

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 14-2

Freedom and Responsibility¹

Now again look at this great country of ours. I came here yesterday, and I dashed down to Kanya Kumari-Cape Comorin and spent a night there. And although the gods were not very kind and it rained, nevertheless I was very happy to go there and it came to my mind, that here I am sitting at the southern tip of India, with a vast country above me, to the north of me, numerous provinces, States and the rest, mountains and rivers, and my mind went back to the northern limit of this country, which is Kashmir, nearly two thousand miles away. Ladakh and Kashmir are practically in the heart of Asia. Ladakh is almost across the Himalayan barrier on the other side. The lowest place in Ladakh is eleven thousand feet altitude. And I felt and I wondered, when I thought of India with its tremendous variety and diversity, here is India in Kashmir, with its amazing beauty of nature and its high mountains and glaciers and rich valleys, here is India in Ladakh, bare and barren, and almost an extension of Tibet, and here is India also, if you like, in Travancore, near the Equator, completely different. So, and in between, all the variety of this country, the diversity of it, and yet wherever you may go, the tremendous impress of its unity, which I found in Ladakh, which I found in Kashmir, which I find in Travancore or any other part of India that I go to. I myself, though born on the banks of the Jamuna and the Ganges in Allahabad, as you know my family hails from Kashmir, I feel very much at home in Kashmir when I go there, in the mountains and rivers and bleak glaciers. But when I come to Travancore, I feel at home here also. And so, I feel at home wherever I may go in India.

¹ Speech at a public meeting, Thiruvananthapuram, June 1, 1950 NMML, Extracts

To Madame Sun Yat-sen²

New Delhi April 29, 1950

My dear Madame Sun,³

It is a long time since I have written to you or heard from you directly. But I need hardly say that you have been very often in my thoughts. Our Ambassador,⁴ while he was in China, used to keep us in touch with events there and send us news of you from time to time, which was very welcome. Now that our Ambassador is going to China to represent us there, I take this opportunity of sending this brief letter with him carrying my good wishes to you and to your great country which has endured so many trials in past years. I am very happy that India and the People's Republic of China are exchanging diplomatic missions which will help them to keep in touch with each other and develop, I hope, closer contacts. Our two great countries have played important roles throughout the course of history, and I have no doubt that in the future they will also have to face great responsibilities. During this long past of thousands of years, it is a curious and significant fact that these two great and dynamic countries have never come into violent conflict with each other. They have lived at peace with one another and their contacts have been cultural, artistic and in the domain of thought, and each has profited by inspiration drawn from the other. That is a unique instance in history and it is my earnest wish that this uniqueness should continue, and that our contacts should ever remain friendly and cooperative.

It is more than 22 years since I met you in Moscow for a brief while. But long before that I had heard a great deal about you and come to admire you for

² J.N. Collection.

³ Madame Sun Yat-sen was the Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government Council, which was the chief legislative body of China.

⁴ K.M. Panikkar.

your personality and the work you had done. Since then I have not had the pleasure and good fortune to meet you again, although I had hoped to do so on several occasions. But your example has been an inspiration for many of us throughout our lives, and often, when dark clouds surrounded us, we thought of you and your indomitable personality, and derived comfort from that thought.

I send you my homage and my affectionate regards.

Yours very sincerely,

Jawaharlal Nehru

Cable to Nahas Pasha⁵

Your Excellency will have read Mr Trygve Lie's peace programme.⁶ Much of it is long-term and can be usefully taken up only after certain preliminary obstacles have been overcome. Of these, the deadlock over the admission of the People's

Government of China to the United Nations and its allied agencies is at once the most dangerous and most formidable. Since this issue came to a head over seating of representative of the new Chinese Government in Security Council last January, the U.S.S.R. has extended boycott to every U.N. organisation that has met so far. There can be little doubt that, unless matter is resolved beforehand satisfactorily, she will boycott forthcoming session of

⁵ New Delhi, 26 June 1950. J.N. Collection. Nahas Pasha was the Prime Minister of Egypt at this time.

⁶ Trygve Lie, the U.N. Secretary-General, convinced that the crisis for the United Nations resulting from the Soviet boycott could only be resolved through the admission of People's China to the United Nations, visited the capitals of fifty-nine countries where he urged that a distinction be accepted between diplomatic recognition of the Peking Government and its representation in the U.N.

U.N. Assembly, an event that will gravely imperil the very existence of the United Nations.

Opinion must differ on wisdom of Soviet tactics. In my view, more prudent and cooperative course would have been to continue participation in activities of United Nations even after first attempt to seat representative of new Chinese Government in Council had failed. The correct democratic method for a minority is to continue effort to cover the majority. This error, however, does not relieve those of us who regard U.N. as sole agency for concerted international effort to save world from catastrophe of war, of responsibility to do everything possible to break present deadlock.

As Your Excellency is aware, India took the step last December of recognising the People's Government of China. This involved approval neither of ideology nor policies of new Government, but only of an established political fact.

China's permanent membership of Security Council, main executive organ of United Nations, is due to her size, population and resources. It can hardly be disputed that Government of Peking more truly represents these attributes of China's as a nation than Government which has sought refuge in Taiwan. The logic of facts therefore, favours recognition as de jure Government of China of those who are in effective control of that country. This is the reason why, since last January, India

has voted for inclusion of representative of this Government practically in every organ or agency of U.N. where question has come up.

In some quarters, there is reluctance to take similar step because of declared intention of Mao Tse-tung and his colleagues to identify themselves with foreign policy of Moscow.⁷ First impressions of our Ambassador, who only

⁷ On 1 July 1949, Mao Zedong had stated that China "would lean to one side, the side of the Soviet Union, because the U.S.S.R. would help China politically and economically and the imperialist powers would not." The two countries signed a military pact linking their security interests.

recently presented his credentials in Peking, suggest that, if treated as equals, present Government may make an independent and constructive contribution to the solution of world problems. To continue to keep them at arm's length can only accentuate their sense of bitterness over what they regard as political ostracism by those who refuse to admit them to the world community of free nations.

For reasons of their own, U.S.A. and France find themselves unable to recognise the new Government. I venture to suggest that Egypt, like us, has no ideological prejudices but, on the contrary, deep solicitude for the preservation of the United Nations and the promotion of world peace. In practically all major world issues, India, since she attained independence, has found herself united in understanding and action with Egypt. Both Egypt and India today are members of the Security Council. It is my sincere conviction that, if Egypt were to join us in trying to seat the representative of the People's Government of China in Security Council, she would be making an outstanding contribution to the future of the United Nations as also of world peace. I have, therefore, decided to appeal to Your Excellency most earnestly to give this matter your prompt and favourable consideration.

I would naturally prefer that Egypt recognise the new Government of China and also work for admission of its representative to Security Council and, as occasion offers, to other organs of the United Nations. If, for any reason, recognition of Government in immediate future be found impracticable, I would strongly urge that Egypt should at least vote for entry of representative of Chinese Government into Security Council and other organs and agencies of U.N.

To Ernest Bevin⁸

New Delhi
27 June 1950

My dear Bevin,

Your letter of the 15th June was duly forwarded by our High Commissioner in London and I received it on my return to New Delhi yesterday. I am grateful to you for having taken the trouble to write to me at such length from your sick-bed. I do not think it necessary to go further at this stage into the question of IndoChina.⁹ As regards the admission of the Representatives of the People's Government of China into the U.N. Security Council and other organs and specialised agencies of the United Nations, I am happy to find that you have reached a decision which is in harmony with our own policy.¹⁰ I have addressed a personal message to Nahas Pasha, Prime Minister of Egypt, in which I have appealed to him to recognise the Peking Government or, at least, to vote for the entry of its representative into the Security Council. We are not diplomatically represented either in Cuba or in Ecuador. A direct approach to these Governments by us is not, therefore, possible. I am, however, considering the transmission of a request similar to one that I have sent to Nahas Pasha to one or both of these Governments through their Ambassadors in Washington. If anything comes of these efforts, I shall let you know.

I have just returned from a three weeks' tour in Indonesia, Malaya and Burma. This was most interesting and instructive and made me understand a

⁸ J.N. Collection.

⁹ Bevin agreed with Nehru that French Indo-China was a political problem and its people should be given the opportunity to determine their own future.

¹⁰ Bevin had thought if the Chinese Government had shown more readiness to establish diplomatic relations with foreign powers, the number of nations giving de jure recognition would have been more. However, the U.K. Government had decided to vote for the admission of the new Chinese Government at the forthcoming meeting of the United Nations.

little better the problems of these countries, and promoted our friendly feelings towards each other.

I am glad to notice from press reports that you are making a good recovery and sincerely hope that you will soon be restored to your normal health and be able to resume your official duties.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru