

THE FOLLY  
OF  
RECOGNISING  
RED CHINA

MOTHER INDIA,  
FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW,  
makes out a case of  
vital significance to  
civilisation

8 As.

THE FOLLY  
OF  
RECOGNISING  
RED CHINA

By ... ..

*All rights reserved*

THE FOLLY  
OF  
RECOGNISING  
RED CHINA

by  
K.D. Sethna

First edn.: 1950  
Pdf: 2015.

## PREFACE

*MOTHER INDIA, Fortnightly Review*, with its motto, "Great is truth and it shall prevail", has always stood above political parties and economic "isms" refused to be impressed by mere appearances, however imposing, and approached every problem—political, economic, philosophical, cultural or any other—from the viewpoint of the highest spiritual ideal that historical India has known: the free and many-sided and dynamic growth of the Godhead secret within man. *MOTHER INDIA's* treatment, therefore, of the question of recognizing Red China is in a class of its own and, in the midst of much darkened counsel in the country, has gone straight to fundamental facts. It is a treatment that, with an explicitness making no convenient reservation, has come to conclusions in basic agreement with the policy of the U.S.A. in this particular matter. Representing a body of enlightened Indian opinion, a public fit though few, *MOTHER INDIA* wishes the American Government full success in the work it has undertaken with a foresight and resolution remarkable under the circumstances of wide-spread fumbling and wavering by even democratic countries.

The present booklet dovetails, with appropriate revisions and additions, the text of three editorials published at short intervals; October 29, 1949—December 10, 1949—January 7, 1950.

7-1-50

K.D. SETHNA,  
Editor.



## THE FOLLY OF RECOGNISING RED CHINA

The Indian Government has made a New Year's gift of recognition to Mao Tse-tung. In our opinion it has committed a blunder whose gravity beggars description. Our earnest hope is that somehow the blunder and its consequences will be counteracted by the pressure of a more enlightened world-opinion and world-policy.

When Pandit Nehru assured America that no hasty decision without joint consultation with the western democracies would be taken in the matter, he made us proud of having at the helm a responsible statesman conscious of the many world-problems connected with Communism, and not a mere party man with an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist bee in his bonnet buzzing outworn slogans so loudly that the word of the Time Spirit never reached his tympanum. But his own personal sympathy with several of Marx's economic principles to which Mao has loudly proclaimed his allegiance was a danger that could not be overlooked and there was the possibility of his judgment of fundamentals getting coloured to a certain degree and of his sympathy serving in some measure as a drag on the movement to reach the right position. Under such circumstances we should not be much surprised at the Government's letting itself be unduly influenced at last by arguments, publicised by interested groups, to the effect that Mao had practically all China to back him up, that he was working for the good of the Chinese people and that, in any case, to ignore so huge a phenomenon as his conquest would show a serious and harmful lack of the sense of reality. In addition, there was perhaps the fear lest Indian Labour which is guided by



Leftist leaders and unthinkingly favours Mao should be alienated, with consequences unpleasant to Congress during the next elections. The sharp student our Government has often been of far-reaching international considerations has been overwhelmed by factors that seem to have nothing to do with sound logic and true vision: the proof that such factors have been operative is the impulsive hurry, the reckless precipitancy with which the Government has rushed into recognition, not even trying to concert its gesture with any by the rest of the Commonwealth or to ascertain the final development of America's policy towards Chiang Kai-shek.

What has happened is most regrettable. But let us not be misunderstood when we say this. We do not cast cynical doubt on the Government's sincerity of purpose. Neither do we imply that any other party in power than Congress would have acted differently or refrained from keeping its eye on election-chances. The Socialists who appear to be the chief rivals to Congress were the most clamorous for establishing diplomatic and trade relations with Mao. There was hardly a leader of any effective political party in India who advocated non-recognition. India under Congress has at least three achievements to her credit in the international sphere. One is her dogged stand against either Kashmir's absorption into Pakistan or its partition. The second is her choice to be a republic without leaving the Commonwealth. The third is her close approach in several matters to the United States of America. Her Commonwealth ties and her eagerness for American friendship are, for all her resolve to join neither the Western bloc nor the Eastern, salutary to civilization. Parties in opposition to Congress would have taken no less firm a stand on Kashmir; but none of them would have done their bit so well for civilization at large. Whatever its faults, Congress is the least blind of all the political parties in action today. So when we condemn the

Government's move in the China affair we are not starting a campaign against Congress. But being the least blind does not make Congress an illumined party. Some of its acts of short-sightedness are ghastly, and the recognition of Mao can be shown to be the ghastliest.

