

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

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October 1, November 30, 1962

Nepal

218. For M. J. Desai: No Reaction to Mahendra's Behaviour¹

I agree with both your suggestion in your note. I shall speak to the Home Minister² on this subject also. I have already spoken to the DIB.³

I have read the papers in this file and, more particularly, the note of your interview with Shri Rishikesh Shaha.⁴ I am entirely opposed to his suggestion that a senior representative of the Government of India should go to Kathmandu to see the King.⁵ I have had no desire to embarrass the King or even to do anything which might hurt his vanity. But, at the same time, I am certainly not going to pamper that vanity.

I am also not inclined to deal with the King's communique in a special public statement. Naturally if I am asked at a press conference or elsewhere about it, I shall say something. But on the whole I think it will be better to treat it with the contempt it deserves. I do not propose to write to the King on this subject either.⁶

¹ Note, 2 October 1962, for the Foreign Secretary.

² Lal Bahadur Shastri.

³ B.N. Mullik. Nehru met Mullik at 9.30 p.m. on 1 October 1962, the day he arrived at New Delhi. NMML, Engagement Diary.

⁴ Nepalese Politician, (1925-2002); He was replaced as Foreign Minister on 22 September 1962.

⁵ Mahendra.

⁶ The Royal decree claimed that "... despite New Delhi's assurance, the rebels were launching raids into Nepal from across the border". The Sunday Tribune, 23 September 1962; p.1. See also SWJN/SS/76/items 472 and 473; and SWJN/SS/78/item 430.

219. Vinoba Bhave's Nepal Visit⁷

Certainly we can raise no objections to Vinoba Bhave going to Nepal and we would be prepared to give such facilities as are necessary. You may inform our Ambassador⁸ accordingly. But I doubt very much if Vinobaji will upset his present programme in order to visit Nepal. He is touring West Bengal now and is likely to spend two-three months there. As you know, he only travels by foot and it will take a mighty long time for him to reach Nepal on foot.

If Vinobaji is to be invited to Nepal, it is not enough for Shri Tulsi Meher⁹ only to do so. The Government should join in the invitation or at least express their agreement with it. When Vinoba Bhave went through East Pakistan recently, the Government there went all out to arrange for his tour and to help him in every way. In Nepal, in existing circumstances, the Government's attitude has to be fully known to the public as well as their help should be given. Otherwise, people will be afraid and there will be difficulties.

You may write to our Ambassador on the above lines. Make it clear that we shall have no objection whatever to Vinobaji, if he agrees, going to Nepal. You may also mention or write to Shri Shriman Narayan that there is some talk of this in Nepal. We shall have no objection to Vinobaji deciding to go there and we shall give him every facility if it comes off, whenever that might be.¹⁰

220. Nepali Political Intrigues¹¹

⁷ Note, 9 October 1962, for M. J. Desai, the Foreign Secretary.

⁸ Harishwar Dayal.

⁹ Tulsi Meher Shreshtha, worked with Gandhi at Sabarmati, and ran the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi in Nepal.

¹⁰ See appendix 8.

¹¹ Note, 10 October 1962, for M. J. Desai, the Foreign Secretary.

I give below an extract from the UP Governor's¹² letter to the President dated October 4th. The reference in this extract is to something that happened two months ago and it may be out of date.

Extract:

"The Commissioner, Faizabad Division, has reported, for the second half of August, 1962, that the Nepali Congress workers are now busy making preparations to start some violent activities against the King's regime in Nepal. They are reported to be secretly securing illicit arms and ammunition, including hand-grenades, etc. The Nepal authorities are in their turn deadly against the Nepali Congress workers and are bent upon even shooting and killing them. The Nepali Congress workers recently tried to loot the Mail bag of Bardia district (Nepal) but failed. They, however, staged demonstrations in several villages against the King of Nepal across our border in Nepal. The Nepali Police remained busy in unearthing the 'bomb explosion' incident in the office of the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Nepalganj, recently".

Another extract:

"On my return from the visit of the Nepal and Tibet borders in the month of June, I had invited your attention to the serious propaganda carried out by officials in Nepal against India and the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru. I had also stated that there was a move to claim all hill areas of Uttarakhand and Kumaun Divisions as also areas extending up to Dehra Dun. I had hinted that the Chinese were taking very good advantage of these ill-feelings and were consolidating themselves in Nepal. There is little reason to disbelieve that this position is further intensified due to events that had taken place since then. It is also published that convenience of communication arrangements between Lhasa and Kathmandu are agreed between both the Governments of Nepal and China".¹³

¹² Biswanath Das, 1962-1967.

¹³ See also item 16.

221. Chinese Influence in Nepal¹⁴

I am sending you a copy of the daily Tej of October 11th, 1962. This was given to me by P.N. Sharma, Photographer¹⁵, today.

2. On the third page, there is a report to the effect that it is learnt from a reliable source that Chinese forces are coming into Nepal in considerable numbers; that they are coming in the guise of volunteers, also that considerable numbers of so-called Chinese technicians are coming into Nepal, but probably they are also soldiers. Further that they are being armed by the Nepal Government with arms they have received from India.

3. It is also stated that the Nepal Government is thinking of introducing a visa system for personnel going from India to Nepal.

The leading article of the Tej in the same issue is quite a good one.

If you like, you can send this issue of the Tej to our Ambassador in Kathmandu.¹⁶

6. I do not think it would be advisable for the Ambassador to adopt any minatory language to the King or his Government. Things have gone too far for any such language to be used. It will have the opposite effect. At the same time, to remain quiet is not right. I think the Ambassador should draw the attention of the Nepal Government to these rumours and reports as well as the other things that have happened and state that it is a matter of deep grief to the Government of India that such steps should be encouraged.

222. Chen Yi on Nepal¹⁷

¹⁴ Note, 11 October 1962, for M. J. Desai, the Foreign Secretary.

¹⁵ A Rotarian and Delhi based reporter and photographer of repute.

¹⁶ Harishwar Dayal.

¹⁷ Report of statement. Reproduced from the National Herald, 17 October 1962, p. 1.

Prime Minister Nehru today described as "rather showing off" the recent statement of the Chinese Foreign Minister, Marshal Chen Yi that if Nepal was attacked China would go to her help.

On his return to the capital today after his visit to Colombo, Pandit Nehru was asked to comment on Marshal Chen Yi's statement, particularly in view of India's close treaty relations with Nepal.

Pandit Nehru: "How am I to explain or justly justify his (Chen Yi's) saying? We are not going to attack Nepal. The whole idea is rather showing off." PTI.

223. To Rajendra Prasad: Nepal Politics¹⁸

October 19, 1962

My dear Rajendra Babu,

I received your letter of October 11th on my return from Ceylon.

The situation in Nepal is very disturbing and we are greatly concerned about it. How this has arisen is a long story, and I do not propose to trouble you with this. Briefly, ever since the coup d'etat by the King,¹⁹ we have made it clear to him that we do not wish to interfere with internal changes or developments in Nepal. It is true that I expressed my regret at the time in Parliament in answer to a question, and said that what had happened in Nepal was a setback to democracy. Apart from that, I have not criticised the regime there. I have told the King when he has pressed me to advise him, that the problem in Nepal cannot be solved by mere repression. Some conciliation should also take place. I further told him that we would not permit India to be made a base for any violent activities in Nepal or for any gun-running. We issued instructions accordingly, and I believe that by and large these instructions have been followed. I think that very few rifles have gone to the Nepali Congress people in Nepal from India. It is difficult on a

¹⁸ Letter to the former President.

¹⁹ Mahendra.

long and free frontier to check every individual who goes. There may, perhaps about a year ago or more, have been some slackness by the Bihar Police in this matter. But for some time past we have issued very strict injunctions, and I believe they have been followed. Most of the arms that the Nepali Congress people within Nepal have managed to obtain, are from Police posts and Army posts in Nepal itself.

It might interest you to know that when the late King²⁰ was alive, he did not get on well at all with his eldest son who is the King now. I pleaded for the son with him. Indeed, the late King would not give his permission to Mahendra to marry the woman of his choice, who was the daughter of a Rana. Again, I pleaded with him to give this permission, and he agreed. Later, the question arose about Mahendra being acknowledged to be the heir. The late King was dead against it, but owing to pressures brought upon him by his advisers and others, he ultimately agreed. Even while doing so, he said before a number of persons that Mahendra would be the last King in Nepal as he would ruin the country.

Ever since Mahendra became King, we have treated him in a friendly way and with the utmost courtesy. Occasionally he wrote to me asking for my advice. At that time, I told him that the two strengthening features in Nepal were the King's position and the popular organisation that is the Nepali Congress. If the two pulled together, all would be well in Nepal. Neither could do without the other.

Right from the beginning, Mahendra had an acute dislike of B.P. Koirala. He wanted Subarna Shamshere to be Prime Minister. Subarna rightly said that the leader of the Party should be the Prime Minister, and the King ultimately agreed. I congratulated him upon it. After that, no particular occasion arose for me to have long talks with the King. I met him once or twice, and he complained of B.P. Koirala, just as B.P. Koirala complained to me of the King's attitude in various matters. Suddenly I heard of the coup d'etat and B.P. Koirala and others being put in prisons. Much later, the King wrote to

²⁰ Tribhuvan.

me on the subject and sought my advice. I did not urge him to have a democratic structure, but I did suggest that a conciliatory attitude would help him. This was the advice given to him by others also. I have never pressed my advice upon him and I have not gone beyond this at any time. It was only when he has insisted on my advising him that I have said so. Unfortunately, Mahendra is a very foolish and conceited person. Further, he is in the hands not only of bad advisers, but a palace clique which is anti-India. Indeed, it is one of the stock in trade of Nepal politics to raise a cry against India. Even B.P. Koirala indulged in this kind of thing. After the coup d'etat, Tanka Prasad and some others exercised much influence on the King. Tanka Prasad is very pro-Chinese. The King thought he could play a game between India and China.

During all this time, we have not interfered in any way and we have continued the help we have been giving in various projects. We have further not only stopped any kind of gun-running, but tried to use our influence to stop any incidents on the border. As a matter of fact, hardly any incident has happened in recent weeks on the border, except those which have taken place at the instigation of the King's men from across the border. Some two or three hundred hardened criminals have been released from Nepalese prisons and are utilised by the authorities there to create incidents on the border. We have received some information that the idea behind all this is to create incidents and then to condemn India. The Press in Nepal which is entirely under the direction of the King, goes on writing the most vituperative attacks on India and often praises China.

During the last six weeks or so, the King has issued two very objectionable statements attacking India. I was asked to reply to them, but I have remained quite silent and said nothing about them. The previous Foreign Minister of Nepal was suddenly dismissed because he took exception to the anti-India and pro-Chinese policy. Tulsi Giri was made Foreign Minister again.

In these circumstances, you will appreciate that it is no easy matter for us to deal with the situation. We have done everything to refrain from

embittering it still further and have tried to avoid everything which might create an incident in Nepal or on the borders. The King has become a nervous wreck, afraid of everybody and trusting no one. He has got into such a mess that he cannot get out of it.

You have referred to our Ambassador.²¹ It is probably true that the King's palace clique and his present advisers do not like our Ambassador. But according to my information, this unpopularity does not extend to the people either of the Terai or other parts of Nepal. Anyhow, the Ambassador can do little except occasionally to see the king and his advisers. He is one of our senior Ambassadors because we attach importance to that post, and I have no reason to think that he has acted wrongly. The mere fact of being an Indian Ambassador is, in prevailing circumstances, enough to make you unpopular with the king and his palace clique.

I can assure you that there is no gun-running from India to Nepal and that effective steps have been taken to that end. What the Nepal Congressmen may have done in the rest of India, I cannot say definitely because it is always possible to buy some arms in Calcutta or in Goa or elsewhere. Oddly enough, I have received some information of some gun-running being organised by the Foreign Minister, Tulsī Giri, on his own behalf so as to have an armed band to support him.

It is our belief that some of the incidents near the border have been directly organised by the King's men. There have been, as you might know, even murders of people on our side of the border. There is continuous propaganda against India. Perhaps, some of these stories have reached you also.

We are closely watching the situation and trying our best so that it may not grow worse. But it is no easy matter to deal with a paranoiac who is at the same time exceedingly foolish and who surrounds himself with some of the worst persons in Nepal. I am afraid he will continue doing everything which will bring ruin to Nepal. I want to assure you that we are trying to prevent

²¹ Harishwar Dayal.

any incident happening on the border. We have made that perfectly clear and, what is more, we have largely succeeded.

My own information is that the King is not very popular in Nepal, although a certain sanctity attaches to the office.

I am sorry you have not been keeping well.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

224. To M.P. Singh: Relations with Nepal²²

November 26, 1962

Dear Mahesh Babu,

Your letter of the 24th November. I do not quite understand what all this is about. There is a reference to a Biography of King Mahendra. Some time back, I saw some parts of this Biography and it struck me to be rather absurd. The writing was fligid.

Then there is some reference to "resolving the present tangle" and some kind of a peace formula is suggested. I do not know who makes this suggestion and under whose authority. We cannot deal with such matters in this way.

We are anxious, of course, to have good relations with Nepal, and I believe these relations are improving.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

²² Letter to Bihar Minister.

Tibet

233. Freda Bedi is not a Communist²³

I enclose a personal and confidential letter from Freda Bedi. Whatever varying views might have been in the past, I am sure she is not a communist. She is, in fact, a devout Buddhist and has, during the last year or two, devoted herself to the Tibetan refugees' welfare and especially to their children.

2. I do not know what I can do in the matter. I think the Dalai Lama will be here till tomorrow evening. It is possible to give him a message from me (perhaps Shri K.L. Mehta²⁴ could do it), this might be done. The message should be that Mrs Freda Bedi is not Communist and is devoted to the welfare of the Tibetan children. I would not have agreed to her looking after the children if I had doubted her in any way.

234. Talk with the Dalai Lama²⁵

Education

In reply to PM's enquiry about the Dalai Lama's recent visit to Simla, Dalai Lama said that he had heard reports that the standard of living of the children at the Save the Children Fund Nursery was high. This would have created difficulties when the time came for the children to settle down in life in India. He was glad to say, however, that as a result of his personal inspection, he found that there was no truth in the reports.²⁶

2. The Dalai Lama mentioned that the Tibetan Education Society School in Chhota Simla was greatly congested. I[t] had 498 pupils whereas available

²³ Note, 18 October 1962, for M. J. Desai, the Foreign Secretary.

²⁴ Joint Secretary (East), MEA. See also SWJN/SS/68/pp.609-613.

²⁵ Record of talk, 18 October 1962. Composed by K. L. Mehta JS (E). MEA, File No. E-IV/2 (167)/62, pp.2-2/Corr.

²⁶ See notes in item 474.

accommodation could not be stretched to take in more than a maximum of 300.

3. The Joint Secretary²⁷ explained that a decision had already been taken by the Society to rent one or more houses in Simla in order to remove the congestion. Unfortunately, enquiries so far made showed that no such accommodation was available. PM said that he was not prepared to accept this statement and expressed the desire that renewed efforts should be made at an appropriate level to find the necessary accommodation in Simla so that the children could be properly housed. If Education Ministry does not act promptly, EA²⁸ should intervene and take action by sending our officer to Simla.

4. The Dalai Lama referred to certain squabbles which had developed amongst members of the staff and expressed the hope that as a result of the Headmaster's removal, things would now settle down. He added that he was looking for a suitable Tibetan for appointment as Principal of the School. The present incumbent was a good man but rather lenient. PM said that the matter of selection of the right type of Headmasters/Teachers was of the highest importance. The Education Ministry should do everything necessary to ensure that qualified teachers with appropriate background and capacity to work with the Tibetans are found for the schools being set up by the Tibetan Education Society. PM also enquired whether a new man had been appointed to fill the Headmaster's post in the School.

5. PM then enquired whether some of the children from the Dharamshala Nursery had moved over to Simla etc. Dalai Lama replied in the affirmative and added that even so, the number of pupils in the Dharamshala Nursery still stood at slightly over 500. This was partly because the Nursery had to admit many children whose parents were in Nepal.

6. PM then enquired about Mr Maurice Frydman's proposal to set up Children's Homes in Almora. Dalai Lama said that as no water was available

²⁷ K.L. Mehta, Joint Secretary (East) MEA.

²⁸ MEA.

at the site originally proposed, he had himself made a modest start of the scheme as originally envisaged by Frydman in Mussoorie. The Joint Secretary explained briefly the details of the scheme as worked out by Mr Frydman and which had been discussed recently with the Minister of Education. PM felt that the objective which Mr Frydman and the Dalai Lama had could be equally achieved by providing a goodly measure of home life in the existing hostels. It must be remembered, PM added, that in schools of this kind it was not just a question of giving a few lectures. It was equally important that a Tibetan- home atmosphere should be created in all the houses where children reside as boarders. Where the children were small, there should be matrons in adequate number to look after them. In addition, Tibetan couples selected by the Dalai Lama should be appointed to take charge of the children as "foster parents". One such couple could normally be expected to look after 40 pupils. It follows that Tibetan couples in appropriate numbers may be appointed in a boarding house where more than 50 pupils reside. Necessary number of houses should be taken on rent to remove congestion and to implement this idea of providing home atmosphere in hostels.

7. The Dalai Lama mentioned that present arrangements such as they are, provide education facilities for 1600 Tibetan children against a total of some 4,000. He was glad that plans were afoot to open more residential schools and expressed the hope that such schools will be started soon. PM agreed.

8. The Dalai Lama expressed his happiness to find the Prime Minister sharing his views in the matter. He said that was the important thing and the details could be worked out to achieve the objective which PM and he had before them. The Prime Minister ordered that the Ministry of Education should be asked to progress these matters expeditiously.

Tibetan Refugee Boys between the Ages of 16 and 28

9. Dalai Lama said that some 10,000 of such boys and girls are at present living in India, and only a few have so far been provided with jobs in factories etc. There appears to be a need to widen the scope of the programme under which boys in this age group are given training in

appropriate crafts with a view to provide jobs for them.

10. PM agreed and expressed the view that this problem would become even more important once the boys and girls, at present being taught in our schools, finished their primary education and are not considered fit to pursue higher studies. Alternative avenues for training and employment must, therefore, be found for them.

Mysore Scheme

11. Prime Minister enquired how the people were taking to the Mysore Scheme. The Dalai Lama replied that the Tibetans who had gone there were very willing to settle down as agriculturists. He added that the desire would be heightened once the Mysore State has been able to allocate land to individual families. PM agreed and said that this process should be expedited.

CHINESE INVASION

China General

244. To Morarji Desai: NEFA Border Situation²⁹

October 11, 1962

My dear Morarji,

I am sorry to say that the situation in the NEFA border is deteriorating fast. I am afraid that we are in for trouble there on a big scale. This will put a great strain on us, but there is no help for it. We shall have specially to organise additional production, especially of spare parts. We may also have to add to our forces somewhat.³⁰

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

²⁹ Letter to the Finance Minister.

³⁰ See also item 126.

245. Clearing NEFA of Chinese³¹

Army Told to Clear NEFA of Chinese

PM No Talks till this Aggression Ends

New Delhi, Oct 12 - Prime Minister Nehru said here today that instructions to the Indian armed forces were to free the Indian territory in NEFA of the Chinese Intruders.

"I cannot fix a date, that is entirely for the military," Pandit Nehru said.

Prime Minister was talking to newsmen at the Palam aerodrome before his departure for Madras on his way to Ceylon for a three-day visit.

Replying to a question whether the chances of talks with the Chinese had finished, the Prime Minister declared that so long as this particular aggression (in the eastern sector) continued, there appeared to be no chance for talks.

Asked when he expected the Chinese to be thrown out of NEFA Pandit Nehru replied "Wintry conditions have set in already. I cannot fix any date for it. They are strongly positioned, large numbers situated on a higher ground."

Replying to a question about the estimate of the number of the Chinese in the area, Pandit Nehru said that he did not know the exact number. "Apart from anything else their (the Chinese) base on the other side is quite near from where they came," he added

Fighting in spurts

Answering a series of questions on the latest situation in NEFA Pandit Nehru said: "There was as you know a rather major incident two days ago. We suffered some casualties. The other side suffered heavier casualties probably approaching a hundred. There is a little river there about two miles

³¹ Report of a press conference, 12 October 1962. Reproduced from the National Herald, 13 October 1962, p. 1.

from the mountains. Mostly, we are on this side of the river and they are on the other side."³²

Asked whether the fighting was still going on, the Prime Minister replied that it was not continuing but it occurred in spurts.

In answer to a question whether the Chinese aggressive attitude presented a menace to the free nations of Asia, Pandit Nehru replied, "I don't know about that. It is quite enough to me if they are a menace to us."³³

Pandit Nehru who left by a special IAF Viscount was accompanied by Mrs Indira Gandhi, and the Commonwealth Secretary Mr Y.D. Gundevia. The Minister a for Steel and Heavy Industries Mr C. Subramaniam, and the Minister without Portfolio Mr T.T. Krishnamachari, travelled by the same plane to Madras:

The Prime Minister was seen off by ministers of the Cabinet, high officials and the Charge d' Affaires of the Ceylon High Commission, Mr B .P.

Tilakaratra.

After a night's stopover in Madras the Prime Minister and party will leave for Colombo tomorrow.

246. Admission of China to the UN³⁴

[Note, 21 October 1962, from M. J. Desai, the FS, begins]

The Soviet Resolution on admission of China to the UN is likely to come up in New York tomorrow. We have, during the last year or two, been voting in favour of the admission of China without making any statement. Similar attitude this year is bound to be seriously misunderstood by all concerned.

³² The reference is to Kechilang River, in the Chihtung area. White Paper, Vol. VII, p.113.

³³ See also item 16, section "China and the Northeast".

³⁴ Noting, MEA, The Question of Admission of The People's Republic of China to the United Nations, p. 16, col. 2, and p. 50.

If Prime Minister agrees, the telegram placed below to Chakravarty³⁵ may issue.

M. J. Desai,
21-10-1962

PM

[Note, 21 October 1962, from M. J. Desai, the FS, ends]

[Note, 21 October 1962, by Nehru begins]

Yes, the draft may issue.

J. Nehru
21-10-1962

[Note, 21 October 1962, by Nehru ends]

[Telegram, No. 24507, 22 October 1962, from M. J. Desai to B.N. Chakravarty, New York, UN, begins]

When the Soviet Resolution on admission of People's Republic of China comes for debate in General Assembly, you should make a statement. You should point out how China has committed flagrant aggression on both the Eastern and Western sectors of our borders and condemn Chinese aggression. You should, at the same time point out that our Delegation is voting for the Resolution because, apart from principle of universality of membership of the UN, the only effective way to check Chinese military adventurism is to make her accept her responsibility as member of the world organisation and be subject to the views and discipline of this world organisation.

[Telegram, No. 24507, 22 October 1962, from M. J. Desai to B.N. Chakravarty, New York, UN, ends]

247. To Chou En-lai³⁶

³⁵ B.N. Chakravarty, Permanent Representative at the UN, 1962-65.

Thank you for the copy of your message of 24th October³⁷ which was delivered to the Ministry of External Affairs by your Charge d'Affaires in Delhi on the evening of 24th October along with a copy of the statement issued by the Government of the People's Republic of China on the morning of the 24th.

Nothing in my long political career has hurt and grieved me more than the fact that the hopes and aspirations for peaceful and friendly neighbourly relations which we entertained, and to promote which my colleagues in the Government of India and myself worked so hard, ever since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, should have been shattered by the hostile and unfriendly twist given in India-China relations during the past few years. The current clashes on the India-China border arising out of what is in effect a Chinese invasion of India, which you have described as "most distressing", are the final culmination of the deterioration in relations between India and China.

I would not, in this letter, go into the long history of this deterioration in India-China relations or argue as to where the fault lies because you are quite familiar with our views on this subject. All I would say is that the long preamble to the statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China of 24th October, enclosed with your letter, gives a distorted picture of the history of India-China relations. I agree with you, however, that we should look ahead and consider what can be done not merely to turn the tide as you suggest, but to reverse it and make a serious attempt to restore the relations between India and China to the warm and friendly pattern of earlier days and even to improve on that pattern.

As regards the three points mentioned in your letter which were put out in the statement of 24th October, the Government of India have already

³⁶ Letter, 27 October 1962, to the Prime Minister of China. Reproduced from Chinese Aggression in War and Peace. Letters of the Prime Minister of India (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Publications Division, 8 December 1962), pp.9-13.

³⁷ See appendix 26.

indicated their official reactions to the proposals on these three points. I enclose a copy of this official reaction for ready reference.

My colleagues and I have carefully considered the appeal made in your letter. We are not able to understand the niceties of the Chinese three-point proposals which talk about "lines of actual control", etc. I believe several other Governments interested in peaceful settlement of our differences have also not been able to understand or appreciate what these proposals actually mean.

We are of the considered view that a clear straightforward way of reversing the deteriorating trend in India-China relations would be for Your Excellency to accept the suggestion made in point (v) of the official reaction of the Government of India and to revert to the position as it prevailed all along the India-China boundary prior to 8th September 1962. If this is agreed to, it can be implemented by both sides. We will, thereafter, be glad to welcome you or a delegation from your country at any level that is mutually acceptable to discuss and arrive at further agreed measures which can facilitate a peaceful settlement of our differences on this border question, in one stage or in more than one stage as may be necessary.

There have been repeated declarations by the Government of the People's Republic of China that they want to settle the differences on the border question with India by peaceful means, though what is happening today is in violent contradiction with these declarations. I would, however, presume that your letter is a reaffirmation of the earlier declarations and indicates a desire to revert to the paths of peace and peaceful settlement. On this common basis of eschewing war and violence in the settlement of border differences, our proposal to revert to the status quo along the entire boundary as it prevailed before 8th September 1962 should be acceptable to you. We could, after this is implemented, discuss our differences and see whether we can arrive at agreed measures and settle the differences either in one stage or in several stages. If we fail, we can consider what other agreed peaceful method of settling our differences should be adopted. Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Enclosure

October 24, 1962

The Government of India have seen Press Agency reports of the three-point statement issued by the People's Republic of China which the New China News Agency has put out this morning. There has been no official communication from the Chinese Government on this matter so far.

The Government of India have in previous notes and in statements made by the Prime Minister clearly indicated their attitude in this matter. The Government of India's position is:

(i) The Government of India wedded to peace and peaceful methods have always sought to resolve differences by talks and discussions in this case of border differences with the Government of China.

(ii) On the 16th October 1962, in a note sent to the Government of China they proposed the restoration of status quo of the boundary as it prevailed before the Chinese aggression in the Eastern sector on 8th September 1962, prior to talks and discussions for easing of tension and for creating the appropriate climate for purposeful talks and discussions to resolve the differences between the Governments of India and China on the boundary question.³⁸

(iii) Since then, it is the Government of China which on the morning of the 20th October 1962 hurled its vast armies at various points on all sectors of the India-China boundary and enlarged the conflict. These Chinese forces have advanced in all sectors into Indian territory and are still advancing. India cannot and will not accept a position under which Chinese forces continue to commit aggression into Indian territory, occupy substantial Indian territories and use these as a bargaining counter to force a settlement on their terms.

(iv) There is no sense or meaning in the Chinese offer to withdraw 20 kilometres from what they call "line of actual control". What is this "line of actual control"? Is this the line they have created by aggression since the

³⁸ See White Paper, Vol.VII, pp.117-120.

beginning of September? Advancing 40 or 60 kilometres by blatant military aggression and offering to withdraw 20 kilometres provided both sides do this is a deceptive device which can fool nobody.

(v) If the Chinese professions of peace and peaceful settlement of differences are really genuine, let them go back at least to the position where they were all along the boundary prior to 8th September 1962. India will then be prepared 'to undertake talks and discussions, at any level mutually agreed to, to arrive at agreed measures which should be taken for the easing of tension and correction of the situation created by unilateral forcible alteration of the status quo along the India-China boundary.

(vi) India is always prepared to resolve differences by talks and discussions but only on the basis of decency, dignity and self-respect and not under threat of military might of any country however strong it may be.

(vii) India would be prepared to welcome the Chinese Prime Minister or any suitable representative of the Chinese Government on a mutually agreed date if China is sincere in its professions of peaceful settlement and accepts the constructive proposal made in point (v) above which is fully consistent with dignity and self-respect both of India and China.

248. Chinese Treatment of Lhasa Consulate Staff³⁹

[Note, 4 November 1962, by M. J. Desai, the Foreign Secretary, begins]

The Chinese have been putting all sorts of pressure on our Consulate General in Lhasa. Telegraphic communication between Lhasa and Delhi and Lhasa and Peking was cut off, so far as our Missions are concerned, from 12th October. Telephone connection of the Lhasa Consulate-General has been cut off since 14th October. All sorts of restrictions have been placed on the staff and they are denied essential commodities like milk, eggs, firewood, etc. The local Tibetan servants have been compelled to withdraw

³⁹ Noting, 4 November 1962. MEA, File No. C/551/25/62-TB, pp. 2-3/notes.

their services from 31st October and now demonstrations are being organised on a trumped-up demand that the local staff who have refused to work for the Consulate-General should be given gratuity at the rate of one month's salary per every year of service. The telegrams from the Lhasa Consulate General are always delayed by three or four days and none of our telegrams to Lhasa seem to have been delivered to the Consulate-General.

2. The Chinese are determined to eliminate our last contact in Tibet i.e., the Consulate-General in Lhasa. There has been no pressure of this kind so far against the Consulate General at Shanghai or against our Embassy at Peking.

3. We have taken up the matter with the Chinese Mission here several times but the Chinese Charge d' Affaires here can hardly do anything to get the Chinese Government's policy regarding the Lhasa Consulate General modified.

4. I feel that we should not wait for further Chinese moves but take the initiative ourselves and close the Consulates-General at Lhasa and Shanghai and ask the Chinese to close their Consulate-General in Bombay and Calcutta. We will hold the staff of the Chinese Consulates here till the staff of our Consulate-General at Lhasa and Shanghai are allowed to leave China. This is necessary because the Chinese system of exit permits, etc. can impose a lot of hardship on our staff and the Chinese ought to know that reciprocal hardships will be imposed on their staff in India.

M.J. Desai

4.11.62

PM

[Note, 4 November 1962, by M. J. Desai, the Foreign Secretary, ends]

[Note, 4 November 1962, by Nehru, begins]

I agree with you that we shall have to take some such steps as you suggest. But I do not know if you have clearly told the Chinese Government about the treatment of our people in our Consulate-General at Lhasa. It might be worth while to send them a message stating clearly how our employees and

others have been treated there and how it is becoming impossible for them to function or even to have proper foodstuffs etc. There should be reciprocal treatment and we have put no difficulties in the way of the Chinese Consulates here. It is obviously not possible for our Mission to function in Lhasa if they have to face all these difficulties and obstructions. Some such message might be sent to them and then on receipt of their answer, we can take the initiative to close our Consulates at Lhasa and Shanghai and ask them to close theirs in Bombay and Calcutta.

J. Nehru
4.11.1962

FS

[Note, 4 November 1962, by Nehru, ends]

249. To Chou. En-lai⁴⁰

Thank you for your letter of 4th November.⁴¹ Our Charge d'Affaires in Peking to whom it was handed over sent us a copy by telegram. My colleagues and I have carefully considered the elaboration of the three proposals of the Chinese Government of October 24,⁴² given in your letter. Apart from the Chinese claims regarding the territorial boundary in various sectors of the India-China boundary, one fact stands out quite clearly. This is the basic fact that till the 8th September, 1962, Chinese forces had crossed the frontier between India and China in the Eastern sector as defined by India, that is, along the highest watershed in the region, in accordance with the Agreement of 1914. It was on 8th September 1962, that your forces crossed this frontier and threatened the Dhola frontier post of India. We took limited defensive measures to reinforce this post and at

⁴⁰ Letter to the Prime Minister of China 14 November 1962; White Paper, Vol. VIII, pp.10-17.

⁴¹ Appendix 39.

⁴² See appendix 26.

the same time made repeated approaches to the Chinese Government to withdraw their forces beyond the Thag La ridge which is the frontier in the region. Your forces not only did not withdraw to the position they occupied before 8th September, 1962, but, after some probing attacks, mounted a massive attack and are now in occupation of large areas of Indian territory in this region and also in various other frontier areas of NEFA. That the attack was pre-meditated and carefully planned is clear from the fact that this attack at the Thag La ridge frontier which commenced on the morning of the 20th October 1962, was not an isolated move; similar attacks against Indian defence posts started simultaneously along other parts not only of the eastern sector of the frontier, but also of the western sector of the frontier.

As I said in my letter of 27th October, ⁴³ I do not want to go into the history of the last five years and the forcible, unilateral alteration of the status quo of the boundary by the Chinese forces in the western sector, on which a mass of notes and memoranda have been exchanged between our two Governments. The events since 8th September, 1962, however, have completely shattered any hope that anyone could have entertained about settling India-China differences peacefully in accordance with normal international principles observed by all civilised governments. This invasion, coming after 12 years of constant and consistent endeavour on our part to maintain and develop friendly relations with China, can only point to one and only one conclusion, namely, that the Government of China have taken a deliberate cold-blooded decision, in total disregard of all principles, which govern normal neighbourly relations between sovereign governments, to enforce their alleged boundary claims by military invasion of India. It is this crisis of confidence which has to be dealt with. I must state frankly that we find no attempt either in the three proposals as elaborated now or in the other parts of your letter, to deal with this main problem created by the massive Chinese aggression on India which began on 8th September, 1962,

⁴³ Item 247.

namely, the complete loss of confidence in the bona fides of the professions for a peaceful settlement repeatedly made in public statements of the Government of China. On the other hand, your letter proceeds on the unilateral assumption that the line of actual control created by the latest Chinese invasion of India should be accepted as a part of the cease fire arrangements and implemented on the ground, the boundary differences being negotiated thereafter between the two Prime Ministers. In brief, China will keep what it has secured by this further invasion and is prepared to negotiate on the rest. India can never agree to this position.

The three proposals of the Chinese Government of October 24, 1962, have been examined carefully and in detail. The result of the examination is given in the memorandum that I am attaching to this letter. The memorandum speaks for itself.

You have mentioned in your letter that according to the Chinese proposals, the Chinese armed forces will have to withdraw by more than 20 kilometers from their present positions and that the fact that the Chinese Government have taken as its basis the 1959 "line of actual control" and not the present "line of actual control" between the armed forces of the two sides, is full proof that the Chinese side has not tried to force any unilateral demand on the Indian side on account of the advances gained in what you still choose to call "recent counter attacks in self-defence". What you call the 1959 "line of actual control" was no line but a series of positions of Chinese forces on Indian territory in Ladakh progressively established since 1957, which forcibly and unilaterally altered the status quo of the boundary. This was done even while assuring us since 1954 that China had no territorial claims against India. So far as the Central sector is concerned, the Chinese forces were always to the north of the Himalayan watershed ridge which is the traditional and customary boundary in this area.

The analysis given in the attached note will, however, show that even this 7th November, 1959 line of actual control is projected three years ahead to be identical with the line of actual control established by your forces since the massive attack on 20th October, 1962. Surely this must be clear to all

concerned. To advance a few hundred kilometres and then offer to withdraw 20 kilometres is, all anybody can see, hardly a constructive proposal based on mutual accommodation. Your present proposal in brief amounts in broad terms to this because India had been pressing China to remedy the forcible alteration of the status quo since 1957 in the Western sector, China has undertaken since 8th September, deliberately and in cold blood, a further massive aggression and occupied larger areas of Indian territory and is now making the magnanimous offer of retaining the gains of the earlier aggression plus such other gains as it can secure by negotiations from the latest aggression on the basis of the Chinese three point proposals. If this is not the assumption of the attitude of a victor, I do not know what else it can be. This is a demand to which India will never submit whatever the consequences and however long and hard the struggle may be. We cannot do less than this if we are going to maintain the principles we cherish, namely, peace, good neighbourliness and peaceful coexistence with all our neighbours including China. To do otherwise would mean mere existence at the mercy of an aggressive, arrogant and expansionist neighbour.

Despite the crisis of confidence created by the earlier Chinese aggression, we are, as I said in my letter of 27th October, prepared to consider entering into talks and discussions to deal with our differences and to re-establish good neighbourly relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence between our two countries, each following its own way of life, provided it was agreed that the status quo along the entire boundary as it prevailed before 8th September, 1962, should be restored. This is the minimum corrective action necessary. The damage to the very principles of good neighbourliness and peaceful coexistence done by the further aggression since 8th September, 1962, must be corrected before any other constructive step can be taken. You have referred to the peaceful friendly relations between our two countries till 1959 despite the differences on the boundary question and asked why we could not have these relations after 1959 despite the differences on the boundary question. The reason I feel should be clear to you. It was in January 1959 that you put forward a claim for 50,000 square

miles of Indian territory under the guise of a boundary dispute. This was not a small adjustment of the boundary here or there involving a few hundred square miles but a demand for surrender of large areas of Indian territory. You did not stop at this preposterous demand. Though we agreed to talks and discussions at various levels to examine the relevant historical, cartographic and other data on the subject, your forces continued to forcibly occupy substantial areas of Indian territory even while these talks and discussions were going on. This process continued throughout the subsequent years and, on 8th September 1962, your forces started the further aggression in the Eastern sector which had been quiet and peaceful all these twelve years except for the minor differences over Longju. In your letters as well as in the official note of your Government, there are references to the line of actual control as on 7th November 1959, as the basis of the three-point proposals. If the Chinese Government really mean what they say regarding the restoration of 7th November 1959 positions of their forces in all sectors of the boundary, their withdrawal to those positions and the restoration of the positions of the Indian forces as they were prior to 8th September 1962, would, by and large, meet the problem of disengagement as there will be enough distances between the position of the forces of the two sides to prevent any risk of a clash. To put it concretely, in the Eastern sector the Chinese forces will go back to the positions they held on 7th November 1959, that is, they will be on the other side of the boundary along the Himalayan watershed which they first crossed on 8th September 1962. In the Central sector the position will be the same, that is, they will be to the north of the highest watershed ridge. In the Western sector the Chinese forces will go back to the positions they held on 7th November 1959, as given in the attached note, that is, along the line connecting their Spanggur post, Khurnak Fort and Kongka La and then northwards to join the main Aksai Chin Road. The Indian forces will go back to the various defence posts they occupied in all the three sectors prior to 8th September 1962. This arrangement will secure not only adequate disengagement of forces of both sides but will not in any way prejudice

either the alignment of the customary and traditional boundary in the Western and the Central sectors as claimed by the two sides or the alignment of the Me Mahon line Boundary in the Eastern sector.

You have, Mr Prime Minister, referred in your letter to the appeal made by Asian-African countries. I agree that this appeal should evoke a constructive response. You must have seen in this connection the four-point suggestion made by the President of the UAR mentioned in the UAR Presidential communiqué of 31st October and my message to the President of the UAR dated 27th October.⁴⁴

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Memorandum

The implications of the three-point proposal of the Chinese Government presented on the 24th of October and further elaborated upon in Prime Minister Chou En-Lai's letter dated 4th November, 1962, are given below:

Western Sector: The line of actual control in November 1959 was no line but a series of positions of Chinese forces on Indian territory. These positions had been progressively established since 1957 by forcibly and unilaterally altering the traditional status quo of the boundary, even while the Government of China were assuring the Government of India that they had no territorial claims against India. In November 1959, Chinese posts in the Western sector were at Spanggur, Khurnak Fort, Kongka La and along the main Aksai Chin Road. Within three years i.e. by September, 1962, the Chinese had constructed a large network of military roads and posts, beginning with posts opposite Daulat Beg Oldhi in the north, along the Chip Chap river valley and across the Galwan river to the Pangong and Spanggur lake areas. At certain points the network of military posts was more than one hundred miles to the west of Chinese positions in 1959.

⁴⁴ See item 389 and appendix 56.

The Chinese three-point proposal, taken with its clarifications, is that, in the Western sector, both parties agree to respect the "line of actual control" between the two sides. In his clarificatory letter Premier Chou En-lai states that "the line of actual control" is basically still the line of actual control as existed between the Chinese and the Indian sides in November 1959." The normal deduction would be that this line of control would, therefore, be a line connecting Spanggur, Khurnak Fort, Kongka La and proceeding northwards to join the main Aksai Chin Road. However, Premier Chou En-lai's letter states that "in the Western and Middle Sectors it (the line of actual control) coincides in the main with the traditional customary line". In short, while referring to the line of control as it existed in 1959, the Chinese actually project it to the line they claimed in the meeting between the officials of the two sides in 1960 and the line they physically hold now since their massive attack which commenced in this region on 20th October, 1962. This line not only includes all the Chinese posts established in the three years since 1959, but also includes all the Indian posts in the territory that existed till 30th October 1962, and extends even farther westwards, thus taking in an additional 5000 to 6000 square miles since their 7th November 1959 position.

According to the Chinese proposal, after this "line of actual control" is determined, India would have to further withdraw yet another 20 kilometers inside territory accepted by the Chinese as undoubtedly Indian, while the Chinese withdrawal of 20 kilometres would be only 20 kilometres inside Indian territory claimed by them leaving the Chinese forces well over a hundred kilometres deep into territory belonging to India. The total effect of this would be that the entire network of Chinese aggressive posts which existed on 20th October 1962, and some more would remain intact poised for a further attack, while all Indian defence posts in Indian territory claimed by China will be eliminated and even posts in territory accepted as Indian including much key posts as Daulat Beg Oldhi, Chushul and Hanle would be dismantled and eliminated.

Middle Sector: In the middle sector, the suggestion that the "line of actual control" whether on 7th November 1959 or now, coincides only "in the main" with the traditional and customary boundary is absolutely without foundation. The Chinese Government have never had any authority south of the main Himalayan watershed ridge, which is the traditional boundary in this sector. Some Tibetan officials along with some Chinese troops did intrude into Barahoti on various occasions since 1954; and, in 1958, the two Governments agreed to withdraw their armed personnel from the locality. But Indian civilian personnel have throughout been functioning in the area. A conference held in 1958 to discuss the question made clear that the Chinese Government had not even precise knowledge of the area they were claiming.

Eastern Sector: In the Eastern sector the Chinese Government are willing to withdraw their troops to the north of the "line of actual control". This "line of actual control" has been clarified in Premier Chou En-lai's letter as coinciding "in the main" with the McMahon Line. The Chinese Government by this ambiguous statement indicate that there are portions of the "line of actual control" as envisaged by them which do not coincide with the McMahon Line. These divergences have not, however, that Chinese positions have always remained to the north of the highest Himalayan ridge in the Eastern sector of the India-China border and the alignment of the McMahon Line has never been questioned by China. The Chinese were nowhere in the vicinity of this watershed boundary either in November, 1959 or later till 8th September, 1962, when they started their aggression into Indian territory in this region.

Premier Chou En-lai has in his letter referred to the 1914 original map of the McMahon Line and the coordinates given in this map. The Agreement of 1914 only formalised what was the traditional and customary boundary in the area which lies along the highest Himalayan watershed ridges. The maps attached to the Agreement were of small scale of 1 inch to 8 miles. They were sketch maps and intended to be only illustrative. All that they

made clear was that the boundary ran along the main watershed ridges of the area. The parallels and meridians were shown only approximately in accordance with the progress achieved at that time in the sphere of scientific surveys. This is a common cartographic feature and the Chinese Government have themselves recognised this in Article 48 of their 1960 Treaty with Burma. If the maps and the co-ordinates given therein were taken literally it is impossible to explain the discrepancy between the existing distances and those given in the map between various villages in the area. Also Migyitun according to the maps is at latitude 28° 38' North while its actual position as ascertained by the latest surveys is much further north. Tulung La has been shown on the 1914 maps at 27° 47' N while its position on the ground is further north of this point. Strict adherence to the co-ordinates shown on the McMahon Line maps would result in advancing the Indian boundary in both the areas of Migyitun and Tulung La further north thereby including both these places inside Indian territory. In the area east of Tsari Sarpa, strict adherence to the coordinates of Lola in the McMahon Line maps would result in advancing the boundary of India into this area by at least 7 miles to the north. This would mean including at least 70 square miles of Tibetan territory within India. The Government of India recognising the principle underlying the McMahon Line agreement that the boundaries line along the highest watershed ridges actually confine their jurisdiction to the area south of this boundary and did not try to take over Tibetan territory beyond the highest watershed ridge on the basis of the inaccurate coordinates given in the 1914 maps. This must be known to the Chinese authorities and yet they ignore this and seek to use the inaccurate coordinates given in the maps when they are favourable to their fanciful claims made to support their latest aggression. The Chinese authorities cannot have it both ways. They cannot accept the highest watershed as the boundary in parts of the Eastern sector where it suits them though this is not consistent with the coordinates given in the 1914 maps and quote the coordinates in these very maps in their favour in other parts of the sector to make demands for territorial concessions from India.

The Chinese proposal envisages a further withdrawal of 20 kilometres on either side of the McMahon Line as understood by them. This would leave Chinese forces in command of the passes leading into India while Indian forces would be 20 kilometres to the south leaving the entire Indian frontier defenceless and at the mercy of any fresh invasion. The present Chinese invasion which commenced on 8th September, 1962, was known because there was a defence post near the border. If there are no border posts at or near the passes, Chinese aggression could recur without India knowing about it for quite some time.

The objective of the Chinese three-point proposal is to secure for the Chinese side guaranteed occupation of the Indian areas in the Western and Central sectors which they claim while they retain their right to negotiate, and negotiations failing, to enforce, whatever territorial adjustments they want in the Eastern sector.

Western Sector: India should not dispute on the ground, though it will be allowed to talk about its juridical claim, the Chinese occupation of 14,000 square miles of Indian territory including 2,000 square miles forcibly occupied since 20th October 1962. India has to agree not only to respect this so called line of actual control but must also dismantle and withdraw its defences in the region a further 20 kilometres into admittedly Indian territory involving withdrawal from points like Chushul etc.

Middle Sector: The Chinese claims must be fully satisfied so far as physical occupation is concerned.

Eastern Sector: The principles of the highest watershed, which is the boundary and which had been respected till 8th September, 1962, should be given up in favour of whatever interpretation the Government of China decide to put on the McMahon Line. There should be a further withdrawal of 20 kilometres. Thus, India must give up control of the passes in the highest watershed ridges in the areas, with no guarantee that the Chinese side will

not cross the actual line of control whichever it may be.

In short, the Chinese three-point proposal, despite the manner in which it is put forth, is a demand for surrender on terms which have to be accepted while the Chinese forces in great strength are occupying large areas of Indian territory which they have acquired since their further aggression which commenced on 8th September, 1962, and the massive attack which they started on 20th October, 1962.

250. To N. Sri Rama Reddy: Possible Action⁴⁵

November 15, 1962

My dear Sri Rama Reddy,

Your letter of the 15th November. I think you have somewhat misunderstood me. When I said that China could not defeat us ultimately nor could we defeat China, I meant this in the ultimate sense, that is to say, India surrendering to them and their dictating terms of peace or China surrendering to us and our practically dictating terms of peace to them. It is obvious that great countries do not surrender, even though they may suffer any number of defeats, until they are completely exhausted. We are not going to and cannot march into China proper and into Peking, nor do I think that China is capable of marching to Delhi.

This does not preclude our pushing them back from Indian soil completely. Indeed, I think we can do so and I hope this will be done, though it may take a little time. Nor do I mean that peace efforts are futile. What I said was that their peace offensives at present are traps for us; but peace always comes after the bloodiest war and it may well be that the pressures on China, partly due to our efforts and partly to world conditions may be such that they retire completely from our territory.

As for the nuclear bomb, it is a possibility that the Chinese may have a test

⁴⁵ Letter to Rajya Sabha MP, Congress; address: 122 South Avenue, New Delhi.

in a year or two.⁴⁶ That does not mean that they can use it. They will require another several years to be in a position to use it. I do not think there is the slightest chance of such a bomb being used against India, apart from the time element. The use of such a bomb would involve all kinds of consequences which should be very serious for China.

What you suggest we should try to do in a year or two is neither feasible nor desirable except in so far as we try to drive out the Chinese from Indian soil completely. Of course, much can be done to weaken China's position in other ways. Much is happening indeed and is likely to happen to that end.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

251. To Lal Bahadur Shastri: Chinese Propaganda in Dehra Dun⁴⁷

November 16, 1962

My dear Lal Bahadur,

G.S. Pathak⁴⁸ has sent me the enclosed paper. This has been issued apparently by the Chinese Embassy. Pathak says it was being distributed among the workers at Dehra Dun.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

252. In the Rajya Sabha: Chinese Cease Fire Announcement⁴⁹

⁴⁶ China's first test was on 16 October 1964.

⁴⁷ Letter to the Home Minister. MHA, File No. 4/34/62-Poll (I), p. 1/c.

⁴⁸ (1896-1982); Rajya Sabha MP, Congress.

⁴⁹ Statement on Chinese Cease fire Announcement, Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol. XLI, Nos. 9-21, 20 November to 6 December 1962, pp. 1969-1973. See also notes in Announcement of Chinese Cease fire in item 253.

The Prime Minister (Jawaharlal Nehru): Mr Chairman, Sir, in view of certain developments that have taken place in the last few hours, I would like to make a brief statement to the House.

The Government of the People's Republic of China, it appears through radio broadcasts, has announced that they will have a ceasefire from midnight of the 21-22 November, and will start withdrawing their forces from the positions they occupy, from the 1st December. This is a unilateral announcement. We have thus far received no official confirmation of it. As soon as we receive any official message from the Chinese Government, we shall give it full consideration. Till then I would not like to express any opinion in regard to the Chinese proposals.

Our position in regard to any negotiations continues to be what we have previously stated, that is, that the position as it existed prior to September 8, 1962, shall be restored.

We shall continue our efforts to obtain aid from friendly countries and strengthen our country's defences and its economic potential. We would like to express again our gratitude to the many friendly countries who have offered us aid and sympathy and support during the time of distress. We have made it clear previously and we repeat it, that we have no desire for any territorial expansion in any direction and our aim is to live in peace and amity with our neighbours.

A.B. Vajpayee⁵⁰ (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, in view of the Chinese offer, which could well be a deceptive offer, made to confuse world opinion, and lull India again into complacency, may I suggest that the decision to adjourn the present session of Parliament of the 23rd of this month be reversed, and that Parliament should be constantly in session till this new peace offensive is dealt with? Secondly, before arriving at a final decision with regard to the latest offer, may I submit that the Government should consult and should have exchange of views with

⁵⁰ Jana Sangh.

all sections of public opinion so that the decision may be a national decision as such?

An Hon. Member: That will be a national decision.

Ganga Sharan Sinha⁵¹ (Bihar): While associating myself with what my hon. Friend here has said just now, I would like to say that some steps should be taken to see that this offer of the Chinese, about a cease fire does not create any lull or any relaxation in our efforts, either in the Government's efforts or in the public mind. Special efforts should be made for that and the necessary steps should be taken, because everybody is not in Delhi. We in Parliament are sitting before the Prime Minister and know, but many people outside may have an entirely different impression. So, we should take special steps to let the country know what the Government is thinking and what the Prime Minister has said just now. This must be known to everybody in the land. Secondly, so far as our final decision is concerned, I would request the Prime Minister that before a final decision is taken, Parliament should be taken into confidence. At the same time, we would request him that in making a final decision, I would personally like—and I think all hon. Members also would like—that those who have come to our aid in hour of need should also be taken into confidence and I do hope our Prime Minister will keep these things in view.

I would also request the Prime Minister to continue this session of the Parliament so that it may keep up the morale of the country and everything will be much more sober and it will be useful from the point of view of the safety and solidarity of the country. Therefore, I suggest that this session of the Parliament should continue.

⁵¹ Independent.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I have already stated, Sir, that I do not propose at this stage to give any full reaction to the Chinese proposals. We have not received them officially, not even unofficially, but long statements issued by the Chinese Government have been heard on the radio. They require full consideration, of course, before we can have a full picture. I do not know how many hon. Members have had the opportunity to listen to those long, long statements. And in a matter of this kind, no government worth its name should without consideration come to a decision.

Now, that decision will have to be on the lines that we have always stated and they have been recently discussed in this House. The general principles are decided by Parliament and on them the Government functions. The hon. Member has said that we should, before we do what we do, have some kind of a public debate. This is a very remarkable suggestion which will be quite unique in diplomatic history. In a matter of this kind, principles are laid down, but we cannot consider the notes that we send or receive in this public or semi-public way. It would be very unusual and possibly not very profitable.

As for the hon. Member's suggestion that we should continue our efforts, even in the statement I made just now, I said that we propose to do it that we shall continue our efforts to obtain aid from friendly countries and strengthen our country's defences and the economic potential of this country. All that we propose to do fully.

The hon. Member also said something about consulting other countries. We are in close touch with many of our friends in other countries and we shall continue to remain in close touch. We do not propose to consult them about every decision we arrive at, every letter or note that we may send to another foreign country. But we are in close touch and we shall continue to be in close touch with them.

Ganga Sharan Sinha: I did not mean that they should be consulted on every one of our letters and notes or on every matter. But in coming to a final conclusion they should be taken into confidence and we should consult

them.

Jawaharlal Nehru: There is one thing more. As for the suggestion that this House, that Parliament should continue to sit, that is entirely for the House and for you, Sir, to determine. But I would point out that it is not a question of two or three days' extra sitting, because we may come to a provisional conclusion and it may be finalised later on, after seeing what they do. They themselves say that they will withdraw and begin withdrawing on the 1st December. I do not know whether they are going to give effect to that or in what manner they are going to give effect to it. So, it may be necessary for us to see that. Apart from any provisional conclusions that we may arrive at after considering their proposals fully, it may be necessary for us to watch what they do. What I mean to say is that this is going to be not a thing which could be decided in two or three days. It may take a much longer period and in considering whether this House should continue to sit or not, that should be kept in mind.

253. In the Lok Sabha: Chinese Cease Fire Announcement⁵²

Jawaharlal Nehru: Sir, I should like to make a brief statement in regard to certain developments that have taken place.

The Government of the People's Republic of China, it appears from Radio broadcasts, has announced that they will have ceasefire from midnight of 21/22 November and will start withdrawing their forces from the positions they occupied from the 1st December. This is a unilateral announcement. We have thus far received no official confirmation of it. As soon as we receive any official message from the Chinese Government, we shall give it full consideration. Till then I would not like to express any opinion in regard to the Chinese proposals. Our position in regard to any negotiations

⁵² Statement on Chinese Cease fire, Lok Sabha Debates, Third Series, Vol. X, November 21 to December 4, 1962, pp. 2689-90, 2700-02.

continues to be what we have previously stated, that is, that the position as it existed prior to September 8, 1962 shall be restored. We shall continue our efforts to obtain aid from friendly countries and strengthen our country's defences and its economic potential.⁵³

We should like to express again our gratitude to the many friendly countries who have offered us aid and sympathy and support during the time of our distress.

We have made it clear previous and we repeat that we have no desire for any territorial expansion in any direction and our aim is to leave in peace and amity with our neighbours.

[Omitted: exchanges on procedure]

Jawaharlal Nehru: In the little statement that I made a little while ago, I have stated that we shall consider any communication from the Chinese Government carefully and then express an opinion about it. I have not gone into it and there is much that can be said in regard to it. Other hon. Members have given their first reactions and I have listened to them. But in a matter of this kind or any serious kind, Government has to think carefully all aspects of it and then form an opinion and give effect to it. I do not wish to say more. There is only one matter the hon. Member Shri Kamath talked about my broadcast the other day as if there has been any change in my submission to this House here or broadcast anywhere. We said some time ago, after careful thought that the position prior to the 8th September should be restored; to that we have stuck all along; to that we stick even now...

⁵³ "On 21 October 1962, 00:00 hours Peking time, Peking Radio announced that from 00:00 hours 22 November 1962, the Chinese frontier guards would cease fire all along the Sino-Indian border. From 1 December 1962, the Frontier guards would withdraw 20 kilometres behind the 1959 Line of Actual Control." Peking Review, vols. 47 and 48, 30 November 1962, p.5. See also appendix 62.

Priya Gupta⁵⁴: 8th September? People of India do not want that. In the main Resolution they hold Prime Minister never said so...

Speaker: Order, order.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am merely stating what our position has been in regard to this matter and we do not shift it about every 24 hours. I think it is a good position and strong position and, as I have said before, we do not propose to consider negotiations till that position is restored. Negotiations themselves will be in various stages and when it comes the first thing will be how to create the conditions which will enable negotiations (Interruptions).

Priya Gupta: It has cost us. There cannot be negotiations at the cost of our country's prestige and honours.

[Omitted: Exchanges on procedure]

Jawaharlal Nehru: A suggestion has been made by one or two hon. Members that before we communicate and reply to the Chinese Government we should have it discussed here. I am afraid this is a very novel procedure. General principles are discussed here and we are guided by whatever the House may decide. But to discuss these communications between one Government and another would be a very extraordinary thing; and it is a very undesirable and harmful thing. We cannot carry on communications with Governments in that way.

Fourthly, an hon. Member has suggested that Parliament may be prolonged. That is entirely for you and the House to decide. It is not for me to say. But I would suggest this, we have not only to consider carefully any communication that comes to us from the Chinese Government, but also to find out and watch how they are giving effect to it before we can form an

⁵⁴ PSP, from Katihar, Bihar.

opinion. Even according to them—apart from the ceasefire which will be from tonight onwards—they will start withdrawing on the 1st December, and therefore, in order to watch what they do, it will involve some little time. It is not a question of extension by a few days, of Parliament. That is all I wish to submit.

Hari Vishnu Kamath⁵⁵: I crave your pardon, Sir. The resolution that the House adopted the other day made no reference to the 8th September line. That is all that I want to say.

254. In the Lok Sabha: Cease fire⁵⁶

Hari Vishnu Kamath⁵⁷ (Hoshangabad): Before you proceed, Sir, may I appeal to you to request the Prime Minister to make a brief statement on the war situation now, particularly with reference to that part of the Chinese Government's announcement that they would cease fire or would have ceased fire last midnight, midnight of 21st-22nd. We want to know whether there is any information available here in Delhi, in the External Affairs Ministry or not.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs and the Minister of Atomic Energy (Jawaharlal Nehru): Such information as we have got is to the effect that there has been no firing since last night.

Hari Vishnu Kamath: Midnight?

Jawaharlal Nehru: There has been no firing—midnight or before that.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ PSP, from Hoshangabad.

⁵⁶ Question Session, Lok Sabha Debates, Third Series, Vol. X, November 21 to December 4, 1962, pp. 2932-34.

⁵⁷ PSP.

⁵⁸ See appendix 64.

Hem Barua⁵⁹ (Gauhati): May I know the exact position where the Chinese troops are now located so far as NEFA is concerned? Are they at the Foothills now or have they crossed Foothills? I want to know the exact location of Chinese at present.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not think they are at the Foothills; they are some way beyond that.

Hem Barua: There is a place called Foothills.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I know. They are not there.

255. For the National Broadcasting Company⁶⁰

No Non-Alignment vis-a-vis China

Talks to be backed by Strength: PM

New York, Dec. 5 — Prime Minister Nehru has declared in a television interview:

"There is no non-alignment vis-a-vis China." The filmed interview, recorded earlier in New Delhi was broadcast by NBC over its national network last night.

Questioned on the future of non-alignment, the Prime Minister said he still thought non-alignment a good policy for India, but it was true that Chinese aggression had weakened the idea in the minds of some countries.

Moreover, non-alignment or Panch Sheel could not stand in the air. He added: "There is no non-alignment vis-a-vis China; there is no Panch Sheel vis-a-vis China. In spite of their loud talk, they broke it up." Pandit Nehru

⁵⁹ PSP

⁶⁰ Report of interview, reproduced from the National Herald, 6 December 1962, p.1. The interview was recorded on 27 November at 7 p.m. at the Prime Minister's House. NMML, Engagement Diary.

said whatever happened (even if the Chinese withdrew to the positions prior to September 8 and negotiations began) India's military preparations would continue.

"We have had rather bad shocks, and we do not propose to be careless or somnolent about matters. We shall continue our military preparations."

He expressed confidence that ultimately the Indian Army would drive them out from the NEFA area and very considerable portion of Ladakh—I cannot say the whole of Ladakh, because although we like to and try to ... long before that stage arises, we may have conditions favourable to us for talks with them."

Talks backed by Strength

Earlier, the Prime Minister said that even if India had to negotiate with China the "negotiations must be backed by strength and we have to build up our strength for that purpose; and we propose to do so." The Prime Minister said India had not yet thought of accepting American military advisory groups for training and other activities. "If the necessity arises, we shall take advisers", he added. He said he did not think any political considerations would come in, specially in respect of small advisory groups for training purposes, particularly of specialty weapons. It might be somewhat different if large numbers of people come.

Issue to UN

Asked about taking the Sino-Indian conflict to the United Nations, Pandit Nehru said: "We have not taken it. That does not mean we shall never take it."

China, Pandit Nehru said, was now making tremendous efforts by diplomatic contacts and publicity, which was not truthful, to influence Afro-Asian countries. However, India was getting tremendous sympathy and support from most of these countries. In the beginning, to some extent they hesitated to express their opinion because many of them wanted to mediate but later, realising what was happening, they have been clear in

expressing sympathy to India, he added.

Soviet Attitude

On the attitude of the Soviet Union, the Prime Minister said that while the Russians had not done anything in a demonstrative way yet. It was a fact that the Russians were very friendly to India. Apart from the help they had given in building a steel plant, etc., there was something deeper he said. He said that even in the present Sino-Indian crisis, during the last two or three years when the controversy grew, they refused to take the Chinese side, though pressed.

Answering further questions of the correspondent, Pandit Nehru said Pravda's first article had certainly disappointed India somewhat. But the later version was somewhat different. "Apparently they had pulled themselves for whatever reason they thought proper".

At present the Soviets were laying stress chiefly on "somehow or other there should begin negotiations", Pandit Nehru said.

Pandit Nehru said he did not expect "very much more" help from Russia, although the Soviet Union had been consistently friendly for the past several years. PTI and Reuter.

US Aid to Pak⁶¹

Asked about this earlier criticism of the United States military aid to Pakistan and the latter's current criticism of the US aid to India, Mr Nehru said he thought he was justified about past criticism, and "the present situation has partly proved my case."

He said American military aid was given to Pakistan for a particular purpose and not to be used against India. "Instead of that purpose their whole outlook appears to have changed."

Mr Nehru added: "Now it is a most extra ordinary situation that they are

⁶¹ This portion of the same interview has been reproduced from a report in The Hindu, 7 December 1962, p.1.

praising Communist China and blaming us and the United States for helping us with equipment. It is really quite extra ordinary. In a way they have fallen into the Chinese trap."

"I do not know what the Chinese have promised them. There are bizarre rumours, as you know, that they have been promised by the Chinese chunks of India in the east."

He Said, "Surely it is obvious any threat from outside to us is bound to be a threat to them."

(b) CHINESE INVASION: Explanation and Strategy

256. To Chief Ministers⁶²

October 21, 1962

My dear Chief Minister,

The last two or three days have brought very disturbing news about the situation on our frontiers. As I write to you, we have not yet received any accurate information of this situation. But it is clear that the Chinese forces have attacked us all along the frontier in the NEFA and Ladakh in great numbers and have dislodged positions that our forces had taken up at various places. They have been advancing. We do not yet know what our casualties or the Chinese casualties have been. But one of our helicopters used for removal of casualties has been shot down, and another is missing. In the Ladakh sector, one of our transport planes was shot at by the Chinese, but managed to return safely to its base.

The Chinese are issuing statement after statement trying to show that it was the Indian forces that organised a large scale attack on them in all the sectors and that they acted only in defense. It is amazing to what lengths the Chinese are going in disseminating utterly false accounts. In view of the overwhelming forces that the Chinese had with them, accompanied by

⁶² Letter to all Chief Ministers and the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

artillery, mountain guns and automatics, we could not afford to carry out any large scale attack. Our instructions were to defend our line to the best of our ability.

As a matter of fact, the Chinese Government issued a statement at about 7 a.m. (Peking time) on the 20th October stating that the Indian forces had attacked them in large numbers.⁶³ It was only some time after this that the major attack of the Chinese started. It has become a habit for the Chinese to blame others for what they propose to do.

Anyhow, the fact remains that Chinese have attacked us with overwhelming strength and fire power, and this has led to a grave setback to our forces in NEFA where they have captured some of our posts and driven back our forces. In the Ladakh sector, some of our minor posts have also been captured by them. The position is a fluid one, rather to our disadvantage. We are taking all possible steps to check this Chinese advance and have sent additional forces there. It is clear that the situation that has arisen is one of gravity and danger to India and its integrity.

It would be foolish for me to prophesy what further developments may take place in the near future. But about one thing we are certain: that we must throw all our strength and determination in resisting this blatant attack and aggression on India by the Chinese. We propose to do so. At the same time it must be realised that the situation before us is a difficult one and that it is likely to continue for a long time. Indeed, we must be prepared for a lengthy struggle which will affect India in various ways, even apart from the purely military aspect of it.

We have not declared war against China and we do not intend doing so at present or in the foreseeable future. Any such declaration of war is not beneficial to us in any way and would lead to far-reaching consequences. But the fact is that we are in military conflict with the Chinese, and all the consequences of this conflict will be borne by us. We have thus to prepare

⁶³ See "Note of the Chinese Government, 20 October 1962", White Paper, Vol.VII, pp. 123-124.

ourselves in every way not only to carry on this conflict to its successful conclusion, but also to face the other consequences that may arise from it. Whatever happens, we cannot surrender to the Chinese aggression or bow down to it. However long a time it may take us, we shall fight with all our strength against this outrageous aggression on our territory.

The Chinese go on making statements which are so manifestly false that it is difficult to keep pace with this distortion of facts. They say that we have committed aggression on their territory, that our military aircraft are being used in the fighting, and that they had not crossed the McMahon Line which now, according to them, is not the high Himalayan watershed that we claim, but somewhat further south.⁶⁴ It is apparently their habit to consider every place that they have occupied by aggression as their territory. The fact is that neither our soldiers nor our planes have gone into Chinese territory or air space. Further, that no military aircraft has been used in these border encounters. We have used transport planes and helicopters to drop supplies or to remove casualties.

As for the so called McMahon Line, it is clearly stated in the old Treaty that the high ridge of the watershed of the Himalayas is the international frontier. The map attached to the Treaty is on a very small scale, and the line drawn covers a few miles in that scale. It is quite absurd to say that, in spite of the clear definition in the Treaty, the actual frontier is further south of it because the Line covers a few miles in a small scale map.

Apart from this, we have been long in possession of this area and the Treaty itself is nearly 50 years old.

But I need not go into these arguments because you know them and do not require to be convinced. The position now is that a full scale invasion by Chinese forces is taking place both in the eastern border and the northern, and we have to face it, whatever ups and downs there may be in the struggle.

⁶⁴ See Notes of Chinese Government of 11 and 17 October 1962; White Paper, Vol. VII, pp.141, 143.

It is a tragedy that we, who have stood for peace everywhere, should be attacked in this way and be compelled to resist attack by arms. But there is no help for it. No self respecting nation can tolerate this kind of aggression, and we will certainly not do so. I cannot say how long it may take us to clear our territory from the aggressors. However long that may be, we have to work to that and with resolution and the determination to achieve our objective.

It is not enough for us to say that and to shout slogans. We have to prepare for it and throw in all our strength and resources. We have been too long used to a relatively quiet and peaceful life and are not accustomed to meet such situations with speed. Even in the last two great wars, India did not come into the picture much, although our soldiers took part in them. We have now to face a dangerous crisis, such as we have not had since independence. Our procedures are slow moving. These have to be vitalised and speeded up. No military struggle can be carried on with slow civil procedures. We shall have to spend much money in procuring supplies and in adding to our forces.

We shall have to think of the economic aspect of all this and to introduce measures to control any untoward development. I am writing to you now in barest outline of the problem that faces us and asking you to make your colleagues and others realise the significance of it. We have to concentrate on this great struggle which threatens our integrity and freedom.

Everything else will have to take second place. This is a matter which cannot be dealt with on party lines. It is a supreme national issue, and every person who is an Indian must realise his duty in this crisis. We must, therefore, concentrate on building up this unity to face this invasion of India and try to put aside, as far as we can, controversial matters. We have to create a sensation all over India that we stand together to oppose this invasion and shall continue to do so till we have freed India from the aggressor. This may be a long process. But, however long it may be and whatever temporary reverses we may suffer from, we must be determined to win.

We have felt no ill-will against the Chinese people. In international matters,

we have often helped the Chinese Government. It has been a matter of great grief to me that, in spite of the friendly attitude to them, the Chinese Government should have paid us back by aggression and calumny. The Chinese newspapers are full of the utmost vituperation, against India and the Government of India.⁶⁵

I do not want even now for us to indulge in calumny and vituperation, or to encourage hatred against a people. We must view the situation calmly and without panic or hysteria. But that calmness must be accompanied by a firm determination. China is a great and powerful country with enormous resources. But India is no weak country to be frightened by threats and military might. We shall build up our strength, both military and economic, to win this battle of Indian freedom. We shall always be willing to negotiate a peace, but that can only be on conditions that aggression is vacated. We can never submit or surrender to aggression. That has not been our way, and that will not be our way in the future.

We shall have to take measures in regard to prices going up etc. I would like you to think about these matters also and be wide awake so that no untoward happening takes place. There must, of course, be no panicky reaction to events. That is a sign of weakness.

Above all, I would beg of you to avoid controversial issues and to concentrate on the unity of the nation and our united resolve to meet this menace together and with full strength. I am sure that all parties will feel this way. It is always to be stressed that this is a national issue demanding the service of every Indian, to whatever group or party he might belong.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

⁶⁵ Nehru is reacting in particular to an editorial in Renmin Ribao, 14 October 1962, entitled, "Mr Nehru, It is High Time for you to pull back from the Brink of the Precipice", reproduced in Peking Review, Vol.V, No.42, 19 October 1962, p.6.

257. Talk with PSP Leaders⁶⁶

Chinese will be Repulsed

No Need for Panic, Says PM

New Delhi, Oct. 21 - Prime Minister Nehru today told two PSP members of Parliament, Mr H.V. Kamath and Mr Hem Barua, that recent "reverses", on the northern borders, should in no way cause alarm or panic because the army would take action to repulse the Chinese and regain the lost position.

Mr Kamath and Mr Barua met the Prime Minister here this morning. Mr Kamath and Mr Barua told pressmen that while Pandit Nehru admitted that the armed forces had suffered certain reverses, he (Pandit Nehru) was of the view that the conflict with China "will probably be a long drawn affair."

The PSP leaders said that Pandit Nehru explained the present position in NEFA and Ladakh and said that the Chinese had penetrated three to four miles inside NEFA.

Summoning of Parliament

The PSP leaders had suggested to Pandit Nehru that as the country was "practically at war though undeclared", it was very necessary that Parliament should be summoned at the earliest, not later than November 5. They said they got the impression that Pandit Nehru was seriously considering such a step. The Prime Minister had already given such an indication in his letter to Mr Kamath dated September 28.⁶⁷

Asked whether in the context of an undeclared war, severance of diplomatic relations with China was necessary or desirable, Pandit Nehru told the two leaders that the matter would have to be carefully considered in the light of the consequences that might possibly ensue from such a step.

The matter should therefore be left to the Government to judge and decide keeping in mind the various aspects of the questions, Pandit Nehru was said

⁶⁶ Report, reproduced from the National Herald, Oct 22, 1962, p. 1.

⁶⁷ See SWJN/SS/78/ item 420.

to have added.

On the situation on the border Pandit Nehru was reported to have said that China was at present in a position to bring up troops and supplies in lorries and trucks by road up to two to three miles of the fighting line while India had to depend on airdropping. India had however built and was building roads in that region and he was confident that they would soon overcome the present difficulties.

Danger to Bhutan

Asked whether there was any danger of attack on Bhutan, Pandit Nehru told the PSP leaders, that Chinese troops were only fifteen miles from Bhutan border but he could not say what their intentions were.

Replying to a question Pandit Nehru is reported to have remarked that perhaps the Chinese were concentrating on NEFA area with a view to strengthening their bargaining position in Ladakh.

Mr Kamath and Mr Barua also asked the Prime Minister whether without any shift in the policy pursued so far in acquiring military equipment the acceptance of any offer of aid without strings would be improper or undesirable.

Pandit Nehru told them that India was at present purchasing arms from different countries and there was no need to consider the matter from any other angle.

Mr Kamath and Mr Barua pointed out that China was often ahead of India in her news broadcasts over Peking Radio.

Pandit Nehru replied that the Chinese technique was to serve the news of an incident even before it took place and cited as an example the latest happenings in NEFA.⁶⁸

Further, Pandit Nehru added, the Chinese had the habit of ascribing their sins to India in order to provide a cover for their own actions.

⁶⁸ The reference is to the 20th October morning attack news by BBC before the attack actually took place. The Times of India 23 October 1962, p.1, col.6.

Pandit Nehru was said to have agreed with the view expressed by the PSP leaders that the Plan⁶⁹ might have to be pruned in order to raise more resources for defence purposes.

People's Committees

The PSP leaders suggested that people's committees should be set up at the state and if possible, at the district levels, to make the people aware of the danger and mobilise them both psychologically and physically, cooperation of all the parties should be sought in the task. The PSP offered its full cooperation in this.

They drew Pandit Nehru's attention to the latest resolution of the Communist Party on the border situation and suggested that it should be "watched". Pandit Nehru said that the party Chairman, Mr Dange,⁷⁰ had tried to explain the resolution, though it was only one side of it.⁷¹

258. In New Delhi: Interview to BBC⁷²

Prime Minister Nehru said, in a BBC television interview broadcast here tonight, that India would not ask for Western military aid in her frontier conflict with Peoples, China. But, he added, India would buy military material from the West.

Mr Nehru said that the present conflict was most serious—it amounted to a war, even though there has been no declaration of war.

The Indian Defence Minister, Mr Krishna Menon, also interviewed, described the Chinese actions on the frontier as total aggression against India.

The interview with Mr Nehru and Mr Menon was recorded in New Delhi last

⁶⁹ The Third Five Year Plan.

⁷⁰ S.A. Dange became Chairman of CPI after Ajay Ghose's death in January 1962.

⁷¹ While Dange said in a press conference that "the Chinese have violated the McMahon line," the General Secretary, E.M.S. Namboodripad said it was a border dispute which should have a negotiated settlement in his answer. Reported in the Times of India, 18 October 1962; p.1, col.6.

⁷² Report of interview of 21 October 1962. Reproduced from The Hindu, 24 October 1962.

night. Asked what the attitude of the Communist Powers towards the Sino-Indian conflict was likely to be, Mr Nehru replied, "So far they have been silent, but we hope that they will have an understanding of our position."

Mr Nehru said he thought the conflict would be a long-drawn out one. The fact that the Chinese had announced the fighting even before it started, he stressed, showed that their action was premeditated and prepared.⁷³ He added that the present situation was the result of the peculiar Chinese habit of saying one thing and meaning something different. As long as that continued, one never knew where one stood with China.

Asked how he explained the outward calm in the Indian capital, Mr Nehru replied: "One gets angry and excited at times, but the situation has become so serious that we have got to be calm."

Mr Menon was asked whether India intended to refer the conflict to the United Nations. He replied that he would not say what would be done in the future, but one factor to consider was that the big powers had kept China out of the UN and referring the border conflict to the UN now would be deciding the question.⁷⁴

Asked if India's position was properly understood in the Western countries, Mr Menon said that one got the impression from press reports there that it was India which had taken on something it could not cope with. What was not realised, he declared, was that it was China which had entered Indian territory by force and continued to occupy it, and India was trying to regain its territory.

⁷³ A note to the Indian Embassy by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Peking, dated 20 October 1962, stated that "At 7 o'clock (Peking time) in the morning of 20th October the aggressive Indian forces ...launched massive attacks against the Chinese frontier guards all along the Keichilang river and in the Khinzemane area." White Paper, Vol.VIII, p.123.This was 4.30 a.m. IST. The Times of India commented that "it was astonishing that at 4.30 a.m. IST, the BBC broadcast the alleged attack basing its message on a Peking Radio report which had obviously been issued before 4.30 a.m. IST." Which means that "the aggressor, aware of its planned offensive could only have announced the attack half an hour before it was actually made." 23 October 1962, p.1, col.6.

⁷⁴ See item 246.

259. Broadcast to the Nation⁷⁵

[Translation begins:

Comrades, friends and fellow countrymen,

I am speaking to you on the radio after a long interval. I feel, however, that I must speak to you about the grave situation that has arisen on our frontiers because of continuing and unabashed aggression by the Chinese forces. A situation has arisen which calls upon all of us to meet it effectively. We are men and women of peace in this country, conditioned to the ways of peace. We are unused to the necessities of war. Because of this we endeavoured to follow a policy of peace even when aggression took place on our territory in Ladakh five years ago. We explored avenues for an honourable settlement by peaceful methods. That was our policy all over the world and we tried to apply it even in our own country.

We know the horrors of war in this age today and we have done our utmost to prevent war from engulfing the world. But all our efforts have been in vain in so far as our own frontiers are concerned, where a powerful and unscrupulous opponent, not caring for peace or peaceful methods, has not only threatened us but even carried these threats into action. The time has, therefore, come for us to realise fully this menace that threatens the freedom of our people and the independence of our country. I say so even though I realise that no power can ultimately imperil the freedom we have won with so much sacrifice and cost to our people after long ages of foreign domination. But to conserve that freedom and integrity of our territory we must gird up our loins and face this great menace that has come to us since we became independent. I have no doubt in my mind that we shall succeed. Everything else is secondary to the freedom of our people, and of our motherland and if necessary, everything else has to be sacrificed in this

⁷⁵ Speech, 22 October 1962, NMML, AIR Tapes T.S. No. 8805, NM No. 1707.

great crisis.

I do not propose to give you the long history of continued aggression by the Chinese during the last five years, and how they have tried to justify it by speeches and arguments and the repeated assertion of untruths and a campaign of calumny and vituperation against our country. Perhaps there are not many instances in history, where one country, that is, India, has gone out of her way to be friendly and cooperative with the Chinese Government and people and to plead their cause in the comity of nations and then for the Chinese Government to return evil for good and even go to the extent of committing aggression and invade our sacred land. No self respecting country and certainly, not India, with her love for freedom can submit to this whatever the consequences may be. There have been five years of continuous aggression on the Ladakh frontier. Our other frontier at NEFA remained largely free from this aggression. Just when we were discussing ways and means of reducing tension and there was even some chance of the representatives of the two countries meeting to consider this matter, a new and fresh aggression took place on the NEFA border. This began on the 8th of September, last. This was a curious way of lessening tension. It is typical of the way the Chinese Government have treated us. Our border with China in the NEFA region is well-known and well established from ages past. It is sometimes called the McMahon Line, but this line which separated India from Tibet was the high ridge which divide the watershed. This has been acknowledged as the border by history, tradition and treaties long before it was called the McMahon Line. The Chinese have in many ways acknowledged it as the border, even though they have called the McMahon Line illegal. The Chinese laid claim in their maps to a large part of the NEFA which has been under our administration for a long time. The present Chinese regime was established about twelve years ago. Before that the Tibetans did not challenge it. Even the maps the Chinese produced were acknowledged by them repeatedly to be old and out-of-date maps which had little relevance today. Yet, on this peaceful border where no trouble of fighting had occurred for a long time, they committed aggression and this

also in large numbers and after vast preparations for a major attack. I am grieved at the set-back to our troops that have occurred on this frontier and the reverses we have had. They were overwhelmed by vast numbers and by bigger artillery, mountain guns and heavy mortars which the Chinese forces have brought with them. I should like to pay a tribute to our officers and men who face these overwhelming numbers with courage. There may be some more reverses in those areas. But one thing is certain that the final result of this conflict will be in our favour. It cannot be otherwise when a nation like India fights for her freedom and the integrity of the country. We have to meet a powerful and unscrupulous opponent. We have, therefore, to build up our strength and power to face this situation adequately and with confidence. The conflict may continue for long. We must prepare ourselves for it mentally and otherwise. We must have faith in ourselves and I am certain that faith and our preparations will triumph. No other result is conceivable. Let there be this faith, the focused determination to free our country from the aggressor.

What then are we to do about it? We must steel our wills and direct the nation's energy and resources to this one end. We must change our procedures from slow moving methods of peace time to those that produce results quickly. We must build up our military strength by all means at our disposal. But military strength is not by itself enough. It has to be supported fully by the industry and the farmers of the country and by increasing our production in every way that is necessary for us. I would appeal to all our workers not to indulge in strikes or in any other way which comes in the way of increasing production. That production has to be not only in the factory but in the field. No anti-national or anti-social activities can be tolerated when the nation is in peril. We shall have to carry a heavy burden together, whatever our vocations may be. The price of freedom will have to be paid in full measure and no price is too great for the freedom of our people and of our motherland. I earnestly trust and I believe that all parties and groups in the country will unite in this great enterprise and put aside their controversies and arguments which have no place today and put forth a

solid, united front before all those who seek to endanger our freedom and integrity. The burden on us is going to be great. We must add greatly to our savings by the purchase of bonds, to help finance production and meet the increasing cost of national defence. We must prevent any rise in prices and we must realise that those who seek to profit at a time of national calamity are anti-national and injure the nation.

We are in the middle of our Third Five Year Plan. There can be no question of our giving up this Plan or reducing any important element of it. We may adapt it to the new requirements here and there. But essentially the major projects of the Plan must be pursued and implemented. Because it is in that way that we shall strengthen our country not only in the present crisis but in the years to come. There are many other things that our people can do and I hope to communicate some of them at a later stage. But the principal thing is for us to devote ourselves to forge the national will to freedom and to work hard to that end. There is no time limit to this. We shall carry the struggle as long as we do not win because we cannot submit to the aggression or the domination of others. We must avoid any panic because that is bad at any time and there is no reason for it.

We have behind us the strength of a united nation. Let us rejoice and apply it to the major tasks at hand today, that is, preserving our complete freedom and integrity and the removal of all these who commit aggression on India's sacred territory. Let us face this crisis not lightheartedly but with seriousness and with a stout heart and with firm faith in the rightness of our struggle and confidence in its outcome.

Do not believe in rumours, do not listen to those who have faint hearts. This is a time of trial and testing for all of us and we have to steel ourselves to the task. Perhaps we were growing too soft and taking things for granted. But freedom can never be taken for granted. It requires always awareness, strength and austerity.

I invite all of you to whatever religion or party or group you may belong to be comrades in this great struggle that has been forced upon us. I have full faith in our people and in the cause and in the future of our country. Perhaps

that future requires some such test and determination on our part. We have followed a policy of non-alignment and sought friendship of all nations. We believe in that policy fully and we shall continue to follow it. We are not going to give up our basic principles because of the present difficulty. Even this difficulty will be more effectively met by our continuing that policy.

I wish you well, and whatever may befall us in the future, I want you to hold your heads high and have faith and full confidence in the great future that we envisage for our country.

Jai Hind!

Translation ends]

260. To Biju Patnaik: Facing the Chinese Threat⁷⁶

October 22, 1962

My dear Biju,

Your letter of the 20th October.

Since you wrote very grave and serious developments have taken place on the NEFA border. That occupies all our attention and our resources. We cannot add to our burdens. We have to watch carefully all developments and take such action as we can.

As it is, we face a prolonged conflict on our borders and we have a very hard task. We shall, of course, face it with all our strength and I have no doubt that in the end we shall succeed, even though we may have any number of reverses in the beginning.

