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James V. Di Crocco

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THE BIDDING FOR MONGOLIA

A Research Paper written by

Mr. James V. Di Crocco

Naval Warfare Course, 1963

INTRODUCTION

At a time of increasing contention between the leaders of world communism, the Mongolian People's Republic affords a specific instance of Sino-Soviet rivalry in a well-defined situation. Mongolia, uniquely situated directly between the U.S.S.R. and Communist China, is inhabited by a people distinct from, and traditionally inimical, to both Russians and Chinese. In an area of over 600,000 square miles, generally comparable in size, climate, and topography to six or seven of the American plains and Rocky Mountain states, a sparse population of approximately one million is pressed from the north by 200,000,000 in the Soviet Union, and from the south by over 600,000,000 in Communist China. Few nations, except perhaps some of the new African states, have been more remote to Americans and less known by them, yet now Mongolia has representatives in New York and attempts have been made to place American representatives in Ulan Bator.

It is the purpose of this paper to examine the dynamics of Sino-Russian confrontation in Mongolia, particularly as exemplified in recent years by competing programs of economic and technical assistance, and to assess the opportunity that has been presented to the United States to become a firsthand observer, and perhaps even a limited participant, in the contest for influence in Central Asia. In this light the paper will take notice of the Mongol attitude toward the U.S.S.R. and Communist China, toward the impact on old Mongol ways of both communist regimentation and modern technology, and also toward the United States as a new factor in a complicated equation. The vitality of Mongol nationalism as a manifestation hostile to Sino-Soviet ambitions and favorable to free world influences, and Sino-Soviet reaction thereto, will be considered. After an evaluation of the significance of Mongolia's present situation to the United States, an appraisal will be made of the course appropriate for this country to follow.

I. 'THE ROOTS OF' RIVALRY

Chinese anarchy, on the one hand, and Russian imperial problems, on the other: this situation leads us to the inescapable conclusion that it would be criminal folly to let slip by so favorable an opportunity and fail to profit by the weakness of our [Chinese] neighbor in order to achieve our imperial ideals.

—Novoe Vremya, 1912¹

The Confrontation. On 25 December 1962, Premier Chou En-lai of the People's Republic of China chose the occasion of a state dinner in Peking for perhaps his most bitter denunciation of Soviet foreign policy to date. During the month Sino-Soviet ideological billingsgate had reached new levels of ill temper and vocal intensity, and Chou pushed the quarrel further forward by lashing out at Khrushchev and his Czech and Italian supporters for violating previous agreements that internal communist problems were to be settled in private.

The guest of honor at the dinner was Premier Yumzhagiin Tsendenbal of the Mongolian People's Republic (MPR), who had come to Peking to sign an accord delimiting at last the boundaries between the MPR and Communist China. His response at the moment was cautious and impartial, consisting of platitudes concerning Mongol-Chinese friendship and carefully avoiding any taking of sides in the argument.²

It was particularly appropriate that this latest episode in Sino-Soviet recrimination had taken place at an occasion involving Mongolia. From the time of their earliest contacts, Mongolia has been the locus of a direct confrontation—always suspicious, frequently hostile—between Chinese and Russian power, and their maneuverings and stratagems to dominate this extensive buffer area have continued to the present day.

The confrontation goes back to 1689, when an expanding Russia probing into the Central Asian heartland found its way blocked by Chinese forces in Outer Mongolia. The ensuing controversy over the delineation of frontiers and the extent of rival authority resulted in the Treaty of Nerchinsk, the first treaty concluded on terms of equality between China and a European power, the effect of which was to partition Mongolia in a fashion

which set patterns of influence for centuries to come. By its terms Buryat Mongolia was detached and integrated into Russian territory, and China was given a free hand in Outer Mongolia.³ The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw a succession of similar Sino-Russian treaties designed to regulate perennial disagreements over the demarcation of frontiers along the entire mutual borderline from Turkestan to Korea, accompanied by continuing Russian penetration through exploration and trade, but it was not until the first years of the twentieth century that Russian interests in Outer Mongolia received formal acknowledgment, however dubious, in a campaign of arcane and convoluted diplomacy that challenged China in her dooryard.

Russia's Diplomatic Campaign. The first step was taken in 1907 by means of a secret convention between Russia and Japan, in Article III of which the Japanese Government, 'recognizing the special interests of Russia in Outer Mongolia,' undertook to refrain from any interference which might prejudice those interests.⁴

Then in 1911 a major opportunity was presented to both Russia and the Mongols by the fall of the Manchu dynasty. On the one side, Outer Mongolians under the leadership of the primate of the Lamaist hierarchy, Jebtsun Damba Hutukhtu, rose up to establish the independence of their nation. On the other, the Tsarist Government promptly recognized Jobstun Damba Hutukhtu as the ruler of Outer Mongolia, and a year later concluded a treaty with the new government in which it was promised that:

The Imperial Russian Government will lend Mongolia its assistance in order to preserve her present autonomy and also her right to keep her national army, forbidding entry to Chinese armies and colonization of her lands by the Chinese.⁵

However, this was clearly a move against China and not in behalf of Mongolia, since, to the Mongols' deep disillusionment, the Russians limited their support of the new government to autonomy only, and said nothing about true independence. Pressing her advantage, Russia concluded still another secret convention with Japan whereby the mutually accepted sphere of Russian 'special interests' was further extended well inside traditionally recognized Chinese domains to include Inner Mongolia west of the meridian of Peking.⁶

The final blow to Mongol hopes for a truly sovereign state came with a Russian agreement with China, also in 1912. Although China was compelled to recognize the autonomy—not the independence—of Mongolia, Russia in turn flatly recognized that Outer Mongolia remained under Chinese suzerainty. The crucial provision was the stipulation that questions concerning Outer Mongolia and the latter's relations with China could not be resolved without consultation with Russia.⁷ Thus in a brief span of intense diplomatic manipulations Russia had succeeded in undoing the Treaty of Nerchinsk, effectively detaching Outer Mongolia from China and making it a Russian protectorate, and winning recognition by both China and Japan of her stake therein.

The Mongols were infuriated, but their objections were, of course, unavailing. Ultimately, in a humiliating tripartite agreement of 1914, the Mongols were even forced into formally acknowledging that Chinese suzerainty over Outer Mongolia was to be maintained, and that no international treaties of a political nature could be concluded by Outer Mongolia.⁸

The First Satellite. Russia's involvement in World War I and the communist revolution of 1917 made temporarily impossible any further activity in Mongolia on her part. However, in 1916, just before the communists came to power, Lenin expressed his own views with regard to Mongolia which set the future course of Soviet policy in the area. Acknowledging that his tenets required him to demand that the Tsarist Government get out of Mongolia and similar less-developed regions, he nevertheless pointed out that this did not bind the 'class-conscious European proletariat' to become 'separated' from those areas:

Nothing of the kind . . . We shall exact every effort to be friendly and to amalgamate with the Mongolians . . . We shall strive to give the nations, which are more backward and more oppressed than we are, 'unselfish cultural aid,' to use the happy expression of the Polish Social-Democrats, i.e., we . . . shall help them on towards democracy and socialism.⁹

The translation into reality of that 'happy expression' was to mean limitless misfortune for Mongolia in the years to come.

Russia's own preoccupation with her internal troubles now gave China the chance to pay back what she had received. In the Fall of 1919, a Chinese army under General Hsü Shu-tseng marched

into Outer Mongolia ostensibly to forestall revolution, but actually to coerce the Mongol authorities into signing away the autonomy which they had won in 1911.¹⁰

Shortly thereafter, White Russian forces in Siberia under Ungern von Sternberg moved on Mongolia as part of a grandiose plan to restore all the recently overthrown monarchies through the agency of a great united Asiatic power under a new Attila. Ungern captured Urga, the capital (now Ulan Bator), in February of 1921, and proclaimed the complete independence of Mongolia.¹¹

The Soviet regime by this time was consolidating its power, and Ungern's activities furnished the Red Army a perfect pretext to occupy Mongolia. In July of 1921, the Red Army joined with a group of Mongol revolutionaries under Sukhe Bator to overthrow Ungern, and the so-called Mongolian People's Republic was proclaimed in 1924.¹² The Soviet-trained Mongols used to establish communist power in their own country were the forerunners of the numerous East European leaders who similarly emerged from Soviet training after World War II to take over their native countries under the guns of the Soviet Army.

Soviet authority was now firmly established in her first satellite by the characteristic triple means of military occupation, protected revolution, and ruthless purges of the opposition. Conversely, as the Soviet Union's position grew greatly stronger, that of China rapidly deteriorated, lacking as she did the power and the means to counter the Soviet encroachments. The resulting *modus vivendi* was the same as had been resorted to previously with the Tsarist regime: formal paper recognition of Chinese sovereignty over Outer Mongolia, and implicit recognition of Russia's *de facto* control. In Article V of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 31 May 1924, the Soviet Union recognized that Outer Mongolia was an 'integral part of China' and undertook to respect China's 'sovereignty' therein.¹³

The true value of this paper acknowledgment can be appreciated from two associated facts. First, the U.S.S.R. made no agreement to renounce a Soviet-Mongolian treaty of November 1921 by which the Soviet Government had recognized the People's Revolutionary Government as the 'sole legal government' of Mongolia. Second, at the end of 1921, Chicherin, the Soviet Foreign Commissar, chose to interpret Mongolia's autonomy in such a way as to negate the effect of the *pro forma* recognition of China's authority:

We recognize the Mongolian People's Republic as part of the Chinese republic, but we recognize also its autonomy in so far-reaching a sense that we regard it not only as independent of China in its internal affairs, but also as capable of pursuing its foreign policy independently.¹⁴

A Soviet-Mongolian Protocol of Mutual Assistance, concluded on 12 March 1936, further emphasized the meaninglessness of the agreement of 1924. China objected vigorously, arguing that the Soviets had violated the provision of the 1924 agreement which specified that 'Outer Mongolia being an integral part of the Republic of China, no foreign state has the right to conclude with it any treaties or agreements,' but her protest was brushed aside.¹⁵

The Results of Yalta. It was not until 1945 that the Soviet Union was at last able to detach Outer Mongolia from China in an internationally recognized agreement acceded to, no matter how grudgingly, by China herself. The opportunity arose at Yalta as part of the cajolment of the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan. On 11 February 1945 the Soviet Union, the United States, and Great Britain agreed that 'in two or three months after Germany had surrendered and the war in Europe had terminated, the Soviet Union shall enter into the war against Japan on the side of the Allies' on certain conditions, the first of which was that 'the *status quo* in Outer Mongolia (The Mongolian People's Republic) be preserved.'¹⁶ As a result of the insertion of the phrase '(The Mongolian People's Republic),' the U.S.S.R. later held that this provision meant independence for Outer Mongolia; the Chinese vainly persisted in basing their position on the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1924.¹⁷ Finally, on 14 August 1945, Wang Shih-chieh, then Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs, wrote to Molotov as follows:

In view of the desire repeatedly expressed by the people of Outer Mongolia for their independence, the Chinese Government declares that after the defeat of Japan should a plebiscite of the Outer Mongolian people confirm this desire, the Chinese Government will recognize the independence of Outer Mongolia with the existing boundary as its boundary.¹⁸

The plebiscite was duly held on 20 October 1945. 'Thousands of mounted messengers were used to gallop from tribe to tribe on the swiftest post-ponies, carrying the traditional courier's badge, a falcon, used since the days of [Chinggis] Khan.'¹⁹ Out of

497,074 eligible voters, 483,291 are reported to have gone to the polls, and all were said to have voted in favor of independence. On 5 January 1946 the Chinese Government officially announced the independence of Outer Mongolia.²⁰ Diplomatic relations, however, were never established.²¹

Chiang Kai-shek observes in retrospect that since his government was not represented in the discussions at Yalta, he was therefore not legally bound by any part of the agreement. He goes on to say: 'Had Outer Mongolia been really independent and free, and able to stand between China and Russia as a buffer for the security of all concerned, then this excessive sacrifice would have been justifiable.'²²

With China's paper renunciation of any claim to Outer Mongolia, a long-standing aim of Soviet policy—more properly, a traditional aim of Russian national policy, apart from any question of the nature of the Russian Government—appeared to have been achieved. Actually, however, the status of Mongolia between Russia and China was merely entering into a new and more complex phase. After the overthrow of Chiang and the Chinese Nationalist Government by Mao Tse-tung in 1949, a renewed and much more formidable Sino-Russian confrontation in Mongolia began to take shape.

II. SINO-SOVIET ECONOMIC COMPETITION IN MONGOLIA

If Berlin is the bone that sticks in Mr. Khrushchev's throat, then Mongolia must feel the same in Mr. Mao Tse-tung's.

—*The Economist*¹

Mao Tse-tung and the Future of Mongolia. Seizure of the Chinese Government by the Chinese Communists brought to power a leader whose opinion concerning Mongolia's status with respect to his country followed the Soviet pattern in being no different from that of his predecessors over the years. Edgar Snow reports that in an interview with Mao at communist headquarters at Paoan on 16 July 1936, Mao stated that: 'It is the immediate task of China to regain all our lost territories, not merely to defend our sovereignty below the Great Wall.' In a subsequent interview with Snow, Mao was quite explicit: 'When the people's revolution has been victorious in China the Outer Mongolian republic will automatically become a part of the Chinese federation, at her own will.' He added prophetically: 'The Mohammedan and Tibetan peoples, likewise, will form autonomous republics attached to the Chinese federation.'² Again, in 1944, Mao declared to Guenther Stein that:

Our national government must first recognize Outer Mongolia as an autonomous national state in accordance with the promise Dr. Sun Yat-sen gave all national minorities . . . I hope and have no doubt that they will rejoin China the moment the national government lives up to the promise of the founder of the Republic and the Kuomintang.³

Mao has already fulfilled two of his predictions. Despite a high degree of Russian penetration in Sinkiang, he had taken over full control and development of the area from the Soviets by 1955. He accomplished the absorption of Tibet through ruthless military oppression. In view of the firm Russian presence in Mongolia on the one hand and the opportunity presented by Mongolia's almost total lack of modernization on the other, it was in the arena of economic aid that he chose to make his attempt at penetration in that country.

Influence Through Aid. During the years following the Mongolian revolution in 1911, Chinese influence there had evaporated. In 1950 the first steps were taken to reintroduce a formal Chinese presence, absent for over thirty years, with the establishment of a Chinese representation in Ulan Bator.⁴ Then on 4 October 1952, Tsedenbal signed in Peking a ten-year Sino-Mongolian agreement on economic and cultural co-operation, which he described as opening 'a new era in the relations between the Mongolian people and the Chinese people.'⁵ It made arrangements for 'closer co-operation between the countries in the economic, cultural, and educational fields, not only through the usual diplomatic channels, but also between the corresponding government departments,' and specifically provided for an exchange of teachers and students.⁶

Three years later Communist China took a further initiative that had significant implications. While the Chinese Communists could and did elect to challenge the Russians on their own ground with specialized technical assistance and the gift of industrial establishments, obviously their long suit was multitudinous manpower. In this area they could easily overmatch any opposition. Chinese colonization was already engulfing the sparse Mongol settlements in those parts of their homeland beyond the Chinese wall but not within the boundaries of Outer Mongolia. Extension of this creeping ethnic strangulation into the heart of Mongolia proper would settle the Mongolian problem for China once and for all. This was not a new idea by any means; Sun Yat-sen, for example, had proposed the colonization of Mongolia, as well as of other outlying areas, to develop new markets which would assist in the development of China proper.⁷ Mao's move was made in a 1955 agreement whereby a labor force of ten thousand Chinese was to be sent to Ulan Bator, with the promise of more to follow. The crux of the agreement was the ominous proviso that those Chinese workers who remained for five years might be permitted to become Mongol citizens.⁸

In April 1956, Mikoyan and Tsedenbal signed an agreement for economic assistance for the period 1956-1960, under which the Soviet Union transferred to Mongolia Soviet interests in the newly built broad-gauge trans-Mongolian railway linking Irkutsk, Ulan Bator, and Peking, and also two narrow-gauge lines, along with all service buildings, installations, and rolling stock. In addition, the Soviet Union promised to build housing in Ulan Bator with a total floor space of 430,500 square feet.⁹

Communist China reacted in August of the same year. It was announced in Peking at that time that the Chinese would grant Mongolia 160,000,000 rubles in aid (\$40,000,000 at the then official rate). Among the projects included were textile and glass factories, a paper mill, roads, and bridges.¹⁰

A seesaw pattern of move and countermove was now established. Inaugurating the next episode, Damba, then first secretary of the Mongol People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP), was invited to Moscow with Tsendenbal during the period 10-15 May 1957. The visit was made the occasion for a joint statement which reviewed in detail Soviet assistance to Mongolia during the previous decade. It was asserted that the Soviet Union had granted Mongolia long-term credits on easy terms for over 900,000,000 rubles (\$225,000,000), and had made Mongolia the outright gift of Soviet property to the extent of over 100,000,000 rubles (\$25,000,000). It was further stated that Mongolia was now largely self-sufficient in petroleum, thanks to Soviet extracting and refining equipment which had cost over 300,000,000 rubles (\$75,000,000). Eighteen industrial, agricultural, municipal, and service enterprises, including a new mine at the Nalaikha coal field, had been given to the MPR along with Soviet material, technical, and financial assistance. Under a new agreement, Mongolneft, a petroleum trust, was to be handed over to the MPR free, and the Soviet shares in Sovmongolmetal, a developmental joint stock company, were to be transferred to the MPR on easy terms, with repayment to be made over a period of thirty years. The airfields, installations, and equipment at Ulan Bator and Sain Shanda were to be given to the MPR along with a number of aircraft whose Mongol pilots had been trained in the U.S.S.R. In addition, a new credit of 200,000,000 rubles (\$50,000,000) was to be extended to finance the MPR's acquisition during 1958-1960 of 2500 tractors, 550 harvesters, 200 diesel and mobile electric stations, 80 sawmills, 3000 trucks, building materials, and over 10,000 head of pedigreed livestock.¹¹

The Soviet Union's decision to publicize in such detail a review of the aid which it had extended to Mongolia, and to grant new assistance in so significant an amount, indicates the degree to which the U.S.S.R. was aroused by the renewal of China's activity in Mongolia. Harrison E. Salisbury draws attention to the fact that Moscow began to take a real interest in improving the situation in Mongolia only after the Chinese Communists had established themselves, and that most of the Russian projects dated from 1952 or later.¹² Previously the Russians had had no reason to question the security of their position in Mongolia.

However, the advent of a kinetic new regime in China, and later Khrushchev's attention to nearby areas of Siberia in connection with his 'virgin lands' program, stimulated a heightening of Soviet concern in the MPR.

The Chinese Communists responded to the new Soviet credit by concluding a treaty with the MPR on 29 December 1958 whose main feature was a long-term loan of 100,000,000 rubles (\$25,000,000) to assist in building electric power stations, highways, and industrial and other facilities.¹³

The Soviets continued to press their program during 1959 and early 1960. On 10 February 1959 the U.S.S.R. and the MPR signed an agreement concerning the providing of technicians for the development of virgin lands, geological prospecting, and hydro-electric surveys, and for 550 more tractors and 350 harvesters.¹⁴ A year later, on 11 February 1960, Tsedenbal again visited Moscow, where he and Kozlov signed still another agreement for Soviet assistance in building various industrial projects, roads, and residential housing in Ulan Bator.¹⁵

Communist China's Major Challenge. It was later in 1960 that Communist China made its strongest move. The importance which the Chinese attached to it can be seen from the fact that the site of the ceremonies involved was not Peking but Ulan Bator, and that the Chinese delegation was headed by Premier Chou En-lai and Foreign Minister Chen Yi. During a five-day state visit they negotiated with Tsedenbal a treaty of friendship and mutual assistance. The treaty was supplemented by a new economic agreement which provided for an additional Chinese loan of 200,000,000 rubles (\$50,000,000), and Chinese assistance in the construction and equipping of industrial enterprises, water conservation projects, public utilities and housing.¹⁶

This was the largest extension of Chinese Communist aid to Mongolia ever made, and with it Chinese influence reached its high tide. Its effect was to bring Communist China into reasonable parity with the Soviet Union in an area which for almost forty years had been exclusively a Soviet domain.

Experienced foreign observers who visited the MPR at the time were convinced that by dint of the outpouring of labor battalions, cash, construction, and equipment, Communist China had not only managed to reassert the historic Chinese presence in Mongolia, but was actually bidding fair to beat the Russians at their own game. Salisbury reported that he saw the 'blue ants'—

the Mongol term for the Chinese laborers—wherever he went, working on almost every construction project in the country.¹⁷ C. R. Bawden reported that the Chinese were to be seen working on ‘any enterprise of importance in Ulan Bator and elsewhere,’ especially roads, bridges, and housing.¹⁸ Tsendenbal himself told Salisbury that the Chinese laborers totalled 20,000, a figure also reported by Justice William O. Douglas and Marvin L. Kalb.¹⁹ However, Salisbury felt that the number must be significantly greater, and W. A. Douglas Jackson cites estimates suggesting a total of up to 60,000.²⁰ Salisbury had occasion to point out further that the Chinese seemed to be making psychological and educational inroads as well, concentrating their efforts on the younger Mongols who would form the next generation of leaders. They were taking them to China for study and travel, and apparently were achieving significant success in convincing them that the Chinese way was ‘The Way’ for Mongolia.²¹

An Asian diplomat (not further identified) whom Salisbury met made the following observation:

The momentum of the Chinese initiative is so great, the attractive force of Chinese dynamism is so overpowering, that it is hard to see how, over the long run, Russia can maintain her position here. She is still the first power in Outer Mongolia. But five years from now this may well no longer be true.²²

Salisbury summarized his own impressions at the time as follows:

The ideological and practical ability of Russia to counter the Chinese offensive effectively seemed limited. And the demographic ability of the Mongol state to resist indefinitely the huge and growing pressures from the south and east seemed equally limited.²³

The Soviet Union, however, was not prepared to allow her long-unshakeable position in Mongolia to be undermined by whatever efforts, even on the part of those united to her in fraternal bonds of ideology. The counterthrust came within four months.

The Soviet Victory. On 9 September 1960, Tsendenbal was again in Moscow. There he signed with Khrushchev a large-scale agreement for additional Soviet aid for the MPR’s Third Five-Year

Plan. The Soviet Union pledged a long-term credit of 615,000,000 rubles (\$153,750,000) and agreed to defer repayment by the MPR of 245,000,000 rubles (\$61,250,000) in previous debts. The U.S.S.R. would aid in the construction of fifteen industrial enterprises and would supply technicians and machinery in a variety of categories.²⁴ On 13 April 1961 a Soviet grant was signed for 122,000,000 new rubles (\$134,000,000).²⁵ All in all, the Soviet obligation to the Third Five-Year Plan was to come to \$350,000,000.²⁶

This counteroffensive marked the turning point of the campaign. Subsequently, the current of Soviet influence continued to swell while the Chinese tide rapidly receded. By the late Summer of 1961, Justice Douglas already had observed the virtual elimination of Chinese influence on the economy,²⁷ and when Salisbury revisited Mongolia in December 1961, it was clear to him that the wave of Chinese influence which had been so impressive two years before had now been decisively broken by the Soviet resurgence. The 'blue ants' which had swarmed everywhere were now to be seen but rarely. Whereas they previously had lived near the center of Ulan Bator in great barracks and encampments, and even in the still uncompleted apartment houses they were building for the Mongols, now they were quartered in three camps three or four miles outside the city. These camps were surrounded by tall security fences complete with watchtowers and were patrolled by guards with submachine guns. 'Whether these measures were taken at the instance of the Mongols or the Chinese was impossible to ascertain.'²⁸ Chinese officials were similarly isolated; they were quartered in a house eight miles outside of town.²⁹

Also, while at the time of Salisbury's visit in 1959, many Mongols were glowingly enthusiastic about the Chinese, now they rarely mentioned them at all:

A professional man described with enthusiasm a trip to Japan. 'Did you pass through China?' he was asked. 'Oh, yes,' he said, 'I had a most interesting visit in Hong Kong.' Asked about Peking, he replied, 'Well, I didn't stop there.'³⁰

More recent visitors have confirmed Salisbury's assessment: both Kalb and Howard Sochurek reported a clearcut Russian victory in 1962. Kalb states that by April 1962, 14,000 of the 20,000-man Chinese labor force had been withdrawn under Russian pressure which took advantage of the Chinese domestic economic crisis.³¹ Also, in June 1962 a communique was issued by a

conference of communist leaders in Moscow announcing the admission of Mongolia to COMECON, the Communist Council for Mutual Economic Assistance; the economy of the MPR was thus integrated into that of the U.S.S.R. and the European satellites.³² Finally, both Kalb and Sochurek report that orders went out to purge pro-Chinese elements from the MPRP. This latest round began in September 1962, when Daramny Tömdör-Ochir was summarily relieved from his important party posts because of his 'nationalism,' which seems to have impelled him to support the Chinese as a counterpoise to the Russians. Apparently this touched off a sweeping removal of partisans of Peking.³³

A shadow of coming events had been cast as early as November 1958 and March 1959, when a major party shakeup disgraced and dismissed eight prominent functionaries led by Damba, Tsedenbal's chief rival. While Salisbury felt that this dispute centered around the scope of Tsedenbal's plans for industrialization, the consensus of other commentators is that Damba headed a pro-Peking faction against the Soviet-supported Tsedenbal, whose personal triumph in an internal power struggle thus became a Soviet triumph as well.³⁴

For its part the Mongolian leadership solidly supported the Khrushchev line on such controversial doctrinal issues as peaceful coexistence, and was the only Asian communist delegation which condemned Albania as forcefully as the Soviet hierarchy at the pivotal 22nd Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in October 1961. Tsedenbal himself, speaking at a de-Stalinization meeting called late in January 1962 to downgrade the late Marshal Choibalsan, who might be called the Stalin of the MPR, criticized the Chinese Communists by name for their defense of the Albanians. 'We cannot agree with the reservations on this question which, for instance, the delegation of the Chinese Communist Party made at the 22nd Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.'³⁵ Tsedenbal put the final seal on the MPR's rejection of China following his adjustment of border differences with Chou En-lai in late December and early January 1962-63. While his initial responses to Chou's attacks on the Soviet had been noncommittal, he surprisingly chose to assert openly before ten thousand Chinese in Peking that Khrushchev's policy in Cuba had been entirely correct,³⁶ and then upon his return to Ulan Bator is reported to have attacked the Chinese by name before a specially called ideological conference, charging them with 'irresponsibility' and 'arrogance.'³⁷

There are a number of reasons for the Russian victory. First of all, the Soviets were much better able to supply industrial installations, equipment, and technicians from their broad industrial base than were the Chinese, who have suffered one economic disaster after another in recent years. In 1960, for example, the Soviet Union exported to Mongolia industrial equipment valued at 25,555,200 rubles, whereas the Chinese were only able to deliver goods to the amount of 8,875,910 rubles, and this essentially in light consumer goods.³⁸

Second, Russian influence, imposed and maintained by force and violence, has been all-pervasive in Mongolia ever since the communist takeover in 1921. As Robert A. Rupen points out, Soviet models inspired the constitution of the MPR, its party, its Marxist-Leninist orientation, its schools, textbooks and 'socialist realism' in art and literature.³⁹

Third, the leaders currently in power are strongly Soviet-oriented. They have been trained in Soviet or Soviet-dominated schools, and owe their positions to Soviet favor.⁴⁰ Some, including Tsedenbal, have Russian wives.⁴¹

Finally, the Mongols traditionally have had antipathy for and fear of the Chinese, whose sheer mass threatens them with the ethnic obliteration which was the fate of the Manchus. In addition, the Chinese represent a way of life and category of occupations for which the Mongols have nothing but contempt. A Mongol visiting East Germany recently had the following to say to Nora Waln:

You must realize that Chinese and Mongols are natural foes. The Chinese have no respect for turf. They look down on us for liking to be nomads, living in good tents, raising fine herds; and we despise them for settling down in villages, destroying pastures, digging up the grass, fencing in community wells.⁴²

A second summed the situation up succinctly: 'Russia protects us from the Chinese.'⁴³

III. MONGOLIA, COMMUNISM, AND MODERNIZATION

Love of freedom and independence characterizes the nomad, and his horse and his yurt enable him to give them expression.

—Robert A. Rupen¹

The Price of Modernization. In the narrowest sense, the MPR's position as the zone of contention between the U.S.S.R. and Communist China has not been without a certain purely material advantage. The result of the competitive bidding between the rivals has been to furnish the MPR with an embryonic but substantial industrial base in a much briefer span of time than would otherwise have been the case. The total Soviet investment in the MPR up to 1965 will be at least \$975,000,000, and Communist China will have contributed something like \$115,000,000 or more. If the expected contributions from the rest of the Bloc are included, such as the \$9,900,000 Polish loan of 1961,² the MPR will have received a total of just under \$1,500,000,000.³ The per capita contribution between 1956 and 1961 amounted to \$465—a figure greater than aid from the Soviet and Communist China to any other nation.⁴ By 1965 this per capita figure will be on the order of \$1500. A further appreciation of the scale of this assistance may be gained from consideration of the fact that during the same period, United States aid to Iran comes to only 25% more than the total Soviet pledge to the MPR, although Iran has a population twenty times greater than that of the MPR.⁵

Considerable progress has been made in health and education as well as in industry. An ultra-modern Czech-equipped hospital has been built in Ulan Bator, and medical services have been extended into the countryside as well; every *sum* (county) has a first-aid station and many have hospitals, and all *aimag* (provinces) have hospitals.⁶ Figures for 1961 indicate that the MPR now has 419 primary and secondary schools, 15 vocational schools, and six institutions of higher learning, including the university at Ulan Bator. Total enrollment is given as 124,000, or about ten per cent of the population, of which about 4000 are full-time students at the university.⁷ Tsednbal even made the claim in 1958, addressing the 13th MPRP Congress, that the MPR had more students in institutions of higher learning (presumably as a percentage of the total population) than Italy, Turkey, Pakistan, or Iran.⁸

Lubsantserengiin Tsende, at the time Acting Premier, stated optimistically in 1959 that the MPR would catch up to Eastern Europe in fifteen years.⁹ In any event, progress has been rapid enough for Justice Douglas to consider that the minimum standard of living in 1961 already compared favorably with what he had seen in the Soviet Union.¹⁰

But at what cost has this beginning been made? Obviously the price which Mongols have paid for their introduction to the industrial revolution has been a high one. Whatever material gains the MPR has made must be weighed against the sufferings inevitably imposed by the communist system. Particularly in the days of Choibalsan and Stalin, mass murder and waves of terror of the grimmest sort were accepted as standard methods of applying discipline to recalcitrant or even slow-moving groups of the population.

Apart from the rigors accompanying a communist police state, however, there are other, subtler harassments which have been brought to the Mongols not only by the alien ideology, but also merely by the imposition of modern ways themselves. Because of the uniqueness of the traditional Mongol way of life, these would be felt and regretted even if they were imposed in a more sympathetic context. However, the utter incompatibility of the free Mongol nomad tradition with communist regimentation and rigidity exacerbates all the distress of what would at best be a painful and perplexing transition.

Settling the Nomads. The communist leadership of the MPR has set out to break Mongol nomadism as one of its highest priority tasks. On 15 May 1957 Tsendenbal and Bulganin issued a joint statement reiterating this long-standing communist policy.¹¹ The communists have been aided in implementing it by the mere fact that industrialization, with its requirement for a permanent pool of settled factory workers, has been a powerful stimulus to urbanization.

However, the regime itself is forced to admit that even after forty years of effort, it has had a difficult time in arousing the people's enthusiasm for settling down. As late as 1959, nearly the entire population still resided in the traditional Mongol *ger*, the collapsible, easily transportable dwelling of latticework and felt, better known by the non-Mongol word 'yurt,' which has been the Mongol's home since time immemorial. One of the major projects in Ulan Bator has thus been the construction of

apartment houses to replace the *ger*, and by 1961 about 30% of the city's population of about 160,000 had been moved into permanent housing.¹² But the Mongols do not give up easily; most of those who now live in apartment houses still keep a *ger* for summer.¹³ The regime has apparently decided to join those it cannot beat, and has put on sale a prefabricated factory-built *ger*, containing no nuts or bolts, to accommodate the people's preference.¹⁴

Agriculture Among the Herdsmen. Another radical and far-reaching departure from habitual Mongol culture patterns, perhaps the one to which the Mongols themselves will find it hardest to adjust, is the large-scale introduction of agriculture to a people who traditionally have had little to do with it. Mongolia has never been entirely devoid of agriculture, to be sure, but what there has been of it has generally been found in Inner Mongolia. Officially reported totals for acreage under cultivation in the MPR in recent years are: 1958, 258,714 acres; 1959, 635,041 acres;¹⁵ and 1961, about 1,500,000 acres. The Third Five-Year Plan is to double the latter figure by 1965.¹⁶ The main crop is wheat, but Bawden also saw good crops of corn and potatoes.¹⁷ Grain production was 76,000 tons in 1958 and 256,000 tons in 1960.¹⁸

The entire agricultural operation raises questions as to its wisdom and feasibility. Its influence in breaking a culture has already been mentioned; however, it may be argued that if the MPR is to become a modern state the Mongols must learn to produce their own food beyond meat and dairy products. But there are other, more tangible difficulties, and these center around water.

The typical Mongol terrain is by no means limited to barren *gobi*, i.e., gravelly, arid desert with sparse vegetation. Much of the countryside makes good pasture and throughout history furnished the sustenance for the Mongol cavalry—pasture-land, to be sure, but an unknown quantity for large-scale farming. The major hazard would be the creation of a dust bowl of immense proportions. Salisbury describes the danger as follows:

There had been a cloudburst a few hours before our jeep passed through. The water had cut across the plowed earth like a hot knife in ice cream. Never had I seen land ravaged so swiftly. It did not merely wash away the soil; it carved it out, two yards at a time.

What, I wondered, would happen to this wonderful green world when the gang plow tore off the natural cover of all those valleys? For the plow was coming; of that I was certain. The officials said that it was, and here at the Kara Korum state farm the pattern of what lay ahead was outlined as clearly as if it had already happened.¹⁹

Collectivization. Beyond the general effort to compel the Mongols to adopt the sedentary life of the industrial worker and farmer as a step in destroying their nomadic independence, the communist regime has utilized the weapon of mass collectivization. This technique is applied to the livestock-raising economy as well as to agriculture, and is being imposed essentially for political reasons. While it may truly be more efficient and economical to raise livestock on a ranch-type, fodder-oriented basis, Bawden points out that the primary purpose behind the enforced collectivization is to ensure that the largest group of the population, the most conservative and most antipathetic to regimentation, is transformed into tightly controlled units within a system of complete socialization.²⁰

The concept of collectivization brings up tragic and bitter memories for Mongols. During the twenties and thirties a massive attempt at enforced collectivization was made in the MPR just as in the Soviet Union. The years 1929-1932, now described by party theoreticians as the period of 'left deviation,' constituted a brutal reign of terror in the MPR. The people, made desperate by the purely confiscatory nature of the movement, resisted as best they could; they slaughtered their livestock by the thousands, or tried to drive them across the border into Inner Mongolia. In addition, those livestock which were confined to limited areas soon exhausted the pasturage and died of starvation. The consequence was human famine across the land. Disaffection became so intense that even an officer of the General Staff of the army of the MPR, Samba by name, left Ulan Bator in 1932 for western Mongolia, traditionally a center of nationalist resistance, and joined anti-Soviet forces there in an ill-fated attempt to overthrow the regime.²¹ The entire collectivization scheme was an unmitigated catastrophe, and was ultimately abandoned.

This abandonment, however, was only temporary. The communist authorities began to reintroduce collectivization in 1954-1955, but this time moved slowly and cautiously to avoid a repetition of the previous experience. In 1956 Tsedenbal told Jack Raymond of

The New York Times that the compulsion of twenty-five years before had been abandoned, and admitted that only 20% of the 27,000,000 head of livestock had been collectivized up to that time.²² By 1958 only 35% of the rural population had joined the movement,²³ but by 1959 Tsedenbal claimed that collectivization was 100% complete. Much of this would appear to exist on paper only, however; it seems that the regime could easily tag a family herding complex as a collective without actually altering its structure very greatly for the time being.²⁴ In the very year that Tsedenbal was indicating a successful conclusion of the campaign, the Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party roundly denounced the ard (herdsmen) households for their recalcitrance in the collectivization movement, an indication that the nomads were still unwilling to surrender their freedom.²⁵

IV. UGSAATAN MASH DEED!

—THE FORCES OF MONGOL NATIONALISM

Mongol gedeg negen ner yertöntsiin tsihend
duur'sgaltai,
Mongolyn töldö gedeg sanaa bidnii zürhend
holbootoi.
Ösöhöö sursan ündsen hel, martaj bolshgüi
soyol,
Üntel orshih töröhl nutag salj bolshgüi oron.
Ene bol minii törsön uutag—
Mongolyn saihan oron.

The name of the Mongols is famed to the ears of
the world,
The love for Mongolia is linked to the depths of
our hearts.
Since birth I have learned the speech of my nation,
a heritage for me unforgettable.
Till death I will live in the camp of my birth,
a home for me inalienable.
This, this is my motherland—
Mongolia's lovely land.

—Dashdorjiin Natsagdorj¹

Chinggis Khan—The Universal Symbol. Latent in the traditions and history of the Mongol people there are strong nationalistic forces which are significant in the influence which they exert on Sino-Soviet policies toward Mongolia and are also of consequence to the free world. Donald S. Zagoria points out that: 'In all communist states the ally of the West is nationalism . . . In Eastern Europe and in the Asian Bloc, there will arise increasing opportunity to encourage national distinctiveness.'² He defines encouragement of the incipient pluralism in international communism as one of the important tasks facing Western policy-makers.³

In Mongolia these nationalistic forces originate in a presence which, like Barbarossa, is in a real sense protecting even today the identity of the Mongol people—Chinggis Khan. As Rupen observes, 'His name continually reappears in Mongolian national movements, in all Mongolian areas. He represents the one

truly universal Mongolian symbol.⁴ His memory has exerted an important political influence during the period of Mongol decline by preserving their sense of nationhood and encouraging them to hold out against overwhelming pressures. Consequently Chinggis Khan has presented the communists with a vexing dilemma. As a basic policy they must obscure his memory and undermine his influence so as to weaken the spirit of Mongol nationalism. However, there have been a number of instances in which they have felt it useful to offer some form of appeasement to Mongol sentiment.

The activities of the Chinese Communists with respect to the supposed remains of Chinggis Khan are instructive. In 1955 they went so far as to construct at Ezen Horoo, in Inner Mongolia, a magnificent mausoleum to house them. As Rupen and Howard L. Boorman indicate, this was a gesture of considerable significance. It was at variance with the standard Soviet line which denigrates Chinggis Khan as a feudal tyrant, and demonstrates Chinese awareness of the political implications which accrue from their preserving, within territory under their own control, the remains of the personage venerated by all Mongols everywhere.⁵

The Soviets have also felt it appropriate to make certain inclinations to Chinggis Khan as a symbol. In 1959, for instance, they announced that they had found the birthplace of Chinggis Khan in the Buryat ASSR.⁶ Thus if the Chinese possess Chinggis Khan's tomb, the Soviets can lay claim to the site of his birth.

Furthermore, as a parallel to the attention paid by the Chinese to Ezen Horoo, a great deal of archaeological research and restoration has been conducted within the MPR itself at Erdeni Zuu monastery, which marks the obliterated site of Karakorum, the great capital of the Mongols.⁷ Salisbury remarks upon the 'casual, almost grudging' manner in which he was guided to Erdeni Zuu by a young Mongol communist, 'as though, in a way, he did not want to recognize . . . the fact that the memory of [Chinggis] and the memory of Karakorum still burned more brightly in the minds of his countrymen (and the world) than any vision of Marx and Engels.'⁸

The attitude of Salisbury's guide is characteristic of the loyal party liners. When Tömör-Ochir was disgraced in late 1962, he was denounced by *Ünen*, the Mongol equivalent of *Pravda*, for adherence to the 'cult of personality'; however, a more compelling reason was the fact that he had called for a national celebration to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the birth of Chinggis

Khan. Such nationalistic notions were decried as having been intended to undermine the 'fraternal friendship between the Mongolian and Soviet peoples.'⁹

To avoid the fate of Tömör-Ochir, Mongol nationalists must express their feeling for their country in whatever subtle ways they feel may circumvent party vigilance. Consequently they emphasize their linguistic heritage, whenever possible use their own script instead of the Russian imposed Cyrillic, and treat of traditional folk themes and past historic glories in their literature. Such tendencies were roundly attacked by a Russian critic in 1955, who was pained by the fact that the teaching of history and literature in the Mongol schools continues to show 'manifestations of the ideology of bourgeois nationalism.' Mongol authors turn their thoughts too frequently to traditional epics and folklore, and 'write in old-fashioned language and employ archaisms' rather than the prescribed *partiinost'* jargon.¹⁰

Pan-Mongolism. The bases for communist hostility to Mongol nationalism are obvious. On the one hand, nationalism in general has traditionally been attacked by international communism; on the other, more particularly, Mongol nationalism is closely linked with the spirit of Pan-Mongolism, which is a cause of concern to both Communist China and the U.S.S.R. because there are actually more Mongols living today in territories adjacent to the MPR than in the MPR itself.

The reunification of Mongolia is a long-cherished ambition of the Mongol people in general. Salisbury sensed the flow of the current during his visit in 1959: '. . . I felt certain that the concept of Greater Mongolia was shared by all Mongols, those in Russia and China as well.'¹¹ J. V. Davidson-Houston puts it this way: 'All Mongols, whether living in Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia, or Manchuria, look to Outer Mongolia as the home of their race just as they look to Tibet as the fount of their religion and philosophy.'¹²

Reunion has been openly advocated and striven for by Mongol leaders. All of the prominent figures in the anti-Chinese revolution of 1911-1919, later subverted by the Russian-trained communists, were Pan-Mongolists.¹³ A Pan-Mongol congress actually met at Chita in 1919, and created an ephemeral Provisional Pan-Mongol Government. Even after the establishment of the MPR, Damba, then Premier, started abortive negotiations in 1925 with the Chinese warlord, General Feng Yü-hsiang, on the subject of a Pan-Mongol state.¹⁴

Chinese Communist Policy in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. Inner Mongolia is the area where Pan-Mongolistic aspirations might most logically be expected inasmuch as its Mongol population—about 1,200,000—exceeds the approximate million inhabiting the MPR. Inner Mongolia was conquered by the Manchu dynasty long before Outer Mongolia, and consequently has had a much closer relationship to China. In recent times, continual Chinese political harassment and economic exploitation in the area stimulated the development of always-present Mongol self-awareness, and by the 1930's the influential nationalist leader, Prince Demchugdonrob, had rallied Inner Mongolia from Manchuria west to the Ordos under his motto, 'Ugsaatan mash deed!'—'Mongolia above all.'¹⁵

The advent of the Chinese Communists signified the inception of a policy toward the minority groups in China designed to use the empty titles and externals of a so-called autonomy to insure the complete subjection of the minorities. The Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (IMAR) was the first of the Chinese Communist 'autonomous' areas to be established. Chinese Communist policy since the inauguration of the IMAR has been characterized by a steady expansion of its administrative boundaries to include areas where the Chinese population is heavily predominant, in order to submerge the Mongols in a Chinese sea in an area whose ostensible purpose was to preserve their own nationality.¹⁶ As a result, Chinese now outnumber Mongols in the IMAR seven to one.¹⁷

The Mongols, however, have been difficult to subdue. The Chinese have had to resort to frequent purges to insure Mongol 'agreement' to the domination of the Chinese Communist Party in the IMAR,¹⁸ and have attempted to eradicate Mongol nationality by cultural as well as physical engulfment. This has been approached by introducing new Chinese-language textbooks in the area's schools early in 1960 and by increasing the hours of study in the Chinese language.¹⁹ Also, both they and the U.S.S.R. have resorted to manipulations of the written Mongol language as an antinationalistic device.

Language Reform as a Weapon Against Nationalism. The traditional Mongol alphabet somewhat resembles a page of Semitic script given a quarter turn to the left—which is essentially what it is; it is derived through the Turkic Uighurs and the Iranian Sogdians from an Aramaic script.²⁰ Its spelling is as archaic as that of English, and over the centuries it has increasingly diverged

from the spoken language not only in phonetics but also in grammar and even in vocabulary.

On 25 March 1941 a joint resolution of the Council of Ministers of the MPR and the Central Committee of the MNRP announced the adoption of a 'new alphabet constructed on the basis of Russian writing'—a modified version of the Cyrillic alphabet adapted to the Mongol language by the addition of two new letters. Since 1 January 1946 practically all printing in the MPR has used the new Cyrillic, and since 1 January 1950 all official affairs have been transacted in it.²¹

Foreigners would be the first to agree that the Cyrillic script is much easier to learn and read than the traditional Mongol alphabet. But as Rupen points out, adoption of the Cyrillic script to the exclusion of the classical alphabet will cut Mongols off from their heritage of traditional literature, and from this will follow the decay of the traditional literary language. The classical literature glorifies the Mongols' history and the deeds of their heroes; in addition, it is permeated with the influence of Buddhism. Consequently by manipulation of the language the communists promote their aim to cut the Mongols off from their past, to eliminate any favorable references to the khans, the feudal lords, and religion, and to obliterate all vestiges of 'bourgeois nationalism.'²²

The communists have not won yet. Salisbury states that in all the time that he was in Mongolia he saw only one Mongol official who used the Cyrillic to jot down informal notes or memoranda.²³ And as a result of pressure from Mongol intellectuals, school-children between the ages of eight and eleven now study the old script.²⁴

The Chinese Communist approach to the language problem is equally revealing. In mid-August of 1955 Peking announced that the same Cyrillic transcription of Mongol as used in the MPR would be adopted for use in the IMAR, with four years to be allowed for the changeover. But later on this policy was revoked, and it was announced that the script to be used would be the Latin.²⁵ If the old script is replaced in this manner, Mongols on either side of the border will find a further barrier to communication and unity in their use of two different scripts.

Mongolian Territory in the U.S.S.R. Second only to the IMAR as a major area of *Mongolia irredenta* is Buryat Mongolia in the U.S.S.R. Just as Chinese farmers now far outnumber the Mongols

in the IMAR, Russian and Ukrainian farmer colonists form the bulk of the population in Buryat Mongolia. Figures from the Soviet census of January 1959 give a total population for the Buryat Autonomous Region (BASSR) of 671,000, of whom about 180,000 are Buryat Mongols. The total number of Buryat Mongols in the U.S.S.R. is given as 253,000.²⁶

Historical Russian control of Buryat Mongolia has provided the Soviet Union with one of its most useful avenues of access to manipulation of Mongolian affairs. Even as recently as the International Congress of Mongolists held in Ulan Bator in 1959, the Soviet delegation was led by Buryat scholars whom the Russians felt they could trust. It is significant that a decree of the Supreme Soviet issued 7 July 1958 deleted the word 'Mongolian' from the official name of the region, formerly the Buryat Mongolian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.²⁷

Another area of Greater Mongolia now part of the Soviet Union is Uriyanghai, or Tannu Tuva, and here the same anti-nationalist pattern occurs once more. At the Third Congress of the MPRP at Ulan Bator in 1924, even the Mongol communists, as well as the Uriyanghai natives, desired the reincorporation of Uriyanghai into the MPR, but the Soviet Union stepped in to stop the move by force. Zhamtsarano, a Buryat nationalist leader, flatly denounced the Soviet action against Uriyanghai as 'Red imperialism.'²⁸ The story came to its climax in 1944, when the Soviet Union annexed Uriyanghai outright as the Tuvian Autonomous Oblast' of the U.S.S.R.

When the fate of Uriyaughai is considered, the question may well be asked, as it is by William B. Ballis, if the MPR faces a similar destiny.²⁹ The already pervasive imposition of the Russian pattern, and the absence of any tangible constraint in Mongolia itself, would make the move merely a matter of Soviet volition. The answer would seem simply to lie with Communist China. Given the belligerence of the Communist Chinese leaders and the increasing antagonism between them and the Soviet, it would appear little likely that they would tolerate the swallowing even by a fraternal antagonist, of a vast territory once controlled by China. On their part, the Russians would gain little from formalizing a control they now can exercise anyway in full effect. More than that, recent developments in the international status of the MPR indicate that the Soviet Union may have decided to counter Communist China in Mongolia by fostering international recognition of the MPR as an independent state,

considering this compromise an acceptable price to pay to keep the Chinese at arm's length. For their own part, the Mongol people themselves would appear to welcome international reinforcement of their claims to nationhood, seeing in broader contacts with the outside world, particularly with the United States, a means to balance Soviet control.

V. MONGOLIA AND THE UNITED STATES

. . . if in . . . remote Ulan Bator, Mongols can hardly conceal their impatience for closer association with the United States, only the most stubborn pessimist would be frightened at our ability to defeat communism in 'peaceful competition.'

—Harrison E. Salisbury¹

UN Membership and the Question of Recognition. On 27 October 1961 the MPR formally became the 102nd member of the United Nations. After the ceremonies of induction had been completed, Dondog Tsevegmid, Deputy Foreign Minister of the MPR, went to the rostrum to deliver the customary speech of appreciation. The interpreters had been given a brief, prepared statement which they began to read in the official languages of the UN—English, French, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese. To the surprise and perplexity of delegates and interpreters alike, Tsevegmid spoke not in Russian but in Mongolian. For some time after the helpless interpreters finished their statement, Tsevegmid continued his speech in Mongolian, apparently understood by no one in the hall except the other members of his own delegation.²

This exhibition of bourgeois nationalism by an indoctrinated communist was in consonance with other evidences of the vitality and pervasiveness of Mongol nationalism even in the least expected Marxist quarters. It came as the climax of a fifteen-year campaign by the MPR and its Soviet sponsor to achieve the admission of the MPR to the United Nations and thereby gain a form of international acknowledgment of MPR nationhood. Admission to the UN symbolized a significant turning outward from isolation for the MPR, accompanied by a heightening of Mongol interest in the West, and especially in the United States, and also signified a transformation of the attitude of the United States, which, in addition to making possible the admission of the MPR to the UN, was also for the first time actively exploring the question of diplomatic recognition of the MPR and the exchange of official representatives.

Attempts of the MPR to join the UN had consistently foundered on Chinese Nationalist opposition, supported by an unenthusiastic Western appraisal of the validity of the MPR's claims to status as a nation. Nationalist China had actually supported the MPR's first application in 1946. However, China's long history of claims to

suzerainty over the area had not been eradicated by her forced and grudging acceptance of the secret Yalta settlements and the ensuing plebiscite, and a border incident in 1947 was sufficient provocation for the Nationalists to reverse their position.³ When the question of MPR membership in the UN was revived in 1961, the Soviet Union made it clear that unless the MPR's application were approved, it would automatically veto the simultaneously pending application of Mauritania. The major obstacle to MPR membership continued to be Chinese Nationalist opposition. The effect of the Soviet pronouncement was to anger the African members of the French Community, not so much at the U.S.S.R. as at the Nationalists.

Votes in favor of the moratorium on discussing the admission of Communist China to the UN had been decreasing. In 1960, for example, the record was 42 for, 34 against, and 22 abstaining.⁴ The important point was that eleven of the abstentions were by the French African states, and if these were to move into the 'against' column in retaliation for the exclusion of a sister state by the U.S.S.R. because of a Chinese Nationalist veto of the MPR, the Chinese Nationalist cause would be in serious danger.

As late as December 1960 the United States had opposed the entry of the MPR into the UN on the grounds that it was merely a dependency of the U.S.S.R. lacking the attributes of legitimate nationhood.⁵ However, the United States decided to reverse its policy in view of the developments outlined above, and resolved to explore the establishing of diplomatic relations with the MPR as a touchstone of its independence and legitimacy as a state and consequent eligibility for membership in the UN. If convinced, the United States would then persuade the Chinese Nationalists to withhold their veto. Mauritania would presumably then be admitted as well, the French African states would be contented, and the Chinese Communist question would be successfully postponed for another year.⁶

Consequently Mr. Edward L. Freers, United States chargé d'affaires in Moscow, met on 2 June 1961 with Sonomyn Lubsan, MPR ambassador to the U.S.S.R., to consider the question of establishing diplomatic relations, and it became publicly known on 8 July that the MPR's reaction to the United States' initiative was favorable.⁷

Opinion in the United States was divided generally on party lines. Democrats such as Senators Mansfield and Fulbright

supported the negotiations, while Republicans such as Senators Keating and Bridges opposed them. In Taiwan, however, the discussions generated a political tornado. Correspondents there feared that the angry anti-American tone of the government-sanctioned press would so inflame popular resentment that there might be a repetition of the mob violence which resulted in the sacking of the American embassy in May 1957.⁸

The denouement came on 11 August, when the State Department formally announced that the United States had abandoned its plans to establish diplomatic relations with the MPR. Two coincident events appeared to be significantly related to this decision. The first was the visit of Chinese Nationalist Premier Chen Cheng to Washington the previous week, and the second was the fact that on the morning of the announcement the Senate began its voting on the Administration's foreign aid bill. The official explanation released by the State Department stated merely that negotiations had been suspended because of the 'existing world situation'; spokesmen denied that there had been any 'firm deal' with Premier Chen or that the Department had any guarantees of the position which the Chinese Nationalists would take in the United Nations with respect to admitting the MPR.⁹ However, reports at the time indicated that the Chinese Nationalists were ultimately persuaded to withhold their veto of the MPR in the UN in exchange for certain concessions by the United States. According to these reports, as a *quid pro quo* the United States agreed to abandon its plans for the diplomatic recognition of the MPR, to abstain in the Security Council on the MPR's application rather than vote affirmatively, and, in addition, to refuse entry into the United States to Dr. Thomas W. I. Liao, a Chinese who had incurred Chinese Nationalist displeasure by opposing them as well as the Chinese Communists.¹⁰ In any event, the MPR's application was approved by the Security Council on 25 October, 9 to 0. The United States abstained and the Chinese Nationalists did not participate in the vote.¹¹

Mongolian Interest in the United States. The question of United States recognition of the MPR is nevertheless still open, and has recently received new attention because of the British recognition of the MPR which was announced on 23 January 1963.¹² The obstacle of the MPR's admission to the UN and the concomitant involvement of the Chinese Nationalists' own position in the UN has been surmounted, and the case can now be considered purely on its own merits. Three conditions must obtain for such recognition to be successful: first, it must be

determined that recognition is in the interest of the United States and of advantage to its position in the cold war; second, the MPR regime must be interested in broadening its horizons, even to the extent of establishing relations with the leader of the opposing ideological camp; and third, the Soviet Union must be willing, for whatever reason, to permit the MPR to entertain such schemes.

Considering these conditions in reverse order, it is apparent from the progress of the previous negotiations that the U.S.S.R. has not been inclined to oppose official United States-MPR relations.¹³

With respect to Mongol willingness to emerge into contact with the world in general, and the United States in particular, recent visitors agree that the MPR is in the midst of a powerful surge of interest in the United States. In an interview with Salisbury in 1959, Tsendenbal said that he desired not only to see the MPR join the UN, but also to establish diplomatic relations with the United States.¹⁴ Reporting on his second visit to the MPR in 1961, Salisbury states that Mongols, wherever he met them, expressed 'gratitude and appreciation' for the efforts made by the United States to secure their admission to the UN, and some actually seemed to believe that the United States had sponsored the application.¹⁵ Justice Douglas said in 1961 that he found intellectuals 'starved for contact with the West.' He declared: 'If an American ambassador in Ulan Bator announced there were scholarships for one thousand Mongolians in American schools, he'd have two thousand applicants.'¹⁶ Sochurek, who visited the MPR late in 1962, reports an 'insatiable curiosity' about the ways of the West.¹⁷

Such an interest is all the more remarkable when it is taken into consideration that the Mongolian view of the United States has of necessity passed through the communist filter. Salisbury summarizes the situation as follows:

Probably the most forceful tribute to the attractive power of the United States and of American ideals is provided by Mongolia. Lodged as she is between two giant communist neighbors, still this remote little communist country dreams of closer contacts with the United States, looks forward to an interchange of Americans and Mongols, and makes no secret of the fact she would gladly welcome American know-how and technical assistance. In fact, they are most

eager for United States recognition, and would welcome American technical aid, if for no other reason than to broaden the international basis of their country. It is noteworthy that in Ulan Bator intellectuals are learning English so that, as they say, 'we can visit the United States.'

The fact that this has happened in a country where hardly an American penetrated until the past two or three years, and where people have been isolated as no others in the world with the possible exception of Tibet, should not be overlooked.¹⁸

Judging from on-the-spot reports, then, there appears to be considerable vitality in the MPR, despite all communist barriers and hostile propaganda, to the hope that diplomatic contacts will ultimately be established with the United States. The failure of the negotiations in 1961 is passed off as a temporary setback:

'Soon, I am sure,' a high official said, 'the difficulties will be cleared away. Americans will be coming to Mongolia to help us in many fields of technology. And we will be sending our people to the United States to learn about your life and the wonderful things we know that you have contributed to the world.'¹⁹

Recognition Pro and Con. The arguments in favor of United States recognition of the MPR and the establishment of an American mission in Ulan Bator were summarized by Senator Mansfield in a statement which he made before the Senate as early as 19 April 1960:

While it may be difficult to grasp the relationship of a vast stretch of deserts and desolate mountains in Central Asia to major trends in world affairs, the relationship, nonetheless, is there. It is there, because in those deserts and mountains, the outward pulsations of a Chinese and Russian society converge in a setting which is not the least fixed or static. Brought into direct juxtaposition in this fashion are two great powers, two sets of national interests and fears, as well as two variations of a shared ideology. That is the reality, whatever may be the apparent universality of international communism. How these national interests and these ideological variations reconcile or diverge, how these fears

intensify or relax on contact—these questions involving Russia and China are of the greatest significance for the conduct of effective foreign policy. Indeed, the importance of this contact has been recognized in the many words which have been written by skilled people on this question, without specific reference to Outer Mongolia. In Outer Mongolia, however, the living drama of the convergence is being acted.²⁰

The Washington Post set forth further support for recognition in an editorial of 26 January 1963:

[Recognition] would be a small but important step toward influence in a delicate zone between Russia and Communist China and it could help Mongolia fill the independent role it has traditionally set for itself . . . [Mongolia's] historic status as a Sino-Soviet buffer has dissolved into an ambiguous stance as a satellite of Moscow. China can only be displeased at this turn since, insofar as Mongolia plays a part in Sino-Soviet relations, it is as a captured pawn. The United States has no leverage in this situation such as recognition would afford. Nor does it have the interesting listening post that Ulan Bator would be. Recognition could lead to political, people-to-people and perhaps economic relations and these would, hopefully, break down Mongolia's isolation. Since it is American policy to offer satellites a limited alternative to total dependence on Moscow, there is no overbearing reason why this policy should not be extended to Mongolia.²¹

Such arguments are challenged by the opponents of recognition. One of the major objections advanced by Senator Bridges in 1961 was the possibility that recognition of the MPR 'would merely be a side-door device to make the recognition of Red China a bit easier to put over at an early date.'²² However, it is difficult to see the relevance of this objection. The United States has already recognized a number of communist states, and such recognition establishes no precedent for recognizing Communist China. The fact that MPR is an Asian country should not becloud the issue. Each case must be considered on its own merits. Moreover, Mongolia appears to be solidly in the Soviet orbit rather than the Chinese. Furthermore, as Zagoria points out, 'one of Peking's major goals has been to eliminate American power from Asia . . .'²³ Not the least of the advantages to be gained from

recognition would be the opportunity thereby presented to introduce an American presence into an area in the very midst of Communist Asia where American influence has never been felt before, and to do this under the nose of the Chinese Communists.

Another argument set forward is that of Senator Keating's that recognition 'is another move calculated to embarrass our allies on Formosa . . .'²⁴ Mongolia, however, is not a part of Han China, and the Chinese Nationalists themselves recognized the MPR in 1946.²⁵ Acknowledgment of the right to self-determination of the Mongols—and indeed of the Tibetans and the Turki—would only enhance the stature of the Government of the Republic of China. Perpetuation of a sterile Han claim is of less importance than an initiative to introduce influences of the free world into the communist heartland.

Senator Bridges set forth another argument against recognition by calling into question the advantages of placing experienced diplomatic observers in the MPR as a source of information on communist affairs. 'We have had so-called listening posts for years in Soviet satellites, without ever hearing anything much except what the communist secret police permit to filter through.'²⁶ In response it is only necessary to point out that the first tangible signs of a Sino-Soviet rift based not merely on questions of ideological heterodoxy but on a conflict of traditional power interests could not be observed by United States officials at firsthand because of our lack of representation in Ulan Bator. And as Zagoria makes clear, official communist releases, analyzed by careful students, can be a significant source of information.²⁷

Still another argument set forth by the opponents of recognition was raised by Senator Bridges as follows:

It is said that recognition by the United States would encourage the development of Outer Mongolian independence. Since when has United States recognition in Hungary, in Poland, in Czechoslovakia, or in any of the other Iron Curtain countries made them any more independent? As long as the Red armies stand by ready to trample down the slightest rising of national spirit and freedom, such an argument as that represents mere wishful thinking.²⁸

There can be no question, of course, that the Mongol people are completely at the mercy of the Soviet and Chinese Communist

armies, who can crush them at their wish. But this scarcely means that whatever glimpse of the free world, or slight alleviation of their predicament, which contact with Americans could bring, must be denied a captive people indefinitely. As has been set forth above, the Mongol nomadic tradition could not be more antipathetic to the constraints of communist servitude. It is a tragic irony that the Mongols have had no way to turn for relief from one oppressor than to appeal to another, or that in their desire to catch up with the modern world they have been compelled to accept their industrial technology from communists. As early as 1912, Da Lama, one of the Mongol nationalist leaders, declared: 'The Mongols are poor and uneducated, but freedom-loving, and do not want to change from Chinese slaves into Russian slaves.'²⁹ In 1924, the War Minister of the MPR, Danzan, was brutally murdered by Buryat Communists because of a violent speech which he had made, warning that closer relations with the U.S.S.R. would bring Mongolia under Soviet domination. Again in 1926, Tseren Dorji, who for a time was Prime Minister of the MPR, said: 'You foreigners think that the Russians are everything in Mongolia. It is not so . . . We like their experts, and we trust them, but they will not always be here.'³⁰

The pattern continues to the present day. Damba is purged for fearing too close a dependence on the Soviet Union; Tömör-Ochir is disgraced for showing more interest in Mongol nationalism than in the Soviet-enjoined suppression of it; and Professor Rinchine is dismissed from the faculty of the university at Ulan Bator for protesting against Russification.³¹

Surely the vitality of Mongol nationalism and the historic Mongol antipathy to Russians and Chinese alike indicate that it would be constructive to offer the Mongol people a 'limited alternative to total dependence on Moscow.'³²

The question of the utility of fostering national identity and self-determination among the Mongols through diplomatic initiative is a particular case in point which forms part of a broader question affecting in general the relations of the free world with the captive communist-controlled nations. Rupen poses the problem with respect to the MPR as follows:

The sympathetic Western observer may cautiously hope for the survival of Mongolian pride and patriotism; approve the attack on illiteracy, disease, and economic

underdevelopment; decry the purges, and constant demands for political and intellectual orthodoxy, and honour the memory of their victims; and wish that in the twentieth century small peoples can find ways to influence their own destiny.³³

Some of the ways that peoples oppressed by communist overlords can be assisted toward a hope, however distant, of influencing their own destiny are indicated by the recommendations of the series of studies on cold war strategy commissioned by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the United States Senate in 1959. Segments of these studies completed by the Harvard-Columbia Research Group and the Harvard Center for International Affairs agree that the United States should keep open channels of communication toward the satellite states. Although the studies are specifically concerned with the countries of Eastern Europe, the principles which they enumerate could apply to Mongolia equally well: 'We should express concern for the welfare of these peoples and should pursue a policy of the broadest and deepest possible contact with them through cultural, economic and other exchanges.'³⁴ The end is, of course, to keep alive the spark of independence and nationalist sentiment in spite of communist oppression. The studies go on to recommend that the United States 'encourage autonomy of decision' for the satellites, 'and refuse to acknowledge the permanence of the Soviet-imposed *status quo* The United States should encourage gradual loosening of repressive Soviet control by accurate reporting of conditions . . . and by supporting contacts and exchanges' Furthermore, in order to foster communist ideological erosion, the United States should 'refuse to recognize Soviet domination of the satellites as final and should insist that the communist world is an area of concern to the outside world.' The studies additionally recommend that the United States 'attempt to deal with existing communist regimes as if they were independent, without, of course, endorsing them.'³⁵

In the case of Mongolia, all of these courses of action would derive from recognition. Not only would advantages accrue directly to the United States through the penetration of American diplomats into a hitherto closed area of the communist world, but a people naturally unsympathetic to communism would at last be afforded some direct contact with the leader of the democracies, and from this contact forces could be set in motion which would work, in however limited a fashion, against the mainstream of the communist current. American technological preeminence puts

this country in a uniquely favorable position to respond to Mongol enthusiasms for modernization. A complementary effort in the information field would set American political, social, and belletristic classics before a people hitherto denied them, and in counteracting communist materialism with American ideals would demonstrate that economic growth is not an end in itself. The task would be hard. The American representatives would be isolated and lonely in a post of great hardship. The action would take place on a very small stage in a world of superpowers, and results would be limited. However, the wedge of American influence would have been introduced into an open fissure in the communist monolith, and the long-range results might surpass expectations.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

An examination of the policies of Russia and China toward Mongolia since their first confrontation in the seventeenth century reveals a recurring pattern which remains constant on each side irrespective of the regime. The Tsars persistently maneuvered to further their influence in Mongolia at China's expense, and the Russian Communists have continued the effort to insure the exclusion of Chinese influence and the invulnerability of their own. On the Chinese side, the empire, the Nationalists, and now the communists, have uniformly considered Mongolia to be a *Han fief*. While they have generally been successful in thoroughly dominating Inner Mongolia, they have withdrawn in Outer Mongolia only through the pressures of necessity before Russian encroachments.

In its latest phase, Sino-Russian competition for Mongolia has been waged with economic and technological weapons. Although Communist China made a powerful bid during the past few years to challenge Soviet supremacy in Outer Mongolia, all reports indicate a conclusive victory for the Soviet Union at the present time.

In view of Mao Tse-tung's specific declaration that Outer Mongolia would one day come back to China, and the fact that, as he foretold, Tibet and Sinkiang have been reintegrated into China, it can be assumed that the setback at the hands of the Soviet Union is considered a temporary one. Sino-Soviet rivalry for the Mongolian buffer can only assume greater significance as their doctrinal dispute intensifies.

For their part, the Outer Mongolians have been material beneficiaries of Sino-Soviet bidding and counterbidding to advance their modernization. However, reports from visitors and the evidence furnished by continuing purges and upheavals demonstrate that traditional Mongol nationalism has not been extinguished and is still a matter of serious concern to the communist leadership. Admission of the MPR to the United Nations symbolizes a new Mongol interest in forsaking long isolation and in establishing contacts with the outside world, particularly with the United States.

Mongol interest in inaugurating official diplomatic relations with the United States presents this country with a unique

opportunity to reintroduce an American presence, in no matter how limited a fashion, into the Asian heartland, after having been totally excluded therefrom for over a dozen years. Recognition of the MPR would make possible the establishment of American diplomatic personnel at the back doors of both the Soviet Union and Communist China at a time when both the cold war and exacerbated Sino-Soviet tensions maximize the value of knowledge of developments within the Bloc. Finally, recognition would give the Mongol people, victims of communist terror and police-state oppression for over forty years, a small window on the free world, and through American contacts provide them some leverage, however limited, against the pressures of subjugation.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

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13Tillman Durdin, 'Peiping Renews Aid to Mongolia,' *The New York Times*, 30 December 1958, p. 7:1 (microfilm).

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APPENDIX A



GREATER MONGOLIA

- 1 -- Chita
- 2 -- Irkutsk
- 3 -- Nerchinsk
- 4 -- Sain Shanda

■ OCCUPIED BY BOTH MONGOLS AND CHINESE
 --Map by Urgunge Onon

The Nalaikha mines are located about 15 miles southeast of Ulan Bator.

APPENDIX B

A NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION FROM THE MONGOL

No rigid consistency of system has been followed in transliterating Mongol words and names. By and large, preference has been given to forms which have received general currency even if these are not strictly correct; the most obvious example is the conventional Ulan Bator instead of the accurate *Ulaanbaatar*.

The excerpts from the poems by Urgunge Onon and Dashdorjiin Natsagdorj are given in transcription from the Cyrillic, i.e., colloquial, versions even though the originals are written in the classical script. This has been done simply to avoid archaic spellings and thus make the phonetics a trifle less inaccessible.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

Mr. James V. Di Crocco

FOREIGN LANGUAGE ABILITY:

Chinese (Mandarin), read; Russian, read, speak; Japanese, read, speak; Mongolian, read, speak; French, read, speak; German, read, speak; Italian, read, speak; Spanish, read, speak; Portuguese, read; Bulgarian, read; Ukrainian, read.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

CoLumbia, 1943, BA
Catholic University, 1945-46, Studying Chinese
Columbia, 1947-48, Working for MA

DUTY ASSIGNMENTS:

Student, Naval War College	Naval Warfare Course Civilian with U.S. Government	1962-1963 1951-1962
U.S. Dept. of State, Voice of America New York, N.Y.	Multilingual monitor (shift supervisor) (civilian)	1949-1951
HQ 3rd Naval District, N. Y.	Assistant to District Officer, Reserve Communications Supplementary Activities (LT,USNR)	1948-
USN Russian Language School, Anacostia, D.C.	Student of Russian (LT,USNR)	1946-1947
USN Communications Annex Washington 25, D.C.	Research Analyst (ENS-LT,USNR)	1943-1946
USN Japanese Language School, Boulder, Colorado	Student of Japanese (Y2c-ENS, USNR)	1942-1943