

## Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

### Series II, Volume 22

#### **An Asian Vision**

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12 June 1953

JN: Yes. On the whole if there is a big enough party which thinks in terms of office, we would welcome it because otherwise these opposition parties become totally irresponsible. They have no hope of office so they can say and do just what they like. But there is today a good opposition and a very good opposition both in Parliament and outside. We have continually to face it.

*Hodson: If then, Prime Minister, you do not see any immediate danger from communism inside India, do you see any threat to India externally, from Communist pressure and expansionism either immediately through Afghanistan, Tibet and so on, or through Communist conquest, if you like, of South East Asia?*

JN: Whatever the internal position might or might not be, I see absolutely no danger—external danger—to India, from Communist or any other source.

*Martin: What about relations with, if not danger from, Pakistan? Are you more hopeful now of patching up difficulties? You have been seeing the Prime Minister of Pakistan from time to time, I believe, recently?*

JN: Yes. Our relations have improved greatly. Our psychological approach to each other is much better. And I think that we shall gradually solve most of our problems. It may take a little time to solve all of them, but I think we are on the right path.

*Q: Has the assistance of the United Nation been considerably useful in resolving the difference between India and Pakistan?*

JN: I am afraid, not. It has not proved helpful with all the will in the world. These problems should be dealt with directly without the help of third parties.

*Clark: But Prime Minister, I think what we were getting at a moment ago about the fear...that if there is ...a truce in Korea...the Chinese may expand elsewhere, not perhaps directly with India, but there is the danger that they might expand elsewhere in South East Asia and be a threat on your flank. Do you think that there is a danger of that sort, danger of Chinese expansion down into Indo-China, Siam and say Burma?*

JN: I think that view a wrong view completely. I do not think China ever since this change over there, has had any desire to expand. They have got enough problems of their own and so far as India is concerned we have the most friendly relations with them.

*Clark: What about Korea, that seemed expansion to some of us?*

JN: Well, till the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel was crossed in Korea, there was no sign of Chinese activity. It was only after that was crossed, and China, I have no doubt, feared invasion of its own mainland. And they told us so when it was on the point of being crossed that now they are threatened all round. Remember there are plenty of people saying "let us invade China and put an end to the People's Government there." So in sheer fear, I think, they reacted and once they reacted, well, of course, they got entangled in it.

**To N. Raghavan<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> File Nos. F.12/62/NGO-52, Vols. I-VI and F. 12/64/NGO-52, MEA. Copies of this letter were sent to Secretary General and Foreign Secretary.

New Delhi  
April 19, 1953

My dear Raghavan,

I received your letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> March some time ago.<sup>2</sup> Since then much has happened on the general situation has undergone a very marked change. Among other things, the Chinese Government has again become friendly to you and to us.<sup>3</sup> In fact, they veer round very much to what we have been saying previously about Korea. That is all to the good and we need not go about saying that we told you so.

In this rapidly developing situation, we have to be wide awake all the time, to maintain friendly relations with the Chinese Government and at the same time, to keep our dignity. Perhaps, the events of the past few months have on the whole, yielded good results, The Chinese Government must appreciate that, while we continue to be friendly, we hold to our opinions also and cannot be made to change them by pressure tactics. Anyhow, we must always remember our long range policy, which is of developing friendship with China, subject always to not giving in on any matter that we consider important or vital to our interest.

Some time ago, i.e, before these recent developments, we were approached by the UK Government to cooperate with them in refusing supplies to ships going to China. We made it clear to them that we would not do so and that we would maintain our complete freedom of trade and giving supplies to ships. As a matter of fact, before this matter could come to a head, the new development took place and it was not pursued. It may not rise again, but that very incident demonstrated to the UK Government and to the US that we would follow our own policy that we

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<sup>2</sup> Raghavan had written about his continuing efforts for friendly relations with China and had surmised that though "violent attacks on Indian resolution have died down" and "they have ceased questioning" India's *bona fides*, the Chinese attitude "still continues to be cold."

