

? . Baldandorjiin Nyambuu (1922-2008) : A Member of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People ' s Revolutionary Party

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## **II. Baldandorjiin Nyambuu (1922-2008)**

**: A Member of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's  
Revolutionary Party**

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## 1. Birthplace

YuK (Yuki Konagaya): I am very pleased to meet you. I have heard that you are one of the most famous politicians in Mongolia who honestly fought against the disgraceful situation of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in the twentieth century. I would like to suggest that we start this interview with your childhood. Will you explain about your childhood such as your birthplace, birth year, parents, and brothers or sisters?

BN (Baldandoljiin Nyambuu): I agree to your suggestion. I will start my self-introduction with my childhood. I was born in 1922 in a place called "Sharkhai Hill" in Darkhan Chinvan Puntsagtserengiin *khoshoo* of Tusheet khan *aimag*. Our *khoshoo* has changed to Sergelen *sum*, Töv *aimag*, as a result of the later reform of local administrative units. I am eighty-three years old now. I have been told that my ancestors had lived in "Sharkhai Hill" for generations. My family has been nomadic and exclusively engaged in herding livestock.

YuK: Did you have much livestock?

BN: My family was not wealthy. My grandfather and his paternal ancestors had little livestock. However, I have been told that his maternal ancestors had much livestock. My father was born in 1888 in "Sharkhai Hill" as well. My mother was the third child in her family. She grew up in a livestock farming family.

My father got married when he was twenty years old to my mother, who was seventeen years old. After their marriage, they started their lives with one horse, one or two milk cows, and a few sheep and goats. My father had been engaged in hunting of tarbagans (a marmot) in addition to herding livestock. He told me that he had improved his life generally by hunting tarbagans. My father could read and write the Mongolian script. Before the revolution, he had been engaged in administration as a junior government official from the age of twenty. He told me that such junior government officials had been called "Khar Zaisan (black noblemen)."

While they were leading their life in that way, the Mongolian People's Revolution occurred in 1921. In the early stage of the revolution, my father had been engaged in herding livestock. After the Mongolian People's Revolution, he had been a member of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party during the period from the later 1920s to the early 1930s. He also worked for a while for the government offices of the *bag* and the *sum*. He finally quit his work at the government offices and resumed herding livestock. His family gradually became wealthier in the countryside, with an increase in the number of livestock.

My family used to be engaged in the training of racehorses every year. I had attended a race on a horse, which my father trained since my childhood.

While I was leading such a life, in 1938, my father was arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security.

YuK: Why?

BN: Why? I do not know. The Ministry of Internal Security did not explain the reason why they arrested my father at all. I tried to understand the reason why my father was arrested by investigating the political climate of Mongolia during the period. Not only my father but thousands of fathers in Mongolia were arrested in this way. The thousands of fathers never returned home but were sentenced to death, with their young wives and small children left at home. It was 1937 during which such a “grievous disaster” was brought into Mongolia. It was the start of the “mass arrests.”

Thousands of Mongolians were sentenced to death by “political false charges” according to the determination of the “Special Committee Plenipotentiary” in October 2, 1937. The “Great Purge” started this way. The “Special Committee” was organized at the end of 1937 with Internal Security Minister Kh. Choibalsan, Secretary of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee D. Lovsansharav, and so on as members. People were arrested and executed immediately by the determination of the “Special Committee.”

The Ministry of Internal Security told nobody why my father was arrested or where he was detained. We had no idea whether my father was alive. My mother went to the Ministry to inquire about my father, but she returned home without knowing anything at all. After a while, however, rumors came to be spread about my father that “He is alive! He is likely in a prison! He has been likely sentenced to ten-year imprisonment!” Such rumors were spread from mouth to mouth not only about my father but also about the people arrested from my land. However, the rumors were baseless.

It was not until the start of the democratic movement in Mongolia that I knew the truth about my father. In the early 1990s, I inquired at the Public Records Office of the Ministry of Internal Security and read the literature about my father. In this literature, it was recorded that “he was arrested in August, 1938.” He was detained for approximately one month and started to be examined in September, 1938. Written evidence was taken twice. At the first examination, he had stated, “I am not involved in any counterrevolutionary activities. I have nothing to say about the counterrevolution!” At the second examination, he had stated, “It is a fact that I joined a counterrevolutionary organization under the leadership of a court officer named Vaajir in the office of the Bogd Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu. We aimed to restore the old regime by overthrowing the present government. I participated in this activity and had assignments. I had five people in my region join the organization!” and so on.

As a result, the “Special Committee” sentenced him to death on November 10, 1938. Given that it was a rule during the period that the determination of the “Special Committee” be executed on the same day, the death sentence was likely executed on the evening of November 10, 1938.

During this period, those who were sentenced to death by the determination of the “Special Committee” were taken to an execution ground in a truck or chased by guards with a rifle. They were then made to stand on the edge of a large hole to be shot in the head from behind. My father may have been killed in this way. I could not find any literature on how the determination of the “Special Committee” was executed in the Public Records Office of the Ministry of Internal Security. Such literature may not exist. In 1990, the Ministry rehabilitated my father. I investigated the statement of my father at the second examination. I found that the “counterrevolutionary organization under the leadership of a court officer named Vaajir in the office of the Bogd Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu” had never existed. In addition, the “court officer named Vaajir in the office of the Bogd Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu” had never existed. No one in my region “joined the counterrevolutionary organization on referral from my father.” There was no truth in the statement recorded in the written evidence. It was a “false crime” indeed.

I found that my father had been examined during this period by an officer of the Ministry of Internal Security named D. Batkhuu. This man is still alive. I met him recently to find out about my father. He said, “The name of Baldangdorji, the birth year, the birth place, and so on are the only truthful statements. The other parts are all lies. The second written report was a bogus story we created. We made your father sign it. Although he had strongly denied it at first, as a result of our alternate continuous punching for several days, he finally gave up and signed our false written “confession”. In those days, those who refused to sign were all tortured until they did so!”

YuK: How old were you when your father was arrested?

BN: I think I was about fifteen years old then. Two elderly brothers, one younger brother, my mother and I, five family members, were left home. When my father was arrested, I was in Ulaan Baatar with one of my elderly brothers. The other elderly brother, the younger brother, and my mother were at home.

I had initially been a herder until the age of fifteen. There were no elementary schools in our region. It was only in 1940 that an elementary school was constructed. Because my father could read and write the Mongolian script, he started teaching it to me when I was eight or nine years old. After being taught the Mongolian script by my father for about two years, I was able to read and write.

In those days, there was a priest named Luvsantseren in our region. He was respected by all the people because he was proficient in Tibetan and Chinese and had such special abilities as preparation of Tibetan drugs. My father sent me to him to learn Tibetan. In addition, I also learned mathematics and the Mongolian script. I went to his house early in the morning on a horse and returned home in the evening after study. I stayed at his house during winter for about two years. I hated the Tibetan script very much because I did not wish to become a lama. However, I liked the Mongolian script and mathematics very much. I mastered sufficient knowledge to work as a file clerk.

## **2. Stationing of the Soviet Army**

BN: Our family started attending the Naadam horse race in Ulaan Baatar in the 1930s, and we attended it for several years. My home land is 100 to 150 kilometers away from Ulaan Baatar. We sometimes billeted in Mt. Bogd near Ulaan Baatar.

In 1936, I entered a vocational school for communications technology in Ulaan Baatar. In those days, there were five technical institutes in Ulaan Baatar. I was admitted into the school through the referral of an acquaintance of my father. I used to come to Ulaan Baatar in winter for study and return home in spring.

I started living in Ulaan Baatar in 1937. In those days, the political climate inside and outside Mongolia was increasingly harsh. From 1935 on, boundary incidents occurred frequently in Eastern Mongolia. Many incidents occurred when the Japanese Army invaded the national boundary in Buranders and in the vicinity of the Khalkh River. The “Soviet-Mongolian Mutual Assistance Protocol” was signed by the presidents of the two countries in 1936 in Moscow.

In the summer of 1937, after spending the summer vacation in my home land, I came to Ulaan Baatar with my father on a camel at the end of August. Upon reaching the Yaarmag Hill as the sun set, we came to see a line with many lights. The light line was very long and continued with regularity. Neither my father nor I had ever seen such a line, and we were totally surprised. We approached the light line by accelerating the camel and found that it was a long convoy with Soviet soldiers in it. The distance between cars was approximately twenty meters. The Soviet soldiers were seated on the chassis in queues with firearms. The convoy was so long that we could not see where it started and ended. The convoy entered Ulaan Baatar from the west side and traveled eastward. My father and I had to wait until the convoy passed because we needed to go to the other side of the line. But the convoy

kept going. We shivered with cold because it was a night in autumn. The convoy progressed throughout the night and finally finished its movement at dawn. After the convoy passed, we could go to the north side of Ulaan Baatar at last. After that, a similar convoy marched in the evening for several days. The Soviet army convoy, which two of us saw, was an army dispatched by the Soviet government to Mongolia to fulfill its duties under the Mutual Support Agreement. Thus, with my own eyes, I witnessed the entry of the huge corps of the Soviet army into Mongolia.

### **3. Mongolian Purge**

YuK: When did the “Political Purge” in Mongolia begin?

BN: The Political Purge in Mongolia began in the 1920s. During this period, numerous senior government officials, including the president of Mongolia, were executed. The Political Purge lasted until the 1990s. The “Political Purge” was discontinued at about the time when the democratic movement started. With a personality cult strengthened from the 1930s, numerous innocent people were sentenced to death on false charges. The history of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party states that Kh. Choibalsan was responsible for the purge. The political purge conducted during the Kh. Choibalsan period was considerably different from those conducted during the 1950s to the 1960s and in later periods.

The purge, which started in the 1920s, was further intensified in the middle of the 1930s. From the middle of the 1930s, numerous people were politically suppressed and sentenced to death. The first incident was the “Lkhümbe Incident,” which was followed by the “Jigdjav Incident.”

Jigdjav had temporarily acted as the President of the Provisional People’s Government in the early 1920s. Lkhümbe graduated from the University of the Peoples of the East (abbreviated to KUTV) in the Soviet Union. He returned to Mongolia after graduation from the university and acted as the chairman of the Mongolia Trade Union Central Council. Later, he was appointed the Secretary of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. He had participated in the suppression of the “antirevolutionary movement” that started in 1932 in Western Mongolia. Many Buryats ran away from the vicinity of Lake Baikal to Khentii province and Dornod province in Mongolia to escape the Russian October Socialist Revolution in 1917. They all lived in the northern parts of Khentii province and Dornod province. Lkhümbe had been in charge of the Buryat immigrant issues as the Secretary of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. He made a business trip to Khentii province in the middle of the 1930s, where he met the Khentii province Board Chairman of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary

Party. On the next day, he returned to Ulaan Baatar together with a member of the Khentii provincial Board of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party named M. Renchin. Shortly before they came back to Ulaan Baatar, the Ministry of Internal Security had arrested a person named Markhain Tsveen Khenty who lived in Dadal county, Khentii province. He had acted as the Vice Chairman of the Central Committee of the Mongolian Revolutionary Youth League Ulaan Baatar City Board Chairman of the Revolutionary Youth League. Before Markhain Tsveen was arrested, Tsevegjav, the President of Khentii Cooperative, had been arrested. Although Markhain Tsveen and Tsevegjav were from the same province, it is uncertain if they knew each other. The Ministry of Internal Security arrested Markhain Tsveen and slandered him noting that "You are involved with Tsevegjav, the President of Khentii Cooperative, who is a counterrevolutionary!" Markhain Tsveen denied that and repeatedly said, "No. I am not involved with Tsevegjav at all!" Then the Ministry of Internal Security hit and tortured him to force him to sign a false written confession. The false written confession stated "It is a fact that I was connected with Tsevegjav. We last contacted each other through Lkhümbe. We had known that Lkhümbe was expected to make a business trip to Khentii province. Lkhümbe handed over my letter to Tsevegjav after he reached Khentii province and then brought an answer to me!" Then the Ministry of Internal Security arrested Lkhümbe based on the false written confession and slandered him, "You are involved with counterrevolutionaries, Markhain Tsveen, Tsevegjav, and so on!" Lkhümbe did not admit that for more than one year. But the Ministry of Internal Security succeeded in making him sign a fabricated written confession after one year by hitting and inflicting torture on him. And he was shot to death, based on the false written confession.

The extremely cruel and cold-blooded methods used in the prisons of the Ministry of Internal Security in those days to make innocent people sign false written confessions were likely introduced by specialists from the Soviet Union. This method was invented by A. V. Vyshinsky, former Minister of Internal Security, and had been used in the Ministry of Internal Security of the Soviets. A. V. Vyshinsky had been confined in the same room as I. V. Stalin in an Imperial Russian prison before the Russian October Socialist Revolution in 1917. After winning the revolution, Stalin came to assume such important posts as the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party and the Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting and appointed A. V. Vyshinsky as the Attorney General of the USSR. A. V. Vyshinsky used the above methods to kill off the true communists (Bolsheviks) who were comrades of V. I. Lenin and contributed to the victory of the Russian October Socialist Revolution. A. V. Vyshinsky shot to death comrades of V. I. Lenin such as N. Bukharin, M.



Tukhachevski, who was a noted commander in chief of the Red Army, and V. Blyukher, based on false evidence, which he made them sign by torturing them. A huge number of people were shot to death this way. The political purge in Russia was conducted on a far larger scale and in a far crueller manner than the political purge in Mongolia. A. V. Vyshinsky threw Russian people into a state of fear and sunk them in a pool of blood. The Russian October Socialist Revolution would not have been able to exist even for a day without such cruel “red terrorism” led by I. V. Stalin.

In Mongolia, exactly the same method started to be used after Kh. Choibalsan was appointed to be the Minister of Internal Security in 1936. The Ministry of Internal Security arrested people involved in no crimes based on false written evidence signed by others, and Ministry agents hit and tortured them in a cruel manner with the objective of having them admit to other fabrications. Choibalsan had acted as the First Vice Chairman of the People’s Commissariat before he was appointed to the post of Minister of Internal Security. He became very powerful. Although Choibalsan was one of the leaders of the 1921 Revolution, he was not appointed to a high post after the victory of the revolution. This fact was likely related to his personality. Many people might have regarded him as “a person likely to commit a politically irreparable mistake.” He had been even unemployed for a time. Many people were arrested in relation to the Lkhümbe Incident. On that occasion, Choibalsan was arrested too. Some of those arrested were sent to a Siberian prison camp. Choibalsan was included among them. In those days, it was least probable that prisoners sent to Russia would return home. However, Choibalsan shortly returned to Mongolia. No records have been found so far that explain why he was released and allowed to return to Mongolia. The KGB of the Soviets might have decided that “Kh. Choibalsan will be able to contribute to the Soviet Union in future!” The KGB probably allowed Choibalsan to return to Mongolia to take advantage of him. After Choibalsan returned from the Soviet Union, he came to build his bright political career. He was promoted to various posts such as the Ministry of Internal Security, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Minister of Defense, and the Vice Chairman of the People’s Commissariat.

The President of Mongolia in those days was P. Genden. It is apparent that it was not P. Genden who recommended Choibalsan to those posts. P. Genden had a strong sense of pride and a strict and fiery temperament to protect national interests. He formally visited the Soviet Union frequently and met the leaders of the Soviet government, including I. V. Stalin, the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. He was active in intergovernmental dialogues on the cooperative relationships between the Soviets and Mongolia.

In those days, Buddhism had a strong influence on Mongolian society. P. Genden exchanged opinions with leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the issues of Buddhism, temples, and priests. I. V. Stalin, et al. might have considered that “Buddhism, temples, and priests in Mongolia are an antirevolutionary power!” That is why they had taken an attitude that “Mongolian Buddhism must be eliminated by the power of the Ministry of Internal Security.” On the other hand, the President of Mongolia had stated that “the power of the Ministry of Internal Security should not be exerted over Mongolian Buddhism!” The confrontation between the Soviets and Mongolia on this issue had been long-lasting. It is reported that there was an intense argument on this issue between P. Genden and I. V. Stalin. The rumor that “P. Genden seized I. V. Stalin by the lapels and slapped him in the cheek!” might be truthful. In any case, President P. Genden had stood up for his nation without being daunted by I. V. Stalin’s power. The issue of Buddhism is an internal issue of Mongolia. Needless to say, it is apparent that Buddhism did not need to be interfered with by I. V. Stalin, who was a “cruel Bolshevik” with hands spoiled with blood and who knew nothing about Buddhism. In the first place, I. V. Stalin was uneducated. Nevertheless, he was given numerous titles such as “Great Leader of the International Working Class.”

I know some Russians attempt to explain the acts of I. V. Stalin, but I say that no theories are required to explain the acts of Stalin. I. V. Stalin was a fellow who threw Russian people into a pool of blood to monopolize power. His lack of education aggravated his greed and his attempt to monopolize power by all means. He killed many innocent people to achieve his purpose. A well-educated person would never have committed such stupidity. This has been proven by world history. All things considered, it is another issue as to why such a person could hold political power. From such a standpoint, anything called social revolution seems to be undesirable. The destiny of the nation and the people will depend on the nature and the educational level of the person holding State power.

The top officials of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the leadership of I. V. Stalin, started to prevent the export of products to Mongolia to compel a change in policy toward Buddhism. This might have been the only countermeasure that I. V. Stalin could take against P. Genden’s protection of Buddhism. As a result of such difficulties between the Soviets and Mongols, a tendency to criticize the views of P. Genden began to appear in the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. Some people among the top officials of the Mongolian government tried to make concessions to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union regarding Mongolian Buddhism, temples, and priests. Such people had been led by Rovsansharav, the Secretary of the Mongolian People’s

Revolutionary Party Central Committee, Erdev-Ochir, Choibalsan, and so on. In 1936, they conspired to force P. Genden to retire. This was the start of the “Great Political Purge” in Mongolia. In those days, the ambassador of the Soviets to Mongolia was Smirnoff.

After the retirement of P. Genden, the Ministry of Internal Security arrested 114 politicians and noted activists. This incident was called the “114-person Incident.” P. Genden had strongly objected to the arrest of those people. After the retirement of P. Genden, there were few persons in the Mongolian government who shared his philosophy. M. Demid was one of them. M. Demid acted as a member of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee Caucus, the Minister of Defense, and the commander-in-chief, and was respected by the public. He was Mongolia’s second leader. After the retirement of P. Genden, Choibalsan et al., who assumed positions in the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, started planning to force M. Demid to retire. This incident developed as follows.