### **Can Recognition be Legally Justified?**

Let us look clearly at the whole issue of Red China's status. Just because the Nationalist Government is being beaten in battle it is not rendered illegal. Chiang Kai-shek was recognised as China's legitimate head by the whole world. In 1945 even Russia agreed by treaty to acknowledge no other government than his. On the strength of its legitimacy this government was allotted a seat in the U.N. To repudiate it is to act in flagrant contravention of international law. And so long as this Government is still on Chinese soil, however battered, however shrunken, it remains all the more the sole legal representative of the Chinese people. Even if it were forced out of China, the legality would not lapse. During the last war, the Free French Government had its headquarters in London; so too did the Polish Government. Nobody talked of recognizing Hitler's Yes-men at Vichy or his stooges at Warsaw. If Russia lost little time in breaking with Chiang she has gone back on her 1945 agreement and violated international law. For India to follow suit is to adopt a thoroughly dishonest and reprehensible policy.

Russia's argument is that Chiang's government is now proved to be a provincial affair and not representative of the Chinese people's will. Before going deeper into the subject, we have to reply: "Suppose Mao were in Chiang's shoes. Would Russia have condemned him as merely provincial?" The fact is that, if the conditions had been reversed, she would never have treated Mao as she has done Chiang. She has welcomed Mao because he is a

Communist and because Chiang has been sufficiently defeated and deserted and because her possession of the atom bomb has emboldened her to flout treaties. Her action has really nothing to do with the question whether Mao stands for the bulk of the Chinese people. It is wholly a party-move made at the right psychological moment—a move which comes as the logical culmination of the policy she has been pursuing for a long time. It will be remembered that the entire military equipment of one million Japanese troops captured by her in Manchuria had been conveniently allowed by Stalin to fall into Mao's hands and that Chiang's *débaclé* started as the direct result of this gift.

The motives behind Russia's recognition are plain enough to read if we mark her behaviour towards the newly born State of Indonesia. The settlement giving rise to this State has satisfied Indonesian aspirations to the fullest and India is particularly happy because she took a prominent and decisive part in pressing on the U.N.O. Indonesia's claim against the Dutch. But Moscow has resorted to its 43<sup>rd</sup> veto in order to suspend from further activity the U.N. Commission which has advised and helped the Dutch-Indonesian authorities, and in order to prevent a message of goodwill being sent by General Assembly to the new Republic. What every democracy has hailed as a most happy event and a great triumph of the cause of national freedom has been described by the Soviet Union as a new form of colonialism inspired by a "conspiracy" between Dr. Hatta and the American representative on the U.N. Commission. All this throws into relief two points. First, there is a complete cleavage between Russia's concept of liberty, independence, popular support, and the concept common to the West and India and all Asia outside Red China, a complete cleavage which proves that what we call a legitimate government is

not what Russia means by the same phrase. Second, she labours under no hesitation in condemning out of hand any newly born government which is not modelled on her own system or that of her *protégés*, the latest and biggest of whom is Mao's China. Her condemnation emphasises how much at variance she is with India about a Government for whose success India is morally responsible to a great extent. She may in the future recognise, for reasons of her own, the Indonesian state, but the recognition will be always under explicit protest and never imply that her ideas and ours tally. Clearly enough we should be able to perceive that she is not concerned with true popular government anywhere and that we, in recognizing Mao, have taken a step, against whose soundness a *prima facie* argument is constituted precisely by our having followed her example.

### **Is There Any Moral Ground for Recognition?**

Let us, however, face the question: Is Mao China as at one time Chiang was? If he is, there would be some sort of moral argument for officially accepting him even though the cause of civilization might demand opposition on the ideological level. But there is not the slightest doubt that the entire revolt of the Communists has been inspired and engineered by Russia, directly as well as indirectly. The Chinese Nationalist Government has brought in the U.N. General Assembly the charge that the Soviet Union has violated the U.N. Charter by acts undermining the political and territorial integrity of China. Until the General Assembly passes judgment, no western state can technically be in a position to take Mao at his word that he stands for the Chinese people. Technicality apart, every western state knows that the uprising in China was never a spontaneous one so far as the Communist colour it has assumed is concerned. What was spontaneous was the

dissatisfaction of several groups with Chiang—not, of course, Chiang the man with his ascetic virtues, his mellow Confucian wisdom, his passionate love for his country, but Chiang the politician and the ruler with his inefficient corrupt bureaucracy, his impotence to check greedy landlordism and capitalist exploitation, his recourse to the Secret Police originally as a counter-move against Communist intrigue but ultimately as a weapon wielded by fear and suspicion on a rather indiscriminate scale. Yes, there was considerable resentment at Chiang's failure to live up to his ideals. Yet this resentment had nothing to do with preference for Communism. Naturally the landless peasants were glad to see their oppressors "liquidated" and to get property for themselves without paying anything. But more than three-quarters of the population—some observers estimate as much as 95%—are not concerned with and do not understand the Communist ideology. In the first flush of their good fortune they do not realize what horrors of subservience and slavery are in store for them under the name of collectivisation. Nor do the other under-dogs look beyond their noses: it is sufficiently exhilarating to find society being overturned, workmen in factories becoming managers, postmen becoming postal commissioners, inexperienced students becoming mayors of cities. For various reasons the Kuomintang regime has been attacked by various sections of the Chinese people. But to call the people Communist is a grave blunder. It is the leaders who are Communist. Mao does not represent China by his Communism. If he is claiming that there is anything else behind him than a good number of ignorant masses who had been fed up with the incompetence and cupidity of the Kuomintang regime, he is making false pretences.

This is the first fact we have to keep in mind. The second is that in the territories occupied by Mao, a large number of men are forcibly herded under the Communist

banner. One particular party has imposed itself: that is all. The ruthlessness that goes with all Communism has been at work in China. No opposition is tolerated. Nobody dare think as he likes. You are either a Communist or a corpse. Mao has been trained in Russia and we must not let his elegant habit of writing poetry or his powers of persistence and endurance or his military qualities blind us to the pitiless iron that has entered his heart with Stalinism. What is working through him is Stalin. And it is not even a nationalist Stalin as in the case of Tito who has learnt all his lessons from the terrible Master of Kremlin but who has refused to let Yugoslavia dance to Russia's puppet-strings. Mao is utterly Stalin's man. Even against a remote chance of Titoism Stalin had taken precautionary steps by securing from Mao the autonomy of Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia and Manchuria—border provinces which lie along Russia's eastern frontier from Turkestan to Siberia and which, being under inevitable Russian influence, can be pressed any time as a lever to force Mao into collaboration. But Mao is not likely to contemplate any falling away from Stalin. Without the slightest reservation he has declared his solidarity with him. And he has also made no secret of Stalin's having cooked the entire dish of the revolt against Chiang by using for Communist purposes the growing discontent with the old system. Was it not in last October that he proclaimed his "undying gratitude to the glorious Soviet Union without whose aid and support victory would never have been possible"? And has he not again lately—on the occasion of Stalin's birthday—said: "For many years the Soviet people and the Soviet government have repeatedly given aid to the cause of liberation of the Chinese people. These acts of friendship on the part of the Soviet people and the government, which the Chinese people received during the days of their severe trial, will never be forgotten"?

This is the second fact we have to remember. The third fact is that, as American papers have observed with a grasp of fundamentals, the Red Commissars installed by the Communists are only titular heads of a military government. There has been no election such as a democratic country could respect. The Government cannot, therefore, claim to be based on the popular will. It is just a replica of the puppet regime in North Korea. One recalls also the "State of Manchukuo" set up by Japan in Manchuria in the heyday of her Fascism. Communism and Fascism operate behind absolutely identical fronts so far as general government machinery goes: no free choice of representatives is allowed. To speak of a popular base to the present Chinese rule is to forget that political democracy is the first casualty under Stalinists just as it is under Hitlerites. It is noteworthy in this context that the United States and the other western democracies had resolutely refused to recognise Japan's "State of Manchukuo." The situation at the moment is in no political respect different from the one which faced these countries at that time.

Shrewd students of Chinese affairs have not been slow to perceive that the very constitution of Red China published by Mao gives the lie to his claim of representing the millions under his yoke. This constitution is out and out centralised. The phrase used in article 2 is "democratic centralism." But it is not difficult to see that the adjective "democratic" is particularly meaningless in the present context. For article 1 speaks, among other things, of "various nationalities within the country." If China consists of various nationalities, the only government which at least on paper can call itself democratic would be a federal one. Where the governmental structure makes no pretence in even theory to be federal and be founded on the voluntary association of those nationalities, how can there be a people's government? There is indeed talk of convoking in

the future an All-China People's Congress on the basis of universal suffrage, but till such time that this happens it is self-contradictory to speak, in the same breath, of "centralism" and of government by the people. The Soviet Constitution, on which the Chinese is supposed to be modelled, is at least free from such centralism in theory. It claims to be federal and tries to exhibit in certain respects some resemblance to those of the western democracies. The resemblance means very little in actual practice: as Pandit Nehru remarked in the U.S.A., Soviet Russia is an extreme example of centralization and regimentation, reducing freedom to almost a cipher. So we can gather from its historical precedent that the All-China People's Congress, even if it brings in federalism, will not constitute authentic democracy. But at the moment when drastic centralism is explicitly the order of the day it is absurd to suggest that Mao stands for the common people. We look in vain for any mention of fundamental rights of citizens in the constitution he has set up. It is pure and simple dictatorship or at best the grip of a self-elected clique. Perhaps one might plead that the unsettled condition of China calls for a military centralism, but such a defence, even were it valid, is quite different from holding that the military centralism is actually a people's democracy!

Already the uncontrollable vastness of China and the half-as-old-as-Time temperament of the people are bringing out, despite every Communist curb, the non-representative character of Mao's new-fangled Marxism. Hordes of guerillas, having not the least affiliation with the Kuomintang, are scorching the tail of the Red armies. The Communist High Command has admitted, as Bruno Kroker lately pointed out, that there is about as much trouble brewing in the rear as if the Nationalist armies were making a stand—a firm stand—in the field against them. Civil disobedience campaigns are being formed whenever a



new Red regulation cannot be enforced with a sufficient number of bayonets. Independent non-Kuo mintang uprisings have been reported from Taming near Tsinan in Shantung, Hsuchang near Kaifang in Honan, the Soochow-Wusih rice-growing area in central China and the Lake region between Hankow and Kiukang. In diverse localities which the southward-advancing Red troops have left loosely policed, the masses are reawakening and in some instances going to the extent of even massacring the Communist officials. A strange state of affairs, indeed, in a People's Republic!

