

Cold War International History Project  
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

**New East-bloc Documents on the Sino-Indian Conflict, 1959  
and 1962**

*Editor's note: The following three selections from Russian and East*

*"Great Leap Forward" an economic disaster), and ideology (both sides clearly sought the mantle of leadership within the communist world), but a bitter personal antagonism had been revealed: Suslov (clearly reflecting Khrushchev's views) decried the "cult of personality"*

*The Suslov report was obtained for the Cold War International History Project by Vladislav M. Zubok of the National Security Archive from the Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documents (TsKhSD) in*

*aspects of the still-murky Sino-Indian border dispute, much further research in Moscow is still necessary, particularly with key Chinese and Indian archives still closed. In any event, CWIHP would be pleased to assist scholars interested in examining the photocopies of these and other Russian documents obtained during research on Soviet-Indian relations, 1959 and 1962, or in commissioning English translations of more of them. The documents are on file as part of the Russian Archives Documents Database (RADD) at the National Security Archive, a non-governmental research institute and declassified documents repository located at the George Washington University on the 7th floor of the Gelman Library, 2130 H St. NW, Washington, DC 20037, tel. (202) 994-7000; e-mail: nsarchiv@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu; fax: (202) 994-7000. The third section below is the transcript, found in the East German*





counterrevolutionary rebellion in Tibet. They claim with justification that the issue of Tibet is a domestic affair of the PRC. We give them full support on this. We stand against the attempts of Western powers to sever Tibet from China, to exploit the Tibetan issue for aggravation of international situation. At the last (16th) session of the UN General Assembly the representatives of the USSR and fraternal socialist countries resolutely supported the PRC, protesting against the discussion of the so-called "Tibetan question" and other attempts to blacken the People's China, including the one using the Sino-Indian border dispute.

The imperialist tactics aim at making the Tibetan issue a bone of contention first of all between China and India, to pit these two great Asian powers against each other, to aggravate the situation in the South-East Asia, to undermine the influence of the socialist camp, including China, in this region of the world, to weaken the positions of communists in the movement of national liberation. The American

far-sighted enough to recognize the vital importance of India's friendship with China, with the Soviet Union and the whole socialist camp. Nehru behaved with reserve. In his numerous speeches he admitted that Tibet is a part of China, he spoke against the establishment of a so-called "government of Dalai-Lama in exile," stressing the significance of the Sino-Indian friendship. India repeatedly raised the issue of restoration of rights of the People's Republic of China in the UN. Precisely these actions made the rightist bourgeois circles in India, who are linked to Anglo-American capital, to assail Nehru, blaming him for "indecisiveness" and "appeasement" with regard to the People's China. Their goal is to unseat Nehru, to revise the neutralist foreign policy of India, to tilt it in a rightist direction, to the path of alliance with Western powers. If reactionary circles of India succeed in achieving these goals, it would cause serious damage to the socialist camp and the whole cause of peace, since the present foreign policy line of the Nehru government is a positive factor in the struggle for strengthening peace.

One should ask, what aims did Chinese comrades pursue in attacking Nehru so uncompromisingly? As they explained it themselves, they stood by the principle of "cohesion and struggle." According to com. Mao Zedong, they unmask Nehru as a "double-dealer," "half a man, half a devil," "half a gentlemen, half a hooligan," and in doing this they allegedly "force" him to strengthen friendship with the PRC. A question, naturally, was raised how to live side by side with this "devil"? How to build relations with India? The Chinese comrades found a solution in forcing Nehru to repent and in pressuring him into cooperation with China. At the same time the Chinese said that they visualize the possibility of the downfall of the Nehru government and see no great trouble if a reactionary pro-Western government comes



Obviously this course inevitably had to lead to further aggravation of relations with India. And it happened, indeed, when after suppression



foreign policies in the reactionary direction." It follows: "We believe that if one carries out only the policy of unprincipled adjustment and concessions to Nehru and the Indian government, not only would it not make them change their position for the better, but, on the contrary, in the situation of the growing offensive on their side, if China still does not rebuff them and denounce them, such a policy would only encourage their atrocity. It would not be advantageous for the friendship between China and India, and also not be advantageous to make Nehru and the Indian government improve, instead of moving toward further rapprochement with the West." The letter contains a reproach that "the TASS announcement displayed to the whole world the different positions of China and the Soviet Union toward the incident on the Sino-Indian border, which causes a virtual glee and jubilation among the Indian bourgeoisie, American and British imperialists, who use this to drive a wedge into the relations between China and the Soviet Union. This cannot help evoking regrets."

The analysis of this letter of the CC of the Communist Party of China leads us to two conclusions of fundamental importance. They are the following: the Chinese comrades either correctly assess their own mistakes committed in their relations with India, nor the measures taken by the CC CPSU for regulation of the Sino-Indian conflict. The Chinese leadership's assessment of the situation in the

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comrades justifiably believe that further exacerbation of the Indo-Chinese relations could weaken the democratic movement in India, gravely undercut the position of the Indian communist party and threaten it with a ban. In the words of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India comr. [Ajoy Kumar] Ghosh, Indian





confirmed again that the Communist party of China has a common line and common goals with us. We expressed our satisfaction in this regard.

*[noting that Khrushchev had pointed out the Chinese leadership's "nervousness and touchiness" at being criticised, Suslov harshly criticized the "atmosphere of the cult of personalrty" surrounding Mao, which he likened to that of Stalrn; recalling that during a 1958 conversation with Khrushchev, Ma*

that he desires that the ties of the CPI and CPSU do not become weakened in any way after the death of Ghosh. The assistance in various forms and the comradely advice of the CC CPSU have always





promised to inform the CC CPSU about the situation in the party in the future as well...

*[Source: AVPRF, f. 090, op. 24, d. 5, p. 80, ll. 31-36; document obtained by J. Hershberg; translation by K. Weathersby.]*

*[The second excerpt, dealing with the brewing crisis over the Sino-*



*"this publication in all probability will inaugurate a new period of anti-Soviet hysteria in India," pushing the Indian Government toward the West, and he pleaded with the Soviets to influence China to resolve the border dispute "without damage to the prestige of India and of Nehru himself. "]*

sharply reformulate the whole system of views on the border conflict held by members of the party, since these views in many cases were contradictory to those expressed in Pravda and in this letter of the CC CPSU. In particular, the CPI for three years considered the McMahon line the real border between the two states. Many rank and file members of the party and some members of the leading organs, in solidarity with the widespread opinion among the population, hold to the view that the PRC is [the] guilty [party] in the origin and exacerbation of the border conflict." "Undoubtedly the article in Pravda will have an influence on these comrades, he said, it will force them to think through the whole question again." Members of the secretariat Nair and Sharma at today's meeting pointed out that the Pravda article, while in fact criticizing the position of the Indian communists and India's relation to this question as a whole, did not express any critical comments with regard to the PRC and the Chinese comrades.

Nambudiripad reported that the secretariat of the CPI after the discussion of the Pravda article today reached the conclusion that "this publication in all probability will inaugurate a new period of anti-Soviet hysteria in India." The campaign that is going on everywhere against the PRC will, obviously, be extended to the Soviet Union, and then to all countries of the socialist system....He expressed the opinion of the secretariat that in connection with this statement of the Soviet press and in connection with the pressure on India from many neutral countries regarding a more rapid peaceful settlement of this conflict, the Indian government...can reachb western countries are our true friends...

"In this connection we very much would like to find out if Soviet



Chinese border conflict, noting that he had expressed them to the prime minister. R.K. Nehru said that the prime minister gave him a letter to N.S. Khrushchev and spoke about his conversation with the

CCP are trying to prove their thesis that India, as a capitalist country, will surely join the bloc of western countries, that it cannot conduct a policy of nonalignment for any length of time. They regard Nehru not as a nationalist leader but as a reactionary bourgeois. They are trying by their actions to force India to reject the policy of nonalignment, to



6. "We are on the leading edge of the struggle against the realization in practice by these fanatics of their theoretical program, which is a threat to the entire world, to all peoples. Therefore, everyone must

efforts of the Indian government and of Nehru personally which are

to a resolution of the border dispute by military means. He stated in





sign a provisional protocol; the signing of an official treaty will follow if the Kashmir question between India and Pakistan has been settled. Anyway, the aforementioned border treaty will reflect the real situation. We are not going to define officially the border between China and Pakistan today. That would be to lead India into a dead end [*Sackgasse*]. The border between India and Pakistan is still officially unresolved.

When you visited India in [September] 1959, Comrade Zedenbal, the border conflict between China and India had just reached a climax. At that time, I informed you regarding the Chinese-India border question, but during your stay in India you tried at timto avoid this question. We are very interesat tinted in this mater.



and attack this area. Now, after this area is cleansed, we again have no border guard there. If India, under these conditions, begins an invasion again, this will be a

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discussed[?] We think that Pakistan negotiates with us without submitting itself to America and England, although it belongs to an



turned to us with this question; I assume that the border question between the two countries will be settled in a friendly manner. At that time the question was, it seems to me, mainly about a border area of 90,000 square kilometers.

Nehru said that if it was a border disagreement involving a few kilometers, one could make mutual concessions, but that in this case

reactionary forces in India itself, and on the other hand a blow against the forces of imperialism, with the USA at its head. We assume that such measures will strengthen India's neutral stance and will prevent India from abandoning this position. This will advance the battle for peace in the whole world. The American imperialists are making efforts to derive advantages from this conflict. The peaceful settlement would undoubtedly be a serious [line illegible--trans.] for imperialism.

I suppose that our Comrade "Landowner" ["Gutsbesitzer"] Shagwaral, who is responsible for agricultural questions would be very interested in this.

We thank you for the help that you have provided in difficult times to the cattle-breeders in our Aimaks and Somons, especially in winter and spring. We also express further our satisfaction that the border question between our countries will soon be settled.

I would like to make use of this meeting, Comrade Premier, to broach two aspects [of Sino-Mongolian relations].

We were and are grateful that for the construction of our country the PRC has provided us with financial and economic help as well as

*Zhou that these are needed for linguistic, not nationalistic reasons);*

circumstances, I ask you to understand Indian-Chinese relations correctly.

The MPR, as is known, has entered the United Nations. Therefore, the

co-existence that you, Comrade Premier Zhou Enlai, together with Nehru, proclaimed. It will be very disadvantageous for our camp, if in place of Nehru, a man such as [Moraji] Desai comes to power. Then there will be a danger that India will join an aggressive bloc. In general, we attach the greatest meaning to the preservation and exploitation of India's neutrality.



kilometer area on the eastern border, that this question will be decided in the future. Is that true or not?

**Zhou Enlai**: I already went to India with Comrade [Foreign Minister] Chen Yi in 1960 in order to settle the Chinese-Indian border question,

of a few dozen kilometers of area. We have made absolutely no

