

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Series II, Volume 43

July-September 1958

ISSUES OF GOVERNANCE

To Dr BC Roy¹

New Delhi

August 4, 1958

My dear Bidhan,

The opening of the new Supreme Court building took place today. In the course of a conversation with the Chief Justice,² he told me that he had recently been staying at his house in Kalimpong. Conditions in Kalimpong were so bad that he did not want to go there again and indeed he might dispose of his house. He complained of the behaviour of Tibetan traders there who, to some extent, terrorise the population. He told me of his personal experience in this matter. A Tibetan came into his garden there. The mali objected, but the Tibetan threatened him. Then the Chief Justice himself went and told him to get out. Thereupon the Tibetan became aggressive and even drew out a dagger which he had somewhere round about him. Nothing much happened, but the Chief Justice got a shock. The matter was later reported to the Police who managed to trace this Tibetan and I believe he was sentenced to some brief term of imprisonment.

I am drawing your attention to this because we must not allow anybody, Tibetan or other, to go about terrorising our population. We have

¹ JN Collection.

² Justice S.R. Das

particularly to be careful on this border area. I think therefore that your Police there should be given strict injunctions on this subject.

There are in Kalimpong and round about all kinds of Tibetans. There are plenty of émigrés from Tibet who are opposed to the Chinese regime there. There are people favouring the Chinese regime and there are plenty of spies of various countries. We have to be particularly careful therefore in Kalimpong that nobody is allowed to misbehave.

We have received complaints from the Chinese Government about Tibetan émigrés using Kalimpong as a base for their operations against the Chinese in Tibet.³ Some of these complaints have been forwarded to your Government. There is no doubt that there are people in Kalimpong and round about who want to do this kind of thing. We have made it clear that we will not tolerate it, and that we shall take action if they create any kind of trouble.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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1. To Apa B. Pant⁴

New Delhi
July 11, 1958

My dear Apa⁵

³ S. Dutt has written in his book *With Nehru in the Foreign Office* that the Chinese had alleged that Kalimpong was the "commanding centre of the rebellion." Nehru refuted these allegations while conceding that spies may have been functioning in Kalimpong. Nehru also asked the people of Kalimpong to refrain from collecting arms to be sent to Tibet or do anything inimical to China

⁴ Apa B. Pant Collection, NMML. Also available in JN Collection

Your letter of July 7th. I shall return to you some of the copies with my autograph, but I do not want you to send any copies at present to any person in Tibet.

Our relations with China are not as good as they have been in the past, chiefly because they think that we are conniving at the activities of Tibetan émigrés in Darjeeling, Kalimpong, etc.⁶ Indeed, I rather doubt now that I shall be going to Tibet at all.⁷

In this connection, I should like you to be particularly careful in dealing with Tibetan émigrés. I have an idea that you have been, perhaps, not very careful in the past. This applies not only to you but to the members of your staff.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. Chinese Sovereignty and Tibetan Autonomy⁸

Here is the letter and manifesto about which reference was made in the *Daily Telegraph* of London. I do not think it is necessary for us to acknowledge it.

⁵ Political Officer in Sikkim.

⁶ For Nehru's comments on Tibetan emigres, see ante, pp. 385-386

⁷ Nehru was expected to visit Tibet at the invitation of Dalai Lama [see Selected Works (Second Series), Vol. 41, p. 672] and then proceed to Bhutan. But the formal visit to Lhasa did not materialise. However, on his way to Bhutan from Gangtok in Sikkim, Nehru passed through the Tibetan Plateau at Yatung on 18 September 1958. On his way back from Bhutan, he again passed through Tibet on 29 September 1958. See also Selected Works (Second Series), Vol. 42, p. 659.

⁸ Note to Foreign Secretary Subimal Dutt, 7 August 1958. JN Collection

2. In the manifesto, some kind of a scrappy historical narrative is given. It is odd that no reference is made in it to the Younghusband Expedition to Tibet.⁹ In 1908, it is said that there was a Chinese invasion and a massacre of Tibetans. This must be after the Younghusband Expedition. The Chinese Government then, as far as I remember, was very weak, and the British had considerable influence in Tibet.

3. To say that no Chinese had been allowed to go to Tibet without express permission is hardly correct. It is true that Tibet enjoyed some kind of an autonomy, but Chiang Kai-shek used to send from time to time his envoys there as a symbol of China's sovereignty. I remember one of them going there at the time of the installation of the Dalai Lama. On his way back, he came to see me in Allahabad.¹⁰

3. A Repetition of Inaccurate Maps¹¹

I do not think that we should allow this matter to pass without some kind of protest. To ignore this repetition of inaccurate maps showing large parts of India in China is, in a sense, to accept them. Anyhow it weakens our case to some extent.

