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No. 402



EMBASSY OF INDIA,
MOSCOW.

4th November 1960.

Ang... k.

Will you please refer to my demi-official letter No.394 dated the 29th October, 1960, in which I had briefly reported the contents of Marshal Malinovsky's speech when he attended a dinner in the Embassy last week? Yesterday, he invited the entire delegation, led by Dr.Kothari, and members of the Embassy to dinner at the Soviet Army Officer's Club. The invitation cards bore the name of both Marshal Malinovsky and his wife; and Dr.Kothari and I were seated on either side of Mrs.Malinovsky. This was a major departure from protocol, as I have known it here for the last eight years; in the U.S.S.R., wives do not exist at official parties, or occupy relatively unimportant positions at the table. There was only one other occasion on which an invitation was received in the name of both the host and his wife. That was when Mr. and Mrs.Kozlov invited the Yuvraj and Yuvrani of Kashmir to dinner, and on that occasion we felt an exception was made because of the Yuvrani.

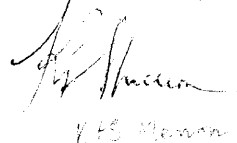
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2. Marshal Malinovsky proposed two toasts in which he made what must definitely be looked upon as a policy statement. He referred to Mr.Khrushchev's policy of peaceful co-existence and said that the Soviet Government had been consistently trying to develop contacts of various types with all countries. As far as Indo-Soviet relations were concerned, there had been no question of building them up in this way: as soon as the artificial barrier which the British had erected between our two countries disappeared, they began to co-exist quite naturally without having to make any special effort to develop friendly relations. Great Britain had foreseen this development and therefore interposed a narrow strip of Afghan territory between India and the U.S.S.R. Afghanistan was then under the thumb of Great Britain. Britain did not suspect that a time would come when Afghanistan would draw nearer to the Soviet Union than to Britain.

3. Taking up a point I had made in my toast that it gave us much satisfaction to note that the Soviet Army stood firmly behind its Government's plan for disarmament, Marshal Malinovsky said that it was the sincere aim of the Soviet Government to reach a stage at which no country would have any Armed Forces at all. Such a plan was the only guarantee that man would not destroy himself; it would also open up the possibility of diverting resources into more economically useful channels.

However, there were some people, said Marshal Malinovsky, who took the view that disarmament would be a rash undertaking as long as there existed an aggressive imperialist camp. Such people thought nothing of even launching a nuclear war, which might entail the loss of half the human race but would leave the world free from the contamination of capitalism. The Soviet Government could not possibly agree with this view. The advocates of this view did not realise what a catastrophe a nuclear war would be. Not only the war and the destruction which it would cause, but its aftermath would be terrible. Famine and epidemics would stalk the land; and for a whole generation or more, the population would be full of the maimed, crippled and diseased. Marshal Malinovsky's criticism was directed at the Chinese, though he did not mention them by name, and to the view, said to have been expressed by Mr. Mao Tse-tung, that if there were to be a nuclear war, some two or three hundred million Chinese might die, but still three or four hundred million Chinese would be left. This goes to show that the basic difference between the Chinese and Soviet Communist Parties in their approach on the vital question of war and peace has not yet been eliminated.

Yours sincerely,



V. B. Menon

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Copy forwarded to Shri O. Pulla Reddi,
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