# *A Diplomat Speaks*

K. P. S. MENON

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# *Preface*

To speak or not to speak is a question which often arises in a man's public or even private life. As a rule it would be well to remember the advice which Disraeli gave to a new Member of Parliament who asked whether he was expected to speak often in Parliament. "No, I do not advise you to do so", said Disraeli, "it is better that the House should wonder why you do not speak than why you do."

Much depends on your profession. If you are a lawyer, you cannot help speaking. Eloquence counts, especially with the jury. Eloquence, however, which is not backed by substance is unlikely to appeal to a judge. Indeed, he is likely to be repelled by it.

When I was a student of the Madras Christian College in 1916, I remember listening to a famous barrister of that time, Eardly Norton, arguing a case before a very eminent judge, Sir C. Sankaran Nair. With his "quips and pranks and wanton wiles", Norton produced a great impression on the gallery. After listening to him for some time, Sir Sankaran Nair gently but firmly pulled him up saying: "We all know you are Mr. Norton. Now will you come to the point?"

A member of the diplomatic service has often to ask himself: must I speak or need I not? Reticence is an essential virtue in a diplomat. Once, exasperated by the tendency of some of our Ambassadors to speak in season and out of season, Jawaharlal Nehru said in Parliament that it was the business of a diplomat

to keep his eyes and ears open and his mouth shut. In the diplomatic profession more than in any other silence is golden.

Yet there may arise occasions when a diplomat has to break the rule of silence and indulge in speech. His speech, if not golden, should at least be silver and certainly not lead.

In some countries like the USA a diplomat is in constant demand for public speaking. He may be called upon to speak at the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, the Y's Mens Club, the Junior Chamber and so on, most of which have their replicas in India too.

Few nowadays remember the wise saying of the wisest of American Presidents, Abraham Lincoln, that it is better for a man to keep silent and be thought a fool than to speak and confirm it.

In the USSR the position is different. There a diplomat has greater privacy. But there, too, there arise occasions when he must speak or can do so with advantage.

In the Soviet Union, they have a habit of celebrating not only their own National Day but the National Day of countries with which the USSR is particularly friendly. Year after year, I, as Indian Ambassador, had to speak on the occasion of our Independence Day and Republic Day over the Moscow Radio, in the Hall of Columns, at the House of Friendship, at the University of Moscow and at our reception in Hotel Sovietskaya. To speak on such formal occasions without being too formal and repeating oneself requires practice.

When the relations between India and the USSR became closer not only our National Day but even Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday began to be observed. The centenary of the birth of Rabindranath Tagore, too, was celebrated at a glittering function in the Bolshoi Theatre. During my stay of nine years in Moscow, that was the only occasion when the Bolshoi, the great House of the Ballet and the Opera, was put to an extraneous purpose.

An even more unusual incident was the celebration of "Kalidasa Day" in Moscow. Speaking at that function, I said

> . . .how charming it would be to see Ulanova, Lepishenskaya, or Plisetskaya dancing in an Indian saree! After all, if Lepishenskaya can dance in a Chinese costume in the *Red Poppy*, and if Kuznetskaya can act in an Indian costume in the *White*

*Lotus*, there is no reason why a Russian ballerina should not do equal justice to Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*. It is a drama which is particularly suitable for being turned into a ballet, though it was written nearly two thousand years ago.

The Soviet authorities took up this challenge and turned *Sakuntala* into a beautiful ballet, which is still running to crowded audiences in Riga.

Jawaharlal Nehru visited the Soviet Union in 1955 and was the guest of honour at a magnificent banquet which was given by the Heads of Asian and African Missions in Moscow and was attended by the Soviet leaders. This precedent used to be followed, whenever the Head of an Asian or African State came to Moscow. In the late fifties, the Bandung spirit was very much alive, and Moscow was a magnet for Asian and African Prime Ministers—and not for them alone. Among those who were entertained by "the Bandung diplomats" were the Emperor of Ethiopia, the Kings of Afghanistan and Nepal, the Prime Ministers of Burma and Egypt, the Presidents of Syria and Guinea and Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia. On all such occasions, I, as the seniormost among the Asian diplomats, had to propose the principal toast. To propose a toast is different from making a speech and is an art in itself.

Toasts had also to be proposed, to the accompaniment of vodka or champagne, on the visit of important delegations from India to the Soviet Union and vice versa. These toasts were designed to welcome the delegations, to put them at ease in a new and strange country, to initiate contacts between them and their hosts, and at the same time to project painlessly and, if possible, gracefully, some aspect of Indian culture or other into Soviet minds.

For this purpose an ideal occasion arose when we gave a dinner at the Indian Embassy on the occasion of the staging of our great epic, the Ramayana in Moscow, in honour of its producer, director, composer and translator and also the actors and acrtesses who took part in it. Another occasion for giving a glimpse of the vast panorama of Indian culture was when Dr. Malalasekara, the Ambassador of Ceylon and a Buddhist scholar of international repute, gave a party in honour of the 2,500th anniversary of the birth of Buddha.

There arose also other occasions for proposing toasts, e.g. to celebrate a fishing expedition or the departure of a much-loved colleague or a betrothal or a marriage in the diplomatic corps. I also had to say a few words at a melancholy function, the funeral of Professor Yuri Roerich, a gifted member of a gifted family which migrated to India after the Revolution and made India its home and has enriched Indian art and culture.

There is only one longish lecture in this collection of speeches. That is the one which I delivered at the University of Moscow on "The Republic of India".

The period which I spent in Moscow (1952-61) was exceptionally interesting and important in Indian, and world, history. India had just become independent. Other countries in Asia and Africa followed suit with bewildering rapidity, often as bewildering to the peoples who became independent as to the erstwhile bearers of the White Man's Burden. The "Vasco da Gama Era" was coming to an end.

The Second World War was over, but the cold war had supervened. The hope, entertained by Wendell Wilkie and others that "one world" would emerge out of the War, had proved illusory. Two worlds had emerged, two politico-military blocs, headed by the USA and the USSR. And a third world was emerging in Asia and Africa.

How would this new world adjust itself to the new situation? Would it be content to be an appendage to one or other of the two great Leviathans? Or would it work out its own destiny with malice toward none and charity for all? That was the sixty million dollar question in the fifties.

Beyond it was the six hundred million dollar question: In this nuclear age, would civilization reach new heights of which man had hitherto never dreamt? Or, would it perish in a nuclear conflagration? As Bertrand Russell put it, was the earth "destined to be a ruined, lifeless planet which will continue for countless ages to circle aimlessly round the sun, unredeemed by the joys and loves, the occasional wisdom and power to create beauty which have given value to human life?"

In the history of Indo-Soviet relations, the fifties were a formative period. It was a period of mutual discovery. It was during this period that the first cultural delegations of artists, scholars, soldiers, film stars, educationists, doctors and Members of Parlia-

ment went from one country to another. It was then that the first Cultural Agreement between India and the USSR was signed. It was then that the Indian epic, Ramayana, was compressed into a play and staged in Moscow, and Indian dramas like Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*, Bhasa's *Mrichchakatika*, and Tagore's *Chitra* were staged. Mahatma Gandhi was then officially acknowledged as a great liberator of humanity and his *Experiments with Truth*, as well as Jawaharlal Nehru's *Autobiography*, was translated into Russian.

It was not only a period of discovery for both countries but of development. It was then that the first Trade Agreement between India and the USSR was signed; that the first metallurgical complex was established at Bhilai; that the first machine-making project was established at Ranchi, followed by dozens of similar projects; that planes, Indian and Soviet, began to fly to and fro; and that the first shipping line between the two countries was opened.

In order to bring the story up to date I have included, as appendixes, three speeches delivered by me in New Delhi on various aspects of Indo-Soviet relations towards the end of 1973 and the beginning of 1974, namely (*i*) over the All India Radio on the 26th November 1973 on "Indian and Soviet Foreign Policies: Points of Convergence"; (*ii*) at a public meeting in New Delhi on the 10th December 1973, held under the Chairmanship of Dr. S.D. Sharma, President of the Indian National Congress, to reivew the results of Mr. Brezhnev's visit; and (*iii*) at Hyderabad on the 4th January 1974, at the National Conference for Peace and Security, convened jointly by the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society and the All India Peace and Security Organization. They will show how far India and the USSR have travelled, and how fruitfully, on the road of friendship since my days in Moscow.

Against these appendixes even the seemingly trivial toasts in the book acquire significance. I hope the reader will feel that these have served at least as an appetizing sauce for the rich repast of Indo-Soviet cooperation which was being prepared by the unseen forces of history, among whose visible instruments Jawaharlal Nehru was the foremost.

Re-reading these speeches one thinks nostalgically of the prestige enjoyed by India, out of all proportion to her strength,

in the halcyon days of Jawaharlal Nehru, a prestige which dwindled steadily during the sixties and is sought to be re-established by his daughter, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, in the face of formidable obstacles, internal and external.

To the younger readers, these speeches, I hope, will give some tips as to what they should say—and, more important, what they should not—and how they should say it when they are obliged to break the golden rule of golden silence.

K. P. S. MENON

# *Contents*

# *A Diplomat Speaks*

# 1

## *Indian Art Exhibition*

I am very happy to be able to say a few words on this auspicious occasion. It is, in fact, a unique occasion. This is the first time in history that an Indian Art Exhibition has come to the Soviet Union. A couple of years ago an Art Exhibition from the Soviet Union went to India. I was in Delhi then and I know how charmed the Indian people were to see Soviet paintings. From those paintings they not only derived much artistic enjoyment but they also got a vivid idea of the multifarious life and culture of the Soviet Union.

I am very glad that the All-India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, under the initiative of Mr. Sarda Ukil, decided to return the compliment. Here you will see representative collections from contemporary Indian artists. They are contemporary in a chronological sense, in the sense that they have been painted by living artists. But in another sense they are more than contemporary; they continue an artistic tradition which goes back some two thousand years. You should not, however, imagine that our artists are hide-bound by tradition. Throughout the centuries

they have struck out new paths, new avenues in art.

You will see that some of our painters have drawn from the rich field of Hindu religion and Hindu mythology. They have done so not because they are over-religious—I do not thnik we need accuse Mr. Ukil and his colleagues of excessive piety!—but because religious and mythological themes lend themselves to beautiful artistic treatment.

Our present-day painters, however, are more and more interested in secular subjects. This is in keeping with our Prime Minister's determination to turn India into an entirely secular state. In these paintings you will see the richness, the variety, the grandeur, the pathos and also the oddities and eccentricities of Indian life, as seen through the eyes of gifted artists. In this way, I hope, the people of the Soviet Union will have some idea of Indian life and culture, even as the people of India had of Soviet life and culture from the Soviet exhibition of art which went to India two years ago.

Latterly, the contacts between India and the Soviet Union have been growing. I rejoice in them because I am convinced that this is the best way of promoting friendship between countries. The visit of artists is particularly welcome; and I would like to thank the authorities here for all the kindness and hospitality which they have been extending to Mr. Ukil and his distinguished colleagues.

## 2

## *Soviet Cultural Delegation to India*

With your permission, I would like to propose a brief toast. This is to wish *bon voyage* and a very happy time in India to the Soviet Cultural Delegation. Let me assure them that the Government and people of India are eagerly looking forward to their visit. A very warm welcome awaits them—warm, not in a climatic sense, for you will be going to India at a time when North India, at any rate, will be cold, though Mr. Novikov may not admit that there is any real cold weather in India. As for South India, from where I come, we have only three kinds of climate there—hot, hotter and hottest ! I hope this will not frighten any of you.

All our people or, to be accurate, 99 per cent of our people, are looking forward to your visit. To be frank, there may be one per cent which, for reasons of their own, are a little nervous of the growing friendship between India and the Soviet Union. In fact, some people are already talking of a "cultural invasion" of India from Russia and China. I can only say that if all invasions in the world were like yours, the world will be a happier

place to live in. Your invasion of India will be very different from, shall we say, the invasion of Korea. You will not leave behind you cities devastated, millions of men killed, women widowed and children orphaned. But even you, I am afraid, may cause a few casualties. The ballerinas may leave a few wounded hearts behind!

I hope that, apart from entertaining our people, you will have time to look round and see a bit of my country. I hope they will not work you too hard. I have no doubt that your visit will result in a rich harvest of friendship between our two countries.

Finally, I would like to thank you on behalf of my wife and myself for accepting our invitation to this reception. We are particularly grateful to you for accepting it at such short notice. If the notice was short for you, it was short for us too; and I hope you will attribute any deficiencies in our hospitality to it. I also hope that when you come back you will give us another opportunity of meeting you and hearing your impressions.

With these words I propose a very hearty toast to the Soviet Cultural delegation to India.

3

## *Return of Soviet Cultural Delegation*

May I propose a toast in honour of our distinguished guests? We are very happy indeed to see them back, safe and sound. Some of us had a glimpse of them in Vienna. We saw an excellent performance given by them there. We were relieved to find that the heat and the discomforts of India have not affected their appearance, their complexion, their voice or the rhythm of their arms and legs. On the contrary, they looked all the better for their visit to India.

We also had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Bespalov, the leader of the delegation, in Vienna. In fact, we travelled back with him from Vienna to Moscow, though we spent most of the time looking after our ears, which gave trouble! That was just as well, for we could not speak in Russian with him!

When Mr. Bespalov left for India he said he was going to be there only for ten or twelve days. We requested him to stay longer and, at any rate, till our Republic Day celebrations were over. We are very happy that he stayed there throughout the time the delegation was there. I hope he did so not merely

to keep the delegation in order, but because he felt the charm of India.

At first I was a little disturbed to hear that Mr. Bespalov had brought away the Taj Mahal with him! I was relieved to find out he had only brought away a model of the Taj Mahal. Mr. Bespalov was less greedy than an English Governor-General a century ago. That Governor-General gave orders that the Taj should be pulled down, so that it might be taken to England and given as a present to Queen Victoria. Fortunately, however, the engineers reported that to pull down the Taj Mahal and set it up again would be more costly than to build a new Taj. So the idea was given up.

When you were leaving for India I expressed a fear that the ballerinas might have a few broken hearts in India. I do not know how many broken hearts they have left behind. but I do know that they have left the pleasantest of memories. I have received a number of letters from my friends about your visit. Last week I received a letter from a very intimate friend of mine. I hope you will not blush if I quote one or two extracts from it. It said: "Mikhailov was simply splendid; he had a glorious voice and looked dignified too." "Plisetskaya", he said, "was at her best as the dying swan. She looked as if she lost herself emotionally in that dance. That is a great quality in an artist. It took Plisetskaya many minutes to look happy and smiling after her dance as the dying swan." He added that he liked the folk dance artists from Uzbekistan. "I liked the chief Uzbek dancer", "not only for her dance but for her face, which had some mischief in it"; and so he goes on piling praise on you all.

I feel sure that your visit to India will have greatly strengthened the relations between our two countries.

## 4

## *Indian Handicrafts Exhibition*

It is always a pleasure for me to come to Leningrad. The last time I came here was at the height of summer. Then we experienced something which we had never experienced before, which we in India cannot even imagine, your White Nights. I come from a part of India where the sun has no irregular habits, where days and nights are always of equal length, where the sun rises punctually at 6 a.m. and sets punctually at 6 p.m. It was, therefore, strange to find myself in a place where the night was not dark and the day seemed endless. But now we see Leningrad in a different mood, beautiful still, but sombre, wearing a mantle of white.

It is not merely nature that fascinates one in Leningrad but art. Your beautiful streets, your magnificent architecture, your world-famous museums, your natural role as window on Europe, your revolutionary traditions, and, above all, your heroic defence during the War—all these combine to give Leningrad a character and romance which set it apart from other cities.

I am glad that our handicrafts are to be shown in this beautiful

and historic city. They are mostly the products of our cottage industries. We are now making a systematic attempt to revive our ancient handicrafts. I hope this will not give you the impression that we are developing a primitive economy, an economy based on cottage industries. When your distinguished leaders came to India they told our people again and again that it was important to develop heavy industry. And we have provided for it in our Second Five-Year Plan. It is true that in our First Five-Year Plan our main goal was to make India self-sufficient in the matter of foodgrains. In the Second Five-Year Plan our main objective will be to establish the essential foundations on which an industrial superstructure can be built.

This does not mean that we are going to neglect our handicrafts. They too have a part to play—a minor part but significant—in our economy. You will see here brocades from Banaras and Hyderabad, silks from Bengal and Madras, carpets and shawls from Kashmir, metal work from Jaipur and Moradabad, and ivory and sandal-wood work from Mysore and Travancore. Thus the handicrafts to be shown here come from the north and south, the east and west of India. Some are objects of daily use; others are articles of luxury. All have one feature in common; they all show a sense of beauty; and as John Keats, a contemporary of your own great poet, Pushkin, whose halo lingers over Leningrad, said: "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

I am glad some things of beauty, included in this exhibition, will be placed in your museums and bring joy to thousands of people.

5

## *Anniversary of Nehru's Visit*

I am grateful to the Moscow Radio for having asked me to say a few words. This day, last year, on the conclusion of Mr. Nehru's memorable visit to the Soviet Union, the Prime Ministers of India and the Soviet Union issued a joint statement. This is a suitable occasion for recalling that statement and for enquiring how far the hopes and aspirations, expressed in that statement, have been fulfilled during the year that has passed.

In the forefront of that statement the two Prime Ministers affirmed their resolve to adhere to certain principles of international conduct, which have come to be known as the Five Principles. These principles were affirmed equally emphatically in the joint statement which was signed soon after by Mr. Nehru and Marshal Tito. We were glad to see them included also in the recent Anglo-Soviet and Franco-Soviet declarations. Thus the validity as well as the universal applicability of these principles is receiving wide recognition.

To us the Five Principles are no empty formulae. They are living canons by which we hope to strengthen our friendly

relations with the Soviet Union and indeed with all countries, far and near. Co-existence, again, is, to us, no idle phrase. The co-existence of States with different social and economic structures is not, in our view, a misfortune to be endured, but a fact which enriches the diversity of human society. It is unfortunate that when some people talk of co-existence, especially with the Soviet Union and China, they mean little more than co-endurance. But the number of such misanthropes is getting smaller and smaller.

Last year the two Prime Ministers recognized certain signs of improvement in the general international situation. That improvement reached its climax at the Geneva Conference of Heads of States which soon followed. There international tension fell almost to vanishing point. The "Summit Conference" in Geneva was characterized by an unusual urbanity. The distinguished statesmen, who attended that conference, recognized once and for all that war, especially in an atomic age, was no solution to the world's troubles. That is why, if I may say so, they decided to play the gentleman towards one another.

The ancient Chinese recognized that the hall-mark of a gentleman is that he would refrain from causing his opponent to lose face. When one thinks of some of the conferences which were held in the post-war period, one cannot help feeling that the main object of the protagonists was to cause as much loss of face to their opponents as possible. From the Geneva Conference, on the contrary, all the participants emerged not only without losing face but gaining face in the eyes of their own people and the peoples of the world. The Geneva spirit, however, showed some signs of decline towards the end of the year. But it is a spirit which cannot die.

While Mr. Bulganin and Mr. Nehru recognized certain signs of improvement in the general international situation, they also deplored the continued failure to solve certain problems. They reiterated their conviction that the persistent refusal to admit the Chinese People's Republic to the United Nations lay at the root of many troubles in the Far East and elsewhere. This position unfortunately continues. It is, however, good to note that no less than 25 sovereign States have recognized the real Government of China. It is a matter for particular satisfaction that recently the Government of Egypt has decided to

establish diplomatic relations with the Chinese People's Republic.

The two Prime Ministers also deplored the lack of progress in implementing the agreements, reached at the Geneva conference of 1954 in respect of Indo-China. These impediments have not been wholly removed. Nevertheless, the appeal, recently made by the Soviet and British Foreign Ministers as Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, to the parties concerned and their response thereto are encouraging signs.

While the clouds on the Far Eastern horizon have continued to linger, though not menacingly, certain clouds have appeared, or reappeared, in the Middle East. However, the resolution which was passed unanimously in the United Nations Security Council on the 5th May, insisting on the implementation of the United Nations resolution on Palestine, is a good omen. It is also hoped that Mr. Nehru's formula for a possible settlement of the Algerian problem will open the way to a peaceful solution. That formula was not provoked by a desire to meddle with other people's affairs, but it is imbued with the sentiments which inspired India herself in her struggle for independence, namely, her love of freedom, sympathy with peoples struggling for it and her abhorrence of violence.

In their joint statement the two Prime Ministers emphasized the need for disarmament. They pointed out that the tendency to build up arms and armaments, conventional as well as atomic, had increased the prevalent fear and suspicion among nations and had the effect of diverting national resources from their legitimate purpose, namely, the uplift of the people. They also acknowledged that the proposals for disarmament, which the Soviet Government put forward in May 1955, were a substantial contribution to peace. The Soviet Government have now made an even more substantial contribution to peace by their decision to carry out a unilateral reduction of their armed forces and armaments. This step is bound to have an effect even on those circles which have cast aspersions on the sincerity of the Soviet move.

The two Prime Ministers felt that, under the aegis of the Five Principles, there was ample scope for the development of cultural, economic and technical cooperation between their two States. Among the measures taken to further this cooperation may be mentioned the proposed steel plant, which is to be put up at

Bhilai with the assistance of the Soviet Government; a greatly extended trade agreement; the decision to open a direct shipping line between Bombay and Odessa; technical assistance of various kinds; and exchange of delegations.

The friendship and understanding between India and the Soviet Union were greatly enhanced by the visit of Mr. Nehru to the Soviet Union and the Soviet leaders to India. The magnificent and spontaneous welcome which was extended to the leaders by the people on both sides cannot be explained better than in the title of the Soviet film, *Druzhba Veliki Norodov*, showing the visit of the Soviet leaders to India. For many centuries India and Russia had been separated from each other by political and geographical obstacles. The geographical obstacles have now been removed by the march of science; and the political obstacles have been removed by the march of history.

To be frank, it must be admitted that in the past certain ideological distortions stood in the way of our friendship. Those obstacles have now been removed by the courageous decisions, taken at the 20th Congress in regard to certain fundamental principles. Amongst those decisions is the recognition that there can be different varieties of socialism, that there can also be different roads to socialism, that violence is not essential for the transformation of society and that parliamentary institutions can be a means to the establishment of socialism. These decisions are welcome to India which has declared a socialistic pattern of society as her goal but is resolved to establish it in accordance with her own genius, traditions and environments.

All the circumstances, therefore, are now favourable to the normal development of Indo-Soviet friendship. But ours is not an exclusive friendship. It does not exclude friendship with other countries. We have not entered, nor have we any intention of entering into, a military or politico-military pact with the Soviet Union or with any other country. We do not believe that the best way of binding nations is by hoops of steel. Our friendship with the Soviet Union is an integral part of our resolve to establish a net-work of friendships with all countries, far and near. And we are happy that this basic attitude of ours has met with the full understanding, sympathy and appreciation of the Soviet Union.

6

## *A Bandung Banquet*

I have been asked to propose the toast to the guests. It is an honour to propose a toast to such a distinguished guest on behalf of so many hosts.

This is one of the functions at which the number of hosts is far greater than the number of guests. That is because we come from a section of the globe, which comprises more than half the population of the world and includes countries situated so far from each other as China and Indonesia in the East and Egypt and Ethiopia in the West.

The representation of our countries in Moscow has been increasing. Our number has been recently strengthened by the addition of the distinguished Ambassador of Cambodia. Soon we shall have with us the Ambassador of that lovely island, Ceylon. We are happy to have the special representative of the Ceylon Government, Sir Claude Corea, and Lady Corea with us this evening.

Our countries have passed through different experiences. All of them, however, have one thing in common. Almost all have

recently emerged into independence. All have emerged, or are emerging, from the era of Western dominance over Asia.

Nine years ago, when India became independent, Prime Minister Nehru uttered a memorable sentence. He said: "A new star has risen on the Eastern horizon, the star of freedom." At about the same time, another star rose on the Eastern horizon, the star of independent Indonesia. The birth of that star was more troubled than the star of India. That was because the Dutch were more stubborn than the British; and the struggle for independence in Indonesia was correspondingly more severe. We have today with us the brilliant leader of that struggle.

Dr. Soekarno is not merely a national figure. For us, assembled here, he has a particular significance. It was in his country and under his initiative that the Bandung Conference was held.

We also welcome our Soviet guests who are with us this evening. Their presence is indeed appropriate. The Soviet people rejoiced at the birth of an independent Indonesia. They also welcomed the Bandung Conference. They appreciated its importance, its significance and its potentialities. Here were 29 countries, with differing backgrounds and differing ideologies, which met together in Bandung, argued, discussed, differed from one another in some respects and yet came to certain unanimous conclusions and subscribed to certain fundamental principles. Those principles have become the cornerstone of the relations between many States, far and near. They have been wholeheartedly accepted by the Soviet Government. I am sure that in the implementation of those principles and, if the need arises, in the defence of those principles, we can count on the powerful support of the Soviet Government.

7

## *Indian Film Festival*

First of all I would like to thank the Soviet Government for their kindness in inviting this Film Delegation to Moscow. The members of this delegation form a distinguished group. Among them are producers, directors, actors, musicians and technicians and one or two who are at once producer, director and actor.

To people like me, moving in a different sphere, the film world is a strange world—at once near and remote, real and unreal, realistic and fantastic. To us there is some magic about the men who produce this world and the stars, who, in their glamour, rival the stars of heaven. There is a proverb that "distance lends enchantment to the view". In the case of our artists as well as yours, nearness lends even greater enchantment than distance. The more you see them, the closer you view them, the more delightful they are. That is because your artists and ours have a quality, more enduring than superficial glamour, namely, a warm-hearted humanity.

But it will not be appropriate for me to sing the praise of my countrymen. After all, that is a form of self-praise which one

must avoid. Nor is there any need for me to sing their praise in Moscow. For you know them already, if not personally, at least from the films which you have seen and in which they figure.

This is not the first Indian Film Delegation to visit the Soviet Union. There was one a couple of years ago; and two of its members are here with us today. Who does not know them—Raj Kapoor and Nargis? Last year, when the wife of my Private Secretary gave birth to a son in a hospital in Moscow, the nurses insisted, to the embarrassment of the mother, that the boy should be called "Raj Kapoor"! And I dare say that if it had been a girl, they would have insisted with equal vigour that she should be called "Nargis" or "Rita".

Let me recall the visit of the members of that delegation to a sanatorium in Sochi where I was then staying. It was an event in the life of the sanatorium. Normally, a sanatorium has something of the atmosphere of a monastery. The discipline is strict and rules are rigid. But when Raj Kapoor and Nargis and others invaded the sanatorium, the discipline was relaxed, the rules were thrown to the winds, the patients were neglected, and the director, doctors, nurses and patients all joined to make the evening a musical festival of Indo-Soviet friendship.

The Soviet people's appreciation of Indian pictures, however, is not purely emotional. They realize that while our films are meant to delight and amuse the audiences, they also serve a social purpose. India is passing through a period of transition. The world of India today is a world of contrasts—a world of the motor car and the bullock-cart, the tractor and the plough, the prince and the peasant, a world of increasing socialism and decreasing capitalism. India has deliberately adopted a socialistic pattern of society as her goal. Before long you will see the march of India towards this goal in a film, which is being produced jointly by India and the Soviet Union. The members of the Indian Film Delegation are worthily playing their part in the building of the new India. They are not merely artists, they are also architects of the India of tomorrow. I am very glad that the Soviet Government has given them an opportunity of seeing something of a new world, different from, but by no means opposed to, the new world which you yourself have built in your own land.

8

# *Kalidasa Day*

First of all, I would like to express my deep appreciation of the decision of the Soviet authorities to celebrate Kalidasa Day in memory of Kalidasa, a poet who lived in a distant land and in a distant epoch. This is an example of the remarkable range of the cultural and literary interests of the people of the Soviet Union. It also shows the universality of Kalidasa's appeal.

Everyone knows how great is the interest of the Soviet people in foreign classics. One has only to look around at the theatres in Moscow where, night after night, foreign plays are staged. I sometimes think that one sees more of Shakespeare on the stage in Moscow than in London. Among the Shakespearean plays which have been recently staged in Moscow are the great tragedies of Shakespeare—*Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*—and some of the comedies such as *Taming of the Shrew*, *As You Like It*, *Much Ado about Nothing* and *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

The versatility of Soviet producers is amazing; they have turned

a comedy like *Merry Wives of Windsor* into a ballet, with as much skill as a tragedy like *Romeo and Juliet*. How wonderful would it be if the greatest Indian drama, Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*, could also be turned into a ballet! How charming it would be to see Ulanova, Lepishenskaya or Plisetskaya dancing in an Indian saree! After all if Lepishenskaya can dance in a Chinese costume in the *Red Poppy*, and if Kuzetsova can act in an Indian costume in the *White Lotus*, there is no reason why a Russian ballerina should not do equal justice to Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*. It is a drama, which is particularly suitable for being turned into a ballet, though it was written nearly two thousand years ago. (The Soviet authorities took up the challenge and have turned *Shakuntala* into a beautiful ballet which is running to crowded audiences in Riga.)

When I think of the universality of Kalidasa's appeal, I recall the lines of Pushkin, in which he predicted his own immortality:

*I shall not wholly die ! My soul's enchanted music*
*My ashes will outlive, and know not pale decay:*
*And famous I shall be while yet a single poet*
*Beneath the moon his rhymes shall say.*
*My verses will be sung throughout all Russia's vastness.*
*And every race therein the echo will maintain;*
*Proud grandson of the Slav, and Finn, and yet unfettered*
*Tungoose, and Kalmuck on the plain.*

Pushkin's prophecy has come true. Thanks to the Revolution of 1917 and the drive for literacy which it initiated, Pushkin's poems are now read by the Slav and the Finn, the Tungoose and the Kalmuck. But what is strange is that the works of Kalidasa too are beginning to be read by the Slav and the Finn, the Tungoose and the Kalmuck. Many of Kalidasa's works have been translated into the numerous languages of your multi-lingual State.

The secret of Kalidasa's appeal lies in the skill with which he portrays the elemental emotions of man. In particular, he deals with the most elemental and yet most powerful of human emotions, love. But the love in Kalidasa's plays is very different from the love which is depicted in modern novels. Modern writers,

especially in the West, take pleasure in the theme of illicit love. The problem in which they revel is the eternal triangle, that is to say, the husband, the wife and the lover; and the lover often gets the better of the husband! This is a subject which did not interest Kalidasa at all. He deals with love in its pure aspect; it is the love of the White Swan rather than of the Black Swan in 'Swan Lake' which interests him.

For instance, let us take the play, *Shakuntala*. There, a proud monarch falls in love with a simple, unsophisticated village maiden; and she returns his love. They are united, but owing to a curse he forgets her. Eventually, as a result of a strange coincidence, his memory returns to him; and they are happily reconciled. All the nuances of love, its dawn, its tenderness, its intensity and its consummation, the sorrow of parting and the joy of reunion are sketched with the most skilful strokes in Kalidasa's play.

This poet of love was also a poet of nature. I shall only refer to one of Kalidasa's poems, *Meghdoot*, or *Cloud Messenger*. There, an exile in Central India sees a rain-cloud floating northwards; and his heart is full of memories of his beloved who is in a distant town in the northern Himalayas. He asks the cloud to take a message to her. The poem is full of the descriptions of the land over which the cloud will travel. One gets an aerial view of North India, of its great mountains and rivers, almost as beautiful a view as that which some of the members of our Embassy were privileged to get when they went in your jet plane TU-104, when it performed its first great experimental flight from Moscow to Delhi.

Nowadays one often hears the phrase, the conquest of nature. We are used to that phrase. Yet it is a strange phrase; as if man is the enemy of nature! All honour to the scientists who have conquered nature. Yet what has this conquest led us to? Last week it looked as if it was leading us to the Third World War and the destruction of civilization. The reason is that man has conquered nature, but not himself. During the last fortnight the world saw the eruption of some of the most evil instincts in man, hatred and revenge, greed and violence, which man has not been able to conquer. (The reference is to the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt and to the outbreak and defeat of the counter-revolutionary revolt in Hungary.)

Kalidasa's attitude towards nature is different. In his poems and plays, man is not in conflict with nature but is in perfect harmony with it. The world which Kalidasa depicts is a world of peace, of beauty, of serenity.

9

## *Indian Republic Day 1957*

I am grateful to the Moscow Radio for having asked me to say a few words on the occasion of our National Day. The last time when I had the privilege of speaking over the Moscow Radio was on the 23rd June, 1956, which was the anniversary of the signing of the joint statement, issued in Moscow by Prime Minister Nehru and Prime Minister Bulganin. Then I recalled the hopes for peace, which had been fervently expressed in the joint statement, and the extent to which they had been fulfilled.

During the twelve months which followed the issue of that joint statement, there was a distinct decrease of international tension. Among the factors which contributed to it were the memorable visit of the Soviet leaders to India; the courageous and realistic decisions of the 20th Congress; the Soviet proposals for disarmament; and the general reduction of arms and armaments carried out by them. Thus, when I spoke from here in June last, the prospects of enduring peace were fairly bright.

Unfortunately, it cannot be said that the succeeding six months have fulfilled the hopes of mankind. Indeed, in some respects

there has been a set-back. Who would have thought in June last that before the year was out Egypt would become the scene of aggression.

This, however, is not an occasion for reviewing the international situation. Rather, it is an occasion for reviewing the relations between India and the Soviet Union. That is a more pleasant task too. During the last year the relations between our two countries have developed in all directions. India has just embarked on her Second Five-Year Plan, just as the Soviet Union has embarked on her Sixth Five-Year Plan. Our Second Five-Year Plan is far more ambitious than the first, though it is by no means so gigantic as yours. It is a matter for great satisfaction that your country, which is the pioneer in the realm of planning, will cooperate with us in making our Second Five-Year Plan a success. The Bhilai Steel Plant, which is rising impressively in Central India, is a fine example of Indo-Soviet cooperation in the economic sphere.

Politically, there is considerable similarity in the views of our two Governments on vital problems such as disarmament, the need for banning nuclear weapons and nuclear tests, the futility of military pacts and the evils of racialism and colonialism. It is true that on one or two matters we have not been able to see eye to eye with each other. That is only natural between States, which have different traditions and different environments. Such differences have not affected our basic friendship.

Our cultural contacts have greatly expanded. It 1956 there was an ample exchange of delegations, official and unofficial, and mutual visits of scientists, scholars and artists. A most distinguished Soviet visitor who is in India at the present moment is Marshal Zhukov;[1] and I have no doubt that his inspiring personality will leave an indelible impression, especially on our Armed Forces.

Let me conclude this talk with an expression of the hope—indeed, the belief—that during the coming year the friendship between our two countries will be enriched and strengthened more than ever before.

[1]Defence Minister and thrice Hero of the Soviet Union.

## 10

## *Visit of King of Afghanistan*

We have assembled here this evening to pay our respects to His Majesty the King of Afghanistan.

The constitution of Afghanistan has invested the king with great responsibilities, civil, military and ecclesiastical. His Majesty has been on the throne for nearly a quarter of a century. To him must go a large share of the credit for the remarkable progress which Afghanistan has achieved during this period and for the prestige which she enjoys in international circles.

On such occasions, when we, Heads of Asian and African Missions, gather together, we are tempted to ask ourselves what it is that brings us together. For our states do not form a bloc, in any sense of the word. We are not a military bloc, nor are we even a political bloc. Our states are in different stages of development. We follow different systems and different ideologies. Some of us have not even recognized each other. Yet, something seems to draw us together.

What is it that draws us together? History and geography. Perhaps, history even more than geography. For more than three

hundred years, Europe dominated Asia. One Asian State after another lost its independence. Some lost their independence formally; others, indirectly and yet substantially. India lost her independence altogether. China did not lose her independence formally; she did not become a colony; but, as that great Chinese leader, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, said, China became a "hyper-colony, a colony of all nations".

That era is gone. We are determined that that era shall never come back. All our States are determined to preserve their independence against all the winds that blow, against all encroachments from all quarters and in all forms. It is only in this way that we can improve our peoples' standard of living and save our area from war—whether it be hot war or cold war, whether it be war, waged with clean bombs or with dirty bombs. These are the common aspirations which brought the Heads of our Governments together in Bandung.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, Afghanistan, too, passed through many vicissitudes. In the 19th century Afghanistan lay in the path of two expanding empires, the Tsarist and the British. The fact that nevertheless Afghanistan survived as a separate political entity shows the stamina of her people. However, her independence too suffered. She had to wage three wars in defence of her independence. It was as a result of the Third War that Afghanistan emerged as a sovereign State in 1921. All Asia rejoiced over her victory. We in India had special reason to rejoice over the birth of an independent State at the gateway of India. It was a good augury for our own freedom. We are happy to have with us the head of a State, with such sturdy traditions.

We are also happy to have the distinguished Soviet leaders with us on this occasion. Their presence is particularly appropriate, because the Soviet Union was the first State which established diplomatic relations with Afghanistan after she won her independence.

May I say again how great an honour and a pleasure it is for us to have so eminent a guest in our midst? I ask you to rise and drink to the health of His Majesty the King of Afghanistan.

*11*

# *Tenth Anniversary of Indian Independence*

"Today", said Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, this day ten years ago, "a new star has risen on the Asian horizon, the star of Independence." On the 15th August, 1947, India attained independence. It did not mean simply that another National Flag had begun to fly or that another State could join the United Nations. It meant more; it marked the end of an era. It marked the end of "the Vasco da Gama era", not merely for India, but for all Asia. It also marked the beginning of the end of that era for Africa. For Europe too, it opened out possibilities for establishing relations with the East on a more natural, more wholesome, more profitable and more enduring basis. Thus the 15th August, 1947, was a landmark not merely in the history of Asia but in world history.

Today we are celebrating the Tenth Anniversary of the advent of Indian freedom. We are also celebrating the 100th anniversary of a melancholy event in the history of India. In 1857, there took place in India a violent, widespread and somewhat chaotic rising against foreign rule. It lacked central direction and pur-

pose and was ruthlessly suppressed. But it had a lesson for the people of India. It was not by the methods of 1857 that India could obtain freedom.

Similarly, the abortive attempt, in which Lenin's brother took part and for which he was executed, to assassinate the Tsar Alexandar III, in 1889 had a lesson for Lenin. "This method will not do", said 19-year old Lenin, "we must seek another way." India sought still another way for her emancipation. That way—a more disciplined, more difficult, more enlightened and more effective way than that of 1857—was shown to India by Mahatma Gandhi.

It is interesting to observe that Lenin and Gandhi appeared on the political scene in their respective countries at about the same time. Future historians will reckon 1917 as an epoch-making year. In that year Lenin appeared in Russia, after spending many strenuous years in exile. In that year also, Mahatma Gandhi appeared in India, after spending many years in opposing entrenched racial arrogance in South Africa.

Not that there was no independence movement in India before 1917. To say so would be as incorrect as to say that there was no revolutionary movement in Russia before 1917. Prior to 1917, the Home Rule Movement in India was confined to a few intellectuals and politicians. Mahatma Gandhi converted it into a movement of the masses. He roused the masses from their lethargy. Once the seed of freedom had been planted in the minds and hearts of the masses, nothing could prevent it from growing into the mighty tree of independence.

What has India achieved during the first decade of her independence? Independence has released the energies of the Indian people and enabled them freely to tackle their manifold problems, social, economic, political and administrative. Hundreds of Princely States which, under British rule, had enjoyed different degrees of isolation and exercised different degrees of autocracy, have been merged into the Republic of India. Many evils, which had crept into our society under the garb of religion, have been eliminated, partly by legislation and partly by the force of public opinion. The land problem is being resolutely tackled; the old landed estates are being broken up; and peasants are being encouraged to adopt cooperative measures. India, like the Soviet Union, has realized the importance of planning. Our First Five-

Year Plan was an unqualified success. Our Second Five-Year Plan, conceived on a grander scale and demanding greater sacrifices from the people, has just been launched. Above all, our foreign policy has assumed shape; already, in different parts of the world—in Korea, in Indo-China, in the Middle East and generally in the United Nations—India has proved to be a factor for peace.

So much for the past and the present; what about the future? What will India look like forty years hence, say, in 1997? Doubtless she will be stronger. But strength is not a quality which we relish for its own sake. As Shakespeare put it, it is good to have a giant's strength, but tyrannous to use it like a giant. We do not need a giant's strength, because we have no giant enemies. All we wish to do is to develop sufficient strength, no more and no less, to safeguard our hard-won freedom from all encroachments, whatever form they may take and whichever quarter they may come from.

Our primary concern is the welfare of our people. Doubtless by 1997, our people will be healthier, happier, more literate and more prosperous. By that year, let us hope that the cold war will have abated and that international relations will have mellowed. In that mellowing process I have no doubt that the friendship between India and the Soviet Union—two States which, following different social and political systems, have yet one common goal, world peace—will be a potent factor. And so, may I conclude this talk by echoing the two words which have been ringing in every nook and corner of Moscow during the last carnival fortnight, namely, Peace and Friendship. (The reference is to the Youth Festival which was being held in Moscow.)

## 12

# *Soviet Parliamentary Delegation to India*

I would like to propose a toast to the delegation of the Supreme Soviet which is leaving for India in a day or two. Many delegations have come to the Soviet Union from India. Many delegations have also gone to India from the Soviet Union . This delegation is the most important of them all, because the Supreme Soviet is the supreme organ of the Soviet State.

In the 19th century, a well-known English writer, Walter Bagehot, said that Parliament was omnipotent. "Parliament could do anything. . .", he said, "except make a man a woman, or a woman a man." Those were days when men were he-men and women were womanly. Though Parliament could not make a man a woman or a woman a man, Parliament abolished the distinction between them in the eye of the law. No State has removed the inequalities between men and women so completely as the Soviet Union. Our Parliament, too, has been doing its best to remove all inequalities in the status of women. Recently our Parliament has revised the immemorial Hindu Code, so as to remove the immemorial disabilities to which Hindu

women had been subjected. When a foreign correspondent asked Nehru what he regarded as his greatest feat in the first decade of Indian independence, he replied: the revision of the Hindu Code.

In this connection, it is good to see that two or three women are included in your delegation. This is a representative delegation, which includes administrators, scientists, writers and others prominent in different walks of life. We are particularly glad that the Central Asian States, nearest to India, are well represented on this delegation. Above all, we are glad that the delegation is to be led by so distinguished a personage as Mr. Lubanov.[1]

When you are in India, our Parliament will be in session. You will doubtless note that in some respects our system is different. But systems do not matter. It is the spirit that counts. History shows that even the best of things can be turned to evil use. For instance, take the sputniks. The Soviet people have rightly designated tham "Stars of Peace". Btut some Americans are inclined to regard them as "beacons of war". What is important is that our objectives should be right.

So far as India is concerned, the main objectives of our Parliament are two-fold. Internally, we wish to establish a socialistic pattern of society. Doubtless this pattern will be different from the socialism in Russia or China or of Western countries; it will be in harmony with our own traditions and our own outlook. In external affairs, our great objective is peace. In the attainment of those objectives we have had the sympathy and cooperation of the Soviet Government. I feel sure that this friendship and this cooperation will be further strengthened by the visit of the Soviet Parliamentary Delegation to India I propose a toast to the health of the members of the Soviet Parliamentary Delegation and their success.

[1]Chairman of the House of Nationalities.

## 13

# *Indian Paintings by Soviet Painters*

It is hardly necessary for me to say much after the very impressive speech which Mr. Kaftanov[1] has made. I shall merely say how glad I am that this Exhibition has been arranged by the Soviet authorities. We in India were happy to welcome the distinguished artists who painted these pictures. They are the inheritors of a great tradition. On them has fallen the mantle of Vereshchagin, that brilliant painter and intrepid traveller, who undertook many an arduous journey to distant lands. It was not so easy to travel to India in those days, for the jet plane had not been invented.

In Vereshchagin's time India and Russia hardly knew each other. Through his charming paintings Vereshchagin may be said to have almost introduced India to Russia. Today there is no need to introduce India to Russia. Our acquaintance with each other has grown greatly during the last ten years. The artists, whose paintings you will see presently, have added to our know-

[1]First Deputy Minister of Culture, U.S.S.R.

ledge of each other. One of them, indeed, has even added to my knowledge of my wife by painting her portrait!

An artist not only sees things but sees through things. He paints things not only as they seem but as they are, not only as they appear on the surface but as they appear in his mind's eye. In the paintings which are exhibited here today, we see India through the sensitive minds of Russian, Armenian, Azerbaijani and other artists. These paintings constitute a fine pictorial record of contemporary India. Let us now proceed to see them. Before doing so, let me once more express my appreciation of the Soviet Government's kindness in arranging this exhibition on the eve of our Republic Day.

## 14

# *Indian Republic Day 1958*

I am very glad to renew my periodical acquaintance with my friends over the Moscow Radio. Last year, too, I had the privilege of speaking to you on our National Day. We meet under the benign auspices of the "sputniks", which have been happily designated "Stars of Peace".

In India, as in Europe, people have a habit of sending New Year greetings to their friends. This year, I designed a somewhat unusual New Year card. I sent our good wishes to our friends for Anno Domini 1958, Anno Vikram 2014 and Anno Sputnik One. Anno Domini you all know. It is what is called the Christian Era; we, in India, too, have been following it for all practical purposes. At the same time, we have an era of our own, dating from the time when a great and good king, Vikramaditya, ruled over India more than 2,000 years ago. And now I have taken the liberty of coining a new era, "Anno Sputnik".

The sputnik does indeed mark a turning point in human history. Man is no longer chained to the earth; he is no longer a prisoner of gravity; he is launching out into cosmic space.

Scientists throughout the world recognized the revolutionary significance of the invention of the sputnik. Laymen, too, were thrilled by the sight of an object, weighing half a ton and containing various instruments for studying solar radiation, cosmic rays, etc. and—that perhaps interested them even more—a dog in a hermetically sealed container, revolving at a speed of 18,000 miles per hour at a height of about a thousand miles above the earth. And now Soviet scientists are making plans for reaching the moon and establishing a Physical Station there to be called "Mirnava".

But while we may have our eyes on the heavens, we cannot tear ourselves away from the problems of the earth. Those problems are pressing. The lustre of millions of stars cannot blind us to the plight of millions of human beings on earth. We in India have to think constantly of the needs of some 400 million men, women and children who inhabit our land. The majority of them are ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed and ill-educated. Doubtless their condition has improved greatly during the last ten years, but they have a long way to go before they reach decent human standards. Their welfare is the primary concern of our Government. It is for their sake that our First Five-Year Plan was conceived and successfully executed. It is for their sake that our Second Five-Year Plan has been inaugurated. This plan is far more ambitious than the first and its execution is beset with difficulties. But we are determined that no difficulties, however great, shall stand in the way of the fulfilment of the core of the Plan.

In carrying out our Five-Year Plans we have had the assistance of many countries, far and near. Soviet assistance has been considerable. All of you must have heard of the Bhilai Project. This great metallurgical plant is rising majestically in Central India, and is expected to produce a million tons of steel a year by, or before, 1960. I would like to take this opportunity to pay my tribute to the Soviet engineers, planners, scientists and technicians who, defying the severity of our climate and other hardships, have been working splendidly to make it a success.

The Bhilai Plant and similar projects which are being set up with the assistance of other Governments are but the first milestones on the road to the raising of our people's standards of living. It is going to be a long and arduous journey. The prospects at the end of the journey are, however, wholly exhilarating. But

there is one cloud on the horizon, the cloud of a nuclear war, a war which will be more destructive than any which has afflicted mankind, a war in which the whole edifice of civilization, which man has taken centuries to erect, may crash to the ground. The prevention of such a war is the first concern of all civilized men and nations. You may have heard that 9,000 scientists, hailing from 44 different countries, have presented a petition to the Secretary-General of the United Nations calling for an international agreement to suspend nuclear tests. This striking appeal shows which way the tide of enlightened public opinion is flowing. It is good to think that the Soviet as well as the Indian Governments are rowing with this tide and not against it. Let us hope and pray that this tide may gather strength and lead mankind to a state of peace

*Where the war-drum throbs no longer*
*And the battle flags are furled*
*In the Parliament of man,*
*The Federation of the world.*

## 15

## *Gandhi Memorial Day 1958*

This day 10 years ago, I was presiding at a meeting of the UN Commission on Korea. It was then that I heard the most excruciating news which I was destined to hear in my life-time, the death of Mahatma Gandhi. All my colleagues on the Commission, too, were visibly moved by this news. They came from lands, as far away from each other as China and Syria, Canada and Australia. The Syrian delegate moved a touching resolution of condolence on the death of Mahatma Gandhi and was supported by the delegate of China and others. In fact, the meeting of our Commission transformed itself into a memorial meeting for Mahatma Gandhi.

Even in distant Korea people were greatly affected by the report of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. I remember how a woman, a poet of Korea, came into my room and burst into tears. I was at that time Ambassador of India to China and received a number of messages of condolence from far and near. The wording of one of those messages has stuck to my memory. It said that the life of Mahatma Gandhi showed that the power

of the human spirit was greater than the power of the sword.

It was through the strength of the human spirit that India won independence. It was through Mahatma Gandhi's gospel of non-violence that an unarmed India wrested independence from the hands of a mighty empire.

This has a lesson for us today when violence in international affairs has reached a peak hitherto unknown. Mahatma Gandhi lived long enough to see the atom bomb, dropped on Hiroshima. Since then, the destructive power of these diabolical weapons has increased a thousand-fold. Unless man cries a halt to this race to destruction, civilization is doomed. Mahatma Gandhi's message of non-violence, therefore, has a special meaning for us today.

I am happy that, for the first time, the Moscow Radio has organized this programme in memory of Mahatma Gandhi. This has a triple significance. In the first place, it shows the desire of India and the Soviet Union to understand each other better. Soviet scholars have been studying the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi. Secondly, it is only natural that Russia should take an interest in Mahatma Gandhi, for after all a great Russian, Leo Tolstoy, had a profound influence on Mahatma Gandhi. Above all, the Soviet Union realizes that the dangers, confronting mankind today, can be averted only through the application of non-violent methods to the solution of international questions. Let us, therefore, pray on this occasion, the 10th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's death, that his spirit—a spirit which, while opposing tyranny and injustice to the bitter end, was at the same time kindly and compassionate—may prevail and bring what mankind has been hankering after from time immemorial, peace on earth, and goodwill among men.

## 16

## *Dinner to Soviet Artists*

My wife and I are very glad to welcome the distinguished artists of the Soviet Union.

There have been many different kinds of contacts between India and the Soviet Union during the last five years. None of them has been more delightful than the contacts in the world of art. In fact one of the very first delegations from India which came to the Soviet Union was a delegation of artists.

Now let me let out a secret. When that proposal was under consideration I felt a little nervous. At that time I had not been in Moscow for long; I had been here only for a few months. I used to hear from my colleagues in the Diplomatic Corps that the only kind of art which appealed to the Soviet people was the realistic kind. I was told that every other style was looked down upon as corrupt or decadent.

Our own artists belong to different schools. Some follow the Ajanta style; some the Moghul style; some the Rajput style some the Kangra style and so on. Some, indeed, follow no pattern at all but have evolved a line of their own. Some are a law unto

themselves. And I wondered how the Soviet people would like our paintings.

When our artists and paintings actually came, my fears and misgivings were set at rest, for they had a wonderful reception here. I shall not forget the sight of men and women, old and young, waiting for hours in the streets on a rainy or foggy day, in a long queue, and going in with notebooks and pencils and jotting down the particulars about the pictures. I was specially interested to see some of the remarks which they entered in the book which was kept for this purpose. One observed: "This is like a breath of fresh air into a hot house." Then, indeed, I realized that the Soviet people were capable of appreciating art, no matter from where it came or to which school it belonged.

Russia has a great artistic tradition. It comes down from the Middle Ages, when those superb icons and frescoes were made. My wife and I were never tired of looking at them in places like Vladimir and Veliki Novgorod. This tradition has been continued—may be in a different form—by great artists like Repin and Vereshchagin. The artists whom we have the honour to have with us this evening are inheritors of a great tradition and, at the same time, are enriching that tradition in various ways. It is with the greatest pleasure that I propose a toast to their health.

## 17

## *With the Indian Community*

First of all let me say how very happy I am to be with my own people and some of our good Russian friends this evening. I am particularly grateful to Mr. Sahni for the very kind words he has said about me.

I must say the honour of Padma Bhushan came to me as a complete surprise. In fact, the telegram from India, intimating the award, was received by a member of the staff who opened it first and brought it to me, saying "Mubarak". I did not know what the "Mubarak" was for. I thought another grandchild had arrived! During the last few years, it was mainly on the occasions of the arrival of our grandchildren in regular succession that my wife and I received congratulations from our friends.

I am very glad you have invited all the members of this Embassy to this function, for they have every right to share this honour. I was greatly touched to see how pleased they were about it. In fact, two of them even sacrificed the premier of *Hamlet*, for which they had bought tickets. Another member of the Embassy and his wife deserted their new-born—and first-

born—child to spend the evening with us.

One member of the Embassy, whom I have known longer than anyone else, was also very happy, but he was disappointed when he actually saw the Honours list. He exclaimed: "All sorts of people seem to have got honours this year!" It reminds me of an experience which I had in England. A friend of mine asked me to spend a week with him in his house in Lancashire. I went to his daughter and told her that her father had invited me to their house. "Ah", she said, "father asks all sorts of people to come and stay with him."

What provoked Pillai's remark was that the honour of Padma Bhushan was also conferred on a musician, a scientist, an economist and an ornithologist. This is as it should be. In the British days, these honours used to go mostly to Government servants, and particularly to the members of the I.C.S. In fact, it was the I.C.S. men who recommended these honours; and naturally they kept the lion's share to themselves! They were the givers as well as the takers of honours.

That was not a healthy state of affairs. Administration, doubtless, is important, but a nation should have an all-round development. There is something wrong with a country in which the administration or the bureaucracy has too much power and too much prestige. It is important that science and art should be freely encouraged. In this respect we have to learn much from the Soviet Union where artists and scientists are held in the highest respect. But for the facilities given to scientists and the prestige attached to them, the Soviet Union would not have been the first to invent the "sputnik". And so I was happy to find myself in the company of "all sorts of people"—a scientist, a musician an economist and an ornithologist.

In reality this is not so much a personal honour to me as an expression of the satisfaction of the Government of India at the growth of the friendship between our two countries. Two great countries, two great civilizations, two great peoples, who are neighbours and yet, owing to extraneous circumstances, have been strangers to each other for centuries, are now coming together. It is a great historical process. You and we are spectators of this great process. Not only spectators but, in our own way, participants.

The part which some of you have been playing to develop

the friendship between the two countries is even more commendable than that of the members of the Embassy. Without any diplomatic privileges, without diplomatic immunity, braving the climatic and other hardships of Moscow, you have been playing your own part in developing the friendship between our two countries. Those among you who have been translating books from Russian to Hindi or Hindi to Russian, those Indian women who have been introducing their Russian friends to the sweetness of Indian music, those Indian children who are getting the younger generations of both countries better acquainted—all of them can have the satisfaction that they are assisting in the friendship of India and the Soviet Union. We regard it as a part, and as an example, of the friendship which, we hope and pray, will come to exist between all the peoples of the world. So let me propose this toast to the friendship of all nations and, particularly, to the friendship of India and the Soviet Union.

## 18

## *Commencement of Moscow-Delhi Air Service*

On this occasion I am reminded of an interesting conversation between our Prime Minister and your Prime Minister three years ago. They were talking about the past and future development of Indo-Soviet relations. Your Prime Minister said: "I shall see that in two or three years you, Mr. Nehru, are able to fly to the Soviet Union after an early morning breakfast, have talks with us in Moscow and return to Delhi for supper." Today we are celebrating the practical accomplishment of that prophecy. We are very glad to have here the eminent men who have played an important part in turning that dream into a reality.

Until now Indians used to go to Russia through Europe; and Russians used to come to India through Europe. Soon we shall be able to go direct to India from the USSR and vice versa. This will bring India and the Soviet Union closer to each other not only geographically but in every other way. Moreover, this has a symbolic significance. Until now we used to see Russia through Western eyes. That is because we had few contacts. Indeed, in the British days, we were discouraged to have any

contacts at all. In future, we shall be able to look directly into each other's eyes, into each other's hearts.

Here we have the top men of Aeroflot—men of ability, of imagination, of vision and what is most important, of goodwill. That goodwill was shown most clearly during the talks between our delegation and Aeroflot. I understand that the talks went off most smoothly and harmoniously. I am only disappointed that the talks finished so quickly; for otherwise we would have been having our charming guests with us for some time longer.

All honour to the men who have brought India and the Soviet Union within a stone's throw of each other, who have practically abolished the Himalayas as a barrier between us, and who are performing an important part in developing Indo-Soviet friendship.

So far I have been speaking as the Representative of India. I would also like to say a few words as a simple traveller. I think I can claim to have travelled on Aeroflot more than any of my diplomatic colleagues. When Prime Minister Nehru came here, I travelled throughout the length and breadth of the Soviet Union in one of your planes; I think we covered 13,000 kilometres. When Mr. Bulganin and Mr. Khrushchev went to India, I too, travelled over the length and breadth of India in a Soviet plane. Many times I have been in your jet plane to Prague and back, and many times to Tashkent. Unfortunately, I was not able to travel on your plane from Moscow to Delhi. I could have done that too, because you invited us to travel to India during the pioneer flight of the jet plane, but I gave away my seat to a charming girl[1] who contracted a romantic marriage and wanted to go and see her father and make peace with him.

I have nothing but the most pleasant recollections of my travels on Soviet planes. There was never any trouble, mechanical or any other. Only once, when I was travelling with our great philosopher, Dr. Radhakrishnan, we got into an air-pocket and were thrown up to the ceiling of the plane. For this Aeroflot was not responsible. After all, even Aeroflot cannot prevent the existence of air pockets and philosophers.

[1]Ameena Ahuja, wife of the then First Secretary in the Indian Embassy, Moscow, and now Ambassador to Rumania.

From the top to the bottom, the personnel of Aeroflot has always been most friendly and courteous. I propose this toast to the Head and to the personnel of Aeroflot, the engineers, the mechanics, the pilots, the navigators, the stewards and the ground personnel who are making Aeroflot a model airline.

## 19

## *Visit of King of Nepal*

On behalf of all the Heads of Asian and African Missions present here, I am happy and honoured to propose this toast to His Majesty the King of Nepal. Most people have heard of a picturesque state called Nepal in the heart of the Himalayas, but few people knew much about it. The visit of His Majesty to the Soviet Union and to other countries in Europe will put Nepal on the map, on the mental horizon of Europe.

When the Head of another mountain-state, the King of Afghanistan, visited Moscow I quoted a few lines from the poet, Wordsworth, to illustrate the spirit of the Afghan people:

*Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,*
*One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice :*
*In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,*
*They were thy chosen music, Liberty !*

These lines are equally applicable to Nepal. Throughout her history Nepal has also been devoted to freedom. When, however,

India, and almost all Asia, was under foreign domination, Nepal's independence too suffered. One of the first things which India did on attaining independence was to conclude a fresh treaty with Nepal on a basis of absolute equality. If I may make a personal reference, I, as Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, took part in the negotiations leading up to that treaty; and one of my valued possessions is this pen, bearing the inscription "Indo-Nepal Treaty", which was presented to me by the Nepal Government on that occasion.

Ordinarily, people are apt to regard kings as autocrats. But in Nepal there was an extraordinary development. In 1950, the king put himself at the head of the popular movement. Democracy, however, has its travails. His Majesty King Mahendra has been guiding democracy in Nepal through safe and constructive channels.

By a happy coincidence, today happens to be the third anniversary of the signing of the joint statement in Moscow by Prime Minister Nehru and the Prime Minister of the Soviet Union. That historic document affirmed clearly the Five Principles of peaceful co-existence which were proclaimed at Bandung. The presence of the King of Nepal in Moscow as an honoured guest of the Soviet Government is another off-shoot of the policy of peaceful co-existence to which the Soviet Union and all our Governments adhere, whether we belong to this group or that or to no group at all.

With these words, I have much pleasure in proposing this toast to the health of His Majesty the King of Nepal and his gracious Queen and the happiness and prosperity of the people of Nepal.

## 20

## *Fishermen's Dinner*

We, diplomats, have met on different occasions for different purposes. Sometimes we have met to bid good-bye to an outgoing colleague; sometimes to welcome an incoming colleague. But today we have met for an unusual purpose. We have met in order to celebrate fishing!

Whether we actually caught fish or not is a different matter. On two previous occasions we returned to our homes loaded with fish; and our families were impressed with our fishing prowess until we told them—for even diplomats have to speak the truth sometimes—that the fish had been caught not by us but by our Russian friends. This, however, did not prevent our families from enjoying the fish which we brought.

I am sure all of us cherish pleasant memories of our fishing expeditions—memories of the beauty of the Russian countryside, the frozen river on which we walked as on glass and the art of subterranean fishing. More than anything else, we shall always remember the kindness and hospitality of our Russian friends.

These fishing trips were not only interesting but instructive.

21

## *The Republic of India*

I am grateful to your distinguished Rector for the honour he has done me by asking me to address you. I have often had the pleasure of visiting the University in the company of such personages as Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Radhakrishnan, our Vice-President and others. I have also often stood outside your University and admired its beauty and envied you who have the good fortune to study here. Then years roll back, and I am reminded of the time which I myself spent at another beautiful University, the University of Oxford. But, from what the Indian students here tell me, you in this University seem to study much harder than we did at Oxford. You may have heard of the humourous writer, Stephen Leacock. He once said: "All that a degree at Oxford means is that you have lived three years at Oxford and managed to keep out of jail." But that is not altogether correct. Oxford has always had a number of smart, fashionable, aristocratic students, caring more for sports than studies, more for social distractions than intellectual achievement. At the same time, it has had generations of young men, who,

like you, work hard and discipline themselves for the battle of life.

The subject which your Rector has suggested for my talk is "The Republic of India". That is indeed a vast subject. But it would have been an even vaster subject if he had prescribed "India", instead of "The Republic of India". If I were to speak on India, I would have to go back 5,000 years. But on "The Republic of India" I shall only have to go back 12 years. This shows that my country, as compared with yours, is at once very old and very young.

It was on the 15th August, 1947, that India attained independence. Then the omens were not altogether favourable. The continent of India had just been partitioned. Two States had arisen where there used to be one. Nature meant India to be one. With the Mighty Himalayas on the north and the sea on the other three sides, India had a distinct geographical unity. She had also evolved a certain cultural and spiritual unity, in spite of the fact that there were many races and religions in India. The majority of the people in India are Hindus. But in India you have also the earliest Christians in the world. St. Thomas, the Apostle of Christ, came to India in the first century B.C. with the gospel of Christianity. The descendants of the people whom he converted still inhabit Kerala; and his own remains are buried in St. Thomas Mount near Madras. Some of the earliest Muslims in the world are also to be found in India. They are the descendants of the Arab traders in the 7th and 8th centuries; then there used to be a flourishing trade between India and West Asia. Some of the oldest settlements of Jews are also to be found in India, near Cochin. Again, we have a community called the Parsis, who are descended from the men who fled from Persia as a result of religious persecution there. In spite of the presence of these different groups, India has evolved a cultural synthesis, which can be seen in our life, art and architecture. Even that magnificent building, the Taj Mahal, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, though built in the so-called Islamic period of Indian history, belongs more to India than to Islam.

Yet, today we find India divided. To a large extent, we have only ourselves to blame. We do not believe in throwing the blame on others when we are ourselves responsible for our mis-

fortune. Yet, the partition of India is the ultimate result of British rule, of that policy of "divide and rule", which the British rulers, like the ancient Romans, followed.

We acquiesced in the partition of India, because we felt that that was the price we had to pay for our independence. We feared that if we did not agree to it, the British would continue to remain in India for many years more. Yet, our hopes of having a friendly neighbour in Pakistan have not been fulfilled. Soon after partition, in the first frenzy of independence, Hindus, forgetting the principle of non-violence which Mahatma Gandhi had dinned into their heads for many decades, and Muslims, forgetting that 50 million of their co-religionists still remained in India after partition, fell on one another. Fortunately, this period did not last long, thanks to the sanity and courageous leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru. Credit is also due to the men of the Indian Administrative Service. One good thing which the British had done was to train an efficient Civil and Administrative Service. In the colonial territories of France and Holland, the French and the Dutch had not even bothered to train the "natives" in administration. But the British behaved better. When independence came, the superior Administrative Services of India consisted of an equal number of Indians and Englishmen. Englishmen left India as soon as India became independent; and it was left to a handful of trained Indians to uphold law and order and to prevent the chaos following the partition from spreading throughout the country.

An even greater danger to India than the bigotry of Pakistan was the existence of numerous Princely States. There were no less than 562 Princely States, ruled by Maharajas or by Rajahs. They claimed themselves to be independent of the Government of India. The British had fostered the fiction that they had direct relationship with the King Emperor. Some of the States were big, and others were small. Some were as large as, or larger than, some of the States in Europe. For instance, Hyderabad had a population of 17 million; and the ruler of Hyderabad is regarded as one of the richest men in the world. On the other hand, there were some Maharajas who owned simply a few coconut trees; and even they had the exalted title of "His Highness". Some of these rulers were good, others were bad, and all were autocratic. There was nothing even remotely resembling

democracy in their States. They took as much money from the people as they fancied and spent as little as they could on improving the lot of the people. When the British left, some of them formally declared themselves independent. For instance, the State of Travancore, which now forms part of Kerala, declared herself as an independent State and even sent an Ambassador to Pakistan. The State of Hyderabad also raised the standard of revolt against the Government of India. It wa san extremely dangerous situation. But at that time we had a strong man, a man of iron, as our Home Minister. He was Sardar Patel. With a mixture of pressure and persuasion, cajoling and coaxing, he brought all the Indian Princes under the sway of the Government of India. These States have now been completely incorporated into India's political system; and India enjoys greater internal unity than it ever did under British rule.

All the 562 Princes used to be the Heads of their States; indeed they thought that the people belonged to them. Now, of these 562, only two are recognized as the Heads of the State. They are not Heads of State in the old sense, they are constitutional heads or Governors, acting under the authority of the Government of India. These are the Maharaja of Mysore and the Yuvaraja of Jammu and Kashmir. Both of them are young men in their "thirties", scholarly, accomplished and democratic. As you know, the Yuvaraja and Yuvarani of Kashmir had been in the Soviet Union recently and travelled all over your country and received much kindness and hospitality. They have gone back, the richer in experience as a result of their visits to various parts of the Soviet Union.

Kashmir, however, is still a problem. And an unnecessary problem. What happened was this. When the British relinquished their hold on India they left the Indian Princes in the air. It was left to the Government of India to negotiate with each Indian Prince. Before the Government of India had time to negotiate with the State of Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan decided to try and compel Kashmir to accede to it by force; in other words, Pakistan decided to annex it. Pakistan sent some of the wild tribesmen of the Frontier to Kashmir and followed them with her own troops. At that time the Maharaja, who had been sitting on the fence, came to his senses and acceded to India. Even more important was the accession of Shaikh Abdulla,

the popular leader of the party which had fought against the autocracy of the Maharaja for a whole generation. Thus the Prince as well as the people of Kashmir decided to join India. Nevertheless, India declared that their accession would be provisional and that the matter would be finally settled by the will of the people and reported it to the United Nations. Much to India's surprise, Kashmir got caught up in power politics. And the question of Kashmir still continues to be on the agenda of the U.N. The Soviet Union, however, has strongly supported India's stand on Kashmir.

Pakistan's contention in respect of Kashmir is quite simple. They say that the majority of the people of Kashmir are Muslims and therefore Kashmir should go to Pakistan. This is a contention which we can never accept. We feel that it is a medieval, a primitive idea to base a State on religion. Moreover, if India is to be divided on the basis of religion, what about the millions of Muslims who are still living in India as Indian citizens? Sometime, it is forgotten that India has 50 million Muslim citizens; she is the third largest Muslim country in the world. In every respect, Muslims enjoy equal rights with Hindus and other communities in the Republic of India. They hold some of the highest positions in the land. For more than a decade, until he died recently, the Minister of Education in India was a Muslim. Our Ambassador in the United States is a distinguished Muslim; so, until recently was our Ambassador in Egypt. The Governor of the important State of Assam, bordering on China and Burma, is a Muslim. Our Prime Minister has been saying again and again that religion should have nothing to do with the State. Religion, or the relation of man to God, is one's private affair; it should not intrude into the conduct of the Government. Jawaharlal Nehru has stood firmly by his conception of a "secular State".

I have been talking to you of the difficulties which the Republic of India encountered in the early stages of its existence. Misfortunes never come single; and at this time a tragedy descended on India. Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated. He had devoted the last few years of his life in trying to bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims; and he fell a victim to a bigot. Mahatma Gandhi was in every sense the Father of our Nation. For 30 years he was the leader in our struggle for inde-

pendence. He obtained independence for India by means of a unique weapon, "Satyagraha" or soul force, based on non-violence. He was greatly influenced by the philosophy of Leo Tolstoy; and the correspondence between them forms a fascinating chapter in the life of both. For about 20 years, Mahatma Gandhi led a struggle against the brutal racialism of the Government of South Africa. There he experimented with the technique of non-violence and carried on a bitter struggle against oppression. In 1917, the year in which Lenin appeared in Russia, Mahatma Gandhi appeared in India and plunged himself into the struggle for Indian independence. He insisted that the struggle should be conducted on non-violent lines. Non-violence, however, did not mean "passive resistance". The resistance to British rule was by no means passive, it was active in every sense of the word. It meant opposition to British rule with the whole force of one's mind, will and soul. Men and women were taught to have the courage to face police charges and even soldiers' bayonets without flinching. Thousands were thrown into jail. Women, too, emerged out of their seclusion under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership and freely joined the struggle and went to jail. Indeed, jail-going at one time became a necessary qualification for a girl to get married! If a girl's name was suggested to a man as a possible bride, he would ask: Is she beautiful? Is she musical? And last, but not least, has she been to jail? If she had not been to jail, even the fact that she was beautiful and musical would not count much in the bridegroom's eyes!

To Mahatma Gandhi, non-violence was a moral necessity. But he also adopted non-violence on the ground of expediency. In the state of affairs in India, violence would have been of no avail. Violence on the part of the people would have been opposed by the still greater and more organized violence on the part of the rulers. Indeed, a century ago, in 1857, we tried to eject the British from India through violence. But we did not succeed. The rising of 1857 was savagely suppressed by the British. But where violence failed in 1857 the non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi succeeded in 1947, and India became independent. It must be said that the British had the good sense to see the writing on the wall. They behaved differently from the French and the Dutch who hung on to their territories to the bitter end. The Dutch carried on a war against the people of Indo-

nesia under the name of "police action"; and the French were ejected by the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, which marked the end of a long-drawn-out struggle.

It is a matter for satisfaction to us that the role of Mahatma Gandhi in India's struggle for freedom is now being appreciated in the Soviet Union. I must confess that there was a time when this was not appreciated or understood; I might even say that there was a time when Mahatma Gandhi was positively misunderstood in the Soviet Union. It used to give us much pain to see the uncomplimentary remarks about him in the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia and other publications. But now, thanks to the researches of your scholars and the insight of your leaders, you have a much more correct understanding of Mahatma Gandhi, his personality and his philosophy. I am not suggesting that you should or could adopt Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy in its entirety. But the role which Mahatma Gandhi played in winning freedom for India and in stressing certain moral values in politics is something which mankind can never afford to forget.

So far, I have been dwelling on the difficulties which we had to face in the first years of our independence. During those years we had to devote a great deal of our time and energy in tackling the consequences of the unnatural partition of India. At the same time, we kept in mind the supreme goal of Indian independence. We realized that political independence would be of no use without economic independence. Our great goal was, and continues to be, to raise our people's standard of living. When India became independent, the plight of our people was pitiable. The vast majority of the people of India were poor, illiterate and unhealthy. The per capita income in India was the lowest in the world—Rs. 246—per year or less than Rbl. 25 a month. This poverty was all the more unbearable because of the great disparities in wealth. There was a glaring contrast between the Maharajas, with their marble mansions, their fabulous jewels and their gorgeous concubines, on the one hand, and the peasants in their mud-hovels, struggling to keep body and mind together. When the British left, out of every 100 persons, 83 could not read or write. Terrible diseases like small-pox, cholera and plague ravaged the land every year and took a heavy toll. It was estimated that malaria alone carried off two million people

a year. Medical attention was poor; there was only one doctor in rural areas for 25,000 people. The result was that the death rate in India was amongst the highest in the world, 19.5 per cent. Particularly harrowing was the mortality among infants. Out of every thousand children born into this world, 146 died before they were one year old. And the average expectation of life of an Indian was only 26 years.

Such was the legacy which imperialism had left to us. It was indeed a terrible situation; and our task could only be described as Herculean. But we took comfort from the example of your own country. The Soviet Union was a better example to us than the countries in the West, because conditions in India and in Russia, and especially in Central Asia, was somewhat similar. The industrial revolution reached Russia much later than the West of Europe. Moreover, the countries in Western Europe had their colonies; they had the whole world to draw their wealth from. Yet, in the space of 40 years, the Soviet Union, has, by its own efforts, made tremendous headway. When the Revolution took place, your own percentage of literacy was low. Now, you have practically abolished illiteracy. Before the Revolution, dread diseases like malaria and small-pox used to take a heavy toll of life in the Soviet Union. Now you have eliminated them altogether. And your expectation of life has been almost doubled since the Revolution.

How did the Soviet Union achieve these results? Essentially by planning. The Soviet Union was the pioneer of planning in the world; and we decided to take a leaf from her book. Our First Five-Year Plan was launched in the Year 1951. In that Plan we concentrated our attention on the agricultural field. Our first task was to give sufficient food to our people. At that time, India did not produce enough for her people to eat. The memory of the famine of 1943 was still fresh in people's minds. In that year, in a single Province, the Province of Bengal, no less than three million people died for want of food. A Commission, which was appointed by the British Government themselves, reported that the famine was the result of bureaucratic bungling and even dishonesty on the part of officials and non-officials who hoarded foodgrains when people were dying; they called it "a man-made famine". We are determined that such calamities shall never recur. We have launched some large irrigation schemes such as

the Bhakra Nangal Project which is now being completed; and the Bhakra Nangal dam will be the highest in the world. During the First Five-Year Plan, our agricultural production increased by 19 per cent; and food crops alone increased by 24 per cent.

We are now in the period of the Second Five-Year Plan, 1956-61. In this Plan we have given as much attention to industry as to agriculture. We realized that we could not make progress, even in the sphere of agriculture, without having a strong industrial base. We, therefore, set about developing our heavy industry. To us, this means a great strain, as it did mean to you, for a whole generation. Yet, without developing heavy industry we could not make any progress at all. Our effort in the Second Five-Year Plan has, therefore, been to lay the foundation of industry, particularly heavy industry. Let me take one example. When the British left India our production of steel came to barely one million tons a year. The goal of our Second Five-Year Plan was to increase the production of steel from one million to six million tons. In this we have had the cooperation of three great countries. Three steel projects, each producing a million ton of steel ingots a year, were projected with the assistance of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and West Germany; and a steel mill which has belonged to a private Indian company since the days of the British is being expanded with American assistance.

The USSR was the first to come forward to help us. A few weeks ago, I visited the great steel project in Bhilai. It was heartening to see this splendid plant rising in the heart of ancient India. It was equally heartening to see the spirit in which your engineers and mechanics were working at Bhilai. Defying the sun and the heat, and the dust-storms, defying the monsoon, even observing the law of prohibition, your people have been working in a spirit of fraternal cooperation with their Indian brethren. In doing so, they are erecting not only a great metallurgical plant but a fine edifice of goodwill between the two countries.

Our general industrial production increased by 66 per cent during the last decade. But we are only at the beginning of our industrial development. Again, to take steel, as an example, the proposed output of six million tons is not sufficient for India. We are still importing steel to the extent of 1,500 million rupees. As for oil, India produces only 8 per cent of her requirements. Every

year, she is spending 1,000 million rupees in the import of foreign oil. We want to save this foreign exchange. It was thought at one time that India was deficient in oil. India has plenty of iron, coal, manganese, mica and other minerals, enough to last for a thousand years or more, but it was thought that India has no oil resources. Thanks to the technical assistance of the Soviet Union, however, we have now struck oil. Indian experts always had an inkling that there was oil in Western India, though foreign experts had thought otherwise. Now, Soviet experts have found oil in the very regions which had been pronounced by foreign experts as bereft of oil.

Our minds are now occupied with the Third Five-Year Plan. There are two more years left to complete our Second Five-Year Plan. These two years, together with the five years of our Third Five-Year Plan, coincide with the period of your own stupendous Seven-Year Plan. By the end of your Seven-Year Plan you will have approached the level of America or even overtaken her in some branches of industrial production. We have no such ambition. Our only hope is that at the end of the Third Five-Year Plan, we shall have a self-reliant and self-generating economy. It is no pleasure for us to go about, hat in hand, once in four or five years, asking our good friends for credit of various kinds. The objective of the Third Five-Year Plan is to establish a firm economy, which will regenerate itself. The outlay on our Third Five-Year Plan will probably be twice that of our Second Plan; it will probably be in the region of 100 milliard roubles, and in executing this Plan we shall doubtless have ample assistance from the Soviet Union.

Our relations, however, are not confined to the economic field. Indeed our economic relations are a reflection rather than the cause of our friendship. Nothing in the mid-20th century is more remarkable than the way in which our two countries have come together. It is fair to say that the British always tried to keep us apart. They were afraid that if Indians became imbued with the revolutionary spirit which was prevalent in the Soviet Union that would be fatal to British rule in India. In 1934, my wife and I applied for passports to go to Europe. My wife's passport was duly endorsed for all countries in Europe; mine for all countries in Europe except the Soviet Union. Evidently, the British thought that it was not safe to let a young Indian be

contaminated by the example of the Soviet Union. I little dreamt then that within 20 years I would have the honour of representing my country in yours and of doing my little bit to bring the two countries together.

It must be admitted that, even after India became independent, our two countries were, to start with, a little shy of each other. There were still certain lingering misunderstandings between us. You suspected that though India had become politically independent, she was economically not independent; that she was bound hand and foot to the West. We, on the other hand, suspected that the Soviet Union had some ulterior designs, that she was out to turn the world red. Now these misunderstandings have been cleared. In clearing these misunderstandings, the historic and imaginative decisions of the 20th Congress played a greater part. An almost equally great part was played by the exchange of visits between our leaders and yours. You are now satisfied that India, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, is following an absolutely independent policy and will continue to do so. And we are satisfied that your only desire is that India should remain independent, for an independent India is a bulwark of peace. I always feel that the friendship between our countries—countries which have a different outlook on life, different traditions and a different philosophy and yet are co-operating with each other for the amelioration of the plight of millions of people and for the reduction of international tension—is the finest example of peaceful co-existence.

## 22

## *Indian Republic Day 1959*

Today we are celebrating the 9th Anniversary of the establishment of the Indian Republic. When I came to Moscow, the Republic of India was still in its infancy. It was in its third year. Now it may be said to have passed from infancy to childhood.

This is always a difficult period in the life of a nation as well as an individual. India has had, so to say, her teething troubles. She has had her trials and tribulations. And an unkind nature has added to them. One year she would send a flood; in another year, drought. Nevertheless, we have overcome most of these troubles. In facing them we have had the example of the Soviet Union which had to contend with far greater difficulties during the corresponding period of its existence and manfully defied them.

I would like to address this talk specially to my young listeners, say to those who are about 20. When I was born the world was very different. Then there were Kings all over the world. By the time I was 20, two of the most ancient monarchies, the monarchy of Russia and of Austria-Hungary, had crumbled. So had

the Monarchy of Germany. Another, and an even more ancient monarch, the Emperor of China who, for 4,000 years, used to call himself "the Son of Heaven" had also vanished. And lesser kings lived in fear and trembling. Indeed, one of them, the King of Egypt, when asked in his youth about the future of the monarchy of Egypt, said: "When I grow up, there will be only five kings in the world: the King of Clubs, the King of Diamonds, the King of Hearts, the King of Spades and the King of England." The King of England has survived, because the English people had the good sense to transform the entire character of the institution of monarchy. They have turned it into a "constitutional monarchy".

When I was 20, the map of the world was very different from what it is today. I remember being astonished, as a young boy, at the fact that a map of the world was coloured mostly in red. It was not the red of Communism—for Communism still existed only in the books of Karl Marx—but the red of the British Empire. Yet this Empire, which seemed so solid then, was already beginning to feel the shocks of the people's longing for freedom. In 1917, Mahatma Gandhi appeared in India with the mighty weapon of "Satyagraha" or "soul force" or "non-violent non-cooperation", determined to win freedom for 350 million people. At the same time, another great figure, Lenin, appeared in Russia determined to overthrow one system and substitute another. The strange thing is that these two countries, India and Russia, the liberators of which appeared on the scene at about the same time hardly came to know each other for 30 years.

During the last few years the relations between these two countries have developed in every field of human endeavour.

In the beginning, our foreign policy was apt to be misunderstood on all sides. Some persons thought that since we did not sever our links altogether with the Commonwealth we were under the domination of the West. Others thought that because India and the Soviet Union saw eye to eye with each other on many vital issues such as colonialism, trusteeship, the suspension of nuclear tests, etc. we were in the so-called "Communist camp". Now, I think both sides have a clearer appreciation of India's policy. It is an independent policy, a policy of judging each issue on its merits, and testing each issue in the light of the great

criterion: Is this conducive to peace or not? I am convinced—and I, as the Ambassador of India to the Soviet Union, am happy that the Soviet Union is also convinced—that this policy is good not only for the progress of India and the new, independent States of Asia and Africa but for the lessening of international tensions and the promotion of world peace.

## 23

## *Emperor of Ethiopia in Moscow*

We have assembled here to pay our respects to His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Ethiopia. On behalf of my distinguished colleagues and myself, I tender His Majesty our sincere greetings.

We, the Heads of the Asian and African Missions in Moscow, have had the privilege of welcoming many Heads of States and Governments from the east, the west and the middle of the Bandung area. But we have never had with us the Head of a State, older and more romantic than Ethiopia. Last year when I was in Damascus and was walking on "the Street called Straight", where St. Paul underwent his conversion, I felt that 2,000 years of history rolled by before my eyes. One has a similar sensation when one recalls the history of Ethiopia. In fact, our sensation is even deeper, because while the history of Damascus goes back to the New Testament, the history of Ethiopia goes back to the Old Testament. As we all know, the dynasty of Ethiopia was born out of the union of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba nearly 3,000 years ago. How many States are there which have had such an ancient and continuous history?

Yet, in our own time, a brutal attempt was made to destroy the independence of this kingdom: and the League of Nations looked on. I take the liberty of recalling the words which His Majesty uttered on that occasion. "If you seek peace without justice", said His Majesty, "you will have neither peace nor justice." Those words were prophetic, because the Italian aggression on Ethiopia was the beginning of a chain of events which plunged the world into the Second World War.

I remember a historic occasion, when His Majesty's words were quoted. At the end of April 1945, at the San Francisco Conference, I saw the representative of Ethiopia mounting the rostrum and quoting His Majesty's words, "If you seek peace without justice, you will have neither peace nor justice." By a strange coincidence, at the very moment when these words were being said, Mussolini's body was hanging, naked and upside down, in a great square in Milan where, a few years previously, I heard a great crowd hailing him, "Duce, Duce, Duce". And I thought to myself that this was the man who, seeing the bodies of thousands of Ethiopians mown down, exclaimed that it reminded him of the "beautiful unfolding of a black rose".

It is unpleasant to recall these events. Yet one must not forget them, for it is necessary for us all to be on our guard against the resurgence of Fascism or Nazism in any shape or form.

A little while ago, I referred to Ethiopia as an ancient and romantic State. But this State is being rapidly modernized. His Majesty has given, of his own accord, a Constitution to his people. Under his inspiration and guidance, Ethiopia has been making remarkable progress in such matters as education and public health. That is why His Majesty is held in such esteem and affection by his people.

It is an honour for us to have so historical and distinguished a figure among us. I ask you to rise and drink to the health of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia and the happiness and prosperity of his people.

24

## *Toast to a Bride and Bridegroom*

On behalf of the diplomatic corps, I am very happy to be able to say a few words on this occasion. This is a red letter day in the life of the charming young couple whom we see before us. In a way it is a red letter day in my life too. This is the first time that I play uncle at a marriage ceremony. I have often played the father, but not the uncle. This is also the first time that I shall be making a speech on behalf of the diplomatic corps. I have often spoken on behalf of the Heads of Bandung Missions, but not on behalf of the diplomatic corps as a whole. Today I have that privilege because our esteemed doyen is out of Moscow.

In one way I have a greater right than Mr. Sohlman to speak on this occasion. I have known the bride's family longer than anyone else. The friendship between Dr. Malalasekara and myself began 30 years ago in Ceylon, when Ceylon was trying to work the unworkable Donoughmore constitution and India was boycotting the Simon Commission. In those days neither Dr. Malalasekara nor I ever thought that we would be Ambassadors or that we would live to see our countries sending out Ambassadors.

But Dr. Malalasekara had already made a mark in a sphere, more enduring than diplomacy: he had already won a name for himself as an accomplished scholar. It is a great privilege for me to convey our good wishes to the charming daughter of so distinguished a friend as Dr. Malalasekara and so gracious a lady as Mrs. Malalasekara.

I have no doubt that this marriage will be supremely happy. One has only to look at the bride and bridegroom to see that they are made for each other. They have all those qualities which we associate with Ceylon—the beauty, charm and freshness of

*that spicy isle*
*where every prospect pleases,*
*and man is not vile.*

Moreover, the omens are good—the omens, both international and inter-planetary. A rocket has hit the moon; and Mr. Khrushchev has hit America. So, this marriage is taking place at a turning-point in human, and celestial, affairs.

May this couple sail through life under a cloudless sky! Doubtless, being mortals, they may have to put up with a few stray clouds, as all of us have to. If, 36 years ago, when we got married, some astrologer had foretold what was in store for us, if he had told us that my wife would be a mother at the age of 20 and a grandmother at the age of 40, that we would have six children and 12 grand-children, that we would be posted to Fort Sandeman on our barbaric frontier, where one of my predecessors was shot dead and my immediate successor was shot dead too, that we would be posted in wartime to Chungking which used to be bombed day and night, that we, who come from Kerala, where the temperature seldom goes down to 30°, would be posted to to a place where the temperature sometimes goes 30° below zero, my wife would have refused to marry me and chosen a more eligible suitor. Yet, looking back on it all, we feel that it was worth while. So, I hope, 36 years hence, on this day in the year of grace 1995, I hope Anuma will turn to Dudley and say: "Dudley darling, do you remember that 36 years ago, one Mr. Menon said, on behalf of the diplomatic corps in Moscow, that today we would think that our marriage was worthwhile?

It was worthwhile, wasn't it?" And, I hope, Dudley will agree whole-heartedly and show his agreement by a gesture which lovers can make even after 36 years of married life.

With these words, I wish, on behalf of my distinguished colleagues, every happiness to this charming couple and I shall ask them to accept this small present on behalf of the diplomatic corps.

## 25

## *President Sekou Toure in Moscow*

Once more, we, the Heads of Missions of the States which took part in the Bandung Conference, have met here in order to welcome the Head of another Afro-Asian State. This tradition goes back nearly five years, to the time when Prime Minister Nehru came to the Soviet Union. Since then, we have had the privilege of having in our midst many Heads of States and Governments from Asia and Africa. Among those States, none was younger than the Republic of Guinea. And among those statesmen, too, none was younger than President Sekou Toure. Though young, President Sekou Toure has already carved his name indelibly on the new page which the great wind of history has turned over in Africa.

The last occasion, on which we similarly met, was to do honour to His Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia. And, today, we are meeting to do honour to the President of the Republic of Guinea. The mere mention of this fact is enough to show how heterogeneous the Bandung group is. It consists of States, old and young, monarchical and republican, conservative and communist. The

fact that both the President of Guinea and the Emperor of Ethiopia were invited to the Soviet Union and received with equal respect and consideration has also another significance. It shows that the Soviet Government means what it says when it declares its adherence to the principle of peaceful co-existence of nations with differing social and political systems.

I said just now that the States of the Bandung area form a heterogeneous group. But all of us have more or less similar problems to tackle. The greatest of all problems is to raise our people's standard of living, to enable them to live a fuller and richer life or—it would be more correct to say—a less empty and less miserable life. That is the task to which President Sekou Toure, too, has dedicated himself.

President Sekou Toure has the personality to carry this task through; he has secured the necessary conditions for it; he has devised the necessary administrative machinery; and he is receiving the moral and material support of countries, far and near. We, having had the honour of meeting this man of destiny, who has launched Guinea on the uncharted sea of independence, will watch the course of that small, but sturdy, ship with the utmost interest and sympathy.

I ask you to rise and drink to the health of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Guinea.

## 26

## *Buddha Jayanti*

I am very grateful, as, I am sure, all of you are, to our distinguished colleague, Dr. Malalasekara, for having thought of celebrating the birth of Buddha. I am also grateful to him for having asked me to say a few words on this occasion.

We, diplomats, are often accused of having too many cocktail parties. There is a saying that it does not matter if a diplomat is weak in the head, but he must be strong on his feet. In order to attend Dr. Malalasekara's parties, however, one must be strong in the head as well as the feet. Today, he is celebrating the 2,500th anniversary of the birth of Buddha.

When an Indian has to say a few words on such an occasion before such an audience, he has mixed feelings. He has a sense of pride, a sense of guilt and a sense of gratitude. He feels proud, because it was his land, India, which gave Buddhism to the world. But Buddhism has practically disappeared from India. It is no longer the religion of India; it is not even one of her principal religions. That is why one has a feeling of guilt, because India failed to cherish Buddhism. At the same time, one has a

feeling of profound gratitude towards neighbouring countries which harboured Buddhism—countries like Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Nepal, China, Korea and Japan—which protected Buddhism and preserved its precious scriptures, which are still coming to light in the most remote spots of Asia.

Just now I said that an Indian would have a feeling of guilt on such an occasion. Yet, this feeling is unnecessary. For India did not persecute Buddhism as a heresy. India did not expel Buddhism from her shores. In India, there was no Thirty Years' War, no War of Religion. India's method of dealing with rival systems was different. She simply absorbed Buddhism into her own system—into that vast, strange, complex, amorphous, and for that very reason, indestructible system called Hinduism. It is as if Buddhism, which came from the womb of Hinduism, went back into the same womb, refined and purified.

One can watch the whole process of this transformation if one goes to Ellora. There, by the side of a semi-circular hill, are some three dozen temples hewn out of the solid rock. The first temple, built two or three centuries before Christ, is simply a hall for meditation. In the next temple, built a century or so later, we see the feet of Buddha; Buddha is already becoming an object of worship. In another temple, built some time later, we see the whole figure of Buddha, with a single disciple. As years go by, the sculpture and the architecture become more and more elaborate; and in the temples built from the 5th century onwards, we see Buddha as a deity, with all the paraphernalia of Hinduism, gods and goddesses, angels and fairies, saints and disciples, around him. Thus Buddha, who preached against idolatry, himself becomes an idol. He, who preached against the worship of the gods, himself becomes a God.

All religions have undergone a similar change. Take, for instance, Christianity. How different was the Christianity of Galilee, the simple saintly religion of Christ, from the Christianity of today! As some one said, Christianity has been tried and found wanting, but the religion of Christ remains to be tried.

Though Buddhism has almost disappeared from India, the teachings of Buddha have had a great influence on the art, sculpture and architecture of India, as, indeed, of all East Asian countries. There have also arisen, from century to century, great souls who have tried to practise the principles of Buddhism in

their personal, as well as poilitical, life. One such was Mahatma Gandhi.

Our Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, is of a different type. He is essentially an agnostic. Yet, if he were to adopt any religion at all, I feel that that would be Buddhism. One might even say that the foreign policy of India, of which Nehru is the architect, is an attempt to apply the principles of Buddhism to practical affairs. This explains our devotion to peace, our faith in non-violence, our determination to relate ends and means and our refusal to think that peace can be achieved by warlike methods.

We, diplomats, are immersed in day-to-day affairs and have therefore no time to think of ultimate questions, such as the destiny of man. Nowadays, all our thoughts are on the Summit Conference. But, above and beyond this summit is another summit, towards which mankind has been groping from time immemorial, call it self-realizaton or salvation or Nirvana; and there is no better road to it than the Eight-fold Path of Virtue, prescribed by Buddha.

Let me conclude these remarks by thanking our distinguished colleague once more for celebrating, for the first time in the history of the Soviet Union and, perhaps, of Russia, one of the greatest events in the annals of mankind, the birth of Buddha. We should be grateful to him for having turned our mind today from the problems of diplomacy to the problems of philosophy, from contemporary affairs to eternal questions, to which Buddha gave clearer, less dogmatic and more rational answers than any saint or prophet who has illumined the path of history.

## 27

## *Roerich's Paintings Exhibition*

In my State in India, Kerala, there is a proverb: Who wants to hear about a festival which one is going to see? Similarly, who wants to hear about the feast of beauty which is awaiting us?

In any case, how can one describe the incomparable beauty of Roerich's paintings? I can only say that having seen them, and seen them many times, I have come to enjoy the landscape of my own country better than ever before. Roerich has caught, as vividly as his eminent father had done, the grandeur of our Himalayas, the magic of our skies, and the peace of our lagoons. And he has depicted them in an essentially Indian way.

The critics have drawn a contrast between the manner in which nature is treated in the West, say, in Shakespeare, and in Kalidasa, who lived thirteen centuries earlier and is known as the Shakespeare of India. In Shakespeare, nature is but the setting, the background, against which man struts and frets his hour upon the stage and performs actions, great or petty, heroic or villainous. In Kalidasa, the connection between man and nature is far closer; each almost shares the other's moods and even

thoughts. That is how Roerich has dealt with nature. And that, I may add, is how this sensitive artist and his charming wife have been living, as it were, in the arms of nature in the lovely valley of Kulu in the Himalayas.

Roerich is as notable for his portraits as for his paintings of nature. Among his men and women are saints, philosophers, politicians, dancers and ordinary men and women. No one is better known or better loved in India than Jawaharlal Nehru. I have known him through his writings for 40 years, and I have worked with him intimately since independence. I find it very hard to describe this man, this complex, yet essentially simple man, this man of action who is also a man of dreams. But, in his portrait of Jawaharlal Nehru, Roerich has brought out his whole character by means of a few swift strokes. This is where the brush scores over the pen, the artist over the writer. And Roerich is no ordinary artist.

The paintings of Roerich show conclusively that art rises over all national and political frontiers. In Roerich's art two worlds meet, the world of India and the world of Russia. This is not surprising, because he himself belongs to both worlds. Roerich was born in Russia. But, we would like to claim him as an Indian. He is an Indian by marriage—by marriage to one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of India. Thus, by heredity, he is Russian; by environment he is Indian. I hope this will not rouse the old controversy as to which is stronger, heredity or environment! If this question is raised, I am afraid Roerich's paintings will provide no answer. In his paintings, heredity and environment, the inspiration of Russia and the inspiration of India, are beautifully and harmoniously blended.

This confirms the feeling, which I have long cherished, that there is a good deal in common between the spirit of India and the spirit of Russia. Through the ages, the Indian soul as well as the Slav soul has been noted for its compassion for the common man, its striving for perfection, its yearning for the infinite and its tendency to rise from the particular to the universal. These are qualities which characterize Indian as well as Russian art, literature and music; and these are characteristics which you will see also in the paintings of Roerich.

Roerich has left behind some of his mystical paintings in India. He need not have done so, for the Soviet people are mature

enough to appreciate all schools of art, though they themselves may prefer some to others.

I must not detain you longer, but I will ask my friend, Alfred Gonsalves, to read out a message from our Vice-President and our Minister for Culture.

## 28

## *Funeral of Professor Yuri Nikolai Roerich*

A month ago, a week ago, even a couple of days ago, I would not have believed that we were destined to take part in such a melancholy function. A dear and distinguished friend of ours has passed away. The suddenness of his death makes it all the more tragic.

Professor Roerich was essentially a scholar. There are many here who are more qualified to speak about him as a scholar than myself. Yet, he was more than a scholar. He was, in the truest and the highest sense of the word, a diplomat. If the first duty of a diplomat is to interpret one country to another, Roerich had been doing this admirably. For the last few years, Professor Roerich had been interpreting to the Soviet Union not merely India but a whole system of philosophy and culture which arose there, spread into the neighbouring lands and is still aliving force there. At the same time, he interpreted all that was best int he Soviet Union to India.

In doing this Professor Roerich was carrying on the role in which his talented family had been engaged for the last half a

century. In India, the name, Roerich, is a household word. In the field of art, philosophy and culture, the Roerichs have been a golden link between India and Russia. At this very moment an exhibition of paintings by the brother of Professor Roerich is being held in Moscow; and it is sad that he should have passed away at the moment of his brother's triumph. Professor Roerich as well as his father and brother must be reckoned among those men, who from the time of Afnasi Nikitin in the 15th century to our own day, have sought to promote the friendship of two great countries, India and Russia.

Professor Roerich will be mourned not merely in India and the Soviet Union, but in many other countries—in Ceylon and Burma, in Tibet, Nepal and Mongolia. What more can I say except to pronounce the age-old benediction, which is common to all religions and which even an agnostic can utter: Peace be on his soul !

29

# *Indian President's Visit to U.S.S.R*

The visit of President Rajendra Prasad to the Soviet Union is over.

Exactly five years ago there took place another memorable visit, the visit of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to the Soviet Union. The international setting in which that visit took place was very different. Prime Minister Nehru's visit took place in an atmosphere of mounting optimism, which culminated in the Summit Conference in Geneva in 1955. The visit of President Rajendra Prasad took place in an atmosphere which had been vitiated by the U-2 incident, the collapse of the Summit Conference at Paris and further spoiled by the failure of the Disarmament Conference at Geneva.

Nevertheless, both visits formed an occasion for a great demonstration of Indo-Soviet friendship. There were fervent expressions of mutual appreciation of the policy of India and the Soviet Union. There was also a display of warm and sympathetic interest in India's plans for economic development. Above all, there was a re-affirmation of the doctrine of peaceful

co-existence of States, following different social systems.

What is the significance of all this? Firstly, it shows that the friendship between India and the Soviet Union is not a matter of tactics or convenience, subject to every passing political gust, but a permanent, immutable factor in international life. Secondly, it shows that the irritation and frustration, caused by the failure of the Summit Conference, form but a transient phase which cannot and must not last. Even when Dr. Rajendra Prasad's visit was in progress, the Soviet Prime Minister made in Bucharest an unequivocal declaration of his basic policy, which has the approval and support of the entire Soviet people, because it is clearly based on their needs, their sentiments and their aspirations.

Thus, though the visit of President Rajendra Prasad took place in a less buoyant atmosphere than that of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, it, too, has strengthened Indo-Soviet friendship and improved the prospects of peaceful co-existence, without which civilization is doomed to perish.

## 30

## *Dinner to a Bride*

I am happy to say a few words on this auspicious occasion. I do so with special pleasure as the bride and bridegroom are so charming and the bride is the daughter of one of the most esteemed, best loved members of the diplomatic corps.

Last night we had the pleasure of having Mona and the bridegroom with us for dinner. That was the last evening of their single lives, for today they have been united.

Then my thoughts went back to an evening which I spent 37 years ago, or to be precise, the 20th April, 1923. That night I was devoured by curiosity as to what my wife would be like, for I had not seen her before. What was more risky—or perhaps fortunate!—she had not seen me either. I am afraid there will not be this element of surprise in the case of Mona and Chaker, but I am sure that Mona will prove to be a source of continuous surprise to Chaker by her charm, goodness and sweetness.

We offer our heartiest congratulations to the happy couple. We must also congratulate their charming parents. Perhaps,

we should also sympathize with them a little. It must be a wrench for them to part with their daughter, but they can take comfort in the English doggerel:

*A son's a son till he has a wife*
*A daughter's a daughter all her life.*

I am sure Mona will be a daughter to the El Konies all her life and that Chaker will be a son to them, even as my son's wife has become a perfect daughter for us both.

When a man who had a singularly happy married life for forty years was asked what was its secret, he replied that he and his wife had come to an agreement at the beginning of their married life that she would have the last word on all minor matters and that he would have the last word on all major matters. "And no major matter has yet arisen", he said. Let us hope that no major matter will arise between Mona and Chaker either.

If any major matter does arise, let us hope it will be settled in a spirit of compromise. The late Master of Balliol once gave an example of true compromise. He said that he and his wife had decided to go to America. He wanted to go to New York and his wife wanted to go to Chicago. They had a long argument about it. "Finally", he said, "we compromised; we went to Chicago." Actually, Chaker and Mona will soon be going to New York. But I hope that if Mona wants to go to Chicago, Chaker will not mind. And I also hope that Mona will not insist too soon and too often on going to Chicago!

I am sure we are all happy that Mona has married a diplomat. The younger members of our corps can, therefore, look forward to the pleasure of serving with her husband and her at the same station. And the older among us will watch their career with the greatest interest. Our Russian friends, too, will be happy, because there is every chance of Chaker being posted to Moscow; and it will be a pleasure for them to see Mona here again. Indeed, I hope, I may almost prophesy, that one day Chaker and Mona will worthily fill the place in Moscow which their parents are now occupying with the utmost dignity, grace and distinction.

Now, on behalf of the entire diplomatic corps, whether we belong to NATO or CENTO or SEATO or the Warsaw Pact,

or whether, like India and the UAR, we do not belong to any Pact at all, let me wish this charming bride and bridegroom long life and every happiness. And as a token of our good wishes let me ask them to accept this small present.

## 31

## *At the Army Officers' Club*

I am very grateful to Marshal Malinovsky for asking my wife and me to be present on this occasion. The last time I had the honour of being here was in 1956, when the Chief of our Army Staff, General Thimayya, was here. He was accompanied by his wife. This time our officers are not accompanied by their wives. Still, it was kind of the Soviet officers' wives to have graced this occasion with their presence. Seeing some of them at our Embassy last week, an envious bachelor officer said that the Soviet Armed Forces seemed to have bagged the loveliest women in the Soviet Union !

As I said, it was four years ago that I was in this Club. During this interval great things have happened. Science and technology have progressed beyond man's wildest dreams. The Soviet Union has invented the Sputnik; it has unveiled the hidden face of the moon; it has sent up two canine passengers into space and safely brought them back; it has prepared the way for interplanetary travel.

Humanity thus stands on the threshold of a wonderful age.

At the same time, mankind, unless it takes care, is in danger of extinguishing itself. That is why the Soviet Government has proposed a scheme for complete and general disrarmament in the UN. This scheme has roused much interest in India. India has had a tradition of non-violence from time immemorial—from Buddha 2,500 years ago to Gandhiji, who was influenced by your own Leo Tolstoy. But it is not on philosophical but on practical grounds that our leaders have supported this scheme. The other day, Prime Minister Nehru said at Bhilai that "man must abolish the atom bomb; otherwise, the atom bomb will abolish man".

It is good to see that the Soviet Armed Forces stand solidly behind the move for complete and general disarmament. I propose this toast to the Soviet Armed Forces, who are at once heroic and peaceful, and to our gracious hosts and their charming wives.

## 32

## *Visit of Prince Sihanouk*

We have assembled here to welcome the Head of an Afro-Asian State, His Royal Highness Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia. On behalf of the Heads of Missions of the States which took part in the Bandung Conference, and also on behalf of the Heads of Missions of the States which would have taken part in the Conference if they had been independent then—and the number of such States is increasing year by year—I offer a most cordial welcome to His Royal Highness.

For us, it is a special pleasure to welcome the Head of the State of Cambodia. No State has adhered so firmly and so unflinchingly to the principles of the Bandung Conference. The result is that Cambodia is free from the storms which have been blowing in some of the neighbouring States. She is enjoying peace, tranquillity and stability which unfortunately some countries in our region do not possess.

For this happy position, the credit goes largely to His Royal Highness. He was the principal architect of the independence of Cambodia; and he has been consolidating it by establishing

friendly relations with all countries, far and near. At the same time, he has been attending to the crying problem in all our countries, namely, the raising of the standard of living of the common man. It is an honour for us to welcome so eminent a statesman.

On such auspicious occasions, it is a pleasure for us to have our Soviet friends with us. Who, ten years ago, would have thought that such a function would be possible in Moscow in 1960? Ten years ago some of the States which are represented in this hall today simply did not exist as independent States. Many did not have any relations with the Soviet Union. Even such relations, as there were, were of a formal, and not substantial character. But during the last five or six years, thanks to the dynamic policy of the Soviet Government, there has been a great flowering of the friendship between the Soviet Union, Asian and African countries. Many an Asian and African statesman, too, has contributed to this development, which is good not only for our countries but for world peace, for it reduces the ugly animosities of the cold war. And prominent among such statesmen is Prince Sihanouk.

The great Greek philosopher, Plato, said that the world would be happy when kings are philosophers and philosophers are kings. Cambodia is happy because it has a Prince who is also a philosopher, a politician who is also a statesman, an aristocrat who is also a democrat to the tips of his fingers. This accounts for his immense popularity and the universal esteem and affection in which he is held in Cambodia. On behalf of my colleagues from Asia and Africa, I have great pleasure in proposing a toast to the health of His Royal Highness and his gracious consort, to the members of his party and to the happiness and prospeity of the people of Cambodia.

## 33

## *Ramayana Staged*

I would like to propose a toast to our dear guests. We have had the privilege of having many types of Soviet guests in this Embassy, but there is no group whom we are welcoming with greater pleasure than today's guests. I would like to call them respectfully, "the Ramayana group". Among them I would like to include one who was proud to belong to it when it was being produced, my wife.

There is no word more sacred in India than Ramayana. The story of the Ramayana has been told and read and sung and recited for about 3,000 years. Every man, woman and child in India knows Rama, Sita and Hanuman and most of the characters of the book. Ramayana is regarded as a treasure, not merely in India but in all South East Asia. For instance, even today, many of the themes for the dances and plays in Thailand and Indonesia are drawn from the Ramayana.

The Ramayana, however—as Madame Guseva knows only too well—is an enormously long epic. It is longer than the Iliad and the Odyssey. This is the first time perhaps that the story of the

Ramayana has been done in a three-hour show. In India, and elsewhere in Asia, it is usual to present episodes from the Ramayana. Each of these episodes sometimes takes many days. Even presented in one day, it would take the whole night. I remember how, as a child, I would go to see the Ramayana together with a mat and a pillow and ask my friends to wake me up when a favourite character like Hanuman came to the scene.

You have done something incredible. You have condensed the whole story of the Ramayana into a single compact play. That is indeed a remarkable feat. But you have done more. You have faithfully reproduced the atmosphere of a country, which is some 10,000 kilometres away from the Soviet Union, and a period which is separated from us by some 3,000 years. I have no words to describe my admiration and my respect for what you have achieved. I propose this toast to Mr. Kolisaev, the producer of the play; Mr. Balasanyan, the muscian—and how Indian his music is! Madame Guseva, the script-writer; Mr. Shah Azizov, the director of the theatre; and all the talented actors and actresses, who have taken part in this play.

## 34

## *Indian Republic Day 1961*

I am very happy to attend this function and to say a few words. This is the climax of a week's celebration of our Republic Day by various institutions and organizations in Moscow. These celebrations began almost exactly a week ago in a school where Hindi and Urdu are being taught. I must say that the students there, aged 8 to 13, put me to shame by their superior knowledge of our own languages. And now, these celebrations, which began in a school, are ending in this temple of learning, the Moscow University.

I would like to begin by reading to you the message from our President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. This message is meant for Indians overseas. But there is nothing secret about this message and I hope our Russian friends will not mind sharing it with us. Here is the message:

On this day of national rejoicing our thoughts naturally go to you all who are not in our midst today.

I should like to take this opportunity to speak to you about

the state of our country. Probably, you know that we are in the midst of the last phase of our Second Five-Year Plan and are soon going to take the Third Plan in hand. The implementation of the first two plans has been an exhilarating experience. We have covered much new ground in most of the fields of our major hydro-electric projects, community development and basic industries like iron and steel, as also small-scale industries. Whatever the difficulties, we are determined to carry out our programme of national reconstruction. I am sure you have many pleasant surprises in store for you whenever you happen to visit the Mother country next.

The world situation being what it is, some of you may have to make new adjustments. I have no doubt that you will always give a good account of yourself in such circumstances. The interests of the country of your adoption should ever be your guiding light. Besides, do not forget that every Indian abroad is an unofficial ambassador of his country and the world judges India by how he conducts himself.

I should like now to greet you all on this auspicious occasion on the 11th anniversary of our Republic. May the New Year that begins today bring good luck and happiness to us all! Jai Hind.

You will see from the President's message that his main concern is with our Third Five-Year Plan. At present, that is the principal preoccupation of our Government, our economists and the people as a whole. We are at a crucial stage in India's economic development. We have successfully completed our first two Five-Year Plans; and, in a few months, we shall be embarking on our Third Five-Year Plan.

In our First Five-Year Plan, our principal aim was to improve agriculture. Our first concern was to provide sufficient food for our people. This was not an easy task. Our population stands round about 400 million and is increasing at the rate of six million a year. Our foremost task was to make India self-sufficient in the matter of food, and thus to save the vast amount of money which used to be spent on importing foodgrains from outside.

In our Second Five-Year Plan, we shifted our emphasis from agriculture to industry. From your own experience, we learnt the

importance of developing heavy industry. We realized that without heavy industry it will be impossible even to develop agriculture properly. Soon we shall be launching our Third Five-Year Plan on an even more ambitious scale. Its outlay is likely to be about one hundred milliard rupees; and at the end of the Plan, we hope that our economic foundations will have been well laid.

In this great adventure of planning for improving the people's standard of living, we have had the assistance of many countries, far and near. The Soviet Union's own assistance is reflected in many spheres. In the sphere of industry, the finest monument of Soviet assistance is the great Bhilai metallurgical plant, which is already producing a million tons of steel a year and, under the Third Five-Year Plan, will be expanded to produce 2½ million tons. In the sphere of agriculture, we have set up, with Soviet assistance a great State farm, the Suratgarh State Farm, which is the largest in Asia. In the sphere of education, the Soviet Government has established a Higher Technical Institute in Bombay with Soviet equipment and manned by Soviet professors. In the sphere of public health, we are setting up a number of pharmaceutical projects with Soviet assistance. These are but examples of the many-sided help, which we have been receiving from the Soviet Union in our economic development.

Perhaps I should say a word specially about Soviet assistance in respect of oil. India has magnificent natural resources. She has enough iron ore, coal, mica and manganese to last for a thousand years. Until recently, however, it used to be thought that there was little oil in India. In fact, until recently we used to produce only 8 per cent of our oil requirements. We used to spend 1,000 million rupees every year to import oil from outside. But, thanks to the assistance of Soviet technicians, we have now found oil of excellent quality and in abundant quantity in various parts of India. Your technicians have found oil in regions where other foreign experts had pronounced that there would be no oil at all. Thus, the Soviet Government is playing an important part in setting India on her feet economically.

In this University, which is a temple of learning, a centre of culture, I must also say a word about the cultural relations between India and the Soviet Union. There have been many comings and goings of academicians, professors, aritists, singers,

scholars, musicians and dancers. Behind these comings and goings, there lies the will on the part of our peoples to understand each other. There is little doubt that misunderstanding and ignorance lie at the root of much of the world's troubles. Even between India and the Soviet Union there used to be a lack of understanding until recently.

Let me give just one example. Until a few years ago we used to think that Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation, was not understood by the Soviet people. Indeed, in some respects, he used to be misunderstood. We used to be hurt at the disparaging description of him in the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia. But, five or six years ago, Soviet scholars began to delve into his life and work; and Soviet statesmen, sensitive to national and international currents of thought, paid a visit to India. The result is that the great role played by Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for Indian independence is now better understood.

Gandhiji's methods, too, are now better understood in the Soviet Union. His method was called "Satyagraha" or "soul-force" or non-violent non-cooperation. Formerly, people used to think that non-violence simply meant passive resistance. That is a complete misconception. There was nothing passive about non-violence. It was something active, dynamic; it meant opposition to evil with all one's heart, all one's soul and all one's spirit. When millions of people in India showed their determination to resist imperialism in this way the independence of India became assured.

Gandhiji had learnt about the potentialities of a non-violent struggle from your own Leo Tolstoy. At first he used this weapon in resisting racial discrimination in South Africa. Later, he applied it on a massive scale to secure the independence of India.

Satyagraha or non-violence was the key to the independence of India. It can also be the key to the peace of the world. After all what are your proposals for complete and general disarmament in the UN, but an application of the principle of non-violence on a universal scale? In this nuclear age, the alternatives are the eschewal of violence or the destruction of humanity.

We are living in thrilling days. The emancipation of mankind is proceeding at a terrific pace. In 1945 I was present at the birth of the United Nations. Then the United Nations consisted of 51 members. Now its membership has almost doubled; 99

countries have now become members of the United Nations. All Asia has become free except for one or two tiny spots like Goa in India and Macao in China. And Africa is awake and astir.

There was a somewhat similar period in history when the French Revolution broke upon the world, with the magic cry, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Then Wordsworth, an English poet, wrote:

*Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive*
*But to be young was very heaven.*

For me to be alive today and watch the dawn of freedom over Asia and Africa is bliss; for you, who are young, it must be very heaven. You and I are specially fortunate to be in this country, which is playing a leading part in the world today and with which our own country has the most friendly relations.

In conclusion, let me remind my Indian friends of the President's exhortation that each of them must regard himself as an unofficial ambassador of his country in the Soviet Union. Let me express the hope that none of you will do anything to injure, and all of you will do something to promote, the friendship betwen our two countries, because it serves not only our mutual interests but that great goal, the peace of the world.

## 35

## *A Farewell Dinner*

I should like to propose a toast, or, rather, two toasts. This dinner party was originally designed to welcome Mrs. Zehnder. Then we heard that the Zehnders were leaving us. We, therefore, decided to turn a welcome party for Mrs. Zehnder into a farewell party for Mr. and Mrs. Zehnder.

From the beginning the El Konies had been included in our list of guests. Last week we came to know that they, too, were leaving us soon. This, therefore, had to be a farewell party for them, too. This is our explanation for killing two birds with one stone; and I think the birds themselves prefer it, because this is the busiest part of the shooting season!

We are very sorry indeed that the El Konies are leaving us. They were amongst our dearest friends. Doubtless, our friendship reflects the great friendship between our two countries and between our two Prime Ministers. But it is more than an official friendship, it is also a personal friendship which has already gone down to our children; and if Mona plays up, it will go down to our children's children, too !

Mr. El Kony has suddenly become a world figure. At any rate, the world press has taken an interest in him. Newspapers—British, Egyptian and Indian—have been showring compliments on him right and left. We, who have had the privilege of knowing him, know how richly deserved these compliments are. I have watched with admiration the manner in which he has been carrying out his duties in Moscow.

During El Kony's time and mine, there has been a vast development of the friendship between our two countries on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other. But there has been a difference. Last week, on the occasion of our Republic Day, when a Soviet newspaper correspondent asked me what I thought of Indo-Soviet relations, I replied truthfully that they were like a cloudless sky. True, some clouds have come and settled over our northern frontier; and another cloud settled over my own State, Kerala, for a couple of years. But those clouds have passed, leaving no trace whatever on the sunny landscape of Indo-Soviet friendship. On the Egyptian skies, too, some clouds appeared, more directly affecting the friendship between the U.A.R. and the U.S.S.R. But those clouds, too, have passed quickly, leaving the friendship between the U.A.R. and the U.S.S.R. unimpaired. For this the credit goes largely to the personality of His Excellency Mr. El Kony.

Not only to the personality of Mr. El Kony, but to the personality of Mrs. El Kony, who has been a perfect complement to her husband. My wife and I will never forget her. I am particularly grateful to her for the many occasions on which she played hostess when my wife was away. Those, I must confess, were the only occasions when I did not absolutely miss my wife!

I must also say a word about Mr. and Mrs. Zehnder. It was unkind of Mr. Zehnder to have brought his charming wife with him to Moscow, to have presented her to us, to have made us fall in love with her and then to take her away! That is the kind of practical joke which Mr. Zehnder loves to play on his friends. In fact, one of Mr. Zehnder's most attractive qualities is his sense of humour. I have often heard him beginning a speech with the remark that he did not know much English and proceeding to make an excellent speech, full of witticisms and even quotations from Shakespeare.

I am sure we shall all miss Mr. Zehnder. Mr. Zehnder posses-

ses a quality which—if I may be provocative—we, so-called neutrals, can afford to have, namely, objectivity. Sometimes, having been in the Soviet Union for over eight years, I ask myself: Am I getting too pro-Soviet? Am I taking appearances for reality? And then I go to someone like Mr. Zehnder and have a talk; and I feel comforted and relieved. Mr. Zehnder comes from the heart of Europe, and I, from the centre of Asia, in more sense than one; and yet our appraisal of things and persons, currents and problems in the Soviet Union are remarkably close, if not identical.

Both Mr. El Kony and Mr. Zehnder are proceeding to two sister countries of the Commonwealth,[1] to which India belongs. We shall rejoice in the further development of the friendly relations between the U.A.R. and the U.K., which were unfortunately marred by some untoward events. No one is better fitted to improve those relations than Mr. El Kony. I propose this toast to the health of our distinguished friends, Mr. and Mrs. El Kony and Mr. and Mrs. Zehnder.

[1] Britain and Canada.

## 36

## *IAF Delegation in Moscow*

I would like to propose a toast to our guests. We are very happy to have with us Marshal Vershinin and other officers of the Soviet Air Force. We would like to thank Marshal Vershinin again for the delightful and most friendly party to which he invited us a couple of days ago.

We are also happy to have Mr. Patolichev, Minister of Foreign Trade and other officials of that Ministry. They must be glad, as I am, that the out-turn of trade between India and the Soviet Union is going up very rapidly. When I came to Moscow, the out-turn was barely 30 million rupees; now, it stands at 600 million ruppes. And, thanks to the Trade Agreement, which was signed by Mr. Patolichev last year, the out-turn is expected to go up to 1,000 million rupees in a couple of years.

What has brought us all together is the arrival of Air Vice Marshal Pinto and his brother officers from India. I shall not propose a toast to them, for they are not guests and this Embassy is their home. They should therefore regard themselves as co-hosts.

We have with us today the representatives of a number of

organizations in the Soviet Union. The presence of the representatives of so many different organizations might make one think that the negotiations, in which Air Vice Marshal Pinto is engaged, are very complicated. In a sense they are complicated; in another sense they are simple. They are complicated because they involve the examination of a number of technical problems. Technically, they are somewhat complicated, but politically, they are extremely simple. That is because on both sides there is a clear and firm determination that the negotiations shall succeed.

Who would have thought ten years ago or even five years ago that an Air Force Delegation from India will come to the Soviet Union to buy planes! This would simply have been inconceivable. Even at that time, the relations between the Soviet Union and India were friendly, but they were rather formal. Many misunderstandings which existed in the time of the British rule in India continued to linger.

Let me let out a secret as an example. The first Trade Agreement with the Soviet Union was negotiated ten years ago, when I was Foreign Secretary to the Governement of India. In the draft agreement there was a clause for the possible exchange of technical information and technical personnel. Our Home Ministry was greatly nervous of the inclusion of this clause. They thought that under the guise of technicians, Communist agitators, propagandists and even saboteurs might come to India and turn India upside down. That was the kind of misunderstanding which existed in those days.

Such misunderstandings were not all on one side. You, too, suffered from various misunderstandings about India. There were doubts in the Soviet Union as to whether India would follow a truly independent policy. All such doubts and fears have now been removed. Both your policy and ours have developed—I shall not say, changed—according to the realities of the situation; and India and the Soviet Union are now great friends.

I propose this toast to this great and everlasting friendship and to all our friends who are present here tonight and are engaged in promoting that friendship and cooperation—and in particular to Marshal Vershinin, Head of the Soviet Air Force; Mr. Patolichev, Minister of Foreign Trade; Mr. Sheremetiv of the State Committee for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries and Mr. Pushkin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

## 37

## *At the Moscow University*

I am very grateful to the University of Moscow for the great honour it has done me by conferring a doctorate on me. Wherever I have been in the Soviet Union, whether in Moscow or Murmansk, Yalta or Yerevan, Alma Ata or Astrakhan, I have received the utmost courtesy and consideration from the people and the Government. But this gesture which the Moscow University has shown, I shall regard as the greatest kindness of all.

I appreciate this kindness all the more, because I honestly believe that I do not deserve it. On me, you have just conferred a Doctorate in History. It is true that I have always been interested in history. Both at Madras and Oxford, my special subjects were history and political science. I even had ideas of entering the educational field. If I had done so I might have earned the honour which you have conferred on me today. But it is no use talking about what might have been. To do so would be to give away one's age, for there is a saying that a man grows old when regrets take the place of dreams.

I have been wondering what I have done to earn this Doctorate

in History. My only claim is that during the last few years I have had the privilege of watching, at close quarters, history in the making. I have seen history being fashioned in one of the most vital, most dynamic spots in the world, Moscow—and that during a period which, I am sure, will be regarded in the future as a landmark in the march of history.

