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INDIA-CHINA FRIENDSHIP MUST NOT BE IMPAIRED

The statement made by Prime Minister Nehru in the Lok Sabha on April 27 reveals the sharp deterioration that has taken place in the relations between India and China in recent weeks. This development has been hailed by imperialists and caused grave concern to the freedom-loving peoples of the whole of Asia.

THE events that have led to this tragic pass are well-known and need no reiteration here. Sri Nehru feels deeply hurt by certain statements made in the Chinese Press and in the speeches at the Chinese People's Congress. While he admits that there have been "lapses on our side" and regrets the "grave discourtesy" to a picture of Mao Tse-tung by "a small group of irresponsible people in Bombay", the whole tenor of his statement makes it clear that he holds that it is the "other side" that is primarily responsible for the present situation.

Undeniable Facts

It is difficult to agree with this conclusion. No matter what one thinks of some of the statements and speeches made by some people in China, certain facts cannot be denied. It was not the Chinese who set the ball rolling. It was in the Indian Parliament that rabid attacks were made on China by some members. China was called an aggressor, trying to suppress a small country. Moreover, Pandit Nehru himself openly doubted the authenticity of the letters written by the Dalai Lama, virtually charging the Chinese Government with deception.

It would have been less than human for the Chinese to swallow this without a counter-reply. If Indians feel hurt at the charge of expansionism levelled at a few among them, should not the Chinese feel hurt when their Government is attacked as an aggressor and charged by the Prime Minister of India with deception?

Of course, we do want freedom of speech and should not stifle free expression of thought. But then we need not complain if people in other countries give similar free expression to what they think. The obvious remedy is to carry on controversies within the framework of friendly relations, of relations between friendly countries, so that bitterness of expression is avoided.

Immediate Task

There is a category of persons in India who, to satisfy their blind anti-Communist hatred, would not mind impairing Sino-Indian relations. But the overwhelming mass of our people want these relations to be friendly and, therefore, the immediate task before people is to call a halt to the spate of harsh words, invectives and charges that are being uttered.

Now that the Tibetan episode has brought us to a dangerous precipice, it is proper for us to review and reassess our aims in Tibet. What is it that we want in relation to Tibet? Confusion

is created because, though official statements strictly talk of autonomy, even some members of the ruling party talk of all kinds of things, including aid to a small country struggling for independence. The statement issued on behalf of the Dalai Lama is itself atrocious in this respect. It was highly improper that an official of the India Government distributed it. What does the statement say?

"There has always been a strong desire for independence on the part of the Tibetan people. Throughout history this has been asserted on numerous occasions—sometimes the Chinese Government imposed their suzerainty on Tibet and at other times Tibet has functioned as an independent country... In 1951, under pressure of the Chinese Government a seventeen-point agreement was made between China and Tibet. In that agreement, the suzerainty of China was accepted as there was no alternative left to the Tibetans."

Is this the position of the

regional autonomy under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government." The Preamble to the agreement states: "The Tibetan nationality is one of the nationalities with a long history within the boundaries of China..."

Political Bias

The Government of India obviously recognises this bipartite agreement. The fact that

by
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Government of India? We have yet to learn that the Government of India thinks that the 1951 agreement was not genuine but made at the point of bayonet. Since this is not the position of India, since India considers the agreement valid, it was grievously wrong on the part of any official to circulate the statement. That statement is more or less a virtual repudiation of the Sino-Tibetan agreement and a claim of Tibetan independence from China. One cannot permit anybody to draw on India's support to snatch Tibet from China under the plea of autonomy.

If our stand is that Tibet is a part of China, then our Government cannot lend even indirect support to a demand for independence and secession. Some interested people in India wish to perform a sleight of hand and equate autonomy with independence. Such an attitude will be an unwarranted interference in China's internal affairs. It is plain that the Dalai Lama cannot be permitted to use Indian soil to preach disintegration of Chinese territory. The sooner the thing is made clear to him the better.

It is highly improper to suggest that there has been a breach of assurance by China on the issue of autonomy of Tibet. It must be remembered that there is no tripartite agreement between China, India and Tibet. There is an agreement between China and Tibet in which "the Tibetan people have the right of exercising national

Tibet has autonomy under the leadership of the Central Government, does not mean that a foreign Government can sit in judgement over the functioning of autonomy in Tibet. This is a basic mistake which none should make.

And yet we seem to be indulging in a lot of gratuitous advice as to whether a particular emergency should be met by political or military or other methods. How will our Government like it if a foreign Government advises us how to maintain law and order, when to use firearms, how to deal with the situation in Kashmir or the Naga Hills and how to meet the demand for linguistic States by persuasion and not by killing people? It is evident that even official statements of the Indian Government have tended to go beyond expression of human sympathy for those suffering, and have revealed a distinct political bias. There is one-sided acceptance of the rebel story; there is one-sided rejection of all that the Chinese said, including the authenticity of Dalai Lama's letters.

In the name of cultural ties, of human sympathy, of religion, there is a tendency to forget political frontiers and to act as if they were no longer there. Otherwise, what could one make of the following statement?

"Though physical barriers were progressively removed, mental and emotional barriers increased. Apparently the attempt to cross these mental and emotional barriers were either

not made or did not succeed." The head of one Government is saying this of the internal policy of another friendly Government.

This is nothing but a complete exoneration of the reactionary rebels who have taken arms against the friendly Government. The onus is thrown on the Government of China, it is that Government's policy that is responsible for everything. Those who have taken arms against the Government, who have killed people and officials in the interests of serfdom and reaction are exonerated and upheld as leading a national revolt. Private organisations and individuals are no doubt at liberty to express their opinions on world events. But no Government can hail a rebellion in a friendly country as a national revolt and escape the charge of intervention in internal matters.

Sympathies -With Whom?

And with whom are we sympathising? We sympathise with Lamaism against land reform. We sympathise with superstition, against science, with serfdom against Socialism — all in the name of national revolt and religion. Nasser attacks Communism in the name of Islam; we decry the march of Socialism in Tibet in the name of Buddhism—we whose country has suffered so much due to wanton intrusion of religion into politics.

As the Prime Minister stated: "On the one hand, there was a dynamic rapidly moving society; on the other, a static unchanging society fearful of what might be done to it in the name of reform. The distance between the two was great and there appeared to be hardly any meeting ground. Meanwhile, change in some forms inevitably came to Tibet. Communications developed rapidly and the long isolation of Tibet was partly broken through."

And we are today sympathising with those who stand for static society, for serfdom, those who abhor change because it hurts their vested interests. We blame those who stand for dynamic change and seek to lead Tibet out of medieval darkness. This is indeed a sad commentary on our secularism, on our concern for a Socialistic pattern of society. Our sympathy only encourages those who want to

resist social change in Tibet, who seek to exercise a veto on Tibet's progress and who have taken arms to defend ancient privilege.

Reactionary Cause

This is the first time in recent years that our leading organisations have espoused a reactionary cause. It is sad to reflect that those who sponsored the noble Kotnis mission to China should waste their sympathy on reaction in Tibet.

And should Sino-Indian friendship be endangered for this cause which does not help India or the world? A little bit of reflection should convince everybody that many of the actions and statements here have gone beyond expression of sympathy and have partaken of a partisan nature. Our Government would not like armed rebels to be politically sympathised with and propagated for in other countries.

Imperialists and many others are trying to fish in the troubled waters of Tibet and spoil the relations between the two countries. Their game must not succeed.

Responding to Prime Minister Nehru's statement in the Lok Sabha, China's Premier Chou En-lai in his report to the People's Congress said on April 18: "Prime Minister Nehru of our great friendly neighbour India issued successive statements on non-interference in China's internal affairs and in favour of continued consolidation of friendly Sino-Indian relations. We welcome these statements. There is a friendship of over two thousand years between China and India, which are moreover the initiators of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. There is no reason why either of our two countries should let our mutual friendship and the principles in foreign relations adhered to by our two countries jointly be shaken on account of a handful of Tibetan rebels."

Speaking to the Lok Sabha, Nehru said: "It would be a tragedy if the two great countries of Asia, India and China, which have been peaceful neighbours for ages past, should develop feelings of hostility against each other. We, for our part, will follow this policy; let me hope that China also will do likewise

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TIBET

★ by **RAHDASS**

Prime Minister Nehru's announcement to Pressmen after he came out of his four-hour meeting with the Dalai Lama in Mussoorie that the Dalai Lama-General Tan Kuan-san correspondence had in fact taken place and that the letters written by the Dalai Lama were authentic has brought a whole propaganda edifice crumbling down.

WHEN Peking had released these letters they had been dubbed as fabricated, the Indian Press continued to refer to them as the "alleged letters" of the Dalai Lama.

What They Said Then

Even as late as April 16, a New Delhi despatch in the Hindu was saying: "What has perplexed New Delhi is the reiteration by the Premier (Chou En-lai) of the genuineness of the letters written by the Dalai Lama to the Chinese Military Commander... Even if the Dalai Lama now denied having written those letters the Chinese could still maintain that he is saying it under duress..."

The Tribune was on the same day editorialising: "The Chinese Embassy in New Delhi has also been circulating photostat copies of certain letters alleged to have been written by the Dalai Lama to the Chinese representative in Lhasa, in support of the official Peking line." Other papers were writing in a similar vein.

These Special Correspondents and editorial writers were all expecting that the moment the Dalai Lama entered India he would deny authorship of the letters and what made them bold to cling on to this belief was Prime Minister Nehru's own words in the Lok Sabha, "I would like to get greater confirmation about them (the letters), the circumstances in which they were written and whether they were written at all."

When Sri Nehru came out of Birla Nivas on April 24 and acknowledged that the letters were the Dalai Lama's, one expected him at least to express some regret about his earlier statement. But nothing of the sort was done, instead he tried to explain what might have prompted the Dalai Lama to write those letters.

Wider Significance

With all that, it is good that the authenticity of the letters has now been established. Its significance is not only that it has proved as baseless a particular charge against China, it has much wider significance, it puts a question mark against many things that have been said in the now-famous, very controversial Tezpur Statement.

When the Dalai Lama reached Tezpur and the statement was read out by a Tibetan official and copies were handed out to Pressmen by an official of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, this statement which has since been the centre of a debate raised a num-

ber of questions—and not from the Chinese alone.

The Hindu's K. Rangaswami, for instance, wrote from New Delhi: "There is an impression here that the Dalai Lama's statement has left many gaps unfilled."

The first of these gaps, of course, was that the statement kept completely silent on the letters.

"Another aspect of the situation," wrote the Hindu Correspondent, "which is regarded as even more fundamental is yet to be cleared. The Dalai Lama narrated in proper sequence all the events leading to the appointment of the Preparatory Committee for Tibet in 1956. Then the Dalai Lama deals with incidents which occurred in March this year and what happened in these three years has not been stated. These three years are considered as particularly relevant. It is in 1956 that Pek-

that the Tezpur Statement is riddled with questionable facts.

● The Tezpur Statement says: "The 'relation' of Tibetans with China became openly strained from the early part of February 1959. The Dalai Lama had agreed a month in advance to attend a cultural show in the Chinese headquarters and the date was suddenly fixed for March 10." Who fixed the date so suddenly? Doesn't the wording of the statement give the impression that the Chinese military authorities had fixed the date? And doesn't it seek to become a justification for the rumour the rebels had spread that the Dalai Lama was about to be abducted by the Chinese?

Truth In The Letter

And yet what had the Dalai Lama written in the letters which he has said are his own.

He wrote to General Tan Kuan-san on March 11: "I intended to go to the Military Command to see the theatrical performance yesterday, but I was unable to do so, owing to obstruction by people, ecclesiastical and secular, who were instigated by a few bad elements and who did not know the facts." Obviously it was the Dalai Lama who had "intended to go" on the 10th and it was the Chinese who were saying, "it may be advisable

a Manchu Minister stationed in Tibet—that all this means that the leading position of the Dalai Lama was bestowed on him by the over-all Chinese Government then in power and that the Kasha was just an administrative organ of the over-all Government at that time.

And what is the present position? The present position is that Tibet is a local region of China where a Preparatory Committee for the autonomous region has been established.

The assertion of Tibetan independence looks strange, to say the least, against these historical facts.

1951 Agreement

● The Tezpur Statement says: "In 1951, under pressure of the Chinese Government, a 17-point agreement was made between China and Tibet."

Apart from the fact that the Dalai Lama himself has in the past lauded this agreement publicly and talked of Tibet's advance under this agreement, here is the testimony of one who signed the agreement in Peking in 1951.

Ngapo Ngawang Jigme was the Chief Plenipotentiary Delegate of the former Tibet Local Government in the negotiations and signing of the 17-article agreement. He is now Vice-Chairman and Secretary-General of the Pre-

ing political system in Tibet," that they "will not alter the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama," that "officials of various ranks shall hold office as usual," that "the established status, functions and powers of the Panchen Lama shall be maintained."

We know that the functions and status of the Dalai Lama have not only not been altered, he had been elected Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, thus becoming a leading member of the State. He was also appointed Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the autonomous region of Tibet. Even after the rebellion, he continues to be the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee and the Panchen Lama is only acting in that capacity as long as he is away from Tibet. And even in this session of the Chinese National People's Congress the Dalai Lama has been elected to its Standing Committee and as a Vice-Chairman.

Where Is The Interference ?

While these are facts we know, we have yet to hear from the Dalai Lama of specific instances of any interference with his status and functions.

Neither can one imagine, looking at the caravan that has arrived with the Dalai Lama that there has been any interference with ecclesiastical and secular officials. If the Chinese had decided to interfere, not many of those who have come to India would have remained as high Tibetan officials.

Except very general assertions not one instance has been brought to our notice so far of a single decision taken on any internal matter of Tibet by the Chinese authorities without the consent of the former Local Government.

Article 7 lays down that "the religious beliefs, customs and habits of the Tibetan people shall be respected and lama monasteries shall be protected. The Central authorities will not effect a change in the income of the monasteries."

Not only have the Chinese scrupulously adhered to this clause, they have in cases even gone out of their way to provide transport facilities to lamaseries which wanted to buy goods from a distance.

They Are The Criminals

Before we are expected to believe that there has been any violation of religion and customs, we should at least be told which monastery has not been protected, which lamasery's revenue has been reduced. Particularly so when we know that some of these people who are making the charge, while swearing by Buddhism and Tibet's customs, have been responsible for the killing of even Dalai Lamas themselves—for some generations no Dalai Lama has lived to reach the age of 18, as Anna Louise Strong wrote in her article in New Age. They are the ones who have violated Tibet's religion and customs and when they

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ing declared that for a period of six years the Chinese Government would leave the task of undertaking reforms to the Tibetan Government itself. For any complete picture of the situation one should know what the Tibetan Government did or did not do in these three years. Peking has been alleging that the interval was utilised for organising an open rebellion in Tibet. There is an obvious gap in the Dalai Lama's statement between the time the negotiations with the Chinese authorities commenced and his flight from Lhasa and what happened in the interval would provide a clue as to who fired the first shot in the battle not for Lhasa but for the Dalai Lama himself."

Mysteries To Be Unravelling

Yet another aspect. Writes the Hindu Correspondent: "It is not clear why the Tibetans should have organised a demonstration against the Chinese if the Dalai Lama chose voluntarily to accept an invitation to attend a cultural performance at the Chinese headquarters." "These and other mysteries of the Tibetan scene remain to be unravelled," he concluded.

It is when one begins to unravel some of these mysteries with all the information that is available that one finds

that you do not come for the time being." (General Tan Kuan-san's letter of March 10)

● The Statement begins with expressing the strong desire of the Tibetan people for independence. "Sometimes the Chinese Government had imposed their suzerainty on Tibet and at other times Tibet has functioned as an independent country."

A Bit Of History

The Dalai Lama must be knowing Tibet's history much better than anyone of us. He must be knowing that the Dalai Lama who first became head of Tibet did so at an order from Peking.

He must be aware of the fact that Tibet has been one of China's administrative areas for over 700 years; that the fifth Dalai Lama, the first to enter the political arena was appointed head of Tibet by the Central Government in Peking during the reign of Emperor Kangsi (1662-1723) of the Ching dynasty; that the establishment of the Kasha—Local Government of Tibet—at the time of the Seventh Dalai Lama was authorised by the Central Government in Peking during the reign of Emperor Chien Lung (1711-1799) of the Ching dynasty; that the Kasha was then directly under the authority of

paratory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region.

He has said that the 17-article agreement was signed with the plenipotentiary delegates of the Central People's Government after "detailed discussions on an intimate and friendly basis which arrived at unanimous opinions satisfactory to both parties."

After this, it is too late in the day now to say that the agreement was signed "under pressure."

● The Tezpur Statement says: "In fact after the occupation of Tibet by the Chinese armies the Tibetan Government did not enjoy any measure of autonomy even in internal matters and the Chinese Government exercised full powers in Tibetan affairs."

And Its Implementation

Without bothering too much at the moment with the fact that the charge is familiar and that we have been hearing it in India quite often—even before the Tezpur Statement was made, let us examine its truth. And here it is necessary again to go into the question of the 17-article agreement and how it has been implemented.

Article 4, 5 and 6 guaranteed that "the Central authorities will not alter the exist-