

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 25

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Hurdles in Building a New India¹

26 March 1954

Well, communalism must not be allowed to creep in. If it were out in the open, we could combat it. But I see that it is taking all sorts of strange forms, and hides behind a curtain to deceive the innocent people who are easily lured into its snare. My complaint is that often it is the newspapers in this State I shall not name them, which are responsible for spreading communalism. They proclaim their nationalism very loudly but are in fact saturated with communalism and do great harm to India. So you must beware of this. Different kinds of people inhabit this country. There is great diversity among the people living in the North, near the borders, or in Kashmir or Ladakh or Assam, near Tibet and Burma, and the people in the South, in Malabar, etc. The climate is wholly different. In some area, there is snow and it is bitterly cold and in the other, it is always hot. There is difference in dress, food, living habits, etc... and all of it together goes into the making of this country. The grandeur of this country lies in its diversity but it will become dangerous if it is not securely bound by unity. So we must preserve both the diversity and the unity of the country. If anyone were to try to pass a law thd't everybody, whether he lives in Lucknow or Kanpur or

¹ The States Reorganization Commission was constituted under the Home Ministry on 29 December 1953 with S. Fazl Ali as Chairman, H.N. Kunzru and K.M. Panikkar as members and P.C. Chaudhuri as secretary, to investigate the problem of states reorganization. the historical background, the existing situation and the bearing of all Important and relevant factors thereon.

elsewhere, should dress and live alike, it will not be a sign of wisdom because each place is distinctive. Further away, you have completely different places like Ladakh, Assam, the Lushai mountains, Aizawl, Manipur, Tripura etc., which are all beautiful gems in the body politic of India. But just because they are different, we do not have the right to say that we are part of India or that they are not. This is what we seem to feel, especially because those areas are backward. What right do any of us have to impose our will forcibly on anyone else?

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People's Cooperation in Progress

10 April 1954

Therefore all of you have a place in the world today in the capacity of Indians and not as the citizens of Saurashtra or Gujarat, Maharashtra, Bengal, Punjab, Andhra, Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan. Please remember this. It is not a bad thing to serve one's province, its special culture and literature and traditions, etc. You must preserve the heritage of Saurashtra. It is not necessary that there should be complete uniformity in the country. The beauty of India lies in her diversity. You may not have seen her different forms. I wander all over the country from the Himalayas in the north to the south and to the borders of Tibet and Burma and see the myriad forms of India. The more I see, the more amazed I feel, not...

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To B.C. Roy²

26th March 1954

² File No. 2(655y53.PMS.

My dear Bidhan,

Some time ago, on the 4th March, you wrote to me and sent me a copy of a letter which you had addressed to Gutidevia.³ I think I have already told you, and you yourself spoke to the Maharajkumar of Sikkim,⁴ about going to Kancherjunga. As for photographs of Everest and Kanchenjunga, I should not like to encourage these very much. If foreigners do it, objections are taken by the Chinese Government as they are bound to fly over the Tibetan territory. It is a risky business, and unless it is very necessary, I do not want to take that risk with our young men at present. There have unfortunately been a number of accidents resulting in the death of some of our fine pilots.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

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Border Areas of Uttar Pradesh⁵

20 February, 1954

The development of the area in UP on this side of the Tibet border has been important for us. It has become an even more important matter now for a variety of reasons. Various recommendations have been made from time to time, but evidently we do not get moving. The matter, I understand, rests somewhere between the Home Ministry and the External Affairs Ministry. The Planning Commission is also apparently concerned. Defence and Transport Ministries are no doubt also

³ Y.D. Gundevia. India's Ambassador at Berne.

⁴ Palden Thondup Namgyal (b. 1923); President, Sikkim State Council, 1943-49; President. Mahabodhi Society of India, 1953; succeeded Maharaja Tashi Namgyal as Chogyal of Sikkim, 1963-75; deposed after annexation of Sikkim to India in April 1975.

⁵ Note of the Secretary General and the Foreign Secretary, 20 February 1951. File No. 17(96)48-PMS.

interested.

2. We must get this moving. I have just received a letter from the Chief Minister of UP⁶ together with a comprehensive scheme for this area I presume the Planning Commission is considering this scheme. I am particularly interested in the roads, because without the roads nothing else can really be done. I suggest that immediate steps be taken to consider, firstly, the construction of roads in this area, and secondly, the several recommendations,

3. I suggest that SG might take this matter in hand and get in touch with the Ministries concerned as well as the Planning Commission.

4. I am sending the papers sent to me by the Chief Minister of UP.

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Issues in Foreign Policy

23 March 1954

I find that there are a number of cut motions also relating to tribal affairs. The House will remember that sometime back there was a tragedy there, not very far from the Tibet border, when a platoon of ours the Assam Rules, was attacked and ambushed and a number of people were suddenly killed.⁷ That was a kind of thing which sometimes occurred in pre-independence days when the British ruled this country, and they had a way of dealing with them -- a heavy way which involved much destruction of life and property. We were put in a difficulty as to

⁶ G.B. Pant on 17 February wrote to Nehru drawing his attention to the development of Indo-Tibet border area, particularly the means of communication there. The matter was taken up with the Central Home Ministry in August 1951 and proposals in regard to development schemes as well as for construction of roads in Tibetan border areas were sent to MHA and MEA and a comprehensive scheme was sent to the Planning Commission by the UP Government.

⁷ See Selected Works (second series), Vol., 24, pp.307.310.

how to deal with this matter, and the immediate reaction was that we must do something quickly to get back the persons who were held as hostages, and, well, to punish the guilty. The place was very difficult to get at. Even after sending troops by air. it was about three weeks march to the exact spot. Anyhow, we decided on adopting not the old way, but avoiding destruction as far as possible and making a friendly-a firm and friendly approach. As a result of this, this matter was settled. I think, in a very happy way. Those who were dead, of course were dead, we could not get them back. We got back the hostages doing very little damage to anybody, and those simple folk who had, in a moment of excitement or whatever it was, misbehaved, realised that we meant well with them. They came, surrendered the arms they had taken and the whole thing was settled in a friendly way. and we are receiving ~ good deal of cooperation there from these people, and it has become one of our Partly Administered Areas now. I should like to congratulate those in charge of our North East Frontier Agency, who were responsible for this- for the very tactful and wise way in which they handled the situation there.

Sometime ago I made a statement about the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and our Custodial Force in Korea.⁸ There is nothing more to be said about it. I promised then to place the reports- the original reports- of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission on the Table of the House. I have not done so, I am sorry, because they have not come out of the press yet. They are very big reports, running into hundreds and hundreds of pages, and the) are taking some time, and I hope that within a week or ten days I shall place those original reports here for members to refer to them if they so wish.

This chapter of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and Custodial Force is over so far as we are concerned. That, of course, does

⁸ See ante, pp. 366-372.

not mean that the Korean problem is over. It is very much alive. But the only part of that Custodial Force business that is not over in a sense is that we have brought over here 88 prisoners of war, or ex-prisoners of war, who, for the present, are with us. Out of these 88, about 30 have expressed a desire to stay on in India, and there are others who want to go to other countries. For the moment we are holding all these people, in a sense on behalf of the United Nations, but, of course, it is for us to decide whether those 30 or any other who want to stay here should be given facilities to do so or not. Probably, we shall allow them to stay here temporarily. That is to say, we cannot—we do not propose and we cannot in law—make them citizens of India, but if they have nowhere else to go to, we can hardly throw them out either. So, we intend giving them some papers of residence here which can be renewed periodically, -- that is, it is for the Government then to keep them or not to keep them in future, and to provide, where possible, some occupation for them.

