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THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER DISPUTE

SECTION 3 : 1961-62

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THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER DISPUTE

SECTION III. (1961-1962)

This is the third in a series of three working papers on the Sino-Indian border dispute. This Section III deals with the period from early 1961 through the time of the most serious clashes in autumn 1962. An appendix discusses Sino-Pakistani border negotiations from 1960 to 1963.

We have had a useful review of this paper by P. D. Davis of OCI. The DDI/RS would welcome additional comment, addressed either to the Chief or to the writer, Arthur A. Cohen

THE SINO-INDIAN BORDER DISPUTE

SECTION III. (1961-1962)

SUMMARY

Chinese policy toward India in 1961 operated on contradictory assumptions, namely, that it was necessary to "unite" with Nehru and simultaneously to "struggle" against him. The Chinese hoped that an opening for negotiations would appear, but, at the same time, they noted that Nehru would talk only about a Chinese withdrawal from the Aksai Plain. They apparently believed that they had some room for diplomatic maneuvering with him, when in fact such room no longer existed.

The Chinese tried to persuade Nehru to drop his precondition of withdrawal. In April 1961, they probed informally in New Delhi for any willingness to accept "arbitration," and in May they asked the Burmese to induce Nehru to negotiate on the China-Burma-India trijunction point; they were turned down in both attempts. They absorbed a continuous volley of Indian insults and rebuffs without striking back publicly, calculating that a public riposte would compel Nehru to leave the dispute open indefinitely. They wanted it closed: it was creating deep anti-Chinese feeling in India and was providing Khrushchev with an issue with which to lobby among other Communists for support against the "adventurist" CCP.

Anxious to get Nehru to talk and to refute Khrushchev, they moved beyond Mongolia, Burma, and Nepal in early 1961 to suggest border talks with the Pakistanis. This maneuver rekindled Indian anger. It pointed up the self-defeating aspect of the Chinese policy to press Nehru in various clever ways but to offer him no concessions. That is, the Chinese had rejected the carrot-and-the-stick as a policy because the only carrot acceptable to Nehru was the entire Plain. They were, therefore, left with sticks of various sizes, and when they used even a small one the Indians winced.

Their adamant stand against withdrawal made political probes--by certain Indian civilian leaders--futile exercises. (The Indian army leaders preferred an unbending hard

line, including military moves against Chinese posts.) The MEA Secretary General, R.K. Nehru, was scolded like a small boy by Liu Shao-chi in July 1961 for coming to China only to demand Chinese withdrawal and to insist that the border had been delimited. As a result of the angry rebuke, relations further deteriorated. Even Nehru indicated he had no choice but to adopt a tougher attitude toward the Chinese. The Chinese response was to treat him as an implacable foe, at first letting his own words (reprinted without comment) in September 1961 "prove" that he was not only anti-Chinese but also anti-Soviet, and then attacking him openly in November and December. During the intervening month--October--the Chinese formally protested that Nehru was engaged in "dishonest dealing." But such Maoist shock treatment conflicted with their effort to attain a political settlement; the "struggle" aspect of Chinese policy had once again consumed the "unity" aspect.

Nehru was constantly pulled in two directions. His inclination was to work for a political settlement; however, Chinese adamancy made him vulnerable in Parliament and consequently more susceptible than ever to the argument of army leaders that the Chinese should be pushed back by force. He accepted their view that flanking moves against Chinese posts would provide a form of safe pressure. Beginning in April 1961 and continuing throughout the year, Lt. General Kaul directed all three Indian army commands to increase the strength of their forces along the border. But the Chinese were alert to the ensuing moveups; the Indians could not move forward in 1961, as the Chinese had done from 1957 to 1960, without detection. Beset, on the one hand, by Chinese protests regarding Indian moveups, and compelled, on the other, to pledge to Parliament a "forward" border policy, Nehru spoke in tones of striking belligerency. He promised publicly in November that new posts would be set up so that territory held by the Chinese could be "recovered." "Half a dozen new posts" already had been established, he said, and more would be set up.

Chinese charges of Indian responsibility for the initial provocation--i.e., new posts in spring 1961--seem to be valid. Although the Indian countercharge complained of a new Chinese post set up at the same time, they admitted

privately that (1) this post was within the Chinese claim line of 1960 and (2) it had been set up after the Indian posts had been established.

The Chinese tried to deter Nehru by first indicating awareness of Indian moveups. They then warned Nehru that they would not remain passive observers; they put teeth into this warning by declaring (in a note of 30 November 1961) that, if the Indians professed to be moving merely into territory claimed on Indian maps in the west, Chinese maps showed claims too: "the Chinese government would have every reason to send troops to cross the so-called McMahon Line" in the east. The warnings failed to deter Nehru; on the contrary, they enabled his opponents to press for an even harder anti-China line.

In early 1962, the Chinese temporarily eased their warnings and tried a smaller stick. They used the Burmese to convey to Nehru their formula for a settlement: China would drop its map claims in the west and retain "only" the area Chinese troops held on the ground--i.e., the Aksai Plain. The Indians insisted on "recovering" the Plain. The deadlock persisted, and the Indians decided to apply more military pressure on Chinese posts in the Aksai Plain. The defense ministry in early April 1962 ordered the Indian army to flank several Chinese posts and induce a withdrawal. The Chinese responded by stepping up patrolling and reinforcement activity in the west. Nehru stated publicly on 2 May that he would not be deterred by these moves from his new "forward" military policy. The border dispute was in this way transformed by the Indians from a primarily political quarrel into a serious military confrontation.

Evidence suggests that in June 1962 Indian advances behind PLA border posts convinced the Chinese leaders that they should prepare for a major operation to clear out the new enemy positions. In early July, when they felt safe--because American assurances had dispelled their fears of a Chinese Nationalist invasion--the Chinese made their first countermove against Indian advance posts in the west, encircling a new post in the Galwan River Valley. The move was primarily intended to convince Nehru that they were prepared to fight to stop his "recovery" plan.

The Chinese use of this big stick enabled Indian military leaders to renew their demands on Nehru. In late July, Nehru reluctantly agreed to Kaul's request that Indian troops on the border be given the discretion to open fire.

Convinced that a calamitous defeat on the border--an increasing probability--would end his political career, Defense Minister Krishna Menon worked to establish a flexible policy. He gained Nehru's temporary acquiescence to drop the withdrawal precondition for Sino-Indian negotiations. However, the deeply suspicdous Chinese inflexibly insisted on an explicit Indian rejection of the precondition. By thus refusing to make even a token conciliatory gesture, the Chinese helped Indian army leaders and amateur policy-makers (i.e., journalists and certain Opposition Parliamentarians) to discredit Menon's flexible line. And the Chinese felt confirmed in their suspicions when, on 22 August, Nehru stated in Parliament that India intended to make gains on the border by military as well as political pressure.

The Chinese acted vigorously to warn Nehru that retaliation against further advances in the west would not be confined to that sector. PLA troops in September flanked the Indian post in the eastern sector at Dhola (Che Dong). This move spurred Indian army leaders to press Nehru for authority to clear the Chinese from the Dhola area by a major operation. Nehru agreed, and a new special corps under Kaul was established in early October to direct the "squeeze" against Chinese troops. By mid-October, Nehru had agreed to extend active pressure on the Chinese to Ladakh. The long-range plan was to be carried out over two or three years, the flanking of forward posts constituting only a beginning. Both army and civilian leaders--with the notable exception of Krishna Menon--discounted the probability of significant Chinese retaliatory action even after the 10 October firefight left 33 Chinese dead near Dhola.

Chinese warnings had such a long history that their impact on Indian thinking was reduced in September and October--the final phase of Chinese preparation for attack. When the Chinese began to use significantly stronger language, the Indians viewed the threats as more of the same.

The Chinese apparently were motivated to attack by one primary consideration--their determination to retain the ground on which PLA forces stood in 1962 and to punish the Indians for trying to take that ground. In general terms, they tried to show the Indians once and for all that China would not acquiesce in a military "reoccupation" policy. The secondary reasons for the attack, which had made it desirable but not necessary, included a desire (1) to damage Nehru's prestige by exposing Indian weakness and (2) to expose as traitorous Khrushchev's policy of supporting Nehru against a Communist country. They attained almost unqualified success with the first objective, but attained the second only with respect to parties already in their camp.

As for Chinese calculations of risk, Peiping seems to have viewed its political and military vulnerabilities as insignificant. On the military level, the Chinese apparently calculated that they could beat the Indians handily and that their opponents would fight alone; they were right on both points. However, they were taken aback by the sharpness of the Indian turn toward the U.S. and UK for equipment and supplies. On the political level, they saw nothing left to lose in their relationships with the Indians and the Soviets; both had run their course to open enmity. By summer 1962, the Chinese and the Russians were both on the offensive against non-Communist countries, but so bitter was the mutual antagonism that there was no mutual support. When, therefore, Khrushchev in mid-October sought Peiping's support during his Cuban missile venture, the Chinese not only were stinting in their support, but also implicitly criticized him for encouraging the Indians even before he had "capitulated" on Cuba.

The border dispute had a momentum of its own. The Chinese attack would almost certainly have been made even if there had been no Cuban crisis and even if there had been no Sino-Soviet dispute. Whether the Chinese would have attacked precisely when they did if there had been no Cuban missile crisis is conjectural, but the Soviet charge that the Chinese attacked because of the opportunity provided them at that time is overstated.

It seems likely that the continuing deadlock on the border will lead eventually to renewed clashes, at a time when the Indians have restored their spirits and forces. A political settlement, which could not be negotiated when relations were still to some degree amiable, will be even less likely in the prevailing condition of completely antagonistic relations.

SECTION III. (1961 - 1962)

As of January 1961, the Chinese strategy toward India was, to use Mao's phrase, one of "unity as well as struggle"--"unity" meaning renewed efforts to reach a rapprochement with New Delhi. The Chinese leaders apparently viewed this strategy as having "tactical flexibility," leaving "some leeway" (again Mao's phrase) for Nehru--to see, that is, if he would come round to changing his anti-China attitude. A Chinese Foreign Ministry report issued in January 1961 depicted Peiping's prospective policy toward India as containing the following major elements: an effort would be made to mollify India and maneuver Nehru into assuming a "passive position" on the border dispute, an invitation would be sent to him requesting that he visit China at "an opportune moment," another border experts' conference would be held, and the Sino-Indian agreement on Tibet would be revised rather than permitted to lapse. The report viewed the Sino-Indian struggle as necessarily "subservient to the struggle against imperialism," and advised that India should not be made the primary enemy. However, all of this was qualified by the warning to guard against another anti-China wave.

Chinese policy toward India, therefore, operated on two contradictory assumptions in the first half of 1961. On the one hand, the Chinese leaders continued to entertain a hope, although a shrinking one, that some opening for talks would appear. On the other hand, they read Indian statements and actions as clear signs that Nehru wanted to talk only about a Chinese withdrawal. Regarding the hope, they were willing to negotiate and tried to prod Nehru into a similar attitude. Regarding Indian intentions, they began to act politically and to build a rationale based on the assumption that Nehru already had become a lackey of imperialism; for this reason he opposed border talks. China was therefore "justified" in maneuvering to isolate him.

Chinese Feelers for Negotiations: January - June 1961

The Chinese tried publicly and privately to persuade Nehru to drop his withdrawal precondition and to convince him of their desire to attain an overall

settlement. They conveyed their message publicly by requiring of New Delhi a "mutual accommodation"--apparently an exchange of claims to the NEFA and the Aksai Plain--and cited the examples of Burma (Chou En-lai's speech of 6 January)* and Nepal (Chou's speech of 9 February). This public position provided them with some room for private overtures.

Seizing upon the unpublicized Indian protest note (30 December 1960), the Chinese once again broached the matter of negotiations. The Indian note had complained that the tri-junction shown on the map attached to the 1960 Sino-Burmese Boundary Treaty was at the Diphu Pass, five miles below the traditional junction point and that this implied Peiping had rejected the watershed principle on the eastern sector. In their reply (note of 21 February 1961), the Chinese first denied that the Treaty map showed the Diphu Pass as the tri-junction point and stressed the indefinite aspect of the Treaty text which resulted from the failure to date of China and India to delimit formally the boundary. The Chinese then declared that the Sino-Indian boundary dispute involved not the question of individual points but "large tracts of territory" and that Peiping hoped to seek a settlement through talks on the basis of "mutual accommodation." Such an accommodation, they urged, would settle the "entire" boundary question as well as the minor matter of the tri-junction.

Neutrals were enlisted in their effort. Foreign Minister Chen Yi discussed the matter with Sukarno on 31 March in Djakarta, insisting that China did not want "disturbed" relations with India, would prefer that New Delhi stopped quarreling about "snowy mountainous territory that is probably inhabited only by animals," and would rather "discuss" the existing map claims. Chinese officials in Peiping asked the Burmese border expert, Brigadier

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* The Sino-Burmese boundary "agreement on principles" had been concluded in January 1960 and the "treaty" had been signed in October 1960. The exchange of instruments on 2 January 1961 merely formalized the legal procedure and was the occasion for Chou's visit to Rangoon and his speech there. A "boundary protocol," which set out in detail the agreed alignment of the entire boundary was signed in Peiping on 13 October 1961 by Chou and U Nu, constituting the final act in the settlement.

Aung Ghyi, in early May to induce New Delhi to negotiate with China on the tri-junction issue. They made this approach despite India's formal refusal to negotiate (note of 30 March) and continued to press forward with the tri-junction proposal. While replying (note of 4 May) that New Delhi's refusal in effect meant rejection of a border settlement, they reiterated their willingness "to define jointly with the governments of Burma and India the exact location of the tri-junction"--Peiping's first and last formal proposal for a three-way conference on the Indian border issue.

The Chinese had extended feelers in New Delhi too, but of a less formal kind. The "cultural" counsellor in the Chinese Embassy there, Yeh Cheng-chang, reportedly asked the chairman of the All-India Peace Council on 1 April if he thought the Indian leaders would support a Chinese move to appoint an "arbitrator" to adjudicate the border issue. Yeh stated that because China's disputes with Burma and Indonesia had been settled, he believed it likely Peiping was prepared for arbitration. Yeh continued to probe, asking a local employee of the embassy's "cultural" office on 7 April if he felt that the government would accept either U Nu or Sukarno to arbitrate the dispute, inasmuch as China was "seriously considering proposing arbitration." Within two weeks after J. Narayan, a critic of Nehru's foreign policy, stated publicly on 18 April that "the dispute with China was a fit case for arbitration," Yeh again approached an Indian employee in the embassy to propose that the Indian leaders take up Narayan's suggestion. Yeh's approaches were all informal and on this occasion he insisted that although Peiping desired arbitration, the first move must be made by New Delhi. These probes apparently were intended to provide the Chinese leaders with some insight into Nehru's thinking about any alternative to his stand of no negotiations without a prior Chinese troop withdrawal in the Aksai Plain.

Nehru's attitude was relayed to Yeh in late April and transmitted to Peiping by him. Nehru declared privately that he would not accept arbitration and that any formal effort to settle the border dispute must be preceded by a Chinese "assurance" that their troops would vacate the Aksai Plain. His attitude was more formally indicated in New Delhi's note of 16 June which repeated the charge that the Sino-Burmese boundary map had shown the tri-junction point

incorrectly to be at the Diphu Pass and which scored the Chinese for seeking to drag India into talks:

> The Government of China seem to be exploiting the opportunity offered by the China-Burma Boundary Treaty to support their unwarranted claim for negotiating the question of the India-China boundary. As the Chinese Government are aware, the Government of India have pointed out repeatedly and in clear and unmistakable terms that this boundary is well known and well recognized and has been so for centuries and cannot be a subject of any negotiations. /emphasis supplied/

This rejection came at a time when continuing private Chinese probes also were rebuffed by the Indians. Krishna Menon is reported to have said that when he arrived in Geneva on 6 June for the international conference on Laos, Chinese officials in Chen Yi's delegation indicated that Chen might be interested in discussing the border dispute with him. At several private meetings with Menon, Chen avoided any discussion of the dispute and Menon surmised that the Chinese wanted him to broach the matter first. He did not, as he was under instructions from Nehru to avoid taking the initiative, leaving the Chinese with the impression that Nehru was unwilling to show any flexibility.

That the Chinese leaders had persisted in probing for talks, at any level, in the face of clear signs of Indian intransigence reflected concern that the dispute conflicted with their basic interests in south Asia and significantly undercut their position as "nonadventurist" Communists in the Sino-Soviet dispute. They had persisted even in the face of New Delhi's threat to "bring about the vacation of aggression" as made in the January 1961 Resolution of the Congress Party--a resolution drafted by Menon, providing further evidence of his swing away from Chinese positions ever since the Sino-Soviet dispute sharpened in April 1960.*

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* Chen Yi told a bloc diplomat in Geneva in early June that Menon is a good example of "how little trust" one can have for Indian leaders. Chen said "badly informed imperialists" consider him, mistakenly, to be a man of the extreme left, and went on to depict him as a completely loyal instrument of Nehru, capable of wearing

(Cont'd)

They had not stopped trying even after Nehru stated (20 February speech in Parliament) that the Chinese were wrong in occupying Indian territory, that "there can be no question of horse trading in this matter--that you take this and we take that--that we halve it," and that he could go to Peiping "only when what we say about this matter is broadly acknowledged by the Chinese government." ** In short, they absorbed a continuous volley of Indian insults and rebuffs without striking back politically or militarily, apparently aware that either kind of riposte would compel Nehru to leave the dispute open indefinitely. They desperately wanted it closed. Any delay worked against them as it was creating an enemy state on China's southern frontier. There was, however, another compelling reason--the Sino-Soviet dispute.

The failure of the Chinese to settle the border quarrel was being used by the CPSU to substantiate Khrushchev's charges that the Chinese leaders were warlike, "adventurist," and determined to drive India into the West's camp. They viewed the situation as providing Khrushchev with an effective weapon in his lobbying among other parties for support against the

* (continued)

various faces but in the final analysis "a servant of reactionary interests."

Subsequently, however, as a result of Menon's efforts to impel Nehru in July 1962 to begin talks with the Chinese, Peiping considered encouragement of his attitude as tactically useful. The Chinese apparently saw him as still close to Nehru even after his removal from the post of defense minister. Chou En-lai is reported to have sent a letter to Menon in early January 1963 through the Ceylonese official, Felix Bandaranaike, expressing regret that the border dispute has led the Indian government to "sacrifice" him. Chou went on to say he hoped Menon would continue to use his good offices with Nehru, particularly in the context of the Colombo Proposals for a border settlement.

** NCNA did not report Nehru's remarks, avoiding all reference to them until Peiping attacked Nehru personally in late 1961.

CCP. The border quarrel had placed them on the defensive: they asked the Russians to understand their position which would be undercut if Moscow published the 9 September 1959 TASS statement, blanched at Khrushchev's 30 September public rebuke regarding China's urge to "test by force the stability of the capitalist system" (which they later said was an "insinuation" referring to Taiwan and the Indian border), personally briefed Khrushchev on 2 October about Indian provocations but were told by him that in any case it was wrong to shoot people dead, blanched again at Khrushchev's public digs on 31 October and 7 November, and tried to change the Soviet "neutral" position in six talks with the Soviet ambassador between 10 December and 30 January 1960. At this point, they apparently feared that Khrushchev might score heavily against them on this issue among foreign Communists, thereby detracting from their gains against him on the matter of revisionism. As Khrushchev's campaign developed, they attempted to demonstrate, in an irrefutable way, that the responsibility for the quarrel and clashes was entirely India's. They suggested that border settlements had been achieved with Burma and Nepal because these countries, unlike India, were acting in good faith. Chou En-lai used the occasion of border treaty ceremonies in Rangoon on 6 January 1960 to advise the Russians that the treaty with Burma proved, as would future border pacts, that China desired all border disputes to be settled peacefully. Chou said:

> As for those who, for the time being, do not understand our position and policy, we are willing to wait patiently and welcome them to observe and study our position and policy on the basis of the development of events. We believe that with the passage of time, they will eventually admit that China's position and policy are in the interests of world peace and friendship between peoples...

Chou was speaking at a time when his colleagues in Peiping were briefing the Soviet ambassador, relaying through him their request to Khrushchev that he stop supporting Nehru and accusing China of "adventurist" folly.

Anxious to exploit Chinese embarrassment rather than ease it, the Russian leaders responded to this

request in the CPSU's 6 February 1960 letter. They denied charges of Indian provocation and accused the Chinese of "narrow nationalism" and a desire to hamper Soviet foreign policy moves toward the US. Khrushchev struck again on 22 June at the Bucharest meeting of Communist parties, declaring that "Indians were killed; this means that China attacked India."

Peiping - New Delhi Relations Worsen: January - June 1961

Throughout the period of probing for a possible Indian desire to negotiate, the Chinese tried to refute Khrushchev's position that Nehru was still nonaligned. They depicted his policies as being pro-US and opposed to specific Soviet policies as well as general bloc interests.* The procedure of quoting his remarks without comment provided them with more flexibility than a direct propaganda campaign to discredit him completely as a "class" enemy--a course adopted in late 1961.

However, the Chinese expatiated bitterly on Nehru in private conversations. A Chinese embassy official in New Delhi told an Indian Communist confidant on 26 February that Nehru's decision to send troops to the Congo confirmed the Chinese view that his policy is basically pro-US. He complained that Nehru desired "to drag out" the border dispute in order to win votes for the Congress Party in the 1960 elections. Behind the scenes at the World Peace Council (WPC) meeting in

* The New China News Agency (NCNA), for example, reported that (1) on the Congo issue, Nehru had turned down Khrushchev's 22 February letter calling for withdrawal of UN forces and that Nehru had kept "in close contact with the US" on the issue (2 March); (2) on Laos, after Secretary Harriman met with Nehru, the Secretary had stated that President Kennedy and Nehru "see eye to eye" (25 March); and (3) on Cuba, US papers said Nehru had tempered his statement on the US role in the Bay of Pigs attack because the prime minister did not want public opinion opposed to the US (4 May). These NCNA reports carried no commentary; each was sufficiently pointed to convey an impression of Nehru as a tool of the new US administration and opponent of Moscow.

New Delhi in late March, China's chief delegate, Liu Ning-i, pressed for a resolution condemning India's Congo policy and "Nehru's pacifist attitude"; although written into an original draft, this criticism was removed from the final version on the insistence of the Indian delegate. Nehru was accused of being "Kennedy's lawyer" by a Chinese embassy official on 31 March, and by June, Chen Yi himself began to disparage Nehru in private talks. Chen told a bloc official in Geneva on 2 June that Nehru was determined to fulfill "with no excessive modesty" the role of spokesman for India's big bourgeoisie and claimed that this fact "explains" his unfriendly attitude toward China and India's instigation of border incidents. Chen moved beyond this doctrinal remark to draw the only "logical" conclusion: China's impression was one of "an increasing closeness of relations between Washington and New Delhi." Finally, he cast aspersions on Khrushchev by implication for having been duped by Nehru for several years. Nehru was aligned--with the US.

Sino-Indian relations continued to worsen as each side mistreated nationals of the other. Starting with a crude attempt to embarrass the Indian ambassador and a personal aide in late November 1960, the Chinese took a series of steps to harass Indian personnel on the mainland. By early May 1961, petty harassment of the Indian ambassador and his staff in Peiping had so nettled New Delhi that L. Menon, deputy Minister of External Affairs (MEA) recommended that a new ambassador not be sent to China until relations improved; Nehru, however, did not agree. He seemed aware that the annoyances had been motivated by Peiping's desire to retaliate for New Delhi's rough handling of Chinese nationals in India. He viewed Peiping's protests as more moderate than anticipated. When earlier (on 21 October 1960) a Chinese official had made a verbal complaint to the Indian ambassador concerning the "quit India" orders given in Calcutta and Kalimpong to more than 30 Chinese, the accusation was directed only against "local authorities" rather than the central Indian government. Although subsequent expulsions drew protests through diplomatic channels, the Chinese leaders were at pains to avoid sustained publicity on the matter and did not denounce

India's action in a major propaganda campaign.* Reflecting their desire to keep the issue of mistreatment of nationals below the boiling point, NCNA's report on 22 May of the deportation "under armed escort" of two Chinese was couched in relatively mild language and frequently made the point that only "local authorities" were responsible.

The Chinese in fact made no public statement during the first half of 1961 regarding their basic position on the border question. There were several reasons for this reticence. They calculated that an open argument on any aspect of the border issue would further harden Nehru's attitude, or the attitude of his advisers, against them. Further, they viewed the border experts' Report issued by New Delhi on 14 February 1961 as detrimental to their case and decided not to acknowledge it (at least in China); a public dispute over the Report would bury both sides in recriminations over details at a time when the Chinese were trying to stress points of common agreement. Beyond that, they were anxious not to provide Khrushchev with more ammunition to feed his drumfire complaints that Peiping's position was driving Nehru to the right; the Chinese privately insisted that Nehru was in effect his own driver.

Determined to refute Khrushchev and to pressure Nehru to negotiate, the Chinese moved laterally beyond Mongolia, Burma, and Nepal--all states willing to settle border discrepancies--to Pakistan. They suggested border talks with Karachi in December 1960, and by January 1961 they had gained concurrence to negotiate a preliminary agreement. This maneuver rekindled official Indian suspicions of the Pakistanis and confirmed their view of the Chinese as anti-India political opportunists. (See APPENDIX)

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* Indian Home Minister Shastri stated on 15 March that as of 31 September 1960, 12,474 Chinese were registered in India and that expulsion notices had been served on 69, of whom 8 had been expelled forcibly and 26 arrested to face prosecution for anti-Indian activities. The Chinese leaders almost certainly recognized that the "local authorities" in West Bengal were acting under the Home Ministry's policy of deporting anti-Nehru Chinese, but sustained the local-national distinction for tactical reasons.

The move toward Pakistan pointed up the contradictory aspect of Chinese policy. They desired and talked about the need for negotiations but made no concession to attain them; on the contrary, their political moves drove the Indians away from the "proper" mental attitude. At the same time that the Chinese approach succeeded in exacerbating India-Pakistan relations, it embittered Indian officials all the more against China.

The Chinese leaders were willing to accept the consequences of probable failure of pressure tactics against the Indians because they had no alternative to these tactics. Significant concessions before negotiations were ruled out. India, they felt, would view concessions as a sign of weakness and insist on greater concessions--i.e. complete withdrawal of Chinese forces from the Aksai Plain. Stated differently, the Chinese rejected the carrot-and-the-stick as a policy because the only carrot acceptable to New Delhi was the entire Plain. They were, therefore, left with sticks of various sizes, and when they used even a small one, the Indians winced.

R. K. Nehru's Probe: July 1961

Prime Minister Nehru's rejection in the first half of 1961 of Chinese overtures for negotiating on Peiping's terms--that is, his refusal to accept occupation of the Aksai Plain--did not end Sino-Indian contacts. His rejection was followed by a one-man probe intended to determine whether the Chinese might reconsider and soften their position regarding the Plain.

Chinese willingness to withdraw troops at least partially was in the Indian view a sine qua non for the start of any talks. From the Chinese viewpoint, however, negotiations after an assurance had been given to withdraw would be superfluous; nothing would be left to talk about except the procedure of the Chinese pullback. In other words, Nehru would negotiate only after the Chinese showed a willingness to accept this occupation. Because of this impasse, the Indian attitude had been, both shortly before the Chou-Nehru talks of April 1960 and consistently thereafter, that the only policy was to wait and hope for Chinese agreement to pull back, or to consider compelling them to pull back.

However, the Sino-Soviet dispute led some Indian leaders to believe that the Chinese might decide to soften their stand and even consider a partial withdrawal of their forces from the Plain. They felt that New Delhi should examine the possibility. The chief proponent of this view was the MEA Secretary General, R. K. Nehru, who was supported in it by Krishna Menon. R. K. Nehru was provided with the occasion to initiate a probe of the Chinese position by the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Mongolian People's Republic (July 1921) which he was scheduled to attend. The Chinese ambassador in Cairo, Chen Chia-kang, had arranged for Secretary General Nehru to meet with the Chinese leaders, having discussed the trip with the Secretary General in Cairo during the June preparatory meeting of the Non-Aligned Nations Conference. R. K. Nehru, Chen stated, had mentioned his forthcoming trip to Ulan Bator but was reluctant to transit China unless permitted to meet with the Chinese leaders. Chen had assumed R. K. Nehru wanted to discuss the border issue and conveyed his remarks to Peiping, whereupon arrangements for the visit were made.

The probe idea was sanctioned by not enthusiastically encouraged by Prime Minister Nehru.* the Secretary General's stopover was approved by the Prime Minister in a scribbled note: "Can't do much harm; may do some good." However, it was opposed by Foreign Secretary Desai, who felt that R. K. Nehru had been influenced by Menon in this course and that, in any case, Menon was interfering too much in MEA policy formulation.

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* One month earlier, Nehru had instructed Krishna Menon not to take the initiative in broaching the border dispute with Chen Yi at Geneva. Nehru felt then that such an initiative might be construed as a sign of weakness and willingness to accept a compromise settlement. Nehru's public and private statements made after the failure of the Secretary General's trip were post facto justifications for the policy initiative of his MEA chief.

prime minister, compelled to defend his subordinate's prospective visit at a press conference on 30 June, stated that R. K. Nehru had no instructions to negotiate;

The Chinese leaders, however, apparently anticipated a bargaining gambit or an indication of willingness to negotiate. This is suggested by the top level attention given R. K. Nehru when he arrived in Peiping on 13 July and held discussions with Liu Shao-chi the next morning, and again by the more extensive talks with Chou En-lai and Chen Yi in Shanghai on 16 July. More importantly, it is suggested by the outrage of the Chinese leaders when they learned that India's foreign policy chief had come with no negotiating offer.

When, on the contrary, they were aksed by R. K. Nehru if they were prepared to retreat, they were aroused and lashed out angrily at the Indian. In reply to the Secretary General's demand that the Chinese withdraw from the Aksai Plain, Liu shot back furiously that it was "ridiculous" for Nehru to make such a long trip in order simply to restate a position which China had previously indicated was "unreasonable, unjust, and unacceptable." He told the Secretary General that if New Delhi wanted the Plain vacated before starting negotiations, the Indians must vacate the NEFA, and this was the "only" condition on which China would consider even talking about the Plain. Liu's counter-demand was in fact later incorporated in the bitter Chinese note of 30 November 1961.

His response to R. K. Nehru's demand and Chinese refusal to grant the Indian an interview with Mao was interpreted in New Delhi by Krishna Menon--a supporter of the visit--as another example of the "intolerable arrogance" of the Chinese leaders. Nehru met with a somewhat more tactful but equally solid rebuff when he raised the obrder issue with Chou En-lai and Chen Yi in Shanghai on 16 July during a six-hour exchange. Chou repeated Peiping's position that the border is not defined and therefore should be a matter for negotiation. When, at one point, Nehru complained that the border experts' Report had been published by India but not China, Chou replied that India had been in "too much of a hurry" to publish it and that

by "unilaterally" publishing it, India had "tried to make propaganda gains." Chou's remarks on this matter are further evidence that the Chinese viewed their legal case as somewhat weaker than India's. When R. K. Nehru left Shanghai on 17 July, followed three days later by recalled Ambassador Parthasarathy, he left Sino-Indian high level contacts in a state of abeyance which lasted until discussions were held in Geneva in March 1962.

Animosity had been deepened on both sides. The Chinese leaders were personally affronted by the visit. The "cultural" counsellor of the Chinese embassy in New Delhi privately commented to an Indian employee on 24 July that R. K. Nehru's trip had been a great disappointment to Peiping; the Chinese government was surprised that a high-level Indian official would travel to China merely to "repeat demands and adhere to positions" which already had been rejected. (Liu had taken virtually the same line with R. K. Nehru personally.) The counsellor concluded that Sino-Indian relations were going from "bad to worse." In the Indian camp, even the moderates were hardened against Peiping. The Chinese had not even hinted at a concession (that is, a carrot), but had used instead a nasty lecture (that is, a stick). Prime Minister Nehru commented privately on 21 July that the Chinese were in no mood to settle the border dispute, relations would further deteriorate, and he had no choice but to adopt a "very stiff" attitude toward Peiping.

Chinese Harden Treatment of Nehru: July-September 1961

For the ensuing period of several months, the Chinese dropped the assumption that the Indian prime minister could be prodded into negotiations. They decided to treat him as an implacable foe. Constantly plagued by Soviet criticism, however, they continued to cover their flank by letting Nehru hang himself with his own words, particularly those words which were directed against Moscow's moves. They highlighted every public statement of Nehru's which could be construed as anti-Soviet.*

* NCNA, for example, reported that (1) Nehru had refused to comment on a "recent warlike" speech of

(Cont'd)

In September, the Chinese took a step toward slandering Nehru openly in their commentary. After citing Indonesian and Burmese press criticism of Nehru by name, the Chinese attacked him by implication for his moderate remarks on colonialism (People's Daily editorial, 9 September): "Somebody at the Non-Aligned Nations Conference advanced the argument that the era of classical colonialism is gone and dead...contrary to facts." This was a distortion of Nehru's remarks but appeared close enough to be credible. On the same day, Chen Yi referred to Nehru by implication at the Bulgarian embassy reception: "Those who attempted to deny histroy, ignore reality, and distort the truth and who attempted to divert the Conference from its important objective failed to gain support and were isolated." On 10 September, they dropped all circumlocutions and criticized him by name in a China Youth article and NCNA report--the first time in almost two years that they had commented extensively on the prime minister.

The formal Indian riposte led to an exchange of recriminations which further demonstrated the animosity impelling the Chinese to disparage Nehru and thereby to contradict their policy of attaining a border settlement. Foreign Secretary Desai protested to Ambassador Pan Tzu-li on 14 September and the Indian charge in Peiping made a verbal demarche to

* (Continued)

President Kennedy (25 July), (2) Ambassador Bowles in New Delhi had praised Nehru for "generous support" on the Congo crisis (10 August), (3) Nehru had told Parliament that "The present tension in Berlin is due to the Soviet Union's declaration it would sign a peace treaty with East Germany" (23 August), (4) Nehru publicly had "ignored facts" and disparaged the Berlin Wall as "absurd" (29 August), and (5) Nehru had attacked the Soviet Union for resuming nuclear weapons tests (7 and 10 November). Interspersed in this reporting were allusions to the Chinese leaders' real complaint, namely, that on 23 August, 9 October, and 6 November, Nehru had "slandered China for 'illegally occupying Indian territory.'"

the Chinese Foreign Ministry on the same day, complaining of distortion in Peiping's comment on Nehru's Belgrade speech. The Chinese response to these protests, conveyed to the Indian charge by Deputy Foreign Minister Keng Piao on 24 October, went well beyond a denial of distortion; Keng opened a personal attack on Nehru and his aides. The Indians (note of 10 November) gave the following account of Keng's abusive remarks:

> The Vice Foreign Minister...indulged in personal attacks on Prime Minister Nehru, Defense Minister Krishna Menon, and Secretary General R.K. Nehru....He accused the Secretary General of making an 'incorrect and untrue statement' to the press on his return from Mongolia via China....The Secretary General was charged with prevarication and abuse of Chinese hospitality.
>
> Not concent with this attack on the Secretary General, Vice Foreign Minister Keng Piao has discourteously charged the Prime Minister of India with 'dishonest dealing.' Such accusations and offensive remarks are not conducive to high level contacts between two Governments.

The Indians asserted further that Keng's abuse was "calculated to cause offense." This seems indeed to have been the major Chinese calculation. They used Keng primarily to convey their contempt for what they felt had been Nehru's doubledealing in sending R.K. Nehru only to harangue them in their own offices as aggressors.

This Chinese action was hardly cool, calculated diplomacy. It was instead an outpouring of their animus against the Indian leaders, and if any other calculation existed, the intention probably was just as self-defeating, namely, to shock the Indians into a more submissive attitude. Such Maoist shock treatment directly conflicted with their effort to attain a border settlement. The "struggle" aspect of Chinese policy had once again consumed the "unity" aspect.

Indian Moveups and Repercussions: April - December 1961

Nehru, too, was pulled by contradictory forces. His natural inclination was to work for a political settlement. However, Chinese refusal to withdraw from the Aksai Plain and Opposition demands that they be compelled to withdraw made him more susceptible than ever before to the army argument that the Chinese would not move back unless pushed by Indian troops.

By early 1961, the problem had become one of just how to push them. Nehru's rejection in January of action to oust the Chinese "by force if necessary," and in February of "any move to push the Chinese from Indian soil," ruled out a large-scale Indian offensive operation. However, it had not had ruled out the establishment of new Indian posts in areas claimed by the Chinese (particularly in Ladakh) by a process of moving closer to and between existing Chinese posts. The process would require a series of small-scale advances, in order to avoid provoking firefights, and flanking moves, in order to press Chinese forces to abandon forward posts. Direct assaults apparently would not be required.

The rationale for this process stemmed from the view held by certain civilian and army advisers that stealthy Chinese advances from 1957 to 1960 provided justification for stealthy Indian moveups in 1961. Nehru himself gradually accepted this simple logic of retaliation.

He agreed to act in April 1961. In order to "bolster the regular strength" of Indian army units on the border, the Chief of the Army General Staff, Lt. General B.M. Kaul, sent an order in early April to all three Indian army commands to furnish 10 percent of their current troop strength for service with border units. In a clarifying statement to the army commands, Kaul stated that the intention was not to introduce "entire units" but to "augment" army units already along the border in such a way as not to give the Chinese cause for increasing their own troop strength. (Kaul was also anxious to avoid giving the press the impression that the army was "massing" troops on the border.) The

Indians were wary of the Chinese military intelligence effort, particularly after confirming through interrogation that a Chinese soldier arrested in Bhutan in March had had the mission of contacting individual Indian military personnel to obtain order of battle information. Nehru showed some anxiety in June that the Chinese were preparing to respond to Indian moves by a major attack, but was relieved of this worry in July and August by reports that the Chinese were merely improving their border posts and communications.*

Nevertheless, the Chinese were alert to increased Indian border activity. The Indians could not move forward in 1961 (as the Chinese had done from 1957 to 1960) without detection. Following their bitter exchanges with R.K. Nehru, the Chinese leaders decided to protest any Indian patrolling across China's 1960 "line of actual control."

They made their first formal protests in August against Indian advances begun under Kaul's order of early April. In addition to charges of air reconnaissance carried out over Chinese-claimed territory in May and June, their first note in the series (12 August 1961) complained that:

1. "since last April," Indian troops began to push further into China's Demchong area,

2. in May, Indian troops set up a checkpost at nearby Oga,

3. in July, 30 heavily armed Indian troops conducted two patrols as far as Charding La,

* He and his aides had been particularly concerned about a possible major Chinese buildup north of the Sikkim border. Kaul himself reported in early July that Indian press reports and rumors had been wrong. The Maharajkumar of Sikkim told an American official in mid-October that there was only a brigade of Chinese troops on the border and that a Chinese patrol was seen only every two or three months; he implied that if the Chinese were doing the type of patrolling which the Sikkimese and Indians were doing, they would have been seen more frequently.

4. again in July, troops patrolled well past the Thaga Pass, and

5. in June, a detachment of Indian official personnel established themselves at Wuje (Bara Hoti).

These actions, the note declared, had once again caused "tension" on the border; India should immediately withdraw all troops and other official personnel "who have crossed the border."* The Chinese in effect demanded that the Indians stop moving up.

New Delhi's formal response and Nehru's public statements were expanded into the bitterest open Sino-Indian exchange since 1959.

The Indian response was primarily intended to justify their continuing advances on the border. New Delhi's note of 31 October rejected the Chinese complaint as in effect accusing Indian troops of moving on Indian soil. It deliberately ignored both Peiping's 1956 and 1960 lines of actual control, noting only that patrolling within the "traditional" line--that is, not the actual existing one--was India's right. Thus, regarding the new Indian post at Oga (32° 50' N - 79° 26' E) in the Demchog area, the note stated:

> The MEA do not see why the Government of China should have any concern with measures India adopts inside her territory... As regards partrolling up to Kargo and Charding La, while Kargo is well within Indian territory, Charding La is on the /traditional/ border, and has been under Indian control for several years. /emphasis supplied/

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* When recapitulating military moves of spring and summer 1961, the Indians (note of 30 April 1962) stated that Chinese activities had compelled them to take "additional measures" to protect Indian territory. However, they were careful not to specify that these measures included forward moves on the ground in the western and middle sectors.

In order to counter Chinese charges more forcefully, the note raised a complaint of Chinese incursions. It insisted that since 1960, "aggression has been added to aggression" and instanced intrusions and the establishment of new checkposts "even beyond the Chinese claim line of 1956." These "fresh Chinese violations" were given in the note as a post at Nyagzu, Dambuguru, and at a point 33° 19' N - 78° 12' E. The Chinese, however, responded by focusing on Indian advances, not Indian arguments. They insisted (note of 2 November) that Indian troops were still pressing forward on "China's border" and warned of "very serious" consequences.

The war of notes became open when Nehru on 20 November tabled in Parliament excerpts of the Indian 31 October note. The fifth Indian white paper was also issued, delineating Sino-Indian exchanges regarding the border. Nehru stated that "in recent weeks" some new checkposts had been built by the Chinese beyond their 1956 claim line but within their 1960 line. The storm that broke in the Indian press over the surfacing of these "new" Chinese incursions was directed against the prime minister's policy of "playing down the border question" and his unwillingness to take military action.

Attempting to impede further criticism of his "soft" policy, Nehru spoke in tones of striking belligerency. The military situation on the border, he began, had changed progressively in India's favor because of recently strengthened defenses. He then promised:

> We will continue to build these things up so that ultimately we may be in a position to take effective action to recover such territory as is in their possession.

This was the most explicit public statement that Nehru had made regarding an intention to take military action to regain land held by Chinese forces. The Chinese for good reason later cited it to demonstrate Indian responsibility for border clashes. Nehru went on to give an account of India's "hard" moves. Although the Chinese had established three "new" posts in Ladakh, he said, India had set up

six, including one at Daulat Beg Oldi near the Karakoram Pass. He also cited a steady buildup of Indian forces and noted that 500 to 1,000 men were required to provide logistic support for one 50-man post.*

Compelled in this way to demonstrate Indian military aggressiveness, Nehru at times spoke about outposts in detail, exposing his and his aides' confusion about certain crucial facts. Regarding the time three "new" posts were established, Nehru stated in Parliament on 20 November that it had been "in recent weeks" and, on 28 November, that it had been "during the last two years" or, on second consideration, "during last summer." Regarding location, he stated on the 28th that "two...are practically on the international frontier between Tibet and Ladakh" but, on second consideration, "we are not quite certain whether they are a mile or two on this side or on that side." When a member of Parliament claimed that "then, they must be on this /India's/ side; if there is any doubt, they are obviously on this side," Nehru agreed:

> Let us presume that. We have presumed that. But I am merely saying that they are near the international frontier.

Nehru's ambiguity and uncertainty suggests that the Indian charge that the three Chinese posts were "new" may not have been accurate.**

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* Reflecting the Indian propensity for swagger at the time, the Director of Artillery told the American army attache in late November that his forces had the firepower in Ladakh to make the Chinese posts "untenable."

** His remarks at the very least reflect MEA incompetence in handling the charges. The MEA 31 October note had incorrectly given one of the coordinates for a "new" post as 33° 19' N, placing it ridiculously deep--100 miles deep--within Indian territory; it should have been given as 35° 19' N, placing it within Peiping's 1960 claim line. The error was not recognized by the Indians; it was privately pointed out to a MEA official by an American embassy official, and the MEA was obliged to send a note of correction on the 23rd. The note of correction was not included in the white paper tabled on the 28th or in Nehru's remarks of that date.

The Chinese denied the posts were new. They stated (note of 30 November) that the places cited "are within Chinese territory," two of the posts--at Nyagzu and 35° 19' N - 78° 12' E--"have long been in existence, and no checkpost has ever been established at Dambuguru." The MEA's China Division director later (on 8 December) conceded privately that Dambuguru and Nyagzu were not new, having been set up in 1960. (The Chinese apparently were correct in their assertion regarding Dambuguru at 33° 58' N - 78° 52' E; it had remained unoccupied until Indian troops moved into it sometime between 5 and 9 May 1962.) However, the MEA official insisted that the third post--at 35° 19' N - 78° 12' E on the Chip Chap River--had been set up in spring 1961. The Indians later (in their note of 22 February 1962) changed the date to September 1961 for this Chip Chap River post, and they did not claim that it was beyond the 1960 Chinese claim line. In short, their claim that Indian advances in spring and summer 1961 had been made precisely to counter "new" Chinese posts cannot be substantiated. The Chinese apparently viewed this claim as part of an Indian tactic to cover Kaul's policy of advances.

Nehru's public remarks and the uproar in Parliament and the press spurred the Chinese into releasing their notes and launching a major propaganda campaign directed against Nehru personally. The line they took in the onslaught suggests that by late November 1961, the Chinese leaders were convinced that Nehru had decided to intensify India's military plan to recover territory in the western sector. They tried to deter him.

They led off by making it clear they were alert to the plan. They pointed out (Foreign Ministry statement of 6 December) that four Chinese notes had been sent since August 1961 because, starting in mid-May, Indian troops began to "overstep" the line of actual control in the western and middle sectors. They then depicted Indian statements in November as "tantamount to professing openly that India intends to change unilaterally the status quo on the border and is preparing to futher invade Chinese territory."* This was interpreted as meaning

* They supported this charge by citing Nehru's 28 November statement in Parliament: "India...is now building up a system of roads and building

in effect that Nehru had switched over from refusal to settle the border dispute by talks to using force. They concluded with a warning:

> Should the Indian Government, going it alone obstinately, continue to push forward into Chinese territory and extend its unlawful occupation, it must bear full responsibility for the resulting new tension. /Emphasis supplied/
>
> This policy...is extremely dangerous... under no circumstances will the Chinese Government be cowed by war clamor and military threat.

They put teeth into their warning by turning to a discussion of a hypothetical situation in which Chinese troops would be compelled to retaliate. Seizing on the argument that Indian troops were simply advancing into territory claimed on Indian maps, they declared (note of 30 November) that the Chinese, too, had extensive map claims and, were they to use New Delhi's logic, would be justified in moving on the ground into territory claimed on Chinese maps. This threat was conveyed to the Indian leaders as follows:

> Such logic of the Indian Government is untenable and also most dangerous. The Indian Government must be aware that the Chinese and the Indian Governments do not hold identical views concerning the boundary between the two countries. Taking the case of the eastern sector of the boundary, the Chinese Government has always held that this sector lies along the southern foot of the Himalayas and that the so-called "McMahon Line" is totally illegal. If the Indian Government's above logic should be followed,

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bases at suitable places for our armed forces" in the west; "forward posts" have been dispatched totalling "more than half a dozen new posts;" India must be prepared "to recover" its territory. They also cited a Times of India article from the same date; clashes will "now" be hard to avoid, "especially since the army has instructions to proceed with its plan of extending its checkposts."

> the Chinese Government would have every reason to send troops to cross the so-called "McMahon Line," and enter the vast area between the crest of the Himalayas and their southern foot. But the Chinese Government has never done so and all Chinese military and administrative personnel, acting on orders, have not crossed the so-called "McMahon Line." /emphasis supplied/

This was not the first time that the Chinese had pointed to the consequences of the Indian argument. They had said essentially the same thing in their statement of 26 October 1959. However, they appraised the Indian forward movement in late 1961 as far more ambitious than that of summer 1959 and used the threat of retaliation in the east as part of their effort to deter Nehru from advances in the west.

The warnings failed to deter Nehru.* On the contrary, when publicized, they enabled his opponents to call for an even harder line. When, therefore, Nehru referred to the warnings in Parliament on 5 December, he was compelled to concede that non-diplomatic--that is, military--methods would not be ruled out to settle the border dispute.** But by late 1961, such a policy was already being implemented; the Chinese stick had the effect of creating greater internal pressures on Nehru to press forward even more vigorously.

* For example, New Delhi's response (note of 9 December), stated in effect that what the Chinese had done since 1956 in Ladakh, the Indians could do better in 1961.

** He said: "While pursuing diplomatic and other peaceful means, India is also preparing the ground for other methods to be employed....The statement that the government had issued orders to Indian army personnel not to fire unless fired upon is absolutely wrong. There are military orders to defend or attack, whichever the situation might demand." The Chinese later cited his remark on using "other methods" to demonstrate that New Delhi had switched over to a policy of military aggression.

Chinese Suggest Settlement "Formula": January - March 1962

Having refuted charges of "new" Chinese advances, demonstrated their awareness of Indian advances, and threatened retaliation, the Chinese leaders dropped their intense anti-Nehru propaganda assault. They once again tried to indicate to Nehru they had not slammed the door on a political settlement. Such a renewed approach apparently was motivated by the calculation that an overture might attain two goals; it might

(1) dilute Nehru's determination to forge ahead with an aggressive forward-post policy by introducing an element of indecision into Indian thinking and

(2) offset Soviet criticism of the CCP for antagonizing India at a time when Peiping was having some success in using the issue of Soviet "dictation" to turn against Khrushchev's anti-Albanian tirade at the 22nd CPSU congress.

They may also have been convinced that Nehru found it advantageous for his domestic and foreign policy to leave the border dispute "open...and to drag it out" (People's Daily editorial, 7 December 1961).

In January 1962, the Chinese suggested to the Burmese* their terms for a settlement. The Indians also indicated their position. In February, Chinese embassy officials in New Delhi informed leftist journalists of a "formula" which included joint Sino-Indian use of the Aksai Plain road, formation of a joint commission to demarcate the Ladakh border, and recognition of China of the McMahon Line. Responding to the Chinese probes, Indian leaders insisted on various forms of Chinese withdrawals.

* Home Minister Shastri indicated [redacted] that U Nu had been acting as "the middleman" in Sino-Indian exchanges on the matter of a formula for settlement. The Burmese premier had visited India in January.

Nehru told President Prasad on 10 March that Peiping must meet three conditions before negotiations can be started: (1) agree to vacate posts found to be in Indian-claimed territory after the December 1960 border experts' meeting, (2) admit that the Aksai Plain road traverses Indian territory in Ladakh and agree to construct an alternate route, and (3) publish the full text of the border experts' Report. Nehru said that these conditions had been communicated to the Chinese through informal diplomatic channels, and that he included in his formula permission for the Chinese to use the road "temporarily." Later in March, Foreign Secretary Desai responded to a Chinese overture made at the Geneva conference on Laos by repeating Nehru's demand that the Chinese withdraw from the Plain.

As a gesture to show some amenability to compromise, the Chinese at Geneva had added a new proposal to their formula. They had told Foreign Secretary Desai there that in addition to giving up their map claim to the NEFA, they might give up the map claim to part of Ladakh, retaining "only" the Aksai Plain--i.e., the area they occupied on the ground. Some Indian's apparently viewed this proposal as merely an opening gambit which reflected a basic Chinese willingness to accede to Nehru's demand for a significant pullback in Ladakh. When the new Chinese formula was reported to R. K. Nehru, he stated privately that by standing firm, the Indians would be able to compel the Chinese to cede some of the ground they held, enabling the prime minister to save face with the Opposition, the press, and the public.

However, the Chinese refused to withdraw from any territory on which their forces already stood. That is, they refused to accept Nehru's sine qua non for the start of negotiations. By 24 April, Desai reported that the Chinese, waiting for a reply, had made no further overtures in Geneva. By that time, the Chinese were compelled to make a new complaint--namely, that Indian checkposts recently had been established behind Chinese posts. Viewing this as the final Indian response to their "formula," they apparently abandoned the effort to wean Nehru away from a forward border policy.

Indians Flank Chinese Posts: April - July 1962

Criticism of Nehru's "soft" China policy in November 1961 and the Chinese propaganda attack on him made Nehru amenable to a new and bolder Indian army strategy--namely, moves around and behind Chinese forward posts in the west. The army intended to induce the Chinese to abandon the posts by isolating them from their bases. A direct assault on the posts was ruled out as risky.

Formulated in December 1961, the army plan envisaged operations in Ladakh by spring when weather conditions improved. The plan called for the establishment of five new Indian posts of 80-100 men each behind nine existing forward Chinese posts in Ladakh west of the 1956 Chinese claim line; the posts were to be manned all year round. Krishna Menon instructed the Indian air force to prepare a report on its capability to sustain a major air supply effort. (Two of the posts were to be set up close to the western part of the Aksai Plain road, but the Indians were unable to move anywhere near it in subsequent encounters.) Briefing cabinet subcommittee officials on the Nehru-approved plan in late December, Krishna Menon stated that the new posts would be positioned to cut off the supply lines of targeted Chinese posts; they were to cause the "starving out" of the Chinese, who would thereafter be replaced by Indian troops in the posts. These points would serve as advanced bases for Indian patrols assigned to probe close to the road.

Alert to the possibility of new Indian moves, the Chinese in late 1961 had warned the Indians to maintain the border status quo. Privately in January 1962, they began to threaten armed counteraction. The Chinese ambassador in Cambodia told his Burmese colleague in late January (at a time when Peiping was again probing for negotiations) that China still desired Chou-Nehru talks, but if India wanted to "bully, pressure, or fight" the Chinese about the disputed area, the Chinese would prove to be tough adversaries and were "quite willing to use troops to resist attack." This threat was communicated to the Indian ambassador in Phnom Penh, who apparently informed New Delhi. Together with the publicized warnings, it may have

contributed to Indian concern over a possible major Chinese military counteraction. The Indian High Commissioner in Karachi told an American embassy officer there on 2 February that although India "now" had military forces in Ladakh adequate to defeat Chinese troops in the area, they did not want to provoke a countermove which would result in a major war. India must be sure, he said, that all military moves in Ladakh must be "localized;" if the new operations could be "limited strictly to Ladakh," he concluded, the Chinese would find it difficult to reinforce their advanced units.

Acting on the assumption that moveups would not provoke a major clash, the Ministry of Defense ordered the army in early April to flank Chinese forward posts and induce a withdrawal to the 1954 line agreed to by implication in the Sino-Indian trade agreement. Two Indian battalions were ordered to move around and eventually "retake" the Chinese post at 35° 19' N - 78° 12' E in the Chip Chap River area--the post which they inconsistently claimed had been established either in spring or September 1961 and which the Chinese insisted had been in existence for a much longer time.

The first planned Indian flanking operation against a Chinese post was directed against this disputed post in mid-April. By 30 April, the Chinese formally charged that in the period from the 11th to the 27th, Indian troops had set up two posts, one southwest and one northwest of their post, and had maneuvered around it in groups numbering up to 120 men at times.*

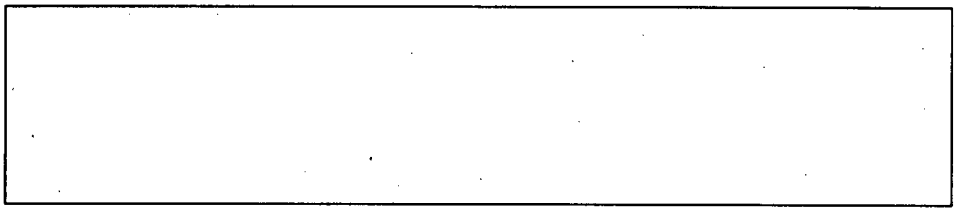
The Indian operation was confirmed by the American military attaché in New Delhi. He reported on 29 April that the Indian army had been ordered to use two battalions to take the Chinese

* The Chinese later charged (note of 28 May) that this flanking operation included the establishment of a third post approximately five miles southwest of their post as well as aggressive patrolling in areas immediately west, northwest, and southwest.

post "as soon as possible;" he commented that lack of additional information indicated exceptional Indian security measures concerning the move.

The Chinese reacted by ordering their troops to resume patrolling along the Aksai Plain border sector from the Karakoram Pass to the Kongka Pass. They warned that the operation might provoke their forces to fight. When an American embassy official on 2 May asked the director of the MEA's China Division precisely what had motivated the threatening Chinese note of 30 April, the latter disingenuously replied that perhaps it related to "present Pakistani pressure on India in the Security Council." However, in attempting to calm public fears regarding a possible Chinese offensive, Nehru declared in Parliament on 3 May that there really was "nothing alarming" in the Chinese note because it had been evoked by an Indian initiative: India had established a number of posts, some of which were "behind" the Chinese post, causing the Chinese some "annoyance"--"Hence their note." The Chinese leaders were provided with a further indication of Nehru's gradually increasing militancy when he stated publicly on 2 May that the Chinese note would not deter him from supporting the forward policy. "We will stay where we are" and are "prepared for them if they step up patrolling."

The border dispute was in this way transformed by the Indians from a primarily political quarrel to a serious military confrontation.



The Indians decided to go ahead despite Peiping's 30 April warning. On 1 May, Indian army headquarters with Nehru's approval ordered the immediate dispatch of 1800 troops to Ladakh from the Srinagar Command to serve as a supporting force in any fighting resulting from the Chip Chap operation; they were given a "fight-to-the-death" speech by Kaul and dispatched on 2 May. At the same time, Kaul wired instructions to those Indian border posts which were tactically well-positioned to "retaliate immediately" if the Chinese wipe out any of the new Indian forward posts.* Starting on 5 May, Indian troops began to move into the post at Dambuguru and on 6 May, active patrolling by troops of both sides was reported to American officials by the Chief of the General Staff, General Thapar.

More ominously than in April, the Chinese threatened to fight back. On 6 May, the Chinese chargé in New Delhi told an Indian contact that China, "shocked" by India's advances and establishment of new posts "at places deep within China's territory," has no alternative but to resist:

> I hope the Government of India realizes the consequences that are bound to follow. China wants no trouble, but if trouble is forced upon it, it will respond forcefully.

On 19 May, the chargé stated privately that Indian troops, moving into Chinese territory, sometimes in full view of Chinese border forces, seem to be "spoiling for a fight." He warned that Peiping

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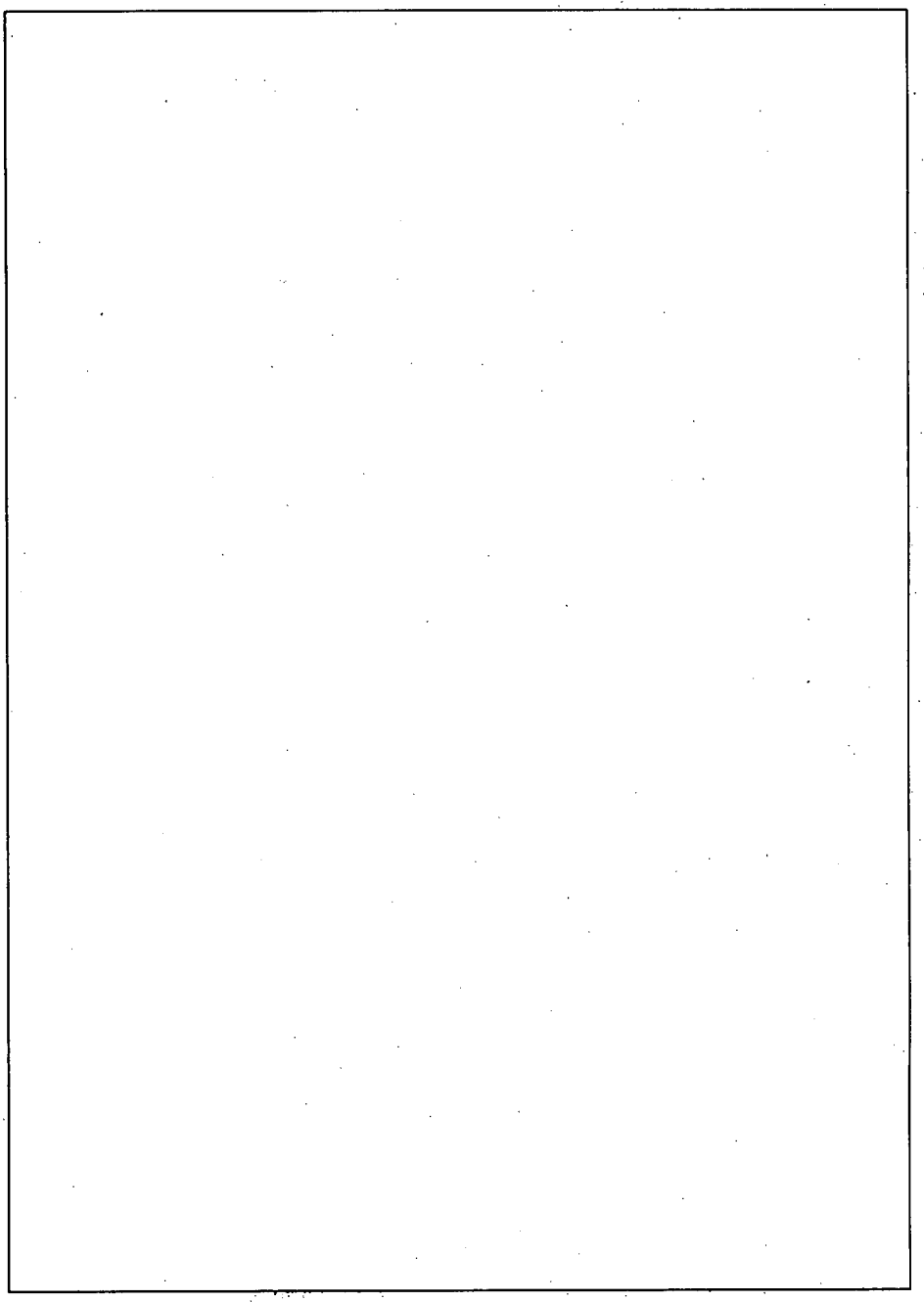
* The existence of Kaul's strike-back instructions was indirectly confirmed on 15 June by the MEA's China Division director when he informed an American embassy officer that if the Chinese were to push Indian troops from any post, Indian forces in other positions would retaliate at Indian strong points.

was aware New Delhi was preparing a major military drive. The Chinese had already protested formally (note of 11 May) that Indian troops on 2 May had set up another new post in the area south of Spanggur Lake approximately 2.5 miles from the Chinese post at Jechiung (Jechitung), that two Indian soldiers had fired at the Chinese post on 5 May, and that "very serious consequences" would have resulted if Chinese troops had not been alert, cool-headed, and restrained. This Chinese note was the first since late August 1959 in which they had charged one of their posts had been fired upon. On 19 May, the Chinese demanded that Indian troops which had moved across the McMahon Line into Longju in late April must be withdrawn, warning that "otherwise the Chinese Government will not stand idly by." They refused to view Nehru's proposal (14 May) for a mutual withdrawal in Ladakh on the basis of each other's map claims as anything but a diversionary political move; they warned him (note of 2 June) that it was unacceptable, requiring a one-sided (Chinese) withdrawal and in fact intended to conceal India's continuing drive "in setting up military strong points on Chinese territory...a border clash may touch off at any moment." That is, they indicated they would be guided in their decisions by Indian military advances more than by Indian political statements.

Possibly in May and probably in June, Indian advances convinced the Chinese leaders that they should begin planning for a major action to clear out the new Indian positions. There is some evidence that active planning in June resulted in practical steps taken in preparation for eventual military action.



Throughout June, however, the Chinese avoided moving against any of the new Indian posts, They apparently desired no clash with Indian forces at the time despite clear indications of New Delhi's intentions.

Chinese Encircle Galwan Post: July 1962

Chinese "self-restraint," repeatedly expressed in notes with increasing frequency since the mid-April Indian moveups, was motivated throughout May and June primarily by Peiping's fear of a Chinese Nationalist invasion across the Taiwan Strait. Chen Yi reflected the Chinese leaders' anxiety regarding the "threat of aggression" by the Nationalists in his 29 May interview with Japanese newsmen; this anxiety was reflected in other ways, including the appraisal of the Chinese Communist ambassador in Stockholm who informed his embassy staff in mid-June that if the Nationalists attacked at the same time as the Indians, China would be in a "bad situation." Statements made at the Sino-American talks in Warsaw to Ambassador Wang Ping-nan on 23 June and by President Kennedy to newsmen on the 27th apparently dispelled these fears. Security precautions in the Canton area were eased in early July and on 19 July, Chen Yi, during an interview in Geneva, three times referred to the American "assurance" given to Wang Ping-nan that the US would not support a Nationalist assault against the mainland, describing the assurance as "not bad." He did not comment on Khrushchev's 2 July statement.*

The Chinese leaders, no longer rattled by the prospect of a two-front war, turned with restored confidence to counter the Indian advances. Their first major move of 1962 was in direct response to a new Indian move in Ladakh. They formally charged (memorandum of 8 July) that about 20 Indian troops on 6 July moved into the Galwan River Valley, attempting to establish "a new strong-point" and "to cut off the only rear route" of a Chinese post

* During the first ten days of July, the Chinese leaders tried publicly to suggest a definite Soviet commitment to assist them militarily in the event of a Nationalist attack, but their actual estimate of Khrushchev's intention in making his 2 July statement was that the Soviet leader hoped to make a political gain (among foreign Communists) without making a military commitment. At least one Chinese official later indicated privately that Khrushchev's hypocrisy was decisively proven by his failure to comment until after American assurances had been given to Peiping.

located at the lower reaches of the river. On 9 July, they displayed considerable pique, complaining (People's Daily editorial) that Nehru three times in late June had "boasted" in Parliament about India's new posts set up behind Chinese positions and that Indian officials are "triumphantly bragging about the aggressive activities of Indian troops nibbling away at China's borders." Implying that they would deny the Indians any further opportunity to continue flanking moves with impunity, the editorial warned:

> It seems that the Indian Government has taken China's restraint as weakness. But the Indian authorities are committing a big blunder if they think that the Chinese border units will submit to the armed Indian advance, that they will renounce their sacred duty of defending their fatherland and give up the right of self-defense when subjected to unprovoked attacks....
>
> It is still not too late to rein in on the brink of the precipice. The Indian authorities had better think three times about this matter.

The Chinese followed up their warning with a note (10 July), detailing a series of Indian flanking moves against six Chinese posts and citing Nehru's 20 June statement in Parliament as proof of Indian provocation.* At the same time, they moved on the ground. On the morning of 10 July, Chinese troops began to advance on a small Indian unit at 78° 38' E - 34° 40' N from the east, south, and west, positioning

* In their note, the Chinese selected Nehru's remarks which most strikingly supported their argument: "In his speech in Parliament on June 20, 1962, Nehru unwittingly let out the truth. He stated that to say that China had made 'a fresh intrusion' was 'hardly correct' and that it was due to the Indian movements 'sometimes going behind Chinese positions' and 'largely due to the movements on our (Indian) side that the Chinese had also to make movements.'"

themselves at a distance of 20 yeards from the new post. According to Krishna Menon's report to the Cabinet Defense Subcommittee on 12 July, the 20-man Indian unit had been ordered to open fire if the Chinese advanced any closer. Nevertheless, the Chinese had the superior force and could have destroyed the post without much trouble.

This three-sided encirclement apparently reflected the decision of the Chinese leaders to impress Nehru that they would now fight to stop his forward policy. Reluctance to fight, they apparently believed, had encouraged the Indians to make new advances and new public boasts; the Indians had not been deterred and China's prestige was being damaged. Verbal warnings had to be made real warnings by moving troops on the ground. Actually, the Chinese stopped short of launching an attack. They apparently calculated that flanking pressure at points of their own choosing would not be a risky policy. Chinese superiority in men and arms would be ensured, and pressure provided them with more control over the situation than an outright attack. They apparently believed that the numerically inferior Indian force would be withdrawn from the Galwan Valley post.

However, the Indian leaders viewed a pullback under the circumstances as detrimental, providing the Chinese with a bloodless victory. They began to supply the post by air and moved more troops into the valley. They had no other plan of action for breaking the Chinese encirclement. Ambassador Galbraith received the impression from the MEA's China Division Director, S. Sinha, on 13 July that the "strategy" of the Indian leaders was to hope that the Chinese would go away. Displaying some anxiety, Sinha stated that if Indian troops opened fire, many Indian posts in the western sector would also be vulnerable to Chinese retaliatory action. The Chinese tried to induce a withdrawal on 13 July by pulling their encircling force back 200 yards from the post, opening a line of retreat along the supply trail. At the same time (on the evening of the 13th), they threatened the Indians with the consequences of any rash action: the Indian government should give "serious consideration to the danger of the situation and not play with fire; he who plays with fire will burn himself."

Within the Indian leadership, the views of the military prevailed with increasing vigor over those of the civilian chiefs. Nehru and his political advisers found themselves under stronger pressure than before to stand pat at Galwan and to continue the policy of advances elsewhere in the western sector.

Indian army leaders planned to continue the moveups throughout the summer, calculating that the Chinese would not react on a large scale and that any small-scale reaction could be localized. Thus Chinese encirclement of the Galwan post did not change Indian strategy; on the contrary, Kaul privately expressed confidence that the Chinese were not operating from strength. He told Ambassador Galbraith on 16 July that the Indian army viewed the Chinese as set in a "mood" of weakness and that Indian policy was to take maximum advantage of this mood by establishing even more new posts. In contrast to the policy "ambiguities" of a year or two ago, Kaul continued, the Indian army "is not now in a mood to be pushed around." His remark about "ambiguities" was directed implicitly against Krishna Menon, who had never been enthusiastic about a forward policy and was only driven to concur with the moves of spring-summer 1962 under threat of being called "soft" on the Chinese as a result of his early contacts with them. Menon was made even more vulnerable to criticism after an Indian advance in the Chip Chap River area resulted in a sharp firefight on 21 July; Nehru himself was in effect compelled to approve Kaul's request that Indian troops on the border be given the discretion to open fire. Prior to the incident, border units had been instructed to fire only in self-defense, although Kaul and the army staff had been seeking such approval from Nehru and Menon for several months.

The failure of the Galwan encirclement to deter the Indians from their forward policy was indicated to the Chinese leaders in several ways, the most open being a 17 July Times of India article. Displaying lofty disregard for Chinese sensibilities, it stated in cavalier tones:

> What has happened in the Galwan Valley is the consequence of the firm policy decision by India nearly ten months ago. The process of extending our physical presence on what we

regard as our territory was begun after due consideration of the risk involved. Even at a much earlier stage than last week, the Chinese should have realized that physical confrontation between troops from either side was inevitable. We intend to go ahead with this process. If the Chinese accept this unpleasant fact, there may yet be a way out through negotiations after mutual withdrawal from the disputed area in Ladakh. /emphasis supplied/

This was tantamount to asking the Chinese leaders to permit Indian troops to push back PLA border forces. The Chinese maintained their positions around the Galwan Valley post and moved elsewhere in the western sector beyond the 1956 claim line up to the line they had shown Indian border experts in 1960. They warned New Delhi against making "a fatal mistake if it should think China is flabby and can be bullied" (note of 16 July) and "a wrong assessment of the situation," gambling with the possibility of "a war on two fronts facing China" (People's Daily article, 21 July). In short, their actions and warnings in July were more ominous than previously as they improved their tactical positions and as the threat from Taiwan receded.

Civilian Leaders Revive Negotiations Probe: July 1962

The Galwan Valley encirclement pointed up the logistic capability and the tactical facility with which the PLA could move to hold Indian posts as hostages. The encirclement had frightened certain key Indian civilian leaders, particularly R. K. Nehru and Krishna Menon. They worried about the vulnerability of all Indian border posts; as defense minister, Menon worried about his position and prestige. A successful Chinese attack against even one of the posts would inflame the border area and create new opportunities for Menon's domestic opponents to bring him down.

Even before the Galwan Valley incident, these Indian civilian officials had begun to recognize that the Chinese had established their forces in the Aksai Plain so securely that the army could not realistically expect them to evacuate holdings there as a prerequisite for talks.* R. K. Nehru had approached the Chinese chargé in New Delhi on 29 and 30 June and was advised by him that China would prefer that preliminary talks take place in Geneva, using the 14-nation conference on Laos as a "cover" for talks. The Indian Secretary General was also reported in early July to have been pressing the prime minister with memoranda on the matter of an overall border settlement; at the same time, Menon was working with the Secretary General in trying to prod other civilian officials into concurring in an effort to seek such a settlement.

There was no real duplicity in the Chinese action of responding to R. K. Nehru's initiative at a time when their forces were primed to move against the new Indian post in the Galwan Valley. Ever since the Chou-Nehru talks of April 1960, the Chinese leaders without exception had been receptive to any high-level Indian exploratory approach to talks. Only after they had ascertained that the Indian representative was stating the same old position--that is, Chinese withdrawal as a precondition for negotiations--did they act to reject an Indian overture. Thus in early July, the Chinese responded by returning Ambassador Pan Tzu-li, who had been in Peiping since January, to New Delhi to make a personal determination of Nehru's willingness to begin talks. Nehru advised the Cabinet Defense Subcommittee meeting on 12 July that during his meeting with Pan, the latter had suggested Sino-Indian talks be initiated. Nehru told the meeting

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* Such a precondition had been raised in New Delhi's note of 13 March 1962 in the following manner: "The withdrawal of Chinese from Indian territory, into which they have intruded since 1957, in order to restore the status quo, shall be an essential step for the creation of a favorable climate for any negotiations between the two governments..." The Chinese viewed this stipulation as "in fact tantamount to the summary rejection of negotiations" (note of 22 March).

that this suggestion would be turned down because the Chinese were capable of making further border advances under the guise of talks. President Radhakrishnan concurred, maintaining that no grounds for talks existed as long as the Chinese persisted in their refusal to withdraw first. Home Minister Shastri urged continuation of a "firm" policy: territory not actually in Chinese possession, he said, should now be occupied by Indian troops. The only dissenter, Menon, replied that the Chinese were complaining of Indian flanking moves precisely because of the "firm" policy. He informed the Subcommittee that Ambassador Pan Tzu-li had discussed the matter of talks privately with him as well as Nehru and that he, Menon, saw no harm in beginning discussions with Chinese officials.

Cooperating with R. K. Nehru, Krishna Menon continued to act on his own initiative and without majority cabinet concurrence. The talks he began with Chen Yi in Geneva in late July had not been discussed with the prime minister prior to Menon's departure for the conference, according to a reliable source. Only after arriving in Geneva did Menon cable Nehru; he received only reluctant approval to talk with Chen coupled with a warning to make no commitments to the Chinese foreign minister.*

The approach to Chen Yi was doomed to failure because Menon had no authority to present a new Indian position. He repeated New Delhi's view on Chinese "occupation" of Indian territory, refusing to say whether talks could begin prior to Chinese withdrawals. Chen made no concession, but finally suggested that neither country should call the other an "aggressor." Menon refused to comply on the grounds that he had no authority to issue a joint communique. Chen then took a tough line with Menon; he was reliably reported to have been "threatening," and Menon was "somewhat shaken" by this display of anger. The Indian defense minister persisted in his efforts despite this setback of 24 July. He tried to persuade High Commissioner Malcolm MacDonald in Geneva to

*Later, on 29 July, Nehru characteristically accepted responsiblity for the actions of his long-time friend, publicly claiming that he had personally asked Menon to meet with Chen.

"mediate" the dispute on the latter's trip to Peiping in the fall; MacDonald refused. Following his return to New Delhi on the 25th, Menon recommended that India's 26 July note to China avoid raising the withdrawal precondition for talks. The note in fact avoided the precondition and stated only that "as soon as tensions have eased and an appropriate climate is created," India would be ready to negotiate.

Thus despite internal opposition, Menon in effect had established a flexible line.* He had advised cabinet members at a meeting on 25 July not only to repudiate the withdrawal precondition as unrealistic, but also to seek a settlement based on the Chinese claim line of 1956--the only way toward a peaceful solution. This view corresponded precisely with the Chinese position. Menon had persuaded Nehru to accept this view prior to dispatching the 26 July letter to the Chinese.

For a period of about three weeks, Nehru defended Menon's line. However, he viewed it less as a real step toward a settlement than as a device to

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* The Times of India on 31 July carried an article suggesting that Menon's desire for a negotiated settlement was no longer an MEA secret, the country was ready for such negotiations, Menon had been "encouraged" by his talk with Chen Yi in Geneva, and "further probes" to find a mutually acceptable formula were underway. As indicated earlier, Menon had not been "encouraged" but rather frightened by Chen's threats at Geneva during their 24 July meeting. However, when he returned to New Delhi on the 25th, he exploited the intransigence of Chen to strengthen his own argument that India should modify its withdrawal precondition.

The Minister of State for External Affairs, Lakshmi Menon, complained privately on 12 August that the government had "reversed" its tough line on the border dispute and that "our wonderful Minister Menon is behind the change."

buy time to gain a military standstill on the ground in Ladakh which would reduce the risk of clashes; meanwhile, India would be able over the next five years to strengthen its positions in Ladakh. Trying to buttress his argument for a peaceful settlement, Menon reported at a full cabinet meeting on 1 August that the Indian military position in Ladakh was "untenable," that the army had already pushed its plan of establishing new posts beyond the limits of military safety, that the Chinese were steadily bringing up supplies and equipment, and that the Indians would never establish a supply line in the Aksai Plain even roughly comparable to China's. He then made a striking estimate regarding the consequences of a major border clash: Indian forward posts would be wiped out immediately and the Chinese could, if they desired, push the Indians far beyond their 1960 claim without serious resistance. Menon's sobering remarks prompted the prime minister--whose ignorance of military matters made him dependent on Menon's estimate--to state that it was necessary "now" for India "to change" diplomatic tactics and to seek a de facto military truce based on the current border situation. Nehru called for "a complete military disengagement" so that fighting could not possibly begin--a line Chou En-lai had been insisting on since late 1959. Once this was accomplished, "discussions" on demarcation of the border could go on "for five or six years." Regarding the matter of domestic criticism such a drastic policy change would provoke, Nehru declared that it would be nothing compared to that which would be unleashed following a military catastrophe. In short, he and Menon showed considerable foresight by not underestimating Chinese military capabilities on the border.

This sober estimate was not shared by Indian army leaders. The Chief of the Army General Staff, Thapar, denied privately on 4 August that the army had given Menon such an alarming estimate of the military situation. Thapar said the army report merely called the Indian position "over-extended" and cautioned against setting up new forward posts "until" logistic support could be assured, but did not predict a military disaster if fighting should break out. General Kaul made almost precisely the same criticism of Menon's presentation on 5 August. He and other army leaders apparently continued to believe that the Chinese were in a "mood" of weakness and that the forward border policy should be sustained.

Despite such opposition, Nehru tried to press forward along Menon's line favoring negotiations, but the Chinese, too, made his progress difficult. They were willing to begin negotiations but, unfortunately for Nehru, they were obsessively concerned with the possibility of Indian duplicity and with avoiding any impression of weakness. They insisted publicly and without equivocation that there should be no preconditions.* Such explicitness on the part of the Chinese in effect nullified their call for discussions "as soon as possible" (note of 4 August) and made meaningless their lateral move in early August to persuade a top Burmese foreign office official to gain New Delhi's accession to Burma as a meeting place for immediate Chou-Nehru talks. Nehru had been waiting for a straw to grasp--i.e., a modest Chinese conciliatory gesture indicating a small degree of willingness to make a concession to the Indian position; he did not find one, nor did the Chinese indicate privately to him that one could be found. At the very least, the Chinese could have refrained from insisting on "no preconditions," remaining as silent on the point as the Indian note of 26 July. That they refused to make even this gesture suggests either (1) they were unaware of the civilian-army policy dichotomy in the Indian leadership or (2) they chose to appraise it as irrelevant so long as Indian troops continued to move across the Chinese claim line. They concentrated their attention on the latter consideration. That is, the fact that Indian troops were still positioned to cross, and were in fact crossing, the Chinese line implied an Indian intention to compel the Chinese to make a concession; as viewed by the Chinese leaders, such compulsion had to be explicitly criticized, and the worst response would have been to appear conciliatory. Since Nehru found no softening of the Chinese position in Peiping's note of 4 August, he had no choice (given domestic pressure on him) but to note that its tone was "rather disappointing" (speech to Parliament on 6 August).

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*Chen Yi stated publicly on 3 August that, regarding a Chinese withdrawal from Ladakh, "no force in the world could oblige us to do something of this kind" and Peiping declared (note of 4 August) that preconditions must be dropped.

As word of Menon's new flexible line spread in Parliament and among journalists, Nehru was forced into a series of retreats in a last effort to defend it. Speaking to Parliament on 13 August, Nehru tried to conceal the fact that the Menon-originated 26 July note had used language which implied an Indian willingness eventually to accept the 1956 claim line; on 14 August, he tried to justify talks with the Chinese by asserting it was "childish" to insist on a withdrawal precondition and went on to take refuge in the distinction between "talks" and "negotiations," saying that "talks" were an essential preliminary to negotiations. On the same day, he demanded Parliamentary approval for "freedom of action" so that "we may--I do not say we will--have some talks." The Opposition in Parliament at the time had no real alternative to giving Nehru this "freedom of action," as their earlier advice to evict Chinese troops "by force" was based on an unrealistic view of India's military capability. Yet uncertainty regarding Menon's motivations and uneasiness fed by suspicions that civilian foreign policy advisers might cede a large part of Ladakh continued increasingly to operate as factors restricting the prime minister's maneuverability. The small group of journalists and Parliamentarians who professed to be specialists on India's China policy gradually compelled Nehru to retreat further; on 22 August, he hinted in Parliament that talks with the Chinese now would be formally conditioned on his earlier withdrawal stipulation. An MEA official later told an American embassy officer in New Delhi that certain "intended ambiguities," which had been written into India's 26 July note in order to induce preliminary talks, had to be "elaborated" in Part Two of the 22 August note; one such elaboration was the raising again of the withdrawal precondition. Domestic politicians and journalists in effect had assisted the army leaders in destroying Menon's flexible line.*

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* His friend, Nehru, finally had been compelled to act on the proposition that it was more important (as prime minister) to be realistic about domestic politics than Sino-Indian politics. When, in mid-August, R. K. Nehru wrote a memorandum to Nehru urging him to offer publicly to go to Peiping to begin talks with Chou En-lai, Nehru told his foreign policy adviser that the proposal did not make sense in the current domestic political scene. Nehru complained that the Indian

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In retrospect, R. K. Nehru's and Menon's increasing awareness that Indian posts could not be moved any farther forward and were in fact highly vulnerable to Chinese attack spurred them to press the prime minister for negotiations. They recognized that a military catastrophe was probable and that such a development would hurt them politically. Nehru, too, apparently was convinced that a policy of military disengagement rather than military advance was essential for the security of Indian posts, but he could not argue convincingly for a flexible policy. He was driven back toward the position favored by army leaders by the pressure of domestic reaction; as he fell back, he was given no comfort by the Chinese who refused to make even a token concession by employing new--or avoiding the same old--language in their 4 August note. Mao and his lieutenants had drawn on their favorite colors--black and white--in appraising the 26 July Indian note and, against a background of Indian advances, they could see only the black.

If the civilian leaders had been permitted to pursue their course, the border dispute might have been turned away in August 1962 from a military clash and toward a political settlement. However, in addition to Chinese intrasigence and domestic opposition, a majaor military development on the border in the east at last locked the door which had just been closed on such a settlement.

The Dhola (Che Dong) - Thagla Ridge Incident: September - October 1962

As Indian advances continued, the Chinese leaders apparently were confirmed in their appraisal of Indian notes as merely diplomatic devices providing cover for a military policy. They viewed the civilian leaders' approach increasingly as motivated entirely by duplicity rather than any sincerity for talks. Distrust of the civilian leaders was deepened by what they considered a deliberate effort to conceal Indian advances under a cover of MEA distortions of developments on the border; they specified (note of 27 August) New Delhi's attempt

* (Continued)

press had to a "considerable extent" tied the hands of Indian diplomats in dealing with the Chinese. Nehru concluded that he wanted a military disengagement but differed with R. K. Nehru who was insisting it was urgent to begin negotiations for a settlement immediately.

to cover up the fact that three Indian patrols had encircled a Chinese post at Pangong Lake by claiming the Chinese troops were "located close to the supply line of the Indian post." Their suspicion of Indian duplicity clearly had been confirmed by Nehru's own admission (in Parliament on 22 August) that on the border question, India was following a "dual policy," intending to make gains "by political pressure, military pressure, or other pressures."

Prior to September, Chinese counteraction to Indian advances in 1961 and 1962 had taken place with few exceptions in the western sector.* They had held strong counteraction in the eastern sector in reserve, as their basic negotiating position was premised on Chinese de facto acceptance of the McMahon Line. With the exception of Indian moves into Longju in June 1962, they did not protest the establishment of new Indian positions in the east until the incident at Dhola (Che Dong) in early September.

For the first time since November 1960, the Chinese engaged an Indian military detachment on the eastern sector when, on 8 and 9 September, approximately 300 Chinese took positions opposite the Dhola (Che Dong) post manned by about 50 Assam Rifles. The matter of just when the Indians had established the Dhola post is important. The Chinese were remarkably vague (note of 16 September), stating that the Indians had moved into the area "recently," and later backed

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* By far the greater part of Chinese and Indian moves between 1961 and 1962 had occurred in the west. The Chinese had established new posts in this sector in July and August 1962 to block the Indians; their posts proliferated almost in the same measure as those of their opponents to the south. In July, the Chinese had insisted that "since spring 1962," 15 Indian posts had been set up across the claim line in the west, and they pinpointed these on a published map (in People's Daily, 14 July); for their part, however, in September the Indians pointed to new Chinese holdings, the number of which was minimized by Krishna Menon (in Parliament on 3 September) as merely "tactical dispositions" constituting a "distribution of personnel into one, two, three or four posts" which indicated "no further advance into our territory," but was expanded by his critic, Lakshmi Menon, to "30...since May 1962" (in Parliament on the

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away from this position, conceding (note of 3 October) that the Indians had entered as early as "last June." Thus, although the Indians apparently had set up the post in June, the Chinese did not decide to move against it until 8 September. This suggests that the original Indian move had not provoked the Chinese, but rather had provided them with a pretext to be used at some time in the future to warn the Indians that continued advances in the west would be met by Chinese action in the east. That is, the Chinese may have intended their September move against the Dhola post as a clear sign that China could play the game in the east which India was playing in the west.**

Indian establishment of the Dhola post was part of a major planned advance in the east laid on by army leaders in the spring of 1962. On 14 May, the Director of Military Operations had ordered the Eastern Command of the army to establish 25 additional posts along the McMahon Line. Indian army troops had moved into many of these posts in June, including the post at Dhola. Considerable anger was generated on both sides after the Chinese insisted in September that the post was north of the McMahon Line and the Indians declared it was south of their version of the Line. The original 1914 map, upon which McMahon had drawn his line and which the Chinese used to support their case, was very small in scale and imprecise on the matter of the Tibet-Bhutan-NEFA trijunction where Dhola was located. Responding to Chinese charges, the Indians (note of 17 September) claimed that Dhola was on the southern side of the Line; subsequently, the dispute centered on pinpointing the exact location of the trijunction area Line.

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same day). The scene of greatest military activity between the two sides in the west had been the Chip Chap and Galwan areas.

** The Chinese had threatened to play just such a game earlier. The Peiping People's Daily "Observer" commented on 21 July:

> If the Indian troops, according to the logic of the Indian side, could launch at will large-scale invasion of Chinese territory, occupy what they regard as their territory and change by force the status quo along the border, then, it may be asked, have not the Chinese troops every reason to enter

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The Chinese rejected the Indian attempt to insert the watershed principle as the determining factor in the case. They stated (note of 6 October) that according to both the map on which McMahon had drawn his line originally in 1914 and the Indian official map of 1959, Dhola would be north of the Line. They also declared that Indian border experts in 1960 had agreed that the Line's western extremity was 27° 57' N - 91° 40' E, placing Dhola well north of the Line. The Indians, on the other hand, centered their case on the Thagla Ridge in the trijunction area. In their view, the Line should in fact correspond with the Ridge line, and because the Chinese had come down across the Ridge, it followed that they had come down across the McMahon Line simultaneously. They reminded Peiping (note of 10 October) that the Indian border experts in 1960 had urged the Chinese experts to exchange maps "on a very large scale" in order to provide the fullest details and that this proposal had been rejected by the Chinese, who provided a map on the "diminutive scale of 1" = 80 miles." Peiping's reluctance to accept this proposal, the Indian note declared, indicated satisfaction that the boundary "ran along the ridge." As the quarrel developed, no fewer than three versions of the border near the trijunction were posited, two by the Chinese (depicted in People's Daily, 8 and 11 October) and one by the Indians (note of 10 October). Actually, Dhola was north of the McMahon Line by at least 400 yards as claimed by the Chinese and it was only by using the watershed principle--that is, the crest of the Thagla Ridge as the natural boundary--that the Indians could argue the matter credibly.

The Indian leaders, convinced that the Chinese military force had crossed the Thagla Ridge to encircle the advanced post at Dhola, decided that the Chinese should be compelled to pull back regardless of all risks. Home Minister Shastri, acting head of the government in the absence of the prime minister and the finance minister, told Ambassador Galbraith on 13 September that the Chinese would have to be "thrown out." He repeated this statement publicly on 16 September. On 17 September, Indian troops threatened to open fire on Chinese troops at the Che Jao Bridge south of the

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and station themselves on the Chinese territory south of the McMahon Line which is now under India's forcible occupation?

Thagla Ridge near the post, and on 20 and 21 September, they attacked the Chinese, apparently killing one officer at the Bridge and surrounding a small detachment in the vicinity. The situation worsened as the Chinese hit back on the 22nd; the Indians attacked again on the 24th. Foreign Secretary Desai told Ambassador Galbraith on 25 September that troops under the Eastern Command were now under orders to shoot when necessary; accordingly, he continued, they have been shooting and the Chinese have been "responding," leaving a handful of dead and wounded on both sides. Firing subsided by 29 September, when an MEA official claimed the Chinese had been completely cleared from the Che Jao Bridge. By that time, however, Indian advocates of the policy of expulsion had become dominant in the leadership and Krishna Menon, who had opposed the policy prior to his departure for New York on 17 September, left with the premonition that full-scale fighting would contribute to the cause of those Indians who desired his political death.* Nevertheless, he had no practical recourse but to join other Indian leaders who were denouncing Chinese actions openly.

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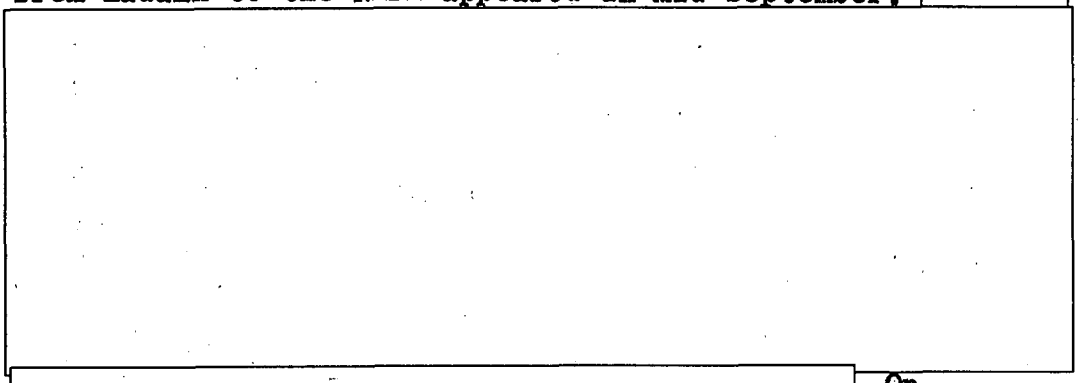
* Menon apparently was aware that he was approaching a morass in which his political prestige would stand or fall on the ability of Indian troops to beat Chinese troops--a morass he had tried for months to stay clear of because he was convinced that a major Chinese assault would in fact wipe out advanced Indian posts and, as a political reverberation, destroy him as the "guilty defense minister." Lakshmi Menon quoted him as saying in a state of anguish in mid-September that "Now my enemies will attack me, but I cannot reply because Nehru was personally responsible for all decisions regarding the NEFA and had refused to concentrate as much force there as in Ladakh." Such was his fury that he hit out even at his old friend.

Chinese preparations for major operations against Indian posts apparently were stepped up. The first hint of a general shift in emphasis of military activity from Ladakh to the NEFA appeared in mid-September.



On 29 September, air transport flights to Lhasa and Hotien were started and continued on almost a daily basis. Eight transports eventually were involved in this operation that probably served to resupply forward elements with certain critical items.

The Chinese continued to prepare the Tibetan populace for a Sino-Indian clash. Tibetans were being told by the Chinese in the period from 17-23 September that Indian troops had unlawfully intruded in Tibet at many points and that they (the Chinese) would recover them soon. Indian troops were said to be no match for the Chinese army. The Indians also reported on 24 September that a large number of vehicles carrying stores and equipment continued to arrive at forward posts in the western sector, but interpreted these moves as indicating the Chinese were stocking their posts "for the winter."

Chinese warnings increasingly implied that they would be compelled to use force following the firefight near Dhola in early September. New Delhi was warned that "shooting and even shelling are no child's play; he who plays with fire eventually will be consumed by fire" (note of 13 September) and "flames of war may break out" at Dhola where "Chinese troops will necessarily defend themselves resolutely" (note of 21 September). To defend against Indian "nibbling of Chinese territory," Chinese border forces were ordered to resume patrolling and set up new military posts in the middle and eastern sectors (note of 21 September).

The Chinese at this time began to cite certain Indian acts which later served as justification for attack. For example, for the first time in several years they declared that one of their officers had been killed (note of 21 September). This was a significant admission, as Peiping had avoided mentioning that four Chinese soldiers had been killed in the firefight in the Chip Chap area earlier in September. The Chinese also introduced the line that the Chinese people were burning with "great indignation" over the Indian actions on the border and that New Delhi "cannot now say that warning was not served in advance" (People's Daily, 22 September). Moving to arouse a warlike attitude among Tibetans and PLA forces, Chinese authorities in Lhasa on 29 September held a memorial service for their casualties--the "five martyrs" of the Dhola fighting. The political commissar for the Tibet Military Region, Tan Kuansan, declared that fighting was continuing, the situation was worsening, and predicted that Tibetans and all officers and men of the frontier guard units "will shed blood in order to defend the sacred territory of the motherland."

The Dhola confrontation stimulated Indian army leaders to press Nehru to approve an increase in strength and to bring pressure on the Chinese in the eastern sector. A new special corps was established on 4 October and its new commander, Lt. Gen. Kaul, departed for Tezpur headquarters on the 5th to direct operations against the Chinese. Following creation of the special corps--a move under active consideration ever since the early September incident--Nehru and Menon on 6 October approved an army headquarters plan for encircling Chinese troops in the Dhola area. The plan was reliably reported to have been conceived as a flanking operation, providing for a slow forward movement of Indian troops over a period of weeks and for crossing into the Chinese side of the McMahon Line, if necessary.* In the

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* The army planned to make no official admission of this as policy, and so far as possible, any crossing by Indian troops of the Line was to be denied. The Indian air force had already violated the Line a number of times, and it was reportedly under orders to continue to do so when necessary.

army's view, India was "now" committed to fight the Chinese all the way even if this meant full-scale war. Foreign Secretary Desai told an American embassy officer on 6 October that a steadily mounting "squeeze" was being applied by the Indian troops to the Chinese at Dhola and emphasized that the Chinese must be ousted.* The immediate result of this Indian initiative was the 9-10 October clash near the Che Jao Bridge, during which, the Chinese claimed, 33 Chinese and 6 Indian soldiers were killed--the biggest and bloodiest clash on the Sino-Indian border as of that date. The Chinese declared that another one of their "frontier guards" was killed in a renewed firefight in the area on 16 October.

Army officers continued to insist on a more forceful policy. Krishna Menon on 16 October finally accepted a proposal, long pushed by the Indian army, particularly by Kaul, that it should be official government policy to evict the Chinese from the Aksai Plain as well as the NEFA. Menon agreed to present this proposal personally to Nehru on the 17th and, upon the prime minister's approval, the Indian army general staff would be permitted, he concluded, to formalize its operational plan for the entire border. Nehru apparently agreed; he informed Ambassador Galbraith on the 18th that the Indian intention to keep steady pressure on the Chinese now extends to Ladakh. The army general staff estimated that two or three years would be required for the army to implement fully this long-range operational plan; the forward posts constituted only a beginning. Nehru may well have had Indian army officers as well as Parliamentarians in mind when he informed the Ambassador of his discontent with those who had described efforts to avoid a real war as appeasement. Nehru and Menon apparently continued to refuse to permit the army to

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* The Indians preferred to move the Chinese out with threats rather than force. The Director of the China Section, MEA, told an American embassy officer on 11 October that the Indian leaders were trying to give minimum publicity to developments while applying military pressure in order to provide the Chinese with the opportunity to withdraw "without loss of face." He deplored press headlining of military developments, as such publicity undercut this government policy.

use tactical air support for ground operations because they feared this would provoke the counter-use of Chinese aircraft and thus increase the tempo of the fighting and extend its scope.* As late as 19 October, just before the Chinese attack, Indian army headquarters is reliably reported to have opposed Menon's decision to tentatively pull army units out of the Galwan Valley, complaining that the defense minister was really motivated by a desire for appeasement rather than by any military considerations.

The caution some Indian army officers and many Indian civilian officials had shown in spring and summer 1962 seemed to have fallen away by fall. In speaking of moving against Chinese forces in the Dhola area, army and civilian officials in October discounted the probability of retaliatory action on any significant scale. For example, when, on 13 October, Foreign Secretary Desai confirmed to Ambassador Galbraith the army plan to "evict the Chinese from the NEFA," Desai stated that he did not believe the Chinese would attempt to reinforce heavily their troops on the Thagla Ridge in the face of "determined" Indian action, as the Chinese had commitments elsewhere along the border. Moreover, Desai continued, there would be no extensive Chinese reaction because of their fear of the US--"It is you they really fear." This increasing confidence that the Chinese would continue to play the game of flanking and counter-flanking maneuvers with relatively small units apparently contributed to the reluctance of important Indian leaders to take seriously Chinese warnings of full-scale war.

Chinese Prepare for October 1962 Attack: Final Phase

In retrospect, the Chinese seem to have moved in stages toward their October 1962 attack, the early stages having been more of a defensive nature intended

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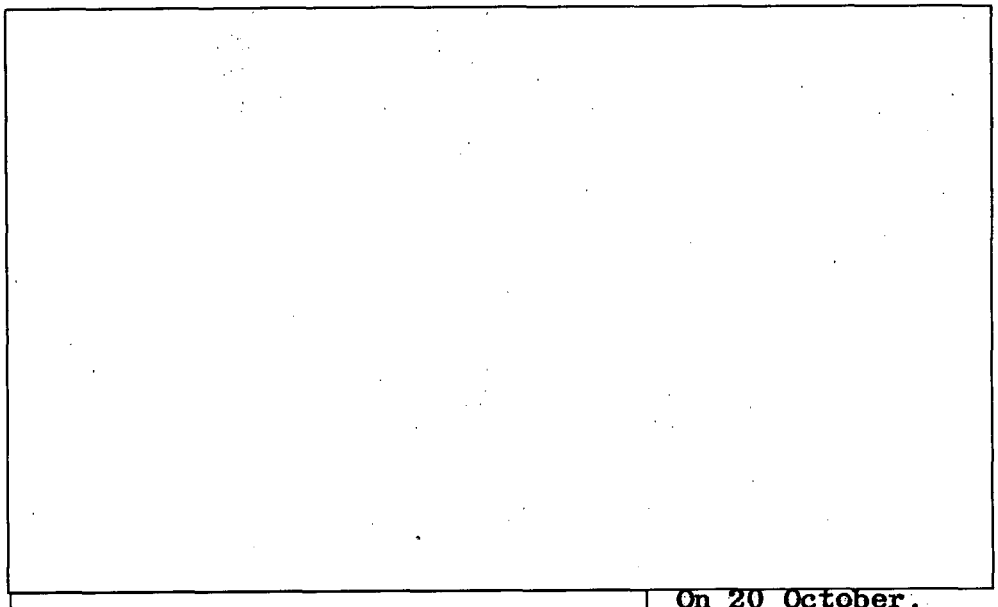
* Even if permission had been given, the use of tactical air against Chinese patrols in mountainous terrain, where ridges and spines are 13,000 feet, would have confronted the Indians with considerable difficulties. Even their air resupply effort was proving to be a failure, as the loss figure for air drops in the Dhola area was as high as 85 percent.

to strengthen their border positions in the event that early Indian move-ups developed into a major Indian military operation.

The Chinese had been alert to Indian move-ups in the spring of 1961 and had appraised Nehru's 28 November 1961 statement on establishing border posts to "recover" Indian territory as clear evidence that New Delhi had switched over to a new policy of force. It was probably at this time that the Chinese leaders began to move actively to buttress their border defenses, simultaneously warning New Delhi that its policy was "extremely dangerous" and that Indian moves in Ladakh could lead to Chinese moves across the McMahon Line into the NEFA.

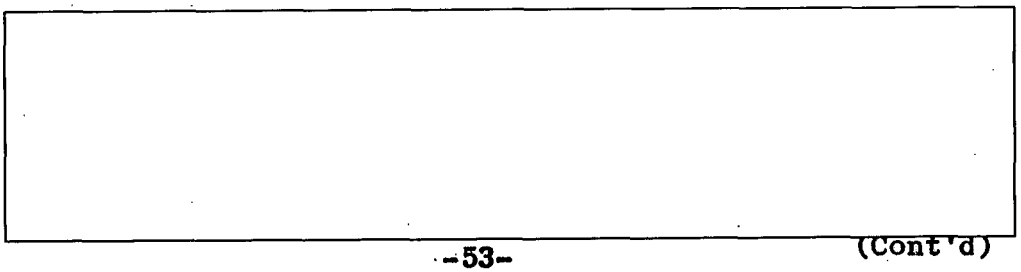
Shortly after their diplomatic effort designed to negotiate an overall border settlement in early 1962 was frustrated by Indian demands for Chinese withdrawals, they were alerted to a new Indian initiative in April 1962, when Indian troops began to move up between and even behind certain Chinese posts. This new Indian policy of encirclement and pressure on the posts indicated to the Chinese leaders the military nature of a long-range basic Indian plan and New Delhi's determination to use force. This new policy apparently impelled the Chinese leaders not only to intensify defensive preparations and increase patrol activity (which had been reduced but never completely halted), but also to prepare step-by-step for a military action to push the Indians back from their new positions. As noted earlier in this paper, the Chinese were deeply worried about their security in June. Based on personal contacts with Chou En-lai and Chen Yi, [redacted] in late June 1962 that the Chinese leaders expected the Chinese Nationalists and the Indians to launch simultaneous military actions against China "anytime" between June and mid-summer. However, assured in late June that the Nationalists would not attack, they turned their attention to planning for a major clearing action against Indian posts. By early July, they began to insert sharper warnings into their notes and public statements.

Preparations continued during the relative lull in August. The firefights at Dhola in September, resulting in dead and wounded soldiers on both sides helped transform the matter of a political settlement into a purely hypothetical proposition. The establishment of a new special corps under Kaul in early October and the killing of 33 Chinese soldiers near the Che Jao Bridge at Chih Tung on the 9th and 10th precipitated the final phase of Chinese preparations.



On 20 October, simultaneous attacks were launched in the Ladakh and NEFA areas.

The Chinese stepped up their effort to stimulate anti-Indian attitudes among Tibetans and a combat attitude among their troops. On 11 October, one day after the most serious firefight in the Dhola area (specifically, near the Che Jao Bridge at Chih Tung where the Chinese suffered 33 casualties), an Indian MEA official informed an American embassy officer



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that he had just received a telegram from the Indian Consul General in Lhasa reporting a series of anti-India demonstrations had taken place in front of the Consulate. The telegram also indicated that a Tibet-wide campaign had been launched to attribute local food shortages to Indian aggressiveness and that vigorous anti-Indian propaganda had been carried out within PLA forces in Tibet.

The final phase of Chinese preparations for the attack was marked by a series of belligerent notes which in effect warned of imminent retaliation. "Resulting casualties" would be India's responsibility to bear if Indian troops did not stop moving forward near Dhola (note of 11 October) was typical. The People's Daily editorial of 14 October was at once a call to arms to the Chinese and a final warning to the Indians:

> So it seems that Mr. Nehru has made up his mind to attack the Chinese frontier guards on an even bigger scale....It is high time to shout to Mr. Nehru that the heroic Chinese troops, with the glorious tradition of resisting foreign aggression, can never be cleared by anyone from their own territory.... If there are still some maniacs who are reckless enough to ignore our well-intentioned advice and insist on having another try, well, let them do so. History will pronounce its inexorable verdict.
>
> All comrade commanders and fighters of the PLA guarding the Sino-Indian border: heighten your vigilance hundredfold. The Indian troops may carry out at any time Nehru's instructions to get rid of you. You must be well prepared. Your sacred task now is to defend our territory and be ever-ready to deal resolute counterblows at any invaders....
>
> At this critical moment...we still want to appeal once more to Mr. Nehru: better rein in at the edge of the precipice and do not use the

lives of Indian troops as stakes in your gamble.

The editorial confined itself to implying retaliation in the east. That is, in referring to the imminence of an Indian thrust, it referred only to a pending "massive invasion of Chinese territory by Indian troops in the eastern sector." This was deceptive, as the Chinese attack on the 20th was opened on the western sector as well, surprising Indian forces in the relatively less active area.*

To sum up, indicators of an imminent Chinese offensive did not begin to appear until mid-October, when the Chinese apparently were already in their final phase of preparation. Earlier indicators suggest--in retrospect--that preparations for an attack probably began in late June 1962. As for

* Indian plans were grossly distored in Peiping's note of 20 October: "The Chinese Government received successive urgent reports from the Chinese frontier guards on October 20th to the effect that Indian troops had launched massive general attacks against Chinese frontier guards in both Eastern and Western sectors of the Sino-Indian border simultaneously." Thus the Chinese seized upon public Indian statements indicating an action against troops in the Dhola area and exaggerrated them to mean the Indians were planning and had started a general offensive.

The Chinese later had no difficulty in compiling a public record of Indian statements--the most convincing kind of record--regarding India's plans for a general offensive by merely clipping and collating Indian press reports of October and twisting them into the context of a hypothetical two-front Indian attack. Such a record was printed in Current Events Handbook of 6 November 1962; Chen Yi told a Swedish correspondent oh 17 February 1963 that he could demonstrate Indian aggressiveness by "leafing through the Indian newspapers of May and June 1962." Chen was at great pains to deny that the "great advances" made by PLA forces southward after 20 October 1962 in any way proved that the Chinese attack was more than a mere counter-attack against Indian action in the localized Dhola area. He tried to lend credibility to his lie by conceding that of course China had "prepared"--but had prepared only a defense.

Chinese threats and warnings, they had been made over such a long time period (beginning in November 1961) that their impact was diluted in Western and certainly in Indian thinking. As a result, in the crucial warning period from mid-September to mid-October 1962, when the Chinese began to use stronger language, the Indians viewed Peiping's threats as more of the same.*

Reasons for the Chinese Attack of 20 October

The Chinese leaders seem to have been motivated by one primary consideration and several secondary ones in their decision to attack Indian forces. Their determination to retain the ground on which their border forces stood in 1962 apparently was more important than all other considerations and sufficient by itself to explain their action. That is, it was necessary to attack for only one primary reason, although desirable for several secondary reasons.

The primary reason reflected their view that the Indian leaders had to be shown once and for all that China would not tolerate any strategy to "recover" border territory. In clearing away Indian border posts and routing Indian troops in two key sectors, the Chinese conducted what has been called a "punitive" expedition to chastize the Indian leaders for past and intended moveups. They tried

* New Delhi's note of 25 September alluded disparingly to the number of warnings and reasserted India's determination not to be "deterred" by them from moving against the Chinese. American officials in Hong Kong predicted in mid-October that the loss of 33 soldiers near Dhola would compel the Chinese to hit back in force. However, at the same time, on 13 October, Indian officials were still discounting to American officials in New Delhi the possibility of any extensive Chinese military reaction to Indian operations in the Dhola area.

to weaken Indian capabilities and discourage Indian hopes for future advances. They apparently were convinced that only a radical deflation of New Delhi's military pretensions could establish an Indian attitude of forebearance. Direct diplomatic appeals and indirect political moves--such as border agreements with other neighbors--had failed to induce such an attitude. The Indians had to be taught a lesson, which meant simply that they must begin to recognize realistically their military inferiority. Chen Yi is reliably reported to have told Hong Kong Communist newsmen on 6 October in Peiping that border clashes would continue "until such time as India comes to recognize the power of China." A more vigorous statement of this view was made well after the Chinese attack by Liu Shao-chi during his discussion with the Swedish ambassador in late February 1963. Liu, becoming highly incensed as he began to discuss India, stated that the attack had taught India a lesson and that for the future, Nehru and the Indians must be taught that they cannot change the border status quo by force.*

The aggressive Indian attitude reflected in October in the army's forward border policy--which culminated in the 9-10 October firefight, leaving 33 Chinese dead--would in itself have compelled the Chinese leaders to hit back even if an overall plan had not been laid on earlier. Failure to deliver a strong riposte after absorbing such a humiliating defeat would have encouraged the Indian military planners to conduct similarly aggressive operations at other border points. The civilian leaders would again boast of an Indian "victory" in Parliament to improve the government's domestic political prestige. Beyond that, a natural desire for retribution, combined with rational military and political considerations, became an overarching emotional factor impelling the Chinese leaders to

* Liu also told Colombo conference representatives in early January 1963 that the Chinese had to show the Indians that China was a great power and, for this reason, had to "punish" India once.

view a policy of restraint as the worst way to handle the bombastic Indians.*

Among the secondary reasons for attacking, a desire to damage Nehru's prestige by exposing India's weakness apparently ranked high in the Chinese leaders' order of priority. Nehru's prestige was considerable in Asia; it was being used by New Delhi to compete with Peiping for influence among leaders of the emerging nations. New Delhi's publicly expressed contempt for the "great power" status of China and the disrespectful behavior of a militarily inferior power (India) was more intolerable to the Chinese leaders than that of a militarily superior power (the US). Chen Yi's above mentioned remark of 6 October reflects a degree of injured national pride. Liu Shao-chi had included in his January 1963 discussion with Colombo representatives the remark that "China really cannot accept India's attitude"

* Clear signs of Indian bombast were available to the Chinese leaders not only in reports from their own intelligence sources, but also, in a more galling way, from the Indian press. Several of these are cited here: on 5 October, Lt. General Kaul was made a commander of a new special corps to be used exclusively against Chinese forces, and after obtaining authority from Nehru to "take limited offensive action," he flew to the front to give personal direction to military forces moving north of Towang; on 9 October, the Indian air force was said to be in an emergency condition and prepared to operate in the NEFA; on 12 October, Nehru declared that he had ordered the Indian army to "clear Indian territory in the NEFA of Chinese invaders" and personally met with Kaul, issuing instructions to him; on 16 October, Nehru held a long conference with Menon and other senior military officers and ordered all arsenals to step up production in order to cope with the "threat of large-scale war;" on 17 October, after meeting with Nehru, Menon hurried to the new special corps headquarters to hold emergency talks with Kaul; and on 18 October, defense ministry officials declared that the Chinese had to be "driven back two miles."

which he described as "a feeling of superiority to the Chinese."

The animus aroused among the Chinese leaders by India's public boasts and taunts had been building up for several months prior to the 20 October attack, making them emotionally keen to humiliate their humiliators. Liu Shao-chi, Chou En-lai, and Chen Yi have been reported on various occasions after the attack to have made disparaging remarks about the training and ability of Indian officers and men to foreigners and to Chinese cadres.* The blow that Chinese forces dealt Nehru's prestige simultaneously increased that of Mao's; in August 1963, General Hsiao Hua publicly attributed PLA success in the attack to the fact that Chinese troops had been indoctrinated intensively in the political aspects of the "thought of Mao Tse-tung."

* Chen indicated to Nepal's Special Ambassador, R. Shaha, in December 1962 his great contempt for the Indian army, and especially for Indian generals. He also stated that the Chinese had released many Indian prisoners because they didn't want to have to feed them--a half-truth which concealed the Chinese aim of soothing New Delhi's anxiety to acquire outside military aid. Chou reportedly told a meeting in Shanghai in late January 1963 that the Indians were not even qualified to be called "beancurd" soldiers--Mao's term--and recounted the alleged occasion when one Chinese platoon captured two Indian battalions along with all their equipment. Liu told the Swedish ambassador in late February that Indian military leaders were not very good and that even American arms did not really increase the Indian military capability. However, the Chinese military attaché in New Delhi was reliably reported in August to have shown considerable concern about the increase in this capability through US aid.

Morale in China, which had slipped to a low point after several years of embarrassing economic setbacks, was given a considerable boost, and doubts about the fighting elan of PLA officers and men were largely dispelled.*

Another secondary reason was the Chinese leaders' desire to expose as traitorous Khrushchev's policy of supporting Nehru, a bourgeois leader, against them, a Communist leadership. The Chinese indirectly, and the Albanians openly, in summer and fall 1962 had criticized Khrushchev for supplying military aid to India. The Albanians had pressed forward along the line that the action of "N. Khrushchev and his group" was a betrayal of the rights of a "socialist" country and was intended to advance his narrow aims of rapprochement with imperialism and bourgeois governments (Zeri I Popullit, two-part article, 19-20 September 1962). This merely made explicit the euphemistic criticism the Chinese had directed at Khrushchev earlier (People's Daily, 17 and 18 September). That the 20 October border war did in fact confront Khrushchev with an embarrassing choice between supporting "socialist" China and "bourgeois-nationalist" India is indicated by Pravda's swing toward and later away from Peiping's position--temporarily criticizing certain CPI members and later acquiescing in their Indian-nationalist

* The British chargé in Peiping told American officials in Hong Kong on 3 April 1963 that the Chinese leaders were in a very "priggish" mood [redacted] because they had gained their objectives of exposing Indian weakness and abasing Nehru. Liu Shao-chi had told the Swedish ambassador earlier that after the clash, great self-confidence had permeated the Chinese forces. That there may have been doubts regarding the will-to-fight of Chinese troops is suggested by the curious line Chen Yi took on 28 September 1962 in a speech to Overseas Chinese in Peiping. Chen repeatedly made the point that the PLA had been "ready" to fight Nationalist forces earlier (in June), insisted that "not a single one" had balked, and that China was not "worried" about war--she could endure it.

stand--and by statements made privately by Soviet diplomats. His anguish was very apparent.

The Chinese were able temporarily to tarnish Moscow's image in the eyes of Indian leaders. Soviet shifts on the matter of MIG-21 delivery to India were so frequent, so opportunistic, and so obviously related to Sino-Soviet relations, and Pravda was so equivocal in its support of India--at one time it veered to the Chinese position--that some Indian leaders gained the distinct impression from these evasions that India could not look for any vigorous support from the Russians in the event of possible future Sino-Indian border clashes. Moreover, the Indians did not take kindly to Soviet suggestions that they agree to negotiate with the Chinese immediately and that they keep the 20 October attack out of the UN lest Moscow be compelled "to support China."

However, if a secondary aim of the Chinese had been to sour completely and irrevocably Soviet-Indian relations, they failed in their attempt. Indian leaders are still indulgent of many Soviet policies.

As for their attempt to depict Khrushchev as a traitor in the eyes of foreign Communists, the Chinese probably made the point stick only with parties who were already in their camp. The Albanians directly, and the Koreans indirectly, condemned Soviet aid to the Indians as unMarxist. The Indonesians provided them with unique support. PKI party boss Aidit, acting in their cause but probably on his party's initiative, cabled Khrushchev in early November, saying

> I cannot restrain the joy of all members of the Indonesian Communist party and myself with regard to your government's decision to cancel the dispatch of MIG aircraft to India.

By imputing a decision to Khrushchev which he had not made, Aidit may have been trying to sour Soviet-Indian relations and create Communist pressure on Khrushchev to make such a decision. News of Aidit's cable fanned some anti-Soviet sentiment in India but its effect on the Soviet leader may have been,

contrary to expectation, to drive him into subsequent reassurances to New Delhi that MIGs would indeed be dispatched.

Chinese Calculations of Risk

The necessary condition for the 20 October attack apparently was, in the Chinese leaders' view, that no major risk should be involved. Thus they made their first move--in July, against Indian forces at Galwan--only after they had received American assurances that the Chinese Nationalists would not attack from Taiwan; this relieved them of worry about a two-front war. When they made their final move--on 20 October--they apparently believed that (1) they could win against Indian forces with the advantage of surprise and numbers and (2) the Indians would fight alone. They were right on both points.

However, they apparently did not anticipate that the Indians would fold so quickly.* Further, they apparently had not estimated that the Indians would turn to the US and UK for military aid; they were obviously taken aback by the sharpness of this turn. Following the success of their major assault of 20 October, they soon recognized that "only the US imperialists would benefit from it /the clash/" (People's Daily editorial, 8 November). Their concern that the US might decide to "intervene" and "enlarge" the fighting during the second

* Sihanouk told a Western journalist in late April 1963 that Chou En-lai in the course of a long, wearisome briefing (on 10 February) had stated that the Chinese leaders were "surprised" at the feeble resistance of the Indian army and its quick retreat. According to Sihanouk, Chou said that before the Chinese realized it, their troops were "inside India" with an embarrassingly successful "counterattack" on their hands. Chou apparently was referring only to the 20 October attack, as the second Chinese thrust--a deep ripose to Indian probes in mid-November--had been pushed more than 100 miles "inside India."

assault--in mid-November--was reflected in Chou En-lai's letter to Sekou Toure of 13 November. Further, the US supply mission in India may have been seen by the Chinese as the first US move to "poke in its hand and develop the present unfortunate border conflict into a war..." (Chinese government statement, 21 November). This consideration was probably decisive in shaping the Chinese decision to announce a unilateral PLA withdrawal. They seem to have believed that only such a drastic move--backward--on the ground would alleviate the anxiety driving the Indians toward acquiring US arms and establishing a US supply mission.

An effort had been made earlier to dispel the impression that China desired general war or large-scale fighting. Within one week of the 20 October attack, a Bank of China official, who had been briefed on the attack in Canton in late October, stated that three points were to be stressed in Hong Kong Communist newspapers regarding the nature of the border fighting:

1. On no account was the border fighting to be described as "war." In discussions, only such words as "conflict, fighting, and dispute" indicating a localized engagement were to be used;

2. New Delhi should be depicted as the aggressor, accused of attempting to spread its influence into Tibet and Sinkiang; and

3. New Delhi's charges should be refuted by saying that India does not need more modern arms and equipment. This should be demonstrated by noting that the arms captured by the "frontier guards" were not all out of date and that the Chinese had not used heavy weapons. Further, the Indians initially committed an enormous number of troops to the fighting--"30,000" by Chinese estimates.

The third point in part suggests a Chinese fear that the Indians, in turning to the US and UK, would begin a crash program to modernize Indian divisions

and mold them into a force capable of eventually striking back effectively at the PLA. Chou En-lai and Chen Yi plied Malcom MacDonald on 29 October in Peiping with the line that the "conflict" was really a localized affair and that a major "war" between China and India was inconceivable.* They handled the crucial matter of British arms with considerable delicacy: they professed to "understand" fully British support for India as a fellow member of the Commonwealth and, although regretting British action in supplying arms, they "understand" and "do not intend to protest." They both stressed their desire that Nehru negotiate, apparently with the intention of spurring MacDonald to use his influence with the Indian prime minister.

But the PLA had inflicted such a degrading defeat on Indian forces that Nehru was more than ever before unable to consider negotiations as a real course because such a course would have been viewed as surrender after the battle. Nehru later told Senator Mansfield that apart from his own convictions, he could not stay in office one week if he negotiated with the Chinese. His prestige was not restored by Peiping's 21 November announcement of a unilateral Chinese withdrawal. Yet the Chinese leaders continued to insist--apparently minimizing the pressures at work on Nehru--on a "quick positive response" as though they believed

* A striking instance of Chinese downplaying of the border fighting appeared in Peiping newspapers after the 20 October attack. The Sino-Indian clash was largely eclipsed by the Cuban developments. Reports indicated that this disparate treatment of the two situations was carried over into all mainland propaganda. For example, Chinese students who had enthusiastically urged reinforcement to PLA border troops during the fighting were cautioned by party cadres that the Chinese leadership desired disengagement and a peaceful solution.

it might be forthcoming from the prime minister. If they believed, even for a short period, that Nehru would talk because he knew now that he could not fight, they were radically wrong.* Their military attack had precisely the effect of ensuring that he would be forever their political enemy.

The Chinese military attack, therefore, opened them to a political risk. Their apparent calculation on this matter was to deny that it was a risk in the sense that something would be lost. The Indians were in their view no longer amenable to political manipulation, and as relations had deteriorated drastically by summer 1962, there was nothing left in the Sino-Indian political relationship worth preserving. That is, they apparently believed that nothing existed to risk. The Chou-Nehru relationship was dead; Mao's struggle-and-unity formula had become all struggle.

The Chinese leaders probably made a similar calculation regarding the political risk of damaging Sino-Soviet relations. There simply was nothing left to risk in the relationship with Khrushchev. Khrushchev for several years had been exaggerating the seriousness of Sino-Indian border clashes and using the situation hypocritically--by

* The Chinese professed a desire for talks to start on a low level. Thus Chou, in his letter to Nehru of 4 November 1962, stated: "China and India can quickly designate officials to negotiate matters relating to the disengagement....When these negotiations have yielded results and the results have been acted on, the prime ministers of the two countries can then hold talks."

After several months, they fell back into a more realistic public appraisal of Nehru's attitude, declaring that they could "also wait patiently" for negotiations. That is, they took the position openly that Nehru would not respond to further suggestions of a political settlement.

imputing unwillingness on the Chinese side to negotiate--against them in the world Communist movement. The Chinese were prepared to attack the Indians regardless of the political sniping their military attack would evoke from Khrushchev. In fact, they now had an issue--betrayal of a "socialist" country during wartime--to use against him. When, therefore, in the final phase of their preparations, the Chinese leaders were offered a pledge of support from Khrushchev, they viewed it with considerable suspicion. They saw it as at the most helpful in isolating Nehru but not essential to their planned operation. Soviet support was not necessary, as the Chinese had acted on the border without it in July and September 1962.

That it was not solicited is suggested by the unwillingness of the Chinese leaders to reciprocate and provide Khrushchev with the support he desperately desired during the Cuban crisis. The Chinese leaders acted throughout the overlapping periods of their military attack and Khrushchev's showdown with the US on the assumption that they owed the hostile Soviet leader nothing by way of support and would not give him any support until, or unless, he unequivocally repudiated his past policy by openly and fully supporting the Chinese position in the border conflict.

The following evidence suggests that the Chinese desired Khrushchev's complete capitulation and would not accept minor concessions:

1. As the Cuban missile crisis developed, the Soviet leader decided to offer the Chinese a degree of support on the Sino-Indian border dispute in exchange for full Chinese support of his Cuban venture. Khrushchev received Ambassador Liu Hsiao on 15 October, after having snubbed him for more than a month.* (The Chinese version established

* Khrushchev's personal snubs were deliberate. Thus early in September, Liu Hsiao had been received by Kozlov rather than Khrushchev for his farewell interview. However, Khrushchev was reported by British officials to have found time to receive not only the retiring West German ambassador but an American official and an American poet, a Saudi Arabian, and, after his return to Moscow from his Black Sea resort, the Austrian Vice Chancellor. (Liu left in late September to attend the CCP's 10th plenum but returned unexpectedly to Moscow for the (cont'd)

13 October as the first Khrushchev-Liu meeting.) On the 16th, when Khrushchev entertained him at a state banquet, Chinese diplomats were reported as saying that the Russians would shortly "drop their facade of neutrality" on the Sino-Indian dispute. That Khrushchev had suggested he would change his position is also indicated by the published Chinese version (People's Daily, 1 November 1963). According to the Chinese:

> On 13 and 14 October 1962, Khrushchev told the Chinese ambassador the following: Their information on Indian preparations to attack China was similar to China's. If they were in China's position, they would have taken the same measures. A neutral attitude on the Sino-Indian boundary question was impossible. If anyone attacked China and they /the Soviets/ said they were neutral, it would be an act of betrayal.

Liu apparently had briefed the Soviet leader on the 10 October firefight at the Che Jao Bridge and on Indian plans to push forward in the Dhola area. He probably indicated the Chinese leaders' decision to hit back if necessary. This briefing seems to have provided Khrushchev with the opportunity to offer his support and request Mao's in return. He almost certainly informed Ambassador Liu Hsiao sometime between 13 and 16 October of his Cuban missile venture and seems to have requested that he ask Mao to forget the past:

> In the autumn of last year, before the departure from Moscow of the former ambassador on the Chinese People's Republic in the Soviet Union, Comrade Liu Hsiao, members of the Presidium of the CPSU central committee had a long talk with him. During this conversation, the members of the Presidium once again displayed initiative in the matter of strengthening Chinese-Soviet friendship. Comrade N. S. Khrushchev asked Comrade Liu Hsiao to forward

Chinese 1 October celebration.)

to Comrade Mao Tse-tung our proposal: "to put aside all disputes and differences, not to try to establish who is right and who is wrong, not to rake up the past, but to start our relations with a clear page." But we have not even received an answer to this sincere call. (CPSU "open letter," Pravda, 13 July 1963)

Mao's refusal to respond was probably based on his calculation that Khrushchev was in real trouble and was expediently maneuvering to buy him off by offering support for China's border policy.

2. Mao's price was high. He apparently felt that Khrushchev should make a clearcut public statement, criticizing Nehru's border policy. At the very least, Khrushchev should direct his top aides and Pravda's editors to make such a statement as a token of Soviet sincerity. Mao seems to have planned to continue attacking Khrushchev's moves, treating the Soviet leader's personal bid with contempt, until such time as this reversal of Soviet policy was forthcoming. The Chinese press did not report the effusive references to Sino-Soviet friendship on the occasion of Khrushchev's meetings with Liu Hsiao. People's Daily reported only the fact that Liu had been received at banquets given by various Soviet leaders. It avoided all mention of Soviet press tributes, which had included the statement that Liu's series of "warm, sincere" conversations with top Soviet officials ended on 23 October with "a comradely discussion" with Mikoyan. (Liu left Moscow on 24 October.) On the contrary, People's Daily and other Chinese newspapers maintained a continuous anti-Soviet drumfire not only immediately after the Khrushchev-Liu meetings, but even after Pravda on 25 October took the Chinese position on the "notorious" McMahon Line, Sino-Indian talks, and certain "chauvinist" CPI members. People's Daily reprinted this Pravda peace offering on the 26th but did not use it for any follow-up commentary. When, therefore, on the 27th People's Daily "explained" Nehru's anti-China policy as basically a matter of his class position, Khrushchev was implicitly attacked for "shielding and supporting" Nehru and for trying to play "a pacifying role in relation to China." Khrushchev's attempt at conciliation was rejected well before he backed down on Cuba.

All the Soviet leader gained from his unilateral concessions had been to sour temporarily his relationship with Nehru and to suffer a diplomatic defeat at the hands of his formal ally, Mao Tse-tung. For his part, the Chinese leader gained an admission from the CPSU (Pravda editorial of 25 October) that he had been right on the matter of the McMahon Line and on his insistence on no preconditions for talks. Only after the Soviet leader began (CPSU "open letter" of 13 July 1963) publicly to attack the Chinese for their display of "narrow nationalism" in the Sino-Indian dispute was he able to drive home effectively a political point against his Chinese adversary on the border issue.

The Soviet charge, made along the lines of CPI leader Dange's article (New Age, 21 April 1963, supplement), that the Chinese attacked because of the opportunity provided them by the Cuban missile crisis, is declamatory history. The Chinese attack would have been made even if there had been no Cuban crisis (and even if there had been no Sino-Soviet dispute). The border dispute had a momentun of its own. The important historical fact is that both China and the USSR had been engaged in an increasingly bitter argument at a time when they both, independently, decided months earlier to go on the offensive against non-Communist countries. Further, neither of these allies gave the other more than restrained support at a time when each sought all-out support--a commentary on the state of the Sino-Soviet alliance in fall 1962.

The Prospect

The Sino-Indian dispute probably will remain unsettled for many years, primarily because the Indians will continue to insist that the Chinese withdraw from the Aksai Plain. The Chinese will not withdraw. They have made it clear that they will retain the ground their troops stand on and the road their troops defend between Sinkiang and Tibet. The decisive implication of Liu Shao-chi's statement to R. K. Nehru in July 1961 is that China has as much right to retain the Plain occupied since 1956 as India has to the NEFA occupied since 1951. Even in the best case--that is, a complete Indian withdrawal from the NEFA--Liu implied that China would only "consider" a pullback from the Plain.

The Chinese are left with only a hope that a future Indian leadership will decide to negotiate rather than fight. Peiping has indicated that China would not initiate an attack in the future. However, Chinese concern that the Indians will be emboldened to try again is reflected in their decision to insert a third party--i.e., the Colombo powers--into the border dispute to impede a new Indian border venture.* The miserably beaten Indians may try again eventually when their forces and spirits have been refurbished. Although the Chinese attack in fall 1962 deflated Indian military pretensions, it so intensely humiliated the Indian leaders and so vitally affronted the pride of the nation that the deep desire for ultimate vindication--that is, to fight with new weapons and more troops, and win--may well prevail over the more sober calculation that the safest way out of the deadlock is a political settlement on Chinese terms.

* The Chinese decision to apply a restraint on the Indians was indicated by the following passage in People's Daily of 13 October 1963: "Should the Indian Government, under the instigation of the US imperialists and modern revisionists, pin blind faith on the use of force and deliberately rekindle border conflicts, the Chinese Government would first of all inform the Colombo conference countries of this situation, requesting them to put a stop to it. The situation today is very different from that of a year ago." Chou En-lai had stated earlier (on 11 October to Reuters correspondents) that the Colombo powers can "play the role of dissuading India...should India create tension on the border again."

The Chinese have also taken the precaution to point out to the Indian leaders that four areas are sensitive, that is, are closed to Indian forces. They have implicitly warned that any effort to establish an Indian military presence in any of the four would meet with PLA counteraction. They have also implicitly warned that should checkposts again be set up anywhere else at the line of actual control, or on the Chinese side of it, they would inform the Colombo powers and retain the option to wipe them out. (See attached map)

The Indians have been clearcut and unequivocal in stating that they will not accept Chinese terms. When Chou En-lai sought to demonstrate to Nehru (and to various neutral leaders) that the Chinese would return to their positions and had not attacked in order to seize territory (letter to Nehru of 4 November 1962),* the Indian prime minister responded sarcastically that Chou was merely making a "magnanimous offer of retaining the gains of the earlier /1957-1960/ aggression" (letter to Chou of 14 November).** This was, Nehru concluded

> ...an assumption of the attitude of a victor. /The demand for India to accept the Chinese 1959 line/ is a demand to which India will never submit whatever the consequences and however long and hard the struggle may be.

Nehru had not been deterred from his rejection of the Chinese version of the line by Chou's trifling concession made on a map sent to heads of state (appended to Chou's 15 November letter).* The Indian position was stated privately by the MEA China Division Director, Menon, to an American embassy officer on 31 December 1962. Menon asserted that although it was not necessary that

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* To use Chou's words: "The fact that the Chinese Government's proposal has 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 the recent counterattacks in self-defense."

** Chou sent various neutral heads of state the map published in the People's Daily on 8 November, depiciting the new, proposed Chinese base line (1962) and the old Chinese claim line (1959). The two lines coincided except at five points, at each of which the 1962 base line deviated eastward and northeastward, making small enclaves into Chinese territory. The Chinese position allows for the move of Indian troops roughly to the vicinity of this base line but not into four sensitive areas.

India be permitted to re-establish every post lost since 8 September, nevertheless, for the sake of the principle of not sanctioning acquisition of territory seized through military means, India "must" re-establish its presence in territory lost during the attacks of October and November.

A political settlement, which could not be negotiated when Sino-Indian relations were still to some degree friendly, will be even less likely now that relations are completely antagonistic. The deadlock will remain, and it seems probable that border clashes will recur at some future time when the Indians regain their confidence.

APPENDIX

SINO-PAKISTANI BORDER NEGOTIATIONS: 1960-1963

Combined with their effort to demonstrate that Nehru had gone over to the American camp, the Chinese tried to pressure and embarrass the Indians by approaching the Pakistanis in 1960 for negotiations on their common border in the northern area of Kashmir.

This overture required a degree of opportunistic maneuvering by the Chinese, who had been maintaining that they were more Leninist and ideologically purer than the Russian leaders. They began to move toward the Pakistanis despite the fact that the Communist movement had held Pakistan to be an obviously reactionary regime, a member of the "imperialist military bloc," and led by a strong-man who had none of the socialist pretensions of certain neutralist leaders. The Chinese had been warning other Communists to reject cooperation with all but truly socialist leaders or at least truly neutral neutrals. President Ahyub was neither, nor could he reasonably be depicted as a member of the anti-imperialist "national bourgeoisie." Yet Peiping began in 1960 to seek a major accord with Pakistan.

Unlike the Russians, the Chinese ever since 1950 had kept open an avenue of approach to the Pakistanis on the Kashmir issue. The Chinese position had been to equivocate, which meant refusal to recognize Indian sovereignty over the area. For example, Chou En-lai took an equivocal public position on Kashmir when pressed on the matter during a news conference in Karachi on 24 December 1956. Chou said he had not "studied" the matter and suggested that India and Pakistan settle it by negotiations outside the UN. This position was significantly different from Moscow's, as the Russians had recognized the juridical accession of Kashmir to India. Privately, the Chinese had indicated considerable concern that Pakistani-held Kashmir might be converted into a missile base, and their ambassador in Karachi, Keng Piao, had informed the Swedish ambassador in mid-April 1957 that Peiping preferred that the "status quo" in Kashmir be maintained. During the border experts talks with the Indians in 1960, the Chinese experts consistently refused to discuss the segment of boundary west of the Karakoram Pass, as such action would have implied Chinese recognition of Indian ownership of that segment of territory.

For their part, the Pakistanis saw the value of CENTO and SEATO decrease as the US began to show a willingness to tolerate India's nonalignment policy and as the US refused to make these alliances into defense arrangements against the threat from India. The Pakistanis in late 1960 turned more and more away from a close relationship with the US and toward a new, improved relationship with the Chinese and the Russians. Increased American and British military aid to India deeply troubled the Pakistanis and further impelled them into a rapproachement with the Chinese, who were later willing to hint that China would provide Pakistan with protection in the event of an attack from India. Thus, as China in 1959-60 became the enemy of India, and the US gradually became India's best friend, the Pakistanis looked to a closer political relationship with the Chinese against a common enemy.*

The Chinese did not turn directly toward the Pakistanis until the complete collapse of Sino-Indian negotiations in December 1960. They began to move from a position of holding in abeyance a border settlement with Pakistan to one of active overtures for high-level negotiations. The Chinese ambassador to Pakistan reportedly suggested in December 1960 that talks be started over the Hunza area and such other regions along the border as Pakistan might wish to discuss. By January 1961, the Pakistani foreign minister indicated that a "preliminary" boundary agreement was being discussed with the Chinese. The Chinese procedural plan seemed to be similar to the one they had used with success in handling the Burmese and Nepalese, e.g. a step-by-step advance, beginning with an accord "in principle" recognizing the need to negotiate a definitive boundary, the formation of a joint committee to discuss the details of surveys and demarcation on the ground, and the drafting of a formal border treaty.

* The Director of Pakistan's Ministry of External Affairs, Mohammed Yunis, told an American official in Karachi on 4 February 1962 that regarding his government's policy toward Peiping, the principle of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" applies.

The Chinese maneuver was not lost on the Indian leaders. They reportedly protested to Peiping in January 1961, insisting that India was sovereign over all of Kashmir and that Pakistan therefore had no common frontier with China. Foreign Secretary Dutt told the American ambassador in New Delhi on 24 January that the Sino-Pakistani agreement "in principle" to negotiate the boundary demarcation made Peiping's policy very clear: "to isolate India and cast her in an intransigent role." Dutt speculated that to accomplish this the Chinese might even concede all the Pakistani claims involving some 6,000 square miles of territory--a guess which depicted the Chinese leaders as being more generous than they actually proved to be, but captured the spirit of the Chinese attitude. Dutt reflected Indian concern by pointing to other signs of Chinese efforts to isolate India: China's nonaggression pact with Afghanistan, continuing approaches to Nepal, near-completion of the Sino-Nepalese boundary treaty,* the Sino-Burmese boundary treaty and Chou En-lai's early January elaborate visit to Rangoon, and Chinese official statements suggesting China would regard

* The Sino-Nepalese boundary treaty (which used the "traditional boundary" and split the difference on ownership of Mt. Everest) was signed in Peiping on 4 October 1961 shortly after Liu Shao-chi implicitly criticized the Indians by praising Nepal for having resisted "foreign aggression and pressure." This treaty, and the accords on Chinese economic assistance as well as on a Chinese-constructed road from Tibet to Katmandu, represented a major diplomatic defeat for New Delhi and opened the door for the spread of Chinese influence. The Chinese have tried to keep this door open through flattery of Nepalese officials and assurances of support against Indian pressure. The British High Commissioner in New Delhi reported to his government on 16 February 1962 that the predominating position in Nepal which the British bequeathed to India in 1947 should have provided India with a strong bastion. But New Delhi's "neglect and disdain" of Nepal, followed by attempts at interference and later still by indiscreet speeches and support for refugee politicians had given the Chinese an opening which they had been quick to exploit. He saw no prospect for the development of relations of real confidence with the Mahendra regime.

(Cont'd)

Bhutan and Sikkim like any other independent South Asian countries. Ambassador Bunker felt that Dutt's initiative in broaching the matter was in the nature of "an unexpressed hope" that the US would discourage the Pakistanis from any rapprochement with either the Chinese or the Russians.

After moving rapidly in late 1960 and early 1961 to gain an initial agreement in principle to negotiate the Sino-Pakistani border matter, the Chinese leaders, having attained the agreement, were compelled to mark time. They exchanged notes thereafter on occasion with the Pakistanis, who had begun to drag their feet, but were unable to bring them to "preliminary talks" until March 1962, when the Indians were preparing to outflank Chinese posts. The Chinese pressed Karachi for full-scale substantive negotiations soon after the October 1962 attack on Indian positions. Chou En-lai was reported to have invited Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali to Peiping in late November, and on 26 December, Karachi announced that complete agreement in principle had been reached with Peiping on the "alignment" of their common border. The announcement of this agreement on alignment, intended by the Pakistanis to put pressure on the Indians to reach an agreement on Kashmir at a time when the Indian negotiating team was arriving in Karachi for talks on the disputed area, also served the Chinese purpose of convincing the Ceylonese prime minister (then on her way as Colombo Power courier to Peiping) that the Chinese were willing to reach frontier accommodations. To this end, the Chinese also had announced their border accord with Mongolia in December. Beyond this, the Chinese apparently calculated that their agreement with the Pakistanis on an area claimed by India would stiffen

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* (continued)

Chinese exploitation of the Indian policy failure in Nepal included a formal charge that India had engaged in "great nation chauvinism." In its note to India of 31 May 1962, Peiping cited a New Delhi statement that the border runs from the trijunction of the boundaries of India, China and Afghanistan to the India, Burma, China trijunction in the east, and then asked: "Pray, what kind of assertion is that? ...Nepal no longer exists, Sikkim no longer exists, and Bhutan no longer exists. This is out-and-out great power chauvinism."

Nehru's resistance to making any concessions to Pakistan, thereby exacerbating already strained India-Pakistan relations.

The Chinese in January 1963 temporarily dragged their feet in talks with Pakistan, hoping for talks with the Indians on the basis of the Colombo Proposals. Failing to gain Indian responsiveness, they resumed their move toward Pakistan. The Chinese formally concluded the border agreement with Pakistan on 2 March 1963, announcing simultaneously that border negotiations with Afghanistan would soon begin.* They stressed the speed and ease with which the final agreement on the border alignment had been reached, leaving a joint commission to survey the China-Pakistan border for demarcation and to erect pillars. Chinese anxiety to furnish new "proof" that India was the recalcitrant side in the Sino-Indian dispute provided the Pakistanis with an opportunity to achieve a favorable border settlement. The Chinese apparently did not attempt to persuade the Pakistanis to give up any territory they already controlled and even conceded several hundred miles of valley grazing land on the Chinese side of the watershed. Although a major Chinese motive was to increase India-Pakistan "contradictions," the Chinese were careful to deny this publicly in a People's Daily editorial on 4 March. The editorial stated in effect that the Chinese wanted to be fair about the matter: China takes the position of "non-intervention and impartiality toward both sides." After the Kashmir dispute was settled, it went on, either of the disputants would have the right "to reopen negotiations with the Chinese Government on the boundary treaty to replace the agreement." Privately, however, the Chinese tried to justify their moves in the direction of a "reactionary" Pakistan as indeed an attempt merely to split them from the Indians. An official of the Chinese Communist Bank of China in Hong Kong defensively asked the bank staff on 7 September 1963 a rhetorical question: "Would it be good if Pakistan and India had joined together to

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* When, on 22 November 1963, the Chinese signed the boundary treaty with the Afghans, politburo member Peng Chen implicitly underscored New Delhi's recalcitrance by noting that four countries on China's south and southwestern borders had adopted an attitude of "active cooperation"--Burma, Nepal, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

fight us?" He went on to "explain" the Sino-Pakistani air flights agreement as based on the consideration of isolating the Indians.*

The Russians moved to expose the hypocrisy of Chinese pretensions to be pure and principled Communists. The Chinese reportedly took the line with Moscow that talks with Karachi were a "first step" towards leading Pakistan out of the Western alliance.** But following the outbreak of open polemics in mid-July 1963, the Russians bore down hard in public statements on Chinese opportunism not only in connection with Peiping's support of the anti-Communist Iraqi Bathists, but also regarding the Chinese effort toward Pakistan. The Russians ignored Indian intransigence and emphasized Chinese deals with "reactionaries" at the expense of neutrals. Pointing to the nationalistic motivation of the Chinese leaders, an 8 September Moscow broadcast noted that the Chinese understand very well that Pakistan is a member of the "aggressive CENTO and SEATO pacts." Moscow's 21-22 September 1963 government statement attacking Chinese opposition to the partial test ban treaty also contained a caustic remark about Peiping's actions:

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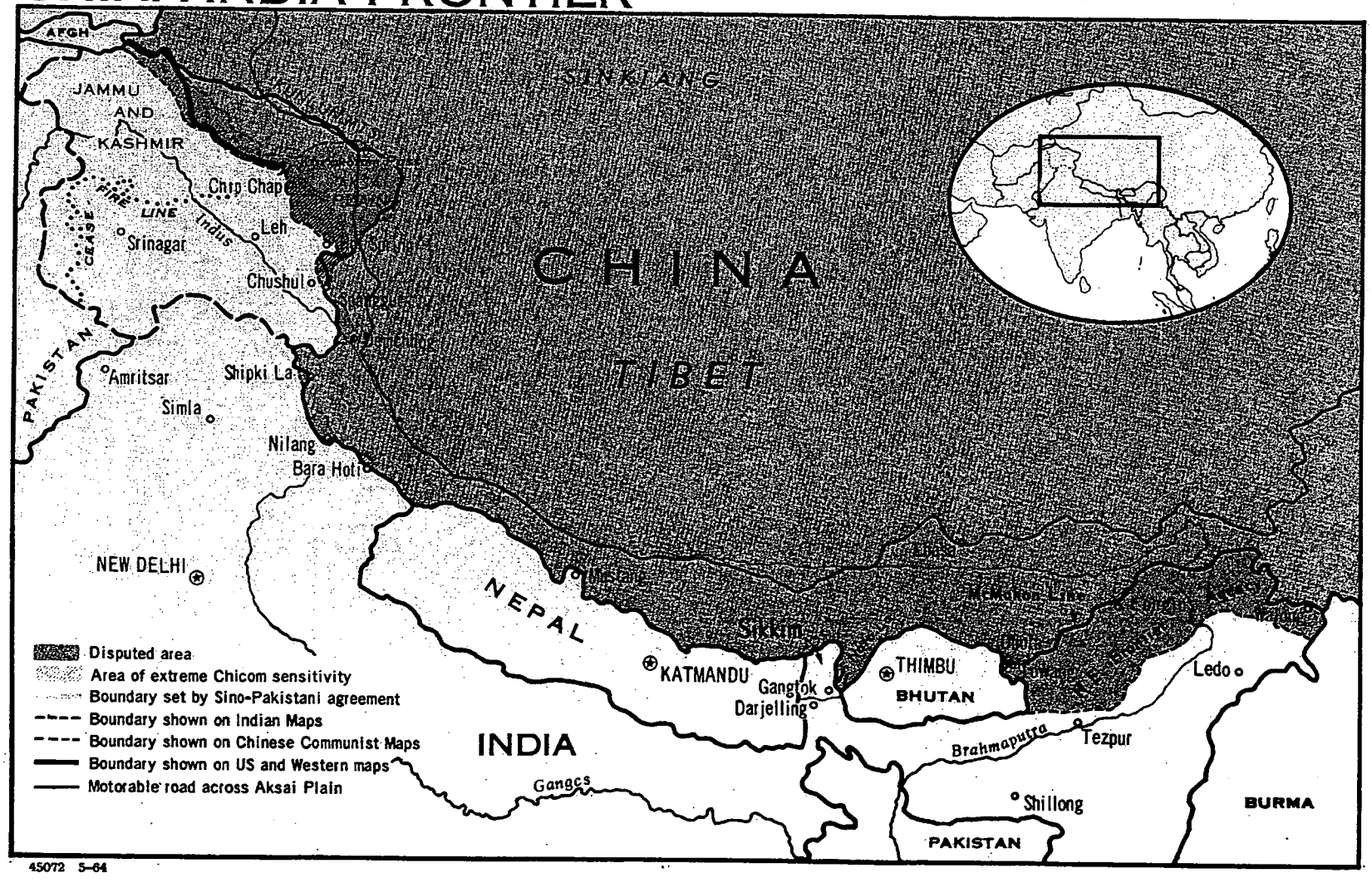
* Chou En-lai was also defensive on the matter of China's move toward a pro-Western regime. Chou conceded in an interview on 31 March that there is a "certain contradiction" between Pakistan's signing a border agreement with China and its membership in SEATO, but, in doing so, he cleverly placed the onus on the Pakistanis for departing from principle and international alignment.

** In a conversation with an American official on 15 June 1962, the MEA China Division Director, S. Sinha, stated he had information that this had been Peiping's position in justifying the move to Moscow.

> Such an attitude to a neutralist country /i.e., India/ is all the more unclear in view of the fact that the Chinese Government had in every way been making overtures to the obviously reactionary regimes in Asia and Africa, including the countries belonging to imperialist military blocs.

On the day this statement was published, Soviet Aeroflot representatives were scheduled to arrive in Karachi to negotiate landing rights in Pakistan; an air link agreement was signed in October.

CHINA-INDIA FRONTIER



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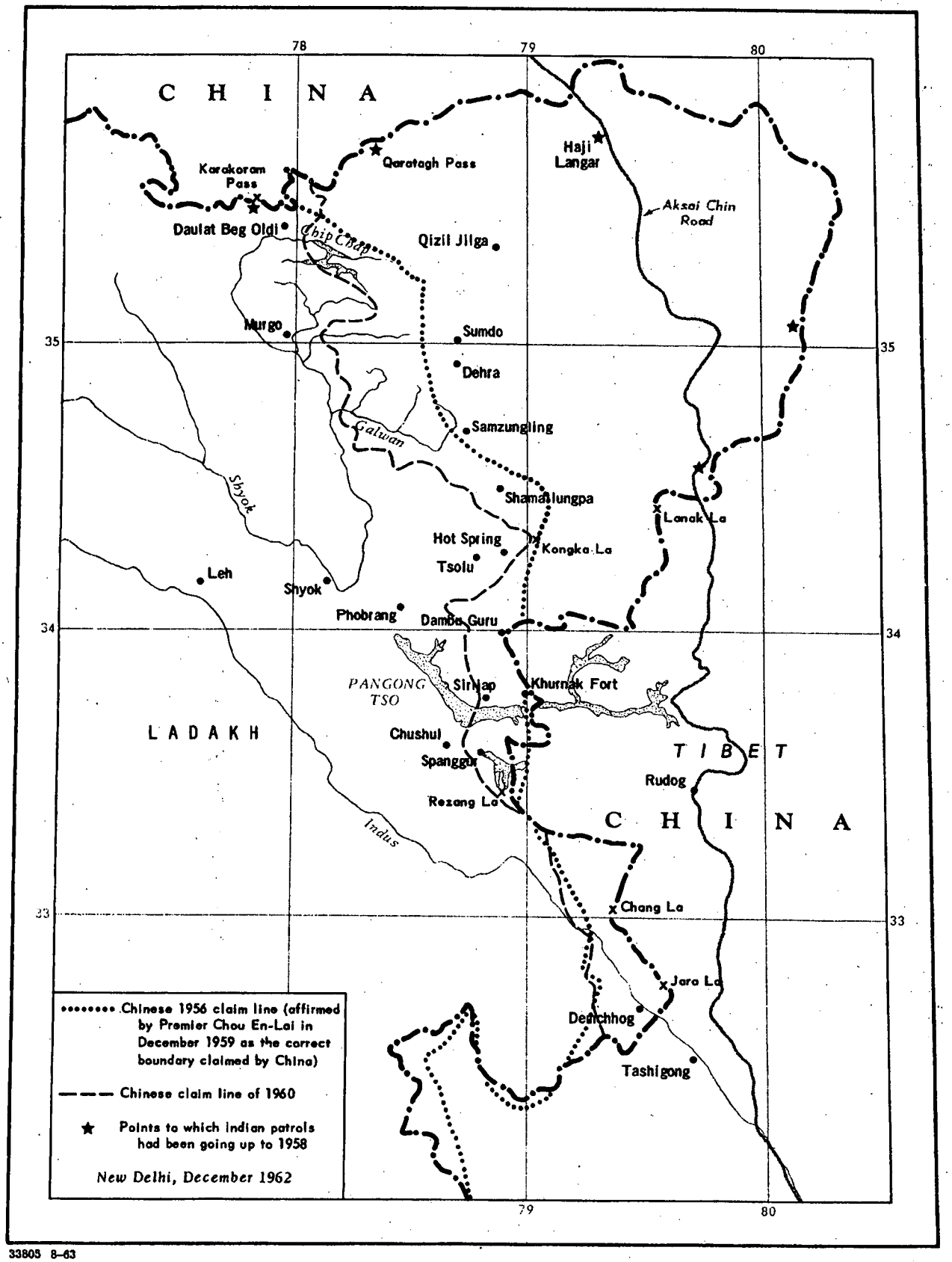
SINO-INDIAN BORDER

Chinese Claim 'Lines' of 1956 and 1960 in the Western Sector



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