

## SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

*Series II Volume 32*

**To Lord Mountbatten<sup>1</sup>**

New Delhi

18 March 1956

My dear Dickie,

You left with me a letter from Prince Peter of Greece.<sup>2</sup> In this letter he expressed a wish to go to East Nepal to climb some mountains there and wants permission to do so.

I did not read this letter till after your departure. If I had read it while you were here, I would have been able to tell you of our difficulties in this matter. Primarily this has nothing to do with us. It is for the Nepal Government to give or not to give permission. I remember that the Nepal Government some time ago informed us that they were not prepared to give this permission.

As a matter of fact, since then a number of developments have taken place in East Nepal and near the Nepal-Tibet border,<sup>3</sup> which make it still more difficult for the Nepal Government to revise their previous decision. Some people to whom they had given permission to go to these mountains actually crossed over into Tibet and were arrested by

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<sup>1</sup> JN Collection

<sup>2</sup> Prince Peter of Greece and Denmark lived in Kalimpong for a long time. See Selected Works (second series), Vo1.23, pp.221-222.

<sup>3</sup> The Tibetan authorities were reported to have disputed the frontier separating the Nepalese District East No.2 from the south-eastern province of Tibet. The District Officer had suggested to the Nepalese Government that the Tibetans would have to be pushed back by 1,000 yards.

the Tibetan authorities.<sup>4</sup> This led to some kind of an enquiry into this matter and the Nepal Government was much upset by the whole incident. What the result of the actual enquiry was, I do not remember. The crossing over into Tibetan territory might have been purely accidental, as there are no marked boundaries in those mountains. But, apart from the merits, the fact is that the Nepal Government was much embarrassed and there was some agitation in the newspapers there and among the public to stop all foreigners from going to East Nepal on mountaineering expeditions.<sup>5</sup>

East Nepal, as you know, is almost completely cut off from Kathmandu and communications are non-existent.

In view of all this, the present tendency of the Nepal Government is wholly against encouraging any visits to East Nepal. For us to ask the Nepal

Government to relax their rules would be odd and would be an unnecessary interference which they would not like.

I have myself been unable to understand the anxiety of a number of mountaineers to go to East Nepal, which is a border area with Tibet. There are plenty of mountains elsewhere to be climbed.

Anyhow, you will appreciate that it would be exceedingly embarrassing and, I think, wrong for us to interfere in this matter with the Nepal Government.

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<sup>4</sup> The Nepalese Foreign Office strongly protested to the British Embassy in February 1956 against the "misconduct" of two members of the Welsh expedition to Saipal and Api Namba in 1955. The two climbers had "illegally" entered Tibetan territory causing embarrassment to the Nepal Government.

<sup>5</sup> In the first week of March 1956, the Nepal Government was reported to have enforced certain conditions for permitting any expedition to the Himalayas. Members of all expeditions would henceforth be required to submit reports on their scientific research work on mountaineering to the Nepal Government before they left the country. The members of the Lhotse expedition of 1955 were alleged to have taken obscene photographs of Sherpa womenfolk.

I am returning to you Prince Peter's letter.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru

### **On Conversation with J.F. Dulles-II<sup>6</sup>**

As I have told you, I mentioned to Mr Dulles that I have to make a statement in Parliament. In this connection, I said that I would be expected to lay copies of our correspondence on Goa on the table of the House. Mr Dulles was not very happy about this matter, but he said that, perhaps, it could not be helped. He added that he would consult or speak to Ambassador Cooper. After that, he said nothing to me before his departure. You might, perhaps, ask Ambassador Cooper about this matter. You can tell him that sometime back, I had indicated in Parliament that I would place this correspondence before them. That is the usual course. It would be embarrassing for me not to do so now. We had postponed this with some difficulty because Mr Dulles was coming here. Now, there is no further reason for postponement.

2. As you know, I gave a copy of Mr Chou En-lai's message to Dulles.<sup>2</sup> As he was leaving my house yesterday morning, he was on the point of giving me a paper which, I think, was some kind of a reply or note on Chou En-lai's message. I did not see it myself. Mr Dulles was rather hesitant to give it to me then, although it was meant for me, because he said that he had not read it himself. I suggested to him that he might read it and give it to me later in the afternoon. No such paper was given to me later. Was it given to you?

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<sup>6</sup> Note to Secretary General and Foreign Secretary, New Delhi, 11 March 1956. JN Collection