To be insistent, therefore, on recognizing the Peking regime is to betray the democratic cause in the most extreme sense. At the least one must watch and wait. One wonders why in addition to blinking the all-too-patent fact of a throttling militarism there was the hurry to decide this way or that. Several new governments have had to labour on for a long time before getting recognition. The U.S.A., for instance, did not recognise Soviet Russia for seventeen years. Franco's Spain has had no recognition up to now, although she is of one mind with Britain and America as regards Communism. Even the Government of Chiang Kai-shek which overthrew the Manchu Dynasty in 1912 was refused full recognition by President Wilson for a whole year. And, remember, there was little doubt anywhere about Chiang being a liberator. If under such circumstances there was no precipitate decision, why the feverishly quick vote in Mao's favour when he comes with, to put it mildly, very questionable credentials?

### **Recognition a Grave Danger to Civilised Values**

Neither morally nor legally can there be by any right-thinking democratic nation an official recognition of Mao. What is tempting Britain and at moments America to put moral and legal factors aside is business interests. They

have investments in China and they must be asking themselves whether by establishing diplomatic relations with Mao they can safeguard these investments in spite of his Communist dye. Again, it is patent that China is in vital need of reconstruction and she cannot do without British and American help in the future by way of industrial equipment and "Know how". This was hinted by the Chinese Foreign Minister, Chou En-lai, in his statement: "I believe the establishment of normal relations between my Government and the countries of the world is necessary." But a colossal folly would be committed if business took precedence over wider considerations. And we may remark that the wider considerations are much more than simply a moral and legal punctilio. Although morally and legally the case for not recognizing the new Government is sound enough, an even greater reason is the increase of strength such a recognition would bring to a cause violently antagonistic to civilised values. For one thing, it would open the gates to the flow of British and American industrial equipment into China, which while filling the pockets of businessmen will turn what is now a mere military success into a fast-developing all-round efficiency. A China growing technologically a second Russia would be a mighty menace to all countries, and most to India who is at present the best bulwark the spirit to democracy has in the South-Asian continent. In the second place, an officially recognised Red China would have one of the five permanent seats in the U.N. Security Council and serve Russia as an important ally in challenging every progressive measure initiated by America and Britain: only France's vote would then remain to be influenced and France, owing both to her variable internal condition and the Viet-Nameese imbroglio, might not in every instance be quite invulnerable to high-power diplomatic offensives. In the third place, embassies of Red China would be set up

all over the world, enjoying various privileges and functioning as centres for disseminating violent doctrines and sowing fanatic hatreds and blind discontents. The Chinese Reds have done immense harm in Malaya and Indo-China. They are hovering dangerously on the outskirts of India today, and their having an official acknowledged embassy in our country would provide them with huge advantages. More than any other country India has to be vigilant against Red China.

The *entente* of Mao Tse-tung with Stalin constitutes an alarming aggrandizement of anti-civilisation forces. America seems to perceive this more clearly and acutely than either Britain or India. Mr. Acheson desires America to reconcile herself to the loss of her financial stakes in China and realizes that (to use Senator Knowland's phrase) opening trade with the Communist regime is like shipping scrap iron and oil to Japan before Pearl Harbour. That is why several times he has called Mr. Bevin to conference in order to work out a common policy and effect a definite relegation by Britain of trade interests to a lower shelf. For Mr. Bevin's benefit a thorough survey of vital problems has been made in the light of confidential reports from American State Department officials in the East that Mao is hand-in-glove with Stalin. Of course Mr. Acheson's view must have highlighted the threat mainly to American power and the American constitution and the American way of life and whatever in the rest of the world resembles or approximates to it. But, even in a proper envisaging of this threat to things American, there is the nucleus of a true vision of world values. For, no matter how faulty America may be in part of her racial policy and of her "go-getting" temperament, she cherishes the ideals and institutions of intellectual and political freedom, which leave the way open for evolution of the divinity hidden within the human consciousness. India, historically, has been the intensest aspirant after the Godlike, the Eternal: if she is to be faithful

to her own soul and to the cause of human evolution she would do well to walk hand in hand with America in all matters pertaining to international relationships at a time when the two giants in the field are the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Her acting in close concert with America will help the latter herself to acquire a more sensitive grip on essential issues and develop a finer receptivity to the Powers of the Spirit that are striving in India today to inaugurate a new age.

We are not asking India to commit herself to the western bloc. The western bloc is not a system of infallible and all-wise agencies: it is built of human stuff and is likely to make mistakes. Besides, its aims may not always conduce to India's welfare. India need not be bound to it in every respect nor become a helpless instrument to whatever business-mentality may operate within it. But she must never fail to see that America's policy vis-à-vis Soviet Russia is mostly on the right lines and that therefore she herself whose culture is the very antithesis to all that is signified by Dialectical Materialism must never do anything that may strengthen the turbulent and tyrannical forces embodying this doctrine.

### **Mao's Connection with the Indian Communists**

Not that we should be reactionary enough to plump wholly for Chiang, warts and all. We Must keep a critical attitude to the degradation into which his rule has fallen. But degradation does not signify that the principles behind his rule are basically antagonistic to civilisation and to our spiritual genius. If granting recognition to Mao or withholding it from him means our siding with him or sympathizing with Chiang and if we feel that on the ground of Chinese popular opinion we can do neither, the question that should guide us is: How do Chiang and Mao stand respectively in terms of our own national life and culture? Here the answer depends entirely on whether Mao the

Communist represents what is represented by the Indian Communists against whom our Government has issued a drastic charge-sheet and whom our Prime Minister has unequivocally labeled as enemies of India and subverters of all our values.

In general, nobody in his senses can deny that Communism is a world force and, except for Yugoslavia, not a nationalist movement in each country. Every book in Soviet Russia, intended for the indoctrination of the masses, underlines with Stalin's explicit approval a Leninist principle which may be stated thus: "After consolidating Marxism in Russia, inspire revolutionary movements in other countries, help them to overthrow by violence the existing governments and in the event of necessity come out with even armed force against these governments until Marxism is established everywhere." In the near past Stalin may have discredited this principle in the course of some interviews to western visitors, and he may even have put it aside in the interests of national or international expediency. But it has remained stressed in all his publications in Russia, down to the very latest editions of them. And at present the European Cominform is proof enough of its being in force. Further, Peking Radio's broadcasts on November 28 confirmed the creation of a Far Eastern Cominform to bolster up Communist-led movements in Southern Asia. Liu Shao-chi, Red China's spokesman at the Peking conference of Communist delegates from twenty countries including the Soviet European bloc and Asia and Australasia, said that the Chinese people must give their moral and material support to these movements. This sufficiently connects Mao with the Indian Communists.

But there is more than a general connection. We have proof positive of his hostility to the Indian Government and to Nehru in especial. There is opinion in some quarters that the act of recognizing Mao must produce on him an

impression of friendliness and draw an amiable response from him. Of course he must be highly gratified if India does not set her face against him; it would serve his purpose excellently. But would it ever make him look upon India as friendly? Whatever be India's own feelings, she will remain an enemy in Mao's eyes no less than in Stalin's so long as she is non-Communist. To be non-communist is to be, in their view, a confederate of "Fascist beasts". Not even a Socialist regime is regarded by Stalin and his followers as being amicable. They make no distinctions in the final summing-up. No country is accorded by them the right to choose its own government. No country is considered good-neighbourly unless it goes Red. Pandit Nehru's much-emphasised neutrality produces not the least warming of the cockles of Stalin's heart. Neither is Mao rendered the least bit affectionate by Nehru's unwillingness to be teamed up with either bloc. We have only to tune in to Peking Radio to realize with our own ears the attitude of Red China towards us. In preparation for the conference on a master-plan for revolution in Asia as well as in the Pacific a series of talks was begun against the imperialism of India in South-East Asia. Pandit Nehru was attacked together with Doctor Hatta. And there was the uncompromising statement that all-existing non-Communist East-Asian Governments would be swept away and "democratic people's republics" set up instead. Again, less than a week after Nehru's birthday, the New China Radio broadcasted a letter from Mao to the Indian Communist leader Ranadive, in which it was openly stated that India would not remain long under the yoke of imperialism and its collaborators. Whether India recognised Red China or no, she would never cease to be marked out as a field for subversive activity leading to the downfall of everything that the idealist in her stands for. Not a shadow of doubt is left that if Mao were working in India he would be at the head of the Indian Communists. Nor can we doubt

that if his partisans got an official status in our country the Indian Communists would be considerably benefited. Hence he must be Enemy Number One of all the best in Indian life and culture.

The line this gives us in the matter of recognition is clear. If the Indian Communists occupied by force a part of our country and went on enlarging their hold, would we ever think of granting them recognition? Mao who is in fullest possible accord with them has the same standing in China as they have here. Is it not self-betrayal on our part, nationally and culturally, to have committed the mistake of making him a New Year's present of recognition?

Our Prime Minister has talked time and again of the Chinese Communists as being chiefly land-reformers, agrarian progressives. Even if we ignore the fact that the new Chinese land-laws have no long-range policy of any kind to improve Chinese agriculture but are merely confiscatory, taking the property of the "haves" and redistributing it among the "have-nots" and in most cases apportioning the best fields to party members and their friends and in general doing the redistribution with a vast amount of brutality—even if we ignore this fact, we must never forget that Socialist doctrines about landed property are one thing on paper and quite another when woven into a scheme of Stalinist world-revolution and totalitarianism. The Chinese Reds are not disinterested apostles of agrarian reform: they must be viewed in the ominous context of a global strategy to put back the clock of human history. Would our government call our Indian Communists, with whom Mao's sympathy definitely lies, agrarian reformers? Would it say that they should be regarded chiefly as gossellers of a better land-arrangement?

