

**Reference on Bhutan
in the Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru**

Series 2, Volume 13

To C.P.N Singh

New Delhi

September 10, 1949

My dear Chandreshwar Prasad,

Thank you for your two letters, the latter being of September 4th.

I am afraid your conversations with the Maharaja go round and round without producing any results. I am beginning to think that no results are going to come from that source. When you see him, you can tell him of my disappointment over all this regret that the Government of Nepal is allowing valuable time to slip by. This time will not come back and the situation will get more and more difficult had offered my advice to him in all sincerity as a friend of Nepal and as one intimately concerned with India, also as one who has knowledge of world developments. If he is not prepared to accept my advice, I can do nothing further in the matter. Obviously if conditions in Nepal do not change materially, there will be agitation in India. We have tried to restrain these people and have succeeded to a large extent. But we cannot possibly succeed any more, if nothing happens in Nepal.

Our policy of course is not to permit any agitation that aims at violence. But peaceful agitation we are bound to permit according to our Constitution and policy.

Owing to the developments in China and very probably a little later in Tibet, Nepal will have to face a very serious problem on her border before very

long. Those problems will not be of a military character so much as an invasion of ideas and dangerous ideas at that. This invasion can only be met by internal changes brought about in time.

The draft treaty that you have sent will be considered in our office. I might inform you, however, that certain clauses in it about our not permitting any agitation or activity aimed at reform or change in the other country can hardly be accepted by us.

I am interested to learn about the Maharaja's inquiry as to the distinction between independence and autonomy. There is all the difference in the world. Even our provinces and states are referred to as autonomous, that is they have a large measure of autonomy. Some places like Bhutan have even more autonomy. But in the international sense Bhutan is subordinate to India, because she can have no foreign relations and cannot declare war or peace. As a matter of fact Bhutan remains autonomous only because we choose to allow it to remain so. Even financially it is dependent upon us and it can carry on only because of the subsidy we give.

The Maharaja is very much mistaken, if he thinks that I ought not to see Koirala or anyone else, because he does not approve of him. I consider myself completely free to meet or deal with anyone I choose.

Yours sincerely,

Jawaharlal Nehru

To John Matthai

New Delhi,
September 10, 1949

My dear Matthai,

Recent developments in China and Tibet indicate that Chinese Communists are likely to invade Tibet sometime or other. This will not be very soon. But it may well take place within a year. The Government structure of Tibet is feeble. A Lama hierarchy controls the whole country, the majority of whose population is very poor. Any effective attempt by the Chinese Communists can hardly be resisted, more especially as the greater part of the population is likely to remain passive and some may even help the Communists. On the other side at Sinkiang, Soviet influence is already strong.

The result of all this is that we may have the Chinese or Tibetan Communists right up on our Assam, Bhutan and Sikkim border. That fact by itself does not frighten me. But all along this border are tribal areas. In the past British officers carried on a policy of encouraging separatist tendencies in these areas. They have to be tackled very carefully. It seems to me essential from every point of view that these areas should have good communications, that is, roads. This means a certain road development programme for these areas. There was, I believe, some such programme in the Assam scheme. But much of it has been cut down for reasons of economy. I think that it is a risky business not to develop these communications at this stage or in the near future. Later we might have to spend much more. At present we can proceed relatively slowly, as we have sometime. I am putting this to you, so that you might consider how far we could go in this direction in the near future.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 14

Letters to Chief Ministers¹

13. We are concerned with some of our border countries or States. Bhutan and Sikkim may be considered as definite parts of India from this point of view. Nepal is not. But it is too intimately related to India for us to view with unconcern what happens there internally or externally. During the last two years or more, we have been constantly pressing the Government of Nepal to take a realistic view of the situation in all its aspects. We have urged major domestic reforms as that is the only way to strengthen the country. Now, with the development of the Chinese situation, the internal and external forces of Nepal have become of even greater importance to us. Any threat to Nepal ultimately becomes a threat to us.

¹ File No. 25(6)-49/PMS

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 15 Part 2

The Indo-Tibetan Boundary²

Tibet is contiguous to India from the region of Ladakh to the boundary of Nepal and from Bhutan to the Irrawady, Salween divide in Assam. The frontier from Bhutan eastwards has been clearly defined by the McMahon line which was fixed by the Simla Convention of 1914. The frontier from Ladakh to Nepal is delimited chiefly by long usage and custom....

That is what the honourable Member is suggesting.³ Our maps show that the McMahon line is our boundary and that is our boundary-map or no map.

That fact remains and we stand by that boundary and we will not allow anybody to come across that boundary.

² Answer to a question in Parliament whether India had any well-defined boundary with Tibet. 20 November 1950. *Parliamentary Debates. Official Report*. 1950. Vol. V, Part I, cols 155-156. Extracts.

³ In a supplementary question, Mahavir Tyagi had asked whether it was a fact that the Survey of India maps showed India's boundary beyond the boundaries shown in the latest Chinese map, namely extending up to the Brahmaputra banks near Sadia."

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 15-2

To V.K. Krishna Menon⁴

New Delhi

August 18, 1950

My dear Krishna,

A minor sensation has been caused here by Reuter's report of what you are supposed to have said at a press conference in regard to Tibet.⁵

From your telegram it appears that there was no press conference but an informal talk after lunch which was off the record. Also that the text as sent to us by Reuter's is not a correct version of the answers given. I hope you will send us a correct report.

Tibet is a very ticklish issue. We have to proceed rather cautiously in regard to it and we did not want it stated in public that we have been addressing the Chinese Government on this subject. They are sensitive and this itself might create an undesirable reaction in them.

On the other hand, our own position in Tibet can hardly be described in the terms that the press report stated.⁶ It is true that we recognise Chinese

⁴ J.N. Collection.

⁵ Krishna Menon was quoted as saying that "our views have been made known to the Chinese Government but it would not be correct to say that there have been *deniarches* from the Indian side. Whatever advice we give to China on the Tibetan question would be in the direction of moderation irrespective of legal rights."

⁶ The report stated that 'India's position in Tibet was rather peculiar. She was the only country represented at the Tibetan capital. But the Indian representative was there in an 'undefined capacity' and was more or less the successor of the original British representative.' It added that India, like Britain, recognised Chinese suzerainty.

suzerainty but at the same time we recognise Tibetan autonomy and the two went together so far as we were concerned. What happens in the future, I do not know,' but we do wish Tibetan autonomy to continue under some kind of Chinese suzerainty. Tibet is very different from China proper and there is some dislike between the two. The right solution appears, therefore, to be Tibetan autonomy. What happens in Tibet immediately affects some of our border States, like Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. As it is, there is tension in these States.

For some time past, I have been asked questions about Tibet at press conferences. I have answered them rather vaguely and tried to avoid any direct commitment. Now, since the publication of the Reuter's message from London, press correspondents are pestering us or rather embarrassing us for a clear declaration of our policy in regard to Tibet. We do not intend any such clear declaration because whatever we may say may be embarrassing either from a Chinese or a Tibetan point of view. Anything that we might say to the Chinese loses its effect to some extent if any public reference is made to it.

In any event, please send us a correct report of what you said so that we may deal with this matter when it arises.

Yours,
Jawaharlal

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 16 I

Rectification of the Assam-Bhutan Boundary⁷

I confess that I see no difficulty at all about the various point raised.⁸ First of all, to consider this matter as a cession of territory, though it may be accurate strictly legally, hardly explains the position.⁹ It is a very small, minor rectification of a boundary, the kind of rectification which States have frequently to undergo, which does not mean very much and takes place when two States agree. I am not speaking as a lawyer for the moment, but from an ordinary, if I may say so, common-sense point of view, is it supposed that no rectification, no addition, no variation here and there is ever going to take place in the future? If so, who is going to do it? Parliament, of course, nobody else. To deny the right of Parliament or to say that nobody can ever add or subtract or vary or rectify the boundaries would be I think rather an extraordinary situation to face, because such things do happen, are bound to happen, and there must be some final authority by whose consent this could be done and that final authority can only be Parliament. Therefore, I beg to submit that it is hardly correct for us to say that Parliament itself cannot do it. If that is so, then the only course left

⁷ Reply to a debate in Parliament, 7 August 1951. *Parliamentary Debates (Official Report)*, Vol. XIV. Part 11 (6th August 1027 August 1951), columns 1/7.91. Extracts.

⁸ During the debate on the Assam Boundaries Bill for ceding to Bhutan an area of about 32 sq. miles in Assam called Dowangiri. R.K. Chaudhuri, H.V. Kamath, Pattabhi, Sitaramayya. V.S. Sarwate and P.S. Deshmukh had raised various points.

⁹ Kamath stated that Article 3(c) of the Constitution provided that boundaries of States could be changed. But there was no power conferred upon Parliament to cede or diminish any territory of the Indian Union.

open is to amend the Constitution, if the occasion for it arises, not now. But I do submit that these things are within the inherent power and authority of Parliament and the interpretation that some honourable friends have put about the State boundaries, etc. is a somewhat strained interpretation.¹⁰ Then again, my honourable friend Mr. Chaudhuri, I think, rather confused the issue by bringing Pakistan into the picture.¹¹ That is a completely different thing which has nothing to do with this matter. Here we are talking about rectification of boundaries-between whom? Not with a foreign country, but with a State with which we are intimately allied, whose defence, whose foreign affairs and communications and various other things are under our control. It is not technically speaking a part of the Union of India, but it is very closely allied, and in fact, in some matters under the control of this Parliament, in regard to those subjects in which it has acceded, or is in alliance with India. It is not a new thing. It is the continuation of an old thing which has now been put on a permanent basis by a treaty, so that one must look upon this, not as though he was dealing with a foreign State, but rather as dealing with a State, which though not technically a part of the Union of India, yet is very closely allied with us.

Secondly, it is not really cession. It is a very small rectification of boundary, mostly of forest land. There are various fairs held in that border and because there was a certain amount, if I may say so of religious sanctity attached to a small area there, we felt that it was far better to give that small area to a

¹⁰ Sarwale from Madhya Bharat argued that Article (2) said: "the States and the territories thereof shall be the States and their territories specified in Part A, B and C of the First Schedule" If Article 3 were read with Article I. it implied that the boundaries of one State and another could be changed, but the whole territory which was referred to in Schedule I could not be changed unless the Constitution was amended.

¹¹ Chaudhuri said that Pakistan had captured Golagani which according to Assam did not belong to India and Dauki, one and a half miles inside Indian territory which according to Gopaldaswami Ayyangar really belonged to Assam.

close ally of ours, closely associated with us, to gain the goodwill rather than hold on to a bit of forest land, a very small patch.... May I also say quite clearly that the responsibility for this is largely that of the Government of India? But the Government of India's responsibility was not enough. We did try to have the assent and the goodwill of the Assam Government.

Therefore, we approached the Government of Assam and after a great deal of consideration, argument, examination, conferences and the like, they agreed to the transfer of this particular territory. So, I submit that this issue does not raise any major legal or constitutional point, nor does it raise any material political point either in regard to the area involved or in regard to the State to which we are transferring this territory, because that State is almost as near to us as any State of the Indian Union. I think it will be a good thing if we treat this State as closely allied to us as possible rather than consider it alien. Of course, Bhutanese subjects need not be considered to be Indian nationals. But when this Parliament finally controls major policies about that State, when the Government of India gives them annual subsidies and aids, it is far from an alien State. In fact we want to develop cordial relations with this State by a psychological approach. If we treat them as aliens they cannot come here, we cannot go there. Thus barriers grow up. We want in this treaty of alliance not only to provide for economic, political and other matters and our control so far as foreign affairs; communications and defence are concerned, but also to create a psychological feeling of oneness and kinship. They said that they attach value to this particular area from a religious point of view. Hardly any human beings live there-just a handful. We thought it a very good decision to arrive at to give that area to gain their goodwill. As a matter of fact the whole area does not go anywhere else...

Now all these frontier areas have a mixed population, culturally connected with both areas. Now Mr. Chaudhuri's own province of Assam - a very

beautiful and fertile place potentially very rich, which unfortunately has been suffering from great calamities-has a rich variety of people. Right from the borders of Burma, China and Tibet you see people of all kinds. The term "tribal area" is a very vague one. As a matter of fact there is as much difference between one tribe and another, as between a tribe and the plains people. You cannot therefore consider all of them alike. Even now it is quite a possibility that you may have to deal with some of them in a somewhat different way. It is quite possible that they may come up to you even for slight amendments of the Constitution to deal with somebody in a slightly different way if Parliament agrees to it-about minor things, nothing major. But the main thing is to make them grow and feel that they are organic units of this great country and that they can live their lives without being imposed and exploited by others, because that is their great fear. People in the mountains have certain virtues, and certain failings. People in the plains have certain other virtues and certain other failings. Normally, people in the plains are cleverer than the people in the mountains - though I am not prepared to admit that they are better. And people in the plains go to people in the mountains and often exploit them in a financial way, grab their land, and otherwise do a bad deal with them. And so a fear has grown among the people of the mountains all over the Himalayas, if I may say so - not confined to this area of Assam or Kashmir or somewhere in Kumaon-that the people of the plains come and exploit them and take away their lands or other things. Therefore they require protection.

This has nothing to do with this Bill. What I am venturing to point out is that these border areas are difficult areas and that they have to be approached not with a big stick but, psychologically, in a friendly way so that they may feel that they are meeting with friends and not people who impose themselves on them. They have affections on either side; they have marriage ties on either side of the border. They come and go. Culturally

speaking, it is a very mixed area. On the one side there is the Tibetan culture flowing into India, and on the other side there is the typical Indian *culture* going up *there*. It is good that this is so. I do not object to it. But it does create problems, and one had to adjust oneself to those problems by making those People feel that they can live their own lives and grow without imposition, and by their own free will they become nearer and hearer to us. We want the people of Bhutan as a whole to be much closer to India and looking to India not only politically but even culturally, than to any other place.

If in order to do that we come to certain minor adjustments of territory, a little bit of forest etc., without upsetting anybody, I do not see how we do the slightest injury to our great country. In fact we do something which a great country should always do - to show how it looks upon its little brothers in a friendly generous way and protects and helps them to grow.

I submit that this little Bill which my honourable colleague, the Deputy Minister¹², has put forward is a very simple proposition which raises no basic issues, constitutional or political, and which, the House may remember, is a story that started a long time ago, years ago. In fact, before the Republic came into existence under this Constitution the thing was really completed, but owing to certain difficulties in giving effect to it the matter has hung over, and we should finalise it now. Not to do so does not do much good or harm to us. But it does make the people feel that we have not kept our word with them and that something that we had agreed to three years ago and more has been disagreed to and the whole thing is upset and all kinds of difficulties are produced about a very small matter.

¹² B.V. Kesakar

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 18

Cable to K.M. Panikkar¹³

Your telegram 210 dated June 15th Tibet.

We think it is rather odd that in discussing Tibet with you Chou En-lai did not refer at all to our Frontier¹⁴. For our part, we attach more importance to this than no other matters. We are interested, as you know, not only in our direct Frontier but also in Frontiers of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, and we have made it perfectly clear in Parliament that these Frontiers must remain. There is perhaps some advantage in our not ourselves raising this issue. On the other hand I do not quite like Chou En-lai's silence about it when discussing even minor matters.

Your reference to a connecting road via Assam¹⁵ must be due to some misunderstanding. The only feasible road from India to Tibet is in Sikkim via

¹³ New Delhi, 16 June 1952. JN Collection.

¹⁴ Reporting on his talk with Chou En-lai on 14 June, Panikkar stated that "the question of boundary was not touched and no allusion made to any political problems." The Chinese Premier said "he presumed that India had no intention of claiming special rights arising from the unequal treaties of the past and was prepared to negotiate a new and permanent relationship safeguarding legitimate interests." Panikkar added related to "an agreement in principle" about the "transformation" of the Indian Mission in Lhasa "into a proper Consulate-General" as an "immediate practical step" and negotiation for India's "special rights like military posts, trade marts and posts and telegraphs" at suitable times subsequently.

¹⁵ Chou En-lai had expressed Chinese preparedness to build a road from Lhasa up to their frontiers if India built one up to hers. Panikkar had replied that the project involved serious engineering problems and the question would have to be discussed with the Assam Government.

Gangtok to Gyantse. We have no proposals to make any roads in Assam towards Tibetan Frontier. It is true that in our Five Year Plan we intend developing communications in Assam towards Frontier for our internal purposes but these will take a long time.

The only road therefore which can be considered in this connection is via Gangtok. We have already built part of this and made it jeepable. We propose to extend this gradually towards Frontier. The region is mountainous and difficult. I understand that on the other side of the border also for many miles there is difficult mountain terrain. We have no objection to these roads being made; in fact we are making them gradually, but they will take time.

As for our Mission in Lhasa being converted into a Consulate-General we have no objection, we would also be agreeable to opening of Chinese Consulate in Bombay. We would like you to consider however how far it is desirable to have these piecemeal arrangements. We would naturally prefer a general and comprehensive settlement which includes Frontier. In our instructions to you dated 25th January, you were asked to specify our interests including those on the Frontier. We presume you have done so. If so, we can presume that Chou En-lai's silence means some kind of acquiescence. It is not for us to suggest any reconsideration. At the same time I should like to be assured on this point. I leave it to you to exercise your discretion in this matter.¹⁶

¹⁶ In a clarification of Chou En-lai's conversation with Panikkar on 14 June, handed to T.N. Kaul, Indian Charge d'Affaires, on 10 July 1952, the Chinese Foreign Office stated that Chou En-lai had said that the "Chinese Government would like to state a principle at the same time solving specific problems and then follow this up with successive solution of other specific problem." The Chinese Government added that Chou En-lai felt "existing situation of Sino-Indian relationship in Tibetan China was scar left by Britain in course of their past aggression against China. For this Government of India was not responsible." and that the

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 19

Cable to Indian Mission, Lhasa¹⁷

Your telegram 90¹⁸ dated 5th September is rather disturbing as it indicates that our policy is not fully understood. That policy is to recognize that Tibet is under Chinese suzerainty and, subject to that, to protect our own interests in Tibet. Otherwise, we do not wish to interfere in internal affairs of Tibet and we can certainly be no parties to any secret or other activities against the Chinese. That would be both practically and morally wrong. It is for Tibetans and Chinese to settle their problems. Our interests now within Tibet are limited and our chief concern is proper maintenance of our frontier line. This we have made quite clear to the Chinese Government and on that there can be no yielding. We have already agreed to convert our representative in Tibet into a Consul General. That itself indicates what future position is going to be. It would be improper and unwise for our representative to get

"relations between new China and new Government of India in Tibet should be built a new through negotiations."

¹⁷ New Delhi, 6 September 1952. JN Collection. This cable was repeated to Political Officer, Sikkim.

¹⁸ The telegram stated that the Chinese occupation of Tibet had led to the emergence of three political groups-(1) a pro-Chinese group which supported Chinese expansion in Tibet; (2) a neutral group which was not aligned with any major political group nor was it unfriendly to the Chinese; and (3) a third group claiming to be the champions of Tibetan freedom and culture. This group was in need of funds to build up its units in Tibetan villages and amongst the middle classes. Funds were available from foreign countries particularly from the USA, but the group did not wish to receive help from the countries which had nothing in common with Tibet. It looked upon India for help and sought a loan of Rs .2 lakhs.

involved in Tibetan domestic affairs or intrigues. We are naturally friendly towards Tibetans, as we have been in the past, but we must not give them any impression of possibility of interference or help. Therefore, any question of loan as suggested is completely out of the question. We have to judge these matters from larger world point of view which probably our Tibetan friends have no means of appreciating.

Any appraisal of Tibetan situation is helpful, but the appraisal by one particular party can hardly be objective. What we could like is objective appraisal having regard not only to internal but also external factors.

Our own appraisal is that owing to geography and climate and other factors, it is difficult for Chinese Government to exercise full control over Tibet. But if any challenge to their authority takes place, they will easily crush it ruthlessly and this will result in ending of such autonomy as Tibet might otherwise have.

We are particularly concerned with our border State like Sikkim, Bhutan, and Nepal and in no event will we tolerate any intrusion into these States. We can be of greater assistance not only to ourselves but to others by maintaining friendly and straight forward relations with China and, at the same time, showing firmness where our vital interests are concerned. It is necessary, therefore, to avoid any activities which might endanger those friendly relations and embarrass.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 20

Cable to N. Raghavan¹⁹

10 December 1952

I have sent you full appraisal of situation regarding Korean Resolution and suggestions as to how to explain situation to Chinese Government.²⁰ I want to make it clear that while we intend maintaining our friendly approach there should be no element of apology on our part as to what we had done. Our attitude towards Chinese Government should always be a combination of friendliness and firmness. If we show weakness, advantage will be taken of this immediately.

This applies to any development that might take place or in reference to our frontier problems between Tibet and Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh and rest of India. In regard to this entire frontier we have to maintain an attitude of firmness. Indeed there is nothing to discuss there and we have made that previously clear to the Chinese Government. Bhutan is independent in a way but is protected by us and its foreign affairs are our responsibility.²¹ Hence even in regard to Bhutan we do not propose to tolerate any interference. The old McMahon line is considered to be our frontier and we shall adhere to it.

This is only for you information and guidance. Nothing need be done about it at present.

¹⁹ New Delhi, 10 December 1952, JM Collections.

²⁰ See ante, pp. 453-54.

²¹ Article 2 of the Indo-Bhutan Treaty 1949 stated that the Government of India will not interfere in the internal administration of Bhutan and "Government of Bhutan agrees to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in its external relations."

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 21

North-Eastern Frontier Situation²²

I have read these papers with interest. It is clear that we should remain wide-awake about our North-Eastern frontier situation from Ladakh right up to Bhutan and Assam. Mr. Sinha's²³ note is helpful in drawing our attention to various present and possible dangers.

2. But I find Mr. Sinha's approach to be coloured very much by certain ideas and conceptions which prevent him from taking an objective view of the situation. The note starts by reference to the lust for conquest of the Chinese and is throughout based on this. Mr. Sinha looks back with a certain nostalgia to the past when the British exercised a good deal of control over Tibet and he would have liked very much for India to take the place of the British of those days. As a matter of fact, the weakness of our position in Tibet has been that we are successors, to some extent, of an imperial power which had pushed its way into Tibet. When that imperial power has ceased to have any strength to function in the old way, it is patent that we cannot do so, even if we so wished. We do not, in fact, wish to do so in that particular way. What we are really interested in is our own security maintenance of our frontiers intact.

3. It serves little purpose to think regretfully of past days and past ways. That is only done by people who have been pushed aside by the advance of history and who can only think of the past when they played an important

²² Note to the Secretary-General and Secretary, MEA, 5 March 1953. JN Collection Extracts.

²³ S. Sinha, who was officer in charge of the Indian Mission in Tibet in 1950, was Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of External Affairs at this time.

role in the historic process. The biggest event since the last War is the rise of Communist China. It is totally immaterial whether we like it or dislike it. It is a fact. It followed naturally that a strong Chinese Government had done with more or less success. It followed also that there was no power, however big, which could resist that claim in Tibet. Certainly we could not do so. To take up an attitude of resistance without the strength to follow it up would have been political folly of the first magnitude. Therefore, we had to accept the changes that took place. We shall have to accept any other changes internal to Tibet. But one thing we are not prepared to accept is any modification of or intrusion across our frontiers. Therefore, we must concentrate on that and not think vaguely of other matters.

4. While there is much in Mr. Sinha's report that has a basis of truth, this is put forward in such an exaggerated and emotional way that it loses force. I am sorry that a representative of ours should allow his objective analysis to be affected in this way. That does not help in understanding a situation.

5. We live in a revolutionary period when the whole of Asia is in a state of turmoil and change. We have to keep up with that change and not merely regret the days of pre-change. In the ultimate analysis we have to build up our strength. That strength means not so much frontier outposts and the like but internal strength—political and economic. One of the biggest things in Asia today and in the future is the rate of progress of India and China. . If India makes good, more especially on the economic front, in the course of the next five to ten years, then India's future is not only assured but is very promising. If we fail internally, then of course anything can happen on our frontiers or elsewhere.

6. We have, of course, to be alert and vigilant on our borders. This is not so much from the point of view of resisting any major incursion but rather to make clear to China and the world that we are going to stick to our frontier.

Any challenge to our frontiers will have to be met. In fact, it means a challenge to the whole of India, and not merely to the frontiers.

7. As Mr. Kapur²⁴ says, and many other reasons can be advanced also, no major challenge to these frontiers is likely in the near future. If we are alert, no challenge will take place within a reasonable time and possibly even later.

8. It must always be remembered that the strength of our position lies in certain geographical factors which cannot easily be changed or overcome—not so much to Himalayan mountains but the added and inhospitable land of Tibet on the other side which cannot support or logistically provide for any large forces. The weakness of our position on those borders lies in the fact that Bhutanese etc., are closely allied culturally and socially to the Tibetans and naturally look towards Tibet from that point of view.

9. The weakest parts of the frontier are those lying between Bhutan and Sikkim. In a sense there is graver danger in Nepal, if that country goes to pieces.

10. The general policy we should pursue is:

Strengthen our communication system with the border areas and have well-equipped check-posts there.

Strengthen our Intelligence system.

Develop these border areas economically and otherwise and thus bring them more and more within the orbit of India's economic and national life by making them feel that they are integral parts of India and profit by it.

11. In regard to Bhutan the difficulties arose because we do not function there at all or hardly at all. Nevertheless, as Mr. Kapur pointed out, the position in Bhutan is not so bad, so far as we are concerned, as Mr. Sinha seems to imagine. We should develop these relations and more particularly communications there. This has to be done with tact.

²⁴ B.K. Kapur, India's political officer in Gangtok, Sikkim.

12. For the last year or possibly two years the UP Government has been writing to us about their border with Tibet and the difficulties of maintaining any check-posts there because of lack of communications and accommodation. In spite of urgent reminders from the UP Government, the matter has got stuck up either in the Home Ministry here or in the Finance Ministry. This should be looked into, as this is important.

13. We should like, of course, to have as full information as possible about Tibet. How exactly to do it is not clear to me. If Mr. Sinha would apply his mind to this rather than indulging in fears and speculations, he would be much more helpful.

14. There is no question of our making India the main route of supplies to Tibet for the Chinese. We should not agree to this. But, on the whole, even from the larger political point of view, it seems desirable that a trickle of supplies should be allowed to go through and this type of contact maintained. That itself has a certain psychological significance, demonstrating the reliance of Tibet on India. Of course, trade should be encouraged, where possible.

15. Whenever any incident takes place in Tibet involving any affront or discourtesy to Indians or India's interests, we should take a strong line. A strong line does not mean an offensive line, but it does mean that we do not intend to submit to such treatment. As I have said above, we can only remain in Tibet in any shape or form with China's acquiescence. But so long as we remain there, we must remain there with dignity.

16. There are references in Mr. Sinha's note to Tibetans boasting about their claims to Bhutan or parts of North-East India. Whenever any such thing is said publicly or formally or semi-formally, we should take immediate objection to it and make it clear that we are not prepared to tolerate any such claim language.

17. When Sardar Pannikar was in Peking, the question arose of our settling our frontier with Tibet, that is the MacMahon line, finally with the Chinese Government. Mr. Panikkar was of opinion that we had made our position clear to the Chinese Government and that it will serve no useful purpose to raise that question formally at that stage.²⁵ We agreed at the time. Perhaps the present is not a suitable time to raise this question. But if occasion offers itself and especially if any challenge to that frontier is made, then we shall have to make this perfectly clear.

18. We have to deal directly in our Ministry with the North-East Frontier Agency. That is our responsibility and we should keep the development of those areas constantly in mind. Fortunately the Governor of Assam is deeply interested in this matter and has helped greatly by extensive tours. In a wider sense, it is our responsibility to look after the entire border even apart from the North-East Frontier Agency. External Affairs should keep itself in close touch with developments along this frontier in Kashmir, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Assam so that a coordinated policy might be pursued in cooperation with the other Ministries or State Governments concerned.

²⁵ In a cable to Nehru on 17 June 1952, K.M. Panikkar argued that India's position on the frontier with Tibet was well known to China, and as Chou En-lai had not raised the border issue in his interviews with him, his silence should be presumed to be acquiescence, if not acceptance.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II Volume 23

Residual Problems Regarding Tibet²⁶

30 August 1953

I have read through all these papers and notes. The course suggested in them seems to me to be much too slow. I think we should move more rapidly and more effectively in this matter.

2. I have drafted a telegram, which should be sent to our Ambassador in Peking, conveying a message²⁷ on my behalf to Premier Chou En-lai...

4. As for the points in issue, I do not think there is any doubt in our mind about the line we should take up. We shall undoubtedly have to withdraw our military escorts. If the Chinese Government want us to remove our Post and Telegraph Offices on the trade routes to Gyantse²⁸ we shall have to agree. But they must offer sufficient substitutes for them. There should be no difficulty about normal trade or trade agencies or right of pilgrimage. Anyhow, all these matters have to be discussed with them.

5. For the present, we need not raise the question of the frontier, but this will have to be brought in a larger settlement. In that settlement, I should like to make clear our special position in the border States. Perhaps an occasion might arise even before that settlement for us to make this clear. But, for the present, no mention need be made.

²⁶ Note, 30 August 1953. JN Collection. Extracts.

²⁷ See the next item.

²⁸ According to the Indo-Tibetan Trade Regulations of 1914, India had its trade agency at Gyantse, where the Indian Trade Agent, with his small military escorts, was posted. Gyantse was also the terminus of the Indo-Tibetan telegraph line maintained and run by the Government of India.

6. I agree that it will be desirable to confer a Military rank on the Maharaja of Bhutan. This matter might be taken up with the Defence Ministry.

7. For the present, we shall send my message to Premier Chou En-lai and give an Aide Memoire to the Chinese Ambassador here. The Ambassador should be informed that I have sent a direct message to Premier Chou En-lai on this subject...

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II Volume 24

The Beijing Conference²⁹

3 December 1953

I agree generally with this not for the discussions at the Peking Conference.³⁰

2. I agree about the attitude we should take up in regard to the frontier. We should not raise this question. If the Chinese raise it, we should express our surprise and point out that this is a settled issue. Further, that during the last two years or so, when reference was frequently made about Indo-Chinese or Indo-Tibetan problems, there has never been any reference to this frontier issue and it is surprising that this should be brought up now. Our delegation cannot discuss it.

3. We should avoid walking out unless the Chinese insist on taking up this question.³¹ If such an eventuality occurs, the matter will no doubt be referred to us.

4. Regarding the village of Minsar in Western Tibet, which has belonged to the Kashmir State, it is clear that we shall have to give it up, if this question

²⁹ Note to the Secretary General, 3 December 1953. JN Collection.

³⁰ This note presented the main points that were to arise during that were to arise during the discussions at the Beijing Conference: 1. the question of India's frontier with Tibet: Indo-Tibetan trade and trade agencies, 3. Freedom of movement of Indian and Tibetan traders and pilgrims, 4. passports and visas, 5. telegraph, post office and hospitals 6. security guards and escorts and 7. Special position of Bhutan.

³¹ K.M. Panikkar had suggested in his note on the proposed Beijing Conference that if China insisted on reopening the whole issues of the frontier, the Indian delegation could walk out of the conference and break off the negotiations.

is raised. We need not raise it. If it is raised, we should say that we recognize the strength of the Chinese contention and we are prepared to consider it and recommend it. But the matter will have to be referred to the Kashmir Government. It can of course be referred by telegram through us. The point is that we should not come to a final agreement without gaining the formal assent of the Kashmir Government.

5. There are references in the note to certain disputed areas in Ladakh Hunza, etc. I imagine that some of these are in the Pakistan-occupied territory, like Hunza. If so, we can hardly discuss these with them and we can point out that all this area is under dispute with Pakistan.

6. Regarding trade, I agree with the Commerce Ministry that we should not restrict trade between India and Tibet. Tibet is our natural market and we should develop it normally.

7. As regards prohibited articles, this prohibition should generally continue. But we might be a little more generous in regard to petrol, etc. A few thousand gallons does not make any difference to us, nor does it make any great difference on the other side from the military points of view. But, as a bargaining counter, we might agree to relax our rules to a small extent in regard to POL.

8. The question of free transit of foreign goods from India can hardly arise, except perhaps in theory, as China hardly purchases foreign goods. It would be interesting if China claimed the right under the Barcelona Convention, of 1921. That itself would slightly weaken China's attempt to bypass or reject old conventions and customs. Anyway, it is clear that it is physically impossible for us to use the Sikkim route to any large extent.

9. I do not know that it will serve any useful purpose for us to ask for the restoration of the old trade route between Sinkiang and Kashmir. That route passes through territory held by Pakistan. It is exceedingly unlikely that we shall get back this territory. However, there is no harm in mentioning this.

10. I agree with what is said about our trade agencies. Gertok is important. Yatung especially, and, to some extent, Gyantse are likely to become more important as trade between India and Tibet increases. They are on the main route. Therefore, it is eminently reasonable that we should have some trade agents there or at least at Yatung.

11. If Bhutan is mentioned in any way, we should make it perfectly clear that External Affairs of Bhutan are under our direct guidance. We should not raise this question. But inferentially, this fact should be brought out and further that the Chinese will have to deal with us in regard to External Affairs relating to Bhutan.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 25

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.³² 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.³³ 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.

³² See *ante*, p.455.

³³ 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.

We do not encourage in India our officials or military officers to titix 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.³⁴ A number of Nepali organisations are organising satyagraha in Bhutan. They have made their base in Indian territory. I have just received news that there was a conflict between them and presumably Bhutan troops.³⁵ 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.³⁶ 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

³⁴ 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.

³⁵ 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.

³⁶ 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.

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.

To Bisnuram Medhi³⁷

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,³⁸ 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.³⁹

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 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

³⁷ File No. 57/28154-Poll., MHA. Also available in JN Collection. A copy of this letter was sent to K.N. Kaija.

³⁸ 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.

³⁹ 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.

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

To Maharaja of Bhutan⁴⁰

New Delhi
9th May 1954

My dear Maharaja Saheb,

Thank you for your letter of the 28th March.⁴¹ I am sorry for the delay in answering it, As a matter of fact it took some time to reach me and then I

⁴⁰ JN Collection

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 Assam⁴² and West Bengal and also our Political Officer in Sikkim.⁴³ 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 functions 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 our Constitution. Apart from this,

⁴¹ 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.

⁴² 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.

⁴³ B.K. Kapur.

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 in 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 Dorji⁴⁴ 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 case 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 they are being treated equally and with justice by the authorities.

⁴⁴ 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, 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

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series 2 Volume 26

Measures to Control Floods⁴⁵

6- I suggest, therefore, that we should move in this matter:

1. In regard to Nepal, we should point out to them the disastrous consequences of these floods both to Nepal and to India and the necessity of having the fullest data about these rivers and then evolving schemes, which will no doubt be joint schemes so far as Nepal territory is concerned. We have thought too much on the lines of big and very expensive dams and hydro-electric works, etc. But there are other ways also of dealing with this question. In any event, our approach will have to be many-sided. Therefore, steps have to be taken for the survey of these rivers and surrounding terrains by competent engineers.

2. Bhutan: The same applies to Bhutan except that our ignorance about Bhutan is complete. We should point out to the Government of Bhutan in forcible language that this is a dangerous situation for us and, no doubt, for Bhutan also. The distance between the Bhutan territory and the plains of North Bengal and Assam is very little, that is to say, between the Brahmaputra and the mountains in Bhutan is a short distance. A river coming down in spate from Bhutan suddenly overwhelms us and covers the whole area with water. It is essential,

⁴⁵ Note to the Secretary General, MEA, Foreign Secretary and Cabinet Secretary, 18 September 1954, JN Collection. Also available in File No. 17(320)54-PMS. A copy of this note was sent to Gulzarilal Nanda.

therefore, that some steps should be taken to survey the upper reaches of these rivers that come down from Bhutan to India, Otherwise, there 'will be continuing disasters. We suggest, therefore, that these upper reaches of these rivers should be surveyed and we are prepared to organise this survey in cooperation with the Bhutan Government.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II Volume 28

2. Attitude Towards Bhutan⁴⁶

I agree that our general approach to Bhutan should continue as before. There is no question of our trying to rush or push things there. This will not help and, in a sense, there is no need for hurry. At the same time, of course, we should be alert and develop relations with Bhutan.

2. There is no question of my going to Bhutan for the inauguration of the new Constitution. In fact, it is exceedingly doubtful if I can go there for any purpose because of the time involved. If airfields, etc., are made, then it would be a different matter. Indira Gandhi also is not likely to go. She has not been keeping well and this long journey might be too much for her.

3. Apa Pant⁴⁷ should certainly go there, and it would be a good thing to have occasional visits of our people to Bhutan later.

4. So long as the Dorji family⁴⁸ and Sardar D.K. Sen⁴⁹ occupy positions of importance in Bhutan, we are likely to have to deal with hostile atmosphere. They are bound to think, and rightly, that any change in Bhutan will affect their personal and vested interests there.

⁴⁶ .Note to the Foreign Secretary, 17 March 1955. .JN Collection.

⁴⁷ Apasaheb Balasaheb Pant (1912-1992); Political Officer in Sikkim and Bhutan with control over Indian Missions in Tibet, 1955-1961.

⁴⁸ The Dorji family was in close familial collaboration with the Wangchuk dynasty, extending over a 75-year period. This alliance had provided the foundation for the creation of a stable and centralised monarchical polity after 1907.

⁴⁹ .(b. 1897); Adviser to the Bhutan Government.