We must not, because of momentary difficulties, forget our basic policy. That indeed would be most unfortunate; but our basic policy must be conditioned to circumstances. Goodness and mental charity are always good but they should not mean supineness and submission to evil. We have

⁷⁶ Letter to the Chief Minister of Orissa.

to meet violence and invasion with all the strength we possess and the firm determination not to submit to them. The next two or three weeks will, probably, indicate what further developments are likely to take place. We shall keep our minds free to consider such developments and what we should do in regard to them. I do not think that we should, at this stage, involve ourselves in matters which would add to our difficulties. There is no question of our being soft to the Chinese after all they have done, but we have anyhow to be wise and farseeing and not to lose ourselves in taking wrong steps which may produce results that are not good for us.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

261. To N.S. Khrushchev: Chinese Aggression⁷⁷

22nd October, 1962

My dear Prime Minister,

The Government of India appreciate the friendly interest shown by the Government of the USSR and their concern at the latest developments on the India-China border, expressed in their note which was handed over by the Soviet Ambassador to me on 20th October. The Government of India are grateful to the Government of the USSR for their anxiety, conveyed in the note, to remove as quickly as possible the difficulties in the relations between India and China.

The Government of India share the desire of the Government of the USSR to do whatever they can to resolve the differences between the Governments of India and China on the border question by peaceful talks and discussions in a spirit of understanding and cooperation.⁷⁸ They have throughout these last few years made serious attempts to resolve these differences by

⁷⁷ Letter to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

⁷⁸ For the Soviet position on the Sino-Indian issue, see appendix 23.

peaceful means.

The Government of India appreciated the position of the USSR and the cautious stand taken by them on the India-China border differences. That is why the Government of India did not so far place the merits of the case before the Government of the USSR. It was only a few days back on 18th September that Our Foreign Secretary, on hearing about your Ambassador's interest in this matter, talked to him about the background of the case and the latest developments and gave the Ambassador copies of notes exchanged between India and China on the latest clashes in the Eastern Sector of the boundary.

As Your Excellency is aware, our policies ever since our attainment of independence have been conditioned by our own historical background and thinking. We have been strictly non-aligned, taking attitudes on the merits of each question. So far as the relations between India and the Soviet Union and even between India and China are concerned, the Government of India have never been, and will never be, influenced in any way by the views of attitudes of other Governments. The Government of India are, therefore, surprised at the references in the USSR Government's note to those "who are interested in intensifying world tension, who wish to line their coats by military clash between India and China", to "forces of reaction and war" and "imperialist circles" and how they "dream in their sleep of ways of disturbing the friendship of the Soviet Union with India and with China".

China-India relations have deteriorated because of certain things done by China in her relations with India in the last few years. The present crisis has not been of Government of India's making, but has been forced by deliberate aggressive moves made by the Government of China to alter the status quo of the boundary unilaterally by force instead of seeking a solution by talks, discussions and negotiations. It would be appropriate in this connection to state the following facts:

- (i) Till 1954, i.e. about five years after the formation of the Government of the People's Republic of China and the establishment of their control in Tibet, there had been no trouble of any kind on the India-China frontier.

On the contrary, the Governments of India and China negotiated an Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between India and the Tibet region of China, under which the Government of India, on their own initiative, gave up various extra-territorial privileges exercised by the Government of India in Tibet, which had come down from British times. This was done in a spirit of understanding to establish friendly and cooperative relations between two sovereign and independent countries, removing all traces of colonial traditions of the past.

(ii) The Government of India had no doubts about the customary and traditional boundary confirmed by treaties and agreements of the past; and this boundary was known to the Government of the People's Republic of China. There were inaccuracies in Chinese maps regarding this boundary and these were brought to the notice of the Government of China as early as 1954 and on several occasions afterwards. We were always given to understand that they were old maps which had not been revised.

(iii) The presence of Chinese forces in the area of Aksai Chin along the Sinkiang-Tibet caravan route came to the notice of the Government of India for the first time when the Government of China published a map of their projected road. An Indian patrol which went to the area in the course of its normal rounds was detained by the Chinese border forces and, on enquiry, the Government of China informed the Government of India "According to the report of the Chinese local authorities in Sinkiang, frontier guards of the Chinese Liberation Army stationed in the south-western part of Sinkiang discovered in succession on September 8 and 12, 1958, two groups of Indian armed personnel at Tahung-Liutan and Kezrekirekan on the Sinkiang-Tibet road on Chinese territory". This communication was dated 3rd November, 1958.

(iv) By the beginning of 1959, the Chinese forces had moved further west and as mentioned in the note of the Government of the USSR an armed clash took place at Kongko Pass when the Chinese border forces

opened fire, killed 9 Indian personnel and captured the rest.

(v) Even after my meeting with Premier Chou En-lai in April 1960 and during the subsequent discussions of the officials of the two sides, the Chinese aggressive moves continued. By the middle of 1961, the Chinese border forces were nearly 70 miles south-west of the Sinkiang- Tibet road where they were in 1958.

(vi) Due to these aggressive intrusions by Chinese forces, the Government of India were compelled to take certain defence measures to halt the Chinese advance. While taking this action, the Government of India at the same time expressed their desire for talks and discussions to remove the border tension prevailing in these areas and made various proposals throughout last July, August and September. The Chinese responses to these approaches were negative and disappointing. The Chinese even refused to consider discussion of measures to correct the situation created by their unilateral alteration of the status quo of the boundary. Instead, they insisted on India accepting the precondition that the Chinese forces could not be asked to withdraw from the areas they had occupied over the last few years in the region of Ladakh.

(vii) It is pertinent to mention that according to the Chinese notes it was the Chinese frontier guards which detained the Indian patrol party in September 1958 at the north-western end of the Sinkiang-Tibet road. Chinese notes received during the last few months again refer to Chinese frontier guards who are now manning a series of posts nearly a hundred miles south-west of where they were in September 1958. Surely, the India-China frontier cannot be mobile and vary from year to year in accordance with the progress of Chinese forcible intrusions.

(viii) While notes regarding the scope of these talks and discussions were being exchanged and even dates and places were being specified, the Chinese forces crossed the Thagla Ridge, which constitutes the boundary between India and China in the Eastern Sector, and intruded into the north-west corner of North East Frontier Agency, of India., The

Government of India had to take measures to meet this further attempt to alter forcibly the status quo of the boundary.

(ix) The Agreement concerning the McMahon Line, which is the same by which the boundary in this sector between India and the Tibet Region of China is often called, merely formalised what had been the traditional and customary boundary between the territories of India and Tibet. It was a well recognised and long-established boundary which was not "created", but only confirmed by treaty in 1914. The local authorities and inhabitants of the area as well as the Governments of the two sides had for centuries recognised the validity of this boundary alignment, and even the People's Government of China, after they established their control in Tibet, proceeded on the basis that this was the boundary. The same watershed boundary, represented by the McMahon Line of 1914, between Burma and China has recently been once more accepted in the treaty between the Governments of Burma and China.

(x) Any talks or discussions, whether they are regarding preliminary measures to relieve tension or substantive discussions are, of course, without prejudice to the position of either party regarding its claims in connection with the boundary. But there is no convention or precedent in international practice which justifies forcible occupation of territory without a declaration of war; and this is what the Government of China have done over the period of five years since 1957 in Ladakh and have been doing now since the beginning of September in the north-west corner of the Eastern Sector of the India-China boundary.

The Government of India agree that these border questions are difficult and complicated and have to be handled with patience to arrive at reasonable solutions. They have acted all along in this spirit even after the forcible occupation of about 12,000 square miles of Indian territory by the Chinese in the Ladakh region. They only took limited defensive measures to stop further Chinese intrusions and asked for talks and discussions to consider what measures should be taken, by agreement between the two Governments, for restoring the status quo of the boundary and easing

tensions in the area, prior to discussion of the question on merits. The Government of India laid down no pre-conditions of any kind. It is the Chinese who, through their Foreign Minister, stated that no one can make the Chinese withdraw from the Ladakh area that they had occupied during the last few years. It was this pre-condition about which notes were being exchanged when the Chinese thought it fit to cross the well known India-China boundary in the Eastern sector and commit further aggression into India. Consistent with her self respect and dignity, India had to take such action as it could to resist this new intrusion. On the very morning on which your Ambassador handed over the note of the Soviet Government to me, the Chinese mounted a well concerted and premeditated attack on our defense posts in the Western as well as Eastern sectors of the boundary and are advancing further into Indian territory. You will agree, Mr Prime Minister, that this blatant use of force by the Chinese to annex such territory as they can is at complete variance with the policy regarding exercise of patience and settling differences in a spirit of cooperation and understanding counselled in the Soviet Government's note. The Chinese chose to launch their carefully organised large- scale and vicious attack on Indian defense posts south of the McMahon Line, which is the international frontier and which had been quiet and peaceful for all these years, and also on our defense posts in the Western sector, on the very day on which you, Mr Prime Minister, were making sincere efforts to have the boundary differences between India and China resolved peacefully.

There is a reference in the note to the talks which our Defence Minister, Shri Krishna Menon, had with the Soviet Ambassador in Delhi on September 15 and October 8. You will appreciate, Mr Prime Minister, that these talks had taken place after the recent aggressive intrusion by China south of the international frontier into the north-west area of the eastern sector of the boundary. Even then the Defence Minister pointed out, in the context of the great patience and forbearance shown by the Government of India at Chinese aggression in Ladakh during the last few years, that India would certainly have to resist if the Chinese continued this new aggression in the

eastern sector. Surely, neither you nor any of India's other friends would want her to submit to the arbitrary and blatant use of force by any Power, however strong.

It is not India who is attempting to settle the dispute by the use of force. China had already, by military action, forcibly occupied the greater part of the disputed area in the western sector, that is, in Ladakh, over the period of the last five years. Despite this unilateral and forcible occupation, India, because of its faith in peaceful talks and discussions, did not precipitate a clash but made proposals for a meeting between the representatives of the two countries. While the exchange of notes for the finalisation of these talks was going on, China in the beginning of September suddenly marched her forces in the eastern sector across the highest mountain ridge—the Thagla Ridge—which constitutes the boundary in that particular area, to spread the conflict and seize Indian territory by force. I agree with Your Excellency that this is a very dangerous path, but it is China which is following this path.

I can assure you, Mr Prime Minister, that so far as the Government of India are concerned, we are wedded to paths of peace and to the policy of settling outstanding differences by talks, discussions and negotiations.

All our past traditions and policy have clearly demonstrated our love of peace and our abhorrence of war. We have not set foot on an inch of Chinese territory, but have remained on our own territory which has been in our possession for a long time past and which has been clearly shown in all our maps as well as in our Constitution as being part of the Indian Union. It is true that this Indian area now occupied by China is mountainous and sparsely populated. But that does not lessen our undoubted claim to it. Politically, by treaty and tradition, it belongs to India and has all along been treated as such. Our literature for two thousand years or more is full of references to it as part of India and our people, nurtured in this literature and old tradition, are greatly attached to it. It has been and is a part of India's life and heritage. No country with any self-respect can accept any claim which is contrary to history, treaties and its own traditions, more especially when this is by aggression.

We know that China is a great and powerful country. We have sought, in the past, friendship and cooperation with it and pleaded its cause before the United Nations and elsewhere. It has been a matter of great surprise and regret for us that in spite of our friendly attitude, the People's Government of China has committed gross aggression on our territory and has carried on a propaganda against us which is vituperative in the extreme. You will appreciate, Mr Prime Minister, that India could not have acted otherwise than it did in challenging the Chinese claim which had no basis and in protesting strongly against their aggression. Even so, we have been prepared for discussions which might lead to a peaceful settlement, but how can we have any discussions when actual and new aggression is continuously taking place and vast Chinese armies are moving further into our territory? Any discussion can only be worthwhile if a suitable atmosphere is created for it. We, therefore, proposed that the first thing to do was to create that atmosphere by the Chinese Government restoring the status quo as it was prior to the 8th September. We could then consider what further agreed steps should be taken to correct the situation created by the earlier unilateral alteration of the status quo of the boundary and to ease the tensions, preparatory to the substantive discussions of the differences regarding the boundary.⁷⁹

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

262. To the Conference of Governors⁸⁰

At the invitation of the President, the Prime Minister gave an account of the

⁷⁹ See also item 395.

⁸⁰ From the Proceedings of the conference on 23 and 24 October 1962 at Rashtrapati Bhavan. MHA, File No. 19/41/62-Public-I, pp. 21 (A)/c. Only extracts are available at the NMML.

situation which had developed on the border with China. It was five years, the Prime Minister said, since the Chinese started their aggression in Ladakh. To meet this, we had built certain roads and set up border posts. Ultimately our posts and the Chinese posts were more or less facing each other. The Chinese were in a more favourable position because they could bring their supplies by roads across the Tibetan plateau almost up to their posts whereas our supplies had to be brought across high mountains or carried by air. A state of tension continued but no major clash had taken place. Recently there had been a proposal for talks between the Chinese and Indian representatives. We had made no conditions but had proposed that the initial talks should be not so much on the merits of the case but in order to find an agreed solution for lessening tension. While this correspondence was going on, a new development took place on the north-eastern frontier where the McMahon line is the international boundary.

The McMahon Line, the Prime Minister said, merely recognised the frontier which had existed for a long time past and is described in a treaty as the highest ridge of the watershed in the Himalayas there. The Chinese maps claim a great part in NEFA and in Ladakh. Soon after the new Chinese Government came into being, attention was drawn to this both in writing and subsequently orally to Prime Minister Chou En-lai. At that time, he said that these were old maps produced by the previous Chiang Kai-shek regime and that he had had no time to look into the matter and that anyhow this could be settled peacefully between the two Governments. When these maps were printed again the same way, we again drew the Chinese Premier's attention to them and received the same answer which gave the impression (though he did not himself) that the old maps could be changed and that while possibly there might be some minor differences there were no major differences. Meanwhile, five years ago, the Chinese started their aggression in Ladakh. No aggression took place in the NEFA area except for the incident at Longju which was not of much importance.

On the 8th September, the Chinese crossed the high ridge of the Thagla

pass. Indian forces in the area were strengthened. The Chinese, however, were at a great advantage since their road system came right up to the foot of the ridge whereas our troops had to be supplied mainly by air.

Reinforcements were sent but we were still greatly outnumbered. On the 20th October, the Chinese launched an attack all along the frontier in NEFA and simultaneously on the Ladakh frontiers. Half an hour earlier Peking radio announced that they were being attacked.⁸¹ There had been severe fighting and heavy casualties on both sides. Many of our posts had been overwhelmed or had been compelled to withdraw and the Chinese were advancing towards Tawang.

The Prime Minister said this may well mean an interminable conflict between India and China and it was necessary to fashion our organisation accordingly from slow moving peace-time ways, both in civil and military matters, to a swift moving machine which can take decisions quickly and act on them effectively. This would mean a great additional burden on our country but it must be shouldered. There was no other way. The Chinese had crossed the McMahon Line which, in fact, they had never recognised. The position was serious. We had suffered a severe setback and must gear up the machinery to meet the situation. We had to increase our production and give a single- minded direction to all our efforts. People must give up minor controversies.

He was glad that there had been adequate response to the appeal to all parties. It would be necessary to raise more money by Government loans, savings and in other ways. We must keep down prices. The cooperation of the States would be necessary in all fields. It was proposed to call the National Development Council sooner than had been intended.

The Defence Minister then gave the Conference an account of the military situation on the frontier. On the 8th September, he said, the Chinese came over the Thagla ridge. Steps were taken to reinforce our positions. Our posts were small ones. There are no roads in the area and in places even

⁸¹ See note in item 258.

animal transport cannot be used, the bridges in some places being rope bridges. The Chinese first surrounded our post at Dhola after destroying one of the bridges. Our troops resisted but were clearly outnumbered. Steps were being taken to contain the Chinese in the Thagla area when the Chinese launched their attack in great strength. Our forward positions had been taken by direct assault after severe fighting. The supply position was very difficult being dependent on air dropping. A threat was developing to Tawang. The Chinese had taken Khinzamane.

Lieutenant General B.M. Kaul, Chief of the General Staff, had been appointed Corps Commander to conduct operations on this front.⁸²

In the West, the Defence Minister said, we had for the past eighteen months been building up posts between the international border and the 1960 line. The Chinese tactics had been to surround our posts. Until the present fierce fighting started, we took defensive action but had not gone in for waging war. Now there had been simultaneous attacks on our posts some of which had fallen in the face of heavy gun fire. In the Pangong lake area even tanks had been used and a threat was developing to Chushul.

The Defence Minister referred to Chinese propaganda according to which every time they attacked they accused India of doing so. They had recently announced that our air force was supported by our ground forces. They also announced that their forces would not respect the McMahon Line. As the Prime Minister had said, the situation required considerable reorganisation of the administrative machine. Augmentation of the army and supply of modern weapons had been under consideration and would be put into operation as soon as possible. He could not say how long the present struggle would continue but we would fight back; there was no other way. The morale of our troops was high though they were fighting under very difficult conditions. Our communication systems were limited and this was one of the main reasons why it would be some time before we would be in

⁸² On 4 October 1962. The Times of India, 5 October 1962, p.1, col.5. See also items 5 and 6, which concerned Kaul's appointment.

a position to recover lost ground.

In answer to questions the Prime Minister said that the Chinese had not invaded Bhutan or Sikkim. They had made a declaration that they had nothing to do with Bhutan which is an independent country. It was difficult to say anything about the attitude of Russia. They appeared to be trying to maintain an attitude of not taking any sides. China was of course their ally.⁸³

[Portions omitted]

International Situation

The Prime Minister informed the Conference that the Chief of the Army Staff would come with maps the next day and explain the situation on the borders.

He then told the Conference of the very tense situation that had developed in regard to Cuba. The day before, President Kennedy had broadcast an address to the American nation in which he said that Cuba was being used by the Soviets as a base for missiles carrying atomic warheads. They had established installations for ballistic missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead to Washington. This, President Kennedy had said, was a danger to the USA and all the American countries and he had, therefore, taken measures, including the placing of Cuba under close surveillance. No ship would be allowed there if carrying war material and therefore, every ship going there would be searched. The USA had also asked the Security Council that the United Nations should send observers to find out about the alleged missile bases and if there were any, to have them dismantled. President Kennedy had warned that any missile attack from Cuba on the United States would be answered by instant retaliation on the Soviet Union. Berlin also, the Prime Minister said, continued to be a cause of tension. The situation was very dangerous.

In regard to Pakistan there had been no particular development. Generally

⁸³ See appendix 23.

speaking the Pakistan Press had been giving prominence to Chinese reports and statements about the border conflict. He did not however think they were likely to create difficulty for India at this time because of the influence of America on whom they rely for support.⁸⁴

Nepal, the Prime Minister said, was a very difficult problem. The King and the Ministers were aggressively anti-Indian. India did not wish to interfere in Nepalese affairs. Express instructions had been issued not to allow India to be used a base for anti-Government activity. There was however an open border with Nepal and it was very difficult to stop people coming from Nepal to India and carrying on activities from here. No incidents had occurred during the past two or three months. There have, however, been several incidents deliberately engineered from Nepal. We had suggested joint enquires into these but the Nepalese had refused.⁸⁵

The Governor of Uttar Pradesh mentioned a report he had heard of Chinese fishing operations in the vicinity of Indian islands and the possibility of their establishing submarine bases there.

[Portions omitted]

The Prime Minister said that questions had been asked about foreign exchange in the preceding discussions. The whole position was, however, very much governed by the new situation which was entirely outside our previous reckoning and would undoubtedly be a strain both on foreign exchange and domestic resources. The equipment of the army was not up to date. We had hitherto concentrated on manufacturing our own equipment and had made considerable progress but that was not enough. To have provided modern equipment for our army would have cost hundreds of crores and naturally we had to balance these demands with our other necessities. Originally, we had to consider only the situation vis-a-vis Pakistan but now a far greater menace had appeared and we would have to produce modern equipment as far as we could and also obtain it from

⁸⁴ See item 228.

⁸⁵ See items 220, 221 and 222.

outside and that was going to be a very heavy burden.

With regard to the European Common Market the Prime Minister said he had met the President of France and the Prime Minister of Italy who had shown themselves to be sympathetic and anxious to find a solution for India's difficulties.

The Prime Minister then read out the text of a statement issued by the Chinese Government which had not been received officially but of which a broadcast had been made. This statement proposed that both parties should affirm that the Sino-Indian boundary question must be settled peacefully through negotiations, pending which both should respect the line of actual control between the two sides along the entire border and that the armed forces of both sides should be withdrawn 20 kilometres from this line and disengage.⁸⁶ This, the Prime Minister said, was of course a typical Chinese gambit. If we accepted the line of actual control it would mean that if they penetrated deeper into our territory that would actually be the line of control. They had already occupied parts of NEFA and Ladakh and now they wanted to sit down for talks. This would mean the acceptance of their aggression. It was impossible for us to accept this. India's position had been clearly stated in the President's speech the preceding evening which was that the Chinese should withdraw to the line held by them on the 8th September 1962 which meant that all fresh aggression in NEFA must be vacated and some changes in Ladakh also. We could not go beyond that whatever the consequences. The Chinese were massing troops in all sectors. The Chief of the Army Staff would explain the, military position to the Conference.

⁸⁶ Statement of the Chinese Government, 24 October 1962. See A.S. Bhasin (ed.) *India-China Relations: 1947-2000 A Documentary Study*, (New Delhi: Geetika, 2018), doc. no. 1881, pp. 3939-3942.

263. To H.K. Mahtab: Offer to China⁸⁷

October 27, 1962

My dear Mahtab,

Your telegram. You are wrong in thinking that we are asking for something now which China offered and we rejected previously. We asked earlier for a 'meeting to consider how to lessen tension, and if this was achieved then to meet to consider the merits.

What we ask now is for the position before 8th September to be restored and then for preliminary meeting to reduce tension to take place. This is in line with what we said before. As a matter of fact, if China agrees to this and goes back across the McMahon Line in the East and also back to some extent in the Western sector, that will be very advantageous to us, and China will lose all the advantages she has gained. There is practically no chance of her accepting this. I am sure that what we have proposed is both honourable and desirable for us. There is no question of confusion being caused anywhere.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

264. In New Delhi: To Congress MPs⁸⁸

India to Get Arms from Outside: Nehru

New Delhi, Oct. 27 - Prime Minister Nehru told his party colleagues here today that India had made arrangements with some countries for securing armaments and equipment for the Indian forces now engaged in repelling the Chinese invaders.

He told about forty five Congress members of Parliament who called on him today, that efforts were also being made to step up production of the

⁸⁷ Letter to Congress MP and former Chief Minister of Orissa.

⁸⁸ Reproduced from the National Herald, 27 October 1962, p. 1.

requisite armament indigenously despite the foreign exchange position. Those present at the meeting included the Defence Minister, Mr Krishna Menon.

Pandit Nehru also told the members that the Government would utilise retired army officers and generals who had offered their services. The Government was considering certain measures by which best advantage could be taken of their experience without having dual arrangements with regard to actual operations.⁸⁹

Pandit Nehru informed the members that India had already communicated her case to all countries barring Portugal and South Africa, with whom she did not have diplomatic relations.

India has told that the Chinese invasion of Indian territory, apart from raising other problems, constituted a crime under international law.

Explaining India's conditions to the recent Chinese proposal for resumption of talks, Pandit Nehru is understood to have said that the demand for withdrawal of the invading Chinese forces was made in order to relieve tension and create the proper climate for talks.

In reply to questions, Pandit Nehru told the members that India had no doubts with regard to her friendship with Bhutan.

The relations with Nepal were also friendly and he was sure both the countries would stand together. There were a large number of Nepali nationals in the Indian armed forces and a still larger number on the Indian reserve list inside Nepal.

He expressed surprise at the attitude of the Pakistani press in the present Sino-Indian conflict particularly the bitterness with which they wrote against India. Both in their bitterness and extent of writing, Pakistani papers seemed to have outdone the Chinese itself.

On the attitude of the Communist Party Pandit Nehru is understood to have said: "We have to do the right thing and not to do anything that would lead to unnecessary provocation of creation of enemies."

⁸⁹ See items 291 and 383.

The members are understood to have told the Prime Minister that the people had responded well to the promulgation of the state of emergency by the President.⁹⁰

Pandit Nehru assured them that the emergency powers sought under the Defence of India measure would be used to curb anti-social elements.

Why Arms Shortage

Carrying the background to the shortage of automatic weapons, Pandit Nehru is understood to have told the members that in the past, the British rulers had not created capacity in India for producing these. The requirements of the Indian army were supplied from Britain. Production of armaments was taken up in the country only after independence, but the pace of production was handicapped largely by the pressure on foreign exchange.

However, despite the foreign exchange, efforts were being made to step up their production.

Explaining the emergency decided on by the Cabinet, Pandit Nehru told the members that the proposed citizens' force should be a voluntary organisation.

He said that the Territorial Rifles and Home Guards would be expanded on a large scale for internal work.

He welcomed the formation of citizens' committees as had been done by the Mayors of Bombay and Delhi.

Pandit Nehru is understood to have stressed the need for utilising the services of all for the national cause, while replying to a question about the relative roles of the public and private sector in building up the nation's defence capacity.

He also emphasised the need for austerity both in the Government as well as private homes. There was also need to prevent rise in prices.

The members reported complete satisfaction after their meeting with the

⁹⁰ On 26 October 1962.

Prime Minister lasting over seventy minutes.

They said that their discussions with Pandit Nehru had cleared whatever little doubts or misgivings they had.⁹¹

265. In New Delhi: To the CPP Executive⁹²

Arms Arrive: Supply Position. Improves

Country Better Prepared Now To Meet Aggression

New Delhi, Oct. 29 - Prime Minister Nehru and the Defence Minister, Mr Krishna Menon, are understood to have told the Congress Parliament Party executive here today that India was now in a better position to meet the Chinese threat in NEFA and elsewhere than a few days ago.

They told the thirty-two-member executive that the supply position to the Indian forces had improved. Some arms had already arrived from abroad and more were on their way.

Pandit Nehru, however, laid great emphasis on indigenous production of arms and equipment needed by the defence forces, so that the nation could stand on its own feet.

Pandit Nehru is understood to have indicated to the members that he was not thinking of breaking diplomatic relations with China at the present moment.

Besides the Defence Minister, the Minister of State, for Defence, Mr K. Raghuramiah, was also specially invited to attend the meeting which lasted about an hour and forty-five minutes.

During the discussions, the members are reported to have strongly felt that every possible measure should be taken to improve the nation's military preparedness.

⁹¹ "Misgivings" about equipment. See NMML, Sudhir Ghosh Papers.

⁹² Report of conversation with CPP executive members; reproduced from the National Herald, 30 October 1962, p. 1.

Aggressor's Advantage

Mr Menon is understood to have explained that in any military conflict, the aggressor had certain initial advantages of surprise moves. But the Chinese no longer had these advantages.

Pandit Nehru is stated to have told the members that the withdrawals by Indian forces from the forward positions were more in the nature of strategic moves.

The Minister for Agriculture, Dr Ram Subhag Singh, who returned to Delhi today after a four day study of supply position in Assam and other border areas, reported to the meeting that the morale of Indian forces was very high, they were cheerful and in good spirits.

Reviewing the measures that had been taken to maintain and improve the supply position to the border areas, the minister said quantities of food had already been allotted to the border areas on an emergency basis. Part of it had already reached their destination and more was on its way.

The minister told the committee that apart from having consultation with the officials in Assam, NEFA and bordering states, he had attended several meetings of the grain dealers, producers and others to discuss gearing up of the food production machinery.

No Second Grade Weapons

To a suggestion that in the absence of latest weapons, the country should acquire and produce second grade weapons, Pandit Nehru is reported to have remarked that there could be no question of securing or producing second grade weapons. Apart from securing latest weapons, the country must produce them. People should get out of the old habit of securing things from outside. There were still some who continued to think on the old lines, this mentality was no doubt changing, though slowly.

With regard to civil defence, Prime Minister told the committee that steps had already been taken to protect defence and other important installations.

Those who participated in the committee's discussions included Mr Mahavir

Tyagi, Mr Bhakt Darshan, Mr K. K. Shaw, General Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, Mr Ravindra Verma, Mr H. C. Mathur, Mrs Renuka Ray and Mr S. Shastri.

266. To T.T. Krishnamachari: Don't feel Despondent⁹³

October 30, 1962

My dear TT,

Thank you for your letter of today's date.⁹⁴

Much of what you said yesterday I agree with. Part of it I do not agree with.

But that does not very much matter. Anyhow, whatever you said and repeat in your letter is very much in my mind. I think that we have set things moving and I hope they will bring quick results.

There is no need for you to feel despondent. I have no such feeling although I have received a number of shocks during the last few days.

You can see me when you like or write to me.

Yours affectionately,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

267. To Surjit Singh Majithia: Strategy in NEFA⁹⁵

November 3, 1962

My dear Surjit Singh,

Your letter of the 3rd November. I am writing a brief reply to you immediately. I wish I had time to write more fully.

⁹³ Letter to Minister without Portfolio. NMML, T. T. Krishnamachari Papers, File 1962, Copy.

⁹⁴ See appendix 33. See also documents in sub section (e) CHINESE INVASION: Krishna Menon, *infra*.

⁹⁵ Letter to Deputy Minister of Defence; address: 9 Teen Murti Marg, New Delhi.

(a) Government knew that there were large forces of the Chinese in Tibet, but we did not think that several Divisions would be thrown across the Thagla Pass. As soon as the original incursion took place by the Chinese on the Thagla Pass, immediate steps were taken to send troops there. This was not an easy matter as many of them had to go by air. Every supply needed had also to be sent by air in difficult mountain terrain. Many of our air droppings were lost.

About the second week of October we found that the Chinese forces were increasing fast. Even then we could not imagine that two or three Divisions would come over rather suddenly.

(b) The Army appreciation of the situation was that we should try to push the Chinese a little wherever possible, but in effect we should hold a strong defensive line at the river Namchuko. This was, in fact, the direction given.

(c) I am not aware of this assessment. Opinions differed and it was thought that the longer we allowed the Chinese to entrench themselves fully, the more difficult it would be to push them back. In fact, hardly any aggressive action was taken by us except one or two minor incursions. The attack came from the Chinese side in a big and massive way.

(d) Tawang had certainly importance. But the main centre of attack was some distance away from it. If that was not held, Tawang would obviously have been weakened greatly. Anyhow, the final decisions were left to the military Commanders.

(e) There is no question of our sacrificing the lives of large numbers of our men deliberately. No one expected two Divisions of Chinese troops, highly trained and well armed, coming down on our forces then in a particular spot.

(f) It is easy to criticise the administrative arrangement, more especially after the event. Every effort was made to send supplies, but all these had to be sent by air, and our Air Force was strained to the utmost. And, as I have said above, many of the air droppings were lost.

(g) Such fire support as was available was given. But the Chinese had

big artillery, heavy mortars, etc. Our Army does not possess these big mortars. Nor indeed do the UK and US armies possess them. They rely on air power much more.

(h) As I have said above, the final decision was left to the Commanders on the spot. No orders were given that they must do anything which they thought unwise. In fact, the final orders were to defend at the river as far as possible.

I am surprised that you should say that this was a fault of Defence Production, or of the person in charge of it.⁹⁶ Our Defence Production has been speeded up as much as possible, but it is true that it was not enough to meet the years of preparation and training of the Chinese. You will remember the difficulties of the American forces in Korea and the severe set-back they suffered there in spite of the latest equipment they had. Also, the wiping out of the British Army at Dunkirk by the Nazis in spite of good equipment and every effort made. It is easy to find scapegoats, but it does not show much wisdom to forget surrounding circumstances.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

268. To the National Development Council⁹⁷

Friends, Comrades,

We are meeting today specially because a very special occasion has demanded it. You know all the facts and the recent occurrences.

Nevertheless I should like to impress upon you what has happened. It is the Chinese invasion of India and it is something much more than aggression on a particular point and particular border area.

⁹⁶ At this time V.K. Krishna Menon was in charge of Defence Production. See sub section (e) CHINESE INVASION: Krishna Menon, *infra*.

⁹⁷ Speech, 4 November 1962. Planning Commission, File No. F.8/6/62-Education, Education Division.

There has been a good deal of Chinese aggression in Ladakh for the last four or five years. Nevertheless, although it covered a great deal of area, it was one on a small scale in the sense that small forces went and occupied certain areas.

What has happened in NEFA in the months of September and October and more specially from the 20th October onwards, is qualitatively and quantitatively very different. It is not a frontier exchange. It is an invasion of India. What the Chinese may have in mind is anybody's guess work. We can all think about it. But anyhow it is a much bigger thing than what has happened yet, certainly since the Chinese came or since our Independence. It really marks, their coming and our reaction to it, if I may say so, a turning point in India's history.

We are at the crossroads of history and we are facing great historical problems on which depends our futures, our present of course, but our future. So whether we are big men or small, we have to undertake the work of big men because only big people can face big problems, not big in size but big in mind, big in vision, big in determination. This is the first point I should like to stress upon you to realise the extraordinary character of what has happened which has in effect changed or will change our whole national outlook and as well our history as it is going to be. So if we have to face this adequately, as we have every intention of doing, then we have to think in a big way. We have to forget many of our problems which normally pursue us and see this big problem which concerns us all.

It may be, I hope, it will and there are some indications that it will be, that in solving the big problem we shall almost automatically solve many of our smaller problems, conflicts, controversies, etc. At the same time it is clear that this big problem will require a tremendous effort on the Nation's part and those of us who have been placed by fate and circumstances in a position of Governmental authority, whether at the Centre or at the State, have a tremendous responsibility—a responsibility which a few persons by themselves can be big enough to shoulder but which, I am sure, all of us put together can and will shoulder. Therefore, it is necessary to view these

problems in perspective and realise the full implications of what has happened and what might happen.

The Chinese invasion, I may use the word, came in its quantity and quality, as I said, it is something different from the previous thing. It came almost like a thunderbolt, and reactions today in India, good reactions, have also come like a thunderbolt. The response of the people all over the country has been truly magnificent and wonderful. Most of the problems that fill our newspapers, conflicts, this, that and other, are things of the past. Not for ever. They may raise their heads again but for the present they are not and we have to keep them there and there can be no doubt as you all know that the response of the people of all classes, of all areas in India, has been amazingly good and heartening. That itself shows the stuff that our people are made of. It is one thing to get entangled in small matters but when the big crisis comes, to rise above those matters and face it. While much had happened in the past to depress us, what has now happened has heartened me and I am sure heartened all of you.

We might say that this terrible shock has occasioned almost a new birth of the Indian spirit and the soul of India has awakened again after some stop. We who are privileged to serve the particular States, to serve India, it is a great privilege and a great responsibility. Well, all we can say is that we shall do our utmost to be worthy of this responsibility and not to allow any personal group or other matters to come in the way. We must put them aside. In this matter, constitutionally there might be Central Government and the State Governments, but actually we are all one and we have to face as one people.

Now we normally meet, that is this National Development Council, to consider our Plan, and the Plan is not something apart from our national life. It is of the warp and woof of it. How does it affect our Plan and our economic and social processes that are going on in the country. That is a matter which we will have to consider. You may not at this meeting go into great details about it but I do hope that we all have some discussion about it.

It is clear to begin with that the first priority and the first necessity is to do

everything that helps us to meet this crisis and ultimately to push out the invader and the aggressor from our country. That is the first priority and everything else must give way to it. But even considering that we have to see what strength we have in us in doing it and prepare the ground not only for that purpose but for the time that comes afterwards. After all we have an immediate task, immediate I use the word, because the task has come to us now, though it may last a considerable time for us to give effect to it, is to free our country from the aggressor. But that itself is part of the task of strengthening and raising our country to higher levels.

It may be that some trick of destiny has put us to this test, to take our minds away from the petty things of life and to test us and to prepare us for bigger things in the future.

While we think of what might be called a war effort, we have always to think of the building up of the country as well.

War effort is not a question of enrolling soldiers and sending them to the front. That is a part of it, an important part. A soldier as everyone knows depends on the country, on the morale of the country, on the production of the country. Each soldier—I do not know how many he requires—requires hundreds of men behind to feed him and to send him supply. Even from the point of view of the war effort, we have to work all over the country in a variety of ways, in agriculture, in industry and so many other ways but also apart from the war effort that is necessary to produce the kind of India that we seek. The two are not contradictory. In fact they fit in. If we do not do that, the war effort will be lacking and the ultimate result would be very much lacking.

For people to say that the Plan must be largely scrapped because we have got trouble and invasion to face has no meaning to me. It shows an utter misunderstanding of the situation. It is a war effort that requires the Plan. The basis of the Plan is to strengthen the nation, the basis of the plan is to increase production. Nothing is required more than production when you have such a problem to face. I am leaving out the military aspect; that is for our experts and soldiers to deal with. But the civil aspect is an essential part

of any war effort of this kind. The civil aspect is important and production is important, training is important, technical personnel and all that.

It becomes essential to look at the Plan as apart, as an essential part of our effort. Therefore, an idea of giving up the plan which some people who in their shortsightedness suggest is very wrong. It is true that we shall have to examine the Plan, stick to essentials and those things that are not essential now or which might be essential tomorrow may be slowed down somewhat. That is a matter of examination. We cannot easily examine it in some details here in this Council. We can consider the main things.

It is obvious as I said that production must increase, agricultural production, industrial production. In industrial production things that are not essential may not increase; in fact may be even stopped. But those things that are essential must increase for our effort alone. Everything has to be judged from that point of view.

Then take training. We have to increase our technical training. Take normal education which may on the first view appear not so terribly important and yet it is essential and important that we may make variations in our system of training. We may not spend too much as I think we should not on big buildings and constructions and make some other use of other methods. We may have bigger classes. We may have in each school double shifts, three shifts if you like. But we cannot stop the educational process or slow down the pace because that itself is essential for the effort, not only for the effort today but for tomorrow. We cannot have a short vision and if I may use the word "win the war and lose the peace afterwards". It often happens when we have to face a crisis we have to keep both in view—win a war and win the peace.

Then again power. Now, every one of you realises the importance of power—electric power, thermal power whatever. Because on that depends the growth of industry, on that depends to some extent the growth of agriculture, on that depends so much. The modernising of agriculture and industry depends upon power. We cannot afford to lessen power and in fact we have to increase it, augment it. In this connection, we have at the

present moment agreed to have an atomic power plant at Tarapore. Later on one in Rajasthan and we have in view one in South India. Now because of this crisis I do not think, for a variety of reasons, that we should interfere with that programme. Power is essential to increase our strength, to increase our industry, etc. and the growth of atomic energy is also essential from other points of view. Therefore, we cannot relax on that now. We cannot relax on most of the things that we have to do. After all our Plan is a selective plan. We wanted to do much more. How are we to do this? Inevitably it will involve tremendous burdens, not only the war effort, the plan effort, this is part of the war effort.

We have to cut down the non-essentials not only in the Plan but generally in our other activities. We have to economise and whatever we may do, we shall have to bear this burden and the consequences of it. Normally the increase in production in war time for war needs which are not only needs actually of war, that is armament, etc., but also other needs required by the armed forces, the increase in production is very considerable.

That means that a large amount of purchasing power will go to the people. What will be the effect on many things, on prices, etc., we have to consider it. It is important that in so far as possible, the price level should be maintained and I would like to say there have been tendencies for the price to rise which have worried us and we have considered this matter and the matter will come up before you. Considering everything, by and large, prices have not risen appreciably—in pockets they have. That is a very important matter because this affects not only the people but the whole economic structure. Several goods will have to be restricted to some extent, concentrate on other goods. There is a demand for them because of the increasing purchasing power. All these things have to be considered by us, organisation of civil supplies, etc., so that there may not be a lack of them amongst large groups of people and in abundance elsewhere.

One thing on which we have laid stress repeatedly has been the cooperative movement. I think it has advanced quite considerably in the last few years. I cannot at the moment say how far it has advanced in numbers, in quantity,

in quality how much, I am not in a position to say. Perhaps you know better. I think even in quality it is advancing. Anyhow this movement, look at it from the point of view of the present emergency, is a very important thing apart from its general importance. So we have to push it. The maintenance of prices, cooperative stores and cooperative movement generally is important.⁹⁸

There is one matter which I should like to draw your attention and consult my colleagues about it which just struck me. We might encourage in agriculture the short term crops immediately. Crops, anything, vegetable crops or other things like eggs. These are the necessities for troops and others.

We might utilise the next three months for this short-term. The Agriculture Ministry has to consider that more specially in Northern India.

It is a good thing in itself. To encourage these things, possibly sometimes we may have to give a little subsidy for them to do it. The return will be very considerable and would be good for the agriculturists and for the country. Then you may have heard that we are forming some national committees. The National Defence Fund that we have formed and for which we are having your cooperation of course—we should like to have some of your representatives from the States on it. If you like we can have all the Chief Ministers. Or if you prefer not to make it too unwieldy you can choose your number to be on the National Defence Fund Committee.

In regard to the collections in States you know that the State Bank is accepting donations and contributions everywhere; the Reserve Bank too. You will get to know a little more about it later. It has been suggested that some kind of State fund might be opened as a part of the big fund that will come to the big fund. This is the view to be considered. But it must be one major fund, National Defence Fund, which cannot be split up.

Then, you perhaps know that some days ago when the present emergency is supposed to have arisen on the 20th October i.e. just exactly two weeks

⁹⁸ See item 160.

ago, an Emergency Committee of the Cabinet was formed. Then there have been in the Central Government various other adjustments to speed up work. And on the whole this has resulted in speeding up the working of the Government. Gradually we will get into full stride.

Then it is proposed very soon to form a National Defence Council. The National Defence Council will broadly—we have not finalised the names etc, yet—will consist of the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet, the present Chiefs of Staff of course, certain retired Generals and retired senior people from the other Defence Services and some prominent public men. On the one hand we do not want it to be unwieldy. At the same time we wanted it to be representative. There again I want to consult you as to the representation of States. It may not be perhaps helpful to have every Chief Minister on it. We can have some of them or all of them and have their advice.

Further you know at various places, chiefly in cities like Bombay and other cities, Citizens Committees have been formed. It is a good thing but it is desirable to have some central coordination of them.

There will be some separate committees but if there is a Central Committee coordinating their activities, it will be better. But our idea of the Citizens Committees is it should be 100 per cent non-official, except for one thing that our President has kindly agreed to be the Patron but not in any executive capacity. We will advise them but it should be a non-official committee. In that also the question arises of how the State should be represented in it. Then you know that the Finance Minister has made appeals—we have all made appeals for contributions—and they are coming in and it is an exceedingly moving spectacle every day to see the kind of people who bring their life's savings, who bring them to us.

More moving is the response of the poor and children coming up. Daily in the morning I spend some time, an hour or so, at my house because large numbers of people come to my house, where a provisional branch of the State Bank has been opened. At the President's House the same thing occurs. I find, I am very greatly moved, the way people who come, the very

little children and grown-ups and retired people, giving whatever they have saved. It is a very heartening sight. Now we have to organise this. Last night the Finance Minister⁹⁹ broadcast something about gold bonds which he proposes to issue very soon and he probably will give you some particulars about it.

The Citizens Committee can broadly, generally, help in keeping up the morale, in looking after even prices not shooting up, in not allowing wrong kind of rumours to spread. One grave danger in moments of crisis is this spreading of rumours. Particularly we in India—I do not know if we do it more than other people—but we are apt to listen to rumours and spread rumours. Everybody, in fact the whole world, does it specially in such times. How to deal with that situation.

Then again in Delhi some unfortunate things have happened, occurrences have taken place when people in their excitement going out and demonstrating against some Embassy or some office and sometimes doing a little damage. This is too serious a matter to be left in the hands of school boys, however well-intentioned it may be. It becomes a joke for them but it has bad consequences. We cannot afford to have these things now even though we might have had them before. We have to put up with that. It is the Citizens Committee's job to control the situation in a friendly way and generally to help in the maintenance of peace and order because all disciplined effort of the nation depends on peace and order in the country. Obviously, if our energies are absorbed in other matters we cannot deal with the major issues. But there are many other things that Citizens Committees can do, in the savings campaigns and others.

269. To the CPP Executive¹⁰⁰

[Translation begins

Comrades, before we start the proceedings, we have some motions for condolences. One is for Dr Subbarayan and the other is for Vinayak Rao

⁹⁹ Morarji Desai.

¹⁰⁰ Speech at the meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Party Executive Committee, 7 November 1962. NMML, AICC Speeches, Tape No. M 64/C(i), M 64/C(ii)M 65/C(i).

Vidyalankar of Hyderabad. So, if you agree, please stand up. Please sit down.

Translation ends]

Comrades and friends, we meet here today before the date previously fixed for the session to commence. You know the reasons for this. A new situation has arisen, a dangerous situation on account of the aggression and invasion of Chinese forces into India. You know also the reaction that this has caused all over India and naturally on Members of Parliament as well as so many others. It has been a wonderful and magnificent reaction and all of us in spite of what has happened on our frontiers have been greatly heartened by this reaction. It has shown, this reaction, the basic feeling of the Indian people which can rise on an emergency above all their petty quarrels and disputes and controversies. The realisation has come to them that this is one of the big things that happens to a nation and it has to be met in a big way. Perhaps almost, one might feel inclined to say, that the kind of shock we have had and the reaction it has produced may work out finally for the good of the nation.

That is good, but you will realise that the situation we have to face cannot be met by merely exhibitions of, rebel exhibitions of our deep feelings, to all we are, whether we declare it or not, in a state of war. In a state of war with a country which, for the purposes of war, is highly organised and is and possesses possibly the biggest army in the world, not only a big army but a highly trained army, trained during the last 20 or 30 years and trained in a particular way which need not be quite orthodox but which is very effective, because it is a mixture of army tactics and what might be called guerrilla tactics. In Tibet alone they have a very large army, all over Tibet, and Tibet has been connected by them by roads so that it is fairly easily possible for them to rush their forces to any particular part of the frontier of Tibet and India. So we have seen in the last, little more than a fortnight, massive forces of the Chinese army coming down into India over the mountain passes and overwhelming our forces.

It is, everybody knows, that our army is a well-trained and brave army.

Everybody also knows that even in this contingency they fought with remarkable courage, but they were simply overwhelmed by these large masses of troops coming wave after wave. Now naturally the shock was great to all of us and many criticisms have been made of our stage of preparedness or unpreparedness, many charges have been made which sometimes are partly true, sometimes are completely untrue, but the basic fact is that we have to face a ruthless enemy and a very strong enemy and one can only meet that aggression by a total mobilisation of our resources and fortitude and determination. So it must be realised that we are in for a long time and that this is not some short time affair which can be concluded by a burst of energy. We are, as I said in my broadcast a fortnight ago, we are a peaceful nation, we may have a good army, but we are not mentally constituted, our thinking is not, does not go that way, to organise ourselves for war. We can, of course, we are doing it, but we have not been in the past.

Many people in Parliament, belonging to the opposition chiefly, have criticised us in the past for not driving the Chinese out of Ladakh. Some people have even said we should conquer Tibet. Now all that if I may say so with all respect, is so extraordinarily beyond the range of possible fact that it is surprising that intelligent people should make such remarks. When you come to war, it is not what your wishes are that count but what your strength, determination, discipline organisation is. We have seen mighty countries with mighty war apparatuses like Germany, like Japan, crushed completely, ultimately in a war. We have seen whole armies thrust into the sea like the British army, in France, Dunkirk. You have seen a great nation like France collapse before the Nazi onslaught, in spite of a huge army and the modern weapons. You have seen in another connection the Japanese in the last war driving out the whole strong British army in Malaya and so on. That is to say, in order to meet the crisis of this type fully, it is not enough to be excited about it, but cold-blooded, long sustained effort when almost everything is secondary but the primary job of freeing our motherland. Now we have been known in the past as advocates of peace all over the

world and of course in our country. We follow the policy of non-alignment. In our country we seek to establish the structure which we have described as a socialist structure. I think those objectives of ours who were and are today and I hope will be firmly pursued but the fact remains that today we have to meet a certain situation and nothing is more necessary than a firm adherence to the objectives and not to weaken national morale or national discipline in any way. Fortunately, we have got a good basis for it in the wonderful reaction we have seen in the country, the country wants and desires it, and it is up to us to give it proper direction, mobilise the millions of people in the country and do everything that is necessary. I may be saying something that of our attitude and now obvious to all of you but I am putting it to you so that we may give consideration to this problem of today in the light of this background.

For instance, again I refer to people saying we must conquer Tibet. Now, I won't go into any details but that is beyond the bounds of possibility however much we may want it. Our putting it means that we are justifying the argument that has been made by the Chinese and thereby other countries will think that all this has arisen by our aggressive activities. As it is, you will find many so-called unaligned countries in the world rather confused, rather afraid of being dragged into this conflict, and some have declared completely in our favour, some half and half, some, many have hesitated because, well, it is obvious the reason but even the facts underlining this are not so clear to them in spite of all efforts of ours, because Chinese propaganda is strong and they go on saying the most outrageous falsehoods about our having attacked them and they are defending themselves, our attacking them on Indian soil, this is absurd on the face of it. Now for us to talk of Tibet in this connection is to talk about the moon or some other distant object which is unattainable.

Some members have said drive them out from Ladakh. That was a desirable objective, we wanted to do it, I hope we will do it, but in the circumstances that then existed purely from the balance of military and like strength of us it was not a feasible proposition, we would have sent our soldiers to certain

disaster not because soldiers were weak but all the conditions were such as to militate against them and against us. This has been happening now for four or five years and any attempt of ours to build ourselves up was a fairly lengthy process. When we had built up we might adopt other tactics but some people accused us, well, do it immediately. You will realise now how difficult this was when in a relatively more favourable position, relatively I say, in NEFA, the terrible difficulties we have had, Ladakh was much more difficult to deal with in that way.

So we have to take a view of the situation, a realistic view and not merely an enthusiastic view of what we want to do. Now it is my belief that looking at it realistically we can do it, that is, we can push out the invaders from our territory, but we can do it only with a mighty effort, with building up all the resources of our nation and everything up all the resources of our nation and everything that goes with it. It is going to be a tremendous burden to us, we may suffer setbacks but I have no doubt in my mind that the ultimate triumph will be ours if we remain true to our country. Thus we have to take this long view and not in our excitement to do something for the moment which may appeal to us but which may have consequences which are in the long run bad.

Now a good deal has been said about our state of unpreparedness. Partly it is true, partly things have been said are not true. It is true in the sense that our minds are not conditioned to this kind of major war, our country is not conditioned. There is always an advantage in favour of an aggressor which can concentrate its attack on a particular point and we had a choice all these years certainly of strengthening our defence apparatus, but also of strengthening our country economically and socially. In effect a great war against a powerful adversary can only be fought by a industrialised nation in modern conditions. For a moment you can fight, you can fight little actions and you can also perhaps get enough aid to fight some little war, but a long term effort cannot be made with all the help in the world, without your own people producing the goods you require, the weapons you require and all that, you will find no instance of that anywhere. So, we looked upon our Five

Year Plan not only as good in itself but as something which strengthens the nation even for war. We had the choice of either proceeding with it or gradually strengthening the base of the nation for war or peace, for everything, or leaving it and immediately getting all the help we can in weapons and other things and concentrating our efforts then for an immediate crisis. When there is an immediate crisis, one has to do it, there is no choice left, as there is a crisis today we are getting weapons from wherever we can, we have asked all countries for it. We have asked of course the United States, UK, France, Italy we have asked the Soviet Union and other countries and we are getting them. I hope to get them, but that kind of thing can only be done in an acute crisis for the moment, and because there is no help for it, there is no escape from it and you try your utmost, it is question of survival. But otherwise one builds up one's strength, basic strength; that does not give basic strength, because basic strength must come from the people, from what they make, industry, science, etc. War is a question of science and industry today as well as agriculture, the food front is most important in this. You have to build that. Therefore the Five Year Plan, there is no question before us that the Five Year Plan was necessary, not only to build up the nation but even to build it up for defence in war, but it takes time as you know and we have succeeded to some extent but not nearly as much as we should like it to be, but we had always this choice, should we give up part of the Five Year Plan, a good part of it, and devote it only to arms etc. Remember when you talk of war and arms, you have to think in terms of thousands of crores, it is not a question of a few crores this way or that way, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 thousands of crores. Normally no country except an authoritarian regime like in China or like Hitler can do it. No democratic country can. If you have vast resources like the United States you can do it, it has enormous resources. But a democratic country, specially a relatively poor democratic country, finds it exceedingly hard. You have always the choice of giving up all the building and concentrating on war effort. That war effort itself, if it is to be a long sustained one requires internal strength, you cannot always rely on others.

Therefore, we chose, we tried to build up our army and our apparatus on those lines knowing that will take time and hoping that time will come to us, that is, no major attack will be made then and when we are strong enough. Meanwhile we did what we could, the construction of roads etc. in the construction of equipment in India and in buying such necessary articles as we could. I cannot go into these matters in detail because it would not be proper; I mean to say, it would not be proper because that would be giving out the information which may help the enemy, which may—I am talking about the past—which may be not quite fair to our services, for our colleagues and others, but always we had this in view.

Now we are being criticised for not giving proper weapons or clothing. That is not a correct thing. Take clothing, every soldier that was sent out—and they were sent out rather hurriedly to the North East—we had in NEFA a fairly well protected area in the normal sense and I said so in Parliament. I could not give any undertaking and I did not to Parliament that we hold NEFA against all odds. How can I say that but I did say it was a better protected area than Ladakh. It was a better protected area and it is. Then when they first started coming over the Thagla Pass in small numbers, well, we immediately decided to send more troops there, we had sent troops almost entirely by air, because the place is inaccessible otherwise not wholly inaccessible but not easy to access. We had to send all their supplies, arms, clothing, food, every little thing, which they wanted by air. Our Air Force has done a wonderful job carrying all these things under great strain, sometimes under fire too. We did that, and because of the hurry that we had to send them, we had to do something which normally should not have been done, that is sending people from the plains suddenly to a height of 14000 feet or more. Normally people have to get accustomed to it, acclimatised. Our soldiers are good, healthy persons, but one is weakened by this sudden transfer. When they went in September, in the second week of September, it was not so cold there. We gave every single soldier three stout blankets and two pairs of boots. They said, I do not know who said, the soldiers or their officers, that going by air they take up too much room, all these

blankets, send them subsequently by air. They took a blanket each, sent others later. We did so, but owing to the hazards of air droppings many of them, many of the things we dropped, fell into the ravines, remember air dropping has to be done not only in highly mountainous country with huge ravines and khuds, but facing the enemy, so much of it was lost in the khuds, it was recovered by search party and others sometimes, sometimes not. Later, we went on supplying them with blankets, every one of them has four blankets. Then we discovered, we learnt something from the Chinese because they, after long years of war on mountainous territory and guerrilla war and others have rather perfected simple methods which do not burden the soldiers and costs them little. In the matter of food we have a complicated system of food, good food for the army. The Chinese soldier has his bag of rice and a little tea and nothing else, he boils the rice and eats it and has some tea. We have a complicated food, which is better food no doubt, but it takes time to cook; it is much more difficult to supply all that. Their clothing is principally thickly padded, cotton padded coat and cotton padded trousers, which is very warm, it does not look nice at all. One of our officers said the Chinese look like monkeys in this clothing, puffed up. Well, it may be, but very effective, they may not look very dainty and graceful in them. We adopted that, we have been supplying now for the last two to three weeks, we gave immediate orders, we have supplied at the rate of 500 to 1000 cotton padded coats to all our army in addition to the other too. Then weapons, we supplied them, most of them had 303 rifles which are good rifles, and which have been used till now, till very recently in England in the British army and in other armies too. The British army and the American army rely much more on aircraft. They have not got even mortars which the Chinese have, big mortars, we have mortars too but not of that range, we could not get mortars. We have been making mortars, we make smaller ones and now we are making bigger ones, but the very big ones were not ready then 10 our factory. Gradually by experience we found that this was completely a different type of warfare. Well we might have been wise, perhaps some people are, this was matter of judgment of our general

staff and others. You might have thought this might happen and will happen, but normally people in the army and elsewhere are thinking in routines, they are used to certain things and they carried on till by errors and mistakes and sufferings they learnt better. We should not. Some time ago we decided to have automatic weapons and we decided as we wanted to in everything to make them ourselves. A long argument was carried on whether we should get them from outside. If we get them from outside it meant a large sum of money and we do not build up our industrial strength. But it took considerable time and ultimately we did start it, time was wasted in argument apart from the fact that, which we always have to consider, our financial resources, our foreign exchange and all that. So we started making them, not enough to replace them, we are replacing them now. But I would like to tell you how even in the most efficient armies in the world 303 rifles are still being used and are being replaced now. I think in the British army they have actually been replaced just recently.

So all these things happened and some of them put us at a disadvantage there, but the major thing was the vast masses of Chinese troops that were brought down. It is difficult for us to estimate how many they will be, we saw them increasing and that is why our effort was to take action, to push them out in the early stages. Sometimes it has been said that the political direction we gave them interfered with their military activities. Well, I can tell you that from the first of October, the day I came back from abroad, daily I was going to the Defence Ministry, discussing with the generals and air chiefs and others the position, what they were doing, what they should do and certainly I pressed them, whenever, as soon as it was possible, to push these people back. We could not, nobody can tell, it is ultimately for the experts, the generals etc. to decide when to take and what action to take. We can tell them broadly that we like these people to be pushed back so we told them but not that they must stick there, whether it is militarily possible or not and get slaughtered, that was an absurd thing.

Then soon after we came back, on the 1st October, we decided to change our organisation, make it more effective there. The organisation then was

the whole of the frontier of that side, not including Ladakh, apart from Ladakh the whole of this huge frontier UP, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, NEFA, Naga Hills and all that were under one General. We thought that was too big a charge and he had to concentrate on this NEFA. So we divided up into two and appointed one of our very competent generals to be in charge of this, General Kaul.

He was on leave then, he was suddenly called back and within twenty-four hours of his coming back, he was sent to NEFA. He went there, with these directions as I have said, to take as early steps as he could to push them back. We did not exactly know what numbers they were because large numbers were hidden by the ridge on the other side, you can only see the numbers on this side. He went there, he functioned rather too actively in the sense that first of all he went from Delhi to 14000 feet height and walked and inspected every post there, perhaps walking 16 miles, 18 miles a day in high mountains, can you imagine at that height, sudden change, this affected somewhat his heart and other things. However he carried on. After five or six days, he came back to report and he gave us a report that the Chinese troops were far more than we had imagined and many more on the other side. Anyhow they are much more. Well after about a few days, after he reported, he went back. Even when he was here, he came back after his very strenuous time he spent there, he got high fever when he was here. In that fever he went back, he said I will get over it. But going back to the same height again instead of getting better, he got worse and ultimately the doctors in charge forced him, brought him forcibly almost back to Delhi, this was on the 18th and he was here for a number of days; when the action took place and the Chinese attacked on the 20th he was lying badly ill here and part of his illness was due to his feeling frustrated, to go back, he did go back, some days or about a week after or eight days or nine days I forget, now beginning of this month and he is there now. I want to say that that all kinds of totally false stories about him were circulated, and even some foreign correspondents sent stories to their papers abroad. Now General Kaul, I don't wish to, compare he is, to my thinking and my watching him for

the last fifteen to sixteen years, one of the bravest and most active and energetic persons in our Army. Nobody can judge one's ability or high tactics till the thing occurs, but about his courage and his extreme perseverance and his capacity to do a job entrusted to him I doubt if there is anybody equal to him. Well unfortunately, he is there now, it is very unfair to our officers to cast doubts on their efficiency, ability or courage, specially on an officer who even in this episode showed extraordinary determination and when he became quite incapacitated for a few days by high temperature and palpitation of the heart, etc, he was forced by the doctors to come away, so he came away here. After two, three days' rest he wanted to go back, he was forcibly restrained here by the doctors and others and even when he went back the doctors were not agreeable to his going back, but he went and we allowed him to go back because he was really feeling so frustrated being here when all this was happening there.

Well, this disaster took place there on the 20th and we do not yet know, it is really, how many our casualties were, because large numbers of our troops who were dispersed by that sudden onslaught, have been coming back from places round about, and that meant of course the more they came back the casualties were that much less. I do not exactly know but I think between 1000 to 1500 or 1600 persons came back, have been coming back, more may come back, but still there were heavy casualties which we have estimated at about 2000 or so. We do not know if the Chinese have taken any prisoners, I rather doubt it, may be a few, but I rather doubt it. The fighting was of such a character as it did not permit prisoners to be taken and as far as I know Chinese are not famous for taking prisoners. Apart from that initial upset and onslaught and the Chinese took advantage of that to move forward because our armies have been upset by this terrific onslaught and they were not reorganised rapidly. So they advanced somewhat in two or three directions, that is what happened, some places fell to them, but after a few days fresh advances were formed and they are there, fairly strong defences, as strong as we can make them, and I believe that they are giving a good account of themselves. But in a matter of this kind I cannot

give a guarantee, nor can the bravest general give a guarantee, because it depends on factors; one can do one's best, depending on factors sometimes beyond one's control but I feel that both in Ladakh and in NEFA area we occupy strongly our defence position.

Now I have tried to give you some brief account of what has happened there. Ever since then we have been trying to strengthen them more but the difficulty about strengthening them is not just numbers of soldiers but all the logistics apparatus which goes with them, which has to be transported by air, sometimes by trucks to a certain distance, and as I said the strain on our Air Force has been tremendous and they have borne it well. Now naturally so far as pure military tactics are concerned, it is a matter for our army general staff etc. I can offer them no advice about tactics etc. I do not know anything about it, I can discuss it with them, I can put ideas that I may have, but it is for them to decide. We discussed these matters daily and we have been strengthening our posts there every day. I have no doubt Chinese have also been strengthening them. But whatever the future may bring I do not think the Chinese forces can bring about the same type of massive attack with large numbers which they did on the first day. That is the position.

Now suppose we hold on to where we are, and I think we will, suppose we even push them back a little here and there or suppose they push us back, all these are temporary things. It may be advantageous to us or slightly disadvantageous. But the basic thing is that this kind of thing does not defeat either party finally. So the struggle goes on and therefore, we have to be prepared for a long term effort. Now our general policy has been and continues to be to seek peace where it is honourable, not dishonourable to us, and which helps us to maintain the integrity of our country, and I hope we shall never give that up because it is, if I may say so respectfully, a little childish to talk bravely of defeating China and our going to march to Peking to defeat it or they going to march to Delhi, all these things. But what we have before us is a continuous struggle provided no extraordinary thing occurs, which is not, I do not expect their agreeing to our terms. Now some

people have said, you should not offer terms, you should not talk to them till they have quitted the whole of our territory. It is a great thing to say but not a very wise thing to say in the circumstances. What we have said is this, that they should withdraw to the position on the 8th September, that means a big withdrawal in NEFA and partly in Ladakh. After that we are prepared to talk to them, not on the merits but to talk to them about reducing tensions so that in future we might be able to talk to them, that is our present position. We have to take up a position which is not by any means easy but which is at least possibly feasible and which gives us further opportunities, strengthens us. We have to talk to them, something which can be understood by other countries, all countries are interested. That is our present position. I think it is a very fair suggestion which they have rejected, that is a different matter. It is a fair suggestion which has been accepted by many other countries as a fair proposition. Some people like President Nasser when he understood this position, he himself proposed something very like this to the Chinese Government, because all these countries wanted to do something in the nature of mediation and did not want to jump into the fray on this side or that. He suggested and several other countries have done the same thing.

Now to come to the present, I have given you in some detail the development of this war and I want you fully to realise that it is going to be a long, long effort and in a long effort just like a runner runs, you must get your second breath, the nation must get its second breath and not start panting too much and may be unable to carry on and we have to prepare for that second breath in the long effort. That is why I do not very much like the mere exuberant enthusiasm of school boys and others, which is good in its own way, but which exhausts itself soon. If grown up people function like that they seem to think that they are helping the cause of their country, but they are only exhausting their energy and making themselves less capable of carrying on war for a long time.

One thing of course is definitely bad which has happened in Delhi, may be

elsewhere, these organised attacks on the Chinese Embassy, the Communist Party headquarters and some shops, Chinese shops etc. It is not a sign of strength, it weakens one, and in other countries it creates a bad impression. Remember the Communists. I do not know what they have in their minds or hearts, but many of them are probably in their hearts pro-Chinese, many of them I think are not, not to that extent, they have passed a resolution which as resolutions go, is fully in support of all our policy and have condemned China, and have even criticised some articles in Russian newspapers which is a very unusual thing for them to do. You may say they were forced by some circumstances, whatever that may be, their resolution has helped us in other countries because when people see in other countries, in these unaligned countries, and even communist countries of Central Europe, Poland, etc., that the Communist Party has said this, then they are much more chary of criticising our national attitude, they realise this. However that is by the way. But this is not a good thing to encourage in any way this kind of loose behaviour, it is a fight which does not leave any strength behind.

Now we have got to build up the nation and build up the nation in a way to which we are not accustomed. We have carried on civil disobedience, non-cooperation and all that; we are by way of being experts, in that something which is a different approach which affects every human being in India, build up everything, total mobilisation of our resources, our industries, our agriculture, our human beings, take this part of our plan education, we dare not allow education to lapse. We dare not allow agriculture to go back because that affects our broad effort, we have to build up, we want to, increase our army. We want immediately 15000 officers, where will the officers come from, from our young men who have to be given special training, may be concentrated training, and there must be a background of people, even our soldiers must be educated because they are technically-minded today. So that all these processes have to be diverted to one end, mobilising the nation, preparing the nation and everything that comes in the way of that has to be sacrificed or put by. That is what we have

to do. We have to build up the morale of the nation and the morale of the forces. Therefore, it is essential that we do not do anything which affects the morale of the nation or of our armed forces and everything, every word that you may say in Parliament is broadcast to India and to the world. Hence you be very careful not to say things which affects the morale of the nation and of our forces. As a matter of fact, people complain we do not tell them much about news from the front. We do not judge, it is entirely a matter for the military to judge, if they think some news may help the enemy, they did not want to give it out. Something that may help not only the enemy but any person, a saboteur or somebody committing sabotage. Now some aircraft have been bringing arms from America and from England and from other places. In no warring country is it ever advertised, what is coming when it is coming; it is an invitation, a person might commit sabotage on the airfield or wherever they can. Thus far we are not used to these restraints.

Newspapers giving big headlines, this has arrived, that has arrived, it is all very well, but you take a risk and unless there are very stiff arrangements to prevent that happening, it is a bad risk, you would not take it. You know that even now we have got this Defence of India Act under which there are severe penalties for rumour-mongering, severe penalties for giving news about movement of troops, movements of equipment, and gradually we will have to get used to them, the sooner the better. Because it comes in the way of our war effort. We may have to get used to all kinds of things. In England, etc. in war time there was strict rationing, strict controls, we are not going to put them now, but if anything is necessary it has to be done, because everything has to be subordinated to one end. I have no doubt, I am sorry I am taking up your time by saying things which are well known, which are platitudes.

But now I come to one other matter. There has been a great deal of talk and criticism of our Defence Ministry of Mr Krishna Menon who was Defence

Minister and partly of me too.¹⁰¹ I do not mind criticism myself but the way it has been carried on has been most unfortunate and it hurts me very greatly. Because, shall I say, all these setbacks that we have suffered, have been cast on the Defence Minister, sometimes on others too, that would be cruel because all the major decisions and the minor decisions have been jointly undertaken by us. It is normal and I can tell you that I have been in touch with Defence rather closely all the time, but for the last five weeks or so I have been in daily, constant touch, going to the Defence Ministry, sitting down there, discussing it and so I am at least as much to blame as anybody else. It is easy, it is a cheap way of finding fault with people because something has occurred. And I can understand the public, the public irritation, frustration, anger and trying to find the scapegoat, that happens. But it is a dangerous way of thinking because if you do that our generals, suppose you started criticising our generals in that way, no general will be able to function, such ability he has he gives, why did this happen, why did you withdraw, why that, it simply cannot be done, you change your general, ultimately you may have to change the general, and I want to say I have been hurt very much by what has been said against my colleague Mr Krishna Menon. Sometimes his patriotism is doubted. Now none of us, certainly including me, most of you too are free of failings, are merely a bundle of virtues. We have our failings, our faults, and so has Mr Krishna Menon. But I can say with complete confidence, I have had experience of five or six Defence Ministers here since Independence, and some of them very good, very able men, like Mr Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar, a very fine man. But I can say with confidence that no Defence Minister has worked harder and more efficiently than Mr Krishna Menon. One might almost say he gave his, well I won't say gave his life to it, but all the energy he has, all the time he has, he does work, he is a very hard worker, all night he hardly sleeps, and he worked that way. He may have made mistakes

¹⁰¹ See infra sub section (e) CHINESE INVASION: Krishna Menon. See also items 28 and 446.

here and there but he gave all the strength he had to it and it was a difficult matter because of the difficulty we are facing today

We have to think anew, we have to build a new type of nation, new type of public, used to these conditions. We are too used to a certain slackness, a certain, well, speechifying and pointing out the faults of others. In the army which is a good army I repeat, we are the successors of the British army, we follow their methods, our Indian Army, right up to Independence practically everything was decided in Whitehall, then we had the officers, he had to carry it out, they were English officers here till then, almost everything that we required for our ammunition and equipment was bought from England. Some change was made during the last war. Because of the difficulties of the war they could not get them from England so they had to produce them here. So some factories etc. were put up, ordnance factories, but still we were very, very backward in introducing everything. Our method of thinking was that the best way to get a thing is sign an order on some firms in Germany, America, England, etc. and we get them, we did get them but at a terrific price, nothing is more expensive than war material and not only is it expensive, the armaments racket is notorious. It makes you pay through your nose, private firms and others, it is not an easy thing which you can get. If you require something, you have to get it, whatever you pay, they make you pay. So the basic thing was this has to be changed and we have to produce ourselves. That was not an easy matter to shift from, because it is not copying a gun or something, sometimes they copy it, even in copying it we want their licence and their agreement and pay them royalties. It was having a Science Department which can produce these things, which can improve them, there was no such thing here previously. We have built up an effective science department, defence science department which not only thinks about these weapons but looks ahead and thinks about other weapons that are coming into the field like missiles and ballistics, things and all that. They have not very many, may not, but we have to think ahead, that was done. Ordnance factories, many of them were increased and advanced in many ways. Well that is all right. We made great progress

subject always to our limitations of finance. Because when you think of war you have to think in terms of thousands of crores, it is not hundreds of crores, it means the whole, our annual revenue being thrown into it and we are chary of doing it, and I do not know if everybody justified it to anybody, people would have welcomed it, it is all very well now when they have the shock of this experience they are prepared to accept anything. If we say 10 thousand crores they will say yes, because they feel it is now a struggle for life and death but at that time, peace time, to get that, it was very difficult. And I can very well understand our Cabinet, our Finance Minister, myself, jibbing at vast expenditure.

So, it was to change the mentality behind defence, it is a difficult thing, which Mr Krishna Menon tried to do and which is essential, which now with the war of course we will do very rapidly and he succeeded to some extent, not to the extent of our making ourselves self-sufficient, of course not, it takes time. But we were moving in that direction and whatever has been done in the past few years, although it is wholly inadequate from the point of view of carrying on now, we can increase it rapidly on that strong foundation. That is why I said that Mr Krishna Menon has done according to my thinking and I have been in intimate touch with his work, very good work in the Defence Ministry, and from this point of view more effective work to build the foundation of the future strength than anyone else, although others, they were very able and very fine men and it has hurt me that a man who has devoted himself so utterly should be criticised in the way that he has been. I want you to distinguish two things: many people have said that he must go, resign, that is a different thing. I am sure one may be entitled to say in all the circumstances of the case he should resign, I can understand that. There are arguments for it and against it, but to condemn him for something which is the fault of many others including myself and which was inherent in the circumstances when you are facing a country with an army of I do not know 4 million people, the mere numbers are tremendous. We are a big country but our army is not one tenth of theirs. Their whole effort has been concentrated in building up a military

apparatus and now we are engaged in building up a military apparatus to meet them, it is a different matter. So I should like to pay my tribute to Mr Krishna Menon's work. That does not mean that everything that he has done is perfect, he has made mistakes, I have made mistakes. First of all, most of us are jointly responsible for major decisions. Secondly, even in the other decisions with which I was largely connected I am largely responsible. He has made mistakes and sometimes he has got into trouble and all that and there is also to be said that however virtuous a minister might be, if for some reason or other, if the Department under him suffers a great deal, the minister is responsible. These are arguments which I can understand, but what has hurt me, well, it is not unexpected, it is a kind of propaganda which is carried on in the press, daily propaganda aligning him, that is carried on by some of our opposition parties, the Jan Sangh, Swatantra party and others. It is, it is morally bad, factually incorrect and does a lot of harm to the morale of the nation and our forces. I have expressed my opinion to you and behind it often I feel it is not so much what he has done or not done, but a desire—I am talking about the opposition parties—a desire to condemn us, condemn our party, the Congress and Congress Government and to take advantage of that situation in order to damn the Congress. Also I believe, some people, I do not say all, these opposition parties have opposed our policies, whether it is socialism, whether it is non-alignment, whether it is public sector, etc. etc. How they want to utilise this opportunity to go against all the basic policies that we have professed and tried to follow. That is a dangerous thing I think if that is done, not only will it weaken our war effort but otherwise do a lot of injury for us and we have to be very wide awake that that does not happen.

So, I was pained that many of our colleagues have, not entirely, partly, taken up that attitude. As I said it was, I can understand on a balance of considerations your coming to a decision or I, coming to a decision, that it is better for a minister to resign or the Prime Minister to resign. After all, I am here only by your goodwill, the moment you say no I go out, do some other job. That is a different matter, it is always in your hands and I said as I told

the Executive Committee, if I feel at any time, that I do not have your confidence then I have no business to be here, I have not threatened resignation or anything like that, that would be a very bad thing for me in this crisis, in peace time one can do all such things, but in such a time nobody can run away from his job, unless of course it is your will, then of course everything stands.

Now I might tell you that during the last considerable time, well many weeks Mr Krishna Menon has several times offered his resignation to me and a letter he wrote to me about seven or eight days ago, I think it is dated 30 October, and I read to the Executive Committee, if you like I will read it. This was the letter he wrote to me then. It has come in the Radio? "In the situation that faces the country as a result of the unprovoked invasion of our territories by China I submit that it is appropriate and necessary that the portfolio of Defence should be taken over by you. I am conscious and concerned that this will impose a heavy burden on you. The determination of our people to eject the invader and to defend the honour and integrity of the motherland so overwhelmingly demonstrated by our people will I feel sure, add to your strength and capacity. No one other than you can guard or help to maintain that resoluteness to the fullness of this purpose and without deterioration. I conveyed these sentiments to you some days or weeks ago and much earlier in this crisis. I feel however that your assumption of charge should not be delayed. I had offered to serve and assist you in the task that faces us in any capacity you wished. I need hardly say that such ability or energies as I possess are unreservedly and entirely at your disposal now as always."¹⁰² It was on the 31st that I made that change, I think on the 1st November perhaps that I took over Defence and asked Mr Krishna Menon to look after Defence Production in which he was greatly interested and which had been largely built up under his guidance and I should like to say, not work of Krishna Menon, but those of our army men, airmen and naval men, engineers. They are a fine lot of men and

¹⁰² See appendix 35.

engineers, apart from courage, they are a fine lot of men who can do anything given the opportunities and the thing that Shri Krishna Menon did was to give our men opportunities. And until now the opportunities largely came in the way of purely fighting, I mean to say, the generals and colonels and others, but the engineers' job was rather in a lower grade. He was an adviser, he built, looked after an ordnance factory, but our scientific apparatus, we have got 2000 or 3000 scientists working on defence science and we have had this great advantage of having one of our ablest men till recently Dr Kothari, in charge of it. Now he is, as you know, of the University or what not, Grants Commission, head of it. So that these people are a very fine lot of men, and I am much impressed by their ability and what is more, having got the opportunity, they worked with tremendous enthusiasm, 'because they were making something new. They are not merely on parade, going up and down but they were making something, the best that was required, came out of them. So I am proud of those men. So that is what I decided on first. I thought defence was my complete charge including of course defence production but that particular department might be left to Mr Krishna Menon because he was good at it; he had devoted himself to it, and he worked hard for it. I thought that, well, meet the situation, but find after that a great deal of crisis still continuing and it has affected some of our members also. I have got letters of various kinds, some in his praise, some in his dispraise, some in his criticism and outside too as I ventured to say the other day somewhere, I am fairly in touch generally speaking with the pulse of the nation. Then because of all these factors and in spite of my opinions that he would do well, especially well in this restricted field of production, I thought that a person whose work has been criticised, even though wrongly criticised, cannot do good work. It upsets him, upsets others and I began to think then that repeatedly he has offered his resignation to me, should be considered by me previously, purely thinking there can be none of course, one may be affected personally by some factors. But I was trying to judge purely from the point of view of how we can conduct this war efficiently, how we can use our best men for particular

jobs, which they can do well and I have thought that then that he will do this job very well and we should ask him to do this defence production. But when later I began to feel that his work will be impeded by this constant controversy and criticism, it is immaterial whether most people criticise him or most people were for him, it is immaterial but there was this controversy, I thought of the resignation he sent me and which he kept on repeating and I have had his resignation letter in my pocket all the time. So finally, I decided to accept it.¹⁰³ I have at least, I have decided to accept it, I have not formally done so yet. That is a formal matter but I have decided to accept it and I have decided to accept it not without considerable hurt and pain because I did think and do think that a man of his extraordinary abilities, perseverance, determination at work should be utilised fully, and it will be harmful to us and to the nation I think if his abilities are wasted. After all there are not too many men in the country; there are of course many good men, many able men and in many fields of work but there are not too many of them about. So it is with regret that I acceded to his wish to resign. That is a decision now and I suppose formally speaking I shall write to him, may be tonight, may be tomorrow, finalising this matter.

Now we are meeting in Parliament tomorrow and I should like all our members, if I may say so with all respect, to function with determination and dignity and not descend as far as possible to personal levels. We do not want to treat this crisis for any party advantage, we have even I think the AICC has asked the Congress Committee to cooperate with other parties although I have been told this has not been very successful always and the other parties have rather not used the occasion to the advantage of the general cause. They have attacked Congress policy and made it rather embarrassing for Congressmen sitting on the same platform. I do not look at it from that point of view but remember that it is very difficult for us to sit down now without harm. Suppose we sat down and enquire into the working of our Army headquarters, Air headquarters some time this has to be done

¹⁰³ See appendices 45 and 46.

but this is no time. It is very harmful because all our senior officers are doing their best. Sometimes their best may not take them very far, that is a different matter because of circumstances and other things, sometimes an officer has to be changed or a minister has to be changed that is a different matter. I would remind you that in no war, no major war have the first set of senior officers continued long. Because they are peacetime officers when they have to face a crisis. Within six months of, the senior officers in England, in Russia, the last war, I am talking about and I am not sure what happened, in Germany because they were trained to it right from the beginning, were completely changed, war conditions brought out new men, new abilities were recognised, younger men and all that. Well if that comes, that comes but normally a country facing a crisis does not indulge in mutual mud-slinging, it is bad form, it affects the morale of the people and therefore and as I said it is difficult for us even to say, give all the facts because all the facts may also be harmful from the morale point of view. So, I hope that tomorrow and after in Parliament, our party will function with discipline with dignity.

Thank you.

I do not wish in any sense to put a closure on speeches but, and it may be desirable, I do not know what the honourable member is going to speak, our colleague, he may be, I am saying is I have no idea whatever. He said he wanted some guidance about certain matters that may be necessary but perhaps it will be better for these points to be considered in subsequent meetings, points that are raised, we could consider them.

270. To Rajendra Prasad: Latest Position¹⁰⁴

November 8, 1962

My dear Rajendra Babu,

¹⁰⁴ Letter to the former President; address: Sadakat Ashram, Patna.

Thank you for your letter of the 5th November. I have read the extract from the Hindusthan Standard which you have kindly sent me. We are taking such steps as are possible to protect the various routes of entry from Tibet to India. The Chinese have some advantages over us. They have an Army in Tibet alone which is far larger than the entire Indian Army; they have got roads all over Tibet so that they can rush troops at any point quickly and, being the aggressors, they can choose their point of attack.

We are protecting the Chungi Valley route, but some parts of Bhutan are easy of access to the Chinese. We cannot send any troops to Bhutan because the Maharaja thinks that will give an excuse to the Chinese to enter Bhutan. The Chinese have said that they will not enter Bhutan, but no one can really rely on their word.

Arrangements are being made about the collection of funds as well as about citizens' organisations in States.

As you must have known, Krishna Menon has resigned. I do not think that the propaganda against him was at all justified. But I will not go into that question. I happen to have been connected with Defence very intimately for some time past. For the last five weeks I have been going there daily.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

271. In the Lok Sabha: Emergency and Appreciation of Defence Forces¹⁰⁵

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs, Defence and Atomic Energy (Jawaharlal Nehru): Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move:

"This House approves the Proclamation of Emergency issued by the President on the 26th of October, 1962, under clause (1) of article 352 of

¹⁰⁵ Moving Resolutions on National Emergency and Appreciation of Defence Forces, 8 November 1962. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol.9 November 8-20, 1962, pp. 106-133.

the Constitution."

Speaker: I shall place it before the House.

Resolution moved:

"This House approves the Proclamation of Emergency issued by the President on the 26th of October, 1962, under clause (1) of article 352 of Constitution."

The hon. Prime Minister may move the other resolution also.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I beg to move:

"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 coexistence, China has betrayed this goodwill and friendship and the principles of Panch Sheel which had been agreed to between the two countries and has committed aggression and initiated a massive invasion of India by her armed forces.

The House places on record its high appreciation of the valiant struggle of men and officers of our armed forces while defending our frontiers ..."

Several Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Jawaharlal Nehru: "... 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."

Speaker: I shall place this Resolution also before the House.

Resolution moved:

"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 coexistence, China has betrayed this goodwill 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 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 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."

Jawaharlal Nehru: Mr Speaker, Sir, we meet in Parliament today earlier than was intended, because of a grave crisis that has arisen. This House, and everybody in India, and the greater part of the world know that the People's Republic of China has invaded India with massive forces, and there have been some bloody battles resulting in considerable casualties on both sides.

For five years, we have been the victims of Chinese aggression across our frontiers in the north. That aggression was, to begin with, rather furtive. Occasionally there were some incidents and conflicts. These conflicts might well be termed frontier incidents. Today, we are facing a regular and massive invasion of our territory by very large forces.

China, which has claimed and still claims to be anti-imperialist, is pursuing a course today for which comparisons can only be sought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In those past days, the European Powers in the full flood of imperialist aggression and with strength and weapons given to them by the Industrial Revolution took possession of large parts of Asia and Africa by force. That imperialism has abated now, and many of the colonies of European countries have been freed and are independent countries. But, curiously, the very champions of anti imperialism, that is, the People's Government of China, are now following the course of aggression and imperialist expansion.

[Omitted: Exchange on procedure]

Jawaharlal Nehru: It is sad to think that we in India, who have pleaded for peace all over the world, and who have sought the friendship of China and treated them with courtesy and consideration and pleaded their cause in the councils of the world should now ourselves be victims of new imperialism and expansionism by a country which says that it is against all imperialism. This strange twist of history has brought us face to face with something that we have not experienced in this way for over a hundred years or more. We had taken it almost for granted that despite some lapses in recent years, as

in the Suez affair, we had taken it for granted that this type of aggression was almost a thing of the past. Even the Chinese aggression on our borders during the last five years, bad as it was, and indicative of an expansionist tendency, though it troubled us greatly, hardly led us to the conclusion that China would indulge in a massive invasion of India. Now, we have seen and experienced this very invasion and it has shocked us, as it has shocked a large number of countries.

History has taken a new turn in Asia and perhaps the world, and we have to bear the brunt of it, to fight with all our might this menace to our freedom and integrity. Not only are we threatened by it, but all the standards of international behaviour have been upset and so all the world is affected by it, apart from the immediate consequences. No self-respecting country which lives its freedom and its integrity can possibly submit to this challenge. Certainly, India, this dear land of ours, will never submit to it whatever the consequences, we accept the challenge in all its consequences, whatever they may be ...

It may be that this challenge is also an opportunity for us. Indeed, the people of India in their millions have demonstrated that they accept this challenge and have shown a unity and an enthusiasm such as has been very seldom in evidence. A crisis has come and we have stood up to face it and meet that crisis.

I have moved a Resolution seeking the approval of this House to the state of emergency that has been declared by the President. That was inevitable when foreign legions invaded India and our Constitution wisely provided for such a course to be followed by us in any serious crisis. I have no doubt that this House will approve of this declaration by the President and subsequently I hope also of the Defence of India Ordinance and the other steps that are being taken to face this crisis.

I should like this House for a moment to look at this matter in some perspective. We stand, I do believe, at a turning point not only in the history of India but of Asia and possibly even of the world, because what happens in this conflict will affect it obviously. It will affect Asia, of which two of the

biggest countries are China and India. But it will affect the world also and, therefore, this conflict has very wide reaching consequences. We should try to look at it from this point of view. For the moment, we are shocked at this cruel and crude invasion of another country. The world has also witnessed the response of the people of the country invaded, that is, our country, and the world will yet witness the way the people of India act when their freedom is threatened and their dear liberty is imperilled.

So, we are shocked and in a state of high excitement. That is inevitable, and not surprising, but we have to remember that this turning point in history is not going to end soon. We may have to face this for a long period, for a number of years, I do not know how long, and we must train ourselves, and the nation to be prepared to face, however long the crisis may last. It is in the mood, in that mentality, that I seek this House to give a lead to the country.

Chinese aggression on our frontiers is five years old and during these years this House has discussed this matter repeatedly. On the last occasion this discussion took place on the 12th August, 1962. Many White Papers have been issued, giving the long drawn-out correspondence between the Government of India and the Government of China. Only today I have placed another bunch of these papers contained in White Paper No. 7. On the 22nd August, 1962 we sent a note to China. A reply was sent to this on the 13th September last. But before the reply was sent or received by us, even on the 8th September, China's forces crossed the international boundary in the northwest corner of NEFA across the Thagla ridge and began to threaten the Indian post at Dhola. We had a number of posts near the northern frontier of NEFA adequate enough to meet any minor or normal incursion. We hoped that we would be able to meet this new aggression and immediately we took steps to strengthen our forces in that area.

Five days after this new aggression, on the 13th September, the Chinese Government sent us a threatening reply, asking for discussions on the boundary question. We have previously demonstrated by a mass of

evidence that our boundary is what has been called the McMahon Line, but the boundary was not laid down even by Mr McMahon, whoever is responsible for it. It was a recognition of the long standing frontier on the high ridge of the Himalayas which divided the two countries at the watershed. To some extent, though indirectly, the Chinese accepted this. Certainly, they accepted the continuation of this line in Burma. But, apart from the constitutional or legal aspects, it is undoubted and cannot be challenged that no Chinese has ever been in that part on this side of the line, excepting, as the House knows, in a little border village called Longju. Even the McMahon Line which the Chinese have called illegal was laid down 48 years ago, in 1914, and that was a confirmation of what was believed in then. Legal or not, it has been a part of India for a long number of years and certainly let us say for 50 years or so, apart from its previous history which is also in our favour. Here then is a boundary which for nearly 50 years has been shown to be our northern frontier. I am limiting what I say to 50 years for the sake of argument; really it was even before that. Even if the Chinese did not accept it and I would like to say that the objection they raised in 1913 to this treaty was not based on their objection to the McMahon Line; it was based on their objection to another part of the treaty, which divided Inner Tibet and Outer Tibet, the McMahon Line did not come in that; however, it is a fact that they objected to the whole treaty because of that other objection. Even if the Chinese did not accept it then, this has been in existence now in our maps in our practice, in our Constitution, in our organization, administration etc., for nearly 50 years. Even the non-acceptance of it, can it entitle them to undertake an armed invasion to upset it? Even the Chinese know and say that independent India has been in possession of this territory right up to the Himalayan watershed. It is rather difficult for me to say what they say. Because, if any person takes the trouble to read through this vast correspondence, he will notice that their alleged frontier is a very mobile one; it changes. It is wherever they have laid the frontier and in this matter too they have stated many contradictory things. They have laid stress sometimes on the fact that we have occupied

this area of NEFA or a large part of it since we became independent. That is a curious statement since, as I have said all along, it was fully recognised in 1913-14. Apart from that, when we became independent, we did one thing. We naturally wanted these tribal people in the frontier areas to share our independence. The British largely left them to their own resources and interfered only when there was some trouble. But there is no doubt that the British considered their frontier to be the McMahon Line. They did not have a full fledged administrative apparatus there. On gaining independence, we were naturally anxious to develop these area as we were trying to develop other areas of India. We tried, therefore not only to introduce our administration there but schools, hospitals, roads, etc. It is this which the Chinese say represents our occupying that. Any person who sees these papers and the history behind them would easily say that we have occupied it in every sense, legally, constitutionally, administratively, practically for a large number of years.

Now, the point is that whatever the legal and constitutional aspect of their claim might be—we think there is no force whatever—does that justify sudden invasion of this kind? The House will remember that we have discussed this matter many times previously; we discussed it largely in relation to their aggression in Ladakh because nothing had happened here except with the sole exception of the little frontier village Longju.

Repeatedly, in the course of talks sometimes they are reflected in these papers too—we were given to understand something not absolutely, not clearly; as has now been discovered, always their phrases had a double meaning attached to them which could be interpreted any way, to assure us of something and later to deny that they had assured us. I remember the long talk I had with the Chinese Prime Minister, specially about the McMahon Line. I forget the exact date; it was five years ago or six years ago; I do not remember exactly. That was when he came to India. We had a long talk and immediately after the talk I put down .in a note I prepared the contents of our talk so that I might not forget it. That note is here in our Office. Much later I sent an extract of my note of that talk to the Chinese

Government and they denied the truth of it; I was very much surprised and hurt because I was quite certain. When we were talking it was not once I asked. I asked the same question two or three times and definitely the answer was given to me. He gave me to understand that although the Chinese Government considered the McMahon line an illegal line and a British imperialist line, nevertheless because of the large number of facts, because of their desire to be friendly with us, they would [be] prepared to do this. That was the clearest impression that I got. He denied it later on. So, it becomes a little difficult to say what they stood by at a particular time. Anyhow, my point is that whether they acknowledge the McMahon Line or not undoubtedly it has been, till a few weeks ago, completely in our possession; the area on this side was completely in our possession; for generations past it has been in our possession; if you like it I can put a later date, 1913-14 and I may say that it was a recording of what had been happening previously. How does it justify the Chinese Government to carry on an invasion of it, by any law, international standards of behaviour or for any other reason?

The House may have noticed a very peculiar approach that the Chinese Government has made to what has happened recently in NEFA. They go on saying that India attacked them and their frontier guards as they are called, are merely defending themselves. I must confess that this complete perversion of facts and the attempt to make falsehood appear to be the truth, and the truth to be the falsehood has amazed me because nothing can be more utterly baseless than what they have been saying. Here is a single fact. We have been up to the McMahon line all these years; we have not gone one inch beyond nor have we covered another's territory. They have come, let us for the moment assume their case that there is some doubt about where the McMahon line is. But the point is that they have invaded an area which has not been in their possession ever, ever in the history of the last 10,000 years. After all the present Chinese Government came into existence 12 years ago or thereabout. Any claim that they may directly make to this territory can only be made either in these 12 years or

possibly previously through Tibet. So, it becomes a question of what they can claim through Tibet or through their domination over Tibet. It is true that for a long time past there were some frontier questions between Tibet and India, even in British times. But all these questions were about little pockets or little frontier areas, small areas. Nobody has ever put forward, no Tibetan Government has ever put forward previously these large claims to what tantamount to two thirds of NEFA apart from the vast area in Ladakh.

So, we arrive at one firm conclusion which is not capable of argument or denial; that is, the Chinese have come to this territory with a massive force, territory which for a long time at least has been included in India, and administered in a vague way and a little fully administered by India. If they had any claim they could have discussed it and talked about it and adopted various means of peaceful settlement, appointed arbitrators, or gone to the Hague Court or whatever it was.

Here, I may say, it has been unfortunate, in this as in so many other cases, that the present Government of China is not represented in the United Nations. Hon. Members are surprised when we have supported the Chinese representation-the representation of the People's Government of China-in the United Nations, we have supported it in spite of this present invasion, because we have to look at it this way: it is not a question of likes or dislikes. It is a question, which will facilitate Chinese aggression; it will facilitate its misbehaviour in the future. It will make disarmament impossible in the world. You might disarm the whole world and leave China, a great, powerful country, fully armed to the teeth. It is inconceivable. Therefore, in spite of our great resentment at what they have done, the great irritation and anger, still, I am glad to say that we kept some perspective about things and supported that even now. The difficulty is one cannot call them up before any tribunal or world court or anywhere. They are just wholly an irresponsible country believing, I believe, in war as the only way of settling anything, having no love of peace and stating almost that, and with great power at their disposal. That is the dangerous state of affairs not only for

India but for the rest of the world. I am not going into the question, as some people do, of communism or anti-communism. I do not believe that that is a major issue in this matter or any other. Communism may help; but the major issue is, an expansionist, imperialist-minded country deliberately invading into a new country...

[Interjection omitted]

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not know what the hon. Member has said. I am not entering into that argument. I am laying stress on this fact, because as some countries do, they explain everything in terms of communism and anti-communism. I think the result is that they are unable to see many of the basic facts of the questions. Communism may help or communism may hinder. Communism may give them a certain strength of weakness, whatever it may be. But today we are facing a naked aggression, just the type of aggression which we saw in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was then no communism anywhere.

[Interjection omitted]

Jawaharlal Nehru: So, we have to face this new type of imperialism on our border. Asia is facing this new type, and the whole world is concerned with that. For the moment, we are most concerned with it, and we have to face it and bear the burden ourselves, although some of our friendly countries are certainly helping us and we are grateful to them for that help.

To say that we are committing all this aggression on Chinese territory is a kind of double talk which is very difficult for a man of my simple mind to understand. "We commit aggression ourselves; we commit aggression on the soil of our own country and they defend it by coming over the mountains into our territory." It is really extraordinary to what length people can go to justify their misdeeds.

It is true that when we heard on the 8th September of their coming over the

Thagla pass into our territory in some forces, we had quite adequate forces in our posts. We had no doubt some forces there to meet any incursion, but if large forces come over, an ordinary military post can hardly resist them. We took immediate steps to send further forces to reinforce our posts. We sent them immediately as we had to in the circumstances; yet there was one unfortunate factor which normally should be remembered. That was, if we send our forces, who are tough, young and strong, nevertheless, we send them from the plains of India suddenly to 14,000 ft. high. For any person; however strong he may be, it requires time to be acclimatised to these heights. But they went there. Then they went there, then began a process; we sent some further forces and thought that they would be adequate to meet the Chinese menace in so far as it was feasible. The Chinese also started increasing their forces there. Now, for them, it was a relatively easy matter, because they have vast forces in Tibet. I do not know how much they have. They used to have 11 divisions, and I told they now have 13 or 14 divisions in Tibet. Just imagine the very vast armies they are having in Tibet alone.

[Translation begins:

Rameswaranand: Now you must have understood the thinking process of the Chinese!

Translation ends]

Jawaharlal Nehru: I think, if the hon. Member feels keenly about it, we will send him to the frontier. Perhaps the speeches may convince the Chinese, so, first of all, the Chinese armies were fully acclimatised, living for long on the high plateau of Tibet. It was just not in the line with the ridge but only a little below the ridge.

Secondly, the whole of Tibet has been covered in the last few years by roads, and the roads there, in that extremely severe climate, mean simply levelling the ground, removing boulders, etc., because you do not require cement or anything at that height. The ground itself is so very hard. So, this

is covered by roads, and they can travel perhaps at quick notice from one part to another in Tibet.

So, they could bring large forces to the other side of the Thagla ridge. They would not be immediately visible to us, because on the other side—and that is what we believe happened—although some forces were being added on by the Chinese crossing the Thagla ridge they could not be seen. They were adding large numbers of forces on the other side nearby and in the last few days of this battle that occurred there on the 20th, they poured in masses of the people. I do not know how much: six, seven and eight times the number of troops that we had. They have thus logistic advantage not only of bringing troops but supplying everything that could be brought immediately on the other side of the Thagla ridge and send them. We had a certain disadvantage. I am merely mentioning the facts—the logistic disadvantage of the people having been suddenly sent to those heights, everything that they require has to be sent by air, and our Air Force has done a very fine piece of work there in taking everything by air in spite, sometimes, of enemy fire and the difficulties that always occur in those high mountains. So, this went on.

May I add that there has been a great deal of attack about our unpreparedness. I think most of it is based on ignorance (Interruption).

Hari Vishnu Kamath¹⁰⁶: We do not want to interrupt; you may go on replying in your own way.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am glad of this generosity in not interrupting me. I say most of this talk is based on ignorance of facts. Some of them are true: first of all, it is perfectly true that we were not prepared to face two or three divisions of the Chinese army descending upon the forces there.

[Translation begins:

¹⁰⁶ PSP

Rameswaranand: I want to know what you were doing till now?

Speaker: Please listen to him first. If you interrupt like this how would we conduct the proceedings of the House?

Rameswaranand: He has been caught in this mistaken notion, and now he is not even prepared to listen to us.

Speaker: At least, listen to him with some patience.

Rameswaranand: I want to know what they were doing. Those people were attacking us and what were these people doing?

Bagri: When Swamiji was saying something, our Prime Minister said that penetrate their frontier. Our children will go to the frontier, because they are brave. They will go up to China and come back victorious.

Translation ends]

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Swamiji, I am afraid, has not acquired ...

[Translation begins:

Ram Sewak Yadav: Swamiji is agitated because he does not understand this language. You explain to him.

Jawaharlal Nehru: This is what I was saying. Swamiji does not understand anything.

Ram Sewak Yadav: Swamiji understands everything.

Jawaharlal Nehru: This is not just a matter of language.

Ram Sewak: Hon. Speaker, it is inappropriate to say that any hon.

Member does not understand anything.

Speaker: Please try to understand my problem. If Swamiji, does not understand this language, there are many other hon. Members who would not understand that language. Let us first listen to him and then decide how to make Swamiji understand.

Ram Sewak: The Prime Minister had once spoken in this language in the house. If he could answer this question in this language, we would be grateful.

Rameswaranand: When I had asked six months ago, you said all these speeches are printed in Hindi.

Speaker: This is not a strange thing that Swamiji is unable to understand this, now. Let us listen to the Prime Minister first, and then decide.

Rameswaranand: I have felt so, hence I have spoken so.

Speaker: Now, Swamiji will sit quietly.

Translation ends]

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am sorry not to be able to oblige Swamiji. I would have been glad to oblige him, but my difficulty is, as you yourself have been pleased to remark, in a matter of this kind, there are many Members of this House who might not understand me otherwise.

I was talking about unpreparedness¹⁰⁷. It is perfectly true, as I said that we were unprepared to meet a massive invasion of two or three divisions. But the other things that are said about roads, about blankets, etc. are very largely incorrect ... (Interruptions).

¹⁰⁷ See item 445.

Mohan Swarup¹⁰⁸ (Pilibhit): what about arms?

Jawaharlal Nehru: It is really extraordinary that many persons here who know nothing about arms talk about arms. (Interruptions).

Speaker: Let us hear the hon. Prime Minister. All sections shall have their opportunity to express themselves, we are now listening to the Prime Minister.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not wish to go into details. I merely wanted to indicate that the criticisms that are made, partly justified, are largely not justified. About arms, it is not a thing which one normally talks about in Parliament openly. But I would be glad to explain what we have done, what we have not done and the difficulties that we had to face.

The hon. House will remember that till independence, our defence department was entirely under the War Office, and the War Office not only laid down the policy, but insisted that everything as far as possible should be acquired through Whitehall. During the last Great War, because of the difficulties of acquiring war material from abroad, from the United Kingdom, some of our ordnance factories grew up, but still they were rather elementary. The first problem we had to solve, therefore, was to get out of this Whitehall atmosphere and the practice of our acquiring everything from there, determining our own policy, and all that. I think we have done rather well to build up in these years this industry.

There is always a choice and there has been a choice in this and other matters for us to buy arms from abroad or to make them ourselves. Obviously it is infinitely better to make them ourselves, because that strengthens the country, industrially and otherwise; and secondly, you cannot altogether rely on outside supplies; any moment they may fail you

and economically it is bad to get them from outside. So, our practice has been to try to build up our arms, the industry and the like in the country, and we have done fairly well. We might have done better; I do not know. All kinds of difficulties arise, because development of one industry depends on the whole industrial background of the country. We have laid stress on that. I would not go into that.

A great deal was said about arms, automatic rifles and the rest. For the last three or four years, we have been trying to make them and various difficulties arose about patents, this, that and the other, and sometimes about our own difficulties in finding enough foreign exchange. This has been a continuing difficulty, as to how much we should spend in the shape of foreign exchange. Ultimately, we got over these difficulties and we started their manufacture, I forget the date, but sometime this year, and we are now making them.

The only alternative was previously for us to get a large number of those weapons from abroad. We hesitated; we wanted to make them ourselves. Undoubtedly, we could have got them, but remember this. If we had tried to get all those weapons from abroad in what might be called relatively peace time, we would have had to spend enormous sums of money. Our whole planning, etc. will have gone, because when you talk of weapons in terms of war, you talk in terms of thousands of crores. It is not a question of a few crores, but thousands of crores and it would have smashed our economy. It is a different matter when we have to face this tremendous crisis, which both our people feel so much and the world sees; we can get better terms to get the things and our people are prepared to spend much more.

I am merely pointing out some things; they may not be an adequate explanation, but I want you to appreciate that every attempt has been made and continually being made to build up industry—an aircraft industry, an arms industry, etc., an up-to-date one. Obviously, we cannot be up-to-date in the sense of competing, let us say, with America or the Soviet Union or England. It is just not possible for us to advance our basic industries and science so much. But we have made good advance

scientifically. One of the most important features is that the defence science department that we have built up is a high class affair, employing about 2,000 scientists.

Anyhow, if there were mistakes committed or delays committed, it is not for me to go into that now. It is not a good thing for us to apportion blame and say that such and such officer or such and such Minister, etc. is to blame. We are all to blame, in a sense. (Interruptions).

It is a fact that ever since 1st October, when I returned from abroad, every day I have been connected—previously I was connected through the Defence Ministry, but from the 1st October, I have been there every day. We, the Chiefs of Staff and others sat together and discussed the matters. And, naturally, it is for the experts, the Chiefs of Staff and their advisers to determine the tactics, the strategy etc., of fighting, and not for me; I do not know enough about it.

I can only put questions to them, make suggestions to them, leaving the final carrying out of it to their hands.

We took several steps. On the very next day, on 2nd October, we called back the Chief of the General Staff, General Kaul, who was on leave then. I want to mention his name specially because, quite extraordinarily unjust things have been said about him. We sent for him and we changed the method of command, separating Naga Hills etc., from NEFA. He went there practically within 24 hours. Some people say he had not had any experience of fighting. That is not correct. He had the experience of fighting in Burma. He was our Military Attache in Washington when the trouble occurred in Kashmir, but he begged us to send him there. We sent him there and he was there. I doubt, knowing a good many of our officers and others, many of them are good in sheer courage and initiative and hard work, if we can find anybody to beat him. Anyhow, it is very unfair for our officers who are bearing a heavy burden, whether it be Kaul or anybody else, to be criticised in this way, criticised by foreign correspondents sending messages abroad. That is a highly improper, highly irresponsible thing to be done when they are bearing such heavy burden.

Then General Kaul, as soon as he went over there—he went there suddenly from here to 14,000 feet—daily walked 16 to 20 miles from post to post over highly precipitous mountain area. He fell ill and he came here to report after four or five days.

[Translation begins:

Rameswaranand: Those who died, what happened to them? Didn't they get treatment there?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I would like to beg Swamiji that what we are discussing here is not a matter of joke. It is tied to India's future. He thinks that we are having fun. We are discussing here a very grave issue.

Rameswaranand: We are with you... we are with you. We are ready to die for the country. Please listen to us at least.

Translation ends]

Speaker: Order, order. I would first ask the hon. Members on these benches, on the Congress side, not to interfere or take into their own hands the right to silence any other hon. Member. I think I am competent enough. I will deal with any hon. member who interrupts or who says things like that. Whenever I need the help of all those hon. Members I will request them. But I think I would not need that. I hope hon. Members on this side would not compel me to go to that extent. They will have ample opportunity to have their say. I will allow them as much as they want. Now they should listen patiently. When their turn comes and when they speak, if they are interrupted in this manner, they would not like that. Therefore, we should listen to the Prime Minister in order to be able to criticise what he has said. If they do not listen to him, how shall the hon. Members on this side criticise those facts that he is giving. Let him have his say. When their opportunity comes they can criticise him.

[Translation begins:

Rameswaranand: Since you have started explaining to us, please say a couple of words in Hindi also.

Speaker: I said that you keep quiet for now. When your turn comes you can speak as much as you wish.

Translation ends]

Jawaharlal Nehru: I would like to point out to the house a fact, which is no doubt known, that this invasion by the Chinese did not merely take place in NEFA on the 20th October. On that very day it was a coordinated attack all along the line from Ladakh to NEFA. Therefore, to say that because we had attacked them, we are perfectly justified in pushing them and attacking them in NEFA. To make that an excuse and say that we had attacked them in NEFA and therefore, they are attacking us on that day all among the line of Ladakh is a thing which is manifestly a false statement, a made-up thing. Now, a few days after the 20th October—I think it was 24th—a message was sent to the heads of Governments or heads of States in cases where it may be so, almost all of them, pointing out the background of Chinese invasion and stating our firm resolve to resist it—a copy of it I have placed on the Table of the House [26/27 October 1962 was the date of the message]. We have received many replies, not from all yet, but from many of them, extending their sympathy and support at the present crisis. Just soon after, four or five days after this massive attack, the Chinese Prime Minister came out with what is called, a "three-point proposal", on which a ceasefire might be arrived.¹⁰⁹ This was very vague. It was not quite clear what he meant. But what appeared to us and what appeared later on to us on further elucidation was that it meant our not only acknowledging or partly acknowledging their right to be where they were on our territory, but our force retiring still further, some 20 kilometres or so; that is to say,

¹⁰⁹ See appendix 26.

although the Chinese armies would retire a little on our territory we would retire further and they would have an opportunity to build up their strength on our territory to attack us further later. It is an impossible thing for us to agree to. There has been more confusion about this in the country, not only here but in other countries too, but as we have explained it. Most people have understood it-I am talking about other countries.¹¹⁰

We, in reply or independently rather, proposed that they should retire to the line prior to the 8th September, that is, behind the McMahon Line there and they should also retire the advances they had made since the 8th September in Ladakh. Some of our friends have said that this was a weak proposal, we should have asked them to go out completely. Well, it is for the House to judge our weakness and strength, and the proposals must have some realities because we have not only to abide by it but we have to convince all our friends elsewhere that we are making something, a proposal which is reasonable and which can be given effect to. The proposal was that they should retire to that line as it stood on 8th September both in NEFA and Ladakh. Then we were prepared to meet their representatives to consider what further steps should be taken to lessen tension etc. Once that was agreed to, then would come as a third step our meeting together to consider the merits of the question, we have made that proposal and we stand by it. I think it is a reasonable proposal and certainly not in any sense a dishonourable or a weak one.

Then, meanwhile, many of our friends abroad, well intentioned countries, made various efforts to bring about ceasefire, stoppage of fighting and a consideration of the matter on the merits. Their efforts, or rather their desire, to help in stopping this fighting is very laudable, and we welcome their desire. But, not knowing all the detailed facts, sometimes they made some proposals which had no great relevance to the situation.

I shall refer only to one of them and that was the reference made by

¹¹⁰ See Chou En-lai's rejection of this proposal, appendix 39, and Nehru's rejection of Chou En-lai's position, item 395.

President Nasser of the UAR. I must pay my tribute to President Nasser in this matter because he did not make a vague proposal in the air. People advise us to be good and peaceful, as if we are inclined to war. In fact, if we are anything, as the House well knows, we do not possess the warlike mentality and that is why for the purpose of war there is weakness. We may have developed it, but that is a different matter, I am talking of the past. So, people talking to us to be good boys and make it up has no particular meaning, unless they come to grips with the particular issues involved. Now, President Nasser took the trouble to understand the facts and, thereafter, issued a presidential decree or communique issued by the President—in the Council of the UAR,¹¹¹ in which he made certain proposals. These proposals were not exactly on the lines we had suggested but were largely in conformity with our proposals. They laid special stress on troops withdrawing to their lines where they stood prior to the 8th of September. That was a major thing. That fitted in with our proposal. China has rejected this proposal, made by President Nasser.¹¹²

Now, this crisis is none of our making or seeking. It is China which has sought to enforce its so-called territorial claims by military might. Indeed, she has advanced beyond the line of her territorial claims. As I said, their frontier is a mobile one; anything they could grasp becomes their frontier. In this task, in defending our frontiers and our motherland, we have sought help from all friendly countries. I wish to express my gratitude for the prompt response to our appeal for sympathy and support which have been

¹¹¹ On 31 October 1962.

¹¹² See item 389. Nasser proposed on 26 October that both India and China should revert to the situation prior to 20 October 1962 and cease fighting forthwith; a no-man's zone be established between the two sides and then enter into peace talks. China declined, as it felt that "neither the restoration of the state of boundaries as before September 8, nor restoration of the state boundaries as before October 20 when the clashes began, constitute a reasonable basis for a peaceful settlement". [In fact, the 4-point proposals were an improvement on the earlier proposals from the Indian perspective since they clarified the withdrawal line of 20 October 1962 as the one that existed on 8 September 1962.] South China Morning Post, no.2865, 23 November 1962, pp.28-29.

given to us by various countries. This help that is given is unconditional and without any strings. It does not therefore, affect directly our policy of non-alignment which we value. Those countries, which have helped us have themselves recognised this aid, made it clear that they do not expect us to leave that policy. Help has been given to us swiftly by the United States, by the United Kingdom and by some other friendly countries. We are in touch with many others. We have also made approaches to other friendly countries like the Soviet Union and France for supply of equipment. We have often declared that we do not covet any territory of anyone else; we are quite satisfied with our own territory such as it is. But there is another aspect of that. We do not submit to anyone else coveting our territory and although the aggressor in this instance has gained some initial successes—I do not know what they have in mind, whether they want to use it as a bargaining counter or they have some other evil designs—as I have said we cannot submit to it, whatever the consequences.

There is one other aspect which I should like to mention, which is not indirectly connected with this matter but directly connected, and that is our development plans and the Five Year Plan. Some people have said "let us give up these Plans so that we may concentrate on the war effort." What is the war effort? People think of the soldiers in the front, which is perfectly right. They are bearing the brunt of the heat and danger. But in this matter, in the kind of struggle that we are involved in, every peasant in the field is a soldier, every worker in a factory is a soldier. Our work, our war effort essentially, apart from the actual fighting done, is in ever greater production in the field and factory. We must remember that. It is an effort which depends greatly on our development. Today we are much more in a position to make that kind of effort in field and factory than, let us say, ten or twelve years ago; there is no doubt about that. We are not still adequately developed. I hope this very crisis will make us always remember that an army today, a modern army, fights with modern weapons, which it has to manufacture itself in that country. It is based on the development of industry, and that industry must have an agricultural base if it is to succeed.

Therefore, we have to develop all round, apart from agriculture and industry, which are the basic things in our Five Year Plan. Then there is power, which is essential from the point of view of war effort, from the point of view of industry, from the point of view of even agriculture, so that to talk of scrapping the Five Year Plan is not to understand the real springs of our strength. We have to carry the Five Year Plan and go beyond it in many respects. It may be, in some matters which are considered non-essential, we may tone down or leave them but in the major things of the Five Year Plan we have to make the fullest effort. Among the major things agriculture is highly important. How can a country fight when it is lacking in food? But do not think we will be. We have to grow more and more, which is a difficult thing. We have laid down the targets for our agricultural produce in our Five Year Plan, but in the last year or two, this year especially, we have fallen behind because of floods and all kinds of things.

Now, although we have fallen behind, I take it that we have to aim at higher targets than we have laid down even in the Third Plan, and I am sure we shall get that. I am not talking vaguely. I think we can get that, we cannot get it so easily if we laid down certain targets in the office here in the Food Ministry. We must go down to the agriculturist, and transform his present enthusiasms, his present energy into greater production. Nothing is more cheering and heartening than the reaction amongst the people, amongst the peasants, who have given their little mite. Let them transform them into greater production. I am sure they can if we approach them rightly. So also with industry; so also with many other things like education etc. We must look upon all of them as part of the war effort that we have to make. In this process I hope we shall not only build up our nation more swiftly but will make it stronger, make it more social-minded, and lay the base of the socialist structure that we aim at.

This peril we have to face is a grave menace. This challenge may be converted into opportunity for us to grow and to change the dark cloud that envelops our frontiers into the bright sun not only of freedom but of welfare in this country.

In effect we have to look at this matter as an effort of the whole nation. We may say—some people say—we want an armed people. That is true in a sense. But what we really want is the whole people mobilised for this effort doing their separate jobs whether it is in the field, the factory, or the battlefield, thus combining together and strengthening the nation and bringing success to us. We have to be armed, therefore, not only by weapons of warfare but by weapons of agriculture, industry and all those as well.

We do not minimise our task. Let no man minimise it or have any illusions about it. It is not a thing which we can deal with by momentary enthusiasm, enthusiasm of the moment or lasting a month or two. It is a long effort that we require, a difficult effort, and we shall have to go out to do our utmost. It is not merely enough to pay something to the Defence Fund or to do something else. That is good in its own way. It is very welcome how people are paying them by straining every nerve to the utmost. We have to keep up our strength and our determination to the end. And that end may not be near. Therefore we have to prepare in every way to strengthen the nation not only for today and tomorrow but for the day after also to meet this menace. If we do that, I have no doubt that we shall be able to show the determination and fortitude that is required of our people. We have had a glimpse of it in their present enthusiasm which has been a most moving sight. To see our people come, not only the young but the old—old men and old women—and the young, little children and their enthusiasm has been a sight to gladden any heart.

Now before I end I should like to say a word about our soldiers and airmen who are working under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. I want to send on your behalf our greetings and assurance of our full assistance. To those who have fallen in defence of the country we pay our homage. They will not be forgotten by us or by those who follow us. I am confident that all sides of this House will stand united in this great venture and will demonstrate to the world that free India which has stood for peace and will always stand for peace and friendship with other countries can never

tolerate aggression and invasion. If we have worked for peace as we have done and we shall continue to do so, we can also work for war effectively if we are attacked as we have been.

Sir, I commend these Resolutions to the House.

272. In the Rajya Sabha: Emergency and Chinese Attack¹¹³

The Prime Minister (Jawaharlal Nehru): Chairman, Sir, I speak on the Resolution moved by my friend and colleague, the Home Minister.¹¹⁴ As a matter of fact, I do not think it is necessary for anyone to speak in commending that Resolution because every party and group and every individual in this House, I gather, approves of it and gives it full support. And what is much more important, that support has come in a tremendous and magnificent measure from the people of this country.

I shall, therefore, say something about some points, some outstanding features of this situation more particularly about the way we have to condition our mentality to face it. Some people have criticised our unpreparedness and may I add that I hope, not now but somewhat later at a more suitable time, there will be an enquiry into this matter, because there is a great deal of misunderstanding and misapprehension and people have been shocked—all of us have been shocked—by the events that occurred from the 20th October onwards for a few days and the reverses that we suffered. So I hope there will be an enquiry so as to find out what mistakes or errors were committed and who was responsible for them. But for the present that cannot be done and I do not wish to state before the House anything in regard to those matters though I do think that many of the charges made have little substance. The real thing, the basic thing, is that

¹¹³ Statement on Resolution on Emergency, Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol. XLI, Nos. 1-8, 8 November to 19 November 1962, pp. 402-426.

¹¹⁴ Lal Bahadur Shastri.

we as a nation, in spite of brave speeches now and then, have been conditioned in a relatively peaceful manner, in a democratically peaceful manner, which is somewhat opposed to the type of conditioning that a country like China at present has had, especially in the last dozen years or so. They have been conditioned, even previously they have been in a sense at war, I should say for thirty years, in a condition of war, not war with foreign countries but war in their own country, and the House will remember how constantly this idea of war was being put forward by them. America has been their chief *bête noire*, their chief enemy and constantly they were rousing up their people against America, against imperialists and the like so as to keep up that mentality of war, that constant preparation for war, for building up for war and all that. We, on the other hand, have constantly spoken about peace and we are, in spite of sometimes using excited language, a peaceful people, and we have pleaded for peace all over the world and in our own country and naturally that conditioning is of a different type than the type of conditioning that China, for instance, has had during the last dozen years. Having conditioned their people, they can turn the direction, they can turn the people's thinking in any way they choose. It was against America; suddenly India becomes enemy no. 1. Not that America ceases to be in their minds the enemy, but they turn it round saying that we are the stooges of America. Therefore, all the previous conditioning against America is turned round to us. For them it is really as if we are doing a job for America, as if it did not directly concern us. Now, in normal times, even apart from this conditioning and the rest, democratic countries do not normally behave like, well, countries—if I may give you an instance—like Hitler behaved in Germany. Now, great countries—not countries which are pacifists—like England, like France and the rest had powerful armies; yet they were not conditioned in the way that Germany was under Hitler, and when war came the result was that in spite of their vast armies, the French army and the British army with the fullest equipment they had with them could not stand up against Hitler and they were swept off. France was humiliated and humbled and then the British army, almost the whole of it,

was swept into the English Channel. Not that it was not a good army, but the aggressor has an advantage and the conditioning of the aggressor makes it a more fit instrument for the initial attack. First of all, the aggressor chooses the point of attack, the day and the time of attack, which is an advantage. So this has to be borne in mind. Now, we in the last many years have thought certainly of keeping our army, air force, etc., but we have thought that the essential way of gaining strength is industrialising the country and improving our agriculture because struggles are fought today even more than at the battle front in the field and factory and we thought—and we still think—that even from the point of view of strengthening our defence forces the background behind them in the field and factory was essential. Without a proper industry no modern war can be fought. We may get as we are getting—and we are thankful for getting them—arms from abroad because the emergency compels us to do so, to get them. Yet we cannot fight for any length of time with merely aid from abroad. We have to produce the weapons of war here and behind those weapons of war and behind that industry which is so essential is the agricultural background. No industry can be built up unless agriculture is functioning. So we come back to the growth of agriculture and industry and we have been trying to do that in the last so many years by Five Year Plans and the rest. Naturally, the Five Year Plans were meant to raise the level of living of our people, to give them certain amenities, to raise the national income and all that; but essentially, if I may venture to state to this House, they were meant to strengthen the country, to strengthen even the defence forces of the country. Now, many people thought, being used in the past to getting everything from abroad, that this was the easiest way—getting arms and everything from abroad. Originally, our Indian Army before Independence consisted of very brave men, but it was essentially an outgrowth of the British Army. Most of the officers, all the senior officers were foreign, were British. Gradually, some of our officers rose in rank and a very, very few became Brigadiers. For the rest, I think, Colonel was the topmost rank. All the policy was laid down in Whitehall. They did not bother. They had to carry out that policy. Almost all

the fighting material—not human beings but arms, etc. —came from England chiefly. There was only a slight advance in our arms production during the Second World War because it became very difficult to supply India from England. Their own demands were terrific and there was distance. Therefore, the British Government encouraged the production of certain arms and ammunition in our ordnance factories. Even so, nothing except the most ordinary arms were allowed to be made here. The rest had to come from there. That was the state of affairs when we took charge. First of all, all the policy, direction, etc. changed, from Whitehall direction to Indian direction. We had good people. Yet all the training and thinking was originally derived from Whitehall or from Sandhurst, etc., which is good training. I do not say that it is bad. And they are very fine men. Nevertheless, it was somewhat out of touch with Indian conditions. Gradually, we had to bring that round, to fit in more with Indian conditions, but more particularly the whole question of production was before us. We could not rely on foreign sources for arms, etc. After all, when one is forced to do, one gets it from anywhere, as we are doing it today. But that is not a safe thing and that does not produce a sense of self-reliance and self-dependence. Now, to build up a modern arms industry requires not only some prototype being obtained and copying it. That is difficult enough. But it requires an industrial background in the country. It is out of a background of industry that these things arise, not a specific thing. You make something which may be good for war without any background. We have to have a vast number of scientists, technicians, etc. and long experience of doing it. All these years we have been trying to do that and I think we have made very considerable progress. We have today in our Defence Science Department—I do not exactly know it—I think more than two thousand scientists working. Because you cannot get the real thing here, to get some idea of it, you have to build up your own prototypes and then after building them up you have to experiment with them, try them, and then finally decide in favour and then produce them in large quantities. All this takes time. We have always had this idea that the way to strengthen our army is

to go through these processes. It is true that in defence one has to fix some period with some idea in one's mind as to when one may be confronted with a war crisis. Suppose, we are confronted with a war crisis in a year's time. In our thinking everything else has to be conditioned to that year. We cannot produce big things within that year. We have to do something. If a war is suddenly thrust upon you, immediately you have to do as best as you can. But in doing the best we can, for the time being, we really lessen our capacity for the future, even to carry on with war for the future, unless we build it up from below as I have said. That was the problem always before us. Every country when it thinks of arms, etc.—apart from this point of building up the arms industry—has to consider when the time for trial will come. I remember the first time I came into the Government, before I became Prime Minister, I was Vice-President of the Council and one day a problem came up before us about the Army. What Army should we keep? That was just after the World War. This was before Pakistan came into existence and before there was any particular danger. And we were put this question; "When do you expect, what time do you expect to have before a war will take place?" Any war. We had nobody in view. That is to say, we can concentrate more on preparations for it in the sense of long-term preparations. If we think the war is next year, then the approach is different. And it was said; "Let us think, for the moment, ten years." At that time there was no question of building up the arms industry here. It was only a question of acquiring weapons. Ten years has no particular meaning. It was just a period, so that whatever we required should be spread out over ten years. That was the idea and that should be obtained from abroad. Later when we became independent we laid much greater stress on production here in this country. There were difficulties. Many people used to old methods, not only for our Army but for everything, for our railways, etc., preferred just giving a big order—a team going abroad and coming back here—for tanks, for this, that, and the other. It was simpler and they knew that tank. And they rather suspected or were afraid that if we made it ourselves it may not be quite as good. It may fail us. But that was not good

enough for a long-term effort, we had to do it ourselves and gradually it was built up. And then we had also, you will remember, always certain financial or foreign exchange difficulties, how much we should turn over to defence. Defence expenditure has gone up somewhat by normal peace time standards considerably. It affected our whole planning, our First Plan and Second Plan. So, we had to strike a balance somewhere, with all these difficulties and delays, nevertheless, we built up our defence industry, not by any means as we wanted it. The process continued and continues, but still I think with considerable success. If I could show you the rate at which our production in defence industry has gone up, you will notice that it is very considerable. I will not go into those figures. I am merely mentioning these things. Some people criticised that our ordnance factories have been making civilian goods. It was to the tune of about five per cent because when labour was unemployed it had to be turned to do something. And always the normal test is that ordnance factories or any arms manufacturing concerns cannot manufacture in peace time as fast as they are supposed to make in war time. Otherwise, you get stocked up with things tremendously. You cannot do anything with them. They get spoiled no doubt. The normal rate is—I forget the exact figure—that in war time you have to advance your rate of production between 15 and 20 per cent of peace time. Because you are spending so much, your ammunition is being fired at a tremendous pace, it must be replaced. In peace time you do it only when there are exercises. So, all these problems came to us. I was saying that our production has gone up very considerably—not civil production. It is a mere bagatelle, nothing—arms production for the Army, Navy and Air Force and especially for the Army and the Air Force. And now for the last month or two, of course, we have done extraordinarily well. I should like to say a word in commendation of those in charge of our arms production, the Director-General of it, who is a very able and very enthusiastic man, and all his workers and others. Their scientists and chiefly technicians are working today twenty-four hours a day. There is not a minute's interval when they stop. So, this process went on. It did not go on, I admit, completely, as fast

as a country bent on war would do it, because we had always to check it, because the more we spent on it, the less we had for other basic things, even for defence. As I said, I think agriculture is as important as guns in defence. I think the growth of industries is as important as guns. I think that power is as important as guns. All these things help in producing guns, all these things help in producing a well fed army and well fed country, all these things help us conserving our foreign exchange. All these things are inter-connected. One must not think of defence as something by itself, training people, parading them about and handing them guns for defence. So this process has been going on naturally limited by our resources, limited by many other factors, limited by the growth of our industrial development, and it has made a fairly good progress. It might have made more.

And now I should like to carry this argument to its conclusion. I would like to say that we have today, as everyone realises, a terrific problem which cannot be solved obviously by brave gestures and processions or anything like that, which are good in their own way, but obviously it is something when we are up against one of the biggest powers in the world. We have seen in the past, in the Great War and others, how great powers mauled at each other till ultimately, after three or four years or more they were all exhausted, utterly bled, and the greatest powers were defeated, defeated absolutely France, Germany, Japan for instance. They did not lack enthusiasm, they did not lack good armies or good navies or air force, they did not lack the industrial background. Yet they were defeated because it was a trial ultimately of something basic, not a question of a few guns or something but of the nerve and basic strength of a nation, the morale of a nation. That is what we have to face. I think we can face it with confidence, but I want you to think of the ordeals before us. We may have, as every army has, as every defence force has, reverses and all that, we have to survive them, we will survive them and not get terribly dispirited because we had a reverse. That is not a right outlook at any time but more specially when we are up against a highly organised and trained military machine like that of China which has, I believe, the biggest army in the world. Even in

Tibet I understand, they have got a vast army, leave out the huge legions in China. That is the problem before us. Now, in facing it, we face it today, as we try to do, with all the material we have and all the material we can get from abroad, and we have asked a large number of countries to supply it. The main countries which have supplied us thus far have been the United States and the United Kingdom, and we are grateful to them for it, but we have, if I may use the word, impartially asked many countries including the Soviet Union. I may add about the Soviet Union that all the previous commitments they made, I believe they stand by them, what further commitments they will make I cannot say. We have asked them, we have not got an answer yet. But on previous commitments they have said that they stand by them in spite of these developments.

So, we have to meet the situation, but if we realise, as we should realise, that this is a long-term effort, this may take, I cannot say how long, but mentally we must be prepared for a long, long time, for years, two years, three years or four years, the people and the country straining themselves to the uttermost— it is not a question of giving some money to a fund, it is not a question of some people being recruited, but every man and woman in the country being strained to the uttermost. If that is so, that can only be carried on if together with it we are thinking constantly of increasing our industrial potential and behind that our agricultural potential, and the industrial potential and the agricultural potential give us the war potential. War potential is not something apart from industrial potential and agricultural potential. That is why I have said that we dare not even for the sake of this war and the defence of our country slacken our efforts at increasing our industrial and agricultural potential or in other words give up our Five Year Plan. We may give up some bits of it—that is a different matter—which we consider non-essential, but the basic things of that have to continue, if for nothing else, just for the sake of this war situation. That is how I would like the House to consider this problem because it requires, apart from what we do, a certain mental adjustment to it. If we have not got that mental adjustment, we will be constantly having shocks, not being able

to do what we can. It is not a hundred yards race or a hundred metres race where we make a violent effort and go as fast as we can for a hundred yards in nine or ten seconds. You do it if you are fast runner and get exhausted at the end of it. If it is a very long race, and if you have to run a long race, let us say, of three miles or more, you run differently from how you run a hundred yards race. You have to keep your breath and get your second breath and carry on whatever happens, so that in that sense we have to look at this and not exhaust our energy, our capacity in initial spurts, and not have the energy left for something else because there is a limit to a nation's energy. To courage you may say there is no limit. Many men show courage unto death. Fewer men show courage living on the verge of death and yet working hard. That is true, but there is a limit to the totality of a nation's, I will not say courage but, strength, if you like, and you see that in these great wars that have taken place that limit was reached in the case of some countries like Germany and Japan. They collapsed six months before the other party might have collapsed. Mr Winston Churchill, I believe, talking about the First World War said—I forget his words—it was just a pure chance, he said, ultimately which side collapsed. It is a very well worded thing but I do not remember it. However, one has to think ahead and preserve that courage so that we could outlast the other party, our opponent, our enemy. That is the problem before us, and this requires not only tremendous mobilisation of the nation's resources but a mental adaptation to it. Some of us are not accustomed to facing these questions of a nation's life and death in war time— and we are not accustomed, let us be clear about it—we have heard of wars, read about wars, the first World War, the second World War and all that, but we were not emotionally concerned with them in the sense of that type of terrible suffering which people in Europe, people in the warring countries had, whether it was this side or that side, Germany, England, France and Russia. All these countries suffered terribly and to the last ounce of their blood they went on doing it, and then those people survived who had just the last ounce more than the others, they survived. That is the kind of struggle we are in. It is not a joke. And

now of course in a war one has to think of nuclear weapons; not we, we are not producing them and we do not intend producing them. China says it will produce them. It has not done so. It might—in a year's time—and even if it does, it will be an experimental thing, and it will not be a thing which they can use for several years. However, war now has become a different thing and that is why apart from our natural desire for peace in the world and in our country, it is too terrible to contemplate, even by people who like war but fear the annihilation of mankind. So, we have pleaded for peace, and the world generally has been responding to the call of peace, not our call but the general call of peace all over. Even the great leaders of nations are powerfully affected by it because they faced—as we faced only two or three weeks ago—suddenly a turn of events in Cuba, and the Cuba affair might have led to war, war in 24 hours or 48 hours. Well, they shrank back and wisely decided to avoid it. Now, that has been the past, and we, apart from—I imagine—every thinking person wanting to avoid wars—are particularly trained to some extent, even more, inclined that way because of Gandhiji, not that I say Gandhiji made any of us terribly peaceful or made us what he thought he would like to have made us, but we did not reach his ideal. With all that behind us we pursued a certain policy which at no time—I may tell the House—was a pacifist policy, which at no time meant weakening our defence forces but strengthening them to the utmost of our capacity having regard to the resources and finances at our disposal. Our defence forces, our army at the present moment is much larger than the limit placed on it by ourselves. It has simply grown by circumstances bigger. Even so it is a very small army compared to China's millions; there you go into many millions, we do not go into them; we only go into hundreds of thousands and, as I said, we thought of defence chiefly from the point of view, first of all, of defence science—which is the basis of defence production, of technicians and others. To get all that takes time. For a soldier to be trained, it does not take very much time. And in the same way we take weapons because it is often said that we did not give our people adequate weapons. That is both true and not true; that is to say, we have

not an army shifted over completely to automatic weapons; we are in the process of doing it. It is a lengthy process, manufacturing it ourselves, and we did not want, previous to this crisis, to spend large sums of money in getting those weapons from outside. We decided to make them ourselves, and we are making them now. But when the crisis came we had to give them—that is a different matter. We are trying to give them now, and in this connection, I might say that even an army like the British Army has only recently got automatic weapons. They are changing over now, in the course of some months, because their thinking is along different lines now, and we largely have followed their thinking; our officers and others who are responsible for this kind of thing have been trained there, have been in contact with them and think that way. The whole concept of war has changed. First of all, the air arm has become very important. Secondly, the nuclear weapons have become so important that conventional arms get relatively less important, and there is an argument whether the conventional army should be built up, or nuclear. All that is going on there. For us there is no choice. We do not have nuclear weapons and we are not likely to have them. But in the confusion of arguments this element of automatic weapons, even in an up-to-date and modern army like the British, was neglected in their military thinking; they did not think it was necessary or essential; they preferred some other weapons, 303 rifles, something which we have. Anyhow for the last two or three years we have been thinking of making the automatic weapons, not only thinking but also moving in that direction. But then all manner of difficulties are involved in it, because we have to get the prototypes, we have got to get the blueprints of them, and we have to make them ourselves making some adjustments for conditions here. Then we have tests and trials of them. It takes a long time. Last year we had been carrying this out, and now they are being produced or will be produced next month. Meanwhile we have got many of them from abroad. What I was venturing to point out to the House, were the problems that we had to face all the time, and at no time did we think that we can be complacent about this matter, about China or about their doings. But we did

think that we should build up the basic thing which will enable us to convert it into a proper war machine when the necessity arose, because, if we did not have the base, then the war machine would be without foundations, would be superficial and would depend only on some outside help that we can get. We get it no doubt as we are getting it now, but it will not be able to carry us through for very long, and also it was, shall I say, a question of judgment as to when this final challenge would come. Of course, previously hon. Members here and elsewhere asked us—I remember a speech delivered here too--"why did we not push them out two or three years ago in Ladakh?" Well, it is rather difficult to go into that because that kind of thing, if one goes to details, may help our enemy, but broadly speaking we wanted to be fully prepared for that. We did not want to go into it half prepared or quarter prepared, and again, the preparation involved roads, a tremendous deal of roads, and big arms factories being built, the old ones being modernised and enlarged and all that, which takes time. So we wanted that. It was no good our hitting out at the Chinese and being pushed back with force and being helpless after that. So, we prepared for that and tried to build up the roads and build up the posts, which posts were, obviously, not strong enough to hold them back if a big army came. A post of 100 or 200 men is more a signal post, that thus far you advance and no more, but if they decide to bring in a big army, they can sweep it away. That was the position in Ladakh and, therefore, we tried to hold them there and prepared to make ourselves stronger for a future tussle. In the NEFA region, as the House knows, they had not come at all except, originally, to a small village Longju which again-according to them-they claimed to be on the side of the McMahon Line. It is actually on the border, and even that, according to them, was not coming over the McMahon Line. Apart from that they had not come over at all during all this period. What they had stated all this time, and their actions, say, in regard to the Burma-China Treaty and others, led one to believe that they would not encroach any further. That does not mean that they were satisfied with that. They might proceed further if they liked, but nevertheless there was this idea which was spread

abroad by themselves, by their statements and activities. Although they said that this was an illegal McMahon Line, that they did not recognise it, nevertheless they always said that they would not cross it, and all these years we were in a sense better prepared here than in Ladakh, and especially lately we have built some more roads. But again, however prepared we were, it is a comparative question. No man can say that he is thoroughly prepared to meet anything. A hundred men may be prepared to meet five hundred men, but a hundred or five hundred or five thousand men are not prepared for a hundred thousand men to swoop down upon them or something. It is always a comparative thing. And we suddenly had to face a thing which certainly was not in our minds and we are, if you like, to blame for it, that an army of forty thousand or fifty thousand men will swoop down a small corner of NEFA and face our force which was about, I do not know-I do not wish to mention figures-but very much smaller.

Then, again, they have the facility of bringing large forces at short notice from Tibet. Tibet having a huge reservoir of Chinese army, they can bring it by road right up to the edge of the ridges because that is the end of the Himalayas there. They can bring it in, go over a little ridge there and down they are in our territory, the ridge being the watershed, while we have to go hundreds of miles of difficult territory. Now, although we have some roads, we have built them, yet almost everything that we had to send to the army had been by air. It is a terrific strain on our Air Force which have done remarkably well.

So, I want to keep this background before you that we were all the time thinking of producing conditions, both in our arms factories, in our defence science and the roads, etc. we built, which would enable us to meet them as strongly as possible. It was a question of whether we will be forced to face a big challenge, what time we might be forced and we could hurry these things up, but there is a limit to your hurrying an arms factory being built. Now we are thinking, and I hope the House will also think, in terms of a long-term effort, we cannot say how long it will be, but as things are, we dare not allow ourselves to think of a short-term effort, because if we think

so, we will be disappointed, and that is disheartening thing if you do not make up your mind for a long-term effort and prepare for a short-term one, because then all your calculations are upset. Also, if we think in a short-term way, we will prepare for a short-term thing; we would not be able, perhaps, to carry on for a long term. We must think in terms of years. Also there is a good deal of talk on the Chinese side, a good deal of, what I may say, peace offensives. Now, whatever happens we shall always favour peace provided that peace is an honourable one, a peace that leaves our territory in our hands. That is a different matter. I hope that we shall never become war-mad and forget the objectives that we have, as in the Great War and other wars, a certain madness seizes a nation for which they may even win the war but they lose the peace. That is so. We are all for peace always. Why should we spend vast sums of money? And money required for these things, for this kind of operations, is such that all the money we spend in our Five Year Plans is a bagatelle before its enormous sums. We thought we are brave to put a certain sum for our Five Year Plans. But here there is no choice left. We have to spend much more for the initial stages of the war and for subsequent stages. So while we are for peace, we must not allow ourselves to be taken in by these so-called peace offensives which are not peace, which are merely meant to some extent to humiliate us, to some extent to strengthen their position where they are for a future advance maybe, because, I am sorry to say it, it has become impossible to put trust in the word of the Chinese Government.

Now, even now their descriptions all the time are that we have attacked them and the brave Chinese frontier guards are defending themselves, the brave Chinese frontier guards having come on our territory, we are apparently attacking them and they are defending themselves. Apparently, the idea is that they should have a free run on our country and we should do nothing.

Some of the hon. Members have criticised our publicity arrangements and, if I may say so, there is a great deal of truth in that criticism. We are trying to improve them. I think, they have improved somewhat, and I hope, they

will improve, because it is not an easy matter to build up these things in a few days, war publicity and all that, and also because we do not quite function, we are not used to functioning, quite in the way the Chinese Government are used to functioning, that, is, stating complete untruth, one after the other, a set of lies. We are somewhat more careful about what we say. Take the 20th of October. Before even their own attack had commenced, they started broadcasting that we were attacking them. Before that, that is, a little before that, about half an hour before, I think, they started that. People said "Oh, we hurt them first and they afterwards." Now, what is one to do? Even before they attacked they started broadcasting that we were attacking them. Nothing was happening there. Then they attacked. When we learnt of that a couple of hours later, they got an advance of two or three hours. So you have to face a machine of propaganda publicity which originally was often called Goebbels machine in Nazi Germany. There is extraordinary similarity in many things between the Chinese publicity, etc., and the old Nazi publicity. And, of course, that can only be carried on with a certain rigid authoritarian pattern behind it—nobody dare say anything.

Here I do not wish to criticise our newspapers, but very often they say and do things which do not help the war effort, although they are very keen in helping it but they do not think in that way. Everybody can say anything in a public meeting, and many people say amazing things in public meetings here which certainly do not help the war effort. They shake their fists. "We will drive out the Chinese" and all that, and say all manner of things which prevent the Chinese being driven out.

You have to face the background of a democratic country, democratic freedoms. To some extent they have to be limited. There is the Defence of India Act which is not wholly functioning now but it is meant for that. But even in working that Defence of India Ordinance or Act we do not do it wholeheartedly, we do not like to do it unless we are forced to. I do not know, in the course of war it may gradually become stiffer in its operations. That is possible. But at the moment we have got inhibitions in acting, in

stopping a man from writing or publishing something. But there it is, a completely regimented apparatus in private life and public life. That is helpful in a war effort, but I do not think it is ultimately helpful. I do think that a democratic background ultimately is the stronger of the two, and I think, you can see something of it; some glimpse of it you can have here even in the last fortnight, two or three weeks in India, by the wonderful response that we have had from our people. Now, that is not a regimented response. It is a spontaneous response which has come out of the people's minds and hearts and it does show that our fifteen year old democracy has taken roots in the people, that it is all very well for us to quarrel with each other and to make all kinds of demands, but when they see, when they feel, that there is danger to their democratic set-up they have come up like this. That is a very healthy sign, a very hopeful sign and something that has heartened all of us. So, I do think that the democratic apparatus is ultimately good even from the point of view of war, provided of course that the apparatus and everything else is not swept away at the first rush. But we can be sure that it will not be swept away. Therefore, it becomes a question of utilising that enthusiasm in a democratic manner with such limitations as war imposes upon us and directing it to defend the country and repel the invader. There again we have to think from a long-term view, and it should not be a question of our panting too soon, losing our breath too soon. We may have to run long, long distances and for a long, long time we have to carry on with determination and with fortitude. Well, our demonstrations and processions will not help in that. They may be good for rousing enthusiasm here and there, but we require something much deeper, much stronger, much more enduring for that.

Now, one further matter, which I should like to mention is that it is really painful and shocking to me the way the Chinese Government has, shall I say, adhered repeatedly to untruths. I am putting it in as mild a way as I can. What are they doing today? In the other House, I said it is aggression and invasion which reminds me of the activities of the Western powers in the nineteenth or the eighteenth century. Perhaps I was wrong. It is more

comparable to the activities of Hitler in the modern age, because one thought that this kind of thing cannot happen nowadays. Of course, some aggression may take place here and there but this well thought out, premeditated and well organised invasion is what one thought was rather out-of-date and not feasible. We know the whole Chinese mentality, of the Government at least. It seems to think that war is a natural state of affairs, and here we are disliking it, excessively disliking the idea of war, emotionally disliking it, apart from not liking its consequences. We have, therefore, to realise that we are up against an enemy which is well conditioned, well prepared for the type of action it has taken and which is prepared also to cover it up with any number of falsehoods. And whatever we may do, to some extent this kind of propaganda of the Chinese, naturally, has some effect on other people in their own countries. I do not say that the Chinese persons are all against India but listening to their own propaganda they are influenced by it and other countries, the so-called non-aligned countries, getting that propaganda in full measure are affected by it, or at any rate, are confused by it. Therefore, it is no good our getting angry with them that they do not stand forthright in our defence, in support of our position, because they are confused. Not only are they confused, but sometimes they are a little afraid too. So, whatever the reason, we have to meet this and meet it with truth. Now, in war, Sir, unhappily—it has been said—the first casualty is truth, that is perfectly true, and the sad part of a war is not that people die in large numbers—that is sad of course—but the sad part of it is that war brutalises a nation and individuals. Well, death comes to all of us at its proper time but the brutalising of a country and of people is a more harmful thing. Now we have undergone a process under Gandhiji which is the reverse of this. I do not mean to say that we in India, our people, are any better than other people. I do not agree to that. We have numerous failings, weaknesses and we are even violent in small matters when other countries may not be. But the fact is that basically we are a gentle people, basically we have been conditioned by Gandhiji, especially, in peaceful methods, and however violent we may become

occasionally, at the back of our minds there is that training. And it alarms me that we should become, because of the exigencies of war, brutalised, a brutal nation. I think that would mean the whole soul and spirit of India being demoralised, and that is a terribly harmful thing. Certainly, I hope that all of us will remember this.

Now, only the other day—two days ago—I saw a statement made by Acharya Vinoba Bhave for whom I have the greatest respect. I do not agree with everything that he says. Of course, I have the greatest respect for him because I do think in the whole of India he represents Gandhiji's thinking more than anybody else. And it heartened me—what he said about this Chinese invasion. He condemned it in his own gentle language, but he condemned it and he said himself he was not a man of war, he could not take a gun and meet it, but inferentially, he said India had to do it. But then he added that he hoped very much that even in doing so we would not be full of hatred, our minds full of hatred and ill-will and brutalised and all that. Well, I hope so earnestly. Now, what will happen. I cannot say, because war itself is a powerful agent for metamorphosis-varied experiences and brutalities. We may have to undergo all that, not the men. The men in the battlefield who face death all the time still sometimes survive this hatred. It is the people sitting behind who indulge in all this hatred. The energy and courage of the men in the battlefield is exercised in action but the men sitting at the counters in their money-houses and who encourage them too indulge in all this hatred business and create this brutalised mentality. Well, I do hope that somehow, we shall escape it; we shall try our best to escape it.

Now, some people criticise us for having suggested that we are prepared to talk to the Chinese representatives if they withdraw to the position before the 8th of September. And some people say "No, you must not talk to them, you must not do any such thing until they withdraw completely from Ladakh and everywhere." Now, the 8th of September was the day when they came in NEFA across the Thagla Ridge and also attacked Ladakh and went and captured some more territory in Ladakh. Now, let us be brave but let us also

be sensible. Our saying to them "We will meet you only when you surrender and confess defeat" is not a thing which is likely to happen. Whatever happens, they are not defeated nor are we defeated. In fact, it is very difficult for China to defeat us and it is still more difficult for us to defeat China. We are not going to march to Peking. Even if we have success here, as we hope to, it does not defeat China even and even if they have success in the mountains, it does not mean that they defeat India. You must remember that this type of war is a war which may go on indefinitely, simply sucking the blood of either country and brutalising us. Therefore, to talk of conditions which are manifestly not going to be fulfilled in the foreseeable future is not a wise thing. What do we seek after that? We seek after that, if these conditions that we have set are fulfilled, to talk to them about what? It is to talk to them—our representatives and theirs—as to how we can produce conditions to relax tensions, etc. may be other withdrawals which will lead to the third stage which is talking to them on the merits of the question, we do not agree to anything in between and I think, it is a perfectly fair and legitimate proposal, honourable to us. As a matter of fact, as the House knows, the Chinese have rejected it completely out of hand. So, the various friends in other countries are putting forward numerous mediatory proposals, more or less all of them based on some kind of a ceasefire immediately and about the Chinese proposals. I need not go into them because they are so manifestly meant to favour their aggression and to give them a chance to establish themselves and push us out and then, may be at a later stage, to commit aggression again. But these people are confused. They put forward proposals which are very much to our disadvantage. Fortunately, after we had explained these various matters, President Nasser of the UAR put forward certain proposals which are very, very near our proposals.¹¹⁵ They are not exactly the same but are very near; basically, our proposals that they should retire behind the Thagla Ridge, that conditions before the 8th of September should be produced.

¹¹⁵ See note

That is the basic part of his proposals. That too the Chinese have rejected. I think that the proposals we have put forward are honourable, legitimate and not coming through weakness but strength and they are having a good impression on the rest of the world. The rest of the world also counts in such matters.

Many people have said that we should close up our Mission in Peking and they should close the Chinese Mission here. Now, that is a legitimate thing for us to say or to do but we have to balance certain advantages and certain disadvantages, and for the moment, I need not and I cannot go into all the details. For the moment, we do not think it will be advantageous to us to do that, when the time comes, if it is necessary, we shall do that. Again other Members, I believe, have talked about our withdrawing our forces from the Congo and the Gaza Strip. It is true that we would like to withdraw them, we have suggested that we should withdraw them but we have felt that we should not do something suddenly without adequate preparation for it on the other side, something which will upset all the two years' effort in the Congo and cast a heavy burden on the UN. Therefore, we have told them that we would like to withdraw them and we would like them to make other arrangements but for the present we will not withdraw them till they agree to it. We have certain international obligations. It is true that where the safety of our country is concerned, that is the first consideration.

Nevertheless, in the balance we thought that we owed something to the international community, to Africa, and withdrawing them in a panicky condition would not be good and the amount of help that we derive from it, would be less than the harm we cause by our acting in that manner, out of course, we want to withdraw them as soon as we conveniently can.¹¹⁶

Finally, I should like to say that this is a tremendous challenge to our manhood and our nationhood, something which is far above our party bickering and party conflicts. Of course, parties have their views and they are entitled to them, but for the moment, this is something bigger than

¹¹⁶ See item 197

those things and the challenge has also another aspect of it and that is, it is an opportunity to build up our nation, an opportunity to build up on right lines—that is my trouble—lest we in our excitement or in our folly should go into wrong lines because that would be a tragedy, a deeper tragedy than war. That is not to be corrupted by war, to use war to the utmost of our strength, not to be corrupted, and to use that war situation to change our pattern or economic and social structure on the right lines. If we do that, then out of this great trouble that we face, good will come for the nation and I would like this House and our Parliament and our Members to give this lead to the nation that we are not interested in the so-called victory by itself, because victory is a hollow thing if you miss the fruits of victory. The fruit of victory is not a little territory. We have seen great wars in Europe and elsewhere, mighty countries fighting each other and countries have won, won decidedly and yet somehow the fruits of victory have escaped them. That is the lesson of the last two wars. It has slipped out of their fingers and new problems have been created which they cannot solve today and they think of the third war. Therefore, we have to think of the basic things we aim at because something has come in the way, a very bad thing—aggression—which is bad from our national point of view, from every point of view, therefore, we have to get rid of it and we will try our utmost to get rid of it but that by itself is not enough. In doing so, because the process of doing so shakes up the nation completely, we have to see that that shaking up of the nation is of the right kind and they yield right results. Thank you.

273. Defending Sikkim¹¹⁷

India Will Defend Sikkim: PM

Gangtok, Nov. 10 - Prime Minister Nehru has assured the Sikkim Congress

¹¹⁷ Reproduced from a report in the National Herald, 1 December 1962, p.1.

President that "Sikkim will be defended by us with all our strength, just as any part of India."

He has conveyed this in a letter to the President of the Sikkim Congress, Mr Kashiraj Pradhan

Earlier in a letter to the Prime Minister, Mr Pradhan had expressed concern over the speech of Pandit Nehru in Parliament as reported by a Delhi newspaper which read: "The Prime Minister said that he could not give the assurance that Sikkim would not be lost to the Chinese."

Replying to Mr Pradhan, Nehru said: "The extracts from the newspapers you have given is not correctly reported."

274. To Sheikh Abdullah: Chinese Invasion¹¹⁸

November 13, 1962

My dear Sheikh Sahib,

I received your letter of the 5th November, 1962, some days ago.¹¹⁹

Immediately, I wrote a brief acknowledgement which I hope has reached you. As you will appreciate, I have been terribly busy, and hence the delay in writing to you more fully.

I quite agree with you that the trouble on our borders is no mere border incident. We have had such border incidents now for five years, while China was encroaching on our territory. This time, however, in the North-East Frontier Agency, there has been what can only be described as a full scale invasion. The Chinese, in accordance with their way, twist everything, and call it aggression on our part. As a matter of fact, no Chinese have come into NEFA at any time previously. Before the present regime came into existence in China, the Tibetans never laid claim to it. But I need not go into history. It is patent that the Chinese have deliberately and after much preparation,

¹¹⁸ Letter to the former Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir; address: Special Jail, Jammu.

¹¹⁹ See appendix 41.

carried out this invasion. They have huge armies in Tibet, which they can turn easily to any particular point of attack. The aggressor has always this advantage. Also, they have another advantage—that they can come right up to our border easily by road, while we have to go across high mountains, without adequate roads, to reach the place. We have to send supplies etc. all by air-dropping. But, in spite of our initial reverses, I am quite confident that we shall not only check them, but, ultimately drive them back.

This is going to be a long process, as I have said, and it will take all our strength and resources to do so. I am quite convinced of the gravity of this situation, which you point out, and I think that gradually many other people are realising this. It is because of this that we are seeing an amazing upsurge of enthusiasm and emotion all over the country. The causes of the clash are, as you say, much deeper.

I appreciate what you say—that this invasion of India by China is dangerous for both India and Pakistan. Unfortunately, Pakistan has not realised this or, having realised it, wishes not to say or act in that way. The Pakistan newspapers are playing up China, and some leading personalities in Pakistan have even said that they must take advantage of this situation. I think that is a very short sighted and unwise policy for them. We have tried, and are trying our best, to be friendly to them and to make them realise the dangers inherent in the situation both for India and Pakistan. It is patent to me that the present danger to India will lead to a serious danger to the freedom of Pakistan. In fact, in a sense, Pakistan, by being in military pacts with Western countries, is really essentially more hostile to China. It is inconceivable to me that China can ever be friendly or cooperative with Pakistan. I hope that the realisation of this will come to the leaders of Pakistan.¹²⁰

It has always been our basic policy to become friendly with Pakistan. It will continue to be harmful to both countries to be hostile to each other. We have tried our best to pursue this basic policy. But, unfortunately, it has not

¹²⁰ See item 228.

so far produced the results we aimed at. We shall continue our efforts. Perhaps, in the crisis that has overtaken us, some way out may be found. I hope you are well.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

275. In the Lok Sabha: Emergency and Chinese Invasion¹²¹

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs, Defence and Atomic Energy (Jawaharlal Nehru): Mr Speaker, Sir, since I had the honour of moving this resolution, we have had a long debate in this House, almost perhaps a record debate in this House and perhaps in other parliaments also, I do not quite know how many Members have spoken.

Speaker: 165.

Jawaharlal Nehru: 165 Members have spoken. While it may have been said that perhaps a very large number of speeches rather take away from the pointedness of the question before the House and our minds wander into details, yet I am glad that so many Members have spoken because the point that stands out is this, not they have not made various suggestions, various criticisms, but that fundamentally and basically every person who has spoken in this House has spoken in the same refrain more or less, and that our Members have reflected the mood of the country.

I have put forward a longish resolution before this House, and it is clear from the speeches made that the resolution as it is welcome to this House and will be accepted as it is. But I have almost felt that it would have been, shall I say, suitable to add a small paragraph to the resolution thanking the Chinese Government for taking some action against us—which of course, we have resented—which has suddenly lifted a veil from the face of India.

¹²¹ Reply to debate on Resolution on Emergency, Lok Sabha Debates, Third Series, Vol. IX, November 8-20, 1962, pp. 1644-1671.

During the last three weeks or a little more we have had a glimpse of the strength of the serene face of India, strong and yet calm and determined, that face, and ancient face which is ever young and vibrant. We have not seen her face but rather this House, say a million faces representing that face of India or Bharat Mata.

That has been an experience worth having for all of us and it has been our high privilege to share in that emotion and experience. Whatever the future may bring, I do not think we shall ever forget this powerful emotional upheaval that India has had in which we have all shared. I repeat, all of us whatever party or group we may belong to. Any person who gives thought to these matters will realise, and I hope, other countries also realise—I hope that even the Chinese Government realises that—what this signifies because it seems to me obvious that no country which evokes that feeling in a moment of crisis can ever be suppressed or defeated. In fact many countries of the West and, I hope, many countries of the East also realise that today. They are surprised that such an amazing upheaval should have taken place among our feelings that all our petty controversies which seemed so big to us suddenly become of no moment and are swept aside before the one thing before us, that is how to meet this crisis and emergency, how to face this invasion and to repel it. That is the major issue. We may—I am going into that a little more later—have failed here and there. We might not have been quite prepared to meet this invasion. Our mentality may be built towards peace. Although we prepared for any such emergency, nevertheless it is true that the mind of the people and of the Government while preparing sought peace all the time. I am not sorry for that. I think, it was a right urge and it is that right urge that has led to this enormous upheaval in the Indian mind.

Much has been said about our unpreparedness. In some degrees many hon. Members have referred to it. I shall deal with that matter presently. I do not seek to justify any error that we might have committed, but I do think that many hon. Members have done an injustice, not to any Minister or others, but to our Armed Forces as a whole in making serious charges. I hope to

disabuse their minds by stating some facts. The one real fact, as I said, is that our whole mentality has been governed by an approach to peace. That does not mean that we did not think of war or of defending our country. That, of course, we had always in mind. But there is such a thing as being conditioned in a certain way and, I am afraid, even now we are conditioned somewhat in that way.

Shri Anthony said—I am not quite sure of his words but he said something to the effect that now we must ...

An Hon. Member: Brutalise.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I had an idea that he used the word "bloodthirsty"—I am not sure. Anyway, he said that our nation must be brutalised, that Jawaharlal Nehru must be brutalised. I hope that our nation, much less my humble self, will never be brutalised, because that is a strange idea that one can only be strong by being brutal. I reject that idea completely. Our strength lies in other factors. Brutality is a thing which we have associated with certain movements which we have objected to or rejected. By becoming brutal and thinking in those brutal ways we lose our souls and that is a tremendous loss. I hope that India which is essentially a gentle and peace loving country will retain that mind even though it may have to carry on war with all its consequences to the utmost.

There is a definite distinction between being strong and being brutalised. I need not mention an instance which has lent prestige to our history—the instance of the long period when Gandhiji was controlling the destinies of our movement for freedom. No man can say that Gandhiji was brutal, he was the essence of humility and of peace. No man can say that Gandhiji was weak. He was the strongest man that India or any country has produced. It was that peculiar fixture of strength with sacrifice to the uttermost, yet a certain humility in utterance and a certain friendly approach even to our opponents and enemies, that made him what he was. Those of us who were privileged to serve with him and under him do not claim, of course, to be

much better than we are. We are humble folk who cannot be compared with the truly great, but something of the lesson that he taught came down upon us and we learnt it in a small measure. In the measure we learnt it, we also became strong though, I hope, not brutal. So, I would like to stress that I do not want to become brutal; I do not want that aspect of the cold war and the hot war which leads to hatred and dislike of a whole people and looking upon them is something below normal.

Some of us who are old, remember the First World War and the tremendous propaganda in it against the Germans. I do not hold any brief for the Germans. I think they were wrong in the First World War and, I think they were wrong in the Second World War. But the type of propaganda against the Huns and all that, against the whole people, not against an individual, was shocking. I have no doubt that the same type of propaganda was being carried on in Germany against the Western allies.

War is terrible and millions of people die; much destruction is caused. Yet, after all, death comes to all of us and if it comes a little earlier than otherwise in the great cause, it is not to be sorrowed for. We have to face it as men. Death in a good cause is not a thing to regret, even though we may regret the parting with our colleagues and comrades. But brutality is something which degrades a person. Death does not degrade a person. Brutality and hatred and the offspring of these things do degrade a nation and the people. So, I should like to say right at the beginning that, I hope, no such emotion will rise in our country and, if it does rise, it will be discouraged. We have nothing against the Chinese people. We regret many things that their Government has done. We think that their Government has acted infamously towards us. We regret many things that their Government has done in their country. We cannot help them. Anyhow, we must always distinguish between the people of my country—much more so of a great country, great in size, great in history—and its government, and not transfer somehow our anger and bitterness at what has been done by the Government, to the people.

Perhaps, if I understand, many Members, sometimes, listen to broadcasts

from Peking. I have not done so at any time. They have told me of the constant appeals that Peking broadcast makes to the Indian people. It distinguishes the Indian people from the Indian Government or the Indian Parliament. It carries on propaganda that the present Government are just some reactionary people who are sitting and crushing the Indian people and making them do things against their will. I am sorry if they are so utterly mistaken, because even the blind can see that all the Indian people are one today. It does not require much perspicacity. But, I want the House to note the reason for their propaganda, that is trying always to distinguish between the Indian people and the various governmental agencies and parties. There is something in that. We must not lump together the Chinese people and the Chinese Government and everything that is in China together.

I cannot say how the Chinese people feel now, because they have no chance to express their feelings. Even if they had a chance, their minds are so conditioned by constant propaganda, by one-sided news that they are likely to feel one way even though otherwise they might not have done so. We should always distinguish between governmental action and the people as a whole. Therefore, I have not liked some poor Chinese shopkeepers, some restaurant-keepers being attacked in Delhi or elsewhere, as if they were the symbols of the attack on us. Perhaps some people thought so. But it was wrong for them to think so. It brutalises us and gives us a bad name. I should particularly like to lay stress on this aspect because it does not add to our strength in the least; but it weakens the nervous energy that we possess by using it in wrong directions.

War in these days is something infinitely more than it was in the old days. When I say old days, I am talking about India. I am not talking about the Great Wars and other things. War involves not only courage. It tends to become total war in which every human being, man, woman, and perhaps child, somehow helps or hinders, may hinder; and the total energy, nervous and otherwise of the nation, is involved in it, organised and mobilised.

We have seen in these great wars that have happened in the past, in the

First World War and the Second, very powerful nations, very brave nations, armed to the teeth with the latest weapons, contending against each other, killing millions on either side, yet carrying on, but ultimately the whole nervous energy of the nation collapsing. Perhaps if the one which collapsed could have carried on a little while longer, the other would have collapsed, as Mr Winston Churchill said at the end of the First World War. It was the sheerest fluke that we won, the sheerest chance, sheerest fluke. Because both sides were determined to carry on. They were trained people in war and they had strength and determination. Ultimately, it becomes a thing of the whole basic energy of a nation collapsing, however it might be. It so happened that the Germans collapsed a little sooner. This is what Mr Churchill said. Perhaps, if they could have carried on, the decision might have been otherwise. So also in the Second World War. Throughout the War, it almost appeared, except towards the end, that Germany might win. Yet, ultimately, the other people won. So, we must realise that it is a question not only of a few weapons here and there, but of this entire energy of the nation, the mind of the nation being concentrated to achieve a certain objective and holding to it whatever happens and not wasting our energy or frittering it on any minor things, minor expressions and minor disputes. I hope, of course, that we will mobilise the nation. We will, profit by many of these suggestions made in this House and other suggestions that are continually coming before us. But, even if we make mistakes, as any person is bound to do, the real thing that counts is not an odd mistake leading to an odd reverse, but ultimately keeping up this united front and united nervous energy of the nation to face this crisis.

The fact of the matter is that before these three and a half weeks, before the 20th of October, it was not realised by the people at large what danger possibly might confront us. They thought of frontier incidents. Hon. Members in this House criticised us for not taking steps in Ladakh to drive them out, not realising that it is not such an easy matter. Perhaps they realise it a little more now that these things are not such easy matters, that they require not only the strength of a nation, but properly utilised properly

directed, enormous field of preparation and consideration of military factors. Where these factors are against us, naturally we suffer a reverse, it does not matter what your strength is. Our jawans were very strong.

I might mention just for the information of the House that it was not today, but some years back—by some years, I mean a couple of years back—that is, after the Chinese started nibbling at our territory in Ladakh, that we had before us the question of NEFA. We considered it, what we should do if they attacked. We hoped that they would not attack there. Certainly, we hoped, we expected that they would not attack in such large numbers as to bring about a regular invasion with several divisions, which they did.

Nevertheless, we had to consider if they did, what should be done. The advice that we received then was that it will be disadvantageous for us to try to hold to the exact frontier line, the McMahon Line, but that we should delay them, we should harass them, we should fight them a little but the real defence line should be lower down wherever a strong defence line could be made. Partly because to the last moment we did not expect this invasion in overwhelming numbers, partly from the fact that we disliked it—I frankly tell you that we disliked the idea of our walking back in our own territory, whatever it was—we faced the Chinese there under very disadvantageous circumstances from a military point of view. In addition to that, enormous numbers came over. It is no criticism at all of our officers or men that they were somewhat overwhelmed by this deluge and they had to retire to more defensive positions.

Frank Anthony¹²², I think, said that we have been enabled to put up some kind of line of defence, because we have received arms from abroad. Now, we are very grateful for the arms and material and equipment that has come from abroad, but that was not correct then; no arms which were brought had reached our troops by then; they are gradually dribbling in and going there, but by that time when we achieved the present position, these arms which were brought had not been given and had not reached them. It

¹²² Nominated Member from the Anglo-Indian Community.

was with the existing equipment that they brought the Chinese advance to a standstill.

So, the real reason, the basic reason for our reverses in the early days of this campaign was the very large forces the Chinese threw in; in a restricted sphere or field, they outnumbered our forces, by many, many times. Even the question of better arms did not arise. They had slightly better arms, but that question did not arise so much. They had better mortars to hit at some distance. They still have them, but they had stopped. That was the main reason, and there was nothing that we could do about it because the geography of the place, the military appraisal of the place was against us in that particular area. The only fault we made, it may be, if it is a fault, was even to stick out where the military situation was not very favourable. It was not that we told them to stick out; it is folly for any politician to say so. But our soldiers themselves have a reluctance to go back, and they stuck on at considerable cost to them.

I referred to the great unity in the country, which is a wonderful factor. It is not unity of parties so much as the unity of hearts and minds. We can see that in the thousands of faces. When I talked about the face of India, I really should have talked about the million faces of India, because they all bear the same impress today, whatever community or party he or she may belong to.

And I should like to say something even about the Communists. Now, the Communist Party's manifesto as a manifesto was, I think, as good as if it has been drafted by any non-communist. People may think or say that it does not represent their real views, but because of pressure from outside they did it. Let us suppose that it did not represent some of their views, some no doubt, some there are in the Communist Party who even objected to this manifesto, and were overruled. Even so, the fact that conditions in the country were such that they decided to issue that manifesto is a factor of some importance. It shows how these conditions mould people's minds in India, all of us, whatever party we may belong to, even to a party which for reasons known to Members was inclined in the past to favour somewhat the

Chinese, because they are also communists. Even then, they stood out, and stood up four square against this attack as any hundred per cent nationalist would do. That is a good thing. Why should we not take full advantage of it instead of deriding it and seeking causes why they did it? After all, there are some leaders among the Communists, and they sometimes quarrel amongst each other about ideologies, theses and what not, but the large number of ordinary workers or others who may belong to the Communist Party are simple folk. They are attracted by something in it, and those simple folk are affected just as they are affected by the situation which affects every Indian; they have also been affected by this manifesto of the Communist Party, that is, the ordinary communist members, that is a great gain. They should be affected in this way. Why should we lessen the effect of that by telling them that it is a wrong manifesto? So, I welcome that manifesto, and we should take full advantage of it in forging the unity against aggression that we have in fact forged.

Then, I do not wish to go into the hundred and more minor criticisms and suggestions made in this House. All suggestions made by hon. Members will be carefully examined. Some, as I said, were made because of not knowing that the thing had been done; some perhaps we cannot adopt; others we may adopt.

I should like rather to lay stress now on the general question of our preparedness, because hon. Members seem to think, some Members, that we sent our soldiers barefoot and without proper clothing, to fight in the NEFA mountains. It is really extraordinary to say that they were almost unarmed, and barefooted.

Some soldiers were stationed there. Others were sent rather in a hurry in September. Our time for issuing winter clothes is September, about the middle of September, when they were sent. They went there, of course, at that time in full uniform, full warm uniform, woollen uniform, and every man had two boots, good boots. As they were going, they were given three blankets apiece. Later on, it was made into four blankets; now, they have been issuing four thick army blankets. But these blankets took up so much

room, and as they were going by air, the people decided, that is, the officer in charge, and the men themselves said, "They take so much room, and therefore send them later on to us." It was not so very cold then. So, they took, each one of them, one blanket, and left the others to be sent later on. That was a little unfortunate, because sending them later, as we did, meant air-dropping them. And air-dropping was a hazardous business in those days. Apart from the fact that the Chinese then could fire at them, airdropping in those very precipitous areas in the mountains could not be accurately carried out. Often, they went into the khud, into the deep ravine below, and it was difficult to recover them. So, we lost a good deal of our supplies, many of these blankets and other things.

Then, we even went further. We provide for high mountain altitudes snow-boots; they had good boots, they had two boots apiece; they had snow boots; these boots had been provided to these soldiers of ours who were permanently located there. The others that were sent were all in Assam; they were not here; but they were in Gauhati and other places. But, again, the difficulty arose of sending them by air.

Broadly speaking, I would say that all our Army in NEFA as well-clad, and well-booted, but towards the end, that is, towards the end of September, realising that the Chinese forces were increasing very rapidly, we decided to send more troops quickly. These troops were sent in a hurry. And sometimes, it so happened that troops that were being sent somewhere else were diverted to NEFA, and these troops certainly had not the full complement of winter clothing then. Of course, it was decided to send them later. Except for these troops that went later and which did not have the full complement and subsequently it was supplied to them, all others had the full Army complement, and many of them had snow-boots also. In any event, everyone had good stout Army boots.

Some people have heard stories of frostbite. All the cases of frostbite occur naturally due to the cold and due also to the high altitude. I do not quite remember the number, but I have an idea that out of a large number of people, I do not quite know, about two or three thousand, the total number

of frostbite cases was only a handful. Even the cases of bronchitis, pneumonia etc., were only about forty, which is a very small percentage considering the conditions there. Of these too, we may say that more than half was due just to the altitude and not to lack of foot covering. This occurred not to our regular army serving on the front, but most of this occurred to people when on the 20th October, when this fierce onslaught of the Chinese came, our forces in that particular place—one or two places there—were dispersed. They could not return to the base of their army. They dispersed and for some days, they wandered about the mountains and ultimately returned. That was also the reason perhaps for people saying that the casualties were very heavy. Of course, a large number of our forces had not returned in order, they were wandering about the mountains, returning a few days later. I think these persons who returned a few days later were over 1,600. During these few days, these persons, naturally, were not well-protected. When they were wandering they did not have the facilities of the army blankets and other things they would at the base camp. They were not carrying them. They were wandering in high altitudes and they suffered a great deal. That was where the frostbite cases chiefly occurred, along with lack of other comforts. When they came back, they were put in hospital, and they are doing fairly well.

So I would submit to the House that it is not correct to say that our people were not sufficiently clad or sufficiently booted. It was an unfortunate thing that this was the time for changeover from summer clothing to winter clothing. Suddenly a small number of our army which was in summer clothing at that time was diverted to the east without coming back to their base, and the winter clothes took a little time to reach them. As regards boots, they had very good boots. Even snow boots were supplied. Some people do not have them. We do not supply snow boots to large numbers, to everybody. We do supply them to people in these high altitudes.

Apart from clothes and boots which were, I do think, excellent, normally our army is not clad for the winter. They were clad, for instance, in the special clothes, but normally our army is not clad for the severe winter. They have

got all kinds of winter things, but not for these very high altitudes and the cold winter there.

It might interest hon. Members to know that in Ladakh, round about the Chushul area, the temperature at present is 30 degrees below zero. Such is the ferocity of that climate. Ordinarily, it does not matter how many clothes you may have in a temperature 30 degrees below zero at an altitude of over 14,000 ft. unless you are used to it. Now, learning from experience, we have provided, in addition to all the winter materials that our soldiers have, thick cotton padded coats and trousers. They are very warm. They may not look so smart as with the other clothes, but they are there. We started providing them these within a few days of the 20th, as soon as we felt that they ought to have these and it became colder there. We have been sending these cotton padded coats and trousers at the rate first of 500 a day and later at the rate of nearly 1000 a day.

The other charge made is about weapons, that they did not have proper weapons. Now the soldiers, jawans, who went there were supplied with all the normal equipment, that is, 303 rifles and the normal complement of automatic weapons such as light machine guns and medium machine guns. They did not have semi-automatic rifles because our army does not possess them. I might point out that many up-to-date armies in the West do not possess them yet. Even in England, the changeover to semi-automatic rifles has just fully taken place. It has just been completed; it took about four or five years; it has just been completed, this year, a few months ago. It is a lengthy process. And the British Army is relatively smaller than ours.

For about four years now, we have been considering and discussing this matter. Various difficulties arose. Points of views were different. The easiest way is always to order some ready-made article. But the easy way is not always a good way. Apart from the continuing difficulty we have to face, that is, lack of foreign exchange etc., it is not the way to build up the strength of a nation. If we get something today, we have to get ammunition for that all the time and we are completely in the hands of some other country. And specially if we have to deal with private suppliers in other

countries, the House knows that the arms racket is the worst racket of all; because you need something, they make you pay through the nose.

So we were very much against getting it from private suppliers outside and we thought that we should build up our arms industry to manufacture semiautomatic rifles. These arguments, especially in peace time, take a long period to determine. Of course, if we had this crisis before, we would have functioned better. But it took about two to three years to determine what type to have. Ultimately, we started the first processes of manufacture and we have just arrived at a stage when within about three weeks or four weeks—in fact, some prototypes have been prepared—they will begin to come in larger numbers and will increase in numbers in another month, two months and three months to a substantial quantity.

It is not, a question merely of semi-automatic rifles. As I have said, we had automatic machine guns, LMGs and MMGs light machine guns and medium machine guns. Every regiment had its complement of these. Certainly, they did not have semi-automatic rifles for the reasons I have given, namely, we wanted to manufacture them ourselves and this changeover to automatic rifles has been relatively a modern development. As I said, even in England, it is a recent thing. But this outlook of ours, about manufacturing things ourselves rather than buying them, covered our whole approach to this question. We are manufacturing a great many things in arms today which we did not previously. I shall give you some figures. The first pressure upon us is always that of finance, that is, foreign exchange. We could not really afford it. Do not compare that situation two or three years ago with the situation today when we have to meet a crisis. When we meet a crisis like this, it just does not matter what happens. We have to face it. We have to buy it here and there; we have to get it from wherever we can. That is a different matter. But normally, the whole approach was to make them ourselves.

How did we make them? The usual thing was that we brought some with the proviso attached that the persons we bought it from would give us the license and the blueprints to manufacture it here. So we bought some to

begin with, and then started with the blueprints and the license we had got to manufacture it, and supply it with everything, whether it is tanks or other things.

Also, it is all very well to build a factory here and there, but really you want to have a strong industrial background. You cannot, out of a relatively agricultural background, suddenly put up a highly sophisticated factory. All this time the work we have done, not in the Defence Ministry, but all over the country, in our First Five Year Plan, the Second and the Third, has been meant to strengthen the nation by making it more modernised, more industrialised and build up this base out of which you can produce the things you require. Perhaps some hon. Members will no doubt realise this, some may not. You have to have a strong base, industrial base. You have to have indeed not only a strong base, you have to have a literate people. People may think for the time being that education can be stopped. Education is essential for a real war effort. It is essential because you want every soldier today to be a better mechanic; he has to be educated as much as possible. So it all goes together. The whole basis of our Five Year Plan was to better our people, to raise their level and all that, but it was essential to make India stronger to face any trouble that arose, whether it was invasion or anything. And we are in a much better position today to face this trouble than we were ten or twelve years ago, there is no doubt, because of the growth of our industrial base in the public sector and the private sector, both. If we had to face this business ten or twelve years ago, our army was the same as today, a very brave army, but it had no industrial background and it would have been very difficult for it. We had to develop that industrial background as fast as we could. Now we have at least a base to develop, and I hope, therefore, that no conflict will arise in any person's mind whether we should go ahead with the Third Five Year Plan or devote ourselves to the war effort. That is part of the war effort—I do not say everything in the Third Plan—some things may be avoided, slowed down, even dropped, if you like. But take agriculture. It is the base of all industry. It is only on a strong agricultural base you can build up industry. The industrial base is the

foundation of any war effort. So, the two are connected, intimately connected.

Education again. We want today, we shall want, not only a widely educated mass of people, but vast numbers of technically trained people. That comes in. Power is essential for industry, and so on. So, really, all the major things that we want were in the Five Year Plans, and are required today.

But the point I wish to lay stress on is this, that all our thinking in the past even from the point of view of the army has been concentrated on industrialisation, on making things ourselves.

Today we are getting large numbers of arms and equipment from other countries, and we are very grateful to the United States, to the United Kingdom especially, and other countries. But please remember that this kind of thing, and this kind of response, could not have occurred in peace time. Obviously, it is when danger threatens us, just as we feel in a particular way, and others feel too, and they think, as they rightly think, that this is not a mere matter of India being invaded by China, but it raises issues of vast importance to the world, to Asia, and realising that they do it, they help us; that is, they feel this involves many issues in which they themselves are intensely interested. This could not have happened in peace time.

Someone asked us we could have brought some of the things at a very heavy price. Today I hope we get them on very special terms whatever the terms are, they are being worked out, but it is understood special terms, not to put any heavy burden on us today. That kind of thing could not have taken place then. We would have brought these things, or even one-tenth of what we are buying, at a heavy cost, which would have made our Finance Minister shiver. But apart from that, in any long-term view, it was a wrong thing. The thing is to make them ourselves.

What has China done? The main difference—there are many differences between China and India—but one difference is that first of all they started about twenty years before, the success of the revolution there, they were fighting all the time. They had a heavily trained army fighting in the

mountains. They are especially good at mountain warfare; lightly clad with a bag of rice and a bag of tea in their pockets, they march on, with no questions of supplies or anything for days, with cotton-padded coats and trousers. They were highly trained in that warfare. But what I am saying is this, that they concentrated right from the beginning, apart from other developments in the country, on the development of armaments manufacture. They got a good deal of help from the Soviet Union; vast numbers, thousands of people set up their armament industries, did not concentrate on that, certainly not. We thought: better build up the whole industrial complex of India, and out of that other things would also be built up. Nevertheless, we did build up, I think fairly adequately, our armament industry, not as much as we would have liked, it was being progressed. I shall just read out to you some figures of our ordnance factories production. In 1956-57, the issues to the army from the ordnance factories amounted to—I cannot tell you the details, it is not right for me to tell you the details, it is not right for me to tell you, I am only telling you how much they cost.

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

N.G. Ranga¹²³ (Chittoor): We know the results anyhow. We do not want all that, it will only help the enemy.

Jawaharlal Nehru: It has grown about 500 per cent. I do not mind telling you. I am not going to give you what they are making, but the issues to the army in 1956-57 were Rs 8.64 crores; civil orders Rs 3.52 crores; Air Force and Navy Rs 1.93 crores. In 1957-58, issues to the Army Rs 12.78 crores; civil orders 3.27 crores; Air Force and Navy Rs 2 crores. Then the figure for the army goes up to Rs 12, Rs 14, Rs 19, Rs 24 and in 1961-62 to Rs 33 1/4 crores, and at the present moment it is estimated at Rs 60 crores.

¹²³ Swatantra Party.

Much has been said about civil orders, that we make thermos flasks and the like in ordnance factories. It is very unkind, that kind of criticism. Without knowing anything. Most of the civil orders are for Railways and the Government. A few things are made, some things like thermos flasks, simply because in the process of manufacturing other things, some things are manufactured which can easily be converted into thermos flasks etc., and there was surplus labour about. You will see that, civil orders have not progressed much. They have become, from Rs 3 1/2, to Rs 6 crores in these eight years, while the issues to the Army rose from Rs 8 to Rs 60 crores. It has advanced much more, again with the difficulty of trying not to import machinery as much is possible. We did import some. Again foreign exchange, that awful thing stares us in the face. And the result was that much of the machinery used was revamped, reconditioned machinery, which we got from old stocks; and our engineers are good men, they made it to suit their purposes. Of course, it is far better to get new machinery. We are trying to get new machinery. But it is remarkable what they did with the material they had before them and I should like to pay a tribute to the men in charge of our ordnance factories, not only because they are thoroughly competent but, what is more, they are filled with a certain enthusiasm. They are patriotic and they want to show results. They work night and day and at the present moment they are working 24 hours a day in the factories. I should like to mention how pressure of circumstances makes one a hard realist. The food we supply to our army, though good, is complicated and not easy to throw about or be supplied from above. In the last two or three weeks both our Armed Forces Food Department and Defence Science Organisation as also the Food and Agriculture Ministry have been experimenting with foods which could be concentrated foods and which could be carried about easily in your pocket also and which should be enough for several days. Only this morning I was looking at an exhibition, demonstration rather, in the Defence Ministry of these foods, quite a large number, very attractive and very palatable. They looked palatable. I did not eat them. There are all kinds of preparations of gur and nuts. They are

excellent preparations, I may also tell the House that gur is a good thing for high altitudes. We are making very good progress. We have in fact sent these things to the front to find out the reaction of the soldiers to that. Some hon. Member asked a question about the newspaper items about our soldiers getting notices from courts or some such thing. I do not know that. Anyhow we have immediately taken action to stop any such thing happening. And every such thing will have to be postponed for the duration of this emergency.

Some people criticised our diplomatic missions abroad for not doing as good a job of work as they ought to in putting our case and countering the Chinese propaganda. My information is that our diplomatic missions abroad, by and large, are doing very good work. But another country's outlook is not determined solely by what we tell there. There may be many factors, may be sometimes fear, sometimes other things. I think our missions abroad are doing well and, what is more, their work is being rewarded. The first reaction of many countries, many of these Asian and African countries, was regret and surprise at what had happened here and they hoped that it would be quickly ended by some ceasefire and compromise and all that, because they found themselves in a difficult position. Gradually this surprise is giving way; it has given way in the case of the UAR and even Ghana, which took up an attitude to our regret originally and later, supported the UAR making some suggestions to the Chinese Government. It was very near to the suggestions we made about the cease fire business. So, I do not think it will be right to criticise our diplomatic missions abroad. You must remember that these countries have their own diplomats too here who report to them, and most of them have got their newspaper correspondents. There are many ways of getting news about what is happening.

This question comes up in various ways about Pakistan and Nepal. It is difficult for me to say anything definite. But about Nepal I should like to say that latterly the attitude of Nepal has been relatively much more friendly. Naturally, we have always made it clear it is unfortunate that they thought that we were creating troubles. We have made it clear right from the

beginning that we do not want trouble in Nepal. Apart from the Chinese invasion and the trouble there, they are largely internal. Anyhow, now, I think they believe our word and are very friendly and I hope that our relations will continue to be friendly and cordial.

As for Pakistan, there also, I will not be quite definite, but their newspapers have been peculiarly virulent about this matter against us. But I do not think their newspapers reflect very much the opinion of the people of Pakistan or even of those in authority in Pakistan. Gradually they are realising it; at first, apparently they thought this was a small frontier matter and nothing much. Now, they are realising how far reaching are the consequence of this and they are making a reappraisal.

I should like to say a few words about the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has been, as the House knows, consistently friendly to us all along. It has been put in a very difficult position in this matter, because they have been, and are, allies of China, and hence the embarrassment to them as between a country with which they are friendly and a country which is their ally.¹²⁴ We have realised that and we do not expect them to do anything which would definitely mean a breach over there. It is not for us to suggest to any country. But we have had their goodwill and good wishes all along, even very recently, and that is a consolation to us and we certainly hope to have that in future.

The Chinese Government has been making a lot of propaganda about our Defence of India Act as if that was specially passed to deal with some Chinese here. It has obviously been passed because of the situation we have to deal with. Everybody who is mischief-maker, if it be a Chinese who makes a mischief, he comes under its purview; otherwise not. The difficulty with the Chinese is that they have a singularly perverted opinion and perverted view of what happens in the rest of the world. It is an odd characteristic of the Chinese. Being a great nation with a vast territory, it begins to think all outside the limits of its frontiers are subhuman types and

¹²⁴ See appendix 23.

not so advanced as they are.

One thing more. There has been some criticism about our offer for a cease fire. We have said that before we discuss anything, the Chinese forces must go back and restore the position as it existed before the 8th September, that is, a little over two months ago, when they first came over the Thagla pass. They have suggested something different, and something that is apt to delude the people. They say, let us go back, to the position of November 1959. Now, the people who do not know this might well wonder, they are going back three years, not now. But November, 1959 was roughly the date or period when the first claim was made by the Chinese Government, by Mr Chou En-lai, to these territories according to their maps. Previously, they were included in their maps, but nobody had made any official claim. In fact, officially they have said that their maps are old and not up-to-date, and they will revise them. But in 1959 for the first time, they claimed them, meanwhile, of course, they having gone into a good bit of Ladakh.

In 1959, our counter-measures started taking effect. In 1959-60 and 1961, we went into Ladakh much more and more and established many posts there. Now, we realised, as I think I told this House then, that the object of these posts is to prevent their further advance unless they fight it out. It was difficult for us to have a major armed conflict with them there, because they had great advantages. Their roads came right up there. They could bring all kinds of weapons, tanks, etc., there from Tibet which is near, which is relatively a flat country, while for us, although we made some progress and the road is recently made--at that time even that was not made--it is very difficult; it meant months of effort to get there. Nevertheless, we put up those posts to check their advance and they did check their advance. In fact, we pulled them back a little. In the NEFA area, we had previously put up our posts at the border or just under it, because one cannot have a high-ridge post. Even in Thagla pass, our post was two or three miles on this side, but not on the pass itself.

Now, if we accept their proposals, which seems so innocuous, they would retire, they said, up to the McMahon Line, but then they add that their idea

of McMahon Line was different from ours and it is on this side of the ridge, and we should have to retire from where we are today—another 20 kilometres, that is, leaving about 40 kilometres of territory which was not occupied either by their armies or ours. That is to say, they would have a fixed base on this side of the Thagla pass, an open territory which they can walk across any moment they like. It was impossible for us to agree to. And in Ladakh, it meant our withdrawing still further from where we are, and their [they are] not exactly marching immediately, but our facilitating their advance in the future if they want to come, so, we rejected those proposals. We said, there should be a reversion to the 8th September line both in NEFA and in Ladakh. That meant in NEFA not only their going back but our going forward to those posts that we held, with no vacant space left, and in Ladakh our going back a good way.

Some people say, "How can you say that? You must not negotiate. You must not have any talk with them till you completely push them out from the Indian territory." That is a very good thing. But one does not talk with anybody whom one has defeated completely and pushed out. The question of talks does not arise. If we have gained our objective without talks, the question of talks does not arise. I would suggest to the House to remember that in these matters, one has to take a strong view, but a realistic view. The suggestion that we have made, they have rejected, because it strengthens us and weakens them. What is more the suggestion we have made about the 8th September line is one which has been appreciated in a great part of the world-non-aligned countries and others because merely saying that we shall not talk to you till you have confessed defeat is not the kind of suggestion that any country makes to another. So I hope that the House will realise that what we have suggested is a right suggestion and will support it fully. Some Members talked about our stating that we are going to liberate Tibet. Some other even mentioned I think the hon. Member who just intervened said something about Mansarovar.

Shri Raghunath Singh¹²⁵ (Varanasi): Mansar village. (Interruptions).

Jawaharlal Nehru: Unfortunately, history is not made by men like the hon. Member opposite. It is really amazing to see that some other Members and others outside talk that we should lay down that we would liberate Tibet. It is a very happy idea if it is liberated. But our undertaking that job at the present moment or at any moment seems to me extraordinary and fantastic and having no relation to reality.

I have said that in a war between India and China, it is patent that if you think in terms of victory and defeat there might be battles and we might push them back, as we hope to—but if either country thinks in terms of bringing the other to its knees, it manifestly cannot and will not happen. Let us be realistic. Are we going to march to Peking? (Interruptions.)

Priya Gupta¹²⁶ (Katihar): Are we going to allow them to march to Delhi?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am sorry I cannot enter into an argument. But I appreciate that a war like this cannot be ended as far as I can foresee by surrender by either party. They are two great countries and neither will surrender. Therefore, some way out has to be found to finish the war in terms honourable to us. We have said that we will finish the war when we liberate our own territory which is in their possession. Our saying that we are going to liberate Tibet is a thing which we cannot do; even if we had the atom bomb, we could not do it. It is manifestly absurd to talk about it, and it justifies everything that China has said about it, in the sense ... (Interruptions.).

They have always been saying that their chief grouse against us is that we have been encouraging a revolt and rebellion in Tibet. That is the thing which ultimately turned them against us. If we say that, it will justify their argument, which had no foundation, and give them in international circles and everywhere considerable strength. It will mean our saying something which we cannot possibly, feasibly do. It is impossible. We have got a big

¹²⁵ Congress

¹²⁶ PSP.

enough task, a tremendous task, which we should realise, to push them back to their own territory from our own country. We are going to do it. It is going to be mighty difficult; it might take us a long time. So, I hope that while we should be strong and determined, as we must be, we must not just for the sake of appearing braver than others say things which are, I regret to use the word, manifestly nonsense.

Now, the resolution I have placed before the House is a fairly comprehensive one. It is a resolution of resolve, of determination and of dedication. I hope, therefore, that in accepting the resolution, as I hope this House will, the House thinks in terms of dedication, not in bombast, not in tall talk, but realising that we have a very difficult task before us, we are determined to fulfill it however long it may take, and whatever the consequences might be. And, in doing so, we will be heartened by the biggest thing that a country can do and which India has done thus far, and that is, produce this enormous emotional upheaval that we see all over India among men, among women and, perhaps more than all among children. So, I put forward this resolution before the House in the hope, faith and with the strong determination that all those who are present here and the country will abide by it and will act up to it.

Hari Vishnu Kamath¹²⁷: Mr Speaker, may I by your leave, ask just one question? The Maharajkumar of Sikkim is reported to have said in Darjeeling two days ago that there has been a tremendous Chinese military build-up on Sikkim's borders during the last few days or weeks. Is the Prime Minister in a position to assure the House and the nation, in view of the agreement which India has with Sikkim for the responsibility of its defence, that our Army is better prepared to resist the Chinese aggressor in Sikkim than it was, unfortunately, in NEFA a few weeks ago?¹²⁸

¹²⁷ PSP.

¹²⁸ See item 273.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I regret, Sir, that such questions are put to me. I will give no assurance of any kind. How can I give assurances? I can give no assurance except that we are taking all measures that we can if such a thing occurs there. How can I give assurance about the future in matters which are determined not by my assurances but by other factors?¹²⁹ But I do not think that the Chinese, if they venture to invade and come from Chumbi valley, will be allowed to come or will find it an easy job.

One thing I have to mention it is unconnected with this question. I have received today a letter signed by 35 Members of Parliament offering their services to serve anywhere. I am very grateful to those 35 Members and I welcome their offer. I do not quite know how we can immediately profit by it. But I am sure as our organisation progresses work would be found for more and more people in all grades and departments of life.

276. To Bishan Chandra Seth: Resolve to Fight back¹³⁰

[Translation begins:

Dear Bishan Chandra Ji,

Your letter of the 17th,

You are right in pointing out that when I was asked about Sikkim, I got a little irritated. And the answer I gave might be misconstrued by some.¹³¹ If I am asked to give assurance whether something will happen or not during a war, I feel it is not right. I could only have said that we would defend Sikkim and we have all the intention of doing so.

One thing I can say with confidence, that we will repel the aggression of China from all of India and Sikkim. But in between what will happen is

¹²⁹ See item 276.

¹³⁰ Letter to Bishan Chandra Seth, Congress MP from Saharanpur; 17 November 1962; address: 28 South Avenue, New Delhi; PMH-No. 1999-62.

¹³¹ See note 106.

difficult to predict. You would remember that for years I have been asked to expel the Chinese from Ladakh. I too wanted that. But I knew that with our forces we cannot do so, since the Chinese were in an advantageous position and we were on difficult terrain.

If someone asks me to throw out the Chinese from Tibet, it is completely beyond reason and our capability. Well, if there is a revolution in China or a World War, anything can happen.

The third thing that you have pointed out is that I should write my speeches before delivering them. Neither is it my habit, nor do I get time to write speeches.

You have written that the President should be the head of the Defence Council, does not go down well with my understanding. Wherever there is parliamentary government, this is neither practised nor preferred. The president's views are taken and if they are impactful, it would go against our constitution.

Pakistan is taking all the help from the US and they are providing it also. Our entering into a military pact sounds wrong to me. We will not gain much from such a pact, and on top of that the whole world will suffer. Whether Soviet Russia is with us or not, I cannot say; but if they are not with us and yet, do not help China, then also we would stand to gain a lot. These days the Sino-Soviet relationship is not very good. They abuse each other in public. We should not do anything that would push the Soviets towards China. If Russia stops supplying petrol to China, that would be of great advantage to us.

It is possible that the war with China could be fought in the air. We should be prepared for it. But now China has much greater strength in air power and can harm us immensely.

Dissolving the governments of Assam, Bengal and Kashmir will not augur well for India; instead of getting full popular support, which we are getting now, it would start terrible in fighting.

Yours,
Jawaharlal Nehru

Translation ends]

277. To Vishnu Sahay: Defence Strategy¹³²

November 17, 1962

My dear Vishnu Sahay,

I have your letter of the 14th November. I am passing on copies of it to the Home Minister and the Cabinet Secretary.

I agree with you that Tezpur is being over-visited. I have been thinking of going there myself, but for the present, I have postponed the visit. This is chiefly because of the fighting going on in the Walong area. I did not wish to come in the way of what is being done there.

What you say about the possibility of Chinese coming in via Tirap is true.

There is that possibility though for the moment I do not think it is at all likely. But obviously we cannot station our forces in small numbers in various places. I think what might be done soon is, first of all, to have a good Intelligence service in this area and, secondly, to build up Volunteer Corps or Home Guards. I think also the time has come for us to train Guerrilla Units. We are taking this in hand elsewhere in NEFA using Khampas and tribal people.

As for Bhutan, we are in some difficulty. Any attempt of our Army to go there in numbers would probably be an invitation to the Chinese also to go there. For the present we have sent some people to train the Bhutanese and taking some other steps also.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

¹³² Letter to the Governor of Assam.

278. In the Rajya Sabha: NEFA and Ladakh¹³³

The Prime Minister (Jawaharlal Nehru); Mr Chairman, Sir, I have to give grievous news to the House. Both Walong and the Sela Ridge in NEFA have fallen to the enemy. In the Chushul area fighting is proceeding.

In Walong the enemy attacked on the night of the 15-16 November. This was a two-pronged attack. The battle continued till the morning of the 17th. The enemy succeeded in shelling the airfield which was the only source of supply to our forces. On the 17th afternoon, our troops started withdrawing to defensive positions in the rear. In the Jung area, the enemy attacked our positions on the 17th November. Their attack was repulsed four times. Ultimately, there was an attack in greater strength and the Jung position had to be given up. Our troops fell back to the main position on Sela. In the meantime, the enemy by-passed our main post by a wide flanking movement between Sela and Bomdila. They attacked in the early hours of the 18th November and cut the road between Sela and Bomdila. The infiltrators were forced to withdraw. They formed up again, however, and renewed the attack. The situation is somewhat confused and fighting is going on, but our commander had to withdraw from Sela.

In Chushul sector in Ladakh heavy artillery—attacks were made on the Chushul airfield and outposts. Our post at Rezang La was attacked on the 18th November morning. After fierce fighting, this post was overwhelmed. A part of another post, six miles east of Chushul, was also attacked. Other attacks on the Chushul area were repulsed, fighting is still going on.

This is bad news. I cannot go into any further details at this stage. I should like to add that in spite of the reverses suffered by us, we are determined not to give in any way and we shall fight the enemy, however long it may take, to repel him and drive him out of our territory.

Ganga Sharan Sinha¹³⁴ (Bihar): I would like to have some

¹³³ Statement in the House, Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol. XLI, Nos. 1-8, 8 November to 19 November 1962, pp. 1652-1659.

¹³⁴ Independent.

clarification. It has appeared in today's papers that we had to withdraw from Walong because we were outnumbered. Secondly, it has also appeared in the Press today that Chinese trucks and buses were seen in Tawang. I do not know whether both these news items are correct. The first is that it has appeared in today's Press that one of the main reasons why we withdrew from Walong was that we were outnumbered there by the Chinese. Is that correct? The second thing is that it has also appeared in the Press today that Chinese buses and trucks were seen at Tawang. Is that news correct?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I can hardly discuss the details of the fighting, Sir, in Walong. It is difficult. We have not got all the details yet but the major fact is that the enemy managed to attain a high position, a position of height, there and shelled our airfield which was the sole source of supply to the Walong base and they also attacked the Walong post. The Commander there decided to withdraw and he was withdrawn from it. This has always to be decided by the Commander on the spot subject to such instructions as the superior officers give. The civil authority hardly comes into the picture. As far as the other matter that the hon. Member has mentioned is concerned trucks and buses being seen there at Tawang, they may well be there because in the small area there between Tawang and Bumla pass, some kind of road appears to have been constructed by the Chinese.

K. Santhanam (Madras): May I know whether the airstrip at Walong has been made unusable by the Chinese?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am sorry I cannot answer that question. I have no information on that.

Rajendra Pratap Sinha¹³⁵ (Bihar): I want to ask one question. The

¹³⁵ Congress.

Prime Minister just now told us that there was an outflanking movement to capture Sela. Am I to believe that the Chinese forces came to this area from our adjoining State of Bhutan to attack?

Jawaharlal Nehru: No, Sir. It is on the other side. Bhutan is on the left side and nobody has entered Bhutan to our knowledge.

Chairman: He is talking of the outflanking movement at Sela.

Jawaharlal Nehru: Sela movement has nothing to do with Bhutan territory. It came from another side.

Chandra Shekhar¹³⁶ (Uttar Pradesh): The situation has turned out to be very serious. A National Defence Council was formed in the country and emergency was declared. I fail to understand why no meeting of the National Defence Council has been held so far. I should like to have one more assurance from the Prime Minister. I would like to know whether he is going to give up the old policy of vacillation and hesitation and declare that we are going to fight firmly, whether he will talk like a war leader who is going to put before the nation an example of his vitality, strength and determination. I want that clear and categorical assurance from the Prime Minister because at this juncture if we are in a hesitant mood, I think we cannot fight the enemy. The way civil defence arrangements are going on in the country, I think it is not intended to meet the situation in the country and the emergency that has arisen.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I can hardly answer the hon. Member's question. Not today but for some time past there has been no question of hesitation or vacillation. We realised certainly from the 20th October, if not before, that we are meeting a very well-prepared determined enemy who could throw in

¹³⁶ Congress

vast forces and overwhelm us at any point and we decided then to take every possible measure, including, of course, getting every kind of aid that we could from friendly countries. We have asked for every kind of aid. Some has come, some others will come in. We have not hesitated to do that. There is no inhibition about that and we propose to go on doing that and it is not only a full-fledged war but a very difficult war for us because of various situations. The hon. Member referred to civil defence. Civil defence is helpful but it has nothing to do with the immediate conflict. Civil defence comes in, may come in and we should certainly look after it but the immediate problem is somewhat different.

Chandra Shekhar: The whole trouble is that we become wiser after the event. Civil defence will come in later on but we must prepare for it. I should like to mention one more point. It was reported from Jorhat that there was an attempt to sabotage the railway line. It was reported from Warangal that some members of the public who went round to make collections for the Defence Fund were attacked by the Communists. It was reported from Burdwan that demonstrators against the Chinese were stoned from the Communist Party office. All these things are happening in the country and the national emergency is there, but our Government is keeping mum over all these issues, when people resisted all these attempts our Prime Minister told the public that all these attempts are not going to serve the country. I want to know from the Prime Minister whether this national upsurge is not going to serve the country but that only such attempts of sabotage are going to serve this country. (Interruptions) We are not going to bum the houses of the Communist Party but if stones come from the office of the Communist Party, those Communist Party offices cannot be protected by any Government and by any person whatsoever. (Interruptions)

Jawaharlal Nehru: The hon. Member referred to some incidents in today's papers about somebody being stoned apparently in front of the Communist

Party office. I am told that those people who stoned them, especially the leader of the Party there, were arrested immediately and the Bengal Government has also taken other steps. There is no doubt that any such activity must be dealt with severely but I had ventured to say on a previous occasion that certain, fortunately very few incidents had occurred where some shops had been destroyed or burnt or looted out that does not add to our strength. It is undignified and harmful but any person coming in the way of our war effort must be dealt with firmly.

Dahyabhai V. Patel¹³⁷ (Gujarat): I do not wish to embarrass the Prime Minister or the Government in any way but we are opposing a massive onslaught of the Chinese who have been well prepared. They have been preparing themselves for a long time. The country feels, a very great section of the country, a large section of the country feels that our request for aid from friendly countries has been rather hesitant, we have not demanded the full measure of the aid that is available and we are hesitant to ask that. Are we going to ask for unstinted and full measure of aid to come to enable us to drive the Chinese out? I would like the Prime Minister to make that categorical declaration.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I think I had made that clear that we are asking, for all the aid that we require. There has been no delay on our part but aid naturally had to be phased. We wanted some things immediately, some things in the next two months or so and some things in the next six months but we have given long lists of what we require to several friendly countries and we are anxious to get them as soon as possible.

M. Ruthnaswamy¹³⁸ (Madras): May I know by whom, the Cabinet or the Army Council, is the strategy of defence in the NEFA area laid? I also

¹³⁷ Leader of Swatantra Party in the House.

¹³⁸ Swatantra Party.

want to know whether the Commander who was sent there is allowed to modify that strategy whether he has anything to do with the course of the tactics followed day after day?

Some Hon. Members: How can that question be answered? No, no.

G. Murahari (Uttar Pradesh): I want to know why the Prime Minister is not ordering the air arm to go into action to destroy the supply bases of the enemy which are situated in our own territory.

Anand Chand (Himachal Pradesh): The hon. Prime Minister has just now said that it is a full-scale war. May I respectfully ask him, now that the position is changed—previously it was infiltration of the Chinese in very large numbers—whether the Government would now revise their stand—because up till now we have been saying that this is Chinese aggression— and we would now say that it is war and take all steps that are necessary because this emergency, Sir, as I put it before the House, was based on certain of our territories having been occupied by the Chinese? Now, it is full-scale war and if it is full-scale war, I think something should be done about the closure of our Embassy in China as well as the closure of the Chinese Embassy here and all other steps that follow, because I want to know whether we are going to declare war now that the Chinese have come into our soil or whether we are going to wait for the Chinese to declare war against us?

Chairman: You think the declaration is immensely important?

Jawaharlal Nehru: This is obviously a war, a kind of a brutal and callous war. We are treating it as such and taking all steps about it. As for the hon. Member's question about declaration of war and closing our Embassy and their Embassy here, there is no question of, shall I say, any inhibition in doing that. One has to consider it from various aspects as to whether it will

be helpful in our carrying on this effort or not at the present moment. We shall certainly consider it very carefully.

A.B. Vajpayee¹³⁹ (Uttar Pradesh): May I know whether the attention of the hon. Prime Minister has been drawn to a statement made by the Prime Minister of Australia that they have not received any request for military aid from India? May I seek a clarification whether Australia has been approached for military aid?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I think Australia has been approached, not in a big way because big aid was obviously likely to come from some big countries like the United States, like the United Kingdom and to some extent from France but I think we have approached them for some things.

M.H. Samuel (Andhra Pradesh): May I know if the Prime Minister has any information about the casualties we have inflicted on the enemy at Walong?

Ganga Sharan Sinha: Last Friday it was announced that our house will adjourn on the 23rd. In view of the serious situation that is developing, will the Prime Minister reconsider this and call the leaders of all the groups and find out some method so that Parliament can remain in session or some other via media, by which Members can be kept in touch because that is very necessary? And I think before we adjourn this decision should be taken.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am in the hands of the house, this House and the other House. The sole test should be what will further our war effort. Many hon. Members have been eager to go back to their constituencies or elsewhere to do work. It was really under pressure from them that we decided to shorten

¹³⁹ Jana Sangh.

this session. If it requires to be extended a little longer, we shall certainly agree.

279. In the Lok Sabha: NEFA and Ladakh¹⁴⁰

The Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs, Defence and Atomic Energy (Jawaharlal Nehru): Mr Speaker, Sir, I have to give grievous news to this House. Both Walong and the Sela ridge in NEFA have fallen to the enemy. In the Chushul area fighting is proceeding.

In Walong, the enemy attacked on the 15th/16th night. This was a two-pronged attack. The battle continued till the morning of the 17th. The enemy succeeded in shelling this air field, which was the only source of supply to our forces. In the 17th afternoon, our troops started withdrawing to defensive positions in the rear.

In the Jung area, the enemy attacked our positions on the 17th November. Their attack was repulsed four times. Ultimately there was an attack in greater strength, and this Jung position had to be given up. Our troops fell back to the main position at Sela. In the meantime, the enemy bypassed our main post by a wide flanking movement between Sela and Bomdila. They attacked in the early hours of the 18th November, and cut the road between Sela and Bomdila. The infiltrators were forced to withdraw. They formed up again and renewed the attack. The situation is somewhat confused, and fighting is going on, but our Commander had to withdraw from Sela.

In the Chushul sector in Ladakh, heavy artillery attacks were made on the Chushul air field and the outposts. Our post at Rezang La was attacked on the 18th morning. After fierce fighting, this post was overwhelmed. A part of another post six miles east of Chushul was also attacked.

¹⁴⁰ Statement, Lok Sabha Debates, Third Series, Vol. IX, November 8-20, 1962, pp. 2230-2234.

Other attacks in the Chushul area were repulsed but fighting is still going on. This is bad news, I cannot go into further details at this stage. I should like to add that in spite of the reverses suffered by us, we are determined not to give in, in any way, and we shall fight the enemy, however long it may take to repel him and drive him out of our country.

Hari Vishnu Kamath¹⁴¹: On a point of clarification.

Speaker: I have received, and probably the Prime Minister may have received, a call attention notice from several hon. Members. That was specific about the fall of Jung to the enemy, and the reportedly precarious position of Chushul. Would the Prime Minister like to say anything more?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I would not like to say anything beyond what I have said. I have referred to both Jung and Chushul.

Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): I am sure the House is distressed and shocked beyond measure to hear of this most calamitous reverse since October 20. Our gallant jawans are being killed and taken prisoner in thousands.

The former Defence Minister, on the eve of his resignation, stated in Bombay or elsewhere, that the position was that we are not only outnumbered, but out-weaponed.¹⁴² May I ask the Prime Minister whether steps, and vigorous steps, are being taken now to obtain arms and equipment from all friendly nations on a massive scale and thus allay the widespread public apprehensions that our armed forces are not yet fully equipped to meet the enemy?

Jawaharlal Nehru: As the House knows, every effort is being made to get arms and other equipment from foreign countries, and we have received

¹⁴¹ PSP.

¹⁴² See item 453.

some, and they have been immediately sent on to our forward posts.

Priya Gupta¹⁴³ (Katihar): May I know the extent to which foreign military aid is taken, and whether Government have a blueprint for further military aid to meet this crisis arising out of the fact that there is a reported mutual understanding between China and the Pakistan Government to the effect that China would help Pakistan to get Kashmir and West Bengal and Assam according to Group C proposal of the British Cabinet Mission?

Speaker: All this question is not relevant here.

[Omitted: Exchanges on procedure]

Speaker: Order, order. He (Bagri¹⁴⁴, Hissar) has put a question and the Prime Minister has said that he has not this information with him; and that whenever it is got it would be supplied to the House ... (Interruptions).

Hem Barua¹⁴⁵ (Gauhati): In view of the fact that a very grave situation has emerged with the fall of Walong and Jung and Sela pass has also fallen according to my latest information ... (Interruptions) and the Chinese are making a headlong thrust into the heart of Assam, in this context may I know whether the Government proposes to go in for a total war with military aid in men and materials from our friendly countries or the Government proposes to go in for immediate negotiations for peace on the basis of cease fire at whatever cost? These are the things that I want to know from the Prime Minister; the situation has become very serious.

¹⁴³ PSP.

¹⁴⁴ Mani Ram Bagri, Socialist Party.

¹⁴⁵ PSP.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I have myself stated that it is a grave news and it creates a serious situation. Naturally our Armed Forces will do their utmost to meet it. It is all that I can say. I cannot go into details.

280. Broadcast to the Nation¹⁴⁶

[Translation begins:

Comrades and friends,

Nearly a month ago I spoke to you on the radio and told you of the Chinese invasion of India.¹⁴⁷ They had come across our frontier in the North East Frontier Agency. At first in small numbers and then in ever increasing numbers, and suddenly on the 20th October they had made a massive attack with overwhelming numbers on our military posts and our forces stationed there. That was a severe set-back for us and it naturally grieved us.

Now today I have to tell you of further set-back which have occurred in the last two or three days and even today. Huge Chinese armies have been marching in the northern part of the North East Frontier Agency and we have suffered reverses at Walong, on the Sela Ridge and today Bomdila—a small town in NEFA has also fallen. In the North also in Ladakh, in the Chushul area, the Chinese have been attacking fiercely, though they have been held. Now what has happened is very serious and very saddening to us and I can well understand what our friends in Assam must be feeling because all this is happening on their doorstep, one might say. I want to tell them that we feel very much for them and that we shall help them to the utmost of our ability. We may not be able always to succeed in what we are trying now because of various factors and of the overwhelming numbers of the Chinese forces, but I want to take a pledge to them, here and now, that

¹⁴⁶ Speech, 19 November 1962. NMML, AIR Tapes NM No. 8596, NM. No. 1689.

¹⁴⁷ See item 259.

we shall see this matter to the end and the end will have to be victory for India. We are not going to tolerate this kind of invasion of India by any foreign country. This is the first war of independent India to maintain her independence. And India is not going to lose this war, however long it lasts and whatever harm it may do us meanwhile. Therefore, on this day which has been a sad day for us bringing news of reverses and set-backs, I want to send my greetings to the people of Assam specially, to the people of NEFA, and to the rest of India, and to tell them that we must not get worried about this. Sad we must be necessarily, but we must train ourselves and steel ourselves to meet all these reverses and to even make our determination still firmer to do all that we can to repel and throw out the invader from India. We shall not be content till that invader goes out of India or is pushed out. We shall not accept any terms that he may offer because he may think that we are a little frightened by some set-backs. I want to make that clear to all of you and more specially to our countrymen in Assam, to whom our heart goes out at this moment.

There has been a great deal of expression of determination in India, great enthusiasm, which has heartened us. People even the very poor have contributed to our funds, defence funds and in many ways, people have shown their determination. I hope that this will continue in ever increasing measure and any set-backs that may come, in this is war which has been thrust upon us, will not permit us to waver in our determination, because we will not waver. We shall carry out this fight which has been thrust upon us to the end, and that end is going to be victory for us, whatever in between there might be. So, with that pledge to you, I want to end; I do not wish any person to doubt what the end will be, and I do not want any Indian—man or woman or child, to get dismayed because the Chinese forces have won some successes at this beginning. This is war, and in war successes come and failures come also. What counts is the end, not the intermediary stages of that war.

So, at present, I shall only say this to you, I shall not say much. I hope in future to keep in touch with you, a little more frequently to tell you what is

happening and to mobilise the nation to meet this grave menace. For this menace is not of Assam or Ladakh or of India only; it is a menace for Asia and a menace for the entire world. We see the most, the grossest form of imperialism functioning here across our borders in India. China has said often enough that it is anti-imperialist. Now we see this so-called anti-imperialist country becoming itself an imperialist of the worst kind and committing aggression and invading a friendly country without rhyme or reason or excuse and justifying it by saying that they are being attacked. I must confess, that I have seldom come across such a travesty of truth and of decency in international behaviour. We must stand up for it, not only we but all decent-minded persons and decent-minded countries who value their freedom, anywhere in Asia or Africa or in Europe or America. I should like to say that we are grateful for the speedy help that came to us from our friendly countries abroad, more especially from the United States and the United Kingdom. We shall require more help and we have asked them for it and we shall certainly use all the help they can give us, because this is a matter of survival for us. It is not a game that we are playing or if you like, it is a game of life and death. The life and death of a nation and the life and death of millions in this country, and we are going ahead whatever happens, with the firm conviction of the rightness of our cause and that success and victory will be ours. I want you to join in this conviction and not to be downhearted at any time. And so, let us all say today with real meaning repeat our old cry: Jai Hind!

Translation ends]

281. In the Rajya Sabha: Situation in Ladakh and NEFA¹⁴⁸

The Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs and Minister of

¹⁴⁸ Statement in the House, Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol.XLI, Nos.9-21, 20 November to 6 December 1962, pp.1763-1767.

Defence (Jawaharlal Nehru): Mr Chairman, I should like to keep the House informed of the developments on the various battle fronts. In the Ladakh area I said yesterday that Chushul had been fiercely attacked repeatedly, but the attacks had been repulsed. One of the distant outposts in Ladakh, Rezang La, had been attacked and it has changed hands twice. That outpost is in the possession of the enemy, but Chushul remains very much in our possession.

Then, in the other side the Chinese forces have advanced. They were near Bomdila yesterday. They have taken possession of Bomdila and they are at the present moment a few miles beyond Bomdila.

These are the chief facts which have happened. I need not add that all the steps possible for us are being taken by our Army authorities.

M.S. Gurupada Swamy¹⁴⁹ (Mysore): May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that the intention of the Chinese troops is to march further and reach our Assam frontier, so that they may have a strategic hold over certain area?
(Interruptions)

Chairman: How can anybody say what they want to do, how can the Prime Minister know what they want to do?

M.S. Gurupada Swamy: I want to know this. He said that the Chinese troops in Bomdila were advancing further. May I know whether the advance has been checked according to the information available or whether they are still advancing?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Obviously their advance is being obstructed and checked. I cannot answer what the intentions are of the Chinese troops, but we should expect the worst from them and prepare for it.

¹⁴⁹ Congress.

Faridul Haq Ansari¹⁵⁰ (Uttar Pradesh): Yesterday the hon. Prime Minister assured the House that very strict measures would be taken against those people who contravened the Defence of India Rules and Ordinance. May I know whether the hon. Prime Minister is aware that a map of the NEFA area by the Chinese showing Assam, Bihar and West Bengal as part of China is even now being sold in Calcutta? Secondly, there is a book, collections of Urdu poems by one Taban¹⁵¹, which indicates welcome to the Chinese forces in India. Not only that. There is couplet which warns the Prime Minister of India that the Chinese invasion is death to him, Truman and other men. Why is action not taken against this?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I cannot answer these questions about which I do not know much, but action is being taken. We have specially asked the Bengal Government, as other Governments to take action wherever they consider necessary. It is for them to pick and choose and determine what action they have to take.

A.D. Mani¹⁵² (Madhya Pradesh): May I ask the Prime Minister where was the need for our Charge d'Affaires in Peking to meet the Chinese Foreign Office officials yesterday, when the situation is so grave as it is today and it is having a very weakening effect on our morale to find that when the crisis has developed, our Charge d' Affaires is meeting the Chinese Foreign Office officials on his own initiative to discuss the matter? The news is published in today's paper.

Chairman: Was it on his initiative? Does the news say that it was on his

¹⁵⁰ PSP.

¹⁵¹ Mehtab Rai Taban. See also MEA memorandum to Chinese Embassy in India, 2 November 1962 regarding spreading propaganda material through post. White paper, Vol.VIII, p.126.

¹⁵² Independent.

initiative?

A.D. Mani: The news says that he called on the Foreign Office. If he had been invited by the Foreign Office, it would have been mentioned. I infer that he went and saw on his own initiative.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not know exactly how he went. Very likely he conveyed a message from us to the Foreign Office and he went to convey that message.

Bairagi Dwibedy (Orissa): May I know, Sir, what is the total number of evacuees from the towns that have fallen to the Chinese and how they have been rehabilitated?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I could not give the exact number. Tawang is a very small town and a considerable number of people came away from Tawang when the Chinese went there and they have been placed in various camps, etc. They have been looked after.

There is one other matter Sir, I should like to mention. General P.N. Thapar, Chief of our Army Staff, has this morning applied for long leave on grounds of health. He has been granted leave and on his recommendation the senior Army Commander Lieutenant General J.N. Chaudhuri, is being appointed to officiate as Chief of Army staff.

[Translation begins:

A.M. Tariq (Jammu and Kashmir): Just now an Hon. Member asked about the Defence of India Rules. I wish to ask the Prime Minister in clear terms, what is our policy regarding this. I would also like to draw his attention to a cartoon published in today's Hindustan Times, where it has been shown that the Prime Minister is holding a Mashaal and the house of Hindus tan is on fire. And Jayaprakash Narayan is going to ask Ayub to save the house. If the Government has seen this cartoon, what action

has been taken against it?

Jawaharlal Nehru: At least I have not seen it and if any government official has, then we would certainly take action.

Translation ends]

R.S. Khandekar¹⁵³ (Madhya Pradesh): The hon. Prime Minister gave the position regarding Ladakh and Bomdila. May I know what is the position on the Walong front?

Jawaharlal Nehru: As you know on the Walong front, some miles on this side of Walong, conflicts are going on between our Army detachments and certain forward Chinese forces.

Bhupesh Gupta (West Bengal): May I know, Sir, if the Prime Minister is aware that the Ananda Bazar Patrika of Calcutta published a cartoon on the appointment of Mr Chavan as the Defence Minister, ridiculing his appointment in that paper and in other papers, calling the Prime Minister a gorilla and carrying on a scurrilous campaign against him? May I know whether the Home Minister has placed these materials before him, since what we need is national unity at this hour?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am not aware of that cartoon or the articles.

282. To Sudhir Ghosh: Military Tactics¹⁵⁴

November 21, 1962

My dear Sudhir Ghosh,

¹⁵³ PSP.

¹⁵⁴ Letter to Rajya Sabha MP, Congress; address: 95 South Avenue, New Delhi.

Your letter of the 21st November.¹⁵⁵ I do not know to what documents you refer that have been shown to the President, and who showed them. At a very early stage, that is, late in September or the beginning of October, we did say that it was desirable to push the Chinese across the frontier. Later, when we got further information about the strength of the Chinese, definite instructions were given to defend at the most feasible line. We were not told that they had to move troops from Tawang, and we made it clear that the final decision must rest with the Commanders on the spot.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

283. To Gopal Singh: Future Strategy¹⁵⁶

November 22, 1962

My dear Dr Gopal Singh,
Your letter of November 22. I quite agree with your analysis. What we require most now is a little breathing time to reorganise our forces and our equipment. At the same time, we cannot accept the Chinese proposal which is a very tricky one, and which we have refused previously. Any decision which might result in war on a bigger scale soon would be to our great disadvantage. We are trying our best to get the equipment necessary. As for Pakistan, we have done a great deal recently to cultivate friendly relations, but they are getting more and more aggressive. Some people say that they have made some arrangement with China. Pakistan is thinking of greater ambitions—something even more than Kashmir. I do not see how we can possibly give in to this kind of bullying. India will go to pieces.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

¹⁵⁵ See appendix 64.

¹⁵⁶ Letter to Rajya Sabha MP, nominated; address: 62 South Avenue, New Delhi.

284. To Chief Ministers: War and Five Year Plan¹⁵⁷

November 23, 1962

My dear Chief Minister,

Our minds are full of the Chinese war in the North-East of India. This has been obviously a much bigger thing than a frontier affray. It is a regular invasion of India with far-reaching consequences and we cannot possibly submit to it.

2. The cease-fire and withdrawal proposals made by the Chinese are very tricky. Of course, we cannot object to their withdrawal. But we cannot admit even indirectly to their withdrawal. But we cannot admit even indirectly their claim to parts of our territory. We are considering what reply to send them.

3. But I am now writing to you not so much about the direct war effort, which is important and to which a great deal of attention has been paid, but certain other matters which ultimately are equally important even from the war point of view.

4. There is a tremendous response from our people, and it has been most heartening and moving to observe it. The problem is how to take advantage of this great response. To a small extent, the answer is recruiting for the Army or the volunteers; the NCC or Home Guards; or the National Defence Fund; or the Citizens' Committees that are being formed. All this does not cover a very large number of people. We can have large scale teaching of nursing and first aid and civil defence.

5. But it has to be realised that the war effort essentially means greater production in agriculture and industry. This means a concentration on certain basic aspects of our Third Five Year Plan. Industry, I take it, will gather momentum because of more needs and the like.

6. What of agriculture? I have had very pleasing news of the response of the peasantry. I think every effort should be made to direct this enthusiasm into

¹⁵⁷ Letter to all Chief Ministers and the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

right channels. For instance, they should be asked to undertake special works to increase agriculture. Even the digging of water channels, tanks, bunding and other important things which people can do without any expenditure of foreign exchange. We might fix a time table for this, say six months, during which they should build their water channels as well as do many other things.

7. If this is undertaken under proper direction and a strong push is given to it, the results may be very gratifying indeed.

8. I am merely mentioning one or two matters which come to my mind. You can consider other matters. The point is to tie all this up with the war effort and make people realise that they are serving this effort by these measures and, above all, to fix time limits. I hope you will give full and urgent consideration to this matter.

9. It is of the utmost importance that we should not allow defeatist rumours to spread. Unfortunately, there are many people engaged in this nefarious task which tends to demoralise our people. But fortunately, the majority of our people are not inclined that way, and they respond very well indeed to the right approach.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

285. To Mahendra Mohan Choudhury: Assam is India¹⁵⁸

November 25, 1962

My dear Mahendra Mohan,

Your letter of the 22nd November reached me two or three days ago. The letter is signed not only by you, but by a number of others also.

I have read your letter with care and thank you for it. I have also been told of conditions in Assam at present by Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indiraji and

¹⁵⁸ Letter to the Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly.

others who visited it.

I need not tell you how deeply pained we have been at recent events in NEFA and Assam. Our hearts have gone out to all of your people there. I can assure you that there will be no peace till we have rid India and, of course, Assam also, of this Chinese menace. Assam is a living part of India, and what happens to Assam happens to the whole of India. I cannot, of course, guarantee what ups and downs we may have in the near future. But of the end, I am quite certain, and I hope that the people of Assam will bear with determination and fortitude whatever burdens they may have to shoulder, remembering always that they have the entire people of India behind them. We have to deal with a strong, capable and ruthless enemy. We have to look ahead and prepare ourselves for this conflict. We cannot possibly surrender to them even indirectly.

We are carefully considering their recent offer. We are unable to accept it as such. At the same time, we do not want a quick resumption of operations. We want a little time to prepare ourselves.

Please do not be despondent. We must hold together stoutly and work and prepare for a better Assam and a better India.

If possible, I shall try to come myself for a day or two to Assam. At present, I am terribly occupied here with our war effort and other preparations.

You can share this letter of mine with your co-signatories. But please do not give publicity to it.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

286. In the Lok Sabha: After Cease Fire¹⁵⁹

Jawaharlal Nehru: There have been so many questions of different types

¹⁵⁹ Question hour, Lok Sabha Debates, Third Series, Vol: X, November 21 to December 4, 1962, pp. 3328-3336.

that I am a bit confused and may forget answering some of them.

Speaker: My intention was only to bring to the notice of the hon. Prime Minister all these questions. The hon. Prime Minister might choose which are to be answered at this moment.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I shall answer as many as I can remember here and now. The first thing is about the hon. Law Minister¹⁶⁰ and the Secretary-General¹⁶¹ going to Cairo and Accra. That is true. Very probably the Deputy Foreign Minister, Shrimati Lakshmi Menon, will go to some countries, that is, Burma, Indonesia and possibly Cambodia. These countries are those that have been invited by the Ceylonese Government to go very soon, early in December, to Colombo to discuss these matters connected with our conflict with China. We were not, naturally, invited and we were not even informed of it. Afterwards we heard about it. The countries invited are the UAR, Ghana, Indonesia, Burma and Cambodia. I think, that is the whole number; I cannot think of any others. So, we decided to send my colleague the law Minister and the Secretary-General to Africa, to these two countries invited from Africa and the Deputy Foreign Minister and probably some senior official of the External Affairs Ministry to the countries in Asia. That is apart from any others whom we may send to other places. Their object is to explain our position more thoroughly in regard to these so-called proposals of the Chinese Government so that there may be no confusion in their mind as to what we think about them.

About the other questions, I really forget...

S. M. Banerjee¹⁶²: About clarification.

N.G. Ranga¹⁶³: What about informing all other Governments? Press

¹⁶⁰ Asoke Sen.

¹⁶¹ Secretary-General, MEA, R.K. Nehru.

¹⁶² Independent Member.

¹⁶³ Swatantra Party.

campaign?

Jawaharlal Nehru: We, of course, inform all Governments through our Ambassadors and in other ways. But, these we specially decided to approach because they were going to meet in Colombo soon at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Ceylon.¹⁶⁴

The hon. Member asked for clarification. It is natural to ask for clarifications of various points which are not clear and in so far as they can be cleared it will be desirable so that our reply should be based not merely on any doubt about these matters. We have not received a full reply yet. Possibly in a day or two we will get it.

N.G. Ranga: Does the Prime Minister expect to receive their reply so soon in the light of the way in which the Chinese have been taking so long a time in all their replies?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Sometimes their replies come soon. Sometimes they take a long time. I cannot say precisely.

Hem Barua¹⁶⁵: Position of civil defence in Tezpur.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I think the position in Tezpur is almost normal now. The hon. Member mentioned something about evacuation.

Hem Barua: There is an order by the Commissioner of Civil Supplies and Movements and Liaison Officer with the Government of India. It says: "Employees whose homes are outside Assam may, however, be anxious to send away their families; this the State Government desires should be done in as orderly a manner as possible. Arrangements are accordingly

¹⁶⁴ Sirimavo Bandaranaike.

¹⁶⁵ PSP.

being made to give all facilities for such employees to send their families home." I say, any order after the cease fire was announced, would it not create panic among the rest of the population in the State?

Jawaharlal Nehru: May I know the date of that?

Hem Barua: It was issued on 21st November, 1962. It was circulated to the different offices on the 22nd November this month.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I am afraid this notice was issued by some official in the Assam Government.

Hem Barua: No. He is an officer with the Government of India stationed at Shillong. Here it clearly says: Commissioner of Civil Supplies and Movements and Liaison Officer with the Government of India.

The Minister of Railways (Swaran Singh): That means Assam Officer for liaison work with us.

Jawaharlal Nehru: Assam Government's officer in liaison with our Government. I cannot say in what conditions he sent it. But it does not represent our view point. I agree with the hon. Member that there should be broadly speaking no question of anybody withdrawing from where he is. This refers, I think, to women and children chiefly.

Speaker: Women and children.

Hem Barua: Central Government employees...

Hari Vishnu Kamath¹⁶⁶ (Hoshangabad): This should be rescinded by the

¹⁶⁶ PSP

Government here.

Hem Barua: Withdrawn.

Speaker: Order, order. Now that it has been brought to the notice of the Government, the Government has a definite opinion about that and the Government would act accordingly. There was one other proposal whether it would be possible to place a map of those lines in the Central Hall so that Members may have an idea and might be able to appreciate what the difference is.

N.G. Ranga¹⁶⁷: How is that such an important order came to be passed without the knowledge at all of the Government of India? (Interruption).

Speaker: Order, order. Under the shadow of a previous event, some officer issued it. (Interruption). Order, order.

Jawaharlal Nehru: Certain orders were issued, I believe, some little time ago that in the event of any contingency arising, what should be done so that they may be prepared for it.

Hem Barua; It is not like that. The language is different.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I quite agree with the hon. Member that it was undesirable to issue this order. And those orders were perhaps misinterpreted or exaggerated by the local people.

Speaker: In regard to the maps, can anything be said for the present?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I shall endeavour to have some kind of map placed in the

¹⁶⁷ Swatantra Party.

Central Hall.

Speaker: Is there any information about those jawans of ours who were taken in between Sela and Bomdila?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Some of them have returned. I believe—I am not quite sure—about a thousand of them have returned.

Hem Barua: There are conflicting press reports that the number is between 1000 and 3000.

Indrajit Gupta¹⁶⁸ (Calcutta South West): What is the estimate of the number of those persons?

Jawaharlal Nehru: They have not returned actually to headquarters. A few of them have been brought back when they were traced by our helicopters. The exact number is not known. It is an estimate. I hope that those people will be soon back. But that does not comprise of all those; it is possible that some of them, quite a fair number, may be in a different column round about.

287. At the CPP¹⁶⁹

Jawaharlal Nehru: I have to announce that Shri Jagannath Rao Chandrike and Shri Amarnath Vidyalkar have been elected unopposed as Members of the AICC representing the Congress Party in Parliament.

A Member: Friends, with the permission of the leader I would like to announce 3 points: one is Shri Bakhshi Ghulam Mohamed will address the

¹⁶⁸ CPI.

¹⁶⁹ Speech, 29 November 1962. NMML, J.N.'s Speeches from Tapes, Tape No. M 65 (II).

members of the party tomorrow the 30 November 1962 at 5.5 p.m. in the Central Hall; the second announcement is there will be a film show, a documentary on war efforts, in the Central Hall on Monday, the 3 December 1962 at 5.5 p.m.; third announcement is; 120 members of the Congress Party in Parliament have offered their services for the defence services in the following categories. Their names should be sent to the Ministries concerned and defence department so that their services may be utilised. Advocates 25, Agriculturists 8, Atomic Energy 3, Cooperation 3, Defence 5, Defence publicity 10, Doctors 8, Education 13, Engineering 2, Nursing 6, Publicity General 18, Miscellaneous 19, 120 altogether.

Thank you.

Jawaharlal Nehru: I think that apart from individuals who may be chosen for some particular work which is possible, most of them will have to serve in their own states. They may serve in many ways, but almost every member can become a member of the territorial army or some voluntary organisations, official, I am not talking about the non-official, official voluntary organisations. I do not know,

Atomic energy is a full time job, if they are good enough they are chosen then they will work there and if they do not, they remain here. But there are many points, for instance publicity, in which members can be useful in their States and some of them here. But I would suggest that somebody the secretary or a small committee should keep this list in view, consult people, the defence and others, how to follow this up.

Well, friends and comrades there is nothing else on the Agenda, but as we are meeting after some time, I shall say a few words about the general situation etc. in the country. It is totally unnecessary for me to point out to you that the crisis that we have to face is extraordinary and dangerous, well vitally and in facing that crisis we have to do many things. We have passed a fine resolution in both Houses of Parliament. We have to act up to them. But something much more obviously. By passing that resolution and by the general upsurge which we have seen in the country which has been

remarkable and most heartening. I think each one of us will agree with me that we have not seen anything like it previously; in another sense we have not seen, there was the independence movement, many things that moved us tremendously, and affected us. So this has moved us and it is, if you analyse it, why did this happen? Well, fundamentally because they felt they had something which they stood to lose, something of value which they stood to lose, by this Chinese invasion. That is to say I do not make a great point of it, but I do think it is a point worthy of mention. That since we became independent all our work, the work that has been done in the country has brought something to them which they value and consider precious and the fear of losing it brought about this tremendous reaction in the people. Of course, normally people, many people, react to any such invasion as they have, done but there is something more about it. Suppose we had been a complete failure in the last fifteen years since we became independent, government, development, whatever. I am sure the reaction would not have been as it has been. There has been a great deal of criticism of us during these years by, often by opposition parties, sometimes by our own colleagues, and sometimes it has been justified. But nevertheless, the fact remains that what has been done in these fifteen years or so has, when it came to the test, we find that it left a tremendous impression on the people and they did not want to lose it. That is very heartening.

Now the question arises about how we are to utilise this enthusiasm. This is a difficult question to answer immediately. There are various ways. One is of course for young people to join the army itself. I doubt if many Members of Parliament will be considered suitable for that, apart from their desire to do so. I mean to say even they, unfortunately, even the normal recruits that count and that is not so in India only, in other countries too, it is applied, about 75 percent are rejected for being physically unfit, even young people even those just and beyond that age of course little more. Our physical condition as a whole is not good, because even normally a soldier has to be tough and fit and specially in the kind of war we are waging in the mountains of high altitudes. It requires a man of extreme fitness and capacity to be

able to fit too. One of the factors somewhat against us, I am not mentioning this as an excuse, was that our armies were sent rather at quick notice, suddenly transported from these low altitudes to 14000 feet high, not all 14000, 12000, and I doubt how many of you sitting here if you are suddenly put 14000 feet high, how you would function. You will find it difficult even to breathe. You will be panting all the time and if you live long there it may affect your heart seriously. I know of several very good officers of ours who were posted in Ladakh, army officers, not now, I am talking about a year and two ago, but merely living there about 6 or 8 months at Leh which is not so high, which is 11500, they died quickly after coming back, it affected their heart and what not. Now if I may say so, having to work hard at 14000 feet high and then the cold coming and all that, the result was that not that our people are not fit enough, but they did not have the time to acclimatise themselves to that altitude and to that climate and therefore they were physically not as fit as they might have been. They went from here and went straight to the front, within a week or two they had to fight. That was perhaps one reason which lessened their capacity, there were others too. So I was saying about what we can do but there is the army, then there is the territorial army which I do think many of us should join, may I mention. Now I have spent a good deal of time in earlier years mountaineering and I was very fond of the mountains. Now I find if I go beyond 10,000 or so I get into difficulties, breathing difficulties, it does not matter if I go for a few hours, I recover doctors have told me, you must not go above 8000, 7000. I remember they told me some years ago, I was at Manali, and I had decided to go up to that Pass, what is it called? Rohtang Pass, which is 13500 feet and my doctor here who had examined me did not like it, he said he will report to the doctor, a person, who often sees me in London whenever I go, a very eminent man. They took my cardiogram and all that. We were going from morning to Rohtang, early in the morning and stopped for the night. At night, all arrangements were made, at night I got a telegram from this British doctor through the High Commissioner that I should not go above 7000 feet. Now Rohtang is 13500, I suppressed that telegram, I did not

show it to anybody, and next morning we went up to the Rohtang and well fortunately I came back without being affected by anything. I spent only two or three hours. But I have felt unhappy since then because of my lesser capacity to go up to heights. It is natural I suppose after all I cannot forget that I am 73 now. So I had to come back. People should go. Then I went the very next year to Bhutan and I had to pass 3 passes to reach Pari, 3 passes of 14500 feet. We went, of course, we did not stay there, but we passed them and came down and went up.

Now I do think that it will be a good thing for many members to join the territorial army units. Those who are very old, from very old I mean relative to the ages required, perhaps may not, but I think they should try to get in and get some training and it will do them good, perhaps it will be a very good example to others, because the territorial army was meant for people of all classes in England I mean. Here normally the territorial army has workers in factories and some agriculturists, chiefly technical people and all that. We have not had broadly speaking middle-class elements there, they should go there as they did in England and that will include others to join too. Then there are other volunteer organisations which are being formed and there are many other types of direct work that people can do and indirect work of course there are any number, they are gradually growing. I cannot go into that, but the thing has been worked out, but essentially people have to work in their states, we cannot gather them all here, give them work except special individuals who may fit into some scheme of things that is much less our concern. I get a large number of letters offering their services. Now what am I to do? I cannot appoint them, I am not a public service commission taking them for a war effort, but I can thank them and refer them to their states.

Now I want to say something about the present position that we are facing. All of you know that a few days back the Chinese made some proposals. Unilaterally they announced a cease fire and a withdrawal will probably, I imagine, take effect from day after tomorrow. It may take a few days, but I suppose it will begin, they will do it. Now, people have expressed their

opinion about this, many people, that what do we think about it, why didn't the Government reject it outright, why have we asked for clarification and elucidation of their offer and so on and so forth. Well, to begin with it is always good to understand an offer clearly before you deal with it. It is a good thing that we asked for this clarification, some has come, some has not yet come. And I suppose within a few days we shall send an answer. Now we were anxious to find out exactly what they did apart from what they have said. For instance we wanted to find out how they withdraw, have they withdrawn or not, that we shall know in two or three days time. There was no hurry to answer. Some of our friends and critics who stay with other parties had expressed their strong feelings that, why are we waiting for this, why do not we reject it, why do not we get up, gird our loins and drive the Chinese out. Well, that is a matter which is not a purely political matter for us to decide in our chambers but which concerns the army and our strength and what tactics we should pursue. All that has to be taken into consideration. It is not an expression of a public meeting, what we should do. Now clearly it would be rather absurd for us to say and they say we will withdraw, we say do not withdraw, we object to your withdrawing, it is ridiculous, they are withdrawing from our territory. We may find that they do not withdraw enough, that's a different matter. But so long as they withdraw it is a good thing.

But a basic factor before us I am reluctant to say, although it is fairly well known and I do earnestly hope that no member present will give publicity to this in the newspapers or elsewhere. The basic factor is time. Time for us to get prepared, to get ready. We have, we have had very serious set backs. In the larger scheme of things they are not very big in that sense, but they have been very severe, they have not been very big in the sense of numbers involved on our side. You may say it would be perhaps a legitimate criticism, why did not we have enough numbers. Well, much can be said in answer, but nevertheless the criticism is partly justified.

In other words, why were we not adequately prepared to meet this onslaught. Among the things that might be said is that we certainly did not

expect a massive invasion of India; we expected a relatively small conflict on the frontier, we did not expect several divisions suddenly to pour in. But it is easy for them to do so because they can bring them in Tibet. Our estimate is that they have got 14 divisions in Tibet alone, the whole of the Indian Army consists of 10 divisions, all over India. I do not mean to say that they brought 14 divisions in one spot but they are easily accessible to them by roads and by large number of roads and those roads bring them up right up to the Indian frontier whether in Ladakh or here, and then all they have to do is to go up a little and then come down into India. On the other side we have to go sometimes hundreds of miles, no roads, sometimes a road comes up partly which we have built recently, but we have to do still nearly 100 miles, 80 miles, 70 miles by trek, which takes a long time. In other words, we have to, the only way we can reach there, send armies their food or clothing or arms is by air and not by air even. There is no airstrip there to land, by air droppings, which is very difficult process, laborious process and the more men we put there the harder it becomes to feed them and to give them arms etc. That is one of the reasons why we sent large quantity of winter clothing, they had gone there before winter had set in, it got rather cold suddenly and unfortunately many of these things we sent by air, dropped from the air, went into the khuds, into the ravines. It is highly deceptive country and the enemy sitting in the front, sometimes having pot shots at them, they could not come down very low and we lost much of the stuff. So, the difficulty in sending larger armies there was because we could not maintain them, because we had to maintain them through air droppings, and frankly to begin with we did not think they would throw in such a vast number of people and they could throw them in at two days' notice, a day's notice. At the last moment two or three days, we threw all these troops in across the pass and they were, after a few hours march. Some people are of the opinion, our military people, that we should not have fought them at all on the border. That is we should have come to a proper defensive line, that is to say defensive line, first, which is capable of defence and secondly, which is connected by roads into our bases. We

should not leave the bases and rely on air supply. It is a military problem, it is up to them to decide. Against that there was always a feeling one does not like to withdraw in one's own territory while the enemy marches on, one wanted to resist them and one did not know, how many people they have been, we thought that their numbers would also be limited.

So all these things happened and we suffered serious reverses, the serious reverses I would repeat are not so much from the point of view of numbers involved in big wars, large numbers, hundred or thousands are involved. We have not such a big army, or the fact that we lost, whatever we lost, two or three thousand persons as prisoners and casualties altogether. Actually, it was serious, and the psychological reaction to it was serious both for the public of India and the Army. It is easy to be wise after the event and to criticise them and it should be enquired into, who failed in this, whose fault it was. We cannot sit down, have a court of enquiry at the present moment, but it is being in a sense enquired into, what happened exactly. But the point is having got that experience we have to adapt ourselves to meet that. It is no good our saying that we shall fight everywhere, here, there and everywhere, under the same disadvantageous conditions that we have here (interruptions). That is so, that is, we gave to them at Chushul a very good fight.

Now I do not know, now what they do it is said there, somebody objected to our saying they come in waves after waves. There is nothing to object about that, because that involves two things, having very large numbers of troops and being willing to sacrifice very large numbers. We are not conditioned that way to throwaway lives easily although our jawans are brave enough, very brave. But we do not send them in human masses.

Now I do think that in spite of our defeats the casualties suffered by the Chinese are probably much greater than ours. It is said, I do not know how, the Chinese put into front rows Tibetans whom they have got into their army, and somebody else in the second row and the third row they come up themselves. So that they sacrificed the poor Tibetans in large numbers, they fall down, then second row comes and third row, their troops come

later. Now this was exactly what happened, apart from Tibetans, I mean in the Korean war, where you will remember the American army which had the latest type of weapons which no army possesses, suffered very serious defeats to begin with, and the Chinese had no modern arms then and yet by their method of warfare, which is a mixture of regular warfare and guerrilla warfare and there was a large number of people and they are very specially trained in mountain warfare. They did not go up to a pass; we go and defend the pass, they do not go to the pass; they climb the hill on the either side of the pass and having got at the hill and they take their small mountain guns at the top of the pass, they carry them themselves in bits, four or five persons carrying them, parts of the mountain guns, fix it there, sitting on the top of the mountain, they hold the pass, and they climb all round and usually they attack, not frontal attacks but all round attacks. It is normally rather disconcerting to the party holding a position. They expect a frontal attack, they have developed this kind of tactics and strategy after thirty years of fighting. We may read about, it we have read about it, but the real experience of it is different from reading about it in Korea or somewhere else. They took a mighty long time, the Americans, to get used to this warfare and with the help chiefly of their air power and others they could gradually control them. Now my point is, having got this experience we have to adapt our fighting methods to it so that we might be able to defeat them.

Now another thing, they proclaim their cease fire and withdrawal, when they were approaching the plains. They were still about 30, 40 miles away of the plain area, why they did it, maybe some political reasons, and some practical reasons. The advantages they have, being specially trained in mountain warfare largely vanishes on the plains, and they did not want therefore to meet our forces on the plains. Though political reasons too, I have no doubt. One thing is pretty obvious, that the Chinese did not look forward to a long campaign. Apparently, they wanted to hit us hard blows, to frighten us, and then even to appear to be generous having regard to the position they had gained by those hard blows and to come to some

understanding or arrangement with us, which was less than they had gained by their hard blows, but nevertheless gave them an advantageous position for the future when they could have another or whatever it was. That has been their practice and that is I believe, now we are told, Chairman Mao Tse-tung's tactics, which is Chinese tactics, it is interesting to know, are largely derived, they have been worked up in the last hundred years in China. Of course, modern things are applied to it too, but in a sense all this trouble that has happened internally in China about 60 years ago, all that some tactics was applied. It is a curious tactic, avoiding fight, chiefly guerrilla work, if the enemy can be overwhelmed with numbers overwhelm them, or else avoid the fight. Now of course they have improved upon that with modern weapons. But the basic idea is still the same. So for whatever reasons it is partly political and partly lack of their desire not to get entangled in the plains, because then, and partly also their lines of communication, become lengthened. Now you must remember that all the Chinese armies in Tibet, as big as they are, are supported from China. It is a terrible job. You cannot get anything in Tibet, very little in the shape of food, even for the population, and large armies have to be fed from China, their arms are to be supplied, everything. The result is they have to face a very difficult logistic problem. They can send things by train, even so there is one thousand miles of road to cover. I suppose they use trucks and lorries for that. Now I have no doubt that in the last may be year, may be two years, they have been stocking supplies in Tibet for their army and they could rely on these stock of supplies for their attacks. But if there is a long continued war, you cannot carry it on because of past supplies, you have to get them. Therefore, it is not very easy for them to get this continuous flow of supplies for a large army and long campaign; therefore, it is disadvantageous to them. They want short, swift campaigns, yielding some results, which can be capitalised and then prepare for the next, whenever the time may come. All these reasons may perhaps have induced them to seek an arrangement after this initial success.

Also, you will see on the 20th October, they came down for the first time in

massive strength from the Thagla pass and that was the first serious defeat we suffered. On the 24 October that is 4 days afterwards came Mr Chou En lai's offer, three-point offer. The mere fact of it following closely on the first, shows that it was carefully thought out beforehand, not suddenly in a day's time, that is, in their mind because it was this very policy of a hard hit and stunning a party and then offering some terms which might appear to them relatively good.¹⁷⁰ We did not accept those terms. So, for the next three weeks they prepared again and gave us a hard blow at Sela Pass and other places. Soon after that they come out again with their offer. The offer was the same as they had done on the 24 October this difference that they added to it unilaterally cease fire and withdrawal which is of course important, but essentially the offer was much the same as on 24 October which we had rejected.

So now we have before us a position when we must profit by the experiences and the reverses we had, and build ourselves up to meet the situation with strength, and that is the process we are going through now. Fortunately for us, some countries, notably the US and the UK came rapidly to our help, and although that help could not be used by us in the early days, because however much help they gave, which came rapidly, was not enough, and sending and distributing this material to our armies there took, takes time, and so far as automatic rifles and others are concerned, does not merely take time but requires a little practice, not much, but some practice. So, it was not, it did not help us very much in these critical days. Anyhow we are grateful to them for having sent it and we are using it now and gradually they are spreading.

Also, we realised that any large scale help must be, there is, a limit to the help you can get from outside, and we must produce our own things, both for practical reasons and economic reasons. So, we took steps immediately

¹⁷⁰ In fact, the Chinese peace offer was known to the Soviets even before the attack of 20 October was launched. See "Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Presidium Protocol 58," October 11, 1962, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/115070> Accessed on 6 September 2018.

in October to triple, quadruple our production from our ordnance factories. They are working night and day and producing a great deal. That is not enough, we are getting some equipment, machinery etc. so as to produce new types of things which we require, our ordnance factories are new ordnance factories. That is, we are aiming at producing most things that we may require ourselves, it may take a few months to have new factories, new things still there are some things which probably we cannot produce soon. Ultimately, we will produce almost everything, because of our industrial base today can almost produce everything we require, and in the last, that is for example because of the last 12, 13, 14 years of our First Plan, Second Plan, etc. we have got an industrial base which can be used. If this had happened ten years ago, we had not an adequate base for it, as some say of course from the last war, it is not enough. Now we can make many of these things and with a little further equipment we can do so. Now all this requires a little time. Quite apart from the other questions of producing them or getting them from abroad, getting them to be effectively used by people, by our Army or just as we are recruiting fresh armies, that requires a little time. Therefore, time is an important matter for us to consider. We cannot rush in unprepared and face possibly the same type of reverse that would be foolish from any point of view, and yet some of our friends in parties of the opposition and others go about delivering speeches that we must jump in and push them out. The gentlemen who say so, probably has never touched a rifle in life, being out of the other equipment. It is really extraordinary I suppose I can only say which has no reason or logic for perhaps some political reasons. Now that is the position we face. We want time to prepare and to give an effective reply to China's invasion. I have often said in public that we must be prepared for years, I have mentioned five years or even more, and I do not know how long we will have to do this, carry on with this. But in any event, we have to prepare as if we are carrying on for five years, may be a little less, may be a little, we have to prepare for that because I look upon this not merely as a present effort to drive them out but to create conditions, strength, to prevent any future onslaught.

Remember this that we are up against, in some ways, from an army point of view, the most powerful country in the world, army I repeat. The Chinese army is the biggest in the world, bigger than America or Russia: they have got good weapons for an army and they are better trained than, any American or Russian or anybody, because they have been continuously at it for the last 30 years in some form or other, whether civil war or anything, highly trained, fairly well armed. Of course they cannot be compared with Americans or Russians in regard to superior sophisticated weapons, they cannot compare with them, apart from nuclear weapons, even in their aircraft. They have got a very big air arm. I do not know how much bigger, but about ten times or eight times bigger than ours. But still in that, they are very much third rate, I mean to say compared to America and Russia. So far as pure army is concerned they are as good as any, and better.

So, it is a difficult matter, you must realise that we are fighting with one of the great powers of the world. It is not a local fight with a country more or less like us or little better or little worse. Therefore, we have to prepare and we have to take steps which are conditioned by our strategy, tactics and our preparation. We cannot just take steps without thinking of the military aspects. In all this in the last two months since October 20th and before, beginning of October or September even, we have naturally, in these matters one has inevitably to rely on the military advice one gets. We cannot, Ministers or Prime Ministers, we cannot tell them to do this or that, if it is against military advice. We may stress certain political aspects, that, for instance, we did not like the idea of their retiring a good deal from our frontier without challenging their coming in. Purely from a military point of view perhaps it was better to retire and allow them to come in and meet them on a more advantageous ground for us. We did not overrule military persons. If they had said no, we cannot do, perhaps submit, but we did say that something else should be done and they accepted it, therefore we agreed to it. However, I am talking about the future. One has to accept the advice of the military. There are defence experts as to what preparations we have to make and where we should meet the Chinese and try to push them

back, defeat them. This is not a matter for political decision, sometimes it is, but this is not, and for us to do anything at present which involves a major military conflict unless we are prepared for it, it would not be very wise. The choice is not ours, the choice is Chinese, if they want to fight we have to fight. But if we have to fight according to our choice we fight on suitable ground with suitable arrangements and preparations, and, as I said, we should like some time for that. In a sense there is. The winter has come there and fighting may tone down, but nevertheless even winter does not stop it. It is in this context that we have to view the Chinese offer. As I have said, it would be absurd for us to say, do not withdraw, it is ridiculous. When they said they will have a cease fire, we could have said, you may have cease fire, we will go on shooting at you. But it is not practical politics, before arrangements of anything. We merely shoot at them, they are an army which has won a victory, preparing to depart, and we come in their way and invite them to advance further on us without proper preparations. It is not practical. So inevitably we accepted, we have not said anything about it, but we have accepted the cease fire to prepare ourselves for the next offer, and we certainly are going to accept their walking out, withdrawing.

The question is they have made, if you read their proposals carefully, they have laid down certain conditions. The first conditions were that if we fire at them as they are withdrawing, then they will hit back and something else like that. Some other conditions are about how far they will withdraw and how far they expect us to remain and there is some vacant land about 25 miles in between, where they are, according to them where we should be, what kind of arrangements should be made there, whether armies can go there or civil authority should go, these are other matters which we have to consider and reply to. But my point is that let us presume that we do not agree to all the conditions they said, we probably will not, but we cannot merely say we reject your offer, fight, because we have to be ready for it, we are preparing for it. So, we have to consider this with some wisdom and so as to produce conditions which are favourable for us to meet their

challenge effectively.

Now I do hope, I have said nothing very secret, but I do hope what I am saying was not going to be repeated outside or published, I would beg of you to avoid that.

Now one thing else I should like to put to you. We have just been meeting in Executive Committee and there was a good deal of discussion there about some Congress members saying and doing things which produce an impression that the Congress party is not solid and disciplined.¹⁷¹ Now about this I shall partly repeat what I said there. I am not going into any particular cases of individuals, that is important, but the fact of the matter is that in existing conditions you will realise that it is very easy for rumours to spread. We are only at the beginning of our trouble. Suppose bombs started falling on Delhi, then many of our people who are very brave on the platform, may function differently and then you will find all kinds of wild rumours going about. It is no disrespect to our courage, but we are a gossiping people, all people are really to some extent, and we spread, almost extraordinary stories spread out. I have known them, you must have known them, that there is a petty riot, or communal riot or something, the way the stories are made up, it is amazing and each story excites the other party. So such a contingency occurs. Well we might have to train our people.

My first experience of bomb dropping took place in 1938 in Spain where civil war was going on. I went to Barcelona on a visit to the Republican Government which was the legal Govt. Franco was attacking them. I was staying at a hotel in Barcelona on the 6th or 7th floor, I was there for two or three days. Every night aircraft came to bomb Barcelona. It is absurd to try to run away, I could not have run away from the 7th floor of the building, so I went on to the balcony to have a good look and I saw these bombs dropping all over and they went away after some practice. The next morning, I went to see the houses, a group of houses burning or ruined,

¹⁷¹ See item 28.

shattered but I saw them. It was remarkable, they had got used to it, the people there. At first they were very frightened. Within ten minutes of the all clear signal which was given by the city authorities, the city was functioning again, city was functioning except for the areas of the bomb which were bombed, which were ruined, others functioning, shops opened, large number of, on the road side, people selling things, it is extraordinary how rapidly they came back, because human beings adapted themselves with amazing facility to anything. In England or other places, these took place on a much bigger scale, subsequently in China in 1939 when I went to pay a visit to Mr Chiang Kai shek's Govt. I was in China when the great world war was declared. It started with invasion on Poland by Hitler. And I had gone to China to spend a month, or more there but I had been there only for five or six days and I came back immediately. But during those five or six days there, there were air raids, overnight Japanese air raids, and we had to retire to air shelter. I spent at least two nights in air shelters with Marshal Chiang Kai-shek and Madam Chiang Kai-shek and suddenly at dinner time and after dinner and the air raid alarm and they took us to their own shelter. But the view I had from the sixth or seventh floor from the Barcelona Hotel I did not have here, because I was on the ground, I could see when they come, and in Barcelona they had no anti-aircraft guns or anything, they had no aircraft or hardly any and it is very discouraging not to be able to do anything. It is the aircraft bombing either by anti-aircraft guns or in the air; they can come down fairly low and take pot shots at you. But in London of course in the last war infinitely more than this and other things. Gradually even though people got used to it first they are of course relatively speaking more disciplined people.

Now we have got to develop that discipline because it may be that we have to face these air raids and other things, not immediately. We did not in this present conflict with China to begin with the first month or so, we did not use our air, for the simple reason that we thought that if we use our air power they would use theirs and they had much more valuable targets than we had. We could attack Tibet; there is nothing which we can do, anything

we could use in aiding the ground forces; certainly, we could a little, but with the risk of their also not only adding to their ground forces but destroying our ground forces and their air power is about eight or ten times of ours. The real thing was it was easy for them if they so chose, very easy for them to go and destroy Bhakra Nangal... [Tape inaudible]

[Translation begins:

I have not stood up to say anything special. I have stood up to show my gratitude to you, Thank you. It is not the right time to say this, but whatever has been spoken about me or to me that has some impact and that also increases my responsibility. You all know that whoever is a leader, of this party or any other, can do very little without an organised and disciplined cadre, which walks along with him. So, it is actually up to you people to do what we all want to do. Thank you all again.

Translation ends]