

INDIA'S TIBET POLICY

AN APPRAISAL AND OPTIONS

BY

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) believes that an understanding of India's Tibet policy is a must in clarifying the context of today's politics of Sino-Indian relations, particularly in the aftermath of Pokhran II. TPPRC hopes that during discussions about India's security concerns vis-a-vis its neighbours, especially the People's Republic of China, the Tibet angle will neither be forgotten nor wished away. Tibet has had an integral role in the modern history of Sino-Indian relations and will continue to do so until an amicable solution to the Tibetan problem is determined. Given this background TPPRC anticipates this third edition of INDIA'S TIBET POLICY: AN APPRAISAL AND OPTIONS, to be of continued importance for Indian policy and decision makers and the public at large.

INDIA'S TIBET POLICY is an incisive analysis of situations leading to complete hold of Tibet by China during the last over 50 years. The document reveals plans, policies and strategies adopted by China to besiege India. In this process it also draws attention to the policy decisions India chose to make about Tibet and its ramifications for India - exposing the vulnerability of India's security.

The Centre sincerely expresses appreciation to Mr. L.L. Mehrotra for preparing this document. Mr. Mehrotra retired as Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Since then he has been associated with the Centre as member of its Advisory Board. His knowledge of Tibetan which he studied at the Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok in 1959-60 and his association with His Holiness the Dalai Lama since 1961-62 when he served as Government of India's Liaison Officer was the beginning of a closer interest in India-China-Tibet affairs. As Director of the Northern Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, he dealt with border regions of India during 1969-73. Later he served as Charge d'Affairs in Peking (now Beijing) from 1973 to 1976. Mr. Mehrotra served in many countries of the world including U.S.A., former U.S.S.R.,

China, Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka on Ambassadorial and other assignments. His academic and intellectual pursuits continued even after his retirement as is evident from the award of Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship (1993-95) to work on Regional Cooperation in South Asia; Visiting Professorship at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (1993-95) and Coordinator, South Asia with Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (1995-96). He also served the Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, New Delhi as the Director (overseas) and as an Honorary Professor for Life of San Salvador University, Buenos Aires.

The Centre places on record its gratitude for the guidance and help received from the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (the Tibetan Parliament-in-exile) and the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung in the production of this third edition. We also recognise the painstaking efforts of Ms. Tsering Lhakyi, our Administrative Assistant in the production of this document.

We hope this document will contribute to the better understanding of the geopolitical considerations to be undertaken by India, especially with reference to its policies vis-a-vis Tibet and China.

New Delhi
November, 2000

Tsering Tsomo (Ms.)
Executive Director

**FRIEDRICH-NAUMANN-STIFTUNG
AND
THE TIBETAN PARLIAMENTARY AND POLICY
RESEARCH CENTRE**

The Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung (FNSt) established in 1958 is a non-profit organization for public benefit. It promotes the liberal principle of Freedom in Human Dignity in all sectors of society, both nationally as well as internationally, in developed as well as developing countries.

The Foundation is active in more than 75 countries. In the South Asian Region comprising the SAARC countries the Foundation's work encompasses projects concerned with support for economic liberalisation; fostering regional economic co-operation in South Asia; promotion of civic rights; and environmental protection. All these activities are carried out in co-operation with local, national and international NGOs, the emphasis being on self-reliance and the setting up of democratic institutions.

Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung in partnership with the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies has set up the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) with the purpose of strengthening the Tibetan diaspora in building up a healthy democratic working ethos. The objective is to prepare the Tibetans in exile for the assumption of responsibilities that would respond to their hopes and aspirations through a framework of legislative, executive and judicial institutions based on the concept of the Tibetan polity guided by *Saddharma* and with a view to generating human values and considerations based on man's free will, equality, justice and non-violence. There is also the standing need to constantly remind the Tibetan diaspora of their national identity, culture and heritage and the global community of Tibet's unique contribution to the world of thought and culture.

Established in 1994, the Centre has already reached a very representative section of Tibetans residing in India and Nepal, encouraging them to get actively involved in their new democratic institutions and helping their leadership to formulate a vision for the future. Moreover, the Centre has a sound back-up programme of publications to disseminate information to build up national and international public opinion for the fulfilment of a just cause.

CHAPTER 1

INDIA'S HISTORIC LINKS WITH TIBET

For centuries past Tibet had flourished as a repository of an ancient culture thriving under the silence and solitude of a vast firmament, away from the tumult and turmoil of the world. Tibet was known to mankind not for its wealth and weaponry but for the heights of its spiritual glory and depth of its philosophical thought. Religion had been the keynote of this culture. Here, man was not the measure of all things but an humble creature with his share of *Karman* in the *Samsara* of activity and fruits thereof in the inexorable vortex of life. What was titanic in him was not vanity but the effort to emerge out of it, through suffering and sacrifice, meditation and prayer, compassion and congregation. Life continued in its spiritual endeavour in the mountain fastnesses, the glens and the plateau of Tibet until recently when the force of circumstances changed the shape of things.

ANTIQUITY OF INDO-TIBET CONTACTS

Generally, we think of India's contacts with Tibet with effect from the advent of Buddhism there. According to the Tibetan tradition, however, these contacts go further back in history. Tibetan chronicles¹ and scholars like Bu-ston suggest that the Tibetan race stems from the descendants of a military general named Rupati belonging to the Kaurava army. According to the Tibetan legend, Rupati fled to Tibet after the defeat of the Kauravas at the hands of the Pandavas in the epic battle of Mahabharata, and was followed by a large number of his followers. T.W.D. Shakabpa in his work 'Tibet: A Political History' states that a large number of learned Tibetans claim their race to have descended from Rupati and his followers. The claim is based on a letter written by the Indian pundit Sankarapati, (Deje-dakpo in Tibetan) about a hundred years after the death of the Buddha. The letter described the migration of Rupati's followers to Tibet².

¹ Deb-snon and Mkhas-pahi-dgah-ston

² Tibet: A Political History by Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa, Yale University Press, New Haven and London. 1967. p.5.

ESTEEMED LAND OF NOBLE MASTER

Buddhism went to Tibet directly from India. Being the land of the Noble Master, the Buddha, India represents to the Tibetan mind the birthplace of all that is noble in thought and deed. Tibet's religion, philosophy, art, poetry all show a deep Indian influence.

Buddhism was introduced in Tibet by the memorable efforts of two Tibetan kings, Songtsen Gampo and Trisong-Detsen, whose names are written in the golden pages of Tibetan history. One flourished in the first half of the 7th century A.D. and the other in the second half of the 8th century. Before Buddhism reached Tibet through Bhiksu Santaraksita, Kamalasila and Padmasambhava, it had undergone a profound evolution in its doctrine and practice in India itself. The three *Pitkas* viz. *Vinaya*, *Sutra* and *Abhidharma* were brought into Tibetan language and constituted the foundation of Tibetan culture with oral transmission and uninterrupted lineage of tradition.

The core of the entire Tibetan attitude to life, is *Karuna* or Compassion. Their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama is *Karuna's* incarnation par excellence. As an incarnation of *Avalokitesvara* (Chenresi in Tibetan), he dominates by the power of love through the conquest of the heart. The next important incarnation is Panchen Lama representing *Amitabha* (Hodpamey in Tibetan) - Infinite Light - the Dhyahi-Buddha of the existing Kalpa. Apart from these two Grand Lamas, there are numerous incarnate Lamas called Tulkus. They are believed to be incarnations of accomplished saints. In Tibetan Buddhism, the Indian concept of *Avatara* has been taken to its logical conclusion so that it ensures the presence of several saviours at the same time in the midst of the vast suffering humanity.

The system of reincarnation, originally Indian, and familiar to the Tibetan since the advent of Buddhism in Tibet, came into popular vogue in their country largely from the time of Gendun-Dubpa, the first Dalai Lama. The transmission of the title is not automatic from father to son. Instead of being hereditary it is based on a very discreet

process of selection of the true reincarnation of the deceased Dalai Lama, Rinpoche or Tulku. The process of selection is so rigorous that it might take years before the 'right' choice is made. The reincarnation may be found thousands of miles away from the place where the previous incarnation departed from his body. The basis of this belief and practice is the age old Indian philosophy of rebirth, which does not see death as an end, but as an occasion for the soul to assume a new cloak after the previous one no more remains fit to serve it. However, the word Dalai Lama is not an Indian word. Dalai is the Mongol translation of the Tibetan word 'gyamtso' which means Great Ocean.

THE MONASTIC TRADITION

Tibet imbibed its monastic tradition, too, from India. Buddhism was the first monastic religion of the world. Monasteries are sprinkled throughout the length and breadth of Tibet as a monument to its Indian connection. The atmosphere inside them transports the visitor into a realm of inner experience and makes him look within for *atmaparyavekshana*, self-scrutiny. The presiding divinity installed in the shrine at the back of the prayer hall dominates the cosmos around, of which the temple is the very symbol and the devotee a part. Scenes from the life of the Buddha taken from the Jatakas painted in frescoes are reminiscent of Ajanta paintings of India. However, the direct inspiration to the Tibetan painter came not from Ajanta, but from the art of the Pala kings of Bengal.

LITERARY AFFINITY

Sanskrit and Pali works from India have been translated into Tibetan by a very successful and scientific method employing two experts, one of each language. The translations are so perfect, if one translates them back, the original is restored almost in its entirety. It is probably true that the Mahayana literature from India was properly catalogued and preserved for the first time in the Tibetan language. It is also true that many works no more extant in their

original Sanskrit form are available only in the Tibetan language. Through their libraries, frescoes, and images the Tibetan monasteries preserved and transmitted the Indian mystic tradition in all its glory in a superb manner.

TIBET: THE SPIRIT OF INDIA

Thus the culture of Tibet, is a glowing example of how the stream of Indian consciousness crossed the Himalayan frontiers and flowed into far-off lands, transforming their body, mind and soul into an eternity of love, peace and compassion through a community of ideals and institutions.

Like *Om Mani Padme Hum*, “the jewel in the lotus”, these ideals inspired Tibetans into a life of virtue, devotion and sacrifice. The grandeur of man’s material advances in the world outside were matched by the glory of spiritual heights on the ‘Roof of the World’ where millions of people tuned themselves to the gospel of the Arya, the Noble one, the Buddha from India and sought salvation through it. While India is fast forgetting these ancient links with Tibet, Tibetans everywhere adore India as the root of all that is noble and good and worthy of emulation in the history of human civilization.

CHAPTER 2

INDIA'S VIEW OF TIBET'S POLITICAL STATUS

When Guru Padmasambhava crossed the Himalayan heights and stepped into Tibet or when Shanta Rakshita went there and introduced the Brahmi alphabet or when Atisha preached to them what he called the true essence of Mahayana, was their *Karma-Bhoomi* or field of action Tibet, a region of China or an independent Tibet, a fully endowed self-governing political entity? As far as we know, they were functioning within the bounds of an independent entity called Tibet. The Chinese chronicles such as Gaoseng Zhuan (Biographies of Eminent Monks) and Yuzhi Shenseng Zhuan (Biographies of Monks with Magical Power) written in the 6th and 16th centuries respectively have recorded the visit of almost every Indian scholar, saint or priest to their shores. *Inter alia*, they mention Kashyap Matanga and Dharmaratna, Kumarajiva and Bodhidharma, Amogha Vajra and Vajra Bodhi but none of those who went from India to Tibet. If Tibet were an integral part of China, monks from India who brought Buddhism to Tibet and founded its various sects would have figured too in Chinese chronicles. The long chain of eminent Indian saints who visited Tibet were not visiting China in visiting that country.

India's ties with China through centuries of history were extremely close but they were forged by altogether a different set of spiritual and cultural personages from India than those who went to Tibet. Their domain of activity was China as different from Tibet which was obviously a distinct and separate religious, cultural and political entity. By the same token the border between Tibet and India was treated historically as Indo-Tibetan and not as Sino-Indian border.

As a national entity and as a power in the region to India's north, Tibet had its ups and downs. It had powerful rulers in ancient times who invaded China and menaced its frontiers. For example Trisong Detsen (755-797 A.D.) invaded parts of China including its capital

Changan (now Xian) in 763 A.D. and forced China to pay tribute. In the year 821 Chinese Emperor Hwang Te concluded a peace treaty with the Tibetan ruler Tsenpo, the successor of Trisong Detsen as follows:

“Both Tibet and China shall keep the country and frontiers of which they are now in possession. The whole region to the east of that being the country of Great China and the whole region to the west being assuredly the country of Great Tibet. From either side of that frontier there shall be no warfare, no hostile invasions and no seizure of territory”.

The 821 treaty was undertaken in order to ward off Tibetan invasions of China which were becoming frequent. The treaty amounted to a no-war pact between two independent and plenipotentiary powers. It contained a solemn vow of good neighbourliness:

“Having consulted to consolidate still further the measure of neighbourly contentment, they have made a great treaty”.

The treaty of 821 further affirmed:

“And in order that this agreement, establishing a great era when Tibetans shall be happy in Tibet and Chinese shall be happy in China, shall never be changed”.

Subsequently whenever China entered its forces into Tibet without the concurrence of the latter, it was in violation of the express terms of the bilateral treaty of 821.

India did not hesitate to deplore China's invasion of Tibet when the People's Liberation Army forced its entry into Tibet in 1949. In a note dated October 26, 1950, the Indian foreign office told the Chinese foreign office. how it looked at the event:

“In the context of world events, invasion by Chinese troops of Tibet cannot but be regarded as deplorable and in the considered judgment of the Government of India, not in the interest of China or peace”.

If India had treated Tibet as an integral part of China, it would certainly not call the entry of Chinese forces into Tibet as an invasion. Nay, it treated Tibet as a full-fledged country as is evident from a note the Government of India had sent to the Tibetan government, soon after attaining independence:

“The Government of India would be glad to have an assurance that it is the intention of the Tibetan government to continue relations on the existing basis until new arrangements are reached that either party may wish to take up. This is the procedure adopted by all other countries with which India has inherited treaty relations from His Majesty’s Government”¹.

The political import of this message is crystal clear. Apart from treating Tibet as a country in unmistakable terms, it puts the Government of India and the Government of Tibet on an equal footing. The note was addressed to the Tibetan foreign office in recognition of the fact that Tibet, like any other independent country, was running its own foreign affairs. It conceded that relations with Tibet could continue on the existing basis only by the willing consent of the two sovereign nations, India and Tibet. That was precisely why the Government of Tibet’s assurance in that behalf was necessary and was being specifically sought. It implied that the Government of Tibet had as much right as the Indian Government to take up with the Government of India, the question of striking new arrangements. It explicitly stressed the right of ‘either party’ to do so. Without any qualification or condition attached, Tibet was placed with “all other countries” with which India had inherited treaty relations from the British Government.

This attitude of India towards Tibet was not only well merited but one that had many precedents. Only a few months before India’s independence, at Prime Minister Nehru’s initiative in his capacity as Prime Minister of the interim government, an Asian Conference was organised in New Delhi to which Tibet was invited as a participant

¹ Notes, Memoranda and Letters Exchanged and Agreements signed by the Governments of India and China, Vol. 2, 1959 p. 39.

along with other countries of Asia and its flag was flown with other participating nations.

In regarding Tibet as independent in 1947, India was not being innovative. Tibet had enjoyed that status in actual fact in the eyes of several other governments too. Mongolia concluded a formal bilateral treaty with Tibet in 1913. Nepal had also concluded treaties with Tibet and maintained an Ambassador in Lhasa. When Nepal applied for the membership of the UN in 1949, it formally stated that it had independent diplomatic relations with United Kingdom, the USA, India, Burma and Tibet. As early as 1903, the British signed what is known as the Lhasa Convention with the Government of Tibet after the successful Younghusband expedition. The Convention is a mark of Tibet's untrammelled sovereignty. The British enjoyed the rights and privileges granted by Tibet to them under that document till they left India. After the fall of the Manchus when the nationalist government of China invited Nepal and Tibet to join China, both of them refused. In the Second World War, to sustain its neutrality Tibet consistently declined passage through its territory to the allied forces and material to aid China. When victory came to the allies, Tibet sent envoys to U.S.A., U.K., and China alike to felicitate them. Throughout the first five decades of the 20th century, Tibet's envoys travelled on passports issued by the Tibetan foreign office and if any negotiations were involved they carried credentials and plenipotentiary powers from the Government of Tibet. In 1913, Lonchen Shatra sat as Tibet's plenipotentiary at the Simla Conference along with those of China and Great Britain as an equal.

All these attributes of Tibet's independence were recognised by the Chinese themselves. If the Kuomintang Chinese Government did not acknowledge them, there would be no entreaties to Tibet to join the Republic of China. During the period of the civil war, Mao Zedong also acknowledged the alien status of Tibet. In his "Red Star Over China" Edgar Snow quotes the Chinese leader as having said the following when he passed through the border regions of Tibet during the long march and was given food and shelter by them:

“This is our only foreign debt, and some day we must pay — the Tibetans for the provisions we received from them”¹.

There was nothing wrong, much less anti-Chinese in India treating Tibet in 1947, therefore, as an independent country. Tibet was fully in charge of its foreign affairs, defence and communications, and was being run by its native institutions which went a few centuries back such as the one of the Dalai Lama being the temporal and spiritual head of that state that had close cultural links with India for centuries and close political and military links with her during the last few decades of the British rule in India.

Indeed, it is remarkable that both the last British representatives in Lhasa and the last Chinese representative in that capital, described the status enjoyed by Tibet at the time, i.e. 1947-48 as fully independent. In “Tibet and the Tibetans”, Shen Tsung-Lien, the last representative of the Republic of China wrote after leaving Tibet in 1948:

“Since 1911, Lhasa has to all practical purposes enjoyed full independence”².

Similarly Hugh Richardson, the last British Consul General in Lhasa summed up Tibet’s status during his time (1936-49) as follows:

“The Government of Lhasa with which I dealt was beyond question in complete control of its own affairs dealing directly with the Government of India in such matters as frontier disputes, trade questions, supply of arms and ammunition and so on. There was no Chinese participation whatsoever in such matters and no reference to them, nor were they informed. In all practical matters the Tibetans were independent”³.

Thus, at the time when India became free, Tibet’s independence was a fact, Chinese suzerainty over it fiction. That fiction was coined by the British to subserve their imperial designs and purposes and used,

¹ Red star over China, New York edition. 1961. p. 214.

² Tibet and Tibetans, Shen T. and Lin S., New York, 1973. p.62.

³ Tibet - A Source Book - edited by Dr. Anand Kumar, New Delhi, 1994. p.55.

abused and disused by them as per convenience. When they saw Tibet not conceding them trade arrangements across the Himalaya, they complained to the Chinese. Going by India's experience Tibet smelled political domination coming in the wake of British trade, so it held the British off. The then Manchu Emperor, however, had no power over Tibet. Amban Yu Tai, the Manchu representative in Lhasa confessed as much to the British. He told the British Foreign Secretary Mortimer Durand in 1903 that "he was only a guest in Lhasa not a master and he could not put aside the real masters, and as such he had no force". The British then attacked Lhasa, gained the concessions they wanted and struck a treaty with Tibet as a plenipotentiary power. Lord Curzon the British Viceroy in India very correctly and forthrightly spelled out Tibet's relationship with China at that point:

"China's sovereignty over Tibet is a constitutional fiction - a political affectation which has only been maintained because of its convenience to both parties — as a matter of fact, the two Chinese (i.e. Manchu Ambans) at Lhasa are there not as Viceroys, but as ambassadors".

There is no doubt that there were periods in history when China as successor to the mantle of power of Mongol emperors tried to keep Tibet under its thumb. The Chinese rulers also inherited the special Tibet-Mongol Cho-yon relationship between them and the Dalai Lama with the latter serving as their spiritual mentor and they guaranteeing him protection. However, by 1912 Tibet had delivered itself completely both of the Cho-yon relationship sought to be misused by the Manchu emperors and of the last vestiges of Chinese political influence over them. This fact needs to be noted. The Cho-yon relationship came to an end when the Manchu troops invaded Tibet in 1908 getting suspicious of increasing British influence there and wanting to depose the Dalai Lama. However, by that time the Manchu empire was already tottering to its collapse. The Dalai Lama responded by terminating the Cho-yon relationship and waited for the death knell of the Manchus to be sounded in 1911. In 1912, he signed an agreement with the Republic of China with

Nepalese mediation under which all imperial troops were expelled from Tibetan soil. On February 14, 1913, the Dalai Lama reaffirmed Tibet's independence and repeatedly frustrated any suggestion that it should join the Chinese Republic. That status had remained intact until the entry of the People's Liberation Army of China into Tibet in 1949-50 and its occupation that followed. From then on Tibet, as India had known it for centuries, has been fast disappearing.

One more decade and the People's Liberation Army of China attacked India.

CHAPTER 3

INDIA BETRAYED

Of the many lessons of history, one that India cannot forget is the story of China's betrayal of India's friendship in 1962. In the wake of its full scale and wanton invasion of India in the early hours of October 20, 1962, Prime Minister Nehru said in a broadcast to his countrymen, "Perhaps there are not many instances in history where one country (i.e. India) has gone out of her way to be friendly and cooperative with the Government and people of another country (i.e. China) and to plead their cause in the councils of the world, and then that country returns evil for good".

By invading India from the high grounds of Tibet, the Chinese turned history upside down. What a contrast it was to the bridges of peace and friendship, religiosity and spirituality built between India and Tibet and India and China for twenty centuries and more. Nehru stood shell shocked before his countrymen. All that he had stood for in his stance towards China had been betrayed. The dream to build a new Asia on the foundation of friendship between India and China, the Bandung spirit, the Panchsheel, all had received an irreparable blow. The Sino-Indian Agreement of 1954 which had proclaimed the five principles of peaceful co-existence had to be consigned to the dustbin of history as a meaningless document. The Chinese had deliberately and systematically violated all these principles including the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its friendly neighbour. The 1954 Agreement was an instrument of regulating India's trade with Tibet which had been a fact of life for two thousand years. By the year 1962, the Tibet of the past itself had evaporated and its temporal and spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama was in India in exile with thousands of his countrymen, perhaps never again to return to their native land.

The Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950 and of India a dozen years later was a keen reminder of the fact that China under Mao Zedong was out to eradicate the past be it Confucianism at home, Buddhism

in Tibet, or Chinese international relationships, either with U.S.A., then Soviet Union, India, Japan or Europe. India had to be humiliated as a rival in Asia geopolitically and ideologically and one that had managed to have a modicum of good relations with both America and the Soviet Union. By its militancy and belligerence China had turned blind to Prime Minister Nehru's repeated attempts at forging a lasting friendship with it. He was denounced, instead, as the running dog of imperialism in reward for his championship of China's entry into the United Nations while other nations that mattered in the admission process treated it as an outcaste. Its thrust towards India ever since communist China came into being had a schematic pattern. Step by step it overran Tibet, changed the political, economic and social order there in the name of reform, forced the Dalai Lama into exile, positioned itself on India's borders, refused to resolve the border questions year after year until "the time was ripe", i.e. until China was ready to overrun India's widely scattered and poorly connected posts along its 2600 mile border with China in one single sweep, and brought India to heel.

The 1962 invasion of India by China meant the end of the Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai sentiment. More tragically it marked the end of India's age old relationship with Tibet. All of India's bridges with Tibet, religious, spiritual, commercial, and political collapsed. The process had started on 1st January, 1950 when Mao Zedong proclaimed "the liberation of three million Tibetans from imperialist aggression" as a basic task before the People's Liberation Army of China. From whom was this territory to be liberated? The British were no longer on the scene. As a successor state India maintained Consulate General in Lhasa, and trade missions in Yatung, Gyantse and Gangtok, a communication link with them and a military contingent for their safety. There was extremely close interaction between the Tibetan people who were largely Buddhist and whose lives centered round their monasteries and India. Every year Tibetan pilgrims used to visit Gaya, Sarnath and Sanchi connected with the lives of the Buddha by the thousands. Since very little was grown on the rugged terrain of the Tibetan plateau, almost the entire population of the country

was dependent on the supply of essential commodities for their sustenance on India. The thirteenth Dalai Lama, had visited India in 1910 and the fourteenth Dalai Lama, the current one, undertook a visit to India in 1956 as the most important celebrity at the Buddha's 2500th birth anniversary celebrations in India when the Tibetan ruler was hardly twenty. Places like Mansarovar Lake and Mount Kailash were visited every year by countless pilgrims from every part of India.

The 'liberation' of Tibet meant for the Chinese leadership and its army the termination of the influence of Buddhism, the Dalai Lama and India on the daily lives of the people of Tibet. People's Liberation Army executed its historic mission of eliminating India's presence and influence in Tibet with a high degree of finesse. India set to itself three objectives as PLA moved into Tibet. One, that PLA's entry into Tibet should not cast a shadow on India's security and India's territorial integrity should remain inviolate; two, that Sino-Indian friendship should be sustained, and three, that Tibet should enjoy real autonomy. The Chinese objectives on the other hand were to enforce its authority over Tibet, to maintain the facade of Tibetan autonomy but in actual fact to bring it effectively under its administrative control and to overwhelm it by a massive migration of the people of the Han race; to undermine the authority of the Dalai Lama and to gain sufficient time to alter the status quo on Tibet's border with India to suit China's strategic needs. A clash with India was inherent in China's policy in regard to Tibet as subsequent events proved.

The Chinese troops entered Tibet on October 7, 1950. Even before their entry, the Government of India were apprehensive on two counts; one, whether the Chinese would honour Tibet's autonomy, and, two, the border between India and Tibet. On August 21, the Government of China declared their willingness to solve the problem of Tibet by peaceful and friendly measures and their desire to "stabilise the China-India border". The induction of Chinese troops into Tibet, never seen there in the last four decades, was China's typical answer

to both the issue. It was obvious on October 7, 1950 that the Chinese had no desire to solve the problem of Tibet by 'peaceful and friendly measures'. The Chinese step was neither peaceful nor friendly. On the other hand their saying that they wanted to stabilise the China-India border was a bad omen. China had no border with India except through Tibet and India's border with Tibet was a well-settled border. Even while smelling trouble, the Government of India expressed their appreciation for the intentions of the Government of China regarding Tibet in their August 21, 1950 declaration but pointedly added that the recognised boundary between India and Tibet should remain inviolate. That was six weeks before PLA's invasion of Tibet. However, immediately after the event, the Government of India drew the attention of the Government of China to the harmful effects of resorting to military action in Tibet. It affected adversely Communist China's chances of entering the U.N. for which India was pleading. Even more importantly India was afraid that it would lead to unsettled conditions along her borders by way of Tibetan resistance to PLA. The Chinese, however, had made up their mind and did not care for India's advice.

China's response to India's 'well-meant' and 'friendly' advice was an arrogant rebuff. Peking (now Beijing) accused India of "having been affected by foreign influences hostile to China in Tibet". That spoke volumes of China's perception of India. China believed bourgeois India to be in the imperialist camp that was using it and looking at it as the inheritor of the British imperialist mantle. Nehru on the other hand looked at the Chinese revolution as no palace revolution but a basic revolution involving millions and millions of human beings. However, for all his understanding of the Chinese revolution, Nehru was astounded at the Chinese accusation of India "having been affected by foreign influences". If anything, the west was finding Nehru too independent to be amenable to their influence. He also could not accept the idea of the Chinese imposing their will on Tibet. The democrat in him spoke emphatically on the subject in the Indian Parliament thus on December 7, 1950:

“It is not right for any country to talk about its sovereignty or suzerainty over an area outside its own immediate range. That is to say, since Tibet is not the same as China, it should ultimately be the wishes of the people of Tibet that should prevail and not any legal or constitutional arguments — the last voice in regard to Tibet should be the voice of the people of Tibet and of nobody else”.

Nehru’s statement of December 7, 1950 at the Parliament of India was significant in many respects. It showed his original understanding of the Tibetan question. About his statements later in the 50s in the Parliament or elsewhere on Tibet one could say that they were made in the heat of tension with China or in the midst of conflict or war with it as the decade of the sixties unfolded itself. But at the beginning of the 50s in December 1950, just a year after the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, his vision was full of the dream of Sino-Indian friendship as the harbinger of a new Asia. He could not be doing or saying anything which ran counter to his desire to build the strongest possibilities of amity and good-neighbourliness with China. In the Parliament of India Nehru would want to speak nothing but the truth as he saw it. By telling the Parliament that Tibet was not the same as China, that it was an area outside China’s own immediate range and that it was not right for any country to talk about its sovereignty or suzerainty in a circumstance where ultimately the wishes of the people of Tibet should prevail, he was stating in all earnestness his understanding of the true status of Tibet and how its problem ought to be solved. However, the Chinese had a totally different idea of solving the problem of Tibet by ‘peaceful and friendly measures’. With PLA guns pointed at the Tibetans in Lhasa, an agreement was imposed on them on May 23, 1951—the infamous 17 Point Agreement under which the Tibetans were made to accept Tibet as a region of China and not only Chinese suzerainty over it but absolute control. In course of time with their strangle-hold complete they were to impose a colonial situation on Tibet. The Dalai Lama was forced to flee and India treated a lesson by Tibet’s new masters when it raised with China the question of the

recognition of its well-established borders with Tibet. That lesson came in the form of full scale invasion of India.

In their southward march through the territory of Tibet and eventually across the Himalaya, the Chinese betrayed India at every step. Since Tibet had already accepted her status as a region of China under the 17-point agreement of 1951, even though under duress, India, too, signed an agreement with China on April, 29, 1954 to regulate its trade with Tibet under which the latter was accepted as a region of China. Under the notes exchanged at the time, India withdrew its military escorts stationed at Yatung and Gyantse and agreed to the transfer of the post, telegraph and telephone services and the rest houses belonging to the Government of India in Tibet to the Government of China. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence enshrined in the Preamble of the 1954 Sino-Indian Agreement were reiterated by Premier Chou-en-lai during his visit to Delhi in June 1954. These included (i) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (ii) mutual non-aggression (iii) mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (iv) equality and mutual benefit; and (v) peaceful co-existence. However, high on the heels of the visit of Premier Chou-en-lai, India received a protest from China against the presence of Indian troops in Barahoti (the Chinese called it Wu-je without even knowing the coordinates of the place) in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The Sino-Indian Agreement of 1954 had specifically mentioned Barahoti as one of Indian posts for trade with Tibet. But the ink had hardly dried on that Agreement that the Chinese claimed Barahoti as their own territory! Barahoti was clearly south of the Niti pass, one of the six border passes mentioned in the Agreement.

Barahoti, however, was not the only area of the Indian territory to which the Chinese laid their claim. It was accompanied by what may be described as cartographic aggression on a massive scale. Some maps published by the People's Republic of China showed 50,000 square miles of Indian territory in the North East Frontier Agency (now Arunachal Pradesh) and in Ladakh in the west. When Prime

Minister Nehru pointed the error to Premier Chou-en-lai during his visit to Peking in October 1954, the latter told him that the Chinese maps in question were of little significance, they being merely a reproduction of old Kuomintang maps. However, the Chinese Premier's reply was merely tactical and diversionary. In actual fact the very next year, in June 1955, the Chinese troops camped on Barahoti plain and in September proceeded 10 miles south of Niti Pass to Damzan. In April 1956 an armed Chinese party intruded into the Nilang area in Uttar Pradesh and in September they intruded across Shipki-pass, another border pass mentioned in the Sino-Indian Agreement of 1954. On September 20, 1956 a Chinese patrol came up to Hupsang Khud, as much as 4 miles south of the Shipki pass on the Indian side. While these events were taking place in the middle sector of the Himalaya in violation of the 1954 agreement and India lodged due protests, Prime Minister Nehru took up the question of the eastern sector again during Premier Chou-en-lai's visit to India in 1956 and 1957. In the eastern sector, the Indian boundary conformed to the McMahon Line, accepted by both the Chinese and Tibetan plenipotentiaries at Simla during their convention with the British in 1913-14. Chou-en-lai told Nehru that the Government of China had accepted that line in the case of Burma and would do so in regard to India too after consulting Tibet. Nothing of the kind happened and instead the Chinese soldiers intruded into the Lohit Frontier division of the North Eastern Frontier Agency in July, 1959 and in August 1959 in Longju in the Subansiri division, also in NEFA.

The story of China's betrayal of India does not end there. The Chinese troops that were piecemeal completing their job of the military occupation of the whole of Tibet intruded not only into the Indian territory in the eastern and middle sectors of the Himalaya but even more heavily into the western sector. In 1957-58 they constructed a highway connecting Tibet to Sinkiang across the Aksai Chin region of north-east Ladakh in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. They consolidated their hold further by occupying the fort of Khurnak in Ladakh in July 1958. When Prime Minister Nehru

took up the question with Premier Chou-en-lai in a letter on 14th December, 1958, the latter, vide his letter of January 23, 1959 gave an ominous explanation as to why the Chinese had not settled the border with India despite India's repeated reminders since 1954. The Chinese Premier said:

“This was because conditions were not yet ripe for settlement and the Chinese side, on its part, had had no time to study the question”.

It is quite clear that China had kept its territorial claims undiscussed until it had started translating them actually on the ground and until it was ready to speak to India in the matter from a position of military strength. The time was now ripe to state China's position in the matter. The Chinese Premier now claimed that the Sino-Indian boundary had never been formally delimited! India's detailed exposition on the Indo-Tibetan boundary having been delineated and confirmed by treaties, customs and actual administrative jurisdictions in all the three sectors had been now summarily dismissed. Chou-en-lai had also told Nehru in his letter of September 8, 1959 that “the Chinese Government absolutely does not recognise the so-called McMahon Line” in unabashed contrast to his earlier statements and assurances.

The final blow, however, was yet to come. The Chinese design became obvious when some Chinese officials in Tibet proclaimed that the Chinese authorities before long will take possession of Sikkim, Bhutan, Ladakh and NEFA. Mao had long ago called these as fingers of the Chinese palm! The matter was brought by Nehru to the notice of Chou-en-lai. In their meeting in Delhi in April, 1960, the two Prime Ministers failed to resolve their differences but agreed that officials of the two governments should meet to examine all relevant documents in support of the stands of the two governments and report and in the meantime every effort should be made to avoid friction and clashes on the border. However another shock was waiting in the wings for India. During their talks in Peking, Delhi and Rangoon, the Chinese officials refused to discuss the alignment in the western sector west of the Karakoram Pass, in that portion of

the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir which was under Pakistan's illegal occupation. The Chinese thus questioned the legality of the accession of that state to India. They went further and opened talks with Pakistan in regard to the boundary to the west of the Karakoram Pass in May 1962 and as a result incorporated a part of Jammu and Kashmir in their own territory after Pakistan ceded it to them to buy China's friendship. China's hostility to India thus touched a new peak.

The Chinese were hardly interested in the outcome of the official reports. During the discussions between June and December, 1960, they had run into several contradictions. While maintaining that Tibet had always been a region of China and Tibetan authorities had no right to deal directly with any foreign country, they had often to take recourse to documents negotiated directly between Tibetans and outside powers. In an official note of April 3, 1960 the Chinese had asserted:

“Violation of the traditional customary line and expansion of the extent of occupation by unilateral occupation cannot constitute the legal basis for acquiring territory”.

The Chinese, however, were doing just that. When they mentioned that in the Aksai Chin area they had built the Tibet-Sinkiang road unhindered and that proved that the territory belonged to them, their own note above was cited by the Indian side to them. They had no answer to it. First the Chinese officials delayed their report by two years but when it came in April 1962, a year and half after India's in December, 1960, it was obvious that the latter was overwhelmingly superior both qualitatively and quantitatively. But the Chinese believed firmly in the dictum that possession is more than half the law. Even if their interpretation of the border was different from India's, the only way to resolve the issue was through negotiations with a view to reconcile their respective positions. But the Chinese had a different strategy in mind. Both before, during and after the meeting of the officials, they kept nibbling at the Indian territory wherever they could and in the western sector their claim line shifted thrice.

In the early hours of October 20, 1962, Chinese forces equipped to the teeth with artillery and mortars and effectively supported by its air force overwhelmed Indian positions well inside the Indian border from the ChipChap area of Ladakh in the western sector to Khinjaman and Dhola in the North Eastern Frontier Agency. The betrayal of India was complete. History had been undone.

CHAPTER 4

REACTIONS IN INDIA TO THE CHINESE INVASION

Consequent upon the entry of 40,000 troops from eastern Tibet's provincial capital of Chamdo from eight directions, the smashing of the small Tibetan resistance force resulting in the death of some 4000 Tibetans and the capture of Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, the regional Tibetan Governor. India's Ministry of External Affairs sent a note to the Government of the People's Republic of China on October 26, 1950 which *inter alia* stated as follows:

“Now that the invasion of Tibet has been ordered by Chinese Government, peaceful negotiations can hardly be synchronised with it and there naturally will be fear on the part of Tibetans that negotiations will be under duress. In the present context of world events, invasion by Chinese troops of Tibet cannot be regarded as deplorable and in the considered judgment of the Government of India, not in the interest of China or peace”.

In India's view, thus, the entry of Chinese forces into Tibet was an act of invasion. Clearly India did not regard that as an internal matter of China. Sardar Patel reacted to the situation very sharply in a letter to Prime Minister Nehru less than two weeks later on 7th November, 1950 (Annexure 1). In the letter he not only charged the Chinese of perfidy but analysed the strategic implications of the Chinese invasion of Tibet with a great deal of foresight and clairvoyance. *Inter alia*, the then Deputy Prime Minister made the following points:

1. ‘The Chinese Government has tried to delude us by professions of peaceful intention’.
2. ‘The final action of the Chinese, in my judgment is little short of perfidy. The tragedy of it is that the Tibetans put faith in us; they chose to be guided by us; and we have been unable to get them out of the meshes of Chinese diplomacy or Chinese malevolence’.
3. ‘Even though we regard ourselves as friends of China,

- the Chinese do not regard us as their friends’.
4. ‘We have to consider what new situation now faces us as a result of the disappearance of Tibet, as we knew it, and the expansion of China almost upto our gates’.
 5. ‘We can therefore, safely assume that very soon they will disown all the stipulations which Tibet had entered into us in the past’.
 6. ‘That throws into a melting pot all frontier and commercial settlements with Tibet on which we have been functioning and acting during the last half a century’.
 7. ‘While our western and north-western threat to security is still as prominent as before, a new threat has developed from the north and the north-east. Thus, for the first time, after centuries, India’s defence has to concentrate itself on two fronts simultaneously’.

Sardar Patel could not have been more clinically precise and more right.

Quite by coincidence, the same day as Sardar Patel wrote to Prime Minister Nehru on Tibet, the Tibetan Government appealed to the United Nations for its intervention through a letter to the Secretary General on November 7, 1950 as follows:

“Though there is a little hope that a nation dedicated to peace will be able to resist the brutal effort of men trained to war, we understand that the United Nations has decided to stop aggression wherever it happens”.

However, ten days later when El Salvador formally asked the General Assembly to include the Chinese aggression against Tibet on its agenda, the matter was not taken up by the august body for discussion at the suggestion of the Indian delegation. The Indian delegation asserted that a peaceful solution which is mutually advantageous to Tibet, India and China could be reached between the parties concerned. In the outcome Tibetan officials signed an Agreement

with China on May 23, 1951 under duress and without the authority of the Tibetan Government in Lhasa on 'Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet'. Known as the 17-Point Agreement between the Chinese People's Government and the local Government of Tibet, it was, quite contrary to Indian assurances, neither advantageous to Tibet nor to India. The latter was simply ignored. The peaceful liberation of Tibet was achieved by 23000 Chinese troops entering Lhasa on 9th September, 1951 from all sides!

The 17-point Agreement was not an Agreement but a dictate. The Dalai Lama and his Government came to know of it four days after it was 'signed' when Radio Peking broadcast it on 27th May, 1951. They did not even know its contents until then. A shocked and stunned Tibet 'heard' the news. The Agreement empowered the Chinese Government to enter its forces into Tibet and to handle its external affairs. Tibet was deprived of the symbols of its sovereignty in one assault. The occupation of Lhasa in September that year was followed by the occupation of other principal cities of Tibet as far as Rudok and Gartok in the far west and Gyantse and Shigatse in Central Tibet. Then Tibet was cut into pieces and parts of it incorporated in China's neighbouring provinces. A large part of Tibet's Kham province was incorporated into China's Sichuan province and another portion into Yunnan. A new Chinese province called Qinghai was also created with the bulk of Tibet's Amdo province and part of Kham. The remaining part of Amdo was incorporated into the Gansu Province. With only a little part of Kham and the central province of U-Tsang left, Tibet was reduced to a shadow of its former self. The People's Liberation Army had come to liberate Tibet of its serfdom. It reduced it to servitude. As early as 6th April, 1952, Mao Zedong himself admitted in the "Directive of the Central Committee of CPC on the Policies for our Work in Tibet":

“Not only the two Silons (Prime Ministers) but also the Dalai Lama and most of his clique were reluctant to accept the Agreement and are unwilling to carry it out — and yet we do not have a material base for fully implementing the Agreement, nor

do we have a base for this purpose in terms of support among the masses or in the upper stratum”.

While that was the situation on the ground, India sanctified the Chinese military occupation of Tibet by accepting it as a region of China in the 1954 Sino-Indian Agreement on trade with Tibet. As that Agreement enunciated the principles of Peaceful Co-existence, the Panchsheel, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, said the following in the Rajya Sabha:

“Our Prime Minister is depending on the Panchsheel which has been adopted by Comrade Mao and the Panchsheel which is one of the clauses in the No-Aggression treaty on Tibet. I am indeed surprised that our Hon’ble Prime Minister is taking this Panchsheel seriously. Hon’ble Members of the House, you must be knowing that Panchsheel is one of the significant parts of the Buddha Dharma. If Shri Mao had even an iota of faith in Panchsheel, he would have treated the Buddhists in his country in a different manner”.

Dr. Ambedkar then warned the Prime Minister in no uncertain terms:

“.....Prime Minister will realise the truth in my words when the situation matures further. I don’t really know what is going to happen. By letting China take control over Lhasa (Tibet’s capital) the Prime Minister has in a way helped the Chinese to bring their armies on the Indian borders. Any victor who annexes Kashmir can directly reach Pathankot, and I know it for sure that he can reach the Prime Minister’s house also”.

Eight years later the Chinese annexed Aksai Chin in north eastern Kashmir. Prime Minister Nehru had his share of warnings but apart from his genuine desire to have close and friendly relations with China, he knew it was not possible for the Indian armed forces to take on both Pakistan and China, a spectre to which Sardar Patel had drawn his attention. Nehru’s effort was to avoid a direct military confrontation with the Chinese throughout the fifties. He had no

power to halt the Chinese avalanche through Tibet. In December, 1950 he had stated that the last voice in regard to Tibet should be the voice of the people of Tibet and of no one else. The Chinese guns had effectively silenced that voice and the men behind them crossed the Himalaya into India equally effectively in the late fifties and early 60s. Our armies could not stop them even at our frontier.

Reacting to the Chinese betrayal and belligerence, Dr. Rajendra Prasad said at the Gandhi Maidan in Patna on October 24, 1962:

“Freedom is the most sacred boon. It has to be protected by all means — violent or non-violent. Therefore Tibet has to be liberated, from the iron grip of China and handed over to Tibetans”.

Even before the Chinese invasion of India, there had been voices galore in India to protect Tibet’s freedom and the Tibetan right to self-determination. Acharya Kriplani who in the Lok Sabha debate in 1954 had openly charged China of having committed an act of aggression and in 1958 had talked about Panchsheel having been born in sin because it was enunciated to put the seal of our approval upon the destruction of an ancient nation associated with us spiritually and culturally, said of Tibet in the Lok Sabha on May 8, 1959:

“It was a nation which wanted to live its own life and it sought to have been allowed to live its own life. A good government is no substitute for self-government”.

The same year at the All India Convention on Tibet on 30 May, 1959, Lok Noyak Jaya Prakash Narayan, in his Presidential address, pleaded for a United World opinion to be created ‘against Chinese aggression and for Tibet’s independence’. He emphatically called it a fight for the ‘Rights of Man’. He, however, predicted that Tibet was not lost forever. ‘Tibet will not die’ he said, because there is no death for the human spirit. Jaya Prakash Narayan concluded:

“Tyrannies have come and gone and Caesars and Czars and dictators. But the spirit of man goes on forever. Tibet will be resurrected”.

It is a tribute to Nehru's character as an ardent lover of peace and international harmony that even after the Chinese branded India as running dogs of imperialism, nay even after they launched their pincer movement against India in 1962—a concerted attack in all the three sectors of the Indo-Tibetan border in the Himalayas, and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Indian armed forces, he stuck to his advocacy of PRC's entry into the U.N. A large section of India's public opinion failed to interpret India's Tibet policy in terms of the Prime Minister's lofty idealism or the constraints on him in terms of India's actual military capabilities, faced as it was now with aggression from two quarters. It was seen throughout the fifties as a policy of yielding too much ground to the Chinese in regard to Tibet. Said Acharya Kriplani in the Lok Sabha repeatedly (1954, 1958 and 1959):

“In international politics when a buffer state is destroyed by a powerful nation, that nation is considered to have committed aggression against its neighbours.