5. The Maharaja⁵⁰ and his wife⁵¹ are welcome to come to India but we must not overdo this kind of thing. I forget when he came here last but it was not long ago so far as I can remember.⁵²
6. The question of appointing an Indian Agent should be kept open, but no undue pressure need be used. It may be mentioned whenever a suitable time for this arises.
7. I agree that it will not be right for Rustomji⁵³ to be appointed an Indian Agent. The Dewan of Sikkim obviously cannot be Government of India's Agent for Bhutan.
8. The question of the Bhutanese asking for the appointment of an Agent in Delhi has not been previously raised. If it is raised, we can consider it. I have no particular objection.
9. We should certainly simplify the Issue of permits, etc., to avoid unnecessary delay and inconvenience.

⁵⁰ Jigme Dorji Wangchuk (1928-1972); ascended the throne of Bhutan on 27 October 1952 as the third King in line of the Wangchuk dynasty and ruled till his death in 1972.

⁵¹ Ashi Kesang Wangchuk

⁵² The Maharaja and Maharani reached New Delhi on 11 January 1954 to have a tour of some cities in India and to participate in the Republic Day celebrations

⁵³ Nari Kaikhosru Rustomji (b. 1919); joined [CS, 1941; Adviser to Governor of Assam for Tribal areas and states of Manipur, Tripura and Cooch-Bihar, 1948-54; Dewan of Sikkim, 1954-59; Adviser to Governor of Assam for NEFA and Nagaland, 1959-63; Adviser to Bhutan Government, 1963-66; Chief Secretary to Assam Government, 1966- 1971; Chief Secretary to Meghalaya, 1971-77; Publications: *Enchanted Frontiers: Sikkim, Bhutan and India's North-Eastern Borderlands* (1971); *Bhutan: The Dragon Kingdom in Crisis* (1978).

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Series II Volume 29

Peaceful Path to Progress⁵⁴

...Now we cannot tolerate any deaths due to famine. We have to make all possible arrangements for flood relief. But I want you to remember that the bond between the provinces and the Himalayas cannot be broken. Therefore, the situation has to be faced in varying degrees. It is wrong to get into a panic every year over floods. We must make arrangements to minimize the damage that occurs. But we cannot stop the rains. Moreover the floods do some good too. Sometimes when there are heavy rains in Bhutan or Tibet, we have to suffer the consequences. Earlier we used to be taken completely by surprise. This year for the first time, we had flood warnings from Bhutan and Tibet, and I hope that the system of information sharing will be strengthened further. Then we will be able to take some precautions. In short, we must not be disheartened by natural events like floods. We must understand that these are phenomena which date back to millions of years and do good as well as some damage. Yes, now we have the resource to control the situation to some extent, which we are doing. With greater cooperation, we can succeed even more. But there is no cause for panic. We must concentrate all our strength and energy on the task of progress and particularly on eradicating poverty from the country. A strong economy is the only solution to our problems. Poverty can be eradicated only through mutual cooperation.

⁵⁴ Speech at a public meeting, Guwahati, 27 August 1955, AIR tapes, NMML. Original in Hindi.

Brahmaputra Floods and their Lessons⁵⁵

Sisters and brothers,

You may remember that I came here exactly a year ago when the Brahmaputra was in full spate and was devouring the city.⁵⁶ Huge trees had fallen and innumerable houses including the Circuit House disappeared in front of my eyes. It was a terrible sight. We had tried to build a stone wall but even that disappeared. But we did not panic. This year also, we should not give in to panic. There is no place in this world for those who panic. Those who are bold and prepared to help themselves can weather any crisis. There has been a great deal of thinking on how to save Dibrugarh and the nearby areas. Work began last November and gathered momentum in January. You have seen with your own eyes the result of all that work. The flood levels this year were higher than last year.⁵⁷ We used to get reports in Delhi. The higher the water level rises, the greater the danger. But the work done by our engineers proved enduring and succeeded in stemming the fury of the Brahmaputra this time. In spite of the fact that the water rose to a higher level this year, it did not do any damage to Dibrugarh. This is no small achievement, particularly since it was done in such a short time, within six or seven months. Huge boulders were thrown into the river and held in place by steel wires. It was a problem even to find the stones here. They had to be transported over two or three hundred miles. Five train loads were carried every day. Stone spurs were then constructed and

⁵⁵ Speech at a public meeting, Dibrugarh, 20 August 1955, AIR tapes, NMML (Original in Hindi).

⁵⁶ Around the third week of August 1954, extensive damage was caused throughout Assam by high floods in the Brahmaputra. Nehru was in Dibrugarh on 5 and 6 September 1954. See Selected Works (second series), Vol. 26, pp. 115-118.

⁵⁷ The river level at Dibrugarh by August 1955 had risen 1.09 feet above the highest level reached during floods in 1954.

everything was completed before the fifteenth of June. And Dibrugarh was saved this year from the onslaught of the Brahmaputra.

This was a big step. But the important thing is the lesson that we have learnt from this experience. People from all walks of life cooperated fully in the effort. It was, of course, the responsibility of the Assam Government and of the Central Government. The Central Ministry of Irrigation and Power played an important role. The railways were responsible for transporting five trainloads of stones every day. The armed forces helped a great deal too, so did the Department of Science and Natural Resources by supplying aerial photographs. Big tasks need the cooperation of many departments, and pooling of resources, knowledge and experience. I want you to understand the importance of cooperation for big projects like this.

I referred to the role of the armed forces. The students of Dibrugarh and the nearby areas and others also helped a great deal. Then we also got some help from outside. For the first time this year, we got information from Tibet, where the Brahmaputra originates, about the floods. Earlier we used to be absolutely in the dark. Some rivers flow into India from Tibet and others from Bhutan. But we knew nothing till the floods were actually upon us without warning.

So this year we requested Bhutan and the Chinese Government to keep us informed which they did for the first time. For the last few months we have been getting reports from three different sources about the level of the Brahmaputra waters and the likelihood of floods. But the truth is that the waters of the Brahmaputra which flow into India are not from Tibet or China but from our own mountains in the North Eastern Frontier Agency.

Whatever it is, we have succeeded because of the cooperation among the Government of Assam and the Central Government, various ministries, engineers, scientists, students and other volunteer workers, coupled with the information received from Tibet and China. It is true that the greatest

responsibility rested with our engineers who must be congratulated on completing this task successfully. But the people who should be congratulated even more are the citizens and volunteers who worked to complete this task.

What is the lesson to be learnt from this? There are great tasks waiting to be done. They can be taken up successfully only by cooperation between the Government and the people and pooling of resources and energies of the entire nation. No big step can ever be taken by the Government or the people alone. It requires the cooperation of all concerned.

So we have before us the picture of a great task completed successfully. Some work remains to be done. But it has been demonstrated quite clearly that we can fight the floods and save Dibrugarh. After six months of hard work, we are fully confident that we can safeguard Dibrugarh and the adjoining areas fully from the onslaught of the Brahmaputra. Please sit down. It is hot and you are in great discomfort. I am in the shade. It would have been better to have held the meeting in the evening.

Approach to Bhutanese Problems⁵⁸

I have read this report by the Foreign Secretary about his visit to Bhutan⁵⁹ and found it very interesting and instructive. I agree with his main conclusions and, more especially, that our approach to the Bhutanese problems should be somewhat varied in emphasis. I think he is right in suggesting that we should give up the idea of pressing for closer political

⁵⁸ Note to the Foreign Secretary. MEA. 15 July 1955. JN Collection.

⁵⁹ R.K. Nehru, the Foreign Secretary, and some other officials visited Sikkim, Tibet and Bhutan from 6 June to 2 July 1955. It took them four days from Tibet-Bhutan border to reach Paro in western Bhutan where the Maharaja received them for a four and a half days' stay till 23 June, and the Foreign Secretary submitted his report on the tour and his talks with the Maharaja and Jigmc Dorji, the Prime Minister on 5 July 1955.

contacts or of asking for a Political Agent in Bhutan.⁶⁰ We should concentrate more on the social and economic approach.⁶¹

2. I have no doubt that O.K. Sen⁶² is their principal adviser on political matters and O.K. Sen's advice is seldom likely to be in favour of India. However, quite apart from O.K. Sen and his advice, we should lay greater emphasis on the social and economic side. Even there, there should be no attempt at any imposition. Help should be given when asked for and not thrust upon Bhutan.

3. The principal help that I envisage is to give opportunities to the Bhutanese for training in India. This training can be for:

- (1) survey work;
- (2) medical and health;
- (3) Hindi language and general education;'
- (4) engineering;
- (5) any other that is suggested might be considered.

⁶⁰ RK Nehru had commented that Bhutan had not accepted India's demand for a resident Political Agent there because of her concern about safeguarding her status which was higher than that of Sikkim. as the stationing of a Political Agent was the old British method of bringing a country under control. Jigme Dorji however, had told him that some time later they might agree to this appointment when they had a fixed capital. At this time, the Maharaja. with the entire governmental machinery moved from valley to valley to maintain his hold on the administration.

⁶¹ Suggesting closer relation with Bhutan through social and economic channels. he had commented on monarchy administration proposals for framing a constitution and codifying the civil and criminal laws and land reforms in Bhutan. He also mentioned the problems of development of communications. economic survey. training of medical personnel. learning of languages especially of Hindi language and monasteries. He also commented on the conflict between the Bhutanese and the Nepalese who were confined to the southern terai of Bhutan and were regarded as foreigners. They were not allowed to go to the North. not represented in the Militia in the councilor in the assembly, which assisted the Maharaja.

⁶² Adviser to the Bhutan Government.

4. If they require some persons from India to help them in any of these activities or training, we should try to send to them such persons. But the initiative should come from them.
5. I do not know how far efforts to study the flood problem have gone. This is important for us.
6. It is certainly desirable for the Maharaja and the Maharani as well as others in Bhutan to visit India and to see the work being done here.
7. I should myself like to go to Bhutan, but at the moment I do not know when I can do so. Presumably, it will have to be in summer time. This summer is out of the question.
8. I am thinking of writing a letter to the Maharaja.⁶ In the course of this letter I could mention the Foreign Secretary's visit and my own desire to go to Bhutan to pay the Maharaja a visit. Will Foreign Secretary indicate any points that I might mention in this letter.
9. A copy of this note might be sent to Shri Apa Pant.⁶³

To Maharaja of Bhutan⁶⁴

New Delhi
16 July 1955

My dear Maharaja Sahib,

I have just returned from a long tour abroad. On my return, I received a report from our Foreign Secretary, R.K. Nehru, about his visit to Bhutan. I was naturally interested in his report and was happy to read his account of his visit. May I express my gratitude to you for the courtesy and hospitality which you gave to our party.

⁶³ Political Officer in Sikkim and Bhutan with control over Indian Mission in Tibet.

⁶⁴ JN Collection. A copy of this letter was sent to the Foreign Secretary.

As I told you when you were here⁶⁵ and were good enough to invite me to visit Bhutan, I would very much like to go there. My difficulty is how to find the time for it. But the attraction of visiting Bhutan and meeting Your Highness again is great and perhaps sometimes or other I shall manage to reach there. I fear it cannot be this year.

I hope, however, that you and the Maharani will visit us again. It is always a pleasure to meet you both. Apart from this, we would welcome your visiting many of our projects which I am sure will be of interest to you. We are engaged, as you no doubt know, in a great effort to build up our country. Having nearly come to the end of the our First Five Year Plan, we are now preparing the Second Five Year Plan which is likely to be much more ambitious. In this, we are laying greater stress on heavy industry and, at the same time, on village or household industries. One of the developments in India which I consider most important and which is nearest my heart, is the Community Project Scheme and the National Extension Service for rural areas. This affects our vast rural population. It has already spread to about a hundred thousand villages and has brought about a remarkable change there. I am sure this will interest you as it is particularly applicable to underdeveloped countries.

I have recently learnt about the land reforms which Your Highness has introduced.⁶⁶ I am very happy to learn of this because land reforms form an essential foundation for progress in other directions. I am glad also that you are promoting education and health services.

⁶⁵ Maharaja Jigme Dorji Wangchuk visited India in January 1954 and participated in the Republic Day celebrations.

⁶⁶ He put a ceiling of thirty acres on large landholdings, distributed his own lands to his subjects, made the land revenue equitable and abolished it altogether in case of poor farmers with smaller holdings. The land tax accounted for three-fourths of the total revenue of Rs fifty lakh, paid mostly in kind. The Maharaja was trying to persuade the peasants to convert it into a cash payment.

Sometimes ago, we approached Your Highness' Government about the question of flood control which is troubling us greatly. I am glad that an agreement has been reached about this matter and that your Government will cooperate with our Government in this joint task.⁶⁷ I need not tell you that we shall always be happy to help Your Highness by sending technicians or experts to Bhutan whenever they are needed. An even more effective method of helping will be to train Bhutanese young men and women in our institutes in India.

With all good wishes to you and to the Maharani.

Yours very sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

Policy towards Bhutan⁶⁸

I have read this note by Shri Panikkar and I agree with him.⁶⁹

2. I think we need not worry at all about Chinese or Tibetan claims on Bhutan or Nepal.⁷⁰ Whatever might have happened in the past, and there is hardly anything that has happened to support these claims, I cannot imagine

⁶⁷ R.K. Nehru had reported on 5 July that an agreement between the two Governments had been reached about the initial steps to be taken in this regard. Accordingly flood control stations were opened at various places and the Bhutanese staff trained.

⁶⁸ Note to the Foreign Secretary, 17 July 1955. JN Collection.

⁶⁹ On 16 July, K.M. Panikkar, Member, States Reorganisation Commission and former Ambassador to China, had sent his observations on a note on Bhutan written by R.K. Nehru on 5 July 1955

⁷⁰ R.K. Nehru had written that the Chinese claimed. last in 1910 and repeated in 1948 through the Tibetan Kashag, that Bhutan was their vassal state and "we cannot have special relations with Bhutan without their concurrence". They gave transit visas to the Indian party but took no special notice of the official visit to Bhutan. Panikkar's view was that though the situation required careful handling there was no serious danger of the Chinese putting forward any claim to suzerainty over Bhutan.

any such claims being advanced now. Our policy of course should be the positive policy of friendship with these areas and contacts and help.

3. Therefore, as we have said before, we must give no impression to the Bhutan Government that we have any desire to have political or other control over it. We should not push our men there and it is only when they want any help that we should send it.

4. You mentioned that the chief help they want is financial help. I would not rule this out. But if this question is raised, it would be better, I think, to give them some financial credit here for purchases in India. However, this question does not arise now.

5. I entirely agree with Shri Panikkar's suggestion for the opening of a high level Hindi school in Kalimpong.⁷¹ I suppose Kalimpong would be the most suitable place for it. This should cater especially for the Sikkimese and the Bhutanese. But it should also invite tribal folk from the surrounding areas. This school should, I think, also encourage the teaching of Tibetan and Bhutanese languages for our people. It may have a section attached to it for this purpose. Also, as Shri Panikkar has said, there might be a small polytechnic attached. The school should be directly under the Central Government who should finance it. I suggest that you might put up a note to this effect and send it to the Education Ministry, with the suggestion that the Education Ministry, after considering the proposal and vetting it, might put up before the Cabinet as a special case.

6. It might be desirable to send a copy of that note or the substance of it to the West Bengal Government for their views.

⁷¹ R.K. Nehru commented on 17 July 1955: "Hindi is a source of strength to us and we must treat it as an instrument for projecting the Centre's influence in our border areas."

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Series II Volume 36

Talks with Chou En-lai-III ⁷²

26. The relations of Sikkim and Bhutan with China were different from Tibet's relations with China. Sikkim and Bhutan were never under China and even the imperialist powers never considered them as such, as they did in regard to Tibet. The Ching dynasty appointed Governors and stationed troops in Tibet.

⁷² Note to N.R. Pillai, Secretary General, MEA, R.K. Nehru, India's Ambassador in Beijing and Apa Pant, political Officer in Sikkim, 1 January 1957. Jawaharlal Nehru Collection.

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Series II, Volume 43

July-September 1958

To the King of Bhutan⁷³

New Delhi

25th July, 1958

My dear Maharaja⁷⁴

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 you have expressed in it. We have very pleasant recollections of your visit to India.⁷⁵

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

⁷³ JN Collection

⁷⁴ Jigme Dorji Wangchuk

⁷⁵ 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

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 have to be in the second half of September as I have to be in Delhi early in October.⁷⁶

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

⁷⁶ 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

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Volume 44

(September 1- October 31, 1958)

To Chief Ministers⁷⁷

Gangtok, Sikkim

16th September 1958

My dear Chief Minister,

I came to Gangtok in Sikkim today from Delhi. Tomorrow I proceed on my way to Bhutan, crossing the Nathu La, the pass which leads to the Tibetan Plateau. It is over 14,000 ft above sea level and from it one descends to Tibet. There are various routes to Tibet from India, but, till now, the easiest route to Paro, the summer capital of Bhutan, goes from the Nathu La and crosses a small corner of Tibet. Thus, I shall have a brief glimpse of Tibet and I shall spend a night at Yatung, which is about sixteen miles across the border.

2. I shall be going to a country, Bhutan, which is more cut off from the world than perhaps any other country. No papers will reach me, no newspapers, though of course I shall have the inevitable wireless. As I shall be away for over two weeks, I feel like sending you a letter before I leave for these rather inaccessible regions. I leave behind many problems, internal and external. Perhaps it was not right for me to seek an escape from them, even for a while. But I felt that a promise long given should be kept and very

⁷⁷ File No. 25(30)/58-PMS. This letter has also been published in G. Parthasarathi (ed.), *Jawaharlal Nehru: Letters to Chief Ministers 1947-1964*, Vol. 5 (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1989), pp. 133-139.

elaborate arrangements have been made for my journey in Bhutan and, to some extent, in the little corner of Tibet which I shall pass. It would not have been fair on my part to call off my visit at the last moment. Also, I must confess that I had a powerful urge to go to Bhutan. That urge is always there when high mountains are concerned. But it was especially present in the case of Bhutan, which is one of the very few countries which still live in a past age, unaffected by what is called modern life. Aircraft do not go there nor railway trains nor automobiles. Indeed, there are no roads there and I do not think any four-wheeled or two wheeled vehicle has ever appeared in Bhutan. One travels on foot or on the back of a pony by difficult bridle paths. Apart from the Nathu La, the pass between India and Tibet, there are two higher passes in Bhutan itself which I shall have to cross. Bhutan is sparsely populated and is essentially an agricultural country with peasant farmers. The population probably does not exceed 600,000 or 700,000 in the whole country; this is an estimate for no census has been taken. The people of Bhutan are sturdy and attractive and rightly very jealous of their independence. In fact, the rulers have not welcomed any outsiders. It is a Buddhist country like Sikkim with many affiliations with Tibetan language and culture.

To Chief Ministers⁷⁸

Gangtok, Sikkim

October 15 1958

My dear Chief Minister,

⁷⁸ File No. 25(30)/58-PMS. This letter has also been published in G. Parthasarathi (ed.), Jawaharlal Nehru: Letters to Chief Ministers 1947-1964, Vol. 5 (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1989), pp. 133-139

My last letter to you from Gangtok in Sikkim, on the eve of my journey to Bhutan via Tibet. After I left Gangtok, I was almost entirely cut off from communications till my return to Gangtok two and a half weeks later. I received an occasional message by wireless from Delhi. But this was rarely sent as I had requested that only something that was really important should be forwarded to me. Usually we could listen in to the AIR news broadcasts in the evening, as we had a radio with us. There were no newspapers at all and I had a sensation of being in another world.

2. The little corner of Tibet that I saw upset my idea of that country. I had always thought that on the other side of the Himalayan ranges, there was the high tableland of Tibet, more or less flat and treeless. As a matter of fact, on the other side of the Nathu La, there were the same precipitous mountains covered with thick forests. This was the Chumbi Valley where Yatung is situated and, broadly speaking, it was similar to Himalayan scenery. At the top of the Nathu La ended the road that our engineers had constructed, and on the other side we had to descend by precipitous bridle paths. This road on our side is a remarkable feat for which our engineers deserve great credit. If a road could be built on the other side of the Pass, connecting Yatung, then there would be through road communications between India and Tibet. On the Tibetan side this road will be a much simpler proposition than the one that we have built on our side. Through road traffic would make a great difference to trade as well as to travellers. There is still a considerable inflow of goods from India to Tibet although this has gone down during the last year or two. I was told that upto last year quite a number of automobiles had gone this way after having been taken to pieces and carried by porters.

3. The change from Sikkim to Tibet was noticeable, though not very great. Some little distance before we reached Yatung, we were received by

representatives of the Chinese General in Command at Lhasa⁷⁹ and of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama.⁸⁰ Tibetans peered at us from their houses or from the roadside, curious about us, and yet not quite sure whether they should come near us.

4. Yatung was a small spread out town. The main market road was full of Indian shops. There were, I believe, over ninety such shops, many of them having started business in the course of the last three years, when this trade was highly profitable. Conditions were more difficult now and so a number of these Indian shops were closing up. The Chinese authorities had put up a number of new buildings-schools, hospital, community centre and residential houses for themselves. Our own Trade Agent's house had its own little hospital and buildings for the staff. In Gyantse and Lhasa our representatives were very badly housed. In Gyantse, a great flood two years ago had destroyed our house and over ninety of our personnel had been drowned. It struck me how difficult were the living conditions of the members of our staff in various parts of Tibet. There was the harsh climate and the high altitude; the lack of social life or amenities and a sense of seclusion from the outside world. Only physically tough people could stand these conditions for long.⁸¹

5. On crossing the Tibet-Bhutan border, we were met by the Prime Minister of Bhutan⁸² and a numerous cortege. We journeyed on horseback or mule-back, a long caravan, going ever higher and higher. The Bhutan Government had taken great pains to improve the bridle paths and erect log huts en route for our night rest. The mountain scenery was more attractive and impressive. Some of us had felt a little uncomfortable on the first day of our

⁷⁹ General Chang Ching Wu.

⁸⁰ The highest ranking Lama after the Dalai Lama in Tibet

⁸¹ For Nehru's note written at Para, in Bhutan, on 22 September 1958 regarding Indian Missions in Tibet, see item 331

⁸² Jigme Dorji.

journey because of the height, but soon we grew accustomed to that altitude and nothing untoward happened. We had a doctor with us, who carried all kinds of drugs and medicines and numerous oxygen cylinders. I am glad to say that those oxygen cylinders were never used and ultimately, on our return journey, we left most of these oxygen cylinders at our hospital at Yatung.

6. The next day's journey brought us to two high passes,⁸³ both above 14,500 feet. We left the tree-line and ascended to these heights where only flowers and grass persisted. There were lovely Alpine flowers throughout. It was surprising that in spite of long hours on horseback or sometimes on foot, we felt refreshed after every rest. The air was exhilarating and altogether this visit proved to be quite an exciting event in our lives.

7. When we were approaching within two or three miles of Paro, where the Maharaja was awaiting us, we had to form up into a procession which gradually descended along the mountain side to the valley below. I have seldom seen anything more spectacular than this long procession consisting of people 100 king like medieval knights, dignitaries of the Buddhist church in their special robes, troupes of dancers, etc. Thus we came down the winding road to the valley below where practically the entire population had assembled.

8. We spent five days at Paro. We had met the young Maharaja and his wife⁸⁴ in Delhi some years ago, and they proved to be charming hosts. In theory, the Maharaja is the all-powerful ruler of his little State. In practice, he is very much one of the people, mixing with them and not very different from them.

⁸³ The Chu La and Ha La passes

⁸⁴ Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuk

The Contemporary World⁸⁵

Jawaharlal Nehru: I came back from Bhutan yesterday.⁸⁶ I did not see much of Tibet; I spent nearly two weeks going in and out of Bhutan. It was a remarkable experience for me because it took me to a world which modern science and technology has not affected at all. There were no roads, no vehicles, no automobiles, and all communications were by mountain carts. It was a strange experience into a world perhaps of three or four or five hundred years ago or more. And yet it was not an unhappy world of peasant farmers, and fairly well off in regard to food and housing and clothing but with no modern gadgets, and there was no unemployment and no beggars. And I was powerfully influenced by it. I suppose it will change as every other part of the world has changed. Nevertheless it was an experience, I thought, worth having, to compare that with other countries where, while on the one side, we have many modern conveniences, we have many ill effects of the modern age also.

Edward R. Murrow:⁸⁷ Mr Prime Minister, it must have been very agreeable to get away from the pressure of modern-day problems and go back to a more

⁸⁵ Extracts from unedited recording of film, radio, and telephone discussions on 3 October 1958 between Jawaharlal Nehru from New Delhi, Thomas E. Dewey from Portland Maine, USA, Aldous Huxley from Turin, Italy, and Edward R. Murrow of Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) who moderated. Telecast in the CBS programme Small World on 12 October 1958.

⁸⁶ Nehru left for Bhutan on 16 September 1958. Using different forms of transport, including aircraft, car, pony and yak, while also trekking, he passed through Tibetan territory, spent the night of 18 September at Yatung, and entered Bhutan on 19 September; he left Bhutan from Paro on 27 September and reached Delhi on 2 October

⁸⁷ Edward R. Murrow, American broadcast journalist; was associated with CBS, 1935-61; moderated and produced Small World, a television series featuring discussions among world leaders.

remote civilisation. Prime Minister Nehru, I know you have met Governor Thomas Dewey,⁸⁸ have you not?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Yes, I have had the pleasure.

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[New topic] Tibet

Question: Are there any reports of recrudescence of large-scale trouble in Tibet again?

Prime Minister: No, not that I know of. There were some minor reports of internal difficulties, but we have no knowledge of recent large-scale trouble.

Talk with Pressmen⁸⁹

Nehru Returns to Delhi; Conclusion of "Fascinating Trip" to Bhutan;
Comments on Events in Burma (From Our Correspondent)

New Delhi, Oct. 2. Prime Minister Nehru, who returned to the Capital this evening from Bhutan, was given a rousing reception at the airport. Mr Nehru, who was been cut off from world events in far away Bhutan, with no modern means of communication, faced a battery of questions from Press men on current developments, particularly in Burma and Tibet.

Mr Nehru commenting on the events in Burma said, "It is not the Army but U Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma, who decided, himself, what should be the proper arrangement for the interim period".

⁸⁸ Thomas E. Dewey, US lawyer and politician; was Governor of New York State, 1943-55, and Republican Party Presidential candidate, 1944 and 1948.

⁸⁹ Palam Airport, Delhi, 2 October 1958. The Hindu, 3 October 1958

On Tibet, Mr Nehru said, "Obviously conditions in Tibet, from such reports as one gets here are not fully normal".⁹⁰ He could not say anything further on that subject or about Algeria or about the resumption of nuclear tests by the Soviet Union because, as he himself explained, he had not read any newspapers for the last two weeks and did not get much information about world events except occasional radio messages from Delhi. "It is extraordinary how one could get out of touch with the outside world for more than two weeks", said the Prime Minister. He went on to give a graphic account of what he called "the fascinating trip to the lovely country of Bhutan". The Prime Minister, a lover of mountains, went into raptures describing his journey and all that he had seen.

Mr Nehru looked tanned but was suffering from a severe cold. He told his friends that he had contracted it, not in Bhutan, but in Gangtok, yesterday.

Exhilarating Trek

The Prime Minister said: "The main thing is that I have had a fascinating time in this exhilarating trek to Bhutan and my stay in that lovely country, which is unlike any other country, being difficult and inaccessible". Paying a tribute to the people of Bhutan, Mr Nehru said, "They are a brave people, tough people, these Bhutanis, not having any modern amenities. Yet many of them are possibly better off than those who have modern amenities. They have good food to eat. They have fairly good housing, no unemployment, and mind you, there are no beggars at all in Bhutan, though, of course, they have not the knick-knacks of civilisation.

⁹⁰ The National Herald of 3 October 1958 reported, "The Prime Minister was asked to comment on reports in the foreign press about disturbed and abnormal conditions in Tibet. (Pandit Nehru passed through some Tibetan territory on his way to Bhutan). The Prime Minister said, 'What can I say? I passed through Yatung late in the evening. But from such reports that I have had, obviously conditions in Tibet are not fully normal. But apart from that it is difficult for me to say anything.'"

When asked whether the Bhutanis were happy about the offer of help from India, Mr Nehru replied, "There is no formal offer of help. This offer has always been there. You will be surprised to know that they are reluctant to have any help and are not happy to have any help from us, though, if they had asked for it they could have got it".

Asked what the reaction of the Bhutanis was to the possibility of civilisation overtaking them, Mr Nehru said, "I do not know what the reaction of the Bhutanis is, but if I was a Bhutani I would be anxious to avoid the flow of civilisation coming over, traders, money economy, poverty. But gradually they will have to adapt themselves, though not in a sudden rush".

The Prime Minister smilingly brushed away questions about reports of an attempt to kidnap him, saying that he only heard it while on his return.⁹¹

In spite of repeated questions on various topics, Mr Nehru was inclined only to point out that he had not had the opportunity to get any full information and went on to give his impressions of Bhutan.

"Bhutan is another world", he said. "It is not a world of roads or wheeled vehicles of any kind. I do not think I have seen a finer spectacle than the welcome they gave me when I arrived at Paro. A long procession of people in curious attire, dances, church dignitaries coming down the winding mountain steps, was an extraordinary spectacle, perhaps a thing that has been happening for thousands of years".

Mr Nehru expressed the wish that if he visited Bhutan again there would be some kind of road. He hoped that it will be taken on hand by the West Bengal and Assam Governments on this side as well as from the other side. He was full of praise for the Indian engineers who had built a magnificent road to the difficult mountain terrain between Gangtok and the Nathula Pass.

⁹¹ According to the National Herald, "Pandit Nehru said he was very much amazed when, on his way back from Bhutan, he had seen reports in the western press about the possibility of his being kidnapped by Tibetan guerillas and that the Chinese Army had been sent to protect him."

They had been building it for three years and had hurried it up a month before he made this trip.

[Bhutan]

I now come to Bhutan. It has been a fascinating trip to Bhutan which, in spite of its physical exhaustion occasionally, was most exhilarating, a completely new type of country, by new type I mean from the point of view of modern amenities and modern developments—a country where there are no roads, no wheeled traffic, no wheels, practically speaking. It is an extraordinary country; not a primitive country at all. The people are not primitive; the people are good, stout, intelligent people. You put them in any of the schools and universities, they will do well. It is a country of peasant farmers and there are not very big differences between the rulers and the common peasants. No unemployment and no beggars, each person having a patch of land, five, six, seven, eight, or ten acres of land, sometimes a little more, having his wooden log hut, fairly good, and probably having some cattle, some pigs, some poultry and maybe some yaks.

Question: Are there newspapers there?

Prime Minister: There are no newspapers there. There is rather a primitive system of postal service, couriers taking it occasionally, not much. Of course, they maintain this kind of seclusion for a very laudable reason, that is, because of their desire to maintain their freedom. They thought this might be imperilled if they were too anxious to invite people from outside.

Question: Isolation from the outside world? Does it apply to the traffic with Tibet also?

Prime Minister: Certainly, it applies fully now. But with Tibet, in the past I mean, there was the bond of religion and the Dalai Lama was looked up to by them and the pilgrims, etc., went there. They had some trade also with Tibet. There is a part of Bhutan adjoining Bengal and Assam where, of course, people come and go from India. There are regions in the interiors which are rather mountainous and it is difficult to go there.

Question: What has been the influence of the large Nepalese population that has settled in Bhutan and in Sikkim also? Has that affected the development of the political structures?

Prime Minister: Nepalese went into Bhutan, I forget exactly when, some forty, fifty or sixty years ago, and some previously too. They formed rather a different and alien element for some time.

Some years back their further entry was stopped, not because of any feeling against them as individuals, but chiefly because of a feeling that they might become more than the indigenous population in numbers alone. Now, I believe, the policy of the present Government is to incorporate them more and more into Bhutan. They have got some kind of Advisory Council in the State. This was going to hold a meeting soon after I went there and representatives had already started coming, and there were Nepalese representatives in that Council too. Remember, it takes so long for people to travel from one end of Bhutan to the other. It may take three weeks to attend a meeting.

Question: Are there a lot of Chinese there in Bhutan?

Prime Minister: Hardly any. I did not come across a single person. There may be some, but I do not think so.

Question: What kind of diplomatic relation has Bhutan with Tibet?

Prime Minister: Bhutan has a trade agent in Tibet, but no diplomatic representation. You must remember that our treaty with Bhutan, made in 1948 I think,⁹² was Bhutan recognising that it would be guided by India's advice in regard to foreign affairs.

Question: Bhutanese merchants come every year to Bengal and Assam in hundreds, if not in thousands. Do they ever go to the interior part?

Prime Minister: Some of them come, but I do not think there can be very many.

Question: Does the willingness of Bhutan to have a road go from India to their border, to be linked with their main towns, indicate any recognition on their part of their desirability of closer political and economic contact with India?

Prime Minister: Our relations with Bhutan are exceedingly friendly. It is not any reluctance or any apprehension on their part, but it is a general desire not to get overwhelmed by an outside population coming in, a thing which I completely understand. In fact, if I may say so, I advised them to prevent outsiders coming. My definite advice to the rulers was: certainly get your experts and others, but do not encourage too many people to come, even from India. I tell you why. We do not encourage traders to go into the

⁹² . In fact, the Indo-Bhutan treaty was signed in Darjeeling on 8 August 1949.

North-East Frontier Agency, which is India. We just do not like our traders going there, and if I may use the word, exploiting the people and spoiling all their tastes, selling cheap articles there which are normally neither tasteful nor good, and uprooting the tribal people from their habits without giving anything good enough in exchange. Therefore, I advised the Bhutanese Government, not that my advice was very necessary, not to encourage too much of this kind of thing but to take persons they wanted, and they do want experts, whether engineers or surveyors or maybe educationists, to take such persons for short periods. Or, better still, they can send their students to India to be trained, which they do not.

There are quite a number of students in India and they can go back and work in their own country.

Question: Is Hindi being taught in schools?

Prime Minister: Yes, Hindi has been introduced, not at my saying, but even before it had been introduced. Quite a few people know Hindi, not the common people but quite a few people, Government officials, because they have to come to India quite often, Kalimpong, Darjeeling, those are nearby, and quite a few have even been to Calcutta.

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Volume 45 Series II

The Khampas⁹³

This question appears to be a simple one and the answer can also be equally simple. The answer would be "No". To the knowledge of the Prime Minister, no such delegation wanted to wait on him during his recent visit to Bhutan.⁹⁴ Indeed no mention of it was made.

Simple as the question is, it may create an embarrassing situation for the Government of India. Supplementary questions might be asked and even the categorical negative answer might be supposed by the Chinese Government to hide some fact. In view of the difficult situation in Tibet, any kind of reference to it in Parliament may thus lead to embarrassment. Mr. Speaker may therefore, if he so chooses, inform the Member who has put the question that there is no truth in the allegation that a delegation from the Khampas⁹⁵ wanted to wait in deputation on the Prime Minister.

We would submit that the questions be disallowed.

To B.C. Roy⁹⁶

November 27, 1958

My dear Bidhan,

Your letter of 25th November about your meeting Apa Pant and the position on the Tibet border.⁹⁷ I think that the impression that you got from Apa Pant

⁹³ Note to Subimal Dutt, 4 Nov. 1958. JN Collection.

⁹⁴ Nehru visited Bhutan from 21 to 27 Sept. 1958.

⁹⁵ Tribes of Eastern Tibet

⁹⁶ JN Collection.

as you state, is somewhat exaggerated. Not many people have come either to NEFA or to Bhutan from Tibet. It is a very difficult route. Nor do I expect any considerable number to come.

Your suggestion that I should draw the attention of the Chinese Government is not at all feasible. If we did any such thing, it will not make the slightest difference to anybody, except that it will entangle us in grave difficulties.

Yours affectionately,

[Jawaharlal]

Mimangs and Khampas in Bhutan⁹⁸

I agree. If once the Mimangs and Khampas are allowed to come into Bhutan and rest there even in small numbers, it is exceedingly likely that more will follow. Thus the problem will become more and more difficult to handle.

Ultimately it will be completely beyond the control of the Bhutan Government if this process continues. This will naturally give rise to Chinese protests and possibly some action. Bhutan will be quite unable to face the situation. If we are asked then to help Bhutan, we shall equally be helpless. We should not do anything in a military sense. All we could do would be to protest to China and this will be a feeble policy because we will not be able to follow up that protest. The result will be that without doing good to anyone, we shall injure our relations with China. Once this happens then the

⁹⁷ Apa B. Pant, Political Officer in Sikkim and Bhutan, informed B.C. Roy that a large number of Tibetans were fleeing into Bhutan and NEFA and planning guerilla warfare against the Chinese from there. While they may be expelled from India as instructed by Delhi, others were merely migrating to Darjeeling district hoping to earn a livelihood. Since disturbances in Tibet provoked unrest among hill tribes in Darjeeling, he wanted the Chinese Government to exercise restraint

⁹⁸ Note to Subimal Dutt, 10 December 1958. JN Collection

Chinese Government will not hesitate to take such action as they like against Bhutan.

This same argument applies to Sikkim.

Therefore, it seems important and necessary to nip this trouble more or less in the bud, even though this leads to some embarrassing situations for Bhutan or Sikkim. As a matter of fact, the Mimang and Khampa leaders should, if they are intelligent, understand this position. They will not be benefited in any way by coming to Bhutan in the long run. I can understand two or three of them, who have family contacts with Bhutan, coming there for a while and then returning, although even that is a risky business. But to come in numbers and sit down there and use Bhutan as a base for carrying on their agitation or rebellion in Tibet will obviously be very harmful to Bhutan and later to India.

The question of manning the Sikkim check-posts by Indian Police may be considered, that is, the Sikkim Darbar may be consulted. But I would anyhow hesitate very much to agree to sending our Police or other armed forces to the Bhutan-China border. We cannot, of course, even suggest this to the Bhutan Government. Even in the event of their suggesting this, which is unlikely, I would be reluctant. What can our Police do there, completely cut off from India and in places which are difficult of access. A small number of them will be quite helpless. A large number would be a major development with international consequences. Obviously this would bring us into trouble with China and create new situations which will be very troublesome for us. We can hardly keep an army in Bhutan and relatively small forces at the check-posts will do little good. If the Bhutan Government wants to strengthen its check-posts, it must do it with its own people. Should they desire, we might consider some financial help to them which again should not be definitely given for this purpose. But, as I have said above, I feel reluctant to get entangled in this matter.

It should be made perfectly clear to the Bhutan Government (as well as to Sikkim, of course) that we cannot view with approval any development on their border there which leads to all these difficulties. The easiest course is to take a firm line right at the beginning. They may explain this as politely as they can to the Khampa and Mimang leaders. But politeness should go along with firmness.

To Chou En-lai⁹⁹

December 14, 1958

My dear Prime Minister,¹⁰⁰

I am writing to you after a long time. We have watched with great interest and admiration the progress made by the People's Government of China in recent years. In particular, we have been deeply interested in the remarkable advance in the yield of rice per hectare as well as in the total yield, as also in the great increase in production of pig iron and steel.

10. A few months ago, our attention was drawn again to a map of China published in the magazine "China Pictorial", which indicated the border with India. This map was also not very clearly defined. But even the rough borderline appeared to us to be wrongly placed. This border line went right across Indian territory. A large part of our North-East Frontier Agency as well as some other parts which are and have long been well recognised as parts of India and been administered by India in the same way as other parts of our country, were shown to be part of Chinese territory. A considerable region of our neighbour country, Bhutan, in the north-east was

⁹⁹ Subimal Dutt Papers, NMML. Also available in JN Collection and PIB.

¹⁰⁰ Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China. 127..

also shown as being on the Chinese side. A part of the North-East Frontier Agency which was clearly on the Indian side of what has been known as the MacMahon line, was shown in this map as part of Chinese territory.

11. The magazine containing this map was widely distributed and questions were asked in our Parliament about this.¹⁰¹ I gave answers to the effect that these maps were merely reproductions of old ones and did not represent the actual facts of the situation.

¹⁰¹ See SWJN/SS/44/p. 567.

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Volume 47

Series II

(March 1-31, 1959)

To Subimal Dutt: Inaccurate Chinese Maps¹⁰²

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):

I agree to your draft, but I would like to add a sentence right at the end.

This might run as follows:

"You will appreciate that the continuing publication of Chinese maps showing considerable parts of Indian and Bhutanese territory as if they were in China is not in accordance with long established usage as well as treaties, and is a matter of great concern to us"¹⁰³.

2. If you agree with this, you can include it and have the letter sent to our Ambassador in Peking¹⁰⁴ for delivery.

3. You may also have a copy sent to the Chinese Ambassador here.¹⁰⁵

4. The idea struck me that in view of developments in Tibet, perhaps this was not the right time to send this letter. But, on reconsideration, I think it is right for us to send it as soon as possible.

¹⁰² Note, 20 March 1959.

¹⁰³ The last paragraph of Nehru's letter of 22 March 1959 to Chou En-lai began with this sentence. See item 190, p. 454, paragraph 8.

¹⁰⁴ G Parthasarathi.

¹⁰⁵ Pan Tzu-li.

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Series II

Volume 48

(April 1 - 30, 1959)

To the Lok Sabha Secretariat: Violation of Air Space¹⁰⁶

The following note should be sent to the Lok Sabha Secretariat for submission to Mr. Speaker:

"I have enquired into this matter. The press report appearing in the Indian Express of the 9th April appears to be very largely incorrect. The facts, as we know them, are that many of the planes which were found to have flown over Sikkim, Bhutan or Indian territory were our own aircraft carrying out Survey of India duties or other work assigned to them. Some of these aircraft were Soviet planes on the regular scheduled flights between Moscow and New Delhi. On two occasions they were Soviet planes bringing the King of Nepal and his party.

On two occasions, they were Chinese planes doing survey work on the border between China and Burma, and they might have accidentally partly overflowed our territory. In a number of cases, the planes have not been identified and they might have been Chinese planes. Whether these planes came over accidentally or not it is difficult to say.

There has been no report of violations of our air space in March or April 1959. Therefore, no question has arisen, insofar as we are aware, of any Chinese aircraft pursuing the Dalai Lama over our territory.

¹⁰⁶ Note, 12 April 1959

Steps for the security of our frontier have been taken. It is not possible to have air bases in the mountainous regions near the border as the terrain is not suitable for aircraft to land or take off. Even supplies have to be sent by airdropping in these areas.

Because of these facts, it is submitted to Mr. Speaker that a statement on this subject will not be desirable."

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Volume 49

(May 1- June 31, 1959)

To Apa B. Pant: Intrigues in Gangtok and Kalimpong¹⁰⁷

May 23, 1959.

My dear Apa,

Dinesh Singh¹⁰⁸ and the Maharaja of Tehri-Garhwal¹⁰⁹ came to see me this morning and presented me with their report of their tour. There is nothing very special in this report about Sikkim. They have, however, written a good deal about Bhutan and made various suggestions for closer integration of Bhutan with India or, at any rate, for closer association in various ways such as the appointment of an agent by us in Bhutan and common defence.

I told them that I did not agree with their approach to Bhutan. I did not think it was at all desirable for us to appoint an agent there or to take any steps of a military nature.

In the course of their report they have stated that according to rumours in Gangtok there are Soviet troops in Tibet helping the Chinese. I see telegrams emanating from Gangtok also to this effect appearing in the press. In fact, the longest message that I have seen about this matter was in

¹⁰⁷ Letter to the Political Officer of India in Sikkim

¹⁰⁸ Congress, Lok Sabha MP from Banda, UP

¹⁰⁹ Manabendra Shah.

Dawn, Karachi. In this it was particularly said that these Soviet troops have come to Gyantse and have been welcomed by the Chinese.

I am rather concerned about Gangtok becoming a centre for the dissemination of all kinds of rumours and gossip. In the old days, soon after the Soviet revolution, Riga on the then frontier of the Soviet Union became famous for long and tall stories about conditions in Russia that emanated from there. Lately, Kalimpong has attained a measure of notoriety in this respect. To some extent that is natural because of the presence of large numbers of foreign intelligence agents, refugees and odd people there who have been coming from Tibet in the past.

I do not want Gangtok to compete in this business with other places as a centre of sensational news. Gangtok is such a small place and there is the Indian Political Officer there. Almost every kind of news that comes out of Gangtok will be attributed to the Indian Representative, either directly or indirectly. Hence, we have to be very careful. Or else our reputation for objective news and reports will suffer and we will be considered purveyors of sensational stories.

I cannot believe that any Soviet forces could have come to Gyantse. The whole story is basically and inherently improbable and I shall not be prepared to believe this unless there is hundred percent evidence. Merely vague stories of some fair haired people or soldiers being seen in the streets and being mistaken for Russians is not enough. Nothing would be more unlikely, both from the Soviet and the Chinese points of view, than that Soviet troops should come to Tibet in this connection.

It may be conceded that some people from Northern Tibet with fair hair have been brought there by the Chinese or from some part of China, or even if they are Russians, they might be some experts for geological surveys and the like.

Anyhow, I am writing to you so that you might keep all this in mind and be vigilant about these rumours that refugees and others will spread. No one is less likely to give an objective and truthful account of occurrences than a refugee. It is not a question of straightforward lying, but of a state of mind which is terribly excited and believes every rumour.

Gangtok occupies a very special position both geographically and because of the presence of the Indian Representative there whose contacts are supposed to be with Tibet. Therefore, our mission in Gangtok must remain completely wide-awake and objective; otherwise it will not be able to serve us properly. It must not accept any odd story that comes and it must remain calm and untroubled, even though difficult situations arise.

During the last two and a half months our missions in Tibet have had to face some critical situations from day to day.¹¹⁰ It is always difficult for a mission to function when the governing authority is not only uncooperative, but actually obstructive. I think our missions have done very well in these difficult circumstances and a great deal of credit goes to them.

These difficulties will continue, though at a lower level. I see no relief from them in the near future. A few days ago the Chinese Ambassador in Delhi¹¹¹ conveyed a message to our Foreign Secretary on behalf of his Government. This was, in our opinion, a very objectionable message and we are replying to it in our own way. You will get information of this from our Foreign Secretary. According to our policy and practice, we are replying to this firmly, but at the same time courteously, unlike the Chinese message. It is relatively easy to take up extreme attitudes and to talk without restraint. That is what the Chinese have been doing. We have to follow a more difficult path.

¹¹⁰ See SWJN/SS/48/pp. 224-226 and 443

¹¹¹ Pan Tzu-li

Gangtok, because of its geographical position and as a highway to Tibet and its contacts with Bhutan, has been for us an important centre. It has been our good fortune to have you there as our representative. This importance of Gangtok has grown greatly since recent developments in Tibet and your presence there is a comfort to us. I am writing to you particularly so that you should exercise your influence against gossip and rumour-mongering in Gangtok. Newspapermen and others go there and pick up bazaar rumours. They may go to you and repeat these rumours and even your silence may lead to certain inferences which might well embarrass you later. One has therefore to be particularly careful in dealing with newspapermen.¹¹²

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

¹¹² Nehru copied this letter with the report to Subimal Dutt; he rejected the idea of an agent in Bhutan as "our relations were close at present though somewhat on the informal level

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Volume 49

(May 1- June 31, 1959)

To Subimal Dutt: Code for Mission in Sikkim¹¹³

I do not know what kind of a code is used in messages from our Mission in Gangtok to the Bhutan Maharaja¹¹⁴ or Government. If it is some simple code, then it is highly likely that the message reaches and is deciphered by unauthorized persons. This fact should be kept in mind and our representative at Gangtok¹¹⁵ should be told of it.

To Apa B. Pant: Intrigues in Gangtok and Kalimpong¹¹⁶

May 23, 1959.

My dear Apa,

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¹¹³ Note, 6 May 1959

¹¹⁴ Jigme Dorji Wangchuk

¹¹⁵ Apa Pant

¹¹⁶ Letter to the Political Officer of India in Sikkim

¹¹⁷ Congress, Lok Sabha MP from Banda, UP

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Bhutan with India or, at any rate, for closer association in various ways such as the appointment of an agent by us in Bhutan and common defence.

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I am rather concerned about Gangtok becoming a centre for the dissemination of all kinds of rumours and gossip. In the old days, soon after the Soviet revolution, Riga on the then frontier of the Soviet Union became famous for long and tall stories about conditions in Russia that emanated from there. Lately, Kalimpong has attained a measure of notoriety in this respect. To some extent that is natural because of the presence of large numbers of foreign intelligence agents, refugees and odd people there who have been coming from Tibet in the past.

I do not want Gangtok to compete in this business with other places as a centre of sensational news. Gangtok is such a small place and there is the Indian Political Officer there. Almost every kind of news that comes out of Gangtok will be attributed to the Indian Representative, either directly or indirectly. Hence, we have to be very careful. Or else our reputation for objective news and reports will suffer and we will be considered purveyors of sensational stories.

I cannot believe that any Soviet forces could have come to Gyantse. The whole story is basically and inherently improbable and I shall not be prepared to believe this unless there is hundred percent evidence. Merely

vague stories of some fair haired people or soldiers being seen in the streets and being mistaken for Russians is not enough. Nothing would be more unlikely, both from the Soviet and the Chinese points of view, than that Soviet troops should come to Tibet in this connection.

It may be conceded that some people from Northern Tibet with fair hair have been brought there by the Chinese or from some part of China, or even if they are Russians, they might be some experts for geological surveys and the like.

Anyhow, I am writing to you so that you might keep all this in mind and be vigilant about these rumours that refugees and others will spread. No one is less likely to give an objective and truthful account of occurrences than a refugee. It is not a question of straightforward lying, but of a state of mind which is terribly excited and believes every rumour.

Gangtok occupies a very special position both geographically and because of the presence of the Indian Representative there whose contacts are supposed to be with Tibet. Therefore, our mission in Gangtok must remain completely wide-awake and objective; otherwise it will not be able to serve us properly. It must not accept any odd story that comes and it must remain calm and untroubled, even though difficult situations arise.

During the last two and a half months our missions in Tibet have had to face some critical situations from day to day.¹¹⁹ It is always difficult for a mission to function when the governing authority is not only uncooperative, but actually obstructive. I think our missions have done very well in these difficult circumstances and a great deal of credit goes to them.

These difficulties will continue, though at a lower level. I see no relief from them in the near future. A few days ago the Chinese Ambassador in Delhi¹²⁰ conveyed a message to our Foreign Secretary on behalf of his Government.

¹¹⁹ See SWJN/SS/48/pp. 224-226 and 443

¹²⁰ Pan Tzu-li

This was, in our opinion, a very objectionable message and we are replying to it in our own way. You will get information of this from our Foreign Secretary. According to our policy and practice, we are replying to this firmly, but at the same time courteously, unlike the Chinese message. It is relatively easy to take up extreme attitudes and to talk without restraint. That is what the Chinese have been doing. We have to follow a more difficult path.

Gangtok, because of its geographical position and as a highway to Tibet and its contacts with Bhutan, has been for us an important centre. It has been our good fortune to have you there as our representative. This importance of Gangtok has grown greatly since recent developments in Tibet and your presence there is a comfort to us. I am writing to you particularly so that you should exercise your influence against gossip and rumour-mongering in Gangtok. Newspapermen and others go there and pick up bazaar rumours. They may go to you and repeat these rumours and even your silence may lead to certain inferences which might well embarrass you later. One has therefore to be particularly careful in dealing with newspapermen.¹²¹

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

To Subimal Dutt: Aid to Bhutan¹²²

I agree in principle to our helping the Government of Bhutan more than we are doing at present. The amount suggested, that is, Rs.7 lakhs, in addition

¹²¹ Nehru copied this letter with the report to Subimal Dutt; he rejected the idea of an agent in Bhutan as "our relations were close at present though somewhat on the informal level

¹²² Note, 26 May 1959

to the present Rs.5 lakhs per annum (total Rs.12 lakhs) does not appear to me to be unreasonable.

But I do not like the idea of considering this Rs. 12 lakhs as normal subsidy to Bhutan. In effect this means amending the Treaty between India and Bhutan of 1949.¹²³ Also, indirectly, it would appear that this is a compensation for the territory that was taken from Bhutan in earlier days. I am inclined to think, therefore, that the Treaty figure of Rs.5 lakhs should remain as it is as the annual subsidy. In addition, we should agree to a Development Grant or Subsidy of Rs.7 lakhs per annum. This approach appears to me a somewhat better one. It keeps the additional subsidy of Rs.7 lakhs earmarked for development and we do not touch the old figure of Rs.5 lakhs, which was not earmarked and was largely treated as compensation for territory.

Although this Rs.7 lakhs would be an annual grant to be continued more or less indefinitely, it would stand on a separate footing from the Rs.5 lakhs mentioned in the Treaty. That is, the Rs.7 lakhs would not be a Treaty obligation, but an annual grant to be continued without any fixed period, but essentially at our pleasure.

Bhutan and Sikkim

In the Lok Sabha: The Sikkim Lottery¹²⁴

Hem Barua:¹²⁵ Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

¹²³ See SWJN/SS/44/p. 319

¹²⁴ 5 May 1959. Lok Sabha Debates (Second Series), Vol. XXXI. cols.14920-14722.

¹²⁵ PSP, MP from Gauhati, Assam

(a) whether it is a fact that raffles run and organised in Sikkim are allowed to operate in India as well;
(b) if so, whether they are organised by Indian nationals living in Sikkim or by Sikkimese themselves; and (c) what are the reasons, if the reply to (a) is in the affirmative, for allowing these raffles here?¹²⁶

Lakshmi Menon: ¹²⁷ (a) The Health Relief Charities Fund Lottery of Sikkim has been treated as an authorised raffle in India.

(b) This raffle is run by Indian nationals.

(c) The H.R. Lottery of Sikkim has been treated as a validly authorised lottery because of our special relations with Sikkim and because a fair amount of income derived by the Sikkim Government from the same is spent on health, social welfare works and relief to ex-servicemen from the Indian Army.

Hem Barua: May I know whether the Government are aware or whether the Government have asked the Indian nationals who have subscribed to this raffle to seek redress of their complaints in Sikkim, because the Jurisdiction of our Supreme Court does not extend to Sikkim and if so, may I know the difficulties that confront our nationals in this matter?

Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not know what difficulties there may be. I do not know what difficulties have arisen and why they cannot seek redress in Sikkim itself. It is not necessary to go to the Supreme Court for a minor matter.

¹²⁶ See SWJN/SS/44/p. 303

¹²⁷ Union Deputy Minister of External Affairs

Hem Barua: May I know whether it is a fact that section 294A of the I.P.C. does not treat this raffle as valid in India because our laws do not operate in Sikkim and if so, are Government aware of the difficulties on the way?

Lakshmi Menon: The Government are aware of all the difficulties and the matter has been very thoroughly gone into before this decision was taken to declare the lottery as an authorised one.

Hem Barua: May I know whether the Government are aware of the fact that the Indian national who runs this raffle can remit his profits to his family in India and at the same time avoid Indian income-tax and if so, are the Government aware of this fact, and what steps Government have taken so far to see that income-tax is recovered?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Income-tax on persons who win in the raffle?

Hem Barua: The Indian national who runs the raffle remits the profits to his family in India and also avoids Indian Income-tax. I want to know what steps are taken.

Mr. Speaker:¹²⁸ The hon. Member will put down a separate question.

Jawaharlal Nehru: Income-tax does not, to my knowledge, come up before us.

The Sikkim Government was very much interested in this because they got money for their hospitals out of it. They spoke to me. Their difficulty at that time was that the Indian post office people came in the way. Considering this as an unauthorised undertaking, they did not co-operate and may be, they even confiscated the tickets, etc. They spoke to me about it. Then, we

¹²⁸ M. AnanthasayanamAyyangar

discussed this matter here. Quite apart from our general policy in India, whatever it may be, we felt that we should not come in the way of the Sikkim Government in this matter. So, we declared it as an authorised raffle. The consequences on Income Tax, I am not aware of.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 51

August 1 to 31, 1959

In the Lok Sabha: Tibetan Refugees¹²⁹

Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

- (a) how many Tibetans have crossed into India so far ;
- (b) what facilities have been provided by the Government of India to rehabilitate them;
- (c) the expenditure incurred monthly on the rehabilitation of these refugees;
- (d) the names of the countries from which contributions have been received for their relief and rehabilitation stating the amount in respect of each;
- (e) the names of the agencies entrusted with the relief work; and
- (f) whether Government have received any communication from the Tibetan Government expressing their willingness to take them back?¹³⁰

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon): (a) to (f).

A statement giving the information required is placed on the Table of the House.

¹²⁹ 11 August 1959. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. xxxn, cols 1620-1627

¹³⁰ The question was asked by Ajit Singh Sarhadi, Congress MP from Ludhiana, Punjab, and 39 other MPs

STATEMENT

The total number of Tibetan refugees who have come to India is 12,396. Arrangements have been made for the employment of unskilled refugees on road-works in Sikkim and NEFA. Those who are old and infirm have been sent to Dalhousie and will be maintained at the expense of the Government. A number of refugees with relations in India have been permitted to join their families in the Darjeeling district.

Student Lamas are being accommodated at Buxa, where they will pursue their religious studies. Children below the age of 16 years will be sent to schools.

Refugees who are not being maintained by Government and who are being dispersed for road works are being given resettlement grant of Rs. 50 in addition to the cost of transportation and shelter at the work-sites.

Arrangements have also been made to give instruction in Hindi in Camps and on the work-sites so that refugees can adjust themselves to the conditions in India. It is also intended to select some refugees for training in crafts and vocations after careful appraisal has been made of their aptitudes. Since dispersal from Camps has begun recently, it is not possible to indicate monthly expenditure on the rehabilitation of refugees.

All voluntary relief activities are being coordinated by the Central Relief Committee for Tibetan refugees presided over by Acharya J.B. Kripalani. The Indian Red Cross Society has associated itself with the Central Committee. All contributions coming from India or foreign voluntary agencies are received by the Central Committee. It is understood that contributions have been received from the American Tibetan Relief Committee, the Catholic Relief Committee, the Indian National Christian Council and the Co-operative for American Relief Everywhere. As most of the contributions are in kind, it has not been possible to estimate their value.

The Government have received no communication regarding the return of these refugees to Tibet.

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi: May I know if there is any long range policy about the resettlement of the refugees and if there has been any talk with the Dalai Lama on the subject?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): In the statement the hon. Member will see the steps that have been taken. Gradually, one evolves a policy and one cannot lay down a firm and fixed long range policy; much depends upon the circumstances. It would appear that a considerable number of them will remain in India and we have to fashion our policy accordingly. Almost everything that is being done about them, the steps to be taken in regard to the refugees, etc. had been done after consultation with the Dalai Lama.

Shri Tangamani: May I know how much money has so far been spent by the Government of India on these 12,396 refugees who have crossed over to India?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I cannot give any kind of an accurate figure. I believe that the Finance Minister agreed primarily to allot about Rs. 10 lakhs for this purpose but the actual expenditure is being met partly by the External Affairs Ministry and partly by the State Ministries concerned. We do not know how much the State Ministries have spent and we will get their accounts later.

Shri Supakar: ¹³¹ May I know if the present scheme is to permanently rehabilitate the refugees? How many persons will be permanently resettled here?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I have said that the likelihood of these refugees going back to Tibet in the foreseeable future is very small. We cannot speak of individuals but only of groups. Therefore, we must expect a great majority of them to remain here. Now, there are various types. Some are young men and boys for whom we arrange normal education. Some are young Lamas for whom also we arrange for that type of education. Then there are old Lamas and a number of them have been provided for in various places in their own profession of lamahood - if I may say so - in Sikkim, a few in Darjeeling.

Some have gone to their friends or relatives round about Darjeeling or Kalimpong.

The main body of them, young persons, have, for the present, been given work to do: road-making and that type of thing. Some again are being taught handicrafts.

Shri Nath Pai: We should like to have an idea as to the daily cost of maintenance of these 12,000 refugees and secondly whether the Government is contemplating making any approach to the United Nations refugees section because there is a section which contributes for this purpose and also whether the Dalai Lama is contributing to the maintenance of them and what part of the expenditure is coming by way of public contributions?

¹³¹ Shradddakar Supakar, Ganatantra Parishad MP from Sambalpur, Orissa.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: We have not thought of appealing to the U.N. in regard to this matter.¹³² Some moneys have been received from foreign sources, not by the Government, but by the Central Relief Committee here, of which Acharya Kripalani is the Chairman. There is collaboration between the Government and Acharya Kripalani's committee in this matter. I cannot say what funds are at their disposal and how much they have got from foreign sources, etc. But much of it is in the shape of goods and medicines, this and that - a good deal of it, in medicines. I do not know about the cash; perhaps not too much. I am sorry I cannot give any figure as to how much is spent.

Shri Nath Pai: Is the Dalai Lama contributing anything to their maintenance?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: So far as I know he has not contributed anything to these people's maintenance but to some extent he has met his own expenditure: not, I mean, the housing and the rest, but the odd expenditure, I believe.

[Translation begins:

Shri Bhakt Darshan: I wish to know whether the influx of refugees from Tibet has stopped or this process is still continuing?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It had almost stopped, but some days ago, about a week back we heard that a hundred refugees came to Bhutan. The Government of Bhutan requested us to kindly take them in; so, we said alright, we will take them, because they were not willing to shoulder this burden.

¹³² See Nehru to Dag Hammarskjold, 23 July 1959, SWJN/SS/50/item 160

Shri Bibhuti Mishra:¹³³ I wish to know whether the Central Relief Committee extends some help with regard to the refugees who have come from Tibet to Nepal.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: No, to my knowledge, no question has arisen regarding aid to them; neither anyone has asked for it, nor, as far as I know, the Government there has done anything. Whatever few people have come, they have spread out among their relatives and friends. No arrangement has been made from here.

Translation ends]

Shri Narayanankutty Menon:¹³⁴ May I know whether the Government have taken any decision to extend the same type of relief to a large number of Indian nationals repatriated from Malaya and Ceylon, who are still unemployed and are wandering as refugees in the South Indian States?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: No, Sir, the conditions are entirely different.

Shri Assar: Have our Government enquired from Dalai Lama or his officials about the bona fides of the Tibetan refugees to ensure that there are no Chinese spies?

Mr. Speaker: That is what he has already answered.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: How can the Dalai Lama tell us about 12,000 people who have come from various parts? But, apart from that, naturally, we are interested in finding out who and what these 12,000 odd persons are. We try

¹³³ Congress, Lok Sabha MP from Bagaha-SC, Bihar

¹³⁴ T.C. Narayanakutty Menon, CPI, Lok Sabha MP from Mukundapuram, Kerala

to make such enquiries from such sources as are available to us to get that information.

Shri P.C. Borooah: ¹³⁵ From the statement it is found that most of the contributions were in kind. May I know whether any exemption from custom duty in respect of gifts received from abroad or exemption from excise duty in respect of goods received from within India was given; if so the total amount for which exemptions were allowed?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: Exemptions from customs and also free passage for these goods are allowed, but there is no possibility of knowing how much by way of money it amounts to.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: In the statement it is said that those who are old and infirm have been sent to Dalhousie and will be maintained at the expense of the Government. May I know what is the number of such old and infirm refugees who have been sent over to Dalhousie, and what is the monthly expenditure incurred by the Government to maintain them?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: The figure I have got thus far is that 320 persons have been sent to Dalhousie. It is not a question of old and infirm so much as the old senior Lamas who cannot be put to work; that is to say, it is practically a Lama Centre, where they can carry on their Buddhist vocations and studies in life, which has been, in a sense, created in Dalhousie, and these people have been sent there.

¹³⁵ Prafulla Chandra Borooah, Congress, Lok Sabha MP from Sibsagar, Assam

Shrimati Mafida Ahmed: Is it not a fact that permits were issued to the Tibetan refugees to stay at Mismari Camp only for three months; if so, may I know whether it has been extended and if so, what is the extension period?

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: The Mismari Camp is only a transit camp. As soon as they are found fit to be sent to any of these recognised places, work sites or other places where they can settle down, then they will be sent away and the camp will be wound up.

Shri N.R. Munisamy: As a result of our having afforded asylum to Dalai Lama and Tibetan refugees there is a good deal of anti-Indian feelings against the Indians residing in Tibet at the instance of the Chinese. May I know whether any steps have been taken by Government to clear this misunderstanding?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I have mentioned, Sir, the other day that the Indian nationals there are mostly traders, apart from our own Mission folk and some few others. A number of difficulties have been placed in the way of Indian trade which is gradually vanishing, and we have drawn the attention of the Chinese Government to this matter.

178. In the Lok Sabha: Chinese Statement on Ladakh, Sikkim and Bhutan¹³⁶

Mr. Speaker: I have received notice of an adjournment motion from Sarvashri Vajpayee and V.L. Patil¹³⁷ The grave threat to India's security and

¹³⁶ 13 August 1959. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. XXXII, cols 2243-2247

¹³⁷ Uttamrao Laxmanrao Patil, Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Lok Sabha MP from Dhulia, Bombay

territorial integrity emanating from the offensive propaganda campaign let loose by the Chinese Communists for the 'Liberation' of Ladakh, Sikkim and Bhutan.

Shri S.M. Banerjee (Kanpur): What about the other motion about the crisis in U.P.?¹³⁸

Mr. Speaker: I am coming to that. Crisis in V.P. is a domestic matter.

Shri S.M. Banerjee: It is very important, Sir. All people.....

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I have disallowed it.

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Firozabad): Sir, in a House of only 431 if 97 are ...

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. If he is more interested there let him go and sit there (Interruption). Order, order. I am not going to allow this indulgence of discussing matters which I have disallowed, which according to me are domestic matters.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: Sir, there was another adjournment motion on the subject of Tibet in my name also.

Mr. Speaker: Yes. Shri Braj Raj Singh also has given notice of the same adjournment motion.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: It was not the same motion, Sir; there were some other matters. My point is, sometime back there was a news items in the papers,

¹³⁸ Refers to dissident Congress MLAs expressing their lack of confidence in the Sampurnanand ministry in a statement in the UP Assembly; see item 77, fn 309

which has not been contradicted to my knowledge at least that there was some plan of forming a Himalayan Federation consisting of Ladakh, Tibet, Bhutan, Sikkim and parts of our NEFA area. There had been rumours of a news in the Press that there had been exhortations in Tibet exhorting Tibetans to liberate these areas. This is a very serious matter. Insecurity may prevail all over India on account of this.

Shri Vajpayee (Balrampur): Sir, there is news in the papers that on the 17th July there was a mass meeting in Lhasa in which Communist leaders in Tibet made speeches calling for the liberation of Ladakh, Bhutan and Sikkim.¹³⁹ Secondly, there is a news that huge Chinese forces are being concentrated on the borders of Sikkim and Bhutan.¹⁴⁰ I would like to know what is the position. My adjournment motion is not in the nature of a censure motion against the Government. The only thing we want is that security of India must be safeguarded and any threat that is coming from any quarter must be met.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: Sir, I submit that my adjournment motion may be read in the House so that hon. Members may know what it is.

¹³⁹ Basing itself on a dispatch by George Patterson, the Kalimpong correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Hindustan Times* on 13 August 1959 reported a mass meeting in Lhasa on 17 July, "Chang Kuow-Hua [Zhang Guohua] the head of the Chinese mission in Tibet" as saying at the meeting: "Bhutanese, Sikkimese and Ladakhis form a united family in Tibet and the great motherland of China. They must once again be united and taught the Communist doctrine."

¹⁴⁰ In its report on the Lhasa meeting of 17 July, *The Hindustan Times* of 13 August 1959 referred to "independent evidence" of measures being taken by the Chinese in pursuance of the "new campaign:" "For instance, they are known to have concentrated unusually large forces in the strategic sector bordering on Sikkim and Bhutan. One of the points of concentration is Rinchengong, a village on the trade route from Sikkim to Lhasa and situated on the Amo Chu river, which flows into Bhutan.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has explained it in a much better way than what is contained in the adjournment motion.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):
Sir, I entirely agree with the hon. Member that the integrity of India should be safeguarded at all costs. There can be no doubt about it; every Member in this House agrees.

Now, coming to this particular motion, it is based apparently on a news item today which itself is based on some despatch to a London newspaper. In this newspaper reference is made to a speech that Mr. Chiang-ko-Hua is supposed to have delivered on a certain day. I have not seen that report of the speech - I do not know. A report of that speech was given in the official Chinese paper called China Today. I have read that report. This particular passage is not there. That of course does not lead us to believe that it is not possible, but it is not there. Anyhow, it would be a very exceedingly foolish person who would say the remarks attributed to this gentleman about Ladakh, Sikkim and Bhutan. We shall try to find out whether any speech was delivered on that date and, in so far as we can, what the contents of that speech were. We have had no information from any reliable source of such statements being made by any person who can be considered reliable. Therefore, it is rather difficult for me to deal with something in the air. As for the report that there are large forces, Chinese forces, there are Chinese forces, pretty large forces, I believe, in Tibet. It might even be called 'very large forces' all over Tibet, which came there when this rebellion started there. We have no exact information as to the extent of those forces. I do not think that any large forces are concentrated on our frontiers. Some are there, no doubt. Anyhow, we are quite awake and alert over this matter, and if we get any reliable information I shall place it before the House. I may

say that in one of our last notes to the Chinese Government, which was sent I think on the 23rd July, we protested inter alia against the propaganda in the Chinese official organ describing Indians as imperialists.¹⁴¹

Shri Braj Raj Singh: Sir, the Prime Minister may be asked to say something about the Himalayan Federation also. We just want to get some information about it.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Prime Minister has placed all the available information before the House.

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): May I know whether it is a fact that the Chinese Government have sent some communications to our Government, recently, suggesting that the McMahon Line no longer prescribes or describes the international boundary as it was not ratified by the Chinese Government, and as it was only a British creation there should be some sort of redrawing of the line?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: No, Sir; we have received no such communication now or at any earlier stage. So far as we are concerned, the McMahon line is the firm frontier, firm by treaty, firm by usage, firm by geography. There are minor pockets, small areas in the McMahon line or elsewhere on the frontier where some arguments have occasionally arisen, where questions, sometimes of a mile or two this way or that way, have arisen in the past and discussions have taken place and will continue, no doubt. So, sometimes we have these arguments about these matters; in fact, we are having, I think,

¹⁴¹ In fact, the note was given to the Chinese Foreign Office by G. Parthasarathi on 25 July 1959; see item 174, fn 54

about one or two matters even now, but they do not affect the major frontier line called the McMahon line.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know from the Prime Minister that when Mr. Chou En-lai made a reference to their undefined frontiers with their southern neighbours - when he said like that - did he include India with the Southern neighbours? Did he have that in mind?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I cannot say or interpret Premier Chou En-lai's speech and what he had in mind. But the impression that was given to us by Mr. Chou En-lai some years back was, having regard to all the circumstances, they accepted this, what is called McMahon line - unfortunately we might have a better name for it; but still, they accepted that as the international frontier.¹⁴²

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy¹⁴³ (Kendrapara): Has any map been published showing some portions of India in the Chinese territory?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: No new maps have been published; I do not know.

Shri Vajpayee: May I know whether it is a fact that as many as 20 divisions of Chinese troops are stationed in Tibet at present?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I could not say; I do not know that exactly.

Mr. Speaker: In the circumstances, I do not think it necessary to give my consent to this adjournment motion.

¹⁴² During Chou En-lai's visit to India in December 1956 and January 1957; see Nehru's note to N.R. Pillai, 1 January 1957, SWJN/SS/36/pp. 610-616, here pp. 614-615, and note to Subimal Dutt, 11 November 1958, SWJN/SS/45/p. 699.

¹⁴³ PSP, Lok Sabha MP from Kendrapara, Orissa

187. In the Rajya Sabha: Activities of Chinese Authorities against India¹⁴⁴

V.K. Dhage: Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report which appeared in the 'Hindustan Times' (Delhi Edition) of the 13th August, 1959, to the effect that the Chinese authorities in Tibet have begun a war of nerves against the people of the Himalayan region bordering on Tibet and, in particular, against the people of Bhutan and Sikkim;¹⁴⁵

(b) whether Government are aware that, in a pamphlet issued by the Chinese authorities, Indians have been described as inheritors of British regime, and that a cry has been raised for the 'liberation' of the Bhutanese, Sikkimese and Ladakhis from their capitalistic oppressor, namely India; and (c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in affirmative, what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon):

(a) and (c). Government have seen this report; they have however no information about the contents of the speech by the General referred to in this report. They have also no information about the pamphlet to which reference is made.

Instances of anti-Indian propaganda in the Tibetan region have however come to the attention of Government and Government have drawn the attention of the Chinese authorities to this.

¹⁴⁴ 25 August 1959. Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol. XXVI, Nos. 1-13, cols 1702-1705

¹⁴⁵ See item 178, fns 82 and 83

Shri J.C. Chatterji:¹⁴⁶ As a protest against the fact that our Lhasa Consulate office is being kept under restraint by the Chinese, are we also going to put the same sort of restrictions on the Chinese Consulate office at Kailmpong?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It is not quite correct to say that our Consulate General is under restraint. There are some difficulties there in regard to people who want to visit the Consulate General. Sometimes they do not find easy access to it. Some of them, more especially those people who are Ladakhi Muslims, who want to come there are not permitted to do so usually by the sentry. But the people in the Consulate can go about in Lhasa at any rate, not outside Lhasa; for that they require permit.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I know nothing about this. I hope no gold bars will come from outside to India.

Shri J.C. Chatterji: Is there any truth in the newspaper reports that the Chinese are trying to extend their influence in Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh and the border areas of Nepal?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: That is the main question. It has been answered. There are some reports of these things. We have no information as to their validity or of any responsible person having said this. But the fact remains that so far as Bhutan and Sikkim are concerned, they are in treaty relations with us and we are responsible for their defence. I cannot imagine any foreign authority doing anything which is an infringement of their sovereignty. In any event any such infringement would be an infringement of our undertakings with Sikkim and Bhutan, and we shall certainly resist every such intrusion.

¹⁴⁶ Jogesh Chandra Chattetjee, Congress, Rajya Sabha MP from UP

Shri J.C. Chatterji: Are the Government thinking of devising ways and means for encouraging our people particularly of the border areas so that they may not be cowed down by the aggressive moves of any foreign power?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not know what he means. Ways and means to, what shall I say, to raise the morale of the people there? I hope the morale of the people in the border areas is good.

Shri J.C. Chatterji: It has been reported in the papers recently that some Chinese gold bars were recovered from some Assam tribals. Has it anything to do with the Chinese aggressive moves?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: What did they recover from the Assam people? Gold bars?

Shri J.C. Chatterji: Chinese gold bars were recovered from some tribals in Assam.

Shri V.K. Dhage: Is it a fact that on the borders of Sikkim and Bhutan military concentration is taking place by the Chinese?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: We do not know, Sir.

Shri V.K. Dhage: Is it a fact that there is a certain sort of concern in the minds of the people in Bhutan and Sikkim with regard to the Chinese activities?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Yes, Sir, that is natural. Ever since the troubles in Tibet, as refugees are coming in, there has been a measure of anxiety in the minds of the people and the authorities in Bhutan and Sikkim.

Shri V.K. Dhage: May I know whether there has been any proposal from the Prime Minister of Bhutan to interview our Prime Minister here?¹⁴⁷

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It does not require any proposal. Whenever he comes here, he is our guest, and I see him frequently. There is no very great formality about these things, and I believe he is coming here soon.

[Translation begins:

Shri P.N. Rajbhoj: Will the Prime Minister kindly inform whether the Government of Bhutan has requested for aid from the Indian Government for its security under the Indo-British Treaty for Perpetual Peace and Friendship [sic] which was signed in 1949?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: There is no question of a request for any special aid, military aid. Yes, the Bhutanese have been taking, purchasing, some small amount of ordinary military equipment from us in the past. But they, too, know this and we also know it that if any invasion takes place against them, then it is our responsibility to help them.

Translation ends]

Shri Jaswant Singh: The Indian traders of the Bhotia class who used to trade in Tibet have had their business practically suspended and we have not been able to safeguard their interests. I would like to know whether any action has been taken to protect their interests or whether the Chinese authorities did not permit us to take such action.

¹⁴⁷ The Hindustan Times Weekly reported on 23 August that Jigme Dotji, who "returned recently from Bhutan to Kalimpong, where he spends part of the year," was expected to visit New Delhi in the near future for consultations with Nehru

Shrimati Lakshmi Menon: The next question deals with this point, Sir.

234. For Harold Macmillan¹⁴⁸

No. Primin-21123.

High Commissioner from Prime Minister.

Please convey following message to Mr. Macmillan.

Begins.

My dear Prime Minister,

I am grateful to you for your two messages. I am very glad to have the news about the Queen that you have sent me.¹⁴⁹ The recent tour has been from all accounts very strenuous¹⁵⁰. Having some experience of strenuous tours myself I have come to the conclusion that there must be free days for rest. I hope that in any future tours that the Queen might undertake the programme would be lighter and rest days will be provided. Anyhow this strain is over now, and I am glad she is well and is having full rest now at Balmoral.

2. I have already sent a number of messages about Laos to you and Selwyn Lloyd. I have felt all along that it is essential to keep the frame-work of the Geneva Agreement working. Otherwise there will be no firm anchorage. If the two Co-Chairmen agree to any procedure in keeping with the Geneva Agreement and with the consent of the parties concerned, that will be welcome. But it is obvious that the consent of both the parties is necessary.

¹⁴⁸ Telegram, to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, 7 August 1959

¹⁴⁹ The Queen's pregnancy was announced the same day, 7 August; Andrew, her third child, was born on 19 February 1960

¹⁵⁰ Of Canada, 18 June to 1 August

It would be desirable also to keep the Commission in the picture in some form or other.

3. We have all learnt with great satisfaction of President Eisenhower's invitation to Mr. Khrushchev and a return visit by the President to the Soviet Union later. I think that this is very good news indeed. It indicates an earnest desire to try to break down the barriers of suspicion and thus make it easier to arrive later at some agreements.

4. Talks about the Indus Waters Plan are now proceeding in London.²⁹⁶ There are still some hurdles to be crossed, but I hope that we shall ultimately succeed in arriving at a settlement.

5. The developments in Tibet have given us many headaches and have had a powerful effect on opinion here. It is not our practice to make public condemnations but we have made our position clear to the Chinese Government and to our people. We have at present about 12,400 refugees from Tibet in India. Most of them have come directly to India. Some have come via Bhutan as the Bhutan Government was anxious to get rid of them. About a hundred more have recently come to Bhutan who will ultimately be transferred to India.

6. To begin with, we kept these refugees in some big camps, but we have been trying to disperse them as far as possible. We are arranging educational facilities for the young boys and some selected Lamas. The aged ones have necessarily to be looked after by us. For most of the others, except some Lamas, we are trying to find some work. We may be able to settle some on lands in the North-East Frontier Agency. There are also arrangements to train selected refugees in crafts. The senior Lamas are

being given facilities to continue their studies according to Tibetan-Buddhist traditions. In all these matters we have proceeded in consultation with the Dalai Lama.

7. The Dalai Lama and his party are still at Mussoorie. There appears to be little chance of his returning to Tibet in the foreseeable future. He has no present intention of going outside India. Probably he will pay a visit to us in Delhi next month. He is a charming and intelligent young man.

8. It is a little difficult to get any detailed or accurate information about conditions in Tibet. But it would appear that the Chinese Government sent large forces to Tibet and have succeeded in crushing the rebellion there except for a few small pockets. There is a military administration all over Tibet and an attempt is being made to push through their reforms which means confiscation of lands belonging to the landlord classes and the principal monasteries and distributing them among landless people. There is also a definite attempt to destroy the influence of the Lamas. There are also reports of considerable numbers of Chinese being brought to settle in Tibet.

9. We have had some difficulties about the treatment of our nationals in Tibet and we have been carrying on correspondence with the Chinese Government on this subject.

10. You mentioned the question of newsprint. I am enquiring into this matter.

With kind regards,
Jawaharlal.

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Series II

Volume 52

(September 1-30, 1959)

Bhutan

To S. Dutt [Foreign Secretary]: Bhutanese Refugees in India¹⁵¹

Have you enquired about the matter referred to in the attached letter?¹⁵²

2. I spoke to the Chief Minister of Assam about it. He did not then know about the arrest of these people, but he told me that these Bhutanese had come to him. They come from that small area which was previously in India and was handed over by us to, Bhutan some years ago. They complained of the heavy extractions made by the Bhutan Government and expressed their desire to come and settle down in India.

* * *

To Jigme Dorji Wangchuk: Development Projects and Foreign Policy¹⁵³

29th September, 1959

Your Highness,

¹⁵¹ Note, 29 September 1959

¹⁵² Hem Barua wrote to Nehru on 24 September 1959 about the arrest of some Bhutanese in Indian territory.

¹⁵³ Letter to Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, Maharaja of Bhutan.

Many thanks for your letter which you sent me with our Political Officer, Shri Apa Pant. I received it a few days before the arrival of your delegation in Delhi.¹⁵⁴ We were very happy to receive your Prime Minister and the other members of the delegation.

2. As Shri Jigme Dorji¹⁵⁵ must have reported to you, we have had full discussions with the delegation on various matters of mutual interest to India and Bhutan. In particular, my Ministry has discussed with your Prime Minister the road project which you have mentioned in your letter and the question of development schemes in your territory. Our Foreign Secretary has already informed Shri Jigme Dorji that the Government of India will be glad to assist Bhutan in the implementation of the particular road project which you have mentioned in your letter and to find the necessary finance for that purpose. The construction of this road through a very difficult terrain will be a challenge to our engineers and, if I may say so, to your people without whose assistance the project cannot be implemented. I am, however, confident that all difficulties will be overcome and that this vital road link-the first between Bhutan and India-will be completed with the minimum possible delay. This single project will engage for some years all available technical man-power; but I have no doubt that once this scheme is completed, it will be easy, with the experience available, to undertake other similar projects.

¹⁵⁴ On 18 September 1959 Jigme Dorji visited New Delhi and negotiated an agreement with GOI for finances and other help to construct all-weather roads between West Bengal and Bhutan, from Jalgaon to Thimpu and Paro, the two Bhutanese capitals, and for training and equipment for the army of Bhutan. He also secured an extra annual grant of Rs. 7 lakh from 1960 onward in addition to the annual subsidy of Rs. 5 lakhs. See *The Hindustan Times*, 19 September 1959.

¹⁵⁵ Prime Minister of Bhutan

3. We have also informed your Prime Minister that the Government of India will be glad to make available to your Government a sum of Rs. 7 lakhs a year for other development schemes within Bhutan. I hope that your Government will now go ahead with suitable schemes which will bring immediate benefit to the people.

4. I am informed that there is not likely to be any difficulty in the supply of your requirements of arms and ammunition.

5. I had the opportunity of several talks with Shri Jigme Dorji during his stay in Delhi. We discussed the present difficult situation in Tibet, and the international situation generally. We are passing through a difficult time, but both Bhutan and India will have to face their common problems with calm and determination. As I mentioned to you in my earlier letter, we shall regard any threat to the integrity of Bhutan as a challenge to the integrity of India herself. I know that you and your people are determined to protect your frontiers. If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to let us know.

6. In the course of my talks with your Prime Minister, Shri Jigme Dorji, reference was made to a proposal that Bhutan should establish contacts with various foreign countries. I discussed this matter at considerable length with your Prime Minister and explained my views to him. I have also written to him on this subject so as to prevent any misunderstanding. It does seem to us that the proposal for Bhutan to establish contacts with other foreign countries is likely to lead to far-reaching and dangerous consequences affecting the freedom and integrity of Bhutan. Instead, therefore, of giving further assurance to Bhutan for the preservation of her security, it may have a contrary effect. More particularly because of the existing situation on our

border areas and the difficulties that have arisen between India and China, any such step would lead to fresh problems and difficulties as well as dangers. I shall not, however, deal with this matter more fully in this letter as I have explained our position to Shri Jigme Dorji fully.

I hope Your Highnesses are in good health. With best wishes and kind regards,

Jawaharlal Nehru

* * *

To Jigme Palden Dorji: Foreign Relations of Bhutan¹⁵⁶

September 29, 1959

Dear Shri Jigme Dorji,

You were good enough to write to me a letter without date some time ago while you were still in Delhi. I am sorry for the delay in answering it. I have been out of Delhi and I returned only this morning.

2. In your letter you say that I have given you an "assurance that the Government of India would not stand in the way if His Highness the Druk Gyalpo and the people of Bhutan desired to establish contact with other foreign countries". I am afraid you have misunderstood me and I should like to make the position clear in so far as the Government of India is concerned.

3. Our dealings with His Highness and the Government of Bhutan have always been of a friendly and cooperative kind. As you know, we have never at any time interfered in the slightest with the internal autonomy of Bhutan. There was a proposal some time ago that the Government of India might have a representative in Bhutan to facilitate our friendly contacts. But the

¹⁵⁶ Letter.

Government of Bhutan at that time did not appear to be agreeable to this proposal. Thereafter we gave up this suggestion because we did not wish to do anything which was not approved of by the Government of Bhutan. Our attitude thus has been throughout not to interfere in any way with internal affairs in Bhutan and to pay due regard to the wishes of His Highness and the Government of Bhutan. That indeed was laid down in our treaty with Bhutan and we scrupulously adhere to it.

4. The proposal that you made about His Highness establishing contacts with other foreign countries was, however, of a far-reaching character which went much beyond our treaty and the existing state of our relations. Apart from this, it involved consequences of a very serious nature which I pointed out to you at some length. These consequences were not only of concern to us directly in India, but even more we were concerned at their effect on the security and internal independence of Bhutan itself. Recent developments in Tibet and on our borders have emphasised the need not only for vigilance but for great caution with regard to any step that might be taken.

5. I pointed all this out to you in the course of our long talk. I certainly said that it was not our desire to enforce our wishes on the Bhutan Government. But any such step as contemplated would have grave consequences. I felt sure that if these aspects were brought to the notice of His Highness and the Government of Bhutan, they would appreciate our views in this matter.

6. As you know, we have stated publicly in Parliament and elsewhere that we are responsible for the defence of Bhutan in case of aggression and that any attack on Bhutan would be considered by us as equivalent to an attack

on India.¹⁵⁷ This is a far-reaching commitment the consequences of which will be clear to you. In the event of any country invading or committing aggression on Bhutan, this would involve a possibility of war with India. We are a peaceful country totally opposed to war. That has been our international policy which has been appreciated abroad even by countries which do not agree with us in many matters. For us, therefore, to commit ourselves to the possibility of a major military conflict was no small matter. But we considered this commitment necessary because of our earnest desire to protect Bhutan from any such invasion or incursion. No foreign country can, in these circumstances, commit aggression on Bhutan without taking the risk of a war with India. Bhutan was thus kept out of the jungle of international politics and the cold war.

7. The position is likely to change entirely if the Bhutan Government develops direct contacts with foreign countries. Such contacts cannot be limited to one or two countries if once they are begun. They would have to be extended not only to far off countries but to nearby countries also. In view of her peculiar geographical position Bhutan could thus become a centre of the cold war with all the disastrous consequences that might flow from this. The security of Bhutan would be endangered far more than it is today. No far off countries would be in a position to give any effective help in protecting Bhutan from any external danger. That danger would itself become much greater because of this entry of Bhutan into what is called the cold war region. Thus, in fact, dangers to Bhutan would be intensified without any additional security to Bhutan. The geographical position of Bhutan itself would prevent any help to Bhutan except by India or through

¹⁵⁷ On 25 August 1959 Nehru told the Rajya Sabha, "I cannot imagine any foreign authority doing anything which is an infringement of their sovereignty. In any event, any such infringement would be an infringement of our undertakings with Sikkim and Bhutan." See SWJN/SS/51/item 187.

India. We are entirely opposed to any foreign troops coming to India or passing through India. The position of India, therefore, would become extraordinarily embarrassing because we do not wish to become agents of the cold war.

8. If attempts at contact with foreign countries are made, it is clear that those attempts will have to include China and the establishment of foreign Missions within Bhutan will inevitably lead to all kinds of internal pressures being exercised on the Government of Bhutan. Gradually this might lead to difficult situations and even the border with Tibet might not be safe. So far as India is concerned, her position vis-a-vis Bhutan will necessarily change.

9. This was my general appraisal of the consequences of the proposal made. This would have applied at any time. In the present tense state of affairs on the borders with Tibet, this has a particular and special significance. I have no doubt whatever that should effect be given to your proposal, the doors will be opened to all kinds of developments, internal and external, harmful to the security and even freedom of Bhutan. Anything endangering Bhutan's freedom and security would have a powerful effect on India. But, even apart from that, the main question remains as to the dangers that Bhutan would have to confront in that event.

10. Thus, instead of gaining additional security by such contacts, in effect they would result in endangering existing security and freedom. I am sure that it cannot be His Highness's desire to take any step which may have such harmful consequences on the freedom and integrity of Bhutan. A broad international result of any such step in present circumstances would be a feeling that Bhutan was, on the one hand, seeking to ensure her security by establishing direct contacts with other foreign countries and on the other

hand trying to appease China by direct diplomatic relations if not by an exchange of diplomatic representatives. It is likely that China herself would welcome such direct contact but would that give Bhutan greater assurance of security? What the Chinese Government would like would be to isolate Bhutan from India so that it can deal with Bhutan separately. They know very well that the only country that counts in so far as Bhutan's defence is concerned is India and the biggest Powers elsewhere can do little. Therefore, the Chinese Government would welcome anything that weakens the ties of Bhutan with India and opens the door to them to come into the picture. Gradually the door will be opened wider and it will become very difficult for Bhutan then to resist pressure from China. No external Powers, however great they may be, will be able to give any effective help.

11. I have briefly repeated in this letter what I told you in the course of our conversation. I consider the proposal for the establishment of external contacts by the Bhutan Government as dangerous in the extreme from the point of view of Bhutan itself and I cannot imagine how such a dangerous step can be taken by His Highness or his Government who are so anxious to preserve the freedom and integrity of their country. Such a step would appear to the world naturally as a step against India and our own relations would be affected thereby. More particularly, in the present context of world affairs as well as of the difficulties we are facing on our north-eastern borders, it would be something which the Government of India can only view with the greatest regret.

12. I am sorry if any misunderstanding arose in your mind about my talk with you. I thought I had explained this position adequately, I have always said, as I do now, that we do not wish to compel Bhutan in any way. I have been sorry to find that you have referred to this matter in your talks with

press correspondents and others intimating that we were agreeable to Bhutan establishing contacts with foreign countries. That has given a wrong impression and these press correspondents have been surprised at this and have come to us to ask what the position was. Naturally we cannot deal with this matter in public.

13. I have, however, taken the liberty to write to you fully and frankly on this subject because it is necessary that there should be no further misunderstanding about it. I thought of writing directly to His Highness and dealing with this subject in my letter to him. Indeed I had mentioned this to you. But on reconsideration I am not discussing this matter fully in my letter to him although I have briefly referred to it. That letter is in reply to what His Highness was good enough to write to me. I have, however, added to it that I have had full talks with you about this subject and that you will no doubt convey our views to him. You may, if you like, show His Highness this letter.

14. I am enclosing a copy of my letter to His Highness which is being sent through our representative at Gangtok.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

SELECTED WORKS OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Series II

Volume 54

(November 1-30, 1959)

148. To V.K. Krishna Menon: China Strategy-II¹⁵⁸

Continuation of my telegram of November 4th.¹⁵⁹

Today I had my usual monthly press conference and for nearly an hour questions were asked about China border situation.¹⁶⁰ Yesterday I held an informal meeting of all Congress MPs in Delhi, about 100, and discussed this question with them for three hours.¹⁶¹ There has been tremendous excitement and indignation all over the country, fanned by our newspapers, and I thought it desirable to explain to our colleagues various implications of certain proposals made. We have not been approached by any country with request for mediation nor does this question arise. I expressed our appreciation of Soviet Government's attitude in regard to our border troubles.

2. There being vague talk about seeking help from other countries and even changing our policy of non-alignment, I spoke firmly on this subject saying that no question had arisen or will arise or can arise for changing our basic policies. Any such deviation from that basic policy would be morally harmful to us and even practically dangerous. It would also be a setback to world

¹⁵⁸ Telegrain, 5 November 1959

¹⁵⁹ See item 145

¹⁶⁰ See item 13

¹⁶¹ See item 147

peace and efforts being made by great powers for disarmament and ending cold war.

3. Cariappa has been making very foolish statements about our settling all our problems with Pakistan immediately and of having a joint defence policy. I expressed my appreciation of the better relations with Pakistan in regard to border problems and some others. But much remained to be done. In any event, defence policy was intimately allied with foreign policy and could not be separated. Further while I appreciated President Ayub's friendly gestures, question of so-called joint defence had no practical meaning in circumstances.

4. We would and were taking effective measures for our defence. At the same time, our broad approach of peaceful settlements always remained according to our firm policy. We cannot have any negotiations on the basis laid down by the Chinese who claim as of right large areas of our territory and while they are in forcible possession of some of these areas, notably Longju, and are threatening further incursions.

5. You have with you our last White Paper¹⁶² and some subsequent correspondence with China. My letter to Chou En-lai of September 26th dealt in detail with Chinese claims.¹⁶³ These claims are for 31,000 square miles of NEFA, 300 square miles in Bhutan, 100 square miles in UP etc. and 11,500 square miles in Ladakh (including 2,500 square miles in Pak occupied areas). We have had some minor disputes on UP frontier. In the main the dispute till recently has been about NEFA area. Now Ladakh has come prominently into the picture. There has been no mention of Ladakh in these controversies till recently, although in the old Chinese maps a part of this area has been included in China.

¹⁶² White Paper II

¹⁶³ See SWJN/SS/52/pp. 216-231

6. About these Chinese maps, as you know, we have been protesting for some years past. The answer always has been that the maps were old ones which had to be revised. When Chou En-lai spoke to me in Delhi, he gave me definitely to understand that he would agree to so-called McMahon line because of the accomplished fact and because of friendly relations between the countries concerned. Later he has gone back on this and for the first time made specific claim in his letter of September 8, 1959,¹⁶⁴ to all these vast areas in NEFA and in Ladakh.

7. When our discussions took place for Sino-Indian Treaty in 1954 about Tibet, no claim was put forward to these areas although it was presumed that we were discussing all outstanding matters in regard to Tibet and India. Various mountain passes for trade and pilgrim routes were discussed. The clear presumption was that we had dealt with all outstanding matters and nothing remained and in the Treaty itself no reference was made to frontier claims or disputes.