During this period, man's material progress has reached unprecedented dimensions. The inventions in industry have reached such an advanced stage that, if only the fruits of industry are properly and justly used, there need be no want or starvation in any part of the world. Physically, the world has shrunk; everyone now is everyone else's neighbour; even the mighty Himalayas have been conquered; and Delhi has come within six hours of Moscow. Asia has been consolidating her hard-won freedom and Africa is awake and astir. Man has entered cosmos; interplanetary travel is now only a question of time; and even the Moon has been compelled to unveil her hidden charms. In all these advances, the Soviet Union has played a most prominent, and often a pioneering, part.

For me, what has naturally been most fascinating is the fact that India and the USSR have come together. I have no doubt that future historians will regard this as one of the most significant developments in the mid-20th century.

Prior to this period, India and the Soviet Union had been almost strangers. Of course, there were memories—memories of the Indian merchant in 'Sadko' who comes to the flourishing kingdom of Novgorod and sings a plaintive song which still causes a hush in the Bolshoi Theatre; memories of Afnasi Nikitin who went to India 50 years before Vasco da Gama and left a most sympathetic account of the land and the people; memories of the Indian traders who settled, and were encouraged by your Tsars to settle, in the regions of the Volga and the Caspian Sea; memories of great scholars, writers and philosophers, who have left an abiding impression; and above all, the memory of a mighty figure, the 50th anniversary of whose death was observed a few months ago in India as well as in the Soviet Union, I mean Leo Tolstoy. It was from him that Mahatma Gandhi borrowed the doctrine of non-violence, which he fashioned into a mighty weapon for the liberation of India from foreign rule.

Until India actually became independent, however, these memories remained more or less dormant. Even after India became independent, our two countries were a little shy of each other. There were a great many misunderstandings—serious misunderstandings. We could not shake off in a day some of the prejudices which we had inherited from our pre-independence days; nor, for that matter, could you do so. Many of you imagined that though India was politically free, she would continue to hang on to the coat-tails of the Western Powers; and many of us feared that the Soviet Union was out to turn the whole world red by hook or crook. Even the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, was insufficiently understood—indeed, I should say, he was grossly misunderstood.

Thanks to the researches of your scholars and to the prescience of your statesmen, Gandhiji's great role in the winning of India's independence is now better appreciated. Moreover, certain impediments in the way of our mutual cooperation were removed by the declarations made, and the decisions taken, at the historic session of the 20th Congress. All this resulted in process which is perhaps best described by the title of Ilya Ehrenberg's novel, *The Thaw*. Slowly, but steadily, this thaw has been spreading all over the world, though different countries have responded to it in different degrees.

My own country had no difficulty in recognizing this thaw and in benefiting from it. This is not the occasion for me to dwell on the benefits which have flowed from our mutual cooperation. The mere mention of such names as Bhilai, Suratgarh, Ranchi, Cambay and Ankleshwar is enough to show how beneficial this cooperation has been. But we appreciated this thaw which set in in the Soviet Union, not merely because of its material advantages but because we were convinced that it was conducive to world peace. Today, it can truly be said that India and the Soviet Union stand firmly together in the quest for peace and happiness throughout the world.

For me, it has been a great privilege to watch this process. When I was appointed Ambassador, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru gave me a piece of sound advice. He told me that it was my duty to interpret not only India to the Soviet Union but the Soviet Union to India. Last week, Mr. Nehru was good enough to mention in our Parliament a word of approval about my

work in the Soviet Union; and I take it that this Doctorate conferred on me means that here too my work has been approved. I assure you I shall always treasure this degree as the supreme reward for my work in the USSR which, to me, was a labour of love.

38

## *Tagore Centenary Celebration*

During the last eight-and-half years I have been to the Bolshoi Theatre on many occasions. Indeed, each visit to the Bolshoi Theatre is a memorable experience, which one treasures all one's life. But there have also been certain occasions which can truly be called historic. One such was the visit of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to the Bolshoi Theatre, when some 700 full-throated artistes on the Bolshoi stage majestically sang "Jana Gana Mana", and Ulanova and Plisetskaya competed with each other as Maria and Zarina in the "Fountain of Bakhchisarai". On another occasion, the first troupe of Indian dancers who ever came to this country staged an ancient mythological story with a sociological content, on seeing which a Member of the Presidium teased me by saying: "So, you had Communism in your country 3,000 years ago!" And today, we see the Bolshoi Theatre turned into a hall for the commemoration of the great Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore, Indian but also universal.

The mere fact that this commemoration is being held in the great Bolshoi Theatre is significant. Equally significant is the

fact that some of the most distinguished members in the world of Soviet art, letters and politics are participating in this function. We have listened to their remarkable speeches on the various aspects of the art of Tagore, a many-sided genius, who was at once poet, painter, patriot, nationalist, internationalist, educationist and social reformer. I shall not attempt to supplement what has been said. I shall merely recall a couple of my own personal impressions about Tagore.

The first time I met Tagore was at Oxford forty years ago. Then I was twenty and Tagore was sixty. Now that I am in the sixties, I can sympathize with the open-mouthed wonder with which a boy of twenty views a celebrity of sixty. With his flowing beard, his outlandish dress and his noble face, which has often been compared by foreigners with that of Christ in mediaeval painting Tagore seemed like a being from another planet. There was something serene, something aloof, something almost unearthly about him. But when he spoke to us on the banks of the Isis, his voice was full of earthly passion—passion for freedom, for equality, for liberty.

Those were thrilling days. The First World War had come to an end. Russia had become the Soviet Union and launched, under Lenin's guidance, a tremendous experiment in the history of mankind. Mahatma Gandhi appeared on the political stage in India with a weapon borrowed from the armoury of Leo Tolstoy and launched his first great struggle for India's independence. Tagore, who was at first inclined to rest on the Olympian heights of poetry, was drawn into this struggle; and his voice, the voice of freedom, sounded strong and clear.

The next time I met Tagore was in 1931, soon after his return from Russia. What he told us about Russia had almost the same novelty as what Major Gagarin had to say about Cosmos, for, in those days, there were no contacts between India and Russia. Tagore was in raptures over his visit to Russia. Not that he thought that everything in Russia was worthy of being transplanted into India. He was always of opinion that India should develop according to her own genius, her own tradition and her own philosophy. But he saw a great deal in Russia which was worthy of respect, admiration and emulation.

One thing that impressed Tagore was the rapid spread of education, even among the nomadic tribes of Central Asia. He

also felt that the so-called lower orders of society now had a new dignity and a new status. He compared cilvilization with a lamp. The masses of nameless people were the lamp-stand; they bore on their heads the lamp of civilization which shone on a few individuals, but did not shine on themselves. On the contrary, the lamp-stand was even stained by the oil which dripped from the lamp. In Russia, on the contrary, he felt that the entire society was being transformed with the light of knowledge. Tagore's letters, together with those of Jawaharlal Nehru, who had preceded him to Russia, were amongst the first to open India's eyes to what was heppening in the Soviet Union.

To conclude, let me once more express my grateful appreciation of the worthy manner in which Tagore's centenary is being celebrated here —worthy of Tagore, worthy of the Soviet people's interest in art and literature, worthy of the relationship between our two countries. I am sure Tagore will continue to be a beacon in the quest of mankind for truth, beauty, serenity and peace.

39

## *French Ambassador's Farewell Dinner*

I am most grateful to His Excellency M. Dejean for the charming farewell party which he has arranged on the eve of our departure. I am particularly grateful to him for the kind words he has said about me and my country.

This is by no means the first occasion on which we have been in this Embassy. We have been here on many occasions; and we cherish the most pleasant memories of our meetings with our host and hostess. They have a unique knack of making their guests feel at home. When I see M. Dejean and myself together, I realise how unnatural, or, at any rate, how exaggerated are the political divisions of this world. M. Dejean is the representative of a State which belongs to NATO; I am the representative of a neutral, or, rather, non-aligned State. Yet I have often thought that between M. Dejean and myself, between India and France, there is more in common than between France and some of her NATO allies. I hope you will not think I am trying to make a dent in the wall of Western solidarity !

The realization how close France was to India came to me

when, as Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, I dealt with French representatives on the subject of Pondicherry. At the same time I dealt with Portuguese representatives about Goa. The difference between them was truly extraordinary. To the French we could talk in the language of the 20th century; to the Portuguese it was difficult to talk at all, because they spoke the language of the 17th century, when the Pope issued a Bull, dividing the world into two and giving one half to Spain and the other half to Portugal. With the French we felt we were dealing with gentlemen; with the Portuguese, we felt we were dealing with fanatics. And now their fanaticism has landed the Portuguese into one of the ghastliest tragedies the world has witnessed, the tragedy of Angola.

In India, we have always had a certain sentimental attachment to France. Many of our older political leaders were inspired by the ideas of the French Revolution. To a people struggling for independence, the words: "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" have a special significance. Inadian students who went to Oxford to study history almost invariably took the period of the French Revolution as their special subject. I myself took an earlier, less exciting, more serene period, 1494 to 1715. But that, too, was a French period; it was the age of Louis XIV. And, if President de Gaulle succeeds, as we all hope he will, in settling the question of Algeria in tune with the winds of history, of which he has spoken so eloquently, Frenchmen would be entitled to call this age the age of de Gaulle.

My wife and I will always regard M. and Madame Dejean as distinguished representatives of a great country, with a great history and great traditions. As for Madame Dejean, it was when I met her that I realized the full meaning of that French word, for which there is no equivalent in any other language, *l'esprit*, which means a compound of gaiety, buoyancy, vivacity and sheer intelligence.

I now propose a toast to the health of our distinguished host and our charming hostess.

## 40

## *Foreign Ministry's Farewell Dnnier*

Last night, Mr. Kuznetsov and I were together at a dinner party in the French Embassy. I complimented our hostess by saying that she possessed that typical French quality, represented by that typical French word, *l'esprit*. I hope you will forgive me if, today, again, I quote a French saying, *Partir c'est mourir en peu*. That is, to part is to die a little.

I came across this saying for the first time at Oxford 40 years ago. Since then I have been with, and parted from, friends, in many parts of India and the world—in Hyderabad and Rajputana, in Peshawar and Baluchistan, in Ceylon and Zanzibar, in San Francisco and Nanking. But at no time have I felt the full meaning of this saying more than today. At no time have we felt sadder to leave our friends.

My wife and I have been asking ourselves why we feel so sad. As I said last night at the French Embassy, one thing my long stay in the Soviet Union has taught me is that people with entirely different backgrounds can live and work happily together on the human plane. Take Mr. Kuznetsov and myself, for instance.

Mr Kuznetsov is a Russian and I am an Indian; he is an engineer and I am a historian; he is a Communist and I am a non-Communist (though by no means an anti-Communist). Yet we have been working happily together in a common cause for the last six years. Physically, we spent 21 days and nights together during the historic visit of Prime Minister Nehru to the Soviet Union, when we travelled from one end of this great country to the other, from Leningrad to Yalta and from Kiev to Alma Ata. During this period, I felt towards Mr. Kuznetsov as towards a brother; and I hope he too had a similar feeling towrds me. This is exactly the feeling which my wife cherishes for Mrs. Kuznetsov, whom she regards with the utmost respect and affection.

The Soviet Union has taught me that not only individuals but nations with different backgrounds can co-exist happily together. India and the Soviet Union are in some ways similar and in some ways different. Our climate, our geography, our history and our philosophy are all different. Yet we have been working together in the quest for peace. We see eye to eye with each other on many vital problems such as complete and general disarmament, the need to abolish nuclear tests, the urgency of doing away with colonialism, etc. Above all, we are cooperating in the great task of today, namely, the raising of the standard of living of millions of people, who, in the past, had led a sub-human existence.

Such is the great adventure in which India and the Soviet Union are engaged. In this adventure I have played a very minor, a very humble, part. In playing this part, I have received the utmost kindness and assistance from the Soviet Government and people. We are particularly happy that Mr. Mikoyan, the Acting Prime Minister, has honoured us by his presence here tonight. In developing the relations between our two countries, my wife and I have made many friends, whose kindness will abide with us for ever.

Prime Minister Nehru expressed a similar sentiment at the end of his three weeks' historic stay in the Soviet Union. At the airport, when he was bidding farewell to his Soviet hosts, he said that he was leaving a little of his heart behind. An American newspaper said that it looked as if he was leaving his commonsense behind too. Prime Minister Nehru certainly did not think so.

Nor do I think that I am leaving my commonsense behind. On the contrary, my wife and I feel that our sense and sensibility, our hearts and minds, let alone our bodies, have been refreshed and invigorated by our nine years' stay in the Soviet Union. For this we shall ever remain grateful.

I now ask you to drink to the health of His Excellency Mr. Mikoyan, Mr. Kuznetsov, Mrs. Kuznetsov and other friends who are present here on this occasion and to the everlasting friendship between our two great countries.

## 41

## *The Doyen's Farewell Party*

During the last few months I have seen many a colleague of mine standing where I am standing today rather like an accused in the dock, pleading guilty for deserting his colleagues in Moscow; and I have seen the Doyen gently sentencing him to banishment from the U.S.S.R. with a few kind words and the traditional present. And now the time has come for me to face this ordeal. First of all, let me express the hope that this fate will not befall our Doyen for a long time to come. I am sure all of us agree that no country in the world has had so worthy a Doyen as Mr. Sohlman or so gracious a Doyen's wife as Madame Sohlman

It is eight years and eight months since we came to the Soviet Union. These eight years have passed quickly—very quickly. Yet, so far as India is concerned, these years are worth many generations. Ten years ago, we did no suspect that India and the Soviet Union would stand so close to each other as they do today. And we have developed this friendship almost from scratch, without injuring our established friendshp with other countries.

I hope that in this respect I have been faithful to my country's policy. I hope you will think of us as a couple who tried to establish the most friendly relations with the Soviet Union without in any way endangering our friendship with others. After all, it is the foremost duty of us all in Moscow to cultivate friendly relations with Russia. It must be admitted that in the beginning this was not very easy. A few years ago the Russians were—I hope our Russian friends will forgive me for saying so—rather standoffish towards diplomats; and diplomats, too, were stand-offish towards them. But now we realize what good friends, what sincere friends the Russians can be; how human, how almost sentimental they are; how they return goodwill with goodwill, kindness with kindness; and how easy it is to make friends in Russia and to keep these friendships. Certainly, that has been our experience.

At the same time, we have received thte utmost kindness from our friends in the diplomatic corps, even from the representatives of countries with which we have no formal diplomatic relations. We have not allowed the political differences between one country and another to come in the way of our personal relations and friendships. There are only two countries in the world which we keep at arm's length—South Africa and Portugal. How any one can fraternize with them in view of what is happening there, and especially in Angola, I do not know.

With some of our colleagues we have naturally been more intimate than others. It would be invidious to mention names. I shall mention only one name, namely, our Doyen who stands in a category by himself. We shall never forget the many hours we have spent in this house, the many dinner parties, lunch parties, cocktail parties and Christmas parties we have attended, the many pleasant hours of conversation we have had with Mr. Sohlman and the equally interesting and perhaps more downright talks with Mrs. Sohlman. Indeed, Mrs. Sohlman is not only a friend of ours but a member of our Embassy; she is our *viva-voce* examiner in Russian, and many of our probationers have gone through her firm, but friendly, hands. I would like to convey to them and to you all our sincere gratitude for all the kindness we have received in Moscow; and this present you have given us will always remind us of some of the happinest years of our life.

## 42

## *Farewell Broadcast over Moscow Radio*

I am glad to be able to say a few words on the eve of my departure from the Soviet Union after a stay of eight years and eight months. But it is difficult to know exactly what I should say. Memories come thick and fast, and it will take some time to disentangle them. Yet a few impressions stand out.

Moscow has changed. A foreign journalist who had been here before the war told me that the only two things which had not changed since the thirties were the Kremlin and the Moscow River. That is doubtless an exaggeration. Yet, in my own time, there has been a visible change in Moscow. The city has grown bigger and brighter, there are more shops and consumer goods and the people are more happy and more relaxed.

What I have said of Moscow applies generally to the other cities of the Soviet Union as well. Doubtless the countryside still lags behind the towns, but there, too, steps have been taken to reduce the immemorial disparity between the town and the country.

The political atmosphere of the USSR in 1961 is very

different from that of 1952, the year of my arrival in the Soviet Union. An event like the sensational arrest of the Jewish doctors, which occurred soon after I came to Moscow, can never occur again in the USSR Ideology, instead of remaining static, has moved with the times; and personages, who were unable to move with the times, have been left behind.

Internationally, there have been ups and downs. The great hopes, roused by the historic 20th Congress and the Summit Conference of Geneva in 1955, were dashed in the succeeding year. The process of rebuilding good relations with the West, and particularly with the USA however, began again and was to have reached a climax at the projected Summit Conference in May, 1960. Again, a malignant fate intervened in the form of the U-2 plane, and there was a serious setback. The Presidential elections in the USA this year gave rise to the hope of a "fresh wind" in international relations. The wind has been blowing in contrary ways in different regions of the world. One can only hope that the meeting, which has just occurred between the two world statesmen, Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Kennedy, will gradually set the wind blowing again in the right direction—towards complete and general disarmament and everlasting peace.

Indo-Soviet relations have grown more friendly and more intimate than ever before. Physically, even the Himalayas are no longer a barrier to Indo-Soviet friendship. Politically, the 20th Congress has removed certain impediments in the way of the free development of the relations between India and the USSR; and the exchange of visits, beginning with those of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru to the Soviet Union and the Soviet leaders to India in 1955, has promoted mutual understanding. Culturally, there is a genuine interest in, and admiration for, each other's heritage in art and literature, as shown by the recent impressive celebration of the Centenary of Rabindranath Tagore in Moscow. Economically, the Soviet Union has been playing an appreciable part in India's development plans; and Bhilai, Cambay, Suratgarh and Ankleshwar have become household words in the Soviet Union as well as in India.

For me, to have been a spectator and, to a very small extent, an actor in the vast development of Indo-Soviet friendship has been a great privilege. It has also been an undiluted pleasure, for,

in the discharge of my duties, I have received the utmost co-operation from the Soviet Government and affection from the Soviet people. It will now be for others to build on foundations which have been so securely laid; and I have no doubt that the fine fabric of Indo-Soviet friendship will rise still higher and stand four sqare to all the winds that blow.

# *Appendixes*

# *Appendix 1*

## *Indian and Soviet Foreign Policies: Points of Convergence*

India won independence in 1947. It is worth remembering that the main principles of her foreign policy were already being evolved during the struggle for independence. We regarded that struggle as part of the world-wide struggle against imperialism.

Manatma Gandhi's vision embraced all humanity. It was left to Jawaharlal Nehru to spell out its international implications. The Indian National Congress declared its opposition not only to the operations of British imperialism but to the rising forces of Nazism and Fascism. At the time when the policy of appeasement held the field in Western Europe, the Congress condemned Mussolini's annexation of Abyssinia and the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in no uncertain terms.

The Soviet Union had a keener sense of the dangers of Fascism and Nazism than the Western Powers and the need for jointly and resolutely opposing them. Here already was a point of convergence between Soviet foreign policy and the incipient foreign policy of an India which was not yet independent.

The Soviet Union was the off-spring of the Revolution of 1917. The great objective of the Revolution was to establish Socialism. This, of course, was impossible without undermining capitalism; and imperialism, as Lenin put it, is the highest stage of capitalism. Hence the consistently anti-imperialistic outlook of the Soviet Union, which India has at once appreciated and shared.

Colonialism may now be regarded as a thing of the past. As Sardar K.M. Panikkar put it, "The Vasco da Gama era" has come to an end. Yet, the land to which Vasco da Gama belonged is still exercising colonialism in a savage form in parts of Africa such as Angola and Mozambique. The evil of racialism, which is inherent in colonialism, is also rampant in some States such as South Africa. Whenver these questions come before the United Nations, India and the Soviet Union have taken a forthright stand and condemned the oppressors and those openly or clandestinely supporting them.

The Soviet Union's attitude towards colonialism has expressed itself firmly in relation to the problems of our own subcontinent on more than one occasion. It is strange to think that Portuguese colonialism was permitted to survive in independent India for 17 long years. This showed how anxious the Government of India was to settle this question by peaceful means, if at all possible. When, after 17 years of peaceful waiting, Goa was integrated into India by the merest show of force, there was a furore in the United Nations; and there was even a move to dub India an aggressor, a move which was baulked by the fear of a possible Soviet Veto. At that time Mr. Adlai Stevenson, the US Representative, made a particularly vitriolic, albeit uncharacteristic, speech, denouncing India's conduct. It is only fair to say that Mr. Stevenson had second thoughts on the subject. His speech on Goa was left out, at his own request, from "The Complete Speeches of Adlai Stevenson".

During the Bangladesh crisis the Soviet attitude towards colonialism had a decisive effect on developments. One thing which we have learnt by experience is that colonialism need not necessarily be white; it can be brown, black or yellow and equally ruthless and even cruder. For nearly a quarter of a century, the West Pakistan military regime, hand in glove with the 22 multi-millionaire families of West Pakistan, exploited what is now Bangladesh to its heart's content and treated the Bengalees

almost as an inferior race. When, eventually, matters came to a head and there was war, India and the USSR found themselves on the same side, the side of freedom against tyranny. It was then that the historic Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was signed.

Imperialism and colonialism have been the most persistent causes of war and in opposing them India and the Soviet Union have been promoting peace. For independent India, nurtured in Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine of non-alignment, peace is not only a matter of expediency but a principle of conduct. The Soviet Union too appreciates the need for peace: in fact, the first Decree issued by Lenin after the Revolution was the Decree on Peace. It cannot, however, be said that peace, in the sense of total non-violence, was acceptable to the Soviet Union. On the contrary there was a time when Marxist theoreticians thought that violence was essential for the transformation of society and that war was inevitable. At the 20th Congress, held in 1956, these theories were modified. They had become clearly outmoded in the nuclear era; and it was declared that there was no fatal inevitability about war and that the transformation of society could be effected by peaceful parliamentary methods. Thus the outlook of the Soviet Union has come closer to India's, though it cannot be said to be identical.

This change in Soviet attitude has led to a wholesome appraisal, and eventually a warm appreciation, of India's policy of non-alignment. Why, the policy of detente, which is now being pursued by the Great Powers, is itself an application and expansion of the principle behind the policy of non-alignment. When Mr. Brezhnev signed the agreement with Mr. Nixon, outlawing nuclear war, he exclaimed: "This is the end of the cold war." India has sincerely welcomed this development.

The principal factor which militates against peace in Asia, Africa and Latin America and perpetuates tensions is the indiscriminate supply of arms to developing nations. In the course of his every impressive speech at the recent World Peace Congress, which was attended by 3,500 delegates from 143 countries, Mr. Brezhnev pointed out that the military budget of NATO countries had been increasing by 2 to 3 billion dollars every year. New and ever new types of weapons were being invented, and developing countries were being drawn into the orbit of the arms

race. "This arms race", said Mr. Brezhnev, "must be stopped." Mr. Brezhnev was not content with pious declarations; he has proposed a solution or at least a palliative in the UN. He has asked that the military budget of all Great Powers should be reduced by 10 per cent and that the funds so saved should be used in part for giving greater assistance to the developing countries.

Thus there are many common principles animating the foreign policies of India and the Soviet Union. However, no man, and, still less, no nation can live by principles alone. Principles have to be adjusted to the day-to-day problems of diplomacy; and diplomacy has been defined as "the art of the possible". Nevertheless, India and the USSR can claim that their foreign policies have been inspired by certain definite principles. It is these principles which were crystallized in, and sanctified by, the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendsihip and Cooperation.

## *Appendix 2*

# *Significance of Mr. Brezhnev's Visit*

We have met here today to reviw the result of Mr. Brezhnev's visit to India last month.

Before speaking about the results of Mr. Brezhnev's visit I would like to say a word about its nature. It was very different from the first exchange of visits between the Indian and Soviet Heads of States in 1955, with which I was closely associated. The visit of Jawaharlal Nehru to the USSR in June, 1955 and the visits of the Soviet leaders to India in the November of that year were largely exploratory and ceremonial. Mr. Brezhnev's visit was thoroughly businesslike. Of course, ceremony could not be excluded altogether. Mr. Brezhnev was received with all the honours due to the head of a government. There were official banquets and receptions. There was the mammoth Citizens' Reception at the historic Red Fort in Delhi, which was attended by one of the largest crowds Delhi has ever seen. There was the more intimate reception given by the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society. Mr. Brezhnev also spoke to the Members of Parliament, where he delivered a memorable address, setting forth the aims

and objectives of Soviet foreign policy.

Most of Mr. Brezhnev's time, however, was taken up with talks with the Prime Minister. More hours were spent in talks during the five days of Mr. Brezhnev's visit to Delhi than in the twenty three days of Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to the Soviet Union or the eighteen days of the Soviet leaders' visit to India in 1955.

The outcome of these talks has been impressive. There have been a Joint Declaration, a fifteen-year Economic and Trade Agreement and other subsidiary Agreements.

The Joint Declaration shows how close, if not identical, are the views of the Government of India and of the Soviet Union on such vexed problems as those of the Middle East, Vietnam and Bangladesh. India has appreciated the present international detente, of which Mr. Brezhnev was one of the principal architects. This is only natural, because India's own policy of non-alignment was directed towards the alleviation of international tensions.

There had been fears in some quarters that the detente between the big Powers might act to the detriment of the smaller Powers. It had even been suggested that this detente was but a cloak for the old, discredited theory of Balance of Power. Such fears have been removed by Mr. Brezhnev's visit and its outcome.

The Soviet Government's sensitivity to India's sensibilities was shown in its attitude towards the proposal of India and other like-minded States to turn the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. The Joint Declaration has affirmed the Soviet Union's willingness to play its part in this respect.

On the very day on which the Joint Declaration was published, the US Government announced its intention to assert its naval presence in the Indian Ocean more frequently than before. This was on a par with the sabre-rattling in which the US Government indulged during our war with Pakistan, when the 7th Fleet made its appearance in the Indian Ocean, and, more recently, when it ordered a world-wide alert of American forces during the war in the Middle East—an alert which caused more consternation in the ranks of America's allies than in the Soviet Union.

The coincidence of these two contradictory moves reminded me of an incident during the visit of the Soviet leaders to India in 1955. At a great public meeting in Bombay, Prime Minister

iBulganin declared that the Soviet Union regarded Goa as "an integral part of India". The very next day John Foster Dulles referred to Goa as "a province of Portugal". The province of Portugal has gone with the wind. So will the efforts to turn the Indian Ocean into a sphere of Great Power rivalry.

As is well known, Mr. Brezhnev has often spoken of the need for a collective security scheme for Asia. This term does not find a place in the Joint Declaration. India has always been allergic to labels. For instance it has defined its goal as "a socialistic pattern of society" rather than socialism. However, in periphrastic language, India has supported Mr. Brezhnev's proposal. Mr. Brezhnev has himself made it clear that his so-called scheme is not a ready-made plan but an idea: an idea which lay behind the Bandung Conference and the Asian Relations Conference convened by Jawaharlal Nehru soon after India became independent. At the 24th Congress, Mr. Brezhnev had explained his idea thus: "In setting the goal of extending the zone of relaxation to the whole world, we think it important that Asia should join this process on a broad scale. Here we proceed not only from the interests of our own country, two thirds of whose territory is in Asia, but we take into account the place which that Continent holds in the life of mankind, the role of Asian States and the interests of Asia itself and its peoples." Mr. Brezhnev has also made it clear that this is an idea to be worked out by the Asian States themselves and has expressed the hope that all the States of Asia without exception would take part in it. In the Joint Declaration it is stated that both governments attach "particular significance to the broad development of mutually beneficial cooperation and the strengthening of peace and stability through common efforts by other States in this largest and most populous area in the world"; and the hope is expressed that Asia will thus become a "continent of peace, stability and positive co-operation".

In this connection it is worth remembering that it was after all the USSR which mooted the idea of a collective security conference in Europe. For more than a decade it had been pooh-poohed as a ruse on the part of the USSR to get recognition for East Germany. I recall how Dr. Adenauer, on his visit to the Soviet Union in 1957, stated in one of his earliest utterances that East Germany was "against the law of nature, the law of man

and the law of God". And yet East Germany has won international recognition and is now a member of the UN, and a Conference for Collective Security in Europe has taken place. There is little doubt that the concept of an Asian security scheme too will gradually gain ground.

The Joint Declaration is realistic enough to concede that there are still some danger spots in the world. It recognizes that there are regions where racialism is rampant and colonialism has raised its head in new and insidious forms. In particular, it has stressed the dangers of the continuing arms race.

India has good reason to be alarmed at the arms race which is taking place in Asia. Iran which has not concealed its partiality for Pakistan is getting arms to the extent of 3 billion dollars from the USA. Saudi Arabia is getting arms worth 1 billion dollars; and Kuwait, arms to the extent of 500,000 dollars. It is strange that the USA should supply such large quantities of arms to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, knowing that they will only be used against the USA's own protege, Israel. But where profits are concerned, principles have no place.

In the Joint Declaration India has supported the Soviet proposal in the UN that there should be a ten per cent cut on the defence budget of all Great Powers and that the amount thus saved should be used in part for the benefit of the people of the underdeveloped countries. It is good to think that this proposal has been approved by the General Assembly with only two members opposing it, namely China and Albania. Even States, where vested interests have a decisive voice, have not dared to oppose the proposal, but merely absained. This shows the increasing power of world opinion.

The most concrete result of Mr. Brezhnev's visit was the 15-year Plan for Economic, Technological and Trade Cooperation between India and the Soviet Union. This comprehensive Agreement covers a wide range of industrial and agricultural fields. It provides for the strengthening of cooperation in many fields, such as the peaceful use of atomic energy, space, electronics, geological surveys, iron and steel, non-ferrous metals, shipping, oil and petro-chemistry and power engineering.

Under this Agreement, the capacity of the Bhilai steel plant, which now stands at 2.5 million tons, is to be increased to 7 million; and of Bokaro to 10 million tons. In this connection

it is worth recalling that the Soviet Union was the first country to offer to build a steel plant for India. When we attained independence we realized the need for producing steel, for steel is the barometer of a country's strength. We approached the UK, the USA and the Federal Republic of Germany, without result. The Soviet offer in 1954 to build a steel plant for India was a landmark not merely in the history of India but in the history of Asia and Africa, the peoples of which used to be regarded for three centuries as hewers of wood and drawers of water. It was after the Soviet Union offered to put up a steel plant in Bhilai that Britain agreed to put up one in Durgapur, and FRG in Rourkela. This shows how Soviet aid has not only helped India intrinsically but has acted as a catalytic agent for aid from other countries.

India and the Soviet Union have agreed to try and almost double the volume of their trade by 1980. The growth of Indo-Soviet trade during the last decade has been truly phenomenal. When I was posted to the Soviet Union in 1952, the value of the trade stood at 30 million rupees; by the time I left the Soviet Union in 1961, it had risen to 1,000 million rupees. Now it stands at about 5,000 million rupees; and by 1980, it is expected to reach a figure between 7,500 and 10,000 million rupees.

Before Mr. Brezhnev's visit, there had been reports in a number of foreign papers that the Soviet Union would press for a naval base or for permanent port facilities for Soviet vessels in the Indian Ocean. Such reports have now been shown to have had no foundation whatever.

The magnitude of the aid, envisaged under the latest agreements, has baffled some Western observers. "Just how an underdeveloped nation of 580 million people", said the *Washington Post*, "most of whom poverty stricken, can serve Soviet interests is not easy to understand." There are some people whose touchstone in international affairs is how far their friendship with another nation will serve their own interests. There are others, whose criterion is whether their friendship with another country will serve their mutual interests and the cause of world peace. Great world leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Vladimir Ilych Lenin belonged to the latter category.

In Lenin's instructions to the first Soviet Ambassadors to Iran and to the newly independent State of Afghanistan, with which the

Soviet Government was the first to establish diplomatic relations after the Third Afghan War, Lenin said:

> Our eastern policy remains diametrically opposed to that of the imperialist countries. In our policy we strive to promote the independent economic and political development of the eastern peoples and shall do everything in our power to support them in this. Our role and our mission is to be neutral and disinterested friends and allies of the peoples struggling for a completely independent economic and political development."

In signing the present Agreements, Mr. Brezhnev has shown that the mantle of Lenin has fallen on worthy shoulders, even as the mantle of Jawaharlal Nehru has fallen on the frail but strong shoulders of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

# *Appendix 3*

## *National Conference on Peace, Security and Cooperation*

This is the first National Conference on Peace, Security and Cooperation convened jointly by the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society and the All India Peace and Solidarity Organization. The Indo-Soviet Cultural Society's primary objective is the promotion of friendship with the Soviet Union. The primary objective of the All India Peace and Solidarity Organization is world peace. And both organizations have always believed that Indo-Soviet friendship is a powerful factor to promote world peace. We have also always believed that the Soviet Union is a powerful factor in cementing the solidarity between the developing countries and between peace-loving forces throughout the world, of whom we have some very distinguished representatives on the platform today.

In spite of the similarity, if not the identity, of objectives, these two organizations have been travelling in separate compartments. Not water-tight compartments, but separate compartments with an inter-communicating door. Now we feel that a

stage has come when we can travel in the same compartment.

With the year of grace, 1974, a new chapter has opened. The year, 1973, was in many ways a memorable year. It opened with the great, the unforgettable victory of the Vietnamese people; and it ended with another historic event, namely, the visit of Comrade Brezhnev to India and the stupendous agreements signed between India and the Soviet Union.

It is a very good thing that we are starting our journey in this city, the city of Hyderabad. To us, Hyderabad is the city of Maqdoom Mohiuddin, the great revolutionary poet. Moreover, in Hyderabad we can look back on the journey which we have performed so far and see what distance we have travelled. Perhaps, I am in a better position to assess it, because I had spent two years in Hyderabad before many of you were born. At that time Maqdoom Mohiuddin was an obscure figure, though he was well known to the police; he was a hunted "agitator". That was the hey day of feudalism. On the top of the feudal pyramid stood His Exalted Highness the Nizam with the coveted title of Faithful Ally of the British Empire. Above His Exalted Highness stood an even more exalted figure, His Majesty the King of England, twisting the Nizam's tail every now and then, wielding the weapon of paramountcy and bringing it down on the head of delinquent Princes when British interests were involved. Now all this is gone. British paramountcy is gone; the Nizam is gone and feudalism is gone. But something remains. That is the poverty of the people. The bitter poverty on which the glittering pyramid of feudalism had rested is still there.

The reason for this poverty is still there too, and that is the exploitation of man by man. It is an ancient evil. The struggle against this evil is an ancient one too. But it took on new dimensions, irresistible dimensions with a great event which occurred in our own life-time, namely, the Great October Revolution of 1917. At about the same time there appeared a frail ascetic figure in India, Mahatma Gandhi, who also stood against the exploitation of man by man, and exhorted his own people and the people of all lands to resist exploitation. Here already was an affinity between the Russian Revolution and our own non-violent revolution, of which Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were the leaders.

It has been the privilege of the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society

to water and manure the young plant of Indo-Soviet friendship. This plant has grown into a robust tree, yielding abundant fruit. Three years ago, when India passed through the gravest crisis since independence, when she was attacked by Pakistan, when one Great Power openly supported that country and another Great Power started making noises across the Himalayas, the tree of Indo-Soviet friendship yielded a golden fruit, namely, the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. Only a few weeks ago, it yielded another golden fruit in the form of the 15-year Economic Agreement between India and the Soviet Union, concluded on the occasion of Mr. Brezhnev's visit to India. I can only describe it as a Magna Carta for Indian economic development.

Magna Carta means the Great Charter, but there is no use having a charter unless you know its provisions, unless you know its potentialities, unless you use them, unless you insist that our rulers should use them in the proper way. That is the main purpose behind the National Conference on Peace, Security and Cooperation. With this Magna Carta in our hands we can go forward to the goal, set by Jawaharlal Nehru, namely a socialistic pattern of society. Mahatma Gandhi described the goal in his own inimitable way as "the removal of every tear from every eye".

The cynic may say that this is impossible, that tears have been shed from time immemorial and will continue to be shed and that the exploitation of man by man will continue. That exploitation started with Adam and Eve when Eve exploited the weakness of Adam in the Garden of Eden, though that is more correctly called, the exploitation of man by woman, a form of exploitation which has taken on massive commercial dimension in some countries.

The Padre calls the earth a vale of tears. That is not how Lenin regarded the earth. That is not how Mahatma Gandhi regarded the earth. If the earth is a vale of tears, it's because man has made it so, not because God willed it. This earth can be a valley of sunshine and gladness and happiness and laughter and it is up to us to bring about this transformation in our own country. In this process I firmly believe that Indo-Soviet Cooperation is a powerful asset. That is why I would like to say, with all the fervour at my command, "Long Live Indo-Soviet friendship", Long live World peace!

# *Notes*

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*Chapter 1* INDIAN ART EXHIBITION
*Speech at the opening of an Indian Art Exhibition in Moscow on the 6th August 1953.*

*Chapter 2* SOVIET CULTURAL DELEGATION TO INDIA
*Toast at an Embassy Party in honour of the Soviet Cultural Delegation to India on the 9th January 1954.*

*Chapter 3* RETURN OF SOVIET CULTURAL DELEGATION
*Toast at a Dinner Party in the Indian Embassy on the Return of the Soviet Cultural Delegation from India on the 18th March 1954.*

*Chapter 4* INDIAN HANDICRAFTS EXHIBITION
*Speech at the opening of the Indian Handicrafts Exhibition in Leningrad in December 1955.*

*Chapter 5* ANNIVERSARY OF NEHRU'S VISIT
*Talk on Moscow Radio on the Anniversary of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's Visit to the USSR on the 22nd June 1956.*

*Chapter 6* A BANDUNG BANQUET
***Toast at a banquet by the representatives of the Bandung States to Dr. Soekarno on the 30th August 1965.***

*Chapter 17* WITH THE INDIAN COMMUNITY
*Speech at a meeting of the Indian Community in Moscow on the 15th February 1958.*

*Chapter 18* COMMENCEMENT OF MOSCOW-DELHI AIR SERVICE
*Toast at an Embassy dinner on the conclusion of talks for the establishment of the Moscow-Delhi Airline, the 17th February 1958.*

*Chapter 19* VISIT OF KING OF NEPAL
*Speech on the occasion of the King of Nepal's Visit to the Soviet Union in June 1958.*

*Chapter 20* FISHERMEN'S DINNER
*Toast at the Fishermen's Dinner Party on the 1st October 1958.*

*Chapter 21* THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA
*Lecture on "The Republic of India" at the University of Moscow on the 21st May 1959.*

*Chapter 22* INDIAN REPUBLIC DAY 1959
*Radio talk on the eve of the Indian Republic Day 1959.*

*Chapter 23* EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA IN MOSCOW
*Toast to His Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia on the 11th July 1959.*

*Chapter 24* TOAST TO A BRIDE AND BRIDEGROOM
*Toast to the bride and bridegroom at the marriage of Miss Malalasekara to Mr. Dudley Wijeyaratna on the 17th September 1959.*

*Chapter 25* PRESIDENT SEKOU TOURE IN MOSCOW
*Toast to President Sekou Toure on the 25th November 1959.*

*Chapter 26* BUDDHA JAYANTI
*Speech on the occasion of the Birthday Celebrations of Buddha at Moscow on the 11th May 1960.*

*Chapter 36* IAF DELEGATION IN MOSCOW
*Toast at a dinner in the Embassy in honour of the Indian Air Force Delegation on the 13th February 1961.*

*Chapter 37* AT THE MOSCOW UNIVERSITY
*Speech at the Moscow University on the 13th April 1961.*

*Chapter 38* TAGORE CENTENARY CELEBRATION
*Speech on the occasion of the Centenary Celebrations of Rabindranath Tagore at the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, on the 8th May 1961.*

*Chapter 39* FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL DINNER
*Speech at the French Ambassador's Farewell Dinner in Moscow on the 29th May 1961.*

*Chapter 40* FOREIGN MINISTRY'S FAREWELL DINNER
*Speech at a Farewell Party given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, USSR, on the 30th May 1961.*

*Chapter 41* THE DOYEN'S FAREWELL PARTY
*Speech at Farewell Party held by the Doyen of the Diplomatic Corps in Moscow.*

*Chapter 42* FAREWELL BROADCAST OVER MOSCOW RADIO
*Farewell Radio Broadcast in June 1961.*