1971

Nicholas N. Muraviev, conqueror of the black dragon

Eric E. Oulashin
Portland State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/open_access_etds

Part of the [Asian History Commons](#), [Diplomatic History Commons](#), and the [Political History Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Oulashin, Eric E., "Nicholas N. Muraviev, conqueror of the black dragon" (1971). *Dissertations and Theses*. Paper 1465.

<https://doi.org/10.15760/etd.1464>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Eric E. Oulashin for the
Master of Arts in History, presented May 1, 1971

Title: Nicholas N. Muraviev, Conqueror of the Black Dragon.

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

Basil Dmytryshyn, Chairman

George A. Carbone

Morris K. Webb

The essential objective of this study was to reveal the degree to which one man, Nicholas Muraviev, was instrumental in bringing about Russia's annexation of The Amur basin, as well as the territory that became the Maritime Province of Siberia. Introductory chapters provide: a) a background summary of Muraviev's education and of his career prior to his service in Siberia, and b) a brief historical survey of the area in which his achievements raised Russia to the position of a Far Eastern Power. The main body of the study comprises an analytical narrative of Muraviev's activities during the decade that culminated in the Chinese capitulation at Aigun in 1858. Closing chapters explain the factors that turned the newly acquired territories into a burden for the Russian Government until it decided to build the trans-Siberian railway,

and set forth some conclusions regarding the historical significance of Muraviev's role as Russia's pro-consul in Eastern Siberia.

Extensive use was made of the prime single source of information on Muraviev's life, Ivan Barsukov's Graf N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii, po ego pismam, ofitsialnym dokumentam, razskazam sovremmenikov it pechatnym istochnikam (materialy dlia biografii). Also of significant assistance was the bibliography contained in J. L. Sullivan's doctoral dissertation, Count N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii, a full-scale biography. Sullivan's dissertation preceded two important works bearing on the Muraviev period in Siberia and drawn on extensively in the present study: R. K. I. Quedstedt's "The Expansion of Russia in East Asia, 1858-1860, and P. I. Kabanov's Amurskii Vopross. Among other particularly valuable sources was P. V. Schumacher's long article, "K istorii priobretenia Amurâa. Snoshenia s Kitaem s 1848 po 1860 g.", contained in Russki Arkhiv, which, together with Russkaia Starina and Krasny Arkhiv, also contain numerous other documents, memoirs and contemporary accounts that were consulted. Of signal value, too, among the special studies, surveys and reference works consulted was the introductory chapter of Andrew Malozemoff's Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904. A complete selected bibliography is included.

The research undertaken for this study has led to the conclusion that had it not been for Muraviev's imagination and ingenuity, his willingness, on occasion, to flout authority and his dedication and extraordinary stamina, the annexation to Eastern Siberia of almost 400,000 square miles of territory might never have taken place.

Muraviev was sometimes impatient, perhaps sometimes insufficiently impressed by broader politico-military considerations that dictated what he regarded as an inexcusably over-cautious attitude toward Russo-Chinese relations in St. Petersburg. He also tended to exaggerate the immediate benefits that would accrue to Russia once she acted boldly on the Amur. Yet the salient fact remains that it was the intensity with which he pursued his idee fixe, both with words and actions, the years of his methodical preparation, with minimal support from the Russian Government, that made it possible for that Government to nullify the Treaty of Nerchinsk and to extend the Russian Empire's realms on the Pacific's shores down to the Korean frontier. It took important external factors, such as the Crimean War, and the resulting replacement of Muraviev's nemesis, Nesselrode, and his clique, with more capable and far sighted officials, to bring Muraviev's plans to fruition. But to say this is simply to say that the authorities in St. Petersburg, viewing the confluence of events on the international scene, finally recognized that in Muraviev they had the right man at the right place at the right time.

NICHOLAS N. MURAVIEV
CONQUEROR OF THE BLACK DRAGON

by
ERIC. E. OULASHIN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in
HISTORY

Portland State University
1971

TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES:

The members of the Committee approve the thesis of
Eric E. Oulashin presented May 1, 1971.

[REDACTED]
Basil Dmytryshyn, Chairman

[REDACTED]
George A. Carbone

[REDACTED]
Morris K. Webb

APPROVED:

[REDACTED]
Jesse L. Gilmore, Head, Department of History

[REDACTED]
David Clark, Dean of Graduate Studies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Preface.	v
CHAPTER	
I THE MAKING OF A GOVERNOR-GENERAL	
I. Education and Initiation into War and Peace.	1
II. The Caucasian Crucible	4
III. Governing in the Provinces	24
IV. The Tsar Makes His Choice	27
II "SIBERIA TOO IS RUSSIAN LAND"	
I. The Russian River Amur	37
II. Growing Frontier of Empire	56
III EARLY PROBLEMS AND TACTICS	
I. Changes Come to Irkutsk	66
II. Laying the Groundwork	75
III. The Opening Wedge	82
IV UNTYING THE AMUR KNOT	
I. War in the West Shapes Policy in the East	109
II. The Initial Campaign "With No Smell of Gunpowder".	128
III. Paralysis of the Middle Kingdom	141

CHAPTER

PAGE

V THE ACTIVATION OF RUSSIAN POLICY

- I. The Rout of Nesselrode 147
- II. The Priamur is Taken 152
- III. The Arrow War Speeds Final Solutions 166
- IV. Nerchinsk Formally Avenged. 181

VI TRIUMPH'S AFTERMATH

- I. Expanding the Conquest. 197
- II. Shelving of an Empire Builder 222
- III. Great Expectations Dashed and Revived. 230

VII SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS. 247

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY. 261

APPENDICES

A. MAPS

- I. Russo-Chinese Border Following the Treaty
of Nerchinsk 272
- II. The Amur Estuary. 273
- III. The Acquisition of the Priamur and Primoria. 274

B CONFIDENTIAL REPORT FROM GOVERNOR-GENERAL MURAVIEV

- TO THE GRAND DUKE CONSTANTINE, NOV.29, 1853. 275

C TREATIES

- I. Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) 281
- II. Treaty of Kiakhta. 283
- III. Treaty of Aigun (1858). 291
- IV. Treaty of Tientsin (1858). 292
- V. Treaty of Peking (1860). 296

PREFACE

High on a bluff overlooking the Amur River at Khabarovsk, stands a heroically proportioned statue of Count Nicholas Nikolaevich Muraviev-Amurskii, conqueror of the Heilungchiang, or Black Dragon, as the Chinese called that river. Erected in 1891, this memorial dominates the site to which he pointed, when first defiantly sailing down that forbidden waterway, and prophetically exclaimed, "There is where a city will rise!"¹

Today Khabarovsk is but one of a number of flourishing cities and ports in the Amur basin and the Ussuri maritime area, relinquished to Russia by the Chinese, with rancor in their hearts and in the hope ultimately of obtaining revenge. This territory now figures prominently in the cold war between the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic. Lately, on the Amur and that other river sailed by Muraviev, the Ussuri, clashes have taken place between the armed forces of the two Communist empires. In 1969, the Soviet Government was impelled to issue a lengthy statement in rebuttal of Chinese irredentist claims and reciting the history of China's ancient "Dominion of the Northeast" that passed into Russian possession in the years 1858-1860.²

¹Istoricheski Vestnik, Vol. XXXVI, 1884, p. 646, cited by P. I. Kabanov in Amurskii Vopross (Blagoveschensk, 1959), p. 163.

²Moscow News, Supplement No. 25, 1969, p. 21.

Russian acquisition of the area that has now become the subject of Russian and Chinese polemics was essentially based on the work of Nicholas Muraviev who, often in the face of indifference or active hostility in high Russian governmental quarters, succeeded in abrogating the Treaty of Nerchinsk and annexing the Amur basin to Eastern Siberia. Subsequently, he was largely instrumental in further extending the boundaries of Imperial Russia to Korea, gaining, in all, an area of some 360,000 square miles for his country, which thereby became a Far Eastern Power.

With the exception of one relatively brief biography³ throughout which, in the words of its author, the emphasis is on the man himself, little has been written in the West concerning Nicholas Muraviev. The most complete account in Russian of the politico-military activities of this man is a two-volume work by Ivan Barsukov, Member of the Imperial Society of Russian History and Antiquities at the University of Moscow.⁴ This is, in effect, a large collection of letters, documents and memoirs of Muraviev's contemporaries, together with occasional commentary by Barsukov.

The present study is based upon a detailed scrutiny of Barsukov's compendium and an examination of those sources cited by him that were

³J. L. Sullivan, Count N. N. Muraviev-Amursky, doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 1955.

⁴I. P. Barsukov, Graf N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii, po ego pismam, ofitsial'nym dokumentam, razskazam sovremennikov i pechatnym istochnikam (materialy dlia biografi) (Count N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii, as revealed through his letters, in official documents, narratives of his contemporaries and published sources [materials for a biography.]

available to me, as well as of others. It is hoped that the resulting synthesis, not previously undertaken in this form, succeeds in revealing the degree to which this one man, Nicholas Muraviev, determined the events of a decisive decade in Siberian history and in accurately evaluating the aftermath of the doughty count's exploits. Although appropriate attention is given here to other aspects of Muraviev's administration of Eastern Siberia, the main emphasis is on the achievement that earned him his letters patent of nobility and on an analysis of the factors that delayed the full exploitation of his bloodless conquest.

All dates in the text are in the Old Style (according to the Julian calendar, which in the nineteenth century was twelve days behind the Gregorian calendar). The transliteration system is that of the Library of Congress, without the diacritical marks and ligatures.

The subject of this thesis was proposed by Dr. Basil Dmytryshyn, Professor of History, Portland State University. I am most grateful to him for his regular encouragement, careful perusal of earlier drafts, guidance on sources and suggestions as to organization.

Eric E. Oulashin

Portland State University
May 1, 1971

CHAPTER I

THE MAKING OF A GOVERNOR-GENERAL

I. EDUCATION AND INITIATION TO WAR AND PEACE

Nicholas Nikolaevich Muraviev was born on August 11, 1809, in St. Petersburg, of a well known family of the minor nobility, many of whose members had distinguished themselves as soldiers, diplomats and educators. His father, Nicholas Nazarevich, formerly a naval officer, subsequently Governor of Novgorod, was a State Secretary; he later became a Senator and Chief of the Personal Chancery of Nicholas I. His mother, Catherine Nikolaevna, came of a famous naval family, the Mordvinovs.

The Muravievs initially intended that Nicholas should prepare for entrance to the University of St. Petersburg. At the untimely death of his mother in 1819,¹ he was sent for that purpose to the Godenius boarding school. Alexander I, however, because of his esteem for Muraviev's father, ordered that Nicholas and his younger brother, Valerian, be enrolled in the Corps of Pages, the exclusive school for the training of well-born young men for the military and government service. At the age of fourteen, Nicholas was assigned as a page-of-the-chamber and a sergeant-

¹I. P. Barsukov, Graf N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii po ego pismam, ofitsial'nym dokumentam, razskazam sovremennikov i pachatnym istochnikam (materials dlia biografii) (Count N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii, as revealed through his letters, in official documents, narratives of contemporaries and published sources /materials for a biography/). (Moscow, 1891), Vol. I, pp. 8-9. Muraviev's father remarried and eventually had ten sons and seven daughters, of which three daughters and three sons survived to adulthood.

major, one of a group of thirty-nine young aristocrats under the supervision of the Grand Duke Michael. Thus began Muraviev's career in the sphere of the elite serving people of the Russian autocracy.

Muraviev finished his course of studies in the Imperial Corps of Pages at the head of his class; for this distinction his name was duly inscribed on a marble plaque displayed in the school. He remained in the Corps, however, for another year by reason of his extreme youth, and at the age of seventeen was commissioned a praporshchik² in the Finnish Lifeguard Regiment. Less than two years later, he saw action during the Russo-Turkish war of 1828-9, at the siege of Varna, and was cited in despatches to the Emperor for his "exemplary manliness and fearlessness".³ He fell ill during the campaign, and at its conclusion was unable to accompany his regiment back to Russia. Having been promoted to second lieutenant, he was assigned as aide-de-camp to Lieutenant General Evgenii Alexandrovich Golovin, who had just been appointed military governor of Varna. Golovin was a distant relative and good friend of Muraviev's father, a connection that proved of considerable value to Nicholas during the earlier years of his career.⁴

In Varna, young Muraviev became intimately involved in the details of governing the city, thus gaining valuable experience in civil administration, the field in which he eventually reached the apogee of his service to the Tsar. He continued also to see military action, being

² ~~Ensign~~ or cornet (there is no exact equivalent in English).

³ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 15.

⁴ V. Struve, "Graf Muraviev Amurskii" in Russkaya Starina, Vol. 33, (1882), p. 523. Barsukov fails to mention this advantageous circumstance.

detailed by General Golovin to assault troops and participating in the taking of Sisopol and the bombardment of Akhoil. He also fought in the Nevchinsk Valley, and at Kulevchi and Fort Shumla, where he distinguished himself by his elan in the storming of strongpoints, for which he was awarded the Order of St. Ann, Third Class.⁵

Upon his return to Varna, Muraviev contracted typhus, followed by another fever common to the area,⁶ and in the spring of 1830, was sent on leave to St. Petersburg. Here, enjoying the imperial favor of the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna, whose page-of-the-chamber he had been, he briefly re-entered the glamorous routines of court life.

In the winter of 1830, Muraviev rejoined his regiment as it was preparing to take the field against the Polish resurgents. The influence of his father failed to obtain him an appointment as aide-de-camp to the Russian commander in Poland, General Dibich-Zabalkanskii, but after participating as a regimental officer in a number of campaigns, he once again became aide-de-camp to General Golovin, now commanding an infantry division. Near the conclusion of the Polish campaign, having been designated as parlementor⁷ to the Polish rebel leader, General Girolamo Romarino, he obtained some first-hand experience at high-level negotiating - - which, incidentally, as a matter of delicacy and good taste, was carried out in French.⁸

⁵Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 19.

⁶J. S. Curtiss, in The Russian Army Under Nicholas I, 1825-1855, (Duke University Press, 1965), p. 64, refers to "a sort of plague" that hit the army in Varna very heavily in 1829, although the mortality was not great.

⁷Negotiator bearing a flag of truce.

⁸Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 43.

Continuous field service, and a minor leg wound, earned Muraviev four months' leave at the end of 1831. He returned to St. Petersburg, where at first he languished in a state of depression. In a letter to his brother, Valerian, he bitterly recounted that, having fought with distinction through six severe campaigns in four months, he had been ignored by his superiors, while many of his brother officers who had exhibited less energy and valor had been decorated and promoted over him. His complaint was premature; a short time later he was thrice decorated, being made a Knight of the order of St. Vladimir, and receiving the Gold Saber, inscribed, "For Valor", and the Virtute Militari, Fourth Class (Polish). Thus reinvigorated, Lieutenant Muraviev returned to Poland in the spring of 1832. He resumed his duties under General Golovin, and in that year was promoted to Staff Captain, but a year later, because of recurrences of the fevers that had attacked him in Turkey, he was invalided out of the service.⁹

II. THE CAUCASIAN CRUCIBLE

From 1833 to 1837, Muraviev managed a crown estate, "Stoklishki" in the Vilno guberniya, which had been granted to his father for his lifetime by the Tsar. It was in sadly run-down condition, and what with poor crops, inadequate fertilizer and depressed market prices, it presented a challenge for which Muraviev had little enthusiasm.¹⁰ To his great relief, In March, 1838, through Golovin's intercession, he received a civil service appointment to the latter's staff in Warsaw. Shortly after-

⁹Ibid., I, p. 48-49.

¹⁰Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 52-58.

wards, Golovin was appointed commander of the Caucasian Corps and civil governor of the Georgian Armenian and Caucasian regions. Muraviev thereupon returned to military service in the rank of Major, being assigned for special duties to Golovin. Throughout that year, on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, he took part in punitive expeditions against Hadji-Berzek and other Circassian tribal leaders who refused to become subjects of the Tsar. In the fall of that year, he attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.¹¹ At this time he was deputized by General Golovin to parley with elders of the tribes regarding the government's conditions for peace.

Muraviev evidently carried out his negotiations with considerable skill and authority. He made clear to the Caucasian chieftains that as loyal subjects of Russia, they would be obligated to carry out all orders of the local Russian authorities, to pay tribute, including all arrears, to harbor no bandits and to turn them over to the authorities, to use firearms only on sufferance of the authorities and, in case of provocation, to lodge official complaints and not to resort to armed self-defense. They were to receive all officials sent to them and were to offer no resistance to their passage through their settlements; and without delay they were to elect four representatives and send them to Tiflis with a declaration of repentance and a plea for pardon. It is recorded that "The elders unanimously undertook to carry out these orders".¹²

¹¹In his memoirs, G. I. Filipson, a contemporary of Muraviev's, relates that when Golovin learned of his recent promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, he immediately sought and obtained the same for Muraviev. (Russkii Arkhiv, 1883, Bk. III, p. 350).

¹²Sobranie Akty Kavkazskoi Archeograficheskoi Komissii, (Tiflis, 1884), cited by Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 63.

In the spring of 1839, Muraviev took part in further campaigns in northern Daghestan, culminating in the siege of Akhoulgo, refuge of the legendary chieftain, Shamil. Here, during eighty days of fierce and bloody assaults upon a series of strongpoints, Muraviev was again wounded, a rifle bullet shattering bones in his right hand and largely paralyzing it. This action earned him the Imperial Crown to the Orders of St. Stanislav and St. Anne of the Second Degree, together with a personal commendation from the Emperor.¹³ The decimated Russian forces finally took Akhoulgo, but the charismatic Shamil made his escape.

Following a period of enforced inactivity while his wound healed, Muraviev was assigned in April, 1840, as commander of the Third Section of the Black Sea Coast Line, with promotion to the rank of colonel.¹⁴ With headquarters in Bombori, in Abhazia, he was responsible for nine forts and strongpoints manned by regular line battalions, so that now at the age of thirty-one, he was exercising independent command over substantial troop formations.

Though his services in the Caucasus did not go unrecognized or unrewarded, Muraviev constantly fretted at what he deemed to be the unsympathetic and uncooperative attitude of his superiors, Golovin, of course, excepted. He fumed at what he considered to be the indifference

¹³Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 64.

¹⁴Filipson, op. cit., p. 351, relates that after Muraviev was wounded in the hand, Golovin attempted to obtain his promotion, but that his effort elicited only a decoration; he appealed to the Emperor, who pointed out that Muraviev had been in grade for less than a year, and ordered the award of a second decoration. When Golovin, evidently at Muraviev's urging, persisted, pointing out that Filipson had been advanced to the grade of colonel within less than a year after obtaining his lieutenant-colonelcy, the Emperor gave in. Thus, Filipson observes, Muraviev was thrice rewarded for the same exploit. Filipson does not divulge his source.

of General Nicholas Alexandrovitch Raevskii, Commander of the Black Sea Coast Line, and of senior staff officers in Tiflis, toward the needs of his command and his own activities. In a letter of June, 1840, he had this to say to his brother, Valerian:

In general, I will say that I find myself in great difficulties, having no means of communication with my section, and if this situation does not change, I shall be unable to remain as commander at Bombori. As commander of the section, I consider it my duty either to defend my fortifications or to be blown up in them; but when Raevskii holds on to all the ships, then I can betake myself nowhere, nor help anyone - - and so I have no intention of subjecting my reputation to obloquy, and shall leave the service at the first opportunity; I submit that this would be obligatory for any well-intentioned man when he sees that he is not being accorded the means to be of service.¹⁵

A little later he wrote again to Valerian; who, also evidently benefiting from family connections, was serving on the Corps staff with Golovin in Tiflis:

What a man, Raevskii! He has gathered up all his ships and taken off for the southern Crimea, while here we haven't the wherewithal even to grow fodder, either in the outlying detachments or in the section itself. . . You might take the occasion to tell Evgeny Alexandrovich [Golovin] that if measures aren't taken to bring Raevskii to book and to make him honor his oath as an officer, I shall be unable to serve with him.¹⁶

Three months later, he sent General Golovin his own proposed plan for expeditionary operations in the coming year. He noted in a letter to

¹⁵Ibid., p. 71. Curtiss, op. cit., pp. 157-159, points out that many forts of the Black Sea Coast Line had no connection with Russia proper, because the terribly wild country, torrential mountain streams, and miasmic swamps presented insurmountable obstacles to the building of supply roads on the coast. Some of the forts, therefore, had to rely entirely upon Russian warships and steamers in the Black Sea for supplies and reinforcements.

¹⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 73. Muraviev obviously relied on the Caucasian Corps commander's affectionate indulgence; another, less well connected officer might have been court-martialed for such a statement.

Valerian that "it might be said that I am meddling in what is none of my business, but I consider it my duty according to my conscience, and I am sending it to him by private mail and do not regret the postal expense".¹⁷

Muraviev's frustration and bitterness continued throughout the following year, 1841. His superior officers were either unwilling or unable to provide him with men and equipment in strength sufficient - - in his view - - to assure the successful defense of his sector of the Black Sea Coast Line against anticipated attacks by the local tribes. Barsukov comments, without, however, adducing any evidence, that this was to be explained by jealousy of staff officers in higher headquarters and their unwillingness to give Muraviev further opportunities to distinguish himself. The fact that Muraviev was the protege⁸ of a high ranking general was presumably not lost on his fellow officers, whose reactions to his requests and proposals may sometimes have been tinged with malice. A detailed analysis of the military campaigns in the Caucasus and, in particular, of the situation of the Black Sea littoral during the period in question, might perhaps reveal the accuracy or subjectivity of this view. That, however, would exceed the stated confines of this study; it should be noted, though, that at the time Muraviev was writing his complaints, the Abkhazians and most of the other Circassian tribes in the western Caucasus, while certainly not utterly subjugated, were not posing the major threat to the Russians. That existed farther to the east where Shamil was entering into his "brilliant epoch".¹⁸ It should be kept in mind, too,

¹⁷Ibid., I, p. 77. It is not known what became of Muraviev's plan.

¹⁸M. V. Nechkina, Ed., Russia in the Nineteenth Century, (J. W. Edwards, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1959), p. 342, and Lesley Blanch, The Sabres of Paradise, (Viking Press, New York, 1960), p. 253. Shamil was at the apogee of his power during the period 1840-1847. In the spring of 1840, encouraged by the revival of Shamil's movement, the Circassians mounted

that military commanders are traditionally loathe to concede that they have been provided with forces and equipment adequate to cope with the particular situations and contingencies that they face. Be that as it may, Muraviev's near obsession with the requirements of his command and the degree of confidence that he merited was a forecast of the approach with which he was to carry out his future assignments in the military and governmental service. It was an attitude of mind that sometimes seemed to border on the paranoid.

In fairness to Muraviev, it should be noted that during this period, the Russian High Command in the Caucasus was grievously incompetent, as well as divided by personal ambitions and jealousies. Here is what a biographer of Shamil has to say about the general then in command of the campaign in Daghestan (Shamil's base): "Grabbe was a personal friend of the Tsar, in whose eyes he could do no wrong. Again and again during his command, from 1839 to 1842, his blunders were overlooked." The same writer also refers to a report by General Golovin stating that "the suppression of this terrible despotism [Shamil's] must be our first care". "But", comments this writer, "the Russian High Command, equally despotic, was now weakened by a series of bitter intrigues and quarrels by which the various generals feuded among themselves and jockeyed for favor with the Tsar".¹⁹

Just as at an earlier stage of his career, when he unfairly complained that his services in Poland were being ignored, so while bemoaning his lot in the Caucasus, Muraviev learned that General Raevskii, whom a general uprising and took several forts of the Black Sea Coast Line; these were soon re-taken, however, and strongly reinforced by the Russians. See Curtiss, op. cit., pp. 157-159.

¹⁹Blanch, op. cit., pp. 217-219.

he despised, had recommended him for promotion. He recounted in a letter to Valerian, in February, 1841, that "Raevskii has recommended me for promotion, although I tried to dissuade him", and went on to say that whether or not he was promoted, he was determined to leave the Caucasus.²⁰ But in a later letter to his brother, he said, "No matter how they squeeze me from all sides, I carry out my responsibilities conscientiously and do not pity myself".²¹

This rather querulous self-righteousness and petulance that sometimes permeated Muraviev's letters should be judged with some moderation, keeping in mind that they were private communications to his own, and evidently favorite, brother (letters to his other brother, Alexander, are rarely quoted by Barsukov, and may be presumed to have been much less frequent, since they had all been made available to Barsukov by Muraviev's family).

Despite his self-absorbed grumbling and occasionally insubordinate attitude, the young colonel was clearly performing his duties with vigor and flair. At the conclusion of operations in the spring of 1841, his commander, Major General Arpen, reported to the headquarters of the Caucasian Corps regarding Muraviev's pacification expeditions. He related how Muraviev, aware that the belligerent Ubichs were intimidating other, loyal Circassian tribes, rallied the latter, and with two regiments of Cossack cavalry and other regular troop detachments, proceeded on a triumphal tour through the territory of the loyal Dzhigets in a show of

²⁰ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 90. One suspects that his attempt at dissuasion was limited to a token show of modesty.

²¹ Ibid., I, p. 91.

force against some of the Ubichs, who were being stirred up by Hadji-Berzek. The psychological effect had been overwhelming, and peace had been preserved. Arpen, in a report to Corps headquarters, heartily praised Muraviev's forceful activity and efficiency in leading this, the first Russian troop movement inland from the Black Sea coast at Gagry, and expressed his full confidence in his judgment and capabilities.²²

It was shortly after this expedition that Muraviev, at the age of thirty-two, was promoted to the rank of Major General. In June, 1841, he followed up his earlier success by mobilizing the loyal Dzhigets and troops of his own in sufficient force to intimidate some of the Ubichs and those of the Dzhigets who had not yet submitted to Russian rule. In ceremonial parleys, and with the traditional use of preliminary intermediaries, he succeeded in exacting oaths of fealty from leaders of the tribes and promises that they would keep the peace and remain within their respective territories.²³

Muraviev's promotion and his success in subjugating the mountain tribes - - without loss of life - - were not enough for him to resign himself to his situation in the Caucasus. He was depressed and discouraged by the dismal failures of the High Command and apparently sufficiently seriously considering retirement to write Valerian asking him to consult with his father and brother, Alexander, regarding the purchase of a modest property near St. Petersburg where he could settle down. At the same time, he speculated about the possibility of obtaining an appointment as Councilor of State, in recognition of his military services. His

²²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 94.

²³Ibid., I, p. 96.

rancor on the score of his superiors was unabated, and he inveighed against generals like Arpen, who lived "in luxury in the Crimea, making occasional inspection trips, as on an excursion", in ships that his, Muraviev's command desperately needed for communications and logistical support.²⁴

Once again, just as he was plunged into deep gloom because of real or imagined injustices that he was suffering, he received news from his brother of yet another commendation from the Tsar that was on its way to him. His reply to his brother:

Thanks to the Tsar! Thanks to the Great One for not forgetting us little ones...Clearly it is undeniable that prayer to God--and service to the Tsar--are not lost. Of course, dearer than my general's rank is the esteem of my Sovereign... I can imagine how our old batiushka /father/ is rejoicing-- and I am sure that except for the two of us, he is the only one who sincerely rejoices. But now there lies on me the heavy obligation of justifying my Sovereign's words; help me, Lord, to do so -- that is my constant prayer. God must give me the necessary wisdom and strength.²⁵

In the summer of 1842, Muraviev saw action again, when the Navaginsk redoubt was threatened by a massing of the mountain tribesmen. On July 29th, Muraviev arrived there with a small force, sending two ships back along the coast for further reinforcements. The following two days saw an artillery duel between the mountaineers and the defenders of Navaginsk under Muraviev's personal command. The attackers' batteries were silenced and the mountaineers dispersed. Regarding this action, General Arpen reported to the Minister of War as follows: "I consider it my most pleasant duty to identify the individual chiefly responsible for this new exploit. I have no fear of offending the brave defenders of the Navaginsk

²⁴Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 97-98.

²⁵Ibid., I, p. 100.

redoubt when I say that with such a commander as General Muraviev, any troops would do the same."²⁶ This, it will be noted, from the same General Arpen with whom, Muraviev had written his brother, his relations could never improve, presumably because the general was jealous of Muraviev's prowess.

In the fall, operations against the Ubichs, only a fraction of whom Muraviev had earlier subdued, continued. General Arpen moved on them with a substantial force, with Muraviev in command of the advance guard. Muraviev made contact with the enemy at the entrance to the Arug Valley and vigorously attacked the right bank of the Arug River. After a sharp fire fight, the Ubichs withdrew and he occupied the right bank. The following day saw savage fighting, often hand to hand, with all forces on both sides fully committed. The Ubichs were defeated and fled, leaving many dead.²⁷

Following the victory on the Arug River, General Arpen decided to build additional defenses at the mountaintop Navaginsk redoubt, but when it came time to move out for that objective, Muraviev and his advance guard were nowhere to be found. He had moved forward despite Arpen's orders, and had proceeded with such speed that the Ubichs had not had time to regroup to defend the mountain top, which he took without firing a shot. Muraviev left his advance guard at Navaginsk and rejoined the main force, which had just formed another advance guard to move on the objective he had already taken. When Arpen demanded an explanation for his outdistancing the main force, he replied that he moved, "not at a German

²⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 102.

²⁷Ibid., I, p. 106.

but at a Muraviev pace".²⁸

Arpen's force completed the construction of watch towers at Navaginsk and prepared to return to the coast and sail back to their bases in Chernomorie and Savastopol. The time of year, mid-November, posed a problem, however, with respect to transport of some 2,500 horses of the wagon train, artillery and cavalry. Apart from the enormous number of transports this would have required, heavy seas would have made the project unfeasible. Muraviev, knowing that during Ramadan, the muslim tribesmen would not be alert at night (when they would be breaking their day-long fast), proposed taking the horses back to Abkhazi along the shoreline at night. This plan was carried out, and on November 15, the Black Sea Fleet at Abkhazi up-anchored. The year's operations had come to a successful conclusion, although the Russian forces had not moved deep into the heart of Ubich territory, a tactic that Muraviev had persistently urged, but which Arpen rejected because of logistical problems.²⁹

Wintering back at Abkhazi, although a dull interlude, would normally at least have offered some prospect of rest and relaxation for Muraviev. He was periodically suffering, however, from recurrences of fevers he had contracted in Turkey, and following the conclusion of the active operational season, he was granted leave on grounds of ill health, and returned to St. Petersburg for several months. In letters to his brother Valerian,

²⁸Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 108. An interesting remark, considering that Nicholas I, upon whom Muraviev's future ultimately depended, the product of German tutors and the son of a German mother, was known for his rigidly Teutonic outlook.

²⁹Ibid., I, p. 109.

he mentioned his straitened circumstances.³⁰ With the sole exception of a recital by Franz Liszt, he was denying himself any plays or concerts, and when he went out he walked, since a carriage was "damnably expensive". His economies extended to his table and he contented himself with beer in place of wine. His leave was extended throughout the summer since, although his health was improving, his doctors advised him not to return to Abkhazi in the hot season for fear that he might again succumb to the fevers so common there on the humid coast.³¹

While Muraviev was recuperating in St. Petersburg, major changes were taking place in the Caucasus command. Following an inspection carried out there by Count A. I. Chernyshev, Minister of War, Golovin, Muraviev's longtime benefactor, was replaced by General Alexander Ivanovitch Neidhardt; General Paul Christoforovitch Grabbe, whose mission had been to destroy Shamil and who had titally failed, was replaced by General Vladimir Josifovich Gurko. But, comments Barsukov, matters did not improve. "These new appointees came to the Caucasus to straighten out matters in an area of which they knew nothing, to teach others, themselves being untaught. They were both prejudiced against everything that had taken place in the Caucasus prior to their arrival -- and were totally helpless to improve the situation."³²

³⁰Curtiss, op. cit., p. 192, states that even in 1860, when the pay of Russian officers had risen by from ten to twenty percent, a Russian lieutenant general's pay was little more than one third of that in the Austrian, Prussian or French armies.

³¹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 121.

³²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 126, and Blanch, op. cit., p. 219: According to Blanch, "Neidhardt prolonged the series of disasters and blunders which had so dispirited the Russian army under Grabbe's command. He was stupid, pedantic and slow, and no one has ever explained why the Tsar chose him as Supreme Commander", and p. 230: "He was a German pedant, "only great

Muraviev returned to Abkhazi in the early fall of 1842, and soon came down again with fever, while at the same time his wound reopened. In February, he requested sick leave in order to go abroad to take the waters at Carlsbad and Teplitz. While awaiting action on his request, he returned to active service, taking part in a number of minor operations, throughout the spring and summer of 1843. In a letter to his brother, he told him that his leave request, he had just learned, had been pigeon-holed in corps headquarters for eight months. Thoroughly despondent, he said that unless he left the Caucasus, or at least the Black Sea coast, he would certainly die. He added that in accordance with Asiatic custom he could lay upon his brothers the responsibility for avenging his death, but that being in his soul a Christian, he would say only, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do".³³

In a later letter to Valerian, Muraviev praised the fine fall weather in Abkhazi, "a rare phenomenon, saving more lives than all the doctors or medicines", and then summarized his experience in the Caucasus. In the period 1840-41, he had "enjoyed the full confidence of his superiors, the result of which could be found in the official files". The middle period, 1842, prior to his return from leave, had been chiefly marked by his suffering from his wound and his generally poor state of health. It had not been easy for him to persuade himself to return to Abkhazi, but he had "unquestioningly obeyed the call of duty". While en route, his wound had flared up again, as had his fever, but the hope of making a

in small matters, constitutionally incapable of commanding the Caucasian fronts. He was indecisive and weighed down by the unrealistic program outlined for him by the Tsar".

³³Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 126.

real contribution had bolstered him, and so he had arrived at Kerch to begin the current phase of his Caucasian service. It did not need much perception, he wrote, to discern the unfavorable influence on his command, the Third Sector, of the coming changes in the top echelons. His orders had taken him from Kerch to Tiflis, but he had arrived after Golovin's departure, and it had become plain to him there that the role of his command did not loom large at headquarters.³⁴

If Muraviev was not in the thick of the fray with the most important enemy, he was, nevertheless, doing valuable work for which he was probably not receiving adequate support. He was clearly convinced of the desirability and feasibility of achieving a bloodless conquest by persuading the Caucasian tribes voluntarily to pledge allegiance to the Russian government, and he strove to go about it in a systematic way. In Abkhazi, the key port of the Third Sector, he had at the outset cultivated close relations with Michael Sharvashidze, the local chieftain, and with Sharvashidze's close associate, one Katso-Margani. He flattered the former with special deference, and when Sharvashidze's first son was born, he ordered a 101-gun salute at his headquarters. Through such tactics he succeeded in turning this chieftain into a willing and pliable puppet. Katso-Margani he had found more difficult to manipulate. However, that worthy, an intelligent and cunning mountaineer, over sixty years of age, but robust and energetic, eventually succumbed to Muraviev's blandishments and became his devoted agent. Sharvashidze and Katso-Margani carried on negotiations over several months in order to persuade their neighbors, the Dzhigets, to accept fealty to the Russian Tsar. Three of

³⁴Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 129-133.

the coastal clans finally agreed to pledge their allegiance,³⁵ a good example of Muraviev's adroit policy of peaceful conquest. That had been in the initial period of Muraviev's service in the Caucasus, and his ability in this direction had evidently been noted by his subsequent superiors. At the end of October, 1843, General Neidhardt sent him, together with Sharvashidze, to negotiate with the more warlike and obstinate Ubichs at Navaginsk. Here, again, following hours of negotiation, Oriental-style, through initial intermediaries, the Ubichs, under the redoubtable Hadji-Berzek, agreed to pledge their allegiance to Russia. Hadji-Berzek undertook, furthermore, to conclude agreements with two other Circassian tribes. This, noted Muraviev, in yet another letter to Valerian, took place at a time when Shamil's agent, Hadji-Mahomet, was exhorting those tribes to greater resistance. It would take three months to conclude final agreements with the tribes, and since Muraviev was anticipating an extended leave by that time, he hoped that "the foolish niggardliness, suspicions, inexperience and obstinacy" of General Neidhardt would not ruin the outcome. What Muraviev had mainly in mind when writing this was the frustration he had encountered in obtaining subsidies for the loyal tribes.³⁶

³⁵Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 135.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 130-132. During his maneuvers with the loyal Dzhigets against Hadji-Mahomet, Muraviev had been allowed to disburse six silver roubles a head to the mountaineers, but had been required to report for exactly what intelligence or services he had spent these monies, which he found unrealistic and impracticable. Also, he had requested authorization to recruit six hundred native levies, meaning to put them under a noted Caucasian staff officer, Major Zvanbai, who would thus be able to keep order in the important area of Tsebelidi. Instead, he had been allowed to recruit only three hundred, and had been ordered to choose them from elements of the population which he regarded as the least reliable; his superiors, moreover, had designated as the levies' commander one of their ilk from Tiflis. They had not been really effective, but 13,000 rubles had been expended for them; this, however, had been "by the book"

The noxious climate of the Black Sea coast was again thinning out the Russian ranks. Muraviev's orderly, Ivan, died during the fall of 1843, and the fever was taking hold of his master again. Muraviev sought permission to enter the hospital at Theodosia in the Crimea, but was persuaded by Boudberg to remain at his post pending arrival of his replacement. Boudberg, who evidently saw eye to eye with Muraviev regarding the policy of peaceful conquest of the tribes, was being sorely tried at this time by the inept directives and orders emanating from Tiflis.³⁷ Since 1841, Muraviev had been insisting on the need to subsidize the Dzhigets to the amount of four thousand silver roubles a year. Because of local circumstances and, "of course, of General Arpen", this business had been drawn out until Neidhardt's arrival. Neidhardt had finally approved a subsidy of 2,100 roubles, and ordered that he be informed of the date of the entry on duty of Major Zvanbai, at which time the funds could be released. Zvanbai entered on duty at the end of June, 1843, and Muraviev had thereupon advanced him funds against the anticipated transfer from Tiflis. Four months later, only half of the funds had been received, the basic agreement was abrogated, and Muraviev was asked: "What do the Dzhigets represent, and of what use are they to us?" Muraviev wrote his brother that he had sent a reasonable reply to this query but could not predict the outcome.

and Neidhardt was unperturbed. Muraviev had later been rebuked for recruiting these unreliable levies, but General Boudberg, the new commander of the Black Sea Coast Line, had intervened, pointing out that the mistake had been that of the departed Arpen. Characteristically, Muraviev was convinced that Neidhardt had known of this all along, but had simply sought to make difficulties for him.

³⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 132.

Muraviev was now convinced that "to serve in the Caucasus was not to serve the Tsar, since in Tiflis they did not understand and, indeed, denied something that was clear, i.e., the benefit to be derived from assuring the loyalty of the Caucasian tribes".³⁸ Now his mind was made up. As soon as he was relieved, he would journey to Bogoroditsk in the Tula Gubernia, the home of Vasili Ivanovich Muraviev, his cousin and good friend. There, he planned to spend his leave and if his wounded hand did not heal, he would at least recover from his malaria and its debilitating after effects. If he could not obtain another assignment and if he was required to return to the Caucasus under the present corps commander, he would, within an appropriate time, request retirement and settle down in Bogoroditsk, where he thought he could purchase a small house and garden for 2,000 assignat rubles.³⁹

In another letter to his brother, after going into some details about his possible retirement, Muraviev noted the persistent reports that fifty thousand fresh troops would be sent to assist the Caucasian Corps, and saw that as an "action of the mighty Tsar, concerned for the benefit and the glory of his Empire"; but, he said, a heavy doubt weighed down on his spirit when, recalling all his memories of this region, he was convinced that "even with the mightiest of forces, reverses could be suffered through the inexperience of the high commanders and through the misconceptions and impetuosity of leaders preoccupied by their ambitions and thirst for military glory". In reflecting on Russian policy and actions in the Caucasus, he wrote in this same letter:

³⁸Loc. cit.

³⁹Barsukov, op. cit., pp. 134-135.

Who would have expected General Pullo's winter operations for collecting arms, money and sheep from those very settlements where he had been met with bread and salt? On the first of January, the commandant of Bladikavkaz mustered a hundred of our native levies to capture Shamil, hiding with twenty-one men in a hamlet on the border of one of the unconquered clans, which, however, gave him no assistance or food, for fear of offending the Russians. A few days later, all of the conquered Chechen, angered by Pullo's actions invited Shamil to be their leader against the Russians!⁴⁰

In the spring of 1844, Muraviev finally obtained his leave and traveled to Bogoroditsk, the provincial town where he knew he could rest and recover his health. From there he wrote to Michael Sharvashidze, chieftain of Abkhazi, who was planning to visit St. Petersburg. He told him he would not stir from Bogoroditsk until August, inasmuch as the entire Imperial family was going abroad until then . . . an inauspicious period, one gathers, for Muraviev to be seeking a new assignment in the Caucasus or elsewhere.⁴¹ Accordingly, he advised Sharvashidze not to hasten to St. Petersburg too early. Somewhat later, he wrote his brother Alexander, asking him to cease attempting to obtain an appointment for him

⁴⁰Barsukov, op. cit., pp. 138-140. With regard to General Pullo, Blanch, op. cit., p. 207, has this to say: "For a man to win a reputation for cruelty in the Caucasus betokens a degree of savagery quite unimaginable in the West. Yet the Russian General Pullo had achieved this distinction. He was in command of a number of punitive raids throughout Avaria and Chechnia in the months following the disappearance of Shamil. He was unscrupulous and brutal and loathed by the Chechens. But when, holding down a rising province with too few men, he appointed the renegade Tatars as pro-consuls or officers, he was playing directly into Shamil's hands. These renegades treated the mountaineers with terrible cruelty and injustice. There was no redress -- nowhere to appeal; but when it was rumored that the Caucasian provinces were to be disarmed and converted into peasant communities on the rural Russian pattern, subject to the same taxes, serfdom and conscription, the whole Caucasus arose, blazing with revolt and once again Shamil appeared, as a revenant, to rally the tribesmen around his black standard."

⁴¹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 146.

in Astrakhan; "it is clear", he observed, that the matter is not going well and I assure you that I do not wish any appointment through pressure".⁴² His health had significantly improved and he repeated his desire to resume active service if he were given the means to do some good, bit' polezny, and not to "vegetate and rot" as he had done for the last year and a half in the Caucasus. While still in Bogoroditsk, Muraviev received the Order of St. Stanislav, First Class, with a commendation from the Emperor, "for exceptional courage and wise direction in operations against the mountaineers".⁴³

At the beginning of 1845, Muraviev's father died and he hastened to St. Petersburg. While there, he learned of the appointment of Count Michael Vorontsov as Viceroy of the Caucasus and Commander-in-Chief of troops, in place of the incompetent Neidhardt. Much was expected of this appointment, for Vorontsov, scion of one of Russia's most ancient noble families with a great tradition of loyalty and service to the state, was held in high esteem as an able soldier and brilliant civil administrator. Muraviev, encouraged at this news, obtained permission of Prince Chernyshev, Minister of War, to seek an interview with Vorontsov and went to him to offer his services in the Caucasus. Barsukov relates that the Count received him warmly and promised to take up the matter with the Minister of War. Because of his father's funeral, Muraviev was unable immediately to report on this conversation to Chernyshev. Following Vorontsov's departure, Muraviev spoke of it to the Adjutant-General, who reported on it to the Minister. Chernyshev immediately wrote to Vorontsov to ascertain his

⁴²Ibid., p. 147.

⁴³Loc. cit.

wishes regarding Muraviev's assignment. "The matter", Barsukov states, "dragged on for reasons unknown to us", and at the same time Muraviev's health deteriorated again, so that he was obliged to seek another extension of leave. He received approval to go abroad to take the waters, but was detained on family matters, so that on April 24, he received an inquiry from the War Ministry as to whether he had changed his mind regarding his leave. On the following day Muraviev replied:

It will be essential sooner or later to obtain the mineral waters treatment for the wound in my hand, but over the course of five years I have postponed this five times, when in each case I perceived the need to do so because of the Service . . . My feeling of unlimited submission to the will of the Emperor and devotion to the needs of the Service are unchanged, and if there should arise any need to give me an active assignment at this time, I am unreservedly prepared to give up my leave.

To this the Adjutant-General replied:

Je m'empresse de vous avertir, mon general, que vous pouvez faire vos publications de voyage et vos preparatifs en toute surete; l'affaire du Caucase est coulee au fond. On dira que vos blessures s'etant reouvertes, vous avez demande et recu un semestre pour l'etranger et tout sera dit.⁴⁴

This curious exchange obviously leaves much unsaid. Certainly, it seems as though someone in the higher echelons was anxious to leave Muraviev without an assignment and to speed his departure from Russia.

Muraviev went abroad in the spring of 1845 for his medical treatment. He stayed first at Aix-la-Chapelle, whence he wrote Valerian to be sure to

⁴⁴ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 150. "I hasten to advise you, General, that you may gazette your travel plans and make firm preparations for your voyage; the Caucasus matter has run its course. It will be announced that your wounds, having reopened, you have requested and received six months leave to go abroad and that will be all there is to it."

inform the War Ministry of his whereabouts, in case the need should arise for him to proceed back to the Caucasus. In June, he wrote again, regarding his plan to go to Paris for further treatment. In this letter he allowed himself some philosophical musings:

Monuments, towers and churches cannot satisfy my curiosity; paintings, music and landscapes charm me only briefly; but a passion for delving into the human heart grows within me, the more I meet new people; a passion to know the behind-the-scenes reasons for peoples' actions; a passion for reality in all its nakedness is developing in me more and more, and I am increasingly convinced that superficial judgments are always erroneous and that only experience and observation open for us the ways of Providence. . . Europe makes a strange impression on me, an impression totally unexpected and at the same time for me, a Russian, quite pleasant: at home everything is large, here, small; here in detail everything is good, convenient, arranged, smooth, calculated, enumerated, brought into conformity, reduced to measure and weight; the people know all, it seems even about that which it is impossible to know, and for that reason there is no future here. Here everyone lives in the present; there may be broken hopes and promises, but such things pass quickly and are submerged in the material. Here they speak and write of the unknown, l'inconnu, as of a reasoning out, proving the degree of the development of thought in the present epoch, of the degree of superiority over the eighteenth century, but which, in fact, is all words, since here tout est connu, au moins toute le monde tache de prouver qu'il connaît tout; nothing is left to the imagination; I will say more strongly, nothing is left to the heart, which should enjoy the unknown. Here they say that les Russes n'ont pas de coeur, mai qu'ils ont beaucoup d'intelligence; et bien, je crois que ceux qui le disent, prononcent un jugement bien severe sur eux-memes, c'est qu'ils ne comprennent pas ce que est le coeur et que leur intelligence est tres bornee.⁴⁵

III. GOVERNING IN THE PROVINCES

Upon his return to Russia, Muraviev was detailed in December, 1843, to the Ministry of the Interior in preparation for assumption of duties as a military governor. Barsukov gives no hint of the means whereby Muraviev

⁴⁵Barsukov, op. cit., p. 153.

obtained this new assignment. L. A. Perovskii, Minister of the Interior, however, just as General Golovin, was an old family friend and one may presume this connection was useful.⁴⁶

At the beginning of 1846, Muraviev was assigned to inspect the gubernia of Novgorod and the Land Court. His wounded hand was giving him trouble again and made it difficult to traverse the area over rough roads in an uncomfortable stage coach, but he pursued his task with energy and submitted a report that drew praise from his superiors. As a result, on June 16, 1846, he was appointed military governor of the city of Tula and civil governor of the province by that name, retaining his military rank.⁴⁷

Following his first tour around his area of responsibility, Muraviev submitted his initial observations to the Ministry of the Interior. He had found that the prisons or jails in all of the towns of the gubernia were in a sad state of dilapidation, and recommended that they should all be replaced by new construction. He pointed out that timber was being cut extravagantly, with no thought for conservation and replacement, and urged establishment of regulations to control this practice, which threatened eventually to plunge the area into economic difficulties; in this connection, he stated that more use should be made of coal deposits in the area and undertook later to furnish specific details. He found that development of trade in the area was inhibited by lack of sufficient water communications and recommended construction of wharves in the towns of Odoev and Novosil, so that cargo could move down the rivers Zusha and Upa,

⁴⁶J. L. Sullivan, Count N. N. Muraviev-Amursky, doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1955.

⁴⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 158-159.

falling into the Oka. Until this was done, he pointed out, the latter river would benefit the area but little, since it flowed along the far limits of the gubernia. He had also found that agriculture in the gubernia was not being developed along rational lines and stated his intention to revive an earlier proposal that there be established a local Society for the Rural Economy.

Muraviev's preoccupations at this time extended beyond the responsibilities of a provincial governor. Thus, he was the first of all the governors in Russia to raise the question of freeing the serfs. He obtained the signatures of nine prominent landowners to a petition to the Emperor, seeking the serfs' liberation. The Emperor had been favorably impressed, but ordered that the matter be pursued with great caution, and that first of all a greater number of signatures should be obtained. This it proved impossible to do, so that the project had to be dropped.⁴⁸

In Tula, Muraviev's outlook was a good deal more cheerful than it had been for the previous two or three years. This was not only because of his new success in civil government, but also because the time of his marriage was approaching. His betrothed was Catherine de Richemond, daughter of an aristocratic family from Lorraine. Muraviev had met her the year before while in Paris, had fallen in love with her and, as soon as his uncertain status in the government service had been clarified, had written her to propose marriage. She had accepted and came to Russia, the marriage taking place in Bogoroditsk on January 19, 1847. Barsukov states that according to those who had known her personally, she was beautiful, intelligent and well educated, as well as "even tempered, kind hearted and notably

⁴⁸Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 161-162.

attached to her new fatherland".⁴⁹

IV. THE TSAR MAKES HIS CHOICE

The challenges and satisfactions of a provincial governor's life quickly began to pall on Muraviev and he was soon restlessly seeking some new field of activity. In a letter to Valerian written just a year after taking up his post in Tula, he asked his brother to take some soundings in St. Petersburg regarding a possible appointment for him. He pointed out that having served six years as a general officer, including two years in the Ministry of the Interior, one of them as a governor, it would be "unseemly" to remain much longer in his present position. He complained, too, that the authorities did not relieve officials of whom he wished to be rid, nor did they approve his recommendations for promotions and decorations for those whom he deemed deserving. In a subsequent letter to Valerian, he exhibited a lively interest in the question of a successor to the discredited Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, William Y. Rupert, removed from his position in the wake of the unfavorable report made by Senator I. N. Tolstoy, following his inspection of Rupert's administration.⁵⁰

Muraviev's inquiry regarding Rupert's successor was clearly inspired by something more than idle curiosity. Filipson recounts that on the occasion of a visit to Tula, Nicholas I, dining with Muraviev and others, had

⁴⁹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 163.

⁵⁰Ibid., I, pp. 164-167. The Tsar ordered that Rupert "request" to be relieved. Kabanov, op. cit., p. 68, relates that Rupert, in the tradition of most of his predecessors, had amassed 500,000 rubles during his governorship.

confirmed that Rupert was to be removed, and that during subsequent conversation, the Emperor had been impressed by Muraviev's knowledge and understanding of the problems of Eastern Siberia, on which he had evidently thoroughly briefed himself.⁵¹

Soon after he had sent his inquiry to Valerian, Nicholas N. Muraviev was designated by an imperial prikaz of September 5, 1847, as Governor-General of Irkutsk and commander of troops in Eastern Siberia. In a letter to Valerian, Muraviev recounted how the Tsar had personally informed him of his new appointment, when his train had stopped at Sergeievsk, during a tour of the provinces:

It was at seven in the morning. The Tsar immediately told me of my appointment, and spoke of it in the most flattering terms. Then he questioned me about Tula, and explained that he had no time to stop either at Tula or Orel, since he had a long way to go. He ordered me to come to St. Petersburg, where he would give me his detailed directives, and then excused himself. Without going into detail about our conversation, I will say that it moved me to tears.⁵²

Muraviev's appointment as Governor-General of Eastern Siberia created a sensation. Many highly placed officials in St. Petersburg regarded it as scandalous. And in Omsk, wrote M. I. Veniukov, when the Governor-General of Western Siberia, Prince Gorchakov, learned that his opposite number would be a young man of thirty-eight, he flew into a passion.⁵³ B. V. Struve, another of Muraviev's contemporaries, had this to say:

⁵¹Filipson, op. cit., p. 352.

⁵²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 169.

⁵³Russkaia Starina, 1882, Feb., p. 524.

The unprecedentedly rapid, by the standards of the times, elevation of Muraviev, was the subject of general conversation in the capital. After December 14, 1825, the Emperor Nicholas, as is known, was not very favorably disposed to the Muraviev family⁵⁴ and did not appoint them to the highest administrative posts....There was all kind of speculation, even to the foolish theory that the authorities had confused his name with that of General N. N. Muraviev-Karskii, the corps commander.⁵⁵

There is no readily available specific account of the circumstances that led to Muraviev's appointment. Struve points out that it should be ascribed in large part to the influence that the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna "exerted in certain instances" on the Emperor Nicholas. He observes that the choice of Muraviev for this responsibility had fallen to the Minister of the Interior, L. A. Perovskii; "he brought about this appointment, jointly conceived of by him and the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna, who had been increasingly well-disposed to Muraviev from the days when he had been her page-of-the-chamber. The Grand Duchess, distinguished by an enlightened intellect and a deep understanding of the contemporary position of Russia, which she loved like a second fatherland, perceived in Muraviev just such a worker as he turned out to be".⁵⁶

The Emperor's choice of Muraviev, unlike many of his other appointments, was evidently a case where the confluence of exceptional ability and powerful connections had its logical outcome. Muraviev had proven himself on battlefields in Turkey, Poland and the Caucasus, and at the same time had demonstrated administrative and diplomatic talent, beginning with his youthful experience in Varna, and with the Polish rebel

⁵⁴N. Muraviev-Apostol, a member of one branch of the family, had been a leader of the Decembrists.

⁵⁵Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 170.

⁵⁶Ibid.

leaders, then through his successful dealings with the Caucasian mountaineers, his inspection of the gubernia of Novgorod and his governorship in Tula. In all these capacities he had exhibited firmness, energy, resourcefulness and integrity - qualities that had rarely, if ever, been found in candidates for the governorship of the remote vastness of Eastern Siberia. The patriotic combination of gallant warrior and devoted civil servant understandably appealed to the Emperor, particularly as it must have been described to him by such highly placed personages as the Grand Duchess Elena and the respected Perovskii. If Muraviev possessed other attributes such as vanity, petulance, arrogance and impatience, these were no doubt most openly disclosed only to individuals who were his intimates, such as his brother Valerian, and his fond mentor, General Golovin. If the Tsar was aware of them, he was not disturbed and probably regarded them merely as concomitants of the more positive traits that qualified Muraviev for his new responsibilities.

CHAPTER II

"SIBERIA, TOO, IS RUSSIAN LAND"

I. "THE RUSSIAN RIVER AMUR"

There was at least as much poetry as truth in the reference to "the Russian River Amur", made by Nicholas I during Muraviev's farewell audience. That the Amur once ran red with Russian blood is highly probable. In 1658, Onufrii Stepanov, who had waged a five-year campaign against the Chinese, met his death on that river in a battle in which most of his cossacks were annihilated. For the Chinese, this battle was in defense of the Celestial Empire's "Dominion of the Northeast" beyond the Great Wall, acquired in the first half of the fourteenth century, when the Ming emperors drove the Mongol hordes to the north of the Gobi desert and west of the Buir Nor. One scholar states that this new dominion included not only the traditionally Chinese territory of Liao-tung, but also "the whole of the Extra-Liao region south of the Amur". This region, mainly a land of the Tungus tribes, was divided, under the Ming dynasty, into native "Guards" and "Posts" under the control of a high central command established at the mouth of the Amur River.¹

¹T. C. Lin, "The Amur Frontier Question Between Russia and China, 1850-1860", Pacific Historical Review, Vol. III, No. 1, p. 1; Lin's reference to the region "south of the Amur", though imprecise, would imply that the Chinese had no claims north of that river. On the other hand, he refers to a "high central command" at the mouth of the river, which would indicate a "Chinese River Amur". His study is based on a compilation of Imperial Edicts and government documents published in Peking in 1899. Lin states that a good summary of Ming rule in the Amur region is to be found in I. A. Inaba's History of the Development of Manchuria (Tokyo; 1915, in Japanese).

Over two centuries later, one of the Tungus Guards, Chien Chous, revolted against Ming rule and made himself overlord of the Tungus tribes. The Ming regime, by then fallen into decadence, was powerless before the tribe of Chien-Chous, later known as the Manchus, who broke into Liaotung in 1621 and entered Peking in 1644, when the Ch'ing dynasty was established upon the dragon throne.² These events coincided with a period of greatly accelerated Russian advance to the Pacific, the genesis and development of which may briefly be traced here.

Russia's move into Asia began with Prince Semeon Kurbski's military expeditions in 1483 and 1499 across the Pechora and to the Ob River east of the Urals. Kurbski returned with furs and prisoners, but his venture did not result in permanent penetration of Siberia. It remained for a clan of traders and industrialists to stimulate Russian acquisition of territory there. The Novgorodian family of Stroganovs, favored by Moscow, thanks to old Luke Stroganov's having ransomed Prince Vasili the Blind, who had been captured by the Khan of Kazan, sent expeditions beyond the Urals and obtained a succession of royal tracts to enormous tracts of land there. By a final grant of 1574, the Stroganov domain was extended to the banks of the Tobol River.³ The Stroganovs' progress, however, was not uncontested. The Tatar Khan Kuchum, self-styled "Tsar of Siberia", had been attacking the Russian settlements and the Stroganov garrison needed reinforcements. These were provided by Iermak Timofeievich,

²Lin, op. cit., p. 2.

³A. Lobanov-Rostovski, Russia and Asia (The George Wahr Publishing Company, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1951), p. 40.

leader of some 600 robbing and piratical cossacks⁴ who took service with the Stroganovs in 1579. In 1589, this force, bolstered by some 300 men of the Stroganov garrison, took the field under Iermak to secure the Stroganovs' hold on the land granted them by the charter of 1574. In the fall of 1582, Iermak drove Kuchum from his capital of Sibir and occupied it. The conquest of Siberia was under way.⁵

In 1586, the Russians founded the town of Tiumen, the first permanent Russian settlement beyond the Urals, to be followed, in 1587, by the town of Tobolsk.⁶ A year later, a cossack force re-engaged Tatar forces and drove them southwards into the steppe. Kuchum survived for ten years, however, and to counter his continuing threat, the Russian outpost of Tara on the Irtysh was established in 1594.⁷ This outpost, Tiumen and Tobolsk were the first in a chain of ostrogs (blockhouses or fortified settlements)

⁴Terence Armstrong, Russian Settlement in the North (Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 21-22, states: "It is not easy to determine just who the Cossacks were. They are first found in the Middle Ages acting as a frontier force protecting Kiev and later, Muscovy, from the south. There were Cossack communities on the Dnieper and the Don and although independent, they generally allied themselves with the Slavs. Their origins are obscure. The word itself seems to come from the Turkic kiz or kez, meaning to wander." Armstrong adds that once in Siberia, recruitment was open to any local Russians and even in some cases to non-Russians, and that many hunters and traders became cossacks who, during the advance east, were employed as leaders of pioneer detachments, as soldiers and as frontier guards. In territory already secured, they came to act as a kind of police force and later took charge of all communications. See also M. A. Czaplicka, "Evolution of the Cossack Communities", in Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, Vol. 5, Part II, 1918.

⁵Lobanov-Rostovski, op. cit., pp. 41-43.

