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(Jadavpur University Extension Lecture)  
(16 April, 1959)

# SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS

by

**Dr. P. C. CHAKRAVARTI**  
*Professor of International Relations*  
*Jadavpur University*

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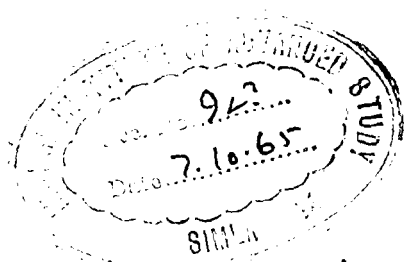


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To .  
The Founders  
of  
The National Council of Education



MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

One of the most significant developments in the recent history of India has been the emergence of a new problem regarding the security of our frontiers. So long as the British ruled over this country, they had, by and large, one frontier problem—the problem of the North-Western Frontier. That problem persists to this day, although its character and complexion have completely changed. But in addition to this problem we are to-day confronted with another—the problem of the Himalayan frontier. This new problem, fraught with dangerous consequences for the stability and integrity of this country, has been created by the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

The Himalayas are often considered as an impenetrable barrier between India on the one side and the trans-Himalayan regions on the other. They have developed in this country, as Panikkar once emphasised, a kind of Maginot-line mentality. Yet the Himalayas are by no means impregnable. Down the ages traders and pilgrims and even large invading armies have traversed through the passes and routes of the Himalayas from India into Tibet and from Tibet into India. In the middle of the seventh century, the Tibetan king Srongtsan Gampo, marched with a strong army from Tibet through Nepal, descended into the plains of northern India, stormed a few cities and defeated the Indian army with great slaughter. In 1790 the Gurkhas, by then masters of Nepal, crossed through the famous Trisuli-Gandaki Pass, overran Tibet and plundered the Lama



monasteries of Shigatse. Two years later (1792) a 70,000 strong Chinese army traversed through the same pass for an invasion of Nepal. In 1834 the armies of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu, under the intrepid General Zorowar Singh, marched through the passes of western Tibet no less than six times and annexed Baltistan and Ladakh to the kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir. And finally in 1904 there came the famous Younghusband expedition through Sikkim and the Chumbi valley into Lhasa with far-reaching consequences on the history of the hermit-land.

It is thus clear that the Himalayas do not constitute a solid, insurmountable barrier against external aggression. The essential geographical fact with regard to the Himalayas is that it is the culmination of a vast, elevated plateau, picturesquely described as the Roof of the World. To the north of the plateau lie the largely unexplored, frozen Chang, Tang highlands and the unknown Kuen Lun mountains which tower over sea-level Chinese Turkestan. They are *terra incognita* to Tibetans and foreigners alike. No ordinary human being dares travel along the 1500 miles length of these bleak and frozen lands, where even valleys are 18,000 or 19,000 feet high. To the east Tibet gradually slopes down toward China, strongly protected by a network of almost impassable rivers—the Salween, the Mekong, the Yangtse and the Yalung, running at the bottom of deep gorges through impenetrable forests and jungles. Tibet is thus a colossal natural fortress standing in the heart of Asia. Any strong military power based on this natural fortress can any day imperil India's security along her 1800 miles long Himalayan frontier.<sup>1</sup> With modern technological

<sup>1</sup> From the north-eastern tip of Kashmir to Namcha Barwa on the north-eastern frontier of Assam, the border between Tibet and India extends over 1800 miles.

advances, resulting in the rapid transformation of the means of transportation and communication, the impregnability of the Himalayas has become a thing of the past. It is clearly not in India's national interest to see a strong expansionist, military power entrench itself in the soil of Tibet.

At the turn of the century there arose an apprehension of Tibet being absorbed within the Russian sphere of influence. It was to forestal this danger that Lord Curzon, then Viceroy of India, planned the much-criticised Younghusband expedition of 1904. The Home Government in London was reluctant to sanction the plan. They looked at the Tibetan question from the standpoint of imperial policy. Curzon as the Viceroy of India looked at it from the standpoint of Indian security. In the end he had his way. A limited expedition under Sir Francis Younghusband was sent into Tibet resulting in the Lhasa Convention of September, 1904. This Convention secured to Great Britain direct influence over the external policy of Tibet. It also provided for the establishment of trade marts at Yatung, Gyantse and Gartok, and the promotion and encouragement of commerce between India and Tibet. A British commercial agent was stationed at Gyantse, and he was empowered to proceed, if so required, to Lhasa. The danger of the Russian bear grimacing from the Roof of the World was thus dissipated.

But at the time when these events were taking place, the British Foreign Office was more worried about the growing strength and ambitions of Imperial Germany than about Russia. In fact, the rising threat of Germany made Britain and Russia come to an understanding in the famous Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. This Convention attempted to settle all outstanding differences

between the two countries by defining and delimiting British and Russian spheres of influence in areas of mutual conflict—Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet. In regard to Tibet both powers agreed to respect the integrity of Tibetan territory, abstain from any intervention in its internal administration, and to treat with the government of Tibet only through its nominal suzerain, China. In effect, Britain and Russia, by the Convention, set up Tibet as a buffer zone between India on the one side and the Russian Asiatic empire on the other. Tibet, like Afghanistan, was to serve as a protective cushion for India.

When Britain recognised Chinese suzerainty over Tibet in the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, she was not in the least worried about China. China was then weak, decadent, disintegrating, in the grip of Western Powers; the Manchus appeared to have “exhausted their mandate from heaven.” Recognition of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet meant no more than the recognition of an empty symbol, or, as Lord Curzon had put it, of a mere “political affection” and a “solemn farce”. It would have required a prophet’s vision to foresee that the farce might one day become a reality, posing a more serious threat to Indian security than the Russian bear had ever done.

Chinese suzerainty over Tibet has a history of its own. Although Tibet had age-old connections with China, there was no Chinese overlordship over Tibet until the second decade of the eighteenth century. In 1717 a horde of Moslem Tartars swept down into Tibet, and took Lhasa by storm, wrecking and looting monasteries and temples. The Tibetans applied to Peking for help and Emperor Kang-Hsi sent up a strong army to drive out the invaders. The Chinese thus came into Tibet in

the guise of deliverers. They continued, however, as overlords. From 1720 till about the end of the nineteenth century this overlordship was symbolised by the residence of two Chinese Ambans (Residents or Viceroys) and a Chinese garrison at Lhasa. Chinese overlordship over Tibet, however, waxed and waned with the changing fortunes of the central government at Peking. When that government was strong, the overlordship was real; when weak, it was nominal. The Tibetans, moreover, revolted against the Chinese whenever there was an opportunity for it. On such occasions, they expelled the Ambans, massacred the garrison and threw off the foreign yoke. In other words, Chinese overlordship over Tibet was never based on the willing consent of the Tibetan people.

In 1895 China was disastrously defeated by Japan. In 1900 the Boxer Rebellion was routed by the Western armies. These misfortunes of China were an opportunity for Tibet. The thirteenth Dalai Lama now so firmly re-established his authority that the Chinese suzerainty was reduced to a mere pretence. When the Younghusband expedition entered Lhasa, there was hardly any trace of Chinese authority in the hermit kingdom. The Lhasa Convention was essentially a British-Tibetan affair. China hardly figured anywhere in the scene.

In 1910, however, Peking made another attempt to reassert its authority in Tibet. The Dalai Lama had been a fugitive from his country ever since 1904. The British had withdrawn from all entanglements in Tibet after the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. Taking advantage of this situation, the Chinese again moved into Tibet with an invading army, deposed the Dalai Lama, and pushing their troops westward as far as Gartok and the border of Ladakh, occupied the whole country.

Most Tibetans, however, still considered the fugitive Dalai Lama as their lawful ruler. Chinese edicts and proclamations in Lhasa were torn down or plastered with dung by an outraged population. In 1911 there occurred the revolution in Peking, leading to the fall of the Manchu dynasty. The Tibetans at once rose against the invaders, fought the Chinese troops of occupation and expelled them from their country. In June 1912 the Dalai Lama returned from his exile, made a solemn and pompous entrance into Lhasa and assumed full and complete sovereign rights over his country. When the first President of the new-born Chinese Republic sought to ingratiate himself with the Dalai Lama by restoring his title and privileges, the latter retorted that he did not seek from the Chinese any title or privileges as he was the lawful religious and political ruler of an independent country. From that date till about 1950 there is hardly any evidence of China exercising any suzerain rights over Tibet. Tibet coined her own money, framed her own laws, administered her own justice, maintained her own army and conducted her foreign relations, unhampered by any external control.<sup>1</sup>

This does not mean that the Chinese gave up their pretensions over Tibet. No serious attempt was, however, made to put them into practice until the Communists came into power in China. In 1950 the People's Republic of China decided to launch upon a full-scale invasion of Tibet. The "Peoples army units" were ordered to advance into Tibet "to liberate the Tibetan people and defend the frontiers of China." "Liberate the Tibetan people from whom?", asked Prime Minister

<sup>1</sup> Writing in the *Observer*, Mr. Hugh Richardson, who was officer-in-charge of the Indian Mission in Lhasa in 1947-50, stated that "there was not a trace of Chinese authority there (Tibet) after 1912."

Nehru in the Indian Parliament, and "defend the frontiers of China against whom?" asked many others in this country. The Government of India immediately wrote to Peking, imploring the People's Government to settle the Tibetan problem by peaceful negotiations, "adjusting the legitimate Tibetan claims to autonomy within the frame-work of Chinese suzerainty". The Chinese reply was couched in the most haughty and insulting language. "The problem of Tibet", the Chinese wrote, "is a domestic problem of the People's Republic of China and no foreign interference shall be tolerated". "The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China", the Chinese note added "cannot but consider it (the Indian viewpoint) as having been affected by foreign influences hostile to China in Tibet". In other words, the Government of India was an agent of Western imperialism! We swallowed the insult.

Three times in modern history Britain went into major wars to defend and preserve the independence of the Low Countries—first in the time of Louis XIV, a second time in the days of Napoleon and a third time in 1914—because she regarded independence of Belgium and Holland as vital to her own security. In July 1934, the Austrian Chancellor, Dr. Dollfuss, was murdered at Vienna by the Austrian Nazis, obviously under instructions from Berlin. On the same day Italy mobilised her troops on the Brenner, because she considered Austrian independence as vital to her security. Hitler was frightened; he dared not carry through the Putsch he had planned. Austrian independence was thus saved for a few years. In 1951 when the United Nations forces crossed the 38th parallel in Korea, the People's Government in China sent large masses of fresh and well-equipped Chinese Communist forces into North Korea because

she considered the immunity of that region from potentially hostile external control as vital to her own security. In 1950 we had neither the will nor the resources to act in the manner the stronger powers in similar circumstances would have acted. Having won our independence by peaceful methods under Gandhiji's leadership, we were inclined to believe that international problems including problems of security might and should be solved by the same methods. Our unwillingness or inability to act in defence of Tibet enabled China to have her way. We remained silent spectators of the tragedy that was enacted at our door-step.

Lhasa looked to us for diplomatic and other support. She appealed to India to sponsor her case before the United Nations. The Government of India informed her that she could make a direct appeal to the United Nations, and that we would support her case to the extent of censuring China for using force against her. But at the last moment we backed out of that promise. When the General Assembly Steering Committee took up the consideration of the Tibetan complaint (25 November, 1950), we not only reversed our previous stand but went to the extent of advocating that the complaint should not be considered at all.

Tibet left to itself could not continue the fight against huge Chinese forces for long. In late April, 1951, a six-man delegation from Tibet arrived in Peking and within a month (on 23 May, 1951) signed a 17-article dictated peace treaty called the Sino-Tibetan Agreement. The Tibetans agreed to "unite and drive out imperialist, aggressive forces from Tibet so that the Tibetan people could return to the big family of the motherland—the People's Republic of China". They also agreed to the establishment of a Military and Adminis-

trative Committee and a Military Area Headquarters in Tibet. Peking was to take control of Tibetan external affairs, trade and communications. The Tibetan army was to be absorbed by the People's Liberation Army. In return, Peking promised not to alter the existing political system in Tibet or change the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama or effect any change in the religious beliefs, customs and habits of the Tibetan people or in the income of monasteries. Thus the old, often nebulous, suzerainty of China over Tibet was transformed into a full-fledged sovereignty.

India's immediate reaction to these events was one of grave concern. The Chinese occupation of Tibet made it impossible for us to maintain our former care-free attitude in regard to the Himalayan frontier. To safeguard India's security, the British had built up two lines of defence along this frontier—an outer line constituted by Tibet as a buffer zone, and an inner line constituted by the British protectorate over Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. When the outer bastion broke down in consequence of the Chinese occupation of Tibet, India inevitably concentrated on strengthening the inner line of defence inherited from the British.

It was clear to India that China, now entrenched in Tibet, could put heavier pressure on the government of Nepal through political and economic means. It was clear that Lhasa, now controlled by China, could be used as an instrument to draw the allegiance of Sikkim, Bhutan and numerous tribes living along our North East Frontier. Ladakh, Bhutan and to some extent Sikkim are parts of ethnological Tibet. Lhasa is to most of our Himalayan peoples what Rome was to the Catholic Christians in the Middle Ages—the great centre to which they must turn for light and spiritual guidance. The



government of India did not fail to realise the implications of the situation. Speaking to the Parliament, Prime Minister Nehru said in December, 1950:

“Our interest in the internal conditions of Nepal has become still more acute and personal, because of the developments across our frontiers, to be frank, especially those in China and Tibet. Besides our sympathetic interest in Nepal, we are also interested in the security of our own country. From time immemorial the Himalayas have provided us with a magnificent frontier. Of course, they are no longer as impassable as they used to be, but are still fairly effective. The Himalayas lie mostly on the northern border of Nepal. We cannot allow that barrier to be penetrated because it is also the principal barrier to India. Therefore, much as we appreciate the independence of Nepal, we cannot allow any thing to go wrong in Nepal or permit that barrier to be crossed or weakened, because that would be a risk to our own security”.

On another occasion, the Prime Minister said:

“So far as Nepal is concerned, it is a well-known fact—and it is contained in our treaties and other engagements with Nepal—that we have a special position in Nepal—not interfering with their independence but not looking with favour on anybody else interfering with their independence either”.

When the Chinese People's Republic published maps showing large areas to the south of the MacMohan line as belonging to China, the Prime Minister declared in the Parliament: “MacMohan line is our boundary, map or no map. We will not allow anybody to come across that boundary”.

Not only was concern felt and expressed, but posi-

tive measures were taken to strengthen our position along the Himalayan frontier. By a treaty signed with Bhutan (August 8, 1949) India took control of the external relations of Bhutan in return for an annual subsidy of 500,000 rupees. On December, 5, 1950, we entered into a similar treaty with Sikkim under the terms of which India not only received full control of Sikkim's external relations, but also acquired the right to take such measures as she considered necessary for the defence of Sikkim or the security of India, whether preparatory or otherwise, including the right to station troops anywhere within Sikkim. India further acquired the exclusive right of "constructing, and regulating the use of railways, aerodromes and landing grounds" and other communication facilities in Sikkim. The government of India also took action to guard the border between Ladakh and western Tibet, while the government of Uttar Pradesh established with the help of the Union Government special constabulary forces to control and patrol the frontier in the Kumaon area. In the north-east frontier area on this side of the MacMohan line the government embarked upon a new policy of extending political control over wild tribes, building roads and air-strips and establishing army units at strategic points. Nepal is legally and technically an independent country. But as a close and friendly neighbour, India has been taking special interest in its affairs so as to enable it to build up social and political stability within. In spite of pressing needs at home Indian experts were sent to Nepal to train an army and civil service, build roads and set up schools. "The financial efforts India is making in Nepal are shown by the fact that in 1954 India spent close to eighteen million dollars in that country for development purposes and these expenditure have continued".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Poplai and Talbot, *India and America*, pp. 114-5.

Alongside these measures we sought consciously and deliberately to improve our relations with China, partly in the interest of world peace, but more in the belief that a friendly China might still be induced to follow a policy of moderation and restraint in regard to Tibet and our Himalayan frontier. India was the second non-Communist country in the world to extend recognition to the Communist government of China (30 Dec., 1949). When in 1951 a resolution was moved in the United Nations General Assembly condemning Chinese aggression in Korea, India voted with the Soviet bloc against the resolution. We attempted to make the Chinese appear as more sinned against than sinning. To placate the Communist government of China we refused to recognise the Nationalist government of Formosa. We strove hard to secure Communist China's admission to the United Nations and to a permanent seat in the Security Council. When a proposal was made that Security Council's membership be revised so that the permanent seat held by Nationalist China might be given to India, we ourselves turned down the suggestion as it might impair our friendly relations with Communist China. India also helped to bring about the cease-fire in Korea and the Geneva Conference of 1954 so that China's relations with the non-Communist Powers might improve.

At about the same time we concluded a new treaty with China called the Sino-Indian "trade and intercourse agreement" on Tibet (29 April, 1954). It was in this treaty that the famous Panch Sheel was for the first time formulated and embodied. Under the terms of the Agreement we surrendered some of the rights and privileges which we had inherited as a legacy from the old government of India. These rights were the right to station an Indian Political Agent at Lhasa (not fixed by treaty but

an established practice since 1935), the right to maintain trade agencies at Gyantse, Gartok and Yatung as well as post and telegraph offices along the trade route upto Gyantse, and finally the right to maintain military escorts at Yatung and Gyantse for the protection of India trade agencies as well as of the trade routes. Under the terms of the treaty we agreed to transform our political agency at Lhasa into a Consulate-General<sup>1</sup>, withdraw our military escorts from Tibet and surrender our communications installations to the Chinese government. It was stipulated that these communications installations were to be handed over to China on the payment of a "reasonable price". But on the day following the signing of the treaty (30 April, 1954), the Government of India instructed Ambassador Raghavan that "postal, telegraph and telephone installations together with equipment operated by India in Tibet" were to be transferred "free of cost and without compensation" to the Chinese People's government "as a gesture of goodwill". We also gave to China one more trading post in India in addition to the two already existing. China pressed for one at Almora or Simla; we gave it at New Delhi instead. Finally, in the years following the conclusion of the Sino-Indian Agreement on Tibet we made almost an all-out effort to widen and deepen our contacts with China through exchange of students, of cultural and trade missions and through diplomatic measures.

What have we got from China in return for these gestures of goodwill? On 19 October, 1949, more than two years after we had achieved our independence, Mao Tse-tung in reply to a message of greetings from the Communist Party of India stated :

<sup>1</sup> The change in the designation of the Indian representative at Lhasa from Political Agent to Consul-General was actually brought about in September, 1952.

"I firmly believe that relying on the brave Communist Party of India and the unity and struggle of all Indian patriots, India will certainly not remain long under the yoke of imperialism and its collaborators. Like free China, a free India will one day emerge in the socialist and People's Democratic family; that day will end the imperialist reactionary era in the history of mankind" (*The Communist*, Bombay, January, 1950).

In other words, free India still needed to be "liberated" through the establishment of a totalitarian Communist regime either of an indigenous or foreign brand !

Secondly, in return for our gestures of goodwill we had hoped that we might be permitted by China to re-open our Consulate at Kashgar (Sikiang). In reply to our request, however, we were informed by the People's Government that Sikiang was a closed area.

Thirdly, in spite of our natural sensibility in the matter of our international frontiers, Communist China has been persistently publishing maps showing large chunks of Indian territory such as Ladakh, Sikkim, parts of NEFA and important Indian shrines such as Kedar-nath and Badrinath as Chinese territory.<sup>1</sup> When the government of India drew the attention of China to what Dr. Meghnad Saha once described as "this cartographic annexation of Indian territory", the People's Government replied that these maps were copies of the old maps produced in the time of Chiang Kai-Shek. Everything of old China was being changed by the Communist government; only the old maps could not be changed ! A few months ago the Soviet weekly, "The New Times", having world-

<sup>1</sup> For Chinese maps showing NEFA, Ladakh and other slices of Indian territory within China, see "Provincial Atlas of the Chinese People's Republic", Shanghai, 1950; "General Map of the Chinese People's Republic", Shanghai, 1950.

Some of these maps have been reprinted in October, 1958.

wide circulation, published a similar inflated map of China. When enquiries were made about it, New China put forward the same plea as on previous occasions. It added, however, this time that it had not yet undertaken a survey of its boundaries, and pending such survey it cannot and will not make changes in its frontiers on its own.<sup>1</sup> In other words, Communist China has reserved to itself the right to declare at any time of its own choosing that the chunks of Indian territory shown in Chinese maps as belonging to China are disputed territories.

Fourthly, our Chinese friends during the last few years have resorted to all kinds of dumping tactics with a view to expelling us from our traditional south-east Asian market and thus crippling our economy. Indian exports of textiles into the Federation of Malay and Singapore shrank from 18.6 million square yards in the first calendar quarter of 1957 to 6.4 million square yards in the first three months of 1958. The volume of our exports to other south-east Asian countries has undergone a similar decline.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Speaking in the Lok Sabha on 22 April, 1959. Prime Minister Nehru stated :

"So far as the Russian maps are concerned, I think they had merely copied them from the Chinese maps without probably going into the matter. When we addressed them they said that they would look into the matter. So far as the Chinese maps are concerned, we are still in correspondence. As I have previously said, their answer has been that these are old maps, we are not sure of the exact border and we shall look into it and till then the status quo should continue'. Well, that is not a very adequate answer, if I may say so, after so many years."

<sup>2</sup> Shri Madan Mohan R. Ruia, leader of the Government of India trade mission, answering questions at a Press Conference (31 March, 1959), stated that China has been steadily expelling India from her markets, especially in Indonesia and Malaya.

Reuter reported from Wellington (1 April, 1959) that by the carefully-timed unloading of low-priced goods, Communist China has upset the local markets in South-Asia and has affected the normal flow of trade with the free countries of the world. "A part of the proceeds from the sale of these goods is used for purposes of propaganda and subversion."

I shall not dwell at length on the tragic events that have taken place in Tibet during the past few weeks. For one thing, there is not enough time for it this evening; for another, although the outlines of the happenings appear to be clear, the details still remain a little confused. There is hardly any doubt, however, that these happenings represent nothing short of a national uprising of the Tibetans against their alien masters. The Chinese plea that it was a conspiracy of Kaloons (ministers), aristocrats and "rebellious bandits" is on all fours with the Russian dubbing of Hungarian patriots as "Horthy Fascists". A rebellion on this scale is not the sort contrived by the "upper strata" and "imperialists" and "foreign reactionaries".

The Tibetan revolt has brought to the surface three significant facts which we had refused so long to take sufficient cognisance of. First, our deep sympathy for Tibet. In his press conference on the 5th of April, Prime Minister Nehru emphasised how recent events in Tibet have "affected some deeper chords in Indian hearts". In fact, never in recent years have the feelings of our people (except the Communists) been so deeply moved by any event outside India as by the happenings in Tibet. This has been so partly because of historical reasons—our close cultural and spiritual ties with Tibet forged in bygone ages, and partly because of a tacit recognition in the national mind that our security, and consequently, freedom are some way or other linked up with the fortunes of Tibet.

The second important fact which has been thrown up by recent events is that there exists in our midst a well-organised minority which is not only anti-national in its outlook and sympathies but actively engaged in confounding the national mind in order to subserve the

interests of international communism. They have launched upon an all-out campaign of vilification against Tibet in order to justify Chinese atrocities in that unhappy land. They have been shouting and shrieking for the suppression of the Tibetan uprising by methods of blood and iron. While they agree with other sections of our people in condemnation of western colonialism and imperialism, they consider any rebellion against Communist imperialism as an abominable crime which must be put down with an iron hand. Indications are clear and unmistakable that in the event of any unfortunate showdown with China, which no one in this country wants, they will provide the material with the help of which internal operations of the Trojan Horse pattern might be employed without much difficulty.

But by far the most important fact brought to the surface by recent events is that the key to Sino-Indian understanding and amity lies hidden in the soil of Tibet. It is on the rocks of the Roof of the World that our friendship with China will flourish or founder. There is hardly any doubt that the Tibetan revolt has cast a deep shadow on our relations with China to-day. Indian Communists who are crying hoarse on behalf of China on this issue are, to my mind, doing the greatest dis-service to Sino-Indian understanding. Entrenchment of China in Tibet and destruction of Tibetan autonomy will permanently impair our relations with China. Only ideological fanatics can ignore or deny the imperatives of geography.

Ever since we became independent, we have been consistently striving to follow a policy of "dynamic neutralism" in a world torn asunder by ideological and other rivalries. But as President Roosevelt had said in 1939, "even a neutral has a right to take account of facts".



And the fact to-day is that the vast bulk of Communist Asia, armed to the teeth, presses down 1800 miles of India's northern border. China not only occupies nearly one-fourth of the giant Asiatic land mass, she has a population of 650,000,000, increasing at the rate of 2.4 per cent annually. Experts on population problems have computed that the Chinese population would be 700,000,000 in 1963 and 800,000,000 in 1968. And there is no recognition in China, as there is in this country, of the need of population control. Sometime ago some noted Chinese economists who had advocated population control were dismissed from their jobs. If present trends continued, sooner or later China would demand an outlet, if necessary by force, for her expanding population, in the same way as Hitler demanded *lebensraum* for an expanding German population.<sup>1</sup>

Alongside this huge population increasing at a rapid rate, China has an army which is the second largest in the world. In 1955 the strength of this army was estimated at 2,250,000 with 700,000 security troops in the background. And this army is stocked up with Soviet equipment and supplies. Expenditure on defence has been

<sup>1</sup> The present revolt in Tibet is due, in some measure, to large-scale settlement of the Chinese in the hermit kingdom. At the historic meeting on 20 September, 1955, between Mao Tse-tung, the Dalai and Panchen Lamas, Mao had indicated that, among the impending changes, Communist China intended to colonise Tibet at a ratio of more than five to one. On 26 April, 1956, General Chang Kuo-hua, quoting Mao, had stated: "Tibet is a huge area but thinly populated. Efforts must be made to raise the population from the present level of two millions.....to more than ten millions". In fact, large-scale settlement of the Chinese began some some years ago in the Golok and Amdo areas of Tibet. This had the effect of driving the Amdos and other Tibetans in a migration towards Central Tibet as far as Jeykundo between Kham and Lhasa. Chinese families in large number have been brought from thickly populated provinces of China and resettled on the best lands of Western Tibet, which has been linked with the Chinese mainland through Sinkiang.

mounting year after year. Peking's budget for 1959 shows an increase of 16 per cent on defence expenditure compared with 1958.

Before the occupation of Tibet by Communist China in 1950, the Tibetan government used to maintain an army ranging from about 5,000 to about 10,000 half-armed solidiers. The People's Liberation Army in Tibet has been at least ten times larger since 1956.<sup>1</sup> In fact, as Prime Minister Nehru stated in the Lok Sabha on 30 March, 1959, Tibet has been under virtual military occupation for some years.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, Communist China has been busy during the last few years in building air-fields and a net-work of highways within, and extending to the frontiers of, Tibet. No doubt these new highways will make travels within Tibet easier than before and "provide facilities for the growth of trade". But they are not without their military significance for Tibet as well as for this country.<sup>3</sup>

These are some of the basic facts which we can only ignore at our peril. We cannot turn these facts into fiction merely by turning away from them. If Sino-Indian relations are to rest on solid foundations. China must agree to grant complete self-government to Tibet

<sup>1</sup> *Thought*, a weekly magazine published from Delhi, wrote on 21 April, 1956 : "There are fairly reliable reprrts that put Chinese Communist strength in Tibet at over 100,000 men."

<sup>2</sup> A recent P.T.I. report stated that "Peking has posted 60,000 Chinese troops to guard about 50,000 Tibetans in Lhasa and suburbs."

<sup>3</sup> On 25 April, 1956, The Communist Chinese *Shih Shih Shon Tse*, writing on "Construction in Tibet" said : "Roads are open to motor traffic from the banks of the Chinshachiang River in the eastern part of Tibet to Kotake in the Ali district in the extreme west, and from the Tang-kula mountains in the north to Yatung in the midst of the Himalayas in the south. The five truck lines of the Sikang-Tibet, Chinghai-Tibet, Lhasa-Shigatse, Shigatse-Gyantse and Gyantse-Yatung have not only linked various important cities and towns in Tibet but have also linked Tibet closely with China's

in the same manner as Britain granted self-government to many of her former colonies and dependencies. China must withdraw from Tibet and concede to the Tibetans their inherent right of self-determination. No one disputes the need of reforms in Tibet ; but reforms must come from within, and cannot be thrust from outside. China must also agree to sign a new convention with India embodying the substance of the old Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, both the countries pledging themselves to respect the integrity of Tibetan territory and abstain from any intervention in its internal administration. Alternatively, there may be a tri-partite agreement between China, Tibet and India, the three countries undertaking to abide by the principles of Panch Sheel in their relations with one another. This must be buttressed by a categorical declaration by China that she would respect the MacMohan Line and the internationally-recognised Himalayan frontier.

Speaking to the Lok Sabha on 30 March, 1959, Prime Minister Nehru stated that while India values her friendship with China, she also values her good and friendly relations with Tibet. "We want them (Tibetans) to progress in freedom", he said. These simple words contain the key to Sino-Indian understanding and amity. Tibet's freedom is essential for the peace and happiness of the Tibetans. It is no less essential for our own security and continued freedom. Let there be no mistake about it.

hinterland". On March 24, 1956, the *New China News Agency* reported that a route had been found for a highway from Nagchuka (north-west of Lhasa) to Gartok, largest town in the Ali district of extreme western Tibet, not far from the Indian border. A few weeks later (April 20, 1956) the same News Agency reported that a new railway line, to be immediately surveyed, would link Lhasa with Shigatse near Tibet's border with Nepal. The fact that similar zeal for road construction is not much in evidence elsewhere, in China itself, makes one doubt whether the highways are merely meant for innocent trade and travel.

## POSTSCRIPT

This talk was given on 16 April. Since that date events have moved apace in Tibet. The backbone of the rebellion appears to have been broken, although its last embers will require time to be extinguished. Countless Tibetans—men, women and children—have been killed. Monasteries with all their wealth of priceless manuscripts and treasures of art have been shelled and destroyed. The Dalai Lama has been given asylum in India, and at least another 12,000 Tibetans have found shelter in this ancient land which had given birth to the lord of their faith.

In the meanwhile, there has been widespread expression of sympathy for the Tibetans all over the non-Communist world including Communist Yugoslavia. Voices of protest and indignation against Chinese action in Tibet have been raised all through Western Asia, Nepal, India, Ceylon and South-East Asian countries. To large masses of Asian peoples Tibet has proved beyond doubt that Communist imperialism is as real and every bit as dangerous as Western colonialism.

On the other hand, the leaders and the regimented press of Communist China have been indulging in an orgy of insinuation, insult and intimidation against this country for its expression of sympathy with the oppressed Tibetans. A few specimens are given below :

On 28 March the New China News Agency issued a communique stating that the Tibetan rebellion "was engineered by the imperialists, the Chiang Kai-Shek bands and foreign reactionaries and the *commanding centre of*

*the rebellion was Kalimpong*". On 29 March a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry emphatically repudiated the allegation. On the following day, Prime Minister Nehru stated in the Lok Sabha: "It is wrong to say that Kalimpong was the centre from which (anti-Chinese) activities were directed.....to imagine or to say a small group of persons sitting in Kalimpong organised a major upheaval in Tibet seems to me to make a large draft on imagination and to slur over obvious facts". On March 31 the National Council of the C.P.I. issued a statement repeating the Chinese charge that Kalimpong was the centre of anti-Chinese activities in Tibet and asking the Government of India to investigate the matter. The Indian Communists accepted the Chinese allegation but not its repudiation by the Prime Minister of India.

When the Dalai Lama sought and obtained asylum in India (31 March), the New China News Agency reported his entry into India "under duress". (It was later insinuated that he had been kidnapped into this country by "Indian expansionists"). When the Dalai Lama issued his first statement to the press from Tezpur (18 April) denying that he had been abducted or that he was under duress in India and exposing China's consistent record of double-dealing in Tibet, the New China News Agency reported (20 April) that the statement was issued under duress and foreign (meaning Indian) elements had helped to shape it. "One has reason to believe", it added, "that the statement was not by the Dalai Lama himself but was imposed on him by some person or persons". Speaking before the National People's Congress at Peking (22 April), the Panchen Lama (the traditional Chinese 'stogge') said that "the so-called statement" by the Dalai Lama "was imposed on him by foreigners".

On the same day (22 April) the Dalai Lama issued a

second statement from Mussorie, in course of which he said "I wish to make it clear that the earlier statement was issued under my authority and indicated my view and I stand by it." But the Chinese press again insinuated that this statement, like the earlier one, was drafted by the officers of the Government of India and issued under duress.

In the meanwhile, Deputies of China's National People's Congress meeting in Peking went on, day in and day out, condemning "Indian" imperialists for scheming the Tibetan rebellion and interfering in China's internal affairs with the intention to split Tibet from China". One Chinese Deputy, an international law expert, stated: "The backing and encouragement certain Indian politicians gave to the rebellious clique in Tibet and the issuing of the so-called statement which was imposed on the Dalai Lama constitute a barbarous act of interference ... We (the Chinese) will never allow foolish hogs to poke their snouts into our beautiful garden". "It is worth noting" said the Panchen Lama, *"that the reactionaries in India, working in the footsteps of the British imperialists, have always harboured expansionist ambitions towards Tibet and have carried out various forms of sabotage activities which are undoubtedly favourable to imperialism and unfavourable to Sino-Indian friendship"*. When the Panchen Lama finished his speech, Mr. Mao Tse-tung is reported to have joined in the applause and nodded approvingly to the twenty-two-year-old temporary head of the Tibet Preparatory Committee.

Warnings and threats have also not been wanting. On 24 April the People's Daily proclaimed in a banner headline over eight columns in black Chinese characters half an inch high: "Deputies of various nationalities give solemn warnings to Indian expansionists". On 25

April the Peking radio solemnly warned: "British imperialists and Indian expansionists had better clarify their minds or they will suffer a tragic end". On 30th April the People's Daily held out the threat: *"We give solemn warning to imperialists and Indian expansionists. You must stop at once ; otherwise you will be crushed to pieces under the iron fist of 650 million Chinese people"*.

Stunned by this ceaseless torrent of abuse, slander, and intimidation, Prime Minister Nehru, in course of a statement (28 April) in the Lok Sabha said: "All I can say is that I have been greatly distressed at the tone of the comments and charges made against India by responsible people in China. They have used the language of the cold war regardless of truth and propriety." He described the Chinese charges as "unbecoming", "fantastic" and "entirely devoid of substance".

But Mr. Dange, leader of the Indian Communist Party in the Lok Sabha, praised the Chinese press comments on India as remarkable for their "sobriety". "Sobriety" indeed!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Communist sense of values is sometimes astoundingly baffling. When Great Britain or America seek oil concessions in the Middle East, it is ofcourse imperialism. But when the Soviet Union seeks similar oil concessions in Iran, it is to liberate Iran from imperialism !

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