In August 1937, M. Demid was invited to the twentieth anniversary ceremony of the USSR Red Army by General of the Army K.E. Voroshilov. In those days, K.E. Voroshilov was the Minister of Defense of the Soviet Union. M. Demid was invited as the Minister of Defense and the Commander in Chief of Mongolia and departed for Moscow to attend the ceremony. Since there was no railroad system in Mongolia in those days, in order to go to Moscow, he had to go to Ulaan-Ude by car and to change to the train there. M. Demid arrived at Ulaan-Ude and changed to the train. Because the purpose of the trip was attending a ceremony, he was accompanied by his wife and several officials of the Ministry of Defense. During the train ride, he received a message asking him to “return immediately because an emergency issue has occurred.” Accordingly, M. Demid got off the train at a certain railroad station in Siberia and returned to Ulaan Baatar via Ulaan-Ude. His wife and fellow travelers directly departed for Moscow. Upon arrival at Ulaan Baatar, he found that he had not needed to return to Mongolia urgently, and no one was identified as the person who recalled him. Several days later, he departed for Moscow again via Ulaan-Ude. He needed to ride a passenger train at Ulaan-Ude. The train company, however, did not allow him to ride a passenger train but, instead, they asked him to ride on a freight train to which two passenger cars were linked. It is reported that the people on the Soviet side who had arranged this trip explained to M. Demid that “he needs to take the train because there is no train that will arrive at Moscow in time!” The other passengers in the passenger cars linked to the freight train were D. Jantsankhorloo, the Head of the Cannon Bureau of the Ministry of Defense; S. Dorjajev, a Buryat councilor of the Soviet Embassy in Mongolia, and his

wife; D. Gombosüren, an officer of the Mongolian Embassy in Moscow; and a female student abroad in Moscow named R. Dagzmaa. Dagzmaa might have been a relative of Gombosüren. The above-mentioned persons were passengers in the special passenger train. There was no diner in the freight train, and there was only one large round table in the car. They had breakfast, lunch, and supper together around the table. They say that meals were served by the Soviet side. They then arrived at the Taiga Station in Siberia, where lunch was prepared for them. A soup was served first and then they were given *banshi* (boiled meat pie). They all reportedly lost consciousness after eating the *banshi*. Dagzmaa later reported this event. She said that when she became conscious after a while, General M. Demid and Bureau Head D. Jantsankhorloo had disappeared, and the other people had fallen down. The train continued to head toward Moscow without stopping. Upon arrival at Moscow, they were hospitalized. They were diagnosed as “being poisoned!” and were treated. During the treatment, they were told that “M. Demid, the Commander in Chief, and D. Jantsankhorloo, the Head of the Cannon Bureau of the Ministry of Defense, had died!” Thus she knew that two of her fellow travelers had died. The wife of General M. Demid, who had already arrived in Moscow, left for the Taiga Station in Siberia soon after she was told that “General M. Demid died!” Upon arrival at the Taiga Station, Mrs. Demid claimed the body of her husband. As expected, the body of General M. Demid was full of bruises, but nobody explained to her the cause of his death.

Thus, the bodies of M. Demid and D. Jantsankhorloo were transported to Mongolia. I saw the arrival of the two bodies at Ulaan Baatar with my own eyes. It was in 1937. The general public deplored the “death of General M. Demid” very much. Newspapers reported the death of General M. Demid. The government officially announced a period of national mourning. His death evoked a great response, which lasted for about ten days. The national funeral was held for him at the Artan Orgii Cemetery, where people who rendered distinguished service for the nation were buried, and a bronze monument was constructed for him.

A few days after the event, however, it was suddenly announced that “M. Demid was a counterrevolutionary!” It came to be reported in newspapers that “Genden, Demid, and so on were involved in antirevolutionary activities!” All kinds of malicious gossip were set out about them. In those days, people were emotionally unstable, and the entire nation was terrified. People could not tell truth from untruth. The death of General M. Demid was intentionally planned from the beginning. Thus, the “Genden-Demid Counterrevolutionary Incident” was also a “fabricated story.”

#### **4. Disciplinary Trial Against Priests**

BN: In the summer of 1937, when I was in my province, shocking incidents occurred continuously. It was reported that “Highest Priest Yonzon Hambo Ruvsankhaisig, High Priest Damdin, Living Buddha of the Manjushri Temple, and so on were arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security!” Such incidents terrified the Mongolian people in those days because they were very religious. “Our teachers were arrested,” the news was passed from mouth to mouth. The incidents were very serious. However, those rumors were spread secretly. The people did not talk about the news openly in general in fear of themselves being arrested. The entire Mongolian society was terrified. Some people were anxious about “what would happen next and how those incidents would develop.” Society was disquieted.

When I came back to Ulaan Baatar after the summer vacation, the incidents had become more serious. Everyone came to complain. In the autumn, soon after I returned to Ulaan Baatar, the arrested high priests went on trial. The trial was conducted in the Bömbögör Nogoön Theater (a dome-shaped green theater), presently located close to the government buildings. This theater was later destroyed by fire. It is uncertain whether the theater was burnt on purpose or by accident. Given that many of the high priests arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security were tried on “politically false charges,” the theater was likely burned intentionally. There is a rumor that, when the building was burning with great force, people whooped for joy, “It is burning well!” There might be some people who really wanted to burn it.

The present Sükhbaatar Square used to be a large square in those days. There used to be a wooden platform near the area where the image of Sükhbaatar is located at present. On national holidays, a labor rally would be held in the Square where leaders of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party made speeches on the platform to the workers. In those days, the “labor's national holiday parade” had not started yet. The parade started later.

At about the starting time of a trial, two thick pillars were erected on both ends of the wooden platform to install speakers. The trial conducted inside the theater was then broadcast through the speakers. Many young priests gathered around the speakers to listen to the trial. The speakers were sometimes interrupted. Because I lived in the vicinity of the north side of the theater, I would come home from the school across the theater. The trial lasted for several days. Highest Priest Yonzon Hambo Ruvsankhaisig was a Tibetan. I would listen to his speech through the speakers. Because he was a Tibetan, he could not speak Mongolian very fluently. I could not understand what he said. Because I was a child, his speech only sounded like a speech of a man with a funny voice. I could not understand his speech at all. One day, when I came to

the square on my way back from school, I saw many young priests gathering on the western side of the theater. When I got closer to the priests to see what was happening, I found a large wooden fence had been constructed there. Young priests were standing along the wooden fence. I found two persons standing inside the wooden fence in a military uniform. One of the two seemed to be a combat commander, and the other seemed to be a soldier. The soldier was holding a machine gun. He was shouting in a loud voice to the young priests standing along the wooden fence with the machine gun pointed at them, "I'll shoot you! Shoot you!" I was jostled near the wooden fence in the crowd of young priests. Then the gunpoint of the machine gun held by the soldier came to be pointed at me. And I found the soldier shouting again, "I'll shoot you!" I felt that he was shouting at me, and I turned back to flee from him.

The young priests standing along the wooden fence were talking to each other, "Now, Yonzon Hambo is speaking! The trial will finish soon!" There was only one entrance to the theater on the west side. One large bus and one small bus were in front of the entrance. The rear doors of the two buses were open and were bordered on the door of the theater. It was apparent that the buses were to pick up the priests from the theater after the trial finished. The young priests standing there appeared eager to rescue the high priests coming out of the theater. The soldier seemed to be standing with the machine gun pointed at the young priests so that he would be able to shoot them if they pressed to the wooden fence to rescue the high priests. I was standing far away from the wooden fence in fear of the machine gun. Young priests standing near me were talking to each other in whispers. The trial lingered on and on. Considerable time passed in this way. The soldier with a machine gun sometimes shouted loudly, "Stay quiet, or I will pepper you with bullets!" Suddenly, the young priests, who had been gathering there, started running toward the south. I started running after them. The high priests, who were given penalties, were picked up on other buses from another entrance of the theater and taken away. The buses at the entrance on the west side turned out to have been a means of camouflage. Thus, I saw a trial against the high priests. The people were very sad.

Before then, on September 10, 1938, there is a record that sixty-five leaders of the government and the army were arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security on a single night. The arrested people were first of all assembled at the Ministry of Internal Security. Then they were taken to the office of Kh. Choibalsan, the Minister of Internal Security. Choibalsan sentenced the people "You are arrested!" As soon as Choibalsan said that, the officials of the Ministry of Internal Security immediately handcuffed them.

Thus, sixty-five persons were arrested on a single night. Various rumors were spread among the people on the following day. People were talking, "Is a coup d'état being staged? It seems that a coup d'état is being staged!" A sense of fear spread among the people. Such arrests lasted until September 30. There is a record that seventy persons were arrested on September 30. The seventy persons included D. Sambuu, the Vice Chairman of the People's Commissariat cum the Vice Commander in Chief; S. Darzav, the Minister of Defense; J. Malj, the Chief of Staff of the Minister of Defense; S. Dendev, the Head of the Military Hospital; Ch. Ochirbat, the Head of the Third Bureau of the Ministry of Defense; R. Battor, the Minister of Education; Ts. Ramjav, the Chairman of the State Conference; and Ch. Shagdar, the governor of Dornod Province. An extraordinary trial was conducted for fourteen of the seventy persons.

I went to the entrance of the theater frequently to see the trials conducted inside it. Only the members of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and holders of an ID card were admitted into the theater. The entrance of the theater was always guarded by a soldier with a gun. The trial was broadcast through the speakers as usual. The trial for the fourteen persons lasted for more than ten days. All of them were sentenced to death.

Two of them appealed to the State Conference. The State Conference was chaired by L. Dogsom in those days. L. Dogsom was a famous revolutionary in the 1921 Revolution and was a comrade of Sükhbaatar. In response to the appeal by two individuals, the State Conference deliberated and revoked the death penalty. The death penalty was revoked for Ts. Ramjav, a former Chairman of the State Conference, and Ch. Shagdar, the governor of Dornod Province.

Vangan, one of Ramjav's sons, later contributed to the development of the "Golden Age" of culture and arts of Mongolia. His other son, Natsag, was also a cultural contributor. Mr. Ramjav was forgiven thanks to his children. Ramjav and Shagdar were forgiven, but the remaining twelve people were sentenced to death.

In 1990, the rehabilitation of victims of political suppression started. As a part of the rehabilitation activities, the Mongolian Ministry of Internal Security finally identified the execution grounds where the people involved in the political false charges were executed. The execution grounds had been kept secret until then. There is a large valley on the north side of Mt. Songino Khaikhhan in the western area of Ulaan Baatar City. It was the execution grounds for the Ministry of Internal Security. Those who were examined for "political crimes" and sentenced to the death penalty were shot to death here. The twelve individuals were shot to death on the night of October 24. It has been reported that leaders of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party were

involved in the shootings. A. Amar, L. Dogsom, Kh. Choibalsan, and so on were reportedly involved in it. They tied the hands and stuffed a cloth into the mouth of those who would be executed. They were all shot to death in a squatting position on the edge of a hole with their faces turned to the hole. After two persons were shot to death, A. Amar entered a car because it was a cold night. Then Internal Security Minister Kh. Choibalsan reportedly shouted, “Why in the world is Amar sitting in the car? Are there any holes available? If yes, we will shoot Amar to death too!” It is apparent that Choibalsan forcibly took the leaders of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party to the execution grounds in order to threaten them.

In the early 1990s, the execution grounds, where the twelve bodies were likely to be buried, were identified, and the bodies were exhumed there to be examined. Then thirteen bodies were discovered. According to the decisions of the Ministry of Internal Security, the number of bodies must have been twelve. Why the additional one body had been buried became a subject of discussion. The following story finally emerged. Because of the noise of many people and cars coming to the valley with the sound of gunfire heard in the vicinity on the night, one young herder aged seventeen to eighteen years old living in the neighborhood secretly came over there and peeped into the execution ground to see what was happening. He was reportedly caught by an officer of the Ministry of Internal Security and was shot to death together with the twelve individuals. The Ministry of Internal Security reportedly killed the young herder to ensure that no witness would be left for their terrible acts.

In the early 1990s, a monument was erected at the execution ground for the sake of the people sacrificed. On the monument, “12 + 1 = 13” was engraved, together with the names of the people shot to death.

Since the autumn of 1937, when I came to Ulaan Baatar together with my father, such arrests had been continuously conducted. I heard of a mass arrest every day. They started arresting a lot of priests, who were often sentenced to death.

In those days, all the temples and halls in Ulaan Baatar were closed. High priests were arrested and executed, and young priests were secularized. Buddhist images removed from the closed temples and halls were laid down here and there as refuse. Burnable ones were left heaped up and then incinerated. Sacred books were heaped up here and there and incinerated collectively. With the unburnt pieces of paper of the sacred books blown all over Ulaan Baatar City, I was very uncomfortable in the city filled with a bad smell and dark smoke. All the Buddhist-related buildings were burnt, including temples and halls.

It was reported recently that a construction company engaged in



construction work at a place called Khanbiin Ovoo disinterred many remains. Then an array of historians visited the site for an investigation. They decided that “this is the very place where the priests were executed!” Hundreds of cranial bones were disinterred there, all with craters. The Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party tried to keep the fact a secret. The leaders of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party reportedly pressured the reporters and the news media involved in the study of the executions. They were reportedly afraid of “revelation of their own deadly sins before the election having an impact on the voters!”

There was a Great Image of the Kannon in the Gandan Temple of Mongolia. In those days, this image of Kannon was disassembled. On the side of the disassembled image, there were many white boxes of the same size. The disassembled Buddhist image was placed in the boxes, piece by piece. This work lasted for several days. In the meantime, one day, the boxes suddenly disappeared. People were talking secretly that “they were likely taken to Russia!” From the early 1990s, the Mongolian Cultural Fund started investigating the whereabouts of the image of the Kannon. Russia explained that the image was likely melted and converted into round shots during the war against Germany. Those days, I did not understand the meaning of what was happening because I was a child. Incidents occurred everyday. Children would visit the site every time an incident occurred. The elderly seemed to feel a deep terror. People came to stay home in fear of other people. Only children and young people went out. Every morning we woke up, we heard the latest news. The latest news was reported every morning that “some bureau head and some minister were arrested!” Such a situation lasted until the end of 1939.

## **5. Experience of Purge at Workplace**

BN: I had not yet graduated from the vocational school for communications technology. When I was in the third grade, some students were selected to be trained in communications by the Morse code. The previous employees were reportedly all arrested and executed. As a result, all professional engineers had gone, and we were trained to be engaged in the communications work there.

This was an incident I experienced in 1938, shortly after we came to work there, one night, when I was on night duty. At the workplace, we had to work on night duty in turn. The night duty was performed by seven persons. We were at the workplace. I was so sleepy that I almost fell into a doze. I was struggling against sleepiness to stay up, but I might have fallen asleep at least for one minute. Suddenly, an array of people entered our workplace. They were not in military uniforms. Because they were in ordinary dress, I

understood soon that they were officials of the Ministry of Internal Security. My body shivered. A youngster, who was two to three years older than I, was seated on one side beside me. An official of the Ministry of Internal Security gave him a document and had him read it. On the other side of me, a youngster named D. Yadamsüren was seated. The officer of the Ministry of Internal Security gave him a document and had him read it. Our bureau manager was a 22-year-old tall and handsome youngster. The officer gave him a document and had him read it. He was in charge of the communications service in the Dornod region. After they finished reading the documents, the officer asked them “Do you understand?” And they seemed to answer that they understood. One of the crowd having forced his way into the office ordered them, “Stand up!”, as if commanding soldiers. We immediately understood that they were being arrested. I anticipated that the document would be distributed to me, and I was waiting for it. The officials flipped through the pages of all the documents placed on our desk for investigation, and then tied up them in bundles with a thin cord. Then they affixed a stamp of some bureau, which I did not know well, of the Ministry of Internal Security on them. They carried those documents, and took our three colleagues out of the office. Four persons — another man, two women, and I — remained in the workplace. We were terrified and unable to say a word. After a while, we returned to our senses, and we all got near the window to look out from the opening left by the curtain, which was not fully closed. Within the precincts of our workplace, two “M Pickup” trucks used by the Ministry of Internal Security for arrest were parked. We saw our three colleagues being put into the lead vehicle. We saw Communication Site employees and Post Office employees placed in the next vehicle. Then the cars started moving and gradually disappeared into the darkness of night.

Several days later, a new team leader came to the workplace. He told us that “Counterrevolutionaries had been mixed in our team. You were all too careless to notice the fact. We have to tighten our guard on counterrevolutionaries from now on!” However, the new team leader himself was arrested and taken away several days later. Thus, there was no peace at all. Military personnel were closely involved in such arrests, with many of them arrested from September, 1937 to April, 1939. Arrest warrants were always signed by Internal Security Minister Kh. Choibalsan. They were fairly infrequently signed by the Vice Minister.

My residence was near the theater. The building of the Ministry of Internal Security was located several steps away from the west side of the theater. In those days, people were arrested mostly at night, although some were arrested during the daytime. I saw arrested people taken by the Ministry

of Internal Security to their building several times. The arrested people were taken to the building on a large truck with a loading platform covered with a green sheet, on which four guards with firearms were seated at the four corners. The arrested people were taken on such a truck into the precincts of the Ministry of Internal Security. Although I saw people taken to the precincts of the Ministry of Internal Security several times, I never saw people taken out of the precincts. They were perhaps taken to somewhere to be shot to death during the night. Sometimes I saw arrested people being lined up and pressed to leave by guards with firearms. They were people not taken inside the precincts of the Ministry of Internal Security, or not guilty enough to be executed.

One day I encountered a crowd of people forced to walk that way and found a former colleague, D. Yadamsüren, included among them. He did not notice me, but I noticed him. It seemed that he managed to escape from the death sentence. He looked so emaciated. I could not forget his appearance at that time until now. I cannot get the scene out of my mind.