### **Was Recognition Dictated by Any Military Danger?**

If the Indian Communists are, as our Government has

averred, anti-national, anti-cultural, what exactly could have blinkered its eyes? Have alarmists, exclaiming at the ugly shadow of Mao near our own frontiers, done it? Mao has revived China's right of suzerainty over Tibet. The right is pretty remote history and international jurists are not willing to concede it easily. But if there is the right, it can be said to belong to the legitimate ruler of China and if Tibet does not regard Mao as a legitimate ruler she cannot be blamed for resisting him. Unfortunately, except for her difficult terrain, she has no defence to speak of. It is quite on the cards that soon she will be added to Mao's territorial possessions. But the story is different with Nepal. Mao will perhaps wish to reach out through Tibet and interfere with Nepal's present status. Nepal has good defence resources although an out-of-date political structure, and India will be particularly interested in the security of this neighbour of hers, since there are sixteen railroads leading from the Nepalese border into our country and the Gurkha soldiers are an important part of our own army. An extension of Mao's rule to Nepal will lay India open to easy attack by him and therefore cannot under any circumstances be tolerated. It will mean definitely a prelude to war between China and India. What the alarmists declared is that if we did not recognise Mao he would precipitate a military clash with us.

But they are mistaken in two respects. India's recognition of Mao will not stop his coveting Nepal if interference in Nepal is an item already included in the Communist plan for self-aggrandisement in Asia. Secondly, India will not be alone in her fight with him over Nepal. The influential British periodical, the Manchester Guardian, suggested in an editorial on November 18 that if Nepal's security is going to be in any way endangered India must forestall the danger. The editorial goes further and says: "If, in India's designs for the security of Nepal, British support is desired, it would doubtless be forthcoming." So there is



not the slightest cause for fear that Mao would come to military grips with us. He knows too well that we shall have the strongest support from Britain and, if necessary, from the U.S.A.: the latter, we may recollect, established diplomatic relations with Nepal in 1947 and emphasised on that occasion the complete independence of this country. Most probably, any tampering with Nepal will be the signal for a world war and Mao will never be advised by Stalin to start such a conflagration. Perhaps he will be asked to desist even from attacking Tibet: as late as 1945 the British Government informed China which was then in Chiang's friendly hands that it was interested in preserving Tibet's autonomy and wished to have direct relations with Lhasa through the Government of India, and the latest reports from London indicate that though Britain may acknowledge Chinese suzerainty over Tibet she will do so only if the Tibetans are allowed to enjoy full local autonomy and if there is no disconcerting talk by Mao of "liberating" her. In any case, Nepal is safe in the present world context from Chinese military occupation: steps would immediately be taken to stop even infiltration tactics. By refusing to recognise Mao we ran not the least risk of a threat by his troops. We could have turned a deaf ear to the alarmists.

### **Is Recognition a Proof of Our Neutrality?**

However, short of military conflict, Mao's basic antagonism to democracies like India would do its worst, no matter how friendly we tried to be. Our friendliness can only give this worst a more subtle garb and at the same time immensely increase its possibilities of harm. Not to see the basic antagonism is political childishness. We must not be taken in by parties that paint the problem of recognition as if it were a test of India's vaunted independent foreign policy. They make it a point of honour almost that we should recognise Mao lest we should be

taken to be camp-followers of the anti-Soviet bloc. But the truth is that even the Commonwealth to which India belongs has not been unanimous. While Dr. Evatt, Australian Minister of External Affairs, was vehemently against recognition unless there was a guarantee about Hongkong, Mr. Bevin, the Foreign Secretary, was prepared to waive the issue of guarantee and has personally been always in favour of the opposite course both because of so-called realism and because of commercial stakes in the Far East. South Africa and Pakistan were neutral, ready to abide by the decision of the rest. New Zealand alone was completely averse to recognition but her latest attitude seems different. Canada, though desiring to take time, has not refused to accept Mao. It would, therefore, be incorrect to charge India with subservience to foreign democracies if she were anti-recognition. But ultimately the question of India trying to evade the suspicion of being taken in tow by other powers is irrelevant. She should not make it her business to avoid seeming this or that. She has only to be true to herself. To accept Mao just because non-acceptance might cause misgivings about India's independence of mind and make Stalin lift his eyebrows is to let adventitious circumstances dictate her decision. True independence consists simply in not being definitively influenced by anything except the highest ideal one can envisage. In the present case it is quite evident that India's highest ideal is absolutely antipodal to what Red China represents. India has lived for thousands of years in a many-sided quest of the Supreme Spirit and tried to mould her outer life from deep within—every aspect of existence acquiring value only inasmuch as it manifested the light of the Infinite, the mystery of the Eternal. Communism indulges in the fantasy that economic factors were predominantly responsible for the rishis who saw the Golden Immortal beyond time's darkness and that from a proper study of the means of

production in the of age the Mahabharata, we can explain the ineffable epoch-making presence of Sri Krishna and the Vision of the Cosmic Being he vouchsafed to Arjuna on the battlefield that became the symbol of man's fight with mortality. The country that gave birth to the Upanishads and the Gita would be untrue to its whole history and betray its own future if to a doctrine which denies the free intellect and the spiritual life it granted a status with possibilities of strengthening Soviet Russia's scheme of a world-revolution against man's inmost soul under the guise of combating capitalism and class-inequality. We may be as modern as we wish and talk of nationalization or mixed economy or collective planning, but unless we choose to perish as a significant entity in the world we can never grip the hand of Mao Tse-tung when we know that this hand will sooner or later be lifted to strike, insidiously if not openly, at the very heart of this dear land of ours which the Avatars have hallowed from age to age.

### **Is it Wrong to Reject Mao while Recognising Stalin?**

Perhaps we shall be told: "If you think Communism to be so pernicious when it confronts us from China, why not extend your condemnation to Soviet Russia herself who is the Arch-Communist and without whom China could never have gone Red? Is not not unfair to swallow the camel of Stalin and strain at the gnat of Mao?" The answer to this sophistry is: "Though we may regret it, Stalin has succeeded in establishing himself internationally. Various circumstances such as the joint front which came to be formed against Hitler have helped to bring about this situation. The western democracies at the moment cannot refuse his delegates a share in international deliberations. All they can do is to guard against his aggressive policy and neutralize his influence within their own borders. India has virtually acted in concert with them except for the fact that

she is not in absolute agreement with certain traits of the western powers and cannot join their bloc. Her neutrality means that she is on common ground with them with regard to the fundamental issues of international politics but in some important superstructural matters she finds them fall short. In the position *vis-à-vis* Russia she stands more or less as they do. It may not be a completely consistent position, and though she must develop a clear-cut rejection of all Russian influence she cannot in the present context of world affairs act very much differently from what she is doing. This does not imply that faced with Communism in other circumstances she must follow the same line. Red China comes with an entirely new practical problem and it has got to be tackled without the shadow of our past mistakes or necessities obscuring its features. Not only have we the full power to withhold recognition but we have also a greater insight into the terrible nature of the Communist fanaticism, thanks to Russia's coming out at last in her true colours. Whether Mao be a gnat or not, we have every justification for straining at him. It is to be hoped that we shall regurgitate the Stalinist camel which we have found difficult to digest, but there is no logic or ethic in waiting till then to deny Red China the slightest chance of increase in power through an international status."

### **Is It Realism to Recognise Mao?**

India should allow herself to be fooled by no superficial argument. And perhaps the most superficial is the pretence of what is termed "realism." All over Britain it has been tricked out in one dress or another. Even Mr. Churchill, the champion of anti-Communism, has used it. But Britain's mind is easy to read. What weighed with it was commercial stakes—1000 million pounds invested in trade with China. It forgot that, as Christopher Buckley has said, throughout South-East Asia and especially in Malaya where the

Communist party is banned and the British are fighting its armed rebellion for the last 18 months, recognition of Mao would be interpreted as a signal diplomatic defeat for the British—in fact, as a Far Eastern Munich—and lend an additional impetus to the rebels. All this forgetting is horrible to think of and we cannot believe Britain's great love of liberty will not sooner or later assert itself; yet we can find at least some show of an excuse in the reluctance to let a lot of money go down the drain. It is a kind of low realism to value money so worshipfully, and to it Mao is likely to seem a big enough reality. We have no excuse at all, good or bad.

The mere fact of Mao's wide conquests cannot impress a sober intelligence with any finality rendering his regime radically real. To be sure, it is pretty solid as far as military strength can make it such. Yet it is not so solid as fatalists might imagine. Did not Major-General Claire Chenault, an "old China hand" who helped stem Japanese advances with his Flying Tigers, express his reasoned conviction that, with the help of an American military mission such as is aiding Greece and of an international air-force patterned after the Flying Tigers, China could still be saved? Another consideration diminishing solidity is that the Russian bloc is in no position to supply China's needs and, without American economic assistance, China's industrial backwardness would be almost perpetuated and the present bold facade reveal an interior crumbling from inherent weakness. But even if Mao's regime is a reality as solid as it appears to a first surface glance, its lease of life is not quite independent of our inner acceptance of it, our installing of it within our consciousness. An inner acceptance gives a hostile force like Communism a foothold in the mind, whether of an individual or a group, by means of which that force may leap forward to greater undreamed-of achievements. Gradually we may be inclined

to acquiesce in more and more suggestions favourable to its programme; gradually a larger field of thought may be laid open to its fanaticism. An insidious defeatism is encouraged as soon as the mind accords explicit status to an undesirable phenomenon. So long as we do not surrender the mind to it as being inevitable, firm-founded, fully moulded, we keep our inner defences intact and deny it that last touch of subtle dynamism by which alone it can play to its utmost a destructive part in our own future. To take from our own experience an instance not comparable in monstrosity to Communism but undesirable enough in its own context: the British rule in India was at one time the solidest thing conceivable and all efforts against it seemed foredoomed to failure. But we never gave its *fait accompli* acceptance within our consciousness. If we had, we should never have got prepared to remove it when world circumstances tended in our favour. Because we refused it the last touch of subtle dynamism, one of the most stone-solid realities in history fell to pieces and left a free India.

The argument from realism, on even the ordinary level, is most inconclusive, to say the least. When we take it to the level from which India especially should consider it, it loses all authenticity. Authentic realism can mean for India nothing else save a constant sense of the basic and perfect reality that is the Divine, a persistent effort to co-operate with the evolutionary urge in the world higher and higher towards the full emergence of this reality, a refusal as much as possible to give support to all that sets at a discount the pure cry of the inmost soul for its supreme Self in the Godhead, an effective understanding of the truth that what least manifests or aspires after the Divine and the Eternal is of all things the least real and should never be allowed to sustain its simulacrum on our sanction and acquiescence. It is a sham realist who never looks beyond appearances and the impact of the crudely immediate. India would have

been a genuine realist only if she had reversed her present role and given the Commonwealth and the world a glorious lead by keeping Mao at arm's length. By not doing so, she has been guilty of a violation of her deepest nature. Whatever be the attitude of other countries, her recognition of Red China is not only an egregious error of judgment but also a symbolic act of national and cultural suicide.

### **The Night Ahead and America's Light**

As a result of what we have done, we stand today on the verge of disasters we can scarcely visualize in their full gravity. Once before in the near past we took a plunge down the precipice. That was when we rejected the Cripps proposals which seemed to come from Britain on the urge of a great inspiration born of a sudden change of heart. No doubt, they were imperfect, but we could have accepted their substance and tried to ship-shape whatever was rough in them. No doubt, also, a turn towards conservatism took place in the Churchill cabinet and considerably hampered Sir Stafford Cripps's movements. But our own peevishness and distrust were mainly to blame for the break-down of the negotiations. We had the trump card and we could have played a winning game, but through lack of vision we threw away our hand. The Muslim League in those days had not acquired the bluster of a year or two later and Congress's giving a "Yea" to Sir Stafford would have meant the establishment of his proposals. India would have had substantial swaraj without the flaw of partition which rendered the freedom won in 1947 so bitter-sweet. A close co-operation between all sections of India's peoples in an all-out endeavour to fight the Japanese who were knocking at our gates would have kindled a singleness of spirit that might have led to a united India for all time. We averted our faces from the God-given chance and created the horrible karma of the massacres that followed partition:

even now we have not outlived the fruits of the unfortunate sowing. It is only by the grace of Providence that India is not an utter shambles of communal fury and also that in spite of our failing to show a united front to the Fascists of Japan they could not cross our borders to spread their odious slavery of mind and life under the guise of "cooperative prosperity." Grace of Providence alone can once more save us from the extreme penalty of missing a second God-given chance of working for the benefit of our country and its culture by returning a decisive "Nay" to the question of recognizing the monstrous growth of Red China.

One despairs of Indian leadership. And when we say this we must hark back to our explanation that not only the leaders of the existing Government but all leaders of India's political parties have made themselves a subject for despair. Congress's failure merely accentuates the darkness. For, leadership must be indeed at a low ebb if not one top-ranking member of our best party could raise his voice against so crowning a folly. Surely our politicians have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. India will never come into her own until this country, famed in the past for her spiritual genius, finds a leader of true inner vision and true revelatory intuition.

At the moment, America remains the bulwark of freedom and civilization. Not that America is untempted to give in. Though, unlike Britain, she is no particular need of a Chinese market for her exports or of venues for capital investment, she is not indifferent to making a good bargain; but perhaps more than commercial interests what weighs with her is a certain strong sympathy with the Chinese people. She would like to believe that the Chinese Communist is somehow different from the Russian brand and this belief is inspired not so much by commercial wishful thinking as by a genuine "soppiness" about the



common masses whom Pearl Buck and others have lovingly delineated. Luckily, there is at the same time a very powerful counteragent on the idealological level, almost an anti-Communist faith and passion matching the fervour which the convinced Communist brings to his job of preparing the ground for a world-revolution in the name of Stalin. This semi-religious opposition on America's part is in practical politics today the one rallying-point for the forces of civilization and it is to be hoped that no hesitation by any country will ultimately count against it. Already its influence is telling on the other western democracies. But one never knows what turn they will take. It would have been extremely advantageous if Britain and the whole Commonwealth had stood by Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson in their determination to boycott Mao at all costs. No country should give countenance to any attempt to persuade it into the sorry mess in which the Indian Government by its thoughtless neglect of the cause of civilization and of our country's spiritual ideal, has landed with an undignified hurry lest any other member of the Commonwealth should forestall us in recognition and make Stalin and Mao Tse-tung suspect the independence of our foreign policy. But even if democracy after democracy fails as India has failed, America with her gigantic powers can still by single opposition undo a good deal of the damage caused by the defaulters. Land of the star-spangled banner, keep your brave eyes lifted to the light of your ideal and with your strong hands direct and defend the civilised world in the night that has gathered all around!