

THE SINO-BURMESE

BORDER QUESTION

RESEARCH BACKGROUNDER

HISTORY OF CHINESE COMMUNIST STRATEGY RE

SINO-BURMESE BORDER QUESTION

(Research Backgrounder)

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THE SINO-BURMESE BORDER QUESTION

The recent border agreement between Communist China and Burma has aroused much interest - particularly in Southeast Asia where the Chinese Communists are clearly seen to be pressing southward along the roads used by ancient Chinese imperialism (Indo-China, Tibet and the Himalayan borderlands). However, it is now evident that Peking is plotting her course carefully, following Lenin's tenet of two steps forward and one backward. Periods of vituperation (anti-Indian and anti-Indonesian campaigns in China) and aggression (Tibet and Ladakh) are sooner or later followed by resurrection of the Panchsheela and Bandung spirit slogans and friendly overtures. The Burmese settlement may presage a new smile campaign toward South and Southeast Asia.

This report gives a general chronology of Burmese-Chinese Communist relations and reviews the Sino-Burmese border issue. This is followed by a documented analysis.

In December 1949, Burma became the first Asian nation to recognize the Peking regime;¹ with a 2,000-kilometre common frontier, Burma has considered it essential to maintain harmony with Communist China.

The common frontier has been the subject of disputes between the two countries for many decades, for the delineation of the border had never been completely settled. By the time the Communists came to power in China, there still remained three areas of dispute along the border, namely, the Kawa area, the Meng-Mao triangular and the area north of the high conical peak.²

In November 1956, the Chinese Communists proposed to the Burmese Government certain "principles" for settling the border problem. Intermittent talks ensued for the next three years which led to the signing of a boundary agreement and a non-aggression treaty in January 1960.³ The boundary agreement appears to put into effect the original Chinese Communist proposals of 1956.

Historical background:

The first attempt to delimit the Sino-Burmese border was made in 1886 when an agreement was reached between Britain and China whereby China gave up her suzerainty over Upper Burma.⁴ The Sino-Burmese boundary was partially surveyed in 1893-94.⁵ The Chinese Government laid claim to Kiang Hung, and this area was ceded to China under the convention of 1894, on the understanding that it would not be ceded to another power.

The convention of 1894, however, left the boundary north of 25°35' N, the latitude of Myitkyina, unsettled. Britain assumed that it would be fixed — as in the sector from Myitkyina to Bhamo — along the high ground between the Irrawaddy-Salween watersheds.⁶

In 1895, China attempted to cede Kiang Hung to France, but Britain objected. As a result a new agreement was drawn up on February 4, 1897, between Britain and China whereby Kiang Hung was returned to Burma and a perpetual lease on Namwan in the Shan State was granted to Britain by China.⁷ The agreement also set up a joint boundary commission which fixed the border area north of the Shan State between 1897 and 1900.⁸ A 200-mile stretch passing through the Wa State, however, was left undemarcated because of disagreements as to where the boundary properly lay. Both Britain and China drew up their own boundary lines known as the Scott Line and the Liu-Chen Line respectively;⁹ and there the matter rested for almost 30 years.

In 1933, a group of Chinese officials in Yunnan published a book denouncing Britain for seizing Chinese territory along the Sino-Burmese border.¹⁰ At the same time silver was discovered in the Lufang area and the Burma Corporation sent prospectors there. The disposition of the area of the silver mines and the location of the Kummeng Shan range of mountains thus again became points of dispute.¹¹

On April 9, 1935 notes exchanged between Sir Alexander Cadogan, the British Minister to China, and Wang Ching-wei, the foreign Minister of China, resulted in the setting up of another joint commission under the chairmanship of Colonel Frederic Iselin of the Swiss Artillery to settle the undemarcated portion of the southern section of the Sino-Burmese border.¹²

The Iselin commission issued its first report on April 24, 1937, but the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War caused it to suspend its work.¹³

During the war, Burma assumed considerable military importance as a supply route to China. The famous Burma Road was built linking Kunming with Lashio. Chinese forces protecting the Burma Road also took the opportunity to occupy the territories to which China laid claim.¹⁴

In 1941, an exchange of notes between Britain and China completed the unfinished work of the Iselin commission by delimiting the Sino-Burmese border in the Wa State.¹⁵ Two months later the Chinese tried to re-open negotiations on the subject.¹⁶ This move was not pressed because of the outbreak of the Pacific War, but after the war China took up the border question again.

In 1947, when Burma became independent, China expressed the "hope" that the border question might be settled "amicably". Fu Chio-chin, Territorial Commissioner in the Chinese Ministry of the Interior, voiced China's claim to territory north of 25°35' N, basing the claim on the fact that the area was part of a State which had paid tribute to China since the seventh century.¹⁷

The Burmese public was greatly aroused, and the Burmese Government replied that the boundary line was clear, that there was no international problem, and that Burma would defend her territory without any hesitation. Faced with this reaction, high Chinese officials tried to allay Burmese fears and suggested the erection of boundary pillars along the boundary of the Wa State. However, owing to rebellions by Communist elements, the Karens and the PVO's (Communist

sympathizers), the Burmese Government was not able to undertake the demarcation work at the time.¹⁸

Communist manoeuvres:

From 1948 onwards, a continual flow of Chinese crossed the frontier into Burma. By 1951 the number of Chinese in Burma was estimated at 300,000.¹⁹ The number rose to about 500,000 in 1954²⁰ and over a million by 1956.²¹ This migration was apparently done with official Chinese Communist cognizance for many of the immigrants were found with official permits for crossing the border.

Coupled with this mass migration were attempts by the Chinese Communists to woo the border tribes and to promote "liberation" movements among them. The sons of chieftains were taken to Yunnan for ideological indoctrination and a number of "autonomous" chous for the Tai, Chinpo, Lisu, Kawa, Lahu and other frontier minorities were set up.²²

An indication of the line to be adopted by the Chinese Communists concerning the minorities, was given in a speech by Chou En-lai at the fourth session of the first National People's Congress on July 9, 1957. Chou declared:

The boundary question has a direct bearing on the interests of the nationalities living in compact communities on the Sino-Burmese border. Therefore, in tackling this question we must specially take into account the interests of these nationalities. We know that the boundary line between two countries is often found dividing into two parts a nationality living in compact communities on the border. This is the result of historical development. On the various sections of the defined boundary between China and Burma, and on the borders between China and other countries, we find people of the same nationality living on both sides of the boundary line. So when we

solve the question of the undefined boundary line between China and Burma, we must realize beforehand that it will be hard to avoid separating the nationalities concerned by the boundary line.²³

Another aspect of the Chinese Communist manoeuvres was the publication of maps and atlases showing their territorial claims. In December of 1950, the Chinese Communists published a map which showed all of Burma north of Bhamo as Chinese territory, although the boundary claimed was marked as "undetermined".²⁴ Upon Burmese representations Peking explained that it was simply a case of an old Nationalist map having been reproduced without revision, because of lack of time.²⁵ The answer lacked credulity as the Nationalists had claimed territory down to Myitkyina only, and not everything north of Bhamo.

In 1953, the Chinese Communists published an atlas showing most of the frontier with Burma as undemarcated and laid claim to everything north of Myitkyina. Referring to the border dispute between Communist China and Burma, the notes to the map of Yunnan said: "These problems await the establishment of a People's Burma and the final victory of the Asian people's revolution; then they can receive a complete and reasonable solution."²⁶

Later, another atlas appeared. The maps in this one did not claim the northern part of Burma and omitted such statements as the one on the establishment of a "People's Burma". However, the maps still claimed a large portion of the Wa State as Chinese.²⁷

Amid all these Chinese Communist manoeuvres, a further complicating factor appeared in the form of Nationalist troops who had fled into Burma from Yunnan. These troops, estimated at about 12,000, fled from Yunnan at various times from the spring of 1950 onwards. Their main base was at Kengtung in the Shan State with an airfield at Monghsat.²⁸

At the outset, the Chinese Communists assured the Burmese Government that they would not violate Burma's border unless Burmese territory was being used by the Nationalists as a base for attacks against them. However, the Burmese frontier north of Myitkyina had apparently been violated by them as early as 1951.²⁹ The following year, more Chinese Communist troops entered the Kawa area, ostensibly to chase after the remnants of the Nationalist troops. The Chinese Communists admitted that their troops were in the area but disputed that the area belonged to Burma. In January of 1953 five units of guerrillas trained in Yunnan and composed of Burmese Communists, Sino-Burmese and Burmese-speaking Chinese crossed the frontier into the Shan and Kachin States.³⁰

Surface harmony:

Despite all these Chinese Communist manoeuvres, surface harmony between the two nations was maintained and much was made of Sino-Burmese friendship. In June 1954, Chou En-lai was invited to Rangoon by U Nu, the Burmese Prime Minister, and the two leaders endorsed the five principles of peaceful co-existence. Speeches on Sino-Burmese friendship were made and the Chinese Communist propaganda organs played up strongly the friendly relations between the two countries.

This atmosphere of cordiality was maintained throughout this period until the Bandung Conference in 1955, and Chou En-lai again visited Rangoon after the conference. In November, however, an armed clash occurred between Chinese and Burmese forces. Peking explained that this was due to "misunderstanding between the outpost units of the two countries in the border region".³¹

From 1956, Peking's military moves along the Sino-Burmese border were intensified and this led to alarm in some Burmese newspapers, notably the Nation.

Diplomatic representations:

In August of 1956, Mme. Soong Ching-ling visited Rangoon on her way to Indonesia. During her stay there, she held discussions with U Nu on the border

problem. From that time onwards diplomatic exchanges began.

In October U Nu went to Peking to discuss the border issue with the Communist Chinese. While there, Chou En-lai put forward a three-point proposal for settling the three main areas of dispute, namely, the Kawa area, the Meng-Mao triangular and the area north of the high conical peak. U Nu held that the proposal was a "fair and reasonable proposal taking account of the interests of both sides".³² The Chinese Communist propaganda machine once more played up Sino-Burmese friendship and urged an agreement be made on the basis of the Chou En-lai proposal.

Twists and turns:

On December 10, Chou En-lai arrived in Rangoon for a 10-day visit. He told 1,000 leading members of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League that he was confident that all outstanding problems between the two countries could be "settled reasonably through peaceful negotiations".³³

Negotiations went ahead with occasional optimistic reports on their progress given out by both sides. However, by 1958 it became apparent that the talks were at a deadlock. This state of affairs lasted till January of 1960 when the Burmese Premier Ne Win visited Peking on the invitation of Chou En-lai. After a number of meetings, a Sino-Burmese border agreement was announced together with a non-aggression treaty.

Although Peking made much out of this agreement on the long-standing border issue, the agreement appears to be no more than the acceptance of the three-point proposal put forward by Communist China in 1956. It is noteworthy that ethnic factors have been included in the agreement, so that it is not impossible for Peking to lay claims to areas populated by tribesmen -- such as the Panhung and Panlao tribes -- who are closely related to tribes living in China.

While the border agreement undoubtedly has some propaganda value for Peking, it still remains to be seen whether it will recoup for the Communist Chinese any

of the goodwill lost through their suppression of the Tibetan uprising and their quarrels with India and Indonesia.

NOTES

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CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

Major developments between Communist China and Burma - based on NCNA news releases and other documents.

1950

- June 8: Diplomatic relations established between Communist China and Burma.
- August 16: U. Myint Thein, Burmese Ambassador to Communist China, presents credentials to Mao Tse-tung.

1951

- March 8: A Chinese Communist map published in December 1950, showing all Burma north of Bhamo as Chinese Territory. The Burmese Prime Minister U Nu says in Parliament that he has taken the matter up with Peking and has been assured that it is simply a case of an old map having been reproduced without revision, for lack of time.

1952

- May 14: An overseas Chinese delegation from Burma presents a "banner" to Mao Tse-tung. "The "banner" is accepted on behalf of Mao by Chu Teh, Commander-in-Chief of the PLA. A statement by the delegation declares: "We have always loved our motherland, but only now we have a peaceful and strong motherland under your brilliant and wise leadership. It is impossible for us overseas Chinese to express our patriotism fully." Chu Teh is also present with a banner. A statement by the delegation says: "The existence of the People's Liberation Army is a strong guarantee for the peaceful construction of China, defence of her frontiers and struggle for world peace."
- September 27: U Hia Maung, Burmese Ambassador to Communist China, presents credentials to Mao Tse-tung.

1953

- January 4: Five units of guerrillas, trained in Yunnan and composed of Burmese Communists, Sino-Burmans, and Burmese-speaking Chinese, cross the frontier into the Shan and Kachin States.
- August 8: A group of the Kachin rebel Naw Seng's soldiers cross the frontier from Yunnan in uniform and make contact with the Burmese Red Flag Communists.

1954

- June 28: Chou En-lai arrives in Rangoon at the invitation of U Nu, Prime Minister of Burma.

- June 29: Chou En-lai and U Nu issue a statement affirming the "five principles": 1) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; 2) non-aggression; 3) non-interference in each other's internal affairs; 4) equality and mutual benefit; and 5) peaceful co-existence.
- October 11: The Burmese Government notifies the United Nations that it will use force if necessary against the remaining Chinese Nationalist troops in Burma.
- December 1: U Nu, Burmese Prime Minister, arrives in Peking for a visit.
- December 2: In an editorial the Jen Min Jih Pao declares: "There is no Sino-Burmese question which cannot be solved by negotiation in the spirit of the five principles for peaceful co-existence."
- December 12: A communique issued by Chou En-lai and U Nu in Peking states: "In view of the incomplete delimitation of the boundary line between China and Burma, the two Premiers held it necessary to settle this question in a friendly spirit at an appropriate time through normal diplomatic channels."

1955

- September 21: A group of the PLA officers and civilian officials come to the border opposite the Kachin State, inspect the border guards, boundary posts, and issue instructions to the villagers on the Chinese side of the line, with regard to the establishment of local political committees.
- November 20: Owing to "misunderstanding", fire is exchanged between the outpost units of Communist China and Burma in the Wa State (about 10 miles within Burmese territory).

1956

- January 2: Mme. Soong Ching Ling, Vice-Chairman of Communist China's NPC Standing Committee arrives at Rangoon for a visit.
- February 7: A party of Chinese Communist officials cross the Burmese frontier to observe a meeting of 2,000 people of various nationalities at Lweje. The Burmese Home Minister delivers a speech. He emphasizes the desirability of demarcating the frontier.
- July 19: 23 Chinese males, 2 females and 4 minority people who make illegal entry into Sima Village in the Kachin State are arrested at 2 a.m.
- 21: 3,000 Chinese Communist troops enter Longseng after destroying the boundary pillar at Namnika.

- July 31: The Nation reveals that Chinese Communists troops have pushed forward 60 miles along a 500-mile stretch.
- A statement issued by the Burmese Government says: It is not true, as stated in the Nation, that Chinese troops have occupied Mankungam, Mogmung and two other villages between Hpimaw and Sadon... The actual position is that some Chinese troops entered Burmese territory and established outposts on Burmese soil in the Wa State in close proximity to the China-Burma border. The Burmese Government have already brought this to the attention of the Government of the People's Republic of China and negotiations are in progress."
- August 1: Chinese Communist troops enter Burmese territory in the southern area of the border.
- August 4: An "observer" of the Jen Min Jih Pao says: "The report spread by the Nation and its charges against China are entirely groundless."
- August 7: U Ba Swe, Prime Minister of Burma, says at a press conference: "The Manao column of the Sixth Infantry Brigade based at Lashio was attacked by a Chinese unit while on a routine flag march." The Prime Minister confirms that "Chinese troops are in occupation of areas of 750 to 1,000 square miles." However, he adds that "there is no question of a fresh definition of the Sino-Burmese border."
- August 11: Mme. Soong Ching-ling travels to Rangoon from Kunming.
- August 13: Mme. Soong Ching-ling calls on former Prime Minister U Nu.
- August 17: The Burma National United Front describes the Sino-Burmese border question as a "machination by imperialist stooges" in a written statement.
- August 23: Chinese Communist troops have established three fortified positions only a few miles from Sadon in Myitkyina district.
- August 26: Chinese Communist troops occupy northern Putao in the Kachin State.
- September 28: U Kyaw Nyein, Burmese Deputy Prime Minister, announces in the Chamber of Deputies of Parliament this morning that "friendly negotiations are now being held between Burma and China on the border question".
- October 24: U Nu, Chairman of the Burmese Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, arrives in Peking at 4 p.m. At the airport he says: "We foresee no difficulty in reaching understanding and agreement, if there are varying points of views."

- October 25: Chou En-lai and U Nu hold talks.
- November 9: A joint press communique issued by Chou En-lai and U Nu in Peking says: "In the talks, the Chinese side put forward for the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary question a fair and reasonable proposal which takes into account the interests of both sides. The Burmese side promised to give consideration to this proposal. In the meantime, the Chinese and the Burmese Governments have arrived at the understanding that starting from the end of November 1956, Chinese troops will withdraw from the area to the west of the 1941 line and Burmese troops will withdraw from Hpimaw, Kangfang and Gawlum, the withdrawal to be completed before the end of the year 1956."
- November 10: U Nu, former Burmese Prime Minister, tells a press conference in Rangoon that "China has agreed to recognize the McMahon Line in the interests of an overall settlement of frontiers between Burma and China." The McMahon Line, agreed to in 1914 marks the Indo-Tibetan border, reaches Burma at Dipnuk Pass (also called Talok Pass) and extends to Izurazi in North-east Burma (about 150 miles). U Nu says that he has agreed to terminate the "perpetual lease" granted to Burma by China of some 100 square miles of territory near Bhamo at a rental of Rs. 1000 per year. Meanwhile he also says that Chou En-lai considers the 1941 Line (that is the Iselin Line dividing the Wa State of North-east Burma and Yunnan) as "unfair" and one that was "imposed upon China while she was under Japanese attack". "But nevertheless," the former Burmese Prime Minister adds, "he (Chou) would be prepared to accept it if an overall settlement could be reached."
- Concluding, U Nu says: "Mr. Chou is prepared to accept the existing borders, including the Burmese contention that the boundary line should be along the Nmaikha-Salween and the Nmaikhashweli watersheds. But Mr. Chou makes one reservation. He claims that Hpimaw, Gawlum and Kangfang falling immediately to the southwest of the Nmaikha-Salween watershed should be returned to China."
- November 16: The Burmese Government announces tonight that talks between the Government and the local leaders in Bhamo area on the Sino-Burmese border question have been "successful".
- November 22: Chinese Communist troops begin to withdraw from "areas to the west of the 1941 Sino-Burmese border line".
- December 10: Chou En-lai arrives in Rangoon for a 10-day visit.
- December 12: Peking announces that the withdrawal of its troops from "the areas to the west of the 1941 Sino-Burmese border line is completed".

- December 15: Chou En-lai and Prime Minister U Ba Swe of Burma arrive at Mangshih, the capital city of the Thai-Chingpo Autonomous chou in the Chinese-Burmese border region at 8 p.m.
- December 16: A border meeting is held at Mangshih. The "fifteen thousand" participants include the people of Thai, Chingpo and Lahu nationalities of Communist China and those of Shan and Kachin nationalities of Burma. Peking says that this meeting is to celebrate "the growing friendship between the two countries".
- December 20: Chou En-lai and Prime Minister U Ba Swe of Burma issue a joint statement in Rangoon which says their discussions "have led to the further clarification of the Chinese and Burmese points of view and have brought a solution satisfactory to both countries."
- 1957
- March 4: Chou En-lai sends a message to U Nu congratulating him on his assumption of Burmese Prime Minister's office.
- March 6: At a press conference, U Nu, Burmese Prime Minister says: "The Kachin State Council has agreed in principle to the proposed transfer of the three villages of Hpimaw, Kangfang and Gawlum to China."
- March 22: Prime Minister U Nu of Burma arrives in Kunming by plane.
- March 28: Chou En-lai leaves Peking by air for Kunming to meet Burmese Prime Minister U Nu.
- March 30: Chou En-lai and U Nu have "cordial" talks in Kunming.
- April 2: U Nu leaves Kunming by a special plane for Rangoon after an 11-day "visit" in Kunming. Chou En-lai says: "I hope the ties of kinship between our two countries will develop ceaselessly."
- April 9: Prime Minister U Nu says at a press conference in Rangoon that "there are one or two points on the border problem which still have to be ironed out with China. But it will not be long before we reach the final stage of negotiations." The one or two points that remain are not very "vital" to the settlement of the problem, he adds.
- April 22: Acting Governor of Yunnan Province Liu Ming-hui, now visiting Upper Burma, says at a reception: "We are deeply aware of the important role played by the people of Yunnan in the development of friendly relations between China and Burma. We government workers and the people of all nationalities of Yunnan will do our best to strengthen these relations on the basis of the five principles of peaceful co-existence."

- April 28: At a banquet given in honour of Sao Shwe Thaik, Speaker of the Burmese Chamber of Nationalities, in Peking this evening, Liu Shao-chi says: "The recent frequent contacts and friendly visits between the leaders of the two countries have promoted mutual understanding and friendship, which have now laid a new foundation for a fair and reasonable solution of the questions left over by history between the two countries."
- July 9: Chou En-lai make a report to the NPC session on the question of Sino-Burmese boundary.
- July 15: The Fourth Session of Communist China's NPC approves Chou En-lai's report on the question of Sino-Burmese boundary.

1958

- February 22: On the "completion" of his term as Chinese Communist Ambassador to Burma, Yao Chung-ming leaves Rangoon for Peking this morning.
- March 17: The Yunnan Provincial Government announces: "Yunnan, bordering on India, Burma, Laos and Vietnam, is a province whose 20 minority nationalities comprise 5.6 million people... Eight highways will be built this year with government investment and after their completion, the six autonomous chow in the province will be interconnected.
- April 29: Li Yi-mang, new Chinese Communist Ambassador to Burma, arrives in Rangoon.
- April 30: Chinese Communist Ambassador Li Yi-mang presents credentials to President U Win Maung this morning.

1959

- February 17: Brigadier Maung Maung Kyaw Win, new Burmese Ambassador to Communist China, arrives in Peking this afternoon.
- February 16: Chinese Communist Vice Foreign Minister Chou An-fu, an expert on Burmese affairs is sent to Rangoon reportedly to discuss the border question.
- October 17: At a farewell banquet for the Burmese Minister of Culture U Chit Thaung in Peking, Chen Yi vaguely touches on the border issue and says: "China...needs peaceful co-existence with all her neighbours, and with all countries in the world; particularly with the South-east Asian countries with which she shares common borders. Disputes between countries can and will certainly be settled through peaceful means."

1960

- January 24: General Ne Win, Burmese Prime Minister, arrives in Peking for a 6-day visit.
- January 28: A non-aggression treaty and a boundary agreement signed in Peking between Communist China and Burma.
- A joint communique issued by Chou En-lai and Ne Win, "pledge" that Communist China and Burma "will ceaselessly strengthen friendly co-operation between the two countries, and continue to make joint contributions to the promotion of solidarity among Asian and African countries and the safeguarding of Asia and world peace."
- January 31: Sino-Burmese non-aggression treaty and boundary agreement made public.

History of Chinese Communist Strategy Re Sino-Burmese Border Question

These problems await the establishment of a people's Burma and the final victory of the Asian people's revolution, then they can receive a complete and reasonable solution.*

Introduction

In the international field, Burma is pursuing a neutral course between the two great opposing world camps. Although Mao Tse-tung has not been as outspoken as Stalin, who berated the neutrals as "imperialist puppets and running dogs",¹ he asks:

Has not the history of the past thirty-one years of Soviet power proved how completely false and bankrupt is the so-called "middle way", the so-called "third path" which, to deceive the working people is so loudly proclaimed by all those who do not like Marxism and who hate the Soviet Union - the socialist fatherland of the working people of the world - by all those who are trying to maintain some kind of intermediate position between the counter-revolutionary front of the imperialists and the revolutionary front against imperialism and its lackeys in all countries?²

When neutrals serve the Communist cause, however, Peking adopts a different attitude. For instance, Chou En-lai states:

*Notes to Map of Yunnan No. 46. Provincial Atlas of the People's Republic of China, Shanghai, 1953.

In South-east Asia, countries like India, Burma, Indonesia and Afghanistan...firmly maintain a position of neutrality... We have a deep respect for the stand taken by these countries...³

In December, 1949 Burma led the way by being the first Asian country to recognise the Peking Government.⁴ Since then, the Burmese Government has considered it essential to maintain "good relations" with Communist China. Probably not unrelated to Burma's position is the 2,000 kilometre-long⁵ common frontier which could be penetrated easily.⁶

The "greater part" of the Sino-Burmese boundary line is reported to have been "fixed".⁷ There are, however, three sections which still remain unresolved: 1) the Kawa area; 2) the Meng-Mao triangular; 3) north of the High Conical Peak.⁸

On the Burmese side, the settlement of the border issue has been prompted in part by the increasing flow of immigrants and refugees from Communist China; the uncertainty of supervision over the border areas; and the frequency of incursions by Chinese Communist army elements. As a show of "goodwill", Peking in November 1956 proposed, through U Nu to the Burmese Government, "principles" for the settling of the border problem. The Burmese Government agreed to Communist China's demands for Hpimaw, Kangfang and Gawlum in the border area east of Myikyina.⁹ Communist China in return, agreed to recognise the McMahon line which marks the Indo-Tibetan border and extends to Izurazi in North-east Burma (about 150 miles).¹ During Communist China-Burma talks in March 1957 in Kunming, the "standpoints" of the two sides were "further clarified".¹¹ Despite his attempts to settle the border problem once and for all, U Nu failed to reach any satisfactory agreement.

Since then, talks on the Sino-Burmese border problem have dragged on. In January, 1960, Communist China and Burma signed a boundary agreement¹² and a

10-year non-aggression treaty.¹³ The agreement appears only to put the Chinese Communist 1956 proposal into effect; and the 10-year non-aggression treaty provides Communist China with an opportunity to re-state its "good intentions".¹⁴

In an editorial, the New York Times said that these new accords of Communist China with Burma for the settling of border disputes may be "welcomed if they help to stabilise one uneasy frontier in South-east Asia".

The paper continued:

But, the wider aims of the agreements are demonstrated by Peking's propagandistic exploitation of them... They are thus both an effort to allay Asian alarms over Communist aggression in Tibet and elsewhere; and an invitation to India to settle its border disputes with Communist China on similar terms, at the price of surrendering Indian territory. They also serve to back up Chinese Communist and Soviet Russian attacks against the American-Japanese mutual security pact which precludes the neutralisation of Japan that is the aim of these attacks. The blandishments seem too transparent to deceive.¹⁵

Meanwhile, it would be interesting to know whether or not Communist China still continues to recognise the Burmese section of the McMahon Line, in view of its attitude on the Indian section of that line.

This report attempts to give a general review of the Sino-Burmese boundary question.

I. Historical Background

Early Demarcation

Dispute between China and Burma regarding the border question is an old story. The first attempt to delimit the Sino-Burmese border was made when an agreement was drawn up between the British and Manchu Governments giving effect to Article III of the Chefoo Agreement.¹⁶ In the agreement the Manchu Government recognised British "sovereignty over Burma".¹⁷ Providing for the resumption of trade and for the establishment of a joint commission to determine the boundary,¹⁸ the British Government in return agreed to send missions to Peking:

Inasmuch as it has been the practice of Burma to send decennial missions to present articles of local produce, England agrees that the highest authority in Burma shall send the customary decennial missions; the members of the missions to be of the Burmese race.¹⁹

This concession was made on the plea that Burma had been "a vassal of China". Meanwhile, the Manchu Government laid claim to Kiang Hung. The London Times, however, said that Burma had never been "a vassal of China". Negating the Manchu claim to Kiang Hung, the paper said:

If at the close of war in 1769 the Burmese had to acknowledge themselves as the vassal of China, as is asserted by the Chinese, how is it that M^rLeod on his visit to Kiang Hung in 1837 and Gournier in 1867 found the Burmese still in power at Kiang Hung, successfully combating the claims of China over that State... The Shans of Kiang Hung, for the sake of peace, paid tribute to China as well as Burma, but Burma had the sole power to levy troops from these Shans in case of hostility.²⁰

Under the convention of 1894, Great Britain ceded Kiang Hung to the Manchu Government.

The Sino-Burmese boundary was accordingly partially surveyed in 1893-94.²¹ A convention of 1894, however, left the boundary north of $25^{\circ}35'$ N (the latitude of Myitkyina) unsettled. Britain assumed that it would be fixed, as in the sector from Myitkyina down to Bhamo along the high ground between the Irrawaddy-Salween watersheds.²²

In 1895, the Manchu Government violated its pledge to Great Britain by ceding Kiang Hung to France. Great Britain refused to accept this. At a convention held on February 4, 1897 the British and Manchu Governments drew up a new agreement, under which Kiang Hung was returned to Burma, and a perpetual lease on Namwan in the Shan State was granted to Britain.²³ The terms of this agreement set up a joint boundary commission, which during the years 1897-1900 fixed the border area north of the Shan State.²⁴

Scott Line vs. Liu-Chen Line

A 200-mile stretch passing through the Wa State territory, however, was left undemarcated because of disagreements as to where the boundary properly lay. As a result, Great Britain and China drew up their own lines known as the Scott Line²⁵ (near $99^{\circ}30'$ E)²⁶ and the Liu-Chen Line²⁷ (close to 99° E).²⁸

Thereafter, the Sino-Burmese border question rested for almost thirty years, although China passed through successive phases of dynastic collapse, revolution, warlordism, and partial re-unification, although Sun Yat-sen referred to Burma as having formerly belonged to China,²⁹ and similar statements were made by his followers.³⁰

Point of Dispute

In 1933, a group of officials in Yunnan published a book, denouncing Great Britain for the seizure of Chinese territory along the Sino-Burmese frontier.³¹ This was aggravated by "the discovery of mineral resources and the sending of prospectors by the Burma Corporation to Lufang area".³² The point of dispute was "the disposition of the area of the silver mines and the location of the Kunming Shan range of mountains".³³

On April 9, 1935 notes were exchanged between Sir Alexander Cadogan, British Minister to China, and WangChing-wei, Foreign Minister of China. This resulted in an agreement to set up another joint commission to settle the long outstanding question of the undemarcated portion of the southern section of the Yunnan-Burma frontier. Col. Frederic Iselin of the Swiss Artillery was appointed neutral chairman of the commission by Dr. Tevik Rustu Aras, President of the Council of the League of Nations.³⁴

The Iselin commission started functioning on December 1, 1935, and signed its first report on April 24, 1937.³⁵ As a result of the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, however, the work of the Iselin commission was suspended.³⁶ During the war Burma assumed considerable military importance as a supply route to China. At the end of that year the Chinese Government began to construct the famous Burma road, which when completed, linked Kunming precariously with Lashio, where the railway from Rangoon ends.³⁷ The protection of the Burma road gave the Chinese an opportunity to occupy territories to which they laid claim.³⁸

Temporarily, public agitation ceased; and the frequent exchange of gifts and goodwill missions at that time appeared to have made mandatory "close relations" between Burma and China.³⁹

1941 Line

Based on the first report of the Iselin commission, Wang Chung-hui, Foreign Minister of China, sent a note to Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, British Ambassador to China on June 18, 1941. The note agreed that the boundary line described in paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article 3 of the Agreement between China and Great Britain, signed at Peking on February 4, 1897, should be changed. (See appendix No.1: Ed.)

In reply, Sir Archibald Clark Kerr said:

With reference to the Notes exchanged between us... regarding the determination of the southern section of the boundary between Burma and Yunnan, I am authorized by the Government of Burma to inform your Excellency's Government that the Government of Burma is willing, as a gesture of goodwill, to undertake to permit Chinese participation in any mining enterprises which may be undertaken by British concerns on the eastern slopes of the Lufang ridge, provided that Chinese interests in these enterprises do not exceed 49 per cent of the total of the capital of each enterprise. (See Appendix 1 for map showing boundaries. - Ed.)

The Sino-British agreement completed - at least on paper - the unfinished work of the Iselin commission by delimiting the Yunnan-Burma frontier in the wa State.⁴⁰

The Aftermath

In August 1941, the Chinese Government attempted to re-open negotiations on the subject.⁴¹ This diplomatic pressure of China on Great Britain over the boundary question, was eased when the Pacific war broke out, and Chinese troops fought in Burma under Allied command in 1942 and again in 1945.

After the war, the Chinese Government took up the boundary question again. In 1946, two Chinese battalions entered the Kachin State and marched up to Myitkyina, saying that they were looking for "deserters". They withdrew on the protest of the British Government in Burma.⁴²

In 1947, when Burma became independent the Chinese Government expressed the "hope" that the boundary issue might be settled "amicably". Fu Chio-chin, Territorial Commissioner in the Ministry of Interior, voiced China's claim to territory north of 25°35' north latitude, basing it on the fact that the area was part of a State which had paid "tribute" to China since the Tang dynasty in the seventh century.⁴³

The Burmese public was greatly aroused. Following the Burmese reaction, the Chinese Government made a statement assuring the Burmese that no unilateral action or declaration by "either" party could be binding; that the issue would be settled by diplomacy according to international law.⁴⁴

The Burmese Government replied asserting that the boundary line was clear; that there was no international problem; and that Burma would defend its territory "without any hesitation". To allay Burmese fears, high Chinese officials, attending the independence festivities in January 1948 in Rangoon, repeated the assurance that Chinese aggression against Burma was not "likely".⁴⁵ Although their territorial claims were not clear, they suggested the erection of boundary pillars along the Wa State.⁴⁶ Owing to rebellions from the Communists, the Karens and the PVCs (Communist sympathizers), the Burmese Government at that time could not take up the work of this demarcation.⁴⁷

2. Chinese Communist Policy

Peking has by no means dropped the earlier Chinese claims to portions of northern Burma and the Shan State. In dealing with the Sino-Burmese boundary question, the Chinese Communist Government declared:

Ever since the founding of the People's Republic the policy persistently followed by our country in international affairs has been to strive for the easing of the world situation and for peaceful co-existence with all countries in the world, and particularly with our neighbours. This policy is beneficial to our country's socialist construction; it also conforms to the interests of the peoples of all countries in the world. It is precisely this basic foreign policy of peace that our Government has followed in handling the Sino-Burmese boundary question.⁴⁸

3. Illegal Immigration

Since 1948 there has been a continual influx of Chinese immigrants across the frontier into Burma.⁴⁹ The estimated number of the Chinese minority in Burma was 300,000 in 1951,⁵⁰ and close to half a million in 1954.⁵¹ The nature of this "threat" could well be judged from the fact that by 1956 the Chinese population in Burma had jumped to over one million.⁵²

The immigrants, some of whom were detected before they could intermingle with the local Chinese population, invariably had been found with official permits. The flood of these illegal immigrants was said to "have hit Burma all along the eastern frontier from Putao and Mytkyina in the north to Bhamo, north Hsensi and Kokang in the South".

In the National and English Review, E.C.V. Foucar wrote that "Mandalay and Bhamo are fast becoming Chinese cities".⁵³

Similarly, the Nation said:

At this rate, Myitkyina, Bhamo, Lashio and the Wa State will soon be swarming with Chinese... To our knowledge not one of the "escapees" has asked for political asylum in Burma. Therefore, they are not escaping. They are coming with the knowledge, the permission or the connivance of the Chinese border guards. We already have too many Chinese guests and friends. It is time to cry halt.⁵⁴

4. Disruption of Tribesmen's Loyalty

Typical Chinese Communist attempts to influence the tribesmen in the frontier region are described by Girilal Jain:

...it was common knowledge among the Burmese officials that the Chinese had formed the "Free Kachin", the "Free Tai" and the "Free Wa" Committees in Yunnan to promote "liberation" movements among the tribals on the Burmese side... According to fully confirmed reports, the Chinese have been taking the sons of Wa chieftains to Kunming and Paoshan in Yunnan for ideological indoctrination. Ordinary Was have been attracted to visit Yunnan by offers of free gifts. Large numbers of Chinese propagandists have been coming into Wa State. In certain cases where the Wa chieftains have resisted the Chinese attempts there have been clashes, and the Chinese are known to have sent large troops to quell the intransigent Was. The Was numbering between 80,000 and 90,000 and inhabiting an area of roughly 4,000 square miles are a warlike tribe and still resort to head

hunting. Further north-east in Putao sub-division, which is claimed as a part of Tibet, Chinese propaganda teams have been seen carrying photographs of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama being feted by Chairman Mao Tse-tung in Peking. In Myitkyina and Bhamo districts they have sponsored the Pawng Yawng Liberation Movement. Kachin agents from the Chinese side infiltrate into Burma to "persuade" the Kachins to work for an independent State under the sovereignty of China... In the Shan State, the agents trained by the "Free Tai" Committee have been busy.⁵⁵

Coupled with this subversion, the Chinese Communists have established a number of "autonomous" chous for such Yunnan-Burma frontier national minorities as the Tai, Chinpo, Lisu, Kawa and Lahu.⁵⁶ The character of Chinese Communist propaganda directed to these minorities is clearly shown in this NCNA report:

The patriotic compact movement universally developed by the various nationalities and the various classes of people of Yunnan, has been of the greatest help in the promotion of the struggle for the protection of our frontiers and various aspects of construction work... At the present moment, the patriotic compact movement has been extended from the main cities to the outlying villages; the scope of the patriotic compact has been extended from isolated districts and classes to all the basic units; and the contents of the patriotic compact have been more closely co-ordinated with our central activities so that

the compacts have become the programme of work for the masses.

Everywhere in this far-flung frontier province, the patriotic compact movement has helped to fortify the will of the various nationalities in the protection of the fatherland. In numerous localities, people's militia forces have been organised for sentry and patrol duties; to check passengers, and to co-operate with the PLA in the protection of our frontiers. In the undemarcated districts along the Sino-Burmese border in West Yunnan and along the Red River valley in South Yunnan, the foreign imperialists on the other side of the border...were summarily turned down when they tried to bribe over the national minorities of the border regions. Having signed their patriotic compacts, the broad masses redoubled their efforts in active participation in the struggle for the liquidation of bandits and special agents. On the basis of the patriotic compacts, the peasants of the 6th ch'u of Ch'uhsiung hsien started a search-the-mountains-for-bandits movement. After organising themselves into small groups to familiarise themselves with bandit conditions, they succeeded in capturing numerous bandit chiefs... "Love your country, enrich your family, and increase production for contribution" patriotic compacts have been signed in the greater part of the households... There are still a number of

"blank" localities along certain border regions... where the work has not yet been systematically developed and the ideological education of patriotism not universally spread. Today, the patriotic compact movement is being extensively and universally promoted throughout Yunnan so as to augment the advanced localities and eradicate the "blank" localities, to further promote solidarity among the nationalities under the banner of patriotism, and to consolidate the defence of the frontiers of the fatherland.⁵⁷

Following these preparations, Chou En-lai then declared:

The boundary question has a direct bearing on the interests of the nationalities living in compact communities on the Sino-Burmese borders. Therefore, in tackling this question we must specially take into account the interests of these nationalities. We know that the boundary line between two countries is often found dividing into two parts a nationality living in compact communities on the borders. This is the result of historical development. On the various sections of the defined boundary between China and Burma, and on the borders between China and other countries, we find people of the same nationality living on both sides of the boundary line. So when we solve the question of the undefined boundary line between China and Burma, we must realize beforehand that it will be hard to avoid separating the nationalities concerned by the boundary line.⁵⁸

5. Publication of Maps

In December 1950 the Chinese Communists published a map which arrested the attention of the Burmese Government. The map showed all Burma north of Bhamo as Chinese territory. The boundary so claimed was marked as "undetermined".⁵⁹

On March 8, 1951 U Nu, then Burmese Prime Minister, told Parliament that he had taken the matter up with Peking and had been assured that it was simply a case of an old (i.e. Chinese Nationalist) map having been reproduced without revision, due to lack of time.⁶⁰ Peking's answer was obviously evasive because the Chinese Nationalists generally claimed only the territory down to Myitkyina; not everything north of Bhamo.

In 1953 the Chinese communists produced an atlas showing most of the frontier with Burma as undemarcated and laid claim to everything north of Myitkyina. With reference to the border dispute between Communist China and Burma, the notes to the map of Yunnan said:

These problems await the establishment of a people's Burma and the final victory of the Asian people's revolution; then they can receive a complete and reasonable solution.⁶¹

Later, another atlas appeared. In this, the Chinese Communist Government returned the northern part of Burma, and omitted some of the offensive statements, including the previous one with reference to the establishment of a "people's" Burma; but they still claimed a large portion of the Wa State.⁶²

In an editorial, the Nation said:

We have before us a large-scale map of Yunnan (Chinese version). In the area coloured "China" is to be found the whole of Sumprabum and Putao subdivisions. The border as outlined on the Chinese map runs N'Sopzup. N'Sopzup is only 48 miles from Myitkyina. Putao is 219 miles away. The same applies to the Wa State where the Chinese have included in their maps the whole territory...⁶³

6. Military Moves

The fear of possible Chinese communist aggression aroused in Burma by subversion of tribesmen, illegal immigration and maps, was intensified by the presence of the Kuomintang troops who fled from Yunnan at various times from the spring of 1950 onward, and settled in northern Burma. They were estimated to number about 12,000; about 7,000 to 8,000 of them being organised, at first under the command of General Li Mi, and later under that of General Liu Kuo-chuan. They called themselves the Yunnan Anti-Communist and National Salvation Army. Their main base was Kengtung in the Shan State with an airfield at Monghsat.⁶⁴

At the outset, the Chinese Communists assured the Burmese Government that they would not violate Burma's border unless Burmese territory was used by the Kuomintang troops as a base of attack against them. This done, the Chinese Communists used the presence of these Kuomintang troops in Burma in their propaganda campaign against the United States, describing them as American-trained and equipped, and as being trained for an American-engineered invasion of mainland China.⁶⁵

One NCNA report said:

...American imperialism is plotting to create disturbances on China's borders with the remnants of Chiang Kai-shek's forces which fled to Burma... 14 American officers were in command of Chiang's men on Burma's east border and...paratroops from unknown sources had landed at Mong Hsia aerodrome 70 miles from Keng Tong...led by some 30 American officers, Chiang's troops were building up "military bases" along the North-east Burma border with China...⁶⁶

In fact, however, some Chinese Communist troops were reported to have already violated the Burmese frontier north of Myitkyina, presumably on the way to Tibet in 1951.⁶⁷

In 1952, under pretext of "chasing after remnant Kuomintang troops", more Chinese Communist troops had entered the Kawa area.⁶⁸ Although they admitted the presence of their troops they disputed the Burmese claim to this area.⁶⁹ In January 1953 five units of guerrillas, trained in Yunnan and composed of Burmese Communists, Sino-Burmans and Burmese-speaking Chinese, crossed the frontier into the Shan and Kachin States.⁷⁰

Despite all these facts, Peking maintained silence.

7. Simulated Harmony

Along with their military moves, the Chinese Communists also kept up the pretence of Sino-burmese friendship. Fresh from what was regarded as a personal triumph at the Geneva Conference, Chou En-lai arrived in Rangoon on June 28, 1954 at the invitation of U Nu, Prime Minister of Burma.⁷¹ Chou's visit appeared to have brought further prestige to the Chinese Communist position. Contributing to this was the endorsement on June 29 by Communist China and Burma of the "five principles of peaceful co-existence":⁷²

- (1) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty;
- (2) Non-aggression;
- (3) Non-interference in each other's internal affairs;
- (4) Equality and mutual benefit;
- (5) Peaceful co-existence.

Commenting on these "five principles", a leading article in the Jen Min Jih Pao said:

Traditional and profound friendship and close economic and cultural relations have always existed between the peoples...of China and Burma... The ceaseless growth of friendly relations between China and...Burma will greatly help to consolidate peace in Asia and the whole world...

We do not launch aggression against others and are firmly opposed to all aggressive action. We do not interfere in other's internal affairs, and are firmly opposed to all interference in other's internal affairs. We stand for peace, and hold that peaceful co-existence is possible between different social and political systems... The Asian peoples love peace. The menace of aggression in Asia comes from outside. For a long time Asia was subjected to imperialist colonial rule and oppression, and the national independence and self-determination of the Asian peoples and their right to choose their own State system and way of life, were ruthlessly suppressed and trampled upon by foreign imperialist forces.

It is time now for colonialism in Asia to end. A new era has dawned, in which Asian countries can co-exist peacefully and establish friendly relations on the basis of respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and mutual non-aggression.

But the rulers of America, ignoring the aspirations of the Asian peoples and the realities in Asia, are still endeavouring to impose the yoke of colonialism on the countries of Asia... While engaged in barefaced aggression, the American rulers try to whitewash their aggressive actions by repeating the hackneyed phrase about the "menace of communism" and misrepresenting the movements for independence and freedom by the people of various countries as the "expansion of communism". They are sparing no effort to suppress these movements in attempts to keep the Asian peoples under the rule and enslavement of foreign colonialism. But such distortion of the facts today deceives nobody.⁷³

On December 1, 1954 U Nu travelled to Communist China.⁷⁴ Welcoming his arrival, the Chinese Communist newspapers praised in vague terms the alleged traditional "friendship" with emphasis on "peace":

Jen Min Jih Pao:

Friendly relations between the Chinese and Burmese peoples are of long standing. Since the founding of New China, there has been a new development in these friendly relations... There is no Sino-Burmese question which cannot be solved by negotiation in the spirit of the five principles for peaceful co-

existence. The relations between the two countries must be equal and mutually helpful, not harmful to each other... It is not difficult to understand that both China and Burma have a common desire for peaceful co-operation... A foreign policy of peace is China's basic policy. China has always attached importance to the development of peaceful co-operation with Asian countries; above all, with our neighbouring countries and we are keen to work for this. China is willing continuously to extend the scope of application of the five principles and economic and cultural exchange with all countries.⁷⁵

Daily Worker:

China and Burma have a common desire and joint responsibility to oppose war and defend Asian and world peace. The friendly relationship between China and Burma is an essential factor to the consolidation of peace in Asia... We Chinese people are carrying out peaceful labour and we want a peaceful environment and a peaceful world. This fundamental fact determines our peaceful foreign policy... The peoples of Asian countries want peaceful co-operation, not war and military blocs... Peace in Asia must be guaranteed; independence and sovereignty of the Asian countries respected; national rights and freedom of the Asian peoples protected, and interference in internal affairs of the Asian countries stopped. This is the common desire of the people of all Asian countries, and this common desire has become a tremendous force in defending peace... closer friendship between China and Burma is beneficial to the establishment and enlargement of the peace area in Asia.⁷⁶

Kuang Ming Jih Pao:

Profound friendship has existed between the Chinese and Burmese peoples for thousands of years. Since the founding of the Chinese People's Republic, friendly relations have developed on a new basis... The Chinese and Burmese peoples who treasure peace and friendship and oppose war and hostility will never fall prey to this imperialist scheming... Burma's correct, unequivocal stand against war and for peace and security are heartily welcomed and supported not only by the Chinese people but, we believe, by all Asian people... The Chinese people love peace and wish to develop friendly co-operation with Burma, our friendly old neighbour, so as to defend peace together. We believe that it is entirely possible for our friendly co-operation to continue to develop, and for our economic and cultural relations to become ever closer.⁷⁷

Ta Kung Pao:

The nearly two thousand years of intercourse between China and Burma have been marked by close relations and deep friendship. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, diplomatic relations on a new basis have been established between the two countries, and a new chapter has been unfolded in the history of their friendly co-operation... As far as the two countries are concerned, the most urgent task confronting them is to carry on economic construction at a fast pace and to raise their people's living standards quickly. It goes

without saying that to undertake this construction needs a peaceful environment and permits no war or threats of war. The People's Republic of China has since its founding pursued a peaceful policy which is in accord with the vital interests of the Chinese people. They are convinced that Burma and other peace-loving countries in Asia all genuinely stand for peace and against war or threats of war. It is evident, therefore, that to build up their own countries and safeguard peace in Asia and the world are the solid basis for unity, co-operation and friendly co-existence between China, Burma and other Asian countries. It is the profound conviction of the Chinese people that any problem between China and Burma can be satisfactorily settled on the basis of friendly cooperation, equality and mutual benefit and that the friendship between them will grow with time.⁷⁸

At a banquet given in honour of U Nu on December 2, Chou En-lai stressed that "Burma and China are...not only close neighbours but...two peoples also have ties of kinship."⁷⁹

At a farewell banquet on December 10, U Nu said:

Geographically, China and Burma are adjoining countries, but for a variety of reasons we have not, in the past, been as close as we ought to be. However, with effect from the day on which we issued our joint statement on the five principles, the road had been laid out for closer relations between our two countries...

I mentioned to Prime Minister Chou how we had, at one time, entertained grave apprehensions about the possibility of the People's Republic of China interfering in our internal affairs... Honestly speaking, we should not be fair if we stopped only at that. I have no love for unfairness or lack of balance. Therefore, I place myself in your position and pose myself this question: "My dear U Nu, I have heard of your apprehensions. Should we not also entertain apprehensions about the possibility of your interference in our internal affairs?"

Let me answer my own question. Our small country by itself will never be able to interfere in your internal affairs. Even if this should happen it may well be likened to a small goat wandering aimlessly amidst the elephants. The goat will perish if the elephants care to strike it even with their tails. But, although Burma by itself may be ineffective in meddling with China's internal affairs, she may be able to create trouble in China if she allows herself to be used as a stooge by the enemies of China. If we should desire to serve as a stooge, then we have several key locations to offer, to be used as strategic air and naval bases for a possible attack on the People's Republic of China. We can also provide facilities to the enemies of China to carry out espionage and destructive activities inside China...

Talking of peace leads me to think of world peace. From world peace my mind wanders to East Asian peace. Frankly speaking, we are daily haunted with the spectre of war in this part of the world which would spread to a world-wide conflagration. Obsessed with this fear, we are constantly thinking of how best to avert such a war...⁸⁰

Premier Chen En-lai replied:

It is quite natural that there should be certain apprehensions and lack of understanding in the first contacts between two new nations having different social systems and bordering each other. But, whatever the apprehensions and lack of understanding which existed between China and Burma, they have been gradually dispelled in the course of the establishment of new friendly relations in the past few years, particularly through the mutual visits of the Prime Ministers of our two nations, and the affirmation of the five principles, on the basis of their historic friendship... It makes no difference between our two countries whether it is big or small; what counts is the friendship that exists between them. In the co-operation among friendly countries, there is no place for agent-provocateurs.

The countries of the world, which confront each other, may become friendly if they do not occupy the territory, infringe upon the sovereignty or interfere

in the People's Republic. We hope that if the appeal of Your Excellency Prime Minister U Nu should succeed in getting certain states to withdraw their armed forces from the territories of others, recognise the principles of peaceful co-existence among nations with different social systems, and cease encroaching upon the sovereignty of other countries and interfering in their internal affairs, it would be an unparalleled contribution to the relaxation of international tension and the defence of world peace. The Chinese people will support the efforts of Prime Minister U Nu in this direction.⁸¹

On December 12, 1954 Chou En-lai and U Nu issued a communique which reaffirmed support for the "five principles" and pledged "friendly cooperation" between Communist China and Burma.⁸² Concerning the question of Sino-Burmese boundary issue, a simple sentence in the communique said: "In view of the incomplete delimitation of the boundary line between China and Burma, the two Premiers held it necessary to settle this question in a friendly spirit at an appropriate time through normal diplomatic channels."

After this communique, Chinese Communist propaganda emphatically proclaimed Peking's dedication to the "five principles". However, in the spring of 1955, the Chinese Communists were reported to have distributed leaflets and urged the Burmese Kachins to cross over to Yunnan. Obviously disturbed, the Information Department of the Kachin State did what it could to counteract these appeals.⁸³

At the Bandung Conference on April 19, Chou En-lai said:

The problem at present is not that we are carrying out subversive activities against the governments of other countries, but that there are people who are establishing bases around China in order to carry out subversive activities against the Chinese Government. For instance, on the border between China and Burma, there are in fact remnant armed elements of the Chiang Kai-shek clique who are carrying out destructive activities against both China and Burma. Because of the friendly relations between China and Burma, and because we have always respected the sovereignty of Burma, we have confidence in the Government of Burma for the solution of this problem.⁸⁴

On his way home after the Bandung Conference Chou stopped at Rangoon. What Chou discussed with U Nu was veiled in secrecy.⁸⁵ While Chou was there, U Nu held a conference at which he said that the Chinese Communist Premier had admitted having granted "asylum" on Chinese territory to the Kachin rebel Naw Seng and two hundred of his followers.⁸⁶

In November of the same year an armed clash occurred. Peking said it was owing to "misunderstanding between the outpost units of the two countries in the border region".⁸⁷

Despite this, and other provocations, many Burmese retained hope or faith in the "five principles".

8. The Tattered Mask

From 1956, Peking's military moves were intensified along the Sino-Burmese border. Its troops began to "push forward for 60 miles along a 500-mile stretch" in the Wa State.⁸⁸ The Burmese peaceful disposition and patience must have led

the Chinese Communists to believe that the time was ripe for them to act boldly. Not until July 31, 1956, did the Nation bring to light the fact that Chinese Communist troops had occupied over 1,000 square miles of indisputably Burmese territory.⁸⁹

On the same day, the Burmese Government issued a statement which said:

The Government of the Union of Burma is in close touch with developments in the Burma-China border region. It is not true, as stated in The Nation, that Chinese troops have occupied Mankungam, Nogmung and two other villages between Hipmaw and Sadon. Two of these places are at present manned by Burmese armed forces in wireless contact with the headquarters concerned and the others are under surveillance... The actual position is that some Chinese troops entered Burmese territory and established outposts on Burmese soil in the Wa State in close proximity to the China-Burma border. The Burmese Government have already brought this to the attention of the Government of the People's Republic of China and negotiations are in progress.⁹⁰

On August 1, the Nation further reported that Chinese Communist troops had invaded Burmese territory in the southern area of the border.

9. "Groundless"

Under the title "Vigilance against Saboteurs of Sino-Burmese Relations", a Jen Min Jih Pao "observer" on August 4 admitted the presence of Chinese Communist troops in the said area, but denied that these troops were stationed in Burma. The "observer" declared:

On July 31 the English language daily newspaper The Nation published in Rangoon, carried a news report about an alleged "invasion of Burma". The news did not cite any sources.

This report spread by The Nation and its charges against China are entirely groundless. The truth is that in the northern area of the Sino-Burmese border, normal relations have always been maintained between the countries. Chinese frontier army units there have consistently been in their present position. It is militarily naive to claim, as The Nation did, that several hundred men could push forward for 60 miles along a 500-mile stretch.

Criticizing the Burmese Government's statement, the Jen Min Jih Pao "observer" said:

In a statement released on July 31, the Burmese Government pointed out that The Nation's report was not true. It also pointed out that villages which The Nation alleged Chinese troops had occupied were manned by Burmese armed forces...

The Burmese Government's statement did not make mention of a very important situation, namely, that the area mentioned in the statement is an unsettled zone in the southern part of the Sino-Burmese border. With reference to the demarcation of this frontier, Burma has a different view from that of China. This

difference should be settled by negotiations between the two countries and not by any other means. Before any settlement of the demarcation, both sides should maintain the status quo. The Chinese army units at the frontier have always been stationed within their present position in a spirit of friendship. Under these circumstances, there is fundamentally no such question as "crossing into" the territory of Burma.

...Pending the formal demarcation of the boundary line between China and Burma, the two countries should maintain the status quo there. At the same time, the occurrence of disputes should be avoided. Chinese frontier defence troops have strictly abided by this principle of maintaining the status quo in the southern and northern unsettled zones of the boundary line between China and Burma. We hold that this is in keeping with the interests of the Chinese and Burmese people, and of peace in Asia.

This can be clearly seen from the reactions evoked by The Nation's faked news. Whatever may be The Nation's motive in fabricating this news, it certainly provided an opportunity for those deliberately working to bring about unrest and create tension in Asia.

At the present, the situation in Asia and the world as a whole is tending toward relaxation. The enemies of peace are trying in every way possible to sow discord and carry out sabotage in an attempt to

achieve their end of splitting Asia and dividing and ruling this continent. Both China and Burma are nations having vital responsibility for the preservation of Asian peace. It is therefore all the more necessary for the two countries to raise their vigilance and strengthen their friendship and unity, so as to defeat the plots of the saboteurs of peace. We are confident that with the concerted effort of the two peoples, all plots to strain and undermine relations between our two countries are destined to failure.

NCNA immediately selected a number of favourable quotations from the Burmese press:

New Light of Burma:

Nowadays, there are many people who are concocting various schemes.⁹¹

Pyidaungsu (Union):

SEATO had been quite calm when the Kuomintang invaded in thousands. Not only that, we had not been able to name our aggressors as Kuomintang in the UNO. We were obliged to refer to them as foreign troops... Immediately on hearing news of the entry of a few Red Chinese troops into Burma, some of the SEATO countries, getting more concerned than Burma, began to talk about the necessity of deliberations by SEATO for action. Since the settlement of the present incident can be brought about by mutual discussion between the governments of Burma and China, the unnecessary concern shown

by the SEATO simply reveals to the public the extent of their imperialistic intentions. We therefore wish to warn them not to poke their nose into other people's affairs.⁹²

Rangoon Daily:

There can be accusations and propaganda based on this news and efforts are likely to be made to disrupt the friendship between the two countries.⁹³

Ludu:

Since China and Burma proclaimed their adherence to the five principles of peaceful co-existence, attempts have been made to undermine their friendship by utilizing the questions of unfixed boundaries and Chinese residents in Burma to sow discord between the two countries.⁹⁴

Burmese Review and Monday New Times:

It is really interesting to see that the whole thing (so-called border affair) was started by the exceptionally enterprising newspaper in Rangoon whose capacity for sensationalized "scoops" is infinite. Burma herself felt no cause for alarm. They (the Burmese people) felt the matter constituted no danger to their national sovereignty. But many people abroad, notably those in Taipeh, Manila and certain Western capitals were persuading Burma that it should join SEATO and should invoke United Nations Organization's assistance for stopping "Red Chinese aggression".⁹⁵

10. Diplomatic Representations

Coincidentally, Mme. Soong Ching-ling travelled to Rangoon on August 11, on her way to Indonesia as "the guest of Indonesian President Sukarno and the Indonesian Government".⁹⁶ During her stay in Rangoon, Mme. Soong held discussions with U Nu on "the border affairs".⁹⁷

From that time, diplomatic representations through "official channels" started.

The Burma National United Front expressed support of "the spirit of negotiation shown by the Chinese and Burmese Governments with regard to the Sino-Burmese border issue". The United Front said in a statement:

We know that there is some difference in view between the governments of the Union of Burma and the Chinese people's Republic with regard to the Wa State border issue...

The governments and peoples of Burma and China stand for peace and are devoted to unity among Asian countries. The two countries have established friendly relations and proclaimed the five principles of peaceful co-existence. It is on this basis that the Burmese and Chinese Governments have indicated that they want to solve the issue by negotiation. The Burma National United Front warmly supports this spirit of negotiation ... In face of the present situation, the United Front will stand with the people of Burma, and crush the intrigues to intervene, create incidents and wreck peace through the Burmese-Chinese issue.⁹⁸

In like manner, the Burma Workers and Peasants Party said in a statement:

The China-Burma border problem is not a new problem. It existed between the Kuomintang Government and the British Colonial Government... There are certain areas on the border completely undemarcated (like the triangular area in Kachin State). There are also areas where demarcation, although defined, had not been approved (like the Wa State)... Both the governments of People's China and independent Burma have no intention to expand. This was evidenced by the agreement on the five principles by both governments, by the progress on economic relations between the two countries, and by the friendship between the leaders and peoples of the two countries ... Therefore, there is the basis for the China-Burma border to become a line of peace and friendship...⁹⁹

As Chairman of the Burmese Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, U Nu said to a reporter of the Nation on August 28:

Sufficient goodwill exists between Burma and China to ensure a just settlement between themselves along... I am supremely convinced that it is a matter which Burma can take up and settle with China in a friendly spirit... The Government could not be provoked into making an irresponsible statement or taking an irresponsible step... The proper atmosphere should be created for mutual trust and mutual goodwill conducive to a fair settlement of outstanding issues.

The matter is one that we must tackle with the greatest patience. I have already once appealed for restraint. I renew that appeal to the press... We can never blind ourselves to the fact that regardless of the system of government which might obtain in either country at any time, we are destined to exist side by side as next door neighbour.¹⁰⁰

U Ba Swe also urged the press to "be restrained from issuing news which might hinder progress of negotiations between Burma and China".

On September 28, the Burmese Deputy Prime Minister U Kyaw Nyein announced in the Chamber of Deputies of Parliament that "friendly negotiations" were being held between Communist China and Burma on the border question. He said that these negotiations showed the "willingness" of the two governments to "solve problems peacefully in accordance with the five principles of peaceful co-existence".¹⁰¹

Also, the Burmese Foreign Minister Sao Hkio stated in Parliament that the Chinese-Burmese negotiations on the border issue between the two countries were "progressing very smoothly".¹⁰²

In his capacity as Chairman of the Burmese Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, U Nu went to Peking again to exchange "views" on matters concerning the border issue. Upon his arrival at Peking airport on October 24, he said: "We foresee no difficulty in reaching understanding and agreement, if there are varying points of views. Our mutual approach will be in the spirit of the five principles to which we have subscribed and to which we have adhered".¹⁰³

U Nu was welcomed by Chou En-lai at a banquet in his honour as "an old friend of the Chinese people".¹⁰⁴

Chou said:

The daily development of our friendly relations proves forcefully that countries of different social systems can well co-exist in peace, and that no question between them cannot be settled smoothly through friendly negotiation, provided they adhere to the five-principles. I fully agree with His Excellency U Nu that if there are varying points of view, we foresee no difficulty in reaching understanding and agreement, since our mutual approach will be in the spirit of the five principles to which we have subscribed and adhered.

In reply, U Nu pointed out that it was quite possible that some "difficulties" might arise in "building up the edifice of Sino-Burmese friendship". Given "patience and persistence", he added that the "builders" would complete the "great and beautiful structure of friendship" between the two countries".¹⁰⁵

11. 3-Point Proposals

During his stay in Peking U Nu held a number of talks with Chou En-lai. Concerning principles for the settling of the boundary question, Chou made a 3-point proposal:

The first point concerns the section in the Kawa area. This section was explicitly provided for in the two treaties on the Sino-Burmese boundary line signed between China and Britain in 1894 and 1897 respectively. But as the related provisions are self-contradictory, this section was for long not demarcated. To create a fait accompli, Britain sent troops in the earlier part of 1934 to attack the areas of the Panhung and Panlao

tribes and were met with heroic resistance from the Kawa people. This was the well-known "Panhung Incident". In 1941, taking advantage of the critical situation in which China was placed during the War of Resistance to Japanese Aggression, and using the closing of the Yunnan-Burma Road as a pressure measure, Britain effected, in an exchange of notes with the Kuomintang Government on June 18, a demarcation in the Kawa area to her advantage. This was the so-called "1941 line". But since the Pacific war broke out soon afterward, no markers were erected along the line... It was the opinion of our Government that on the question of boundary lines, demands made on the basis of formal treaties should be respected according to general international practice, but this by no means excluded the seeking by two friendly countries of a settlement fair and reasonable for both sides, through peaceful negotiation between their governments. In order to promote such a fair and reasonable settlement and to create a favourable atmosphere for it, our government in its proposal about principles to the Burmese Government expressed its preparedness to withdraw its troops from the area to the west of the 1941 line. At the same time, our government asked that, pending a final agreement on the question of the 1941 line and the setting up of boundary markers, Burmese troops should refrain from entering the area to the west of the 1941 line evacuated by the Chinese troops; however, the working personnel of the Burmese Government may enter this area.

The second point concerns the Meng-Mao triangular area, otherwise called the Namwan triangular area, situated at the junction of the Namwan River and the Shweli River and measuring about 250 square kilometres. This is Chinese territory, a fact which Britain also recognised in explicit terms in the treaty. But before the signing of the Sino-British treaty on Sino-Burmese boundary line in 1894, Britain, without obtaining China's consent, built by compulsion a highway through this area to join Bhamo with Namhkan. By the time China and Britain signed another treaty on the Sino-Burmese boundary line in 1897, Britain under the name of "perpetual lease" further secured jurisdiction over this piece of Chinese territory. Following her independence, Burma succeeded to the "perpetual lease" of the area. In its proposal about principles to the Burmese Government, our Government pointed out that it would be inconsistent with the relations of equality and friendship now existing between China and Burma for Burma to continue the "perpetual lease" of a piece of Chinese territory. Our Government expressed its readiness to negotiate with the Burmese Government so as to decide upon the concrete steps to abrogate the "perpetual lease" of the Meng-Mao triangular area.

The third point concerns the section to the north of the High Conical Peak. This section of the boundary line has never been delimited in the past. Britain

continually created conflicts in this area and took the opportunity to expand its colonial territory. The most serious of such conflicts was the armed occupation of the Hpimaw area by the British in the early part of 1911. The "Hpimaw Incident" aroused the indignation of the whole Chinese people and protest movements spread with gathering force through all parts of China. Under such circumstances, the British Government could not but acknowledge formally in its note dated April 10, 1911 to the then Chinese Government that the villages of the Hpimaw, Kangfang and Gawlum area belong to China, but it continued unreasonably to occupy this area. On the basis of the results obtained from an examination and study of the historical facts and actual conditions, our Government made to the Burmese Government the following proposal concerning the demarcation of this section of the boundary line: The section from Isurazi Pass northward to Diphu Pass can be demarcated along the traditional boundary line. The section from Isurazi Pass to the High Conical Peak can in principle be determined along the watershed between the Nu River, the Shweli River (otherwise called the Lungchuan River) and the Taiping River on the one side and the Nmai Hka River on the other, with the exception of the Hpimaw, Kangfang and Gawlum area which should be returned to China. Our Government asked at the same time that, during the same period as Chinese troops would withdraw from the area to the west of the 1941 line,

the Burmese Government should withdraw its troops from Hpimaw, Wangfang and Gawlum. Pending the final demarcation of this section, the Burmese Government might retain its administration over Hpimaw, Wangfang and Gawlum, and the Chinese Government undertook to refrain from sending Chinese troops into these places before this section would have been finally demarcated.¹⁰⁶

After the above proposal was made by Chou En-lai, U Nu expressed the "view" that it was a "fair and reasonable proposal taking account of the interests of both sides".¹⁰⁷

The proposal received the "approval" of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress at its 50th meeting on November 5.¹⁰⁸

A joint press communique issued by Chou En-lai and U Nu on November 9 said:

...In the talks, the Chinese side put forward for the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary question a fair and reasonable proposal which takes into account the interests of both sides. The Burmese side promised to give consideration to this proposal. In the meantime, the Chinese and the Burmese Governments have arrived at the understanding that starting from the end of November 1956, Chinese troops will withdraw from the area to the west of the 1941 line and Burmese troops will withdraw from Hpimaw, Wangfang and Gawlum; the withdrawal to be completed before the end of the year 1956.

The two parties believe that the present talks have provided a favourable basis for the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary question, thus facilitating the further consolidation and development of the friendly relations between China and Burma.¹⁰⁹

In an editorial on the joint press communique, the Jen Min Jih Pao said:

The talks between Premier Chou En-lai and Chairman U Nu have paved the way for a settlement of the Sino-Burmese border question... The Sino-Burmese boundary question is one left over by history. From the time that British imperialism seized Burma by force in 1885, China and Britain had conducted repeated negotiations on the Yunnan-Burma boundary question. In some areas, the border line remained undetermined. Although there had been agreement on some other areas, no boundary markers had been formally set. The so-called Sino-Burmese boundary question is therefore a long-standing one. Now Burma has freed itself from British colonialist rule and is independent. China has also achieved liberation, and the friendly relations established between the two countries based on the five principles of peaceful co-existence are growing day by day. Thus the most favourable conditions exist for a settlement of the boundary question. The talks this time are new efforts to consolidate and strengthen the friendly relations between China and Burma. They prove that any question arising between us and our friends or neighbours

can be settled fairly and reasonably through friendly negotiations. They also indicate that China and Burma value the unity of the Asian countries because we realise that friendly co-operation among Asian countries is the surest guarantee for crushing imperialist intrigues and ensuring peace in Asia... On the basis of the talks between Chairman U Nu and Premier Chou En-lai, the Sino-Burmese border issue will be justly settled.¹¹⁰

Regarding demarcation of the Sino-Burmese frontier, the same paper gave the following questions and answers:

Q. What is the 1941 line of the Sino-Burmese frontier mentioned in the joint China-Burma communique?

A. The 1941 line crossing the Kawa mountain area of the southwest frontier of Yunnan is located west of Panhung, Tsangyuan, Hsimeng and Menglien of Yunnan. The Kawa people inhabit both sides of the line... Taking advantage of the critical situation facing China after the outbreak of the anti-Japanese war, Britain demanded of the Chinese Government acceptance of the recommendations by the survey committee, intimidating China with blockade of the Yunnan-Burma highway. In the circumstances the Kuomintang Government accepted the British scheme based on the recommendations of the survey committee. On June 18, 1941 China and Britain exchanged notes determining this frontier. The national border determined in these notes exchanged was the 1941 line. No boundary

posts have ever been erected in this frontier. During 1951 and 1952, remnant Kuomintang bandits under Li Mi fled to Burma and occupied the Kawa mountain area and raided our country. The Burmese troops did not arrive in the area at that time, and our forces were compelled to fight back and moved to both sides of the 1941 line.

According to the joint communique issued by China and Burma on November 9, the Chinese troops will, beginning from November 1956, withdraw to east of the 1941 line; withdrawals to be completed by the end of 1956.

Q. Where are Pienma (Hpinaw), Kangfang and Kulang (Gawlum)?

A. Pienma, Kangfang and Kulang are to the north of Tengchung hsien of Yunnan and are three undefined places in the northern sector of the Sino-Burmese frontier. The places are flanked by the Kaolikung mountain in the east and Nmai River in the west. These three places are mainly inhabited by the Chashan nationality (a branch of the Chingpo nationality); a small number of Han Chinese also inhabit the places. Pienma, Kangfang and Kulang were formerly localities under the jurisdiction of the Tengchung headman of our Paoshan hsien.

The northern section of the Sino-Burmese frontier had never been defined in the past. Since 1898, Britain on many occasions unreasonably demanded of China recognition of the Kaolikung mountain as the national

border but the Manchu Government had never acceded to their demand. Taking advantage of the clash between the Tengking headsman and the Han Chinese merchants, Britain despatched troops in 1911 to occupy Pienna and stationed troops north of Pienna. The Chinese people firmly opposed this, and a powerful anti-British movement was aroused to demand withdrawal of British troops from Pienna. In Yunnan, the "Chinese Committee for Protecting National Border" was organized, boycott of British goods was announced and arbitration by the "Hague Peace Conference" was demanded. Under the indignant protests of the Chinese people, the British Government was obliged to recognize Pienna, Kangfang and Kulang as Chinese locality but continued occupation of these three places, taking mean advantage of the weakness and incompetence of the Manchu Government. This problem had remained unsolved all the time. After 1922, the Chinese people, being indignant and protesting over the establishment of British administrative organizations in Pienna and other places, organized "aid-Pienna committee". But the Peiyang Government of that time dared not negotiate with Britain. Pienna and other places remained under British occupation and the Kuomintang Government maintained an attitude of indifference to the question. After gaining independence in 1948 the Burmese Government took over from Britain Pienna, Kangfang and Kulang.

On the basis of the joint communique issued by China and Burma on November 9, beginning from the end of November 1956 the Burmese troops will withdraw from Pienma, Kangfang and Kulang; withdrawals to be completed by the end of 1956.¹¹¹

Back in Rangoon, U Nu said at a press conference that discussions on the border question between Premier Chou En-lai and himself were held in "an atmosphere of friendship and cordiality". He stressed that in the course of discussions Chou En-lai had shown "a sense of justice and fairness" toward the settlement of the border problem.

Referring to the problems which had arisen in the Wa State, U Nu said that Communist Chinese troops did not "commit any aggression on the Wa State", and they had entered "originally at the heels of Kuomintang troops".¹¹²

U Nu also said: "China has agreed to recognize the McMahon line in the interests of an overall settlement of frontiers between Burma and China".¹¹³

Later, in a broadcast speech, U Nu said:

If there is a final settlement, it will be a Sino-Burmese border which will ensure, as one made between two friendly neighbours, a border that will be satisfactory to both and respected by both; a border that will be peaceful, and that does not require the stationing of armies on either side of it.¹¹⁴

12. Twists and Turns

On December 10, Chou En-lai arrived in Rangoon for a 10-day visit. He told 1,000 leading members of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League at the city hall on December 11 that he was "confident" that all outstanding problems between Communist China and Burma could be "settled reasonably through peaceful negotiations".¹¹⁵

He declared:

We firmly believed that on the basis of the five principles it is entirely possible to solve the problems between us step by step.

The misunderstanding left behind by history cannot be eliminated at one stroke, and lack of understanding of one side by the other might still exist for some time. Under such circumstances, to have patience and wait is a wise policy.

Speaking of the "suspicions" and "fears" which some countries might "harbour" toward such a "new" and "big" country as Communist China, Chou said:

China therefore must make even stricter demands on herself readily to put into practice the five principles in international relations, and to fight against big-power chauvinism.

Finally, Chou "recommended" that "both China and Burma hold even higher, the banner of the five principles and prove with deeds and set an example that countries with different social systems can co-exist peacefully".

While Chou was in Rangoon, Peking announced that Chinese Communist troops "completed their withdrawal from areas to the west of the 1941 Sino-Burmese border line on December 12, 1956".¹¹⁶

On December 15, Chou En-lai and Prime Minister U Ba Swe of Burma arrived at Mangshih, the capital city of the Thai-Chingpo Autonomous chou near the Sino-Burmese border. To celebrate the "growing friendship" between Communist China and Burma, a meeting was held on December 16. NCNA gave a vivid account:

The participants, including the people of Thai, Chingpo and Lahu nationalities of China and those of Shan and Kachin nationalities of Burma, waved flags and banners to the rhythm of drums played by groups as they came to the meeting ground. The Thai people of China and the Shan people of Burma are of the same nationality; so are the Chingpo people of China and the Kachin people of Burma. Although living in two different countries, they have been kinsfolk since ancient times.

Bedecked with Chinese and Burmese national flags and red banners, the rostrum was flanked by sugar-cane, banana and pine trees, symbolic of peace, friendship and well-being in accordance with local custom. On the rostrum hung the big portraits of President Ba U and Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

Amidst thunderous applause and cheers, Prime Minister U Ba Swe, Premier Chou En-lai, Burmese Deputy Prime Ministers Sao Hkio and U Kyaw Myein, and Chinese Vice-Premier Ho Lung mounted the rostrum.

Liu Ming-hui, Acting Governor of Yunnan Province, made the opening speech. On behalf of the Yunnan Provincial People's Council and the various nationalities in the province, he extended sincere respects and a cordial welcome to the leaders of the two countries.

He dwelt on the traditional friendship between the people of the border region of China and Burma. He said, "The Provincial Government of Yunnan will continue to carry out the five principles of peaceful co-existence, respect the historic customs of the people on the border of the two countries, promote mutual friendly contacts and develop economic and cultural ties between the border region of the two countries"...¹¹⁷

In his speech at the meeting, Chou En-lai said:

I feel very honoured and happy, in the middle of our friendly visit to our neighbour Burma, to be able to invite His Excellency Prime Minister U Ba Swe and other distinguished Burmese guests to come across the border to attend this gathering of Chinese and Burmese border people in Mangshih, and to be able to receive them here as their host. In the name of the Government and people of China, I extend our cordial welcome today to Prime Minister U Ba Swe, other leaders of the Burmese Government, leaders of the various nationalities of the Kachin and Shan States, and other friends from Burma who are attending this gathering.

Brothers of different nationalities of Yunnan Province: although I have visited Yunnan several times, this is the first time that I have come to this autonomous chou in the border region of your province which is populated by fraternal nationalities. Your rich and beautiful land, your creative labour - especially the

achievements you have made in different fields since liberation - have deeply impressed us and made us feel very happy. I would like to congratulate you on behalf of the Government and extend to you fraternal respects for the numerous valuable contributions you have made in recent years to the peaceful construction of the country, and the promotion of friendship between China and Burma.

Brothers, comrades: holding this kind of border people's gathering and allowing the Chinese and Burmese border people to establish broader and closer direct contact is of great significance for friendship and unity between the peoples of China and Burma. The border people's gathering held by the Burmese Government in January this year at Lweje near Lungchwan County in our country, played an excellent role in the promotion of understanding and friendship between the border people of the two countries; marking a good beginning for us. I hope this Mangshih gathering of border people, in which leaders of the two governments are personally participating, will promote more contacts and new understanding and friendship among the peoples of both countries.

China and Burma are close neighbours... More than 1,000 years of traditional friendship exists between the two peoples, making them like kinsmen. Our traditional friendship was beset by man-made obstacles in the past hundred years due to colonialist invasion. The colonialists spread

misunderstanding and disharmony to maintain their colonial rule. However, because of the protracted and heroic struggles by our two peoples, we finally won national independence and freedom; and developed and strengthened our friendship in accordance with the wish of both peoples on the new basis of the five principles of peaceful co-existence. In the past few years, leaders of our two countries have been paying mutual visits, and economic and cultural relations between the two countries are growing daily. The development of friendly relations is beneficial to the construction, and people's welfare of the two countries. It is also a valuable contribution to the unity among the Asian and African countries, the preservation of world peace, and the promotion of mutual understanding and co-operation among nations.

Of course it is not impossible that there may be some obstacles in developing friendly relations based on the five principles of peaceful co-existence. It has not been very long since our two countries first established our new regimes and restored diplomatic relations. There has not been opportunity to solve some historical questions left over from the past. In this situation, it is natural that there are some people on both sides who regard certain questions with reservations and doubts. This is understandable. But I believe that if our two governments and people firmly abide by the five principles

of peaceful co-existence and are sincere towards each other, our mutual understanding and trust will increase, and all questions between us can be solved step by step on a just and reasonable basis. It is known that the Chinese and Burmese Governments have held friendly talks recently on the unsettled border question in a spirit of sincerity and mutual understanding. Through the talks, our mutual understanding has been advanced. We have reason to hope that this historical question, involving many aspects, can be solved justly and reasonably with the consent of the peoples of both countries.

In the past several years, because of disturbances launched among the inhabitants in the border region of our two countries by the remnant Kuomintang armed forces, and also because we still did not understand each other well enough in certain respects, it could not be helped that the traditional relations which existed between the border inhabitants of the two countries in this region, such as small trade transactions, mutual visits and calls, have been hindered and affected. This situation can be improved gradually. As for China, we have always wanted to strengthen friendship between China and Burma, and the ties between the peoples of the two countries. But we have not paid enough attention to those concrete measures to improve relations between the border inhabitants of the two countries. On certain matters there still exist some kinds of restrictions which are too rigid and thus

cause inconveniences. We are ready to rectify these shortcomings in our work in the future, and to strive together with the Government and people of Burma to work better for promoting Sino-Burmese friendship and friendly co-operation between the border inhabitants of China and Burma, so as to fulfil the desire of the peoples of both countries.

Friends, comrades, what makes us particularly happy is that in the border region of our two countries, the people are of the same fraternal nationalities; many representatives of which are present here today at this meeting. Kinship and similar language and customs exist between you, and you drink water from the same river. The long-standing and sincere traditional relations between you are of particularly great significance in developing Sino-Burmese friendship. We should treasure most this priceless friendship and develop friendly and co-operative relations between the border inhabitants of the two countries. Toward this end, I believe that the border people of our country should make greater efforts than those of Burma. Because China is a country with a very large population, we ought to take more initiative and prove by concrete actions that we shall consistently abide by the five principles of peaceful co-existence. We must always be modest, circumspect and forbearing toward our friendly neighbours and resolutely oppose great-nation chauvinism. Only by adopting such an attitude can the

friendship between the border people and the people of our two countries be strengthened and improved with the passage of time. Thus, the development and prosperity of the border region will become easier and the people living there will be able to lead a happier and more prosperous life.

The holding of this meeting is a sign of the greater development of friendly unity between the border people of China and Burma. In the future I hope they will be able to meet often and have more frequent contacts so that the fraternal friendship of the two peoples will become even closer and more fruitful... 118

In reply, the Burmese Prime Minister U Ba Swe said:

As you know, the Burmese affectionately call the Chinese "Pao Po" meaning in Burmese brothers and sisters born of the same parents. To my knowledge, the Chinese, too, both in the past and the present, have always taken the Burmese as their own kin. Such close relations exist not only among the people; the Burmese and Chinese Governments in the past 2,000 years have always been friendly and have respected each other. In this very long period of history, there were at most two or three conflicts between the two sides. This is very rare and has great significance in world history. In ancient times, wars often took place between neighbouring countries in the world. But Burmese and Chinese relations are not of this nature. Throughout history there have been only

two or three conflicts. In the light of this, one need not say much to convey how friendly our two countries have been to each other.

This is especially so in the past two or three years, when relations between Burma and China have notably improved. The joint statement by our friend Premier Chou En-lai and the then Burmese Prime Minister U Nu on June 29, 1954 greatly carried forward and improved friendly relations between Burma and China. Most significant in the joint statement are the five principles of peaceful co-existence which were agreed upon by the two parties... Today our two countries have faithfully carried out these five principles. We are determined to continue to carry them out faithfully in future. Their application has made for very good relations between our two countries. I feel much satisfaction over this. We firmly believe that if this example of faithful practice of the five principles is followed by all nations of different political and economic systems, international tension will be eased and world peace quickly realised. Since belief in these five principles have gradually grown among the masses of the people who cherish world peace, international relations have remarkably improved. As they are more widely applied by various nations, there will be striking progress and successes for world peace.

Our two countries have not only strictly observed these five principles; we have also a common aim. The People's Republic of China is a great nation that is in the course of building itself into a real people's state. The Union of Burma is also a nation that is building itself into a real people's state. As we build our people's states, though there are differences in our methods, we have a common aim. Both our countries are sparing no effort in trying to improve the people's livelihood by every possible means.

Both our countries are states that are effectively striving for peace. We are both opposed to war and have accepted the principle of settling international disputes peacefully. Thanks to our mutual friendship and confidence in each other, we are endeavouring to set an example which can be followed by other states.

Similarities can be found if we review our history. The Chinese as a nation are imbued with national self-respect and have successfully maintained their national civilization. We Burmese too, are imbued with national self-respect. Even under imperialist suppression, we still successfully maintained our national civilization. Our two peoples cherish warm love of our own motherlands and have taken great care to maintain our own civilizations; our relations through history have been most cordial. Each of us has understood the other's attitude. Therefore Sino-Burmese relations have always been friendly for the past 2,000 years.

The people of our two countries were friendly in the past; and we have the same objectives today. For world peace, we have accepted and are carrying out the five principles. We have many points in common in our culture. We believe that Burma and China, with so many points in common, will be still more friendly, intimate and mutually respectful in our present era, since we were able to live together in friendship in the past. Therefore our duty is to promote this friendship and make it stronger as time goes on. We firmly believe that such efforts will be crowned with success.

Our two countries are very dear neighbours. If neighbours in a village live in harmony, they foster unity in the entire village and bring it happiness. If on the contrary the neighbours quarrel, there is no happiness in the entire village. It becomes impossible to build up its economy. Bad elements outside the village will seize this opportunity to plunder and rob the village. The same holds true for relations among nations. Therefore we neighbouring countries must build our friendship and unity. If we are united, we benefit greatly. If we are not united, bad elements outside our countries will work all kinds of conspiracies and bring us great harm. So it is very important for us as neighbouring countries to develop friendly relations, enhance mutual understanding and eliminate suspicion. We must consolidate our friendship with each passing day.

The question of whether a country is big or small is not basic in international relations. In the past, it often was the case that a big country, in its relations with a small country, bullied it. The nations bully weak nations. So long as exists this colonial system of the big bullying the small, the powerful bullying the weak, international tension will continue and there will be no way of bringing about world peace. That is why we are sparing no efforts in struggling against this criminal system of big nations bullying the small and the powerful lording it over the weak.

If all nations, big or small, establish their mutual relations in accordance with the principles of mutual respect and peaceful co-existence, the edifice of peace to which we aspire will be in sight. There is a Burmese saying that a man who respects others is respected. This should be firmly applied in the relations not only of men but also of nations. Only by doing so can the world peace which we desire be achieved and friendly relations between nations be established. If our two countries can live in friendship on the basis of mutual respect and equality, our friendship will be as constant as the flow of the river, unbreakable and lasting. We base our relations on the five principles, and so I firmly believe our friendship will be everlasting.

In building friendship between the two countries, it is most important for the people of the various nationalities in the border regions of our two countries to befriend and understand each other. We must do our utmost to consolidate the friendship between the border peoples of the two countries. With the consolidation of understanding, friendship and unity between the brotherly peoples of the border regions, friendship between our two countries and mutual respect will also go forward and be strengthened...

The political systems of our two countries are not entirely similar. But our two countries have agreed on the principle that every country can freely choose any political system it favours and build it in accordance with its own conditions. Therefore we have accepted the five principles of peaceful co-existence among countries of different political and economic systems. If all nations can follow this example, I believe that mutual suspicion will thaw and mutual understanding will increase. I believe this will also help eliminate international tension gradually. Therefore I propose that while carrying out the five principles we have accepted, our two countries should set an example for the acceptance of these principles by all countries. All the world is watching closely to see if the five principles can be successful. If successful, they will undoubtedly be accepted by more states. If they fail, we should undoubtedly be laughed at by many states.

Therefore, at this meeting of border people, let us once again give our word that we shall continue to work for the successful carrying out of the five principles. At the same time, let us strive together to develop still further the traditional friendship between the Burmese and Chinese peoples...¹¹⁹

After the meeting Chou En-lai returned to Rangoon with U Ba Swe. On December 18 Chou delivered a speech at Rangoon University. He said:

We should not only develop friendly relations between our two countries in this generation, but also have more and more friendly relations in generations to come... We must forever be friendly and united on the basis of the five principles. As long as we can do that, the colonial attacks can all be thwarted...

We have started to settle these questions step by step. As long as we resolutely act upon the five principles, no insurmountable difficulties will stand in the way of settlement of these questions.

A joint statement was signed by Chou En-lai and Minister U Ba Swe on December 20. The statement said in part:

During his stay, His Excellency Mr. Chou En-lai and his party also visited Mandalay, Kaymyo, Bhamo, Myitkyina, Hoho, Yaungshwe, Taunggyi and Lashio, where he received a warm welcome from the leaders and people of each locality. In addition, both the Prime Ministers attended the border conference held at Tangshih, administrative centre of the Tehung Tai-Chingpo

Autonomous chou in China's Yunnan Province. The main feature of this conference at which were gathered over 10,000 people was free discussion between the leaders of the two Governments and representatives of the border people from both sides of the frontier. The climax of the conference was a mass meeting which was addressed by both the Premiers and the leaders of the border regions. The cordial atmosphere of the conference was indicative of the growth of goodwill and understanding among the people living astride the border.

The two Premiers also discussed in a spirit of cordial and mutual understanding the question of the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary line. These discussions have led to the further clarification of the Chinese and Burmese points of view and have brought the problem nearer to a solution satisfactory to both the countries.¹²⁰

Before leaving for Karachi, Chou En-lai told newspaper correspondents in Rangoon that Communist China and Burma were solving the border problem on "the basis of historical documents".

Answering the correspondents, he said that the viewpoints held by the two countries on this question were "basically close to each other".

Asked if he had discussed the possibility of another Asian-African conference during this visit, Chou said "No". He added that Prime Minister Nehru informed him while he was in India of the recent meeting of powers at the Colombo Conference.

One British correspondent asked him if there had been some "unexpected difficulties" during the past discussions on the border issue. He answered, "No".

The correspondent then raised the question of whether the problem could be solved by peaceful means. Chou said, "Of course it can. Why cannot it be solved by peaceful means between two countries like Burma and China"?

On realising his questioner was British, Chou said:

"Then I tell you, all these problems were left over by Britain. They were created by the British colonialists during their occupation of Burma and oppression of China".¹²¹

13. Hard Bargain

Shortly after becoming Prime Minister, U Nu said at a press conference on March 5, 1957 that the Kachin State Council had agreed in principle to the proposed transfer of the three villages of Hpimaw, Kangfang and Gawlum to Communist China. It was on the strength of this agreement, he added, that his predecessor had sent a letter to the Chinese Communist Government.¹²²

U Nu journeyed to Kunming on March 22 and stayed eleven days.¹²³ On March 29, Chou En-lai flew from Peking to meet him,¹²⁴ and they held "cordial" talks on the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary question the same day.¹²⁵ During these talks, Chou En-lai said that the "standpoints" of the two sides were further "clarified" and a general agreement of "views" was "obtained".¹²⁶

Returning to Rangoon, U Nu said at a press conference on April 9 that there were one or two points on the border problem which still had to be "ironed out" with Communist China. He added, "But it will not be long before we reach the final stage of negotiations". He told the press that the issue was "a wide one, covering more than just the three villages of Hpimaw, Gawlum and Kangfang". Meanwhile, he disclosed that he was expecting a letter from Chou En-lai, after which there would be further meetings.¹²⁷

At the Fourth Session of the First National People's Congress on July 9 Chou delivered a report on the question of the boundary line between Communist China and Burma:

We have inherited from the past questions of undefined boundary lines between our country and many neighbouring countries; and the one between China and Burma has attracted public attention particularly. This is because of the prolonged disputes created by Britain over the boundary line between China and Burma when Burma was under British rule; and because in recent years the forces of imperialism have constantly used the boundary question between China and Burma to sow discord between the two countries in an attempt to create a tense situation... The boundary question between China and Burma is of long standing as well as complicated; so from the moment our Government began to tackle it, it has taken a careful attitude to seek, step by step and through suitable preparatory work, a settlement of the question.

During the years immediately after the founding of our state, our Government was engrossed in a series of urgent, major tasks at home and in its relations with foreign countries, and was therefore unable at that time to make comprehensive and systematic preparations for the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary question. However, since the Premiers of China and Burma proposed in the communique on their talks issued on December 12, 1954 that the question of the undefined boundary line between the

two countries should be settled "at an appropriate time through normal diplomatic channels", our Government has proceeded to make the necessary preparations for the settlement of the question. The various government departments concerned have, jointly with the provincial authorities of Yunnan, undertaken a systematic and detailed examination and study of relevant historical data and actual conditions... Our Government made a proposal about principles on these three sections and held that the three-point proposal should be considered as an integrated whole.

In the joint press communique issued after the talks held between Chairman U Nu and the leading personnel of our Government it was declared that the Governments of China and Burma had arrived at an understanding that from the end of November 1956, Chinese troops would withdraw from the area to the west of the 1941 line and Burmese troops would withdraw from Hpimaw, Kangfang and Gawlum; the withdrawal to be completed before the end of the year. By the end of 1956, the two Governments had completed the withdrawal of troops respectively. Thus a good start was made for the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary question. The leading personnel of the two Governments again had opportunities to continue their friendly talks on the boundary question in Rangoon in December 1956 and in Kunming in March 1957. During these talks the standpoints of the two sides were further clarified and a general agreement of views was obtained.

People of all walks of life in our country take a great interest in the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary question. In order to obtain views from a wider circle of our people, on behalf of the Government I made a report on this question in the middle of March this year to the third plenary session of the Second National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Present at the meeting also were deputies to the National People's Congress who were in Peking at the time, members of the Government and specially invited experts. At the end of March I made in Kunming another report on the question to a meeting called by the Yunnan Provincial Committee of the People's Political Consultative Conference and attended by representatives of people of all walks of life of Yunnan Province and representative of various brother nationalities. Earnest discussions took place at these two widely represented meetings which gave the Government an opportunity to listen to the opinions from different quarters and reply to relevant questions raised, thus bringing into closer agreement the views of the people of different quarters in the country on the Sino-Burmese boundary question.

China and Burma have now achieved independence and are making efforts to secure a peaceful international environment so that they can engage in peaceful construction in their own countries. Together with India, China and Burma were the first to initiate the five principles of peaceful co-existence. We all treasure our national independence and national interests and know full well that our

national independence and national interests can best be safeguarded only through peaceful co-existence and friendly co-operation. However, the imperialists have never ceased exploiting the difference existing among Asian and African countries to create tension and discord among them and are trying hard to carry out again their aggressive policy of "divide and rule" against these countries. In view of all this, our Government, in discussing the boundary question with the Burmese Government, has always stressed that both sides should act in a spirit of sincerity and carry out friendly negotiation in accordance with the five principles of peaceful co-existence so that a fair and reasonable settlement may be arrived at. For this will not only further consolidate and develop the friendly relations between China and Burma, but also benefit the solidarity among Asian and African countries. The stand which our Government takes in solving this question is based on a desire to protect our national interests as well as promote Sino-Burmese friendship and the solidarity among Asian and African countries.

The boundary question between China and Burma has behind it a complicated historical background. Therefore, in dealing with this question, the treatment of historical data has become an important problem. In the days when China was under feudal rulers, its boundaries, like the boundaries of many other countries in the feudal era, were not too well defined. Throughout the ages the feudal dynasties in China maintained different relations, varying in nature and degree,

with the nationalities living in the border areas. Therefore it is almost impossible to define the boundaries such as existed under Chinese feudal empires. Furthermore, during the past sixty years or so there have been many vastly different ways of drawing the undefined boundary between China and Burma in the maps published at home and abroad. All this cannot but cause confusion in wide circles as regards the undefined boundary between China and Burma. Our Government holds that in dealing with the Sino-Burmese boundary question we must adopt a serious attitude towards historical data; we must take a correct stand and viewpoint, so as to make a scientific analysis and appraisal of such data, and to distinguish between the data which can be used as a legal and reasonable basis, and those which have only reference value as a result of changed conditions. At the same time we must bear in mind the fundamental changes of historical importance that have taken place in China and Burma respectively, i.e., China has cast away its semi-colonial status and Burma its colonial status, and both have become independent and mutually friendly countries. The Burmese Government has succeeded to the territory formerly controlled by Britain, and the Union of Burma has been established by combining the various national autonomous states and Burma proper, while our Government has taken over the territory under the jurisdiction of the Kuomintang Government. In dealing with this boundary question, attention must be paid to these historical changes, and

the treaties signed in the past which concern the boundary between China and Burma must be treated in accordance with general international practice...

Fellow Deputies! After repeated contacts and consultations the Chinese and Burmese Governments have arrived at a general agreement of views on the boundary question in a spirit of friendship and according to the five principles of peaceful co-existence. We believe that when the views of both sides on concrete problems are brought into accord through continued negotiations, the boundary question between China and Burma will receive a comprehensive, fair and reasonable settlement. (Supplement to People's China, No. 15, August 1, 1957)

On July 15 the NPC approved Chou's report.¹²⁸

Despite its ostensibly conciliatory approach, Peking appeared to delay a settlement. This was indicated by the decline of NCNA reports on the subject of the Sino-Burmese boundary issue. The news agency however, continued to report Chinese Communist propaganda pronouncements of "long-standing friendship" and "five principles":

Burmese Deputy Prime Minister U Kyaw Nyein and Mrs. Kyaw Nyein gave a banquet (in Peking) ... Premier Chou En-lai, in his speech, said that the long-standing friendship between China and Burma had become ever more closer on the basis of the five principles. China faced the sea in the east, where her path contacts with other countries had been artificially barred by the US imperialists, Chou En-lai said. And so, China took the path through Ulan Bator and

Moscow in the north and Hanoi and New Delhi in the south. He took the opportunity to thank the Burmese Government and people for their kindness in giving the Chinese people facilities so that they could make friendly contacts with the Asian and African people.

Chou En-lai thanked U Kyaw Nyein for this praise which he said would be a great encouragement to the Chinese people.

Chou En-lai ended his speech with a cheer in Burmese "Long live Sino-Burmese friendship". He hoped this friendship - in the words of a Chinese poem would be - "A mountain forever green and a stream forever flowing".¹²⁹

In 1958, the settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary issue remained at a deadlock. Answering questions regarding the Sino-Burmese border issue at a press conference on January 8, Burmese Deputy Prime Minister U Kyaw Nyein said that because of the "close friendship" between Communist China and Burma, "all questions" between the two countries could be "solved amicably".¹³⁰

Although the Chinese Communists avoided mention of the border issue, they talked about "close friendship" more emphatically than the Burmese Deputy Prime Minister. For example, at a reception given by Burmese Military Attache Colonel New Taung to mark the 13th anniversary of the Burmese Armed Forces Day on March 27 in Peking, General Chang Tsung-hsun, Deputy Chief of the PLA General Staff, said: "We are deeply convinced that as a result of our common efforts the friendship between the peoples and armed forces of China and Burma will be consolidated and develop and flow forever like the Irrawaddy River".¹³¹

Apart from emphasis on this "close friendship", the year 1958 also witnessed increasing attention to the national minorities along the Yunnan-Burma border by Peking:

Directly to Socialism

NCNA Kunming, January 14, 1958:

Over 700,000 people of national minorities who live in the mountainous frontier areas of Yunnan...will be brought directly to socialism without going through democratic reforms as there is practically no class division among them. In these parts, nearly 500 agricultural producer co-operatives embracing almost 10,000 peasant households have been built. Over 300 of them are scattered over areas of Kalikung Mountain Range where the people of Lisu and Chingpo nationalities inhabit. The rest are spread over Milao and Kawa Mountains...

Realization of Co-operativization

The Yunnan Jih Pao, Kunming reported on January 14, 1958

The CCP Yunnan Provincial Committee has recently issued a directive on realisation of agricultural co-operativization in frontier areas where agrarian reform has been carried out through peaceful consultations.

The directive points out: The frontier national minority areas are experiencing a profound socialist transformation movement. The various nationalities may be in different circumstances, but after the agrarian reform we must lead all nationalities on to the road of socialism, and that will inevitably bring on a struggle between the socialist and the capitalist road of development. With the rise of the agricultural

economy and advance of mutual aid and co-operation, the struggle will become more and more apparent and more and more acute. After the agrarian reform, the people of various nationalities in the frontier areas, like those in the interior of the province, are unprecedentedly enthusiastic for production. This, together with the impulse imparted by the high tide of socialism in the interior, provides us with certain favourable conditions for carrying out a socialist revolution in the frontier areas. But, the common laws of the struggle of the two roads throughout the transition period are expressed through the particularities of every nationality. Owing to the backwardness of the economic and cultural development of the frontier nationalities, the incompleteness of the agrarian reform through peaceful consultations, and the complicated circumstances arising from the interweaving of national relations, internal-external relations and contradictions between the enemy and ourselves, and struggle of the two roads in the frontier areas really has its own particular problems and laws of concrete development. So, when leading the various nationalities toward socialism, we are required to observe steadfastly the common principles of socialism and at the same time to give full attention to the particularities of every nationality. Correct treatment of the problem of generalities and particularities will be the ideological foundation for the healthy development

of agricultural co-operativization in the frontier areas

...

Leap Forward in Industry

NCNA Kunming on May 8, 1958 said:

People of Han nationality in Yunnan Province this year will make an all-out effort to help the minority peoples take a leap forward in industry. The minority peoples who constitute about one-third of the province's 18 million people, live in 4,000 kilometers of border areas... Han workers will also help train minority peoples. Some of the machine tools, power generators and other equipment and apparatus have already been sent from Kunming to autonomous chous.

Irrigation projects will also be built and State farms established this year with the aid of Han experts, as agriculture constitutes the bulk of the economy of the minorities in this province. The Government has appropriated five million yuan to help with these building and development programmes. Han technicians and workers have climbed a mountain more than 2,000 meters above sea level to help construct a reservoir, the first in history of the Kawa people on the south-western frontier... Han workers in trade departments of the province have brought large quantities of consumer goods to the minority peoples in the most remote regions and mountainous areas.

These autonomous chous, though formerly backward economically, are rich in deposits of various minerals. Large

numbers of new factories and mines will make use of these materials to develop local industry.

Break of Divine Power Bonds

The following is taken from Kwang Ming Jih Pac - September, 18, 1958.

While industrial and agricultural production is moving in a great leap forward, the minority peoples of Yunnan Province are boldly breaking and doing away with centuries-old rules, customs, superstitions and taboos, so that their own socialist construction may proceed at an even higher speed...

During the great leap forward and through mass debates, the minority peoples have come to know the social causes of their bad customs and superstitious taboos and have realised their harmful character. Accordingly, in their struggle against Nature, they are waging a vigorous struggle against these superstitions and taboos. To change radically their centuries-old customs of relying on the graces of Heaven for good crops, the Lisu people of the banks of Nuchiang, breaking the old rule of doing no productive work during the winter months and braving windstorms and snowstorms, have opened up over 60,000 mow of terraced fields on the Kaolikung Mountains and Pilohsueh Mountains in the spring of this year, diverting hundreds of tributaries of Nuchiang to the dry fields...

The 300 Thai civilian labourers who worked on the Hunanmen irrigation project in Yunchinghung district said, "Even if we do not worship Buddha and receive holy water,

we shall be able to enter Heaven so long as we have Communist Party leadership."...

The Kawa peasants of Tsangyuan hsien used to regard springs of water as sacred. During the spring cultivation this year, a plan was made for digging in such a spring in Hsinganhai hsiang, but some people objected, saying that there were evil spirits in the water. Then some of the more incredulous peasants said, "We shall catch them if they dare come out." And so a reservoir was made of the spring, and the water is now used for irrigating over 30 mow of paddy fields.

During 1958, the Chinese Communists watched closely the development of the Burmese political situation.

In 1959, there was still no progress in the settlement of the Sino-Burmese border issue. In Peking on October 17, at a farewell banquet for the Burmese Minister of Culture U Chit Thaug, Chen Yi, touching on the border issue though without specifically referring to it, declared:

It will take a long time for a big country like China with a huge population to solve all her problems. China needs a peaceful environment and continued relaxation in the world situation so as to engage in national construction. She needs peaceful co-existence with all her neighbours, with all countries in the world; particularly with the Southeast Asian countries with which she shares common borders. Disputes between countries can and will certainly be settled through peaceful means.

14. New Accords

On January 24, 1960 Burmese Prime Minister Ne Win arrived in Peking at the invitation of Chou En-lai. Upon his arrival the Jen Kin Jih Pao gave him a "warm" editorial welcome.¹³³ Recalling the long history of "friendly contact" between the Chinese and Burmese peoples, the editorial reminded "readers" that "these friendly relations between the Chinese and Burmese peoples dating back to ancient times were once disrupted by imperialism". However, the editorial continued: "In the common struggle against imperialism and colonialism and for the independence of their respective countries, the bonds of friendship between them have been cemented."

Giving special emphasis to the visit of Chou En-lai to Burma in June 1954 when he and U Nu in their joint statement defined the five principles of peaceful co-existence governing Sino-Burmese relations, the editorial noted that: "The Chinese Government and people have always held that the five principles of peaceful co-existence jointly initiated by the Chinese and Burmese Governments and the spirit of the Bandung Conference are of tremendous historical significance in guiding international relations."

In dealing with matters between the two countries, the editorial stated: "The Chinese Government has always strictly adhered to these principles and the spirit of Bandung."

The editorial concluded: "The friendship between the Chinese and Burmese people will surge forward like the rivers Nu Chiang (the Salween) and Irrawaddy which flow through both countries."

After a number of talks Chou En-lai and Ne Win signed a treaty of friendship and mutual non-aggression between Communist China and Burma as well as an agreement on the Sino-Burmese boundary question. Both were made public on January 30.¹³⁴

The full text of the "friendship and mutual non-aggression" treaty between Communist China and Burma reads:¹³⁵

The Government of the People's Republic of China
and the Government of the Union of Burma:

Desiring to maintain everlasting peace and cordial
friendship between the People's Republic of China and
the Union of Burma.

Convinced that the strengthening of good neighbourly
relations and friendly co-operation between the People's
Republic of China and the Union of Burma is in accordance
with the vital interests of both countries.

Have decided for this purpose to conclude the
present Treaty in accordance with the Five Principles
of peaceful co-existence jointly initiated by the two
countries, and have agreed as follows:

Article I

The Contracting Parties recognise and respect the
independence, sovereign rights and territorial integrity
of each other.

Article II

There shall be everlasting peace and cordial friend-
ship between the Contracting Parties who undertake to settle
all disputes between them by means of peaceful negotiation
without resorting to force.

Article III

Each Contracting Party undertakes not to carry out acts of aggression against the other, and not to take part in any military alliance directed against the other Contracting Party.

Article IV

The Contracting Parties declare that they will develop and strengthen the economic and cultural ties between the two States in a spirit of friendship and co-operation, in accordance with the principles of equality and mutual benefit and of mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

Article V

Any difference or dispute arising out of the interpretation or application of the present Treaty or one or more of its articles shall be settled by negotiations through the ordinary diplomatic channels.

Article VI

(1) The present Treaty is subject to ratification and the instruments of ratification will be exchanged in Rangoon as soon as possible.

(2) The present Treaty will come into force immediately on the exchange of the instruments of ratification and will remain in force for a period of ten years.

(3) Unless either of the Contracting Parties gives to the other notice in writing to terminate it at least one year before the expiration of this period, it will remain in force without any specified time limit, subject to the right of either of the Contracting Parties to terminate it by giving to the other in writing a year's notice of its intention to do so.

In witness whereof the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China and the Prime Minister of the Union of Burma have signed the present Treaty.

Done in duplicate in Peking on the twenty-eighth day of January 1960, in the Chinese and English languages; both texts being equally authentic.

In view of Chinese Communist early incursions into Burma, this Treaty appears unable to guarantee that Peking will not make military moves along the border again.

On the Chinese Communist side, the Treaty seems to give Peking some propaganda value so as to restore the trust it has lost in Burma and other South-east Asian countries. Furthermore, the Treaty also serves as a medium for Chinese Communist propaganda attacks on US-Japan Security Pact.

Already the Jen Min Jih Pao has made a propaganda pronouncement:

The Sino-Burmese Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-Aggression is a treaty of peace... The Treaty... affirms that each Contracting Party undertakes not to carry out acts of aggression against the other and not to take part in any military alliance directed against

the other Contracting Party. This affirmation is of great significance. Since U.S. imperialism is now doing its utmost to expand its aggressive military blocs, this article deals a stunning blow against the U.S. plot to create antagonism among the Asian countries...

In sharp contrast with the Sino-Burmese Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-Aggression is the Japan-U.S. Treaty of Military Alliance recently signed in Washington. Through this Treaty, the United States is turning Japan into an outpost of aggression, reviving militarism in Japan and confronting the peoples of China, the Soviet Union and other Asian countries with the threat of a war of aggression by U.S. and Japanese imperialism acting in collusion.

Just as history has entered the Sixties of the 20th century, two treaties of an entirely different nature have made their appearance in Asia: the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Military Alliance which smells of gun powder, and the Sino-Burmese Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-Aggression which is permeated with the spirit of peace and friendship. The former seeks to enlarge the aggressive military blocs and prepare for a new war through treaties of military alliance. The latter aims to consolidate the Five Principles and achieve a lasting peace through treaties of friendship. This is why the U.S.-Japan military alliance has met with the strong opposition of the people of the world,

particularly the Japanese people, and why the Sino-Burmese Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-aggression has been warmly welcomed by all peace-loving peoples throughout the world.

World reaction headed by U.S. imperialism has, in the past period, spread many rumours and slanders against People's China, fabricating lies about so-called "dangers from China" and Chinese "aggression", clamouring that the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence were "out of date" and "dead". The reactionaries attempted to make use of these lies about Chinese "aggression" to frighten Asian countries, split and undermine the relations between them and China, and make the governments and peoples of Asian countries lose faith in the Five Principles, so that they could fish in troubled waters and proceed with their policy of expansion and aggression in Asia. But the Sino-Burmese Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Non-Aggression and the Sino-Burmese Agreement on the Boundary Question have once more placed the rumour-mongers and slanderers in an awkward position. Didn't the U.S. rumour-mongers claim that the Five Principles were dead? How is it they have now come to life? Didn't they say that only China did not want peace? Then how is it that China has concluded a peace treaty with a neighbouring country while they are setting up aggressive military alliances everywhere? It is the misfortune of these rumour-mongers and slanderers that because they call black white, it does not take long to see their true colours. ¹³⁶

Regarding the border issue, the Sino-Burmese agreement says: ¹³⁷

The Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Union of Burma.

With a view to promoting an overall settlement of the Sino-Burmese boundary question and to consolidating and further developing friendly relations between China and Burma.

Have agreed to conclude the present Agreement under the guidance of the Five Principles of peaceful co-existence and have agreed as follows:

Article I

The Contracting Parties agree to set up immediately a joint committee composed of an equal number of delegates from each side and charge it, in accordance with the provisions of the present Agreement, to discuss and work out solutions on the concrete questions regarding the Sino-Burmese boundary enumerated in Article II of the present Agreement; conduct surveys of the boundary and set up boundary markers, and draft a Sino-Burmese boundary treaty. The joint committee shall hold regular meetings in the capitals of the two countries or at any other places in the two countries.

Article II

The Contracting Parties agree that the existing issues concerning the Sino-Burmese boundary shall be settled in accordance with the following provisions:

(1) With the exception of the area of Hpimaw, Gawlum and Mangfang, the entire undelimited boundary from the High Conical Peak to the western extremity of the Sino-Burmese boundary shall be delimited along the traditional customary line; that is to say, from the High Conical Peak northward along the watershed between the Taiping, the Shweli, the Nu (Salween) and the Tulung (Taron) Rivers on the one hand and the Nnai Hka River on the other, up to the place where it crosses the Tulung (Taron) River between Chingdan and Nhkunkang, and then along the watershed between the Tulung (Taron) and the Tsayul (Zayul) Rivers on the one hand and all the upper tributaries of the Irrawaddy River, except for the Tulung (Taron) River, on the other, up to the western extremity of the Sino-Burmese boundary. The joint committee shall send out joint survey teams composed of an equal number of persons from each side to conduct surveys along the above-mentioned watersheds so as to determine the specific alignment of this section of the boundary line and to set up boundary markers.

(2) The Burmese Government has agreed to return to China the area of Hpimaw, Gawlum and Mangfang which belongs to China. As to the extent of this area to be returned to China, it is to be discussed and determined by the joint committee in accordance with the proposals put forward and marked on maps by the Governments of Burma and China on February 4, 1957 and July 26, 1957.

respectively. After determining the extent of this area to be returned to China, the joint committee shall send out joint survey teams composed of an equal number of persons from each side to conduct on-the-spot survey of the specific alignment of this section of the boundary line and to set up boundary markers.

(3) In order to abrogate the "perpetual lease" by Burma of the Meng-Mao triangular area (Namwan Assigned Tract) at the junction of the Namwan and the Shweli Rivers, which belongs to China, the Chinese Government has agreed to turn over this area to Burma to become part of the territory of the Union of Burma. In exchange, the Burmese Government has agreed to turn over to China to become part of Chinese territory the areas under the jurisdiction of the Panhung and Panlao tribes, which are west of the boundary line from the junction of the Nam Ting and the Nampa Rivers to the No. 1 marker on the southern delimited section of the boundary, as defined in the notes exchanged between the Chinese and the British Governments on June 18, 1941. As to the extent of these areas to be turned over to China, the Chinese and the Burmese Governments put forward proposals marked on maps on July 26, 1957 and June 4, 1959 respectively. The area where the proposals of the two Governments coincide will definitely be turned over to China. Where the proposals of the two Governments differ as to the area under the jurisdiction of the Panhung tribe,

the joint committee will send out a team composed of an equal number of persons from each side, to ascertain on the spot as to whether it is under the jurisdiction of the Panhung tribe, so as to determine whether it is to be turned over to China. After the extent of the areas under the jurisdiction of the Panhung and Panlao tribes to be turned over to China has been thus determined, the joint committee will send out joint survey teams composed of an equal number of persons from each side to conduct on-the-spot survey of the specific alignment of this section of the boundary line and to set up boundary markers.

(4) Except for the adjustment provided for in paragraph (3) of this Article, the section of the boundary from the junction of the Nam Ting and the Nampa Rivers to the No. 1 marker on the southern delimited section of the boundary shall be delimited as defined in the notes exchanged between the Chinese and the British Governments on June 18, 1941. The joint committee shall send out joint survey teams composed of an equal number of persons from each side to carry out delimitation and demarcation along this section of the boundary line and set up boundary markers.

Article III

The Contracting Parties agree that the joint committee, after working out solutions for the existing issues concerning the Sino-Burmese boundary as enumerated in Article II of the present Agreement, shall be responsible

for drafting a Sino-Burmese boundary treaty, which shall cover not only all the sections of the boundary as mentioned in Article II of the present Agreement, but also the sections of the boundary which were already delimited in the past and need no adjustment. After being signed by the Governments of the two countries and coming into effect, the new boundary treaty shall replace all old treaties and notes exchanged concerning the boundary between the two countries. The Chinese Government in line with its policy of being consistently opposed to foreign prerogatives and respecting the sovereignty of other countries, renounces China's right of participation in mining enterprises at Lufang of Burma as provided in the notes exchanged between the Chinese and the British Governments on June 18, 1941.

Article IV

(1) The present Agreement is subject to ratification and the instruments of ratification will be exchanged in Rangoon as soon as possible.

(2) The present Agreement will come into force immediately on the exchange of the instruments of ratification and shall automatically cease to be in force when the Sino-Burmese boundary treaty to be signed by the two Governments comes into force.

Done in duplicate in Peking on the twenty-eighth day of January 1960, in the Chinese and English languages, both texts being equally authentic.

Although Peking announced its agreement with Burma with an air of self-satisfaction, this agreement merely puts into effect the 1956 3-point proposal. It is noteworthy however, that ethnic factors have been included in the agreement. It is not impossible that Peking will lay similar claims to the areas populated by tribesmen who live on the Burmese side of the border, but are ethnically related to those on the Chinese side -- such as the Panhung and Panlao tribes -- when the joint committee starts functioning.

Like the non-aggression treaty, this agreement has some propaganda value for Peking. The aura of agreement may help to dispel some of the fear and distrust Peking created in putting down the Tibetan rebellion; also in the dispute over India's unresolved borders. The first indication of this is found in an NCNA despatch which quoted the Rangoon Guardian as saying:

We hope that the kind of spirit that guided both China and Burma to so successful settlement of the outstanding border problems that have long existed between the two countries will also be kindled in our neighbours, China, Indonesia and India, in their mutual relations with each other over the issues outstanding between them... We have just had the happy experience of Chinese Premier Chou En-lai translating those very principles of Bandung into practice in the case of Burma and Indonesia... Both India and China ought to live up to the expectations of their smaller brother nations. To the two of them, time and circumstances have given opportunity to write a history of Asia as it has never been written before.

Appendix I

The following is the text of the Notes exchanged between the British Government and the Republic of China concerning the Burma-Yunnan boundary.*

Dr. Wang Chung Hui to Sir Archibald Clark Kerr

Chungking, 18th June, 1941.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the Notes exchanged between Your Excellency's predecessor and then Minister for Foreign Affairs on 9th April, 1935, defining the terms of reference of a Boundary Commission to be charged with the investigation of the undemarcated southern section of the Yunnan-Burma frontier; and to the additional understanding embodied in further notes exchanged upon the same day.

2. The joint Boundary Commission having been duly established and having submitted its report to our respective Governments in accordance with its terms of reference, the question of modifications of the general treaty line found by the Commission has since been under negotiations between the National Government of the Republic of China on the one hand and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Burma (as the successor in interest of the Government of India) on the other, as provided in the additional understanding of 9th April, 1935.

3. I now have the honour to inform your Excellency that the National Government of the Republic of China agrees that for the boundary line described in paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article 3 of the Agreement between China and Great Britain, signed at Peking on 4th Feb. 1897, shall be substituted the following:

"The line commences at the confluence of the Nam Hpa (Nam P'a Ho) with the Nam Ting (Nam Tin Ho) where Boundary Pillar No. 97 of the northern demarcated section is erected, and ascends the Nam Ting for a distance of about three miles to a point in the neighbourhood of the village of Pang Kwi where Cairn No. 1 was erected by the Sino-British Commission in 1899-1900 on the left bank of the Nam Ting at the point where a spur strikes the river. The frontier then follows this spur generally in a southerly direction to Cairn No. 2, where the road from Hopang to Meng-ting crosses the spur, and thence to Cairn No. 3 on the summit of the hill known as Loi Hseng (1366). It then follows the watershed between the basin of the Nam Tap, including the Nam Loi Hsa (which, also known as the Kung Mengno, is a tributary of the Nam Tap, joining it through or under a natural bridge), and the basins of the Namka and the Nam Kun (Hei Ho) to hill 2360 (approximately longitude $98^{\circ} 57' 14''$). Thence it descends the nearest tributary of the Nam Pan stream to (Chin Ho), which has its source about half a mile west of hill 2303 and follows the Nam Pan stream to its confluence with the Nam Kunlong (approximately $99^{\circ} 0' 30''$ and latitude $23^{\circ} 14' 48''$). It then descends the Nam Kunlong to the point where that river is

joined by a tributary on its left bank at approximately longitude $98^{\circ} 59' 50''$ and latitude $23^{\circ} 13' 20''$; the line then ascends that tributary to its source and continues south-eastwards on to a ridge along which it proceeds to hill 1970 (approximately longitude $99^{\circ} 3' 58''$ and latitude $23^{\circ} 10' 42''$); thence it proceeds southwards along the same ridge to hill 1770 (approximately longitude $99^{\circ} 3' 25''$). The line then proceeds generally eastwards along the watershed between the basins of the Nam Kunlong and the Nam Htung till it strikes the point on the Salween-Mekong watershed (approximately longitude $99^{\circ} 10'$ and latitude $23^{\circ} 6' 23''$) about a mile south of hill 2179. Thence it follows the Salween-Mekong watershed, first generally in an easterly direction to a point just south of hill 2178 and then generally in a southerly direction over hill 2146 to hill 1930 (approximately longitude $99^{\circ} 34'$ and latitude $22^{\circ} 56'$). Thence it proceeds first in a south-westerly, then westerly and finally north-westerly direction along the watershed between the basins of the Nam Ma and the basins of the Nam Hka Lam (Ku Hsing Ho) and the Nam Hka Hka Hkao (Nan Hsing Ho) to hill 1523 (approximately longitude $99^{\circ} 26' 43''$ and latitude $22^{\circ} 56' 43''$); thence it descends the nearest tributary of Nam Hka Hkao and follows that river down to approximately latitude $22^{\circ} 50' 52''$, where it is joined by a tributary on its right bank. The line then ascends this tributary in a westerly and south-westerly direction to its source and crosses the ridge, of which hill 2180 (approximately longitude $99^{\circ} 24' 38''$ and latitude $22^{\circ} 48' 37''$) is the highest point, by the most direct route to the

source of the nearest tributary of the Nam Sak and follows that stream down to its confluence with Nam Hse (approximately long. $99^{\circ} 18' 42''$ and lat. $22^{\circ} 44' 18''$) thence it descends the Nam Hse to its confluence with the Nam Hka (approximately long. $99^{\circ} 23' 20''$ and lat. $22^{\circ} 35' 10''$) and thence it follows the Nam Hka river downstream to Boundary Pillar No. 1 of the southern demarcated section."

4. A copy of the Boundary Commission map with the line marked in red is appended.

5. I have the honour to request that Your Excellency will confirm that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Burma agree that the boundary line described above shall be substituted for the line described in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Article 3 of the Agreement between China and Great Britain signed at Peking on 4th Feb., 1897.

I avail, & etc.

(Signed). Wang Chung Hui

No. 2

Sir Archibald Clark Kerr to Dr. Wang Chung Hui

British Embassy,

Chungking, 18th June, 1941.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's Note of today's date, which reads as follows:

(As in No. 1)

In reply I have the honour to confirm that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, on their own behalf and on behalf of the Government of Burma, agree that the boundary line as quoted above, shall be substituted for the line described in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Article 3 of the Agreement between China and Great Britain, signed at Peking on 4th February, 1897.

I avail, & etc.

(Signed) Archibald Clark Kerr.

No. 3

Sir Archibald Clark Kerr to Dr. Wang Chung Hui

British Embassy

Chungking, 18th June, 1941.

Sir,

With reference to the Notes exchanged between us today regarding the determination of the southern section of the boundary between Burma and Yunnan, I am authorized by the Government of Burma to inform your Excellency's Government that the Government of Burma is willing, as a gesture of goodwill, to undertake to permit Chinese participation in any mining enterprises which may be undertaken by British concerns on the eastern slopes of the Lufang ridge provided that Chinese interests in those enterprises do not exceed 49 per cent of the total of the capital of each enterprise.

The area in question is shown enclosed by a red line on the attached map and its boundaries are as follows:

A line commencing at the summit of hill 2304 running along the ridge to the hill of Lufang Camp (2025), thence along the ridges to Man Hsiang village, thence in a south-easterly direction down the ridge to join the Nam It stream, thence following the course of the Nam It upstream to its source below the peak of hill 2304, thence to the summit of hill 2304.

I avail, & etc.

(Signed) Archibald Clark Kerr

No. 4

Dr. Wang Chung Hui to Sir Archibald Clark Kerr

Chungking, 18th June, 1941

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's Note of today's date, which reads as follows:

(As in No. 3)

I have the honour to request that you will convey to the Government of Burma the National Government's appreciation of this gesture of goodwill.

I avail, & etc.

(Signed) Wang Chung Hui

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