Many strange incidents occurred in those days. Let me take an example of a story frequently spoken of in those days. A man named Z. Dorj had been working in Selenge Province as a representative of the Ministry of Internal Security. The Ministry of Internal Security gave him two trucks and ordered him, "Now, go and arrest counterrevolutionaries! You always have to arrest so many people that the two trucks are fully occupied!" Z. Dorj went northward to a habitat of a large number of Buryats. He arrested all the people on the road and took them away on the trucks. He arrested people for several days in this way, but the two trucks were reportedly never fully occupied. None remained to be arrested. When he returned to the Ministry of Internal Security, the Minister of Internal Security asked him, "We ordered you to arrest counterrevolutionaries enough to occupy the two trucks! Why didn't you fulfill our order?" Z. Dorj was a very arrogant man. He answered, "I arrested all the persons likely to be counterrevolutionaries. There remain none to be arrested any longer!" His boss got angry with the man who could not fulfill his order. Z. Dorj was arrested himself and was taken to Ulaan Baatar together with the people, whom he arrested, and was executed three days later. This story might be a little exaggerated but might be credible.

In those days, the Ministry of Internal Security had formed a plan of arresting counterrevolutionaries. Each investigator of the Ministry of Internal Security had been assigned with a number of persons to be executed a day. The investigators had to execute a given number of persons, say five persons a day, according to the plan. A single investigator was assigned to execute so many persons daily. Remember that a large number of investigators worked for

the Ministry of Internal Security. In normal conditions, arrested persons should be considered innocent until proven guilty. In other words, the Ministry needs to determine whether the arrested persons are counterrevolutionaries. In those days, however, once arrested, the people were determined to be counterrevolutionaries. On what basis do you think people were arrested in those days? There were mostly no reasons for arrest, but people were arrested only for a general reason that they stood for counterrevolution. The Ministry of Internal Security could arrest and execute anyone on this pretext. The task of the investigators was to convince the arrested people themselves that “I am a counterrevolutionary! I did that and this as counterrevolutionary activities!” The investigators faked such information and forced the arrested people to sign it. Those who did not sign the false written confessions were punched or tortured until they did so. The large number of people who were arrested and taken to the Ministry of Internal Security everyday was allocated among the investigators. The investigators had to elicit confessions. The investigators could not fulfill the plan without forcing the arrested people to sign. On the other hand, the investigators who fulfilled the plan were praised. Investigators who settled many “counterrevolutionary” incidents were praised as “excellent investigators” and were promoted. Accordingly, the investigators tried to fulfill their quotas. For the investigators of the Ministry of Internal Security, the arrested people were nothing but “antagonistic elements, counterrevolutionaries!” Therefore, the investigators never sympathized with them! My father must have been executed in this way.

In those days, several provinces were short of prisons to confine the arrested people. In such cases, the Ministry of Internal Security confined all the arrested people into a single ger. If there was little space, they were pushed into the ger. During one night, ten to twenty or more were crushed to death. Only those who survived were taken to the execution grounds, on the next day to be shot to death. In addition, people who could not be accommodated into a ger were directly taken to the execution grounds without being taken out of the truck and were shot to death. Such acts were conducted in all the provinces. Data shows that 30,000 people were killed this way in those days. This figure is, however, not accurate. The actual number of the killed must be far above this figure. The Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party keeps the figures secret. The documents of the Ministry of Internal Security have never been completely disclosed.

## **6. From a Radio Operator to a Pilot**

IL(Ichinkhorloogiin Lkhagvasüren): You studied at the School for Communications and became a Morse communications engineer. Did you

continue the work later?

BN: No, I was discharged in May, 1939. My father was arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security in 1938. Therefore I was discharged on the ground that I was “a child of a counterrevolutionary!” In those days, the children of those who were arrested and executed were all discharged from their jobs. The children of a father or mother sentenced as a “counterrevolutionary” were regarded as disqualified from “being engaged in a public job.” After I was discharged, I returned to my home land and became a herder. In those days, there was a group activity teaching the script to adults. I came to work for the “group” as a volunteer to teach the script to adults. In one word, I became a “volunteer teacher.”

While I was teaching that way, I received a letter from the “Education Division” of our Töv Province in September. The letter stated that I was admitted to a teachers’ training college in Ulaan Baatar. So I went back to Ulaan Baatar again to study at the teachers’ training college. In those days, the teachers’ training college had a three-year program. My teachers’ training college was prestigious because many famous teachers taught there. The principal was J. Cedev. He was later promoted to a high-level national office. I guess he also had a post in the State Conference.

I saw Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal for the first time when I was a student at the teachers’ training college. He had been appointed to be the head of the instruction department of a finance college after he graduated from a school in the Soviet Union and returned to Mongolia. He was on very good terms with Principal J. Cedev. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was a friendly man when he was young. He came to the teachers’ training college often. He talked with Principal J. Cedev almost always when he came to the school. The principal of the finance school was Mr. S. Lobsang. I graduated from the teachers’ training college in three years. Then I was appointed by the decision of the Ministry of Education as a teacher at an elementary school located at the center of Khentii province. I worked for the school for one year from 1940 to 1941.

The German-Soviet War started in June of 1941. So I submitted a written request to the Ministry of Education to the effect that I wished to teach in my home land in Töv province. An elementary school had opened in Sergelen county of my province in 1940. The Ministry of Education accepted my written request and permitted me to relocate to my home land. Thus I became a teacher for the elementary school in Sergelen county in 1941. I went to Khentii province when I was eighteen years old, and I returned to Sergelen county when I became nineteen years old. My elementary school in Sergelen county was small enough to be accommodated in two gers.

In those days, the center of Sergelen county was a place named Gants-

khudag (the only well) north of Tasgiin Davaan. I was teaching at the school until February. However, at the election held in February, I was elected to the top government position in Sergelen county, namely the County Governor. Thus, I became the County Governor when I was twenty years old. Soon after I assumed the position of County Governor, I met Marshal Kh. Choibalsan for the first time. He came to our county on business. Marshal Kh. Choibalsan did not ask much of me. He asked me only such questions as what school I graduated from and how old I was. I did not work as the County Governor for long. At that time, a large number of new schools were established all over the country and thus there weren't enough teachers. In some counties, there was a movement toward returning young teachers, who had been once elected to a county governor, back to a teacher's position.

However, I did not return to a teacher's position. In June, 1942, I was ordered to enter an "aviation school." In those days, a short-term pilot training course was started for wartime. An extraordinary school opened to train five pilots and fifteen engineers. I learned aviation at the school for one year and graduated from it. Our flying corps was summoned to Khentii province with the objective of being sent to the battle line. People from the Regiment Headquarters and Division Headquarters gathered there. Our First Flying Corps piloted an airplane called IL- 2 Type. We were ordered to prepare ourselves to fly a mission in the airplane.

Following the orders of Soviet Air Force Commander I. V. Zaysanov, it was decided that our corps would fly a mission together with the Soviet Air Force. The senior pilots of our flying corps were ordered to be prepared so that they would be able to fly the mission any time. We were on standby with a parachute on the back in the airplane everyday waiting for a signal. However, the flying corps was not ordered to fly a mission, though we made reconnaissance flights two or three times. That was all we did in the war. And the war ended. I assumed such posts as a senior pilot and the Vice Bureau Manager for Flying Corps Politburo in the Air Force during the period from 1942 to 1948.

## **7. Work of Senior Official at Local Governments**

BN: Later, I entered the "College for Senior Party Members" in 1948 as per the decision of the Politburo, Ministry of Defense. I studied at the College for three years and graduated from it in 1951. From 1951 to 1952, I worked for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. From 1952 to 1956, I served as the Head of the Ideology Division and as secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in Ulaan Baatar. From 1956, I served as the First Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in Ömnögov province.

In those days, the provincial committees of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party were exclusively engaged in work in the industrial sector. The agencies of the party intervened with all sorts of matters in the industrial sector. They regarded supervision of activities in the industrial sector as their main jobs. My main role in the provincial committee was integrating all industrial activities into the Cooperative System (or *negdels*). More specifically, my role was to communize the livestock privately owned by grazers, to form an organization called the Cooperative, to recruit members for the new Cooperative, and to have the members of the Cooperative breed the livestock owned by the Cooperative. In order to requisition the livestock of herders, we first calculated the number of livestock to be owned by the livestock farm. Then we requisitioned more livestock than the quantity they needed to own. The farmers whose livestock was requisitioned would join the Cooperative to breed its livestock. This was not a pleasant job for me. The act was a kind of "purge" and was "ideologically prejudiced."

Before joining the Cooperative System, the herders of Mongolia owned a large number of animals. The herders lived exclusively on herding livestock. The source of their life was livestock. As a result of the activation of the "Cooperative System Movement," all herders were forced to join the Cooperatives. Many people refused to join the Cooperatives. We exercised all sorts of pressure to force them to join the Cooperatives. That is why the agriculture and stock raising industry of Mongolia fell into a serious crisis. We faced difficulties in obtaining the workforce required to graze the forcibly requisitioned livestock. We allocated the livestock to the people, who joined the Cooperatives, and forced them to herd the animals.

The herders called the livestock of the Cooperatives "sinful livestock." That was because they were not entitled to use even one of the livestock of the Cooperatives. They were not entitled to use the stock farm products obtained from the livestock of the Cooperatives such as meat, milk, and skin. All the wool obtained from the livestock of the Cooperatives had to be dedicated to the Cooperatives. Herders who appropriated the livestock of the Cooperatives to their own use or who could not fulfill their norms were subject to imprisonment. What the herders could do under the Cooperative system was only rear the livestock, with no credit given for their own.

The herders of Mongolia had originally reared livestock to use for their lives. Accordingly, the herders who grazed the sheep of the Cooperatives should have been paid a salary. However, they had never been duly paid. Worse still, the salary paid to them was meager. The monthly salary paid to a herder, who grazed 500 sheep at the Cooperative, was eight *tugriks*. Under such circumstances, most herders became poor in a short period of time. And

many of them moved from provinces to urban areas such as Ulaan Baatar and settled down.

Such a situation continues to the present day. The current significant increase in the number of people relocating to city areas started then. The social change at that time still has an impact on the lifestyle of the people. When times change, people tend to go toward urban areas because “the traditional lifestyle is likely to become difficult to lead and cause me to become poor.” Such a situation is caused by the people without understanding what will happen. I cannot tell at this point in time whether the old system is coming back to the period before the introduction of the Cooperative System. Since the Cooperative System was introduced, the nature of the people changed significantly. They started losing sincerity and justice. The people stopped working seriously and came to disregard the results of their labor. A tendency to respond dishonestly to any and all matters spread. Some people came to misappropriate the livestock of the Cooperative and offered the excuse that “the livestock died.” They appropriated milk obtained from the Cooperative livestock and made another excuse. The herders had a hard time. They were subjected to fines if they could not fulfill all the norms and plans. They were subjected to another fine if they caused the Cooperative livestock to die.

A herder who caused the livestock of the Cooperative to die had to supply similar livestock instead. As a result, herders lost all privately owned livestock. They always supplied their own livestock to substitute for the Cooperative’s dead livestock and, as a result, they lost all their own livestock. The number of livestock allowed for the members of the Cooperative to privately own had been determined as seventy-five in the Gobi area and fifty in the Khangai area. The number of livestock allowed for the members of the Cooperative to personally own had been adjusted by the “Model Rules for Members of Cooperatives.” It was not a law but rules. The members were, however, strictly required to observe the rules, as if they had been a law.

By 1990, the herders in Mongolia had all turned to beggars. All of them were indebted to the Cooperatives, and the Cooperatives owed the national government, and the national government owed foreign countries. This situation remained until 1990. This was the situation of that time. The citizens lived by working under extremely difficult conditions. As a matter of fact, Mongolia depended on the Soviet Union. Mongolia at that time was just like a dependent country of the Soviets. Mongolia was not called a “dependent country” of the Soviets in formal terms, but in those days it was just like a dependent country. Everything was produced in the manner of the Soviets. Everything was created by imitating the ways of Russia.

The wife of Secretary Yu. Tsendbal was a Russian. Such relations might



have strongly influenced his policies. He liked talking only about the amity between the Soviets and Mongolia. He devoted everything to conservation of this amity. He finally came to think exclusively of protecting his post. He came to suspect the people around him that “they may dismiss him.” The conditions surrounding Tsedenbal himself became very serious too.

I was working together with Tsedenbal from the late 1950s to the early 1960s. During this period, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal suddenly deteriorated in a noticeable manner. He appeared to have lost perception about very common things and lost all ideas about business. We came to wonder “why Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was easily weakened that much, and why his capability had deteriorated.”

In those days, I served as the First Secretary of the Committee of Ömnögov province of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. I would spend several months in a province and then return to Ulaan Baatar. Tsedenbal seemed to have weakened quickly while we were out of Ulaan Baatar. He appeared to pay no attention at all to what he had talked about or had agreed to several days earlier. He often left such things unattended. Business did not progress at all.

After a time, he was dismissed in 1984. There was no other way to improve the situation. The Politburo, Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee had discussed how they should deal with him for a long period. All the members of the Politburo, Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee at that time had their posts as senior government officials, thanks to the support of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Therefore they had used every possible precaution so that they might not make an erroneous decision about Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. They were very patient and served him patiently. Sadly enough, Tsedenbal did not change at all. Consequently, the members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party made a decision to dismiss the leader, who had led the party for over forty years.

## **8. From Choibalsan to Tsedenbal**

BN: After graduating from the university in the Soviet Union, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had been appointed to high-ranking posts such as the head of the instruction department of a finance college, the Vice Minister of Finance, and the President of the Mongolia Bank. Secretaries of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee in those days included S. Rovsansharav, T. Erdev-Ochir, and L. Basen Zhabu. Erdev-Ochir was the chairman of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. He died from a disease in 1938. After that, S. Rovsansharav had the major initiative in the

Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. Rovsansharav's successor was Basen Zhabu.

In the general meeting of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee held in July 1939, Mr. D. Damba, who was the First Secretary for the Ömnögov province, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, was elected as a Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. Mr. Damba took his new office from July 8, 1939. After Mr. Damba took the office of the Secretary for the Central Committee, on July 10, the Ministry of Internal Security arrested Rovsansharav, Secretary of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee; Dogsom, Chairman of the State Conference; Losol, Vice-chairman of the State Conference; and so on. Dogsom, Chairman of the State Conference, and Losol, Vice-chairman of the State Conference, were famous revolutionaries and patriots, who contributed to the victory of the Mongolian People's Revolution in 1921 together with D. Sükhbaatar. In February 1940, Basen Zhabu, who was a Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee, was arrested too.

When Basen Zhabu was arrested, there was a movement to arrest Mr. Damba too. The Ministry of Internal Security summoned Mr. Damba. A "written notice" was delivered to Mr. Damba to the effect that "Kh. Choibalsan summons Mr. Damba to the Ministry of Internal Security." When Mr. Damba received the "written notice," he thought that "he would be arrested." So he went to the Ministry of Internal Security and entered the office of Choibalsan. S. Jambaldorj, Vice Minister of Internal Security, and D. Sombuunjam, Manager of the Arrest Department, were in the room. S. Jambaldorj was a man famous for "Political Purges." He arrested numerous people, charged them with "political crimes," and purged them. Those two men had summoned high-ranked officials to the office of Choibalsan this way to arrest them. Mr. Damba was seated thinking to himself that "it is undeniable that I will be arrested." When Mr. Damba entered the office, Choibalsan reportedly did not say even hello to him and did not look straight at him. And Choibalsan reportedly ordered the two men to "let the guy get in the room." Then D. Sombuunjam went out of the room. Before long, Sombuunjam entered the room, having one "prisoner" covered with a *deel* over the head walking ahead of him. Then D. Sombuunjam ordered the prisoner to "uncover the *deel*." And the man revealed his skinny distressful face with a shaggy beard. Mr. Damba could not identify him. After a while, Mr. Damba found that the man was "Basen Zhabu, a secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee." Then Kh. Choibalsan left his desk, walked close to Basen Zhabu, and said to him, "Now, what witness did you bear about this man, Damba? Say that

again!” Basen Zhabu reportedly said in response, “I did nothing wrong. Those officials of the Ministry of Internal Security punched and tortured me so badly that I could not stand their demands. That is why I said that Damba was one of my accomplices. Damba is entirely innocent. I did nothing wrong either. The witness I made previously was all lie and a fake story. The officials of the Ministry of Internal Security defamed me. I have been engaged in my duty seriously. I have never committed a crime. My body is very sick now. They intend to kill me. Please set me free!”

Then Choibalsan reportedly said, “Is your story true?” Basen Zhabu answered, “Yes this is true. Absolutely true. Damba is innocent and has done nothing wrong!” Kh. Choibalsan reportedly ordered D. Sombuunyam to “take Basen Zhabu out of the office.” Thus, Basen Zhabu was taken out. After Basen Zhabu was taken out, Choibalsan reportedly said to Mr. Damba, “Basen Zhabu said in his testimony that you were an accomplice. However, that seems to be a false charge. You may leave here!” Mr. Damba escaped from being arrested in this way.

Mr. Damba was very wise, well familiar with the life of citizens, and had a good memory. He worked for the army for many years. However, he had not graduated from a Russian school. Indeed, he had never attended even a Mongolian school. He learned everything through self education by his own ability.

When the Tenth Party Conference of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party was held in 1940, Mr. Damba was the only secretary for the Central Committee. The conference was prepared by Kh. Choibalsan and Mr. Damba. In the conference, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal made a speech and discussed the subject of “Present Status and Prospect for Development of Livestock Industry of Mongolia.” Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was ordered by Choibalsan to make a speech on this theme. In the conference, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was elected as Chief Secretary of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee.

At that time, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was a 24-year-old youth. Mr. Ch. Sürenjav was elected to be the Second Secretary of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. Ch. Sürenjav and Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal simultaneously joined the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee in this way. Later, after a while, Nyantaisurengiin Lkhamsüren was elected to be a Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. In the Tenth Party Conference for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, Mr. Damba was elected as a Secretary for the Party Committee of Ulaan Baatar City. Later, he was reelected in 1943 to be the Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary

Party Central Committee. Since then, he had remained within the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee.

When Marshal Kh. Choibalsan died in 1953, Mr. Damba was a Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee and Mr. S. Sürenjav was the Vice Chairman for the Council of Ministers. In 1954, Mr. Damba was elected to be the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

After the death of Kh. Choibalsan, the Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting after him had not been appointed for long. In those days, there was a strong expectation in Mongolia that "Ch. Sürenjav would become the Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting" after Choibalsan. Because Ch. Sürenjav had acted as the proxy of Kh. Choibalsan for many years and thus had acquired experience, his reputation was not bad among the citizens. The citizens stood for Ch. Sürenjav in this way. And before long, the name of the next Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting had been expected to be revealed. However, this issue was settled after chaos and conspiracy. I saw with my eyes and heard with my ears what occurred and was involved in some events. In those days, I acted as a secretary for D. Sosorburam, a secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. Members of the Politburo, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee, held a meeting consecutively for several days. I knew that the meeting was being held, but I did not know the agenda. I was curious about the meeting because it sometimes continued without ending even at midnight.

Several days later, Mr. N. Lkhamsüren and my boss, Sosorburam, were in a room by themselves for some activity. I did not know what they were doing. They seemed to be performing a very important task. Mr. D. Sosorburam came to order me "to decline requests for an appointment with me from external visitors today because I need to continue working on a task." They sometimes ordered me to go to the Public Records Office of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. They requested chiefly materials on general assemblies of the Central Committee of the Party from the Public Records Office of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. In addition, they borrowed old newspapers from the library of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. The newspapers they borrowed mostly contained accounts on internal conflicts that occurred within labor parties, which had held the sovereign rights in socialist countries. In addition, some of those newspapers contained accounts of some party leaders who were dismissed after having committed a political mistake. In those days, I heard from a person, who acted as a secretary for a Secretary of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee, like me, that

“the members of the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party seem to be discussing this issue of the Prime Minister.”

After several days, Mr. N. Lkhamsüren and Mr. D. Sosorburam one day ordered me: “Summon a Russian language typist from the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee and take a typewriter to my office!” I immediately executed the order of Mr. D. Sosorburam. Mr. N. Lkhamsüren and Mr. D. Sosorburam were confined in the office together with the Russian language typist and started writing something. They spent a long time doing so. Later, Mr. D. Sosorburam went out of the office and ordered me, “Take the Russian language typist away!” I saw the typist to his room carrying the typewriter. After I returned to the office, Mr. D. Sosorburam and Mr. N. Lkhamsüren went to the office of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Before leaving, Mr. D. Sosorburam handed over numerous pages of rough copies to me and ordered me, “Now, burn the paper piece by piece!” I started burning those documents piece by piece in an iron container. While burning them, I read some documents. All the documents were written in Russian. All the documents were written about Mr. Ch. Sürenjav. Thus, I knew that consultations had been held on Mr. Ch. Sürenjav in the Politburo Meeting for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. An idea came to me that “the Politburo is preparing to dismiss Mr. Ch. Sürenjav.”

On the next day, Mr. Damba reportedly ordered his secretary, M. Perjee, immediately before closing his work, to “advise that a meeting of the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party will be held at 10 a.m. tomorrow in the room of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal to the members of the bureau except for Ch. Sürenjav,” adding, that Mr. Damba would advise Ch. Sürenjav of that matter directly by himself. M. Perjee and I were very good friends. Just at 10 a.m. the next morning, the meeting of the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party started in the office of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Once the meeting started, Ch. Sürenjav was not allowed to attend the meeting though he was a member of the Politburo. Mr. Ch. Sürenjav was seated in the waiting room next to the door of the room where the meeting was held. Minister of Internal Security Damingiin Bataa was also seated together with him. D. Bataa was not allowed to attend the meeting either. He was seated silently next to Mr. Ch. Sürenjav.

Soon after the meeting started, D. Bataa was summoned to the meeting and entered the room. Before long, Bataa came out of the room with a pale face and left quietly. He was dismissed from the post of Minister of Internal Security. Not long after that, Mr. Ch. Sürenjav was summoned to the room where the meeting was held. Mr. Ch. Sürenjav came out of the room shortly. We had thought that “Mr. Ch. Sürenjav was dismissed from the party!” But he

was not dismissed from the party but was dismissed from the post of Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting.

Mr. Ch. Sürenjav himself seemed to have wished to become a Prime Minister. In addition, some members of the Politburo of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party reportedly supported that. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal, however, criticized Ch. Sürenjav for his intention as "an act of grabbing power." Other secretaries of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party stood up for Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal and criticized Ch. Sürenjav. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal reportedly said that "Ch. Sürenjav has a very bad personal defect and therefore he should not become the Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting." Mr. Ch. Sürenjav agreed in response to such criticism. He quickly acknowledged having been defeated by recognizing the "personal defect" quoted by Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Thus, Mr. Ch. Sürenjav declined to become the Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting.

In those days, private affairs of Secretaries for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee were all managed by Mr. D. Sosorburam. After the meeting, my boss, D. Sosorburam, handed documents over to me and ordered me to "put them into the binder for materials relating to Ch. Sürenjav." I wanted to read the documents but I could not because the boss, D. Sosorburam, was in the office.

Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal became the Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting only after such a conspiracy. It is recorded that "Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal monopolized the power of Mongolia for over 40 years." However, it is not true. While he became the chief secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in 1940, the Ministerial Meeting was chaired by Kh. Choibalsan. In other words, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was not involved in national administration but was involved in party tasks. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was appointed as the Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting in 1954. As a result, Mr. Damba was elected to be the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. Mr. Damba served as the Chief Secretary until 1958. Since Mr. Damba took the office of the chief secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, he had managed the tasks of the party by himself without being helped by Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Mr. Damba was a tremendously capable person. He performed brilliantly in his work while he was the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. He had an ability to decide on policies with all business integrated.

## **9. On the Personality Cult**

BN: The Twentieth meeting of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was held in 1956. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal, Damba, and D. Tömör-Ochir attended

the meeting of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as representatives of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. Adverse effects of the "personality cult" were discussed for the first time in that meeting. The I. V. Stalin Cult, deviation from laws, and executions of thousands of innocent people as "political criminals" were criticized. Mr. Damba supported the subject under discussion proposed by N. S. Khrushchev, the Chief Secretary for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Mr. Damba had considered that "those who made the personality cult prevalent in Mongolia and purged numerous people as political criminals must be revealed and made to take political responsibility!" Mr. Damba stuck to such a political stance as the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

With regard to this issue, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal tried to minimize the adverse effects of the personality cult, noting that "a political purge was implemented in Mongolia but on a far smaller scale than that in the Soviet Union" and so on. On the other hand, many people had considered that "because Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had worked with Kh. Choibalsan for many years, he should also take the responsibility for the personality cult that dominated Mongolia! He should not flee from the responsibility for having executed numerous people as political criminals!" Damba seemed to have intended to thoroughly discuss the adverse effects of the personality cult in the general meeting of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. However, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal postponed its discussion. Tsedenbal protected Choibalsan. For Tsedenbal, protecting Choibalsan actually meant protecting himself.

In those days, there were many members of the Politburo of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee who supported the stance of Mr. Damba. D. Tömör-Ochir agreed that "those who encouraged the personality cult should be accused of political responsibility with the adverse effects of the personality cult revealed!" However, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal gradually laid the foundation for himself. He kept searching for a breakthrough to flee from such severe reprimands and finally decided to dismiss Damba from the post of the Chief Secretary of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. Damba had managed the party very well as its Chief Secretary. I know his performance very well because I was working under the guidance of my boss, Damba, as the First Secretary for the Committee of Ömnögov province of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in those days.

When Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal dismissed someone, he would always find some excuse and make a mountain out of a molehill. Mr. Damba could not speak Russian. He was imperfect in that he had never received a systematized

school education. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal started playing on this weak point. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal asserted, for this weak point, “that Damba cannot maintain a righteous foundation because he lacks preparedness for ideological or theoretical arguments and that while he is only familiar with practical business and is working hard on it, there is no way that he will be able to become a proper communist.”

At the Second General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee held in November 1958, the discussion turned to Damba. When the General Assembly was about to end, with discussions finished on all the scheduled subjects, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal suddenly proposed a subject under discussion: that Damba should be dismissed from the post of Chief Secretary of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. The members of the General Assembly refused discussion on the ground that the subject had not been included in the subjects scheduled for the Second General Assembly. Most people believed that “Damba does not have to be dismissed!” It is apparent from the conference minutes. It was also a very important issue as to whom should be selected as the Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party after Damba. However, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal sought to be selected as the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party after Damba. The members of the General Assembly asked “Is Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal perfectly prepared for ideological or theoretical arguments himself? Is Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal capable of holding two such posts concurrently by himself? There is a lot of business to be fulfilled. We have just a very great goal, haven’t we?”

At the General Assembly, I stated, “There is no definite basis for any personnel changes for Damba. The difficulties in our business do not constitute grounds for transferring him. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal should take the responsibility for the difficulties in our plan. Transferring Damba will not serve as a remedy for the current situation. Why didn’t you include such a matter in the subjects under discussion for the General Assembly in advance? Did you conspire against Damba?” Then Mr. Damba stood up by himself and stated something like this:

“Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal proposed my dismissal in consideration of the present condition of the State. Upon this request, I wish to be dismissed from the office of the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. The decision was made unanimously by the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party!”

At the assembly of the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, Mr. Damba said. “I will hand over the post of the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party to someone else. My personal



weak point should not be mixed with the bad condition of the entire State. I will admit my own fault. But I will not take the chief responsibility for the bad condition of the State. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal should share the responsibility too!” Thus, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal was reelected to be the Chief Secretary of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party at the Second General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party held in November 1958. Mr. Damba was demoted to the Second Secretary of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee by pressure extended by Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal.

Later, at the General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee held in March 1959, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal dismissed Mr. Damba. By expelling Damba from the political stage of Mongolia in this way, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal gained a way even if only slightly to flee from the political responsibility for having executed numerous innocent people as “political criminals” by supporting the “personality cult.”

Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal summoned secretaries for the Central Committee of the Mongolian Revolutionary Youth League, including Magsar and Balganjav, to his office and had the Ministry of Internal Security arrest them. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal was thus involved in arresting numerous people by slandering them as “political criminals.” The number of people arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security by his direct involvement reportedly amounted to 1,400. Many of them were executed. The people who were arrested after Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal took the office of the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee included Ruvssannavaan, who was a former Board Chairman for Ulaan Baatar City of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, and Dorjpurev and Jamsran, who were former vice chairmen for the Council of Ministers. Mr. Damba knew very well that Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal had been expanding the “Political Purge” in that way. The political responsibility for the “Political Purge,” where thousands of innocent people were framed for crimes and executed, should be assumed by Choibalsan. It was a fact, however, that Tsendenbal was involved in these matters. Nonetheless, the chief responsibility should be assumed by Choibalsan.

The Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee accepted the stance that Mr. Damba had insisted on. In the first place, many people opposed Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal because they feared concentrations of political power by Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal rather than because he purged numerous people as “political criminals.” Many people were concerned that concentration of political power in Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal’s hands, who attached too much importance to the Soviets, would “throw Mongolia into a

critical condition!” In those days, many people found that many of the political decisions made by Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal “attach more importance to the national interests of the Soviet Union rather than the protection of the national interests of Mongolia.” Following the dismissal of Mr. Damba, Mr. Ch. Sürenjav was also expelled from the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee.

### **10. On the Illusion among Intellectuals**

YuK: What happened in Mongolia under the name of “illusion among intellectuals”?

BN: Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal called the expulsion of intellectuals in Mongolia “illusion among intellectuals.” From the early 1950s, or since the death of Choibalsan, the social life of Mongolia became very unstable. The citizens began to worry about the growth, progress, and future destiny of the country. An increasing number of intellectuals in Mongolia believed that “Since the Mongolian People’s Revolution in 1921, Mongolia has had relations only with the Soviet Union for the construction of socialism. Neither the national economy nor civil life has been improved for the two to three decades since then. Therefore relations with other countries should be strengthened. Mongolia should promote its own domestic and foreign policies. Mongolia must expand its trading and general relations with countries other than the Soviet Union!” In those days, I was a secretary for the committee of Ulaan Baatar City of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. Such opinions had been shared by all sorts of people from the general public to senior government officials.

Because the mass media was under the tight control of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party in those days, such public opinion had never been reported. However, the entire Mongolian society came to hold such critical views. The people not only exchanged such critical views with others but also started creating and distributing something like “fliers.” When I was working for the committee of Ulaan Baatar City of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, I would always receive “secret orders” from the Central Committee Control Board and the Ministry of Internal Security. The secret orders stated that “Someone is creating a large quantity of confidential documents criticizing the policies of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal and the amity between the Soviet Union and Mongolia and distributing them. You must immediately discover the ringleader who created the confidential documents!” We were confronted with the problem of who was the ringleader creating the “confidential documents.” The “confidential documents” were handwritten in Mongolian script and distributed. Accordingly, handwriting analysis seemed to be the best method. We came to examine the handwriting of all our colleagues.

It was an immense job. But we could not find even one “criminal” by such efforts.

Later, the criticism against the policies of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and the criticism of the Soviet Union increased and were expressed overtly. In those times, in 1956, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal summoned Mr. D. Damdin, who was the First Secretary for the Committee of Ulaan Baatar City of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, to his office and assigned him a duty, noting, “Ill views are spread in Ulaan Baatar City about the amicable relationship between the Soviet Union and Mongolia. The Party Committee of Ulaan Baatar City has not taken any measures to eradicate such opinions. Now is the time to prohibit such opinions!”

After the meeting with Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal, Mr. D. Damdin returned to his office and summoned me. At that time, I was a secretary in charge of ideologies of the Party Committee of Ulaan Baatar City and thus one of the major persons in charge of this issue. Mr. D. Damdin and I consulted together. We decided that “we have to, first of all, summon all the leaders of the Party Committee of Ulaan Baatar City to have them issue a directive to prohibit critical views against Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and the Soviet Union and to identify the critics. In addition, we have to hold a meeting of persons in charge of information and publicity!” The two of us fulfilled this duty promptly. However, it was not possible to stop those opinions.

In those times, members of the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee were dispatched to the ministries and agencies, state-owned large companies, the Central Labor Council, Revolutionary Youth Union Central Committee, Mongolian National University, and so on. The dispatched persons included Mr. Damba, B. Shirendev, L. Tsend, D. Tömör-Ochir, and J. Samdan. They organized assemblies in their respective places. Then they announced, “Ill and malicious remarks about Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and the Soviet Union are spread in Ulaan Baatar. We came over here not to charge or penalize the people making such remarks. We came over here to listen to the views and criticisms against the amicable relationship with the Soviet Union and amend our errors, with those views and criticisms as reference for future administrative work. Therefore, you all should present your frank ideas to us!” The people believed their words and the purpose of their visits.

In general, the leaders of the Party Central Committee rarely held a meeting with the general public in those days. Therefore, the people wished to take this opportunity to speak freely. The people welcomed with joy the visit of the leaders of the party and the government to hear their opinions. At the assemblies, the people enumerated the bad aspects of the relationship between

the Soviet Union and Mongolia.

The people said “The Soviets only push their opinions without accepting the opinions or proposals of the Mongolian side at all,” “The Soviets are enjoying privileges in their foreign trade with Mongolia,” “The Soviets are selling bad-quality products,” and “The prices of Mongolian products are kept low.” The people also criticized Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal, noting, “The Mongolian government does not try to resolve the problems though they know all of them. On the contrary, they seem eager to persuade the citizens to understand that such problems are normal. After all, all the problems are attributed to the acts of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. He is encouraging the unfair relationship in the name of amity between the Soviet Union and Mongolia.” The people made such proposals as “Mongolia should have its own domestic and foreign policies. The present domestic and foreign policies of Mongolia are under the control of the Soviets. We should be able to exchange independently with other socialist countries. We should also have trading relations with capitalist countries. We should cooperate with neighboring countries in the south and the north with a fifty-fifty relationship. We should not regard any countries as superior or evil!”

Those views made by the intellectuals of new-age Mongolia were far from wrong. On the contrary, they were wonderful opinions worth being adopted as guidelines. The officials, who were dispatched from the Politburo of the Party Central Committee, showed their reports on the assemblies with citizens to Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Then Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal started expelling the intellectuals based on those reports. He named those thoughts expressed by the intellectuals as “illusion among intellectuals.”

Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal disagreed with the thoughts of the intellectuals noting, “We are receiving considerable support from the Soviets. The Soviets protected the territory of Mongolia by providing support and dispatching their own armies to us in our Khalkh River War. The dead bodies of the Soviet soldiers, who died in the war, still remain within the territory of Mongolia, don't they? Nonetheless, the intellectuals are spreading worthless remarks against the Soviets. If the amicable relationship concluded with the Soviets weakens, Mongolia will be controlled by other socialist countries!”

Then he convened a meeting of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee to form an organization to discuss the issues of high-level officials, who made critical remarks against the amity between the Soviet Union and Mongolia. And to dismiss them. The meeting was attended by M. Damdin, the First Secretary for the Party Committee of Ulaan Baatar City. Mr. M. Damdin took me to the meeting. My duty was to report about the people placed on the agenda for the meeting. The meeting lasted from morning to midnight. The

meeting was attended not only by the members of the Party Politburo but also secretaries. The attendees kept quiet all day long and only Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal kept speaking in the meeting. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal adopted a strict attitude to the people summoned to the meeting and sometimes rebuked some strongly. Finally, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal ordered me to summon T. Jamts, the Director for the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Youth Union. Like me, Jamts was a graduate of the College for Senior Party Members. I did not know why he was involved in this matter. I went to his residence at midnight and took him to the meeting room. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal started to rebuke him. “You reportedly oppose the Soviet Union. You must know that thousands of dead bodies of Soviet soldiers lie in the Khalkh River. You know they were sacrificed in the war against the Japanese Army. They went to protect Mongolia. Nevertheless, why do you oppose the Soviets? We receive tremendous support from the Soviets. Why do you despise the policies of the Party though you used to be an official of the Party?” said Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. T. Jamts sat quietly. And the meeting ended.

Then Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal ordered noting, “The situation has become very bad. We will have serious trouble unless we impose sanctions on prominent figures. Those who are spreading worthless opinions must be punished. We need to obtain a special resolution of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. B. Shirendev, D. Tömör-Ochir, and S. Samdan, you three, prepare a draft resolution. Go to Nukht immediately to prepare a draft resolution!”

Before the resolution was issued, I was appointed to be the First Secretary for the Committee of Ömnögov province of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. After I was transferred to the province, a resolution was issued, and a large number of officials were dismissed. Mr. B. Shirendev reportedly hesitated to be involved in the duty of completing the resolution.

The dismissed officials included M. Dangaasüren, the First Secretary for the Revolutionary Youth Union Central Committee; T. Jamts; Ts. Damdinsüren, a scholar; Z. Sodnomtseren, the First Secretary for the Dornod Provincial Committee; J. Tomrbaatar, a researcher for the Party History Research Institute affiliated with the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party; D. Ramjav; and Sh. Bat-Ochir, a doctor of economics. Some of them were imprisoned. Their names are listed in the resolution issued by the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. The “illusion among intellectuals” refers to such events.

Although many of those who had been critical of Tsedenbal and the amicable relationship between the Soviet Union and Mongolia were expelled, the expulsion could not stop the citizens from criticizing. On the contrary, the

criticism was intensified and continued. However, the manner of criticizing changed. The people came to criticize secretly at home or among people sharing their views. Such topics came to be spoken secretly.

Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal started arresting, through the Ministry of Internal Security, those who criticized him or the amity between the Soviet Union and Mongolia. He immediately dismissed many people. When Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal appeared on the political stage for the first time, the entire Mongolian society disliked and opposed him. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal tried to suppress criticism.

Ts. Lookhuuz once criticized Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal for the first time at the forum of the General Assembly of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. Ts. Lookhuuz criticized Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal noting, "Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal is too egotistic. He decides everything by himself. His idea is far apart from the ideas of citizens. He does not know the life of citizens. He goes to foreign countries too often at national expense. He goes abroad on a holiday too. He is just imitating blindly what occurs in the Soviet Union. He has no original thinking. The members of the Politburo working together with Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal are encouraging his mistakes by praising him instead of pointing out and correcting them!" This remark was made at the Second General Assembly of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee held in 1956. Mr. Damba, who was a Secretary for the Party at that time, strongly supported the criticism of Ts. Lookhuuz.

## **11. Nature of Tsedenbal**

BN: Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had a very good character. He was not quick in temper but was gentle. I believe that he worked enthusiastically for the time being after he was appointed to be the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee in 1940. He was supported by the citizens at that time. However, he gradually lost his positive qualities and became incapable in his work. After the death of Choibalsan, he apparently lost positiveness and creativity. The fact was apparent to those who worked closely with him but was not at all to the general public. I knew that fact very well because I was an official for the committee of Ulaan Baatar City of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

In 1954, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was 38 years old. He was deficient and lacked in sharpness, knowledge, or abilities and took much time in understanding things. In one word, he was a "thickheaded" person. Compared with him, Mr. Damba was a very sharp, bright, and wonderful person. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal might have faded into the background of Mr. Damba and Choibalsan. That might be why he became prominent only after Choibalsan. His defects

and the negative side appeared more clearly after Kh. Choibalsan and Mr. Damba disappeared. His defects might have been hidden and unrevealed while he was working with them.

I used sometimes to see him. I had an opportunity to talk with him in meetings and consultation. And gradually I came to think that “it is sad that such an incapable person became the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party!” I used to adore him when I was young. When herders in my home county returned from the “fine herders’ meeting,” they would say that “Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal is a wonderful youth, too good to be touched with my dirty hands or to be looked at with my dirty eyes!” Therefore, I used to think that “the leader of the Mongolian citizens” is a person like Buddha. However, after I started working near him, particularly since the “illusion among intellectuals,” my views on him changed. I started doubting his ability.

When looked at closely, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was a man with a very old fashioned mind, self-serving, lacking in ability, and controlled by his wife and the Soviet Union. What he wished was only to defend his post, to please the Soviets, and to show he was obedient to them. In order to show his obedience to the Soviets, he came to think of sometimes dismissing and expelling as many people as possible on the ground of “nationalism.” It is quite doubtful whether he ever had a view on the development of the nation.

It is reported that Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was introduced to Kh. Choibalsan by Mr. J. Sambuu, who was Mongolia’s Ambassador to the Soviet Union at that time, when Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was studying abroad in the Soviet Union. And Choibalsan laid the foundation for his political career. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal graduated from a finance college in Irkutsk. Before that, he graduated from a “Rabfak” in Ulaan-Ude City of Buryatia. The “Rabfak” was a preparatory school for Mongolians to study Russian in order to go to a university in the Soviet Union.

In Irkutsk, Nyantaisüreniin Lkhamsüren studied at the same university as Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Mr. N. Lkhamsüren later told me a very interesting story about those days. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal and Mr. N. Lkhamsüren had been very good friends. However, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal changed one to two years before graduation. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal came to behave as if he had a sacred existence, and the school authorities came to consider him as special. Sometimes Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal disappeared from the school but nobody knew where he was or what he was doing. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal sometimes disappeared from the school in that way and then appeared again. And when he appeared in the school, he was dressed in very expensive clothes and turned out as a wonderfully sophisticated person. He never told anyone where he was

or what he was doing, and his classmates at last stopped asking about it. Far later after that, a person appeared who explained that “Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal had a connection with the KGB of the Soviet Union! He received money and directions from the KGB!” If this was true, it is not Choibalsan, but the KGB that brought Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal into the political world of Mongolia.

Kh. Choibalsan first appointed Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal to be the Vice Principal of a finance college, then to the President of the Mongolia Bank, and to the Vice Minister of Finance. It was not the typical style of Kh. Choibalsan to appoint such a young person as Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal to such high posts at an early stage. Mongolia at that time lacked professional human resources. As a result of executing or imprisoning numerous people by the “political purge” in the late 1930s, human resources had been used up. Young people who were professionals of finance and economy and mastered Russian, such as Tsendenbal, were quite rare. The government and the Party might have needed persons such as Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. Thus, I do not find it a large mistake to have promoted Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal rapidly.

In those days, there were a few human resources other than Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal such as B. Shirendev, N. Lkhamsüren, and Ch. Sürenjav. Those people had worked closely with Kh. Choibalsan. There was a problem “who should take over Choibalsan’s own duties”. Some people reportedly expected N. Lkhamsüren would. People in general might have thought that “Ch. Sürenjav should take over the duties!” There were few rumors that “Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal will become the successor of Kh. Choibalsan!”

Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and N. Lkhamsüren were on good terms for the time being. Mr. N. Lkhamsüren was at first appointed to be the Minister of Agriculture and the Stock Raising Industry. After that, he was elected to be Secretary in charge of ideologies for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. He once served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. At the end, however, the relationship between Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and N. Lkhamsüren worsened. And Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal discharged N. Lkhamsüren and expelled him from the Party Politburo. Their estrangement arose from a very personal issue. I had noticed the reason in those days. The wife of Mr. N. Lkhamsüren was an excellent doctor of medical science. In addition, she was very beautiful. Her name was Namsraijav. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal fell for Namsraijav, and he made a pass at her. But she did not take the least notice of the indecent thoughts of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. Nevertheless, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal stuck to her. Mrs. Namsraijav ran out of patience. She reportedly rebuked Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. In addition, she complained to some members of the Party Central Committee Politburo about the indecent acts of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal.



Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal became angry about her actions. Then he ordered his subordinates to “expel Namsraijav from the Party and discharge her from her post.” He assigned the duty of expelling her from the party to M. Damdin, Chairman of the Party Committee of Ulaan Baatar City. Chairman Damdin summoned members of the Party Committee of Ulaan Baatar, including R. Luvsanravdan, B. Luvsanchoinbor, and D. Dangaa to a meeting. I attended the meeting too as a member. At first, we did not know what would be deliberated at this meeting. The meeting was convened suddenly after the work of the day was finished.

A staff meeting is originally expected to be held with a notice of the agenda issued two days before the meeting date. In addition, the result of deliberation and a draft resolution to be issued should have been distributed in advance. However, this meeting started suddenly with no preparations. The members had been seated in the office of Chairman Damdin. Chairman Damdin had not made any statement. All the members had been seated quietly. After a while, Namsraijav entered the office and sat down. We were all surprised. The meeting started this way. Chairman Damdin stood up and said, “Let’s start the meeting. A directive was issued by the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. The current staff meeting of the Party Committee will deliberate on the issue of Comrade Namsraijav, who orally insulted the leader of our party. She slandered the leader of our party by spreading lies and thoughtless remarks. She planned to destroy the union of the Central Committee. Accordingly, we have to deliberate on this issue to stop Namsraijav from conducting such acts and to expel her from the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party!” Then he sat down. None of us spoke out. We were all seated silently. Then Namsraijav voluntarily stood up and said the following:

“I do not intend to discuss this with any of you. I told the truth at the right place about what had been repeatedly done against me. I cannot stand this situation. I have never spread any lies or thoughtless remarks. I have insulted nobody. I have never orally offended nor looked down on anybody. I have a family. If you want to expel me from the Party, you just do it. I have no charges to accept because I have no fault in the name of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. I have no faults! Instead, it will be a greater honor for you to expel uneducated, cruel, and indecent leaders!” Then she sat down.

Our Chairman Damdin remained seated quietly without being able to speak even one word. After a while, he dismissed us saying, “Is that so? I understood. The meeting is over!” This issue concluded this way. I later asked Chairman M. Damdin about this matter. He told me that he had received a

directive from Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. After all, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal could not expel Namsraijav from the Party. That is why he started looking for a method to expel her husband.

The father of N. Lkhamsüren reportedly used to belong to the Russian White Army, which invaded Mongolia in the 1920s. This may be a false story fabricated by Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal himself. I am not sure. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal dismissed N. Lkhamsüren from all posts and expelled him from the Party on the ground that “A son of a man, who used to belong to the White Army, which fled from the October Revolution, should not be allowed to be a high-level official in the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party!” N. Lkhamsüren went off the political stage of Mongolia this way. After that, he never returned to the political world again.

By the way, since democratization in 1990, very interesting interview articles with Lkhamsüren were published in the newspapers of Mongolia. In the interviews, he mentioned that Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal and he were friends since they were children. In addition, he talked about interesting memories during the days when he had been studying in the Soviet Union together with Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Lkhamsüren used to be my teacher. I was taught by him when I was a student at the College for Senior Party Members. At the school, he also taught D. Tömör-Ochir and S. Jalan-Aajav. In addition, Mr. Damba sometimes came to the school to lecture. Thus, Mr. Lkhamsüren and I were old acquaintances. After he retired from the Party, he lived in Zuun-Kharaa. Perhaps immediately before 1990, I once encountered him by chance in summer. I was invited to his residence then, and I visited him later. His wife had already died, and he lived alone. He told me about many historical events. He also told me about his estrangement from Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal.

He said that “Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had tried to incorporate Mongolia into the Soviet Union as one of their republics!” Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had ordered some intellectuals and politicians of Mongolia to make a request for consolidation with the Soviet Union. Mr. N. Lkhamsüren gave me the first letter addressed to the Soviets. The document had been prepared and signed by intellectuals of Mongolia under orders from Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Mr. N. Lkhamsüren told me that the intellectuals prepared the document by staying at a health resort in Songino for several days. I thoroughly read through the document. The document stated that “according to Lenin, heavy industry must be developed for construction of socialism. However, heavy industry has never been developed in Mongolia. In order to completely construct socialism in Mongolia, it is important for Mongolia to depend on the heavy industry of the Soviet Union. Belonging to the Soviet Union will enable rapid construction of socialism!” The document did not state directly that “Mongolia should be

incorporated in the Soviet Union!” Many issues were discussed in the document. Such issues included those which had been discussed during the period of the “illusion among intellectuals.” More specifically, such issues were discussed as “What is necessary for the rapid development of Mongolia?” When Mr. N. Lkhamsüren gave me the document, he told me, “This document may appear to contain independent views of some intellectuals of Mongolia. This document was, however, prepared under the order of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal himself. This is the very intention of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal! Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal maybe intended to incorporate Mongolia into the Soviet Union because his wife was a Russian!”

Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal used to say that the introduction of the Cooperative System was a great project comparable to the Revolution in 1921. However, this movement actually bore no advantages for Mongolia. The movement was not only unprofitable for the civil life but, on the contrary, it worsened the civil life. The original purpose of the system was to improve the civil life of the cooperative. But the actual effects were opposite. The system degraded civil life badly. Some people became “Labor Heros” by working for the Cooperative, but they were extremely rare cases. The life of most citizens worsened. Some Cooperatives were managed favorably, but the number of such cooperatives was very small.

## **12. Sixth General Assembly of the Central Committee**

IL: You strongly criticized the issue of the large foreign liabilities of Mongolia at the Sixth General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee held in December 1964, didn't you? Will you explain why the liabilities had increased so much?

BN: Yes, the liabilities of Mongolia had expanded. The liabilities increased more and more after the War. What do you think the loans were used for? They had been used mostly for useless things. The loans from abroad precluded the possibility of what could be made or done by the Mongolian people. In addition, loans had been obtained for trivial things. Illicit trading was also found.

In terms of the foreign exchange rate of banks in those days, one ruble was equal to 4.12 *Tugriks*. However, the loans had been provided at a “flexible exchange rate of the ruble.” One flexible ruble was calculated to be eight *Tugriks*. Thus the amount of debt expanded rapidly. Because of this expensive exchange rate of the flexible ruble, the debt of Mongolia became so huge that it could not be paid. Nevertheless the leaders of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, with Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal listed at the top, made no efforts to reduce the debt, and on the contrary, they took measures in the

direction to further increase the debt.

I am not convinced that the Soviets financed Mongolia for the sake of the development of Mongolia. Mongolia was further subordinated to the Soviets because of the debt. The KGB of the Soviets had been informed in detail of what was discussed among intellectuals in Mongolia. They were familiar with the trends of Mongolian society through numerous sources. When we formed some independent plans, which were not favored by the Soviets, they suppressed us, using the loans as a pretext. We were further subordinate to the Soviets due to the debts. It was apparent that a politically very dangerous result was being caused by the debts.

The debts had another political meaning. Through the loans, the Soviets tried to form a social relationship with Mongolia, according to their own model. Their policy was to form Mongolian society in a completely Soviet style with no consideration given to the characteristics of the traditional nomadic grazing society of Mongolia. A tremendous number of specialists came from the Soviet Union to Mongolia, together with the loans. They mostly lived in urban areas of Mongolia with special benefits granted from the government. They formed a “foreign country within Mongolia.” They sold commodities they were specially granted in their own stores at higher prices, taking advantage of the shortage of daily necessities in Mongolian society.

Mongolia is a herding livestock country. Despite that fact, shops were short of meat. The shops sold little meat. Mountains of meat were sold, however, in the special stores for Russians. Meat was short in stores for Mongolians because the meat was provided to the special stores for Russians in the first place before it was provided to us. Soviet families and relatives came after the specialists, who started working in Mongolia. They almost “occupied” the urban areas in Mongolia. Housing complexes were almost under their control. The Russian “specialist advisors” were dispatched to all sectors of the Mongolian economy. It is difficult to answer the question of what they did. I cannot answer the question because they did nothing. Those “specialist advisors” were paid very high salaries. The amounts of their salaries were three to four times higher than the salaries of Mongolian specialists engaged in the same work. Their salaries, as well as their house rents and fuel and light expenses, were all borne by Mongolia.

One Russian specialist was always assigned to every state-owned company, with Mongolian specialists as subordinates. It was strange that Russian specialists were assigned to the companies, despite the fact that the companies did not need the Russian specialists in their duties. Worse still, the Russian “specialist advisors” took no responsibilities. Nonetheless, they were the only authorities and would strongly rebuke their subordinates. One Russian specialist

stayed in Mongolia with a term of office of two to three years. Some of them stayed longer by extending the term of office. With living expenses borne by Mongolia, they led a very luxurious life. They never saved water or light and heat. The laws of Mongolia were not applied to them. For example, when fishing in a river, they used an explosive. Such fishing methods are prohibited in Mongolia, of course. However, nobody could impose any penalties on the “specialist advisors” who violated the law. Those “specialists” incalculably damaged the Mongolian economy.

IL: Did you study at the University of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union while you were serving as the First Secretary for the Committee of Ömnögov province of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party? What sort of people studied at this University in those days? How were applicants chosen?

BN: Yes, I studied at the University of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union when I was the First Secretary for the Party Committee of Ömnögov province. In general, those who worked for the administrative agencies of provinces and those who worked for the Party committees of the provinces were permitted to study at this university. The selection criteria for permission to study at the university were performance ratings at their posts. Persons with good performance ratings were prioritized. In addition, various screenings were conducted. In those days, the Party officials assumed significant responsibilities. None with the slightest fault were appointed as party officials. The screening was particularly serious for the Party leaders. Applicants were screened from among such officials for permission to study at the university. In order to study at the university, applicants had to submit an application form to the Party Central Committee. The application forms were examined by the Personnel Department of the Politburo. Then the successful applicants were chosen at the secretary conference of the Central Committee. The successful applicants were decided through many examinations on ideology and politics. Not all the applicants were permitted to study at the university. In 1962, twenty persons, including I, were admitted to the university.

IL: I heard that various discussions were conducted on the situation of Mongolia among the students. Will you talk about this point a little?

BN: Because the students were engaged in responsible duties of the Party or local administration before they entered the university, we had abundant issues for discussion. We would discuss many themes to a large extent. In general, the major issue related to the development of Mongolia. Many of the students at the university were dissatisfied with the pace of development of Mongolia. After starting to study in the Soviet Union, they were able to compare the situation in the two countries. In those days, there was a significant difference

in the pace of development between the two nations. The measures and policies of the Soviet Union seemed prompt, extensive, and timely. The scale of the economy and Soviet society were incomparably huge. The educational levels and the knowledge levels of the citizens were significantly different from those of Mongolia too. Thus, we could compare a lot of things between the two nations.

IL: You criticized the corruption within the party, particularly the injustice of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal, with specific witnesses at the Sixth General Assembly of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee held in December, 1964, didn't you?

BN: The University of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, where I was studying, was a three-year system university. In December 1964, two and a half years after I entered the university, the Sixth General Assembly of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee was held. A half a year was left before I graduated from the university. Therefore, I knew that it was not "advisable" for me to criticize the Party leaders or the corruption within the Party at the General Assembly — so much so because I had already had certain experiences after having worked in the political world of Mongolia for several years. I had not told my fellow students my intention to criticize Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal at the General Assembly. I had insinuated to one or two of them. They saw me off at the Moscow Airport. One of them bought me an air ticket.

At the Sixth General Assembly of the Party Central Committee held in December, 1964, discussion was made chiefly on the "improvement of audits of the Party and the nation." Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal made a speech on this theme. He read aloud his speech for three hours. In addition, T. Ragchaa of the Planning Committee made a speech too. It seemed that members of the Party Central Committee Politburo had been informed of our intention to criticize Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and Party policies at the General Assembly. In those days, there were a considerable number of "informers" among the students in Moscow. It seemed that the Party Politburo had intended to label us as an "anti-Party group" to expel us forcibly from the Party. It intended not only to expel us but also to have us punished as an example to others in order to eliminate persons with other ideologies within the Party in future.

In general, the critical rumors generated in the age of "illusion among intellectuals" against the administrative policies and measures of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and on the aspect of the amity between Mongolia and the Soviet Union had been in everyone's thinking. Therefore a plan had been formed to settle such rumors at this General Assembly. They purposely labeled us as an "anti-Party group" with the objective of impregnating the society with an idea

that “there was an anti-Party group within the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party that aimed to destroy the union of the Party and to inhibit the leading role of the Party by intentionally creating and spreading in the society various criticisms against the functions and leaders of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party!”

In those days, in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev had been dismissed from the post of the First Secretary for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union by a conspiracy, and a conservative politician named Brezhnev became the Secretary of the Party. Because the General Assembly for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee was held during such politically dangerous times, it was highly possible that such an event, as in Khrushchev’s case, could also occur in Mongolia. The atmosphere in this assembly indicated sufficient possibility of a movement against Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. There was a strong tendency in the Mongolian society “to depart from Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal!” To deal with this situation, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had firmly prepared for this meeting.

Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had known that “B. Nyambu and Ts. Lookhuuz would criticize him!” So he had prepared some self-protection measures. He had secured speakers to defend himself. At the end of the formal speeches at the General Assembly, S. Luvsanravdan, Chairman of the Control Board for the Party Central Committee, and B. Artangerel, First Secretary for the Ulaan Baatar Committee of the Party, were expected to make speeches. They tried to convert the atmosphere in the meeting favorably for Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. They criticized us by quoting the examples of D. Tömör-Ochir and L. Tsend. They said that “our Party will strictly struggle with such dreamers!” and so on. In order to protect Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal and criticize us, twenty-four persons, in total, made speeches.

We had already known that they had prepared for this meeting. We had known that Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was very much surprised to know our intention to criticize him at the meeting and that he was preparing night and day hastily to keep his rights by all means. Mr. Nyantaisürengiin Lkhamsüren told me that matter secretly through a person named B. Jamts. There were many persons among the attendees to the General Assembly, who were critical of the policies of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal.

The General Assembly could have turned against Tsedenbal unless he managed this meeting well and took countermeasures. The attendees to the General Assembly of the Party Central Committee had received a lot of letters and oral appeals from the general public. Those letters stated that “it is advisable to dismiss Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal at this General Assembly!” Many of the attendees to the General Assembly had two views. One was that

Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal should be dismissed, and the other was that he should stay at his post. However, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal had tactically prepared for the meeting. He encouraged the atmosphere in the meeting in his own favor. Although many people wished to make a speech at the meeting, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal did not permit their speeches. He permitted only those who stood for him to make speeches.

In the speakers' list, my name was listed as No. 12, the name of Lookhuuz was listed 19th, and the name of Surmaajav was listed as No. 7. The names of supporters for Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal, including Sanjiin Bataa and B. Dejid, were placed before and after my name. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal's closest sycophants such as Ch. Purevjav, Ts. Puntsagnorov, S. Jalan-Aajav, and Ts. Dugersüren criticized us and defended Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. They criticized us as "opponents to the basic line of the Party; opponents to the Soviet Union; persons with an illicit liaison with antagonistic elements involved in anti-Party activities such as L. Tsend and D. Tömör-Ochir; traitors, and so on." I made a speech with the following points at this General Assembly.

—What the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party should pay attention to as a ruling Party is the national economy. However, the leaders of our Party, with Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal at the top, have continuously supported the construction of socialism by debts. We should immediately break this sick pattern.

—At present, Mongolia has degraded itself to a nation that borrows money from the Soviet Union anytime it pleases for everything necessary for the nation. If this condition remains in future, Mongolia will encounter a fatal crisis of the nation. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal cannot grasp this critical condition.

—The gradually ever-increasing prices of daily necessities have a significant influence on the worsening of civil life. The citizens are talking about nothing but scarcity and the hardships of life. The motivation and optimism of citizens have significantly declined. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal does not appear to be anxious about those points at all.

—Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal has made efforts to obtain fame in the global labor movement. However, he is actually not appreciated at all because he has become corrupt himself and is behind the times. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal is trying to plant in the minds of people an impression that he is the only person who can protect and develop the amity between the Soviet Union and Mongolia. This amicable relationship, however, can be developed properly without Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal.

—In the first place, what kind of person is Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal? He is neither a leader of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party nor a leader of the modern-age Mongolians who are trying to construct socialism but only a



proxy for a bankrupt petty capitalist. I had made comments several times so far to correct the personal faults of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. However, he has not corrected his faults at all. He appears to have become the worst corrupt person.

—Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal is not only a person who lost the order of the Party and the nation and the responsibilities for his duties but also a person who committed crimes against the nation. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal is wildly wasting the national properties in the guise of a benign spirit realizing the desires of its citizens.

—Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal has never admitted his own faults honestly. On the contrary, he is willing to expel everyone to the provinces in order to hide his sins and to protect himself. The General Assembly of the Party Central Committee, which discussed the issues of L. Tsend and D. Tömör-Ochir, expelled them to the provinces as part of a conspiracy under the direct guidance of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. The Party must be an educational organization and the leaders of the Party must be educators. However, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal is not qualified for such leadership. On the contrary, he has become an extremely evil person who dismisses and expels capable human resources.

—Mongolia will not improve as long as Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal remains as a leader for the Party and the government. No matter how many efforts Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal will make or no matter what means he will use, he will never win the confidence of citizens again.

—I know what Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal is thinking of at this conference. He considers nothing but how he will be able to escape dismissal. He is thinking that if he can overcome only this General Assembly, he will have much time and choices until the next General Assembly. When discussing the dismissal of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal as the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, he does not hesitate to say that there is no one but himself who is qualified as the leader of the Party or the government. It is difficult to find as dirty a person as Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal or persons who conduct acts of folly in cooperation with Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal within the Party. There are rather abundant human resources in our Party, who were trained and selected to play a leading role in the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and the national government. Now is the time that the Party Central Committee should give Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal the final word and make a decision in line with the expectations of the citizens.

All of my views were published in 2004. You all might have read them. I criticized Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal twice before this General Assembly. The criticism I made in 1964 was the third one. I made the first criticism at the

General Assembly held in 1959 and the second criticism in 1962. At first, I stated that “The national fate of Mongolia is in your hands, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. You must correct your own faults and your approaches immediately. You should come closer to the citizens and listen to them!”

I saw Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal several times. I used to tell him, “We should place the first priority on the national interests of Mongolia. The Soviet Union has its own national interests, and the socialist countries have their respective national interests. However, we should consider the national interests of Mongolia as the top priority rather than those of others. We seem to have forgotten the national interests of Mongolia and consider the national interests of the Soviet Union and the socialist countries as the top priority. We must struggle for the national interests of Mongolia. Mongolia is surrounded by two superpowers. The two nations are considering conquering Mongolia whenever an occasion arises. Accordingly, we must have equal relationships with both nations. Regarding any of the two as an enemy will adversely affect the national future of Mongolia. Having equal relationships with both nations will benefit Mongolia!” I also told him, “You are not a model person. You should correct your personal faults immediately. Among others, you should pay more attention to your family issues. Your behavior is not suitable as a leader of the Party. There is too much favoritism in your attitude toward Party members and leaders. Such behavior should be corrected!”

I criticized him at the meeting in 1964 because he turned a deaf ear to my previous suggestions and made no effort to correct his personal faults. I had already concluded that “This man will not be improved!”

Before that, D. Tömör-Ochir had once told him directly at a meeting, “Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal, you should retire from the present post. If you remain in such a situation as this, where your performance is not visible at all, the entire nation will be poisoned. You have become disabled. You should transfer your post to another person before you seriously damage the country!”

He had reasons why he could not accept our words. We knew the reasons. The reasons were his Russian wife. He had been completely in the hands of his Russian wife. First of all, a man with his rights held by his wife is not manly at all. In Mongolia, such a man is called “a person toyed with by children or dogs!” While Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had plunged into a situation “toyed with by children or dogs” in his private life, he made efforts to “guide the national government of Mongolia!” It was reasonable that his wife was reported to have relations with the KGB of the Soviets. His marriage to his “wife” itself was arranged by the KGB of the Soviets.

IL: You stated at the meeting that “Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal uses a dirty means to obtain his supporters, he bribes people!” Was that true?

BN: Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had no ability to guide the Party and the national government. Mongolian people would describe Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal by such words as “passionate but lack of ability!” Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal made every effort to solve the problems, which the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party and the government were confronted with, but lacked the ability to guide. That is why he turned into a corrupt person who focused on trifling matters, confused the people, was wheedled by others, and could not say even necessary words. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was supported by persons behind the times and always brought about poison to the party and the government. His sycophants pretended to be good friends to each other but actually persecuted each other with jealousy and grudges. They planned intemperate banquets, gambled, made a fuss at the workplace, and brought shame on themselves everyday just like a breeding male sheep stumbling over a mating adjustment. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal directly gave double salaries every month in secret to no fewer than ten high-ranking officials of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party and the government in the name of a “bonus.” They also received high salaries from the State. The special bonus was granted to them separately from the formal salary. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal sometimes offered them medals. Those high-ranking officials were granted with medals although they had made no contribution to the nation or its citizens. In addition, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal appointed politicians without experience to high rank posts or gave them high salaries. He dispatched them to foreign luxurious health resorts and acquired his supporters in this way.

D. Tömör-Ochir and others severely opposed this “bonus.” I also personally advised Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal on this point several times. He, however, made an excuse with a deep blush that “financial incentives need to be provided to those who are making efforts as Party leaders. This practice does not exist only in Mongolia but is common in Party leaders of other nations! I am providing them with such incentives for the unity of the Party!” In other words, he bought “unity” with money. Those who received money never complained of the acts of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal or criticized him.

Abolition of the special bonuses had been deliberated by the Politburo of the Party Central Committee, and a draft resolution was issued. The draft resolution was in fact “prohibition of transfer of money for unity of the Party.” This draft resolution was presented to the members of the Politburo and was acknowledged and signed by all the members. However, only Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal did not sign it. No resolution could be issued without his signature and therefore the resolution could not be formalized. In those days, receipt of money in an envelope from Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was clearly established.

In those days, the State paid the expenses for Party leaders to spend their

holidays abroad with their families. Chief Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal would spend his holidays in the Soviet Union from the middle of July. After spending his vacation in the Soviet Union, he returned to Mongolia in October or November. All the expenses were paid by the national budget. Members of the Party Politburo, Secretaries, and Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting all received these benefits.

IL: You told us that “Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was personally very gentle,” didn’t you? Will you talk about this point more specifically?

BN: Certainly. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was never a severe or hardheaded person in private. He had a very good character. He was very gentle and seldom got angry. However, I could not help but criticize his business approaches or personal faults. He tried to protect the national interests of the Soviet Union excessively and could not protect the national interests of Mongolia. He did exactly as his wife said. He made many mistakes by himself including the cession of a part of the Mongolian territory in his home land to the Soviet Union as a gift. I could not help but criticize him for his cold expulsion of the people who commented on the act and who criticized his mistake from anxiety over the fate of their homeland.

### **13. Compensation for Criticism**

IL: Why were you called an “anti-Party group”?

BN: There never existed a thing like an “anti-Party group.” However, in an account titled “Resolution at the Sixth General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee,” which was published in the ‘Unen’ newspaper issued after the General Assembly of the Party Central Committee, we were named as the “anti-Party group.” The “resolution” was actually not acted upon by the General Assembly. A draft resolution of the General Assembly would have to be distributed to all the attendees to the General Assembly. The attendees were expected to express their views about the draft resolution after reading it. And resolutions were expected to be made after obtaining consensus. However, no draft resolutions were distributed, deliberated, or voted on at the General Assembly before its conclusion.

What was deliberated at the General Assembly was two issues since Ts. Lookhuuz and I had criticized Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. One was an issue of expelling Ts. Lookhuuz and me from the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, and the other was an issue of our payment of the expenses for our study in the Soviet Union. Those two issues were deliberated on and voted on at the General Assembly. However, no other issues about us were resolved by the attendees to the General Assembly.

The General Assembly started at nine in the morning on December 21,

1964 and ended at six in the morning on December 22. The meeting lasted overnight. However, four days after the General Assembly, what was called “Resolution at the Sixth General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee” was published in the ‘Unen’ paper under the title of “Unanimously Resolved at the General Assembly.” This was a “false resolution” issued in the name of the General Assembly. According to the rules of the Party, this was not a valid resolution. This resolution was issued without being acknowledged by the attendees to the General Assembly.

Issuing a draft resolution by using the names of the members of the General Assembly would not have been done or allowed to be done by anyone other than Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and is impermissible. This shameful act conducted by the Party leaders reveal that it had collapsed. This had never been done by anyone in the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party but Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and, indeed, he had taken such steps several times. He was used to plotting evil. I sometimes saw what he did and wondered how he came up with such ugly ideas. Although his brain never worked in his daily life or on business, he seemed to think of extremely unusual ideas only in terms of bad things. It was a surprisingly wondrous talent.

If the draft resolution had been distributed in advance at the General Assembly, various opinions would have been expressed. In that case, the “false resolution” that was published in the ‘Unen’ paper after the General Assembly would not have appeared. It was because Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal feared the attendees to the General Assembly that he issued the “false resolution” without distributing a draft.

YuK: When you went out of the General Assembly, did you think that you might be arrested?

BN: At six in the morning on December 22, 1964, at the exit of the large convention hall of the government offices, where the Sixth General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee was held, T. Ragchaa deprived me of the “Identification Card for Attendee to the General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party.” Then I went out thinking that “I will be arrested soon after leaving the office! A car of the Ministry of Internal Security may be on standby across this door to arrest me and take me away!” However, no cars waited for me. I thought that “it is likely that I can go home anyway!”

When I came home and sat down, my elder brother Arildii came in saying “I was convinced that you must have been taken away by the Ministry of Internal Security at midnight.” I also received phone calls constantly from my colleagues and friends. Some of them visited my house. They called to console me and say considerate words so that I would not be discouraged. I encouraged

them to go home saying, “You better go home soon. Otherwise, you will be regarded as sympathizers of the dissident, Nyambuu!” Some attendees to the General Assembly said before it ended, “Those guys should be arrested immediately. Let’s see them bowing their heads at the trial!”

There were long breaks during the General Assembly. The members of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee held a meeting. I was told about that by Governor Sukhbat of Bayankhongor Province. He told me in secret, “The members of the Politburo had a meeting to discuss the issues about you. Many of them stated that you should be arrested. Then D. Yondonduichir of the Public Prosecutor's Office was summoned to the meeting. He hesitated to arrest you. He refused to arrest you saying, ‘The members of the General Assembly for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee have a right to express their opinions and criticisms at the General Assembly. Such opinions or criticisms do not need to be supported by all the people. Did they rebel against the State? They did nothing else to be arrested for. If they need to be arrested, what laws will be applied to punish them?’

D. Yondonduichir of the State Public Prosecutor’s Office; Kh. Damdin, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; Y. Gunsen, the Vice Minister of Internal Security; and so on were reportedly of similar opinions. They expressed their opinions to Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal that “There are no legal issues to arrest them for. If you have any witness of their crimes, I will discuss the matter of arresting them!” B. Jambalsüren, the Minister of Internal Security, also refused to arrest us. They reportedly expressed their opinions, “We had a bitter experience of purging innocent people as political criminals for a false charge. For what reasons can we arrest critics at the General Assembly of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee even without discussing whether the criticism was accurate or not?”

After the General Assembly ended, our cases were discussed by the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee Control Board. They discussed the cases for approximately twenty days. At the Control Board, I stated, “Are you trying to transfer me as a herder? I used to be a herder. I grew up grazing livestock. I have no difficulties in grazing livestock even today. However, will you clear up only one thing? Will I be transferred as a “herder” as a punishment? Why do I have to be punished? I was expelled from the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. I do not know the reason for that! Was it a punishment against my criticism on the mistakes and faults of the party leader at the General Assembly of the Party Central Committee? If I will be punished for my criticizing the mistakes and faults of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal, I cannot accept the punishment!” Then, R. Luvsanravdan, the Chairman of the Control Board, told me, “We are not punishing you because

you made criticisms at the General Assembly of the Party. If you think so, it is a misunderstanding. You may be punished for other reasons!” I rebutted, “You are not trying to punish me because I made criticisms, are you? Then, please explain the reason for punishment. I would like to know it. If it is true, I will accept it! I will be punished! If I committed a crime, I should go on trial. I criticized as an attendee to the General Assembly of the Party Central Committee. I made no statement against the Party or the general public! I criticized only Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. That is a fact! My criticism is completely right and honest, and I recognize that it is a criticism necessary for the nation! Nobody can deny it!” In response to my rebuttal, Luvsanravdan could not reply. After a while, Luvsanravdan said, “If you raise a question that way, I must take it to the court!” So I said to him, “In that case, let’s clear up the doubt at the court!”, and left the meeting room. After I left the meeting, I went home directly.

In my house, my brothers and my mother were waiting for me. They were much pleased that I came home without being arrested. So I said to them that “The Party Central Committee decided to transfer me as a herder to the Ereentsav National Farm in Dornod Province, but I strongly protested their decision and left the meeting-like gathering!” Then they were much pleased to know that I was not expected to be arrested and said, “Why do you protest to them? Let’s go to Dornod Province immediately!” My elder brother got very angry at me and said, “You should appreciate it that you were not arrested. You go to Ereentsav for herding right now! Otherwise, you may be suddenly arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security!” They were afraid that I might be arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security. From that day, I had nothing to do at home. So I spent all day reading books at home. Then, my elder brother got angry at me again and said, “You are a criminal! What do you think you can find by reading books on such an occasion? You should prepare for departure and go to your destination immediately instead of spending your time doing such things!” I ignored what he told me. In the end, one day, he brought a thick coat with sheep wool and felt arctic boots to my house. He said, “If you are arrested by the Ministry of Internal Security, go away in those clothes.”

I was a little more than forty years old. I was young and hot-blooded. When I was tired of reading at home and went out, I saw spies of the Ministry of Internal Security crawling close to me. They might have tried to uncover whom I would see or what I would do. They all followed after me. I pretended not to have noticed them. Sometimes, I made fun of them. I knew that they followed after me. They did not seem to know that I had noticed them. They must have thought that they had not been noticed. They followed after me. So

I would suddenly stop and go back in front of them and pass away just beside them.

There used to be a three-storied building in front of my apartment. A “spy group” consisting of six members appeared to have lived in one room of that building with the objective of spying on me. I used to always watch them through the windows of my house. They changed every morning in shifts. In addition, I saw them bringing in something like equipment. One day, I told my family members about the door of the building and said to them “I will go out now. You look at how many persons will follow after me from the building,” and went out. There was one frontage in our apartment. Upon turning at the frontage, I stopped and looked back to the door from the corner secretly. Then I found six persons running after me from the building. I stopped within the frontage so that they might not see me. After all, they passed me without noticing me. I glanced at them, and they suddenly stopped. So I appeared beside them and went directly toward the Ministry of Internal Security. They followed after me.

I went to the Ministry of Internal Security and asked for an interview with the Minister B. Jambalsüren. I waited for so long without knowing whether the Minister intended to see me or not. In the meantime, I was admitted to his office. I had known Minister of Internal Security B. Jambalsüren very well. I transferred my duty as Secretary in charge of ideologies for the Party Committee of Ulaan Baatar City to him when I was appointed the First Secretary for the Ömnögov province Committee of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. B. Jambalsüren was in the Minister’s Office with Vice Minister Y. Gunsen. I immediately told them in a sharp tone, “Do you intend to spy on me? If so, you should not investigate me in such a way. If you inevitably need to spy upon me, shall I invite the spies to my home? I will tell them all the information you need about me!”

However, the two men answered respectively, “We are not spying!” “Aren’t you spying on me? Then, please identify what kind of persons are spying on me! Several persons are watching me day and night. It is your duty to identify who is watching me!” Then B. Jambalsüren replied, “We do not know whether there are any persons watching you indeed. You are only convinced that you are watched by someone, aren’t you? You originally disliked our Ministry. I know that very well!” I got very angry about this remark. So I said to him, “If you play dumb like that, I will indicate it to your subordinates who are tailing me!”

Then he answered, “We do not have the time to walk around the streets after you. You should investigate their reasons by yourself!” I told him, “Jambalsüren, when did you like this Ministry? What were we talking about



when we were engaged in the tasks of the Party? Did you forget that after you were appointed to the post in the Ministry of Internal Security? If your memory is so poor, I can remind you of that with the month and date! I have discussed nothing other than those things we discussed at that time. I only discussed that at a different place. You must know that my criticism of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal has not changed from the criticism that I discussed with you before. I have said nothing against the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party or the national government of Mongolia!" Then he sank into silence.

Vice Minister D. Gunsen listened to our conversation quietly. After leaving the Ministry of Internal Security this way, I went home, with their spies following after me. The Ministry of Internal Security had never stopped spying on us. On the contrary, the spying continued after I was transferred to the provinces.

In addition, since the Sixth General Assembly of the Party Central Committee ended, all media started speaking ill of the "anti-Party group," including Ts. Lookhuuz and B. Nyambuu day and night. I stopped reading what was written in newspapers and stopped listening to reports on the radio. I found that "no truth is included in the media reports!" I paid no attention to them. Given that the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party was always portrayed as right, it was obvious what lies and false stories were reported. Because the State power twisted not only what we said but also even national history, the general public recognized the propaganda as such and had completely lost its confidence in these works. There is a proverb in Mongolia, "engaged in idle talk like a radio!" This proverb indicates that people had lost confidence in propaganda because of all the lies.

Soon after the Sixth General Assembly of the Party Central Committee was over, a campaign started in universities, professional schools, and public institutions, and among intellectuals to uncover the "anti-Party group" and sympathizers and supporters for it. This campaign was conducted by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Control Board with N. Luvsanravdan as the top and the Ministry of Internal Security under the direct guidance of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. The personnel for "uncovering sympathizers of the anti-Party element, Nyambuu" were dispatched to those who had studied at the University of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in Moscow together with me. The detached unit was led by B. Ramjav, J. Jamiyan, G. Ish, and so on. They built "criminal cases" by stating that, "Those who had studied together with B. Nyambuu collected contributions to buy him a wrist watch. They bought him air tickets when his wife and children returned home. They saw them off to the Moscow Station." and announced these stories as if they

had been really serious events. In addition, they built “criminal cases” by announcing such stories as “the sympathizers of the anti-Party element, Nyambuu, denied national development status, asserted that national life was poor and becoming worse, and were listening to the ‘Voice of America’ radio station.” Based on those stories, the students who had been studying at the University of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with me were expelled.

At the Sixth General Assembly, some people said, “all the students at the University of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union are sympathizers of B. Nyambuu. They all share the same ideology as B. Nyambuu. They dispatched B. Nyambuu to the university as their representative!” When I left for Ulaan Baatar to attend the General Assembly, a close friend of mine was on the Black Sea coast on vacation. When he returned to Moscow, he found that the “mission for uncovering sympathizers of the anti-Party element, Nyambuu” had arrived. He told me that the mission had asked him “what he was doing during that period and if he was one of the members who bought a watch for Nyambuu.” He told me that he answered to the following effect: “Yes, that is true of course. What wrong did they do? I am their comrade!” As a result, he was also expelled from the university.

In addition, another friend of mine was expelled from the university only because he sang a song. The song he sang was a very famous Mongolian folk song. The lyrics include the phrase, “What a pity it is that the little otter is caught up between rocks.” When he sang this song, he was a little drunk. Then, he was summoned and strictly questioned, “Why did you sing this song?” “Who do you mean by the otter caught up between the rocks?” “Who do you mean by the rocks catching the otter?” and so on. In the end, he was expelled from the university.

#### **14. Nomadic Life in a Province**

BN: The people in the province showed a completely different attitude toward me. My wife is a doctor and used to study in Moscow. We used to live together in Moscow. Our three children were still very young. When I went to the Ereentsav National Farm in Dornod Province as a “herder,” I summoned my family from the Party Control Board. Thus we decided to go to the province together. The Dornod Province Health Service Bureau appointed my wife as a doctor affiliated to the Ereentsav National Farm. Earlier, there were no doctors in the Ereentsav National Farm. When we arrived at Ereentsav, many people gathered around us, built a ger, and brought sheep meat and cow’s milk to us. They had originally expected that “B. Nyambuu would come to Ereentsav alone!” They were very pleased that I came together with my family. I came to the Ereentsav National Farm in this way and spent eleven

years there.

I originally went to the farm as a “herder.” I worked as an “apprentice sheep herder” for a certain household. My grazing land was not so far from the center of the county. Because my wife was employed as a doctor affiliated to the National Farm, my wife and children decided to build a ger at the center of the county and live there for the time being. I decided to leave the residence located at the center of the county and live in the residence of the team leader in the steppe land. I returned to the residence located at the center of the county only when I was off duty. While we were leading a life in this way, my wife came to be called frequently by patients in remote areas. Thus she needed to go far away to treat patients. We encountered a problem of how we should take care of our children on such occasions. In those days, our children were very young. At first, we tried our best to overcome the problem. But, in the end, we became entirely helpless. My wife was the only doctor in the hospital of the Ereentsav National Farm. So I wrote a letter to Chief Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal about these conditions. I requested him to “approve my working at the center of the county.” Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal approved my request and gave me a letter allowing me to work at the center of the county. I received the answer via S. Luvsanravdan, the Chairman of the Control Board for the Party Central Committee. Thus, I was exempted from the job of apprentice sheep herder, and I came to work at the center of the county.

The Ministry of Internal Security had issued a directive to the local administrative agency that it may not employ me at a monthly salary in excess of “300 to 400 *Tugriks*.” The County Governor therefore could not give me a significant job.

The county government tried to help me out as much as possible. However, if it offered me a good job in defiance of the directive from the Ministry of Internal Security, the leaders of the county government were likely to be dismissed. That was why the County Governor and so on could not give me significant employment. As a result, I worked at such jobs as management of well motors, repair of piping, stock control of locks, construction works, and leader of a mowing team. The head of the Ereentsav National Farm had once appointed me to a post at a monthly salary of more than 600 *Tugriks* though he had known that it had not been approved by the Ministry of Internal Security. Then this information was communicated to the Party Central Committee Control Board via the Ministry of Internal Security. The Control Board dispatched a mission to investigate this matter.

The head of the Ereentsav National Farm was a heroic Buryat. He explained to the mission, “I judged the ability of B. Nyambuu before appointing him to this post. There is none other than B. Nyambuu in our

National Farm who can fill this position. If the Party Central Committee Control Board will dispatch a person who can perform this work, I can dismiss B. Nyambuu immediately from this post!” Buryats in Mongolia can assert themselves firmly. They will never surrender. They may sometimes go a little too far. That is why there is a proverb stating “Buryats are as stubborn as an axe with the handle attached upside and down!”

Soon after I came to the province, I received a bill for payment of expenses for my overseas education in Moscow. This issue had been deliberated at the Sixth General Assembly of the Party Central Committee. I had to pay 24,000 *tugriks*. It was a huge amount of money in those days. It was an amount that I could not pay for from my income by any means. The payment of the expenses for the overseas education had been determined by the Dornod Province Court. I insisted at the court, “I used to study in Moscow. I studied at the university as my duty. I had fulfilled the duty assigned to me. I studied very hard at the university. I did not stop studying at my discretion! My schoolwork was illegally suspended by the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee. That is not my fault. Therefore, I will never accept the payment of school expenses!” The provincial court decided that it would make me pay the expenses for the overseas education in Moscow. I had no income other than my monthly salary. It was thus decided that I would pay the expenses from the monthly salary. My monthly salary as an apprentice sheep herder was at most 100 *tugriks*. I was forced to appropriate 50 *tugriks* for the payment out of the 100 *tugriks* and to survive with the balance of 50 *tugriks*. How many years would I need to continuously pay 50 *tugriks* per month to pay off the debt? However, the Dornod Province Court ruled that “I have to pay off the debt within six months!” Then they attached the property of my family. It was completely impossible for me to pay off the debt within six months. Such a rule was nothing but an effort to suppress me.

Under such painful circumstances, I wrote a letter to Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal again. I made a request to him, noting, “I will pay the expenses for overseas study in Moscow. However, the rule made by the Dornod Province Court is impossible. Please approve my paying for the expenses from my salary over a long period!” In addition, our children were excellent in those days. However, they were discriminated against by other children at school and were called “children of the anti-Party element, B. Nyambuu.” I requested Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal to take appropriate measures to protect my children.

Then, before long, a man was dispatched from the Party Central Committee Control Board to judge the difficult problems which occurred in my life at that site. He was Donoin Purev, a former Minister of Justice. He came to me and said, “The Control Board reviewed your letter and decided

that your payment does not need to be tied up by a deadline. We will approve your long-term monthly payment. In addition, the school should not harm children. You should be treated in the same way as the general public!” He seems to have expressed similar views to the leaders of Dornod Province. In those days, the leaders of Dornod Province were extremely cold to me. They always tried to harm me. However, because of his visit, my condition was somewhat improved.

IL: When were you transferred to Shariin Gol?

BN: I went there in 1976. In those days, I wrote another request to the Party Central Committee. Before the Sixth General Assembly of the Party Central Committee held in December, 1964, I had received letters from several persons concerning the preparation work for the General Assembly. In other words, I had known those expected to make speeches at the General Assembly were opponents of ours. The organizers of the General Assembly might have been surprised about that. And after the General Assembly, they seemed to be excited about finding the persons who provided me with the information. Fortunately, they could not identify the information providers. However, those who provided me with the information were dismissed for other reasons.

In 1976, I wrote a request concerning this. Then I received an answer immediately after that. The letter was signed by Minister of Internal Security Bugayin Dejid as a respondent. He wished to see me in Ulaan Baatar. So I went there. My meeting with him was held on the third floor of the building in front of the Ministry of Internal Security. When I entered the room, B. Dejid had already been seated. A basket of candy and fruits had been placed on the table. He said, “I was ordered by Mr. Tsedenbal to see you and listen to your requests.” So I told him about one of my requests to Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. I said, “I have many children. Some of them entered a school in the Soviet Union. I have already paid off the expenses for my overseas study in Moscow. Now, I wish that Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal approve my living in the vicinity of Ulaan Baatar or in a small city along the railroad!”

B. Dejid conveyed my request to Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Several days after the meeting, I was called by him and saw him again. He told me, “Chief Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal approved your request. I will contact you on this matter again!” Then I returned to Dornod Province. B. Dejid kept his promise, and an answer reached me soon after the meeting to the effect that my transfer to Shariin Gol had been approved. Shariin Gol was a newly developed small coal city in those days. Small towns had been constructed within the city.

## **15. Tsedenbal’s Departure**

IL: The issue of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was discussed at the Eighth General

Assembly of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee in 1984, and a decision was made that Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal would be dismissed from all posts. How did you find out about the General Assembly while you were in Shariin Gol in those days? Weren't there any other solutions for the matter of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal?

BN: When our family moved to Shariin Gol, D. Tömör-Ochir already lived in Darkhan City. The two cities were very close, perhaps approximately seventy kilometers apart. I went there and had very good conversations with D. Tömör-Ochir. He also came to visit our house frequently. In those days, we had difficulties in seeing other people. Those who saw us would be regarded as our "sympathizers" and were threatened to be dismissed from jobs or expelled to a province. Accordingly, we did not intend to see other people. Under such circumstances, it was a great joy for us to see and talk to each other. We traveled between Darkhan and Shariin Gol by train. The Ministry of Internal Security kept an eye on us. However, they never prohibited us from seeing each other.

In those days, I was impressed to know that "D. Tömör-Ochir knew about the political climate in Mongolia!" He knew in great detail what was being discussed among the leaders of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee, the progress of their tasks, who of them had what problems, who had extramarital affairs scandals, and so on. Correct information was not disclosed to the general public on such matters, of course. Such information was mostly spread only as rumors. However, D. Tömör-Ochir seemed to have a very large information network. I found that he always obtained correct information. D. Tömör-Ochir had been informed in advance of the agenda at this General Assembly of the Party Central Committee.

Immediately before the General Assembly, I wrote a letter to the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. As expected, the Ministry of Internal Security made a recommendation concerning this letter. It advised me to the effect that "I insulted the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in my letter and that they would punish me if I wrote such a letter again." I told them that "I wrote everything I intended to say and that I have nothing else to say!" And I signed the written note.

Colonel D. Dorj, who was a manager of the Ministry of Internal Security in those days, came to see me. He told me, "We do not intend to punish you. It is only a measure to prevent you from again taking such action. If you write such a letter again, it would give us good grounds for punishing you in accordance with the provisions of Article 93 and Article 49 of the Penal Code!" Soon after that, however, I could not keep my promise and could not help writing a letter again to the Party Central Committee.

In those days, S. Jalan-Aajav, a member of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee, retired at the age limit. Then, soon after that, a malicious slander was issued by the Party Central Committee Control Board that “S. Jalan-Aajav was one of the leaders of the anti-Party group including Ts. Lookhuuz, B. Nyambu, B. Surmaajav, and so on!” S. Jalan-Aajav had nothing to do with us. I had met him before when I returned home from Moscow to attend the Sixth General Assembly of the Party. However, our meeting was not held only for us but was attended by S. Luvsanchoinbor.

I understood that S. Luvsanchoinbor attended our meeting by order of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. But I did not know who dispatched S. Jalan-Aajav. S. Luvsanchoinbor might have ordered S. Jalan-Aajav to accompany him. S. Luvsanchoinbor told me that he wished to exchange opinions with me on such issues as “who will be a suitable person to take the post after Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal is dismissed.” He had a draft appointment list. The list might have been prepared by S. Luvsanchoinbor himself on the order of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. It was apparent that he was trying to trap me. S. Jalan-Aajav seemed to know nothing about the list and told me that “it is impossible to dismiss Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and that the domestic situation would get serious if a man worse than Yu. Tsendenbal held state power!” I kept silent like a clam because I felt no need to talk about such issues with them. For example, this topic was taken up for discussion: “What do you think of appointing Minister of Internal Security B. Jambalsüren to be the Chairman of the Ministerial Meeting instead of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal?” B. Jambalsüren was an unreliable fellow with an arrogant personality. However, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal appointed B. Jambalsüren to a position of trust by himself and always let him attend him.

However, in 1983, the Chairman of the Party Central Committee Control Board, B. Dejid, slandered S. Jalan-Aajav saying that “S. Jalan-Aajav created this list, and he consulted with the anti-Party group on personnel affairs based on the list.” The Party Central Committee Observation Board also slandered S. Jalan-Aajav. This behavior angered me beyond endurance, and I wrote a letter to the Party Central Committee Control Board to the effect that “S. Jalan-Aajav has nothing to do with us!” Thus I broke my promise with the Ministry of Internal Security. Then I waited to be arrested since I broke my promise. When someone knocked on the door at midnight, I would think, “Oh, I will be arrested at last!” When I saw the cars of the Ministry of Internal Security parked in Darkhan, I came to think “Such cars will come for me when I will be arrested!” Then, I turned defiant, saying to myself, “Let things take their course. Arrest me if you want to!”, and prepared to be imprisoned.

One day, under such circumstances, when I was watching TV at home, I

saw an official report on the Eighth General Assembly of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee being read aloud. The assembly dismissed the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, Yu. Tsendenbal, from all posts. My first thought when I heard that was, "This eliminates the possibility of my being arrested!" And I actually escaped the risk of being arrested. After this Assembly, I saw D. Tömör-Ochir. D. Tömör-Ochir said, "It was apparent that Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal was incapable of leading the national government since the time you and I criticized him. Our criticism was solid. All things considered, however, the decision was made too late!"

Because of the weakness of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal, A. I. Filatova started behaving very selfishly. A. I. Filatova almost dared to say that "he is capable of leading the national government" indeed. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union was involved in the dismissal of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. The Soviet Union was also cautious concerning the behavior of Mrs. Tsendenbal. The remarks of A. I. Filatova were understood as if those were remarks of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. And Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal further authorized the remarks of A. I. Filatova. The acts of A. I. Filatova finally led to the loss of confidence among the citizens, resulting in the rapid degradation of the reputation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union among Mongolian citizens.

YuK: You told us that Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal was incompetent since the time he had been young. Were there any persons who helped him in those days?

BN: D. Tömör-Ochir definitely stated that Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal was lacking in the ability to fulfill his responsibility. He said that even at a General Assembly for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee. For a long time, Ch. Lodoidamba and D. Tömör-Ochir wrote the speeches for Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. They wrote the speeches directly in Russian. Later, D. Yondon took over this duty. D. Yondon had once acted as the Vice President of Foreign Affairs. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal had only one forte. He was good at correcting texts written by others. He would correct draft documents written by others for him thoroughly in red ink. This was a job he was good at. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal had never written speeches for conventions on General Assemblies for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party by himself but read the texts written by D. Tömör-Ochir, Ch. Lodoidamba, and so on.

YuK: Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal reportedly specialized in economics. How do you rate him as an economist?

BN: I do not think he was a good economist at all. There was nothing proposed by or created under the guidance of the Chief Secretary for the



Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. I can find no projects that were "conceived and implemented by our Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, Yu. Tsedenbal." Such national great projects in those days as the "Virgin Lands Program Movement" and "cooperative unionization" were not the work of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. There were excellent organizers working under him such as L. Tsend, D. Tömör-Ochir, D. Maidar, and Ts. Lookhuuz. The great projects of Mongolia were accomplished by them.

Our Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was never a bad person, but had none of his own policies. He tried to implement everything according to Russian models. That was why he was incompetent. I am criticizing him as an individual. However, his loss of economic competency had significantly hindered national development. I criticized only that point.

I have never maliciously criticized the private affairs of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal in front of party colleague members at General Assemblies for the Party Central Committee. I have never insulted him or raised a question emotionally. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal himself knew that my criticism was specific and true. That was why he did not show a bad attitude against me after he expelled me to the provinces.

When I was transferred to the provinces, he provided me with three great supports. First, according to the decision of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee Control Board, I was supposed to be a "herder" at the Ereentsav National Farm in Dornod Province. A livestock herder has to live far apart from the center of the county. However, because my wife was a doctor, we had to live at the center of the county. In consideration of such family circumstances, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal allowed me to live at the center of the county without working as a "herder." Second, he did not prohibit my children from entering a university. Since my children were excellent in school, I asked Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal to "permit them to learn at a university." Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal approved my request, noting, "I have heard that the children of B. Nyambuu are excellent students. They should be admitted to learn like other children." Those who were expelled to the provinces together with me were all prohibited from sending their children to a university. They were strictly supervised and suppressed. No one was permitted by Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal to admit their children into a university but I. Third, I wrote to Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal that "my province is too far to live in because it is too far from Ulaan Baatar, and I wish to be permitted to live in the vicinity of Ulaan Baatar." He approved this request too. In those days, the lives of those who were expelled to the provinces were determined exclusively by Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. All the matters concerning those who

were expelled were taken up and determined exclusively by Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal.

### **16. Tsend vs. Tömör-Ochir**

IL: Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was conferred with such titles as “National Hero of Mongolia” and “Labor Hero.” Will you talk about such titles?

BN: Yu. Tsedenbal was conferred with the title “National Hero of Mongolia” in the early 1960s. As for the title “Labor Hero,” many people were not pleased to confer the title on him. Many people believed that “We should postpone the granting of the “Labor Hero” title to him for a while. We may confer the title on him later!” The bestowal of the title had been proposed by L. Tsend, a member of the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee, and had been accepted by the members of the Politburo of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee and the members of the Ulaan Baatar Committee for the Party. L. Tsend himself might have been requested by Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal to make the proposal. In any case, he stated that the “Labor Hero” title should be conferred on Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. A question arises here why L. Tsend tried to grant the title of “Labor Hero” on Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal, despite the fact that L. Tsend had previously said that “Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal is an incompetent man!” I think that L. Tsend persisted in granting the title of “Labor Hero” on Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal because L. Tsend had political ambitions. In other words, the conferring of the title on Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal might have been a part of preparation for dismissal of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal from the post of Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party and the awarding of this position to L. Tsend. I think that granting the title of “Labor Hero of Mongolia” on Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was a message of L. Tsend to Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal to the effect that “Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal, you did a good job. It is about the time that you should retire from your post. Leave the rest to us!” I believe so. L. Tsend was the closest man to Yu. Tsedenbal who understood that he was no longer competent to assume his duties. There is no other explanation why L. Tsend supported the granting of the “Labor Hero” title to Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal.

I was once fiercely opposed to L. Tsend. This opposition was associated with his encouragement to others to dismiss Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal from his post and to elect L. Tsend himself as the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. After I knew his intention, I fiercely opposed him. When I was the Party First Secretary for Ömnögov province, he came to me. He explained that he came to Ömnögov province to inspect provincial business. However, he had another intention. L. Tsend asked me to support

him if the agenda of dismissing Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal and electing L. Tsend as the Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee was discussed at the General Assembly of the Party Central Committee. I flatly asserted that "I will not support you." L. Tsend got angry at my refusal of his request for support. Then he went away with a parting threat, "I will raise a special question on the business of Ömnögov province!" I retorted, "If you want to fabricate a bad evaluation on the business of our province, you may just do it. Nevertheless, I will not endorse you as the Chief Secretary for the Party."

L. Tsend was a very capable, knowledgeable, and outstanding organizer. He had the talent to be promoted to an important position. The reason that, nevertheless, I did not support him was that he had a significant defect at the same time. His defect was that he was a double-dealing person. This is a very dangerous temperament. A double-dealing person is called in Mongolia a "malicious person!" or "double-dealer!" I thought that such a national leader might put Mongolia in an extremely dangerous situation. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had been likely informed by the KGB of the Soviets of L. Tsend's plan to become Chief Secretary.

In those days, the relationship between L. Tsend and D. Tömör-Ochir was bad. They were originally good friends after having worked together for more than twenty years. They, however, finally opposed each other and never reconciled again. We did not understand the reason for their estrangement at all at that time but it became apparent later. In those days, various bad remarks about Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal had been spread widely in Mongolian society. The citizens believed that "Yu. Tsedenbal would resign soon!" and waited for his resignation. Under such circumstances, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal started taking measures to avert the crisis.

In his calculation, the most dangerous person was D. Tömör-Ochir. D. Tömör-Ochir had fiercely criticized Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal frequently at General Assemblies of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. D. Tömör-Ochir had become popular among the citizens. He directly advised Yu. Tsedenbal, "Yu. Tsedenbal, you should resign soon. Both the nation and the national life have fallen into a difficult situation!" So Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal seemed to have considered that "his crisis would be brought about by Tömör-Ochir."

Around that time, the largest problem for Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal might be "how he should expel D. Tömör-Ochir." Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal decided to take advantage of L. Tsend for this function. L. Tsend had intended to dismiss Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal and to be elected as the Chief Secretary for the Party by himself. It is reasonable for L. Tsend to have considered that "who might

pose the largest impediment for realization of his ambition must be D. Tömör-Ochir.” Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and L. Tsend formed an alliance from their respective different objectives to expel D. Tömör-Ochir to a province.

After that, as time went by, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal gradually came to understand that an ax was about to fall. He had already lost all powerful persons among his followers who would be able to protect him from L. Tsend. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal naturally came to fall into the trap of L. Tsend. It seemed a matter of time before L. Tsend would force Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal to resign. Yu. Tsendenbal understood the situation and started taking prompt measures. He noticed that “there is none but D. Tömör-Ochir who could help him.” And Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal proposed the restoration of rights of D. Tömör-Ochir by himself and started making efforts to obtain the support of members of the Party Central Committee. It was in the midst of such a period that I saw Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal once. He said to me, “I must restore D. Tömör-Ochir to his previous posts. I have stupidly dismissed him according to the suggestion of L. Tsend. What do you think of my proposal? You are such an influential member of the Party Central Committee! I suppose that many people will oppose the restoration of D. Tömör-Ochir. I would appreciate it if you support my proposal!”

However, D. Tömör-Ochir flatly refused the proposal of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal, noting, “You all fired me for no reason. I will not be involved in politics again. I will lead a life as a researcher!” At this time, Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal must have understood that “D. Tömör-Ochir would do no harm to him.” After considerable persuasion, Yu. Tsendenbal made D. Tömör-Ochir accept the restoration. There were no opponents against his restoration in the General Assembly for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party Central Committee where this issue was discussed. D. Tömör-Ochir was never a faultless person either. He was very egotistic and stubborn in character. However, he was marvelous in terms of knowledge, education, and talents. He was a rare person in Mongolia at that time. It was apparent to everyone that the relationship between Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal and D. Tömör-Ochir would not last long. Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal might consider again the problem of “how he should deal with D. Tömör-Ochir this time.”

After resuming his office and solving the issue of L. Tsend, D. Tömör-Ochir was involved in the campaign of “removing the bad custom of personality cult.” This was the most sensitive nerve for Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. D. Tömör-Ochir was one of the persons who knew best how Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal was involved in the “political purge” during the age of Kh. Choibalsan. He also knew well where the materials about it were stored. It is difficult to guess the final objective of D. Tömör-Ochir in this

campaign. He might have been always trying to remove Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. D. Tömör-Ochir had known well that this campaign would result in cornering Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal who would have nowhere to go.

But Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal discovered a way to escape this condition. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was a man versed in evil. He conducted a lot of irregularities taking advantage of the power concentrated in him. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal dismissed D. Tömör-Ochir on the ground that “he raised nationalism and opposed the amity between Mongolia and the Soviet Union.” D. Tömör-Ochir had told me, “I am not qualified to become a leader. Because I have a bad personality, I will make many enemies. I wish to work as a researcher. I will be happy if I can study the history of Mongolia and teach it as an instructor!” At the Third General Assembly of the Party Central Committee held in 1962, D. Tömör-Ochir was dismissed again from all offices.

L. Tsend reportedly exchanged opinions with several members of the Communist Party of the Politburo of the Soviet Union Committee on the issue of dismissing Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. However, they reportedly did not approve Tsend’s opinions. As a result, the defeat of Tsend became inevitable. In the autumn of 1963, Tsend was dismissed. Tsend had never criticized Tsedenbal on a formal occasion. He was capable enough to imply criticism in his choice of words. Tsend was expelled to Zavkhan Province. Thus L. Tsend disappeared from the political world of Mongolia and has never returned there again. On the other hand, Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal accumulated considerable experience on political struggle after dismissing L. Tsend.

Around the time when Tömör-Ochir was dismissed, I was not in Mongolia. I was studying in Moscow. In the year after the General Assembly, I saw D. Tömör-Ochir once. He called me and told me that he wished to see me. And he came to my residence. We talked to each other drinking one bottle of spirits. He told me about the General Assembly of the Party Central Committee. D. Tömör-Ochir told me that the general meeting had been well prepared from the beginning, and I was given no opportunities to speak or defend myself. And he said, “I wish to have an opportunity to meet Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal in the near future. I sent him a request, but it was rejected. It would be appreciated if you arranged an opportunity for me to meet Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal! I was appointed to be the Construction Manager at Bayankhongor Province but I wish to work by making the most of my profession!” The Ministry of Internal Security found out about our meeting at my residence.

Around that time, the telephone of my residence had been tapped by the Ministry of Internal Security. Because I knew this, on the next day after I met with D. Tömör-Ochir, I immediately went to the office of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal and told him everything about my meeting with D. Tömör-Ochir

and what we talked about in the meeting. Then I said to him, “As you know, I stand for D. Tömör-Ochir. He is a human resource necessary for Mongolia. He wishes to see you. But he has not been able to realize his wish for some reason.” Then Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal replied, “Well, in that case, I will see him in the near future!” I conveyed this answer to D. Tömör-Ochir. He was pleased to hear it. I returned to Moscow shortly after that.

In the summer of the next year, I asked D. Tömör-Ochir about his meeting with Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal. Then he said, “I have never seen him after that! He is such a nasty man! He seldom fulfills his promises!” D. Tömör-Ochir was really knowledgeable. When Committee Chairmen of provinces for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party came to Ulaan Baatar, they would first be gathered in the office of D. Tömör-Ochir to have a lecture and advice from D. Tömör-Ochir on domestic and international matters. Then D. Tömör-Ochir listened to us on the conditions of provinces and asked questions. Those who could not answer his questions would be scolded and told, “Can you shoulder this nation with such hopeless ability? Why don’t you rack the globe (head) on your shoulders a little bit? Expand the contents in it a little! Are you thinking of nothing but festivities here and there?”

He was stricter against the ministers of the respective ministries. He would sharply scold them with such words as “It seems that you cannot work at the pace of national development. You should tender a letter of resignation now instead of hindering the national government!” In addition, he would criticize ministers by name in the central bulletin of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, ‘Unen.’ There were no other forums or persons that could criticize ministers in this way in those days. Therefore the general public welcomed the methods of D. Tömör-Ochir. Sometimes the ministers who were criticized by D. Tömör-Ochir rebelled against him.

IL: In 1990, a case of “followers of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal” was sent to the Public Prosecutors’ Office. How did this case turn out?

BN: The “followers of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal” meant approximately thirty people, who worked with Yu. Tsendenbal for a long time, including D. Molomjamts, T. Ragchaa, D. Sodom, B. Dejid, P. Damdin, S. Ramjav, and M. Perjee. They had worked with Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal for a long time, protected him, and hid his mistakes. They were called the “followers of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal” for the first time at the Twentieth Party Conference in 1990. They were expelled from the Party. And it was disclosed that they had embezzled national property. They were questioned about the act of dragging the national economy, and wasteful consumption and misappropriation of a large amount of national property. It was clear that they had obtained incidental benefits by hiding the incompetence of Secretary Yu. Tsendenbal as a

leader of the State, protecting him, and acting in concert with him.

This case was very prolonged since it was sent to the Public Prosecutors' Office. In those days, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party was very influential. There were members of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party who worked both among the personnel of courts and among the personnel of the Public Prosecutor's Office. The Supreme Court Judge who was in charge of the "followers of Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal" case was D. Sharavdorj. He had been appointed as the Minister of Defense by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in the coalition administration formed after the election in 2004. He kept this case under cover for two years. And he finally had the Supreme Court make a decision that "a crime did not occur" and closed it. Actually, there were sufficient grounds for inflicting punishment on them.

IL: Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was deprived of his many medals. Was this work implemented by the order of Mr. P. Ochirbat?

BN: Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal was expelled from the Party at the Twentieth Special General Assembly of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. And at the meeting of the new Politburo of the Party Central Committee elected at this General Assembly, it was decided that Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal would be deprived of five major medals out of those conferred on him previously. It was the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party administration's decision at that time. President Ochirbat issued an executive order based on the decision of the Politburo of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee to deprive Yu. Tsedenbal of the medals.

## **17. Since Democratization**

IL: In March 1990, the members of the Politburo of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party resigned. How do you evaluate this decision?

BN: It was a completely right decision. The Chief Secretary for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, J. Batmunkh, played a major role in making this decision. At that time, youngsters were on a hunger strike at the Sükhbaatar Square located in the center of Ulaan Baatar City. Some members of the Politburo of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party strongly opposed resignation. They tried to use force to disband the hunger strikers. In addition, they were planning to have the entire nation declare a "state of emergency." Who squarely opposed such intent was the then Vice Minister of Internal Security, General Ts. Jamsranjav.

In those days, the democratic movement was supported by all of Mongolian society. It was apparent that arresting the youngsters participating in the hunger strike at that time would throw the society into a dangerous

situation. The Tiananmen Square incident, which occurred in China in 1989, was about to be repeated in Mongolia. At such a difficult time, Chief Secretary J. Batmunkh took the decisive step — the general resignation of Politburo members. J. Batmunkh was very gentle in character. He was from the same region as Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal. Secretary Yu. Tsedenbal appointed him to be the Prime Minister. J. Batmunkh was originally a teacher. He did not seem to have been eager to take an important post in the government. He seemed to have remained a teacher. It is safe to say that he almost exclusively decided upon the general resignation of the Politburo members of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

YuK: Fifteen years have passed since democratization started in Mongolia. What do you think of present conditions?

BN: During the fifteen years since the democratic movement started, the forces of democracy once assumed the reins of government. Except for that period, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party has remained the ruling party. Although the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party committed various mistakes, the Party has abundant human resources and experience and a firm foundation. However, the Party sometimes takes outdated measures against present-day problems.

It can be said that the forces of democracy mostly won the election in 2004. They won the election as a matter of fact. However, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party is trying to find fault with and alter the election results. It is apparent that the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and the Democratic Party are the two major political forces in Mongolia. It is desirable that the two major political parties take the reins of the government in rotation. They should not regard each other with hostility or repudiate each other. As a result of the election, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and the Democratic Party formed a coalition government by "consultation and agreement." It was the best decision.

However, President N. Bagabandi hates the forces of democracy. Since N. Bagabandi took the office of President, no policies have been implemented to protect the interests of the citizens. He is a very guileful man. He did not appoint D. Ganbold of the forces of democracy to be Prime Minister. N. Bagabandi has been a major impediment for the forces of democracy in Mongolia. In addition, M. Enkhsaikhan is the worst person aiming to take high position by taking advantage of the name of the forces of democracy. The democrats, who have been involved in democratization from the very beginning, are only such persons as R. Gonchigdorj and Ts. Elbegdorj.

IL: Recently a presidential election was held. Various comments were made in Japan concerning the election. What views do you have on this election?



BN: There are various rumors among the people about the candidate from the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, N. Enkhbayar. They say he is involved in bribes. For example, such rumors as when Mongolia repaid the previous "debt" to Russia, N. Enkhbayar "wasted five million dollars of it" and "he appropriated fifty million *tugriks* of the national budget for treatment of his own disease" have been continuously spread. In addition, there is a rumor to the effect that "Mrs. Tsolmon, a wife of Enkhbayar, is involved in the national administration. She supposedly appointed a special advisor for the Ministry of Internal Security!" The rumors other than that "Mrs. Tsolmon appointed a special advisor for the Ministry of Internal Security" are all groundless. Whether he was involved in those bribes should be demonstrated with evidence. If they cannot be demonstrated, such rumors are defamation of character.