We need not make a formal protest but, as suggested, Shri Acharya¹² should have a talk with the Chinese Counsellor and hand him an aide-memoire or, if you prefer it, an unofficial note. In the course of the talk it should be mentioned that I referred this matter to Premier Chou En-lai on

⁹ See ante, pp. 441-442

¹⁰ General Wu Zhongxin attended the installation of the fourteenth Dalai Lama in February 1940 and also met Nehru in Allahabad. See Selected Works (first series), Vol. II, p. 468

¹¹ Note to Foreign Secretary Subimal Dutt, 12 August 1958. JN Collection

¹² B.K. Acharya was the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs.

more than one occasion, that is, when I visited China¹³ and also I think when Premier Chou En-lai came to India. His answer was that present maps were based on old maps and the Chinese Government had no time to correct them.¹⁴ As the People's Republic of China has now been functioning for many years and new maps have been repeatedly printed and published, it is surprising that these corrections have not been made. We hope that they will be made soon.

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To the King of Bhutan¹⁵

New Delhi
25th July, 1958

My dear Maharaja¹⁶

I have received today the letter you have been good enough to send me through our Political Officer at Sikkim, Shri Apa Pant. I have read it with pleasure and I am grateful to you for the kind and friendly sentiments that

¹³ Nehru visited China from 19 October to 30 October 1954. For Nehru's record of talks with the Chinese Prime Minister Chou En-lai in Peking, see Selected Works (Second Series), Vol. 27, pp. 11-31.

¹⁴ Between 28 November 1956 and 30 January 1957, Chou En-lai was in India from 28 November to 9 December 1956; from 30 December 1956 to 1 January 1957; on 24 and 25 January and on 30 January he reached Santiniketan via Calcutta. See Selected Works (second Series) Vol. 36, pp. 599-601 and 614-615. For Nehru's talks with Chou En-lai, see Selected Works (Second Series), Vol. 36, pp. 583-619 and 623-638

¹⁵ JN Collection

¹⁶ Jigme Dorji Wangchuk

you have expressed in it. We have very pleasant recollections of your visit to India.¹⁷

When Your Highness came to India, you were good enough to invite me to visit Bhutan. I told you then that I was myself anxious to pay a visit to Your Highness and to Bhutan. Unfortunately it has been difficult to arrange such a visit because the time required for it has not been easy to find.

Nevertheless, I have always kept this in mind.

Your Highness's present invitation is, therefore, very welcome, even though I am not sure if I shall be able to avail myself of it. My proposed visit to Tibet has now been postponed. The Government of the People's Republic of China had previously forwarded to me the invitation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and had themselves also invited me to go to Tibet. I had gladly accepted this invitation and was looking forward to visiting Tibet and meeting again His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I have, however, now received intimation from the Chinese Government that for some reasons my visit to Tibet during the coming season will not be convenient or advisable, and that therefore it should be postponed. I have agreed to this.

I am, therefore, not going to Tibet now and the question of my visiting Bhutan on my way back from Lhasa does not arise. However, I am so eager to visit Your Highness's country and to meet you that I am thinking if it is possible for me to pay a special visit to Bhutan in the second half of September. My difficulty is that in view of the very serious international situation, it is difficult to make any firm programme for the future. But if it is possible for me to pay a visit to Your Highness and come back to Delhi within about ten days or so, I shall try to find the time for this. This will

¹⁷ The King and his wife Ashi Kesang Wangchuk visited India in January 1954 and participated in the Republic Day celebrations. For details, see Selected Works (Second Series), Vol. 24, pp. 592-595

have to be in the second half of September as I have to be in Delhi early in October.¹⁸

At present my mind is heavily taken up by the international situation which has deteriorated greatly of late. It is possible that I may have to go out of India because of this.

Please again accept my grateful thanks for your kind invitation and all my good wishes to Your Highness and to the people of your country.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

PRESS CONFERENCES

*Question: There has been talk of you visiting Tibet. Has anything been finalised about it?*¹⁹

Jawaharlal Nehru: There is nothing further that I can tell you about my visit to Tibet. You perhaps know, some months back the Chinese Government conveyed an invitation to me, I think from the Dalai Lama, which came through the Chinese Government, and no date was suggested, sometime later in the year, and I gladly accepted.²⁰ I hope that a convenient date will be fixed. Nothing more has happened since then. I suppose that if I go this year, it will likely to be somewhere in the second half of September, because after that, I am engaged here, and before that the weather is not

¹⁸ Nehru left New Delhi on 16 September for Bhutan and reached Paro on 21 September 1958 where he stayed for five days. He returned to Delhi on 2 October 1958

¹⁹ Proceedings of a press conference, New Delhi, 3 July 1958. PIB files. Also available in JN Collection

²⁰ See Selected Works (Second Series), Vol. 41, p. 672

particularly suitable for flying purposes, because weather comes into the picture anyhow, coming and going.

Q: You said: "If go to Tibet this year..." Does it mean that there is a possibility that you might not go to Tibet this year?

JN: That simply means that no date has been fixed, and because the period when one can go there by air is relatively limited because of climatic conditions. I hope to go this year, but I said if somehow it does not come off, it will be at some later date.