<sup>3</sup> A substantive change in the Chinese attitude towards India was indicated in Chou En-lai's statement of 30 March 1953, proposing repatriation of all willing prisoners and handing over the rest to a neutral state "to ensure a just solution of the question of their repatriation", Which in essence, was akin to the Indian resolution on Korea.

intend to do, and the fact that we receive financial help for our development from America will make no difference.

As we have told you, we are prepared to allow the 1,000 tons of Chinese rice which are already in India to be sent to Tibet, subject to transport arrangements.<sup>4</sup> But, it must not be taken for granted that this is a normal procedure. This transport business gives us a lot of trouble. In regard to other goods also, we are prepared to consider what we can supply to Tibet within reason.

You say, quite rightly, that with the Chinese one has to have an infinite capacity for patience. Fortunately, unlike the U.S.A., we too have some capacity for patience and we have shown it. Your work will probably be somewhat easier now and you should take full advantage of that and try to have friendly informal talks whenever possible.

I might inform you what our rice position is much better now and we are not in terribly urgent need of it. But if we can get rice from China on reasonable terms, we will be prepared to take it for future use.

It is important for us to know, in so far as this possible, what new developments might take place in China vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. One would imagine that the pressure and influence of the Soviet Union in China would grow somewhat less.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### **Policy on Trade with China<sup>5</sup>**

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Jawaharlal Nehru: (a)<sup>6</sup> A reference was made by the UK Government to the Government of India, but this was not subsequently pressed.

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<sup>4</sup> On 12 April 1953, Raghavan had informed that Chou En-lai was anxious for friendly relations with India and had offered help in transport of various articles to Tibet via India.

<sup>5</sup> Reply to questions in the Council of States, 6 May 1953, *Parliamentary Debates (Council of States)*, Official Report, Vol. III, Nos. 43-51. Cols. 4993-4994.

(b)<sup>7</sup> There was no occasion for any answer to be sent to the UK Government on this subject, but India's policy in this matter is quite clear and has been stated previously. India was not a party to the UN Resolution of 18 May 1951 banning the supply of strategic material to China. The Government of India continue to adhere to the same policy and have not accepted any commitment restricting trade with any foreign country.

May I add that, after the answer was drafted, a formal reply on behalf of the Government of India has been sent to the UK Government.

*Govinda Redd: Do I understand that trade between India and China is going on as usual without being influenced by the UN resolution?*

JN: There has not been in the last many years much trade between India and China, and such trade as has been between India and China has been in regard to specific items being purchased by us or sold by us. We want to continue that and to add to that but anyhow not much could be done. We have not been influenced by any other consideration.

*C.G.K. Reddy: May I draw the attention to a newspaper report... about the conclusions of the McCarthy Enquiry Committee where they have also taken note of our ships under our flag carrying on trade with China?...*

JN: I do not know to which report the honourable Member is referring. I have not seen it. I understand there is something about ships under our fleet. Whose report is it?

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<sup>6</sup> Govinda Reddy enquired whether the Government of the United Kingdom had consulted the Government of India about tightening restrictions on the sea-borne trade with Chinese ports.

<sup>7</sup> He further asked about the opinion, tendered by India, if the UK Government had consulted her two or three ships under the Indian flag, as carrying on trade with China. I want if such investigation even indirectly into our affairs is considered desirable by the Government.

*C.G.K. Reddy: It is the report of the Senate Foreign Relations Enquiry Committee presided over by that famous Senator, McCarthy. He has listed*

JN: I need hardly assure the House that we attach no importance to McCarthy<sup>8</sup> or his Committee in what we might or might not do.

## **Exports to Tibet<sup>9</sup>**

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The answer you gave to the US Minister was correct. Commerce Minister, in his speech, said nothing new. He merely repeated what has been frequently said before, explaining India's policy. Our Government cannot accept any restriction of our trade or any discrimination against any country.<sup>10</sup> We have to judge each case from the point of view of our own national interest and policy.

As a matter of fact, hardly anything in the nature of strategic materials has been sent to China or Tibet. Most of these are required in the country and the export of some of them is banned.

So far as Tibet is concerned, very small quantities of ordinary goods go to Tibet from India. Latterly the quantity of these has gone down considerably. A very small quantity of iron and steel has always gone

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<sup>8</sup> Joseph R. McCarthy (1908-1957), Republican Senator from Wisconsin, 1946-57; conducted a vicious campaign against many liberals allegedly having communist sympathies, 1950-54. He was censured by the US Senate in 1954.

<sup>9</sup> Note to Foreign Secretary, R.K. Nehru, 9 May 1953. JN Collection. A copy was also sent to Secretary-General.

<sup>10</sup> The Commerce Minister, T.T. Krishnamachari, stated in the Lok Sabha on 7 May 1953 that India's trade policy was multilateral and completely non-discriminatory. "Our membership of the Commonwealth does not mean that we follow the pattern of the British commercial policy", he mentioned, and added that restrictive regulations that might be enforced on ships registered in the UK would not apply to Indian ships even though they might be registered under the UK Merchant Shipping Act.

there through Kalimpong.<sup>11</sup> We do not encourage the export of iron and steel because of our own requirements. But we do not wish to interfere with the normal trade across the Tibetan frontier.

## **China and the United Nations**<sup>12</sup>

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*.... Question: Do you think that, with the Korean truce, the prospects of China being admitted to the United Nations are much greater? Do you think your talks will lead to good results?*

Jawaharlal Nehru: I suppose so, of course.

*Q: Are all the members of the Commonwealth in favour of recognition of China?*

JN: I do not think there is very much difference of opinion among the members of the Commonwealth on that issue. There may be a difference of emphasis, but not a basic difference of opinion. The opposition, as you know, comes from other quarters. I think the best thing for us is to see the truce through and then gradually take up other problems. With a Korean truce, the prospects of China's admission must be much better. Because, it is patent to me of course, our policy has been one of recognition of China almost right from the beginning. When the United Kingdom and India recognized China within a week or ten days of each other, there were some difficulties about the British position. We were more fortunate in that matter. So our position is perfectly clear in that respect, and it does seem odd that the United Nations should function

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<sup>11</sup> As regard trade relations with Kalimpong, Krishnamachari said that the Government of India did not want to put any check. There was complaint about detention of iron and steel goods, he said, but this was due to some action by the local authorities to which Government was not committed.

<sup>12</sup> Press conference, London, 8 June 1953. AIR tapes, NMML. Also from *India News*, 13 June 1953. Extracts. For other parts of the conference, see pp. 106-107, 130, 174, 189-190, 396-399, 407 and 448-450.

without a very big country constituted of a large number of human beings. That of course raised a rather important and interesting point about the United Nations itself. There have been some arguments about it from time to time. As the UN was conceived it was meant to include practically all countries, all independent countries, whatever their ideology or viewpoint might be. Because, once you see the UN as something else, it ceases to have its universal character and becomes rather an exclusive group, however big the group might be. We think that it should be the representative of all countries.

*Q: Was there any general discussion?*

JN: General discussion where?

*Q: Was the question discussed at the Prime Ministers' Conference?*

JN: I do not know, but the particular conference you are referring to, the particular conference dealing with the Korean troops, I suppose, will rather tend to confine itself to any problems to be faced to be faced which are difficult enough. But in any other conference that the Prime Ministers, no doubt, all these questions may very well come up....

