value the fundamental interests of friendship between the two countries and world peace, display good faith, adhere to friendly consultations and the five principles, and adopt an attitude of mutual understanding and mutual accommodation, it is certainly possible to overcome all difficulties and bring about a settlement of the boundary question satisfactory to both sides* (Italics mine)

"The Chinese Government has always advocated that, pending the settlement of the boundary question, both sides should maintain the present state of the border and preserve tranquility along it, and see to it that this temporarily unsettled question does not affect the consolidation and development of friendly relations between the two countries. The Chinese Government has always been extremely careful on the Sino-Indian boundary question, and has never taken any step which might lead to clashes or tension on the border

"Of course, the Chinese Government has by no means overlooked the fact that there remain difficulties on the way ahead, *and that there are still some people in the world who, harbouring ulterior motives, are trying by all means to split and undermine the relations of our two countries and prevent the success of the talks.*" (Italics mine)

Both the references to some people holding the dispute to be impossible of settlement and trying to undermine Sino-Indian relations were directed at the Indian leaders who were earlier described by Peking as reactionaries and imperialist agents. Whatever hopes there could be of settlement were dispelled by this note of April 3. The question arises why Mr Chou En-lai came to New Delhi. Various answers suggest themselves. First, it served China's purpose

of keeping up the pretence of friendship for India as a guarantee that the issues remain confused in the minds of the policy-makers in New Delhi. Secondly, it was part of China's well-planned effort to bog down India in interminable discussions so that she gained time to consolidate her hold on the occupied territory. There must have been the calculation that as in the case of Pakistan's aggression, the passage of time would help China in that the reaction to the provocation of aggression and occupation in India would wear off.

Mr Chou En-lai did not come to New Delhi as a penitent sinner in ashes and sack cloth. In fact, throughout the talks he and his Foreign Minister, Marshal Chen Yi, behaved as if they were the aggrieved party and India had occupied their territory. They combined this with the pose of being the representatives of Asia's most powerful nation who had the courage to tell Indian leaders to their face that they had interfered in Tibet, promoted the rebellion and exploited the Dalai Lama for anti-Chinese activities. It was not an accident that they did not adduce any evidence in support of their territorial claims. Mr Nehru himself made a statement to that effect in Parliament on April 26, 1960. Their purpose clearly was to display the mailed fist. It was not without purpose that in Kathmandu on April 28 and at Dum Dum airport on April 29, Mr Chou En-lai should have charged that Mr Nehru's statement to Parliament on April 26 was "unfriendly." Mr Nehru had only explained that whether or not he used the term "aggression" in his talks with Mr Chou En-lai, the fact remained that China had occupied Indian territory, which constituted aggression.

Mr Chou En-lai's strategy during the talks in New Delhi was to minimise the importance of the border dispute. He called it "temporary" and "local" in character. He said that it was one of the ten fingers, implying thereby that India should not worry overmuch if one of her ten fingers was mutilated. He and his colleagues told the Indian Prime Minister and other Cabinet Ministers that the important thing was really to safeguard, strengthen and promote Sino-Indian friendship. The border dispute should

not be allowed to spoil this friendship which was crucial to the cause of peace in Asia and the world. The Chinese leaders had the audacity to argue that India could not afford to have two fronts, one against Pakistan, backed by "imperialist" America, and the other against "friendly" China. During the talks, Mr Chou En-lai repeatedly complained against the press, particularly the English language newspapers, which, he alleged, created obstacles in the path of Sino-Indian understanding and friendship.

Mr Chou En-lai was successful in his mission. The joint communique issued at the conclusion of the talks on April 25 said: "The two Prime Ministers explained fully their respective stands on the problems affecting the border areas. This led to a greater understanding of the view of the two Governments but the talks did not result in resolving the differences that had arisen." This meant that the dispute was the result of "differences" and not of aggression on the part of China.

The two Prime Ministers agreed that officials of the two Governments should meet from June to September alternatively in the capitals of the two countries and examine, check and study all historical documents, records, accounts, maps and other material relevant to the boundary question, on which each side relied in support of its stand, and draw up a report for submission to the two Governments. They hoped that this report should prove helpful towards further consideration of these problems by the two Governments. This was again a concession to the Chinese view that the dispute was capable of solution without their having necessarily to vacate the occupied part of Ladakh. It was agreed that during the period of further examination of the factual material, every effort should be made by the parties to avoid friction and clashes in the border areas. This conferred considerable advantage on the Chinese in illegal possession of Indian territory.

What was even more remarkable, the communique said, "Advantage was taken of the meeting by the two Prime Ministers to discuss certain other important problems of world affairs. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the

forthcoming conference in Paris of the heads of Governments and expressed the hope that this conference would help in lessening international tensions, banning the production and use of nuclear weapons and promoting disarmament." It was indeed remarkable that Mr Chou En-lai should have succeeded in persuading Mr Nehru to agree to the inclusion in the communique of the reference to the Summit conference. This indicated that vague generalisations and idealistic principles continued to influence the thinking of Mr Nehru and his advisers.

At the conclusion of the talks, Mr Chou En-lai addressed a press conference in New Delhi on April 25, 1960, which was arranged at his own initiative. He disclosed his approach to the problem. He said (a) There exists between the two countries a line of actual control up to which each side exercises administrative jurisdiction. (b) In determining the boundary between the two countries, certain geographical principles, such as watersheds, river valleys and mountain passes, should be equally applicable to all sectors of the boundary. (c) A settlement of the boundary question between the two countries should take into account the national feelings of the two peoples towards the Himalayas and the Korakoram mountains. (d) Pending a settlement of the boundary question between the two countries through discussions, both sides should keep to the line of actual control and should not put forward territorial claims as pre-conditions, but individual adjustments may be made. (e) In order to ensure tranquillity on the border so as to facilitate the discussions, both sides should continue to refrain from patrolling along all sectors of the boundary.

He insisted that the McMahan Line was illegal. He indicated his Government's willingness to accept the "actual" administrative position in this region in return for a similar acceptance by India in Ladakh. Clearly, he was not willing to accept the watershed principle and introduced, as in the case of Nepal, other geographical factors for the demarcation of the border.

Mr Chou En-lai could not be unaware that the world over the watershed principle takes precedence over other

geographical factors in the determination of national boundaries. But it did not suit him to recognise it because in that case the Chinese claims would have become untenable. The concept of actual jurisdiction is a tricky one in a thinly populated mountainous area and the Chinese occupation of Tibet places them in such a position that they can alter "actual jurisdiction" by crossing into undefended parts of the sub-montane belt. Similarly, he introduced the reference to the Korakoram mountains with an eye of China's claims to the disputed area in Ladakh. The reference to the two sides keeping to "the line of actual control" was vague. It became even more vague in view of the reference to "individual adjustments." Mr Chou En-lai said that China had not committed aggression. In fact, he disclosed, the Indian leaders had not made the charge during the talks.

The day Mr Chou En-lai left New Delhi for Kathmandu on April 26, it became known that the Chinese had constructed a new road, west of Aksaichin Road. Branching off from the Sinkiang-Tibet highway, it cut deeper into Indian territory. *The Times of India* (Delhi), reported on April 27 that the Chinese had possibly developed one or two airstrips also in the occupied part of Ladakh. It said that the new road was reported to enter Indian territory in the occupied part of Ladakh in the north at the same point as the old Aksaichin Road, namely, Haji Langar. Thereafter it turned due west and then south along the valley of the Qara Qash river and then south-west to the Lanak La. The road runs west-north-west into Sinkiang from Haji Langar to Malikshah and Shahidullah and then north to Yarkand.

In the south, the highway was said to cross the Lanak La into Tibet and then to join the old Aksaichin Road to run down to Rudok on the eastern extremity of Lake Pangong. A feeder road has also been constructed from Lanak La to the Kong Ka pass. The new highway traversed about 200 miles of Indian territory and cut off an area of between 8,000 and 10,000 sq. miles. The alignment of the old Aksaichin Road through Ladakh was only half as long and the area on the far side of it only some 5,000 sq. miles.

The report was confirmed by the Prime Minister in his address to Parliament on April 29, 1960. He said that he had raised the issue with Mr Chou En-lai, who said that he did not know much about it.⁴ Mr Nehru did not substantiate the claim that there was a reference to the road in the second White Paper published by the Ministry of External Affairs and the statement of Mr Karam Singh, Deputy Superintendent of Police, who was among those the Chinese had taken prisoner in October, 1959, and tortured. In fact there was no reference whatsoever to the new road in any of the Government of India's notes to Peking. Karam Singh's statement also merely said at two places that he was taken in a truck from the Chinese Kong Ka pass post "to the scene of the [October 21] incident" (in the Chang Chenmo Valley) and again that he and the other Indian prisoners were taken in trucks from the Chinese post "to the place of handing over." In both cases the distance involved probably did not exceed ten miles at the outside.

Following the failure of the talks, the official organ of the Chinese Government, *The People's Daily* (Peking), returned to the charges that the "imperialists" and "reactionaries in India" had been responsible for it. In a 2,000-word article, the paper said that these forces, which had endeavoured to disrupt Sino-Indian friendship, showed undisguised hostility toward the meeting of the Indian and Chinese Premiers. "Ever since Mr Chou En-lai put forward the proposal for a meeting of the Chinese and Indian premiers they have tried, by hook and by crook, to obstruct this meeting," the paper said, adding that "they openly called for a period of prolonged tension for the sake of their ulterior ends."

It said: "After Premier Chou En-lai's arrival in New Delhi, imperialism and reactionary forces in India came out even more vociferously against the adoption of a policy of conciliation by the Indian Government. Imperialism and reactionary forces in India tried unscrupulously to exert pressure on the talks in order to force China to make concessions. They even demanded that China give up its own territory as pre-condition for the negotiations. They

⁴ *Ibid.*, April 30, 1960.

maliciously spread pessimistic views about the talks and even said that not only today but for many generations to come there can be no settlement between India and China."

"In doing so," the editorial said, "they attempted to undermine the deep-rooted friendship between the Chinese and Indian peoples. However, it is imperialism and Indian reactionary forces themselves which have failed. All their attempts to impose on China their arrogant and preposterous claims did not succeed and will never succeed. Their vain plot to disrupt the traditional friendship between the Chinese and Indian people is now exposed more fully than ever in the eyes of the Indian people and the peoples of other countries in the world." It also said that while the broad masses of the Indian people wanted settlement of the frontier problem, it was imperialism and reactionary elements in India which had obstructed a settlement.

The implications were clear. In the interest of Sino-Indian "friendship" and settlement of the border dispute, the "imperialists and reactionaries" in India must be defeated. This calls for a tough line on the part of the Communist Party of India. The pressure on the borders must, to be effective, be supplemented by pressure within the country. In the final analysis, the Chinese Communists would desire to promote a civil war in India. That is the plain meaning of the repeated insistence that the Chinese path alone can lead to socialist revolutions in the countries of Asia and Africa. The *Red Flag* (Peking), spelt out this line for the CPI in its second issue in April when it poured ridicule on the concept of peaceful transition to socialism and attempts to revise Marxism-Leninism to suit the conditions of the day. The article, issued in the name of the editorial board, may well have been prepared by one of the top party theoreticians. In any case it spoke for the Central Committee of the Chinese Communists Party. It will remain a basic document for years to come. Not for long can India ignore the challenge from within and without. China is not fighting for a highway or some vague historical claim. She is fighting for control over the whole of India through the instrumentality of the Communist Party.

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