Another matter in which the House is interested is the negotiations that are going on in Peking in regard to Tibet. They have lengthened out rather more than we thought, not because of any inherent difficulty in the problems we are facing, but simply because there are so many details, and each detail takes a long time. I hope that within maybe a few days or maybe a fortnight these discussions might possibly end satisfactorily.⁹

Now, these are the - if I may say so - secondary issues, with which we have been dealing. The major world issues, of course, are not entirely of our seeking or making, and we play a very distant part in them.

Nevertheless, it is these world issues that govern the scene, as the House well knows, and in the course of a month or so, there is going to be a conference in Geneva¹⁰ where some of these big issues, both of

⁹ See post, pp. 468-69.

¹⁰ On 26 April 1954.

Europe and the Far East, are supposed to be discussed. In this Conference, the one further step that has been taken-and it is a good step -- that for the first time, the People's Government of China will be represented there together with certain other great powers. It is far better that governments should face each other and discuss these matters, than to try to do so through other intermediaries, or ignore each other.

During the last two or three years, the absence of the recognition of the Chinese People's Government by some great powers and by the United Nations has brought about such an unrealistic state of affairs that it has been hardly possible to deal with the question directly. As I have often stated, it was not a question of any person or any government liking or disliking any other government, but of recognising facts, as they were. Now it is manifestly something on the verge of absurdity for anyone to say-I have nothing against that particular gentleman who is supposed to represent China in the United Nations today, he is an able person-that he represents China; it is obviously a little absurd, quite absurd, for he does not. At the most one can say that he represents the Government of Formosa. But to say that this person represents this great country of China is so wide of the mark that any discussion based on that must fail. And that has been our misfortune in world affairs that realities, because they were not liked, have been ignored.

I do not know what is going to happen at Geneva, So far as we are concerned we have no desire whatever to appear at the scene in Geneva, to participate in these conferences. It is only when we feel that we can really do some good, that we wish to undertake any burden, for the rest, we would rather avoid these burdens.

In this House, sometime ago, I mentioned Indo-China. Indo-China has been, for the last six years nearly, a scene of warfare of a kind of civil war aided by other countries.

Now one fact we must remember when we think of Indo-China

Principles of Foreign Policy

24 March 1954

Yesterday some of our friends here raised the subject of our borders, particularly on the Tibet side, what is known as the McMahon Line. I do not know why they had this sudden doubt because the McMahon Line constitutes India's border at the moment on which we have a number of established check posts. And as far as we are concerned it is our border and will continue to be so. There is no dispute with any other country over this, nor are we about to raise any problem. Therefore it makes no sense for these doubts to be voiced.

My friend Sharmaji has raised an objection in connection with the border question,¹¹ that the new step taken by the North East Frontier Agency and the separate cadre created by the officers is not to his liking. I regret that he does not like it. But we have done this after much deliberation and I am convinced that we must follow this path and if necessary, extend it further. What is the basic question? Perhaps the greatest danger is that of the segregation of Assam. I do not want Assam to be segregated. I want that all parts of India should come closer together and coexist in harmony. But the most important thing is to see that the people of Assam progress willingly.

The parts which are on the borders have come into the Indian Union somewhat late and to some extent not through the right manner, I mean during British rule. Our freedom movement did not make much of an impact on areas which were remote and difficult of access. We have to co-opt them into the mainstream now. The most important part of it is to make them feel that they are part of India and that their future lies

¹¹ Debeswar Sarmah. Congress member from Jorhat, Assam said that the setting up of a separate cadre for NEFA virtually meant segregation of the people of this region from plains people and this would be a grievous error as it would prevent Assam from playing her rightful and proper part in development of the region.

marching forward hand in hand with the rest of the country. Once they are convinced about this, then we can cement relations further. If they feel at the beginning that we are trying to force a relationship down their throats, then it will be counterproductive.

I hear that my colleague the Deputy Minister read out a few lines from an article that I had written for an officer when I had visited the borders a year and a half ago. It had been marked secret,¹² although there is nothing really secret about it. But since some part of it has been read out, I have advised that the entire article be placed on the Table of the House so that those who are interested can read it. It will be put in the Parliament Library or on the Table of the House so that our proposed plan for dealing with the North East becomes clear. This policy is not to keep Assam segregated. We want it to join the mainstream. At the same time we do not want the people in the North East to feel that anything is being thrust upon them. This is a very delicate problem. It is not something that can be resolved quickly. It will take at least a decade or two to draw the tribes of this region towards us.

There is often the question of language. There are many languages in the North East -- very ten or twenty villages speak a different language. Yet we are giving them primary education in their own languages. They learn other languages also. But you must understand where their difficulty lies. A Khasi came to me and said, "It is all very well that you have made arrangements for providing primary education in our own languages. We like it. But it is equally important for us to learn Assamese in its own script." At the moment the dialects in the North East are written in the Roman script, a practice started by the missionaries. He said it was equally important for them to learn Hindi in the Nagari script and to learn English too. So we have to teach four

¹² See *Selected Works* (second series), Vol.20, pp.160-172. Anil K. Chanda, the Deputy Minister of External Affairs, on 24 March had read out some portions of the note written by Nehru to explain the Government's attitude to the tribal people.

languages and three scripts, which cast quite a heavy burden on the poor students. They are tribals and I think their protest was legitimate. They wanted that they should be allowed to learn Assamese in the Nagari script which would reduce the load somewhat. It seemed quite reasonable to me. But as you know we have to tread carefully in these matters because it could have an adverse effect on the people.

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India and the International situation

15 May 1954

The next thing, an event-and a very important event-that I would like to draw the attention of the House to, is the Agreement between India and China in regard to Tibet.¹³ That Agreement deals with a large number of problems, each one of them perhaps not very important in itself but important from the point of view of our trade, our pilgrim traffic, our trade posts, our communications there, and the rest. It took a considerable time to arrive at this Agreement not because of any major conflict or difficulty, but because the number of small points were so many and had to be discussed in detail. The major thing about this Agreement to which I would like again to draw the attention of the House is the preamble **to** that Agreement. I shall read that preamble. It states:

The principles and considerations which govern our mutual relations and the approach of the two countries to each other are as follows:

- (i) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty;
- (ii) mutual non-aggression;
- (iii) mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs;

¹³ See post, p. 468, fn 2.

(iv) equality and mutual benefit; and

(v) peaceful coexistence.

These principles not only indicate the policy that we pursue in regard to these matters not only with China but with any neighbour country, or for the matter of that, any other country, but it is also a statement of wholesome principles, and I imagine that if these principles were adopted in the relations of various countries with each other, a great deal of the trouble of the present day world would probably disappear. It is a matter of importance to us, of course, as well as, I am sure, to China that these two countries, which have now almost about 1800 miles of frontier, should live in terms of peace and friendliness and should respect each other's sovereignty and integrity, should agree not to interfere with each other in any way and, in fact, though now it is formally stated as such, but practically speaking, not committing aggression on each other. By this agreement, we ensure to a very large extent peace in a certain area of Asia. I would earnestly wish that this area of peace could be spread over the rest of Asia and indeed over the rest of the world.