### **Faith in New China<sup>13</sup>**

#### **(page 359)**

Jawaharlal Nehru: India has no intention of assuming any leadership in international affairs—not even in Asian affairs, for that matter—and in consonance with her tradition she was always prepared to make what little contribution she could, but always in a spirit of humility. India has always been anxious to keep away from any alignment with one or the other

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<sup>13</sup> At an interview with Philipp Etter, President of the Swiss Federal Council, at Berne, 16 June 1953. File No. E-II/53/1951/55, MEA.

power blocs and this has led to the position that enabled, or permitted, her to speak on friendly terms to both sides, as and when necessary.<sup>14</sup>

*Philipp Etter<sup>15</sup> : What are Russia's intentions? Was Russia likely to start a war? What was Chinese communism?*

JN: Russia is a great geographical landmass, a country with a large population and a programme of reconstruction. I am convinced that Russia has realized that war shall not be to her advantage. She wants time for peaceful reconstruction. She is making great economic advances and she is, I feel certain, unlikely to start a conflagration which shall be materially and economically ruinous to her no less than to others. A great part of Russia and Russian economy had been destroyed in the last War and it was futile to imagine that Russia would, of her own accord, do anything that would lead to nothing but economic and material disaster for herself, which would definitely be the case if she were involved in a war.

China is, like Russia, geographically a huge country, also with a very large population and, above all, with a long history and very strong traditions of its own. It is strange that in recent years the western world, and America in particular, has repeatedly been complaining that China is, more and more, falling under the influence of the Soviet Union, and yet every step taken by America is one that cannot but drive China more and more into Soviet arms. The Korean War, for instance, has made China more and

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<sup>14</sup> Etter observed that India's place in international affairs was very different, and he was glad that there was "so much in common in the matter of foreign policy between India and Switzerland" and that the latter was proud of being associated with India as a neutral power in Korea." He wanted Nehru's views on some of the important problems of the day.

<sup>15</sup> (1891-1977); a conservative, Examining-Judge, Zug Canton, 1917; Deputy to council of States, 1930; Member, Federal Council, 1934-59; President, Swiss Confederation 1939,1942,1947 and 1953.

more into Soviet arms.<sup>16</sup> The Korean War, for instance, has made China all the more economically dependent on Russia. The East-West trade embargo likewise, is having exactly the same effect. It is strange, under the circumstances, that America should complain of what is happening in China.

I am convinced that China has a history, and China has traditions of its own, which cannot be wiped away easily, at any rate, and the Chinese are certain to stand out and assert themselves. It must always be remembered that even the very revolution in China had been undertaken by Mao Tse-tung against the specific advice of Stalin. The Communist revolution in China was of a different type. It was an agrarian movement, an agrarian communism. That alone substantially distinguished Chinese communism from Soviet communism. Subsequent world events have certainly compelled China to move nearer and nearer towards Soviet communism, but I have no doubt that Chinese tradition and Chinese history shall assert themselves, in time to come, given the opportunity to do so.<sup>17</sup>

### **Recognition to People's Republic of China<sup>18</sup>**

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... In regard to China, we recognized the new Government of China, although several great Powers did not. I think that the non-recognition of China, of the People's Government of China, by the United Nations and some great Powers has been one of the major sources of trouble and war

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<sup>16</sup> Reporting his conversation with Nehru, Paul Hoffman wrote to Dulles on 28 April : "I gathered the impression that he felt that the Russian strategy for the past few years has been directed toward keeping China out of the UN on the theory that China would thus be left without friends and would become more and more dependent upon Moscow."

<sup>17</sup> Etter thanked Nehru for giving him an "opportunity of a discussion on matters of such great importance.

<sup>18</sup> Press Conference, Cairo, 25 June 1953, Jawaharlal Nehru Press Conferences, 1953, Information Service of India, New Delhi, 1954, pp. 18-36. Extracts. For other parts of the conference see pp. 79-83, 416-418, 470-472 and 526.

in the last few years. Because recognition or non-recognition does not, unless it is some unimportant matter, put an end to an obvious fact. Now, can anyone challenge the fact about China, that China is a fact, a very major fact? It may be, if you like, an undesirable fact in the minds of many. But it is fact. To shut your eyes to it does not make it cease to be a fact. It is an obvious thing. In fact, it is not only a fact, but it is a great Power, developing into it. And it is highly unlikely that anything else that is going to happen is going to weaken it. Therefore, it become totally unrealistic not to recognize a fact, dealing with a fact otherwise than not recognizing it. Shutting your eyes to it does not help.

The question of Israel, of course, is different. But as I said, once we applied that policy to China and argued about it in the UN and with other countries it become completely illogical for us not to apply it to Israel in so far as recognition went. What our other relations may be is another matter...

### **Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon**<sup>19</sup>

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Your telegram 127, dated April 12. In my telegram 21705,<sup>20</sup> first paragraph represents view communicated by US to us. But I generally agree that, at present stage, it is better for negotiations to be carried on at Panmunjon and not through agency of UN, where neither Chinese nor North Koreans are represented.

2. We have given no assurance to US and we do not propose to make any commitments to them or to China.

3. Raghavan had long conference with Chou En-lai.<sup>21</sup> This was friendly and, for first time after considerable period, Chou En-lai appeared anxious

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<sup>19</sup> New Delhi, 13 April 1953. File Nos. F-12/62/NGO-52, Vols.I-VI and F-12/64/NGO-52 MEA.

<sup>20</sup> See *ante*, pp. 422-423.

<sup>21</sup> On 12 April 1953.

for friendly relations and for some help in transport of various articles *via* India to Tibet.<sup>22</sup>

4. Regarding Korea, Raghavan told him that I had welcomed Chou En-lai's statement and hoped that it would lead to peace. This apparently pleased Chou En-lai and he expressed his gratitude.

5. Chou En-lai referred to Nam Il's letter to Harrison, dated 9<sup>th</sup> April, and wanted its transmission immediately to me. Further, he wanted my views and comments in regard to it.

6. I am replying that I welcome approach in Nam Il's letter and think that negotiations should be resumed at Panmunjon on that basis. But, further clarifications are obviously necessary. It is not clear what the function of neutral power would be. Would PsOW, who are not repatriated, be sent to neutral country? Would there be any timetable for various processes? There is also the question of final residue of PsOW who refused repatriation. But I would rather not raise this at this state, as that would create difficulties.

7. I have enquired whether it is possible to have more than one neutral in charge of PsOW power.

8. For your information, I might add that I would be reluctant to entangle India as such neutral power

9. I would not like India at this stage to become an intermediary between US and China. This position is always embarrassing and creates misunderstandings. If, however, US definitely ask us to help in obtaining clarifications to Nam Il's offer, we shall do so through Chinese Government, but suggestion must come from them and not from us. I think that it is far better for representatives of rival parties at Panmunjon to deal with this matter directly.

10. I suggest that you might informally talk to US and UK Representatives in UN and tell them that we think that Nam Il's offer affords substantial basis for negotiations and we hope, therefore, that these negotiations will be resumed at Panmunjon. Any clarifications necessary can be obtained

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<sup>22</sup> On 19 April Nehru wrote to Raghavan that India was prepared to send 1000 tons of Chinese rice to Tibet subject to transport arrangements.

there. Question of ceasefire should not be raised by you. I am asking our Ambassador in Washington to approach State Department informally in the same manner.

11. It is clear that Chinese Government would like India to help in bringing about early resumption of negotiation at Panmunjon. We are prepared to help, but we must move cautiously and not get entangled in any way by commitments. Also, it is better for us not to raise this matter in UN, which apparently neither side desires.

12. Please do not mention to anyone that I have received any message from Chou En-lai.

**To V.K. Krishna Menon<sup>23</sup>**

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New Delhi

May 9, 1953

My dear Krishna,

I have received in recent days four airgraphs from you.<sup>24</sup> The latest two, which have just come, are dated the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> May.<sup>25</sup> Thank you for

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<sup>23</sup> V.K. Krishna Menon Papers, NMML.

<sup>24</sup> Of 30 April and, 3, 6 and 7 May 1953. In his first two airgraphs, Menon had apprised Nehru of the thinking in the UN and US circles regarding armistice in Korea. The suspicion in the US seemed that the Soviet "peace offensive" was a ploy to disunite the Allies. Menon felt that the US was not ready for an armistice and was "nervous and ill prepared for the sequel, both at home and abroad", while at the UN the consensus was in favour of an end to the Korean war. According to Menon, left to himself, Dulles would make withdrawal of Ho Chi-minh's forces from Laos a condition for Korean settlement. Menon feared that the US would object to the transportation of POWs to distant countries, while the Chinese wanted such isolation, away from US vigilance, in order to persuade the reluctant POWs to return home.

<sup>25</sup> In his airgraphs of 6 and 7 May Menon informed Nehru about his conversations with Selwyn Lloyd and Attlee on 5 May. While Lloyd was opposed to Secretary Dulles' proposals for a blockade, limited nuclear war and all help to Chiang Kai-shek, he agreed with the US about the impracticability of transporting large number of prisoners from Korea as demanded by China. Menon impressed upon Lloyd that under no circumstances

sending me these appraisals of the situation and your accounts of talks with Selwyn Lloyd and Attlee.

Since you wrote, further developments have taken place and Chou En-lai has come out with another proposal, which is exceedingly like our own resolution in the UN. Indeed it might be said to be practically what our resolution originally was before some amendments were introduced into it. In any event, it is a very close approximation, and it is very clear that China is going all out for a settlement.

This new proposal of Chou En-lai was communicated to our representative who was sent for the purpose. As a matter of fact, Raghavan was not in Peking as he had gone to Shanghai. So, his No.2, Goburdhan was sent for and Chou En-lai had a long talk with him which was very friendly and appreciative of India's help. He appealed, in the name of peace and friendship, for India's further help in reaching a peaceful settlement. He made it clear that this was the utmost he could do, and if even this failed there was no alternative but to carry on the war. But he was anxious to end it.

On receipt of this message, which I acknowledged appropriately, I sent telegrams to our Missions in Washington, London, Moscow, Paris, Ottawa, Cairo and Rangoon, suggesting that our views might be conveyed to the Governments concerned. These views were to the effect that we thought these proposals very worthy of acceptance as a basis for settlement, though minor variations might no doubt be made. In fact, we pointed out that it was difficult to reject something which so near the UN Resolution. I have had replies from London, Paris, Cairo and Rangoon, generally appreciating our position and hoping that this will lead to a settlement. In Cairo, the Egyptian Government has approached the UK and USA Governments to this effect and is also moving the Arab League, The Burmese Government has approached the UK and USA Government.

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the US should be allowed to deadlock the negotiations on Korea. Regarding his talks with Attlee, Menon reported that Attlee did not hide his concern about US foreign policy and on the whole agreed that a solution to Korean problem could only be found on the lines suggested by India in its resolution of December 1952.

It is clear that the only stumbling block at present is the USA. After their initial reaction against the Chinese proposals, they are a little more cautious, partly no doubt because of pressure from other countries. Adlai Stevenson is touring about India and will be in Delhi in two or three days time. Dulles is coming here on the 20<sup>th</sup> or thereabouts. He is difficult to talk to, because his outlook is frightfully bigoted and narrow. Adlai Stevenson is more amenable to reasonable talk.

The other day in Parliament here, it was stated on our behalf that we did not consider ourselves bound by any restrictions imposed on trade with China, including Tibet. As a matter of fact, there was very little trade with China, including Tibet. As a matter of fact, there was very little trade for a variety of reasons. But we judge of this trade from the point of view of our own policy and interests. This statement has apparently not pleased the US much.

I suppose you have met Indira and are acquainted with the general programme drawn up for my stay in London.

Yours affectionately,  
Jawaharlal