‘England went to war with Germany not because Germany had invaded England, but because it had invaded Poland and Belgium’.

‘I do not say that because China conquered Tibet we should have gone to war with it. But this does not mean that we should recognise the claim of China on Tibet. We must know that it is an act of aggression against a foreign nation’.

‘A small buffer state on our borders was deprived of its freedom. When we made a protest, we were told we were the stooges of western powers (if I remember it right, we were called running dogs of imperialism)’.

The criticism in the Indian Press, that watchdog of the people, in regard to India's Tibet policy was even more blatant and Gallic. After the People's Liberation Army crushed the people's rebellion in Tibet, the *Indian Express* wrote in an editorial entitled “India and Tibet” on March 20, 1959:

“The Government of India’s silence in the face of this situation is difficult to decipher and even more difficult to condone. Discretion and restraint are two often alibis for moral and political poverty’.

Above all, the Tibetans as a brutally oppressed people are entitled, as fellow human beings, to the goodwill of the civilized world, not least of India which in its long history has also known bondage and suffering”.

On March 30, *The Times of India* in its editorial on ‘Repression in Tibet’ commented:

“The news from Peking has killed the last lingering hope that, faced with a popular revolt in Tibet, the Chinese would try to come to terms with the people rather than seek to coerce them into surrender’.

‘All the levers of power are in fact in the hands of the commanders of the Chinese forces in the region’.

‘But the military victory of the Chinese is in fact a political defeat’.

‘The Chinese, determined to exploit the rich mineral wealth of the region, will now do everything they can to quicken the pace of change, break the power of monasteries, settle large number of their own people in the region and integrate it completely with the rest of China’.

‘In the face of a military fait accompli, the Indian government can do little to restore Tibetan autonomy, but even so there is no reason for it to stretch the concept of non-interference to the point where it has to maintain an uneasy silence in the matter”.

In its editorial ‘The Rape of Tibet’, *The Hindustan Times* said the same day (March 30, 1959):

“Let us hold our heads low today. A small country on our border has paid the ultimate penalty for its temerity to aspire for independence. Tibet is dead’.

‘Tibet was dying a long time before death came. It was eight years ago that the Chinese communists moved in to assert a theoretical suzerainty over a people with a long history as a distinct entity, geographical, ethical, linguistic, cultural and religious’.

‘But if the Chinese did at times establish effective rule over Tibet, let it also be remembered by those who are now willing enough to help Peking rewrite history that there was a Tibetan king who once extracted tribute from the celestial empire’.

“Tibet is dead. Much else could die with Tibet if we do not even now heed the warning”.

The Indian Press was adequately voicing the mood of the people of India and India’s leadership had to pay heed. Prime Minister Nehru broke his silence on the troubling question of Tibet in the Parliament of India on March 30, 1959, the same day as the above editorials appeared. He spoke of the relationship of India with Tibet being something deeper than the changing political scene, that he wanted to have friendly relations with the people of Tibet and he wanted them to progress in freedom. At the same time, it was important, he said, for us to have friendly relations with China. The next morning, the Indian Express retorted that he could not equate the aggressor with the aggressed and reminded him of his own statements in 1949 to the US House of Representatives:

“Where freedom is menaced or justice threatened, or where aggression takes place India would not be neutral”.

Meanwhile, things moved in Tibet at a dramatic speed—faster than anticipated. The Dalai Lama had gone back to Tibet in 1956 at the instance of Nehru after participating in the 2500th Buddha

Jayanti celebrations. Chou-en-lai had assured Nehru at that time that 'Tibet was not China but an autonomous region which had been part of the Chinese state'. In his March 30, 1959 statement to the Lok Sabha, Nehru quoted Chou-en-lai as having said that 'China wanted to treat Tibet as an autonomous region and give it full autonomy'. In practice the Chinese intensified the socialist purges against Tibetans, parcelled out its territories to become part of Chinese provinces, considerably reinforced the Chinese army, denied the Tibetan monasteries of their spiritual and material wealth, and were making plans, so the Tibetans believed, for abducting the Dalai Lama to Peking. Their worst suspicions were confirmed when their religious and temporal head was invited to come to a theatrical show at the Chinese military barracks on March 10, 1959 without any bodyguards. In a massive demonstration of their will to protect their leader, the people of Lhasa surrounded Norbulingka, Dalai Lama's Summer Palace, to prevent him from attending the Chinese show. Within days the episode turned into a national uprising touching every part of Tibet. Open fighting broke out in Lhasa and several places outside the capital with Tibetan blood littered everywhere as a consequence of Chinese repression. With no help available from any quarter, the Dalai Lama left his hearth and home and his kingdom to seek refuge in India and appealed for international help from outside. On 28th March, Chou-en-lai 'dissolved' the Government of Tibet by an order of the State Council. Even the fiction of Tibetan autonomy was scrapped.

Prime Minister Nehru interpreted the gory march of events in Tibet to the Parliament of India on March 30, 1959 - how the Kham region of Tibet was incorporated into China and how their reforms had brought the Chinese into trouble with the Khampas whom he described as, 'mountain people, rather tough people, not liking anybody ruling them; how the uprising against the Chinese had spread to other parts of Tibet and how this conflict had 'come out into the open' in Lhasa itself, resulting in considerable damage to some of the old monasteries and valued manuscripts. Right as the Prime Minister was telling the Parliament, 'our sympathies go out

very much to the Tibetans', the ruler of Tibet, the Dalai Lama was already at the portals of India. He actually crossed into our territory on the evening of March 31, 1959, after seeking political refuge two days earlier before entering India. As he walked into freedom, he denounced the 17-Point Agreement with China and declared it null and void. On 5th April in his Press Conference in Delhi, Prime Minister Nehru agreed that the 1951 Agreement between China and Tibet had broken down and confessed that there was no autonomy in Tibet. He said that rather emphatically:

“Now what has happened in Tibet is related to the Agreement between China and the authorities in Tibet, in 1950, I think. You will see that on both sides there, it is stated that agreement has ended or broken up. There is no doubt about it, and events also indicate that. Now, that is an important fact that it has broken down”.

The agreement was based on two factors—(i) on the recognition of the suzerainty of China over Tibet and (ii) the autonomy of Tibet. These are two major factors. The breakdown of the Sino-Tibetan agreement, which in any case had been a one-way affair and hardly an agreement, meant that both major factors comprising it, i.e. (i) the recognition of the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet by the people and the government of Tibet and (ii) the autonomy of Tibet had collapsed. Tibet was without a Tibetan government, even without one established by the Chinese, since the Chinese Premier had dissolved it and it was a land with millions of Tibetan people under the occupation of an alien force exercising rights which it did not have under any law - temporal or moral. Tibet, which in Nehru's own view expressed at the Press Conference on April 5, 1959, culturally speaking, was “an offshoot of India” had been shamelessly annexed by China and swallowed up.

At his Press Conference India's Prime Minister admitted: 'it is obvious that at present, since this uprising, there is no autonomy in Tibet'. The Indian press and leading public figures in India, therefore, grilled Nehru on his Tibet policy even further. On April 8, 1959, in a

forceful editorial titled “Second Thoughts”, the *Leader* commented:

“When the world allowed Japan to work her will upon Manchuria, it did not promote the cause of peace . . . When Britain and France committed aggression in Egypt, President Eisenhower did not uphold their action even though the United States is more akin ideologically to Britain and France than India is to China Pt. Nehru can do no better than emulate the example of President Eisenhower and ask China to retrace her steps.”

Thought reminded Nehru in a pungent editorial on April 11, 1959, of what he knew already, that the 1951 Agreement stood on the twin pillars of Tibet’s autonomy and China’s suzerainty. Without the first the latter would be a grotesque imposition. On April 20, 1959, *The Times of India* seriously questioned Prime Minister Nehru’s conviction that ‘Tibet’s autonomy and Chinese suzerainty’ could coexist. There was thus a strong demand that since the situation on the ground in Tibet had changed materially, India too alter the course of its policy in the matter. Prime Minister Nehru however continued to explain that India’s policy kept three factors in view, “the major factor being, of course our own security; the second factor, ‘our desire to have and continue to have friendly relations with China’ and the third factor, our strong feelings about developments in Tibet”.

Prime Minister Nehru was soon in for rude shocks. While he continued in his quest for continued friendly relations with China, the Chinese openly charged India of keeping the Dalai Lama in India under duress. Nehru met the charge by declaring in the Indian Parliament on April 27, 1959 that the Dalai Lama was free to go anywhere he chose and anyone including the Chinese Ambassador was free to meet him. Moreover, while the Chinese were fuming and fretting at their embarrassment to see ‘the Dalai Lama and his clique successfully cross into India despite their attempts by air and on the ground to track him down before he did so, they shamelessly called India expansionist—inheritor of the British tradition of imperialism and expansion. That was typical of the behaviour of the Chinese

government of the time. Before the world could call them imperialist and expansionist, for what they had done in Tibet and to Tibet, they started levying these charges against India which had done nothing but acquiesce in their colonial occupation of Tibet and was hoping to sustain a friendly relationship with them despite the loss of Tibet as a buffer. Nehru called the Chinese charges strange and use of the cold war language. He told the Lok Sabha on April 27, 1959:

“It would be a tragedy if the two great countries of Asia, India and China, which have been peaceful neighbours for ages past, should develop feelings of hostility against each other. We for our part will follow this policy, but we hope that China also will do likewise and that nothing will be said or done which endangers the friendly relations of the two countries which are so important from the wider point of view of the peace of Asia and the world. The Five Principles have laid down, *inter alia*, mutual respect for each other. Such mutual respect is gravely impaired if unfounded charges are made and the language of cold war used”.

However, these pleas made no sense to China’s rulers. Their plans to complete their work in Tibet went apace and as they consolidated their hold, they moved further south. Peace in Asia and the world must come under their own terms. Meanwhile their territorial claims stemming from their own imperial borders must be made a reality, by peace if possible, by war if necessary. When India saw the writing on the wall and placed a few pickets on the border, ill manned, ill equipped and ill connected, they came down like a hurricane and in one clean sweep destroyed them. And in their defence, they charged India of a forward policy which invited quite naturally their wrath, while a full scale military occupation of Tibet in the decade of the 50s was no part of a ‘forward policy’ to which India had any right to react.

The 19th century was one of colonial expansion. The first half of the twentieth century was marked by two World Wars as a legacy of those colonial powers. In the second half of our century, mankind has taken

pride in liquidating much of the abominable legacy of the colonial and the imperial times. Even the Soviet empire has collapsed. But the torch of colonialism is still burning strong in Tibet. All his life Nehru had fought and fought successfully against the forces of colonialism and imperialism and fascism. He could not have been oblivious to what the Chinese were doing in Tibet but he had been hoping that the Chinese would heed the verdict of history against such forces, listen to reason and fulfil their own promises about respecting the autonomy of Tibet. By the year 1962 this great statesman of Asia and the world was a thoroughly disillusioned person. All the pillars of his Tibetan policy and policy towards China had fallen one by one. The Chinese had successfully breached the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of India. Tibet's autonomy was a matter of the past which India had bartered for the independence that country had enjoyed till 1950 and the friendship with China had turned into a nightmare of bitter hostility. The Sino-Indian Agreement of 1954 enshrining Panchsheel now lay in shreds. It died a natural death in 1962 with neither side willing to revive it and China stood as the undisputed monarch of all it surveyed in Tibet and beyond up to the territories of India now under its occupation. In the wake of their mastery over the Roof of the World, the Chinese turned Nehru's dream of Sino-Indian friendship, so elegantly proclaimed in the slogan Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai, into a nightmare that ultimately sapped life out of that most precious jewel of India.

CHAPTER 5

TIBET AND INDIA'S SECURITY

With the militarisation of Tibet and its colonisation by China, the Chinese frontier advanced all across that territory by about 2,000 kms towards the Himalaya. With the nuclearisation of Tibet by China, the Himalayan frontier vanished altogether and all of India became accessible to Chinese weaponry. The Chinese started the process of nuclearising Tibet within a few years of its occupation and the process goes on as they acquire greater and greater nuclear weapon capability.

As early as 1958, within less than a decade of the occupation of Tibet by the People's Liberation Army, China's Ninth Bureau established the North West Nuclear Weapons Research and Design Academy in Amdo, a part of Tibet called Qinghai by China. The Ninth Bureau, subsequently came to be called the Nuclear Weapons Bureau. The North West Nuclear Weapons Research and Design Academy was called the Ninth Academy in short after the Ninth Bureau. For nearly two decades it was responsible for designing all of China's nuclear bombs. It also served as a research centre for detonation development, radio chemistry and many other nuclear weapon related activities. The Ninth Bureau being the most secret organisation in China's nuclear weapon programme, the activities of the Ninth Academy are wrapped in great secrecy but over the years it has been possible to cull a few details from widely scattered sources.

The Ninth Academy is situated at 36.57° north and 101.55° east in Amdo province of Tibet at a height of 10,000 feet east of Lake Kokonor. It is located in the Haiyen County of the Habei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. The Academy is connected by rail to Lanzou, another nuclear site in Gansu province of China across Tibet's border. The site of the Ninth Academy was approved in 1958 by no less a person than Deng Xiaoping in his capacity as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist

Party. Though the Academy is located in the catchment area at the Tsangchu River, it is part of a high altitude desert area known as “gold and silver” sand. The first Director of the Academy was Li Jue who had served as Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff of the Tibet Military Region and was closely associated with the process of China’s military occupation of Tibet.

China conducted its first nuclear test in 1964 at a site close to the Ninth Academy in the region east of Kokonor in the gold and silver sand area. By that act it gave a message to India, the then Soviet Union and the United States of America as well as to Taiwan. India had already suffered a humiliating defeat at China’s hands in 1962 at the Indo-Tibetan border and was expected to behave with the new nuclear power. Soviet Union and China had broken off diplomatic relations in 1960. Soviet Union had now to take note of a new nuclear star in the international chess game as a rival communist power. The U.S. had been considering deployment of nuclear missiles in Taiwan. The Chinese nuclear explosion posed yet another challenge to Taiwan in its determination not to get swamped by the Communist mainland.

The nuclear experimental blast of China in Tibet in 1964 posed a direct threat to India’s security. It was not a defensive China that had carried out the nuclear explosion but a belligerent China that had shown its propensity for war in 1962 and had taken full advantage of India’s military weaknesses. China did not stop at its 1964 nuclear test. It committed all the intellectual, scientific and material resources it could muster to feed its nuclear weapons programme. Despite chaos and confusion that marked China’s history in the 60s and early 70s during the years of the Cultural Revolution, China moved at breakneck speed towards becoming a viable nuclear weapon power. The Tibetan plateau provided it the ideal setting for achieving that status. Its Kokonor nuclear centre, the Ninth Academy, became the hub of its newly found nuclear capabilities. The Chinese pumped 10,000 construction workers initially into the sheltered Yangtse chu valley and increased the work force considerably subsequently,

occasionally using labour from Tibetan prison camps to work on the dangerous segments of the project. By the year 1967, the North West Nuclear Weapons Research and Design Academy was in full bloom, notwithstanding enormous difficulties posed by an inhospitable terrain, by the Tibetan people who would not be easily enchained and put into service, and by lack of transport and communication infrastructure which had all to be built at hurricane speed.

Gradually the Ninth Academy in the Haiyen County of the Habei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture developed into the second largest locality in the area, Xining being the most developed centre of activity in Amdo (Qinghai). For reasons of security and due to lack of willing cooperation by the natives, the Amdo province was run entirely by Chinese military personnel. Tashi Wangchuk, the only Tibetan among the top rungs of the administration was purged in the early 60s. He was personally criticised by Deng Xiaoping, the chief inspiration behind the academy for questioning party decisions. It is not unlikely that he was purged before the 1964 explosion. There have been many instances of Tibetans opposing the nuclearisation of their territory, the most well-known of them being the opposition of late Panchen Lama to the establishment of a nuclear power reactor by the Chinese in the vicinity of Lhasa in the mid-80s. The late Panchen Lama is reported to have stated on the occasion:

“Tibetan region is different from other regions and is specially sensitive politically. What will happen tomorrow if people demonstrate against it. This will become one issue which will become difficult to control”.

The Lhasa project was aborted in the 80s but neither Tibetan nor Indian sensitivities mattered to the Chinese in building Tibet as a major centre of their nuclear weapon activities through the 60s and 70s. Due to the pioneering work done by the Ninth Academy in the Kokonor region, nuclear weapons came to be deployed in the Amdo province by the year 1971. The very first nuclear weapon was brought to Tibet in that year and stationed in the Qaidam basin in northern Amdo, to the west of Haiyen where the Ninth Academy

was located. China established a regular nuclear missile deployment site in the Qaidam basin. A launch site for DF-4 missiles was also built there. These missiles had a range of 4,800 km and could reach almost any part of India from their bases in Da Qaidam (37.6 N, 97.12E) and Xiao Qaidam (37.62 N 95.08E). Subsequently their range was augmented to 7,000 km to reach Moscow and the rest of the then western U.S.S.R. By the 70s the whole of India had come under the threat from China's missiles in Tibet spurred India to carry out its own nuclear explosion at Pokharan, Rajasthan in 1974, but we did not nuclearise our weaponry as China did and whereas China has more than 40 nuclear tests to its credit by now we stopped after the very first.

Apart from the Qaidam basin, land based Chinese nuclear missiles are located at Delingha (37.6 N, 97.12 E), 200 km south east of Da Qaidam, i.e. that much closer to India. Delingha nuclear site also houses DF-4 ICBMS. Amdo province has altogether four launch sites with their headquarters at Delingha. The Tibetan plateau has also been used to place CSS-4 missiles which have a range of 12,800 kms and are capable of hitting not only every part of India but the whole of Asia, as also parts of Europe and U.S.A. These are located in the Amdo province on the border with China's province of Sichuan. New Delhi is within only 2000 kms of these Chinese missile sites in Tibet. There are reports that at yet another site, at Nagchuka, north of Lhasa, at a height of about 15,000 feet, nuclear missiles are permanently stationed. According to these reports Nagchuka has been developed by the Chinese as a major nuclear base as an alternative to Lopnor for China's upgraded air defence missiles and for testing nuclear capable delivery systems. Nagchuka is 500 kms south of the Qaidam basin in Amdo and that much closer to India. In addition to nuclear divisions duly equipped with nuclear weapons, launching sites and testing grounds, a large number of non-nuclear missiles have also been located on the Tibetan plateau and several of them not far from the Indo-Tibetan border after the 1962 border war.

Besides the nuclear and non-nuclear missiles, China can hit India from Tibet quite effectively with at least three types of aircraft capable of undertaking nuclear bombing missions. Its Hong-5 bombers have a combat radius of 1,200 kms which can cover the whole of northern India including the capital of India. However, its Hong-6 aircraft which have a combat radius of over 3000 kms, can reach any part of India including the Andaman and Lakshwadeep islands. In addition China's Qian-5 attack jets can run nuclear bombing missions over India from Tibet. China has constructed a large number of bases in Tibet from where these aircrafts can take off on their kill missions with nuclear bombs. The Chabcha air field south of Lake Kokonor and Golmund in central Amdo were actually used by the Chinese for their operations against India in the early 60s. Chabcha has since been abandoned but Golmund has been expanded and modernised to fly nuclear bombers. The Golmund airfield has a 17,400 feet runway, one of the longest in the world. In 1987 the Chinese deployed a squadron of J-7 fighters there, the equivalent of Mig 21. Since 1985, American built Sikorsky S 70 C Black Hawk helicopters have used this airfield to support military operations in the area. At Damshung, only ten kilometres from Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, an important airfield has been built from where Hong-5 and Hong-6 aircraft can take-off. However, the primary airfield and supply centre for the Chinese forces along the Himalayan border is located at Gonggar, only 160 kms from the Indian border and about a 100 kms south of Lhasa.

To support China's nuclear and other military activity, the Roof of the World has been pockmarked by a number of major and minor airfields. A major airfield is located at Shigatse at a height of 12,493 feet in the Tsang province, at a site south of River Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) and north of India's state of Sikkim. The Ü Province has a major airfield 100 kms north of Lhasa at a height of 14,091 feet and another at Gonggar, 60 kms south of Lhasa, close to the Yamdok tso and only 160 kms from the trijunction of India, Bhutan and Tibet. The northern part of the Ü Province is served by the Nagchuka airfield. Tibet's highest major airfield is located at Choesdate at a

height of 14,465 feet in the Kham region in Tibet's east. Slightly further north at the border of Kham and Amdo is the Jyekundo airfield serving the north-eastern part of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Central Amdo has the important airfield of Golmund while Eastern Amdo has a major airfield located at the height of 7,211 feet at Xining the most well developed part of the Amdo province. In between, Lake Kokonor has the Gangca airfield to its north (11,601 feet) and Chabcha (10,006 feet) to its south. All the nuclear missile sites, airfields and nuclear research and test centres in Northern Amdo are connected by a rail link that runs from Golmund in Amdo to Lanzhou in the Gansu province via the nuclear missile sites at Xiao Qai Dam, Da Qaidam, and Delingha, the Gangca airfield and the Northwest Nuclear Weapons Research and Design Academy (the Ninth Academy) in the Haiyen County.

Tibet's thorough nuclearisation by China is greatly facilitated by its natural endowment. It includes world's largest nuclear deposits. These are located around Lhasa itself, and in the Ngapa Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the Kham province of Tibet amalgamated by the Chinese with their Sichuan province. However, the largest uranium mine in Tibet is not located either in the Lhasa or the Kham region but in the Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture - the "Gya Terseda" mine in Tewe district of the Gansu province of China. The processing of the uranium takes place four kilometres southwest of Tewe and 86 kms from the mining site. 2,000 Chinese are reported to be employed in the mine but hardly any Tibetan. The same is true of the nuclear missile sites in Tibet and of the Ninth Academy. In these places if Tibetans are employed at all, they are either prisoners or monks subjected to forced labour. There are nine uranium mines in the Da Qaidam County of the Amdo Province, near one of the major launching sites for China's DF-4 nuclear missiles. Apart from rich deposits of uranium in Lhasa, Ngapa, Tewe and Da Qaidam, strontium has also been found in Tibet which is used for nuclear missile cladding.

For India the implications of the nuclearisation of Tibet are far reaching. The military occupation of Tibet by China and the

advance of the Chinese armed forces to the Himalayan border of India converted a centuries old peaceful border into a theatre of war. Tibet's nuclearisation has extended that theatre to the entire length and breadth of India. It has radically changed the geopolitical scenario in the region. In 1969 when the Sino-Soviet rivalry was at its peak, and the two countries actually fought a border war at the Ussuri River on their Siberian border, the Soviet Union had decided to strike down China's nuclear installations including those in Tibet. The decision was never carried out but it spoke volumes of the psychological impact of China moving at breakneck speed towards becoming a full-fledged nuclear power on its neighbours. India simply did not have the capability of the Soviet Union to meet the challenge of a nuclear Tibet by striking its nuclear installations down. However, it imposed a heavy defence burden on its meagre resources as a developing country. The burden of meeting the Chinese military challenge from Tibet itself was considerable and in the sixties and seventies India's military expenditure virtually tripled. But to have to meet the nuclear challenge now emanating from China's nuclear bases in Tibet added a new and very costly dimension to the defence requirements of India.

The emergence of China as a nuclear weapon power also affected the course of India's policy on issues such as nuclear proliferation. The land of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru no longer could afford to shun its nuclear weapon option and hope for the best. With the Chinese nuclear dagger thrust towards it from the heights of the Tibetan plateau, it was impossible for anyone in India to think even remotely of joining the Non-Proliferation Treaty particularly when the flawed international instrument protected and perpetuated China's nuclear weapon status as it did of other nuclear weapon powers. While the Ninth Academy of China in Tibet, its Nuclear Weapon Academy, was busy refining and reinforcing China's nuclear arsenals including those positioned in Tibet, and while China conducted test after test to catch up with other nuclear weapon states, it was but natural that India would develop serious reservations about signing a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, too, unless it was linked to the

dismantling of the nuclear arsenals of the existing nuclear weapon states including China's, entrenched as it was nuclear wise in Tibet across India's north and north eastern border. India is also in no position to think of South-Asia as a nuclear weapon free zone with a nuclear Tibet staring at its face even though it has been pleading for a nuclear weapon free world.

In short a nuclear Tibet threatens India's security throughout its length and breadth, it imposes a sizable burden on its resources by way of defence expenditures and it compromises India's traditional role as a champion of Peace and Disarmament on the world stage. The costs of Chinese occupation of Tibet to India just cannot be calculated in material, psychological and spiritual dimensions. Tibet a friendly buffer and part of India's spiritual heritage has been converted into an instrument of hostility and even permanent military and nuclear rivalry. India's peace, security and development all are being held hostage by that one phenomenon - a nuclear Tibet, entirely of China's making.

CHINA CREATES A NUCLEAR PAKISTAN

Not content with a nuclearized Tibet to India's north backed by the entire nuclear and conventional might of the People's Liberation Army, China has proceeded to nuclearize Pakistan, too, to sufficiently divide India's energy and resources. The supply of M-11 missiles by China to Pakistan is no longer a secret. They are capable of carrying nuclear bombs. China has not minded doing this for Pakistan notwithstanding its commitments under the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty to the contrary. In violation of those obligations, China has also supplied to Pakistan magnet rights which constitute an essential component of the nuclear weapon technology.

Pakistan's military collaboration with China dates back to the 1960s and is already of thirty years vintage. China has been the major prop of Pakistan's military build-up during these years. Of over 2,000 Main Battle tanks the Pakistan army has, three-fourth are of Chinese

origin. Pakistan has 1,200 Chinese type 59 MBTs, 200 Chinese type - 69 MBTs and more than 200 Chinese type - 85 MBTs. As far as Pakistan's artillery goes, out of its 1566 units, it has 200 Chinese type - 56, 200 Chinese type - 60, 400 Chinese type - 54, and 200 Chinese type 59-1 units; that is two-thirds of its entire towed Artillery. All of Pakistan's Multiple Rocket Launchers are Chinese. These are 45 Chinese type - 83, 122 mm. Azar MRLs. As far as the Pakistan Air Force is concerned, out of its 430 combat aircraft, more than half are of Chinese origin. It has full three squadrons of 49 Ground Attack Aircraft Q.5. (A-5 Yan Tan) of the Chinese make. Again out of its 10 squadrons of fighter aircraft, 6 are from China, 4 with 100 J6/JJ6 (F-6-FT-6) type and 2 squadrons of J-7 (F7P) aircraft numbering 79.

The entire Chinese objective has been to besiege India and to contain it from all around. Chinese military activities in Burma must also be seen in this light.

As it is, India's defence capabilities are no match to China's. Chinese defence forces are three times India's, so also is its defence expenditure. When one adds Pakistan's military capabilities to China's, its most important military ally to-date, the difference with India becomes staggering as the following figures show:

1995

	Defence Expenditure in billions of US \$ Dollars	GDP	Def. Exp. as % of GDP	Per Capita Def. Exp.	Armed Forces (1000)	Soldiers every 1000
INDIA	8.00	334.17	2.39	8.61	1100.00 +200(R)	1.18
PAKISTAN	4.32	62.79	6.88	34.26	803.00 +500(R)	6.37
CHINA	23.99	560.00 app.	5.50	19.98	2900.00 +1200(R)	2.41

Source: Asian Strategic Review, Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi (1995-96)

Tibet is the most important link in the containment ring built by China round India. Pakistan is its western arm and Burma the eastern one. But for China's military occupation of Tibet and destruction of its buffer status, India's security would not be so badly hemmed as now by the Chinese efforts. Its penetration of Pakistan through Xinjiang and of Burma through Yunnan as military ally would not have made such a substantial difference to India's security environment as it does with the addition of Tibet to China's military and nuclear contours.

CHAPTER 6

THEN AND NOW: INDIA'S POLICY OPTIONS

Much that the Chinese did between 1954 and 1962 was in violation of the 1954 Agreement between India and China on Tibet and the five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence enshrined in it. Instead of mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and mutual non-aggression, the Chinese invaded India and in violation of India's territorial integrity and sovereignty, remained in occupation of territory well-beyond their own original claim lines in the Aksai Chin region of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. Instead of mutual non-interference, they aided and abetted insurgencies in India. Instead of equality and mutual benefit, they asserted their military superiority and kept its fruits in their custody. As a matter of fact they systematically destroyed the buffer status of Tibet, putting India in a permanent state of strategic disadvantage. And finally instead of peaceful coexistence, they carried out a multi-pronged attack on India and demolished our little pickets along the Himalayan frontier to gain their ends. By 1962, the 1954 Agreement with its lease of eight year's life had been reduced to dust. Its death knell was sounded by the Chinese through their guns booming across the Indian frontier.

The collapse of the Sino-Indian Agreement on Tibet should have also marked the end of India's commitment to treat Tibet as a region of China. While signing that Agreement in 1954 India had ignored the fact that Tibet had functioned as a sovereign and independent state until the Chinese invasion and had been so treated by India after independence. After the lapse of the 1954 Agreement in 1962, India could revert to its former position. During debates at the U.N. in 1959, 1960 and 1961 many governments had recognised the fact that on the eve of the Chinese invasion in 1950, Tibet was not under the rule of any foreign country (Philippine Ambassador). The 1961 U.N. Resolution passed by the General Assembly (Document no. 1723 (XVI) - Annexure 2) categorically spoke of Tibet's right to self-determination thus:

(Quote :)

2. Solemnly renews its call for the cessation of practices which deprive the Tibetan people of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, including their right of self-determination.

3. Expresses the hope that Member States will make all possible efforts as appropriate, towards achieving the purposes of the present resolution.

UNGA's 1961 Resolution clearly provided India the basis for making all possible efforts towards achieving self-determination for the people of Tibet. That was one option India should have exercised, particularly after the invasion of its territory itself by China. However, India did not take cudgels on behalf of Tibet's right to self-determination mandated by the U.N. even while the Chinese joined Pakistan in the latter's chorus for self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. In pressing for self-determination in Tibet after the UNGA resolution, India would not have violated any norms of international behaviour. On the other hand, in not doing so, India denied to itself a sound strategic option consistent with its basic national and security interests, besides ignoring its obligations towards Tibet, its peaceful and friendly neighbour which took pride over its centuries long cultural and trade links with India and which had received from India assurances at the U.N. that it would help bring about a just and peaceful solution of its problems arising out of the Chinese invasion.

India has clearly defaulted in not fulfilling that obligation towards Tibet. In 1950 when the request of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for U.N. intervention against the Chinese aggression came up for consideration, India foreclosed discussion on the subject, suggesting negotiations between People's Republic of China and Tibet. Eventually the Chinese succeeded in getting a Tibetan delegation to come to Peking in 1951 and sign a document whose contents were not even made known to the Tibetan government in Lhasa. The Dalai Lama, protested since the delegation did not have plenipotentiary

powers and alleged that the Tibetan seal used on the document was fabricated by the Chinese. The Tibetan leader eventually accepted that document since it provided for Tibet's internal autonomy, if not independence and preservation of peace for his people was his supreme objective. What followed, however, as neither autonomy nor peace for Tibet but genocide and colonial rule which puts to shame the worst tyrannies that European nations had on their colonies round the globe including China in the last two hundred years. As the people rose in revolt in Lhasa and elsewhere, they were brutally suppressed till they were reduced to a minority in their own land by their 'liberators'. The Dalai Lama himself was made to flee Tibet with hundreds of thousands of his people. India watched the spectacle in silence. The Chinese rewarded India for that silence by nibbling at its territory and when India did start protesting, they came down upon it with the full fury of their war machine.

India had deviated from *Dharma* in not coming to Tibet's rescue in 1950 and for a full decade thereafter. It had to pay a price for that which it did in 1962 and which it continues to pay in the form of Chinese occupation of its land in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was hard for India to fight Pakistan aided by the West on its western front and China, a brother and an ally of the then Soviet Union, on the north. That is clear. However, it did not even fight diplomatic battles for the rights of the Tibetan people duly acknowledged in U.N. Resolutions. And it has not pressed for real autonomy in Tibet even though it was something assured by China's leadership throughout, starting with Mao and guaranteed in China's own Constitution.

The report of the officials of India and China on the Boundary Question established beyond doubt that the boundary shown in Indian maps was clear and precise, conformed to natural features, and had support in tradition and custom as well as in the exercise of administrative jurisdiction right up to it. It had been recognised for centuries and confirmed in agreements. China on the other hand kept shifting its position about the border, first by telling India

that it had not done its homework on various maps relating to the boundary with India and then keeping undisclosed till September 1959, its claims to 50,000 square miles of Indian Territory.

By December 1960, 12,000 square miles of India's territory, was already under China's unlawful occupation. Thereafter the Chinese claim line shifted like the running sands of time depending upon how far its forces had reached. After their full-scale and wanton invasion of India in the early hours of October 20, 1962, the Chinese advanced in all sectors of the Indo-Tibetan boundary. After the self-proclaimed ceasefire, they withdrew from areas in the eastern sector; however, in the western sector, instead of the Chinese moving back to positions before the war, their claim line advanced deeper into Indian Territory to points where they were in actual occupation. India never had such difficulties with Tibet. Under the Simla Agreement of 1914, Tibet had accepted the McMahon line in the eastern sector and both sides had respected it as the border ever since. In the western sector, too, the border was governed by well-known agreements. The Chinese on the other hand furnished claims of nearly 36,000 square miles below the McMahon line over territory which had been under India's control traditionally. After gaining territory in Aksai Chin by military means, the Chinese suggested its swap with the territory they claimed in the eastern sector but which had all along been under India's peaceful and rightful control in the North East Frontier Agency (now Arunachal Pradesh). What a way to retain the fruits of aggression! India would do its posterity great harm if it allows any impression to prevail that the territory under the Chinese illegal occupation in Aksai Chin can never be recovered.

Such an assumption would run foul of the unanimous resolution passed by the Indian Parliament after the Chinese mounted their successful and full scale invasion of India in October, 1962. The Resolution enshrines a pledge that every inch of Indian Territory occupied by the Chinese aggressors will be recovered (Annexure 3). That Resolution is still on board and the pledge remains to be fulfilled.

The dictum that the People's Republic of China follows on territorial questions is clear. It implies extending territorial claims as far as possible, then realising them peacefully (Paracels) if possible, by war if necessary (India). Indian dictum of the resolution of all such disputes by peaceful means does not fit into the Chinese pattern of thinking. While talking of peace, the Chinese are constantly preparing for war, war not just in defence of their existing borders but in defence of their claims wherever and whenever they can press them by means of war. The interregnums of peace are thus meant to ensure the preparation for war. In its current phase, too, China wants to build its economy to achieve its fourth modernization, the upgradation of its military machine to face the future more confidently as a super power. It never shies of showing its true face such as it has done vis-a-vis, Tibet, India, Vietnam and Taiwan to invest its claims with a martial response.

China's policy, therefore, of peace and tranquillity on the Indian border earmarked by the 1993 Agreement between the Prime Ministers of the two countries should be seen in this context. While the agreement is there and no doubt there has been progress under it, Tibet remains the hub of China's nuclear activity and in the Chinese policy of the containment of India its stronghold over Tibet plays a key role. Tibet is part of the containment ring that includes Pakistan, duly nuclearized by China on our western fringe, Burma to our right and Bangladesh within the very heart of the Indian subcontinent. While Pakistan gives China access to the Arabian Sea, the ports of Burma and Bangladesh could lead its military might into the Bay of Bengal. China's continuing presence in Aksai Chin is a dagger thrust straight into India's flesh, through the neck in Jammu and Kashmir. The Chinese behaviour casts a shadow on their credibility in respect of Agreements they formally sign as demonstrated by their attitude towards the 1951 Agreement with Tibet, 1954 Agreement with India or even the latest, their accession to Non-Proliferation Treaty. They violated Article III (2) of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and supplied magnetic rings to Pakistan even before the ink had dried on that Treaty. Similarly M-11s have been supplied to Pakistan in

blatant violation of the Missile Technology Control Regime to which it subscribes and now there is news that China has helped Pakistan build a factory in Pindi to manufacture these nuclear capable missiles. So much for China's respect for its treaty obligations.

It is indeed necessary to build an edifice of peaceful and friendly relations with China repairing the damage the Chinese have caused India in the fifties and sixties. That is a most desirable objective for which both these great nations representing the two most ancient civilizations in Asia should work. These relations, however, can be best established on principles of equality, justice and good neighbourly behaviour. There is no denying the fact that notwithstanding some improvement in India-China relations in the last two decades and a consequent reduction in tension, the people of India continue to harbour serious grievances against the Chinese which stem from harsh and unpalatable realities on the ground. The course of India's foreign policy in the future will have to address these concerns. Since Tibet has been at the very heart of India's relations with China, many of these concerns hinge on it. The basic ingredients of India's foreign policy in this matter should be as follows:

1. India has no nuclear weapons deployed anywhere. Since there is no deployment of nuclear weapons south of the Himalayas even far away from the Indo-Tibetan border, India should insist that Tibet should be denuclearised.
2. Since our most important rivers flow out of the Tibetan plateau into India, the Chinese should be asked to desist from treating Tibet as the dumping ground for its nuclear waste.
3. There should be a reduction of armed forces of both countries not only on the Indo-Tibetan border but in areas considerably removed from the border to avoid a 1962 type of conflict. It is necessary to rid this entire region of military tension. The reduction of forces could cover the whole of Tibet and large parts of northern India to the east of Delhi.
4. The 1954 Agreement with China on Tibet is dead. However, even in the 1988 joint communique, India has recognised Tibet

as an autonomous region of China. That recognition has to be contingent on Tibet's autonomy being respected and genuinely preserved. As things stand, everything the Chinese are doing in Tibet, however, militates against Tibetan autonomy. In China's latest outrage against Tibet's autonomy, the Tibetan people have been asked to throw the photographs of the Dalai Lama out of monasteries and homes. India should press hard for the restoration of Tibet's autonomy and the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet in peace and dignity. China's frequent complaints against the behaviour of the Dalai Lama in India should provide the opportunity for discussion on the subject.

5. Meanwhile India should support openly the Dalai Lama's Five Point Peace Plan and Strasbourg Proposal (Annexures 4 & 5) for the restoration of its autonomy and return of normalcy in Tibet as other democracies of the world have done.
6. Pending the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet, India should support the right of the Tibetan people to self-determination making it clear, however, that in the instant case it would involve Tibetan control over Tibet's internal affairs only in accordance with guarantees given by China to Tibet from time to time including in the 17-point Agreement of 1951.
7. The Indian Parliament should adopt at least a non-official resolution expressing sympathy and support for the legitimate rights of the people of Tibet just as Parliaments of some of the other democracies have done including USA, European Union and Germany (Annexures 6 & 7). It is noteworthy that the relations of these countries with China have intensified in recent years despite their open pronouncements of support to human rights in Tibet.
8. The Parliament of India should remind itself and the nation every year of its pledge to recover every inch of the Indian Territory occupied by the Chinese in the 1962 war and renew that pledge.
9. The Chinese know that power grows out of the barrel of the gun. They use their power to cajole, to control and to conquer. They launched their invasion of Vietnam in 1979 when Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee was visiting their country in an attempt

to normalise relations with them. When Shri. R. Venkataraman visited China in May 1992, they synchronised the visit with a massive nuclear weapon test. When India appeared to them as a rival with its prestige soaring high under the leadership of Nehru and as a democratic option for the newly emerging nations of the world, they belittled India and Nehru personally by carrying out its invasion across the Himalayas. India must not relinquish its nuclear weapon option unless and until all the nuclear weapon powers of the world including China and its military ally Pakistan divest themselves of their nuclear arsenals.

Tibet's demand for self-determination essentially should be seen in the context of statements made repeatedly by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the effect that he is not seeking independence for Tibet but reconciliation with the Chinese. What is involved therefore is the restoration of Tibet's autonomy in the real sense through the reversal of circumstances that have impinged on that autonomy. That Tibetan autonomy is a fiction to-day is proved to the hilt by the fact that even in a purely religious matter like the nomination of the new Panchen Lama, the Chinese have recently imposed their own will on the people of Tibet arrogating to themselves the rights that belong to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In regard to the restoration of Tibet's autonomy, the responsibility of the Government of India is well-nigh total. Nothing proves it better than the statement of the Indian Government at the United Nations on the question of Tibet in 1965:

Mr. Zakaria (India): "As representatives are aware, for the past fifteen years the question of Tibet has been from time to time under the consideration of the United Nations. It was first raised here in 1950 at the fifth session of the General Assembly, but it could not be placed on the agenda, in fact, my country opposed its inclusion at that time because we were assured by China that it was anxious to settle the problem by peaceful means. However, instead of improving, the situation in Tibet began to worsen, and since then the question has come up several times before

the General Assembly of the United Nations. Our delegations participated in the discussion at the Fourteenth Session in 1959 and although we abstained from voting we made it clear that because of our close historical, cultural and religious ties with the Tibetans, we could not but be deeply moved and affected by what was happening in that region. We hoped against hope that wiser counsel would prevail among the Chinese and that there would be an end to the sufferings of the people of Tibet.”

A little later in the same statement, Dr. Zakaria summed up the situation prevailing in Tibet as follows on behalf of the Government of India:

“However, the passage of time has completely belied our hopes. As the days pass, the situation becomes worse and cries out for the attention of all mankind. As we know, ever since Tibet came under the stranglehold of China, the Tibetans have been subjected to a continuous and increasing ruthlessness which has few parallels. Fighting a “counter-revolution,” the Chinese have indulged in the worst kind of genocide and the suppression of a minority race.”

The Indian delegate to the U.N. continued:

“Here I feel that it would not be out of place to put before this august Assembly the following facts which stand out stubbornly and irrefutably in connection with Chinese policy in Tibet:

1. The autonomy guaranteed in the Sino-Tibetan Agreement of 1951 has from the beginning remained a dead letter.
2. Through increasing application of military force, the Chinese have in fact obliterated the autonomous character of Tibet.
3. There has been arbitrary confiscation of properties belonging to monasteries and individuals and Tibetan Government institutions.
4. Freedom of religion is denied to the Tibetans, and Buddhism is being suppressed together with the system of

- priests, monasteries, shrines and monuments.
5. The Tibetans are allowed no freedom of information or expression.
 6. There has also been carried out a systematic policy of killing, imprisonment and deportation of those Tibetans who have been active in their opposition to Chinese rule.
 7. The Chinese have forcibly transferred large numbers of Tibetan children to China in order to denationalise them, to indoctrinate them in Chinese ideology and to make them forget their own Tibetan religion, culture and way of life; and
 8. There has also been a large-scale attempt to bring Han Chinese into Tibet, and thereby make Tibet Chinese and overwhelm the indigenous people with a more numerous Chinese population.”

If anything the situation in Tibet is much worse today than it was in 1965 when the Indian Representative summarised the situation for UN's benefit. The genocide continues and the colonial yoke could not be more burdensome. In the midst of the unprecedented suffering and agony of his people, the Dalai Lama's demand for restoring the autonomous status of Tibet in its genuine form is most reasonable and deserves universal support. In lending him support, India would merely be discharging a responsibility which has lain on its shoulders now for nearly half a century without being fulfilled. Such support is both a moral responsibility and a strategic necessity.

ANNEXURES

1: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's letter to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru

New Delhi

7 November 1950

My Dear Jawaharlal,

Ever since my return from Ahmedabad and after the cabinet meeting the same day which I had to attend at practically 15 minutes' notice and for which I regret I was not able to read all the papers, I have been anxiously thinking over the problem of Tibet and I thought I should share with you what is passing through my mind.

2. I have carefully gone through the correspondence between the External Affairs Ministry and our Ambassador in Peking and through him the Chinese Government. I have tried to peruse this correspondence as favourably to our Ambassador and the Chinese Government as possible, but I regret to say that neither of them comes out well as a result of this study. The Chinese Government has tried to delude us by professions of peaceful intention. My own feeling is that at a crucial period they manage to instil into our Ambassador a false sense of confidence in their so called desire to settle the Tibetan problem by peaceful means. There can be no doubt that during the period covered by this correspondence the Chinese must have been concentrating for an onslaught on Tibet. The final action of the Chinese, in my judgment, is little short of perfidy. The tragedy of it is that the Tibetans put faith in us; they choose to be guided by us; and we have been unable to get them out of the meshes of Chinese diplomacy or Chinese malevolence. From the latest position, it appears that we shall not be able to rescue the Dalai Lama. Our Ambassador has been at great pains to find an explanation or justification for Chinese policy and actions. As the External Affairs

Ministry remarked in one of their telegrams, there was a lack of firmness and unnecessary apology in one or two representations that he made to the Chinese Government on our behalf. It is impossible to imagine any sensible person believing in the so-called threat to China from Anglo-American machinations in Tibet. Therefore, if the Chinese put faith in this, they must have distrusted us so completely as to have taken us as tools or stooges of Anglo-American diplomacy or strategy. This feeling, if genuinely entertained by the Chinese in spite of your direct approaches to them, indicates that even though we regard ourselves as friends of China, the Chinese do not regard us as their friends. With the Communist mentality of "whoever is not with them being against them," this is a significant pointer, of which we have to take due note. During the last several months, outside the Russian camp, we have practically been alone in championing the cause of Chinese entry into UN and in securing from the Americans assurances on the question of Formosa. We have done everything we could to assuage Chinese feelings, to allay its apprehensions and to defend its legitimate claims in our discussions and correspondence with America and Britain and in the UN. In spite of this, China is not convinced about our disinterestedness; it continues to regard us with suspicion and the whole psychology is one, at least outwardly, of scepticism perhaps mixed with a little hostility. I doubt if we can go any further than we have done already to convince China of our good intentions, friendliness and goodwill. In Peking we have an Ambassador who is eminently suitable for putting across the friendly point of view. Even he seems to have failed to convert the Chinese. Their last telegram to us is an act of gross discourtesy not only in the summary way it disposes of our protest against the entry of Chinese forces into Tibet but also in the wild insinuation that our attitude is determined by foreign influences. It looks as though it is not a friend speaking in that language but a potential enemy.

3. In the background of this, we have to consider what new situation now faces us as a result of the disappearance of Tibet, as we knew it, and the expansion of China almost up to our gates. Throughout history we have seldom been worried about our north-east frontier.

The Himalayas have been regarded as an impenetrable barrier against any threat from the north. We had friendly Tibet which gave us no trouble. The Chinese were divided. They had their own domestic problems and never bothered us about frontiers. In 1914, we entered into a convention with Tibet which was not endorsed by the Chinese. We seem to have regarded Tibetan autonomy as extending to independent treaty relationship. Presumably, all that we required was Chinese counter-signature. The Chinese interpretation of suzerainty seems to be different. We can, therefore, safely assume that very soon they will disown all the stipulations which Tibet has entered into with us in the past. That throws into the melting pot all frontier and commercial settlements with Tibet on which we have been functioning and acting during the last half a century. China is no longer divided. It is united and strong. All along the Himalayas in the north and north-east, we have on our side of the frontier a population ethnologically and culturally not different from Tibetans and Mongoloids. The undefined state of the frontier and the existence on our side of a population with its affinities to the Tibetans or Chinese have all the elements of the potential trouble between China and ourselves. Recent and bitter history also tells us that communism is no shield against imperialism and that the communists are as good or as bad imperialists as any other. Chinese ambitions in this respect not only covered the Himalayan slopes on our side but also include the important part of Assam. They have their ambitions in Burma also. Burma has the added difficulty that it has no McMahon line round which to build up even the semblance of an agreement. Chinese irredentism and communist imperialism are different from the expansionism or imperialism of the western powers. The former has a cloak of ideology which makes it ten times more dangerous. In the guise of ideological expansion lie concealed racial, national or historical claims. The danger from the north and north-east, therefore, becomes both communist and imperialist. While our western and non-western threat to security is still as prominent as before, a new threat has developed from the north and north-east. Thus, for the first time, after centuries, India's defence has to concentrate itself on two fronts simultaneously. Our defence

measures have so far been based on the calculations of superiority over Pakistan. In our calculations we shall now have to reckon with communist China in the north and in the north-east, a communist China which has definite ambitions and aims and which does not, in any way, seem friendly disposed towards us.

4. Let us also consider the political conditions on this potentially troublesome frontier. Our northern and north-eastern approaches consist of Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, the Darjeeling (area) and tribal areas in Assam. From the point of view of communication, there are weak spots. Continuous defensive lines do not exist. There is almost an unlimited scope for infiltration. Police protection is limited to a very small number of passes. There, too, our outposts do not seem to be fully manned. The contact of these areas with us is by no means close and intimate. The people inhabiting these portions have no established loyalty or devotion to India even the Darjeeling and Kalimpong areas are not free from pro-Mongoloid prejudices. During the last three years we have not been able to make any appreciable approaches to the Nagas and other hill tribes in Assam. European missionaries and other visitors had been in touch with them, but their influence was in no way friendly to India/Indians. In Sikkim, there was political ferment some time ago. It is quite possible that discontent is smouldering there. Bhutan is comparatively quiet, but its affinity with Tibetans would be a handicap. Nepal has a weak oligarchic regime based almost entirely on force; it is in conflict with a turbulent element of the population as well as with enlightened ideas of modern age. In these circumstances, to make people alive to the new danger or to make them defensively strong is a very difficult task indeed and that difficulty can be got over only by enlightened firmness, strength and a clear line of policy. I am sure the Chinese and their source of inspiration, Soviet Union would not miss any opportunity of exploiting these weak spots, partly in support of their ideology and partly in support of their ambitions. In my judgment, the situation is one which we cannot afford either to be complacent or to be vacillating. We must have a clear idea of what we wish to achieve and also of the methods by which we should achieve it. Any

faltering or lack of decisiveness in formulating our objectives or in pursuing our policies to attain those objectives is bound to weaken us and increase the threats which are so evident.

5. Side by side with these external dangers, we shall now have to face serious internal problems as well. I have already asked (H.V.R.) Iyengar to send to the E.A. Ministry a copy of the Intelligence Bureau's appreciation of these matters. Hitherto, the Communist party of India has found some difficulty in contacting communists abroad, or in getting supplies of arms, literature, etc., from them. They had to contend with the difficult Burmese and Pakistan frontiers on the east with the long sea board. They shall now have a comparatively easy means of access to Chinese communists and through them to other foreign communists. Infiltration of spies, fifth columnists and communists would now be easier. Instead of having to deal with isolated communist pockets and Telengana and Warangal we may have to deal with communist threats to our security along our northern and north-eastern frontiers, where, for supplies of arms and ammunition, they can safely depend on communist arsenals in China. The whole situation thus raises a number of problems on which we must come to early decision so that we can, as I said earlier, formulate the objectives of our policy and decide the method by which those objectives are to be attained. It is also clear that the action will have to be fairly comprehensive, involving not only our defence strategy and state of preparations but also problem of internal security to deal with which we have not a moment to lose. We shall also have to deal with administrative and political problems in the weak spots along the frontier to which I have already referred.

6. It is of course, impossible to be exhaustive in setting out all these problems. I am, however, giving below some of the problems which in my opinion, require early solution and round which we have to build our administrative or military policies and measures to implement them.

(a) A military and intelligence appreciation of the Chinese threat to

India both on the frontier and internal security.

(b) An examination of military position and such redistribution of our forces as might be necessary, particularly with the idea of guarding important routes or areas which are likely to be the subject of dispute.

(c) An appraisal of strength of our forces and, if necessary, reconsideration of our retrenchment plans to the Army in the light of the new threat. A long-term consideration of our defence needs. My own feeling is that, unless we assure our supplies of arms, ammunition and armour, we should be making a defence position perpetually weak and we would not be able to stand up to the double threat of difficulties both from the west and north and north-east.

(d) The question of Chinese entry into UN. In view of rebuff which China has given us and the method which it has followed in dealing with Tibet, I am doubtful whether we can advocate its claims any longer. There would probably be a threat in the UN virtually to outlaw China in view of its active participation in Korean War. We must determine our attitude on this question also.

(e) The political and administrative steps which we should take to strengthen our northern and north-eastern frontier. This would include whole of border, i.e., Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Darjeeling and tribal territory of Assam.

(f) Measures of internal security in the border areas as well as the states flanking those areas such as U.P., Bihar, Bengal and Assam.

(g) Improvement of our communication, road, rail, air and wireless, in these areas and with the frontier outposts.

(h) The future of our mission at Lhasa and the trade post of Gyantse and Yatung and the forces which we have in operation in Tibet to guard the trade routes.

(i) The policies in regards to McMohan line.

7. These are some of the questions which occur to my mind. It is possible that a consideration of these matters may lead us into wider question of our relationship with China, Russia, America, Britain and Burma. This, however would be of a general nature, though some might be basically very important, i.e., we might have to consider whether we should not enter into closer association with Burma in order to strengthen the latter in its dealings with China. I do not rule out the possibility that, before applying pressure on us, China might apply pressure on Burma. With Burma, the frontier is entirely undefined and the Chinese territorial claims are more substantial. In its present position, Burma might offer an easier problem to China, and, therefore, might claim its first attention.

8. I suggest that we meet early to have a general discussion on these problems and decide on such steps as we might think to be immediately necessary and direct, quick examination of other problems with a view to taking early measure to deal with them.

Yours,

Vallabhbhai Patel

The Hon'ble Shri Jawaharlal Nehru
New Delhi

2: UN General Assembly Resolution 1723 (XVI)

New York, 1961

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Recalling its resolution 1353 (XIV) of 21 October 1959 on the question of Tibet,

Gravely concerned at the continuation of events in Tibet, including the violation of the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people and the suppression of the distinctive cultural and religious life which they have traditionally enjoyed.

Noting with deep anxiety the severe hardships which these events have inflicted on the Tibetan people, as evidenced by the large-scale exodus of Tibetan refugees to the neighbouring countries,

Considering that these events violate fundamental human rights and freedoms set out in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the principle of self-determination of peoples and nations, and have the deplorable effect of increasing international tension and embittering relations between people,

1. Reaffirms its conviction that respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is essential for the evolution of a peaceful world order based on the rule of law;
2. Solemnly renews its call for the cessation of practices which deprive the Tibetan people of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, including their right to self-determination;
3. Expresses the hope that Member States will make all possible efforts, as appropriate, towards achieving the purposes of the present resolution.

3: Indian Parliament Resolution

November 14, 1962

“This House notes with deep regret that, in spite of the uniform gestures of goodwill and friendship by India towards the People’s Government of China on the basis of recognition of each other’s independence, non-aggression and non-interference, and peaceful co-existence, China has betrayed this good-will and friendship and the principles of Panchsheel which had been agreed to between the two countries and has committed aggression and initiated a massive invasion of India by her armed forces.

“This House places on record its high appreciation of the valiant struggle of men and officers of our armed forces while defending our frontiers and pays its respectful homage to the martyrs who have laid down their lives in defending the honour and integrity of our motherland.

“This House also records its profound appreciation of the wonderful and spontaneous response of the people of India to the emergency and the crisis that has resulted from China’s invasion of India.

“It notes with deep gratitude this mighty upsurge amongst all sections of our people for harnessing all our resources towards the organisation of an all-out effort to meet this grave national emergency. The flame of liberty and sacrifice has been kindled anew and a fresh dedication has taken place to the cause of India’s freedom and integrity.

“This House gratefully acknowledges the sympathy and the moral and material support received from a large number of friendly countries in this grim hour of our struggle against aggression and invasion.

“With hope and faith, this House affirms the firm resolve of the Indian people to drive out the aggressor from the sacred soil of India, however long and hard the struggle may be.”

4: Five Point Peace Plan¹

This peace plan contains five basic components:

1. Transformation of the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace;
2. Abandonment of China's population transfer policy which threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people;
3. Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms;
4. Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste;
5. Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

Let me explain these five components.

1. *I propose that the whole of Tibet, including the eastern provinces of Kham and Amdo, be transformed into a zone of 'Ahimsa', a Hindi term used to mean a state of peace and non-violence.*

The establishment of such a peace zone would be in keeping with Tibet's historical role as a peaceful and neutral Buddhist nation and buffer state separating the continent's great powers. It would also be in keeping with Nepal's proposal to proclaim Nepal a peace zone and with China's declared support for such a proclamation. The peace zone proposed by Nepal would have a much greater impact if it were to include Tibet and neighbouring areas.

The establishing of a peace zone in Tibet would require withdrawal of Chinese troops and military installations from the country, which would enable India also to withdraw troops and military installations from the Himalayan regions bordering Tibet. This would be achieved under an international agreement which would satisfy China's

¹ The Dalai Lama issued his Five Point Peace Plan in Washington D.C., in 1987

legitimate security needs and build trust among the Tibetan, Indian, Chinese and other peoples of the region. This is in everyone's best interest, particularly that of China and India, as it would enhance their security, while reducing the economic burden of maintaining high troop concentrations on the disputed Himalayan border.

Historically, relations between China and India were never strained. It was only when Chinese armies marched into Tibet, creating for the first time a common border, that tensions arose between these two powers, ultimately leading to the 1962 war. Since then numerous dangerous incidents have continued to occur. A restoration of good relations between the world's two most populous countries would be greatly facilitated if they were separated—as they were throughout history—by a large and friendly buffer region.

To improve relations between the Tibetan people and the Chinese, the first requirement is the creation of trust. After the holocaust of the last decades in which over one million Tibetans—one-sixth of the population—lost their lives and at least as many lingered in prison camps because of their religious beliefs and love of freedom, only a withdrawal of Chinese troops could start a genuine process of reconciliation. The vast occupation force in Tibet is a daily reminder to the Tibetans of the oppression and suffering they have all experienced. A troop withdrawal would be an essential signal that in the future a meaningful relationship might be established with the Chinese, based on friendship and trust.

2. The population transfer of Chinese into Tibet, which the government in Beijing pursues in order to force a "final solution" to the Tibetan problem by reducing the Tibetan population to an insignificant and disenfranchised minority in Tibet itself, must be stopped.

The massive transfer of Chinese civilians into Tibet in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a distinct people. In the eastern parts of our country, the Chinese now greatly outnumber Tibetans. In the Amdo

province, for example, where I was born, there are, according to the Chinese statistics, 2.5 million Chinese and only 750,000 Tibetans. Even in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (i.e., central and western Tibet), Chinese Government sources now confirm that Chinese outnumber Tibetans.

The Chinese population transfer policy is not new. It has been systematically applied to other areas before. Earlier in this century the Manchus were a distinct race with their own culture and traditions. Today only two to three million Manchurians are left in Manchuria, where 75 million Chinese have settled. In Eastern Turkestan, which the Chinese now call Xinjiang, the Chinese population has grown from 200,000 in 1949 to seven million, more than half of the total population of thirteen million. In the wake of the Chinese colonisation of Inner Mongolia, Chinese number 8.5 million and Mongols only 2.5 million.

Today, in the whole of Tibet 7.5 million Chinese settlers have already been sent, outnumbering the Tibetan population of six million. In central and western Tibet, now referred to by the Chinese as the “Tibet Autonomous Region”, Chinese sources admit the 1.9 million Tibetans already constitute a minority of the region’s population. These numbers do not take the estimated 300,000-500,000 troops in Tibet into account—250,000 of them in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region.

For the Tibetans to survive as a people, it is imperative that the population transfer is stopped and Chinese settlers return to China. Otherwise Tibetans will soon be no more than a tourist attraction and relic of a noble past.

3. Fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms must be respected in Tibet. The Tibetan people must once again be free to develop culturally, intellectually, economically and spiritually, and to exercise basic democratic freedoms.

Human rights violations in Tibet are among the most serious in the world. Discrimination is practised in Tibet under a policy of “apartheid” which the Chinese call “segregation and assimilation”. Tibetans are, at best, second class citizens in their own country. Deprived of all basic democratic rights and freedoms, they exist under a colonial administration in which all real power is wielded by Chinese officials of the Communist Party and the army.

Although the Chinese government allows Tibetans to rebuild some Buddhist monasteries and to worship in them, it still forbids serious study and teaching of religion. Only a small number of people, approved by the Communist Party, are permitted to join the monasteries.

While Tibetans in exile exercise their democratic rights under a Constitution promulgated by me in 1963, thousands of our countrymen suffer in prisons and labour camps in Tibet for their religious or political convictions.

4. Serious efforts must be made to restore the natural environment in Tibet. Tibet should not be used for the production of nuclear weapons and the dumping of nuclear waste.

Tibetans have a great respect for all forms of life. This inherent feeling is enhanced by the Buddhist faith, which prohibits the harming of all sentient beings, whether human or animal. Prior to the Chinese invasion, Tibet was an unspoiled wilderness sanctuary in a unique natural environment. Sadly, in the past decades the wildlife and the forests of Tibet have been almost totally destroyed by the Chinese. The effects on Tibet’s delicate environment have been devastating. What little is left in Tibet must be protected and efforts must be made to restore the environment to its balanced state.

China uses Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and may also have started dumping nuclear waste in Tibet. Not only does China plan to dispose of its own nuclear waste but also that of other

countries, who have already agreed to pay Beijing to dispose of their toxic materials.

The dangers this presents are obvious. Not only living generations, but future generations are threatened by China's lack of concern for Tibet's unique and delicate environment.

5. Negotiation on the future status of Tibet and the relationship between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples should be started in earnest.

We wish to approach this subject in a reasonable and realistic way, in a spirit of frankness and conciliation and with a view to finding a solution that is in the long-term interest of all: the Tibetans, the Chinese, and all other peoples concerned. Tibetans and Chinese are distinct peoples, each with their own country, history, culture, language and way of life. Differences among peoples must be recognised and respected. They need not, however, form obstacles to genuine cooperation where this is in the mutual benefit of both peoples. It is my sincere belief that if the concerned parties were to meet and discuss their future with an open mind and a sincere desire to find a satisfactory and just solution, a breakthrough could be achieved. We must all exert ourselves to be reasonable and wise, and to meet in a spirit of frankness and understanding.

5: Strasbourg Proposal¹

We are living today in a very interdependent world. One nation's problems can no longer be solved by itself. Without a sense of universal responsibility our very survival is in danger. I have, therefore, always believed in the need for better understanding, closer cooperation and greater respect among the various nations of the world. The European Parliament is an inspiring example. Out of chaos of war, those who were once enemies have, in a single generation, learned to co-exist and to cooperate. I am, therefore, particularly pleased and honoured to address this gathering at the European Parliament.

As you know, my own country—Tibet—is going through a very difficult period. The Tibetans—particularly those who live under Chinese occupation—yearn for freedom and justice and a self-determined future, so that they are able to fully preserve their unique identity and live in peace with their neighbours.

For over a thousand years we Tibetans have adhered to spiritual and environmental values in order to maintain the delicate balance of life across the high plateau on which we live. Inspired by the Buddhist mountains, we sought to respect every form of life and to abandon war as an instrument of national policy.

Our history, dating back more than two thousand years, has been one of independence. At no time, since the founding of our nation in 127 BC, have we Tibetans conceded our sovereignty to a foreign power. As with all nations, Tibet experienced periods in which our neighbours - Mongol, Manchu, Chinese, British and the Gorkhas of Nepal - sought to establish influence over us. These eras have been brief and the Tibetan people have never accepted them as constituting a loss of national sovereignty. In fact, there have been occasions when Tibetan rulers conquered vast areas of China and other neighbouring

¹ The Dalai Lama issued this proposal to the European Parliament at Strasbourg, France on June 16, 1988

states. This, however, does not mean that we Tibetans can lay claim to these territories.

In 1949 the People's Republic of China forcibly invaded Tibet. Since that time, Tibet has endured the darkest period in its history. More than a million of our people have died as a result of the occupation. Thousands of monasteries were reduced to ruins. A generation has grown up deprived of education, economic opportunity and a sense of its own national character. Though the current Chinese leadership has implemented certain reforms, it is also promoting a massive population transfer onto the Tibetan plateau. This policy has already reduced the six million Tibetans to a minority. Speaking for all Tibetans, I must sadly inform you, our tragedy continues.

I have always urged my people not to resort to violence in their efforts to redress their suffering. Yet I believe all people have the moral right to peacefully protest injustice. Unfortunately the demonstrations in Tibet have been violently suppressed by the Chinese police and military. I will continue to counsel for nonviolence, but unless China forsakes the brutal methods it employs, Tibetans cannot be responsible for a further deterioration in the situation.

Every Tibetan hopes and prays for the full restoration of our nation's independence. Thousands of our people have sacrificed their lives and our whole nation has suffered in this struggle. Even in recent months, Tibetans have bravely sacrificed their lives to achieve this precious goal. On the other hand, the Chinese totally fail to recognise the Tibetan people's aspirations and continue to pursue a policy of brutal suppression.

I have thought for a long time on how to achieve a realistic solution to my nation's plight. My cabinet and I solicited the opinions of many friends and concerned persons. As a result, on September 21, 1987, at the Congressional Human Rights Caucus in Washington, D.C., I announced a Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet. In it I called for the conversion of Tibet into a zone of peace, a sanctuary in which

humanity and nature can live together in harmony. I also called for respect for human rights and democratic ideals, environmental protection, and a halt of the Chinese population transfer into Tibet.

The fifth point of the Peace Plan called for earnest negotiations between the Tibetans and the Chinese. We have, therefore, taken the initiative to formulate some thoughts which, we hope, may serve as a basis for resolving the issue of Tibet. I would like to take this opportunity to inform the distinguished gathering here of the main points of our thinking.

The whole of Tibet known as Cholka-Sum (U-tsang, Kham and Amdo) should become a self-governing democratic political entity founded on law by agreement of the people for the common good and the protection of themselves and their environment, in association with the People's Republic of China.

The Government of the People's Republic of China could remain responsible for Tibet's foreign policy. The Government of Tibet should however, develop and maintain relations, through its own Foreign Affairs Bureau, in the fields of religion, commerce, education, culture, tourism, science, sports and other non-political activities. Tibet should join international organisations concerned with such activities.

The Government of Tibet should be founded on a constitution or basic law. The basic law should provide for a democratic system of government entrusted with the task of ensuring economic equality, social justice, and protection of the environment. This means that the Government of Tibet will have the rights to decide on all affairs relating to Tibet and the Tibetans.

As individual freedom is the real source and potential of any society's development, the Government of Tibet would seek to ensure this freedom by full adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the rights to speech, assembly and religion.

Because religion constitutes the source of Tibet's national identity, and spiritual values lie at the very heart to Tibet's rich culture, it would be a special duty of the Government of Tibet to safeguard and develop its practice.

The Government should comprise a popularly elected Chief Executive, a bi-cameral legislative branch, and an independent judicial system. Its seat should be in Lhasa.

The social and economic system of Tibet should be determined in accordance with the wishes of the Tibetan people, bearing in mind especially the need to raise the standard of living of the entire population.

The Government of Tibet would pass strict laws to protect wildlife and plant life. The exploitation of natural resources would be carefully regulated. The manufacture, testing and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and other armaments must be prohibited, as well as the use of nuclear power and other technologies which produce hazardous waste. It would be the Government of Tibet's goal to transform Tibet into our planet's largest natural reserve.

A regional peace conference should be called to ensure that Tibet becomes a genuine sanctuary of peace through demilitarisation. Until such a peace conference can be convened and demilitarisation and neutralisation achieved, China could have the right to maintain a restricted number of military installations in Tibet. These must be solely for defence purposes.

In order to create an atmosphere of trust, conducive to fruitful negotiations, the Chinese Government should cease its human rights violations in Tibet and abandon its policy of transferring Chinese to Tibet.

These are thoughts we have in mind. I am aware that many Tibetans will be disappointed by the moderate stand they represent.

Undoubtedly, there will be much discussion in the coming months within our community, both in Tibet and in exile. This, however, is an essential and invaluable part of any process of change. I believe these thoughts represent the most realistic means by which to re-establish Tibet's separate identity and restore the fundamental rights of the Tibetan people while accommodating China's own interests. I would like to emphasise, however, that whatever the outcome of the negotiations with the Chinese may be, the Tibetan people themselves must be the ultimate deciding authority. Therefore, any proposal will contain a comprehensive procedural plan to ascertain the wishes of the Tibetan people in a nationwide referendum.

I would like to take this opportunity to state that I do not wish to take any active part in the Government of Tibet. Nevertheless, I will continue to work as much as I can for the well-being and happiness of the Tibetan people as long as it is necessary.

We are ready to present a proposal to the Government of the People's Republic of China based on the thoughts I have presented. A negotiating team representing the Tibetan Government has been selected. We are prepared to meet with the Chinese to discuss details of such a proposal aimed at achieving an equitable solution.

We are encouraged by the keen interest being shown in our situation by a growing number of government and political leaders, including former President Jimmy Carter of the United States. We are also encouraged by the recent changes in China which have brought about a new group of leadership, more pragmatic and liberal.

We urge the Chinese Government and leadership to give serious and substantive consideration to the ideas I have described. Only dialogue and a willingness to look with honesty and clarity at the reality of Tibet can lead to a viable solution. We wish to conduct discussions with the Chinese Government bearing in mind the larger interests of humanity. Our proposal will therefore be made in a spirit of conciliation and we hope that the Chinese will respond accordingly.

My country's unique history and profound spiritual heritage render it ideally suited for fulfilling the role of a sanctuary of peace at the heart of Asia. Its historic status as a neutral buffer state, contributing to the stability of the entire continent, can be restored. Peace and security for Asia as well as for the world at large can be enhanced. In the future, Tibet need no longer be an occupied land, oppressed by force, unproductive and scarred by suffering. It can become a free haven where humanity and nature live in harmonious balance; a creative model for the resolution of tensions afflicting many areas throughout the world.

The Chinese leadership needs to realise that colonial rule over occupied territories is today anachronistic. A genuine union or association can only come about voluntarily, when there is satisfactory benefit to all the parties concerned. The European community is a clear example of this. On the other hand, even one country or community can break into two or more entities when there is a lack of trust or benefit, and when force is used as the principal means of rule.

I would like to end by making a special appeal to the honourable members of the European Parliament and through them to their respective constituencies to extend their support to our efforts. A resolution of the Tibetan problem within the framework that we propose will not only be for the mutual benefit of the Tibetan and Chinese people but will also contribute to regional and global peace and stability. I thank you for providing me the opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

6: German Bundestag Resolution¹

Bonn, June 19, 1996

Since the October 15, 1987 resolution of the German Bundestag, which was adopted by all parliamentary groups, the human rights situation in Tibet has not improved, but rather deteriorated.

This is the chief finding of the Foreign Affairs Committee's hearing on Tibet, on June 19, 1995.

Starting with the inhuman military action since the invasion by China in 1950, the violent suppression of Tibet and her aspirations for political, ethnic, cultural and religious self-determination has continued to this day. China's continued policy of repression in Tibet has led to severe human rights violations and destruction of the environment, as well as large-scale economic, social, legal and political discrimination against the Tibetan people and, in the final analysis, the Sinification of Tibet. The denial of educational opportunities to Tibetans is one point of this fact.

One example of encroachment on the religious life of Tibetans is the kidnapping of the boy who was nominated by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama as well as the investiture of a second Panchen Lama by the Chinese authorities.

For years now the Dalai Lama has been attempting to bring about peaceful discussions with the Chinese Government.

The German Bundestag:

1. considering that during its entire history, Tibet has preserved its own ethnic, cultural and religious identity,

¹ The members of Parliament (22 names from the CDU/CSU, SPD, Greens and FDP) propose a motion to improve the human rights situation in Tibet

2. expressing its deep concern that this authentic identity is threatened with destruction by China's brute force of arms since 1950,
3. considering that during the hearing of the German Bundestag on June 19, 1995 the status of Tibet under international law remained a controversial issue among experts,
4. taking into consideration that it is the policy of the Federal Republic of Germany to globally support the realization of the right to self-determination, and in view of the historical-legal status of Tibet, her claim to autonomy is obvious,
5. also taking into consideration that it must be the policy of the Federal Republic of Germany not to tolerate illegal use of violence and major violations of human rights, whereas violation of human rights in Tibet continues unabatedly,
6. deeply worried about reports according to which a six-year-old Tibetan boy, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, as well as his parents were abducted by the Chinese authorities immediately after the Dalai Lama recognised him to be the latest reincarnation of the second religious leader of Tibet, the Panchen Lama, who had passed away in 1989,

1. Condemns the policies of the Chinese authorities, which particularly in Tibet result in the destruction of the people's identity, brought about especially by the transfer and resettlement of Chinese in large numbers, forced sterilization of women and forced abortion, political and religious persecution, as well as the subjection of the country to a Chinese-controlled administration;
2. therefore, calls on the Federal Government to use increased means and ensure that:
 - the government of the People's Republic of China respects the globally-recognised human rights and stops violation of human rights against Tibetans, the Chinese authorities immediately release Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family and allow them to return to their village,
 - the Chinese government rescind all policies which aim at

the destruction of the Tibetan culture, as for example, the organised settlement of Chinese in large numbers in order to restrain the Tibetan population and the persecution of representatives of the Tibetan culture,

- the government of the People's Republic of China responds positively to the efforts of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in Exile to initiate a constructive dialogue and enter into negotiations for granting more rights to the Tibetan people,
- the economic, social, legal and political discriminations against the Tibetan people be abolished,
- all political prisoners in Tibet be released,
- the voluntary return of Tibetans living abroad becomes possible,
- also in future the human rights situation in Tibet be an issue of special attention and critical discussion at the meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission,
- the development, coordination and resources used in Tibet benefit Tibetans and that the Tibetan population gains access to adequate educational opportunities and facilities,
- the environmental destruction in Tibet ends,
- that more attention be paid to the desire of the Tibetan people to preserve their culture and religion, and that the sphere of activity be ascertained where the German people and the Federal Government could give assistance,
- in consultation with the Refugee Commissioner of the United Nations all possible means of aid be worked out that is feasible, particularly to the preservation of the cultural identity of Tibetan refugees,
- an effective contribution be made towards the professional training of Tibetan junior specialists, especially by granting an adequate number of scholarship at German educational and professional institutions,
- the above-mentioned principles and measures also find recognition and implementation within the European Community.

7: European Parliament Resolution

Strasbourg, March 13, 1997

The European Parliament,

— having regard to its previous resolutions on Tibet,

A. Whereas the Chinese authorities continue their repression in occupied Tibet,

B. Whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama proposes to start negotiations on the future of Tibet between the Chinese Government and the Tibetan Government in exile, notably on autonomy and self-government for the Tibetan people,

C. Whereas the three UN General Assembly resolutions passed in 1959, 1961 and 1965 acknowledged Tibet's right to self-determination,

1. Reiterates its condemnation of the continuing human rights violations by the Chinese authorities in Tibet;
2. Supports the Dalai Lama's proposal on negotiations on the future of Tibet and invites the Chinese Government to react in an official and positive way to this proposal;
3. Asks the Council, the Member States and the Commission to do everything possible in the framework of the relations between the Union and the Republic of China and the United Nations in order to bring the two sides together with a view to reaching an agreement which satisfies the legitimate requests of the Tibetan people;
4. Calls on the governments of the Member States to have the question of Tibet's occupation and decolonisation placed on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly;
5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the Government of the People's Republic of China, H.H. the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan Government in exile and the United Nations.