There has been a great deal of talk of collective security, Sometimes of preparations for collective war or collective war-preparedness collective security, good as it is and essential to aim at, assumes the garb rather of preparation for collective war. I submit that it would be a healthy approach to this problem if it was that of collective peace. Therefore, when we have talked sometimes of an area of peace in Asia especially, it has been in this context of collective peace, with no element of aggression against any country and with an idea of not only helping in the preservation of the peace of the world but, in any event, preserving peace in that area. Therefore, I should like the House to consider these wider implications of this agreement between India and China.

So far as Tibet is concerned. it is a recognition of the existing situation there. In fact, that situation had been recognised by us two or three

years ago. Some criticism has been made that this is a recognition of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. Apart from that fact, I am not aware of any time during the last few hundred years when Chinese sovereignty or if you like suzerainty was challenged by any outside country and all during this period whether China was weak or strong and whatever the Government of China was, China always maintained this claim to the sovereignty over Tibet. It is true that occasionally when China was weak, this sovereignty was not exercised in any large measure. When China was strong, it was exercised. Always there was a large measure of autonomy of Tibet. so that there was no great change in the theoretical approach to the Tibetan problem from the Chinese side. It has been throughout the last 200 or 300 years the same. The only country that had more intimate relations with Tibet was India, that is to say, British India in those days. Even then, when it was British policy to have some measure of influence over Tibet, even then they never denied the fact of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, although in practice it was hardly exercised and they laid stress on Tibetan autonomy. Recent events made some other changes, factual changes because a strong Chinese State was against the practical evidence of exercising that sovereignty. So that what we have done in this agreement is not to recognise any new thing, but merely to repeat what we have said previously, and what, in fact, inevitably follows from the circumstances, both historical and practical today. The real importance, repeat, of this agreement is because of its wider implications in regard to non aggression. recognition of each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and non-interference with each other, external, internal or any other like interference.

The House will remember that the Prime Minister of China, Mr Chou En-18i ` sent a message to me on the conclusion of this agreement, a

friendly cordial message which I heartily reciprocated.¹⁴

At the present moment, there is going on in Geneva a very important conference, chiefly concerned with the Korean problem and with Indo-China. From day to day we see messages about various proposals made on either side and sometimes the two approaches seem to be diametrically opposite. And yet the mere fact, first of all, of this conference meeting in Geneva is important. That is why on the last occasion when I spoke after the Berlin Conference I laid stress on the importance of the coming Geneva Conference. Also at that time, I made suggestion that there might be a ceasefire in Indo-China.¹⁵

That suggestion was welcomed in many quarters, but nothing was done about it, at any rate, it produced no effect. Looking back over these few months, a feeling of regret comes that perhaps if a ceasefire had been thought of in more urgent terms at that time much suffering and killing would have been avoided and the position that is being faced today would have been infinitely easier and better; and the tragic and heroic episode of Dien Bien Phu¹⁶ might have been very different.

Anyhow, the House will see that today what we said at that time and what others said too, that is, about ceasefire, has become one of the urgent matters of consideration for the Geneva Conference. Everybody agrees now that there must be a ceasefire, and the question is only how it is to be brought about: Right at the beginning there were some procedural difficulties in Geneva, but they were settled satisfactorily. That was a good and auspicious beginning; because we must remember that the countries meeting there are full of strong feelings against each other. They do not want to give in to the other party in the slightest, in argument or otherwise. And, therefore, this procedural beginning which was settled so satisfactorily was a good omen.

¹⁴ Not printed.

¹⁵ See post, p. 437.

¹⁶ See post, p. 477, fn. 7.

In Geneva today the question of war and peace, -world war and peace - hangs in the balance. I do not mean to say that war will suddenly descend upon us, not that, I do not think it will. Nevertheless, whether as a result of the Geneva Conference many steps forward are taken towards peace, or the present stalemate continues or worsens, is important. It is important for all the countries of the world and it is natural that the great powers are deeply interested in this matter. But let it be remembered that both these major questions that are being considered in Geneva, that is, Korea and Indo-China, are Asian questions. Both the countries are in Asia, and whether we are small powers or great, whether we have great military or other potential or not, naturally as countries of Asia we are intimately concerned with what happens in Korea and Indo-China. Indeed, we are even more intimately concerned-if I may say so-because of our geographical proximity with Indo-China. It has been the misfortune of Asia during the past some hundreds of years, not only to have colonial regimes, but to be often the theatre of war for others and by others. Therefore, if we wish that this business of warfare in Asia should cease, and more especially the business of others carrying on warfare for their own purposes in Asia should cease, it is not an illegitimate desire on our part. As I said on a previous occasion, peace for us, countries of Asia, who have newly emerged into freedom is not merely a pious hope, but an emergent necessity. In a sense the fate of Asia depends a good deal on what happens in Indo-China or Korea.

Now, recently I attended a Conference of five South East Asian Prime Ministers at Colombo¹⁷ and long reports have appeared about this Conference and a statement to which the five Prime Ministers agreed to then.¹⁸ This Conference was not a formal conference, with a formal agenda and formal resolutions at the end of it. Such conferences are

¹⁷ See post, p. 423, fn. 2.

¹⁸ See post, p. 434, fn. 3.

normally held on an informal basis, more so, this conference, which was the first of its kind. And I think, this fact has to be remembered, that of the uniqueness of this Conference. It was for the first time, in a sense, in history, that representatives, the Prime Ministers of these five countries met together to discuss common problems. Quite inevitably, there were somewhat different approaches to some of the problems and different suggestions were made in regard to them. Yet, the remarkable thing is that in spite of those different approaches, in spite of, sometimes, in the case of some countries certain entanglements, which kept them back, nevertheless, we had the statement, this unanimous statement issued by those five countries referring to a wide field of public affairs, more especially concerning Asia. It shows that sometimes, whatever differences there may be between us, the countries of Asia, there is a vast common ground in regard to which we think alike, and that is an important factor.

Now, in this Colombo Conference many questions were discussed. I should like to read out-if I may-a part of the joint statement issued after the Colombo Conference. It has, of course, been published in the press and honourable Members know it. Nevertheless, I should like to draw the attention of honourable Members again to this.

The Prime Ministers reviewed the situation in respect of Indo-China where a long and tragic war threatens the establishments of the freedom and independence of the people of Indo-China as well as the security and peace of Asia and the world as a whole. They welcome the earnest attempts being made at Geneva to find a solution to the problem of Indo-China by negotiations, and hope that the deliberations of the Geneva Conference would bring about a speedy termination of the conflict and restoration of peace in Indo-China. They consider that the solution of the problem of Indo-China required agreement and a ceasefire should be reached without delay. The Prime Ministers feel that the solution of the problem require direct negotiations between the

parties principally concerned, namely, France, three associated States of Indo-China and Viet Minh as well as other parties invited by agreement. The success of such direct negotiations will be greatly helped by an agreement on the part of the countries concerned, particularly, China, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, on the steps necessary to prevent a recurrence and resumption of hostilities. The Prime Ministers contemplate that this negotiating group would report to the Geneva Conference the final decision. They propose that France should declare at the Geneva Conference that she is irrevocably committed to the complete independence of Indo-China. In order that the good offices and the machinery of the United Nations might be utilised for the furtherance of the proposals of the Geneva Conference and implementation of the decision on Indo-China, the Prime Ministers were of the opinion that the Conference should keep the United Nations informed of the progress of its deliberations on Indo-China.

This is more or less a summary of what we have decided. It said something-the House will remember-about colonialism and racialism, about non interference by other countries. It has expressed its opinion strongly about any interference -- external or internal, communist or anti-communist, in fact any type of interference in other countries. That of course, has been the policy or the feeling of most countries; no country likes -- interference of any type. Therefore, it was as well that this fact was clearly stated. Without meaning any disrespect to the great countries of the world, I would like to point out the fact that is well known, that we have today not only two great groups hostile to each other, but what may be called, two crusading spirits trying to undermine each other. It is, if I may use the word, a kind of *Dharm Yudh* going on between the two....

Whatever the virtues of the *Dharm Yudh* might be, somehow other countries unfortunately get entangled, and are bound to get entangled if

matters go worse. It has been our desire, both for ourselves as well as for the sake of the world because of the wider aspect of the problem, to keep apart from this conflict.

Therefore, this declaration is of great importance. The House will see that this declaration fits in exactly with the preamble to the Sino-Indian Agreement that I read a little while ago. In that Agreement, therefore we had in mind more or less the same approach of non-interference as we have mentioned in this Ceylon statement.

In this statement also, the Colombo statement, there is reference to Tunisia and Morocco. Why, it may be asked, were Tunisia and Morocco specially mentioned, when there are many other areas of colonial control. You can hardly make a list of them. But the fact of the matter is that Tunisia and Morocco are not colonies in the real sense of the word, They are both, or they are both supposed to be, sovereign countries in alliance. In effect, it is perfectly true that their sovereignty is non-existent and has been gradually pushed aside and colonial conditions have been produced there. But in law and in fact the position in Tunisia and Morocco is different from the normal colony. Actually the conditions are much the same. But this was one of the reasons why we wanted to mention Tunisia and Morocco separately, because colonies included all colonial territories, and these two places were not directly colonies in that sense.

One thing else we mentioned in the statement, about the possibility of having an Asian-African Conference.² This was a proposal made by the Prime

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India and the International Situation

18 May 1954

So, I want you to appreciate how complex the world has become today.

We have to unravel these knots. If we isolate ourselves or merely criticize others, it will benefit no one. To look for culprits or someone to blame is futile. What we must strive for is how to unravel these knots. There is no doubt about it that they will be unravelled. Sometimes things become stagnant and the situation becomes knotty. Then it becomes necessary to unravel that knot, either by peaceful means or through violence, by fire and storm and people are carried away in the turbulence. Therefore, we are faced with the problem of unravelling these knotty problems. We cannot help anyone by isolating ourselves. Therefore our effort should be to bring some sense of calm and normalcy not arrogantly but softly, and gently. into an atmosphere which is surcharged with fear and anger. All this complicates matters further and calm thinking becomes difficult. I have tried to outline what we need to do in the case of Korea and Indo-China.

Recently we have reached an agreement with China which has not been approved by several of our members. They feel that we have shown weakness and we have made a mistake in accepting China's suzerainty over Tibet.¹⁹ I would like to go into the whole history of this issue step by step whenever an opportunity arises. In my opinion since Independence, we have not taken a step which has been more appropriate and sensible than this. I have no doubts on this score. We have to weigh things in the balance, before we reach a decision. Sometimes we have to compromise on the minuses because the pluses outweigh the minuses. This often happens in foreign affairs. But I have no doubts over the steps we have taken over the Chinese issue. I do not agree that we have made any mistake. That does not mean that I am in agreement with *everything that China has done*, But the relationship that we have established is right from every point of view. I believe that we have been right no matter how you view it. I feel that it has been

¹⁹ Kripalani and Satya Narayan Sinha expressed this opinion.

the right step for India, for Asia and for the world as well. I do not think that something should be criticized without understanding all the nuances of the issue. There has been a revolution which has had a fall out, whether we like it or not. You may not wish to see what is plain as your nose, you may want to blindfold yourselves. But that will not make it go away. People feel that we have had a long standing relationship with Tibet going back thousands of years. Nobody denies that. There is no doubt about it. As you know, our forces were stationed in Tibet, either as an independent country or under China's suzerainty. Now is it proper that the forces of another country be stationed in another independent country? What did the three hundred odd strong force symbolize? What right did India have to keep its forces stationed on alien territory, whether it was independent or a part of China? That was a symbol of British rule. Fifty years ago, the British empire in the time of Lord Curzon had become expansionist and entered into all kinds of arrangements. Now it is impossible for us to continue the arrangements entered into by the British. We do not need to continue to station our forces in Yangtze or Gangtok. Neither militarily nor intellectually does this make any sense. When the forces had been stationed there initially, the agreement had stipulated that they will continue to be there until the indigenous government could make its own arrangements. The agreement also says that we shall continue until we are able to make arrangements for the defence of their roads. In short we were to stay there until they asked us to go and said they could take care of their own defence. They will now look after the installations that we had made. All these things were done as a dominant power-claiming hegemony over another country would do. We could not continue such arrangements. If we had not withdrawn voluntarily, we would have been forced to do so. There is no doubt about that.

I will not go into the history of Tibet's relations with China. It goes back into a hoary past. The treaties and maps that Dr Satya Narayan Sinha

has referred to all belong to the British imperialist period.²⁰ How can we continue to accept them at a time when a great revolution has taken place in China? Whether we like it or not, it has had an impact on our minds. It has been the greatest event in history since World War II. This great upheaval in a country like China where for the first time in a few hundred years of its history it has a strong central Government is a momentous occurrence for Asia and the world.

There is Korea, Indo-China-let us leave aside Indo-China. That war began before the Chinese revolution. Let me tell you that the problems in Korea and Indo-China may not have started if a great mistake had not been made initially of some great powers not accepting the People's Republic of China and the revolution that had taken place there, closing their eyes to reality. They refused to let China into the United Nations. It was indeed strange as though their refusal to accept China would have made it disappear. All the ills of this region, of Asia, during the last six years have arisen because of the refusal of the great powers to accept China.

I referred to the Colombo Conference three days ago and the decision which was taken, but forgot to draw your attention to the fact that it was unanimously decided to bring China into the United Nations. Even that is not quite correct. China is not a new country to be brought into the United Nation. China has always been there, the question now is which is the real China. This is what was discussed in Colombo. I will let you into a secret - I hope nobody will mind if I say that the suggestion that People's Republic of China be accepted was made by me, not merely because I wanted the issue of Indo-China be taken up or that there may be no obstacles in the path of resolving the issue. I even said that we need not take a decision immediately though there could be no

²⁰ Satya Narayan Sinha had referred to traditional traffic routes between India and Tibet and complained that certain passes had been closed to such traffic under the current agreement.

two opinions about it. But it is often seen that when too many issues are brought in together then the issue that we wish to settle does not get resolved. Some of our comrades there said the matter was obvious. There could be no two opinions about this. It was clear what had to be done in Indo-China. I realised during the debate that I had been slightly wrong. I had proposed that this issue should be separated but it was felt that the issues were inextricably linked and could not be separated. As you can see, in Geneva, a heated debate is on over China, that it will not be accepted as a great power, as though saying or not saying so makes a difference. I urge you to look at our agreement over Tibet with China. Dr Satya Narayan Sinha said in his speech that a door had closed. I would like to point out that it is always a two way street, nobody can close doors unilaterally. When a new picture emerges, we shall also think of new ways to follow. When both sides are agreed, it is difficult to say that we shall do one thing but they must not do so. This is like what Lord Curzon would have done. Therefore, we have decided upon trade routes with Tibet. If Dr Satya Narayan Sinha wants to follow a new route, there will be no obstacle from our side, what happens on the other side is not our responsibility. Now, what is the significance of the agreements we had entered into with Tibet about trades, etc. The agreement has been read out. The preamble is of great significance not only for India and China but for the whole of Asia, if

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To M.P. Koirala

23 March 1954

9. In the previous talks I have had with you, as well as with the other representatives of the Nepal Government, we have discussed foreign affairs and we have agreed that there should be full co-

ordination between the foreign policy and the defence policy of the two Governments. Indeed that was even laid down in the collateral letters exchanged at the time of the last Treaty between the two countries.²¹ That Treaty was made before the changeover in Nepal and is, therefore, rather out of date, but the basic points laid down in it still hold.

10. You know of the new developments that have taken place because of the United States giving military aid to Pakistan, You know also that we have been having long talks with the Chinese Government in Peking in regard to Tibetan matters.²² It is important, therefore, that there should be the closest coordination between India and Nepal so as to avoid any differing approach, which may lead to complications.

11. You refer in your letter to certain activities of Americans in Nepal. I am myself not happy about this at all. I think that it should be made perfectly clear to the Americans both by your Government and our Government that they must not interfere in the affairs of Nepal. Apart from other aspects, it is dangerous for large sums of money to be thrown about corrupting people. We do not encourage in India our officials or military officers to mix with foreign representatives,

12. I am particularly anxious that there should be a clear understanding between us in regard to various aspects of foreign affairs as well as defence,

13. I have recently had reports of some trouble on the Bhutan border.²³ A number of Nepali organisations are organising satyagraha in Bhutan. They have made their base in Indian territory. I have just

²¹ See *ante*, p.455.

²² The talks on a new agreement on trade and intercourse in Tibet commenced in Beijing on 31 December 1953 and concluded on 29 April 1954.

²³ The Bhutan State Congress, a Nepal Bhutanese political party formed at Paigaon, Assam in November 1952, with the primary goal to pressurise Bhutan Government to change the discriminatory policies against the Nepali Bhutanese community in Bhutan, was Organising satyagraha inside Bhutan at this time with its headquarters at Siliguri, West Bengal.

received news that there was a conflict between them and presumably Bhutan troops.²⁴ This is exceedingly embarrassing to us as it must be to your Government. Bhutan is your neighbour country and you would no doubt like to have friendly relations with Bhutan.

14. I am aware that there are difficulties in Bhutan for the Nepali residents there and that the policy of the Bhutan Government has not been very favourable to the Nepalese.²⁵ I would welcome progress in Bhutan in various ways. But we cannot encourage Indian territory to be made the base of operations. I am sure that your Government also cannot approve of this method. Governments do not function in this way. I hope, therefore, that you will discourage, in so far as you can, these aggressive activities. I know that many people who are indulging in them are probably not amenable to your influence and represent your opposition groups. Nevertheless, it seems important to me that your Government should take-up a clear attitude in this matter. Any difficulties in Bhutan should be dealt with in a different and governmental way.

15. I learn that Govind Narain will be leaving the King's service next month. That is right, as he has been there long enough. I hope the King will have a competent Secretary provided for him because he must require secretarial assistance of a high quality. The King occupies a very special position in Nepal and your Government will no doubt want to help him in every way.

16. There is one matter which you will not mind if I mention to you. I

²⁴ On 22 March 1954, about 100 Bhutan State Congress volunteers marched from India across the border to launch a satyagraha at Sarbhang, the centre of the largest concentration of Nepali Bhutanese in southern Bhutan. The Bhutan National Militia took repressive action against them when they refused to disperse and return to India.

²⁵ Right to own and cultivate land by the Nepali Bhutanese was strictly regulated, not only in the Bhutan highlands which were closed to them but in Southern Bhutan as well. Even their residence in Bhutan was on a tenuous basis making them easy objects of exploitation by Bhutanese officials.

have in fact hinted at it earlier in this letter. In view of the changes that have collie

in Nepal as also in view of the changes that you contemplate, it is desirable to try to bring about a change in the general behaviour of the leading personalities in Nepal. I mean that the old ways of some rich people flaunting their riches in extravagance and luxury does not suit modern times and creates a bad impression among the public. It would help your Government greatly if it discouraged these old and out of date ways and set an example of economy and simplicity.

17. I have written to you quite frankly about some matters because I consider you as a friend and a comrade, apart from our official positions, and I am greatly interested in the stability and progress of Nepal.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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Coordination of Foreign Policy with Nepal²⁶

7 May 1954

I had a talk yesterday with Mr Regmi, Foreign Minister of Nepal.²⁷ We discussed Nepal-Tibet relations, coordination of foreign policy of Nepal with India, the representation of Nepal in some foreign countries through our Missions, and the question of giving visas to foreigners

²⁶ Note to the Secretary General and Foreign Secretary, 7 May 1954. J:N. Collection.

²⁷ On 1 May D.R. Regmi came to New Delhi for talks with the Government of India which ended on 6 May. He was accompanied by Mahabir Shamahere and Bhadrskali Misra, Minister for Planning and Development. and Minister for Irrigation, respectively. King Tribhuvan had arrived in New Delhi earlier on 29 April on a private visit and met Nehru on 4 May 1954.

visiting Nepal.

2. It was clear that the old Treaty between Nepal and Tibet²⁸ had no force or relevance today. It might be considered to have lapsed.

Normally, this should give place to a new treaty or agreement between the two countries and, some time or other, this would have to be done. But it is not necessary or desirable for Nepal to take the initiative in raising this matter.

3. Some recent statements made in Nepal by the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (Mr Regmi) in regard to Tibet were not very happy and, no doubt, produced some resentment in China. The Prime Minister was reported to have said that so far as they were concerned, they had not recognised the sovereignty of China over Tibet which was for them an autonomous State.²⁹ He also referred to the old Treaty. Whether the report we saw was quite correct or not, these references had no relation to facts, because it was well-known that Tibet is part of Chinese State and the Chinese exercised full sovereignty there. This fact has inevitably to be recognised. As a consequence the old Treaty goes.

4. The annual payment of rupees ten thousand by Tibet to Nepal has already stopped.³⁰ No further mention should be made of this and it should be accepted that there will be no such payment in future.

5. The Nepalese have had some extraterritorial rights in Tibet, and in accordance with these rights, they have had some courts exercising jurisdiction not only over Nepalese residents of Tibet but some mixed

²⁸ Under a Treaty signed between Tibet and Nepal on 24 March 1856, Tibet agreed to pay Rs 10,000 annually to Nepal who in turn accepted the obligation to come to Tibet's help in case of any foreign attack. Trade matters were settled to the satisfaction of Nepal. Both Tibet and Nepal agreed to respect China as before.

²⁹ On 5 April 1954 M. P. Koirala described Nepal's 'relations with Tibet as "independent of Chinese control", which by implication questioned China's sovereignty over Tibet.

³⁰ The last payment was made on 7 March 1952. In 1953 China instructed the Dalai Lama to stop this annual payment to Nepal.

residents also, i.e., sons of Nepalese fathers and Tibetan mothers. Chinese authorities in Tibet have already stated that this cannot continue. Nowhere is this right of extra-territoriality recognised now and, therefore, Nepal must necessarily agree to end these courts. In fact Nepal has no other choice.

6. Normally, there should be no particular problem in regard to this, but it is possible that the Nepalese traders might be harassed somewhat. This would 'depend on the relations between Nepal and the Chinese Government, If these relations are strained the harassment would be greater. If, however, there are friendly relations then probably there' will be no harassment.

7. There is the question of the Nepalese Agent remaining in Lhasa. This was not discussed by me with Mr Regmi. As a matter of fact, he will have no work to do there when his present functions cease. Perhaps we need not say anything about this matter now and leave it to the Nepalese Government to leave him there or, at a suitable moment, to Withdraw him.

8. Thus in effect Nepal should recognise the change in Tibet and not seek to exercise any of its previous rights. It need not press for a new treaty. If the Chinese raise this point, it will have to be considered. The Chinese have always given first place to an exchange of diplomatic representatives and have said that a new treaty can be discussed later. Nepal should not encourage such exchange as that would create some complications in Nepal. It will also raise the question of other countries having representatives in Kathmandu, notably the USA. It is best therefore, not to encourage this development.

9, Should the question of a new treaty be raised by China, Nepal cannot refuse to consider it. They should say that they would gladly discuss this matter, but their foreign policy is coordinated with that of India and therefore, in any such discussions, India will have to be represented also. Nepal should not agree to discussions taking place in Peking. They

should take place either in Kathmandu or Delhi and it should be made perfectly clear that India will be represented a~t them also. The general line to be followed in these discussions would be more or less the line taken in India's agreement with China.

10. It is to be clearly understood that the foreign policy of Nepal and India is to be coordinated. This means that in any matter which affects Nepal, directly or indirectly, India will consult the Nepalese Government, and in any foreign policy matter which comes up before the Nepalese Government, they will consult the Government of India and coordinate their policy with that of India.

11. Wherever Nepal is not directly represented in foreign countries, the Government of India will gladly agree to represent Nepalese interests. This should not apply to every place, but to selected places where Nepal has particular interests and which are chosen by the Nepalese Government. The Government of India, should, therefore, ask the Nepalese Government in what countries abroad they would like India to take charge of their representation. Having agreed to these places, necessary steps will be taken to that end and the foreign Governments concerned informed. It must be clearly understood, however that such places will be agreed to previously between the Government of India and the Government of Nepal.

12 In regard to other places abroad, we should inform our Heads of Missions that they should give every help and assistance to Nepalese nationals. No intimation need be given there to foreign government.

13 The question which I have not discussed with Mr Regmi, but which might well be considered, is our representing Nepal's interests in Peking. I think that on the whole, this would be desirable and would lead the Chinese Government to deal with us in regard to the Nepalese.

14. Apparently, our External Affairs Ministry said sometime ago to the Nepalese Embassy in Delhi that we should check visas given to foreigners going to Nepal. This is not a correct way of putting it. The

position is that the Nepalese Government had no way of checking the people who ask for visas and we offer them our help in this kind of checking. It is of course open to them to give visas to anyone they like, but they are already troubled by too many visitors coming from abroad, notably Americans. Therefore, it will be to their advantage to consult us in such matters. We have much greater experience and knowledge of the persons concerned and we could advise them.

15. I have seen a PTI telegram today which states that a draft treaty of friendship between France and Nepal is pending. I know nothing about this. This might be enquired into. I am informed that the French Ambassador has called on Mr Regmi here in Delhi.

16. As a consequence of our foreign policy being coordinated, it follows that any treaty of Nepal with a foreign country should be considered in cooperation with us and after reference to us.

17. I mentioned to Mr Regmi that should the Nepalese Government so desire, we might be agreeable to accept one or two or more of their bright young men for training in some of our foreign missions abroad. Sometime or other they will require trained personnel and this might help.

18. While in conversation, the subjects are discussed and agreed to: in practice such agreements are not remembered or are not acted upon. It would be desirable to suggest some procedure for frequent consultation. Our Ambassador should keep in touch with the Foreign Office in Kathmandu and External Affairs keep in touch with the Nepalese Ambassador here.

19 This is a preliminary note as there are going to be further conversations. A copy of this note might be sent to our Ambassador in Kathmandu,

BHUTAN

To Bisnuram Medhi³¹

New Delhi

21st March 1954

My dear Medhi,

I have just received a telegram from your Government reporting that a batch of Nepalese have opened an office (apparently at a place called Patgaon on the Assam-Bhutan frontier) which is called the Bhutan State Congress,³² that they fly the tricolour flag, though this flag is somewhat different from our National Flag and that these people are collecting subscriptions and enrolling volunteers with the object of offering peaceful satyagraha against the Bhutan Government. The object of this being the introduction of democratic Government in Bhutan.³³

The local Bhutanese Officer at Sarbhang has apparently requested the Deputy Commissioner of Dhubri to intervene and prevent volunteers from entering Sarbhang.

Your Government has asked for instructions as to what to do in this matter.

We are sending a telegram to you but I should like to explain the position more fully in this letter. Our relations with the Bhutanese

³¹ File No. 57/28154-Poll., MHA. Also available in JN Collection. A copy of this letter was sent to K.N. Kaija.

³² The Bhutan State Congress was formed in India in 1952 under the leadership of D.B. Gurung, D.B. Chhetry and others with the main objective to pressurize the Bhutan Government to change its discriminatory policies against the ethnic Nepalese in Bhutan.

³³ The telegram intimated that the Bhutan State Congress volunteers were planning to enter Bhutan territory through Sarbhang just across Assam border. Distance between camp site at Patgaon and Sarbhang in Bhutan was 23 miles along forest road. Police report indicated possibilities of clash between satyagrahis and Bhutan State Army at Sarbhang.

Government are friendly. Bhutan is a semi-independent State whose foreign policy has to be conducted in consultation with us, The State receives a subsidy from us also, They are very anxious to preserve their independence but realise that they have to rely on India. We have no desire to interfere internally in Bhutan but we have made it clear that, so far as any external matters are concerned or any defence matters, India is intensely interested and must have a say. This is the position. Obviously we cannot encourage India being made a base for an organised agitation in Bhutan. There will be no difficulty about our interfering and putting a stop to this if there was any violence involved. Normally we do not interfere with peaceful activities. However, in the present case, even peaceful activities, apparently deliberately aiming at breaches of the law on the other side are undesirable. These so-called satyagrahis will be arrested or perhaps even shot at and then questions will arise about Indian nationals getting into trouble in Bhutan, apart from the Bhutanese Government accusing us of encouraging these activities.

Therefore I think that your DC should be told that he must make it clear to the so-called Bhutan State Congress which has opened an office at Patgaon that we cannot permit India being made a base for any kind of satyagraha or breach of the law in Bhutan. If organised bands of volunteers endeavour to go from India to Bhutan with the professed object of offering such satyagraha, they will be stopped. If this has to be done, it should be done quietly and without fuss.

There is a difference between organised bands going with this professed object and individuals going through peacefully without declaring their object of satyagraha. Such individuals normally go through and we cannot stop them unless we suspect trouble.

Our object should be to prevent this organised movement taking place from India and to make it clear to the Bhutanese Government that we are not encouraging it in any way. The Deputy Commissioner of Dhubri

should inform the local Bhutanese officer at Sarbhang that we do not propose to encourage this satyagraha and we have informed the so called satyagrahis accordingly but that if any individuals manage to go through quietly, peacefully, it is difficult for us to stop them.

The Deputy Commissioner of Dhubri should be told that he must exercise a great deal of tact in this matter so as not to produce an incident. He should, in fact send for the Bhutan State Congress people and tell them that they are not helping the cause which they apparently have at heart by this kind of satyagraha organised from India, in fact they are injuring it and doing harm to the relations of India and Bhutan. Therefore they should desist from this, it is for the Bhutanese people in Bhutan to press constitutionally for any reform. If this is organised from India, that will be pressure, from outside which the Bhutanese People, even apart from their Government, will resent. Therefore this is a very unwise policy from every point of view.

This will further give rise to conflict between the Nepalese and the Bhutanese in Nepal which must be avoided. The real Bhutanese consider the Nepalese even in Bhutan as, to some extent, outsiders.

I have tried to explain the position to you fairly fully so that you might deal with it on the lines indicated above.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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To Maharaja of Bhutan³⁴

New Delhi
9th May 1954

My dear Maharaja Saheb,

³⁴ JN Collection

Thank you for your letter of the 28th March.³⁵ I am sorry for the delay in answering it, As a matter of fact it took some time to reach me and then I had go away from Delhi. Also I wanted to make further enquiries about the matter referred to in your letter.

As a matter of fact, information had reached us at an early stage about these troubles on your border territory. The moment we heard about this, we immediately got in touch with the Governments of Assam³⁶ and West Bengal and also our Political Officer in Sikkim.³⁷ We told them that Indian territory should not be allowed to be used for any aggressive movement, even though peaceful, against Bhutan. Our officers carried out our instructions in this matter Your Government must know this fully and in fact we have received letters from officials of your Government thanking the Government of India for the action we took. The agitation subsided then, chiefly, because of the action we had taken.

You will appreciate however that we have 10 function in terms of our Constitution and the Fundamental Rights guaranteed therein. We allow a large liberty even for agitations against our own Government.

Opposition parties can function and are represented in Parliament. They can arrange demonstrations against Government. They write in condemnation of our Government in newspapers and deliver strong speeches. It is only when there is violence or threat to violence that we wish to interfere. That is the policy of our Government in consonance of

³⁵ Druk Gyalpo. the Maharaja of Bhutan, reported about Nepal people gathering in Indian territory far incursions into Bhutan to create disturbances and added that since Indian territory was being used, it was the responsibility of the Government of India to control the situation.

³⁶ On 21 March 1954. See *ante*, pp.463-465. Medhi on 3 April informed Nehru that the Bhutan State Congress leaders on being contacted informed that they were sending a delegation to Nehru and that no satyagraha would take place before their return. He also stated that Bhutan State Congress office at Senalpara near the border had been closed and the Nepal Congress leaders had left the area.

³⁷ B.K. Kapur.

our Constitution. Apart from this, our Supreme Court is anxious to protect the freedom of action of our people and judges governmental action strictly.

I am pointing this Out to you to indicate the limits within which we can function. Normally, any peaceful action is permitted, although it may be very much against our Government. We are, therefore, put ii' some difficulty in dealing with agitations if they continue to be peaceful. We had to keep this factor in mind when dealing with the agitation on the Bhutan border to which you refer.

In a letter which we received through our Political Officer in Sikkim, Shri Jigme Dorji³⁸ had suggested that "security proceedings" might be instituted by us against some of the office bearers of the Bhutan State Congress. I very much doubt if this would be in consonance with our Constitution, because our Government's legal powers in such matters are strictly limited and if we go beyond them, they will be challenged in our courts. As I have said above, it is only in ease of violence and threat to violence that we can take such security proceedings. Apart from this, it is doubtful if any such proceedings will be wise at this stage. Any penal action that we might take against some persons of the Bhutan State Congress would be criticised by many people in India and might serve as an irritant. The agitation has now subsided and it is best to leave matters there.

Such agitations, if they exceed constitutional limits, have necessarily to be dealt with by the Government. But we know from long experience in India that the way to deal with such agitation merely by law and order methods is not enough. We have to find out the causes of discontent as well as legitimate grievances and seek to remove them so that all sections of the population might feel that the being treated equally and with justice by the authorities.

³⁸ The Prime Minister of Bhutan.

You are no doubt fully aware of the trend of world affairs and how major changes have taken place in various parts of the world as well as in Asia. No one can put a stop to these ideas and the desire of people everywhere to have a larger measure of freedom as well as an advance on the path to democracy. These ideas will no doubt reach Bhutan and it is a wise policy not to wait for pressure from outside in order to remove any legitimate grievance.

So far as we are concerned, we shall do everything in our power within the limits of our Constitution and policy, not to prevent any trouble to Bhutan from Indian territory. You can rest assured about that, But the real remedy rests with Your Highness' Government and not with the Government of India.

I am glad you wrote to me on this subject. I hope that you will not hesitate to write to me whenever you feel like it.

With all good wishes to you,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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Cable to N. Raghavan³⁹

16 April 1954

1- As you know, very grave situation has arisen because of new policy enunciated by Dulles.⁴⁰ We are much concerned about this and after few

³⁹ New Delhi, 16 April 1954. Agreement between India and China on Trade and Intercourse between India and Tibet Region of China. 1954, Government of India MEA. Also available in JN Collection.

⁴⁰ Dulles, said in Washington on 10 April 1954 that he was going to Europe to seek British and French cooperation in forming a united front that could end the communist threat to South East Asia and he would try to persuade Britain and France to join the front before the Far East Conference in Geneva on 26 April. He also said that communist threat in Indo-China was not a limited one but extended to vital interest of

days I intend making a full statement.

2- If Indo-Chinese agreement on Tibet⁴¹ is signed and announced soon, it will have salutary effect. If however this is postponed indefinitely, this will have contrary effect. Unless this agreement is finalised and signed before Chinese Delegation goes to Geneva these talks will inevitably have to be postponed inevitably. We cannot have our men sitting in Peking hoping for something to happen. They have stayed there much too long already. We shall then have to fix some distant date, probably in Delhi, for future resumption of talks. This will create impression of failure which will not be good.

3. I suggest you point all this Out to Chinese Government and say definitely that our men who have gone from Delhi will have to return here before Geneva Conference begins.

4. Personal. Please inform Kaul⁴ that I appreciate his message to me. In view of early ending of Tibet talks either way, he can stay till then and return here immediately afterwards to report.

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Sino-Indian Agreement on Tibet⁴²

2 May 1954

The Agreement between India and China on Tibet⁴³ should be

nations in South East Asia including the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand.

⁴¹ Negotiations between India and the People's Republic of China on the relations between India and Tibet opened in Beijing on 31 December 1953.

⁴² Note to the Secretary General and Foreign Secretary, Colombo, 2 May 1954. JN Collection. Extracts.

⁴³ The preamble to the Agreement. concluded in Beijing on 29 April 1954, stated that it was based on the principles of "mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty. mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence" and that it was intended to promote trade and cultural intercourse between "the Tibet region of China"

communicated formally to the Commonwealth countries. With that Agreement there should be a note mentioning our old connection with Tibet and the necessity that arose to make fresh adjustments in view of the recent changes in Tibet. Petty difficulties were cropping up in regard to trade, pilgrimage and other matters. These talks between the two Governments were, therefore, suggested by the Government of India and accepted by the Government of China after prolonged discussions in Peking between the representatives of the two Governments, The Agreement was signed. This Agreement not only settles these various points in regard to Tibet which have been troubling us during the last two years or so, but also, we hope will have' a stabilising effect over this region, as well as, we think, to some extent, in Asian affairs...,,

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Future Negotiations with China⁴⁴

12 May 1954

There are certain points in this preliminary report of Shri T.N. Kaul, which deserve notice:

(I) Undoubtedly we should have any future negotiations with the Peking Government in Delhi and not in Peking. I take it, however, that this does not apply to the negotiations regarding handing over the P&T, rest houses, and withdrawal of escorts, etc,, which, it has been agreed,

and India. The Agreement provided for establishment of trade agencies by China in India and by India in Tibet and visits by traders and pilgrims of both countries. It also provided for the lapse of certain rights and privileges previously exercised in Tibet by the Government of India.

⁴⁴ Note to the Secretary General and Foreign Secretary, 12 May 1954. *Indo-China Relations 1947-1954*. Historical Division, MEA. File Nos. I2/86/NGO/54 and 12/88/NGO/54. Also available in *Agreement between India and China on Trade and Intercourse between India and the Tibet region of China 1954*, Government of India, MEA and JN Collection.

will be held between our Embassy in Peking and the Chinese Foreign Office.⁴⁵

(2) So far as the withdrawal of escorts is concerned, I do not know what negotiations are necessary. The sooner they are withdrawn, the better. We should remind Defence about it so that they can make arrangements accordingly.

(3) I agree that adequate publicity has not been given in India to the fact of our having signed this international Agreement in Hindi as a principal and equal language with the other two. Our Public Relations Officer might put out some note about this specially.

(4) I agree also that we should establish checkpoints at all disputed points, wherever they might be, and our administration should be right up to these borders. This matter has been delayed and we should try to expedite it. Thus, the UP Government has written to us frequently about their problems in the Tibet border and, more especially, about the development of communications to that frontier. We should find out how matters stand and try to do something to expedite decisions and action.

(5) As regards a trade agreement with China, I think that we should wait for the initiative of China. Further, that talks, when they take place, should be in Delhi.

(6) As regards a regular non-aggression pact with China,⁴⁶ I do not think we should take any step in this direction. The present Agreement goes half way at least towards a non-aggression pact and that is quite

⁴⁵ In the text of notes exchanged between the Delegations of India and China and published with the Agreement, it was agreed that the Government of India would withdraw within six months the military escort stationed at Yatung and Gyantse in Tibet and it would hand over to China at reasonable price the post and telegraph and public telephone services operated in Tibet by India and the twelve rest houses of India in Tibet, concrete measures in this regard would be decided upon through further negotiations between Indian Embassy in China and Foreign Ministry of China.

⁴⁶ Kaul had mentioned that informal feelers were thrown by the Chinese during negotiations regarding desirability of a non-aggression pact.

enough.

7- I see no immediate possibility of my going to China.⁴⁷ That will have to wait for sometime. When I feel that it is the right time, I shall certainly go there. We need not take the initiative in this matter.

8- I rather like the idea of Mr Chou En-lai being invited to go *via* India from Geneva to China.⁴⁸ We need not formally invite him. but it might be worthwhile to make this suggestion to him. Perhaps Krishna Menon could do this informally, when he sees him in Geneva.

In the event of there being any possibility of Chou En-lai passing through India, we should certainly inform the Burmese Prime Minister of this. I am not sure about the desirability of having tripartite talks. That would give the visit a formal shape.

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To KK Chettur⁴⁹

New Delhi

9th May 1954

My dear Chettur,

I have seen your letter of the 27th April addressed to N.R. Pillai, I wrote to you briefly on the 2nd May from Colombo. In my letter, I indicated that U Nu wanted me to write directly to Chou En-lai.⁵⁰ I had asked U Nu to send me some facts to enable me to write to Chou En-lai.

⁴⁷ Kaul had written that the Chinese Government were keen on a visit by Nehru to China,

⁴⁸ Kaut had suggested to informally sound Chou En-lai whether he would like to viii India on hia way back from Geneva Conference.

⁴⁹ JN Collection. Copies of the letter were sent to the Secretary General and the Foreign Secretary.

⁵⁰ U Nu wanted Nehru to write to Chou En-Lai about certain anti-Myanmar activities perpetrated by China.

I have not received anything from U Nu, but, in view of those developments, I have, in fact, sent a message to Raghavan⁵¹ in Peking to be conveyed immediately to the Chinese Government. Chou En-lai, of course, is not in Peking and is not likely to return for some considerable time.

I can well understand a certain irritation in Burma at various aspects of the Chinese policy. But the analysis of a senior official of the Government of Burma, which you quote in your letter, seems to me rather overdone and unbalanced. I am convinced that if they shift over in their policy in this way, they will land themselves in greater difficulties.

That would mean, of course, the abandonment by Burma of the policy of nonalignment, while Burma and India and some other countries like Indonesia have consistently followed this path. That is a serious matter affecting all of us but, most of all, Burma itself.

The recent Agreement between India and China in regard to Tibet⁵² and, more especially, the Preamble to it, has laid down certain principles which, I think, are excellent, These are recognition of territorial integrity and sovereignty, non aggression, non interference, internal or other, in the other country, etc. If these principles are applied in our relations with various countries, then some of the fears and apprehensions that exist today would disappear. I was hoping for the application of these principles as between Burma and China especially. If they were so applied and sincerely acted up to, many of the points that the senior Burmese official raised in his talk with you will cease to have any significance.

In the final analysis, no country has any deep faith in the policies of another country, more especially in regard to a country which tends to expand. Obviously we cannot be dead sure of -what China may do in the

⁵¹ See the preceding item.

⁵² See *ante*, p.468, fn-2.

future. But whatever its urges might be, we can, by our policy, strengthen our own position and even curb to some extent undesirable urges in the other country. At present the conflict of the two great power blocs exhibits these urges for expansion or of fear of each other. China and the Soviet Union hang together, and yet, in some ways, they pull in different directions. There is, for obvious reasons, a strong desire for peace both in the Soviet Union and China. These reasons may be wholly opportunist, but the fact of their avoidance of a major war is universally admitted. If that is so, that gives us plenty of room for action in favour of peace and protecting our respective countries.

Unfortunately, in regard to the USA, one cannot say that there is this urge for avoidance of war, whatever the reasons may be. Hence the grave danger.

You will have seen that we were very near to a wide extension of the Indo-China war only two weeks or so ago when Eden had to rush up to London to consult Churchill.⁵³ It was Britain's attitude which held back the US. The UK, in fact, has been trying to play a mediatory role to some extent because the consequences of a big scale war are terrible for all countries. The point is whether we, i.e., the countries of Asia, like India, Burma and Indonesia especially, are going to play a mediatory role or not. If not, then the chances of a big scale war become inevitable and Burma is likely to be one of the chief sufferers in this region.

I think, therefore, that any vital change in Burma's foreign policy, as hinted at by you, is of the gravest consequence to Asia as well as to the

⁵³ On 24 April 1954 Anthony Eden, while conferring with J.F. Dulles and the French Foreign Minister, G. Bidault in Paris was confronted with a proposal from Dulles that USA was prepared, if France and the other allies so desired, to move armed forces into Indo-China and thus internationalize the struggle and protect South Asia. In order to take a decision on the proposal Eden rushed to London on the same night to consult the British Prime Minister.

possibility of extension of war, I believe that Burma is in a position not only to protect herself, but to influence the cause of peace, provided she keeps apart from any alignment and has an independent policy in favour of peace and her own protection. In this matter, it is possible that we can be of some help and certainly the recent Agreement between India and China over Tibet is an obvious indication of the way we can go. This might well apply to Burma also. It is because of this that I have sent a message through Raghavan to the Chinese Government.

I have indicated broadly our viewpoint in these matters. You can discuss this informally with the Burma Government. In particular, if you have the chance, you should speak to U Nu on the subject and tell him that while I am waiting for the note he promised me, I have already taken steps according to his wishes and addressed the Chinese Government.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru