

Past as Prologue : South Asia in China-India-US Strategic Competition

Abstract

Contemporary International Security Studies literature relating to geopolitical turbulence emanating from *systemic* transitional fluidity affecting Southern Asia highlights Sino-US competition, Sino-Indian rivalry and Indo-Pakistani adversarial tensions. While the current strategic landscape bears particular characteristics, its evolution is rooted in post-1945 *systemic* restructuring. In the ‘Indo-Pacific’, that rearrangement was shaped by three key developments: decolonisation of European empires and the Partition of British-India into successor states founded on the bases of mutually-inconsistent ideational rationales, *dominant-systemic* polarisation along a capitalist-vs.-communist diarchy, and the renaissance of China as both a communist and nationalist power seeking strategic autonomy within both the Soviet-led communist *bloc*, and the adversarial post-War geopolitical architecture being fashioned by the *superpowers*. Both India and Pakistan, often belying their declaratory policies, bandwagoned with external *protectors* with a view to advancing their conflicting interests. That pattern has recently been reinforced.

Triangular power-politics in a dynamic landscape

Security and economics, twin-pillars of interstate interactions, shape the strategic milieu. Positive resonance, reflecting strong security affiliations and extensive economic transactions, encourage alliances and strategic-partnerships. Negative resonance, with strong mutual insecurity mirroring poor economic intercourse, can presage conflict. Strong security affiliations can overcome negative economic exchanges, but mutual insecurity usually trumps strong economic relations. As each party seeks to improve its relative position, this last permutation is unstable. Britain and Germany faced this asymmetry-born fluidity before 1914. As suspicion and mistrust colour elite perceptions, fluidity generates anxious uncertainty. This is the landscape of strategic competition, in which each state-actor constantly acts to advance its own interests, by supplementing ‘internal-balancing’ with ‘external-balancing’, i.e., securing the support of others with a view to overcoming its rival’s ‘comprehensive power’. Such binary insecurity-driven relations are called *security complexes*.^[1] Examples: US-China, China-India, India-Pakistan and similarly competitive relational dynamics.

Post-Cold War *systemic* shifts transformed major-power dyads. After two decades of tacit anti-Soviet collusion, in 1999, America identified China as a ‘constant competitor’. China would ‘get old before getting rich’ while India enjoyed a ‘demographic dividend’. Southern India and the Malacca Strait would dominate Gulf-East Asian energy SLOCs; India would replace Russia as a central player. China sought ‘to undermine the US foothold’ across Asia; India-Japan cooperation offered balance. ‘China’s resurgence and belligerence prompts tacit US-India cooperation.’ Chinese control of Taiwan, Senkakus and the SCS would enable a ‘Chinese Monroe Doctrine.’ Given India’s potential, a Sino-Indian condominium would threaten US interests; Indo-US collusion would advance these.^[2] In 1999-2000 Washington sought a China-focused Indo-US partnership. Strobe Talbot-Jaswant Singh exchanges laid the foundation for collaboration. President Clinton’s 2000 visit was followed by the 2005-2008 Civil Nuclear Agreements tacitly granting non-NPT signatory India a Nuclear Weapons State-

¹ Buzan B, Rizvi G (Editors) (1986) South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers. Macmillan, London, pp4-32

² Under-Secretary of Defense-Policy (1999) Summer Study Final Report: Asia 20125. DoD, Washington, pp 32-37, 42-46, 53, 60, 72-73, 100, 126-140

status.^[3] Presidents Bush and Obama formalised defence technology-transfers, joint training, hardware sales and, in 2016, a basing agreement reviving India's status as an anti-China US ally.^[4]

Security complexes characterise China-India and US--China interactions. In contrast, since 2000, Indo-US relations have rapidly developed in mutual-security alignments. As each pole in a dyad seeks the support of allies to boost its confidence and erode its rival's, *strategic triangles* emerge.^[5] China-India-US relations have, as a result, become a *competitive strategic triangle*, with China confronting a tacit India-US front.

US pursuit of perpetually-extended post-Soviet *systemic primacy*, and Chinese determination to prevent its permanent subordination, precipitated *systemic transitional fluidity*. As the USA incorporated China's regional rivals Japan and India into a counter-China coalition, the China-India-US *strategic triangle* assumed salience within the competitive dynamic reshaping both Indo-Pacific *subsystemic*, and the global/*systemic* orders. Leaders and officials have forthrightly articulated conflicting perspectives. The Trump presidency and its predecessor, semantics aside, betray notable consistency on US-China rivalry:

Interesting how the US sells Taiwan billions of dollars of military equipment but I should not accept a congratulatory call.^[6] Donald Trump, December 2016

We're going to have to send China a clear signal that, first, the island-building stops; and second, your access to those islands also is not going to be allowed.^[7] Rex Tillerson, January 2017

We agree on the need for bold steps to lower tensions, including pledging to halt further reclamation, new construction and militarization of disputed areas in the South China Sea.^[8] Barack Obama, November 2015

Islands in the South China Sea, since ancient times, are China's territory. We have the right to uphold our own territorial sovereignty, and lawful and legitimate maritime rights and interests.^[9] Xi Jinping, September 2015

In contrast, following President Bill Clinton's 2000 visit to India, his successors rebuilt the early-Cold War era counter-China coalition with Prime Ministers AB Vajpayee, Manmohan Singh and now, Narendra Modi. Obama incorporated India into his 'Asian Rebalance':

The relationship between the United States and India, bound by our shared interests and our shared values, will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century. This is the partnership I've come here to build. We want India not only to 'look East', we want India to

³ DoS (2005) US-India Civilian Nuclear Cooperation. Washington, 22 July 2005; White House (2006) US and India: Strategic Partnership. New Delhi, 2 March 2006; White House (2006) The US-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act. Washington, 18 December 2006; DoS (2008) US-India Nuclear Cooperation Initiative: Bilateral Agreement on Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation. Washington, 10 October 2008

⁴ MoD (2016) India-US Joint Statement on the Visit of Secretary Carter to India. New Delhi, 13 April 2016; MoD (2016) India and the US Sign the Logistics Exchange MoA. Washington, 30 August 2016

⁵ Ali S (2017) US-Chinese Strategic Triangles: Examining Indo-Pacific Insecurity. Springer, Heidelberg (forthcoming), ch.1

⁶ Sevastopulo D, Dyer G (2016) Donald Trump risks China rift with Taiwan call. FT, 3 December 2016

⁷ Tillerson R (2017) Confirmation Hearing. DoS, Washington, 12 January 2017

⁸ Obama B (2015) Remarks to the media after meeting with President Benigno Aquino. White House, Manila, 18 November 2015

⁹ White House (2015) Remarks by President Obama and President Xi of the PRC in Joint Press Conference. Washington, 25 September 2015

'engage East', because it will increase the security and prosperity of all our nations.^[10] Barack Obama, November 2010

The US is an indispensable partner. A stronger and prosperous India is in America's strategic interest. Let us work together to convert shared ideals into practical cooperation. There can be no doubt that in advancing this relationship both nations stand to gain.^[11] Narendra Modi, June 2016

US-Indian and Sino-Indian relations were starkly different. Practitioners avoid discussing Sino-Indian rivalry, but recently-retired officials and academic analysts do not.^[12] Former Indian NSA Shivshankar Menon's observation that 'China is today a significant factor in every one of India's major relationships and most aspects of Indian policy'^[13] rationalised Delhi's drive to secure the Indian Ocean Region as its security-envelop from Chinese influence.^[14] Former Army commander, General Deepak Kapoor, explained:

In a world where nationalism is at the core of international relationships the possibility of confrontation is not only inherent but inbuilt. Unresolved boundary issues between the two further enhance this possibility...China's 'String of Pearls' policy, its strategic relationship with Pakistan, the extensive infrastructure development in Tibet, an increased footprint in the Indian Ocean and the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and its aid to fledgling insurgent movements in India are some of the irritants that are not conducive to good relations.^[15]

US analyses of China's growing will and ability to assert its interests resonate with Indian anxiety. India and America share interest in countering China's challenge to America's post-Cold War *systemic primacy*. Challenges from this 'near-peer-rival' to America's determined extension of its 'all-domains dominance' into the indefinite future was countered with military, diplomatic and economic pressure dubbed the 'Asian Pivot/Rebalance'. What China saw as its legitimate right was viewed by America as a profound threat to planetary order undergirded with US power. This contradiction was most clearly visible in the South China Sea (SCS). Indo-US security cooperation vis-à-vis China reflects and reinforces the fluidity triggered by state-actors' power-assets evolving, changing geospatial footprints, and resultant tensions between status quo-oriented forces and revisionist tendencies. Mismatch between aspiration and capacity, perceptual asymmetry, and the fog of coded signalling leading defensive measures being misread as aggressive ones, generate insecurity-driven dialectics, triggering spirals whose escalatory potential can turn a dialogue of the deaf into avoidable bloodbath.

South Asia in the *triangle*: Insecurity, deterrence and strategy

¹⁰ Obama B (2010) Remarks to the Joint Session of the Indian Parliament. White House, New Delhi, 8 November 2010

¹¹ Modi N (2016) Remarks to the Joint Session of the US Congress. PMO, Washington, 8 June 2016

¹² Rajagopalan R, Avuthu V (2016) Stage set for India-China strategic competition going underwater. ORF, New Delhi, 3 June 2016; Bitzinger R (2016) China vs India: The Great Asian Arms Contest the World Needs to Watch. NI, 9 May 2016; Markey D (2015) Armed Confrontation Between China and India. CFR, New York, November 2015; Ryan M (2012) India-China Strategic Competition. ADF Journal, No.188 (July/August 2012) pp 44-56; Wolf C et al (2011) China and India, 2025: A Comparative Assessment. RAND, Santa Monica; Editorial (2010) China and India: Contest of the century. Economist, 19 August 2010;

¹³ Menon S (2016) Inside the making of India's foreign policy. Brookings, Washington, 31 October 2016

¹⁴ Singh A (2015) Malabar 2015: Strategic Power-Play in the Indian Ocean. IDSA, New Delhi, 28 October 2015; Sakhuja V (2013) Gwadar: Can India Checkmate China? IPCS, New Delhi, 12 February 2013; Rehman I (2009) Keeping the Dragon at Bay: India's Counter-Containment of China in Asia. Asian Security, Vol.5, Iss.2, 2009

¹⁵ Kapoor D (2012) India's China Concern. Strategic Analysis, Vol.36, No.4, (July/August 2012), p663

China and India vie for regional support, building mirror-*triangles* in South Asia and Southeast Asia, widening and deepening their rivalry into a complex competition.^[16] Their strategic partners/protectors/client-states e.g., Nepal and Vietnam, may partly share the patron's concerns, but are driven primarily by their own interests and insecurities. That patron-client dissonance adds to fluidity. Recent Chinese regional has focused on economic incentives enhancing relations, often using the Belt-Road-Initiative (BRI) framework. Beijing has offered large volumes in aid, loans and investments:

- **India** September 2014: 5-year Trade and Economic Development Plan worth \$20bn (indicative GDP \$2.07trn)^[17]
- **Pakistan** April 2015: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) worth \$46bn (indicative GDP \$270bn)^[18]
- **Bangladesh** October 2016: Aid and investment (\$24.45bn+\$13.6bn) worth \$38.05bn (indicative GDP \$195bn)^[19]
- **Sri Lanka** 2005-2014: Infrastructure, trade and investment credit worth \$8.2bn (\$5bn in 2005-2012; indicative GDP \$82.32bn)^[20]
- **Nepal** 2014-2016: Annual aid of \$37.94m; post-quake reconstruction aid from 2015 worth \$483m (indicative GDP \$20.88bn)^[21]

Resource-flows paralleled political dynamics. China's President Xi Jinping, announcing his \$20bn gift in Delhi, noted, 'When China and India speak with one voice, the whole world will take notice.'^[22] That aspiration clashed with the reality as 500 Chinese border-guards faced 500 Indian troops in a stand-off on the disputed Ladakh-Tibet border.^[23] The boundary-dispute, reflecting and reinforcing Sino-Indian competition, triggered the original rivalry. Indian insecurity vis-à-vis Chinese commercial activities identified 'security threats' to the Indian power-grid by Chinese equipment installed in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, and three national-grid transmission links.^[24] This anxiety resonated with US encouragement to jointly challenge China in the maritime domain.^[25] Delhi despatched a flotilla on its first operational sortie across the contested SCS and Western Pacific on a ten-week voyage. Indian warships visited Vietnamese, Filipino, Japanese, South Korean, Russian and Malaysian bases, drilled with counterparts, and teamed up with US and Japanese flotillas

¹⁶ Bhadrakumar M (2016) Chinese naval ships at Gwadar port call for a rethink of India's regional policy. Dawn, 28 November 2016; MEA (2016) Joint Statement between India and Vietnam during visit of Prime Minister to Vietnam. Hanoi/Delhi, 3 September 2016; Chowdhury D (2016) China scores as Nepal plays hardball with India over border 'blockade'. SCMP, 6 January 2016';

¹⁷ Mehrotra K, Krishnan U (2014), Modi Wins \$20bn Pledge From Xi Amid Border Flare-UP. Bloomberg, 18 September 2014

¹⁸ Haider M (2015) Bracing for a \$46bn future. Dawn, 22 April 2015

¹⁹ Hossain M (2016) How huge China investment in Bangladesh affects region. Andalou Agency, Kuala Lumpur, 10 November 2016

²⁰ Smith J (2016) China and Sri Lanka: Between a Dream and a Nightmare. Beijing, 18 November 2016

²¹ Xinhua (2015) China donates \$483mn to Nepal for post-quake rehabilitation, reconstruction. Kathmandu, 25 June 2015; Xinhua (2015) China to provide \$10m for Nepal's reconstruction. Kathmandu, 15 July 2015; PTI (2016) India's aid to Nepal dwindles, China now among major donors. Kathmandu, 25 April 2016

²² Mehrotra K, Krishnan U (2014), Modi Wins \$20bn Pledge From Xi Amid Border Flare-UP. Bloomberg, 18 September 2014

²³ Mehrotra K, Krishnan U (2014), Modi Wins \$20bn Pledge From Xi Amid Border Flare-UP. Bloomberg, 18 September 2014

²⁴ Dutta S (2017) Chinese Entry into power sector raises security fears. Tol, 21 January 2017

²⁵ Adm. Harry Harris (2016) Raisina Dialogue Remarks: Let's Be Ambitious Together. PACOM, New Delhi, 2 March 2016

in *Malabar* drills near China's shores.^[26] In contrast, India's South Asian neighbours cultivated friendly relations with China irrespective of their bilateral ties to India.^[27]:

Afghanistan: *China is a trustworthy and good friend of Afghanistan. The Afghan side thanks China for its long-term assistance and its support to the peaceful reconciliation process and national reconstruction in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is willing to enhance cooperation with China in such areas as economy and trade, infrastructure, security and human resource development. Afghanistan hopes to join the AIIB, and...the BRI.*^[28] President Ashraf Ghani, June 2016

Pakistan: *The Pakistani people had been looking forward to President Xi Jinping's visit and congratulate on the fruitful achievements accomplished by his visit and thank China for its constant valuable support to Pakistan in multiple fields. Pakistan firmly pursues the One China policy, and staunchly backs the stance of the Chinese government on issues concerning China's core interests as well as China's efforts in safeguarding national security and fighting against terrorism.*^[29] President Mamnoon Hussain, April 2015

Nepal: *Nepal and China are good friends and reliable partners sharing exceptionally warm and cordial relations through ages. No amount of words, however powerful, can truly describe the goodwill that we nurture towards each other and the esteem in which we hold each other.*^[30] Prime Minister KP Oli, March 2016

Sri Lanka: *When we travel across Colombo as well as around the country we can see many development projects funded by the government of China. I expect the continuous assistance of the government of China to the Sri Lankan government in the future too in achieving the development goals of the country. Sri Lanka expects the fullest cooperation from China to overcome the challenge of poverty in the country.*^[31] President Maithripala Sirisena, October 2015

Bangladesh-China-India dynamics

Bangladesh, considered India's close regional partner, sought to break out of zero-sum partisanship. Prime Minister Hasina, awaiting President Xi Jinping's arrival, stressed the economic foundations of Sino-Bangladeshi convergence: *China has become our largest trading partner and we consider China as a trusted partner in realizing our dreams, too. China is the leading generator of our many mega-projects in terms of finance, capitalization and technology. We are planning to elevate the relationship to a newer height with the much-awaited visit of President Xi Jinping.*^[32]

²⁶ MoD (2016) Eastern Fleet Ships on deployment to South China and North-West Pacific. New Delhi, 9 February 2017

²⁷ Ali M (2015) Peripheral South Asian response to the growth of Chinese power. In Li M, Kemburi K (Editors) *China's Power and Asian Security*. Routledge, Abingdon, pp 111-138

²⁸ FMPRC (2016) Xi Jinping Meets with President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan. Beijing, 24 June 2016

²⁹ FMPRC (2015) Xi Jinping Meets with Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain. Islamabad, 21 April 2015

³⁰ MoFA (2016) Remarks by Rt. Hon. Prime Minister of Nepal to the Business Community. Beijing, 22 March 2016

³¹ President of Sri Lanka (2015) President thanks China for continuous assistance to Sri Lanka. Colombo, 20 October 2015

³² Liu Chuntao (2016) Bangladesh PM says Chinese president's visit to usher in new era in bilateral cooperation. Xinhua, Dhaka, 12 October 2016

President Xi, justifying Hasina's optimism, responded with similar sentiments: *Bangladesh, with its favourable geographic location and huge population, market-potential and cooperation space, is an indispensable partner for China to advance the BRI and production capacity cooperation in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region.*^[33] Bangladesh charted a course designed to defend its interests by building its economy and gradually modernizing its defensive capabilities. Although the bulk of its combat-hardware procured over the past four decades came from China, Dhaka maintained intimate relations with Delhi, displaying sensitivity towards India's concerns.^[34] Bangladesh responded positively to Indian efforts to boost bilateral military ties, underscoring triangular dynamics.^[35] Domestic political polarisation and turbulence notwithstanding, Dhaka and Beijing maintained positive relations with two key characteristics sustained over four decades: China became the pre-eminent source of defensive *materiel* for Bangladeshi armed services since the late 1970s; Beijing undertook major Bangladeshi infrastructure projects since the mid-1980s. The current administration raised intimacy to a new level as Prime Minister Hasina revealed in 2011:

Last year, during my visit to China, I requested the Chinese Government to present two frigates with helicopters to the Bangladesh Navy. The Government of China agreed...Meanwhile, two ultra-modern missile-armed large patrol craft are being built in China.^[36]

Few leaders have felt able to openly make such requests to foreign counterparts. Prime Minister Hasina and her predecessors built on the foundation laid by President Ziaur Rahman during his 1977 visit after effecting a shift in diplomatic focus from the Indo-Soviet alliance towards the USA, Muslim states and China. Ties were cemented in 1978 when Vice-Premier Li Xiannian and Foreign Minister Huang Hua visited Dhaka, offering \$58.3m in aid and a five-year trade agreement.^[37] By 1980, when Zia made his third trip to China, it had become the principal source of ordnance.^[38] President HM Ershad's repeated visits, Beijing's offer of infrastructure-assistance, and *materiel*-provision, deepened cooperation. Relations ranged between friendly and correct until Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's May 2004 visit to Beijing. In April 2005, Premier Wen Jiabao announced an 'all-round cooperative partnership' in Dhaka.^[39] Later, reopening the Nathu-La trade route with India, China hoped Bangladesh would benefit by using its Burimari land-port.^[40] In 2006, China expanded its Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement to include Bangladesh.^[41] Bangladesh began exporting ready-made garments to China, its largest import-source. Dhaka received counter-terrorism assistance, satellite-imagery receivers, agro-advisers and ordnance. As the Chair of SAARC, Dhaka welcomed Beijing as an observer. China increased post-graduate scholarships; began building a \$400m digital telecom network Zia requested in 2004; ministers signed an MoU on Bangladesh-Myanmar-China road-

³³ Xi J (2016) China-Bangladesh Cooperation Will Bear Golden Fruits. Daily Star, 14 October 2016

³⁴ Rahman M (2014) China biggest weapons supplier to Bangladesh. Gulf Times, 19 March 2014; MEA (2014) India-Bangladesh Relations. New Delhi, July 2014; UNB (2015) Dhaka, Delhi ties at its best, says spokesperson of India. Daily Star, 28 March 2015; UNB (2016) 'Dhaka-Delhi ties becoming multidimensional'. Financial Express, 19 June 2016

³⁵ UNB (2016) Delhi for joint effort to boost military ties with Dhaka. Daily Star, 1 December 2016

³⁶ PMO (2011) Address on the occasion of the commissioning of BNS Dhaleswari and BNS Bijoy. Khulna, 5 March 2011

³⁷ Halim M, Kamal A (1996) Foreign Affairs, in Zafaralluha H (Editor) The Zia Episode in Bangladesh Politics. South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, p 135; Mohammad H (2008) Foreign Policy under Ziaur Rahman. Daily Star, 31 May 2008

³⁸ Ali S (2010) Understanding Bangladesh. Columbia University Press, New York, p 133

³⁹ Luan S (2006) Chinese, Bangladeshi FMs hold talks. Xinhua, Beijing, 6 June 2006

⁴⁰ Zhu L (2005) New corridor opens to boost Sino-Bangladesh trade. Xinhua, Beijing, 17 November 2005

⁴¹ Luan S (2006) Tariff cuts on imports from 5 Asian nations. Xinhua, Beijing, 18 August 2006

connectivity.^[42] Security ties evolved. In 2007-08, faced with maritime disputes with Myanmar, Dhaka sought Beijing's intercession, restoring calm.^[43] As noted, Hasina's 2010 visit to China, following one to India, stressed defence-cooperation. In early 2013, she announced planned procurement of several naval-platforms, including two submarines, from 'a friendly country'.^[44] Beijing revealed offers to build a \$5bn deep-sea port on Sonadia Island, and a \$700m road-tunnel under Karnaphuli River to boost Chittagong's transport capacity. To allay Indian, US and Japanese anxiety, China proposed a consortium with them.^[45] Given widespread 'string-of-pearls' concerns, the former did not materialise but in late-2016, Dhaka contracted two Chinese firms to build two of 19 components of the Payra Deep-sea Port in Patuakhali, with plans to complete all 19 by 2023.^[46] Indian MoD's 'deep-draughted' naval-base project at Sagar Island was not coincidental.^[47] The commissioning of BN's two Ming-class submarines triggered profound anxiety, underscoring China-India rivalry, and Bangladesh's efforts to strike a balance between the two. Indian Naval officers and strategic-analysts were outraged that Bangladesh seemingly questioned Indian pre-eminence by procuring Chinese submarines:

- **Admiral Arun Prakash, ex-Chief of Naval Staff:** 'Given Bangladesh's economic situation and the fact that it is surrounded on three sides by India, the acquisition of submarines is not only illogical but actually an act of provocation as far as India is concerned. Obviously this transfer is a step further in China's strategy of encircling India with its client-states.'^[48]
- **Security analyst:** 'Bangladesh procuring the submarines from China has been an issue of scepticism for the security analysts in India. After Xi's visit, the scepticism has further deepened, particularly, with China and Bangladesh elevating their relationship to a strategic partnership.'^[49]
- **Security analyst:** 'The recent acquisition of Chinese submarines does create a potential 'situation' which could very well be a source of future turbulence for India, Bangladesh and Myanmar owing to the proxy-presence of Chinese ideas, money and hardware. Suddenly, the eastern flank of India has become live.'^[50]
- **Senior Indian Navy officer:** 'Why would Bangladesh need submarines? This decision by the government there is a matter of concern for us. We also suspect that Chinese submarines are sneaking into Indian territorial waters in the Bay of Bengal region, though none has been detected yet. This is reason enough for greater naval presence in the region.'^[51]

Indian disappointment that Delhi helped Bangladesh secure its independence and Beijing opposed it, but Dhaka appears to be switching sides, ignored Delhi's own shift vis-à-vis the USA in joint opposition to China, and the fact that as a secondary actor, Bangladesh seeks to

⁴² Luan S (2006) China, Bangladesh, Myanmar agree on road-connectivity. Xinhua, Beijing, 31 July 2006

⁴³ Ali S (2010), pp 266-267

⁴⁴ Report (2013) Bangladesh Navy to get 2 submarines. Asian Defence. 1 March 2013

⁴⁵ Azad M, Tusher H (2012) Deep Sea Port: China offers to build it, fund it. Daily Star, 28 September 2012

⁴⁶ Mamun S (2016) Bangladesh signs MoU with China on Payra Deep-sea Port Construction. Dhaka Tribune, 9 December 2016

⁴⁷ Jha S (2016) The Bay of Bengal Naval Arms Race. Diplomat, 30 December 2016

⁴⁸ Raghuvanshi V (2016) Purchase of Chinese Subs by Bangladesh 'An Act of Provocation' Toward India. Defense News, 23 November 2016

⁴⁹ Bhattacharjee J (2016) Should China Cozying Up To Bangladesh Worry India? Outlook India, 20 October 2016

⁵⁰ Bhattacharya A (2016) Chinese subs for Dhaka: A new worry. Asian Age, 3 December 2016

⁵¹ Gupta J (2013) Indian Navy concerned over Bangladesh's decision to buy two submarines from China. Tol, 2 December 2013

maintain greatpower-balance essential to its developmental goals and strategic autonomy. This quandary underscores the challenge to Bangladeshi diplomacy posed by Sino-Indian rivalry.

Recycled history

In the 1950s, Beijing developed relations with Bengali leaders HS Suhrawardi and Maulana Bhashani. In October 1956, Suhrawardi, as Pakistan's Prime Minister, paid an official visit to China. Given Pakistan's anti-Communist military alliance with the USA, this was a declaration of independence, initiating Pakistani, and later Bangladeshi, fraternal approaches vis-à-vis China. In December 1956, Premier Zhou Enlai visited Karachi and Dhaka as Suhrawardi's guest. Zhou made two visits to Dhaka. Bhashani, never in government, carried sufficient weight in CPC circles to be granted, during one of his visits, a meeting with the last Qing Emperor, Pu Yi, then helping historical research for the People's Consultative Committee, as a special honour. Bhashani also received Zhou during his visits to Dhaka.

Sino-Soviet schism divided Bengali Leftists along pro-Beijing and pro-Moscow cleavages. This polarisation continued into 1971, when the Indo-Soviet alliance faced a Sino-US front, respectively supporting Bangladeshis and Pakistanis in a proxy-conflict.^[52] This was a dramatic shift for Delhi which, since 5th July 1947, had aligned with Washington against Chinese Communists by offering seven air-bases for US combat-aircraft operating in support of the *Kuomintang* (KMT)-led Republic of China (RoC) against Mao Zedong's Red Army. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's India led the non-aligned movement (NAM) of post-colonial states refusing to join the US-led 'first world' or the Soviet-led 'second world'. They sought strategic autonomy in advancing self-interest. Nehru coined 'non-alignment' in a 1954 address in Colombo.^[53] Cold War historiography claimed India, Egypt, Yugoslavia and Indonesia led the NAM camp, and Delhi remained non-aligned until becoming Moscow's ally in 1971.^[54] Nehru's parliamentary interventions and correspondence with State Chief Ministers over his 17-year reign as India's Prime- and Foreign Minister reinforced this postulate. His 1952 remarks during a foreign-policy debate:

So far as policy is concerned, in spite of the fact that we deal largely with the UK and the US – we buy our things from them and we have accepted help from them – we have not swerved at all from our policy of non-alignment with any group. We stuck to our policy even though we had to deny ourselves the offered help. That is why other countries realize that we cannot be bought by (sic) money...we shall continue to accept help provided there are no strings attached to it and provided our policy is perfectly clear and above board and is not affected by the help we accept...There have been times when one word from us would have brought us many of the good things of life. We preferred not to give that word. If at any time help from abroad depends

⁵² Singh S (2013) Interview with Ambassador Intikhar-ul-Karim. Dhaka, 2 March 2013.

<http://politics.ntu.edu.tw/RAEC/comm2/InterviewB02.pdf> Accessed 23 December 2016

⁵³ TNN (2006) 'Non-alignment' was coined by Nehru in 1954. *ToI*, 18 September 2006

⁵⁴ Mallik D (1967) *The Development of Non-alignment in India's Foreign Policy*. Chaitanya, Allahabad, pp 79-267; Rajan M (1970) *Non-alignment: India and the future*. Prasaranga, Mysore, pp 35-98; MEA (1983) *Two decades of non-alignment: documents of the gatherings of the non-aligned countries, 1961-1982*. New Delhi, pp 221-458; Gopalan S (1984) *India and Non-alignment: A Study of 1962 Sino-Indian Conflict*. Spick & Span, New Delhi; Pande D (1988) *India's Foreign Policy as an Exercise in Non-alignment: Nehru-Indira Period, 1946-1976*. Gyanodaya Prakashan, Nainital, pp 341-347; Hewitt V (1992) *The International Politics of South Asia*. Manchester University, Manchester, pp 57-66; Jayapalan N (2001) *Foreign Policy of India*. Atlantic, New Delhi, pp 29-43; Chary S (1995) *The Eagle and the Peacock: US Foreign Policy Toward India Since Independence*. Greenwood, Westport, pp 5-6, 57-62

upon a variation, howsoever slight, in our policy, we shall relinquish that help completely and prefer starvation and privation to taking such help.^[55]

Records show Delhi forged a tacit anti-PRC alliance with America lasting into the early-1970s, when Richard Nixon reversed US policy. In early July 1947, Nehru granted base-facilities to US military aircraft and personnel operating against CPC forces across south-western China. Communist victory in October 1949 and occupation of Tibet in 1950 challenged both America and India. India's Intelligence Bureau (IB), whose Director, BN Mullik, took orders from Nehru, jointly with the CIA, mounted covert proxy-campaigns aimed at 'bleeding' the PLA in Tibet by recruiting, training, arming and supervising Khampa and Amdowa highlander-rebels. Their failed 1959 insurrection in Lhasa forced the young Dalai Lama to flee to India with pro-independence Tibetans. Continued CIA-IB-aided insurgency, and supportive Indian military moves across the disputed, British-imposed, McMahon Line border, triggered China's 1962 punitive expedition, inflicting a trauma defining Delhi's China perspective since.^[56] Indo-US collusion established geostrategic parameters and precedents. On 1 July 1947, US Ambassador Henry Grady wrote to Nehru, then 'Indian member for External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations' in the Executive Council, and prime minister-presumptive, asking to 'temporarily' station US personnel and aircraft at Maripur (Karachi), Agra, Delhi, and Barrackpore/Kharagpore. Aircraft arriving from the West would land in Karachi; those from the east, at either Barrackpore or Kharagpore. Agra was the 'intermediate staging-point'; Palam (Delhi) was for night-landings. When it became a civilian airport, an alternative would be named; 'in an emergency, US military aircraft would be able to land anywhere in India.'^[57] Nehru's acceptance on 5 July comprised the first basing-agreement, to be revised and renewed via subsequent notes, deepened collaboration.^[58] China's 1950 occupation of eastern Tibet with an 80,000-strong force, swiftly overcoming resistance, deeply troubled India and America.

Dalai Lama acquiesced in the occupation,^[59] but his regency, especially Lord Chamberlain Phala Thubten Wonden, secretly challenged it. Using Minister Tsipon Shakabpa and the Pontiff's eldest brother Thubten Norbu (an incarnate-lama named Taktser Rinpoche), both based in India, they contacted US and Indian officials. Initially unaware, and fearful of Chinese

⁵⁵ Nehru J (1952) Statement in the Lower House of Parliament. New Delhi, 12 June 1952, in Gol (1952) Lok Sabha Debates. Vol.II, Part II, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, Colms.1668-1669

⁵⁶ Ali S (1999) Cold War in the High Himalayas. St. Martin's Press, New York, pp 1-168; Pardesi M (2012) The Legacy of 1962 and China's India Policy. Journal of Defence Studies and Analyses. Vol.6, No.4, (October 2012), 189-206; Tharoor I (2012) The Sino-Indian War: 50 Years Later, Will India and China Clash Again? Time, 21 October 2012

⁵⁷ AmEmbassy (1947) Grady to Nehru: Temporary stationing of American personnel to service US aircraft. New Delhi, 1 July 1947

⁵⁸ MEA (1947) Nehru to Grady: Temporary stationing of American personnel to service US aircraft. New Delhi, 5 July 1947; AmEmbassy (1947) Grady to Nehru: Temporary stationing of American personnel to service US aircraft. New Delhi, 24 September 1947; MEA (1948) Nehru to Grady: Temporary stationing of American personnel to service US aircraft. 22 April 1948; AmEmbassy (1948) Charge' d'Affaires ad interim to the Minister for External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations: Temporary stationing of American personnel to service US aircraft. New Delhi, 3 May 1948; AmEmbassy (1949) Henderson to Nehru: Agreement between the Government of the USA and the Government of India. New Delhi, 2 July 1949; MEA (1949) Menon to Henderson: Agreement between the Government of the USA and the Government of India. New Delhi, 4 July 1949; AmEmbassy (1958) Brown to Nehru: Agreement Between the USA and India for Assurances Regarding Mutual Defense Assistance. New Delhi, 16 April 1958; MEA (1958) Dutt to Bunker: Agreement Between the USA and India for Assurances Regarding Mutual Defense Assistance. New Delhi, 17 December 1958

⁵⁹ Dalai Lama, undated. Birth to Exile. <http://www.dalailama.com/biography/from-birth-to-exile> Accessed 1 August 2016

reaction to Tibetan resistance, in February 1951, Dalai Lama despatched a 15-member delegation to Beijing to negotiate Sino-Tibetan relations. Talks began on 29 April. After several weeks, Beijing presented a 17-point draft formalising the PLA's entry into Tibet, Chinese control over Tibetan foreign-and-defence policies, maintaining Tibet's religio-feudal traditions including the status of Dalai- and Panchen Lamas, but integrating Tibet into the PRC.^[60] Beijing broadcast the treaty's provisions on 27 May, distressing Dalai, who had fled to Dromo near the Indian border. Anxious to prevent consolidation of Chinese control, Ambassador Loy Henderson warned Dalai against dealing with 'the Chinese Communists'. Receiving no reply, and on Secretary of State Dean Acheson's response to Shakabpa's pleas for aid,^[61] Henderson wrote again in July 1951, urging Dalai to repudiate any Sino-Tibetan accord: 'tell India what you now want to do and persuade India to help you or permit other countries to help you.' Delhi's acquiescence notwithstanding, 'we know many Indians are fearful of the Communists near India.' America would endorse Dalai's rejection of deals with 'Peiping', and support him at the UN. Dalai should flee to India 'because then you will be closer to Tibet and will be able to organize its resistance to the Chinese Communists.'^[62]

If India, Thailand or Ceylon refused asylum, Dalai could 'come to our country with some of your followers. If you leave Tibet and if you organize resistance to the Chinese Communists, we are prepared to send you light arms through India. We think, however, that you should first ask India for arms and, if they cannot give to you, ask India for permission for other countries to send them through India. If you are able to organize resistance within Tibet, we will also give consideration to supplying you with loans of money to keep up the resistance, spirit and morale of the Tibetan people.'^[63] Advising Dalai he had granted a visa to Taktser Rinpoche for higher studies, Henderson asked him to send his reply with an emissary. However, General Zhang Jingwu, a treaty-negotiator and now the PLA commander in Tibet, met Dalai in Dromo, assuring him of Beijing's pacific intent. Dalai returned to Lhasa. In late 1951, on legislative advice, Dalai ratified the 17-point Agreement and Tibet's annexation.

Delhi had recognised the PRC on 1 January 1950, but Beijing's refutation of the British-imposed Himalayan borders and India's military-commercial privileges in Tibet deepened Indian anxiety. After US-Pakistani 'anti-communist' negotiations began, India requested US military assistance. Delhi sought US gear needed for high-intensity combat. Washington stipulated military aid 'will further the ability of nations dedicated to the principles and purposes of the (UN) Charter to participate effectively in arrangements for individual and collective self-defense in support of those purposes and principles.'^[64] Ambassador VL Pandit in Washington confirmed acceptance, beginning the first US military supplies to India.^[65] These comprised 200 M4 *Sherman* tanks equipping an armoured division to fight Pakistan, 75 C-119G *Packet* transport-aircraft equipping three squadrons, three squadrons of C-47 *Dakotas*, and a squadron of *Caribou* transports. Twenty-two of the *Packets* carried dorsal-mounted jet-

⁶⁰ Central People's Government (1951) Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet. Beijing, 27 May 1951

⁶¹ DoS (1951) Acheson to Henderson: Tibet. Washington, 2 June 1951

⁶² AmEmbassy (1951) Henderson (unsigned) to Dalai Lama. New Delhi, July 1951

⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ DoS (1951) Webb to Pandit: Agreement Between the USA and India Relating to Mutual Defense Assistance. Washington, 7 March 1951

⁶⁵ Embassy of India (1951) Pandit to Webb: Agreement Between the USA and India Relating to Mutual Defense Assistance. Washington, 16 March 1951

packs for Himalayan operations, including lifting AMX-13 light-tanks to Ladakh.^[66] America provided training, spares, servicing, maintenance and repairs. The CIA flew Taktser Rinpoche to Washington, where Assistant Secretary of State John Allison debriefed him. Taktser brought an unsigned letter from Dalai saying he saw no indication that Beijing planned to change Tibet, and ‘it is best to treat them that way.’ Allison ‘understood’ Dalai Lama must adjust ‘temporarily’ to Chinese force, but asked how America could help. Taktser said it was ‘important that the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people can continue to hope that “something” could be done “afterwards”.’ Now, he sought Tibet’s ‘low-profile’ treatment,^[67] supporting resistance without forcing Beijing to respond violently.

In March 1952, Nehru authorised Mullik to initiate ‘intelligence activities in Tibet and China,’ letting Tibetan-exiles mount operations from India, ignoring Beijing’s protests. India needed time to build its own forces.^[68] As Tibetan animosity towards PLA troops grew, armed clashes and food-shortages became frequent in Lhasa. In May, using Taktser’s debriefing, DoS, CIA and G2 (Military intelligence) framed a policy-outline: ‘there seems to be in operation a cleverly conceived covert plan to encourage hostility towards the Chinese forces...from the standpoint of US interests, developments in Tibet are moving in the right direction and are producing a desirable effect upon the GoI.’ Endorsing ‘incipient Tibetan resistance’, the group stressed ‘avoidance of any public comment or communication with those thought to be organizing resistance.’^[69] Dalai Lama’s report on Lhasa’s deteriorating situation reached Washington in July.^[70] In September, the Kolkata-based Consul-General met Gyalo Thondup, Dalai’s other brother, in Darjeeling. Thondup explained Dalai’s reforms counteracting Chinese-imposed revolutionary changes.^[71] Using family-links to Taipei, Thondup secured KMT aid for the resistance. However, after Beijing punished downed US pilots and captured CIA-paratroopers in 1951-52, operators became cautious. To prevent escalation of RoC raids on the PRC, Washington demanded prior-notification.^[72] India’s Ambassador in Beijing, KM Panikkar, was instructed to gather information on US PoWs. In September 1952, Panikkar was debriefed by a US diplomat in Delhi. Acting Secretary David Bruce urged India to ‘present humanitarian appeal’ to Beijing on US prisoners.^[73] IB officers at Kalimpong and Darjeeling recruited Tibetan ‘watchers’ to monitor PLA movements. Khampa and Amdowa highland-guerrillas, fighting the PLA since 1950, were networked, and given ordnance- and medical support.^[74] Dechen monastery lamas mediated an Amdowa-PLA truce, but in 1953, the PLA resumed ‘denunciations, struggles, arrests and executions’ of dissidents, and fighting resumed. Under Eisenhower, Washington assumed control of covert operations. The IB and CIA established contacts, communications and influence across un-delimited Himalayan frontiers. Later, Pakistan’s Inter-Service Intelligence Directorate (ISI) helped.

⁶⁶ Subramanyam K (2005) Arms and Politics. Strategic Analysis. Vol.29, No.1, January 2005; Green W (1982) The IAF and its aircraft. Ducimus, London, p 10; MoD (2013) Fairchild C-119 Packet. New Delhi, 12 November 2013

⁶⁷ National Archives (1985) FRUS 1952-1954. USGPO, Washington, Vol.XIV, Part 1, pp 8-10

⁶⁸ Mullik B (1971) My Years with Nehru: The Chinese Betrayal. Allied, New Delhi, pp 178-183

⁶⁹ DoS (1952) Memorandum No.611.93B/5-1452. Washington, 14 May 1952

⁷⁰ AmConGen (1952) Telegram No.793B.00/7-152 to DoS. Calcutta, 1 July 1952

⁷¹ AmConGen (1952) Telegram No.793B.11/9-1052 to DoS. Calcutta, 10 September 1952

⁷² AmEmbassy (1953) Hones to Dulles. No.611.90/6-1853. Taipei, 18 June 1953

⁷³ DoS (1952) Bruce to Bowles. No.293.1111/11-752. Washington, 7 November 1952

⁷⁴ AmConGen (1952) No.793B.00/7-152 to DoS. Calcutta, 1 July 1952; *ibid* (1952) No.793B.11/9-1050 to DoS. Calcutta, 10 September 1952

Eisenhower associated China policy with India's potential role. The post-Korean Armistice goal was: 'Continue to exert political and economic pressures against Communist China including unconventional and covert pressures, at least until settlements satisfactory to the US can be achieved in the areas around Communist China.'^[75] Vice-President Nixon dissented. After touring East Asia in November-December 1953, Nixon reported that China was 'here to stay'. He recommended normalisation of relations and China's *systemic* integration. Nixon's recommendations elicited little enthusiasm.^[76] Insecure and defensive, Beijing took a hardline in Tibet. Building up strength during the truce, PLA forces decimated the resistance. However, resistance sprang up elsewhere. The NSC sought to 'utilize all feasible overt and covert means...to create discontent and internal divisions within each of the Communist-dominated areas of the Far East, and to impair their relations with the Soviet Union.'^[77] America, Taiwan and India coordinated trans-Himalayan covert actions. Nonetheless, in 1954, Nehru acknowledged Chinese sovereignty in Tibet, surrendered privileges there, condemned US-Pakistan and US-Taiwan alliances, visited both Washington and Beijing, and reinforced anti-Chinese collusion with America.

Sanguinary linkages

Washington, driven to 'contain' communist 'expansionism' by NSC-68^[78], forged alliances. Indian collaboration was a major prize. Soviet 'threats' to West Asia-Middle East encouraged Pakistan's induction. Existentially fearful of India, Pakistan fashioned close patron-client ties to America. Washington signed similar accords with Delhi and Karachi, helping with defence, education, technical-training, agriculture, export-credit and trade-concessions. Symmetrical treatment did not alleviate Indo-Pakistani insecurity. After their 1947-48 Kashmir War, the neighbours deployed forces along borders in 1950-52. Under US pressure, the leaders exchanged letters on breaking the Kashmir deadlock in 1953. By December, they agreed to hold a plebiscite on Kashmir's final status although challenges persisted.^[79] Resolving core disputes dividing America's South Asian clients could reinforce containment-efforts. But America's alliance with Turkey and Pakistan outraged India.

Nehru complained: 'any such pact between Pakistan and the USA meant the alignment of Pakistan, both in regard to its foreign and defence policy, with a particular bloc of nations. So far as India is concerned, it has been our consistent policy to avoid any such alignment...in view of the developments that appear to be taking place, Pakistan's foreign and defence policies will become dramatically opposed to the policies we have so consistently and earnestly pursued.'^[80] Ignoring Indo-US agreements, Nehru reneged on the UN-proposed Kashmir-plebiscite. His *volte face* perpetuated the Kashmir dispute. Eisenhower urged Nehru: 'I send you this personal message because I want you to know about my decision to extend military aid to Pakistan before it is public knowledge and also because I want you to know directly from me that this step does not in any way affect the friendship we feel for India. Quite the contrary.' Explaining the US-Turkey-Pakistan alliance's Middle-Eastern focus, Eisenhower pledged that

⁷⁵ NSC (1953) Statement of Policy. Washington, 6 November 1953

⁷⁶ Gleason S (1953) Memorandum of Discussion at the 177th Meeting of the NSC. Washington, 23 December 1953

⁷⁷ NSC (1954) Policy Proposal NSC 5429/4. Washington, 10 December 1954

⁷⁸ Lay J (1950) NSC68: A Report to the NSC by the Executive Secretary. Washington, 14 April 1950

⁷⁹ MEA (1954) Kashmir: Meetings and Correspondence between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, July 1953-October 1954. New Delhi, pp 26-44

⁸⁰ MEA (1954) Nehru to Ali, New Delhi, 9 December 1953, in Kashmir: Meetings and Correspondence between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, July 1953-October 1954, pp 44-46

if Pakistan used US arms against India, he would ‘undertake immediately, in accordance with my constitutional authority, appropriate action...to thwart such aggression’. Without reminding Nehru of Indo-US military-intelligence collusion, he pledged ‘most sympathetic consideration’, if Nehru sought fresh military aid.^[81]

Nehru told Ambassador George Allen, ‘I have never at any moment...had any thought whatsoever that US government, and least of all President Eisenhower, wished to do any damage to India.’ He said US arms to Pakistan encouraged India’s ‘Muslim extremists’ to think ‘it might lead to renewal of Muslim domination of India.’ This ‘in turn aroused Hindu extremists who were demanding all sorts of military preparations by India.’^[82] Although welcoming US pledges to defend India, Nehru refused to relent.^[83] He told legislators, ‘This grant of military aid by the US to Pakistan creates a grave situation for us in India and Asia. It adds to our tensions. It makes it much more difficult to solve the problems which have confronted India and Pakistan.’^[84] Delhi sent feelers to Beijing on forging a *modus vivendi* over Tibet. Nehru’s envoys negotiated on traditional border-trade, and reciprocal flows of Hindu pilgrims to Tibet’s Mt. *Kailash* and Lake *Manosarwar*, and Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims to *Bodhgaya* and other Indian shrines. The April 1954 agreement reversed Indian dominance imposed by the 1904 Younghusband expedition, formalising Tibet’s status as a Chinese province, restricting Indo-Tibetan links to culture and commerce.^[85] Its preamble enumerated the principles of Sino-Indian relations, later adapted into the 1955 Bandung Declaration:^[86]

- Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty
- Mutual non-aggression
- Mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs
- Equality and mutual benefit
- Peaceful co-existence

Beijing offered accommodation for Indian pilgrims in Tibet; Delhi withdrew its garrisons, transferred military-communications and postal facilities for ‘reasonable compensation’, and surrendered extra-territorial rights. Retaining trade-bureaux in Tibet, India invited China to open reciprocal offices. Acknowledging Tibet’s status, Delhi agreed to negotiate treaty-implementation only with Beijing.^[87] India’s alleged violations of these treaty-commitments darkened border-dispute dynamics. ‘Godless communist’ threats to Tibet’s region-feudal power structure, landowning rights and traditions united faith, politics, economics and culture, catalysing resistance to PLA-led ‘liberation’. When shortages of necessities dislocated a barter-based economy, outrage bereft of overarching nationalist-ideals exploded. Uncoordinated resistance by Khampa, Amdowa and Golok guerrillas, and PLA-rebel power-differentials favoured Beijing. Feared loss, combative spirit and local knowledge aided the guerrillas.

⁸¹ White House (1954) Eisenhower to Nehru. Washington, 24 February 1954

⁸² AmEmbassy (1954) Allen to Dulles: Meeting with Prime Minister Nehru. New Delhi, 24 February 1954

⁸³ PMO (1954) Nehru to Eisenhower. New Delhi, 28 February 1954

⁸⁴ Nehru J (1954) Statement in the Lower House of Parliament. Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, 1 March 1954

⁸⁵ Raghavan N, Chang H (1954) Agreement between the GoI and the Central People’s Government of China on trade and cultural relations between India and the Tibet region of China. MEA/MoFA, Beijing, 29 April 1954

⁸⁶ Ibid. Preamble; MoFA (1955) Final Communique of the Asian-African Conference. Bandung, 24 April 1955, Article G

⁸⁷ GoI (1966) Foreign Policy of India: Texts of Documents 1947-1964, Third Edition. Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, pp 204-205

Resistance provided channels for Washington's 'containment' pursuits via defence-and-intelligence agreements with Delhi and Karachi. Kolkata and Dhaka became control-hubs.

America used India as a Korean War diplomatic tool. Ambassador Pandit was the first US-China 'back-channel'. Secretary Dean Acheson told Ambassador Chester Bowles to ask her to advise Beijing of 'dangers in their becoming spearhead for Soviet ambitions in Asia', and 'our deepseated desire for peace and broader understanding in Asia. We have no desire to attack China or fight with China anyway.'^[88] America had 'no desire to dominate the internal arrangements of any other nation', but felt 'compelled to interpose, by force if necessary, in situations where nations use force in derogation of the rights and independence of other nations. The resort to aggression as the arbiter of differences between nations is to us intolerable.' When such 'policy of aggression has been abandoned, we have no desire to continue the strife or harbour grudges.'^[89] Mrs Pandit, meeting Zhou in Beijing, expressed distress over China's occupation of Tibet. Zhou replied, China was exercising legitimate control, and had no aggressive intent. Handing him Acheson's telegram, Pandit suggesting if China adopted policies 'wholly independent' of Moscow, 'world peace might be brought closer.' Zhou replied, 'with considerable emphasis', that 'Russia was not running China and never would.'^[90] With war raging in Korea, conflict brewing in Tibet, and general warfare possible, America missed the significance of Zhou's remarks. Chinese officials conveyed their messages to India's Ambassador, KM Panikkar, who relayed these to MEA Secretary-General, GS Bajpai. Bajpai shared these with Ambassador Bowles. Defence-intelligence officials ignored diplomacy. General Hoyt Vandenberg, commander USAF, wrote on behalf of the JCS and DCI, to Secretary Robert Lovett: 'The JCS considers that the United States' current programs for covert operations in the Far East should be continued and, if practicable, be accelerated... Consideration should be given to accelerating covert unconventional operations in the Far East (including South-East Asia), directed towards increasing the solidarity of indigenous peoples and their support of US objectives.'^[91] As tensions simmered in Lhasa and eastern Tibet, polarisation deepened. In mid-1955, following Bandung, Nehru's envoy VK Krishna Menon, and Pakistan's Prime Minister, Mohammad Ali, offered to mediate between America and China. Nehru offered help with freeing US PoWs.^[92] Eisenhower received Menon but Dulles noted, 'Menon was troublesome.' Dulles and British counterpart Harold Macmillan felt 'Menon was messing things up' on China.^[93] Dulles tried restraining Menon, but Eisenhower saw him again after Nehru pleaded India's case. Noting Zhou's interest in direct negotiations expressed in Bandung, Eisenhower wrote, 'I'm inclined to think that the best step now to take is to explore this course.'^[94] Nehru wrote again; Eisenhower gently rebuffed him.^[95] Elevating the Geneva peace talks to ambassadorial level, Dulles asked Macmillan to contact Beijing, .

⁸⁸ AmEmbassy (1952) Bowles to Acheson. No.793.00/4-952. New Delhi, 9 April 1952

⁸⁹ DoS (1952) Acheson to Bowles. No.611.93/4-1152. Washington, 25 April 1952

⁹⁰ AmEmbassy (1952) Bowles to Acheson. No.793.00/7-752. New Delhi, 7 July 1952

⁹¹ JCS (1952) Vandenberg to Lovett. DoD, Washington, 4 March 1952

⁹² DoS (1955) Hoover to Dulles: No.711.551/5-2855. Washington, 28 May 1955

⁹³ White House (1955) MemCon between the President and the Secretary of State. San Francisco, 20 June 1955; DoS (1955) MemCon between the Secretary of State and the British Foreign Secretary. San Francisco, 20 June 1955

⁹⁴ DoS (1955) MemCon: No.790.00/7-655. Washington, 6 July 1955; Eisenhower D (1955) Diary entry. White House, Washington, 6 July 1955; White House (1955) Eisenhower to Nehru. Washington, 7 July 1955

⁹⁵ PMO/MEA (1955) Nehru to Eisenhower. Cairo, 11 July 1955; White House (1955) Eisenhower to Nehru. Washington, 12 July 1955

Diplomatic divergences did not hinder covert collaboration. After building a road from Lake Kokonor via Amdo to Lhasa, the PLA completed another from Kangding via Kham to Lhasa in 1953. Tracks from Xinjinag passing north of Ladakh into south-western Tibet were made motorable, enabling sustained operations across Tibet with logistical support from the north-east, south-east and north-west. When China intensified its anti-feudal ‘liberation-campaign’ against ‘serf-owners’, rejecting ‘liberation’, serfs joined the resistance. Dalai Lama himself, having pledged fealty to Mao in Beijing in September 1954, returned to Lhasa in early 1955, urging moderation upon Khampa militants *en route*, to little effect. Khampas united against the Han, raiding PLA garrisons and ambushing patrols. By December 1954, when the Qinghai-Tibet and Xikang-Tibet Highways opened, resistance coalesced around *Tensung Dhanglang Magar* (Volunteer Defenders of Buddhism) and *Chushi Gangdruk* (Four Rivers, Six Ranges), nuclei of the future National Volunteer Defence Army (NVDA). Rapgya Pangda-Tsang, Kham’s former Governor, joining Amdoa guerrilla leader Gompo Sham in Kalimpong, sought help from US and RoC agents.^[96] US, Taiwanese and Indian aid arrived but most funds came from Khampas like the Pangda-Tsangs and the Lithangwa leader, Gompo Tashi Andrugtsang, the NVDA’s future commander. In 1955-56, fighting swirled around Kanting, PLA headquarters in Eastern Tibet. Morbidity indicated combat-intensity: in 1956-59, PLA deaths hit 40,000; resistance losses, 65,000.^[97] The NVDA comprised tribal militias, some with access to secret Tibetan arsenals and granaries; others received munitions air-dropped by RoC aircraft operating from Thailand, and USAF, and CIA-surrogate CAT aircraft flying from Dhaka and Indian bases.^[98] A US network linking Saipan, Guam, Taiwan, Chiang Mai, Dhaka, Dum Dum and Barrackpore to Kalimpong aided the NVDA. Two Pangda-Tsang brothers in Kalimpong and the third in Kham funded the war with RoC-minted silver. The PLA ‘struck hard’.

CIA-IB covert collaboration did not constrain Nehru’s diplomatic freedom. US rejection of his China initiative triggered an outreach to Moscow. In late-1955, Nehru escorted Soviet First-Secretary Nikita Khrushchev and Premier Nikolai Bulganin on a month-long jaunt. As ‘millions appeared at the meetings,’ Nehru pledged to ‘keep ourselves free from military or like alliances from the great-power groups that dominate the world.’ Nehru’s support for Beijing’s claims to Taiwan, and the UN’s China seat, pleased Soviet guests, but they noted Nehru’s anxiety over Moscow’s links to the Communist Party of India.^[99] America assessed, ‘India can achieve a democratic Asian counterpoise to Red China’ if it overcame economic frailties.^[100] Washington gave substantial aid, maintained military links, and offered hardware worth \$33m, e.g., high-altitude aircraft, US-made radars for British-built bombers, and nuclear test-results databases.^[101] However, a 1954, \$350m, force-support agreement made slow progress.^[102] To reassure Delhi that Pakistan could not use US arms against India, Washington secured authority over such *materiel*, and Dulles reinforced US guarantees to Nehru.^[103] In

⁹⁶ Peissel M (1972) *Cavaliers of Kham: The Secret War in Tibet*. Heinemann, London, pp 54-61

⁹⁷ Grunfeld A (1987) *The Making of Modern Tibet*. Zed, London, pp 128-129

⁹⁸ Robbins C (1979) *The Invisible Air Force: The Story of the CIA’s Secret Airlines*. Macmillan, London, pp 81-94

⁹⁹ Central Committee (1956) Information on Khrushchev and Bulganin’s November-December 1955 trip to India, Burma and Afghanistan, to the Central Committee of the SED. CPSU, Moscow, 11 January 1956; Nehru J (1961) *India’s Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches September 1946-April 1961*. Publications Division, New Delhi, pp 100-102; NSC (1956) OCB’s Progress Report. Washington, 30 March 1956

¹⁰⁰ AmEmbassy (1956) Bartlett to Dulles. No.033.9111/12-756. New Delhi, 7 December 1956

¹⁰¹ OCB (1956) Progress Report. NSC, Washington, 30 March 1956, pp 1-13

¹⁰² AmEmbassy (1956) Hoover to Dulles. New Delhi, 9 March 1956

¹⁰³ AmEmbassy (1956) Hildreth to Huq: Mutual Defence Assistance: Disposition of Equipment and Materials. Karachi, 15 March 1956

New York, Krishna Menon entwined Kashmir-diplomacy with the US-China-India *strategic triangle*, advising Americans that Pakistan could only win the UN-proposed Kashmiri-plebiscite by fomenting religious hatred inciting riots. Lamaist-Buddhist Ladakh would join Tibet/China instead of Pakistan; other Buddhist-populated regions would follow. Overtly neutral in Tibet's bloodletting, Nehru invited Dalai Lama to preside over Gautam Buddha's 2,500th birth-anniversary festivities, also asking Zhou on an official visit. Once in India, Dalai asked to stay. Nehru urged Zhou to reassure Tibet's God-king that violence would end. In November-December 1956, Nehru and Zhou repeatedly met Dalai Lama, who asked Nehru to raise Tibet's occupation with Eisenhower during his imminent US visit. Zhou guaranteed Tibet's pacific future to Dalai, who returned to Lhasa.

Arriving in America in mid-December, Nehru held private talks in Eisenhower's Gettysburg farmhouse, and in Washington. Eisenhower reassured Nehru US aid would not enable Pakistan to attack India. Nehru broached Zhou Enlai's invitation to US journalists to 'correct' perceptions shaped by 10 US prisoners, and Korean War casualties, but Eisenhower declined.^[104] To help India, America granted fresh aid, and both parties called the trip a success.^[105] Neither transcripts nor Eisenhower's 14-page summary of his 14-hour Gettysburg talks with Nehru mentioned Tibet.^[106] However, as Nehru highlighted economic imperatives of anti-PRC military measures, Tibet was likely discussed but left unrecorded. Given close strategic-intelligence ties, Eisenhower felt America was 'better off with India following its policy of non-alignment than were she to be actively on our side, with the consequent added burden on the American taxpayer.'^[107] US strategy was *triangular*: 'A strong India would be a successful example of an alternative to Communism in an Asian context.' With 'Chinese Communist power' growing, America's objective should be 'the development of a strong India, more friendly to the US, and better able to serve as a counterweight to Communist China.'^[108] Nehru may have sought a reduced RoC role in the India-based Tibetan resistance. In early 1957, the CIA took control, as fighting surged. To lift the siege around PLA bases in Tibetan-heavy Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan, and to contain the rebellion in Tibet, Beijing rushed 150,000 additional troops.^[109]

With resistance gaining, Mao conceded 'democratic reforms' were realistic 'only when the great majority of the people of Tibet and their leading public figures consider it practicable.' He deferred reforms until 1962-63.^[110] By May 1957, the rebels sensed victory. DCI Dulles reported PLA withdrawals 'from Tibetan land, possibly in the face of Tibetan resistance and economic problems.'^[111] Success deepened covert collaboration. CIA-IB teams recruited larger drafts of Tibetans from the Tawang Tract in disputed NEFA, and Pangda-Tsang employees from Kalimpong, for *Chushi Gangdruk* units. Some flew from Dum Dum, but most, taken to Cooch Bihar, crossed into Dinajpur. US-trained military-intelligence 'Geo-Survey' staff escorted them to Dhaka. CIA aircraft took them via Chiang Mai to Taiwan, Guam or

¹⁰⁴ White House (1956) MemCon Between President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Nehru. Washington, 19 December 1956

¹⁰⁵ DoS (1957) MemCon: BK Nehru, Mr Dillon, Mr Smith. Washington, 31 May 1957

¹⁰⁶ Riedel B (2015) JFK's Forgotten Crisis: Tibet, the CIA, and the Sino-Indian War. Brookings, Washington, p 10

¹⁰⁷ AmEmbassy (1957) Bunker to Bartlett. New Delhi, 27 June 1957

¹⁰⁸ NSC (1957) NSC5701: US Policy Towards South Asia. Washington, 10 January 1957

¹⁰⁹ Van Praag M (1987) The Status of Tibet: History, Rights and Prospects in International Law. Westview, Boulder, p 162

¹¹⁰ Mao Z (1957) On the Correct Handling of the Contradictions among the People. CPCCC, Beijing, 27 February 1957

¹¹¹ NSC (1957) Minutes of the 327th Meeting. Washington, 20 June 1957

Saipan for armed-training, before being dropped into battle. DoS Policy Planning Staff, unaware of operations, proposed Washington recognise Beijing as China's legitimate government, normalise relations over a decade, sign a 'Pacific Pact' that reunified and neutralised Korea and Vietnam, and admitted China to the UN. 'Tibet would be neutralized, its independence and territorial integrity guaranteed by the limitrophe states, i.e., the USSR, China, India and Nepal. Simultaneously, Chinese troops would be withdrawn from Tibet. Tibet, if it desired, would be admitted to the UN.'^[112] Beijing, given the challenges it faced in Taiwan, Xinjiang and Mongolia, was unlikely to accept this bargain. Even within the DoS, the recommendations gathered dust.

History, geography, and geopolitics

In early 1958, India asked for substantial increases in security assistance, presumably for a final push against the PLA, and to strengthen its own defences. The US *Charge d'Affaires*, Winthrop Brown, asked Nehru to pledge that US *materiel* would only be employed consonant with US law.^[113] Nehru waited for eight months as Tibetan rebels drew the noose tighter around Lhasa, reinforcing Beijing's anxiety to insulate the rebellion from its Indo-US patrons by delimiting, demarcating, defining and defending the disputed Himalayan frontiers. Conflicting visions of the border negated the 1954 Treaty. Alerted to Tibetan influence across NEFA by British official Olaf Caroe after the PLA crossed the Dri River in 1950, Delhi insisted on the 1914 McMahon Line. Using the watershed principle, and demanding 'respect for this boundary, defined by nature, confirmed by history and sanctified by "the laws of nations"', India extended administration into NEFA.^[114] Rejecting the 'imperial imposition', Beijing re-asserted borders delineated under Emperor Chien-lung (1711-1799), whose protectorate in Tibet was governed by Dalai Lama with a four-man Chinese-appointed cabinet protected by a Chinese garrison. The 'Chien-Lung Line' incorporated 'Southern Tibet', territory taken under British supervision after China's Republican Revolution loosened control over Tibet. Beijing's quest to revive that ancient border, urging India to give up 'illegally occupied Chinese territory' under 'unequal treaties' imposed by 'foreign aggressors' on a weak China deepened Indo-US angst. The dispute, highlighted in Nehru-Zhou exchanges, focused both rhetoric and action by Soviet-ally China, and America's tacit-ally India. In mid-1958, Beijing reminded Delhi that in late-1956, Zhou had asked Nehru to stop 'subversive and disruptive activities against China's Tibetan region... using India's Kalimpong as a base.' On 12 January 1958, Zhou wrote to Nehru again; on 22 January 1958, Beijing provided evidence of such activities to the Indian Embassy; yet the campaign continued. Beijing again requested 'effective measures'.^[115] Delhi rebutted all allegations.^[116] With diplomacy ineffective, Beijing decided to meet coercion with force. Chinese border guards began patrolling across the McMahon Line in the east and the Karakoram Range in the west. Indo-US proxy operations against Chinese forces across disputed borders in a frontier-region being reintegrated into the 'motherland' in the context of Cold War tensions ensured the dispute's policy-salience. In July-December 1958, Delhi and Beijing protested against six major mutual-incursions.^[117] Beijing complained Tibetan feudal-lords and rebels were co-ordinating operations with US and RoC agents from Kalimpong,

¹¹² McClintock R (1957) Policy Review. DoS, Washington, 31 December 1957

¹¹³ AmEmbassy (1958) Brown to Nehru: United States and India: Exchange of Notes Constituting an Agreement for Assurances regarding Mutual Defense Assistance. New Delhi, 16 April 1958

¹¹⁴ Rao N (2014) Third Dr S Gopal Memorial Lecture. King's College, London, 13 May 2014

¹¹⁵ MoFA (1958) Lo Kwe Po to KM Kannampilli: *Note Verbale*. Peking, 10 July 1958

¹¹⁶ MEA (1958) Secretary to Ambassador: *Note Verbale*. New Delhi, 2 August 1958

¹¹⁷ Chinese Embassy (1958) Counsellor to MEA: *Note Verbale*. New Delhi, 2 August 1958; MEA (1958) Secretary to Chinese Embassy: *Note Verbale*. New Delhi, 8 August 1958

breaching the 1954 accord; Delhi denied complicity, accusing the PLA of violating India's territorial integrity. This dialogue of the deaf, parallel to robust border-patrols by both sides, presaged conflict.^[118] In December, America and India renewed their mutual defence agreement.^[119]

Taking cover of refugees fleeing eastern Tibet in late 1958, rebels infiltrated into Lhasa. As guerrilla hit-and-run attacks peaked in early 1959, Zhou expressed concern over trans-frontier challenges to Nehru. Nehru replied in March, at the insurrection's height. By then, 80,000 rebels faced a PLA force of 200,000.^[120] NVDA Commander, Gampo Tashi Andrugtsang, was fighting in the south of Lhasa when a Chinese invitation to Dalai Lama to attend a new-year opera at the garrison triggered rioting. Chinese demands that pontifical bodyguards remain outside the garrison during the performance convinced many this was a ploy to hold Dalai hostage to the rebels' surrender. As thousands of Tibetans demonstrated against feared threats to their God-king, he informed General Tan Kuan-sen he would not attend the show. General Tan and Dalai exchanged several notes until 16 March when Tan asked Dalai to mark his location on a map of the Norbulingka Palace ensuring PLA artillery did not shell it. Dressed as a private, Dalai, close relatives and cabinet rode south towards India while guerrillas mounted their fiercest attacks on PLA units. Dalai's escorts were heavily-armed; his cook was a CIA-trained fighter carrying an anti-tank weapon; his CIA-equipped wireless-operator maintained radio-link with headquarters.^[121] Andrugtsang learnt of developments from an Indian broadcast on 22 March, indicating he did not command the Lhasa operation or the Pontiff's flight. Intimate knowledge of these events revealed by the IB's Mullik, the CIA's review, the Pontiff's plea to the CIA for aid, and official records, indicated the operation's triangular command and control.^[122] On 30 March, Eisenhower told the CIA to increase aid to the rebels; but this proved inadequate.^[123] At the Lhuntse Dzong near the border, Dalai learnt of the PLA's bloody counter-strike on Tibetan suspects, and the Norbulingka Palace's destruction. Repudiating the 17-Point Agreement, he crossed the border. Indian intelligence officials swiftly processed his asylum plea.^[124] Guerrillas continued fighting around Lhasa and across southern Tibet, with some air-dropped *materiel*. However, reinforced PLA units destroyed much of the rebellion within six weeks. On 25 April, the CIA reported, 'the Tibetan resistance in the South has been heavily engaged and decimated, and is tragically short of food and ammunition.'^[125] Surviving NVDA units fled to Sikkim and Nepal, mainly the Himalayan fiefdom of Mustang, from where they harried PLA patrols. A rebel ambush later captured PLA documents showing 87,000 Tibetans were killed during March 1959-September 1960.^[126]

¹¹⁸ MEA (1958) *Note Verbale* to the Chinese Embassy. New Delhi, 21 August 1958; MoFA (1958) Memorandum to the Indian Embassy. Beijing, 3 November 1958; Indian Embassy (1958) Ambassador to Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs: *Note Verbale*. Beijing, 8 November 1958; MEA (1958) *Note Verbale* to the Chinese Embassy. New Delhi, 10 December 1958; MEA (1958) Nehru to Zhou. New Delhi, 14 December 1958

¹¹⁹ AmEmbassy (1958) Brown to Nehru. New Delhi, 16 April 1958; MEA (1958) Dutt to Bunker. New Delhi, 17 December 1958

¹²⁰ Mullik B (1971) *My Years with Nehru*. Allied, New Delhi, pp 162, 216

¹²¹ Robbins C (1979) *The Invisible Air Force: The Story of the CIA's Secret Airlines*. Macmillan, London, pp 94-101, 154; Allman T (1973) *Cold Wind of Change*. *Guardian*, 19 December 1973

¹²² CIA (1959) *Review of Tibetan Operations*. Washington, 25 April 1959

¹²³ DCI (1959) Dulles to Eisenhower: *Dalai Lama's Request for Supplies for the Tibetan Resistance*. Washington, 7 May 1959

¹²⁴ Gyatso T (1990) *Freedom in Exile*. Hodder & Stoughton, London, pp 144-156

¹²⁵ CIA (1959) *Review of Tibetan Operations*. Washington, 25 April 1959

¹²⁶ Gyatso T (1990) *Freedom in Exile*. Hodder & Stoughton, London, pp 210-211

As the PLA cleared Kham and Amdo and moved to central and southern Tibet, Gyalo Thondup met US officials ‘on behalf of his brother, the Dalai Lama’, in Washington. Thanking America for ‘the sympathy and help which the American Government and people have rendered’, Dalai expressed hope ‘that the US Government would continue to help the people of Tibet in their struggle for independence. The Tibetans were now facing great difficulties but they intended to continue their struggle.’ Dalai would ‘like very much to have advice and guidance as to what he should do to keep the Tibetan cause alive.’^[127] Tibet needed more money and arms. US officials noted, ‘the problem of training Tibetan refugees in the US and other countries, such as India, was being closely studied, being most carefully studied and considered.’^[128] Dalai ‘could count on 40,000 to 50,000 fighting men, about one-third of whom were in India.’ Washington revised its Tibet policy to say ‘it is an autonomous country under the suzerainty of China.’^[129] Thondup delivered a letter addressed to Eisenhower, seeking recognition of Dalai’s ‘Free Tibetan Government’ and continued aid.^[130] NSC discussions revealed nuanced variations in views.^[131] DCI Dulles assured Eisenhower the CIA was contacting surviving guerrillas for sustained operations.^[132] Washington decided to boost the rebellion by training the best fighters as future commanders at Camp Hale, Colorado. In 1959-1962, 170 rebel-leaders were trained there.^[133] The camp was shut to Tibetans for a year around the 1962 war, being briefly reopened but then closed in 1964.

Fragile mountains

After the rebels’ eviction from Tibet, Zhou’s emphasis shifted to China’s rejection of the McMahon Line and western stretches of the British-delineated boundary. Expressing surprise and disappointment, Nehru insisted the delineations were inviolable, and rejected accusations of complicity with the rebels.^[134] With boosted Indo-US support, the NVDA resumed operations targeting PLA vulnerabilities. Chinese forces fought to secure townships, fortresses and monasteries, and nodal points along the arterial highways. By early 1960, Beijing deployed 100,000 troops in Amdo-Kham, another 100,000 in U-Tsang, and thousands more along the disputed border.^[135] Indian accusations of PLA incursions, and Chinese allegations of Indian collusion with ‘Tibetan bandits’, solidified antagonism. After Chinese ‘incursions’ in August 1959, Nehru ordered the Army to ‘forward-deploy’. The 1958 Indo-US Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement enabled Delhi to boost its Himalayan presence and the IB-CIA covert operations. In September, Zhou explicitly linked border tensions to the Tibetan insurrection. Describing the Indian-claimed boundary as ‘an outcome of colonial-imperial expansionist policy’ of ‘aggression against China’, Zhou repudiated both 1842 and 1914 border-treaties.

¹²⁷ DoS (1959) MemCon: Tibet. Washington, 29 October 1959

¹²⁸ Ibid

¹²⁹ DoS (1959) MemCon: US Attitude Toward Tibet. Washington, 3 November 1959

¹³⁰ DoS (1959) Dillon to Eisenhower: Message from the Dalai Lama. Washington, 30 April 1959

¹³¹ NSC (1959) Minutes of a Meeting. In USGPO (1992) FRUS, 1958-1960. Washington Vol.XIX, p 756

¹³² DCI (1959) Dulles to Eisenhower: Dalai Lama’s Request for Supplies for the Tibetan Resistance. Washington, 7 May 1959

¹³³ Mullen C (1976) How the CIA went to war in Tibet. Guardian, 19 January 1976; DoS (1959) Memorandum of Substance of Discussions at a DoS-JCS Meeting. Washington, 8 May 1959

¹³⁴ MEA (1959) Nehru to Zhou. New Delhi, 22 March 1959; Nehru J (1959) Statement in the Lok Sabha.

Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, 30 March 1959; MEA (1959) Foreign Secretary to Chinese Ambassador: *Note Verbale*. New Delhi, 26 April 1959; Nehru J (1959) Statement in the Lok Sabha. Lok Sabha Secretariat. New Delhi, 27 April 1959; Chinese Embassy (1959) Ambassador to the Foreign Secretary: *Note Verbale*. New Delhi, 16 May 1959

¹³⁵ Peissel M (1972) Cavaliers of Kham: The Secret War in Tibet. Heinemann, London, p 170

Stressing that Delhi took control of ‘Southern Tibet’ only in 1951, Zhou identified 90,000 sq.kms of ‘Chinese’ territory Delhi considered Indian.

Accusing India of ‘intrusions’ in 10 areas in the west, Zhou wrote, ‘Since the outbreak of the rebellion in Tibet, however, the border situation has become increasingly tense owing to reasons for which the Chinese side cannot be held responsible. Immediately after the fleeing of a large number of Tibetan rebels into India, Indian troops started pressing forward steadily across the eastern section of the Sino-Indian boundary. Changing unilaterally the long existing state of the border between the two countries, they not only overstepped the so-called McMahon Line...but also exceeded the boundary drawn in current Indian maps which is alleged to represent the so-called McMahon Line, but which in many places actually cuts even deeper into Chinese territory.’^[136] Emphasising the border’s salience in the Indo-US proxy-campaign in Tibet, Zhou noted: ‘It is merely for the purpose of preventing remnant armed Tibetan rebels from crossing the border back and forth to carry out harassing activities that the Chinese Government has in recent months dispatched guard units to be stationed in the south-eastern part of the Tibet region of China. This is obviously in the interest of ensuring the tranquillity of the border and will in no way constitute a threat to India.’^[137]

Distressed that Beijing claimed ‘about 40,000 sq. miles of what in our view has been indisputably Indian territory for decades and in some sectors for over a century’, Nehru detailed ‘various border intrusions’, the 1954 ‘construction of a road across Indian territory in Ladakh, and the arrest of our personnel in the Aksai Chin area in 1958 and their detention’, and other Chinese misconduct.^[138] Short, sharp exchanges reflected deepening chill. Eisenhower, meeting Pandit in Europe, was ‘distressed to learn’ of Chinese ‘border incursions’. He told Nehru, ‘I am personally following these events with concern.’^[139] Bearing sympathy and assistance, Eisenhower visited Delhi. Dalai’s request for an audience during his visit placed America in a dilemma: how to balance Delhi’s denial of support for the rebellion with a need to ‘not betray’ Tibetans.^[140] Secretary Herter told Ambassador Bunker to deliver a letter ‘written on official stationery and signed by yourself as Ambassador to India’, to Dalai before Eisenhower’s arrival, assuring ‘The US Government is prepared, when a suitable opportunity presents itself, to make a public declaration of its support for the principle of self-determination for the Tibetan people.’^[141] Formally, America endorsed Tibetan autonomy under Chinese suzerainty. Still, after returning from his Asian trip, Eisenhower ordered DCI Dulles to continue helping Tibetans to inflict ‘serious harassment’ on China.^[142] His refusal to let Chiang conduct similar anti-PRC operations^[143] indicated Tibet’s and India’s locus in US calculus.

Eisenhower’s private talks with Nehru in Delhi remained classified. Formally, they discussed regional and global security issues and India’s economic concerns. Impressed with Pakistan’s President Ayub Khan’s wish to live in peace, Eisenhower ‘offered to do anything that might

¹³⁶ MoFA (1959) Zhou to Nehru. Beijing, 8 September 1959

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ MEA (1959) Nehru to Zhou. New Delhi, 26 September 1959

¹³⁹ White House (1959) Eisenhower to Nehru. Paris, 2 September 1959

¹⁴⁰ AmEmbassy (1959) Bunker to Herter. New Delhi, 23 November 1959

¹⁴¹ DoS (1959) Herter to Bunker. Washington, 25 November 1959

¹⁴² Gray G (1960) Memorandum for the Record. NSC, Washington, 4 February 1960

¹⁴³ AmEmbassy (1960) Drumright to Herter. Taipei, 4 February 1960; CIA (1960) Bissell to Lansdale: GRC Plans for Paramilitary Action. Washington, 13 February 1960; Ibid. 7 March 1960; Ibid. 14 April 1960; Ibid. 18 April 1960; White House (1960) MemCon: Free World Sino-Soviet Relations; Proposal...Aid Program. Taipei, 19 June 1960

be considered helpful.’ However, Khan’s rejection of any hypothetical Sino-Indian accord on Ladakh, since Ladakh was part of disputed Kashmir, angered Nehru. Eisenhower again assured him US assistance to Pakistan would not harm India.^[144] Nehru’s anxiety persisted.^[145] He secured substantial aid. When he asked for help with nuclear power, Eisenhower sent the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission to help build nuclear-power infrastructure. On the border dispute, Nehru reported that Zhou had not yet replied to his recent letter. US officials analysed India’s border-disputes with Pakistan and China with Defence Minister Krishna Menon. Ike’s visit strengthened both official- and popular-level Indo-US relations. Communist threats along the border and within India offered America opportunities to ‘exploit’ the defeat of communist politicians in Kerala’s state-elections held in early 1960.^[146]

Delhi began a \$250m border-roads project south of Tibet.^[147] Andrugstang appointed a Bathangwa guerrilla, Baba Yeshe, commander of Mustang-based NVDA units. US-trained rebels, supported with C-130 drops, bled Chinese forces. Visiting India on a final diplomatic foray, Zhou proposed a deal: if Delhi accepted China’s claim to Aksai Chin in Ladakh, Beijing would accept the McMahon Line in NEFA.^[148] Nehru declined, but in CIA assessment, this became the essence of a probable future accord.^[149] The Tibetan operations challenged both partners: Nehru kept the covert campaign from all but a few intimates; Dulles and Herter separated narratives on Tibetan self-determination, and proxy-war with Indian collusion. Herter offered assurances to Dalai Lama, but not for independence.^[150] Following Eisenhower’s visit, Delhi deployed ‘substantial’ forces along the under-construction border-roads. Menon rang Bunker one night, seeking US credit to urgently buy 59 C-119s and two C-130 transports, asking him ‘to telephone Washington’.^[151] On Bunker’s advice, Washington moved promptly. However, when Delhi asked to buy Sidewinder air-to-air missiles being supplied to Pakistan, given the US-India-Pakistan *triangle*’s delicacy, and the missiles’ irrelevance to ‘the Indo-Tibet border situation’, America demurred. Anxious to forge a bulwark against Sino-Soviet ‘threats’ in ‘a divided South Asia’, Washington struggled to balance strategic imperatives and regional tensions.^[152]

India’s envisaged role ‘in the event of a world conflict’ was key. So, Washington had to accept the security-risks Delhi’s purchase of Soviet transport-aircraft posed to US-supplied hardware, and the bargaining leverage it gave India, ‘one of the unfortunate aspects of any Indian purchase of Soviet’ gear. To reduce threats, the JCS urged expanding Indian capabilities.^[153] At Eisenhower’s New York meeting with Nehru, both shared relief at the conclusion of the World Bank-sponsored Indus Waters Agreement with Pakistan. Nehru supported Eisenhower’s views

¹⁴⁴ White House (1959) MemCon: Relations Between India and Pakistan; Trend of Developments in USSR and Communist China. New Delhi, 10 December 1959

¹⁴⁵ White House (1959) MemCon: Pakistan; Collective Security Arrangements; Law of the Sea; Mahe; Algeria; Indian Atomic Development. New Delhi, 13 December 1959

¹⁴⁶ DoS (1960) Special Report: Exploitation of Kerala Elections. Washington, 17 February 1960

¹⁴⁷ DoS (1960) MemCon: Eisenhower and Bunker. Washington, 25 April 1960

¹⁴⁸ Shakya T (1999) *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*. Pimlico, London, 1999, p 281

¹⁴⁹ CIA (1960) NIE 100-2-60: Sino-Indian Relations. Washington, 17 May 1960, p 1

¹⁵⁰ DoS (1960) Herter to Dalai Lama, 793B.00/2-2060. Washington, 20 February 1960; DoS (1960) Herter to Dalai Lama, 795B.00/9-1660. Washington, 11 October 1960

¹⁵¹ AmEmbassy (1960) Bunker to Herter. New Delhi, 5 May 1960

¹⁵² DoS (1960) Jones to Bunker: India-Sidewinders. Washington, 13 July 1960

¹⁵³ DoS (1960) MemCon: Possibility of Preventing Indian Purchase of Soviet Helicopters. 17 August 1960; AmEmbassy (1960) Bunker to Heretr. New Delhi, 17 September 1960; JCS (1960) Lemnitzer to Gates: Sale of Soviet Aircraft to India. Washington, 15 November 1960; DoD (1960) Douglas to Dillon. Washington, 19 December 1960

of the debate over the UN's future triggered by Khrushchev's UNGA critique. Their concerns over Sino-Indian disputes were congruent and differences over Sino-Soviet divergences, nuanced. Delhi rejected 'ChiCom claims of an additional 10,000 sq. miles'; border-negotiations collapsed. They discussed operational-logistical differences between Indian and Chinese border-forces.^[154] Nehru assured Herter that Moscow did not seek war, but 'the ChiComs were a different matter.' Nehru believed Beijing signed border-treaties with Burma and Nepal 'because they want to put pressure on us,' but he would not concede.^[155]

Anxious to thwart 'ChiComs' and boost Delhi's capabilities, Ike extended concessional-funding.^[156] Leveraging Soviet aid-pledges, Delhi told the incoming Kennedy Administration, 'it had a good case for receiving "substantially more than one-third" of total American aid.' Kennedy agreed, but the India-Pakistan-China *triangle* intervened.^[157] Responding to Beijing's offer to delimit Xinjiang's border with Pakistan's Northern Territories, and keen 'to avoid trouble with China and not any desire to embarrass India', Pakistan initiated talks, triggering Indo-US concern. Ayub Khan pledged to Kennedy's envoy Averell Harriman to 'not fall in the trap' of pro-Indian-Soviet-policy vs. pro-Pakistani-Chinese-policy formulations.^[158]

Nehru felt Sino-Pak negotiations aimed 'to show "unreasonableness of India".' His offer to 'settle on the boundaries as they are now' in Kashmir perpetuated the dispute.^[159] Nehru's 'wall of silence' on Kashmir following Khan's peace-proposals suggested he saw Kashmir and Ladakh similarly: Pakistan and China must vacate 'Indian' territory.^[160] Indian critique of US involvement in Southeast Asia concerned America.^[161] Worried that Krishna Menon pushed Indian service-chiefs towards pro-Soviet orientations, US commanders urged attractively-priced hardware-sales.^[162] Washington honoured Khan's demand not to inform Delhi of the supply of F-104 fighters to Pakistan, but readied justifications on the need 'to counter incursion of advanced-type aircraft from the north'.^[163] Kennedy assured Khan, 'If sometime a situation, such as impending war with China, should arise that would cause the Indians to come to the US for military aid, we would talk with Pakistan and see what was the best course of action.'^[164]

Tibet-shaped *triangle*

On Tibet, Nehru conceded China had suppressed the revolt. He told Ambassador Bowles, China 'would press forward wherever possible', and 'had pushed 150 miles within Indian territory', but 'it was unlikely they would undertake any massive military moves.' Still, fearing

¹⁵⁴ White House (1960) MemCon: Eisenhower and Nehru. New York, 26 September 1960

¹⁵⁵ DoS (1960) MemCon: Herter and Nehru: UN matters. New York, 7 October 1960

¹⁵⁶ DoS (1960) MemCon: Aid to India. Washington, 9 November 1960; CIA (1960) NIE 51-60: The Outlook for India. Washington, 25 October 1960; DoS (1960) MemCon: Call by the Indian Minister of Finance on the Under Secretary. Washington, 26 September 1960

¹⁵⁷ DoS (1961) MemCon: US aid to India. Washington, 8 February 1961; DoS (1961) Ball to Kennedy: Proposed US Aid Commitments to India and Pakistan. Washington, 19 April 1961; DoS (1961) Rusk to Galbraith. Washington, 24 April 1961; DoS (1961) Ball to Kennedy: India Consortium Meeting. Washington 1 May 1961; PMO (1961) Nehru to Kennedy: 237-PMO/16. New Delhi, 13 May 1961

¹⁵⁸ AmEmbassy (1961) Rountree to Rusk. Karachi, 22 March 1961

¹⁵⁹ AmEmbassy (1961) Maffitt to Rusk. New Delhi, 24 March 1961

¹⁶⁰ AmEmbassy (1961) Galbraith to Rusk. New Delhi, 28 June 1961

¹⁶¹ DoS (1961) Rusk to Galbraith. Washington, 31 July 1961

¹⁶² DoD (1961) Gilpatric to Bowles:I-14613/61. Washington, 12 June 1961

¹⁶³ DoS (1961) Ball to Galbraith. Washington, 4 August 1961

¹⁶⁴ White House (1961) MemCon: Kennedy-Ayub Talks. Washington, 11 July 1961

China's 'heavily-guarded checkpoints at relatively frequent intervals' north of NEFA, he wished to 'discuss the subject in confidence'. Bowles assured him America 'would oppose' Chinese aggression. Longer term, Washington sought 'the development of an indigenous Asian power-balance which would depend only indirectly' on it. This was achievable 'only by India, Pakistan and Japan,' but Indo-Pakistani animus posed 'almost insurmountable problems.'^[165]

US arms-shipments to Pakistan triggered 'a slight degrading effect on Indian-US relations.' Delhi sought to counterbalance Pakistan's new F-104 fighter-jets. Krishna Menon favoured Soviet hardware, but service-chiefs preferred US weapons. DoD officials pressed DoS counterparts for support.^[166] Ignoring US aid totalling \$850m and rejecting F-104 offers, Delhi ordered Soviet MiG-21s instead.^[167] Washington struggled with zero-sum Indo-Pakistani hostility while bolstering both anti-communist clients.^[168] Nehru's confidante, Menon, who questioned US grasp of Asian issues, tested Kennedy's patience.^[169] Menon, author of India's invasion of the Portuguese exclave of Goa, catalysed a crisis. America opposed the use of force by others, backed NATO-ally Portugal, and sought Indian support against China.^[170] Ignoring Kennedy's dissuasion, Nehru ordered Indian forces to occupy Goa, Damao and Diu; they swiftly did.^[171] Fearful, Khan moved to raise the Kashmir dispute at the UN, concerning Kennedy.^[172] Reminding Nehru 'he was being unfaithful to the comradeship of democratic leaders by making matters worse' for Kennedy, Galbraith cajoled him to join Indo-Pakistani talks on Kashmir, precluding a UN debate. Indo-US interest in countering 'Peiping', and India's 'sheer size and resources', sustained Washington's Delhi-focus.^[173]

To unite India and Pakistan against rising 'communist threats', Kennedy urged Nehru and Khan to receive the IBRD's Eugene Black 'to explore with each head of government the outlines and prospects for negotiations' over Kashmir.^[174] Khan agreed but Nehru declined; Khan received Kennedy's private assurances of US support in case of Indian aggression.^[175] Unafraid of Soviet policy, Indians dreaded Chinese action in Tibet, asking if Washington would help in

¹⁶⁵ DoS (1961) MemCon: Bowles and Nehru. New Delhi, 9 August 1961

¹⁶⁶ DoD (1961) Gilpatrick to Bowles. Washington, 13 September 1961

¹⁶⁷ AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Rusk. New Delhi, 8 May 1962; AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Rusk. New Delhi, 13 May 1962; AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Rusk. New Delhi, 18 May 1962

¹⁶⁸ DoS (1961) Rusk to Rountree. Washington, 7 November 1961; AmEmbassy (1961) Rountree to Rusk. Karachi, 7 November 1961; AmEmbassy (1961) Galbraith to Talbot. New Delhi, 21 September 1961; White House (1961) MemCon: Kennedy-Nehru. Washington, 7 November 1961; DoS (1961) Ball to Galbraith, Rountree. Washington, 8 December 1961

¹⁶⁹ White House (1961) MemCon: Kennedy-Menon. Washington, 21 November 1961

¹⁷⁰ AmEmbassy (1961) Galbraith to Ball. New Delhi, 10 December 1961; DoS (1961) Talbot to Ball: Goa Situation Report. Washington, 12 December 1961; AmEmbassy (1961) Galbraith to Ball. New Delhi, 12 December 1961

¹⁷¹ AmEmbassy (1961) Galbraith to Ball. New Delhi, 13 December 1961; DoS (1961) Ball to Rusk. Washington, 14 December 1961; AmEmbassy (1961) Galbraith to Ball. New Delhi, 15 December 1961; AmEmbassy (1961) Galbraith to Ball. New Delhi, 17 December 1961; DoS (1961) Rusk to Galbraith. Washington, 23 December 1961

¹⁷² President's House (1962) Ayub to Kennedy. Rawalpindi, 2 January 1962; NSC (1961) Komer to Kennedy. Washington, 28 December 1961

¹⁷³ AmEmbassy (1961) Galbraith to Rusk. New Delhi, 28 December 1961; DoS (1962) MemCon: Post-Goa Situation-Pakistan's Fears of Indian Intentions. Washington, 3 January 1962; NSC (1962) Komer to Bundy: A New Look at Pakistani Tie. Washington, 6 January 1962; DoS (1962) US Relations with South Asia: Major Issues and Recommended Courses of Action. Washington, undated

¹⁷⁴ White House (1962) Kennedy to Nehru. Washington, 15 January 1962; *ibid.* Kennedy to Khan. Washington, 15 January 1962

¹⁷⁵ White House (1962) Kennedy to Khan. Washington, 26 January 1962

case Beijing attacked.^[176] Pakistani perspectives diverged.^[177] Zero-sum Indo-Pakistani dynamics plagued US efforts to forge a Subcontinental response to ‘communist threats’.^[178] After a Soviet veto scuppered a June 1962 UNSC resolution on Kashmir supported by America and Britain, Nehru expressed ‘deep regret and sorrow’ that America should ‘almost invariably be against us’ on Goa and Kashmir. The ‘hurt and injury’ created ‘doubt in our minds about the goodwill’ India expected. Tensions over Kashmir, F-104s and Mig-21s roiled relations. Acknowledging challenges, Nehru wrote, ‘whatever might happen, our attitude will continue to be to encourage friendly relations between our two countries.’^[179] Once Nehru’s determination to buy MiG-21s became clear, Kennedy increased aid, reinforcing ties.

In early 1962, Nehru ordered Indian forces to deploy ‘advanced patrols and outposts in the Ladakh area’. In July, Beijing threatened to invade NEFA if these were not withdrawn. ‘Instead of withdrawing, the Indians intensified their forward patrolling activities.’ As clashes mounted, Nehru informed Galbraith of planned Sino-Indian border talks on ‘the principle that the border is well-defined’, although Beijing insisted ‘the entire border is undefined.’^[180] Talks failed. In early September, after four Chinese soldiers were killed near Ladakh’s Chip-Chap River and PLA units approached India’s Dhola outposts in NEFA, Nehru ordered the Army ‘to clear Indian territory.’ Shooting began on 20 September. By mid-October, fighting in the east had ‘become much more serious’, imposing ‘a heavy logistical burden on the Indians.’ On 20 October, the PLA attacked, advancing 15 miles south of the McMahon Line within a week, while destroying Indian forward positions in Ladakh, and inflicting 5,000 casualties.^[181] Washington promptly flew aircraft, spare-parts, and radio-sets, urging Ayub Khan to assure Nehru Pakistan would not complicate Indian difficulties. After Nehru rejected Chinese offers of a cease-fire and mutual retreat of 20 miles from the battle-lines, in late October, Towang, NEFA’s main religio-political centre 20 miles south of the McMahon Line, fell.^[182] Nehru sought Kennedy’s ‘sympathy and support’. Assuring both, Kennedy noted Menon ‘was not an Indian asset.’ Demoting Menon, Nehru took over India’s MoD.^[183]

On 29 October Nehru asked Galbraith for ‘US military assistance.’ On 1 November, Washington, in concert with NATO allies, began flying 800 tons of ordnance, initially worth \$3.5m. Shipments were so large that Galbraith feared, ‘in our natural desire to help the Indians we will overwhelm them.’^[184] America recognised the McMahon Line as the ‘international

¹⁷⁶ AmEmbassy (1962) Bowles via Hall to Rusk. Karachi, 3 March 1962

¹⁷⁷ AmEmbassy (1962) Hall to Rusk. Karachi, 4 March 1962; DoS (1962) MemCon: Kashmir. Washington, 27 April 1962; President’s House (1962) Khan to Kennedy. Rawalpindi, 20 April 1962; DoS (1962) MemCon: US Military Assistance to India; Pakistan Concern at Indian Intentions. Washington, 28 May 1962

¹⁷⁸ DoS (1962) MemCon: Pakistan-US Relations. Washington, 13 May 1962; White House (1962) MemCon: Meeting with the President on India-Pakistan Problem. Washington, 19 June 1962

¹⁷⁹ PMO (1962) Nehru to Kennedy. New Delhi, 5 August 1962

¹⁸⁰ DoS (1962) Brubeck to Bundy: Possibility of Sino-Indian Negotiations over the Border Problem. Washington, 10 August 1962; NSC (1962) Kaysen to Kennedy: Current Activity on the Sino-Indian Border and Estimate of Future Developments. Washington, 3 November 1962

¹⁸¹ NSC (1962) Kaysen to Kennedy: Current Activity on the Sino-Indian Border and Estimate of Future Developments. Washington, 3 November 1962

¹⁸² DoS (1962) Brubeck to Bundy: Fighting on Sino-Indian Border. Washington, 15 October 1962; AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Rusk. New Delhi, 15 October 1962; AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Rusk. 18 October 1962; DoS (1962) Rusk to McConaughy. Washington, 22 October 1962; AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Rusk. New Delhi, 25 October 1962; NSC (1962) Kayson to Kennedy. Washington, 26 October 1962

¹⁸³ PMO (1962) Nehru to Kennedy. New Delhi, 26 October 1962; DoS (1962) Rusk to Galbraith. Washington, 27 October 1962; White House (1962) Kennedy to Nehru. Washington, 28 October 1962

¹⁸⁴ AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Rusk. New Delhi, 29 October 1962; Ibid. 1 November 1962

border’, increased China-related intelligence-supply to Delhi, and pushed Pakistan to support India, outraging Khan.^[185] Despite believing ‘The Chinese have a serious claim to the Aksai Chin Plateau in Ladakh,’ America poured hardware. Nehru kept ‘playing down our role to protect the sensitivities of the Soviets’; Menon’s ouster helped.^[186] On 14 November, India and America exchanged notes authorising military assistance against ‘outright Chinese aggression’. As fears of Assam being lost deepened, Kennedy ordered an inter-agency group to spearhead diplomacy, military-and-economic aid, and raise five Indian mountain-divisions to hold the line. He was briefed on ‘the desirability of using Tibetan guerrillas.’^[187] As Indian withdrawals turned into a rout, guerrilla-deployments became moot. Traumatic losses of territory, lives-and-limbs, hardware, and ‘face’, catalysed profound catharsis.

On 19 November, Nehru wrote to Kennedy, describing the situation as ‘really desperate’. He requested ‘immediate despatch of a minimum of 12 squadrons of supersonic all-weather fighters and setting up of radar’ networks manned by US combatants until Indians were trained. He also ‘asked for two B-47 bomber squadrons to enable India to strike at Chinese bases and air-fields.’^[188] Washington despatched a military-intelligence team to assess India’s needs. ‘This would be US operation with planes, crew support.’^[189] As Nehru sought military-alliance ties, and ‘complete commitment by us to a fighting war’, Washington urged Delhi to deploy all its diplomatic-military resources, including forces facing Pakistan. Keen to salvage Indo-Pakistani-US ties, Rusk wrote, ‘Delhi would not be the first capital to make the mistake of believing we have unlimited powers of persuasion in every capital other than its own.’^[190] Before Kennedy could respond, on 20 November, Beijing announced a ceasefire and withdrawal to lines held on 20 October. Pledging substantial aid to Delhi ‘subject to obvious limits of our capabilities’, Kennedy noted, ‘we cannot allow them’ to impose on ‘us the basic responsibilities which must remain Indian.’^[191] He assessed, ‘Whatever India’s past follies, the Chicom attack and India’s response to it create a basically new situation...the subcontinent has become a new area of major confrontation between the Free World and the Communists. We must take this fact into account in our global policy.’

If Pakistan engaged with China other than on borders, America would be ‘adversely affected’.^[192] Kennedy urged Kashmir peace talks, while raising India’s urgent non-air-defence military-aid ceiling to \$120m.^[193] NSC advice to Kennedy that ‘our interests are best served by continuation of the Sino-Indian dispute,’ manifested grand-strategic triangulation.^[194] However, failure to engineer Indo-Pakistani moves to Kashmiri dispute-resolution challenged US-UK efforts.^[195] Still, as shared interest in weakening Beijing’s

¹⁸⁵ AmEmbassy (1962) McConaughy to Rusk. Karachi, 5 November 1962; President’s House (1962) Khan to Kennedy. Rawalpindi, 5 November 1962; NSC (1962) Kaysen to Kennedy. Washington, 9 November 1962; NSC (1962) Komer to Kennedy. Washington, 12 November 1962

¹⁸⁶ AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Kennedy. New Delhi, 13 November 1962

¹⁸⁷ White House (1962) MemCon: Presidential Meeting on Sino-Indian Conflict. Washington, 19 November 1962

¹⁸⁸ AmEmbassy (1962) Galbraith to Rusk. Delhi, 19 November 1962

¹⁸⁹ DoS (1962) Rusk to Galbraith. Washington, 19 November 1962

¹⁹⁰ DoS (1962) Rusk to Galbraith. Washington, 18 November 1962; *ibid.*, 20 November 1962

¹⁹¹ DoS (1962) Rusk to Harriman, Galbraith. Washington, 23 November 1962

¹⁹² White House (1962) Kennedy to Galbraith, Harriman, Washington, 25 November 1962

¹⁹³ White House (1962) Kennedy to Nehru. Washington, 6 December 1962; *ibid.* Kennedy to Khan. Washington, 5 December 1962; DoS (1962) Rusk to Galbraith. Washington, 8 December 1962

¹⁹⁴ NSC (1962) Komer to Kennedy. Washington, 16 December 1962

¹⁹⁵ White House (1962) MemCon: Sino-Indian Dispute. Nassau, 20 December 1962

ability to threaten India grew, CIA-IB missions in Tibet intensified.^[196] Infiltrating Colorado-trained guerrillas into Tibet was followed by raising Tibetan-manned and Indian-officered Special Frontier Force (SFF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Special Services Bureau (SSB), and Aviation Research Centre (ARC), boosted with US equipment and training. Their covert operations ranged from deep-penetration intelligence-gathering missions to monitoring PLA combat-, nuclear and missile activities.^[197]

Beijing's first nuclear test in 1964 and later BM tests expanded clandestine collaboration. U2 ISR sorties mounted from Indian bases, and the installation, after an abortive attempt, of a plutonium-powered monitoring-station atop the Himalayan Nanda Kot peak in 1965-66, were highlights, revealed only after fears of radiation-pollution of the Ganges forced Delhi's hands in 1978.^[198] Notwithstanding formal termination of security-assistance during the 1965 Indian-Pakistani war over Kashmir, Indo-US covert collaboration continued into the early 1970s, with Delhi and Washington sharing Chinese missile-telemetry data, gathered by US monitoring stations installed on Indian mountains, while Nixon cultivated Mao and Zhou, and India boosted its 1971-alliance with the USSR. The latter's aid to Bangladeshi nationalists in their struggle with Pakistan, supported by Sino-US collaboration, Pakistan's dismemberment, and Bangladesh's independence, formalised a transformation of post-1947 alignments.

¹⁹⁶ Kohli M, Conboy K (2002) *Spies in the Himalayas*. Harper Collins, New Delhi, p 15

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 16-19

¹⁹⁸ Loudon B (1978) Ganges 'Poisoned' by CIA. *Telegraph*, 14 April 1978; *ibid.*, Desai Admits India-US Plot for Spy Device in Himalayas. *Telegraph*, 18 April 1978; Wigg R (1978) Delhi knew of nuclear device spying on China. *Times*, 18 April 1978