⁶George Alexander Lensen, (Ed.), Russia's Eastward Expansion, (Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1964) p. 21.

⁷Armstrong, op. cit., p. 16.

that eventually secured all of Siberia for Moscow. The building of these ostrogs was stimulated primarily by the fur-fever that seized the Russians, "much like", observes Fisher, "the gold-fever which possessed the American 'forty-niners' of a later century. In Siberia, sables worth from 10 to 20 rubles, black foxes worth from 100 to 300 rubles were to be found. Could a man but obtain a few of them, a single trip would then suffice to enable him to settle down in comfort for the rest of his life."⁸

The fall of Sibir and the driving south of the remaining Tatars marked the end of the brief era of extraordinary military exploits began by Iermak. The march north and east henceforth met little resistance, for while the Central Asian steppe was held by the warlike Kazakhs and Turkic peoples, the Siberian forest contained only scattered and weak native tribes.⁹ The Russians, furthermore, were by far better acquainted with military techniques, had firearms (whereas their adversaries generally had only bows and arrows and spears), knew how to construct fortifications and, despite the enormous distances involved, were receiving a flow of support in the form of people, arms and supplies from the homeland.¹⁰

⁸Raymond H. Fisher, The Russian Fur Trade, 1550-1700, (University of California press, 1943), p. 29. He points out that in 1623, two black fox pelts brought 110 rubles, with which the owner could buy fifty-five acres of land, erect a good cabin, buy five horses, twenty head of cattle, twenty sheep, several dozen fowl and still have half his capital left.

⁹Donald W. Treadgold, The Great Siberian Migration, (Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 18, and, as stated in "Sibir", Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Vol. 58, p. 801, "Among the Samoyeds (and most other tribes) there was no class distinction. For that reason, conflict with them presented no difficulty for the Russians." Some tribes, notably the Buriats, Kirghiz and Chukchi, did offer resolute resistance at later stages of expansion into Siberia.

¹⁰Ibid.

The town of Bereznov was founded in 1593 on the lower Ob, and to the northeast, the town of Surgut in 1594 and Narym in 1596. These settlements and those to follow were official creations of the Russian government, following the footsteps of private individuals seeking fortunes in the fur trade, for now Moscow realized the value of the region for defending the eastern limits of European Russia against the raids of Siberian peoples, as well as for the establishment of a profitable base for an advance into Asia.¹¹

Tobolsk was the first main administrative center for the territory wrested away from the Siberian tribes. The movement of cossacks, freebooters and traders, followed by military forces and government officials, proceeded down the Tobol and also over the Urals by the original route from the Pechora. As they proceeded, the native princelings agreed to pay iassak to them.¹² The iassak was rendered to the Moscow government, which was the chief fur trader. In addition to collecting this tribute, the government levied a ten per cent tax on the best furs from the private traders and trappers. It also insisted on the right of buying from merchants and trappers the best furs they obtained. Furthermore, the government exercised a monopoly on the sables, black foxes and other fine furs that constituted the most important single item in the foreign and

¹¹Robert J. Kerner, The Urge to the Sea (University of California Press), 1946, p. 68.

¹²Fisher, op. cit., pp. 49-60, explains the origins of the term iassak, the fur tribute collected by the Russians from the natives of Siberia during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the methods of collecting it. Iassak was tribute paid by the conquered to the conquerors, and as a sign of subjection it carried with it the implication of degradation. It had existed in Siberia long before the advent of the Russians, having been taken over by the peoples of Siberia from the Mongolian-Tatar conquerors who penetrated to the Urals.

domestic commerce of Russia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The fur trade paid the Siberian administrative expenses of the government, which retained a large surplus, while adding an immense region to the state.¹³

There was a standard pattern in the development of the ostrogs and townships marking the Russian march eastward. Private individuals did the initial pioneering.¹⁴ Whenever the government learned of the discovery of profitable fur trading areas, it moved in with a voevoda (military commander) and troops, together with priests and monks.¹⁵ A monastery would generally be built and conversion of the natives to the Orthodox faith would begin. The churchmen were to some extent a leavening influence on the rough Russian frontiersmen and also served to protect the natives from annihilation, in part no doubt, because these monks wished to preserve the evidence of their evangelical zeal. The Moscow government, too, was concerned with the preservation of these people, who were the main suppliers of furs. Not that the system was a benevolent and humanitarian one; pious expressions of intent and official government policy were one thing, the reality quite another. The influx of Russians with their "civilizing" and "Christianizing" mission had its definite

¹³Kerner, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

¹⁴Fisher, op. cit., pp. 29-30, distinguishes two types of private enterprisers, the traders (torgovye liudi) and the promyshlenniks. The former included merchants or their agents and small traders, the latter were men who worked for themselves, exploiting natural resources in a role similar to the coureurs de bois of Canada.

¹⁵A comprehensive study of the early Siberian governmental administrative apparatus, as well as the organization for remote control from Moscow, is to be found in George Lantzeff's Siberia in the Seventeenth Century, (University of California Press, 1943).

black aspects of brutality, exploitation and corruption.¹⁶

The movement eastward, while not preconceived in detail or closely directed from Moscow, was nonetheless methodical and vigorous. The cossacks and voevods struck out in all directions, using the magnificent river network of Siberia, based on four vast systems, the Ob, Enisei, Lena and Amur, the tributaries of which formed an almost perfect unbroken line of communication from the Urals to the Pacific. The speed of their progress, considering the immense distances involved, was extraordinary. Thus, in rapid succession, were formed the towns of Tomsk (1604), Eniseisk (1619), Krasnoiarsk (1628), Iakutsk (1632), and the ostrog of Okhotsk on the Pacific in 1648, only sixty-five years after Iermak's first conquest of Sibir. Some five years later, cossacks were making initial probes into the Amur territory.¹⁷ The stage was thus set for the conflict between the Russians and the Manchu rulers of Peking.

The first incursion into China's "Dominion of the Northeast" was made by Vassili Poiarkov, who penetrated there in 1643 in search of grain to supplement chronically inadequate supplies in Iakutsk. He was followed by Ierofei Khabarov, peasant turned cossack and merchant industrialist. In 1650, Khabarov reached the Amur River and the walled cities of the Manchu tribe of Dauria under Prince Lafkai, whom he routed in a battle at the town of Albazin. This became his base and that of his successor, Onufrii Stepanov, whose forces were annihilated on the Amur below the mouth of the Sungari in 1658.¹⁸ Stepanov's defeat cleared the cossacks

¹⁶Kerner, op. cit., p. 88.

¹⁷F. A. Golder, Russian Expansion on the Pacific, 1841-1850 (Gloucester, Mass.) 1960, pp. 50-51. The easternmost extremity of Siberia, Kamchatka, was taken by another cossack, Vladimir Atlassov, some fifty years later.

¹⁸Golder, op. cit., p. 53.

from the Amur basin as far as the Nerchinsk area, where they had small forces in three ostrogs. In the following year, the Chinese besieged and captured Albazin and destroyed it.

The quarter of a century following the destruction of Albazin saw no significant Russo-Chinese confrontation, but Russian forces at Nerchinsk were steadily and substantially augmented during this period, when Irkutsk was also founded (1661), as well as Selenginsk (1665).¹⁹ Meanwhile, Albazin was rebuilt and fortified by Nikifor Chernigovskii and his band of cossacks who had fled there after mutinying and killing the voevod of Iliimsk. They terrorized the natives in the area and the Chinese protested to the voevod of Nerchinsk who, however, failed to curb Chernigovskii's lawlessness. This, plus the fact that the Russians were now building numerous new ostrogs and interfering with Chinese traders in the area, goaded the Chinese to take up arms. In June of 1685, a superior force of the Chinese army besieged Albazin, which yielded after a few days, reportedly because of lack of ammunition. The garrison was allowed to return to Nerchinsk, and the Chinese commander once more burned Albazin. In the following year, the Russians re-entered and refortified Albazin, a challenge that the Chinese answered by besieging the settlement for eleven months until the fall of 1687, when a messenger from the Tsar arrived at Peking asking that the siege be raised, and announcing the despatch of a Russian plenipotentiary to negotiate the frontier question.²⁰

The Tsar's envoy, Feodor Golovin, had in fact left Moscow in 1685

¹⁹W. A. Douglas Jackson, The Russo-Chinese Borderlands (Van Nostrand, Princeton, New Jersey, 1962), p. 41. Jackson points out that despite establishment of these and other posts, the line of supply was too long for an effective Russian posture along the Amur.

²⁰Golder, op. cit., p. 63.

with instructions to conclude a lasting peace with China, and to establish the right to trade. He was to negotiate an agreement fixing the Amur River as the boundary between the two empires, but was left free, if necessary, to give up the Amur as far as the mouth of the Zeia and even to give up Albazin, which was tantamount to giving up the Amur as a frontier.²¹ Golovin's instructions reflected the relatively low level of importance attached by Russia, at that time, to the strategic and economic implications of control of the Amur River. The Ch'ing regime, on the other hand, clearly attached a positive value to possession of the Amur basin, as evinced in the memorial written by Prince Songotu, before departing for negotiations with the Russians:

Nepuchin (Nerchinsk) now occupied by Russia, is originally the pasturage of Our Mao-ming-an tribe. Yaksa (Albazin) is the old home of Pei-leoh, Our Dahueur (Daurian?) chieftain. Neither do these territories belong to the Russians, nor are they a neutral ground between two borders. The Heilung (Amur) River is most strategically situated and should not be regarded with slight. If they descend it they can reach the Sungari. From the Sungari they can reach the Nonni and the Kueshan. Facing south they can reach Oula (Kirin) and Ninguta and the land of the Sibos, Khorchins, Solons and Dahueurs. Turning back to the mouth of the Heilung River, they can reach the sea. Into the Heilung River flows the Angun (Argun) and the Niumang (Bureia) and the Ginchiri (Zeia). Along both sides of these rivers are our protectorate peoples, the Gorchons, Giliaks and the Bisars, as well as the land of the Hochen and Feiyako. If we do not take possession of all of them, Our frontier people will never enjoy peace. It is our opinion that Nipuchin, Yaksa, the Heilung River, upper and lower, and all the rivers and rivulets flowing into it belong to us and none shall be abandoned to Russia.²²

The parleys at Nerchinsk were protracted but the Chinese had a telling advantage, in that their negotiators arrived at the scene with a military

²¹Yuri Semyonov, Siberia (Helicon Press, Baltimore, 1963), p. 115.

²²So-fang Pei-shing (1860), Introd. Vol. VIII, 2, cited by Lin, op. cit.

"escort" far outnumbering that of the Russians. It was, furthermore, reinforced during the course of the negotiations until they had a preponderance of ten to one. This was consistent with the instructions given by the Chinese Emperor to his envoy, Prince Songotu. They stated that the ambassadorial mission should lose no opportunity to flaunt imposing military power, should circumstances so require.²³

At the first meeting, on August 12, the Chinese demanded that "all of Dauria" be recognized as part of the Chinese Empire.²⁴ This would have meant cession of lands long settled by the Russians and their withdrawal to the Lena River.²⁵ Songotu based his claim on the contention that this land had been Chinese as early as the time of Alexander of Macedon, and that later it had become a domain of Genghis Khan, from whom the reigning Manchu dynasty claimed descent. Golovin dismissed this as preposterous and asserted that the Buriats, Mongols and other peoples living in those lands had never rendered iasak to the Chinese, whereas they had been doing so to the Russians. He proposed designating the Amur River as the frontier. The Chinese insisted on their position and the first day's meeting broke up. On the following day, Songotu's Jesuit interpreters transmitted what appeared to be a veiled threat of force, to which Golovin gave a stout reply, saying that Chinese troops did not frighten the

²³P. T. Iakovleva, Pervyi Russko-Kitaiskii Dogovor 1689 Goda (Moscow, 1958), p. 161.

²⁴"Dauria" is not an exact geographic designation. It may be defined generally as extending from the Iablonovoi Range to the Valley of the Argun, and as encompassing a part of the Transbaikal and the Priamur. (See F. Shperk, Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Vol. 19, p. 160). The Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, (Vol. 13, pp. 400-401) places Dauria in the watersheds of the Shilka, Argun, Zeia, Bureia and Sungari.

²⁵P. T. Iakovleva, op. cit., p. 165 and p. 180.

Russians, as should be amply evident to the Chinese envoys (a reference to the fact that the besiegers of Albazin had failed to take it after eleven months).²⁶ If the Chinese sought peace they should refrain, he said, from threats and, instead, should offer some acceptable proposals for delimitation of the frontier.²⁷ The Chinese then made a proposal that would have meant Russian renunciation of the entire Priamur, as well as of a substantial portion of Transbaikalia. Golovin countered with a proposal that from the River Zeia, the left bank of the Amur should be Russian and the right bank, Chinese. The meeting reached an impasse and broke up with no agreement as to a further meeting.²⁸

During the period August 14-27, no meetings were held, but proposals and counter-proposals were transmitted between the Russian and Chinese camps by Andrei Bolobotskii for the Russians, and by the Jesuits, Francis Gerbillon and Thomas Pereira, for the Chinese. During this period Nerchinsk came under a virtual state of siege, being surrounded by Chinese troops. On August 16, 2,000 Buriat cavalrymen joined the Chinese forces around Nerchinsk, now numbering some 17,000 men with plentiful artillery and supplies. The town had no reserves of grain. For lack of fodder, the camels and horses of the Russians died in great numbers. The situation of the Russian garrison of 1,500 men, with few cannon, dwindling supplies and protected only by the flimsy earthworks of the town, appeared

²⁶Ibid., p. 168.

²⁷Loc. cit. Iakovleva states that through Mongolian interpreters, Golovin then ascertained that the Jesuits were misrepresenting the Chinese position and that they had been instructed to "speak only of the frontier and had never been told to speak of troops".

²⁸Ibid., pp. 170-171.

hopeless. Golovin weighed the situation and decided to call the Chinese bluff -- if bluff it was -- or to defend the town to the death. On August 18, with his personal bodyguard of regular troops and some cossacks, he marched out of the town and prepared to do battle. The Chinese failed to attack, however, whereupon Golovin sent an emissary to the Chinese camp to ask why the town was being besieged.²⁹ The Chinese replied that they were merely deploying their forces "for their own security". On the same day they made a proposal that the border follow the Gorbitsa, Shilka and Argun Rivers. Golovin rejected this, and proposed instead that the frontier should follow the Amur to the Odekon, then along the Argun to Lake Dalai. This would have meant Russian retention of Albazin and was categorically refused by Songotu.³⁰ The Chinese then made obvious preparations to storm Nerchinsk. A flotilla of armed junks approached the city and ground troops moved close to the walls of the town.

Golovin, with no hope of receiving any reinforcements, decided it was time to make concessions. He offered to give up Albazin and to discuss a frontier that would follow the Gorbitsa and Argun, then the Stan-ovoi range to the sea. This meant giving up almost all of the land in the Amur region, but would preserve for the Russians a region where silver deposits had been discovered, as well as a salt lake and lands suitable for agriculture. Songotu agreed to discussions on this basis, but added the demand that the Russians recognize Chinese sovereignty over all of the Mongolian peoples. This last Golovin rejected on the grounds that neither party to the negotiations had any authorization to discuss such

²⁹Ibid., pp. 175-176.

³⁰Ibid., p. 176.

a matter.³¹

Discussions continued on the basis of Golovin's last proposal. They were complicated by Chinese demands that the Mongolian Prince Gantimur and his people, who had, years earlier, defected to the Russians, be given up to the Chinese, and by Russian requests for generous provisions for trade. Negotiations almost broke down once more when Songotu demanded a frontier bounded by mountain ranges reaching to the "Holy Cape". It would have excluded the Russians not only from the Amur region but also from territories they had settled along the Ud River and the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk.³² These demands were again accompanied by threats of force. Golovin rejected them and declared that if the Chinese wanted war the Russians would defend themselves. This vigorous retort threw the Chinese into some confusion. After consulting among themselves, they notified Golovin that they were prepared to make no disposition in the Treaty of lands along the Ud and at the mouth of the Amur.³³

On August 27, agreement was finally reached on the terms of the Treaty of Nerchinsk.³⁴ The frontier was fixed from the Gorbitsa River (a left-bank tributary of the Shilka) along the watershed between the basins of the Lena and the Amur, then along the peaks of the Stanovoi Range; all streams flowing down the southern slopes of the Range into the Amur were defined as Chinese, those flowing down "the other slopes", as Russian. All rivers and lands lying between the Stanovoi Range and the River Ud

³¹Ibid., p. 180.

³²Ibid., p. 181.

³³Ibid., p. 182.

³⁴The text is contained in Appendix C, I.

were to remain undelimited until such time as the governments of the Russian and Chinese Empires were prepared to discuss them. The Argun River, furthermore, was set as a boundary between the two Empires and all Russian buildings and dwellings on the south bank of that river were to be transferred to the north bank. Albazin was to be razed to the ground by the Russians and its inhabitants transported to Russian territory. Deserters and fugitives who had fled from China or Russia before conclusion of the Treaty would remain where they were, but in future, subjects of either Empire fleeing to the other should immediately be secured and sent back. Commercial relations were to be maintained, merchants of both countries being provided with letters of authorization.

The Treaty of Nerchinsk in effect fixed only a small segment of the Russo-Chinese frontier. There was no clear delimitation of any part of the region to the northeast of Nerchinsk, since that region was simply unknown. Cahen points out that "The Stony Mountains, 'Holy Cape', the river Ud itself, indeed, at that time were nothing more to either party than mere vague geographical expressions, the country not yet having been either traversed in a satisfactory manner, or its bearings recorded on any map. The country to the southwest of Nerchinsk, Transbaikalia, and all the remainder of Siberia were left without delimitation of the frontiers."³⁵

From the Russian standpoint, the only favorable aspect of the Treaty of Nerchinsk was the provision granting the right for Russian merchants to travel to China and to trade there. "There was more joy in the Kremlin at this gain than sorrow at the loss of Albazin", comments Semyonov.³⁶ This gain, restricted as it was to a brief and vague statement, did not of

³⁵Gaston Cahen, Early Russo-Chinese Relations (Shanghai, 1914) p. 16.

³⁶Semyonov, op. cit., p. 121.

itself create settled conditions for trade with China, something in which the Chinese had little, if any, interest. China's chief preoccupation was with keeping the native tribes under control. Her long-standing objective was to maintain a thinly populated belt of buffer states, insulating her against the outside "barbarian" world.

A succinct summary of Russian and Chinese policies for their borderlands, following the Treaty of Nerchinsk, is provided in Father Sebes' Introduction to the diary of Father Pereira, a member of the Jesuit Mission in Peking, who had participated in the negotiations at Nerchinsk:

. . .The theory which guided Russia was formulated by Peter the Great, who saw only two possibilities for Russia in the Far East: voyevat ili torgovat, "wage war or trade". Since his European wars kept him too busy for the former, he chose trade. China, on the other hand, had a completely different conception of her relations with Russia. She wanted neither trade nor war. She simply wanted to pacify the territories over which she claimed suzerainty by isolating them from Russian influence. Her principal aim was to close Mongolia and the Amur region to the Russians and transform these territories into a belt of buffer states under the exclusive control of China. She agreed to trade until such a time as she could accomplish the pacification of these territories.³⁷

Within ten years after the Treaty of Nerchinsk, China had achieved considerable progress in her campaign of pacification and the transformation of Outer Mongolia into a dependency. She sought "neither the development of this second-rate pastureland nor the increase of its population through colonization". On the contrary, Father Seves points out, "the Peking Government took every measure to hinder colonization".³⁸ It forbade the Chinese to cross the Mongolian border, to cultivate land there

³⁷Joseph Sebes, S. J., The Jesuits and the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) (Rome, 1961) p. 124.

³⁸Ibid., p. 127.

or to marry Mongol women. The object was to maintain a closed strategic buffer state outside China's own borders, "the less populated the better". In keeping with this policy, the Chinese forbade the Mongolian chieftains to enter into relations with foreign countries and intensified frontier control of foreign merchants and couriers.³⁹ Russian harboring of Chinese deserters and intrigues with native rulers, notably the Chief of the Kalmycks, led China to manifest "a certain indifference" to Russian commercial efforts.⁴⁰

The Russians nevertheless persisted in their efforts to increase their trade, which at that time consisted of imports of low-grade Chinese silks, cottons, tobacco, ginger, pepper and sugar, and exports of furs, wool, horses, oxen, glass and swords.⁴¹ Peter the Great, interested in expanding this commerce, sent emissaries to China, the most notable of which were the missions of Isbrandt Ides, in 1692, and Lev Ismailov, in 1719. Their purpose, in addition to obtaining trading concessions, was to resolve the constant problem of dealing with border refugees in a manner satisfactory to both empires, and to gather intelligence.⁴² At the same

³⁹Loc. cit.

⁴⁰Cahen, op. cit., p. 69.

⁴¹Lo-Shu-Fu, A Documentary Chronicle of Sino-Western Relations, 1644, 1820 (University of Arizona Press, 1966), p. 121.

⁴²Cahen, op. cit., pp. 32-38, and pp. 69-77; These were by no means the first Russian attempts to negotiate with the Chinese in Peking. As early as 1616, a cosaack ataman appeared at the court of the Chinese vassal, Altyn Khan, and obtained permission from an envoy of the Chinese Emperor to arrange for a Russian mission to proceed to Peking. Two years later, the Petlin-Mundorff mission actually reached Peking, but achieved no notable results. In 1654, the Russian ambassador Baikov came to Peking, but was dismissed from the court because of his refusal to "kowtow", the bow of servile allegiance to the Chinese Emperor, considered a part of the court etiquette for admittance of any foreign ambassador. Subsequent embassies of Perfiliev and Setkul-Ablin again in 1672, and of Pershennikov in 1674, and Spathary in 1676, all bore little fruit largely

time, they avoided any Chinese efforts to reach agreement on formal border demarcation, particularly from the Transbaikal to the east. Their efforts bore no fruit, as far as improvement of trade was concerned.

What the Chinese wanted was not trade, but a delimitation of the Russian-Mongolian border that had been left unsettled by the Treaty of Nerchinsk, something that Russia had no desire to expedite, since that would have amounted to recognizing Chinese sovereignty in Outer Mongolia. Almost a century earlier, the Mongolian chieftain, Altyn Khan, had declared his fealty to the Tsar, thus providing Russia with her own claim to suzerainty there.⁴³ At the insistence of the Chinese Emperor, however, and in the hope of preserving whatever trade could be continued, Russia agreed to a settlement. This was negotiated by Sava Vladislavich Raguzinskii, who, following months of inconclusive meetings in Peking and fifty-eight conferences in the border areas, concluded the Treaty of Kiakhta in 1728. A precise frontier was drawn between Siberia and Mongolia, but from the Iablonovoi Mountains to the Sea of Okhotsk, the border was left undefined, as before. Kiakhta and Nerchinsk were designated as permanent trade centers. Trade caravans from Siberia to Peking were permitted once every three years. A Russian Orthodox Mission was given formal permission to reside in Peking, with a priest and students sent there to

for the same reason. Perhaps another, equally cogent reason was that while the Russians were eager for trade, the Chinese authorities were not interested in this. "They looked down upon merchants and depreciated the importance of commerce. Being used to receiving only tribute bearers, the Chinese court lacked the Western concept of trade." (See Vincent Chen, Sino-Russian Relations in the Seventeenth Century (The Hague, 1966) pp. 118-120.

⁴³Sebes, op. cit., p. 124.

learn Chinese.⁴⁴ And, at Raguzinskii's request, it was stipulated that correspondence between the two governments should be carried out in the name of the Russian Senate and the Chinese Meng-ku-li-fan-yuan, the "Office for the Control of the Barbarians of the Mongolian Dominions". This would prevent the Chinese Emperor's addressing the Tsar in insultingly condescending terms, as had happened when the diplomatic correspondence had been conducted as from one Emperor to another.⁴⁵ It became the custom of the Russians and of other western nations to refer to this Office as the Tribunal.

The Treaty of Kiakhta closed Outer Mongolia to the Russians. Official caravans could pass through it on their way to Peking, but in general, Russian trade was limited to the border region, mainly Kiakhta, and the number of official caravans to Peking decreased.⁴⁶

Following the conclusion of the Treaty of Kiakhta, Raguzinskii submitted a memorial to the Government in Moscow in which he laid down four conditions for the eventual conquest of the Amur region -- or, possibly an even greater territory. These were: maintenance of peace in Europe, so that time and money could be devoted to developing Siberia; steady planting of crops in the Transbaikal so as to establish a plentiful food base; gradual build-up and training of strong military forces in Eastern Siberia; and encouragement of the Mongols and other non-Manchu tribes in the buffer areas to strike for independence.⁴⁷ Three years later, evidently

⁴⁴Semyonov, op. cit., p. 123.

⁴⁵R. K. I. Quested, The Expansion of Russia in East Asia, 1857 - 1860 (University of Malaya Press, 1969), pp. 4-5.

⁴⁶Sebes, op. cit., p. 124.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 125-126.

upon more mature reflection, he prepared another analysis in his report on "The Condition and Strength of the Chinese State":

We may easily conceive of a war with China, but we must take into consideration the fact that this would not be an easy undertaking. We would have to concentrate on the border at least ten regiments of the line and an equal amount of regiments of irregulars, which would have to face all the Chinese forces and perhaps the Mongolian as well. The cost of such an undertaking, even assuming that it should be successful, will never be recovered, even in a hundred years. We would have to build fortresses, maintain strong garrisons there, supply them continuously with food and ammunition. Peace would be menaced for a long time, trade with China would be interrupted and the Siberian population would become impoverished. Moreover, the Chinese would never acknowledge defeat, they would begin to arm themselves to an even greater extent and learn our military arts.⁴⁸

By virtue of this analysis, Raguzinskii is regarded by most scholars as the initiator of the status quo policy that guided Russia's relations with China for over a century after the Treaty of Kiakhta. That policy was not without its opponents, however, and almost from the date of the Treaty itself, a recurring irredentism was manifest in some quarters of Russian officialdom.

The denial of the Amur by the terms of the Treaty of Nerchinsk, confirmed by the Treaty of Kiakhta, cut down the impetus of Russian colonization and diverted it to the north-east and across the Pacific. Under the circumstances, however, communications with Kamchatka, not to mention Alaska, were extremely difficult. And from the Russian point of view, the limited trade through the single point of Kiakhta was far from satisfactory. The considerably less than accurate concept of the warmer climes and fertile lands of the Amur region -- which had never received any large-scale testing -- undoubtedly also persisted in the minds of many

⁴⁸Loc. cit.

Russians, as did a certain revanchism. All these considerations nurtured Nerchinsk "revisionism" at an early date.⁴⁹

In 1733, Lorenz Lange, a caravan leader who had played an important role in negotiating the Treaty of Kiakhta, was pressing for exploitation of Chinese difficulties with the Dzhungarians to force changes in the Treaty that would favor Russia.⁵⁰ Eight years later, the historian, G. F. Muller, was stressing that the only practical route to Kamchatka and the Pacific was down the Amur. He pointed out, in addition, that "the difficulties of transport between Yakutsk and Okhotsk would be ended. . . intentions with regard to Japan and the hoped for discoveries in America would be more easily fulfilled, trade with India could be organized and trade with China itself, either by sea or up the River Sungari, would become easier than hitherto."⁵¹ He stressed, too, that the Treaty of Nerchinsk had been concluded under duress, and that it was time to right this wrong. Lorenz Lang, by then deputy Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, agreed completely with Muller.⁵²

Another Siberian administrator, Governor W. A. Miatlev, was commissioned in 1753 to organize a second Bering expedition. It was to start from Nerchinsk and reach Japan and the American coast via the Shilka

⁴⁹Semyonov, op. cit., p. 250.

⁵⁰Two years earlier, the Chinese had dispatched envoys to Moscow to seek Russian neutrality in their planned campaign against the Dzhungars. The Chinese envoys did not penetrate either to St. Petersburg or to Moscow, but they brought back impressive reports regarding the extent and wealth of Russia. (Quested, op. cit., p. 2, cites Leontiev's translation of Puteshestvi Kitaiskogo Poslannika to this effect.

⁵¹Semyonov, op. cit., p. 25.

⁵²Loc. cit.

and Amur. The Chinese government denied permission for navigation on the Amur, however, and the plan was not carried out.⁵³ Three years later, the commandant of Selenginsk, W. Jakobi, recommended assembling troops between Selenginsk and Nerchinsk and then confronting the Chinese with an ultimatum. Catherine II, at the beginning of her reign, considered this plan but rejected it because of the heavy demands it would have made on Russian military resources.⁵⁴

The cautious Russian government, unwilling to become embroiled in a military adventure in an area thousands of miles removed from Russia's basic sources of supply for military manpower and equipment, continued to reject all the overtures of the revisionists during the first half of the nineteenth century.⁵⁵ One such proposal was made in 1805 by the navigator, I. F. von Krusenstern, who recommended that Russia obtain a stepping stone to Manchuria by occupying Anniwa Bay in southern Sakhalin; this was done in the following year by a Lieutenant Khvostoff, who took the bay in the Emperor's name by distributing medals and proclamations among the native chiefs. This action, however, was disavowed by the government.⁵⁶

At the time of the Sakhalin adventure the Russian government was attempting to modify the terms of the Treaties of Nerchinsk and Kiakhta through conciliatory, rather than aggressive methods. In 1805, Count Iuri

⁵³Loc. cit.

⁵⁴R. K. I. Quested, The Expansion of Russia in East Asia, 1857-1860, (University of Malaya Press, 1968), p. 2, and Russkaia Starina, 1881, Vol. 32, pp. 75-91.

⁵⁵V. P. Vasiliev, Russko-Kitaiskie Traktaty (St. Petersburg, 1860), cited by Quested, relates that Paul I planned an armed expedition "to punish China", but was murdered before it could take place.

⁵⁶Ravenstein, The Russians on the Amur (London, 1861), p. 113.

Golovkin, with a large retinue and costly presents, was dispatched with orders to negotiate liberalized trade agreements in Peking and to secure permission for limited Russian navigation on the Amur. He did not progress beyond Urga, where endless parleying about ceremonial wore out his patience so that he returned without accomplishing anything.⁵⁷ A member of Golovkin's party later wrote: "All the inhabitants of Nerchinsk, Irkutsk and Transbaikalia think of the land of the Daur as lost. Why should we not build much better ports at the mouth of the Amur than we have at Okhotsk and miserable Avachinsk (Petropavlovsk). They would be a hundred times better and more useful than our silly American possessions and all those Kuriles and Aleutians....."⁵⁸

Following the conclusion of the abortive Golovkin mission, one of Golovkin's staff officers undertook a secret reconnaissance of the frontier area from Nerchinsk to Gorbitsa, where he found some frontier posts with inscriptions in five languages, and where he was told by the natives that the Tungus tribes on the Amur and in the Nerchinsk area were sympathetic to the Russians. Although it had been intended to develop plans for an expedition on the basis of this information, it was shelved.⁵⁹

The failure of the Golovkin mission did not disturb the placid relations between Russia and China and in 1810 the Russians arranged a

⁵⁷Semyonov, op. cit., p. 253; Quested, op. cit., pp. 11-12, points out that Golovkin's main qualifications for appointment as head of this mission was that he was a relative of the Foreign Minister, Prince Chartoryszky, that the mission was very badly organized and that it was found that the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry had lost its files on China, so that Golovkin had had to start out with inadequate instructions!

⁵⁸F. F. Vigel, Zapiski (Moscow, 1928) Vol. I, p. 251, cited by P. I. Kabanov, Amurskii Vopross (Blagoveschensk, 1958) p. 87.

⁵⁹Quested, op. cit., p. 16, citing P. I. Kabanov, Amurskii Vopross i ego Razreshenie (Moscow, 1947)

meeting between the Governor of Irkutsk, N. I. Treskin, and Chinese officials at Urga. These were carried out in very amicable and equal manner, owing in large part to Treskin's care in conforming to Chinese etiquette.⁶⁰ The meetings failed in their political purpose because, as Qusted points out, "The Chinese had hoped to persuade Russia to send another mission (to Peking) unconditionally, whereas the Russian Government wished to make this dependent upon the sending of a reciprocal Chinese mission to St. Petersburg, in order to enlighten China as to the true extent of Russian power. It was highly shortsighted of the Chinese and greatly to their subsequent disadvantage that they did not entertain this idea, but there would have been too much loss of face involved."⁶¹

Some five years after the Treskin negotiations, an official of the Russian-American Company urged occupation of the Amur delta and navigation of the river, pointing out that almost 15,000 pack horses were required annually, at exorbitant expense, for the provisioning of the Russian settlements on the Sea of Okhotsk.⁶² The Russian government, recovering from Napoleon's invasion and engrossed in the events leading to his final downfall, understandably gave this notion short shrift. It remained unmoved, too, in 1827, when Admiral Nikoloi Mordvinov⁶³ wrote Count Nesselrode, Metternich's disciple, saying, "We cannot forget the

⁶⁰N. I. Treskin, "Zhurnal družheskogo svidania Irkutskogo grazhdanskogo gubernatora Treskina s Kitaiskim pogranychym pravitelem Vanom i Ambanom s 19 feb. po 13 marta 1810." Chtenia v imperialisticheskoy obshestve istorii i drevnostei Rossii pro Moskovskom universitete (Moscow, 1860) Bk. I CSL, 227, p. 9b, cited by Qusted, op. cit., p. 16-17.

⁶¹Qusted, op. cit., p. 17.

⁶²Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 113.

⁶³Muraviev's maternal grandfather

concessions made by Russia to the Chinese on the boundary from the Iablo-novoi Mountains to the Amur. At the time of making those concessions, we were enjoying the great expanses of Siberia and disdained the wilderness of the conceded lands, but now we are suffering because the Amur, the only river in Siberia leading to the open sea, does not flow within our frontiers."⁶⁴

A few years later, Siberian officials were listening to the report of an escaped convict, the Staroverets Guri Vasiliev, who had been returned to them by Tungus hunters for a reward of three rubles. Vasiliev and two companions had periodically roamed the Amur territory for some thirteen years and had drifted down the Amur in a boat to its mouth and the Sea of Okhotsk. Governor-General Lavinskii, of Eastern Siberia, was greatly impressed by Vasiliev's account of the navigability of the Amur River. He also noted the returned convict's report that the Chinese were taking no steps to defend or colonize the area it drained, which at this time was inhabited by only a few thousand Chinese and Manchus.⁶⁵

Lavinskii submitted a plan for the occupation of the Amur region to the authorities in St. Petersburg. The response was that Vasiliev's reports should be tested. Accordingly a Colonel Ladishenskii was sent on an extensive trip on the Amur and subsequently worked out details for a military expedition into the territory.⁶⁶ The plan was shelved, however; the Polish Revolution of 1831-2 had only recently been crushed, the Near

⁶⁴Archiv Ministerstva Inostrannikh Del f. kanz. za 1827, g., d. 7316 II.7-9, cited by Kabanov, op. cit.

⁶⁵G. E. Grum-Grchimailo, Opisanie Amurskogo Kraia (St. Petersburg, 1894), Ch. I, cited by Qusted, op. cit., p. 22.

⁶⁶Semyonov, op. cit., p. 255.

Eastern crisis, later to be resolved by the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, was fermenting, and the Russian Government presumably had enough to worry about without undertaking military commitments in the southeastern reaches of the Empire. But even the cautious Nesselrode entertained hopes of peaceably adjusting the restrictions on trade and removing the prohibition of Russian navigation of the Amur. In 1840, he ordered Liubimov, the secretary of the ecclesiastical mission to Peking, to initiate talks with the Chinese on the subject of the Amur. This proved impossible and convinced Nesselrode that nothing further should be attempted.⁶⁷ Interest in the Amur, however, was revived by the journey of the geographer, A. T. von Middendorf, in 1842, which extended, contrary to the instructions of the Imperial Academy of Science, along the ill-defined border of China.⁶⁸ Count Evfimii Vasilievich Putiatin, perhaps relying on the Emperor's well-known penchant for "military expeditions",⁶⁹ submitted a proposal in 1843 to send forces into the area for the purpose of wringing commercial concessions from the Chinese. According to a report by the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg, this was approved initially by Nesselrode, but judged not worth the outlay by Vronchenko, the Minister of Finance.⁷⁰

Even before Muraviev's appointment as Governor-General of Eastern

⁶⁷Barsukov, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 200.

⁶⁸Russki Arkhiv, 1878, Bk. III, p. 257.

⁶⁹G. Pushkarev, Rossia v XIX veke, (New York, 1962) footnote 12, p.48.

⁷⁰Report from Sir John Crampton to H. M. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Nov. 18, 1860, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 31. The accuracy of the British intelligence service in St. Petersburg at this time would be difficult to determine; the report of Nesselrode's initial acquiescence in Putiatin's project certainly seems questionable.

Siberia, Nicholas I had determined upon exploration of the Amur estuary. In 1846, ensign Gavrilov, commander of the brig, "Grand Duke Constantine" in the service of the Russian-American Company, was ordered by the Emperor "to carry out hydrographic investigations" in the Sea of Okhotsk. He was instructed to avoid any publicity and enjoined from letting his crew know where they were sailing.⁷¹ This expedition had evidently been stimulated by information from the Tunguses, roaming along the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk, that many Russian vagabonds and refugees from the law had made their way to the mouth of the Amur and had established settlements there, much as similar adventurers had earlier done at Albazin. Gavrilov had been instructed to maintain the strictest incognito, passing himself off as a non-Russian fisherman and taking the utmost precautions to carry out his deception, even to carrying western European, rather than Russian, tobacco. In the event of meeting Russian settlers, he was to tell them that he had learned to speak Russian from Russians on the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk, where he had been fishing. Gavrilov encountered sandbanks and turned back and the Russian-American Company reported that the Amur estuary was not navigable.⁷²

II. GROWING FRONTIER OF EMPIRE

While revanchism, real or imagined climatic and agricultural advantages in the "lost" territory, and the need for better communications with the Pacific settlements underlay continued Russian interest in the Amur, there was another, more general, contributing factor. This was the growing economic development of Siberia and the resulting increasing awareness

⁷¹Barsukov, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 172.

⁷²Loc. cit.

within the government that this vast "realm" was becoming an integral part of Russia, rather than a sort of colonial possession.⁷³

In addition to mounting agricultural production, mining was becoming a significant activity in the Transbaikal by the middle of the eighteenth century. Silver, lead and copper were smelted there and in Nerchinsk, plants smelting iron and pig iron were operating. A main highway crossed Siberia from Tiumen in the west to Nerchinsk in the east, and was joined also by roads from the south of Siberia and from the northern regions.⁷⁴ The Kiakhta trade, which had languished during the second half of the eighteenth century, was revived by the Russo-Chinese Convention of 1792. In 1797, 34,000 poods⁷⁵ of tea were imported through Kiakhta; ⁷⁶ by 1824, this figure had risen to 154,000. In that year, peltry constituted 50% of Russian exports to China, and woolen textiles, some 15%. Of the latter, 2,438 arshins⁷⁷ were of Russian manufacture, and 295,825 were foreign re-exports. Some twenty-five years later, peltry constituted a negligible export item, while textile exports, exclusively of Russian manufacture, had risen to 1,296,935 arshins.⁷⁸ This was a natural reflection of Russia's

⁷³Marc Raeff, in Speranskii and the Siberian Reforms of 1822, p. 6, refers to the superficial and erroneous analogy with the colonial possessions of England and Spain drawn by Catherine II and her councilors who referred to Siberia as "our India, Mexico or Peru".

⁷⁴M. G. Levin and L. P. Potapov, The Peoples of Siberia, (University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 129-30.

⁷⁵One pood equals approximately 37 pounds.

⁷⁶A. N. Radischev, the political writer exiled to Siberia at this time, noted in his Pismo o Kitaeskom Torge, that this amounted to $\frac{1}{4}$ of all imports into Russia; $\frac{2}{3}$ of such imports consisted of textiles, (Semyonov, op. cit., p. 125).

⁷⁷One arshin equals 28 inches.

⁷⁸P. I. Kabanov, Amurskii Vopross (Blagoveschensk, 1959), p. 56.

expanding economy. The value of manufactured output in Russia during the second quarter of the nineteenth century had risen from 46,524,000 silver rubles to 159,985,000 rubles, with textiles accounting for 48% of that figure. Thus, by Muraviev's time, Kiakhta had become a prime outlet for Russia's most important export industry. By that time, too, annual tea imports through this point had risen to over a quarter of a million poods. Almost one fifth of Russia's total customs revenue was now being derived from Kiakhta.⁷⁹ Of added significance to the Siberian economy was the discovery of gold. First found toward the end of the 1830's, it was subsequently uncovered in the taiga of the Ienisei and then in the valleys of the Lena and the Vitium.⁸⁰

As the economic importance of Siberia and its trade with China grew, so did its Russian population. In 1796, this amounted to 78,450, plus 14,360 in the Transbaikal (almost all in the mines). By the mid-nineteenth century, this figure had grown to 1,152,978, with some 350,000 in the Transbaikal.⁸¹ Forty percent of this population was non-agricultural, a circumstance that was to become critical in later years.

A small proportion of Siberia's growing population was composed of convicts and political exiles.⁸² Some of the latter, notably the Decembrists, exerted a marked influence on Eastern Siberia's cultural and economic development. The Decembrists contributed greatly to communities

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 52-54.

⁸⁰Semyonov, op. cit., p. 243.

⁸¹Kabanov, op. cit., p. 58.

⁸²Raeff, op. cit., p. 44, states that not more than 2,000 convicts entered Siberia in any one year, and that they remained an insignificant fraction of the population. The number of other exiles, however, who were sent to Siberia -- not as punishment, but for purposes of augmenting the chronically sparse population -- far exceeded this figure.

such as Petrovskii Zavod, Berezov, Narym Surgut, Pelym and Iakutsk. Their dispersal to these and other locations was meant to prevent their close association. It had the beneficent effect of spreading an intelligentsia throughout the area, which until then contained hardly any members of that stratum of Russian society.

The Decembrists organized schools. They improved agricultural methods; through their instruction, the native inhabitants learned to cultivate all manner of fruits and vegetables not previously grown in Siberia, and learned to grow tobacco, rye, buckwheat and barley and to produce hemp oil. The Decembrists also organized medical clinics and undertook scientific research. In some cases they were even able to exercise a constructive influence on the Siberian governmental authorities.⁸³ Their activities were undoubtedly instrumental in spreading the growing consciousness within Russia that Siberia was in fact a part of the nation itself ("Sibir tozhe Russkaia zemlia").

Enlightened and progressive though the Decembrists were, they constituted only a tiny leavening element in Eastern Siberian society, which differed markedly from the traditional Russian pattern. The provincial nobility that played a political role on the local level in European Russia did not exist in Siberia, while the government regarded the other classes there as too unreliable to be allowed any initiative or autonomy. The only social group in Siberia that might have played a political role, vis-a-vis the governmental bureaucracy, were the merchants, but ever since Peter the Great, the government had held the Russian merchant class in low esteem.⁸⁴

⁸³ A. G. Mazour, The First Russian Revolution, 1825, (Stanford University Press, 1937), pp. 222-260.

⁸⁴ Raeff, op. cit., p. 7. Peter the Great recognized the importance of trade for the economy of his realm. He accorded special privileges to

Geographic and economic conditions had favorably influenced the growth and predominance of the merchant class in Siberian society. It was trade that had brought Russian settlers to Siberia, which had been discovered and conquered by merchants or by freebooters in their pay, while the Russian nobility, predominantly concerned with agriculture, (based on serfdom, which did not exist in Siberia),⁸⁵ found little attraction there. The stronghold of the Siberian merchants in the mid-nineteenth century was Irkutsk, where they constituted an economic oligarchy, living "in the world of seventeenth century Muscovy", and thinking "in terms of privilege, monopoly and special rights".⁸⁶

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the merchants of Irkutsk were constantly at odds with the administrative authorities, who reflected the government's prevailing philosophy of "benevolent despotism". Allowed no real role in local self-government, these commercial entrepreneurs were subject to the nearly absolute rule of the Governor, who was the personal and direct appointee of the sovereign, and was responsible to the monarch alone, and of his appointed officials. As is invariably the case under conditions of political and economic

the Russian merchantry and made efforts to bring them into the mainstream of public life. Following Peter's death, the resentful nobility succeeded in arrogating to themselves the monopolies and other benefits enjoyed by the merchants and in relegating them to an inferior status.

⁸⁵That is, of the sort that was prevalent on the estates of land owners throughout European Russia. One form of serfdom did exist in Siberia, i.e., the "enrollment" (prypisanie) of peasants for the rural mines. At the end of the eighteenth century, there were some 60,000 "enrolled workers" of this sort. (See Semyonov, op. cit., p. 241.)

⁸⁶Raef, op. cit., pp. 13 and 32.

absolutism, abuses of power were commonplace. The merchants' only recourse was to forward complaints and present petitions to the capital -- when these could be gotten through. One such complaint, in 1800,⁸⁷ spurred the Russian Senate and the Council of State to an examination of the Siberian governmental structure, and persuaded the Emperor that a fundamental reorganization was required. It was to take twenty-two years, however, before such a reorganization, at least on paper, was effected. The first attempt, under Governor-General Selifontov, resulted only in further expanding the powers of the governor general and in multiplying the number of officials and government bodies in an area already saturated with bureaucrats. This, comments Raeff, "considering the widespread corruption among Siberian officials", led "only to more abuses and confusion".⁸⁸ The situation reached a climax during the administration of Ivan Pestel (father of the prominent Decembrist) and his ruthless deputy, N. I. Treskin, which "became a fourteen-year long history of clashes and conflicts between the bureaucracy and the merchants". It also involved a struggle within the government itself. From the time of Catherine II and

⁸⁷Raeff, op. cit., p. 9, cites the eleven major points of this complaint by M. Sibiriakov, prominent merchant and mayor of Irkutsk: 1) Grain prices had been artificially raised; 2) The population was being distracted from useful work by forcible impressment for road building; 3) The administration had neglected to apportion the required amount of land for each village; 4) The peasants were compelled to transport grain to remote places; 5) The Governor-General had forbidden the planting of tobacco in Irkutsk; 6) The mansion of the Governor had been repaired with the help of conscripted labor; 7) Military barracks had been built in the square in front of the cathedral; 8) A distribution point for forced labor had been established at the very gates of the city, thus making the outskirts of the town unsafe; 9) The barracks of the police had been transferred to another spot in the city at the expense of the people; 10) The transportation of merchandise over Lake Baikal had been prohibited and the merchants had been compelled to use a longer route around the lake; 11) Sibiriakov himself had been deprived of his office of mayor without any reason.

⁸⁸Raeff, op. cit., p. 11.

particularly with the accession to the throne of Alexander I, the central government had become impressed with the advantages of free trade as a basis for the nation's economic well-being. Within the government, however, there were differing interpretations of the manner in which this should be fostered. The Ministry of Finance believed that local officials should be given as little power as possible in economic matters, allowing individual merchants to compete freely for such benefits as were to be derived from dealings with the State.⁸⁹ What the Ministry appeared to overlook was that the merchants' clamor against bureaucratic interference largely reflected their determination to obtain a stranglehold over the economy of the region through their buying monopolies, rather than any attachment to the principles of an open economy.⁹⁰

The struggle between Treskin and the merchants of Siberia entailed the development of a wide range of beneficial economic projects, including the building of roads, granaries, municipal facilities, and similar projects, on the one hand, and on the other, the spread of a scandalous system of bribery and corruption associated with these. Treskin was an indefatigable worker and undoubtedly did much to improve the economic base of Siberia. His high-handed methods, however, which were more suited to the by-gone Petrine era, and the fact that he was apparently as guilty of dishonestly lining his pockets⁹¹ as were his unscrupulous

⁸⁹Such dealings included contracting for supplies and materials required by State-run mines and the then State monopolies of vodka distilling and salt mining.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 30. The combined action of a few powerful merchants for example, could force down the price that peasants could obtain for their grain.

⁹¹An activity that he delegated to his wife. An excellent account of the Pestel-Treskin regime is contained in Chapter II of Raeff's previously cited work.

henchmen, finally caused his downfall. The mounting desperation of the Siberian population succeed in 1819, through the usual device of petitioning the Emperor, in bringing about the dismissal of Pestel (who had spent most of his governor-generalcy in St. Petersburg) and of Treskin. In that year, Michael M. Speranskii (1772-1839) distinguished legislator and statesman, became Governor-General of Siberia.

Speranskii was charged with inspecting and reorganizing the area's entire administrative apparatus. The result of his efforts reflected the division within the Russian bureaucracy between those who were determined upon a policy of strict etatism and bureaucratic authoritarianism and those who favored the ideas of late-eighteenth century enlightened despotism, economic liberalism and humanitarianism.⁹²

Speranskii's reforms of 1822 established administrations for Western and Eastern Siberia with capitals in Tobolsk and Irkutsk. The governor-general of each area was an appointee of the Emperor and responsible to him personally. As the lieutenant of the monarch he was head of the Main Administration, consisting of himself and an Advisory Council, to which he was to submit certain of his proposed measures for information and advice. His personal function was that of administrative supervision of the execution of all measures, including those issued by the judiciary. He was responsible for regular inspection of his region and of its various branches of administration; he was to make recommendations for promotions and honors and he had a qualified power of appointment and dismissal of functionaries. In case of special need, the governor-general could issue temporary executive instructions subject to eventual confirmation by St. Petersburg. In all other matters, the governor-general was to

⁹²Raeff, op. cit., p. 130.

work in conjunction with the Council. The Council, however, had only an advisory opinion that was not binding on the governor-general. Moreover, while it exercised general supervision over current administration, reviewed all matters pertaining to taxation, contractual obligations, supplies, recruits, etc., and was consulted regarding execution of legislation, it had no power to implement its decisions. Its role was thus really very limited and eventually it deteriorated to an institution for dealing with a limited number of specific matters; it soon completely lost its original function of advising the governor-general on matters of general policy.⁹³

While Speranskii's reforms did little to limit the viceroys' prerogatives of the governors-general, they nevertheless had a significant impact on the administration of Siberia and on its economic life. A more systematic organization of local government was established: gubernia (provinces), okrugs (districts) and volosts (townships). More self-government was allowed the native populations under their own clan administrations and "dumas (parliaments) of the steppe". The judiciary was given greater autonomy, but most significantly, a far greater degree of laissez-faire was accorded the economy. The establishment of full freedom of trade had, indeed, been Speranskii's first concern. He restricted interference and participation of officials in economic activities and abolished most of the detailed regulations of trade which had been for the most part a facade for bureaucratic tyranny.⁹⁴ He also instituted positive measures to encourage various forms of economic activity and to bring the whole area into closer trade relations with European Russia. His measures

⁹³Raef, op. cit., pp. 74-76.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 54.

for the promotion and safeguarding of free economic activity were, in fact, his major contributions to the administration of Siberia.

The application and implementation of Speranskii's new legislation often faltered and proved inadequate and his successors tended to fall back into the corrupt practices of the earlier satraps of Siberia. His freeing of economic activity, too, sometimes took the perverted form of facilitating the monopolistic activities of the merchants whom Treskin had hated and distrusted, and ironically, often had the effect of encouraging collusion between government officials and private entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, as Raeff puts it, Speranskii's measures, "encouraged a new outlook and gave new direction to the region's energies and resources. In so doing, the reforms of 1822 helped to open Siberia as the future agricultural and industrial 'frontier of Russia' ".⁹⁵ By the mid-nineteenth century, the need of this new frontier for expanded trade, as well as Eastern Siberia's potential as a base for further eastward colonisation, were becoming increasingly clear to the merchants of Irkutsk -- as they were to become to Muraviev soon after his arrival there. The Amur, he quickly perceived, would be the key to such developments.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 131.

CHAPTER III

EARLY PROBLEMS AND TACTICS

I. CHANGES COME TO IRKUTSK

Muraviev was clearly determined to impress upon the population of Eastern Siberia that his appointment was ushering in an administration far different from that of his predecessor. His arrival in Krasnoiarsk on February 27, 1848, was awaited with trepidation. He was met there only by the city governor, Vasilii Kirilovich Padalka, and except for him, Muraviev received no one that evening. At that time, recalls B. V. Struve, the corrupt practices in the administration of the gold mines was creating a major scandal. Particularly notorious was the disposition of the so-called governmental remnants, being distributed in the guise of gracious monarchical bestowals on various individuals close to the throne. Comments Struve:

This represented the most shameful and outrageous speculation. Nowhere had bribery revealed itself in such blatant form and in such large dimensions. . . . The most highly placed personages did not shrink from participating. Entire gangs of dishonest people were occupied in concocting reasons for including this or that mine in the category of a "governmental remnant". Today a mine would be so classified and tomorrow there would already have arrived an application seeking the Tsar's permission to grant the right to work the mine to some highly placed person or to a company in which such persons were silent partners.¹

The mine scandals and other instances of collusion between government

¹Russki Vestnik, 1888, cited by Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 175.

officials and private entrepreneurs led Muraviev to undertake a sort of demonstration before the wealthy inhabitants of the area. He had earlier promised the Masharovs, a family that had greatly prospered as supply contractors to the gold mine operators and purveyors of vodka to their exploited workmen, that en route from Krasnoiarsk to Irkutsk, he would be their dinner guest in Kansk, where they owned a luxuriously appointed home. Now, however, he decided to make it clear that wealth should not be accorded any advantages before the law, and gave instructions in Krasnoiarsk that the Masharovs be informed that he would not call upon them in Kansk.²

Barsukov records that after a five-day inspection of the troops and of municipal and community establishments in Krasnoiarsk, Muraviev proceeded on to Nizhnii Udinsk, where he stopped for a few hours and where "certain irregularities in the administration of the district came to his attention".³ Muraviev, states Barsukov, "issued lively and decisive orders in order to reinstate confidence in the authorities which of late had been completely destroyed, and then proceeded to Irkutsk". It is a passage of this sort that brings down on Barsukov's head the scorn of critics like Butsinskii, who was quick to seize upon this rather ludicrous exaggeration of Muraviev's effectiveness.⁴

On the day following his arrival in Irkutsk, Muraviev held a morning reception. It was obviously designed to signal the advent of drastic

²loc. cit.

³Ibid., I, p. 176.

⁴Butsinski, N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii, Trud I. P. Barsukova, Retzenziia Professora Kharkovskogo Universiteta, (St. Petersburg, Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1895) p. 126.

changes in the regime. All of the notables in the area, military and civil figures, the merchants, members of the local дума and of the trade corporations, were gathered in the main salon of the Governor-General's residence. The account of I. V. Vagin, an eyewitness⁵ makes it plain that the proceedings were formal and chilly. Muraviev received the introductions of the military officers silently, bowing to no one, nor offering his hand. He coldly listened to the ceremonial address of the Governor of Irkutsk, A. V. Piatnitzkii, and then silently walked past the row of civilians. Among these stood N. E. Tiumentsev, Councilor of the Main Administration of Eastern Siberia, who was "red as a lobster". Muraviev passed him by also. He then walked quickly to the next room, received bread and salt from the city community and immediately returned to the salon. After a few moments, he bowed left and right and the reception, which had taken twenty minutes, was over, though the senior officials were requested to remain for a meeting which, Tiumentsev noted in his diary, "was grim and left everyone with an unpleasant impression". Vagin comments further:

For me, a novice to the governor-generals' receptions, the matter of the overall impression was of little moment. What I was interested in was Muraviev's personality. By its youthfulness and alertness it constituted a complete contrast with the personality of Rupert.

In the evening, little groups gathered in various places to comment on the reception and to go over its details. It was said that one of the most militant of the Rupertist officials, almost the most influential one through his connections, was so put out of countenance that in response to some question of Muraviev's he babbled some utterly foolish answer. But what interested everyone the most was the Mangazeyev story.

Mangazeyev was the officer in charge of the gold desk in the Mining Department. In addition to the sort of bribery in which

⁵I. V. Vagin, "Vostochnoe Obozrenie", in Literaturnyi Sbornik, 1885, pp. 277-283, cited by Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 177-179.

officials at that time were involved, he had thought up a special field for himself: He indicated to various individuals that the profitable crown-demesne remnants in the gold fields and helped them to get these away from other applicants. . . . He had hoped to oblige the inspectors (with Count Tolstoy) in this way, but his obligingness had hurt him.

"There I stood", Mangazeyev related later, "and beside me stood Savinski. They introduced him to Muraviev (and the later said), 'I have heard so many good reports about you'... ..and he scattered compliments. Then suddenly he asked, 'But where is Mangazeyev?' "Well", I thought, "if he has praised Savinski, who is only in charge of the salt desk, so highly, he will embrace me no less." I bowed (and he said), 'I trust you will not be serving with me.' Some praise!

Although Mangazeyev was in excellent health, Muraviev ordered that he be given a medical retirement, this being the only way, because of the Mining Department's procedures, that he could get rid of him. Muraviev lost no time, too, in requesting the resignation of Governor Piatnitzki, who had been notoriously involved in the gold mine scandals. Further purges took place soon, and Muraviev's administration began to be staffed with eager and honest officials to replace those removed. A new order was being established, but it was a gradual process; it was not easy to attract capable administrators to the remote expanses governed by Muraviev.

Muraviev was appalled by the situation in which Eastern Siberia found itself because of years of maladministration. He was determined to bring order into the chaos that faced him, but he had no illusions about the dimensions of the problem. He knew that it was essential, if he was to achieve his ends, that the Tsar be aware of the realities of the situation. With that in mind, before leaving St. Petersburg, he had obtained the Emperor's consent to maintain direct correspondence with him on all matters he deemed to require the Emperor's personal attention.⁶ This arrangement proved invaluable to Muraviev in the months and years ahead.

⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 181.

Matters occupying Muraviev's attention during his first days in Eastern Siberia included reviewing complaints from various individuals and from entire communities concerning oppression and extortion of government officials. He was particularly impressed by the petitions of the natives, the Buriats of the Irkutsk okrug, who waited upon him in crowds. In addition, there were troop inspections, visits to prisons and a myriad of other details affecting the administration of the area.

The Kiakhta trade soon claimed Muraviev's attention, too. He had received a detailed letter, while passing through Moscow, from Muscovite traders doing business in Kiakhta, who pointed out that governmental restrictions and interference were crippling commerce there.⁷ Upon his arrival in Irkutsk, Muraviev sent his aide-de-camp to that border town to obtain first-hand information. On the basis of his aide's findings, he wrote a report to the Minister of Finance, T. P. Vronchenko, setting forth his preliminary view that the archaic regulations governing the Kiakhta trade might need revision and that control of this trade, so important to the Russian economy, should not be left in the irresponsible hands of the people who currently monopolized it.⁸

Muraviev's next step was to prepare a report to the Emperor which created a commotion within the St. Petersburg administration. Wrote he:

⁷Quoted cites M. I. Sladkovskii, Orcherki ekonomicheskikh otnoshenie, S.S.S.R. s Kitaem (Moscow, 1957), pp. 88-94, to the effect that the most counter-productive regulation was that which prohibited trade other than by barter. The Chinese merchants suffered less from Government interference than the Russians, since the Manchu regime had allowed its regulations to lapse. Monopolies of Chinese and Russian merchants within their own countries also tended to stifle commerce.

⁸B. V. Struve, "Graf Muraviev-Amurskii. Iz vospominanii o ego deiatelnosti", Russkaia Starina, Vol. 48, p. 339.

Gold mining, which only recently has drawn everyone's attention to the inexhaustible riches of Eastern Siberia, is already tending to diminish. Low yield diggings have been abandoned because of the excessive cost of labor; the rich mines are being worked out, but there have been no significant new strikes. In all probability, however, one may conclude that gold deposits in Eastern Siberia are virtually inexhaustible. I don't presume to judge the question as to whether it would be to the benefit of the realm were private gold mining to expand, but I am convinced that as long as it exists and is permitted, it is desirable for your Majesty that these riches be shared more fairly and correctly than has been the case to the present. At the same time, the existing order facilitates seizure by them of the claims of others and leads to the ruin of other prospectors not possessing rich diggings.

Shortly afterwards, he submitted a proposal to the Emperor calling for the establishment of a single gold mining company in Eastern Siberia.⁹

Another aspect of the Eastern Siberian economy that excited Muraviev's indignation was that of the practices of the vodka distillers (otkupschiki) who exercised a monopoly. They maintained traktirs (gin mills) near the gold diggings and on pay days siphoned off the miserable gold miners' earnings before they reached their dwellings. Muraviev instituted a system of "escorting" these men home, keeping them away from these drinking dens and encouraging them to keep their money for the needs of their humble households.¹⁰ He also developed proposals for removing both distilling and salt manufacture from the government leasehold system, arguing that such action would gain significant benefits, both for the government and for the area in general.¹¹

Muraviev's concern for the improvement of social and economic conditions in Eastern Siberia was reflected in his attitude toward the exiled Decembrists. It is a reasonable assumption, too, that he preferred their

⁹ Barsukov, op. cit., p. 184.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

company to that of the rest of such "society" as Eastern Siberia had to offer. From the time of his arrival, he established close relations with a number of them, including Prince Sergei G. Volkonskii, Prince Sergei Trubetskoi, N. A. Bestuzhev, Ivan Gorbachevskii and Dmitri Zavalishin.

Among the Decembrists were a number living in small localities in the vicinity of Irkutsk, but only the Princesses Volkonskii and Trubetskoi lived in town, having received the right to do so for the purpose of their children's education. All of the others had to obtain special permits for each trip to town, a circumstance that created some hardship in cases of sickness or other domestic emergencies. Travel from one volost to another also required special passes. Muraviev quickly put an end to such inconveniences.¹²

Muraviev and his wife became friendly with the Princesses Volkonskii and Trubetskoi who, while they had always been widely respected in Irkutsk society, enjoyed, according to Barsukov, only a limited social life, since many of the government officials and other prominent individuals feared the taint of guilt by association.¹³ The Muravievs' example encouraged closer relations of government personnel with the Decembrists. It also prompted a little intrigue of the sort to which Muraviev was more than once subjected.

Governor Piatnitskii, disgruntled at Muraviev's demand for his resignation, sent a report to St. Petersburg in which he depicted in self-

¹²Barsukov, op. cit., pp. 185-186.

¹³The Decembrists had not, evidently, been as isolated as Barsukov implies. A leading Decembrist's memoirs mention that his brother was accepted in Governor-General Rupert's home as one of the family and was also a frequent visitor of Piatnitskii's. See N. A. Bestuzhev, *Zapiski*, g. 1800-1871, Russkaia Starina, Vol. 32, p. 650.

righteous terms the "reprehensibleness" of the close relations of Muraviev and his officials with the Decembrists. The report was sent from the Chief of Gendarmes through the Minister of the Interior, Perovskii, to Muraviev for appropriate comment. Muraviev's reply was to the effect that the Decembrists had expiated the errors of their youth by undergoing heavy punishment and that they were among the best subjects of the Tsar. He held that no punishment should be for life, inasmuch as punishment was for the purpose of reforming the individual and that this had been fully achieved with regard to the Decembrists. There was no basis, he wrote, for leaving them isolated forever from society in the makeup of which they had the right to be included by reason of their education, moral qualities and present political convictions.¹⁴ On the margin of Muraviev's letter, the Emperor Nicholas wrote, "My thanks", and added, "A man has been found who understands me, who understands that I seek no personal vengeance on these people, but am only carrying out the requirements of the State and, having removed the culprits from here, have no desire to poison their destiny there."¹⁵

Piatnitskii's reward for his inept informing activities was involuntary separation from the service. This incident, as well as similar ones, prompted Perovskii to write Muraviev in the summer of 1848, as follows:

You without doubt are sure of my friendly disposition toward you and know that I sincerely wish you well and desire your success. It seems to me that complete frankness must be an essential condition in our mutual relations. In this conviction I shall always tell you what is on my mind and I call upon you

¹⁴Russki Vestnik, 1888, pp. 169-173, cited by Barsukov, op. cit., p.177.

¹⁵Grazhdanin, 1888, No. 301, cited in Ibid., p. 178.

to do the same with me.

Tales are being spread here regarding your impetuosity, which allegedly often exceeds acceptable limits; of the haste with you judge people before you have had time to know them or even to hear them out, and so forth. There is no doubt that officials unfit for the service, from which you have separated them, are the main source of these remours, but don't lose sight also of the fact that those who have been dismissed always have, more or less, supporters who are prepared to chime in with their clients, i.e., loudly to sympathize over imagined sacrifices and to complain and create a commotion about them.

I completely understand your position. You dislike wrongdoing which is rife in the area entrusted to you and take it to heart. At your age, I combated every irregularity and every injustice and wrongdoing with heat and perseverance. I have retained the same perseverance but no longer have the heat, and it can hardly be said that the latter method is not better than the former. This leads me to give you a friendly piece of advice: act as far as possible with more careful observation, more calmly and quietly, and avoid any pretext for reproaches or complaints.¹⁶

Perovskii then went on to urge Muraviev to keep him fully informed of any untoward events or intrigues and stressed that timely information would make it possible to scotch any libelous rumours. Fortunate indeed was Nicholas Muraviev; the early stages of his career had been advanced by the guidance of the paternal General Golovin and now he was receiving the mature counsel of the avuncular Perovskii.

A little later in the year Perovskii wrote to Muraviev concerning his proposals for various economic reforms. One of these entailed dissolution of the vodka distilling monopolies through institution of a new system of licensing designed to encourage competition. Perovskii predicted that the distillers would assure the Minister of Finance that Muraviev's proposals would have ruinous results, with drastically reduced revenues for the Government. He pointed out that it would be difficult to prove otherwise,

¹⁶Barsukov, op. cit., p. 189.

since Muraviev would probably be unable to gain access to the distiller's true accounts. He urged Muraviev, nevertheless, to buttress his proposals with convincing figures and assured him that his reports would be read by the Emperor and that the matter might thereby be given "the desired turn".¹⁷

II. LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

If questions of trade regulations, gold mining practices, oppression of the natives and elimination of corruption were very much on Muraviev's mind, they were nevertheless but the background to the geo-political goals that he had constantly before him, and which had as their precondition the "return of the Russian River Amur". The disappointing result of the Gavrilov expedition had not convinced everyone interested in the Amur question that there was nothing to be gained by exploring the river's mouth. Muraviev had been told by the Emperor that, according to the Russian-American Company, the Amur was only three feet deep at its mouth, but he was skeptical. He found that his skepticism was shared by Captain-Lieutenant Gennadi Nevelskoi, whom he met in St. Petersburg shortly before proceeding to Irkutsk. Nevelskoi was on duty in the capital in connection with the construction of the transport "Baikal", which was to deliver naval cargoes and supplies to Kamchatka. He enthusiastically agreed with Muraviev that the Amur estuary should be further investigated. At Muraviev's suggestion, he undertook to have himself designated as commander of the "Baikal" when it sailed to Kamchatka.¹⁸

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 190-191.

¹⁸Barsukov, op. cit., p. 174; G. I. Nevelskoi, in Podvigi Russkikh Morskikh Ofitserov na Dal'nom Vostoke (2nd Ed., St. Petersburg, 1897, p. 61,

When Muraviev departed for Siberia, he was well aware that the problem of the Amur and the Russo-Chinese frontier, to which the Emperor had pointedly referred, was a most difficult one. He knew that it would be in connection with that problem that he would be facing the most determined opposition in St. Petersburg, where there were two diametrically opposed schools. One of these was the Western-oriented group, preoccupied with the maintenance of the status quo and anxious to avoid any action tending to upset the established balance of power. The leader of this faction was the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count K. V. Nesselrode, who was strongly supported by the Minister of Finance, T. R. Vronchenko. The other group, to which Muraviev attached himself, was that which held to a "strong Russian policy", advocating avoidance of unduly provocative acts while at the same time positively asserting Russian national interests. Among this group were the Naval Minister, Prince A. S. Menshikov, and the Minister of the Interior, L. A. Perovskii. The War Ministry, under Prince A. I. Chernyshev, and subsequently under Prince V. A. Dolgoruki, tended to stand aside, limiting itself to its own administrative field and eschewing both internal and external politics. Struve comments:

Between these two currents the Emperor sailed his vessel with a powerful hand, with extraordinary firmness, rare ability and discernment. . . . Between these two currents Muraviev, too, had to maneuver. What saved him was the confidence reposed in him by the Autocrat, the sponsorship of the Grand Duchess Helena Pavlovna and the sincerely favorable disposition toward him of the then Minister of the Interior, L. A. Perovskii.¹⁹

While Struve's references to the Emperor's rare ability and discern-

cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 126, contends that it was he who had stressed the need to explore the mouth of the Amur and that Muraviev agreed.

¹⁹Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 173-174.

ment may be debatable, it will be seen that insofar as the Amur question was concerned, Nicholas I did indeed "sail his vessel by a powerful hand", by setting aside, pending personal discussion with Muraviev, a number of recommendations of his Ministers which, if approved, would have spelt ruin to Muraviev's cause. And if in the early period of Muraviev's tenure in Irkutsk, the Emperor temporized, this can be easily understood. It was inevitable that his attention should be focused away from, not toward, Siberia, at a time when revolution was in the air in Europe. After the suppression of the uprisings in Berlin, Prague and Lombardy in 1848, it was the Balkan question that claimed priority in Russian foreign policy. The turmoil of European affairs overshadowed everything taking place in the Far East, and so Nesselrode's cautious views regarding Russia's traditional policy toward China prevailed. And yet, ironically for Nesselrode, it was just the developments in the Near East, when they exploded into the Crimean War, that provided the impetus to bring Muraviev's plans to fruition.

Following Muraviev's departure for Siberia, Nevelskoi succeeded in being assigned as commander of the transport "Baikal", and pressed for early completion of construction of that vessel, so that he could bring it to Petropavlovsk in the spring of 1849, unload his cargo there, and spend the rest of the navigational season cruising in and exploring the southeastern shores of Siberia and the Amur estuary. At the same time, he wrote to Muraviev to tell him that except for his solicitations, there was no one in St. Petersburg "who even wished to think about the Amur", and that without instructions, he himself did not dare to act. Muraviev lost no time in obtaining an agreement from the Naval Ministry that Nevelskoi should be instructed to explore the southeastern shores of the Sea of

Okhotsk without, however, making any mention of the Amur estuary. At the same time, he saw to it that orders were issued to alert the four infantry battalions deployed in Eastern Siberia for movement to the Transbaikal area. Here was the first step towards achievement of the first of Muraviev's basic objectives, to break out into the Pacific with a broad place d'armes.²⁰

Muraviev well appreciated that the Transbaikal was the stepping stone to the acquisition of additional great expanses to the east and south. By the time he had arrived in Eastern Siberia, it was a flourishing granary with an industrious, if still sparse, Russian population. As early as in the reign of Catherine II, it had been recognized that if Russia was to seize the Amur region, it would be necessary first to strengthen the Russian element in the contiguous Transbaikal and to improve economic conditions there in order to create a solid base for further progress. During Catherine's reign, the Transbaikal was populated by the undesirables: Poles, Old Believers, schismatics and others; under Paul, Russian peasants were sent there to settle in lieu of performing their military service, and under Alexander I, the area's population was further increased by the arrival of Ukrainians. The Transbaikal had been developed slowly but steadily through Russian agriculture and animal husbandry, road building, a postal service and other elements of methodical colonization.²¹ It was to figure largely in Muraviev's future plans and he gave priority to becoming acquainted with it, as soon as he had obtained a firm grasp of the problems of his administration in Irkutsk.

²⁰Kabanov, op. cit., p. 100.

²¹"Amurskoe Delo i Vlianie ego na Vostochnoyou Sibir i Gosudarstvo", in Russkaya Starina, 1881, Vol. 32, pp. 75-91.

At the end of 1848, Muraviev was on an inspection trip through the gubernias of Eniseisk and Irkutsk, devoting the majority of his time to the Transbaikal, and was gathering data needed to support a proposal that he visit Kamchatka, where no other governor of Siberia had ever been. While on his way back from Tsurukhaita, on the line of Cossack stations through Kiakhta to Verkhneudinsk, he learned that an Englishman named Austin, ostensibly pursuing geological investigations, had crossed Lake Baikal and proceeded by way of Verkhneudinsk and Chita to Nerchinsk; there he had arranged to have a large raft built on which he planned to sail down the Shilka and the Amur to the mouth of that river, hoping to find a whaler or other vessel on which he could cross the Pacific, or which would take him straight to Europe. Muraviev was highly suspicious of foreigners in his area, particularly of Englishmen, and, convinced that Austin was a spy, ordered one of his officers back to Nerchinsk to catch up with Austin and to bring him back to Irkutsk, "dead or alive".²² The officer brought Austin back to Irkutsk within ten days. Muraviev immediately reported on this incident to St. Petersburg, and in a personal letter to Perovskii, he held forth on the jeopardy in which the project of occupying the Amur was placed by uninvited guests who were spying for the English government.²³ Muraviev seems to have been obsessed with the idea that the British might suddenly seize Sakhalin, or the mouth of the Amur, an idea to which he clung for years.

Muraviev's fears, it is true, were shared by others.²⁴ Thus,

²²V. Struve, in Russki Vestnik, cited by Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 192.

²³Ibid., I, p. 190.

²⁴Quoted, op. cit., p. 43, points out, "The only grounds for them which have come to light in published Russian sources is the fact that Count E.V. Putiatin saw some gun-boats assembled at Cherbourg in 1855, and thought they might be intended for an Amur expedition".

Perovskii, in his reply wrote: "It is not without foundation that you consider it necessary to warn the English, and that the time has come when this should not be postponed. I fully share your view, but Count Nesselrode is not thinking along these lines."²⁵ He went on to point out that Nesselrode would oppose any decisive measure at the mouth of the Amur, and would be supported by the Minister of Finance; Nesselrode, he said, feared any possible rupture of friendly relations with England, while Vronchenko would point to the unfavorable consequences for Russian commerce and industry, if there should be a break with China. He warned Muraviev that those "upon whom this matter most depends" would accuse him of being hasty, hairbrained, presumptuous and unacquainted with the area he was administering. They would say that he had not considered either the difficulties or the consequences of what he was proposing. Accordingly, Perovskii advised Muraviev to keep the Emperor personally informed on the Amur question, stressing the need for action and the unfortunate consequences of immobility, and to assemble information to demonstrate that if action was carefully taken, Russia's trade with China would not suffer; he also advised him to calculate the expenses that his proposals would entail, to keep them as moderate as possible, and to seek to budget them from local resources.²⁶

Constant reminder from Perovskii of the need to economize and of the Russian government's difficult financial situation, spurred Muraviev to seek out all local potential and to proceed energetically to develop the economy of the area, as well as to reduce the cost of his own administration.

²⁵ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 192.

²⁶ Ibid., I, p. 193.

As soon as he took over command of troops in Eastern Siberia, he suspended the thoroughly corrupt senior quarter-master, hailing him before the courts despite the fact that the rascal had influential support in St. Petersburg. When it came time to contract for delivery of provisions for the troops and of grain for the Alexandrovsk distillery, some 60 versts from Irkutsk, he turned over the responsibility for these activities to reliable officers of his own choosing. He knew that if he was to have more troops - - and he was planning on that - - their costs could not be escalated through dishonesty and bribery.²⁷

Gold, Muraviev knew, would help further his Amur enterprise, even though it of course had all to be shipped to St. Petersburg. He therefore maintained a lively interest in producing more of it. He was also continuously concerned with finding other new mineral deposits, as well as precious stones; for Siberia itself, he looked for iron. He modernized the old Petrovskii Zavod ironworks and began to build engines there for the steamers he planned to use on the Amur.²⁸

Sometimes Muraviev's energetic efforts to exploit the area's potential cost human sacrifices, largely because, try as he would, he could not obtain enough capable subordinates to carry out his projects as he would have them carried out. Thus, for example, the matter of opening up the rich deposits of gold along the Kara river had unfortunate consequences not foreseen by him. In 1849, he ordered an engineer officer, Ivan Rasgildeev, to develop production there to the full. Rasgildeev committed himself to produce 100 poods²⁹ of gold there in the summer of 1850. He

²⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 193.

²⁸Semyonov, op. cit., p. 266.

²⁹One pood equals approximately 37 pounds.

requisitioned 4,500 workers from the Nerchinsk mines.³⁰ On Muraviev's orders, this number of convicts and other laborers set out on foot for Kara. They marched without provisions and without any vehicles, spending the nights in the open, subjected to the cold and pouring rains. At Kara, under Rasgildeev's iron hand, in two 12-hour shifts, they worked over 25,000 poods of sand a day, out of which they extracted about a pood of gold. In the following winter, over 3,000 miners fell ill of typhus and 568 died; over 1,500 suffered from scurvy and 45 of them died. From October, 1850, to February, 1851, over 1,000 men died.³¹ Production results were excellent, with quotas being exceeded handily each year. In terms of serving his masters, the "Rasgildeevschina" was a decided personal triumph for Muraviev, but it also provided ammunition for his detractors.

III. THE OPENING WEDGE

While Muraviev was diligently following Perovskii's advice regarding development of Eastern Siberian resources, Perovskii was evidently quietly but effectively supporting Muraviev's views on the Amur situation; on January 29, 1849, Nicholas ordered the establishment of a committee charged with considering the Amur problem.³² The first item of its agenda

³⁰Semeevskii, Rabochie na Sibirskikh Solotikh Promishlakh (St. Petersburg, 1898) pp. 315-324, cited in B. V. Danilovskii, Russkoe Zoloto (Moscow, 1959) p. 353.

³¹Nerchinskaya Katorga (Izdatelstvo Politkatorzhan, Moscow, 1933), p. 56, cited by Danilovskii, op. cit., p. 353, and Semyonov, op. cit., p. 265.

³²p. V. Schumacher, "Kistorii priobretenia Amura. Snoshenia s Kitaem s 1848 po 1860 goda." He fails to enumerate the committee's membership, as, unaccountably, do Barsukov, Kabanov and Qusted. It seems clear, however, from various references they make to the committee's work, that the members must have been Foreign Minister Nesselrode, Finance Minister Vronchenko, Interior Minister Perovskii, Naval Minister Menshikov, War Minister Chernyshev, and, probably, Privy Counselor Seniavin.

was the question of a naval expedition to explore the mouth of the Amur. The Tsar confirmed the committee's position that for fear of alarming and provoking the Chinese, exploration and navigation of the Amur should not take place. It was agreed, however, that relations should be established with the Giliaks inhabiting the northern portion of the mouth of the Amur, and that the left bank of the Amur and the part of Sakhalin opposite to it should be denied to any foreign power. On Nesselrode's proposal it was agreed that in order to prevent any foreign invasions, while at the same time avoiding any strain on Russo-Chinese relations, a small naval expedition should be sent to the area. Sailing under some plausible pretext, under a reliable officer of good judgment and discretion, the expedition would carry various articles for trade with the Giliaks and would seek to bring them under Russian influence. The Committee also agreed that Russian naval units should cruise about the area in order to observe any foreign vessels that might be navigating there; such units would also cooperate in the maintenance of trade and cementing of relations with the native population.

In the event of any intrusion by the English or others into the island of Sakhalin, or areas contiguous to the mouth of the Amur, Muraviev was ordered immediately and without prior clearance with higher governmental authorities to report such developments to the Chinese frontier authorities at Urga, in order to alert the Chinese government and to clear the Russians themselves of any suspicion.

Nevelskoi, who had sailed from Kronstadt three months before the establishment of the Amur Committee, was sent instructions to explore the shores of the Shantarski Islands to the mouth of the Amur, and also to investigate the northern coast of Sakhalin; he was to seek a location in

that area, preferably near the river's mouth, which it might be convenient and useful to occupy, should the necessity to do so arise. All this was to be done without exciting the suspicions of the Chinese. The information thus gathered would indicate the further plan of action to be pursued. It was also decided that the Russian-American Company should send an trading expedition overland from Ayan to make contact with the Giliaks and to ascertain the state of their relations with the Chinese. The Company's expenses for this were to be defrayed by government funds.³³

Instructions for Nevelskoi were mailed to Petropavlovsk, his first port of call on the Sea of Okhotsk, but they would be a long time coming, since the only winter mail run of the year from Okhotsk had already departed when the courier arrived there. This circumstance turned out to be an insignificant factor, since Nevelskoi, who had only a general notion of what those instructions contained, had made up his mind; he wrote to Muraviev from Rio de Janeiro that he intended to explore the mouth of the Amur whether or not he received instructions, and sought Muraviev's support in case this should later cause him trouble with the authorities.³⁴

Nevelskoi was pressed for time, since he was anxious to have plenty of leeway before the onset of freezing in the Sea of Okhotsk, and he made the trip from Kronstadt to Petropavlovsk in eight months and twenty-three days, although this had never before been accomplished in under eleven months.³⁵ He unloaded his cargo, and on May 31, sailed from Petropavlovsk along the eastern coast of Sakhalin. Rounding the northern tip of the island

³³D. Romanov, in Russkoe slovo, July, 1859, pp. 103-108, cited by Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 197.

³⁴Kabanov, op. cit., p. 129.

³⁵Ibid.

land, Nevelskoi sailed down the sound between the continental shore and the island, until he reached the Amur lagoon at the mouth of the river.

The Amur lagoon consists of the expanse of water between the entrance to the river and the island of Sakhalin, a little inland sea with an area of about twelve hundred square miles. Nevelskoi and his officers explored it for six weeks. Then, though he had good reason to believe that his action would be in direct defiance of the orders that were on their way to him, he entered the mouth of the Amur and sailed twelve miles up river; from there he proceeded south, and on July 22 arrived at the spot where the continental shore approaches the western coast of Sakhalin. Here at the capes, named by him Cape Lazarez and Cape Muraviev, instead of the isthmus imagined by Laperouse, Broughton, Krusenstern and Gavrilov, he found a channel five miles wide and nearly thirty feet deep at the shallowest spot.³⁶ By this time the little expedition's food supplies were very low, so that Nevelskoi set a northerly course. Sailing along the coast he discovered a bay hidden by a sandbank. This he named the Bay of Fortune.

In the meantime, the Russian-American Company had sent a young officer with two baidarkas (small sealskin-covered boats similar to Eskimo kayaks) from Ayan to the south; he met Nevelskoi at Cape Moukhtel and informed him that Muraviev was anxiously awaiting him at Ayan. Nevelskoi and his crew, exhausted and nearly starving, headed for Ayan.

While Nevelskoi was pursuing his explorations, without benefit of instructions, Muraviev was making preparations for his inspection trip to Kamchatka, in order to "see with his own eyes" what he had heard and

³⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 196-198.

read about that land which, he believed, would one day mean much to Russia. Prior to setting out, he drew up a report to the Emperor seeking possible instructions regarding his forthcoming inspection visit to the Iakutsk oblast, to Okhotsk and Kamchatka, and appending a note again inviting the Emperor's attention to the gold-mining situation, the Kiakhta trade and the likelihood of its diminution because of English competition in Chinese coastal ports.³⁷ In this connection, he also brought up the possibility that "these foreigners" might occupy the mouth of the Amur, build a fortress there and send their steamers up the Amur to Nerchinsk or even to Chita. One of the consequences of this, he suggested, might be that Siberia would detach itself from Russia. He offered the following observations in his report:

I have more than once heard the fear expressed in St. Petersburg that Siberia might sooner or later secede from Russia. Before my arrival here, I considered such fears to be groundless, since I could not imagine to myself what might be the source of such a danger; here, Sire, I have become convinced that such a fear is quite natural and because of reasons quite unrelated to the concerns of the desk officers (in St. Petersburg).

I have found the entire population here to be under the influence of, and, so to speak, in the hands of the rich merchants, manufacturers and distillers, and I have discovered the governmental officials, almost without exception, to be in the pay of those same wealthy people. I have undertaken firmly and sternly to act against this tendency, at first alone, then with the help of a few colleagues brought into service here by me. But all our efforts, possibly not entirely fruitless, have, however, stirred up a struggle with the gold interests dangerous for us; dangerous not in the interior of the region, where my sternness instills fear and respect for the

³⁷The English advantage in ocean trade was enormous. They delivered their products to China at a fraction of what it cost the Russians to do so. As for tea imports - - the major Chinese commodity brought in through Kiakhta; one pound delivered from the interior of China to Moscow cost 40 kopeks, while from Shanghai to London it cost 3 to 5 kopeks, according to Kabanov's citation of Vestnik Promishlenosti, No. 7, 1859.

gold itself, but in the capital where it is a rare department that is not aligned against the present administration of Eastern Siberia.

I have dared to say this only in order to demonstrate how faint is the hope of eliminating the influence of the wealthy industrial and commercial class upon the entire population, and it is within this context that I fear the concentration of wealth in a few hands under the present system of gold production. The wealthy and educated class here, owing to its origins and remoteness from the center of the Empire, has by no means the feelings of loyalty to the Sovereign and the Fatherland that in the interior of the Empire is absorbed with the mother's milk. It is indifferent to everything except its own benefit and, with few exceptions, there is hardly any hope of stirring up in them those noble sentiments in which every Russian glories and takes pride. At the same time, they are not only not lacking in the good sense and spirit of enterprise natural to Russians inhabiting the interior gubernias, but excel in it, which is entirely natural because of the very nature of their making a living in these enormous and wild expanses. This good sense and enterprise makes it clear to them that the present source of Siberian production, that all the future prosperity of Eastern Siberia, is tied up with assured convenient communication with the Eastern Ocean, and that Kiakhta sooner or later will lose its meaning for them because of English competition, and that any other trade is insignificant and cannot assume desirable proportions without navigation on the Amur. Outwardly, many of them express their fears and regrets concerning this; inwardly, it is all the same to them who opens up the Amur.

But what power and resources will be required of the government to prevent Eastern Siberia from becoming English, when an English fortress stands at the mouth of the Amur and English steamers ply the Amur up to Nerchinsk and even to Chita? It follows naturally that without the mouth of the Amur, the English cannot carry out their designs against China, since large navigable rivers flow into the Amur from its right bank, flowing a thousand versts through populated provinces of northeast China.

Of the fact that the eastern extreme of Siberia has of late been occupying the British, there can be no doubt. If, instead of an English fortress, a Russian one should stand there,³⁸ just as one does in Petropavlovsk, and if a flotilla sailed between them and, for the sake of greater security, in those fortresses and the flotilla there were garrisons, crews, and commanders supplied from the interior of Russia, then with such moderate resources there would be assured forever the rule of Russia over Siberia and

³⁸i.e., on the coast of the eastern Siberian mainland.

all its inexhaustible riches, in particular the gold, which has already become indispensable for her, and the even richer veins which are to be found on the left bank of the Amur, judging from the surest indications that I personally have observed last year in the Nerchinsk okrug and along the border river Gorbitsa.³⁹

"In presenting this picture to the Emperor", writes Struve, "Muraviev did not of course contemplate for a moment any thought of the possibility of Siberia's secession from Russia; his object in the first place was to explain within what context and under what circumstances it might be natural for this idea to occur within certain circles, and secondly, he wished palpably to portray the urgent necessity of occupying the mouth of the Amur, in support of all the measures he was taking in preparation for such action."⁴⁰

Struve's comment on Muraviev's typically long-winded dissertation to the Tsar provides a revealing insight into Muraviev's modus operandi. In one sense Muraviev had many masters to whom he had to report in proper bureaucratic fashion: on external relations, to the Foreign Minister; on general administrative and judicial questions, to the Minister of the Interior; on trade and finance, to the Minister of Finance; on military and naval problems, to the Minister of War and the Naval Minister. But he could go over their heads, for he had the ear of the Tsar. He was making the most of it, while preparing to confront his opponents with a fait accompli. Struve's comment is particularly interesting in conjunction with Zavalishin's quotation of Muraviev to the effect that:

³⁹Arkhir Kniaz Volkonskogo, cited in Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 207.

⁴⁰B. V. Struve, Vospominania o Sibiri, 1848-1854, (St. Petersburg, 1889) p. 55.

Nicholas I is a despot at heart and by inclination; unlimited authority, with the consciousness of which he is filled, attests to his insignificance. Any minister can lead him by the nose, assuring him that he is carrying out his wishes. They take advantage of his conviction that nobody can hoodwink him and in such fashion, make of the Tsar their weapon, assuring him that everything done by them originated with him.⁴¹

Whether Muraviev ever did express himself so openly and dangerously, in conversation with some of his Decembrist friends in Irkutsk, is a matter of conjecture. At any rate, Muraviev was obviously painting a rather lurid canvas, with the object of making the Tsar his "weapon".

Despite the decorations showered upon him, his rapid promotions, and the direct access to the Emperor that he enjoyed, Muraviev was never reassured that sufficient confidence was accorded him. He unburdened himself on this score in a letter to Valerian in the spring of 1849, in which he complained of the hostility being encountered in St. Petersburg by his proposals for reform of the gold mining industry. All he sought, he declared, was an expression of confidence in him, in the form of approval of his views and proposals. He could not be of use without that, and lacking it, would resign.⁴² Here was a variation on a familiar theme that he had been sounding since his early days in the Caucasus.

That Muraviev did have dedicated enemies in the capital is unquestionable. One evidence of this was "a little intrigue" reported by Struve. He relates that Perovskii had suggested, and the Tsar had agreed, that it was time to promote Muraviev to the rank of Lieutenant General. On

⁴¹Kabanov, op. cit., p. 90, citing Otdel Rukopisei Vsesoyuznoi Biblioteki im. Lenina v Moskve, f. Kersakovich, d. 7534, 1.37, referred to hereinafter by the abbreviation ORBL. Zavalishin concluded that Muraviev was "two-faced".

⁴²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 209.

April 3, 1849, the regular promotion list was published, but Muraviev's name was missing. Perovskii was indignant and made inquiries of the Ministry of War. No clear explanation was forthcoming, but on April 12, a supplementary order was issued containing Muraviev's promotion, but without confirming his retention of his position as Governor-General, which would have been normal procedure. In writing to Perovskii concerning this matter, Muraviev disclaimed any personal concern regarding his promotion, but stated that it was necessary for the support of his authority, "as a mark of confidence from the Throne".⁴³ The technicality of his confirmation as Governor-General was attended to shortly afterward.

Other evidences of official hostility to Muraviev are to be found in some of the communications of his opponents. Thus, at the time when Muraviev was preparing to go to Kamchatka, the Minister of Finance, Vronchenko, wrote Nesselrode, the Foreign Minister, that a colleague had written him that Muraviev's pressure to open the Amur to navigation had aroused the displeasure of the Chinese government.⁴⁴ This had been reported to the Emperor who, it appears, gave it little notice. At this time, too, Prince Gordhakov, Governor-General of Western Siberia, was expressing his fears regarding the future of Siberia. He confidentially informed Prince Chernyshev, Minister of War, of his view that the Amur was superfluous to Russia. He contended that the boundless wastes from

⁴³Struve, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

⁴⁴Quested, op. cit., p. 31, referring to Nevelskoi's expedition in 1849 and subsequent establishment of Nikolaevsk, states, "There is no evidence in the Chinese archives that any of these events reached the ears of the Emperor in Peking. Nicholas I and Muraviev obviously did well to discount Count Zakrevskii's claim that the Chinese at Maimachen had told some Russian merchants that Muraviev's efforts to open navigation on the Amur had caused murmuring and dissatisfaction in the Chinese government."

Iakutsk to Kamchatka and the Okhotsk coast in themselves constituted a frontier needing no defense. What was more important, these wastes isolated the inhabitants of Siberia from direct contact with foreigners which could easily generate "harmful propaganda leading to disorders". Prince Gorchakov considered the situation to be the more dangerous in that the inhabitants of Siberia by no means felt the same attachment to Russia that General Muraviev "flattered himself that they did". What would happen, he asked, if the population developed close relations with the English or Americans, who might undertake the easy task of persuading the people that it would be more convenient for them to buy English or American merchandise with their gold, rather than to look to Russia as their supplier? The English or Americans, he warned, might be prepared to support such an arrangement with force of arms. Gorchakov was obviously unaware that Muraviev, too, recognized the relatively independent attitude of the Russian settlers of Siberia - - which Muraviev used, however, to buttress his recommendation that Russia strengthen, not relinquish, her hold on the area. Chernyshev submitted Gorchakov's letter to the Emperor, who marginally noted on it that, "We shall keep this in mind when Muraviev arrives for consultations".⁴⁵

In early May of 1849, before departing for Kamchatka, Muraviev sent a further report to the Emperor, reiterating that decline of the *kiakhta* trade was evidence that English activities in China were contrary to Russia's interests. He urged the necessity of maintaining Russian influence over the Chinese by making a military demonstration, both as an indication of the presence of "friendly forces", and also to strike a little

⁴⁵Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 204.

wholesome fear into his neighbors. He suggested that the logical place for this would be in the Transbaikal.

Muraviev stressed his conviction to the Emperor that England needed access to the mouth of the Amur and the right to navigate that river for optimum expansion of her China trade. Were the Amur not the only river connection with the Pacific, he observed, Russia might take an accommodating view of England's aspirations. As matters were, however, the Power controlling the mouth of the Amur would hold dominion over Siberia -- at least to Lake Baikal, which would amount to the same, since that would suffice to isolate the more thickly populated Siberian hinterland, "flowering with agriculture and industrial production, an isolated realm subject to the Power holding the key to the river".⁴⁶

Other letters despatched before Muraviev's departure for Kamchatka included one to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, requesting it to instruct the Orthodox mission in Peking to keep him informed of events in China and urging that the mission be given no special contacts with the Chinese Government until "major questions" became clarified. In a letter to Finance Minister Vronchenko, he pointed out the unsatisfactory condition of the Kiakhta trade which, he said, would continue to deteriorate with each year unless Russia moved in new directions and with new undertakings. The centuries old immobility of China, he pointed out, which in the past had benefitted Russia, had received such a jolt from England that it now behooved Russia to adopt a mobile course. He served notice on Vronchenko that he intended to develop measures required to bring about the necessary changes in the order of things, "with all due caution and protection of the

⁴⁶ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 211.

Government's financial interests".⁴⁷

On May 15, 1849, Muraviev, accompanied by his wife, his ADC, Vasili Mikhailovich Muraviev (a young relative) and one of his key officials, B. V. Struve, left Irkutsk for his unprecedented visit to Kamchatka. When one considers the arduous journey undertaken by Muraviev and his small retinue, it becomes easier to understand why none of his predecessors had shown any inclination to inspect the administration of Kamchatka. The route, over 7,000 kilometers, traversed vast expanses almost devoid of roads. In various states it had to be covered on horseback, in crude wagons and sometimes mounted on elks domesticated by the Giliaks.⁴⁸

When Muraviev reached Iakutsk he learned of the despatch of a secret expedition to his area concerning which he had not been consulted. The initiative for this expedition had evidently arisen within the Russian General Staff in 1849, when it realized that topographic data on the area from the Gorbitsa River flowing into the Shilka and the Sea of Okhotsk were practically non-existent, and that maps depicting that area were completely unreliable. Some rather uncertain information concerning this shadowy border, vaguely referred to in Russo-Chinese treaties, had been

⁴⁷B. V. Struve, "Graf N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii. Iz vospominanii iz ego deiatelnosti". Russkaia Starina, Vol. 48, p. 340.

⁴⁸In "Graf N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii Epizod iz ego zhizni (1849 g.), Russkaia Starina, Vol. 40, p. 511, Struve recalls that had it not been for the intrepid nature of the young Governor-General, the voyage might have had to be abandoned at one point where the route was barred by a torrential stream that had been swollen by the spring thaw. Muraviev's companions and his native retainers were terrified at the thought of attempting to ford it, but he unhesitatingly plunged into it on horseback and led his group across. Afterwards, when the members of the little band were recovering from the chilling crossing and drying themselves out, Struve, resting on the bank of the stream with Muraviev's wife, remarked to her: "Savez-vous, Madame, que je n'ambitionne qu'une chose, c'est d'ecrire un jour la biographie du general".

reported by A. von Middendorf⁴⁹ following his visit to Siberia in 1843-45. Returning from the Udsk area, he had seen four stone pillars placed by the Chinese and had taken them for frontier markers set up on the basis of the last article of the Treaty of Nerchinsk.

General Aide-de-Camp Prince Dolgoruki set the expedition in motion by informing Quartermaster-General Berg that the Emperor had in mind "the somewhat inaccurate delineation of the Russo-Chinese frontier", and deemed it necessary to establish a commission of five officers of the Corps of Engineers and the Topographic Corps to carry out a detailed survey. The expedition was to "survey the frontier area", without, however, approaching the Amur and was to prospect for rare metals and minerals and precious stones in the Transbaikal.⁵⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Akhte of the General Staff was put in command of the expedition.

Muraviev immediately issued orders that the Akhte expedition should be stopped upon its arrival in Irkutsk and wrote the Emperor, pointing out that nothing like this should be attempted while the mouth of the Amur was being discreetly explored.⁵¹ Prince Chernyshev and Count Vronchenko were stung by this action and bitterly complained about Muraviev's

⁴⁹An eminent scholar who led an expedition to Siberia sponsored by the famous naturalist, K. E. von Baer. The expedition's primary task was to explore the Taimyr peninsula and Uakutia and then to investigate the flora and fauna of the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk. (Semyonov, op. cit., pp. 246-247.

⁵⁰Schumacher, op. cit., III, pp. 269-270. He points out that the prohibition on approaching the Amur deprived the expedition of any significance.

⁵¹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 215. An interesting admission on Muraviev's part, considering that no official sanction had been given for such activities. Sullivan in his biography speculates on the possibility that the Tsar and Muraviev had a tacit agreement diametrically opposed to Nesselrode's cautious position.

"arbitrary action", but Nicholas ordered that the matter be left pending until Muraviev should visit St. Petersburg for consultations. The frustrated Lieutenant Colonel and his fellow officers were obliged to cool their heels in Irkutsk until Muraviev's return from Kamchatka, when he set them to surveying portions of the Transbaikal well removed from the Amur and prospecting for minerals, tasks which appear not to have differed markedly from their original assignment - - except that they were laid down by Muraviev's, not St. Petersburg's, directive.

Muraviev reached Petropavlovsk on July 25, 1849, and proceeded to an inspection of the port and its fortifications. One of his first acts was to direct a realignment of the artillery batteries set up for the defense of the harbor. He then familiarized himself with the administrative organization of the peninsula and decided on recommendations for a number of changes.

While in Petropavlovsk, Muraviev met Bishop Innokentii of the Aleutians and Kamchatka, and after probing that eminent cleric's mind, decided on his choice for Governor-General of Kamchatka, V. C. Zavoiko. Local administration of the peninsula up to this time had been organized on a lower bureaucratic level and more directly controlled from the mainland. Muraviev's decision to up-grade the administrative organization reflected his conviction that since the Amur estuary was denied him, Petropavlovsk, because of its geographic location and fine harbor, should be the main strong point of Russia in the Far East, and that Kamchatka should be built up into a well populated agricultural oblast'.⁵²

On his return trip, Muraviev prepared a report to Perovskii, stating

⁵²Kabanov, op. cit., p. 95. Innokentii later became Metropolitan of Moscow.

that he had decided that the port of Okhotsk should be abandoned and its installations moved to Avachi Bay (Petropavlovsk) without delay because scurvy was needlessly decimating the Okhotsk garrison, and because the English had already shown "far too much interest in the advantages offered by Avachi Bay". He proposed setting up warehouses for supplies to be delivered to Ayan (the other Russian port on the mainland), where the Russian-American Company had its installations, and recommended other changes in line with his contemplated build-up of Kamchatka, including reorganization of judicial districts and transfer of the American diocese to Petropavlovsk. He also urged institution of steamer service connecting Kamchatka with the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk (there was coal to be had at Ayan and other locations on the coast) and he emphasized that attention should be paid to the matter of whaling in "our Sea of Okhotsk". He contended that this would offer millions to the national treasury and substantiated his opinion with information he had gleaned from foreign whaling ship skippers he had met during his voyage.⁵³ Only two years earlier, he pointed out, foreign whalers had first entered the Sea of Okhotsk and there were now hundreds of them; in another five years, he warned, these foreigners would have exhausted the Russian waters, having extracted hundreds of millions of rubles' worth from them, with no profit whatever to Russia.

Muraviev then went on to recommend annual transport of settlers to Kamchatka. As for the whole of Avachi Bay (as distinct from the inlet occupied by Petropavlovsk), it would have to be fortified, or else it would be easy prey to any hostile squadron, even of insignificant proportions.

⁵³ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 217.

Two English ships had already been there, he reported, under the guise of seeking a lost scientific expedition. He extolled the virtues of Avachi Bay, which he considered superior to any port he had seen in Russia or western Europe. All England would need, he speculated, would be to force a two-week break with Russia in which to take possession of it, then to make peace; but she would not return the Bay and even were she to pay Russia a million pounds for it, she would get it back in no time from the profits of whaling in the Sea of Okhotsk and in the Bering Sea. And England would not permit anybody into those waters without paying.

The balance of Muraviev's report was an impassioned plea for a drastic change from what he considered to be inert Russian policy in the Kamchatka area. He wrote:

In St. Petersburg, they adjudge the question of Kamchatka and Avachi Bay in terms of times long past. But from the time of the establishment of the French and the English in the Sandwich Islands, then the Chinese War, then the gold strike in California and the whaling in the Sea of Okhotsk, not one of our strong voiced politicians has been here, and they have even been asserting that I am mad to be going off to Kamchatka!

All of the affairs of Kamchatka and the Sea of Okhotsk, particularly after the all-European peace settlement of 1815, positively attest to the fact that during the past thirty-five years, a hostile spirit has directed all of our activities in this area. It would be unjust to blame my predecessors, that is, the Governors-General of Eastern Siberia, but Speranskii was the sinner, for he who was preparing to rule over the temporary administration could not have failed to understand the importance of the Eastern Ocean. To keep silent on this before his Sovereign, knowing the spirit and resources of Siberia, was a crime, natural of course, to Speranskii, who loved his ideas more than his Sovereigns and Fatherland.⁵⁴

⁵⁴Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 222. The reasons for Muraviev's animus toward Speranskii are obscure, but would seem to be at variance with the facts. Speranskii was aware of the "importance of the Eastern Ocean" and made his views known; he was also aware that foreign whalers and seal hunters might make ever increasing incursions into "Russian waters",

Muraviev returned from Kamchatka via Ayan, rather than Okhotsk, in order to inspect that port. He awaited Nevelskoi for some days, almost giving him up for lost, when the "Baikal" appeared off the port on September 3. Muraviev was delighted to receive Nevelskoi's report that sea-going vessels could enter the Amur estuary from both north and south, and that Sakhalin was an island, not a peninsula. Entering from the Gulf of Tartary, ships drawing 15 feet, and from the sea of Okhotsk, drawing 12 feet, could sail up the river.⁵⁵ This was news that needed the most intense exploitation in St. Petersburg.

On the following day, Karsakov was sent to St. Petersburg to deliver Nevelskoi's and Muraviev's recommendations on Kamchatka to Prince Menshikov. Menshikov submitted these to the Emperor, who ordered establishment of a special committee, under Nesselrode, to examine the question of the Amur estuary; Muraviev's proposals he warmly approved: he was worried about costs but noted Muraviev's assurances that his projects could be carried out in large part with local resources.⁵⁶

and that this could eventually become a threat to the power and security of the Russian Empire in Siberia; he made no secret of his apprehensions, as is made clear in Marc Raeff's, Speransky and the Siberian Reforms of 1822, (Seattle, 1959) pp. 42-43.

⁵⁵Kabanov, op. cit., p. 131.

⁵⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 237. Kabanov, op. cit., p. 133, cites Nevelskoi, p. 102, as pointing out that Petropavlovsk was far from ideal as a naval base because it was extremely isolated and difficult to supply, while Kamchatka itself was a barren land, difficult to settle. The road from Yakutsk to Ayan, furthermore, would be very difficult to improve and Ayan itself, Nevelskoi believed, was useless as a port. Nevelskoi deemed it far preferable to devote the scarce resources available to occupying the mouth of the Amur, investigating the surrounding area and surveying and settling routes from the Transbaikal to the Amur estuary. Nevelskoi states that Muraviev fully shared these views, but felt that in view of Nesselrode's obdurate opposition, the Kamchatka build-up was the only alternative.

In December, 1849, Muraviev received orders to transfer the port of Okhotsk to Petropavlovsk, which was to be the main fortified Russian port on the Pacific. Troops, materials and armament were to be delivered from Kronstadt. Zavoiko was named governor of Kamchatka, which was to be a separate oblast. Twenty-five peasant families were to be sent there each year in order to develop an agricultural base. The Ayan road was to be completed and the Ayan trading post of the Russian-American Company was to be transformed into a government port. Agricultural settlements would be made along the river Maiai and between Nelkan and Ayan, in order to supply the port. All Russian naval vessels in Okhotsk and Kamchatka were placed under Muraviev's command, as the Siberian flotilla. Naval cruisers to police the Sea of Okhotsk were to be despatched from Kronstadt and placed under Muraviev's command.⁵⁷

In January, 1850, Muraviev sent Nevelskoi to St. Petersburg in order to present all his logs and maps to Menshikov, to submit his, Muraviev's, urgent recommendations for immediate occupation of the mouth of the Amur with a detail of seventy men, and to deliver a letter to Perovskii.

In his letter to Perovskii, Muraviev expressed the view that had not "poor Treskin" been removed, Eastern Siberia would already have reached the degree of development that was needed in Russia's interests. With each passing day Muraviev was convinced of the good that Treskin had wrought in Eastern Siberia and of the ill done by Speranskii "with his institutions". More than once he had had occasion to deplore the unfortunate effects on the area caused by Speranskii's "unwise law-making exploits

⁵⁷Ibid.

based solely on theory".⁵⁸ In this letter Muraviev also reported on the creation of an advisory board for Eastern Siberian development. The wealthy merchant Kuznetsov had donated two and a half million rubles for this cause and was pledged to underwrite steamship construction for navigation on the Amur. Others, too, were offering material support for the economic growth of the area.⁵⁹ Further in his letter Muraviev pointed to various significant economies he had effected in his administration; he pressed for more stations on the Iakutsk post road and proposed measures to prevent the flow of gold to China, since smuggled gold was displacing export of Russian goods and was thus draining rather than feeding Russia's economy.

During the winter of 1850, Nevelskoi's report and Muraviev's recommendations concerning the Amur estuary were taken up by Nesselrode's committee. The committee by majority vote reprimanded Nevelskoi for having surveyed the Amur's mouth without imperial sanction, and expressed doubt regarding his data since they were at "variance with the opinions of European authorities". They also scoffed at the idea of occupying the mouth of the Amur with such an insignificant force as was proposed by Muraviev, when it was "known" from reports of the Russian ecclesiastical mission in Peking that the river "was protected by Chinese military forces".

⁵⁸Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 240.

⁵⁹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 241. Muraviev fought the privileges of the merchant class and made many enemies among them, but some of the more enlightened ones perceived that it might be in their self-interest to support the reforming Governor-General; Kabanov, op. cit., p. 92, points out that the middle layer and comparatively few among the upper layer (Kuznetsov in Irkutsk, Belogolovy in Kaikhta), were drawn to him despite his haughty ways and disdain for money-grubbing, but the rest, who had depended on Rupert, were his bitter enemies.

The Committee did agree to establishing permanent quarters for trade on the southeast coast of the Sea of Okhotsk, but not in the Amur estuary. The Emperor approved the sending of twenty-five sailors and cossacks to the area for this purpose, under Nevelskoi's command. Prince Menshikov, the Naval Minister, and Count Perovskii, the Minister of the Interior, were the two staunchest supporters of this plan and even urged initiation of cruising the Amur estuary and in the Gulf of Tartary, but the majority demurred.⁶⁰

While Nevelskoi was pursuing his commander's objectives in St. Petersburg, Muraviev continued writing to Perovskii and others in the government regarding the needs of his area. He put forth initial plans for raising troops from among the local population and stressed what he considered to be the continuing English threat, reporting on movements in the Amur estuary area of the British sloop "Herald", the schooner, "Nancy" and the steamers "Investigator" and "Enterprise". He argued that Kamchatka and the Sea of Okhotsk could be held under Russian dominion only if they were supplied via the Amur. The only way to assure security of Russian interests, he argued, was to send frigates and transports from Kronstadt to the Sea of Okhotsk, to raise a military force in the Transbaikal, sending it arms and artillery, to order two steam engines from Ekaterinburg for ships on the Shilka - - and to occupy the mouth of the Amur with as little delay as possible.⁶¹

Muraviev also reported to Nesselrode on the favorable development of Russian relations with the Giliaks and stated that he had ordered the

⁶⁰Kabanov, op. cit., p. 132.

⁶¹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 259.

expulsion from their area of foreign traders (Manchurians?) who were unduly exploiting them. As for the Foreign Ministry's oft-repeated exhortations to caution and discretion, he observed that the Sea of Okhotsk was so full of whaling ships of all nations, as well as of British men-of-war, that the modest Russian dealings with the Giliaks could hardly be expected to attract any Chinese attention - - unless the English should arouse the Chinese, as they had done at Shanghai, where a vessel of the Russian-American Company had been forbidden to put in.⁶²

On March 11, 1850, Muraviev wrote Perovskii regarding reports of the death of the Chinese Emperor, whose heir was an eighteen year old youth. He remarked regretfully that the personnel of the Orthodox Mission in Peking was disreputable and incompetent, which was particularly unfortunate at this time, when it was important to have reliable people there. If the report of the Emperor's death was true, then this was the time to clear up the matter of the Russo-Chinese frontier. He expressed the view that he should have authority to deal with the Chinese on the spot, and that this problem should not be entrusted solely to the Foreign Ministry,

⁶²Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 260-261. It appears that Muraviev and the Russian authorities in general were mistaken about this incident. Quested, op. cit., pp. 32-33, cites Chinese and British archives regarding the visit to Shanghai of the "Kniaz" Menshikov", a vessel of the Russian-American Company, in the summer of 1848. These state that the ship came there and renewed the request to trade that had been made there forty years earlier by the "Nadezhda" and the "Neva". A memorial from Chinese officials in Shanghai reached the Chinese Emperor on September 17, 1848, reporting that the Russians had been introduced by the British Consul, but that the Shanghai Commissioner had ordered them to leave the port under military escort, although their cargoes consisted only of fox skins and wheat, both unprohibited items. The Foreign Office archives reveal that the British Consul had explained the Russians' request to the Commissioner and that as a result the Commissioner had allowed the Russians to unload their cargo and "even after the Viceroy of Kiangsu and Kiangsi had ordered the ship to leave, would have been willing to let him sell the cargo, could buyers have been found".

but should be considered by the Asia Committee of the Government. This was the time, he argued, to take measures that would bring the most beneficial results; on the other hand, the eventual outcome could be prejudiced for a long time if Russia was too cautious and lacked determination. He concluded this letter with recommendations for creation of a separate Transbaikal oblast', establishment there of a Cossack Force and the designation for the Transbaikal of a military-governor-ataman.⁶³ Two weeks later he wrote a "Most Secret" letter for the eyes of the Emperor regarding his concern over the English in China and the need for the Russians to look to their frontiers on the Amur. He reported on this to Perovskii and pointed out that tea passing through Kiakhta amounted to one-third of what it had been, thanks to British competition. The British threat, he wrote, was increasing, since in order to expand their trade throughout northern China, they would need to navigate the Amur; he complained that it was impossible to convince Nesselrode, Seniavin or Chernyshev of this.⁶⁴

Nevelskoi returned to Eastern Siberia in the spring of 1850 and gathering his 25-man command in Ayan, sailed to the Bay of Fortune. Here he and Lieutenant Orlov, who had preceded him, chose a location on the Bay for the setting up of permanent quarters, named Petrovskii Post, in honor of Peter the Great.⁶⁵

The Petrovskii Post met the requirements laid down by the governmental directive but in no wise provided the advantages sought by Nevelskoi

⁶³Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 261-262. An ataman is a Cossack chieftain or hetman.

⁶⁴Ibid., I, p. 264.

⁶⁵Kabanov, op. cit., p. 132.

and his commander, Muraviev, for the achievement of their objectives. It was impossible to keep watch on the mouth of the Amur from the Post, or on the coastal territory leading up to it from the south, whence foreign intruders could make their way into the river before any effective action could be mounted by the Russians. The Bay of Fortune, moreover, was iced in until the month of July. These were the deficiencies of location that Nevelskoi later submitted as justification for the action on which he was now to embark - - action which, irrespective of the characteristics of the Petrovskii Post, he was in any case determined to take.⁶⁶ On this score, he had made his intentions clear while still in Ayan, whence he wrote to Korsakov on June 7, 1850, stating that "If permission from the general (Muraviev) does not catch up with me, then we will issue our own orders in the name of Allah himself - - boldness, speed and movement".⁶⁷

On July 12, 1850, Nevelskoi, with a half dozen armed sailors and two interpreters, entered the mouth of the Amur in a little sloop armed with a one-pound falconet and sailed up the river to a distance of 120 kilometers, reaching a native settlement named Tyr. Here he encountered a group of Manchurian traders, one of whom attempted to incite the native Giliaks to attack the Russians. Nevelskoi drew a double barreled pistol and pointed it at the Manchurian, while his sailors jumped out of the sloop with their arms at the ready. The Manchurians' truculence vanished and with many apologies they explained that they had entered the area on their own responsibility, that no Chinese officials were to be found there

⁶⁶Kabanov, op. cit., p. 134.

⁶⁷Orbl., s. Korsakovykh, d. 41/42, 124, cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 135.

and that the native inhabitants rendered no lassak to, nor were subjects of, the Chinese government. Nevelskoi thereupon announced to the Manchurians that the coastline of the Gulf of Tartary and the entire coastal region down to the Korean frontier, as well as the island of Sakhalin, were Russian possessions. He instructed the natives so to inform the crews of any foreign vessels which, the natives reported, often visited the area, and announced that a series of military posts would be established to defend these Russian possessions.⁶⁸

Control of the Amur estuary was Nevelskoi's first concern. Accordingly, on August 1, 1850, at Kouegda Bay, commanding an excellent view of the river's mouth, amid salutes fired by the one-pounder falconet and his sailors' rifles, he raised the Russian military banner on the site of the post he named Nikolaevsk. Huts were built for barracks and a small warehouse for trading supplies. Then, in defiance of the directive issued to him, he detailed a ten-man garrison and one officer to hold the post and hastened back to Ayan, whence he sent a report on his action to Muraviev and proceeded to Irkutsk in order personally to confer with him. Muraviev, however, having received Nevelskoi's report, had already departed for consultations in St. Petersburg, leaving instructions for Nevelskoi to follow him there.⁶⁹

In November, 1850, Muraviev arrived in St. Petersburg and was received at Tsarskoe Selo by the Emperor, who listened with interest and approval to his report on Nevelskoi's actions and ordered him to prepare a memorandum setting forth his views concerning the Amur. Muraviev

⁶⁸Barsukov, op. cit., II, pp. 72-75.

⁶⁹Kabanov, op. cit., p. 137.

completed this on November 20. The Emperor thereupon ordered the establishment of the "Giliak Committee", composed of Nesselrode as Chairman; Prince Chernyshev, Minister of War; Vronchenko, the Finance Minister, Prince Menshikov, the Naval Minister; Count Perovskii, Minister of the Interior, Count Berg, Quartermaster-General; Privy Counselor Seniavin; and Muraviev.⁷⁰ At this time, too, Nicholas I conferred on Muraviev the Order of St. Ann, First Class, and the Order of St. George, Fourth Class, a mark of imperial favor that might perhaps have been meant to give a hint to Muraviev's opponents regarding the direction of the Tsar's sympathies in the matter of Eastern Siberian policy.

Nesselrode's ruling objective within the "Giliak Committee" was to prevent the occupation of the mouth of the Amur. He argued that to undertake construction of Russian posts in Giliak territory was premature and dangerous. As to Nikolaevsk, he believed its establishment would alarm the Chinese and that it should be vacated. Who could give assurances, he asked, that the Chinese would not arrive there in force, dislodge the little Russian detachment and, before the eyes of the Giliaks, destroy the Russian barracks and trample on the imperial flag?⁷¹ Muraviev insisted on maintaining Nikolaevsk in order to prevent occupation of the Amur's mouth by foreigners. Seniavin and Chernyshev stoutly supported Nesselrode; Chernyshev, unwittingly by way of being a prophet, went so far as to

⁷⁰Russki Arkhiv, 1878. Bk. II, pp. 262-264.

⁷¹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 281, Quested, op. cit., p. 32, comments, "This showed him (Nesselrode) to be living a century or two in the past, for he apparently did not envisage that such an attack would come as a result of British influence - - the only remotely possible bogey - - but genuinely believed the Manchus to be still capable of independent vigorous action on the Amur."

accuse Muraviev of wishing "to erect a monument to himself".⁷² A majority of the committee, furthermore, adjudged Nevelskoi's conduct as insubordinate and meriting reduction to the ranks. His action, they contended, flouted the Imperial will and carried potentially dangerous consequences. They recommended that Nikolaevsk be abandoned, while trade with the Giliaks should be continued from the Petrovskii Post and that the Amur and areas adjacent to it should be avoided.⁷³

The meeting broke up with no formal decision, but Perovskii remarked to Muraviev, on leaving, that the minutes would probably not be favorable to occupation of the Amur. Nor were they, but when a copy was delivered to Muraviev in the evening for his signature, he declined and wrote a dissent. Prince Chernishev was indignant and so indicated to Muraviev, but the minutes, nevertheless, were submitted, with Muraviev's dissent, to the Emperor.⁷⁴ Nicholas thereupon "invited" the committee to reconvene but, this time, under the chairmanship of the heir to the throne, the Grand Duke Alexander, in order to reconsider the problem. At the same time, he observed that "where once the Russian flag has been raised it must never be lowered".⁷⁵

Muraviev thoroughly briefed the Grand Duke Alexander who, at the next meeting of the committee, on January 19, 1851, overruled Nesselrode,

⁷²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 281.

⁷³Kabanov, op. cit., p. 137.

⁷⁴Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 282; Kabanov, op. cit., p. 137, states, without citing his source, that Muraviev also obtained an audience with the Tsar and eloquently defended Nevelskoi's action, as well as his own position regarding the need to occupy the Amur.

⁷⁵Kabanov, op. cit., p. 137.

Chernyshev, Seniavin and Vronchenko. It was agreed that the post of Nikolaevsk should be maintained but with the proviso that it should take the guise of a trading post of the Russian-American Company. It was also stipulated that no new localities within the lower reaches of the Amur should be occupied. At this meeting, too, the Committee established the "Amur Expedition" headed by Captain First Class Nevelskoi. Its responsibility was defined as building appropriate quarters, guarding outposts and maintaining surveillance over the coastline. A seagoing vessel was to be attached to it during the summer season. On February 5, the Senate sent the Chinese Tribunal a communication announcing this action and describing it as a precaution against intrusion by foreigners, "which could not be permitted without approval of the Chinese and Russian governments".⁷⁶

Muraviev had won his first formal skirmish with Nesselrode. The opening wedge had been made; it was to serve as an exceedingly significant support for subsequent actions by Muraviev and his lieutenants.

⁷⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 283.

CHAPTER IV

UNTYING THE AMUR KNOT

I. WAR IN THE WEST SHAPES POLICY IN THE EAST

Muraviev attended to a number of other matters during his period of consultation in St. Petersburg. The first of these was the passage of regulations governing the sale of spirits, an aspect of internal administration that Muraviev had found to be particularly vexing. This was now placed on a more competitive basis and henceforth could be only in the form of bottled liquor to be taken home, thus eliminating the evil gin mills that ate up all of the workers' wages.¹

A development with significant implications for further external policy that Muraviev pursued during his sojourn in the capital was his project for a Transbaikal Cossack Force. The four line battalions in Eastern Siberia, all that Muraviev had at his disposal, were manifestly inadequate as a military prop for imperial expansion, but they were all the regular forces that he could expect to receive from a government sorely preoccupied with politico-military problems in western Europe and the Near East. Always mindful of the exhortation of his wise advisor, Perovskii, to mobilize local resources for the pursuit of his objectives, Muraviev determined upon raising a substantial force from the manpower existing in his own area. He met much opposition, running into the familiar argu-

¹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 284.

ment about alarming the Chinese. He countered this by pointing out that the Chinese had long been used to seeing the Russian military in the border areas; he observed that the Russian frontier chief at Kaikhta was always referred to by the Chinese as "Major", and that when that official visited them at Miamachen he was always accompanied by a military escort. He also argued, perhaps with tongue in cheek, that the Chinese would welcome the security offered by strong friendly forces in the vicinity. He pointed to the 2,000-verst frontier with China and insisted that such a force would be even more necessary if the Amur question was not satisfactorily resolved. His proposal was to include in the Transbaikalian Cossack Force: 1) all existing frontier Cossacks; 2) the Transbaikalian city regiment; 3) all native levies - - Tungus and Buryat regiments; 4) all Cossacks of the military-agricultural settlements in the Transbaikalian; and, 5) all the peasants of the Nerchinsk Mining Administration. Those in the first four categories would form cavalry units, while the fifth would be infantry. The people in this last category numbered well over 20,000 and Muraviev envisioned transforming them into twelve battalions of Cossack settlers. Their transformation would constitute a veritable emancipation, greatly improving their lot. Their condition, in the mines, was actually worse than that of the Siberian convicts, for even the most criminal of the latter, having served the maximum term of twenty years, became free men, as did their children. The mine workers, however, people guilty of no crime, were put to work, starting at the age of twelve, at the same level as the convicts, and, no matter how many years they worked, never received more than twenty-five days a year of free time. And for this they received, in bread and money, less than two rubles a month. Since this did not suffice to

live, they were constantly in debt, either to their employer, the Government, or the tradesmen who exploited them. Under these circumstances a good many of them eventually did commit crimes of one sort or another, often for the sole purpose of attaining the status of convict, which, after a given number of years gave them and their progeny the position of free settlers.²

The Transbaikial Cossack proposal was the subject of long debates within the government, but finally on April 27, 1851, a special committee consented to all aspects of it, including the most controversial one concerning the Nerchinsk peasants, which was one of some sensitivity, since it affected mines that were the personal property of the Imperial family. The Emperor approved the minutes of the committee; Muraviev had convinced him of the need to establish respectable forces contiguous to China, a significant step toward ruling the Amur.

Now the bureaucratic brakes in St. Petersburg were weakening and Nesselrode's opposition was faltering, if only temporarily. Developments in Eastern Siberia were accelerating in the direction desired by Muraviev. Following authorization of the Transbaikial Cossack Force, the Transbaikial and Iakutsk oblast were separated from Irkutsk and these forgotten borderlands were given autonomous status as gubernias. Reorganization of Kiakhta followed, with the appointment of a single head of municipal administration which, in addition to bringing order into what had been a somewhat chaotic situation, also served to impress the Chinese with Russian intentions.³ A further step, of real importance to

²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 286.

³Ibid., I, p. 288.

Muraviev, was the opening of a branch of the Imperial Geographic Society in Irkutsk. The Society was under the presidency of the Grand Duke Constantine, who now began to exhibit a lively and increasingly influential interest in Muraviev's work.⁴ In October, 1851, on the eve of the young Grand Duke's departure for a long stay in Venice, he wrote Muraviev in Irkutsk, asking that he be kept regularly informed regarding events in Eastern Siberia and the unfolding of Muraviev's plans.⁵ Thus was begun a regular exchange of views between the two regarding the Amur question; henceforth Muraviev found in Constantine an invaluable supporter of the development of his grand design.

Soon after Muraviev's return from St. Petersburg, he toured the Transbaikal, inspecting the civil administration, the Cossack Force in the process of formation, and the gold mines. At the same time, he formed his estimate of the area's logistical capabilities for organizing an expedition that might proceed down the Amur. Following this tour, he wrote to Perovskii, decrying the inefficiency of the Mining Administration and remarking that the loss of some 20,000 employees, who were being absorbed in the Transbaikal Cossack Force, would simply result in substantial cuts in the bureaucracy which had nothing to do in any case.⁶

In a further letter to Perovskii, Muraviev reported that the Chinese authorities were delighted with the new administrative arrangements in Kiakhta, seeing in them the possibility of closer cooperation with the Russians at a higher official level. He also stated that he had complained

⁴Struve, op. cit., pp. 114-116.

⁵Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 292.

⁶Ibid., I, p. 293.

to Nesselrode that messages from the Chinese Tribunal⁶ passed through his office sealed and went on to St. Petersburg, so that he learned of their contents only some three or four months later. He would not try further to communicate with Nesselrode for fear of "being misinterpreted", but pointed out that disorders in China might result in a Chinese request for Russian assistance. He wondered what course to take were the Chinese authorities to address themselves to him or his officials and surmised that his reply should be that Russia was prepared to support the legal Chinese government. He suggested that the Foreign Ministry should provide him with guidance.⁷

Meanwhile, in November, 1851, Muraviev reported to the Grand Duke Constantine that the four regular line battalions of Eastern Siberia had been transferred to the Transbaikal and that 20,000 Nerchinsk miners were being transformed into Cossacks, thus providing twelve additional infantry battalions. He pointed out that, "contrary to reports in foreign newspapers", the strengthening of Russian forces in the border area were making no inroads on Russia's military posture in the west; furthermore, it was putting Russia in position to be of assistance, if need be, to "the friendly Chinese Court". In this connection, he mentioned that the Chinese with whom his officials dealt were not at all upset at the news of the founding of Nikolaevsk. At this time, too, Muraviev wrote Menshikov, the Naval Minister, that the Manchu Emperor would welcome the arrival of Russian forces as a bulwark against the insurgents.⁸ Whether this was a tac-

⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 296. There is no available evidence that such guidance was provided.

⁸Ibid., I, p. 299.

tic designed to advance his own plans or whether he actually believed that the Chinese were eager for closer political ties with Russia would be difficult to determine. Russo-Chinese relations on the local plane were quite friendly and this may have influenced his judgment.⁹

During the first half of 1851, Muraviev had prepared measures to strengthen the Amur Expedition under Nevelskoi. The proposals included detailing additional naval personnel to it, as well as a priest, doctor, medical aides from the Kamchatka hospital and fifty cossacks. He urged that this be given priority. He also recommended that the Russian-American Company be relieved of any responsibility for the expedition and that its status as an official governmental enterprise be openly acknowledged. Nesselrode had his way this time, however, and the only element of the program that was approved was that entailing the priest.¹⁰ This was a dispiriting setback for Muraviev, who wrote a discouraged letter to his kinsman, General Muraviev-Karskii, who replied sympathetically and urged him to "keep up the good fight".¹¹

In early February, 1852, Muraviev wrote again to the Grand Duke Constantine, reporting that the situation in China was going from bad to worse. By this time he was receiving useful information from the

⁹Quested, op. cit., p. 32, comments: "The hope was always at the back of his mind that the Chinese Government could be brought under some sort of general Russian influence...Struve describes how at that time (at Kiakhta) the old suspicion between the races had largely gone, and although the Chinese normally did not leave their own town, in early January, Russians, Chinese, and Mongols circulated freely and jointly celebrated the Mongol festival of Tsagansara (called by the Russians 'Bely Mesiats'). Even at other times Chinese entertained Russians in the Chinese town."

¹⁰Russki Arkhiv, Vol. III, 1878, pp. 264-266.

¹¹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 304.

Orthodox Mission in Peking, the new head of which was an outstanding Sinologist, N. N. Kafarov, the Archimandrite Palladii. Palladii had earlier spent ten years in China as a member of the Mission, and unlike his colleagues who at best were indolent, and at worst, debauched drunkards, he had put his time to good use. He was the inventor of the system of translating Chinese into Cyrillic letters, still used by the Russians today and bearing his name. Under his direction the Mission published an annual volume of articles, some of which were translated into German.¹² Palladii was fluent not only in Chinese, but also spoke English and French. He was thus well qualified for the role of official observer, and, in fact, so industrious was he in this sphere that he was criticized, by implication, in the official history of the Mission for the great volume of his political reports to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the paucity of his purely pastoral reports.¹³ Thus Palladii kept Muraviev reasonably au courant regarding events in China, both with regard to trade matters and the political situation, including the progress of the Taiping rebellion. Early in the year he had reported on mounting disorders in the south, where armed bands of insurgents were organizing under the slogan "salvation to the poor, plunder the rich"! The movement had originated in Hunan but had quickly spread to the south and south-east; in Palladii's opinion, depending upon the development of their organization and coordination, there was no telling how far it would go.¹⁴

¹²Quested, op. cit., p. 28.

¹³Kratkaia istoria russkoi pravoslavnoi missii v Pekine, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 29.

¹⁴Russki Arkhiv, 1914, Vol. 2, pp. 496 - 499.

The spreading rebellion was taking on an anti-dynastic hue. Pirates were menacing the coast and there was pillage even in the Peking region, while tribes on the western borders were taking advantage of the government's disarray to press attacks on remote regions of the Middle Kingdom.¹⁵ On these matters - - and regarding his bete-noire, the English, "prowling around the coast" - - Muraviev expounded at length to the Grand Duke and stressed that for the good of the country the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia should enjoy greater confidence of the authorities, including the Foreign Ministry.¹⁶

Muraviev wrote once again to Constantine at the end of February, 1852. He pointed out that initially his main concern in Eastern Siberia had been the welfare of the people which had so long been neglected. Now, however, his basic concern was with the natural frontiers of the Empire, something to which, he contended, neither Speranskii nor his predecessors and successors had given any serious attention. True, St. Petersburg was now giving some consideration to Kamchatka, the Pacific, the Sea of Okhotsk, the mouth of the Amur and the entire river and the contiguous Transbaikal oblast as well - - but not to the degree necessary, in view of the interest in these waters manifested by foreign powers. He had already mentioned England's intentions; soon, judging from what he had been reading, the Americans would be mounting a political and commercial offensive in the islands of the North Pacific and in Manchuria, negotiating with "independent rulers of Sakhalin", angling for navigation rights on the Amur, etc.. Forty years earlier, one of Russia's most

¹⁵ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 306.

¹⁶ Loc. cit.

distinguished navigators¹⁷ had drawn the Russian's attention to Japan but that country was now lost to the Russians. There was no doubt, however, that if Russia should control navigation on the Amur, she could yet salvage a secondary position on the Pacific. But, given the disturbances in China and the rapidity of current events, there was no telling who would be controlling that navigation within a few months.¹⁸

At the beginning of the summer, 1852, Muraviev again visited the Transbaikal, inspecting its factories, mines and agriculture and proceeded up the Shilka as far as Gorbitsa. On the return trip, he left one of his assistants, M. S. Volkonskii,¹⁹ at the Nerchinsk factory, naming him a member of an investigative commission looking into irregularities in the mining administration - - and, in the process, creating new enemies for himself. At Petrovskii Zavod, he observed progress in the construction of the steamer "Argun", destined to ply the as yet unauthorized Amur route. He also looked into Buryat affairs and issued instructions for improvements in their schools and for support in their agricultural enterprises. He appointed three trusted assistants to insure the carrying out of these orders.²⁰

At the end of his inspection trip, Muraviev wrote the Grand Duke Constantine reporting on the highly satisfactory state of training of the Transbaikal Cossack Force. Constantine replied on August 14, expressing his gratification and reporting that he was now serving on the intra-

¹⁷Krusenstern.

¹⁸Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 309.

¹⁹Son of the Decembrist

²⁰Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 311.

governmental Siberian Committee.²¹

Although Muraviev had failed in his attempt to improve the status of Nevelskoi's little band, the "Amur Expedition", it continued its highly useful activities. Life at Petrovskii Post and at Nikolaevsk, tiny settlements bounded on one side by the icy seas and on the other by the limitless bleak wastes of the taiga, was rigorous indeed; yet these hardy people doggedly carried out wide-ranging investigations and surveys in pursuit of two main objectives. The first of these was to become fairly familiar with the territory which, in accordance with Article I of the Treaty of Nerchinsk was undemarcated - - and to determine what territory adjacent to the lower reaches of the Amur and to the coastline did not come under Chinese sovereignty and could, by right of prior discovery and settlement, be annexed to Russia. The second objective was to obtain a detailed knowledge of the entire coastline, including the most convenient harbors, their degree of accessibility, navigational periods at various points on the coast, characteristics of the terrain, natural resources, lines of communication and the like. The expedition pursued its investigations throughout the years 1851 and 1852. As a result of its findings, Nevelskoi concluded that "for the further surveying of the area, with a view to a definitive solution of the maritime problem" . . . it would be necessary to establish posts at a number of additional points. These included the village of Kizi, at the mouth of the Ussuri, Sakhalin and the continental coastline at de Castries Bay; in addition, at the very least, two harbors to the south of the Bay should

²¹Ibid., I, p. 313.

be occupied.²²

Muraviev proposed to St. Petersburg that Kizi and de-Castries Bay, providing good bases for maintaining surveillance over foreign shipping when the Amur estuary was frozen over, be occupied by Russian forces. Nesselrode's cautious counsels prevailed again, however, and Muraviev's proposal was rejected. He was instructed to proceed with extreme discretion and without haste.²³ During this period, the fall and winter of 1852, Muraviev learned from Perovskii, his staunch supporter in St. Petersburg, that the latter was giving up his post as Minister of the Interior in order to take up less demanding tasks in the Department of Imperial Domains. This news, on top of his latest frustration administered by Nesselrode's clique, plunged Muraviev into deep gloom, relieved only by the knowledge that he had another highly placed defender in St. Petersburg in the person of the Grand Duke Constantine. Muraviev felt, too, that he could look for support from the Heir, the Grand Duke Alexander. His discouragement, nevertheless, was profound.

At a period when it seemed once again that Muraviev's plans would come to naught, politico-military developments thousands of miles away provided him with a reprieve. As early as in the beginning of 1852, relations between Russia and Turkey had become so strained that war was momentarily expected. This situation undoubtedly accounted in large measure for the negative reaction in St. Petersburg to Muraviev's adventuresome proposals. Now, however, since it was clear that England and France were backing Turkey, the prospect of an Anglo-French attack

²²Nevelskoi, op.cit., p. 176, cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 142.

²³Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 315.

on Kamchatka or the Amur estuary, of which Muraviev had repeatedly warned, became a real possibility. Thus, in February, 1853, Muraviev was recalled to St. Petersburg for consultations. When he left Irkutsk, he told his faithful assistant, Struve, that since he (Muraviev) apparently did not enjoy the confidence of the government, he would probably not return,²⁴ a threat which anyone who had known him since his early days in the Caucasus would have found tiresomely familiar.

Muraviev arrived in St. Petersburg in March, 1853, and submitted a memorandum to the Tsar in which he outlined the strategic significance of the Amur, with particular reference to the war that was on the horizon. In his characteristically prolix style, Muraviev set forth a geopolitical concept that subsequently proved to be realistic and essentially accurate. As one writer has put it, albeit with some oversimplification, this concept formed the basis of Russian policy in the Far East until the fall of the Tsarist regime and, indeed, right up to the present.²⁵ Another points to "the hand of the dead Raguzinskii" as being plainly visible in the shaping of this policy.²⁶

Muraviev, in his memorandum,²⁷ warned of British incursions into the Far East and urged that the time had come to abandon Russia's "immobility" in that area, where "nothing had been done since 1812". He pointed out

²⁴Struve, op. cit., p. 152.

²⁵Semyonov, op. cit., p. 261.

²⁶W. Gurian, Soviet Imperialism, Its Origins and Tactics, (Notre Dame, Ind., 1953) p. 116.

²⁷The exact official text of this memorandum has not been available to any of the sources consulted; the substance, as summarized on the following pages, has been taken from B. V. Struve's Vospominania o Sibiri 1848 - 1854, (St. Petersburg, 1889) pp. 152-156.

that it would not be enough to limit Russian action to seeking to establish the near-west western communications with China, "leaving the entire eastern frontier of some 6,000 versts . . . to that political orientation and order that has obtained for the last 150 years". Unless Russia now took "special measures" on the Pacific, he warned, the result of England's war with China and the spreading of her naval power in neighboring waters would have irreversibly bad effects, not only for Russian trade with China, but for Russia's very position in the far off lands of East Asia, which could "finish all Russian prospects there forever". It was a matter of Imperial importance, Muraviev insisted, that there should be a settlement of the border with China in the Far East. This, he pointed out, because of the great distance from the area involved to St. Petersburg, could hardly be settled in all details by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He recommended, therefore, that the "commander-in-chief" in Eastern Siberia be authorized independently to enter into contact regarding this question with the Chinese Tribunal and with the Russian Orthodox Mission in Peking. Muraviev then went on to expound his recommended policy:

Twenty-five years ago, the Russian-American Company requested the Government to authorize the occupation of California, which at that time was controlled by hardly anyone, expressing at that time its apprehension that this region would soon become a possession of the United States of America. This apprehension was not shared in St. Petersburg, where it was asserted that this could happen only in a hundred years. The Company maintained that it would happen in twenty-five years, and now it has already been over a year that California constitutes one of the North American States. One could not help foresee the rapid extension of the North American States' dominion in North America, nor could one help foresee that these States, once established on the Pacific Ocean, would soon take precedence over all other naval powers there, and that they would require the whole northwestern shore of America. The sovereignty of the North American States in all of North America is so natural that we should not regret very much that we did not

consolidate our position in California twenty-five years ago - - sooner or later we would have had to yield it; but, yielding it peacefully, we could have received from the Americans other benefits in exchange. Now, furthermore, with the invention and development of railroads, one must become convinced, even more than before, that the North American States will, without fail, spread over all of North America, and we cannot fail to keep in mind that sooner or later we shall have to yield them our North American possessions. Neither, however, can one fail to bear in mind, in this connection, that it is highly natural also for Russia, if not to possess all of Eastern Asia, then to rule over the entire Asian littoral of the Pacific Ocean.²⁸

Owing to various circumstances, we allowed the intrusion into this part of Asia by the English, who, very naturally to the detriment and reproach of all of Europe, disturbing the peace and well-being of other nations, prescribe from their little island their own laws in other parts of the world, including America; laws not in the least aimed at the benefit of mankind, but only at the satisfaction of the commercial interests of Great Britain. But this situation can still be saved by a close tie on our part with the North American States. England exerts all efforts not to permit this bond; her agents everywhere try with all means to estrange America from Russia. In this connection, England's most essential conditions must include: gaining possession of Kamchatka, or leaving it waste, and ruling over the Pacific shores of China and Japan, thus, so to speak, cutting off Russia from the Pacific Ocean. There is no doubt that this system must also include the acquisition of Sakhalin and the Amur estuary. In order to prepare, in view of the above-mentioned considerations, a firm and convenient domain for our American Company, in place of the North American shore on one hand, and, on the other hand, in order to develop more quickly and certainly our sway over the shore of the Pacific Ocean belonging to us, it is essential to permit the Russian-American Company immediately to establish itself on Sakhalin, whence her trade will inevitably develop with Japan and Korea.

Muraviev's memorandum convinced Nicholas I that the Amur expedition, heretofore under the cloak of the Russian-American Company, should become an official governmental enterprise. The next step, warmly supported by Grand Duke Constantine, was to authorize the Company to occupy Sakhalin,

²⁸If taken literally, and discarding a presumption that what Muraviev meant was the north Asian littoral, this would imply the eventual conquest of a good deal more than Manchuria.

denying it to any foreign intruders. The Sakhalin expedition was to report directly to Muraviev. These decisions were taken on April 11, 1853. Eleven days later, Muraviev presented his report to Nicholas I, in the presence of the heir to the throne, Alexander, the Grand Duke Constantine, Nesselrode, and the other ministers who had consistently opposed him. With maps and survey data prepared by Colonel Akhte, Muraviev illustrated the impreciseness of the Treaty of Nerchinsk and pointed out that Chinese sovereignty did not exist on the left bank of the lower Amur, nor on either bank at the estuary. It was then decided to occupy de Castries Bay and Kizi.²⁹ The Emperor, pointing to the map and referring to the maritime area stretching from the Bureia River to the sea, thereupon exclaimed, "So that belongs to us!" Turning to the Minister of War, he said, "Inform the Chinese accordingly." Then, in reply to Muraviev's observations about fortifying the mouth of the Amur, he commented, "That is all very well," and, pointing to the mouth of the Amur, remarked, "but I shall have to defend this from Kronstadt." Muraviev replied, "It would not seem to be necessary, Sire, to do that from such a distance." Pointing to the course of the Amur from the Transbaikai, he said, "reinforcements can be sent from here". The Tsar put his hand on Muraviev's head and exclaimed, "Ekh, Muraviev, truly one of these days you will lose your reason over the Amur!" Then, slapping him on the shoulder, he said, "Well, then, let circumstances lead to that; we shall wait."³⁰

On the following day, Muraviev received a citation "for his exemplary and untiring efforts for the development and well-being of the vast

²⁹Struve, op. cit., p. 157.

³⁰Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 325.

area within his responsibility", and was made a Knight of the Imperial Order of the White Eagle. He was then granted leave to go abroad on holiday and for medical treatment.

It was not until Muraviev had left the country that the Foreign Ministry proceeded, in its own way, to carry out the Tsar's orders regarding notification to the Chinese of the decisions taken on April 22. The Note that was despatched was couched in such language as to create difficulties for Muraviev later on (see below).³¹ At the same time, a special commission was established to examine Muraviev's proposals for building up supplies, munitions, troop formations, and making various other logistical preparations for sailing down the Amur.

Meanwhile, Nevelskoi had continued to act according to his motto, "daring, speed and movement", and to make his way, as he put it, "without instructions". Thus, though aware of the governmental position against occupying any additional points on the Gulf of Tartary, he proceeded to put into effect the government's new decisions - - some time before they had been made. In February, 1853, he sent out Lieutenant N. K. Boshniak with orders to establish a post at de Castries Bay. On March 15, he received confirmation from the young officer that the Russian flag had been raised there; the local inhabitants had been put on notice that this was now Russian territory, and a building was under construction. At the same time, one of Boshniak's assistants had set up a post at Kizi.³²

At de Castries Bay, Boshniak learned from the Giliaks that to the south there was a big bay. Boshniak proceeded there on May 2, with three

³¹Russki Arkhiv, 1878, bk. III, p. 274.

³²Kabanov, op. cit., p. 147.

men in a Giliak boat and at the 49th parallel arrived at the bay, which he named the Bay of Emperor Nicholas I. The local inhabitants here told him that twelve days' journey to the south, a large river emptied into that bay, while its headwaters were near the Ussuri, and that there were good harbors down the coast. The natives also told Boshniak that they were free men owing no allegiance to the Chinese. He thereupon gathered them together at Imperatorskaia Gavan³³ and proclaimed that this whole country down to the Korean frontier was Russian, and that its inhabitants now came under the protection of Russia. He then put up a cross bearing the legend "Discovered and named Bay of Emperor Nicholas I, May 23, 1853, N. K. Boshniak". At the same time, he gave the local inhabitants a written proclamation to this effect in the Russian, German and French languages, with instructions that they display it to any visiting foreigners.³⁴ Then, his provisions being exhausted, he returned to de Castries Bay, where on July 12, the transport "Baikal" delivered him orders to occupy Sakhalin as well as de Castries and Kizi, the latter two of which were already flying the Russian flag.

In the late summer of 1853, Nevelskoi proceeded to Sakhalin and on September 22, landed at Anniwa Bay where, in addition to the native inhabitants, he encountered a number of Japanese, who periodically visited this point and maintained a small supply depot there. The natives warmly welcomed the Russians, but the Japanese appeared frightened until Nevelskoi assured them that he would not interfere with their trade on the island

³³"Imperial Harbor", on the newly discovered bay. It is now Sovetskaia Gavan'.

³⁴Kabanov, op. cit., p. 148.

nor with their fishing, and that their "just" interests would be protected. The Russian flag was raised, cannon were landed on the beach, and Nevelskoi explained that they would be permanently emplaced in order to protect the people and the land, which were Russian.³⁵

Thus was established the Muravievskii Post, the main Russian settlement on Sakhalin. Major Busse was put in command, a mistake, comments Kabanov, on Nevelskoi's part. According to Kabanov, this officer was indecisive, lacked initiative, was fearful of a possible invasion by the Japanese and was simply not up to the task of maintaining this Russian post at a time when war was approaching. And, in truth, following the outbreak of the Crimean War and the attendant increased Japanese activity in the adjacent waters, he managed to persuade Admiral Putiatin, visiting him en route to Japan, to agree to evacuation of the post.³⁶

Putiatin, evidently, did not need much persuading in the matter of Russia's giving up her foothold on the southern coast of Sakhalin. When Nevelskoi returned to winter quarters at Petrovskii in October, 1852, he learned that Captain Rimski-Korsakov, commander of the schooner "Vostok", had visited Petrovskii and had reported that Vice-Admiral Putiatin was resolutely opposed to any occupation of the area and to any designs on the Amur: he had forbidden Rimski-Korsakov to enter the river, since "it belonged to China", and he had protested against the occupation of Sakhalin, insisting that this would prejudice negotiations he was about to undertake with the Japanese. "Nesselrode's influence was obvious", comments Barsukov.³⁷

³⁵Voennno-Morskoi Arkhiv f. kanz. Velikogo Kniazia Konstantina Nikolaevicha, d. 154, cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 148.

³⁶Kabanov, op. cit., p. 150.

³⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 332.

Nevelskoi was unperturbed by Putiatin's antagonism. With singlemindedness as firm as that of his master, Muraviev, he had in two short years obtained a firm grip on the mouth of the Amur and had discovered that the river, 300 versts above its mouth, came very near to de Castries Bay - - which was why he had occupied Kizi and obtained what might be termed a second mouth of the Amur, a way station essential for ships entering the Amur from the south. At the same time, he had found a fine harbor, the Bay of Emperor Nicholas I. He had, moreover, obtained useful information regarding the autonomous status of the natives of the continental coastline and of Sakhalin, as well as data regarding the connection of the Ussuri River to ice-free harbors on the Manchurian coast.

Nevelskoi's achievements, carried out with Muraviev's encouragement and support, prepared the way for the important events of the next three years.³⁸ They provided Muraviev with a plausible pretext for large-scale Russian military expeditions down the Amur, and for establishment of Russian settlements along its left bank. By 1856, the discomfited Chinese

³⁸Kabanov makes an eloquent argument that Nevelskoi was never accorded the degree of recognition that was due him, and that he was overshadowed by Muraviev. In this connection, incidentally, those who condemned Muraviev for "using" people had a plausible example in the case of the relationship between these two. By 1854, Muraviev was reprimanding Nevelskoi for the latter's discourtesy to the managers of the Russian-American Company, and in the following year he was complaining to Karsakov about Nevelskoi's failing to follow his instructions in the matter of battery emplacements at Nikolaevsk. At this time, Muraviev recalled Nevelskoi to Irkutsk to serve as his chief of staff, but under such conditions that he would have little or nothing to do. Muraviev also wrote the Grand Duke Constantine that "Nevelskoi is now needed neither on the Amur nor in Irkutsk, and I therefore take the liberty of recommending that he be relieved". It would be difficult to decide now whether Nevelskoi's long service under hard conditions had had "an unfavorable effect" on him, as Muraviev put it, or whether, being as independent and self-opinionated as Muraviev, he was doomed to clash with his commander. (See Kabanov, op. cit., pp. 120-128, and Barsukov, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 396.

would thereby be placed in a position from which they could not extricate themselves and Muraviev would accomplish de facto what it would take another several years to regularize de jure.

II. THE INITIAL CAMPAIGN "WITH NO SMELL OF GUNPOWDER"

After a four-month vacation in Marienbad, Paris, Valencia, Toulouse and Brussels, Muraviev returned to St. Petersburg near the end of 1853, for a two-month period of consultation. While there, he wrote the new Minister of Finance, P. F. Brok, on the subject of the Kiakhta trade.³⁹ He urged that it be opened to all in the same manner as the rest of the Empire's commerce, i.e., with payment to be made in coin rather than on the basis of barter; he recommended the exclusion of bank-notes, gold dust or ingots. Only by doing away with the archaic barter system, he believed, would smuggling and the draining of Russian gold be put to an end.⁴⁰ A special commission composed of representatives of the Ministries of Finance, Foreign Affairs and Interior, was set up to study Asian commerce in general and Muraviev's recommendation on the Kiakhta trade in particular. Struve comments that the Minister of Finance, however, "was in no hurry to deal with this matter".⁴¹

Once again, in St. Petersburg, Muraviev was plunged into a fit of depression. It seemed to him that highly placed bureaucrats were deter-

³⁹ Vronchenko, previous Minister of Finance, who had been a leading exponent of the policy of rigidly controlled barter trade at Kiakhta, had recently died, and Muraviev hoped for a more sympathetic hearing from his successor.

⁴⁰ B. B. Struve, "Graf N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii. Iz Vospominanii o ego deiatelnosti," Russkaka Starina, Vol. 48, pp. 341-2.

⁴¹ B. V. Struve, Vospominaniia o Sibiri, 1848-1854, p. 161.

mined to frustrate his every attempt to advance Russian interests in Eastern Siberia. He did not lack evidence of hostility directed at him personally, at any rate, since this was unmistakably confirmed to him while he was in the capital.

When Muraviev returned to St. Petersburg, he hastened to the Foreign Ministry and asked Seniavin, Head of the Asiatic Department, whether he should return to Siberia immediately in order to deal with the Chinese. Seniavin's reply was that there were no particular dealings with the Chinese in view, and that from the standpoint of his department there was no need whatever for Muraviev to hurry back to Irkutsk. Thus reassured, Muraviev took his time, since he had other matters, such as the Kiakhta trade, to pursue, and was content to remain until they were settled. Suddenly, in December, an urgent courier from Irkutsk brought him startling news. In response to a note from the Russian Government, Chinese plenipotentiaries were gathering in Urga, and would soon be in Maimachen, near Kiakhta, for negotiations on Amur matters. Muraviev indignantly confronted Seniavin, who acknowledged that there had been a note, to which a reply had already been received from Peking, and that he, the Governor-General, would be responsible for the negotiations.⁴²

Muraviev had learned to maintain a certain sang-froid in the face of the continuing opposition offered him by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; this latest ploy, however, he regarded as intolerable. It threatened completely to undermine his position, since it proposed the placing of frontier markers on the left bank of the Amur. As for delimiting the border to the east, the Note treated that of secondary importance. And this

⁴²Russki Arkhiv, 1878, III, p. 275.

was the Note that had been sent allegedly in accordance with the decisions of April 22, 1853, when Muraviev had found himself in the ascendancy over Nesselrode and the anti-Amur faction. Its despatch had been delayed until June 16, when Muraviev had departed for his four-months' leave in Europe.⁴³

The Chinese received the Russian Note at the end of August, and took action with unaccustomed speed. Ying-lung, General of Heilung-chiang, was ordered to review the text of the Treaties of Nerchinsk and Kiakhta, and to proceed immediately to an investigation of the frontier. He reported that there should be no objection to the delimitation, and the Emperor, I-ting, decreed that procedures should be discussed with the Russians in the following spring.⁴⁴ In the meantime, officials were sent out to place boundary markers on the left bank of the Amur, beginning at the Gorbitsa, and the Tribunal sent an invitation to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send officials to join them.⁴⁵ At the same time, the Chinese sent a commission to Kiakhta, which arrived there in November, 1853. Reh binder, Russian city-governor of Kiakhta, having had no advance notice of these developments, immediately reported on this to Irkutsk, requesting full information, plans, documents, and other pertinent data.

Muraviev would have none of this. He immediately wrote Reh binder sternly enjoining him to abstain from any negotiations, and to tell the

⁴³Ibid., 1878, Bk. III, p. 276.

⁴⁴Ch'ou Pan I Wu Shih Mo, 7, p. 1B, cited by Qusted, op. cit., p. 39. This, the Chinese archive published in the 1930's, is the source drawn upon most extensively by Qusted. Hereinafter it is referred to by the abbreviation, IWSM.

⁴⁵Russki Arkhiv, 1878, Bk. III, p. 276.

Chinese that he could do nothing, having received no instructions from his superiors, and to fix no date for any meeting. He further instructed Rehbinders to let the Chinese know through unofficial channels that in order to proceed with any discussions about the border, it would be necessary for them to address themselves to General Muraviev, who was prepared to consider a proposal for a meeting at Irkutsk, or some other place in the Transbaikal. Rehbinders was to make clear to his Chinese counterparts that there was a Governor-General in command of all land and sea forces in the area, from the distant western frontier to the Pacific, and that matters of high moment had to be referred to him.⁴⁶

Available sources offer no explanation for the fact that Muraviev's action, which could be construed as countermanding the Tsar's orders (for Nesselrode had talked the Tsar into agreeing to the content of the Note to the Chinese) apparently elicited no rebuke whatever. It is possible, of course, that he had consulted one of his highly placed supporters, perhaps even the heir to the throne, before issuing his orders to Rehbinders; that, however, is speculation. It is a fact, however, that he did write the Emperor himself, pointing out what he considered to be the Foreign Ministry's double dealing and reporting the counteraction that he had already taken.⁴⁷

While Nesselrode's plans were being foiled by the resolute Governor-General, activities in the Transbaikal, on the River Shilka, and the Petrovskii iron works were proceeding apace. At Muraviev's insistence, P. V. Kazakevich was engaged in constructing a flat-bottomed steamer,

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 277.

financed by a donation from the millionaire merchant, E. A. Kuznetsov, to be called the "Argun". This was in anticipation of the Imperial permission to sail down the Amur. A steam engine for the "Argun" was being built at Petrovskii Zavod.⁴⁸ Muraviev had earlier initiated this in St. Petersburg, and had succeeded in having all necessary materials and equipment for such construction sent to Ekaterinburg. Thus began a ship-building industry in Eastern Siberia which later withered away for lack of support.

Muraviev, adjudging the Amur question to be one of Imperial importance, had hoped that central governmental resources would be allocated to support its resolution. He awaited the eventual allocation for this purpose of some percentage of the gold being mined in his area. He was severely disappointed, however. The maritime authorities made it plain that he would have to continue this type of development solely on the basis of local resources. He resigned himself to this, realizing that it would temporarily have an unfavorable effect on other sectors of the economy, but rationalizing this within the context of the great goals to be achieved later.⁴⁹

With the onset of the Crimean War, Muraviev became increasingly concerned over Russian defenses on the Pacific coast. In St. Petersburg, this initially was given no heed, understandably enough, since the government was facing a conflict in the west with powerful enemies. English and

⁴⁸A year later, officers of the frigate, "Diana", which had put in at Nikolaevsk, were amazed to see this steamboat, which had been built entirely, "even to the engine", at the headwaters of the Amur. (See N. G. Shilling, "Iz Vospomiananii Starogo Moriaka", Russki Arkhiv (1880), III, p. 145).

⁴⁹Barsukov, op. cit., p. 344.

French naval forces were perilously close to Eastern Siberia, however, and the defense of the coastline and Kamchatka, Muraviev knew, depended entirely on navigation of the Amur. Only thus could the military establishment on the Okhotsk coast and in Kamchatka be provided with reinforcements, supplies and munitions; overland communications would be fatally slow, if not utterly impossible. Even before first departing for Siberia, during Muraviev's final imperial audience, the Tsar had remarked to him, "Well, they'll take Kamchatka away from you and you will learn of it only six months later".⁵⁰

This was the historic moment for Russia to move in the East. Muraviev grasped it. In a long letter, on November 29, he urged on the Grand Duke Constantine the immediate necessity to send troops via the Amur for the defense of the mouth of the river and of Kamchatka. Since the central government's resources could not be diverted for this task, he requested permission to draw on all remaining balances of government revenues generated in Eastern Siberia. He pointed to the parlous condition of the Chinese Government, which had expended its strength and "no longer ruled over half of its realm", and urged that it be informed that it should "address itself to, and deal with the chief administrator and commander of troops in Eastern Siberia, to whom the Government has given appropriate instructions for all contingencies".⁵¹

Even as Muraviev was writing his letter to Constantine, the Special Amur Committee that had been studying proposals earlier submitted by

⁵⁰ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 344.

⁵¹ Ibid., II, pp. 104-109. My translation of this letter is at Appendix III.

Muraviev, made a favorable report to the Tsar. On January 11, he confirmed that Muraviev should be authorized to deal directly with the Chinese Tribunal on all matters concerning the frontier of Eastern Siberia and China. The Chinese were duly notified, and a diplomatic secretary and an interpreter were assigned to Muraviev. His request regarding allocation of revenue balances for support of activities on the Amur was also approved: he would be accountable for these only to the Tsar. Finally, after a number of heated debates, it was decided to navigate the Amur. This was to take place even in the absence of any reply to a note that would be sent to the Chinese Government proposing despatch of military reinforcements and supplies via the Amur to the coast and Kamchatka. In confirming this decision, the Tsar added the caution that "there must be no smell of gunpowder".⁵²

The Tsar's approval of the establishment of Nikolaevsk on the Amur had been Muraviev's first victory over the Nesselrode faction; here was his second. His repeated warnings of hostile British intentions had taken on added significance, now that war was erupting; the Tsar was as loathe to leave the mouth of the Amur to the British as was his Eastern Siberian proconsul. The Tsar had not yet acceded to Muraviev's desire to force a showdown on the frontier problem, but he had gone a long way in that direction. Implicit in the decision to navigate the Amur and to delegate powers to Muraviev regarding frontier questions, was a willingness to fling down the gauntlet before the distraught Chinese government.

Following his triumph in St. Petersburg, Muraviev arrived in

⁵²Russki Arkhiv, 1878, Bk. III, p. 277.

Krasnoiarsk at the end of February, 1854. From there he wrote to Constantine regarding the success of Nevelskoi's occupation of Sakhalin, and requested promotions and decorations for him and his men. He also reported his receipt of a letter from Putiatin in Nagasaki. The admiral, who had been echoing Nesselrode's line, had now reversed himself. His observation of the Americans in Japan had convinced him that "it would be prudent to concentrate Russian influence in Sakhalin and on the Amur".⁵³ At Krasnoiarsk, too, Muraviev received a progress report from Lieutenant Colonel Karsakov, indicating that the expedition down the Amur could take place as soon as the spring thaw set in.⁵⁴

News of the forthcoming Amur expedition stirred great enthusiasm throughout Eastern Siberia. The wealthy merchants, who were well aware of Muraviev's poor opinion of most of them, nevertheless now saw in him the champion of their own material interests, and pledged substantial sums for the expedition. And for the first time since his arrival in Siberia, Muraviev dined with the Merchant Society of Irkutsk.⁵⁵

Muraviev proceeded to Kiakhta on April 26, planning to stay there until May, in anticipation of a communication from the Chinese, whether or not it was received, he would set out on the Amur. The Chinese sent no word and on May 7, he was at Shilkinskii Zavod, where the steamer "Argun" was at anchor, together with a flotilla of river boats, barges and rafts. Here, too, was the bivouac of a composite battalion with

⁵³Barsukov, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 350. He had not yet learned of Nevelskoi's occupation of Anniwa Bay.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Struve, op. cit., p. 174.

artillery that had been mustered for the expedition. Muraviev's military commanders from outlying areas and civil notables were gathered to see him off in gala manner. May 9 was a holiday marked by the bread and salt ceremony and fireworks, grandiloquent speeches, versifying, and symbolic statues. On May 14, the expedition was blessed with the Madonna of Albazin, and amid shouts of "ourah" from the population on the banks, the expedition moved out with Muraviev's craft in the lead.⁵⁶ On the evening of May 17, the expedition approached Ust'-Strelka, where the Shilka joins the Amur, and on the following day, with bands playing "God Save the Tsar", the expedition entered the Amur. On May 20, they were at Albazin, and on the 28th, they reached the mouth of the Zeia.

Muraviev had sent messengers overland to inform the Chinese governor of Aigun of the expedition's impending arrival. That official was paralyzed with fright. He had had no word from his government concerning the expedition, and no instructions of any sort, but he attempted to explain to Muraviev why it would be impossible to permit him to proceed down the river. The sight of the steamer, which they had never before beheld, and of the rest of the flotilla and the soldiery, so frightened the Manchurian officials that they wished for nothing but the departure of the Russians who, to their relief, did not tarry.⁵⁷

The passage through Aigun had been the critical point of the expedition, for Aigun was the only Chinese strongpoint of any significance on the Amur; if there had been any intention on the part of the Chinese to offer armed resistance to the Russians, it would have taken place there.

⁵⁶ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 368.

⁵⁷ Ibid., I, p. 370.

That such resistance was out of the question must have been abundantly clear to Muraviev when he saw the ludicrous Aigun garrison drawn up on the shore of the river. It consisted of some 1,000 shabbily clad peasants, "armed" with sharp ended poles and bows and arrows, with here and there among them an occasional antiquated matchlock.⁵⁸ There is good reason to believe, however, that the Chinese Government was taken completely by surprise. It will be recalled that Muraviev was authorized in January of 1854, to deal directly with the Chinese Government on all matters concerning the Amur. At that time, when the decision to go ahead with the expedition was taken, it was decided to communicate that decision to the Chinese Government. Muraviev waited until April to send the Government of China a Note from Irkutsk, informing it that he proposed to take troops down the Amur to the Pacific coast, as a preventive measure against hostile powers.⁵⁹ The Chinese did not receive this message until July, so that the first that the Manchu Emperor, I-Ting, learned of the expedition was when the Generals of Heilungchiang and Kirin memorialized that it had passed Aigun.⁶⁰ I-Ting, in reply to his generals, observed that the Russian claim that their expedition was meant to counter the British threat "cannot entirely be believed", but that if the Russians really created no disturbances, "it seems unworthy to put obstacles in their way". The commander at Aigun was ordered to alert his troops - - but no mention was made of sending him any reinforcements.⁶¹

⁵⁸Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 119.

⁵⁹Barsukov, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 114-115.

⁶⁰IWSM, 8, p. 4 B, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 46.

⁶¹Quested, op. cit., p. 46.

Only on July 24, 1854, did Archimandrite Palladii complete a translation of Muraviev's note that had been passed to him by the Secretariat of the Chinese Grand Council. It is possible that Muraviev had deliberately dispatched it so late that it would be impossible for the Chinese to prepare to take measures to oppose him; or it may simply have been delayed by the vagaries of the postal service in Mongolia.⁶²

From Aigun onwards the banks of the river were deserted, with the exception of occasional sparse settlements of a few huts. The inhabitants of these little villages as far down the river as its confluence with the Ussuri, fled at the approach of the Russians, for they had been instructed by the Chinese authorities at Tstitsigar to avoid encounters with the Russians, not to hire themselves out as guides and, significantly, to avoid the left bank of the Amur.⁶³

Muraviev's expedition proceeded serenely down the river to the Bureia confluence and past the mouths of the Sungari and the Ussuri, with no untoward incident. Two hundred versts below the Ussuri, a storm came up that was so violent as to result in the foundering of a barge laden with supplies. These were recovered and dried out on an island in the river. It was at this point in its progress that the expedition, on June 10, met with a small boat carrying a Russian naval officer, Ensign Zagradskii, who informed them that they were still some 500 versts from Marinskii Post. Nevelskoi had sent a message with him requesting a de-

⁶²IWSM, p. 25A, cited by Quested, who also cites Russki Arkhiv, Vol. 2, 1914, recording that some new instructions awaited by Palladii took from March 18 to July 5 to go from Kiakhta to Peking in that same year.

⁶³Zapiski Sibiri, otd. RGO, t. III, (Irkutsk, 1857), pp. 63-64, cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 162.

tachment of a hundred cossacks from the expedition for stationing at the mouth of the Khutari River, for maintenance of communications with Imperatorskaia Gavan' [Emperor's Harbor]. Muraviev complied with this request, and on June 14, arrived at Marinskii Post at the mouth of the Amur.

From Marinskii, Muraviev sent 350 troops to Petropavlovsk on the transports, "Dvina", and "Irtysh", and sent the rest via the Amur to Nikolaevsk. He also detailed a sub-lieutenant and two hundred men to build a road through a virgin forest of 100-year old trees from Marinskii Post to de Castries Bay, as a line of communication and supply for Russian vessels at de Castries. It was a brutal task for the detachment, with inadequate equipment and short rations. The young officer and his exhausted men were more than once tempted to give up and return, but the knowledge that Muraviev's wrath would face them if they did so spurred them on to the completion of their task.⁶⁴

Muraviev sent Karsakov to St. Petersburg to report on the successful conclusion of the expedition, and then proceeded to de Castries Bay. Here he took the schooner, "Vostok", to Imperatorskaia Gavan', where Admiral Putiatin was awaiting him to confer on orders from St. Petersburg to bring Russian shipping from Japan to safe haven at the mouth of the Amur. Muraviev then reconnoitered the adjacent posts and other points on the Amur estuary, and issued orders for defensive deployments and fortifications.

When Karsakov arrived in St. Petersburg with the tidings of the first expedition down the Amur, he was met by an emissary of the Officer

⁶⁴Istoricheskii Vestnik, t. XXXVI, 1889, pp. 647-648, cited by Ibid., p. 164.

of the Day at General Headquarters, who insisted that there was no time for him to take a brief rest, to bathe and to change from his shabby traveling clothes; Dolgoruki, the Minister of War, was impatiently awaiting an immediate briefing. Accordingly, Karsakov proceeded directly to the Ministry of War and there delivered Muraviev's written report to Dolgoruki, who thereupon sent Karsakov to report to the Grand Duke Alexander at Tsarskoe Selo, and to the Grand Duke Constantine in Strelna.⁶⁵

"So now", said the Tsarevich, reading the end of Muraviev's report, "we have a firm foothold on the Amur!" And then, reading Muraviev's comment that all the credit belonged to Nevelskoi, Kazakevich and Karsakov, he exclaimed, "Did Muraviev forget himself? He should have all the credit! Tomorrow morning I shall present you to the Emperor."⁶⁶ On the following morning, the Tsar greeted Karsakov with an enthusiastic embrace, and issued orders that all members of the expedition be promoted, decorated, or otherwise rewarded. Karsakov was promoted to colonel, Nevelskoi to rear admiral, and Kazakevich to captain first class. Similar promotions went to lower-ranking officers, and the troops received three silver rubles per man.⁶⁷ In a happy letter to his brother, Valerian, Muraviev wrote that everything was finally on the right track, but that the way would still be hard, because there were many in St. Petersburg who were against him. He also wrote Karsakov to tell him that there was so much to be attended to in Irkutsk that he could not spare the time to go to St. Petersburg personally to receive citations, etc. . . for the Amur exploit. He added that his presence in Siberia would probably be

⁶⁵Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 384.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 386.

required for another six years, and that he was prepared to make this sacrifice for Russia.⁶⁸

III. PARALYSIS OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

Muraviev had evidently taken the measure of the Chinese Government much more accurately than had Nesselrode. This might have been due, in part, to the useful intelligence being provided by Archimandrite Palladii of the Orthodox Mission in Peking, though why it did not equally impress the nervous Nesselrode, to whom it was also available, is not clear.

Some of Palladii's earlier reporting has already been noted. Now, on July 9, 1854, this priest-turned-political-analyst and agent, reported that there had been a meeting of the Grand Council to consider relations with Russia. At this meeting, the Emperor's younger brother had taken a pro-Russian stance, pointing to the peace that had existed with Russia since 1689, and to the fact that the Tsar had placed a ban on the export of opium to China. Palladii expressed the opinion that the Chinese would maintain a passive attitude in the face of Russia's designs on the Amur.⁶⁹

The Archimandrite was also not above indulging in a little psychological warfare on his own. During the summer of 1854, he worked hard at spreading the belief - - which already existed in some Chinese governmental quarters - - that the British were supporting the Taiping rebels, while the Russian Government stood behind the Manchus. There was a measure of truth in the latter part of this contention, at least insofar as

⁶⁸ Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 386-387.

⁶⁹ Russki Arkhiv, Vol. 3, 1914, p. 16.

Muraviev was concerned, for in the spring of the year he had formed a project to offer Russian military assistance against the rebels. In pursuit of this idea, he had attempted to send a staff officer, Colonel A. I. Zaborinskii via the Amur and Sungari across Manchuria to Peking for the purpose of initiating negotiations, as well as for the purpose of reconnoitering the Sungari area.⁷⁰ He had sent a Note to the Tribunal requesting it to accept his emissary, and Palladii had followed this up, but to no avail. In one of his reports to Muraviev concerning his efforts, Palladii added that foreign relations in Peking were being conducted so secretively that even the Tribunal, the normal agency for the conduct of foreign affairs, was being kept in the dark by the Grand Council. He also reported that Shanghai and the entire southern portion of the Middle Kingdom was in the hands of the insurgents. The position of the Manchu regime was clearly rapidly deteriorating. At the same time, the Chinese Government, so ignorant of the outside world, was fearfully handicapped by its attempts to assess the degree of the Russian threat and of Russian capabilities. Thus, Palladii reported, in the summer of 1854, a rumor had spread throughout the capital that a Russian flotilla of 120 (!) vessels had smashed the British naval forces in the China Sea.⁷¹

While the Russians had hardly any naval forces worth mentioning, either in the China Sea or elsewhere, they did have their defenses at Petropavlovsk, organized and reinforced by Muraviev. These were to provide

⁷⁰ A. I. Zaborinskii, "Graf Muraviev-Amurskii, v. 1849-1856, g." Russkaia Starina, v. 38, p. 626.

⁷¹ Russki Arkhiv, Vol. 3, 1914, p. 17.

a Russian victory in this remote theater of the Crimean War. An Anglo-French squadron of seven vessels anchored on August 18, 1854, at the entrance to the Gulf of Avacha. Following a four-day bombardment by the ships' 204 guns against 57 Russian ones, the allies disembarked some 700 men. The Russian coastal batteries had been silenced, but their field pieces supported a garrison, including temporarily enlisted civilians, of something under a thousand men. A fierce battle ensued culminating in a bayonet charge by Muraviev's newly created Transbaikal Cossacks, which drove the enemy back to the sea. Under cover of their ships' guns, the British and French escaped in their landing boats, leaving four officers and thirty-four enlisted men dead on the field. Four men and a British flag were captured; the Russians had lost thirty-one dead and eighty-four wounded. The Anglo-French force made no further attempt to land, and three days later sailed for the open sea.⁷²

Shortly after the victory, Muraviev learned from St. Petersburg that there was a popular outcry in England and France, demanding that another attempt be made to take the port. He thereupon ordered the evacuation of Petropavlovsk, presumably because there was no prospect of quickly replacing the destroyed coastal batteries and of sending sufficient munitions and supplies there.⁷³

On October 30, 1854, Muraviev sent a Note to the Chinese Government

⁷²Semyonov, op. cit., p. 279. Ravenstein gives a good description of the battle and detailed accounts are to be found in A. P. Arbuzov's "Oborona Petropavlovskago Port' a v godu 1854 protiv Anglo-Frantsuzkoi eskadry", Russkaja Starina, Vol. I, pp. 298-313, and in P. V. Shumacher's "Oborona Kamchatki i Vostochnoi Sibiri protiv Anglo-Frantsuzov v 1854 i 1855 godakh", in Russki Arkhiv (1878), Vol. II, pp. 393-425.

⁷³Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 387.

informing it of the successful conclusion of the first Russian expedition down the Amur. In an edict of January, 1855, the Manchu Emperor commented that "This note lacked sincerity", and expressed his conviction that "the Russian barbarians have some intentions of which they do not speak openly".⁷⁴ In that month, too, the Li-fan-yuan sent a Note denying Muraviev's request to send Zaborinskii to Peking, whereupon Muraviev dropped the matter.⁷⁵ In this same note, the Chinese requested that Russian representatives be sent to Urga to undertake a delimitation of the frontier. A month later, the Chinese Governor at Urga, Prince Te-le-k'e-tuo-er-chi, unaware of the Note, informed Rehbindar, the Russian city-governor of Kiakhta, that Chinese representatives wished to meet the Russians on the Gorbitsa River for the delimitation.⁷⁶

At this point, Muraviev obviously decided to take advantage of the confusion and hesitancy within the Chinese Government evinced by these conflicting communications. Of primary concern to him now was the further consolidation of the Russian position on the Amur; negotiations could wait upon a stronger fait accompli. He thereupon sent a Note on February 18, 1855, as follows:

The English in the summer of the past year descended with six (sic) vessels on our Kamchatka, but were repulsed and sent away. Our great Lord and Emperor, concerned not only with his realms and his people, but desirous of preserving the welfare of the neighboring Dai-Tsing power, with whom we have had friendly relations for over 200 years, in a recently issued ukaz, has ordered me, as Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, to take a sufficient number of troops,

⁷⁴IWSM, p. 12 B, cited by Quested, ob. cit., p. 49.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 13 A.

⁷⁶Russki Arkhiv, 1878, Vol. III, p. 279.

heavy and light artillery and other supplies and munitions and, as soon as the River opens, to proceed to the sea and destroy the crafty, selfish English. Fulfilling the will of my Sovereign, I am obliged to undertake an expedition to the mouth of the Amur; if it suits the Tribunal to send a reply to this communication to the mouth of the Amur, I shall be happy to take up delimitation of the frontier there.⁷⁷

On March 16, Muraviev's Note reached the Manchu Emperor, who replied with a note in early April, asking Muraviev to go to Urga and from there, with the Chinese delegates, to proceed to the Gorbitsa.⁷⁸

The Chinese made no preparations to offer resistance to Muraviev's second expedition. Indeed, the enfeebled Chinese regime could do nothing to oppose it - - but it could not quite bring itself to lose face even with its own officials. Thus, when the new General of Heilungchiang, I-ko, reported on the first Russian expedition down the Amur and sought instructions for dealing with any repetition, the Emperor gave him the following edict:

Russia in its communications with other nations, should, of course, take the outer sea route and cannot be permitted to go through the interior of our country. But during the fifth month of the year, (1854), the vessels of the said country were given passage. If their return should be blocked, they would have a pretext for raising further complications. I-ko is hereby ordered to keep a constant inspection and watch. Should those vessels of the said country, which lately made the passage, sail back along the Heilung River, they are to be allowed to return without hindrance, provided no disturbance is created in the regions they pass through. If there should be more vessels coming down and they are not those which made the passage previously, they should be told that the rivers in the interior of our country cannot be used for passage of foreign vessels, and that they decidedly shall not navigate on the Heilung River, so as not to engender misunderstandings.⁷⁹

⁷⁷Barsukov, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 123-124.

⁷⁸Quoted, op. cit., p. 50.

⁷⁹Ibid.

Quested points out the meagreness of the resources at the disposal of the Chinese in the area of Muraviev's activities, by citing a memorial from the General of Kirin, Ching-shun, which reached the throne in the spring of 1855. It reported that the total force to be put out for the frontier delimitation from Heilungchiang and Kirin provinces, and from Urga, would consist of some 400 men, but that their food, equipment, and pay would have to be covered by borrowing from reserve funds; otherwise, it would be impossible to keep them in field conditions.⁸⁰ Muraviev was undoubtedly aware of the general situation that this reflected. In a letter of March 23, 1855, Palladii had informed him that the Taiping rebels were tightening their hold in the south, that Hankow, Nanking, and Shanghai were in their hands and that they had cut the government's line of communications in central China. He had also reported the Chinese Government's continuing and mounting financial distress.⁸¹

Muraviev replied to the Chinese Note of April with one on May 8, stating that because of the military situation, he would prefer to meet the Chinese representatives for preliminary discussions at the mouth of the Amur, where he would be until September. He expressed agreement as to the undesirability of delaying the matter.⁸²

⁸⁰IWSM 10, p. 24 B, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 51.

⁸¹Russki Arkhiv, 1914, p. 22.

⁸²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 420.

CHAPTER V

THE ACTIVATION OF RUSSIAN POLICY

I. THE ROUT OF NESSELRODE

As Muraviev set out on the second expedition down the Amur, the Chinese Government sent out a protest against his activities. It was couched in cautious terms similar to those employed in the Emperor's edict to the General of Heilungchiang, and avoided any threatening statements. At the end of May, 1855, the Chinese Emperor, having received Muraviev's Note sent on the eve of his second expedition, replied with a further and even more cautious protest. This one stated that Russian navigation of the Amur could be allowed only by mutual arrangement with the Russian Senate and the Li-fan-yuan - - an important concession of principle.¹ I-ting also sent instructions to the Generals of Kirin and Heilungchiang ordering them not to resist the Russian vessels, but "merely to instruct them not to cause a disturbance".² In a letter to Muraviev at this time, Palladii hastened to point out the progressively milder tone of the Chinese Notes which, in any case, could not have been lost on Muraviev.³ Matters were now proceeding entirely to his satisfaction.

¹IWSM, 10, p. 37 B, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 52.

²IWSM, 10, p. 37 A, cited in Ibid., p. 52.

³Russki Arkhiv, 1914, p. 504.

The second Amur expedition was organized in three echelons. The first consisted of twenty-six vessels under Muraviev's personal command. The second included sixty-four barges under Colonel Nazimov, with the 15th line battalion of infantry. The third was made up of thirty-five barges under the command of Colonel Korsakov. It included additional regular infantry and cossacks, as well as heavy fortress artillery for the strengthening of the Nikolaevsk defenses. These guns, brought from Ekaterinburg, had presented a tremendous overland transportation problem, requiring up to sixty horses each. Their weight occasionally broke through the bottoms of the barges, causing them to sink; in portions of the river where there were no trees on the banks, the problem of raising them presented agonizing difficulties.

These three echelons represented a military force of some 2,500 men.⁴ The third echelon of the expedition also contained the first group of scientists on the Amur, made up of members of the Siberian branch of the Imperial Geographic Society, whose expenses were being financed by 18 pounds of gold contributed by the merchant, Stepan Soloviev. Included too, under the care of Muraviev's special assistant, Volkonskii, were the first settlers from Irkutsk and the Transbaikal, peasants who would be making their homes in Mariinsk and Nikolaevsk. Muraviev had arranged for their recruitment by offering them a number of privileges. These included freedom from obligatory military service, movement of their household goods at government expense, provision of free government rations for two years and 'of fifty rubles' worth of tools and agricultural

⁴Quested, op. cit., p. 51, citing Nevelskoi.

implements per family.⁵

The settlers, four hundred and eighty-one men, women and children, traveled on twelve barges, with accompanying barges carrying their cattle. Additional barges were loaded with fodder, needed because there was to be no stopping for pasturage.

The Amur pioneers suffered considerable hardship. The rapid current of the Shilka made it impossible to transfer fodder to the barges transporting the cattle, with the result that by the time Albazin was reached almost three hundred of them had died. A greater misery then attacked the unfortunate peasants: typhus spread among them despite the "most favorable hygienic conditions, mild spring weather, covered barges, hot meals with meat, fresh vegetables, tea and a daily ration of vodka".⁶ Despite these tribulations, on arrival at Marinskii Post there were only two dead, while there had been four births en route. Nevelskoi had picked out a number of locations for settlement, but Volkonskii insisted on inspecting them first, together with some of the peasant elders. Only one of the initially chosen sites turned out to be satisfactory, and eventually five locations were picked: Irkutskoe, Bogorodskoe, Mihailovskoe, Nov-Mihailovskoe and Sergeivskoe. Of these, four were on the right bank of the Amur. Despite ample food supplies and decent living conditions in general, typhus raged through these settlements throughout the following winter, abating only with the onset of spring weather. This, remarks Barsukov, illustrated the widely held contention, "even in England", that the first generation of settlers always suffers casualties

⁵Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 417-418.

⁶Ibid., I, p. 419.

and it is only the second that obtains the full benefits of colonisation.⁷

While proceeding by the Kumarskii Post on the Amur on May 12, the expedition encountered four junks bearing the Chinese officials who had been sent to Gorbitsa for the setting up of boundary markers and frontier negotiations. Muraviev explained to them that it was essential for him to reach the mouth of the river without delay and suggested that they return to their base at Sakhalin-Ula-Khoton and await further instructions from Peking. They replied that they dared not fail to carry out the orders of their Emperor. Muraviev thereupon gave them protective passes to be shown to his military commanders and proceeded down the river.⁸

On May 15, Muraviev's officials sent a Note to the Chinese governor of Sakhalin-Ula announcing that Governor-General Muraviev was on his way to the Eastern Ocean in order to defend the mouth of the Amur against the English; that accompanying him were one hundred and four⁹ vessels, including a steamer; that three steamers would shortly be sailing back up the Amur; and that the expedition was comprised of over 8,000 men, women and children. The vessels, the Note stated, bore cannon, other arms, gunpowder and all manner of war materials. It was requested that they not be held up.¹⁰

Muraviev, following his meeting with the Chinese officials at Kumarskii Post, stopped at Aigun to call on the Chinese commander there. In a subsequent report to Emperor Alexander II, he communicated his impression that the Chinese Government had obviously ordered the commander at

⁷Barsukov, op.cit., I, p. 419.

⁸Russki Arkhiv, 1878, Vol. III, p. 280.

⁹Barsukov's account, supra, indicated a total of one hundred and twenty-five; the reason for the discrepancy is not clear.

¹⁰Barsukov, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 423.

Aigun to permit free passage for the Russian vessels. The commander had also intimated that future navigation on the Amur "would not be allowed without special permission from the Chinese Emperor". Muraviev further reported that he had parted from the Aigun commander on the friendliest terms and had assured him that nothing would be undertaken without the consent of the Chinese Emperor, toward whom the Russian Emperor's friendship remained unchanged. On leaving, Muraviev had given valuable presents to the Aigun commander and his officials.¹¹

Count Nesselrode now saw that the Amur question was passing beyond his control. He nevertheless made one last effort. On May 31, he wrote Grand Duke Constantine that he doubted that the Chinese would give up the left bank of the Amur without going to war¹². . . this in the face of the abundant evidence of Chinese impotence! Muraviev, however, had made a firm decision that if the Chinese, on the basis of the Foreign Ministry's Note of June 16, 1853, should demand the setting up of the boundary markers from the Gorbitsa, he would refuse. He would state that he had no orders to this effect from the Tsar, that there was no point in doing so, since the Amur constituted a natural boundary and that he had so reported to the Tsar. He would then tell the Chinese that he was awaiting orders to undertake such negotiations as might prove possible and convenient to both parties, keeping particularly in mind the defense of the river from the enemy.¹³

Muraviev's unremitting arguments and efforts were finally bearing

¹¹Barsukov, *op. cit.*, II, p. 130.

¹²Barsukov, *op. cit.*, I, p. 424.

¹³Schumacher, in Russki Arkhiv, 1878, Vol. III, p. 280.

fruit. In July, Grand Duke Constantine wrote him that the Tsar had reached the decision that in the interests of the development of Siberia, Russia must have the entire left bank of the Amur, as well as the right to free trade in the northern regions of the Chinese Empire.¹⁴ Muraviev was to be entrusted with negotiating a treaty with China.

II. THE PRIAMUR IS TAKEN

The Emperor I-ting, having learned that Muraviev had gone on to Marinskii Post without carrying out the frontier delimitation from the Gorbitsa, ordered his officials to hasten down the river after him.¹⁵ On the following day the first negotiations on the Amur commenced. Muraviev, who was not well, delegated responsibility to Rear-Admiral Zavoiko, who informed the Chinese delegates that the Russian Government was determined to organize the defense of the Amur against foreigners, in order to insure the security of the Eastern Siberian hinterland. The lower reaches of the Amur, he announced, were occupied by the Russians and were Russian possessions, while the lands lying east of the Amur were still undelimited.

Zavoiko went on to say that the Russian Emperor had ordered Muraviev to establish a force of upwards of 100,000 troops¹⁶ in the region entrusted to him, in view, on the one hand, of the necessity of preserving and defending the Amur, and, on the other, of the disorders that had recently arisen in the Chinese Empire. He also served notice that the

¹⁴Ibid., p. 281.

¹⁵IWSM, 11, p. 1 B et seq., cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 53.

¹⁶Muraviev was obviously convinced of the gullibility of the Chinese and of the non-existence of their intelligence services.

defense of the Amur, entailing enormous outlays by Russia, could not be merely a temporary measure.¹⁷

On the following day, Muraviev spelled out Zavoiko's initially stated position by stating that all places occupied by the Russians for the purpose of defending the mouth of the Amur - - and the entire Amur maritime area, should remain permanently in Russia's possession and that the Russians would need permanent settlements all along the river's left bank. He demanded, too, that the Chinese recognize the right of the Russians to navigate the Amur and suggested that the Fei-ya-ha and certain other tribes owing allegiance to the Chinese and inhabiting the area claimed by Russia could be re-settled elsewhere in China.¹⁸ The Chinese representatives replied on September 11 that they had no authority to negotiate these points; they then read out the contents of the Russian Note of June 16, 1853, which, they pointed out, clearly indicated that the Russian Government wished to preserve the frontier of 1689. Muraviev's rejoinder was that simultaneously with the sending of that communication, the Tsar had ordered him first to hold discussions on the undelimited areas and only afterwards to proceed to the actual boundary demarcations.¹⁹ He concluded by asking the Chinese delegation to inform its Government that the main purpose of the Russian Government was the preservation of peace between Russia and China for all time. He then

¹⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 428.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid. There is no available record to indicate that Muraviev in fact had received such instructions; it seems that he resorted to this line as the most convenient way to counter the effect of the Note of June 16, 1853, which, as has been noted, was sent by the Foreign Ministry during his absence abroad.

put the Chinese representatives on notice that since it was wartime, he was obliged to send a third expedition down the Amur in the following spring, in order further to strengthen the Russian defenses and to improve communications with the interior.²⁰ Following this meeting, Muraviev sent a Note to the Tribunal covering these points. At the same time, he wrote the Grand Duke Constantine, requesting him to have the Russian Senate address the Tribunal in similar terms, so that it would be quite plain that he was acting on orders from the highest authority; otherwise, in view of the Note of June 16, 1853, the Chinese might conclude that the Russian Senate saw things differently from the way Muraviev did.²¹

The Emperor I-ting, having received a report of the abortive discussions at Marinskii Post, sent instructions to his representatives to refuse Muraviev's demands, with the exception that they might consent to temporary continuation of Russian operations at Marinskii Post while the Russians defended the area against the English. At the same time, he expressed the opinion that the "Russians' hearts are unfathomable and we fear that their nature is like that of dogs and sheep (bestial), so that it will be difficult to talk reasonably with them".²² Shortly afterwards, the Chinese Emperor received a report from the Kirin General, Ching-shun, to the effect that the Russians had erected "nearly a hundred" buildings at Marinskii Post, and that earthworks, palisades and gun emplacements had been built; Ching-shun concluded his report by stating that it was obvious that the Russians intended to seize the

²⁰Ibid., p. 429.

²¹Ibid., p. 430.

²²IWSM, 12, p. 9 B, cited by Quesed, op. cit., p. 53.

area.²³ In early December, 1855, the Emperor repeated that the left bank of the Amur could not be yielded to Russia, and ordered his three Northern Frontier generals, Te-le-k'e-tuo-er-chi, I-ko, and Ching-shun, to send Muraviev a joint Note so stating, for transmission to the Russian Senate. The generals were instructed to state in this Note that they dared not transmit Muraviev's claims to the Emperor in Peking, apparently a ploy meant to impress the Russian Government that China might react violently "if such claims were presented to the Emperor".²⁴

During the fall of 1855, Muraviev had been continuing to take measures to strengthen the Russian position at the mouth of the Amur.²⁵ He had buildings constructed for the 47th Fleet Equipage, had additional batteries set up at several locations, and expanded his troops' winter quarters. Nikolaevsk, which two years earlier had been little more than an empty space in the wilderness, was now the center of Russian forces on the Pacific. Three separate forts were being constructed there, with fifty-three pieces of artillery.²⁶ The need for these precautions was

²³Quested, op. cit., p. 54.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵At this time, too, Russo-Chinese relations were further complicated by an incident in Sinkiang. Some five to six hundred "vagrants", subjects of the Chinese Emperor, plundered and burnt down a Russian warehouse in the town of Tarbagatai. Six hundred Chinese and Manchu troops were sent to the area and later reported that the ringleaders had been captured and sentenced to 100 strokes of the heavy bamboo cane, followed by exile "if they survived". The Russian Government demanded compensation for the losses suffered by its subjects, but the nearly bankrupt Chinese Government refused to pay. Correspondence between the two governments continued for almost five years on this matter, which became a factor of some importance in eventual treaty negotiations between them. (See Quested, op. cit., p. 55).

²⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 433.

evinced by the presence in the Sea of Okhotsk of some twenty-two French and thirty-four English vessels. These, however, failed to deal any serious blow to the Russians during this period, beyond capturing the Russian-American Company's mail ship, the "Sitka", and setting fire to a fish warehouse in Petropavlovsk.²⁷ The Chinese were now aware of the impressive Russian build-up, but could do nothing, as Muraviev learned from Palladii, who reported that one of the Emperor's ministers had stated that Russian fortifications on the Amur would be intolerable - - but that at the same time, it would be impossible to enter into active hostilities with Russia on such a pretext.²⁸

On October 30, 1855, while en route back from Ayan to Irkutsk, Muraviev wrote to his commander in the Transbaikal, Colonel Zaborinskii, telling him to commence preparations for the third expedition down the Amur. He added that should the Chinese object to the expedition, it would be necessary to demonstrate Russian power and readiness to move into Mongolia and Manchuria.²⁹ What probably prompted this observation - - in the face of Palladii's reports from Peking - - was the continuing rumor, being spread by Chinese merchants, that the Chinese Government was determined to resist another Russian expedition and was sending troops for that purpose from the south to the Amur region.³⁰ As a countermove in this psychological warfare, Muraviev sent his assistant, Volkonskii, to Urga ostensibly as a "courier", but in fact to bring an oral message to the

²⁷Ibid., p. 436.

²⁸Russki Arkhiv, No. 10, 1914.

²⁹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 438.

³⁰Ibid., I, p. 441.

amban there, expressing Muraviev's appreciation for the cooperation of the Aigun commander during the passage of the second Amur expedition. He was to state, if the conversation gave him an appropriate opening, that Muraviev was calling in enormous forces from all parts of Eastern Siberia, since he considered that the enemy would be strengthening his own; Volkonskii was then to deliver expressions of the highest esteem and sentiments of friendliness for the Chinese Government. He was also to remark that Muraviev was prepared to help China against anyone, English or French, should the Chinese Government request such help from his Government. Volkonskii was instructed, furthermore, to sound out the Chinese on their opinion and understandings about the current war, about the Russians and Russia's enemies, and to instill suspicion of the English, who had seized India, "a land no less great than China". He was also to inform the amban that Muraviev was departing briefly from Eastern Siberia, for a personal meeting with the Tsar in St. Petersburg, where Volkonskii was shortly to join him. Finally, he was to determine the accuracy of the rumours that China intended to oppose the third Amur expedition and was concentrating military forces to that end. He was to carry out these instructions with the utmost speed, "even at the cost of ignoring established rules of Chinese etiquette", and then to travel directly to St. Petersburg, where Muraviev was now proceeding.³¹

Volkonskii's mission to Urga, where he was assisted by extremely friendly Mongolian and Manchurian officials, revealed that no Chinese military preparations were being made to resist another Russian move down

³¹Ibid., p. 442-443.

the Amur.³² How correct his information was is revealed by a memorial to the throne by the Kirin General, Ching-shun, received by the Chinese Emperor on February 2, 1856. Ching-shun reported that he could not ascertain whether the British and French had been attacking the Russians on the coast, since the area in question was "too far away from our military posts". Except for the Lower Amur, where the Fei-ya-ha and He-che tribes lived, the area was a remote wilderness, with "places where no one has been". Apart from the Marinskii Post, he was not certain what points were occupied by the Russians. On the military situation, Ching-shun reported that "the troops in Heilungchiang Province are certainly not many and provisions are scarce". Kirin, too, had few provisions and the soldiers there were few. There were 800 soldiers at Sanhsing, Ninguta and Hunchun respectively; the allotted number of troops for Kirin Province was 10,105, but 7,000 had been transferred to other parts of China, and of these only 800 had returned. Ching-shun urgently requested 2,000 men to reinforce the garrisons at Sanhsing, Ninguta and Hunchun, but the Emperor, preoccupied with the rebellion in the south, declined to send them.³³

Shortly before Muraviev's arrival in St. Petersburg, the Russian Foreign Ministry received the Note from the Governors of Kirin, Heilungchiang, and Urga that the Emperor, I-Ting, had ordered them to send. (See above, p. 155). Referring to the Foreign Ministry's Note of June 16, 1853, (the one to which Muraviev had taken such violent exception), the Note stated: "We sent out officials, but your Governor-General, for

³²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 444.

³³IWSM, 12, p. 24 A, cited by Quedstedt, op. cit., p. 58.

purposes of defense against attacks by the English fleet, occupied several towns and settlements on the Sungari River which have been paying tribute to our Emperor. Muraviev is definitely not concerned with maintaining the friendly agreement and peace of two hundred years' standing, and we therefore request that you explain matters to Muraviev."³⁴ The Note also contained the statement (in accordance with the instructions of the Chinese Emperor) that the Governors "did not dare" memorialize Muraviev's demands to the Emperor. This evidently did succeed in causing some concern within the Foreign Ministry, which decided that Russian claims should be limited to free navigation on the Amur only.³⁵ Alexander II ordered postponement of any reply to the Chinese Note until receipt of a reply to a Russian Note claiming compensation for the Tarbagatai ware-house that had been sent on December 14, 1855. Muraviev, however, on arriving in St. Petersburg, convinced the Tsar that the Foreign Ministry's decision should be rejected irrespective of the Chinese position on the Tarbagatai incident. He obtained full authority to negotiate a treaty with the Chinese Government.

The Tsar ordered that navigation on the Amur be continued, and that artillery and arms be offered the Chinese as compensation. He cautioned that resort to force be avoided, or at least that it be employed only in order to free any Russian prisoners who might be seized by the Chinese, he pointed out that under such circumstances, "rapid and decisive measures" would be preferable to becoming involved in lengthy correspondence which, by Chinese custom, would be dragged out for years.³⁶

³⁴Russki Arkhiv, 1878, Vol. III, p. 284.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 446.

Muraviev immediately sent instructions to Irkutsk to organize for the next expedition. Following detailed instructions concerning various aspects of the preparations, including the use of a small steamer delivered from America, he clearly spelled out the need for firmness in the face of any objections that might be voiced by Chinese officials, and instructed his staff to explain to them that the Russian Senate had sent a written communication regarding the expedition to the Tribunal. They were, furthermore, to point out that Russian navigation on the Amur would be an annual event, despite the conclusion of the Crimean War.³⁷

Muraviev prolonged his stay in St. Petersburg in order to obtain full particulars on the peace settlement, and to gather information on the important changes in the upper echelons of the Government that were expected following the end of the war. He knew that Nesselrode, Dolgorouki and Brok would be replaced, and was anxious to learn with whom he would be dealing in the future. The third expedition, therefore, would be proceeding down the Amur without him, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Busse, while Muraviev would depart for Marienbad to take the waters, since his health was again failing him. Before leaving St. Petersburg, he ordered the despatch from Irkutsk of two Notes to the Chinese. The first, which reached I-Ting on February 26, asserted that if Russian troops remained in the Amur area they would be "very strictly controlled"; the second firmly announced that a new expedition was to take place.³⁸ Upon receipt of Muraviev's second Note, I-Ting issued two edicts, one stating that the Russian expedition could not be permitted,

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 447-448.

³⁸ IWSM 12, p. 27 B and IWSM 13, p. 7 B, cited by Qusted, op. cit., p. 59.

the other ordering Te-l-k'e-tuo-er-chi to take "strict precautionary measures", and not to allow the Russians "to cause trouble", if they did come again in force.³⁹

Prior to embarkation of the third expedition, Karsakov came to Aigun and was met by Chinese officials, who offered him their hospitality, but said they had no instructions regarding permission for navigation of the river. They said they would nevertheless interpose no objection, even though this might cause trouble with their Government. They asked, however, that there be no stations established on the way. Karsakov replied that he had to establish such stations on Muraviev's orders, and suggested that for their self-protection, they inform the Chinese Government of this.⁴⁰

The communications from Muraviev preparing the Chinese for the third Amur expedition, the Chinese Emperor's edicts and the bearing of the Chinese officials at Aigun were all clearly the components of an elaborate little play in which the Russians were asserting their will, while at the same time discreetly helping the tottering Chinese regime to save face. Muraviev must have been reasonably certain that the Chinese Emperor's resistance to his policy was that of a "paper tiger", and that, in fact, if the Russians did not actually invade Chinese territory south of the Amur, they would run into no physical opposition.

It was shortly before Busse took the third Russian expedition down the Amur that Palladii reported to Muraviev on the replacement of I-ko, the General of Heilungchiang, who was ill, by I-Shan, a member of the

³⁹IWSM, 13, p. 8 A, cited by Qusted, op. cit., p. 59.

⁴⁰Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 452.

Imperial family. I-Shan had been unsuccessful in resisting the English in Kwantung in 1842. Failing to lift the siege of Canton in 1843, he had been sentenced to death, then pardoned and made General of Ili in 1845. There, he had concluded the Kul-dja Treaty, excluding the Russians from Kashgar, and had redeemed himself before his Government.⁴¹ Palladii, on April 22, 1856, reported to Muraviev that he knew that I-shan had accepted his new appointment very unwillingly, and had delayed his departure from Peking for some time, hoping that the new Russian expedition down the Amur would go by before he assumed his new post. In the same report, Palladii expressed the opinion that the Peking Cabinet was vacillating in its policy on the Amur and was, furthermore, much concerned over the Tarbagatai incident which, it feared, might give the Russians a pretext for drastic action. His analysis was that the Chinese were in a quandary: they feared the collapse of the regime and wished to avoid any action that would speed the dissolution of the Empire, but they also dreaded retaliation by the English, should they take steps favorable to Russia. Under the circumstances, Palladii concluded, the Chinese Government fervently wished that its domestic disorders and its difficulties with the Russians on the Amur could be hidden from the outside world.⁴²

Muraviev's confidence, which permitted him to go to Europe, leaving the third Amur expedition in the hands of a lieutenant colonel, was amply justified. The expedition, including 1,660 troops, arrived off Aigun on May 21, 1856, and was well received by the Chinese officials. They stated

⁴¹A. W. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Dynasty* (Washington, 1943-1944), cited by Qusted, op. cit., p. 60.

⁴²Russki Arkhiv, Vol. 3, 1914.

that they had no authority to let the Russians pass, but would do so, "because of the friendship between their two countries". They also made some pro forma objections to Busses's declared intention to establish additional bases and stockpiles on the lower Amur, and requested him not to let his troops do injury to Chinese subjects; they also asked to be kept informed of the numbers of Russian troops in the region. Busse told them there were some 10,000 on the Amur estuary, and that 5,000 more would be added.⁴³

As the Russians proceeded down the river, they set up stations at Kamarskii Post (at the mouth of the Kamar River), Zeiskii Post (at the mouth of the River Zeia) and Khinganskii Post (near the little Katin River). The triumvirate of Chinese frontier governors were left nonplussed, and the expedition triumphantly proceeded to the mouth of the Amur, secure in the knowledge that the Chinese Government was powerless.⁴⁴ During the summer and early fall of 1856, Russians sailed up and down the Amur, and traveled on the left bank as it suited them, while the Chinese authorities merely sent in reports on estimated numbers of Russian troops and ships that they observed.⁴⁵

One of the Russian troop movements during this period ended in disaster, and was seized upon by Muraviev's detractors as "evidence" of his incompetence. Upon confirmation of the Peace of Paris, Muraviev, before going abroad on leave, ordered a large number of his troops to return up the Amur from its mouth. The movement was poorly planned and

⁴³Ibid., pp. 285-286.

⁴⁴Barsukov, op. cit., p. 452.

⁴⁵IWSM 13 and 14, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 62.

initiated too late in the season. Insufficient supplies, and ice in the river which immobilized their boats, resulted in the death of some two hundred unfortunate soldiers who were returning to be demobilized. With Muraviev in Europe, his deputy, Karsakov, was of course responsible, but individuals like Zavalishin preferred to write in outraged towns about Muraviev's "bungling".⁴⁶

Muraviev returned to Russia at the end of the summer of 1856, going to Moscow for the coronation of Alexander II. He wrote to Karsakov from there, mentioning that his sight and hearing were beginning to fail him and telling him to prepare for a visit to Irkutsk by Americans interested in trade with Eastern Siberia.⁴⁷

During the coronation, political prisoners in Siberia, including the Decembrists, were pardoned and allowed to return from exile, and Muraviev sent Prince Volkonskii, who had joined him in Moscow, to Siberia to bear these glad tidings. It was at the coronation, too, that Muraviev received yet another decoration, the Order of Alexander Nevskii. His morale, nevertheless, was low. He was piqued at what he regarded as the insignificant role he was assigned in the coronation ceremonies, and was convinced that he had enemies close to the throne who were doing everything possible to deprecate the importance of his achievements in Eastern Siberia.⁴⁸ What particularly wounded his pride was the elevation of Prince Bariatskii to the rank of full general, though that close confident of

⁴⁶Zapiski Priamury, otd. RGO, t.V, b. III, p. 26, cited by Kabanov, and Russki Arkhiv, Vol. 16, 1878, pp. 420-425.

⁴⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 469.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 470.

the Tsar was junior to him in terms of military service. He and Prince Suvorov, also senior to Bariatinskii, went so far as to submit their resignations from the army, but these were not accepted by Alexander II.⁴⁹

During his stay in St. Petersburg, during the fall and winter of 1856, Muraviev vigorously pursued Amur matters. What particularly preoccupied him now was the need to settle the Amur area, to provision the troops at the mouth of the river, and to deploy detachments of "hunter-cossacks" at strategic points at the mouths of the Zeia, at Ust-Strelka, the mouth of the Bureia, opposite the Sungari and the Ussuri, and one near Marinskii Post, the Amur Regiment. He also hoped for assignment of additional regular infantry and cavalry, and of cossack artillery, "for", he wrote to Karsakov, "the Chinese Government is by no means stable, and it might easily happen that we shall have to move into China via the land route."⁵⁰

In another letter to Karsakov on December 1, 1856, Muraviev wrote that finally, not only the Emperor and the Grand Duke Constantine, but all the Ministers (including Prince A. M. Gorchakov, Nesselrode's able successor), had been won over to his view regarding the Amur question, which, he said, would be henceforth "handled in such a way as to recompense Russia for all that she had suffered at the hands of the West".⁵¹

Thanks to the unanimous support that Muraviev now enjoyed, he was able to bring about an administrative reorganization in keeping with the progress made in occupying and settling the Amur. He obtained the

⁴⁹Russkaia Starina, 1882, p. 525.

⁵⁰Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 475.

⁵¹Ibid., I, p. 479.

Tsar's approval of the establishment of the Maritime Region of Eastern Siberia, encompassing Kamchatka, and the Ud and Priamur districts. Headquarters for the region were established in Nikolaevsk, by that time a flourishing little town. Its streets were full of shops, including those of Americans and other foreign traders. Everything was available there, at a price. A shipyard was turning out sloops built of fine virgin oak from the surrounding forests, and "better than anything made in Kronstadt". A handsome church was nearing completion, and the town already boasted a clubhouse as a center for the social life of the local merchants, officials and visiting sea captains.⁵²

Thus, by the end of the year, 1856, official action had been taken to confirm that the mouth of the Amur was a Russian dependency, and that the Priamur was a part of Russia's possessions in Asia. Muraviev's exertions in pursuit of his obsession, assisted by the British threat occasioned by the Crimean War, had finally made the annexation of the Amur region an accomplished fact.

III. THE ARROW WAR SPEEDS FINAL SOLUTIONS

The Crimean War had been a significant factor in untying Muraviev's hands and permitting him to reach a de facto solution of the Amur

⁵²Arkhiy Bestuzhevich, f. 604, cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 174. See also, Pisma ob Amurskom Kraye, Russki Arkhiv (1895), Vol. I, p. 374, an article attributed to Engineer-Colonel Dmitri Ivanovich Romanov, in which Admiral Putiatin, en route to Japan, is depicted as being enthusiastic at the changes wrought in the two years that had passed since his initial visit there - - dinners of a quality "hard to exceed in Paris", fine buildings, an excellent ship yard, etc...Putiatin, in a report from there, urged the Government to provide at least 600 pieces of artillery for the area's defense, twenty river steamers and a telegraph line. He pressed the Government to repose unlimited confidence in Muraviev, and to make generous provision of funds at his disposal.

question. His successful expeditions down the river, his annexation of the Amur delta, and the defense of Petropavlovsk, contrasted with Russia's defeat in the Crimea, moreover, forced the authorities in St. Petersburg to give greater weight to Far Eastern matters and to take more account of Muraviev's activities and plans. England, furthermore, whose actions had smoothed the way for Russian occupation of the Amur, was now taking further action in China that would give Muraviev a splendid opportunity to obtain legal sanction of that occupation.

The treaty extracted from China by England in 1842, had become all but inoperative by the early 1850's.⁵³ That treaty, as well as similar ones obtained in subsequent years by the French, the Americans, Belgians and Swedes, was unsatisfactory to both the Chinese and to the foreigners. The five open ports, Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai, were the only locations in which the foreigners were allowed to reside; they were not allowed to travel in the interior and had no diplomatic access to the Government in Peking. The Chinese had promised to undertake revision of the treaties within twelve years (with the implication that restrictions would be relaxed), but they had no desire to do so; the treaties had been forced on them, and they were determined to comply with them only to the extent that they were compelled to do so. The British, moreover, continued to ply their trade in opium, a circumstance that heightened the tension between the sullen Chinese and their unwelcome "barbarian" guests. Thus, following conclusion of the Crimean War, England prepared to send her envoy, Lord Elgin, supported by strong armed

⁵³A detailed analysis of the factors contributing to the breakdown of the Treaty System is contained in John K. Fairbank, Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast, 1842-1854 (Harvard University Press, 1953), pp. 267-368.

forces, to China to wring new concessions from the hapless Celestial Empire. In this venture, she was being joined by her junior partner, France.

Muraviev sensed that the time had come to consolidate his gains. In January, 1857, he wrote the Foreign Ministry requesting speedy permission to transport cossack settlers down the Amur. On February 9, Prince A. M. Gorchakov, the Foreign Minister, wrote Muraviev that no time should be lost in settling outstanding questions between Russia and China, but he demurred at Muraviev's proposal to move substantial numbers of cossacks to the left bank of the Amur. Grand Duke Constantine overrode Gorchakov, however, and at the end of that month, permission to settle three hundred men of the Amur Cossack Regiment was granted by Alexander II.⁵⁴ In the following spring, these men and their families, as well as two hundred families from Ust'-Strelka and Gorbitsa, some twenty-four hundred people in all, were sent down the Amur.⁵⁵ By the end of the year 1857, there were approximately three thousand Russian settlers and soldiers at fifteen stations along the left bank of the Amur, exclusive of the estuary itself.⁵⁶

Even while the English were making final preparations for sending Lord Elgin to China, they were presented with a pretext for forcible intervention. On October 8, Chinese authorities in Canton seized the vessel "Arrow", under the British flag, that was carrying "contraband" (opium?). The Governor-General of Canton refused to return the ship,

⁵⁴ Barsukov, op. cit., II, pp. 148-150.

⁵⁵ Zapiski Priamury, ots. RGO, V, v. III, p. 31, cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 173.

⁵⁶ Kabanov, op. cit., p. 173.

and on October 28, the English bombarded Canton. Chinese reprisals took the form of a boycott of English goods, destruction of English merchants' warehouses, and murder of British subjects by gangs rioting in the streets of the city. The English thereupon seized Shanghai. Thus began the "Arrow War", and another defeat of China.

Prince Gorchakov quickly perceived that the new turn of events in China opened the way for "activation" of Russian policy in the East. This was the time to put pressure on the Chinese and to obtain their formal agreement to Muraviev's actions on the Amur.⁵⁷ Admiral Putiatin, the old sea-dog turned diplomat, set forth Gorchakov's views in a meeting with Grand Duke Constantine, who was traveling abroad at the end of the year 1856. The new Foreign Minister urged early negotiations with the Chinese before the English, French and Americans took Peking, and "included the Amur among the rivers on which they would have free navigation".⁵⁸ A few weeks later, E. P. Kovaleskii, a Mongolian expert and Director of the Foreign Ministry's Asiatic Department, wrote Gorchakov, stating that while he considered it impossible for Russia to join the Anglo-French expedition against China, it was also impossible for Russia to remain entirely aloof from the developing situation. For, wrote he,

The taking of Peking by the Europeans, just as the taking of Herat by the English, would be a matter of equal sensitivity to us, and one to which we could under no circumstances remain indifferent. The former would paralyze all that we are undertaking on the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk and the Amur,

⁵⁷ Krasny Arkhiv, Vol. XXI, 1926, p. 189.

⁵⁸ VMA, f. 410, d. 1159, l. 370, cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 178. Putiatin was Naval Attache in London at this time.

the latter would bring the English to power in Central Asia.⁵⁹

Gorchakov concurred in Kovalevskii's analysis, and sent it to the Tsar on January 22, 1857. In this month, too, Grand Duke Constantine wrote Gorchakov from Hanover, endorsing the view that no time should be lost in sending a Russian plenipotentiary to China in order to reach formal agreement on the frontier question, and to preclude, if possible, the presence in Peking of English and French Residents. He subsequently wrote to Muraviev concerning British and French plans to send additional naval forces into Chinese waters, and informed him that Putiatin would probably be sent to negotiate with the Chinese.⁶⁰

Putiatin was designated as Russia's envoy to China in February, 1857. A Note from St. Petersburg was sent to Peking to inform the Emperor I-ting that the admiral held plenipotentiary powers to negotiate on all matters outstanding between Russia and China. The Note added that Russia did not wish that China's external and internal difficulties should lead to trouble on her own frontiers.⁶¹ The amban at Urga, through which town the Note was despatched, wrote in a covering memorial to the throne that, "unless we first receive written authorization from the Li-fan-yuan, it will be impossible to allow them to cross the frontier". On this memorial I-ting simply wrote, "Noted".⁶²

Putiatin's mission was not at all to Muraviev's liking. He feared

⁵⁹Krasny Arkhiv, vol. XXI, 1926, pp. 188-189.

⁶⁰Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 483.

⁶¹Schumacher, op. cit., pp. 286-287, and Krasny Arkhiv, Vol. XXI, 1926, p. 189.

⁶²IWSM, 15, p. 7 A, cited by Quedstedt, op. cit., p. 72.

that it would hobble his own progress just at the time that the Chinese government was showing signs of giving in to Russian pressure. He had become increasingly convinced that there was nothing to be gained from lengthy discussions with the Chinese, and that the time had come for imposing Russia's will in the matter of "recovering" the "Russian River Amur". He was mindful of the late Emperor Nicholas' remark to him in 1853 that "the Chinese must accede to our just demands, and if they don't wish to do so, you now have the troops and we can force them to."⁶³

Having returned to Irkutsk in early 1857, Muraviev proceeded to take precautions to deal with the situation, should Putiatin's mission fail. He wrote the Ministry of War requesting the bringing up to strength of three of his line battalions of regular troops. He also wrote Karsakov, in the Transbaikal, of his detailed plans to move in the fall, should the need arise, with the line battalions and with cavalry, against the Chinese. For at this point, Muraviev was envisioning the eventual separation of Manchuria and Mongolia from China, as two princedoms under Russian protectorate.⁶⁴

In March, 1857, Muraviev wrote Grand Duke Constantine expressing his reservations about Putiatin's mission. He pointed out that there was a good chance that the Chinese would refuse to make any formal concession regarding the frontier, not only because of "their well-known stubbornness", but also out of fear of having then to make similar concessions to the British and French. He informed him, too, of his preparations to take the field, should developments indicate that to be necessary; he

⁶³Schumacher, op. cit., p. 288.

⁶⁴Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 485-486.

added that the Russian position at the mouth of the Amur was now very solid, indeed, no less so than at Kronstadt, in comparison with the forces that the enemy could direct at either place.⁶⁵

Muraviev made impressive preparations for meeting Putiatin, and for escorting him with pomp and elaborate protocol to Kiakhta with Cossack cavalry, artillery, etc.. "The more noise and showy ceremony there is for the meeting with Putiatin, the more will our silly neighbors be impressed", he wrote to Karsakov.⁶⁶ "On the day of his arrival in Kiakhta, the town must be illuminated. He will be received at his quarters by an infantry company with the flag, music and two batteries of artillery; at the customs house there must be a sotnia of Cossacks, also with two batteries." In another letter to Karsakov, Muraviev remarked that "Putiatin is not a bad sort, but it is unfortunate that he is becoming involved in the Amur question, which he may harm."⁶⁷

⁶⁵Ibid., I, p. 488.

⁶⁶Ibid., I, p. 493.

⁶⁷Ibid., Muraviev was obviously chagrined at Putiatin's assignment to the resolution of a problem for which he, Muraviev, had earlier had full responsibility. And, in truth, this procedure could have led to all sorts of malcoordination and confusion. As for Putiatin's qualifications, however, Muraviev's objectivity could be questioned. Born in 1803, Putiatin had begun his naval career by sailing around the world under M. P. Lazarez, from 1822 to 1825. He had continued on active service for seventeen more years, participating in many naval engagements, including the battle of Navarino. Then, in 1842, he had headed an armed diplomatic mission to Persia, establishing diplomatic relations and trade communications between Persia and Russia. In the following year, he had proposed that the Russian Government equip an expedition for the establishment of maritime trade with China, as well as for demarcation of the Russo-Chinese frontier and for the location of new ports on the coast of northeast Asia. This had been successfully opposed by the Minister of Finance, Kantrin, who feared unfavorable repercussions on the Kiakhta trade. Between 1852 and 1855, Putiatin again circumnavigated the globe and concluded the Treaty of Shimoda, establishing diplomatic and commercial relations between

Putiatin's primary task was to obtain recognition of Russia's possession of the left bank of the Amur, and her right to free navigation on the river. He was also charged with securing agreement to establishment of a diplomatic mission in Peking, to obtain the right for Russia to trade in the five treaty ports, and to send caravans to Peking, as had been done in the past, and to maintain warehouses at various locations in western China, together with a courier service connecting them through Mongolia with Russian territory. In return, he could offer withdrawal of Russian claims for compensation for the Tarbagatai incident, as well as of Russian claims for tax payments by the nomads of the Urianghai-Dvoedants area of Mongolia and Sinkiang, contiguous to Ieniseisk and Tomsk provinces. He could also offer Russian cooperation in assuring that these tribes paid tribute to China. Russia would also agree that caravans proceeding to western areas of China would not go beyond Urga, if other caravans were allowed to go to Peking. Putiatin was empowered, furthermore, to offer Russian arms and military instructors to help China defend Manchuria, if Peking requested such help, and on the prior condition that the Amur question and other problems were satisfactorily resolved.⁶⁸

Russia and Japan. It was during this expedition, too, that he surveyed the eastern shores of Korea and the islands adjacent to it. For his success in opening up Japan to Russian diplomacy and commerce, he was made a count in December, 1855. (See Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Vol. 50, pp. 817-818.

⁶⁸ Krasny Arkhiv, Vol. XXI, p. 191, and VMA f.410, d. 1159, 11, 400-410, cited by Kabanov, who points out that the arms offer was meaningless, since, if the Taiping rebels got to Manchuria, the Ch'ing regime would be finished. (Kabanov, op. cit., p.180)

Putiatin's instructions made it clear that Russia would intervene militarily in inhabited areas of the Chinese Empire only with great reluctance and as a last resort. As for cooperation with the Western Powers, he was told that, "If the course of your negotiations shows definitely that they can be expected to succeed, you may undertake cooperation with the Western Powers, as an extreme measure, extending, however, moral influence only and never promising material support".⁶⁹

Strict secrecy surrounded the objectives of Putiatin's mission; the public, as well as foreign diplomatic missions in St. Petersburg, were informed that he was departing to "seek a harbor in the Amur region".⁷⁰

When it became apparent that no Chinese answer to the Note announcing Putiatin's appointment would be forthcoming, Muraviev sent two of his officers and an interpreter to Urga to explain the reasons for Putiatin's mission. A Note was also sent to the amban of Urga, Te-le-k'e-tuo-er-chi, announcing that Putiatin's arrival in Kiakhta was imminent. The amban sent a memorial to the Emperor reporting that:

Through Tatarinov (the interpreter), I questioned the Russian adjutant in detail as to what business he had to transmit. He said that they had heard that the English, in league with the French barbarians, were proceeding from Shanghai to Tientsin to invade our territory, and that they were considering how the defenses of our two countries could be carried out. That is why they are sending an envoy to meet the princes and high officials in our capital, and to confer with them.⁷¹

⁶⁹Krasny Arkhiv, Vol. XXI, p. 192.

⁷⁰Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 484.

⁷¹IWSM, 15, p. 11A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 73.

He expressed suspicion of the Russians, as well as his opinion that Putiatin should be refused entry. The Emperor I-ting's comment on this, in an edict to his Grand Councillors, was as follows:

The Russians' nature is very crafty. As for their statement that the English barbarians are banding together with all the nations and want to come to Tientsin, and they therefore wish to send someone to the capital for secret talks, it cannot be but that they are seizing the opportunity to inspire us with panic. They want to seize the territory beyond the Heilungchiang. Also, they intend to demand compensation for the Tarbagatai warehouse goods.⁷²

I-ting ordered the Li-fan-yuan to send a Note to Russia stating that there was no purpose in sending a high official to his capital. The Note added that, "When the English barbarians caused trouble before, China undertook to defend herself and did not ask help from other countries. When other countries quarreled amongst themselves, China never paid any attention. Moreover, there are no secret and important matters to be discussed with Russia, since Russia is very sincere in maintaining good relations".⁷³ I-ting's officials were instructed to stop the Russians from sending an ambassador "by reasoning", if they still persisted after receiving the Li-fan-yuan's Note. Further exchanges of Notes, in which Putiatin and Muraviev both participated, brought no satisfaction to Putiatin, who thereupon served notice on the Chinese that if they did not agree by May 10 to his passage to Peking through Mongolia, he would proceed to China via the Amur and the sea. Putiatin received an unsatisfactory reply from the amban of Urga, and on

⁷²IWSM, 15, p. 12 B, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 74.

⁷³Ibid., 15, p. 13 B, cited in ibid.

May 16, he and Muraviev left Kiahkta and with two battalions of infantry and a division of artillery, sailed down the Amur.⁷⁴

Before leaving Kiakhta, Putiatin wrote Gorchakov, proposing that in view of China's intransigence regarding his mission, Russian forces should seize the town of Aigun. He expressed the view to Muraviev that this should be done even without permission from St. Petersburg.⁷⁵ Muraviev did not agree, although he had earlier been contemplating the eventual invasion of Manchuria and Mongolia. He was, however, prepared to undertake other, less aggressive, measures. Gorchakov had earlier written him that no time should be lost in resolving outstanding differences with China, and that if efforts to achieve this by agreement ran into obstacles, "decisive measures of some sort should be undertaken."⁷⁶

Muraviev had proposed large-scale settlement of cossacks on the left bank of the Amur; Gorchakov had deemed this to be premature, but he had been overridden by Grand Duke Constantine. Thus, while Putiatin took ship from Nikolaevsk for the Gulf of Pechelii, Muraviev remained in Ust-Zeisk, directing resumption of further settlement of the left bank of the Amur. Four hundred and fifty cossack families were deployed from Ust'-Strelka to the foothills of the Lesser Hingan, while a battalion of regular infantry, and a division of light artillery made camp at Ust-Zeisk. In writing to Kovalevskii regarding his action, Muraviev commented that since the Chinese had refused Putiatin passage through Mongolia, such settlement should proceed, not only for political reasons,

⁷⁴Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 493.

⁷⁵Ibid., I, p. 494.

⁷⁶Krasny Arkhiv, Vol. XXI, 1926, p. 189.

but in order to establish winter communications between the detachment at Ust-Zeya and the Transbaikal. "Thus", wrote he, "we shall have turned Chinese stubbornness to our advantage and will build a fortification directly opposite Aigun."⁷⁷ Muraviev also took care, at this time, of the dearth of women in Nikolaevski. He ordered the despatch there of sixty female convicts, who were married en masse to male settlers going there on barges down the Amur. This practice he followed for some years after,⁷⁸ which naturally earned him the shocked disapproval of individuals dedicated to besmirching his reputation.

Concerning the expanded settlement activities, one of Muraviev's staff officers wrote Karsakov that:

the (Chinese) people know nothing of our ambassadorial mission and the Chinese refusal to receive it has been kept secret. The people know nothing of it, and all are astonished that the Russians have dared to move along the Amur, and that they are settling and building towns. The Chinese dare not oppose it because they are weak and afraid. The government is on the brink of bankruptcy. They fear Muraviev like fire, and say that the General will do anything he wishes and that if he should get the idea of doing them harm it will be difficult for them to save themselves. The state of their morale is much in our favor.⁷⁹

Clearly, Muraviev was assessing the situation accurately. The Chinese authorities, confronted with a *fait accompli*, could do nothing, but desperately evaded any formal agreement, fearing the reaction of their own people. Muraviev felt free to proceed as he had planned, since he had the forces to back him up. He instructed his officers to maintain friendly relations with the Chinese authorities in the vicinity and with

⁷⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 495.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid.

the population in general. However, they were to warn those who did not wish to live under Russian rule to move to the right bank of the Amur; in the event of any hostile demonstrations by the Chinese at Aigun, Russian forces were immediately to cross the river, disarm the Chinese and occupy the town.⁸⁰

The deployment of settlers proceeded without incident, and on July 7, 1857, Muraviev wrote to Gorchakov that a member of the Orthodox mission in Peking delivering letters to him had recommended that, "with the present Chinese Government we should not negotiate about anything, and, in particular, not correspond about anything". Muraviev commented that this was precisely the basis on which he was operating. He was "preserving all friendship", and declaring only to the nearest Chinese authorities what he was doing or what he needed. They "in just as friendly a way" fulfilled his suggestions, "themselves fearing all correspondence".⁸¹ He reported that he sought free trade with the local inhabitants and that "this wish has already been fulfilled in part in the villages and will gradually be fulfilled in the town (Aigun)". He added that the people here love and respect us and believe every word I say like law. For this reason I do not consider it necessary to occupy the town, nor even emplace a battery opposite it".⁸² Quested observes that this picture is largely confirmed by the Chinese archives, although they understandably do not report positive friendliness with the

⁸⁰Schumacher, op. cit., p. 290.

⁸¹Barsukov, op. cit., II, p. 155.

⁸²Ibid.

Russians.⁸³

At the end of June, 1857, the Emperor I-ting recieved a memorial from I-shan reporting that the Russians had six cannon at Hailanpao (Ust'-Zeisk), four of them directed against the Chinese military post of Heilungchiang. It stated that a Manchu captain had been sent to see Muraviev at Ust'-Zeisk and had been well received and offered presents. Muraviev had informed him that more Russians were coming, but that they would keep the peace and had asked that the Russians be allowed to trade on the same terms as at Kiakhta. This memorial reported 6,000 Russians to be at Ust'-Zeisk.⁸⁴ I-ting received two more memorials from I-shan in mid-August, reporting the extensive Russian settlements on the lower Amur, as well as the despatch of an officer to Muraviev to deliver China's refusal of his request for trade, and to protest against Russian settlement of Ust'-Zeisk. Muraviev had refused to remove any Russian buildings, and had suggested that the Chinese settlements on the left bank of the Amur be transferred to the right bank.⁸⁵

Muraviev's attitude elicited a written protest to him from I-shan, and a subsequent one from the Tribunal to the Russian Senate. I-shan's

⁸³Quested, op. cit., p. 84.

⁸⁴IWSM, 15, p. 34 A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 84. This would appear to be an exaggeration. It is not known just how many Russians were there prior to the encampment of an infantry battalion and a division of artillery, but it could not have been much more than a detachment of one or two sotnia's, which, added to the newcomers, could hardly have totaled 6,000, even allowing also for a group of settlers. Admittedly in the realm of speculation is the possibility that I-shan was deliberately inflating this figure, in order to discourage his Emperor from ordering any resolute action on his part. I-shan and the local ambans clearly had no stomach for anything approaching open hostilities.

⁸⁵IWSM, 16, p. 16 A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 84.

protest pointed out that although Muraviev's navigation of the Amur was allegedly for the purpose of repulsing the English invaders, his people were settling along the banks of the river, constructing buildings, etc.. and that this was obviously not for the purpose of defense against the English. I-shan observed that there did not appear to be any order from the Russian Emperor to seize places belonging to the Middle Kingdom.⁸⁶ Muraviev replied, with what must have been restrained mirth, that the local ambans evidently were unaware of the correspondence that had been going on between him and Peking and about Peking's position to the effect that there was nothing of moment to discuss with the Russians - - in view of which they could not admit Putiatin via Mongolia to Peking. Muraviev returned I-shan's note with this reply and with many protestations of friendship, asking that the Chinese frontier authorities maintain contact on official matters with their Russian opposite numbers. The Tribunal thereupon sent a Note to the Russian Senate asking that Muraviev's "arbitrary acts" be brought to the attention of the Tsar.⁸⁷

Protests were obviously just about all that the Chinese felt they could permit themselves. During the summer of 1857, the only military measures they were able to undertake were the increasing of the Sanhsing garrison by 100 men and that of Aigun by 400. This left the total Chinese forces in Northern Manchuria and Aigun at a level of about one-third of the 22,000 well-disciplined Russian troops on the borders of Mongolia and Manchuria, with an additional 1,000 poised for deployment there.⁸⁸ One other measure, now adopted by the Chinese Emperor was

⁸⁶ Schumacher, op. cit., p. 294.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Barsukov, Vol. II, p. 152.

permission for the establishment of new agricultural settlements in the uninhabited Manchurian lands with people already resident in Manchuria,⁸⁹ obviously a belated attempt to counter the Russian claim that China exercised no sovereignty there.

Muraviev remained in Ust'-Zeya until August, 1857, when he returned via Irkutsk to St. Petersburg, whence, being in poor health, he went abroad for treatment.⁹⁰

IV. NERCHINSK FORMALLY AVENGED

Putiatin's dealings with the Chinese and with the English, French, and Americans need only be summarized in sufficient detail to provide the necessary background to Muraviev's activities following his return to Eastern Siberia.⁹¹

The Admiral arrived in Tientsin on July 24, 1857, and was received courteously by Chinese officials, whose instructions were to effect his departure as early as possible. To this end, the Emperor allowed them to accept a Note from him with the proviso that the answer should be sent to Kaikhta, or Muraviev at Ust'-Zeya. Putiatin, however, refused to leave Tientsin without an official reply to his Note, which cited the precedent of six Russian envoys who had been admitted to Peking in earlier times, then expressed fear that China was not strong enough to deal

⁸⁹Ta Ch'ing Li Ch'ao Shih Lu, ch. 229, p. 12 B et seq., cited by Qusted, op. cit., p. 85.

⁹⁰Barsukov, Vol. I., p. 502.

⁹¹Qusted's valuable work recounts and analyzes Putiatin's activities in China in depth.

with the English, although she was "good at strategy, administration, and literature". The Note also stated that the time had come to settle the question of the undelimited frontier area.⁹²

I-ting gave in, agreeing that an answer could be given to Putiatin at Tientsin on condition that he leave and then return when it was ready. On August 13, Putiatin sailed for Shanghai. On September 2, he was back in Tientsin, and three days later received the Chinese reply. This was to the effect that the frontier question was to be decided with I-shan on the Amur, that no other points could be discussed with Putiatin, and that if he returned to Tientsin or to any other port in China, no further correspondence could be undertaken with him. To avoid giving offense, Putiatin was offered a ceremonial farewell and was also given the following explanation as to why his reception in Peking would cause difficulties:

All your country's tribute-bearing envoys, when they come to the capital, carry out the rite of the three kneelings and nine prostrations, when they present their memorials to the throne. Then the great Ch'ing Emperor rewards them with foodstuffs and ceremoniously sends them back to their country. There is a different treatment for those who escort the students and lamas to the capital. Now Putiatin is not presenting a memorial to the throne, so it is not convenient to treat him like a tribute-bearing envoy. However, he styles himself with the rank of nobleman, so it is impossible to treat him like an ordinary person. It is to be feared that to do so would be impolite and cause harm to our friendship. China has good intentions and is in no way suspicious.⁹³

This oblique statement is susceptible of differing interpretations. Ques-
ted points out that in later conversations with Lord Elgin and with Baron

⁹²IWSM, 16, p. 12 B, cited by Ques-ted, op. cit., p. 86.

⁹³IWSM, 16, p. 26 A, cited by Ques-ted, op. cit., p. 89.

Gros, Putiatin claimed that it insisted on the kowtow and on tribute, whereas in fact it could have been regarded as an invitation to Putiatin to go to Peking in a modest way, something he was unwilling to do.⁹⁴

Putiatin told the Chinese that he must return to Russia to consult with his Emperor, declined the proffered ceremonial farewell and sailed for Japan. There he concluded a commercial treaty confirming the first Russo-Japanese agreement of 1855, and providing substantial benefits for Russia.⁹⁵ In November, he returned to Shanghai. Here he met with Baron Gros, who told him of the allied plans to take Canton. This, Putiatin told him, would be "absolutely useless"; he urged, instead, that pressure be brought directly on Peking.⁹⁶ At this time, and indeed, almost until the conclusion of his activities in China, Putiatin made no mention of the Amur. He had been doing his best to convey to his English and French colleagues the impression that his mission was for the purpose of urging on the Chinese Government "the necessity of a less exclusive policy"⁹⁷ i.e., that the Russians were seeking the same trading rights in Chinese ports as were being pursued by the English, French and Americans. Thus, he embarked upon a course of intrigue which he was to conduct until the negotiation of the Treaty of Tientsin.

Putiatin, while hoping for more aggressive allied action, also urged more pointed measures on the part of his Government. He wrote

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 88.

⁹⁵G. A. Lensen, The Russian Push Towards Japan, (Princeton, 1959), p. 350.

⁹⁶Quai d'orsay archives, Gros-Walewski, 26/11/57, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 91.

⁹⁷Foreign Office, 17/276, Robertson-Elgin, 1/9/57, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 88.

Gorchakov suggesting that Russia terminate trading operations at Kiakhta, his theory being that the Chinese Government was convinced of the great value that the Russians placed on that trade, and regarded it as a lever; breaking off of the kiakhta commerce, he believed, would disabuse the Chinese of that notion. In the same letter, he deplored the fact that he had not at his disposal some three to five million rubles with which to bribe Chinese officials to smooth his way to Peking.⁹⁸

A month later, he wrote Gorchakov recommending a blockade of the Pei-ho to prevent food supply deliveries to Peking until the Chinese sent a plenipotentiary to Tientsin to negotiate frontier matters, concessions to Russia and the same advantages as granted to other nations. He suggested, further, that should the Anglo-French forces carry their war to the north, Russia should offer the assistance of her naval force.⁹⁹

Putiatin's bellicose views were evidently too much for Gorchakov, for in late December, 1857, Muraviev was ordered to cut short his leave abroad in order to attend a conference in St. Petersburg. The upshot of this exercise was the despatch, on December 24, of new instructions to Putiatin. He was informed that Russian occupation of the left bank of the Amur would continue, but that relations with China must not be broken off, since their renewal "would be most difficult and perhaps even impossible on the basis on which they now exist, and would threaten destruction of our mission (in Peking) and abolition of the kiakhta trade". Putiatin was to relinquish his ambassadorial status and assume the title of Commander of the Russian naval squadron and Imperial Commissioner to

⁹⁸Krasny Arkhiv, Vol. XXI, 1926, pp.

⁹⁹Schumacher, op. cit., p. 296.

China. His function would be to observe the activities of the Western Powers vis-a-vis China. He was told that Muraviev alone would be responsible for Amur negotiations and was instructed to obtain from the Chinese only those concessions being given to the other nations.¹⁰⁰

Following Muraviev's consultations in St. Petersburg, he was appointed General Aide-de-Camp to the Emperor. At this time, too, the Amur Company formed for trade in the Priamur was established by two merchants, Bernardaki and Rukavishnikov.¹⁰¹

In January, 1858, the Russian Senate despatched a Note to the Tribunal expressing regret that this body had seen fit to insist on negotiation only at the frontier. It announced that Muraviev had been recalled to St. Petersburg for personal conferences with the Emperor and for receipt of instructions on negotiating.¹⁰²

During the winter of 1857-58, the Russian Government approved Muraviev's recommendation to settle the Amur in much more substantial numbers, through the transfer of an entire infantry brigade - - some 12,000 people, including families. Uncertain relations with the Chinese had delayed this project but by the end of the year, as a preparatory measure, a winter road was opened from Nikolaevsk along the left bank of the Amur to Ust'-Strelka. A post road from the port to Marinskii Post was also built, with milestones bearing the double eagle, and with station

¹⁰⁰Nevelskoi, op. cit., p. 388, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 94, who points out that Barsukov, Vol. I, Ch. 38, does not say that Putiatin was forbidden to deal with the Amur.

¹⁰¹Barsukov, Vol. I, p. 505.

¹⁰²Schumacher, op. cit., p. 296.

houses along the way. These new lines of communication covered 2,000
versts.¹⁰³

Meanwhile, in China, events were beginning to accelerate. Following the Anglo-French seizure of Canton, Elgin and Gros wrote to Putiatin and the American representative Reed, at the end of January, 1858, inviting them to join in sending similar Notes to the Chinese Government, requesting it to send plenipotentiaries to Shanghai to negotiate on the entry of diplomatic representatives to Peking, commercial facilities in the treaty ports, and freedom of worship for Chinese and foreigners alike.¹⁰⁴ This was agreed upon but, without informing his British, French and American colleagues, Putiatin attached to his note a supplementary document concerning the Amur. That portion of it specifically setting forth the Russian position on the frontier question follows:

. . . on the maps the frontier between our two countries starts at the Lesser Pinling Range, and stops at the A-er-kuan-shi-le-ke River, and beyond this, the terrain is unknown. It had always been considered that the country from the Hsingan to the Eastern Sea would be investigated at some later date and that then the frontier would be delimited. Now we know that the Hsingan do not reach all the way to the Eastern Sea. This range divides into two not far from that place. One arm passes through our Huo-ssu-k'e region and already belonged to us before the treaty of Kaikhta. Moreover, this branch does not pass beyond the Amur to the Sungari. It only reaches to the Amur area. The other arm of the range reaches into Manchuria along the right bank of the Amur. That is why the Hsingan cannot be considered as the frontier of our two countries. The Amur should be taken as the frontier. Since Russia already has people living on the left bank, the left bank of the Amur should be taken as the Russian frontier. As for the Manchu homesteads near the town of Heilungchiang (Aigun), no matter how many they may be, let them all be

¹⁰³ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 205.

¹⁰⁴ Correspondence Relating to the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China, 1859-60, cited by Quesed, op. cit., p. 97.

moved to the right bank. Apart from the cost of their removal, which will be paid by Russia, there can be compensation in money or kind. It is important that this matter shall be cleared up. Further, since there are no Machu or Chinese people living on the lower Ussuri, and no vessels go there, the right bank of the Ussuri should be taken as the frontier. Moreover, not far from the source of this river, there are rivers and creeks flowing into the sea which may be used to divide up the sea coast. Russia already has people setting up military posts and building towns in the empty places on this coast. All the area from the Lesser Pinling to A-er-kuan-shih-le-k'e should be mapped and delimited and the frontier in the Ili area also delimited.¹⁰⁵

Putiatin's Note was the first formal declaration to the Chinese of complete Russian territorial claims in Mongolia and Manchuria. It was submitted under the four-Power covering Note accompanying the other separate but similar notes of each envoy. Such an action, Quested observes, was an invocation of English, French, and American backing for Russia's territorial claims - - of which the Western representatives were ignorant. The Russian Note, together with the supplement partially quoted above, was enclosed in the same envelope as the American one and was delivered to the Chinese at Soochow, on February 13, 1858, by Lord Elgin's secretary. It had been examined by none of the other ambassadors.¹⁰⁶

Following despatch of his Note, Putiatin traveled to Canton, Amoy, Foochow and Ningpo before proceeding to Shanghai, where he arrived on March 11.¹⁰⁷ There he received his new instructions from St.

¹⁰⁵ IWSM 18, pp. 32 A - 33 B, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 98.

¹⁰⁶ Quested, op. cit., p. 99.

¹⁰⁷ W. B. Reed, The Private Diary of, (2 Vols., Mss. Dept., Library of Congress, unpublished, diary entry of 25/3/58. Cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 102.

Petersburg, whereupon he sent all but two vessels in his squadron to Japan and the Amur; he also informed the other three representatives of his new orders.

The four envoys received replies to their Notes in Shanghai at the end of March. Putiatin's communication, having been sent under the same cover as Reed's, was not replied to separately; the Chinese reply to Reed included the statement that, "Russia has never had any commercial relations in the five ports, and last year an Imperial decree ordered a high official to go to the Amur to discuss the frontier question with Putiatin".¹⁰⁸ This mention of the Amur evidently did not particularly excite the American representative's interest. Reed was also requested to tell Putiatin that a letter would be sent to him by the Li-fan-yuan and that all the problems the Russians wished to discuss should be dealt with in writing.

The four representatives proceeded to Tientsin in April, and for the next seven weeks engaged in continuous negotiations with representatives of the Peking Government. The Chinese temporized on the occasion of each meeting and attempted to persuade the Russians and the Americans to moderate the demands of the British, and the Americans to reduce Russian demands. Quested gives a succinct summary of Putiatin's policy during this period:¹⁰⁹ to make the Chinese accept all his demands and such of

¹⁰⁸Senate Executive Document 30 (36.1), cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁰⁹Quested, op. cit., p. 106, added that, "His success in this perilous game was, however, not wholly due to his personal skill; for the Chinese would seek no help from the English, whom they chiefly detested; Lord Elgin was preoccupied with his own problems and made no great effort to probe Putiatin's activities, whilst the attitude of Baron Gros and Reed was complacent. . . Under these circumstances, the Russians were able to keep Putiatin's Amur negotiations at Tientsin a

the other Ministers' as would not result in the Peking Government's falling under British influence. He pressed for rapid granting of the allied requests for more treaty ports and occasional diplomatic representation in Peking, and he endeavored to win the goodwill of the Chinese by mediating for them, so that they might cede the Amur and Maritime territory as a reward. Russian territorial claims on the Northeast frontier he pressed upon the Chinese in complete secrecy, concealing from Elgin and Gros, and apparently from Reed, that he had ever seriously raised this issue.

Although Putiatin hoped, by playing his double game,¹¹⁰ to attain all of Russia's objectives, while limiting the realization of allied, particularly British, aims, he placed his ultimate hope in an attack, if necessary, by the British and French expeditionary forces to bring about China's general capitulation.

At the beginning of April, a Note from the Tribunal was received in St. Petersburg. It complained that Putiatin had not gone to the Amur for frontier negotiations, but instead was proceeding to Shanghai and becoming involved in the affairs of other governments and thereby violating the rules of mutual good relations. It stated that the only matter requiring negotiation between Russia and China was the question of delimitation of the Amur frontier, and that for that purpose a Chinese plenipotentiary had been sent to the Amur. It requested the Russian Government

secret from the western world for many years, and indeed this appears to be the first time, to date, that they have been mentioned in print in a Western European language."

¹¹⁰The details of this game are set forth in Quested, op. cit., pp. 106-112.

to instruct Putiatin not to tarry in Shanghai at the cost of the friendship of the two Empires.¹¹¹

While events in China were moving toward a crisis, Muraviev was taking his own steps for a final solution of the Amur problem. During the spring of 1858, he made preparations for a fourth expedition down the Amur, which would transport more settlers, troops and fortress artillery to the delta. In early March, he sent the Kiakhta frontier commissar, A. I. Despot-Zenovich, to Urga with a Note to the Tribunal. Despot-Zenovich told the amban, Te-le-k'e-tuo-er-chi of the fall of Canton and asked that the unsettled areas on the right bank of the Amur be ceded to Russia. He sought a guarantee that the new Orthodox mission would be able to live unmolested in Peking, and suggested that Te-le-k'e-tuo-er-chi should decorate Muraviev with the Peacock feather and receive some Russian decoration in return.¹¹² Despot-Zenovich then went on to stress Putiatin's readiness to act as an intermediary between the Chinese, and the English and French, and concluded by announcing that the Russians would continue to establish settlements on the Amur and the Ussuri, but that this activity had no hostile aspect, but, on the contrary, was for the mutual benefit of both governments.¹¹³ The amban's retort was to the effect that China had never needed help from foreign countries, that he could receive no decoration without Imperial permission and that, as for the mission, "We already informed them last year that for a long time past there has not

¹¹¹Schumacher, op. cit., p. 296.

¹¹²IWSM, 19, p. 25 B, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 96, who points out that neither Barsukov nor Schumacher mention the Peacock Feather.

¹¹³Schumacher, loc. cit.

been the slightest incident concerning the students in the capital, but whether they now proceed there was up to them to decide". Peking approved the amban's reply and informed him that, "we have never decorated a (Russian) Governor-General with the Peacock Feather and even if one of our officials were to receive a row of decorations from them (the Russians), it would be impossible to give it to him."¹¹⁴

Before going down the Amur, Muraviev sent another emissary to the Chinese at Aigun with the news that he would be on the river as soon as the thaw set in, but that if the amban wished to discuss boundary matters with him, it would be more convenient to do so when Muraviev was on the return trip. Muraviev's purpose in sending such a message was twofold: he hoped that news from Putiatin would be awaiting him at Nikolaevsk, and he also wished to make it plain to the Chinese that he was in no particular hurry to undertake negotiations.¹¹⁵

As far as Muraviev was concerned, the Amur question, irrespective of the niceties of international formalities which were still pending, was in fact resolved. At the same time, he was very much aware of the related question of logistics and financing for development of Russia's newly acquired territory. Before taking the fourth expedition down the river, he wrote his brother Valerian as follows: "In a few days I shall depart for the Amur for some four months. . . my sole concern now consists of settling the Amur, developing navigation and trade on it, establishing towns and an archepiscopal cathedral, and discovering gold, which is essential for all this, the more so since at the mouth of the

¹¹⁴IWSM, 19, p. 25 B, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 96.

¹¹⁵Barsukov, Vol. I, p. 507.

Amur and on the adjacent coast, it is necessary to build fortified ports and railroad communications with them."¹¹⁶ At this time, too, in a letter to Karsakov, he observed that establishment of a postal service on the Amur would be costly - - 80,000 silver roubles a year, "which no one will furnish".¹¹⁷

Muraviev's lofty tone in his message to Aigun galvanized the Chinese. Before he reached the confluence of the Zeya, he was met by a junk carrying Chinese officials who urged him to await their commander-in-chief, I-shan, who was arriving from Tsitsigar. Muraviev continued on to Ust'-Zeya where, on May 6, Chi-la-ming-a, amban of Aigun, came to tell him that I-shan was requesting Muraviev to delay if only for a few days in order to discuss demarcation of the frontier. Chi-la-ming-a hinted that he would "manage everything and do everything".¹¹⁸

En route to Aigun, Muraviev stopped at Ust'Zeisk, where he dedicated a cathedral and renamed the town Blagoveschensk.¹¹⁹ He then went on to Aigun where he and his suite were received as honored guests on May 9. Muraviev declined to enter into negotiations on that day, and the Russian delegation was given dinner by I-shan at Chi-la-ming-a's house, with "gay, polite conversation".¹²⁰

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 508.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 509.

¹¹⁸Nevelskoi, op. cit., Ch. 31, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 146. Chi-la-ming-a's cooperative policy was to cost him dear.

¹¹⁹"Good Tidings". Curiously enough, despite the religious connotation, the Soviet Government has not changed the name.

¹²⁰Nevelskoi, op. cit., Ch. 31, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 146.

On May 10,¹²¹ negotiations began at Chi-la-ming-a's house. Muraviev opened the proceedings with an historical survey, including a justification of Russian actions on the Amur, and asserted that the Amur should be the frontier "in the interests of both nations". Later in the day, I-shan and his numerous subordinates boarded Muraviev's ship, were given refreshments and entertained by the Irkutsk Cavalry Choir. On the following day, the Chinese delegation was presented with a draft treaty consisting of the following points: 1) The border between the two empires to be the Amur River, with the left bank belonging to Russia, and the right bank to the Ussuri belonging to China, whose border would then follow the Ussuri to its sources and thence to the Korean peninsula; 2) Navigation on the rivers constituting the boundary would be permitted only to vessels of the two empires; 3) Free trade would be permitted along these rivers; 4) Chinese subjects living on the left bank of the Amur to be re-settled within three years;¹²² 5) Previous treaties to be reviewed for establishment of new regulations regarding all questions affecting the welfare and reputation of both empires, this to be accomplished by individuals specially designated by both parties, who would deal with details concerning trade and commerce at Peking, despatch of missions, envoys and couriers, "for the greater benefit and glory of the two friendly countries". The Chinese delegation refused to accept the draft; Ai-shen-t-ai, I-shan's principal deputy, particularly objected

¹²¹On this same day, Quested, p. 116, mentions that in Shanghai the Chinese were imploring the Americans to intercede with the Russians about the Amur frontier.

¹²²Barsukov, Vol. I, pp. 510-511; Nevelskoi's version says 'one year'.

to the concluding phrase of the last item, pointing out that the Ch'ing Empire had so much glory that it could wish for no more.¹²³

On May 13, Muraviev's Manchu interpreter, Shishmarev, presented a revised draft to I-shan's assistants. This omitted point 5; the Chinese agreed to point 4. In the evening, Ai-shen-t'ai boarded Muraviev's vessel and with tears in his eyes begged Shishmarev to abandon claim to the Ussuri area, threatening that otherwise he would drown himself immediately.¹²⁴ He then implored Muraviev in the same vein. Muraviev decided that it was time to "give a definite and firm turn to events", and on the next day, May 14, went ashore and presented his demands as an ultimatum.¹²⁵ He pointed out that the Chinese were obliged to the magnanimity of the Russian Emperor for the preservation of friendly relations between the two Empires at a time when Chinese actions over the past few years had given the Russians every right to act differently. It was fruitless for them to fall back on the previous treaties for determination of frontiers to the east from the Gorbitsa and in places year the Ud, since during the conclusion of the treaty of 1689, they had acted in bad faith; Peking had written at that time that their plenipotentiaries would be few, but in fact they had sent a whole army to the negotiation site, whereas the Russian representative had limited himself to the smallest necessary entourage. Finally, the Chinese

¹²³Quested, op. cit., p. 147.

¹²⁴Ibid., Quested remarks that actually Ai-shen-t'ai was still alive at the end of 1860.

¹²⁵Barsukov has it that Piotr Perovskii, Muraviev's chief aide and a Councilor of the Foreign Ministry presented the ultimatum. See pp. 510-511.

themselves had violated the treaty first, by exacting tribute from the inhabitants of the undemarcated areas to which they had no right, and secondly, by refusing to receive the ambassador sent by the Russian Emperor with greetings to their Bogdikan; such circumstances between enlightened nations generally resulted in a rupture of relations and hostilities. The Chinese, furthermore, had instigated yet another unpleasant affair, the burning and looting of the Russian warehouse at Tarbagatai.

The Chinese attempted to rebut Muraviev's declaration by asserting their right to the Amur and Ussuri areas, contending that they collected tribute from those areas, where they had always had watch-posts indicative of their rights there, and that the country from the Ussuri to the sea was the homeland of the ruling dynasty, so that it would be treachery to cede it to Russia. Muraviev hotly denied these arguments, declaring that the aborigines of the Amur and Ussuri regions had never rendered iassak to China, that Russia had defended the area from the English in 1854-55 with no help from China, and that the homeland of the Ch'ing dynasty was in the Ninguta region. Following further brief debate, Muraviev put on a show of anger and gave the Chinese till next morning to accept his demands. Of this final scene I-shan reported: "Muraviev suddenly fell into a great rage and behaved like a madman, shouting tremendously to his deputy (actually, the interpreter, Shishmarev). Muraviev then left for his ship, glaring angrily at the Manchu crowds." I-shan sent an official to him later in the day to inquire as to the reason for his anger, and to promise that "in future they (the Chinese) would behave so that the General would not be

angry".¹²⁶

During the night of May 15, I-shan reported, "lights burnt brightly on board Muraviev's ship, and there were incessant reports of guns and cannon". Chi-la-ming-a was sent early in the morning to investigate, and informed I-shan that Muraviev had ordered the firing to alarm the Manchus. He added that two other ships accompanying Muraviev had on board "200 or 300 barbarians fully armed with guns and cannon"; he feared there were more men and ships nearby and that a Russian attack would create a "difficult situation". Inhabitants of the left bank of the river came to Chi-la-ming-a to beg protection against the Russians. Ai-shen-tai was sent to Muraviev on the following morning and was told by him that unless the treaty was signed the next day, he would not allow the settlements and homesteads on the left bank to remain.¹²⁷ The Chinese gave way, and on May 16, 1854, the Treaty of Aigun was concluded. It gave the left bank of the Amur from the River Argun to the mouth, to the Russian Empire, and stated that the right bank of the Amur to the mouth of the Ussuri belonged to the Chinese Empire. The land between the Ussuri and the sea was to be the common property of both empires, until the establishment of the border there. In addition, it stipulated that only Russian and Chinese vessels should be allowed to navigate the rivers Amur, Sungari and Ussuri. It also provided that subjects of both empires should be permitted to trade, and that both governments should protect merchants and precisely observe all the provisions of the treaty forever.¹²⁸

¹²⁶Quested, op. cit., p. 148.

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 149.

¹²⁸My translation of the text is at Appendix

CHAPTER VI

TRIUMPH'S AFTERMATH

I. EXPANDING THE CONQUEST

The news of Muraviev's success was greeted with tremendous enthusiasm in Siberia, particularly among the merchant class in Irkutsk and Kiakhta, where the "unexpected and extraordinarily advantageous" resolution of the Amur question was the occasion for widespread celebration. The area's leading tycoons donated large sums for developmental projects in the newly acquired territory. Kuznetsov contributed 3 million rubles, Rukavishnikov, 2 hundred thousand silver rubles, toward construction of a hoped-for Amur railway.¹

St. Petersburg, too, reacted to the news with great satisfaction, as well as relief. E. K. Biutsov, sent to the capital by Muraviev with a copy of the Treaty, reported that Alexander II, who received him in his study, was visibly overjoyed. The Emperor said to him, "Here we believed that the Chinese were at war with us; the papers have been reporting that they attacked and defeated us, and to think that they have now sent us this treaty on the Amur!"²

Now Muraviev turned to devoting his full attention to exploiting what he hoped would be the concrete benefits of the Treaty. The first

¹Kabanov, op. cit., p. 190.

²Ibid., p. 191.

step would be to colonize the Priamur region on a large scale and to make of the Amur a great trade route for Eastern Siberia. On May 22, he proceeded down the river to select locations for settlement of the 13th Infantry Battalion, which had been occupying the left bank with its stations from the lesser Khingan to the mouth of the Ussuri. At that river's confluence with the Amur, this unit founded a settlement named Khabarovsk.³

During the month following conclusion of the Aigun negotiations, Muraviev sought to reach agreement with the Chinese on new trade regulations. The Chinese strove to limit trading, as in the past, to a single location, to provide for officially set prices, and to place all trade under the strict control of officials of both governments. Muraviev opposed this, pointing out that for trade to flourish, there should be a free market, that the merchants should not be subjected to all manner of constraints and supervision. It was finally agreed that for an initial period, at eight-day intervals, there should be a seven-day fair at Blagoveschensk and Aigun, while the inhabitants of both banks of the Amur would be free to conduct unobstructed trade at all times along the entire course of the river.⁴

Meanwhile, Putiatin was continuing his efforts to capitalize on the Anglo-French threat to China in order to obtain concessions for Russia. Having made no satisfactory headway with the Chinese during protracted negotiations, the English and French decided to resort to armed force. In the morning of May 8, 1858, the commander of the British

³Barsukov, op. cit., p. 515.

⁴Ibid., p. 516.

naval forces delivered a two-hour ultimatum to the commander of the Chinese forts at Taku and when this expired English and French troops captured the forts within a few hours.⁵ Now it was the turn of the distraught Chinese to seek negotiations with the English, French, Americans and Russians. Separate treaties were concluded with each of the Western Powers in early June, 1858.

The essential provisions of the Russian Treaty of Tientsin were the following:

1. Diplomatic correspondence between Russia and China to be conducted between the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the senior member of the Grand Council or the Chief Minister in Peking, on the basis of complete equality. Russian envoys to be received in Peking, via Kiakhta, Urga, Taku or any other open port in China.
2. Russia to have the right to trade at seven named sea-ports, on the same terms as other countries and to have consuls there.
3. No limit to be placed on the number of traders and captains employed in commerce.⁶
4. Parts of the Russo-Chinese frontier not yet determined to be examined without delay in the frontier areas themselves.
5. Members of the Orthodox Mission in Peking to be replaced at any time, at the wish of the Russian Government, which would bear all costs of maintaining the Mission.
6. Regular monthly postal service to be established between Peking and Kiakhta.

It will be seen from the foregoing that Muraviev was not justified

⁵Quested, op. cit., p. 121.

⁶Quested, op. cit., p. 129, summarizes this article as providing that there should no longer be any restrictions on overland trade; this is inaccurate.

in fearing that Putiatin's involvement in the Amur question might prove counterproductive.⁷ As Quested points out, the two treaties were to some extent overlapping, "for the latter, dated June 13, could be interpreted as cancelling the provisions of the former one of May 28 (Article 9 of the Tientsin Treaty provided that the 'undefined parts of the frontier should be inspected by plenipotentiaries, whose findings should be incorporated in an additional clause'.) As it transpired, the Peking Government soon availed itself of this opportunity".⁸

The conclusion of the Treaty of Tientsin was duly reported to St. Petersburg by Putiatin, who added that the Chinese negotiators at Tientsin had been aware of the Treaty of Aigun and on June 3 had informed him that the Emperor had confirmed the agreement between Muraviev and I-Shan regarding the demarcation of the border from the Ussuri to the seaports and the establishment of trade on the Amur.⁹

Muraviev obviously meant to lose no time in the matter of "the demarcation of the border from the Ussuri to the seaports". After presiding over the founding of Khabarovsk in early June, he led the next Amur expedition downriver, with more troops and 200 families of cosack settlers. From the mouth of the Amur he took a reconnaissance party of 100 officers and men up the Ussuri River for surveying and for the construction of the first of a series of strongpoints that would constitute a line of communications. Upon his return down the Ussuri and in the face of protests by the Chinese military, he sent another party up

⁷Supra, pp. 179.

⁸Quested, op. cit., p. 153.

⁹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 520.

that river. He then led a small force up the Sungari River and sent one man as far up as Sanhsing to explore possibilities of establishing trade relations. The General of Kirin memorialized these activities to I-ting, who ordered the ambans of Kirin and Heilungchiang to "investigate the Russians' movements and prevent their further extension".¹⁰ Characteristically, the Emperor did not specify the measures to be used for such prevention.

Having made his initial moves for establishing the Russian presence in the Ussuri maritime area, Muraviev returned to Blagoveschensk where he and I-Shan exchanged entertainment and where Chi-la-ming-a (who had promised to "arrange everything and do everything" at Aigun), met him with expansive embraces. Muraviev's relations with these officials, he reported, were of the warmest friendliness.¹¹ A formal written agreement was signed on July 8 permitting Manchu settlements on the left bank of the Amur to remain there. On that same day in St. Petersburg, the Tsar privately ratified the Treaty of Aigun. No public announcement was made, for it was deemed prudent to keep the British and French in ignorance of Russian aspirations and intentions in the Far East.¹² I-Shan also pressed for agreement on a proposal for regulation of border trade but this Muraviev declined to discuss, saying that he could do nothing until he was notified of the Tsar's ratification of the Treaty of Aigun, which he expected within two months.

On August 26, 1858, Alexander II addressed a glowing citation to

¹⁰IWSM 30, p. 3A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 155.

¹¹Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 519-520.

¹²P. V. Schumacher, "Kistorrii priobretenia Amura (snoshenia s Kitaem s 1848 po 1860 g.)", Russki Arkhiv, III, 1878, p. 331.

Muraviev, conferring upon him the title of Count Muraviev-Amurskii.

At the same time he was promoted to the rank of General of Infantry.¹³ He had accomplished the basic task embarked upon ten years earlier, but he was to remain in Eastern Siberia for almost two additional years. As he saw it, his historical achievement would count for little unless he could persuade St. Petersburg to adopt measures to solve the great problems of food, transportation and communications that were essential if large-scale colonization and economic development were to become a reality. Much, too, remained to be done in the way of reform of internal institutions and administrative practices in Eastern Siberia.

Also of continuing concern to Muraviev was the actual implementation of the Treaty of Aigun and the opening of all of northern China, Mongolia and Manchuria to Russian trade.¹⁴ The Treaty of Aigun ceded the left bank of the Amur to Russia but provided in rather vague terms for a condominium over the area between the Ussuri and the sea until such time as the frontier there should be determined. This situation was complicated by the fact that initially there were apparently conflicting versions of the Treaty. Quested points out that the text cited in Nevelskoi's account makes no mention of any condominium, simply designating the Ussuri as the border between the two empires. She suggests that either Nevelskoi's memory failed him or else that "Muraviev deliberately drew up a Russian text which gave the Ussuri maritime area to Russia and fobbed the Manchus off with a Manchu text which made confused reference to some

¹³Barsukov, op.cit., I, pp. 527-528.

¹⁴The Treaty of Tientsin permitted limitless numbers of Russian traders at the ports but said nothing about opening all the Chinese borderlands to Russian merchants.

sort of condominium". She points out that this would have been perfectly possible because the Manchu negotiators at Aigun had no Russian interpreter and that, indeed, "it is extremely doubtful whether there was anyone in the whole Ch'ing Empire capable of reading Russian fluently in 1858". She goes on to suggest that when Gorchakov and Alexander II eventually examined the Russian and Manchu versions of the Treaty they may have decided that Muraviev had gone too far, and had a new Russian text prepared which followed the Manchu one more closely.¹⁵ If Quested's conjecture is correct then Muraviev was quite disingenuous when, in a letter of September 25 to the Grand Duke Constantine, he remarked, "It is strange that whereas in Peking recognition is given to the Ussuri River as the border, in accordance with the Treaty of Aigun, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in its article in the Journal de St. Petersbourg, gives Russia only the left bank of the Amur."¹⁶ In this same letter, he added that he had received no instructions and no interpretations of the Treaty of Tientsin and he considered that no time should be lost in implementing it, lest the French and the English should undertake intrigues to undermine its provisions. He regretted, in this connection, that Russia had no alliance with the United States.¹⁷

Shortly after writing Constantine, Muraviev learned that the Grand Duke was proceeding abroad for an extended period. This was dispiriting news, for Muraviev was now counting heavily on Constantine's support of his proposals for generously subsidizing colonization, constructing tele-

¹⁵Quested, op. cit., p. 152.

¹⁶Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 524.

¹⁷Ibid.

graph lines, increasing shipping on the Amur and developing the region's industry and commerce. He wrote again to the Grand Duke on October 1, pointing out that his plans could be realized only if reviewed by Constantine and the Tsar. "Any examination of these proposals", he wrote, "in committees or in the Council or the Ministries and any report to his Majesty not coming from you, will inevitably distort my conceptions and can vitiate the return to Russia of her Amur domains."¹⁸ Muraviev's letters did not reach Constantine in St. Petersburg and were forwarded to him in Nice, whence he replied to Muraviev in courteous and encouraging terms.

With Constantine out of the country, Muraviev despaired of success in his future work in the Amur region. He was convinced that he could not count on sympathetic reception of his ideas in any of the ministries where, he believed, he was regarded with suspicion. He feared that he was being kept out of the mainstream of policy development - - perhaps Putiatin's appointment seemed to him to be an evidence of this - - and for this reason he pressed for a governmental commitment to establishment of telegraph lines from the capital to Irkutsk, or even to Nikolaevsk. Only thus, he believed, in view of rapidly unfolding events in China, could St. Petersburg receive timely recommendations from him and also give him instructions regarding the course of European affairs. For, if Nesselrode was gone, he wrote to Karsakov, whom he had sent to St. Petersburg with his recommendations, many "Nesselrodians" were still serving in St. Petersburg and they would be sure to undermine his position. He stressed that frontier questions with Japan (Sakhalin) and China were

¹⁸Ibid., p. 536.

now taking on major dimensions and that under these circumstances he needed the unreserved confidence of the Russian Government. He asked Karsakov to say "to each and all who will listen that for the good of the affair I endure all. . .remaining in grievous separation from my family, perhaps for another year, being convinced that my presence here is essential."¹⁹ But if I see that they do not have enough confidence in me to make it possible to insure that good, then, of course, I shall cease to sacrifice my health and my marital happiness to carry out orders contrary to my convictions."²⁰

Muraviev's discouragement at the prolonged absence from the capital of his most powerful supporter did not prevent him from continuing his efforts at least to bring the political results of his years in Eastern Siberia to fruition. Piotr Perovskii, Councilor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who had assisted Muraviev during the Aigun negotiations, had been designated as the escort officer for the new Orthodox Mission sent to Peking to replace the one under Archimandrite Palladii. The Russian Government decided to appoint Perovskii at the same time as its agent for exchange of ratifications of the Treaty of Tientsin. In late October, 1858, Muraviev wrote to him in Peking regarding the desirability of obtaining agreement to free trade along the entire Russo-Chinese border, something "which had been forgotten in the Treaty of

¹⁹Muraviev's wife had found it impossible, evidently for reasons of health, to remain for long in Siberia.

²⁰Ibid., p. 537.

Tientsin".²¹ He also asked him to arrange for a Chinese commission to proceed in April, 1859, to cooperate with the Russians in demarcating the frontier from the headwaters of the Ussuri to the sea. He was anxious that this be accomplished before the arrival in Peking of the British and French ambassadors.²²

Shortly after writing Perovskii Muraviev learned from the amban of Aigun that Chinese officials would be sent to the mouth of the Ussuri and the mouth of the Suifen, which emptied into the Pacific. What Muraviev sought, however, was a frontier to Posset Bay, some 100 versts south of the Suifen delta. Such a frontier would assure Russian rule over the entire Primoria to Korea. In order to demarcate this frontier, he set in motion a sizeable expedition under a Lieutenant Colonel Budogorskii, composed of General Staff officers, topographers and supporting personnel, some of whom were to proceed with the boundary marking while others would carry out surveys, map the coastline and assemble other data on the entire Ussuri maritime area. He was anxious to proceed quickly

²¹Marked expansion of Russo-Chinese trade could be achieved only by the overland route. Russia had practically no merchant marine, so that the most favored nation treatment guaranteed to Russia in the Treaty Ports was an empty concession. Muraviev had been concerned over this question from the beginning of his assignment to Eastern Siberia. In 1849 he had reported to St. Petersburg: "I consider that the only way to support our trade in China is to alter it from a local to an export trade and by navigating the Amur River to deliver the products of our industries to all the northeastern provinces of China, which are more remote from the present location of English economic activities and therefore from their annihilating competition with us." (Barsukov, op. cit., II, pp. 47-48.) The economic advantages of seaborne vs. overland trade brought Muraviev's aspirations to naught.

²²Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 538 and II, p. 205. Quested refers to this caustically, commenting that in this and in his expectations as to other favorable developments he "seemed to have lost all sense of reality". This appears to be unduly harsh. It is hardly surprising that the situation through the eyes of a commander in the field at the time should have looked different from what it appears to have been to a scholar over a century later.

"lest the English meddle with this", and he hoped also to conclude discussions with the Japanese regarding Sakhalin, so that "the English could not interfere there".²³

While preoccupied with the problems of trade and border demarcation, Muraviev was also worrying about the basic needs of the Priamur. He was only too well aware that if this new territorial acquisition was to be of benefit to Russia it would need people - - a rapidly growing population that could build up overland communications, food production and the security of the area. Accordingly, in a report of December 15, 1858, he urged the Siberian Committee in St. Petersburg to adopt measures to encourage large-scale immigration to Eastern Siberia.²⁴ His appeal elicited little concrete action.

At the end of the year, Muraviev informed the Chinese Tribunal that his expedition to the Ussuri would reach Aigun in February or the beginning of March, 1859, to consult with the Chinese authorities there and to prepare to begin their investigation of the frontier before the spring. Chi-la-ming-a, Deputy Commander of Heilungchiang, had seen the courier bearing Muraviev's Note and had agreed to this procedure.²⁵

Muraviev's actions reflected his diminishing faith in Perovskii's effectiveness. And, indeed, the latter was experiencing considerable frustration in Peking where, because he did not enjoy ambassadorial rank, he was accorded scant attention by the Chinese. His task was further complicated by the fact that, as in the case of the Treaty of Aigun, the

²³ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 538.

²⁴ Ibid., II, pp. 220-224.

²⁵ Quested, op. cit., p. 163.

Treaty of Tientsin also existed in differing Russian and Machu versions, a factor that caused considerable delay in its ratification.²⁶

In January, 1859, the Russian Government decided to appoint Count N. P. Ignatiev as "Political Agent" in Peking to succeed Perovskii. Although only twenty-seven years of age, he was excellently qualified for his appointment. Born into the nobility, he had served in the Corps of Pages and the Life Guards, subsequently graduating from the Imperial Staff Academy in 1851. He then served in the Baltic provinces and as military attache in London. He had played an important role in the Paris Conference of 1856 and had later led a mission to Khiva and Bukhara, successfully concluding a trade treaty and freeing Russian prisoners held in Bukhara.²⁷ Muraviev was pleased to learn of Ignatiev's appointment, since by now he had become thoroughly disillusioned with Perovskii, who was not only having difficulty in obtaining ratification of the Treaty of Tientsin, but was also failing to gather intelligence that would have been of value to Muraviev.²⁸ Ignatiev was not to arrive in Peking until mid-June of 1859, however, and in the meantime Gorchakov sent Perovskii new instructions, in early March, to conclude a treaty with China in eight articles, giving Russia the Manchurian coast down to the Korean border, freedom of trade at any point on the Chinese frontier, the right to have consuls in many towns and providing for the delimitation of the frontier with China both in the east and the west.²⁹ Gorchakov did not know that

²⁶Masatako Banno, China and the West, 1858-1861, The Origins of the Tsungli Yamen (Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 132-133.

²⁷Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Vol. 24, pp. 784-786.

²⁸Quested, op. cit., p. 164.

²⁹Ibid., p. 167.

at this time China was preparing obliquely to repudiate the Treaty of Aigun.

On April 7, 1859, the Tribunal addressed a Note to the Russian Senate without Perovskii's knowledge. It complained about Muraviev's intentions regarding a survey of the Ussuri area, stating that it was "not adjacent to the Russian frontier" and about the conduct of Russian merchants sent by Muraviev to Sanhsing in the previous year. It stated that Muraviev was apparently "making pretexts to stir up trouble and that the ruler of your country cannot have heard about it". It expressed the hope that Lieutenant Colonel Budogoskii's survey party would soon be sent home and added that, "Apart from the left bank of the Heilungchiang.. ..you ought in general not to travel or settle anywhere". It also contained a reminder that no reply had been sent to a previous Note requesting that the weapons offered by Russia be sent to Urga.³⁰

Muraviev intercepted the Chinese Note protesting his actions and re-addressed it to Perovskii, at the same time sending a Note to the Chinese expressing surprise that the Government of China was sending Notes over the head of the Russian envoy in Peking. He asked that Chinese representatives be sent to meet Budogoskii on the Ussuri.³¹ The Emperor I-ting had no intention of falling in with Muraviev's plans. At the end of April, when he received a memorial from I-Shan urging acceptance of free trade along the Amur, he agreed, but he ordered I-Shan to meet Muraviev and argue him out of his plans for the Ussuri area.³² Some two weeks

³⁰Schumacher, op. cit., p. 303.

³¹Ibid., p. 307.

³²IWSM 36, p. 37A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 173.

later I-ting ordered Chi-la-ming-a to prevent the Russians from navigating the Ussuri or going up the Sungari to Sanhsing; he also instructed the Acting General of Kirin to send an officer to the border of Kirin and Heilungchiang to watch for barbarian ships and "stop them by straight talk" from entering Kirin.³³ At that time, too, Perovskii was informed by the Grand Council that China considered effective the boundaries as delimited by the Treaty of Merchinsk and by implication denied the validity of the Treaty of Aigun by stating that the Russians in Mariinsk and "other coastal places on the Amur River were only temporarily allowed to live in the wastelands".³⁴ An edict published a month later announced that I-shan and Chi-la-ming-a, who had been responsible for the signing of the Treaty of Aigun, were to be punished.³⁵

There now ensued a complicated series of further inconclusive exchanges of Notes between Perovskii and the Chinese Government, during which the latter continued to insist that the Russians had no right to penetrate into any part of the Ussuri maritime area. Muraviev continued to send his officials and military units up the Ussuri to badger the Chinese there into joining them in delimiting the new frontier. His men established a number of defense posts in the area and indicated that if the Chinese refused to undertake joint demarcation they would simply seize the area for themselves.³⁶ In late May of 1859, Muraviev himself went to Aigun and announced that he was on his way to inspect the Ussuri

³³IWSM 37, p. 14A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 178.

³⁴Banno, op. cit., p. 148.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶IWSM 37, p. 183, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 181.

and Suifen Rivers. He told the Chinese that he was afraid the English would seize the area and showed them on a map the location (Possiet Bay) where he would meet officials from Kirin; he would wait there and if, after a month, they did not appear, he would go on to Tientsin.³⁷ Then, ignoring their entreaties not to do so, he proceeded down the Amur to Nikolaevsk and thence down to the sea, sailing down the coast of Manchuria to the mouth of the Tumen River, on the Korean border. Lieutenant Colonel Budogorskii, who had completed his survey of the land frontier up to the Tiumen, met him at Possiet Bay. Budogorskii reported to Muraviev that between the mouth of the Ussuri and the Tiumen he had seen no Chinese or Manchus. The two men then sailed for Tientsin, arriving at the mouth of the Pei-Ho on July 2.³⁸

Muraviev was anxious to keep the Chinese in ignorance of Russian naval weakness in the Far East; he tried to keep his presence aboard his ship, the "Amerika", a secret and ordered the rest of his small squadron to keep out of sight of land. The Chinese, however, did learn that he was there, whereupon Muraviev requested permission to send Budogorskii to Peking with maps and letters for Ignatiev. After some delay this request was granted.³⁹ Muraviev then sailed for Japan where he attempted to negotiate a treaty recognizing Russian sovereignty over the entire island of Sakhalin. In mid-August of 1859, he arrived at the Bay of Kanagawa with a squadron of seven assorted steam-powered warships,

³⁷IWSM 38, p. 11, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 186.

³⁸Schumacher, op. cit., pp. 305-309.

³⁹IWSM 40, p. 1A et. seq., and 41, p. 25A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 200.

a force which, though modest, far exceeded the puny array of Japanese naval vessels in the vicinity.⁴⁰

Muraviev went ashore with a retinue of some forty officers and an honor guard of three hundred armed sailors, accompanied by a drum and bugle corps. He opened negotiations with the Japanese plenipotentiaries by delivering a statement claiming that since the ancient name of the Amur River was the Sakhalin-Ula, the island of Sakhalin was homogeneous with that river, which was now "again" under Russian rule, "as it had been one hundred and seventy years before". It followed, therefore, he asserted, that the island must be recognized as Russian.⁴¹ The Japanese pointed out that, according to the Treaty of Shimoda, concluded with Putiatin, Sakhalin remained "unpartitioned between Russia and Japan". They initially refused even to draw a line of demarcation to the south of the island. Muraviev then resorted to a blustering claim that Putiatin had not been empowered to discuss Sakhalin, as this island was within his own jurisdiction as Governor-General of Eastern Siberia. He subsequently rejected a Japanese compromise offer to divide the island at latitude 50 and the negotiations came to an end.⁴²

Muraviev's uncompromising stand on Sakhalin reflected his fear that if he settled for something less than Russian possession of the entire island, that portion that might be assigned to Japan would eventually be seized by England.⁴³ In reporting to Prince Gorchakov on his unsuccessful

⁴⁰Lensen, op. cit., p. 374.

⁴¹Barsukov, op. cit., II, pp. 278-279.

⁴²Lensen, op. cit., p. 376.

⁴³Barsukov, op. cit., p. 217.

meetings, he explained: "Considering that the rights of the Japanese are just as indeterminate as ours. . . I could not agree to any division (of the island) between Japan and us, particularly in consideration of the fact of Japan's weakness, any foreign power can easily take possession of that part which will be recognized as Japanese, consolidate its position there and inflict considerable damage on us for all time to come, especially in relation to La Perouse Strait, which constitutes the nearest and, indeed, only exit for our vessels from the Tatar Strait into the Pacific Ocean."⁴⁴

Muraviev's unsuccessful attempt to browbeat the Japanese was probably not so much the result of his having failed to realize that they were of a tougher breed than the Chinese as it was a reflection of his anxiety to return to the Amur as soon as possible. In a letter to Karsakov written before the start of his negotiations, he had remarked, "I fear the slowness of the Japanese and that I shall have to return to the Amur very late".⁴⁵ The prescience and insight into the psychology of exotic peoples that had stood him so well in the Caucasus and in the Chinese borderlands had not, in fact, deserted him. Putiatin had spoken to him of the Japanese in enthusiastic and admiring terms and had urged the desirability of training them in modern technology; in a letter to Kovalevskii, reporting on his fruitless negotiations, Muraviev referred to this rather sardonically, commenting, "They will learn everything without us, particularly navigation; we had better learn ourselves, rather than teach people who will soon surpass us."⁴⁶

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 276-277.

⁴⁵Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 557-558.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 559.

By the summer of 1859 the main arena for the final resolution of the Amur question was shifting to Tientsin and Peking. In June, 1859, the British and French plenipotentiaries prepared to complete ratification of the Tientsin treaties and to take up their residence in Peking. The Chinese, however, proposed reconsideration of the treaties, whereupon the allies attempted to force their way past the Taku forts, but were defeated. They withdrew, to await the arrival of reinforcements. Ignatiev arrived in Peking two days after this surprising coup by the Chinese forces which made his task of enforcing Russian demands considerably more difficult than it would have been otherwise. He submitted a draft treaty designed to bring the treaties of Aigun and Tientsin into alignment and providing for a settlement of the Russo-Chinese frontier from the confluence of the Ussuri and the Amur along the Ussuri upstream to its confluence with the River Sung-a-cha, then up the latter to Lake Hsing-kai, or Hanka, and the River Hun-ch'un, then along that river to the Tiumen and along the Tiumen to the sea.⁴⁷ All his efforts to obtain serious consideration of his proposals were rejected throughout the summer and fall of 1859, when he broke off negotiations until the New Year.

During the period of Ignatiev's initial frustrations in Peking, Muraviev, who had returned to the Amur from Japan in the fall of 1859, continued to expand his settlements on the Amur and on the Ussuri. He was

⁴⁷IWSM 39, p. 273, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 196, who points out that there is no mention in this draft treaty of Sanhsing, claimed earlier by Perovskii, and that this might suggest that Muraviev, not Gorchakov, had originated this claim, and that earlier Russian incursions might have been instigated by him. In this connection she points out that Ignatiev in his Materiely records a letter Muraviev had sent him from Yeddo stating his intention to occupy the mouth of the Sungari and to send vessels of all sizes up it as far as Kirin.

evidently doing his best to place Ignatiev in a position of negotiating from strength. On October 8, as he was approaching the confluence of the Amur with the Ussuri, Fu-ni-yang-a, Deputy Commander in charge of barbarian affairs, intercepted his vessel and was allowed to come aboard. The Chinese memorial to the Emperor, reporting on this meeting, stated, in part, that Muraviev was "arrogant and overbearing and wrathful of speech. He asked why the General of Kirin had not come to delimit the frontier". The response given by Fu-ni-yang-a had been that Kirin, the Ussuri and Suifen were not contiguous to Russian territory and there was no need to investigate them. Fu-ni-yang-a had asked Muraviev to order back his men and ships from the Ussuri but Muraviev's reply had been that the Russian envoy was now in Peking to manage this matter and that if he could not bring it to a conclusion, he, Muraviev, would have to negotiate with the General of Kirin.⁴⁸

Shortly after Muraviev's confrontation with Fu-ni-yang-a, a Manchu officer had met Muraviev as he was passing along the left bank of the Amur in a carriage and they had stopped at a wayside building to talk. Muraviev refused to discuss the frontier and indicated that the Chinese could send representatives to Blagoveshchensk for that purpose. At the end of October, 1859, the Chinese did just that. Ai-shen-tai came to Blagoveshchenck and repeated to Muraviev substantially what Fu-ni-yang-a had earlier said, and in effect proposing only that there should be delimitation of the land "to be permitted to the Russians" around the points they occupied on the left bank of the Amur and at Marinskii Post and Kizi. The Chinese records describe Muraviev's reaction as follows:

⁴⁸IWSM, 44, 17A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 213.

When Muraviev heard this he became extremely angry and shouted. He told the lama interpreter Father Avvakum to tell Ai-shen-t'ai he was an insolent liar. These places had always belonged to Russia and he not merely would not move those already there, but more men and ships were coming. He would also build gun emplacements and houses at Lake Hanka and at Tiimenshan. Our officer replied as before. Muraviev became still angrier and his appearance was alarming. He told the priest to say that without the use of gun and cannon against them they would never be moved, and he ordered the buildings of the (Chinese) Ussuri defense post on the left bank of the Heilungchiang to be removed. Our officer replied that that would be very hard to permit. Muraviev replied that if it was not removed he must order his men to destroy it, and next year he must set up a gun emplacement and buildings opposite Heilungchiang town (Aigun). Having said this he told Ai-shen-t'ai to talk to his artillery officer, a man of evil aspect. Our officer saw that he looked extremely vain and haughty, and told him that if it came to war, how could he suppose that China would not defend herself? Then Ai-shen-t'ai introduced his Major No-men-te-leh-ho-er. Since he was powerfully built they all stood up and gathered round to look at him. Even Muraviev looked round and laughed and nodded his head endlessly. Then Muraviev gave them wine with his own hands and told them all to drink a glass with the barbarians and get to know one another. It seemed as if his former talk had been only play-acting.

Our officer asked the lama to tell him that all the matters mentioned should be cleared up, and he should arrange to go to the town for a meeting. The chief (Muraviev) said he himself had no business to discuss in Heilungchiang town, but if our General had authority to hand over the Ussuri and Suifen he would meet him, otherwise not.⁴⁹

Muraviev remained at Blagoveschensk in October-November and had repeated meetings with the Deputy-Commander of Aigun, during which he refused to modify his stand on the Ussuri frontier.⁵⁰ He was adopting as obdurate a stand with his counterparts as Ignatiev was encountering on the part of the officials in Peking with whom he was attempting to negotiate. He even went so far as to forbid the Chinese to navigate the Amur below

⁴⁹IWSM 44, p. 36B, cited by Quested, op. cit., pp. 214-216.

⁵⁰Schumacher, op. cit., p. 307.

Khabarovsk.⁵¹

During the period when matters appeared to have reached an impasse, Muraviev continued his Cossack settlement activities along the Amur, as well as his occupation of the right bank of the Ussuri, which included the establishment of the two best harbors on the coast, Novgorodsk and Vladivostok.⁵²

Throughout the fall of 1859, Ignatiev continued to be rebuffed in Peking and on November 17, Gorchakov sent Muraviev the following instructions: "If you become convinced on the basis of future reports from our plenipotentiary in Peking that the Chinese will never agree to the demarcation of the border . . . your Excellency will proceed to occupy those frontiers on the right bank of the Ussuri and the Manchurian ports with our ships as soon as the time of year and local considerations make this possible." Until he became so convinced, however, Muraviev was to adopt a strictly neutral posture with regard to the hostile actions of the English and French and was to undertake no aggressive troop movements, guarding only Russian interests.⁵³ These instructions were largely in accord with Muraviev's own views, as contrasted to Ignatiev's, who by this time, exasperated at being denied access to the highest levels of Government in Peking, was suggesting that Russian troops move on Urga, Aigun, Sanhsing and Tsitsihar.⁵⁴ Muraviev alerted all his troops along the Amur and the Ussuri and ordered construction of two additional gunboats, all of this being done in plain view of the Chinese on the opposite banks.

⁵¹Quested, op. cit., p. 217.

⁵²Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 560-561.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 562-4.

⁵⁴Ibid., and Schumacher, op. cit., pp. 312-313.

During the fall and winter of 1859-60, he removed a number of Chinese military posts on the right banks of the rivers, accomplishing this with no bloodshed, since the Chinese offered only passive resistance. He also spread rumors amongst the Chinese that large Russian forces would cross the Chinese frontiers in the spring, and that at that time sixty English and French vessels would be arriving at Tientsin.⁵⁵

Just how effective Muraviev's attempts to strengthen Ignatiev's hand in Peking were must be a matter of conjecture. The young envoy had achieved little during his negotiations during the winter of 1859 though at the end of that year he had elicited a tacit admission in writing from two senior Chinese officials, Su-Shun and Jui-ch'ang, that Russia's possession of the left bank of the Amur was at least an indisputable fait accompli.⁵⁶ But Muraviev's maneuvers had also stung the Chinese into undertaking a certain amount of defense preparations in Manchuria. An ambush party for the Amur-Sungari confluence was despatched in the spring of 1860 and 200 men were sent to the Niman-Ussuri confluence; eight small observation posts were set up on the Ussuri itself and 300 men had been sent to the Pacific coast. The Plao-fu tribes, moreover, had been organized in twelve posts in the area of the Lesser Suifen River and eighty-four posts in the Su-cheng and Mat'ingho areas near the sea. These irregular forces may have totaled 10,000 men.⁵⁷ How accurate Russian intelligence was on these activities is not known, though in April

⁵⁵Schumacher, op. cit., p. 314 and IWSM, 45, p. 17B, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 217.

⁵⁶Banno, op. cit., p. 154.

⁵⁷IWSM 50, p. 10A, cited by Quested, op. cit., p. 223.

they had received various rumors of Chinese mobilization and reports that 2,000 muskets and five cart-loads of cannon had been sent to Aigun.⁵⁸ Muraviev was clearly unperturbed, in any event, being confident that he had sufficiently superior forces to deal with any eventuality. He recommended to Gorchakov that Ignatiev collaborate with the English and the French and that in the event that the Ch'ing regime should collapse, Mongolia and Manchuria should be taken under Russian protectorate.⁵⁹

In January of 1860 the Russian Government, in agreement with Muraviev's view, decided that Ignatiev should join the English, French and American envoys on the coast and attempt to play the role that had been filled by Putiatin. The Anglo-French reinforcements were arriving in Chinese waters and it was evident that the decisive campaign of the "Arrow War" was approaching.

Muraviev's role in the Russo-Chinese confrontation was now largely one of consolidating his hold on both the Amur and Ussuri areas without resorting to any large-scale hostile action, and of encouraging the local inhabitants to enter into expanded trade relations with the Russians. The ultimate success of the Anglo-French military operations was a foregone conclusion, though he mistakenly believed that those operations and the continuing Taiping Rebellion might bring about the collapse of the Ch'ing dynasty as early as in May, 1860.⁶⁰

As for Ignatiev, Quested summarizes the policy he was following, as set forth in his own report: He was to exacerbate the Anglo-Chinese

⁵⁸Schumacher, op. cit., pp. 324-326.

⁵⁹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 571.

⁶⁰Loc. cit.

quarrel sufficiently for the English and Chinese not to come to terms before China had been thoroughly defeated, even to the extent of letting the British actually overthrow the Ch'ing dynasty, for no other regime could be worse disposed towards the Russians than were the high Manchu dignitaries. He was to make himself an indispensable adviser to the allies, but induce the Chinese, too, to regard him as a friend and to grant Russia everything she demanded. With regard to the French, Ignatiev's task was to irritate their relations with the British and gain their support in defending Russian interests in the Far East against the latter. Finally, the attention of all the Western ministers had to be distracted from Russia's "unfinished business with China, and they must be prevented from meddling in it even indirectly".⁶¹

While awaiting the denouement, Muraviev continued his efforts at administrative improvements in Eastern Siberia. In the spring of 1860, he recommended to St. Petersburg that his domain be divided into three parts, the Primoria, the Irkutsk Gubernia and the Eniseisk Gubernia. The latter he proposed transferring to Western Siberia.⁶² As for corrupt bureaucrats and grasping exploiters, his efforts of twelve years had not succeeded in entirely eliminating them from the scene. In July of 1860, he was writing to Karsakov, on leave in Russia, complaining about the "intrigues" of the Ministry of Finance. Although, as a result of his recommendations, the government monopoly on gold mining (and its attendant evils) had been substantially diminished by legislation in 1851, that portion of it which had been relinquished to the

⁶¹Quested, op. cit., p. 240.

⁶²Barsukov, op. cit., I, pp. 576-581.

private sector had soon become yet another field for bribery, collusion and injustice. Thus it appeared that the Ministry of Finance was now planning to relieve a private operator of his fields in Novomariinsk in order to turn them over to another, more favored, private operator.⁶³

In another letter to Karsakov in the summer of 1860, Muraviev reported that all was well on the Amur and the Ussuri. The Russians were doing as they saw fit and, although some of his firebrand officers were all for a little shooting to encourage the Chinese to legalize what they had agreed to, he had forbidden it, "not only because of official instructions" (which he was not loathe to disregard or exceed on occasion) but out of his personal conviction ". . . here our guns would kill only the common people who are not our enemies, while the mandarins would escape." In any case, he pointed out, the Chinese authorities were contenting themselves with issuing "absurd proclamations and making empty threats, to which no one paid any attention".⁶⁴

Even while marking time, Muraviev continued to press the Chinese to agree to demarcation of the frontier. During the summer he sent an officer to Aigun for that purpose - - as well as to state that the Russian military alert that was everywhere so evident was only in preparation for occupying territories ceded to Russia by treaty; he also warned the amban that any disorders created by Chinese subjects, or any attempt to send Chinese troops down the Sungari would be met by force.⁶⁵

The English and French, having failed to obtain the concessions they

⁶³Ibid., p. 594.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 597.

⁶⁵Schumacher, op. cit., p. 327.

sought by negotiation, mounted a successful assault on the Taku forts and proceeded to fight their way to Peking. In late September, they sacked the Summer Palace and laid siege to the capital. On October 7, 1860, the Manchus capitulated to the allies' ultimatum, thus averting the sacking of Peking, largely as a result of Ignatiev's mediation.

The British and French Conventions with China were concluded on October 10 and 11 and the Russian Treaty of Peking was finally negotiated by Ignatiev and ratified on November 2. It unconditionally ceded all territory on the left bank of the Amur to Russia, as well as the entire Ussuri maritime area to the Korean frontier. Final legal confirmation was thus accorded to Muraviev's historic achievement of acquiring for Russia some 360,000 square miles of new territory in the Far East.

II. SHELVING OF AN EMPIRE BUILDER

Muraviev's twelve years in Eastern Siberia had worn down his health and energy. With his major task accomplished, he prepared to turn over his responsibilities to Karsakov, whom he was recommending as his successor. In the meantime he worked at the unceasing problem of populating the new territories at a sufficient rate to create a base for profitable economic development out of an area that he realized was as yet only a drain on Russia itself. By the end of 1860 there were some 100 settlements along the Amur, totaling a population of approximately 15,000. Such, comments Kabanov, were the results of Muraviev's policy of colonization, results of very little significance which, however, had placed a considerable strain on the resources of Eastern Siberia. The movement of these colonists, moreover, was accompanied by much hardship and suffering, which could have been avoided had Muraviev been in a

position to provide them with adequate financial and logistical support.⁶⁶

In February, 1861, Muraviev, having returned to St. Petersburg, was decorated with the Order of St. Vladimir, First Class, granted a pension of 15,000 roubles annually, and made a member of the Imperial Council.⁶⁷ The Emperor upheld his recommendation of Karsakov as his successor - - over the votes of all of the members of the Council (which had also voted by a large majority against emancipation of the serfs, only to be overruled by their sovereign).⁶⁸ At this time, too, in response to Muraviev's pleas, the Nerchinsk miners were finally granted the same rights that were enjoyed by all factory workers.⁶⁹ His recommendations for reorganization of the Eastern Siberian administration, however, were shelved - - whether for reasons of economy or other considerations is not clear.

Muraviev, at the relatively early age of fifty-two, found that his departure from the scene of his triumph had effectively terminated his career. In St. Petersburg he participated in meetings of the Imperial Council, particularly when they concerned matters affecting the administration of his old domain. Here, he succeeded in putting through one of his projects, the transfer of the Kiyakhta customs to Irkutsk, the junction of the most important communication routes in Eastern Siberia.⁷⁰ Such

⁶⁶Kabanov, op. cit., pp. 200-201.

⁶⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 618.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 619. The majority in the Council had supported Putiatin as Muraviev's successor.

⁶⁹Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 624.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 623.

occasional work sessions, however, compared to the activities that had engrossed him when he was at the peak of his boiling energy in Irkutsk or on extended travels throughout his vast territory, were a frustrating anti-climax.

For a time there were rumors in the capital that he was to be named Viceroy of the Caucasus, or of Poland. It appears that he was in fact seriously considered for appointment to one or another of these posts but, as had happened at a much earlier stage in his career, those who opposed him prevailed. A contemporary of Muraviev's relates that in discussing with some of his intimates the possibility of his becoming Viceroy of Poland, Muraviev said, "Let them first tell me, what does the Government desire in Warsaw: sincere peace or police-imposed calm and order? Concessions to the Poles or their pacification?" The writer points out that at the time the Government was vacillating in its policy, but remarks, "Thank God that this question was resolved and that when it became evident that the views of Nicholas Nikolaevich and the Government were completely at variance, he escaped that fate."⁷¹

Prince Bariatinskii, former intimate of Nicholas I and high in the counsels of Alexander II, advised the Emperor against appointing Muraviev to the Caucasus. He acknowledged Muraviev's outstanding qualifications but urged the Emperor to fill such a high position with an individual who, even if mediocre in comparison with the Count of the Amur, was more "loyal" to the throne.⁷²

⁷¹M. I. Veniukov, "Graf Nikolai Nikolaevich Muraviev-Amurskii", Russkaia Starina, Vol. 33, p. 525.

⁷²Russki Arkhiv, 1889, Vol. 6, pp. 282-283.

A new period of reaction, after the brief "thaw" following the death of Nicholas I, was setting in at high governmental levels. The liberation of the serfs, which Muraviev had advocated while in Tula, had earned Alexander II criticism and hostility both from vested interests that had opposed the measure and from many others who were disappointed by its compromising aspects. The beginning of freer conditions had whetted the appetites of liberals, reformers and radicals who proceeded to demand more relaxation of governmental controls. Student disorders began to assume serious proportions after the Liberation. From London, Alexander Herzen was urging fraternization between Russian radicals and Polish patriots. Socialist propaganda was "flooding the military schools, from the Corps of Pages to the Artillery Academy, where Professor Lavrov combined mathematical instruction with the advocacy of social revolution".⁷³ Clandestine publications, such as Velikorus, Kolokol and Istorichesski Almanach, were widely circulated and, in May, 1862, the most violent of them all, Molodaia Rossia, demanded measures "to change radically and without exception all the foundations of contemporary society". Following its publication, a wave of arson spread over the country. In St. Petersburg alone, a conflagration destroyed two thousand shops and warehouses. The insecurity and alarm created by the unrest of 1861-2 ended the liberalizing trend that had begun with the accession of Alexander II and profoundly altered his outlook. Political trials and other repressive measures, discarded at the end of the reign of Nicholas I, were resumed. "It was the beginning of the duel to the death

⁷³W. E. Mosse, Alexander II and the Modernization of Russia (Collier Books, New York, 1962), pp. 106-7.

between Alexander II and the Russian revolutionary movement."⁷⁴ At such a time, Count Muraviev-Amurskii, a man known to be independent of mind and ready to act on his own responsibility, was bound to be regarded askance.

Those who were anxious to brand Muraviev as disloyal were not wanting for pretexts. His predilection for the Decembrists was well known. Moreover, the famous anarchist, Michael Bakunin, a relative of Muraviev's from the maternal branch, had escaped to America from Eastern Siberia while Muraviev had still been Governor-General there.⁷⁵ It was widely assumed, evidently with justification that this had been accomplished with Muraviev's connivance. Certainly, there can be no doubt of the warmly sympathetic relationship that existed between these two men. Bakunin wrote to Alexander Herzen that "Muraviev is the only man among those who have power and influence in Russia who can and must fully and without the least reservations be considered one of us".⁷⁶ Peter Kropotkin, who came to Irkutsk shortly after Muraviev's departure, observed that "Muraviev held advanced views and a democratic republic would not quite have satisfied him. In his study, the young officers and Bakunin would discuss the possibility of establishing a United States of Siberia, federated across the Pacific with the United States of America".⁷⁷

What Kropotkin was referring to was not as outlandish and incongruous

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 180-212.

⁷⁵Russkaia Starina, Vol. 88, p. 607.

⁷⁶Alexander Herzen, Polnoe Sobraniye Sochinenii, Vol. XIV, p. 426.

⁷⁷P. Kropotkin, Memoirs of a Revolutionist, (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1899) p. 169.

an idea in Muraviev's time as it might appear today. Concurrent with the development of Russian Populism was the rise of "federalism", the yearning for establishment of autonomous, or even independent, regions within the Russian multi-national imperial state. And in only one "historical region" (as contrasted to Poland) of what can rightly be called Russia, Franco Venturi points out, was there an attempt to found a movement of independence. This was Siberia, the most important field of Russian "federalism". While Muraviev was still in Irkutsk, his kinsman, Bakunin, helped two young Siberian patriots, Nicholas Yadrintsev and Grigori Potanin, to become university students in St. Petersburg, where they founded a regional political group by collecting together the Siberians scattered among the various institutions of higher education in the capital. Their aim was separation of Siberia and creation of a republic like that of the United States of America. Their efforts came to naught and within a few years they were arrested. But, Venturi points out, Siberian separatism was not merely firing the imagination of a couple of young students. Even in official Siberian circles, "such as the Committee of the Geographical Society, inspired by Muraviev-Amurskii, there was talk in 1861 of Siberia's colonial status and suggestions for the separation of Siberia from the metropolis, 'as the history of all colonies teaches' ".⁷⁸

Kropotkin's revelations of the conversations in the study of the

⁷⁸Franco Venturi, Roots of Revolution (New York, 1960), pp. 317-319. This concept persisted among Russian liberals and revolutionaries. A journal published in Geneva by "Populists-Bakuninists" pleaded for the break-up of the Empire, pointing out, among other separatist tendencies, that Eastern Siberia, because of its economic interests, might in time gravitate toward the United States. (See Avran Yarmolinsky, Road to Revolution (London, 1957), p. 246. The reader will note, incidentally, that Muraviev was aware of some such possibility as early as in 1849. (See supra, pp. 78-79.)

Governor-General were made years after Muraviev's death but others were seizing upon reports of this sort even while Muraviev was preparing to leave Irkutsk to seek a new appointment worthy of his accomplishments. One such was a certain A. P. Shchapov, Siberian patriot and inspirer of Yadrintsev and Potanin. In prison as a political suspect, he wrote the Tsar, much as had the disgruntled Piatnitzkii, years earlier, alleging that Muraviev was quietly contemplating the possibility of becoming Tsar of Siberia. Shchapov's letter reached the Emperor just at the time that Muraviev was being considered as his possible viceroy in the Caucasus or in Poland.⁷⁹ Piatnitzkii's letter had been ignored by Nicholas I, the tall martinet and friend of Muraviev's father; Shchapov's exercise in poison-penmanship was perhaps taken more seriously by the hard-pressed Alexander II. Other evidences of Muraviev's "unreliability" included the fact that while Feodor Dostoevskii, a minor political offender, was enduring the rigors of a strict prison regime in Western Siberia, another more important subversive, Nicholas Petrashevskii, exiled to Muraviev's realm, had enjoyed the freedoms of any ordinary Russian inhabitant of Eastern Siberia. Another sinister indication was that Muraviev had freed the numerous Polish prisoners in his charge, following the amnesty proclaimed upon the coronation of Alexander II.⁸⁰

The many manifestations of Muraviev's fundamental liberalism clearly did not escape the notice of his opponents in St. Petersburg who, by exploiting them, succeeded in foiling any attempt to appoint him to a

⁷⁹ Semyonov, op. cit., p. 278.

⁸⁰ Semyonov, p. 279: It was claimed that this had been done "against the secret wishes of the government in St. Petersburg".

vice-regal position and managed to bring his career to a premature close. A contemporary of Muraviev's who had known him from the early days in the Caucasus - - and whose impressions of him were by no means those of undiluted admiration - - met him in Europe and commented thus after reminiscing with the soldier-statesman: "What obstacles blocked his way I knew not, nor did I wish to ask him. It was said of him that he was a 'red'. All I can say of those who talked thus is that they distinguish between colors very poorly."⁸¹

Count Muraviev-Amurskii, Far Eastern pro-consul of the "third Rome", had not only added hundreds of thousands of square miles of territory to the Russian Empire; he had also reformed the administration of Eastern Siberia - - at least for a brief period. Kropotkin records in his memoirs that, "In 1862, the senior members of the Siberian bureaucracy were far more educated and in general far better than those of any province of European Russia".⁸² And a quarter of a century later, colonists in Eastern Siberia told the deported writer, V. G. Korolenko, that there had been no bribery in Muraviev's time.⁸³ Such a purge of the traditionally corrupt regime of Eastern Siberia was a direct result of the paradoxical mixture of Muraviev's humane outlook and his sternly authoritarian tendencies. This combination did not endear him to those who were influencing the decisions of the nervous and ailing Emperor.

Following a protracted visit to France, Muraviev returned to St. Petersburg in 1863, at the time of the mounting unrest in Poland, when

⁸¹Russki Arkhiv, 1883, p. 352.

⁸²Kropotkin, op. cit., p. 171.

⁸³Semyonov, op. cit., p. 280.

he thought that his services might be needed. He was given no special appointment and, when his wife rejoined him from Paris, took up residence in Tsarskoe Selo. It was a sterile existence, affording him no satisfaction. Apart from occasional meetings of the Imperial Council, he was never offered any suitable new role either in the government or the army. In 1868, he and his Countess left St. Petersburg to live in Paris. From his apartment on the Rue Miromesnil, Russia's discarded empire-builder followed events in Europe and in his homeland and maintained a lively correspondence with his successors in Irkutsk, the Priamur and the Primoria. Only once, in 1878, did he return to St. Petersburg to offer his services in the Russo-Turkish war, but these were declined. In 1881, he died in Paris of what was reported to be "a gangrenous infection". He was buried in the plot of his Lotharingian wife's family in the Pere Lachaise cemetery in Montmartre.⁸⁴

III. GREAT EXPECTATIONS DASHED AND REVIVED

The annexation and settlement of the Amur region became the subject of debate and polemics even before Muraviev's departure from Eastern Siberia and the controversy continued for many years. It was initiated by Zavalishin's articles in Morskoi Sbornik which depicted the state of affairs in Muraviev's domain as being far different from what was alleged in some official reports attesting to the growing progress and well-being of the population there.⁸⁵ Much of what Zavalishin and similar articles on Muraviev related regarding the hardships of the settlers, inadequate

⁸⁴ Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 671.

⁸⁵ Kabanov, op. cit., p. 196.

preparation for their reception, poorly chosen locations, etc..., was only too true. They erred, however, in ascribing all the ills that afflicted the pioneers of Eastern Siberia to sordid motives of personal gain which could not be imputed to Muraviev, certainly, or even to the corruption or incompetence of some of the officials working for him. The mediocrity and even venality of the Eastern Siberian bureaucracy no doubt contributed to the unhappy history of the early years following the Treaty of Aigun. But the slow rate of development of the area for three decades following Muraviev's departure were the result, in far greater degree, of a number of other, more deep seated factors.

The Amur and Ussuri settlements in Muraviev's day were similar in principle to the military settlements that had been instituted by Count A. A. Arakcheev in European Russia after the Napoleonic Wars, and that, it should be noted, were being phased out of existence there by the mid-nineteenth century. As Kabanov points out, military or para-military colonization by its very nature stifles the sort of enterprise that is necessary to steady rapid growth of a newly settled area.⁸⁶ It was a poor alternative to filling the land with free, private civilians spurred on by the kind of incentives that enticed the successive waves of pioneers westward in America. Under the circumstances facing him at the time, Muraviev had no other choice. His task, considering Eastern Siberia's limited resources - - which were all he could draw upon - - was formidable. Communications along the 3000-verst course of the Amur had to be undertaken simultaneously. . . The same was true of the 800-verst line of the

⁸⁶Kabanov, op. cit., p. 197.

Ussuri to the Korean border.⁸⁷

Muraviev recognized the deficiencies of the mode of colonization that he was obliged to adopt. Many years later, Governor-General Unterberger of the Priamur called on Muraviev, living in retirement in Paris, and discussed the reproaches and criticisms that had been directed at his colonization methods. Muraviev explained that, "At that time, it was necessary first and foremost to establish reliable communications along the deserted bank of the Amur and Ussuri with Vladivostok; for that reason, contrary to our desire, it was necessary to sacrifice the other needs posed by colonizing the area, calculating that these could be attended to in the future."⁸⁸ And just when that future would begin to materialize could hardly have been clearly discernible either to Muraviev or to the policy makers in St. Petersburg at the time of the signing of the Treaty of Peking. Though the Treaty was to some extent a stabilizing factor in Russo-Chinese relations, the Taiping Rebellion had yet to be suppressed. Were the Ch'ing dynasty to collapse under its pressure, the whole picture would be radically changed. Muraviev, as has been seen, envisaged an eventual Russian protectorate over all of Manchuria and Mongolia. He was undoubtedly not the sole Russian official to be aware of such a possibility. Certainly, outside observers were. Ravenstein, writing immediately after the Treaty of Peking, predicted that when the Chinese Empire fell to pieces, Russia would "possess herself of the whole of Manchuria, including the Lia-tung Peninsula".⁸⁹

⁸⁷Barsukov, op. cit., I, p. 544.

⁸⁸Kabanov, op. cit., p. 198.

⁸⁹Ravenstein, op. cit., p. 154.

Such a contingency, involving potential large-scale troop movements and various imponderables with regard to British and French reactions, clearly could not have created a psychological climate favorable to voluntary migration to the Amur or heavy investment there by such industrialists as existed in European Russia.

In the immediate post-Aigun period, voluntary colonization of the Amur by private individuals was at an insignificant level: 8 persons in 1858; 227 in 1859. In 1860 the figure rose to 2,395 new settlers on the Amur and the Ussuri. As an historian of the Amur has sardonically pointed out, "Voluntary settlement of the Amur region was on a small scale indeed; it was only the government official who proceeded eagerly and gaily to the Priamur".⁹⁰ Both the unsettled political situation in the area and bureaucratic rule there made life in Eastern Siberia unattractive and unprofitable for most private individuals who, though theoretically free persons, found their activities circumscribed by red-tape and undermined by corruption.⁹¹

If bureaucratic impediments and political uncertainties stifled free migration, the nature of the country, too, was such as to discourage it. The Priamur, an area much different from the rest of Siberia, presented unpleasant surprises for the early settlers. In this region, dry strong winds from the highlands of Iakutia meet the humid winds from the Pacific, creating what for the new arrivals from Siberia and European Russia was a climatic freak. The winter in the Priamur is consistently dry, sunny and mild, with only light snowfall. The rivers and streams

⁹⁰Kabanov, op. cit., p. 199, citing Rededei, Istoria Priamura (St. Petersburg, 1913).

⁹¹Kabanov, op. cit., p. 202.

are shallow in the spring and at the beginning of summer are almost dried up; in the latter half of the summer, however, after heavy, sometimes torrential, rains, they reach flood stage, often cresting their banks. Many settlers, ignorant of climatic conditions, were ruined by unexpected floods that wiped out their crops and homes. But when they moved to higher ground for protection against such a calamity, they found stony soil and thick scrub and forests, which, after toilsome clearing, yielded poor harvests.⁹²

Muraviev was well aware of the need to provide special inducements to encourage the rapid growth of settlement on the Amur and the Primoria. To this end, before leaving Eastern Siberia, he drafted a proposal providing that serfs coming to the Amur would become free men; it also contained measures making it easier for peasants to receive permission to migrate there. The proposal was not approved by the Government. The regulations for migrating to Eastern Siberia, moreover, that were adopted by the Siberian Committee, provided allowances far too meagre to encourage such migration.⁹³

The slow build-up of the population continued, perforce, along military lines, with conscripted peasants being sent as "cossacks" to the Amur and the Ussuri. By 1861 the Amur line of communication had sixty villages, with a population of 11,850.⁹⁴ But this population, spread out over the tremendous distances of the area, was much too sparse

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Ibid., p. 200.

⁹⁴Andrew Malozemoff, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904 (University of California Press, 1958), p. 2.

and the conditions of life much too difficult to encourage additional larger numbers of pioneers. This sparseness of population made it unwarrantable to establish anything approaching a regular and convenient means of land transportation; at the same time, even had it been attempted, the manpower to do so would have been insufficient. As for the natural main line of communication, the Amur river, this freezes over at Blagoveschensk by the end of October and does not thaw until late April. For some 17 to 27 days before the freeze, moreover, it is filled with ice floes and for an equal period during the thaw it is also dangerous. Such frail barges and river steamers as could operate in the shallow waters above Blagoveschensk could thus navigate on an average of only 140 days a year. The river also contained an unusually high proportion of other natural hazards, such as shoals, snags, shifting and blind channels and bars. Downstream navigation was reasonably safe and rapid but the return trip was dangerous and slow. Scarcity of draft animals moreover, limited the Amur's use as a winter highway, in the traditional Siberian mode. All of these circumstances severely handicapped development of transportation on the river with the result that, in Malozemoff's words, "the Amur served less as a line of communication than as a line of limitation for Russian expansion".⁹⁵

Alexander Bestuzhev, after describing the perils of traveling by barge on the Amur, and the high proportion of sinkings with attendant heavy loss of life and supplies, recalled that in addition to such primitive craft, five small steamers plied the river in 1860. One of them,

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 3.

the "Kazakevich" ran from Chita to Nikolaevsk; there were few who could afford to travel on it, however, since one individual's passage cost 300 rubles, while freight was charged for at 3 rubles per pood. These costs, he pointed out, were the equivalent of rates charged for sailing from England to America.⁹⁶

The well capitalized Amur Company had been established for the purpose of providing the Amur population with food and merchandise of good quality at reasonable prices. Its beginnings were elaborate, with stores and warehouses being established over a wide area and manned by an enormous staff of employees. Misfortune dogged the company from the outset. Operating expenses were high, cargoes from the seacoast sometimes failed to reach their destinations safely, some of the Company's ships sank at the river's estuary - - and employees went into trade for themselves on company time, buying up peltry from the natives for a song and selling it at tremendous personal profits. Within a year, the Company found itself selling waterlogged crusts and biscuits, rancid butter, maggoty sausage, etc., at prohibitive prices.⁹⁷

A correspondent of the periodical, "Amur", observed that, "Trade on the Amur despite its profitability at prices prevailing there (a pood of meat, 8 rubles; pound of tea, 5 rubles, etc.), nevertheless poses much risk. Ignorance as to the population's requirements, sparse settlement over an enormous area, insufficient numbers of experienced boatmen, the high prices of labor, . . . these are the difficulties that cool one's enthusiasm for going down the Amur".⁹⁸

⁹⁶Cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 217.

⁹⁷Kabanov, op. cit., p. 218.

⁹⁸Amur, Nov. 20, 1860, cited by Kabanov, op. cit., p. 218.

It had been Muraviev's hope to attract foreign capital into trade and manufacturing in the Priamur. Even before the Treaty of Aigun, while on consultation in St. Petersburg, he had "dazzled the American Minister, Seymour, with a list of vast improvements that were intended to develop Siberia and the foreign trade of the Amur".⁹⁹ At a meeting in St. Petersburg in January, 1858, Muraviev told him that De Castries, Mariinsk and Nikolaevsk had just been opened to foreign trade.¹⁰⁰ In order to encourage foreign enterprise on the Amur, Muraviev established extremely favorable regulations for foreign commercial agents in those ports. This aroused the Siberian merchants, many of whom sent complaints to their friends in the capital. These complaints - - and the Russian Government's fear of American economic and political penetration of its newly gained possessions in Eastern Siberia - - led to the prohibition of navigation of the Amur by foreign vessels beyond a point 300 versts above the estuary. This in turn excited the indignation of the Americans, who had made sizeable investments in river vessels, merchandise, and construction materials for the development of their enterprises on the river.¹⁰¹ By May of 1860, they were thoroughly disillusioned. The young American businessman, W. W. Collins, who had envisioned railroad and telegraph projects in the area (which he had visited in 1857-8 with Muraviev's blessing) wrote to the State Department at that time decrying the Russian Government's commercial policy and enclosing the translation

⁹⁹Perry McDonough Collins, A Voyage Down the Amoor, edited with introduction by Charles Vevier (University of Wisconsin Press, 1962), p. 27.

¹⁰⁰Quoted, op. cit., p. 100.

¹⁰¹Kabanov, op. cit., pp. 218-219.

of an article in the Journal de St. Petersbourg which said that only thirteen vessels had visited the Amur in 1859. He wrote of the "miserable stupidity of the management of the Amur Company both in St. Petersburg and Irkutsk" and commented that . . . "most undertakings of this nature are badly managed in Russia because of the want of alacrity in commercial undertakings and the great number of employees who succeed pretty surely in leeching the concern of nearly all vitality in a very short period".¹⁰²

As prospects of a flourishing commercial tie with the west coast of the United States receded, there occurred yet another development temporarily unfavorable to the growth of the Amur region and, indeed, of the entire Russian Far East. This was the sale of Alaska to the United States in 1867, something that had been foreseen and advocated by Muraviev, fourteen years earlier, when he had hoped that by so doing, Russia would obtain "compensating advantages" from the United States. The short-term result, however, was a reduction in the importance of the area which had provided an indispensable if uneconomic line of communications to Russian America. Such was the ironic effect of Muraviev's Amur obsession, which had undoubtedly exerted a contributory influence on the decision to relinquish Alaska.

Muraviev's high hopes for overland trade with China also proved to be illusory. Inadequate transportation and competition of European seaborne merchandise were fatal to the marketing in China of products of Russian industry, which was still in an early stage of development. Even Russian textiles, which had earlier enjoyed wide acceptance there, proved

¹⁰²Quested, op. cit., pp. 239-240.

too costly in the face of this competition, which rose as China concluded a series of treaties with the European Powers, beginning with the Tientsin conventions of 1860 with England and France and ending with the trade convention of 1869 with Austro-Hungary.¹⁰³ Tea shipped from Shanghai to Nikolaevsk and thence via the Amur to Irkutsk and European Russia also proved to be too costly, particularly following the decree of 1862, which opened the frontiers of European Russia to the importation of tea; an additional serious blow to the Amur tea route came with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, when freight costs of tea sent to Russia by sea became seven to eight times cheaper than by the overland route.¹⁰⁴

More distressing from the standpoint of the economic development of the Amur basin was the failure of attempts to turn the area into a food producing base for Russia's Far East. Muraviev had held high hopes in this regard because of the abundant rainfall and luxurious vegetation along the banks of the river. The heavy rainfall, however, particularly in the summer, was unfavorable to agriculture. Cereals tended to run to straw, yielding poor grain, which sometimes did not ripen. Fogs and dampness along the coast forced settlers to abandon their farms. Though vegetables and grains grew abundantly, they "underwent some changes". Bread made of local grains had an unpeeeasant taste and when eaten induced a state of dizziness or "intoxication" which caused it to be called "drunken bread" (p'ianyi khleb). It took years of experimentation and research to overcome this; in 1889 a botanical expedition finally discovered that this peculiar condition was caused by a microscopic parasite,

¹⁰³ Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 6, and Note 42.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

which was eventually eliminated.¹⁰⁵ Apparently abundant pasture lands proved to be a further disappointment. Their high-growing watery grass provided little nourishment for cattle, which also suffered from pests, so that herds were often decimated.¹⁰⁶

A brief growing season, poor climate and grain and cattle diseases thus turned the Amur into a food importing, rather than a food exporting, area. Large quantities of grain had to be imported from Europe and America through Nikolaevsk and Vladivostok and from the Transbaikal. Until the end of the nineteenth century, beef cattle were imported from Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia and the Transbaikal, both for Russian settlers and troops.¹⁰⁷

Despite the discouraging agricultural and commercial prospects of the region, efforts at populating it were continued after Muraviev's departure from the scene. Following the liberation of the serfs, the first settlement law, on April 27, 1861, opened the Amur region to both Russian and foreign colonists. In effect until 1882, it offered up to 100 dessiatines (270 acres) of land for each head of family on payment of 3 rubles per dessiatine, as well as a ten-year exemption from conscription and a twenty-year exemption from taxes. Although 150,000 to 200,000 peasants took advantage of this law in the 1860's, the majority of them settled at various locations en route and only a small proportion reached Eastern Siberia. Additional inducements were offered by the Government in 1866, and large numbers of religious sectarians including the Molokans,

¹⁰⁵ Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ Kabanov, op. cit., p. 202.

¹⁰⁷ Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 3.

and Dukhobors, settled in the Blagoveshchensk area; they kept to themselves, however, and made little contribution to the development of the Amur basin. Other measures to solve the problem of underpopulation of the Russian Far East included further settlement, beginning in 1869, of cossacks and of convicts, the latter mainly going to Sakhalin, but these attempts had meager results.¹⁰⁸

In 1879, an important new step was taken. This was the formation of the Volunteer Fleet for the maintenance of regular communications between the Black Sea and the ports of the Far East. The Fleet was composed of five fast German merchant vessels bought by Russia during the Anglo-Russian crisis at the end of the Russo-Turkish War of 1878. It had been intended to convert these into commerce-raiding auxiliary cruisers, but with the passing of the threat of war with England it was decided to use them for regular service to the Far East. The ships began their runs assisted by a subsidy of 36,000 rubles for each voyage, the guarantee of large government cargoes and the cooperation of Russian merchants in exporting their tea to European Russia. In 1882, the Government experimentally shipped 250 settlers to Eastern Siberia at no cost to them.¹⁰⁹ Subsequently, the Government followed a regular policy of subsidizing immigrants to the Far East though charging them a portion of the cost: 90 rubles per adult and 45 rubles per child. The Volunteer Fleet operation, while enthusiastically welcomed by inhabitants of the Primoria, had some unfortunate effects: it weakened the transit facilities for settlers

¹⁰⁸ Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 10. A detailed analysis of Russian policy on migration to Siberia during the thirty years following emancipation of the serfs is contained in Donald Treadgold's The Great Siberian Migration (Princeton, 1957), pp. 67-104.

¹⁰⁹ Malozemoff, op. cit., pp. 11-14.

using the land route across Siberia while, because of the partial fare charged, it failed to attract many settlers. Over a period of seventeen years, only 16,000 settlers came via the Volunteer Fleet. A further result was the weakening of the Amur River as the main line of communication between the settled regions of Siberia and the Pacific; rather than serving as the essential link to Siberia, the river became merely a local artery for the Amur region itself.¹¹⁰

Clearly, much more was needed by way of direct financial assistance to settlers undertaking a six-thousand mile journey to the new lands, but until 1881, very little such assistance was forthcoming from a government beset with recurring financial crises. The Government's position then began to undergo a market change. No longer, now, was the Celestial Empire menaced by English and French troops, or by a powerful insurgent movement in the southern provinces. The Ili crisis of 1881, moreover, had led to a truculent attitude on the part of the Chinese, in particular their military leaders. This circumstance awoke the authorities in St. Petersburg to the woeful weakness of the Russian Far East, resulting from the scanty population along the 3,800-verst frontier and the inadequate lines of communication. In addition, the influx of non-Russian immigrants, Chinese, Korean, Manchurian and others, into the Amur and Ussuri regions was exceeding that of Russians by a ratio of 1.43 to 1. The Oriental settlers, with their lower standard of living and industrious habits, were bidding fair to take over the agriculture and commerce of the area. These alarming developments galvanized the Russian Government into adopting measures to stimulate Russian immigration and

¹¹⁰Ibid.

to restrict that of Orientals. In 1881, regulations were put into effect to afford Russian settlers more generous assistance, and in January 1882, a law was passed prohibiting purchase by non-Russian subjects of land in the Russian Far East without special permission from the Governor-General. Each Russian settler was granted fifteen dessiatines of land with payment deferred for three years. At the same time, settlers had to offer proof to the officials on the Siberian frontier that they had sufficient resources to get to their destination and ensure their support for the first year. These measures had significant effect: before 1882, the average number of new settlers in each year was 601 persons, while the annual average for the years 1882-1899 was 4,076.¹¹¹

Two years after the Russian Government's adoption of the "Russia for Russians" policy reflected in the law of 1882, it was decided to divide Russian possessions east of Lake Baikal into two governor-generalships, those of Irkutsk and Priamur, the latter consisting of the Transbaikalian, Amur and Primorsk districts and the island of Sakhalin.¹¹² Thus was vindicated Muraviev-Amurskii's contention that Eastern Siberia, including the additional territories he had wrested from the Chinese, was too vast an area to be administered by one individual. From that time on, the needs of the Russian Far East received increasing attention by the authorities in St. Petersburg, particularly, comments, Malozemoff, "since the first governor-general of the new administrative division was the talented and energetic General A. N. Kork".¹¹³ It had been shortly after

¹¹¹ Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 11. In 1882, the Russian population on the Amur numbered 45,000; Oriental, 15,000. (Malozemoff, Note. 94).

¹¹² Ibid., p. 25.

¹¹³ Ibid.

the departure of that other talented and energetic Governor-General, Nicholas Nikolaevich Muraviev-Amurskii, that a Russian official "close to the affairs of the Siberian Committee" had commented: "For a realm richly endowed by nature, space and good soil, but deficient in population and finding itself still in the beginning of its own development, the acquisition through expenditure of precious blood and treasure, of immense new expanses, no matter how fertile they may be, particularly if they lie at great distances, would be imprudence in the highest degree".¹¹⁴ Now, the erstwhile Governor-General could observe with some satisfaction from his apartment on the Rue Miromesnil in Paris that the policy reflected in that statement was being modified.

It is true, of course, that events taking place years after the retirement of Count Muraviev-Amurskii and certainly not clearly foreseen by him, were the cause for the shift in Russian policy in the Far East. For nearly a quarter of a century after the conclusion of the Treaties of Aigun, Tientsin and Peking, Russia's major interests remained in the West, the Near East and Central Asia. It was probably for that reason that most of Muraviev-Amurskii's successors were mediocre individuals. No governor-general visited Kamchatka from 1871 to 1881; only one visited Sakhalin in twenty-five years.¹¹⁵ That situation began to change, however, following the Ili crisis of 1881, which strained Russo-Chinese relations for the next decade.¹¹⁶ Now a policy of defense against the Chinese was becoming a necessity.

¹¹⁴Kabanov, op. cit., p. 224.

¹¹⁵Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 15.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 20.

During the eighties many Russian officials and military figures considered that war with China was inevitable. Rising Chinese chauvinism was manifested in a new policy of colonization of Manchuria and increasing Chinese military preparedness there. In 1882-90, there were thirty times more Chinese colonists in northern Manchuria than there were Russian colonists in the Priamur and Primorsk. By 1885, Chinese troops in Manchuria numbered 85,000, 50,000 of them trained and reasonably well armed. At this time Russian land forces in the Far East, exclusive of settled cossacks, numbered 15,000 men, 11,000 of whom were quartered in the immediate vicinity of Vladivostok. Siberia had no other troops to spare, so that the nearest base for reinforcements was European Russia, 4,000 miles away. From there, officers of the Amur military district calculated, it would take eighteen months for troops, in route march, to reach the Primorsk.¹¹⁷

These disturbing developments, coupled with the realization of Russian naval weakness in the Far East, stimulated widespread discussion in St. Petersburg of the need for building a trans-Siberian railroad. Baron Korff submitted numerous petitions to the Government in support of such a project. In the spring of 1886, Alexander III wrote: "I have read many reports of the governors-general of Siberia, and I must confess with sorrow and shame that the government has heretofore done practically nothing to satisfy the needs of this rich but neglected region. But it is time, it has long been time". In that year the Emperor decreed, "Let a railroad be built across Siberia on the shortest way possible."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷Malozemoff, op. cit., pp. 20-24.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 27.

At the same time that Russia's concern over her position in the Far East was rising, her differences with England in central Asia, in particular in regard to the Russo-Afghan frontier, were being resolved. The protocol of July 10, 1887, put an end to further misunderstanding there, so that Russian foreign policy makers became much less preoccupied with central Asian affairs. In that same year, Russia gave up her attempts to insure the election of a pro-Russian king of Bulgaria and accepted the status quo there. These developments favored the transfer of Russian interest to the Far East. At this time, too, French reverses in the Tonkin war of 1884-5 led to the re-direction of certain French financial policies and led French capital to seek profits in Russian ventures, including foundries, mines and even government bonds. This injection of new funds sped Russia's recovery from the financial crisis that had been chronic from the early 1860's to 1886. This led to a drastic drop in banker's commissions that enabled the Ministry of Finance to obtain the first large French loan, 500,000,000 gold francs, in 1887.¹¹⁹ The financing of the Trans-Siberian railroad thus became possible. By 1891, Russia was irrevocably committed to the building of the railroad. Thus was assured the creation of the most important single factor in the belated economic and strategic build-up of the Russian Far East, including the Priamur and Primorsk. The necessary measures to realize Muraviev's vision of Russia's imperial integration were finally being put into effect.

¹¹⁹ Malozemoff, op. cit., p. 38.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Muraviev's family provided a typical background for a young man entering the service of the Autocrat of Russia. His father had been secretary of the Emperor's personal chancellery, his mother, the daughter of a prominent admiral. In his early years Muraviev had profited from the influential connections provided by this background. The intercession of Nicholas I gave him entree to the Corps of Pages; the family friendship of a senior general served to initiate him into high-level staff work at a time when many of his contemporaries were still proving themselves as junior line officers. Muraviev made the most of his opportunities, graduating at the top of his class from the elite school for sons of the Russian aristocracy, then carrying out his assignments in Bulgaria, Poland and the Caucasus with verve and marked effectiveness. His soldierly virtues and his adaptability to tasks of a diplomatic nature made it easy for those interested in his advancement to obtain impressive decorations and rapid promotion for him. His stint at governing the province of Tula helped to round out his administrative experience and gave him added opportunity to demonstrate his imagination and versatility. It seems clear, too, that the interest of another family friend, Minister of the Interior Perovskii, as well as the benevolent inclination of the Grand Duchess Elena, had a good deal to do with Muraviev's appointment to the post in which he earned the title of Graf Amurskii.

When Muraviev was named to succeed the discredited Rupert, Nicholas I was already sufficiently impressed by the young general to agree to a personal channel of communication with him on all matters of high importance. This, considering the weight of opposition to Muraviev in St. Petersburg, was a precious advantage. Perovskii's constant encouragement and mature counsel were also invaluable to him during the first phase of his activities in Eastern Siberia.

From the start of his administration, Muraviev labored under the handicaps of a corrupt local bureaucracy and the implacable suspicion of policy makers in St. Petersburg. His attempts at internal reforms were often frustrated, his strategic concepts sometimes scorned. Yet, though he fulminated against his opponents and occasionally contemplated resignation, he persevered out of his tremendous sense of mission, which finally brought about the Chinese capitulation at Aigun, the apogee of his career.

It is true that two years were to pass before the provisions of the Treaty of Aigun received juridical confirmation by the Treaty of Peking but that circumstance, despite disparaging comments by some of Muraviev's detractors, does not reduce the essential significance of his achievement. Zavalishin, probably Muraviev's most vindictive critic, derided the Treaty of Aigun as "nothing more than an agreement on a demarcation line of the sort that is customarily negotiated for the suspension or prevention of military operations".¹ This is peevish belittlement. The Treaty was Muraviev's personal triumph, a diktat imposed through his energy and determination. The fact that the

¹Kabanov, op. cit., p. 190.

vacillating Emperor I-ting attempted to nullify it serves only to underline its importance. Muraviev had seized the occasion fully to exploit the pressures of the Taiping rebellion and the menace of the Anglo-French expeditionary forces in order to acquire the Amur basin. His subsequent activities contributed to Ignatiev's success in obtaining China's cession to Russia of the maritime area of Manchuria down to the Korean border. The Treaty of Peking complemented Muraviev's deeds, without which it might well have assumed a less sweeping character.

R. K. I. Quested, in her excellent study, based largely on Chinese archives, comments that, "From first to last, the attitude of Britain was completely, though unintentionally, conducive to the success of Russian aggrandisement. There is a kind of fatality about the way in which Her Majesty's Government, knowing little and caring scarcely more about the Amur and Ussuri region, conveniently did everything at the right moment to facilitate the occupation and legal acquisition of the territory by Russia." There "was indeed a fatality", she goes on to say, "about the whole Amur saga, for it was an oddity of history that this country should have lain for so many millenia, uncolonized by the numerous nations of the Far East, waiting century upon century for Muraviev".²

It is certainly true that British foreign policy, first in the Near East, then in the Far East, was of great help to Muraviev in achieving the goal he had before him from the day he first set foot in Siberia. But, as Dr. Quested says, the Amur and Ussuri region waited for Muraviev. He was not only quick to recognize the opportunity for Russia's imperial expansion but, when that opportunity was not sufficiently clear to the

²Quested, op. cit., pp. 282-3.

decision makers in St. Petersburg, he created the conditions to bring it home to them.

During the first phase of his administration in Irkutsk, Muraviev was concerned with improving the government of Eastern Siberia, in righting injustices and in purging the administration of officials who were lining their pockets, at the expense of the local population or of the Government. But even then, he was laying the groundwork for bringing about the "return of the Russian River Amur". The first step consisted of establishing the fact that the river was navigable throughout its length and could be entered by ships both from the Sea of Okhotsk and the Gulf (more properly Strait) of Tataria. The revelation that Eastern Siberia thus had a convenient connection to the Sea of Japan and the Pacific Ocean offered a persuasive argument that possession of the Amur could be of great importance to Russia. The next step was to establish an effective Russian presence on the Amur estuary and to take steps to prevent its occupation by any other nation. This Muraviev accomplished in collusion with Nevelskoi, against the wishes of the more cautious Ministers in the Russian Government. The founding of Nikolaevsk and the occupation of de Castries Bay and Kizi, which gave Russia a firm foothold at the mouth of the Amur, were accomplished in defiance of Nesselrode's clique and with Muraviev's full backing. The Governor-general stood by his subordinate, whose career had been placed in jeopardy by these actions and obtained post factum authorization for his exploits. Nevelskoi's further incursions south along the Manchurian coast, though expressly forbidden by St. Petersburg, were undertaken under Muraviev's protection and, indeed, subsequently extended by him personally.

Once the Russian settlements at the mouth of the Amur were established, it was logical for Muraviev to urge the necessity of navigating the Amur as the most reliable and economical method of keeping those settlements supplied, particularly in view of the ambitions of rival Western Powers in the Far East. It took patience and constant argument to persuade St. Petersburg of this. In this Muraviev displayed considerable statesmanlike vision, as reflected, for example, in his memorandum of March, 1853, to Alexander II.³ In this he stressed his conviction of the danger of Russia's being cut off from the Pacific Ocean by British seizure of Sakhalin and the Amur estuary and advocated relinquishment of Russian possessions in North America for the sake of forming a close tie with the United States as a counter to British power in the Far East. He followed this up in November of the same year with his letter to the Grand Duke Constantine in which he set forth his view as to the immediate need to safeguard Siberia by firmly securing Sakhalin, Kamchatka and the mouth of the Amur, to navigate that river and thus to "establish a firm influence on neighboring China".⁴ In that memorandum he also pointed out that, as a result of five years' preparation, it would be possible to achieve all this with the local resources of Eastern Siberia. That preparation had been made by Muraviev with little, if any, help from the central government.

The resources at Muraviev's disposal had been pitifully meager but while often railing at the penuriousness of St. Petersburg, he profited from Perovskii's advice and made the best of a difficult situation.

³Supra, pp. 125-127.

⁴Supra, pp. 138 and Appendix

A lesser man might have sat back in the comfort of the gubernatorial quarters in Irkutsk and served out his time with a minimum of exertion - - while perhaps accumulating a tidy fortune to supplement his eventual pension. But Muraviev was a different breed of careerist. While bringing about order out of the administrative chaos bequeathed to him by his predecessor, he journeyed far and wide, acquainting himself at first hand with the problems and the potential of his domains. His visit to Kamchatka, the first ever made by a Siberian governor-general, assisted in improving the defenses of Petropavlovsk, enabling it to repulse the diversionary Anglo-French attack during the Crimean War. He pushed gold production (admittedly at the cost of the "Rasgildeevschina") and fostered expanded prospecting for other valuable minerals and precious stones in order to enhance the value of his neglected territory in the eyes of the skeptical authorities in St. Petersburg. He sought iron for Siberian manufacturing and modernized the old Petrovskii Zavod ironworks for the building of engines to power the vessels he planned to use on the Amur. And at an early stage, he recognized the importance of the Transbaikal as a base for the build-up of military forces that he would need when the time came for a critical confrontation with the Chinese. That time came shortly after the despatch of his memorandum to Constantine and the onset of the Crimean War, which gave heightened significance to his warnings of British intentions with regard to the north Asian littoral of the Pacific.

The first Russian expedition down the Amur entailed a calculated risk. The decision to proceed could hardly have been taken had Muraviev resigned himself to meeting his military requirements with the four line

battalions of regular troops, which were all that a central government, suffering recurring financial crises, would furnish him. The expedition needed the backing of armed forces in numbers sufficient to impress and intimidate the Chinese and to provide the necessary support, should active resistance be encountered. Muraviev had foreseen that need four years earlier, when he began raising his own army, the Transbaikalian Force. When the opportunity offered by the Crimean War presented itself, he was fully prepared to exploit it, under the pretext of the need to supply and reinforce coastal defenses against England, the Western Power most hated and feared by China. By taking the Amur estuary, then by raising his own troops, Muraviev created the justification and the means for defying the Chinese ban on the use of the Amur.

Of no little importance to the success of the first expedition down the Amur - - and of his subsequent feats on that river - - was Muraviev's keen perception of the psychology and general state of morale of the Chinese officials with whom he was contending. The same intuitive understanding that had won him the friendship of Caucasian chieftains like Sharvashidze and Katso-Margani and had bent the Uighur tribesmen to his will enabled him to deal successfully with the ambans of Heilungchiang and Kirin and to secure Prince I-Shan's compliance with his demands. He could be suave and gracious with them when the occasion called for it or he could be stern, arrogant or truculent when Oriental impassivity seemed to need shaking. His blustering tactics did fail once, when he attempted to frighten the Japanese into cession of Sakhalin but the time at his disposal had been short then and he had been anxious to return to the Amur. He had had insufficient opportunity to acquaint himself with the Japanese mentality and, trying a bluff, had

lost. Sakhalin, moreover, though important, yielded in Muraviev's priorities to the Amur and Ussuri regions, always his foremost pre-occupation.

It has been seen that Muraviev, while striving to build up Russian power in the Far East, was constantly contending with attempts from St. Petersburg to limit the scope and impact of his activities. One such incident merits singling out. While Muraviev was on leave abroad in June, 1853, the Foreign Ministry despatched a note to the Chinese proposing that the Amur situation be "regularized" through the placing of frontier markers on the left bank of the river. Had Muraviev, on his return, not learned of this, with no time to spare, the Russian stance on the Amur question might have been incontrovertibly prejudiced. Muraviev had countermanded orders from higher authority before and he did not hesitate to do so now, by prohibiting the city-governor of Kiakhta from carrying out St. Petersburg's instructions on the border demarcation, which was almost underway.

Muraviev's hand vis-a-vis his adversaries in the capital was strengthened by the successful defense of Petropavlovsk, at a time when Russian arms were being humiliated in the Crimea, and by his cowing of the Chinese by his first expedition down the Amur. It was also measurably strengthened by Grand Duke Constantine's support and by the replacement of Nesselrode by Gorchakov. Further expeditions were authorized and Muraviev went about consolidating the Russian hold on the region with such limited forces as he had been able to raise and by recourse to calculated bluff and intimidation of the Chinese. Then, in the knowledge that the Manchu regime, beset with internal disorders and facing the Anglo-French military threat, could hardly oppose him, he

proceeded in May, 1858, to Aigun. There, following some preliminary psychological warfare, he forced the Treaty of Aigun upon his terrified Chinese counterpart.

The aftermath of the Treaty of Aigun was a bitter disappointment to Eastern Siberian entrepreneurs and to "Muravievists" in general. With the departure of the once indefatigable Governor-General, the Priamur and Primorsk seemed doomed to return to the oblivion in which they had so long lain. The problems of immense distances, primitive communications and, above all, scanty population, that had worried Muraviev were not being solved. This was the result only in part of the inhospitability of some parts of the area involved. New agricultural methods, selection of crops better suited to the climate, remedies to eliminate parasites that spoiled grain and destroyed cattle, and similar improvements could have been introduced had the right people been sent there for that purpose. Improved transportation facilities and a respectable communications network could have been developed, had the Government steeled itself to the necessary outlay of material and human resources. Eventually, the Government did in fact do so but only when impelled by political and strategic considerations.

The misfortunes attendant upon Muraviev's early colonizing efforts were well nigh inevitable, considering the underlying circumstances. Military occupation, agricultural settlement, construction of defense installations, all had to be undertaken simultaneously. The central problem was to find the people for these purposes.

There were insufficient incentives for enterprising volunteers to come out to that little known land to work toward an uncertain future. Near-draconian methods therefore had to be employed to bring pioneers

out to the Amur and Ussuri regions. Peasants were drafted as "cossacks" and sent there with their families to establish farmsteads in areas that had not been sufficiently reconnoitered and evaluated as to their agricultural potential. Once there, these people were subjected to military and bureaucratic controls that stifled such initiative as they had. Many of them, moreover, had to perform duties unrelated to their essential function of food production. They were obliged to serve as postal couriers, to construct roads or to work on building projects in support of the army and the bureaucracy. These tasks took them away from their fields, thus compounding the already severe food shortage in an area where there were too many consumers in proportion to numbers of producers.

Such were the results of the priorities Muraviev was obliged to observe. Without a secure line of communications over thousands of miles and without adequate coastal defenses at a time when attack by hostile forces seemed a real possibility, all else, Muraviev reasoned, would have been premature. He had sought allocation of funds for railroads, telegraph lines and other economic improvements. He had urged a more generous policy of subsidizing immigration. But he had been put on notice that Eastern Siberia could look only to its own resources for the building of its future. True, he had been allowed in 1854 to retain any "surplus government revenues" generated in Eastern Siberia but this minor concession had been made out of military considerations and contributed little if anything to the general welfare of the people.

Once the Amur and Ussuri regions were acquired and Russian sovereignty there was confirmed, the interest and enthusiasm of St. Petersburg subsided. The Government turned back to its major interests in the West, the Near East and central Asia. Development of the Priamur and Primorsk,

either for its own sake or for the purpose of building a base for further expansion in the Far East, particularly considering the enormous costs that would be involved, held no attraction for the authorities in the capital. That situation was to change, but only after the Ili crisis and the military re-conquest of Chinese Turkestan by Marshal Tso-Tsung-tang.

Following the treaty of St. Petersburg on February 2, 1881, Russo-Chinese relations entered a strained period lasting more than a decade. Aggressive chauvinism in Peking, massive Chinese colonization of Manchuria and an alarming concentration of Chinese troops there in 1885, awoke the Russian Empire to the precarious situation of its Far Eastern marches. But on the heels of these developments came a partial relaxation of Russian concerns elsewhere. At the time of the signature of the Reinsurance Treaty with Germany in June, 1887, Russia learned of the secret Austro-German Alliance of 1879, still in effect. This convinced her of the hopelessness of attempting to put a pro-Russian king upon the throne of Bulgaria and thereby relegated Near Eastern affairs to a plane of secondary importance. In that same summer of 1887, Anglo-Russian differences over Afghanistan were reconciled by the signing of a protocol in St. Petersburg, thus relieving the Russian Government of any immediate problem in central Asia.

Russia's diplomatic situation was now such that Alexander III was able to undertake to meet the pressing economic and strategic needs of Eastern Siberia and to decree in 1887 that a trans-Siberian railroad should be built. Some years were to pass before financing methods, basically those of great infusions of French capital, were devised. In the early spring of 1891, the Tsarevich, Nicholas, inaugurated the construction of a railroad that would have more than met Muraviev's aspirations,

by personally emptying the first wheelbarrow of ballast for the embankment of its eastern terminal at Vladivostok, "Ruler of the East".

Muraviev had been called "a man ahead of his time", a cliché that often lacks precision. Was he, as implied by that term, such a man because of superior vision and wisdom not properly appreciated by his contemporaries? Or was he an impatient careerist oblivious to circumstances that, as a practical matter, simply made some of his projects premature?

Though Muraviev should be given credit for his early discernment of the need to relinquish Alaska, his more grandiose ideas of a Russian-American alliance against England, and its implications as to the balance of power in the Pacific, came to naught. Turning to considerations more immediately related to his work, one can point to the fact that other significant elements of the policy he urged were adopted only after his retirement and, some, indeed only after his death. These had to do with the necessary measures to be taken for the social and economic development of Eastern Siberia. It is evident, however, that Muraviev's views as to the manner and pace of such development were unrealistic, as were his hopes for greatly expanded trade with China.

Muraviev apparently found it difficult to accept that the desirable is not always immediately attainable. As was not unnatural for an able and energetic imperial pro-consul, once installed in Irkutsk, he began to see all problems from a standpoint that was essentially parochial - - if that term may be used against the background of the vast area under his command. To him, therefore, Nesselrode was not simply a mediocrity striving to preserve the overall national interest; he was practically a traitor. In Muraviev's view, Speranskii, too, had betrayed his

Sovereign by confining himself to his assigned mission - - reform of the administration of Siberia - - and "concealing" the potential there for imperial expansion.

Muraviev's petulance over lack of confidence reposed in him reflects a rather unseemly degree of self-absorption; it also suggests inability or unwillingness objectively to recognize that some of his recommendations were encountering a reserve only natural on the part of high policy makers who faced an array of domestic and foreign problems requiring constant review and judicious allocation of governmental resources. Clearly, there was some justification for the jocular remark of Nicholas I that Muraviev would "lose his reason" over the Amur.

So much for Muraviev's limitations. More important to remember is that it was the very intensity with which Muraviev pursued his idée fixe that led Russia to seize the opportune occasion to nullify the Treaty of Nerchinsk. Certainly, the achievement was not Muraviev's alone. An important turning point in the affairs of Eastern Siberia was reached with the replacement of Nesselrode by Gorchakov, assisted by the able sinologist, Kovalevskii. Theirs were the decisions that permitted Muraviev to proceed as he did during the climactic years of his administration. But to say this is simply to say that the powers in St. Petersburg, viewing the confluence of events on the international scene, recognized that in Muraviev they had the right man at the right place at the right time.

If it is clear today that some of Muraviev's concepts were somewhat premature, it is equally clear that without his imagination and ingenuity or his willingness, when necessary, to flout authority, and without his dedication and extraordinary stamina, Russia's annexation of almost 400,000

square miles of territory might never have taken place. Russian cossack adventurers had reached the Sea of Okhotsk in the mid-seventeenth century but Eastern Siberia continued in a relatively somnolent state for many generations after that event. Almost two centuries later, it took twelve years of persevering effort by Muraviev to create the basis for establishing Russia as a Far Eastern Power.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ivan Barsukov's two-volume work, identified in the Preface, is the prime individual source for a study of Muraviev's life. It is a compendium of various documents in chronological order, with occasional commentary by the author. Volume One consists largely of personal letters between Muraviev and members of his family, close friends, and high government officials with whom he had personal relationships. Volume Two is a compilation of his official communications to the Ministries in St. Petersburg, as well as some other papers and notes.

Barsukov had access to all the papers in the possessions of Muraviev's widow, as well as the archives of the families of Muraviev's brothers, Valerian and Alexander. The Grand Duke Constantine and other high official figures also provided Barsukov with letters and other memorabilia. The basic collection was assembled by M. S. Volkonskii and Barsukov was then commissioned to produce his work of collation. Some important parts of the collection, however, were lost in transit. Official records in Irkutsk, moreover, which would have shed much light on the most important years of Muraviev's career, were lost in a fire in 1879. Dr. J. L. Sullivan refers to these regrettable lacunae which he encountered when writing his biography of Muraviev, a work that draws a picture of the man throughout his life, rather than essentially concentrating on his politico-military activities in the Far Eastern theater of Russia's imperial expansion. Sullivan supplemented Barsukov's material by consulting an extremely extensive selection of

memoirs, articles and other writings by Muraviev's contemporaries. His exhaustive bibliography has been of significant assistance in the writing of the present study.

Sullivan's biography preceded two other works bearing on Muraviev's historical accomplishments that should be singled out. One is Dr. R. K. I. Quested's recent study, The Expansion of Russia in East Asia, 1808-1860. This draws largely on Chinese sources and contains hitherto unpublished information, particularly concerning Admiral Putiatin's negotiations with the Chinese. Its special value for the purposes of this study is that it reveals the internal reactions of the Chinese Government to measures taken by Muraviev and to his official communications. The other notable work, Amurskii Vopross is a condensation of P. I. Kabanov's two-volume doctoral dissertation, Amurskii vopross i ego razreshenie. The condensation, however, evidently omits significant information contained in the original. Dr. Quested was allowed by Moscow University to consult the first volume of Kabanov's dissertation, dealing with the internal aspects of Muraviev's career and the early development of Russian activities on the Amur, but was denied access to the second volume, concerning Russo-Chinese relations during the Muraviev period.

Among other particularly useful sources was P. V. Schumacher's long article, "Kistorii priobretenia Amura. Snoshenia s Kitaem s 1848 po 1860 g.", which he cleared with Muraviev in Paris before its publication in Russki Arkhiv. Of especial value, too, was the introductory section of Andrew Malozemoff's Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904. This contains a succinct summation of the factors that turned the Priamur and the Primoria into disappointing burdens to the

Russian Government until it took the decision to build the trans-Siberian railroad.

Included among the footnotes of the present study are references to some of the more interesting sources cited by Barsukov, Kabanov and Quested. The bibliographical listing that follows, however, cites only those sources that I have been able personally to consult.

I. SPECIAL STUDIES, SURVEYS AND REFERENCE WORKS

Armstrong, Terence, Russian Settlement in the North, Cambridge University Press, 1965.

A useful treatise, with main emphasis on the "history of man's relation to his environment", contributing to an understanding of Russian penetration of Siberia from this standpoint. Draws heavily on Russian scholars, pre- and post-revolutionary.

Banno, M., China and the West, 1858-61, Cambridge, Mass., 1964.

Apparently the only one of several Japanese studies of the subject and period that has been translated into English. Contains interesting account of Ignatiev mission, based on Chinese archives.

Barsukov, Ivan, Graf Nikolai Nikolaevich Muraviev-Amurskii, po ego ofitsialnym dokumentam, razskazam sovremmenikov i pechatnym istochnikam (Materialy dlia biografii) 2 v., Moscow, 1891.

The prime source for the present study.

Blanch, Lesley, The Sabres of Paradise, Viking Press, New York, 1960. Highly readable and scholarly treatment of the Russian campaigns in the Caucasus, including, in effect, a biography of Shamil.

Butsinskii, P. N., N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii, Trud I. P. Barsukova, Retzenzia Proffesora Kharkovskogo Universiteta, St. Petersburg, Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1895.

Highly critical study of Barsukov's work, taking the latter to task for inadequately expounding upon Muraviev's weaknesses and failures.

Cahen, Gaston, History of the Relations of Russia and China Under Peter the Great, 1689-1730, Shanghai, 1914, reprinted in Orono, Maine, date not given.

Classical piece of research on the subject and period.

Chen, Vincent, Sino-Russian Relations in the Seventeenth Century, The Hague, 1966.

Compilation of much detailed material regarding early Russian efforts at diplomatic relations, trade agreements, etc.

- Curtiss, J. S., The Russian Army Under Nicholas I, 1825-1855, Durham, N.C., 1965.
Helpful in obtaining realistic picture of conditions under which Muraviev served in Poland, Turkey and the Caucasus.
- Czaplicka, M. A., "Evolution of the Cossack Communities", Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, Vol. V, Part 2, 1918.
Provides helpful background regarding this aspect of Siberia's colonization.
- Dallin, David J., The Rise of Russia in Asia, New Haven, 1949.
Develops theme that the "cold war" of the nineteenth century was the determining element of Russia's Far Eastern policy. Useful introductory material but major portion devoted to the twentieth century.
- Danilovskii, B. V., Russkoe Zoloto, Moscow, 1959.
Essentially a technical study but helpful in obtaining a picture of the role of gold-mining in Eastern Siberia in Muraviev's day.
- "Dauria", Bolshaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, Vol. 13, pp. 400-401.
- Ferguson, A. D., and Levin, A. (eds.), Essays in Russian History, Archon, Hamden, Conn., 1964.
Contains a good essay on Arakcheev's institution of the Russian military settlements.
- Fisher, Raymond H., The Russian Fur Trade, 1550-1700, Berkeley, 1943.
The basic work on the subject. Highly detailed treatment reflects most extensive research.
- Golder, F. A., Russian Expansion on the Pacific, 1641-1850, Peter Smith, Gloucester, Mass., 1960.
Another classic. Develops thesis that "up to circa 1850, Russia showed she could conquer but gave little evidence that she could civilize".
- Gurian, W. (ed.), Soviet Imperialism, Its Origins and Tactics, A Symposium, Notre Dame, Ind., 1953.
A collection of essays generally illustrating that the Soviet Union's emphasis on power politics has brought about a revival of the old power traditions of the Russian Empire.
- Herzen, Alexander, Polnoe Sobraniye Sochinenii, Vol. XIV (M. K. Lemke ed.) 22 vols., Petrograd, 1919-1923.
Contains correspondence revealing Herzen's and Bakunin's sympathetic view of Muraviev as a liberal.

Iakovleva, P. T., Pervy Russko-Kitaiskii Dogovor 1689 Goda, Moscow, 1958.
A detailed study of the background to, and negotiations culminating in, the Treaty of Nerchinsk. Attempts to demonstrate that the Jesuit interpreters with the Chinese delegation exerted a sinister influence and sought to prevent a peaceable agreement.

"Ignatiev, N. P.", Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Brochhaus and Efron, Vol. 24, pp. 784-786.

Jackson, W. A. Douglas, The Russo-Chinese Borderlands, Zone of Peaceful Contact or Potential Conflict? Van Nostrand, Princeton, N.J., 1962.

A well done monograph by this geographer, who concludes that "during periods of China's weakness, Russia has exercised pressure and secured territorial gains and advantages. When China has recovered, there has been a tendency to hold the line if not to push back".

Kabanov, P. E., Amurskii Vopross, Blagoveschensk, 1959.

A condensation of a doctoral thesis, limited largely to Russian sources. Stresses that inadequate recognition has been given to Nevelskoi's role.

Kerner, Robert J., The Urge to the Sea, University of California Press, 1946.

Develops thesis that portages and waterways fundamentally affected and vitally helped shape the course of Russian history. Stresses central importance of Valdai Hills region, controlling population movements, trade routes, inter-state politics (Kiev-Novgorod-Moscow). Illustrates applicability of thesis to penetration of Siberia via Ob, Enisei, Lena, Amur and their tributaries.

Kluchevskii, V. O., A History of Russia, Vol. V., Russel and Russel, New York, 1960.

The great classic, devoted mainly, however, to Russia's internal development, rather than to Russia's international involvements. Vol. V. contains information on the rate of immigration into Eastern Siberia in the nineteenth century.

Komarovskii, A. G., "Muraviev-Amurskii", Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Brockhaus and Efron, Vol. 20, pp. 193-194.

Useful introductory summary with citations of numerous reference sources.

Kropotkin, P., Memoirs of a Revolutionist, Houghton Mifflin, 1899.

Contains interesting comment on and evaluation of Muraviev by this eminent political figure.

Lantzeff, George, Siberia in the Seventeenth Century, University of California Press, 1943.

Excellent piece of scholarly research on administration of Siberia in the early period of colonization.

- Lensen, G. A., (ed.), Russia's Eastward Expansion, Prentice-Hall, 1964.
Anthology of articles or excerpts from works by authorities on various aspects of Russia's progress to the east from the Middle Ages to the present.
- Lensen, G. A., The Russian Push to Japan, Princeton, 1959.
Excellent account of Russo-Japanese relations from 1697 to 1875. Introductory chapters contain useful survey of process of Russian movement into Eastern Siberia.
- Levin, M. G., and Potapov, L. P., The Peoples of Siberia, University of Chicago Press, 1964.
Impressive work of ethnographic scholarship. Good chapter on "Discovery and Occupation of Siberia".
- Lin, T. C., "The Amur Frontier Question Between Russia and China, 1850-1860", Pacific Historical Review, Vol. III, No. 1.
A study based on a compilation of Imperial Edicts and government documents published in Peking in 1899.
- Lobanov-Rostovskii, A., Russia and Asia, Ann Arbor, 1951.
Competent comprehensive survey of Russian movement into Asia for the general reader. Tends to oversimplify, or indulge in insufficiently supported judgments and conclusions.
- Lo-Shu-Fu, A Documentary Chronicle of Sino-Western Relations, 1644-1820.
University of Arizona Press, 1966.
Extensive collection of background documentation.
- Luchinskii, G., "Sibir", Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Brockhaus and Efron, Vol. 29, pp. 748-814.
A comprehensive summary containing helpful references to a variety of source materials.
- Malozemoff, Andrew, Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881-1904, University of California Press, 1958.
A first-rate survey. Particularly useful, for preparing the present study, in illuminating the situation in Eastern Siberia between the time of the annexation of the Priamur and Primoria and the decision to build the trans-Siberian Railway.
- Mazour, A. G., The First Russian Revolution, 1825, Stanford University Press, 1937.
Good study of the Decembrist movement. Useful chapter on Decembrists in Eastern Siberia.
- Mosse, W. E., Alexander II and the Modernization of Russia, Collier Books, New York, 1962.
Good condensed treatment for the general reading public. Succinctly summarized conditions which militated against Muraviev's further progress in government service after his return from Eastern Siberia.

Nechkina, M. V. (ed.), Russia in the Nineteenth Century, Part I, Vol. II of the History of Russia, Ann Arbor, 1953.

Of marginal use. Predictably, derides Speranskii's reforms in Siberia as having been of no consequence.

Pasvolskii, Leo, Russia in the Far East, New York, 1922.

A brief treatment.

Pavlovskii, M. N., Chinese-Russian Relations, Philosophical Library, New York, 1949.

Reasonably competent but somewhat superficial.

Pushkarev, C. G., Rossia v XIX Veke (1801-1914), New York, 1956.

Useful for some insights into the character of Nicholas I.

"Putiatin, Evfimii Vassilievich", Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Brockhaus and Efron, Vol. 50, pp. 817-818.

Quested, R. K. I., The Expansion of Russia in East Asia, 1857-1860, University of Malaya Press, Singapore, 1968.

Valuable scholarly study, mainly of Putiatin's and Ignatiev's negotiations (sometimes, almost on a day-to-day basis). Draws largely on Chinese sources.

Raeff, Marc, Speranskii and the Siberian Reforms of 1822, University of Washington Press, 1956.

Authoritative treatment but would have been more useful had it contained some specific analysis of the degree to which Speranskii's reforms were meaningfully implemented - or of the reasons why they were not.

Ravenstein, Ernst George, The Russians on the Amur; its Discovery, Conquest, and Colonisation, with a Description of the Country, its Inhabitants, Productions, and Commercial Capabilities; and Personal Accounts of Russian Travelers, London, 1861.

Interesting, colorful and essentially accurate narrative covering the period from the Russian acquisition of Albazin to that immediately following the Treaty of Peking.

Romanov, B. A., Russia in Manchuria, 1892-1906, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1952.

Important study of the period, but based only on archives of the Russian Ministry of Finance. Introductory material useful for purposes of the present study.

Sbornik Dogovorov Rossii s Kitaem, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, St. Petersburg, 1889.

Official texts of Russo-Chinese Treaties in Russian, Mongolian, Manchu, Latin and French.

Sebes, Joseph, The Jesuits and the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) The Diary of Thomas Pereira, S. J., Rome, 1961.

A fine study of the controversial subject of the role of the Jesuits at Nerchinsk (were they limited to interpreting or did they substantively guide the negotiations?). Contains much useful background material.

Semyonov, Yurii, Siberia, Its Conquest and Development, Helicon Press, Baltimore, 1963.

Well organized popular history.

Smirnov, N. A., Politika Rossii na Kavkaze c XVI-XIX vekakh, Moscow, 1958.
Of marginal use.

Shperk F., "Dauria", Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Brockhaus and Efron, Vol. 19, p. 160.

Struve, B. V., Vospominanii o Sibiri, 1848-1854, St. Petersburg, 1889.
Valuable for many details shedding light on Muraviev's character and modus operandi.

Sullivan, J. L., Count N. N. Muraviev-Amursky, doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 1955.

A competently written biography of the "whole man". Contains an extensive bibliography.

Treadgold, D. W., The Great Siberian Migration, Princeton University Press, 1957.

Excellent study of origins and nature of Russian settlement of Siberia. Deals chiefly with the peasant and governmental policy. Shows similarities and differences of Siberian migration and American westward movement, as interpreted by Turner.

Treat, P. J., The Far East, A Political and Diplomatic History, Harper, 1928.

Useful mainly as a guide to other, earlier sources.

Venturi, Franco, Roots of Revolution, New York, 1960.

The most comprehensive analysis of the revolutionary movement in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Russia.

Vevier, Charles, (ed.), Siberian Journey Down the Amoor to the Pacific, 1856-57. The Diary of Perry McDonough Collins.

A colorful account of the activities of this young American businessman whom Muraviev welcomed to Eastern Siberia.

"Vorontsovy" Entsiklopedicheski Slovar, Brockhaus and Efron, Vol. 13, pp. 220-223.

Ken Shen Weigh, Russo-Chinese Diplomacy, 1689-1924, Nanking, 1927, reprinted in Bangor, Maine, date not indicated.

Survey by a member of the Foreign Ministry of the Nationalist Chinese Government.

Yarmolinsky, Avram, Road to Revolution, London, 1957.

An excellent study, though not as detailed as Venturi's.

II. DOCUMENTS, MEMOIRS AND CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNTS

"Amurskoe Delo i Vlianie ego na Vostochnoyou Sibir i Gosudarstvo", Russkaia Starina, 1881, Vol. 32, pp. 75-94. No author indicated.

Analysis of difficulties and errors in colonization of Amur Basin.

Arseniev, D. S., "Iz zapisok Admirale Arsenieva", 1860-1862-65, Russki Arkhiv, 1910, pp. 254-312; 385-442.

Barsukov, Ivan, "O Sibirskoi Torgovle. Sapiski Mitropolita Innokentia, Russki Arkhiv, 1894, I, pp. 202-208.

Bestuzhev, Mikhail, "Zapiski Mikhaila Alexandrovicha Bestuzheva", Russkaia Starina, Vol. 32, pp. 591-658.

Reminiscences of a Decembrist in Eastern Siberia.

Efimov, Ivan V., "Iz Vospominanii I. V. Efimova o Grafe N. N. Muravieve-Amurskom", Russki Arkhiv, 1899, III, pp. 570-596.

Recollections of one of Muraviev's staff officers.

Efimov, Ivan V., Graf Nikolai Nikolaevich Muraviev-Amurskii pered sudom Professora Butinskago, St. Petersburg, 1896.

Efimov, Ivan V., "Iz zhizni katorzhnikov Ilginskago i Alexandrovskago togda kazennykh vinokurennykh zavodov, 1848-1853." Russki Arkhiv, 1900, I, pp. 79-107.

Filipson, Grigori I., "Vospominanii Grigoria Ivanovicha Filipsona" Russki Arkhiv, 1883, III, 241-356; 1884, I, 199-222.

Recollections of Muraviev by a fellow-officer.

Kryzhanovskii, V. "Perepiska Nachalnika Pekinskoi Missii Archimandrite Palladiia s General-Gubernaterom Vostochnoi Sibiri, Gr. N. N. Muravievym-Amurskim", Russki Arkhiv, 1914, II, pp. 492-512; III, pp. 5-32, 155-206.

"Pekinskaia Dukhovnaia Missia, Dva donecenia iz Pekina Archimandrita Guria v Asiatski Departament Ministerstva Innostrannykh Del", Russki Arkhiv, 1907, III, pp. 505-508.

Two reports by the Head of the Fourteenth and last Orthodox Mission in Peking.

"Pisma ob Amurskom Krae", Russki Arkhiv (1895) I, 363-400. Author not indicated.

Lev I. Polivanov, Ed., "Iz Zapisok Ivana Garilovicha Polivanova o Vostochnoi Sibiri", Russki Arkhiv, (1898) III, pp. 569-582.

Shilling, N. G., "Iz Vospominanii starago moriaka", Russki Arkhiv, (1892), II, pp. 126-159.

Reminiscences of a Russian naval officer who observed Muraviev's build-up of Nikolaevsk.

Schumacher, P. V., "Oborona Kamchatkii i Vostochnoi Sibiri protiv Anglo-Frantsuzov v 1854 i 1855 godakh". Russki Arkhiv (1878) II, pp. 393-425.

Description of the battle of Petropavlovsk and later artillery action against the British at De Castries Bay.

Schumacher, P. V., Kistorii priobretenia Amura. Snoshenia s Kitaem s 1848 po. 1860 g. Russki Arkhiv, (1878) III, pp. 257-343.

Narrative of the Muraviev years in Eastern Siberia written by one of his staff officers, who obtained Muraviev's approval of it in Paris.

Struve, B. V., "Graf N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii. Espizod iz ego zhizni (1849 g.)" Russkaia Starina, Vol. 40, pp. 505-512.

Anecdotal illustration of Muraviev's character, his impetuosity, and quality of leadership.

Struve, B. V., "Graf N. N. Muraviev-Amurskii. Iz vospominanii o ego deiatelnosti", Russkaia Starina, Vol. 48, pp. 337-358.

Affectionate and admiring recollections of Muraviev by one of his civilian staff officers.

Veniukov, M. I., "Graf Nikolai Nikolaevich Muraviev-Amurskii", Russkaia Starina, Vol. 33, pp. 523-526.

Zaborinskii, A. I., "Gr. Muraviev-Amurskii v 1848-1856 gg." Russkaia Starina, Vol. 38, pp. 623-658.

Recollections of one of Muraviev's senior military staff officers in the Transbaikal who did much important mapping for him in the Ussuri maritime area.

The Riddle of the Mouth of the Amur.

From Yuri Semyonov's Siberia

III

THE RUSSIAN FAR EAST, 1763-1897

MAP 27

APPENDIX B

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

FROM GOVERNOR-GENERAL MURAVIEV TO THE GRAND DUKE CONSTANTINE

November 29, 1853

In the current uncertain state of our relations with the maritime powers it is necessary to devote some attention to the defense of our coast and ports on the Eastern Ocean and the Sea of Okhotsk.

Your Imperial Highness has already consented to take the basic measures for that purpose with the dispatch to the area of naval vessels for which your permission was granted for the build-up of the 46th fleet equipage and with the assignment to the mouth of the Amur of a cossack sotnya from the Transbaikal forces. In addition, the transport "Dvina" should already have delivered armaments this autumn necessary in the first instance for Petropavlovsk, but in order that all these resources be in place in good time and put to good use, certain prior orders and authorizations from high levels of the government will be essential.

The coming revolt in China, on the other hand, requires special attention. Eastern Siberia, thanks to the foresight of the Government, is now supplied with significant military resources. In the Transbaikal region, there are some 16,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry under arms; of this number, 13,000 infantry and cavalry with twenty field pieces can easily and freely be moved across the frontier and, in case of need, the latter figure can be increased to 16,000. But with these forces we must defend our territory from Kamchatka to Charatsia (?) along a border extending on land and sea for 10,000 versts.

May Your Highness deign to note to what degree these places and expanses, (important to) the future of Russia, deserve our attention and protection. I shall only take the liberty to state that no matter how important the events taking shape to the south and the west of our European borders, no matter how disquieting would appear to us the prospect of waging war with Turkey, England and France, Russia is so strong with her unity of thought and unconditional loyalty to the Emperor, that no danger can threaten her from that side - - and her internal material strength and resources are so stable and great that the more drawn out were the war, the more terrible she would become to her enemies, particularly England, even though they might be able to wreak some harm on our littoral cities in Europe: but in our Far East the situation is different: the Bay of Avachinsk in Kamchatka, the mouth of the Amur (Sungari) and navigation upon that river can be wrested away from Russia by force. Neighboring populous China, now

powerless through its ignorance, can easily become dangerous for us under the influence and direction of the English and French and then Siberia will cease to be Russian; but in Siberia, important to us, in addition to gold, are her expanses, sufficient for all of the surplus agricultural population of European Russia for a whole century; the loss of these expanses cannot be compensated for by any victories and conquests in Europe; and in order to safeguard Siberia it is essential to protect and firmly secure Kamchatka, Sakhalin, the mouth of and navigation upon the Amur and to establish a firm influence on neighboring China. It is now possible for us to achieve all this with the local resources of Eastern Siberia, which in the course of five years, have gradually been built up; but it is necessary to permit and authorize the chief administrator of Eastern Siberia to take appropriate action, taking into account local circumstances, for in such a remote land and over such distances it will be too late to give him his instructions in every particular event, and most of all there is the necessity for preliminary orders and decisions regarding the defense of the coast and ports against the English. Their sea communications with the most remote maritime stations makes it possible for them extremely rapidly to give their squadrons the orders to take action against us in the Eastern Ocean, following declaration of war in Europe, news of which, via the customary route through Siberia, will reach Kamchatka much later. In the light of all these considerations, I would propose that: Admiral Putiatin's squadron, now menaced by the English, should proceed without delay to the port newly discovered by Nevelskoi, which becomes ice-free in February, and, upon arriving there, come under the immediate command of the Siberian administration, to which can be entrusted at a convenient time the completion of the task assigned to Admiral Putiatin in Japan, if such task is not yet completed. For the Siberian ports and rapidity of communication among them under present conditions, it will be absolutely necessary to have the steam schooner "Vostok" of the 46th Fleet equipage.

The Commander-in-Chief of Eastern Siberia, in pursuance of these measures, should open communications by the shortest route, with the mouth of the Amur and should send there a portion of the reinforcements designated for the 46th Fleet equipage; also both platoons of mountain artillery attached to the troops assigned to him and two or three engineer officers from St. Petersburg for the fortification of the coast and ports at the mouth of the Amur and in Kamchatka. Only through the above indicated measures shall we be able in good time to prepare to repulse the English who can make their appearance there at the end of June or the beginning of July, and our squadron of three frigates and two corvettes prudently dispatched along our coasts and islands in the Sea of Okhotsk and Kamchatka will force the enemy, in no matter what strength, to conduct his attacking movements with great caution.

Furthermore, for necessary rapid communications between the Transbaikalian region and the mouth of the Amur and thence to Kamchatka, and for the necessary supplying of these points with troops, rations and other necessities, there should be instituted regular steamship communication throughout the summer between the mouth of the Amur and the port of Petropavlovsk by the schooner "Vostok" and for (such communication)

of Nerchinsk with the mouth of the Amur, by the "Argun", newly built on the Shilka, and by fishing vessels. Keeping in mind that the English, even with the greatest effort, cannot bring many landing troops to such remote lands and that throughout the Chinese war they had, for crews and landing parties on their vessels and steamships only three thousand men; that in Kamchatka and the surrounding little-known area the difficulties of providing landing forces will be even greater, and that, finally, the English will not even deem it necessary to employ large forces against places which they believe to be unoccupied, I consider that it should suffice for us in the first instance to have 500 men in mobile order of battle, and on the shores of the Amur a flying detachment, with four mountain pieces, in the same strength, in case our ships should be unable successfully to resist their attack on sea and permitted them to make a landing but if, contrary to expectations, these forces were insufficient to repel them and if the land forces were obliged to retreat in Kamchatka to the interior of the peninsula and to Bolshoresk on the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk, and, at the mouth of the Amur, to the settlement of Kizi and the post of Nikolaevsk, then with the above mentioned steamship communication it would be possible in the same summer to send two battalions down the Amur and several hundred mounted cossacks with attached artillery and to chase the enemy from the Amur coast and the Gulf of Tartary, and then, by those same steamer communications, to transfer enough forces over the Sea of Okhotsk to Bolsheretsk, without coming out into the Eastern Ocean, and to chase the enemy from the port of Petropavlovsk, too.

Opening of navigation on the Amur in this imminent exigency is in any case necessary and justified; but the current civil war in China presents a completely favorable situation for it and the success and security of our three years of activity at the mouth of the Amur (Sungari) serves as a sure guarantee of further successes. There is no doubt that when we sail on the Amur in considerable numbers and openly, there will be oral objections voiced by the Manchurian authorities and later, perhaps, written protests from the Tribunal to our Senate, but to the one and the other it is possible and necessary to give a firm reply, setting forth the necessity for such navigation not only for our benefit and defense but for that of Manchuria itself, and there, I daresay with conviction, that will be the end of the matter.

Moreover, in the current situation of the Chinese government, which has expended its strength and does not rule over half of its realm with which it can be said for this reason that the Kiakhta trade has stopped, and which cannot render us any cooperation for the restoration of that trade, it behooves us to alter the very form of our relations and to inform the Tribunal: that it should address itself to and deal with the chief administrator and commander of troops in Eastern Siberia, to whom the government has given appropriate instructions for all contingencies.

This arrangement will obviate many harmful misunderstandings in the current situation, which would inevitably arise by reason of the distances and slow communications from this area to St. Petersburg, and at the same time will show the Chinese government that we are not

deluding ourselves about its position and are adopting appropriate measures. This form of relations will be the more correct and decent since it will probably soon become necessary to deal not with the Chinese Empire but with several separate provinces. This chief administrator of Eastern Siberia should therefore have assigned to him a special official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and he should be given instructions only on a general basis for every sort of contingency.

With regard to preliminary military measures on our frontier with Mongolia, the following should be done: two camps should be set up by the cossacks' mustering date (May 25 of next year), the first near Kiakhta, made up of the 12th and 13th line battalions, the requisite battery of artillery and the 1st, 5th and 6th horse regiments of the Transbaikal cossack forces; the second, between the settlement of Olegaya and the Vouronkhoiorievsky Fortress, of the 1st and 2nd brigades of cossack infantry and three horse regiments with their light batteries.

Mustering in these places will give the cossacks no great difficulties in their economic affairs and will require very little expenditure of government revenue; at the same time, with this demonstration and with negotiations, at the right time, directly with the chief administrator of Eastern Siberia, we shall undoubtedly succeed in all those dispositions and demands that the government will deem it necessary to lay down in connection with the imminent changes in China.

The 14th and 15th line battalions will remain in their areas of deployment on the Ingod and Shilka Rivers whence, in case of need, they can easily be transported down the Amur; the 3rd Cossack Infantry Brigade, deployed on those same rivers, would have summer mustering of its battalion staffs, also in case of need to strengthen our forces at the mouth of the Amur.

During bivouac period a general reckoning of forces in the event of movement across the border will take place at the following levels:

From the 6 Cossack horse regiments, 5 to be brought up to full strength.	4,400
From the 12 Cossack infantry battalions, 6 to be brought up to full strength.	6,200
From the 4 line battalions, 2 to be brought up to full strength.	2,000
Two batteries of artillery.	400
<hr/>	
Total	13,000

Regarding financial means to meet all possible contingencies which might require extraordinary expenditures for the military and naval departments, it is necessary to permit the chief administrator of

Eastern Siberia to borrow from the various funds and capital of Eastern Siberia, not excluding charities, with the understanding that payment of such loans is to be made at a time more convenient for the government, that is, after termination of the war in Europe, or from new sources of revenue that may be found in Eastern Siberia. The estimated allocation, including the right to alter the actual sums involved and of course with the requirement of reporting all such dispositions to the highest governmental levels.

All of the above presents the possibility, with local resources of Eastern Siberia, with the addition only of vessels in the Eastern Ocean en route there, not only of defending our ancient territories there but of securing them and establishing the necessary influence over neighboring countries, and indicates at the same time the need now to assign to Eastern Siberia a chief administrator enjoying the special confidence of the Sovereign Emperor and the rights and authority corresponding to that confidence.

Note on Treaty Texts

The text of the Treaty of Nerchinsk is that contained in Sbornik Dogovorov Rossii s Kitaem, 1689-1881 (Collection of Treaties of Russia with China, 1689-1881), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, St. Petersburg, 1889. The translation from the Russian is by Dr. Basil Dmytryshyn and is included in his Medieval Russia, A Source Book, 900-1700, Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1967. The texts of the Treaties of Kiakhta and Tientsin are those used by Dr. J. L. Sullivan in his doctoral dissertation, Count N. N. Muraviev-Amursky, Harvard University, 1955, and are taken from Treaties Conventions etc. . Between China and Foreign States, 2 v. Shanghai, 1917. The texts of the Treaties of Aigun and Peking are from the Sbornik Dogovorov etc. . . cited above. Translation from the Russian is mine. Muraviev's Confidential Memorandum to Grand Duke Constantine is contained in Barsukov, v. II, pp. 104-109; translation is mine.

E. E. O.

APPENDIX C

I. TREATY OF NERCHINSK

Article 1

A river called Gorbitsa, which near the Amur River joins the Shilka River from the left side, shall form a boundary for both states. This boundary shall then proceed from the headwaters of the Gorbitsa River along the peaks of the Kamennyi Mountains, which begin at the headwaters of said river, and which extend all the way to the Sea (of Okhotsk). All rivers, be they big or small, which flow south from these mountains and empty into the Amur River, shall be under the suzerainty of the Chinese state; all rivers which flow the opposite direction from these mountains shall be under the suzerainty of the Russian state.

All other rivers which are between the River Udi and said mountains and are under Russian suzerainty, and those rivers which are close to the Amur and flow to the Sea (of Okhotsk) and are under Chinese suzerainty, as well as all territories which lie between the said River Udi and the mountains, shall continue undecided because the great plenipotentiary ambassadors are not empowered to settle their disposition; this condition will remain so until the plenipotentiary ambassadors of both China and Russia, upon their return home, shall receive from their sovereigns proper instructions to solve this problem through ambassadors or through correspondence.

Then the fate of these undecided territories will be decided in a peaceful, dignified manner either by letters or ambassadors.

Article 2

Moreover, the River Argun, which empties into the Amur shall form a boundary (between China and Russia). All lands which are on its left bank, all the way to the mountains, shall be under Chinese suzerainty. The right bank with all its territories will be part of the Russian state. (The Russians) are to transfer all of their buildings from the southern bank of the Argun River to its northern side.

Article 3

The city of Albazin, which the Russians built, should be destroyed completely, and all the people who now dwell there, with all the military and other provisions, should be transferred to Russian territory. They should leave behind neither property nor any of their small possessions.

Article 4

All Russian fugitives, who at the conclusion of this peace treaty are in China, and all Chinese fugitives who are in Russia, shall remain where they are. Those fugitives who, following the signing of this treaty, shall flee, each side shall return promptly to frontier officials.

Article 5

On the basis of the present treaty of friendship, all persons, regardless of their position, may come and go reciprocally, with full liberty, provided they have passports and buy and sell whatever they need.

Article 6

All former discords that have occurred between frontier inhabitants (of both states) prior to the signing of this peace treaty, shall be forgotten and shall not be avenged. And should, following the signing of this peace, some hunters come and pillage or kill, such people, when apprehended, should be handed over to border officials of their native country. And such individuals should be punished severely. And should pillages (or other crimes) be committed by a group of individuals, those willful individuals, when apprehended, should be handed over to border officials to be executed for their crimes. Neither side will either declare a war or shed blood on account of the actions of its frontier population. Each side will make a report of such discords to the respective governments, and such disagreements should be resolved peacefully through diplomatic correspondence.

Chinese authorities reserve for themselves the right to install along the frontiers, which have been outlined in the present treaty, markings of their choice in order to know the exact position (of the frontier).

II. TREATY OF KHIAKTA (1727)

Article 1

The present treaty has been concluded for the eternal preservation of peace between the two empires. It is therefore agreed that from this day forth, each empire must govern and watch over its subjects. In respect for the concluded peace, each shall maintain and guard rigorously its own subjects, in order to prevent whatever might give rise to disputes.

Article 2

This present treaty of peace, renewed and concluded between the two empires shall not be interpreted to apply to that which has hitherto taken place between the two empires.

Request for former fugitives shall not be made, and they shall remain in the empire where they are; but those who shall henceforth cross the frontier shall not, under any circumstance, be held. It shall be necessary, on the contrary, to seek them out without delay, in order to take them and return them to the authorities of the respective frontiers.

Article 3

The high officials of the Middle Kingdom and the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, ambassador of the Russian Empire, judged that the main object of their work was the fixing of the frontier of the two empires; but that it would be impossible to regulate it with accuracy, if it was not carefully inspected on the spot. For this purpose:

The Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, ambassador of the Russian Empire, betook himself to the frontier in person, with Tserin, adjutant general of the Middle Kingdom, viceroy of several Mongolian tribes and son-in-law of the Emperor, Bosygoe, commander of the imperial guard, and Tuleshinym, vice president of the Ministry of War.

They came to an agreement in the following way on the places where the frontier was to pass. The country situated between the outpost of the Russian Empire near the Kiakhta River and the Obo (stone marker) of the Middle Kingdom, located on the summit of the mountain Orogoitu, should be equally divided, and that another Obo should be erected there which shall serve as the sign of the frontier. In the same spot, a commercial depot shall also be established, and commissioners shall be sent there.

From this place to the east, the frontier passes over the crest of Burgutei, as far as the outpost of Kiran. After the outpost of Kiran, there are Tsikteï, Ara-Khidou and Ara-Khadazen; the frontier proceeds by these four outposts in a straight line, along the River Chikolu, Ara-Khadazan, as far as the Mongol outpost Tsagan-Ula. The

desert; between the country inhabited by the subjects of the Russian Empire and between the frontier markers of the Mongol outposts of the Middle Kingdom will be shared equally as at Kiakhta. Where there are in the neighborhood of the country inhabited by the subjects of the Russian Empire, mountains, summits of mountains, and rivers, they shall serve to mark the frontier; and where the mountains and rivers are in the neighborhood of the Mongol outposts, they shall equally serve to mark the frontier. But where there are only vast plains without mountains or rivers, the areas shall be divided equally, and sign posts to mark the frontier have been erected in the middle; the frontier has thus been established from the marker of the outpost of Tsagan-Ula to the banks of the Argun River.

The envoys of the two empires in order to inspect the areas situated beyond the Mongol outpost of the Tsagan-Ula agreed to draw the frontier from the two markers of the middle, erected at Kiakhta and on the mountain Orogoitu on the west, Orogoitu, Tyman, etc.¹

The middle of this chain of mountains equally divided was acknowledged as the frontier. Where there are mountains and rivers along the frontier line, they have been equally shared, in such a way that at present, from the Shabina as far as the banks of the Argun River, all which is on the south side belongs to the Middle Kingdom and the farther side belongs to the Russian Empire.

After having finished the division of the country and after having drawn up a description and an exact map, the two parties exchanged these descriptions. They submitted them to the high officials of the two empires. The subjects of the two States who found themselves without permission beyond the determined frontier, and who had there established their homes, were sought out and brought back to their own country. The same was done for vagabonds, in such a way that the frontier has been entirely cleaned up.

The Urlankhi of the two sides, who paid five zibelines of tribute remained with their former masters; but those who up to them had contributed only one zibeline, were exempted for the future and from the day of the conclusion of this Treaty. For conformity, a proces-verbal was drawn up on both sides, which was mutually exchanged.

Article 4

Now that the determination of the frontier of the two empires is settled, and now that no fugitive may be admitted any more, it is agreed with the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, ambassador of the Russian Empire, to establish a free commerce between the two States.

The number of merchants who may go to Pekin every three years must not exceed 200, as was earlier determined. As long as they are

¹Here follows a considerable list of Manchu or Mongol place names, now largely obsolete.

only merchants, they shall not be treated as formerly; but no tax or impost shall be required either of the seller or of the buyer.

When these merchants arrive at the frontier, they shall give written warning. After the reception of this warning, an officer shall be sent to receive them and to accompany them in their business. If they purchase during the trip camels, horses, and victuals, or if they hire servants, they must pay for them at their own expense. The merchants shall remain under the orders of a chief designated to supervise their affairs; and if there arise differences among them, this chief will rule on them. If this chief of the merchants is a man of high rank, he will be received and treated according to his rank. All types of merchandise may be sold, except those which the laws of the two empires forbid. No one shall be permitted to remain in secret and without the permission of his chief in the foreign country. If anyone dies, all his goods, of whatever nature they may be, shall be returned to his fellow-countrymen, as was agreed with the Russian ambassador, the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich. In addition to the trade carried on by the caravans of the two empires, there shall be erected also on the mutual frontiers near Kiakhta, Selengi, and Norchinsk trading posts, which, as is judged necessary, shall be surrounded by hedges and palisades. Those who betake themselves to these places to carry on trade, must go by direct route. If anyone fails to follow the direct route, all his merchandise shall be confiscated to the benefit of the government. There shall be installed on each side an equal number of officers, placed under the orders of chiefs of equal rank, and charged with protecting these places. Differences shall be arbitrated in the manner agreed upon with the ambassador of the Russian Empire, the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich.

Article 5

The dwelling of the Russians in the capital shall serve henceforth to lodge Russian travellers. On the request of the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, ambassador of the Russian Empire, and with the agreement of the high officials of the Middle Kingdom who are responsible for relations with the Russians, a temple has been constructed near this dwelling. The priest who resides in the capital shall dwell there with three other priests to assist him. When these latter shall arrive, they shall be received like their predecessors and employed at the said temple. It shall be permitted to the Russians to practice their cult with all its ceremonies and to recite their prayers. Four young Russians, knowing the Russian and Latin language and writing, and two others, older, that the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, ambassador of the Russian Empire has left in the capital to learn the Chinese language, must remain in this same spot. Their upkeep shall be paid by the government; and when they have completed their studies, they shall return to their own country.

Article 6

As to correspondence between the two empires, it is very essential that letters be affixed with a seal. The tribunal of frontier provincial affairs is responsible for sending to the tribunal of the Russian senate letters from the Middle Kingdom for the Russian Empire, after the seal has been affixed. Letters of the Russian Empire for the Middle Kingdom must be sent to the tribunal of the frontier provinces, sealed with the seal of the Russian Empire or with the stamp of the governor of the city of Tobolsk. All papers relating to the frontier or to the trading posts, and concerning deserters or thieveries, must be signed and sealed by the Tushetukhan Ovan, dzhan torzhi and the Ovan tanzhin torzhiu if they come out of the Middle Kingdom, and by the commandants of the frontier towns if they come from the Russian Empire. The mutual correspondence between the Tushetukhan Ovan dzhan torzhi and the Ovan tanzhin torzhiu with the Russians must be done by men sent expressly and only by the Kiakhta route. However, it is permitted them to take the shortest route if it is a question of an affair of great importance. In cases of contravention of this rule, the Ovan of the frontier and the commander of the Russian towns must be immediately informed, and after an investigation of the charge has been made, the guilty parties shall be punished by the appropriate official.

Article 7

As to the frontiers, near the River Ud and others, they have already been the object of negotiations between the head of the interior, Sungutou and Fodor Alexevich Golovin. These areas shall remain at present undetermined between the two parties; but they shall be regulated ultimately by ambassadors or by correspondence. On this occasion, the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, ambassador of the Russian Empire, was told: "Since you have been sent as plenipotentiary of your Empress to regulate all affairs, we must also draw up something on this point. At the present time, your subjects are passing across the frontier often to go into the country called Khimkon Tugurnik, and if, as a result, we do not make a decision thereupon during these talks, it is to be feared that the situation may result in differences among the frontier subjects. Such differences being opposed to what is contained in the Treaty of Peace between the two empires, we must arrange this matter right now." The ambassador of the Russian Empire, the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, replied, "My Empress has not empowered me to negotiate on the areas situated to the east. We do not have a precise enough knowledge of these countries; it is necessary therefore that all remain as has been heretofore agreed; but in order to prevent anyone from among our subjects from crossing the frontier, I shall forbid it for the future." Our men replied: "If your Empress has not empowered you to discuss the areas of the east, we shall speak no more of that, and it will be necessary to leave things as they are. But, after your return, forbid your subjects to cross the frontier; for if anyone was seized by our men for coming onto our territory, we should punish him. In such a case, you could not say that we had violated the Treaty of Peace. If, on the other hand, one of our subjects crosses your frontier, you will have equally the right to

punish him; finally because nothing is decided about the River Ud and the cantons which abut upon it, they shall remain as heretofore; but your subjects are not to establish themselves any closer than they are at present.

"As soon as the ambassador of the Russian Empire, the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, shall be home again, he will explain all this to his Empress. It will be necessary then to send men who have knowledge of local affairs in these areas to inspect them; for it would be well to be able to reach a decision thereupon, it being understood, that if this matter, of small importance in itself, was not decided, it might become harmful to the good understanding between the two empires. In addition, a proces-verbal on this subject was drawn up, and has been sent to your senate."

Article 8

The commandants of the frontiers of the two empires must decide, according to the laws of justice, and without delay, all disputes; and if they drag them out for their own interest, each empire must punish them according to its own laws.

Article 9

If from one side or the other, important or petty charges s'affaires are sent, they must betake themselves first to the frontier, and give warning of their mission and of their rank. They must not be retained long on the frontier, and some one must be sent to receive them. After the reception of a letter of invitation, they shall be given refreshments at each stop, and they shall be received with respect. At their arrival, they shall be lodged and paid for; if they come in a year when commerce is not permitted, they may not bring merchandise.

If, for some important matters, one or two couriers are sent, they must present their papers to the frontier officers who shall furnish them with horses in relays, guides, and food, without their having had to give advance warning; all this has been agreed with the Russian ambassador, the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich.

Correspondence by letter and messengers between the two empires, being of the highest importance, must not be allowed to suffer any delay. If then, in the future, letters are not answered, and if messengers are detained unnecessarily, it shall be considered contrary to what is contained in the Treaty of Peace. In such cases, neither ambassadors nor negotiators shall be received until such difficulties shall be terminated; then only will they be permitted passage.

Article 10

The subjects of the two empires who shall flee henceforth shall be punished with death at the very spot where they shall have been arrested. Armed subjects who cross the frontier without committing assassinations or brigandage, but without passports, shall likewise be punished in conformity with their crime. Soldiers who desert and steal from their

leaders shall have their heads cut off, if they are subjects of the Middle Kingdom: if they are of the Russian Empire, they shall be strangled, and the stolen things shall be returned to the commandant or to his government. Those who cross the frontier and steal camels or other beasts shall be returned to their natural judges, who shall condemn them to pay ten times the value of the stolen objects; in case of a second offense, twenty times as much; and at the third offense, they shall be punished with death. He who crosses the frontier to hunt for his own benefit in the environs shall be punished in conformity with the offense, and his booty returned to the government. Peasants who cross the frontier without passport shall be punished likewise, as has been agreed with the Russian ambassador, the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich.

Article 11

This Treaty of Peace concluded between the two empires has been exchanged in the following manner: The ambassador of the Russian Empire, the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, has remitted a copy in the Russian and Latin languages, furnished and confirmed with a seal to the high officials of the Middle Kingdom; and the high officials of the Middle Kingdom have remitted to the Illyrian Count Sava Vladislavich, ambassador of the Russian Empire, another copy in Manchu, Russian and Latin. This Treaty has been accurately printed and distributed to all those engaged in frontier affairs, in order that its contents be generally known.

The seventh day of the seventh moon of the fifth year of Perpetual Rectitude.

Supplement to the Treaty of Kiakhta (1768)

Although the 11 Articles of the Treaty of Peace must be maintained eternally unchanged, it has been found necessary to remove the Russian frontier markers from the neighborhood of Mount Burgutei to Ubitsiktu, Khoshou, and other places, in order to draw the line of the frontier along the ridge of the mountains; but all shall remain as was formerly planned near the two commercial depots of Kiakhta and Tsurukhaitou, where no fee for entry is required. Errors having slipped into the Russian and Latin texts of the Treaty of Peace, and several essential points having been forgotten, it has been judged desirable to correct and rectify them. Furthermore, any disagreements which have heretofore taken place between the two powers shall be forgotten, and no request shall be made for former fugitives. What was decreed by the tenth Article of the preceding Convention concerning the way to prevent stealing and desertion among the respective frontier subjects appeared too equivocal and indeterminate. The tenth Article of the Convention has therefore been entirely rejected, and it has been drawn up again and elevated into law, which must be observed in place of the former one. According to the present Convention, each party must supervise henceforth its own subjects, in order that such things may happen no more. If, at the new assembly which is to take place on the frontier,

evidence is produced of tampering [with the markers] or other such incidents, the commandants of the frontier shall be required to examine it without delay and with loyalty. If, on the contrary, led on by their own interest, they neglect their duty, each party must punish them according to its own laws. As to the search and arrest of brigands and as to the punishment of those who cross the frontier illegally, the following clauses have been drawn up and determined on.

Article 10

Armed men who cross the frontier near one of the outposts to engage in brigandage, whether or not they have killed any one, must be arrested and guarded rigorously until they have confessed from what outpost they came and if they were alone or with others. After they have undergone a rigorous interrogation at the outpost itself, the names of the still free brigands must be written down, and each outpost notified, and especially the first superior officer of the Chinese and the commandants of the Russians. These officials must immediately betake themselves to the actual spot to look scrupulously into the affair with those concerned, and to make without delay a report, which must be sent to the place where frontier affairs are decided. From there it shall be required that a distinguished loyal man be sent to the outpost, who shall meet with the officials there to look into the matter in question; after which he shall send his report to the place where frontier questions are decided. The subjects of the Middle Kingdom who have committed brigandage shall be handed over, without distinction of persons, to the tribunal which governs the frontier provinces, to be put to death, and the Russian subjects shall be handed over to the senate to suffer the same punishment. Murderers shall be conducted to the frontier to be publicly executed. The horse, saddle, arms, and all the equipment of the thief shall be given, as reward, to whoever arrested him. Those who steal horses, animals, and other property, for the first time shall be condemned to pay ten times the value of the stolen articles. If the thief is not caught, the commandants of both outposts must meet together to look into the crime, to examine any wounds, the body of any who have been killed, and a proces-verbal shall be drawn up. The commandant of the outpost shall be expected to arrest the thieves, at the latest, within a month. If the thief has not been apprehended within this time, a report must be sent to both the frontier headquarters. Then the commandants of the outposts and the soldiers who have not done their duty in the search for the horses and the stolen articles shall be punished themselves by paying ten times the value of the stolen goods. If unarmed men are arrested who have crossed the frontier to commit robbery secretly, they shall be punished, according to the law, with one hundred lashes. The horse of the thief with the saddle shall be given, as reward, to those who arrested him. The stolen goods shall be returned. The first time, the thief shall pay five times the value of the goods; the second, ten times; and the third time, he shall be treated as a brigand. If such thieves are not arrested, an authentic proces-verbal must be drawn up for the outpost near which the crime has been committed and the commandant and the soldiers of the outpost must be ordered to arrest the criminal within the space of one month. When he has been caught, he shall receive publicly one hundred lashes,

and the horses and other goods stolen shall be restored without delay. If the commandants of the outposts and the soldiers do not find and within the prescribed time arrest the unarmed thieves, the value of the horses and of the stolen goods must be paid five times over by these commandants and these soldiers who have not fulfilled their duty.

When horses and other stray animals which have crossed the frontier are found, they shall immediately be returned to the nearest outpost; if they are not found, a proces-verbal shall be drawn up, in which they shall be precisely described. The horses and stray animals shall then be returned within the space of five days. This length of time having passed, if they have been found and not returned, or if they have been hidden anywhere and the place where any of these horses and stray animals are is known, the commandants of the mutual outposts must prepare a report about it and send it to the frontier headquarters. In recompense for these objects, double the number must be restored.

Armed people, not furnished with passports, who cross the frontier without committing either thieving or killings, must be arrested. Their horses, saddles and equipment shall be given as reward to those who arrested them. If such persons have crossed the frontier to hunt, they shall, according to the law, be publicly punished with one hundred lashes. The booty, their arms, horses and equipment shall be given, likewise, as reward to those who arrested them. If unarmed people, who have crossed the frontier, are arrested, the commandant of the outpost must interrogate them scrupulously. If they have mistaken the road, they must be released without delay and returned, as soon as possible to the outpost on the other side. If people are found hidden in the forests and in the inaccessible mountains, and if they are arrested, they shall, according to the law, be publicly punished with one hundred lashes; their horses, saddles and equipment shall be given, as a deserved reward to those who arrested them.

All the criminals of the Middle Kingdom condemned to corporal punishment shall be whipped, and those of the Russian Empire shall be beaten with the knout.

The convention herewith concluded has been exchanged in the following manner: the high officials of the Middle Kingdom handed over a copy in Manchu and Mongol languages furnished with a seal, to the Commissioner Plenipotentiary of the Russians; and the latter handed over to the high officials of the Middle Kingdom another copy in the Russian language likewise furnished with a seal.

In order to see that it be generally known, printed copies of this agreement shall be distributed to the frontier subjects on both sides.

The 33rd year of Khianglung, the 19th day of the 9th moon (18 October, 1768).

III. TREATY OF AIGUN

(Ceremonial Preamble Omitted)

Article 1

The left bank of the Amur River, from the Argun River southward to the mouth of the Amur, shall be under the sovereignty of the Russian Empire, while the right bank, as far as the Ussuri River, shall be under the sovereignty of the Dai-Tsing Empire; the lands and places situated between the Ussuri River and the sea shall, as heretofore, constitute a joint dominion of the Dai-Tsing and Russian Empires, until such time as the frontier between the two Empires in this area is determined. Vessels only of the Dai-Tsing and Russian Empires may navigate the Amur, Sungari and Ussuri; navigation of those rivers is forbidden to vessels of any other states. Manchu inhabitants of the left bank of the Amur River, from the Zeia River southward to the village of Khormoldzin shall be left in perpetuity in the prior locations of their residence, under the jurisdiction of the Manchu Government, in order that Russian inhabitants might not injure or oppress them.

Article 2

In the interest of mutual friendship of the subjects of both states, reciprocal trade is permitted to the subjects of both Empires who live along the Ussuri, Amur and Sungari Rivers, and the authorities must reciprocally protect the trading people of both states on both banks.

Article 3

The stipulations laid down by mutual agreement of the plenipotentiary of the Russian Empire, Governor-General Muraviev, and the plenipotentiary of the Dai-Tsing Empire, Commander-in-Chief of the Amur, I-Shan, shall be carried out precisely and inviolably in perpetuity; to this effect, Governor-General Muraviev, for the Russian Empire, has remitted a copy of the present treaty, written in the Russian and Manchu languages, to the Commander-in-Chief, I-Shan, for the Dai-Tsing Empire, and the Commander-in-Chief, I-Shan, for the Dai-Tsing Empire, has remitted a copy of the present treaty, written in the Manchu and Mongol languages, to Governor-General Muraviev, for the Russian Empire. All provisions contained herein shall be published for the information of the frontier inhabitants of both Empires.

Signed, May 16, 1858, in the town of Aigun*

Nikolai Muraviev
Piotr Perovskii
I-Shan
Dziramanga

*Ceremonial recitation of plenipotentiary credentials omitted, as are counter-signatures.

IV. TREATY OF TIENTSIN (June, 1858)

His Majesty the Emperor and Autocrat of All the Russias and His Majesty the Emperor of China judging it of prime necessity to outline clearly the mutual relations of Russia and China, and to draw up new rules for the interest of the two States, have appointed for this purpose their Plenipotentiaries, namely:

His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, his Aide-de-camp General, Vice-Admiral Count Evfimiy Putiatin, Imperial Commissioner in China, and Commander-in-chief of the Russian squadron in the Pacific Ocean;

And His Majesty the Emperor of China, from his Empire the Dakhiushi of the Eastern section, Director-in-chief of the Tribunal of Criminal Justice, the high functionary Kui-leang, and from his Empire the President of the Tribunal of Inspection, Chief of the Division of heavy Infantry of the blue fringed flag, his high functionary Khurashan.

The said Plenipotentiaries, in virtue of the powers which they have received from their respective Governments have agreed upon the following Articles, and have drawn them up as follows:

Article 1

The present Treaty confirms again the Peace and Friendship which have existed for many years between his Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias and His Majesty the Emperor of China, and between their respective subjects.

Russian subjects who reside in China and Chinese subjects who are in Russia shall continue to enjoy the protection of the Governments of the two Empires, both for their persons and for their property.

Article 2

Henceforth communications between the Supreme Government of Russia and the Supreme Government of China, will not be effected as has been done heretofore by the Senate on the one side and the Tribunal Li-fan-yuan on the other, but it shall be the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia who shall communicate with the Senior Member of the Council of State or with the chief Minister at Peking. They shall communicate on terms of absolute equality.

The ordinary correspondence between the persons above-mentioned shall be transmitted by the frontier authorities. Communications of high importance shall be brought by an emissary nominated ad hoc, who can make verbal explanations to the Members of the Council of State and the chief Minister. At his arrival he shall present despatches with the President of the Tribunal of Rites acting as intermediary.

Equality shall be observed likewise in the correspondence and the interviews of Envoys and Ministers Plenipotentiary of Russia, with the Members of the Council of State, the Ministers of the Court of Peking,

and the Governors-General of the frontier and maritime provinces; and in the relations among the Governors-General and other frontier authorities of the two States.

If the Russian Government should judge it necessary to name a Minister Plenipotentiary to reside in one of the open ports of China, he shall deal in his personal relations and in his correspondence with the local Chinese authorities and with the Ministers at Peking, according to the general rules agreed upon now by all foreign States.

Envoys of Russia may go to Peking, either by way of Kiakhta and Urga, or by Taku at the mouth of the Pei Ho, or by any other city or open port of China. After an advance notice, the Chinese government shall see that the necessary arrangements are undertaken in order that the trip of the Envoy and of his suite may be prompt and convenient. The reception in the capital shall take place with the honors due his rank; appropriate lodging shall be prepared and he shall be provided with all necessities.

All the expenses occasioned by the sending of Russian Diplomatic Missions into China shall be discharged by the Russian Government, and shall in no case become the responsibility of the Chinese Government.

Article 3

Henceforth commerce between Russia and China shall take place not only in the places determined along the frontiers, but also by sea. Russian merchant vessels shall be permitted to trade in the following ports: Shanghai, Ning-po, Foo-chow-foo, Canton, Taiwan foo, on the Island of Formosa, Kiung chow, on the Island of Hainan.

Article 4

In the future no limit shall be placed by either Government on the number of traders and captains employed in commerce.

In maritime commerce and in all the details which concern it, namely the declarations on imported merchandise, the payment of rights of anchorage and of duties according to the present tariff, etc., Russian subjects shall conform to the general rules established for foreign commerce in the Chinese ports.

Any illegal commerce carried on by Russians shall be punished by the confiscation, to the profit of the Chinese Government, of any merchandise which has been unloaded.

Article 5

The Russian Government shall be free to name Consuls in the ports open to commerce.

The Russian Government may send out war ships to maintain order among the Russian subjects and to give support to the authority of the Consul.

The relations between the Consul and local authorities, the concession of a suitable area for the construction of churches, of houses and of stores, the purchase by the Russians of lands from the Chinese, and all the transactions which are under the jurisdiction of the Consul, shall take place according to the general rules observed by the Chinese Government in its dealing with foreigners.

Article 6

If a Russian war vessel or merchant ship should be in trouble on the shore, the nearest Chinese authority should immediately bring aid to the ship, and take the necessary measures for the rescue of the ship and the cargo. It shall also assist in the transportation of the crew and the cargo to the nearest port where there is a Russian Consul or the agent of a nation friendly to Russia, or to the frontier, if the shipwreck has taken place near the frontier. The Russian Government shall cover the expenses resulting from the rescue of the crew and the cargo.

In cases where Russian war vessels or merchant ships are in need of making repairs, or providing themselves with water, and with fresh provisions, they shall be allowed to enter on their course into ports not open to commerce, and to buy what they need at prices agreed upon, and without the local authorities making objections.

Article 7

All disputes between Russian and Chinese subjects in the ports and open cities shall be examined by the Chinese authorities in concert with the Russian Consul or with the agent who represents the authority of the Russian Government in that place.

Russian subjects guilty of any crime or misdemeanor shall be judged according to the Russian laws. Likewise, Chinese subjects, for any crime or attempt against the life or the property of a Russian shall be judged and punished according to the laws of their country.

If Russian subjects should penetrate into the interior of China and there commit some crime or misdemeanor, they shall be conducted to the frontier, or into one of the open ports where a Russian Consul resides in order to be judged and punished according to Russian laws.

Article 8

The Chinese Government having recognized that the Christian doctrine facilitates the establishment of order and peace among men, promises not to persecute its Christian subjects for the practicing of the duties of their religion; they shall enjoy the protection accorded to all those who profess the other beliefs tolerated in the Empire.

The Chinese Government considering the Christian missionaries men of good will who are not seeking material advantages, shall permit them to propagate the Christian faith among its subjects, and shall not prevent them from moving about freely in the interior of the Empire.

A fixed number of missionaries leaving the cities or open ports shall be furnished with passports signed by the Russian authorities.

Article 9

Those parts of the frontier between China and Russia not as yet determined shall be examined without delay in the frontier areas themselves.

The two Governments shall name for this purpose delegates who shall fix the line of demarcation and shall conclude thereupon a Convention, which shall be added as a Separate Article to the present Treaty.

Maps and detailed descriptions of the frontier shall then be drawn up and shall serve as definitive documents for the future.

Article 10

There shall no longer be any fixed term for the stay of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Pekin; the members of this mission may, with the authorization of their Government, return to their own country at any time. The vacant place may then be occupied by a new member.

The Chinese Government shall no longer defray any expenses for the maintenance of the mission; all expenses shall be the responsibility of the Russian Government.

The travelling expenses of the member of the mission, couriers, and other persons whom the Russian Government shall send from Kiakhta and the open ports of China, and vice-versa, shall be paid by the Russian Government; the local Chinese authorities shall be obliged, on their side, to take necessary measures to insure that the journey of all such above-mentioned persons shall be prompt and convenient.

Article 11

A regular postal service shall be established between Kiakhta and Pekin for communications between the two Governments, as well as for the needs of the Ecclesiastical Russian Mission at Pekin.

The Chinese couriers shall be sent on an appointed day once a month from Pekin and from Kiakhta, and shall, in the time of 15 days or less, bring official packages and letters to the place of their destination.

Furthermore, every 3 months, or 4 times per year, a convoy shall be sent from Kiakhta to Pekin, and vice versa, for the transportation of all types of goods and belongings. This convoy shall make the trip in the course of one month. All the expenses arising from the establishment and the maintenance of these communications shall be paid half and half by the two Governments.

Article 12

All the political, commercial, and other privileges which might in the future be acquired by the most favored Nations from the Chinese Government, shall be extended at the same time to Russia without the necessity of any preliminary negotiations.

This Treaty shall be ratified immediately by the Emperor of China, and after it shall have been ratified by the Emperor of Russia, the exchange of ratifications shall take place at Peking within a year, or earlier if possible.

Copies in the Russian, Manchu, and Chinese languages, complete with the signatures and the seals of the Plenipotentiaries of the two States, shall be exchanged now, and the Manchu text shall serve as the basis for the interpretation of all the Articles of the Treaty, which shall be observed by the two High Contracting Parties, faithfully and inviolably.

Done and signed in the city of Tientsin on the first day of June of the year 1858 after the birth of Jesus Christ, and in the 4th year of the reign of His Majesty the Emperor Alexander II.

Count Evfimiy Putiatin
Kui-leang
Khurashan

Supplementary Treaty

Concluded November 2, 1860, in Peking

Following an attentive examination and consideration of existing treaties between Russia and China, His Majesty, the Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias and His Majesty, the Bogdikhán of the Chinese Empire, wishing to bind more closely the ties of reciprocal friendship between the two Empires, to develop commercial relations and to prevent any misunderstanding, have resolved to draw up some additional articles, and for this purpose, have named as their Plenipotentiaries:

For the Russian Empire, Major General Nikolai Ignatiev, of the Suite of His Imperial Majesty and Chevalier of various Orders;

For the Dai-Tsing Empire, the Prince Kung, Prince of the First Class, who bears the name I-Sing.

The said Plenipotentiaries, after having made known their full powers, having found them sufficient, have agreed on the following:

Article 1

To confirm and to clarify Article 1 of the Treaty concluded in the town of Aigun on May 16, 1858 (Eighth Year of Sien Fong, 21st day of the Fourth Moon), and in execution of Article 9 of the Treaty concluded on June

1 of the same year (third day of the Fifth Moon), in the town of Tientsin, it is established that:

Henceforth, the Eastern Frontier of the two Empires, beginning with the confluence of the Rivers Shilka and Argun, shall descend along the course of the Amur River to the confluence of the latter river with the River Ussuri. The lands lying along the left bank (on the north) of the River Amur belong to the Russian Empire, while the lands lying along the right bank (on the south) to the mouth of the River Ussuri, belong to the Chinese Empire. Further, from the mouth of the River Ussuri to Lake Khinkai, the frontier line follows the Ussuri and Sungacha Rivers. The lands lying along the Eastern (right) banks of those rivers belong to the Russian Empire and those on the West (left) banks, to the Chinese Empire. Thereupon, the frontier line between the two Empires, from the source of the River Sungacha, cuts across Lake Khinkai and follows the River Belen-khe (Tur); from the mouth of the latter, it follows the crest of the mountains to the mouth of the River Khubitu (Khubtu) and from there along the mountains lying between the River Khunchun and the sea as far as the River Tu-min-dzian. Here, likewise, the lands lying on the East belong to the Russian Empire and on the West to the Chinese. The frontier line lies along the River Tu-min-dzian at 20 versts (li) from its mouth.

Furthermore, in execution of the same Article 9 of the Treaty of Tientsin, there is confirmed a map drawn up on which the frontier line, for greater clarity, is indicated in red and its direction marked with the letters of the Russian alphabet

A B B P T E M O H I R J K H P O T V

This map is signed by the Plenipotentiaries of both Empires and is validated by their seals.

Should there be, in the above-mentioned places, settlements of Chinese subjects, the Russian Government obligates itself to leave them there and to permit them, as in the past, to pursue their fishing and hunting occupations.

After the frontier markers have been placed, the frontier lines shall remain forever unchanged.

Article 2

The frontier line on the west, up to now undetermined, must henceforth follow the direction of the mountains, the courses of the great rivers, and of the existing line of Chinese pickets. From the last outpost, named Shabindaga, established in 1728, upon conclusion of the Treaty of Kiakhta of 1728, (Sixth Year of Yung Ching), it shall proceed southwest to Lake Tsai-san and from there to the mountains lying to the south of Lake Issykul, called Tengerishn or Kirgisnysh alatau, otherwise known as Tsian-Shan-Onan-lu (southern extension of the Celestial Mountains) and along these mountains to the Kokand dominion.

Article 3

Henceforth all treaty questions which may in future arise, must be settled on the basis set forth in Articles 1 and 2 of this Treaty, and for the placing of frontier markers on the East from Lake Khinkai to the River Tu-min-dzian and on the west from the outpost Shabindaga to the Kokand dominion, the Russian and Chinese Governments shall name reliable persons (Commissioners). For the inspection of the Eastern frontier, the Commissioners shall meet at the mouth of the Ussuri River during April of next year (11th Year of Sien-Fong, Third Moon). For the inspection of the western frontier, the meeting of the commissioners shall take place at Tarbagatai but the time is not set.

On the basis of the provisions of Articles 1 and 2 of the present treaty the authorized officials (Commissioners) who are despatched are to prepare maps and detailed descriptions of the frontier line in four copies - two in the Russian, and two in the Chinese or Manchu language. The maps and descriptions are to be validated by the signatures and seals of the Commissioners, following which two copies of them, one in the Russian, and one in the Chinese or Manchu languages - shall be remitted to the Russian Government and two such copies to the Chinese Government, for safekeeping.

For the exchanging of maps descriptions of the frontier line, there shall be drawn up a protocol corroborated by the signing and placing of seals of the Commissioners and it shall be considered as an additional Article of the present Treaty.

Article 4

All along the frontier line established by Article 1 of the present Treaty, free trade without tariffs is authorized between the subjects of the two States. The local border commanders must give their special protection to this trade and to the people engaged in it.

At the same time, all stipulations concerning trade established in Article 2 of the Treaty of Aigun are confirmed.

Article 5

To Russian merchants there is extended, over and above the existing trade at Kiakhta, their former right to travel on commercial matters from Kiakhta to Peking. En route, they shall be permitted to trade also at Urga and Kalgan, without opening up wholesale commerce. The Russian Government is authorized to have a Consul (Lin-shi-guan) at Urga, accompanied by several persons and at its expense to construct a dwelling for him there. As to the concession of land for this dwelling, as well as the size of the latter, and as to the concession of pasturage, there must be an understanding with the authorities at Urga.

Chinese merchants are equally authorized to proceed to Russia to trade if they so desire.

Russian merchants have the right to travel on business to China at all times, only there should be no more (in one party) than two hundred persons at one time in one place; moreover, they must have tickets from the Russian frontier authority indicating the name of the head of the caravan, the number of persons composing the caravan and the place of its destination. During the voyage, the merchants are permitted to buy and sell as they wish. All expenses of the road are to be borne by the merchants themselves.

Article 6

Experimentally, commerce is to be opened at Kashgar on the same basis as at Ili and Tarbagatai. At Kashgar, the Chinese Government shall cede sufficient land for construction of a trading post with all buildings necessary for dwellings, warehouses for storing of merchandise, etc., as well as for a cemetery and a pasture, at Ili and Tarbagatai. Orders will be given immediately to the Administrator of Kadhgar for the cession of areas for the above-mentioned needs.

The Chinese Government shall not be responsible for thefts from Russian merchants in cases where such thefts have been committed by people who have intruded from beyond the lines of the Chinese outposts.

Article 7

Russians in China, just as Chinese in Russia, in places open to trade, may move about freely in their commercial activities without any restraint on the part of the local authorities; they may frequent with the same freedom and at all times the market places and houses of local merchants and may sell and buy all manner of merchandise wholesale or retail, for cash or for barter, and may grant and receive credit as their mutual confidence permits.

The duration of the stay of merchants in places where trade is carried on is not to be limited but depends on their own desires.

Article 8

Russian merchants in China and Chinese merchants in Russia are placed under the special protection of both Governments. In order to supervise the merchants and to prevent misunderstandings that may arise between them and the local inhabitants, the Russian Government may immediately name Consuls at Kashgar and Urga, on the basis of rules adopted for Ili and Tarbagatai. The Chinese Government may equally, should it so desire, name Consuls in the capitals and other cities of the Russian Empire.

The Consuls of both Powers are to be lodged in houses constructed at the expense of their respective Governments. However, it is not forbidden them to rent, if they so desire, lodgings from the local inhabitants.

In their relations with the local authorities, the Consuls of both States, on the basis of Article 2 of the Treaty of Tientsin, are to

observe perfect equality. All matters concerning the merchants of one or the other State are to be examined by them on the basis of mutual consent. Misdemeanors and crimes must be judged, as stipulated in Article 7 of the Treaty of Tientsin, in accordance with the laws of the State of which the guilty party is a subject.

Disputes, lawsuits and disagreements of a similar nature arising among merchants in connection with commercial matters are to be settled by the merchants themselves by means of arbiters chosen from amongst themselves; the Consuls and the local authorities may only cooperate in bringing about conciliations, without taking any responsibility relative to such suits.

In places where trade is authorized, merchants of both States may contract written commitments for orders of merchandise, rental of shops, houses, etc., and present them to be witnessed by the Consulate and the local administration. In case of non-execution of written commitments the Consul and local authorities are to take measures to bring (the parties concerned) to fulfil their obligations exactly.

Matters not having to do with commercial affairs among merchants, such as disputes, complaints, etc., shall be examined by the Consul and the local authorities, by mutual consent; delinquents shall be punished according to the laws of their own country.

In case of concealment of a Russian subject among the Chinese, or of his flight into the interior of the country, the local authority, upon being informed by the Russian Consul, shall without delay take measures to seek out the fugitive and upon discovering him, shall immediately turn him over to the Russian Consulate. The same procedure shall be equally followed relative to any Chinese subject hiding among the Russians or fleeing into Russia.

In case of serious crimes, such as murder, brigandage with serious bodily injury, attack upon a person's life, premeditated arson, etc., after an inquiry, if the guilty party is Russian he shall be sent to Russia to be treated according to the laws of his country, and if he is Chinese his punishment shall be inflicted either by the authority of the place where the crime was committed or, if the laws of the State require it, the guilty party shall be sent to another city or another province there to receive his punishment.

In cases of crimes, whether they be serious or minor, the Consul and the local authority may take necessary measures only against a guilty party of his own country but neither one has the right to detain or independently to judge, much less to punish, an individual who is not a subject of his Government.

Article 9

The present extent of commercial relations between the subjects of the two States and the fixing of new frontier lines render inapplicable the old rules laid down in the treaties concluded in Nerchinsk and Kiakhta and in Agreements supplementary to them; by the same token, the

relations of the frontier authorities and the rules for examining frontier matters do not correspond to the present circumstances; consequently, in place of these rules the following procedures are established:

Henceforth, besides the relations being carried on - on the eastern frontier through Urga and Kiakhta, between the civil governor of Kiakhta and the authorities at Urga, and on the western frontier between the Governor-General of Western Siberia and the Administration of Ili - there shall also be frontier relations between the military governors of the Priamur and Primorsk provinces and the Commanders-in-Chief of Heilung-chiang and Kirin and between the Frontier Commissioner of Kiakhta and the Tsargucheu (Boy-yuan), in the sense of Article 8 of the present Treaty.

On the basis of Article 2 of the Treaty of Tientsin, the above-mentioned Military-Governors and Commanders-in-Chief (Dzian-dzhungs) must observe complete equality in their relations and must carry them out exclusively in connection with matters in which their administration is directly concerned.

In case of particularly important matters, the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia is authorized to enter into written relations - either with the Supreme Council (Dzhun-tzi-chou) or with the Ministry of External Relations (Li-fan-yuan), as the principal authority in charge of relations and administration along the frontiers.

Article 10

In investigations and decisions concerning frontier affairs, either major or minor, the frontier authorities shall be guided by the rules set forth in Article 8 of the present Treaty; as to investigations concerning subjects of one or the other Empire, and punishments to be inflicted on them, they shall be carried out, as stated in the Treaty of Tientsin, according to the laws of the country to which the guilty party belongs.

In case of passage, leading away or theft of cattle across the frontier, the local authorities, immediately upon being informed and as soon as evidence is delivered to the head of the nearest outpost, shall send men to conduct a search. The cattle when found shall be restored promptly to the owner and if any are missing, monetary restitution is to be made according to the law; but in such a case the payment must not be raised to several times the value of the missing cattle (as has been the practice heretofore).

In case of the flight of a person across the frontier, at the first notification, measures shall be taken immediately to find the fugitive. The apprehended fugitive is to be turned over without delay with all of his possessions to the frontier authority. Investigation of the reasons for the flight and the trial itself shall be carried out by the nearest local authority of the country to which the fugitive belongs. Throughout the time of his stay across the frontier, from his apprehension to his return to the appropriate authorities, the fugitive is to be given necessary food and drink and, if needed, clothing; the guard accompanying

him must treat him humanely and must not indulge in arbitrary acts against him. The same applies to a fugitive about whom there has been no advance notification.

Article 11

Written communications between the superior frontier authorities of either State shall be carried out through the nearest frontier officials, to whom despatches are to be delivered under written receipts.

The Governor-General of Eastern Siberia and the Civil Governor of Kiakhta shall send their despatches to the Kiakhta Frontier Commissioner, who shall send them to the Tsargucheu (Boy-yuan); the administrators at Urga shall send their despatches to the Tsargucheu (Boy-yuan), who shall transmit them to the Kiakhta Frontier Commissioner.

The Military Governor of the Amur Province shall send his despatches through the assistant to the Commander-in-Chief (Dzian-dzhun) in the town of Aigun through whom the Commanders-in-Chief of Heilungchiang and Kirin likewise shall transmit their despatches to the Military Governor of the Amur Province.

The Military Governor of the Primorsk Province and the Commander-in-Chief of Kirin shall send their despatches through the chiefs of their frontier posts on the Ussuri and Khun-chun Rivers.

The transmittal of correspondence between the Governor-General of Western Siberia and the Main Administration of the Commander-in-Chief of Ili shall be effected through the Russian Consul in the town of Ili.

In case of a matter of particular importance requiring verbal explanations, the superior authorities of the frontiers of the two Empires may send their despatches to each other by reliable Russian officials.

Article 12

In conformity with Article 11 of the Treaty of Tientsin, letters and parcel post sent for official purposes from Kiakhta to Peking and return will leave at the following times: letter mail, once a month from each of the two points - parcel post, once every two months from Kiakhta to Peking and once every three months from Peking to Kiakhta.

Letters must arrive at their destination within no more than 20 days - parcel post, within no more than 40.

On each trip the parcel post must be composed of no more than 20 cases each weighing not more than 120 Chinese pounds or four poods.

Letter mail must depart the same day it is received; in cases of delay there shall be investigations and severe penalties.

The postillion despatched with letters and parcels, while passing through Urga, must stop in at the Russian Consulate, deliver there

letters and parcels addressed to persons residing in that city and at the same time, pick up letters and parcels addressed by them.

In the sending of parcel post, the cases in which it is packed must be accompanied by way-bills; from Kiakhta, the way-bills, with charges indicated, must be sent to Urga to the Administrator there and from Peking, likewise with charges indicated, to the Ministry of External Relations (Li-fan-yuan).

The way-bills shall indicate exactly: the date of despatch, the number of cases and their total weight. The separate weight of each case shall be written on the outside of that case, in Russian figures and with a translation into Mongolian or Chinese weight.

If the Russian merchants find it necessary for their commercial affairs to establish, at their own expense, a postal service for letters or for transport of their wares, permission shall be granted to them in order to lighten the load of the State mails. In case of the establishment of such postal communications the merchants need only notify the local authorities in advance, in order to obtain their agreement.

Article 13

Ordinary correspondence of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Supreme Council (Dzhun-tzi-chou) of the Dai-Tsing Empire, as well as that of the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia for that same Council or for the Ministry of External Relations (Li-fan-yuan) shall be sent in the usual way by post but without being limited to the fixed times of departure of the post; in the case of matters of special importance, despatches from the above-mentioned individuals may be sent with a Russian courier.

During the stay of Russian envoys at Peking, despatches of special importance may likewise be sent via Russian officials expressly named for this purpose.

Russian couriers must not be detained by anyone anywhere en route.

The courier assigned to deliver despatches must, without exception, be a Russian subject.

The sending of a courier is to be announced 24 hours in advance at Kiakhta by the Commissioner to the Tsargucheu (Boy-yuan) and at Peking by the Russian mission to the War Ministry.

Article 14

When, with the passage of time, any aspect of the stipulations regarding overland trade laid down in the present Treaty presents difficulties to one or the other Party, the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia is authorized to enter into an agreement with the frontier officials of the Dai-Tsing Empire and to draw up supplementary conditions, in conformity in all cases with the above-stated principles.

Article 12 of the Treaty of Tientsin is hereby confirmed and may not be altered.

Article 15

Having affirmed in this fashion all of the foregoing, by mutual agreement, the Plenipotentiaries of the Russian and Chinese Empires have signed with their own hands and sealed with their own seals two copies of the Russian text of the Treaty and two copies of its translation into the Chinese language and have exchanged one copy of each.

The Articles of the present Treaty have legal force from the day of this exchange between the Plenipotentiaries of each Empire and are as if they had been inserted word for word in the Treaty of Tientsin, and must be forever strictly and inviolably carried out.

After ratification by the Sovereigns of the two Empires, this Treaty will be promulgated in each of the two States for the information and guidance of those who must observe it.

Concluded and signed in the capital city of Peking, the 2nd./14th. of November, 1860 A.D., and in the 6th year of the reign of Emperor Alexander II and the 2nd day of the 10th Moon of the 10th Year of Sien-fong.

Nikolai Ignatiev
Kung