8. In regard to recent incident in Ladakh, long account put out by Chinese Government is complete travesty of facts. We have received detailed first-hand account of October 20 and 21 from Second-in-Command of our police patrol party which returned to our base after Chinese attack. His account completely contradicts Chinese account in their note of October 25th and statement issued by their Ministry of Foreign Affairs on October 26th¹⁶⁵. We have no doubt that this Chinese account is completely wrong. In the statement they have stressed their claim to Ladakh area and asserted that they have been in occupation of that area for a number of years. This is not true. Our police reconnaissance parties have been visiting this area since 1954. It is obvious that the Chinese have come into this area in the course of the last year or so. They have challenged the right of India to send any

¹⁶⁴ See SWJN/SS/52/pp. 309-316

¹⁶⁵ See Appendix 3

patrol party in this area of Ladakh and asserted their right to do so in area south of McMahon Line. This is a position we cannot [possibly] accept and we have made this clear to them in our note handed yesterday.¹⁶⁶ In this note we have given full reasons in support of international boundary in Ladakh and NEFA and in regard to recent incident in Ladakh. We have once more asked them to remove their forces from our territory and expressed agreement to settle minor frontier disputes by peaceful methods.

9. Over a week ago, Chinese offered to return prisoners and dead bodies with them to us. We immediately accepted offer and sent an escort party for this purpose to a place within five miles of where Chinese are. They have been waiting there under physical difficulties for this last week but Chinese have taken no further step about return of prisoners etc.

10. There is no truth in press that Chinese have evacuated Longiu. Chinese actions belie their professed anxiety to settle the disputes with us peacefully. We have had to take military measures on the frontier areas, both in NEFA and Ladakh, to counter further expansive designs on the part of the Chinese. As you know, the terrain, especially in Ladakh, is a very difficult one for us. Chinese are better situated as they are near their roads and supply bases in Western Tibet.

11. The attitude of Chinese officials in Tibet continues to be one of harassment to our Missions.

12. For your information only, Chou En-lai and others took up over-bearing and domineering attitude to Indonesian Foreign Minister¹⁶⁷ who had recently visited them. This has much upset Indonesian Government who are indignant at this treatment.

¹⁶⁶ See Appendix 9

¹⁶⁷ Dr. Subandrio

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 57

January 26 - February 28, 1960

171. In the Lok Sabha: Tibetan Refugees¹⁶⁸

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Lakshmi Menon): Yesterday, some Members of the Opposition while discussing Supplementary Demand No. 18 wanted to know more about the Demand and also what we are doing with regard to the Tibetan refugees. To begin with, I am very happy to announce that this Supplementary Demand is not really due to bad budgeting but as a result of unforeseen circumstances.

We had already come to the House for a grant of Rs.10 lakhs in August last. The House was kind enough to sanction the grant. I would like the House to know that this was only an ad hoc grant because at that time we did not know the magnitude of the problem that we had to face. The Tibetan refugees were coming in large numbers, but even so we had never imagined that the number would mount up to the present figure of over 16,000. So far, we have already spent Rs. 14,73,562 and 8 np. That is the total expenditure incurred on the Missamari camp up to 31st October, 1959.

A question was also asked whether these amounts include the expenditure on the Dalai Lama as well. Out of this, about Rs. 6,13,000 is in respect of the amount already spent by the U.P. Government for the Dalai Lama and his party.

¹⁶⁸ Reply to questions, 23 February 1960. Lok Sabha Debates, Second Series Vol. XXXIX, cols. 2328-30 & 2350-53.

We were also asked whether this is going to be a regular feature of our Budget or whether we would stop asking for money for the Tibetan refugee with Rs. 39 lakhs odd. Hon. Members know that over 16,000 people who have come out to India have come away with conditions which they had found very difficult to face. It is not likely that these people will return to their original homes. The Government is fully aware of the situation and the need to face it and is making arrangements for their training, for their rehabilitation and for their settlement and absorption in our country. Yesterday a question was also asked as to what arrangements we are making for their rehabilitation. Having found that it was necessary to rehabilitate them, we have done certain things which were already explained to the House on previous occasions by me. That is, the young people are put in schools. Those who are dedicated to a religious life have been provided with religious education and those who are old and infirm have been provided suitable accommodation and facilities to pursue their studies in perfect peace.

We have also made arrangements for their rehabilitation in various ways. Some of them are artisans and we have got production centres in which they ply their traditional arts which have an artistic value. We are also giving training to those who are anxious to learn these arts. Thousands of able-bodied men are taken for road-making in various part of India. I do not know whether hon. Members would like to know how they are dispersed. They are doing road work in Sikkim, in Punjab, in Himachal Pradesh and in Uttar Pradesh.

We are also thinking of settling them on land. One of the hon. Members raised the question whether it was advisable to settle them in the frontier areas. One of the previous speakers, Shri Bhakt Darshan, has already given the explanation. These people are settled not very near the border but in those areas where climatic conditions are more suitable for healthy living

and also where land is available. For our own refugees who have come from East Pakistan, Government have the Dandakaranya scheme for the simple reason that the available cultivable land in India is limited and we have to reclaim lands which are forest lands now in order to provide cultivable land for those who wish to settle on land.

Chintamani Panigrahi: What is the number engaged in road construction?

Lakshmi Menon: I will tell you. On road work in Punjab 500 persons; on forest work 400 persons; on road work in Himachal Pradesh 1,000; in U.P. 100; and, I think, about a few thousands in Sikkim also. These numbers were, I think, given in this House on various occasions. For fuller details, I may say, there are also projects which are under examination and consideration. A handicraft centre for 250 persons in Dhramsala; settlement on land in Ladakh for 500 persons; in Siang division of the NEFA area for 1,000 to 1,500 persons; settlement in various areas of Himachal Pradesh for about 200 persons.

For settlement in Ladakh, we are thinking of reclaiming about 1,000 acres which will depend upon the available water supply, etc. All these things are being done. I would like to remind this House that this is going to be a recurring feature of our Budget. And, in the Budget Estimates, I am sure, hon. Members will have an occasion to know the actual amount estimated for the rehabilitation and resettlement of these refugees.

We were also asked whether the refugees are still coming from Tibet. Unfortunately, they are. Not in large numbers, but still they are coming. Up to 2nd November, 2,209 refugees came to Bhutan; but most of them are dispersed in India and at present, there are 200 Tibetan refugees in Bhutan. I am giving all these figures because the hon. Member Shri Dwivedy specifically asked for the numbers that have come from Bhutan and how

they were dispersed. It is understood that 10 to 15 refugees are daily coming into India and this in spite of the precautions taken by the Chinese Government at the border.

As I pointed out, our supplementary demand for Rs. 39,89,000 also includes the expenditure incurred by the U .P. Government for the Dalai Lama. We are trying our best to reduce the administrative expenditure so that the amount allotted may be really used for the purpose for which it is allotted. On these grounds, I hope the House will vote the supplementary demands.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series 2, Volume 60

April 15- May 31, 1960

Nehru-Chou Talks IV¹⁶⁹

IV

(April 22 - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

In the central sector, there is a geographical feature of mountain passes.

This also can be made equally applicable to all sectors.

(iv) Since we are going to have friendly negotiations, neither side should put forward claims to an area which is no longer under its administrative control. For example, we made no claim in the eastern sector to areas south of the line, but India made such claims in the western sector.

It is difficult to accept such claims and the best thing is that both sides do not make such territorial claims.

Of course, there are individual places which need to be readjusted individually, but that is not a territorial claim.

(v) We should also take into account national feelings. Your Excellency and some other friends yesterday mentioned to me about Indians having deep feelings towards Himalayas. We readily acknowledge this. But, similarly, the Chinese people and other adjoining countries, like Nepal and Bhutan, *also* have feelings for Himalayas. People both to the north and the south of the

¹⁶⁹ Source: see fn 18 in this section "Chou En-lai's Visit."

Himalayas thus have common feelings around Himalayas. This is a common point and Himalayas should become a mountain of friendship between China and India and other adjoining countries.

You can also appreciate that the Chinese, particularly the Sinkianese, have the same feelings towards Karakoram (which are called in ancient Chinese "Tsung" mountains) and this should also become a mountain of friendship. This kind of feeling is most precious for maintaining friendly relations.

* * *

...I have just mentioned Minsar. I was also told by Bhutan Government that they have enclaves right in Tibet from where they collected revenues for a number of years. These are, of course, old relics, but they serve to throw light on the situation.

Your Excellency mentioned about neither side putting forward any territorial claims. I agree. In fact, to make such claims has been repugnant to us and is out of keeping with our approach to problems.

The question is mainly factual. When it is admitted that certain territories are attached to certain areas, then the question ends. Take again, for example, the eastern part of Ladakh. Considerable part of it is at present in Chinese occupation. According to us, this occupation is only a recent one, in the last one or two years. In some other parts, like northern Ladakh, it may be longer, but these changes are recent changes. We have enough evidence of people going to eastern Ladakh in the last 11 years and finding no trace of any Chinese there.

As regards eastern sector, we stand by our well established boundaries in this area which were not made by the McMahon Line or the Simla Convention, but were only confirmed by it.

Since a great deal depends upon facts, if we can reduce our differences as regards facts, it might help. Otherwise, we would be still on moving foundation.

Premier Chou: Regarding collection of taxes in Minsar, we also collected taxes in the eastern sector till 1950. Regarding examination of material, if you think it is useful to prove your point of view, we shall certainly be happy to see it. But we have not brought our material with us and moreover it will only waste time if we were to look into it. Perhaps we may do as follows: Some people from our party can go to the External Affairs Ministry where some of your own officers can sit with them and they can take down and make notes.

Prime Minister: I agree and, if it is convenient, your officers can go to the Ministry at 3-30 in the afternoon.

(It was decided that three or four officers from each side will meet in the External Affairs Ministry at 3-30 p.m.)

(P.M. gave instructions that a full picture about our case on the western sector with reference to maps and old records may be given to the Chinese).¹⁷⁰

Nehru-Chou Talks VII¹⁷¹

(April 25 - 11 a.m. to 12-45 p.m.)

¹⁷⁰ See item 22 "Meeting of Officials."

¹⁷¹ Source: see fn 18 in this section "Chou En-lai's Visit."

...Frankly speaking, our people will say that you talk about other areas, but you do not talk about Tibet. I do not want to say anything about Tibet. But according to our information, statements have been made in Tibet by important representatives of the Central Chinese Government like Chang Ching- Wu and Chang Kuo-Hua that Bhutan and Sikkim are parts of Tibet as Ladakh was part of Tibet, that areas up to Teesta (near Siliguri) come under Tibet and that the areas north of the Brahmaputra are also parts of Tibet. In addition, there are broadcasts of Lhasa Radio and speeches of the Youth League and Women's League meetings. I do not know whether these are responsible or irresponsible people; but such reports affect our people's minds and they will say you talk about distant places like Africa, but you do not say anything about surrounding territories like Bhutan and Sikkim with which we have intimate relations through treaties and practice.

I have also referred to the Bhutanese enclaves in Tibet. There are some 8 villages, especially near Kailash mountain and there the Bhutanese officials have been deprived of their belongings and the Bhutanese Government has asked us to raise this matter with you. All this I am mentioning just to show how difficult it is to enter into a world survey, even in matters where there can be no disagreement. Your Excellency also referred to Indo-China and I believe that, for the same reason, a reference to it in the present context would seem inappropriate.

As regards five principles, we believe in them and, even if they are not acted upon, they still remain good. But a reference to them in the present context would be immediately criticised. The people will say that these principles have been broken and still we are talking about them.

As regards including Your Excellency's invitation to me in the communiqué, it is not normally our practice to refer to such invitations in joint statements. Mr. Khrushchev came here and he also wanted us to put it in the statement.

Mr. Nasser also wanted to do the same thing, but we told them about it and they agreed not to mention it in the statement. Actually, Nasser referred to his invitation in a statement but he did it independently.

... Your Excellency mentioned about Tibet. I would like to say a few words about it. You spoke about the statements by responsible people in Tibet, but I have not read them; so, I cannot say anything about it. But, I can say this much that, from top to bottom, there is no one in the Chinese Government who has any intention of raising the history regarding Bhutan and Sikkim in order to give rise to new dispute. In two documents we have already said that we have no border disputes with Bhutan and Sikkim and that their border does not fall within the scope of this discussion on 3 sectors. We have also stated that we respect the relations between Bhutan and India and Sikkim and India and our attitude remains the same.

If Bhutan wants to raise the question of its tax collection activities in Tibet, It can be settled in an appropriate way and in a friendly manner.

As regards Tibet, we have settled the question in accordance with the interests of the serfs who form majority of the Tibetan population and also in the interest of freedom of the Tibetan people. The rebels constitute a very small minority. Apart from those who fled away, those who still stay in Tibet can still get land if they wish to till it. The nobles can get compensation for land if they support the democratic reforms. I am sure that the economy in Tibet will develop and the Tibetans will prosper.

Indian Note on Matters other than the Border¹⁷²

Appendix II

Note on certain points mentioned by the Prime Minister to Mr. Chou En-lai handed over informally by Shri S. Dutt, Foreign Secretary, to Mr. Chiao Kuan- hua, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, at Rashtrapati Bhavan on April 25, 1960.

1. Bhutan and Sikkim.

Under India's Treaties with Bhutan and Sikkim, Government of India is clearly responsible for the external relations of these two States. This has been pointed out to the Government of the People's Republic of China, as also the fact that the question relating to the northern boundaries of Sikkim and Bhutan has to be considered at the same time as the boundary between India and China.

Our concern is all the greater, because persistent reports have reached us over a period of months that propaganda organs as well as senior Chinese officials in the Tibet region have been saying that China intends incorporating Sikkim and Bhutan like Ladakh into the Chinese People's Republic. On some occasions, it was even stated that China might take military steps to occupy these territories. It is hoped that in the interest of restoring Sino-Indian relations and assuaging apprehensions, India's responsibility in respect of the external relations of Sikkim and Bhutan would be fully understood and respected and such propaganda would be stopped.

¹⁷² Undated. This is an appendix in the original dossier, Source: see fn 18 in this section "Chou En-lai's Visit."

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series 2, Volume 61

June 1- July 31, 1960

Bhutan and Sikkim

To B.V. Keskar: Radio Station in Gangtok¹⁷³

25 June 1960

My dear Balkrishana,¹⁷⁴

I enclose a copy of a letter I have received from the Maharaja of Sikkim.¹⁷⁵

Apa Pant¹⁷⁶ has also written stressing the importance of having a radio station in Gangtok. This station, of course, will be under our control.

What is the position? Please let me know so that I can send a reply to the Maharaja.

Yours sincerely,

Jawaharlal Nehru

Tashi Namgyal: Sikkim Radio must be under Indian Control¹⁷⁷

30 June 1960

¹⁷³ Letter.

¹⁷⁴ Balkrishna V. Keskar, the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting.

¹⁷⁵ See Appendix 37.

¹⁷⁶ Political Officer of India in Bhutan and Sikkim.

¹⁷⁷ Letter.

My dear Maharaja Sahib,

I received your letter of the 17th June¹⁷⁸ a few days ago. I referred it to our Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Dr. B.V. Keskar, in order to find out what the position was. Dr. Keskar has now written to me on this subject of establishing a radio station in Sikkim.¹⁷⁹

This business of radio broadcasting is a highly technical matter and is also allied to the international system of broadcasting. It is only within the limits of the frequencies agreed to internationally that a country can function. As you must know, radio broadcasting has developed in many foreign countries into television. This is even more intricate and complicated. We in India have not been anxious to go in for television because we thought that we should concentrate on other nation-building activities first. All we are doing is to try to put up a small experimental station in order to learn the technique to some extent for future use when this may be possible. We have thus been deliberately slow because, in our opinion, other matters were more important.

I mention this to bear out to some extent what you have yourself said in your letter to me. Radio broadcasting in Sikkim can only be undertaken with high technical skill and in conformity with international arrangements which have been agreed to between India and international organisations.

I understand that there have been some talks about this matter and even some detailed discussions between our Minister, Dr. B.Y. Keskar, and the Maharajkumar.¹⁸⁰ Apparently at that time no final arrangement was agreed to. Later, the Maharajkumar visited Delhi and had discussions on this subject with the Director-General of the All India Radio.¹⁸¹ It was then, I believe, pointed out that the All India Radio could only agree to the starting of a

¹⁷⁸ See Appendix 37.

¹⁷⁹ See Appendix 52.

¹⁸⁰ Paldon Thondup Namgyal, the Maharajkumar of Sikkim.

¹⁸¹ J.C. Mathur.

radio broadcasting station in Sikkim provided the control of the station and the policy to be followed was under the control of the Government of India, although there should of course be close collaboration with the Sikkim Durbar. There was another aspect to be borne in mind. Unless we could manage to get the agreement of the International Tele-Communications Union to a certain frequency for the radio- station in Sikkim by the middle of 1961, this offer would lapse and there would be little chance of getting this frequency later.

Dr. Keskar visited Sikkim in May last when he had a talk with the Maharajkumar on this subject. He gathered then that the Maharajkumar was agreeable to the proposal he had made. But apparently nothing further has been done in this respect.

I presume that it is in continuation of these last talks that you have been good enough to write to me now on this subject and that Your Highness is agreeable now to the starting of a radio station in Sikkim by the All India Radio on the conditions which have been already stated by the External Affairs Ministry. In your letter you mention that "for the present" your resources would not permit you to establish and undertake such a project and, therefore, you would like the Government of India to do so. I do not quite understand what the words "for the present" refer to. So far as we are concerned, we shall gladly endeavour to put up the radio station on the conditions which have already been stated, that is, the station will be under the control of the Government of India and the policy also would be determined by the Government of India. If these conditions are accepted then we shall take the necessary steps. I take it that Your Highness is agreeable to these conditions.

I have ventured to write to you at some length so that there might be a full understanding between us. If Your Highness or the Maharajkumar would be good enough to intimate your wishes in this matter to me or to the External

Affairs Ministry, we shall convey your wishes to our Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

I am happy that there is all round progress in the development activities of Sikkim.

I trust that Your Highness is keeping well.

With all good wishes and regards,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

To Subimal Dutt: Interpreting Bhutan Treaty¹⁸²

(Question No. 218)

I agree with you. The Speaker might be requested to disallow this question. The question depends on the interpretation of certain Articles in our Treaty with Bhutan. We do not agree with the interpretation put on it in the statement made by the Prime Minister of Bhutan¹⁸³ at a Press Conference. Our position is well known in Bhutan. We do not wish to enter into a controversy on this subject with Bhutan, as that can only be advantageous to those countries and others who desire to loosen the bonds of India and Bhutan. Therefore, we would request that this question be not allowed.

¹⁸² Note, 8 July 1960.

¹⁸³ Jigme Palden Dorji.

To M. Elias: Sikkim and Bhutan Borders¹⁸⁴

20 July 1960

Dear Shri Elias,¹⁸⁵

On the 6th July you sent me a cutting from the Bengali newspaper Jugantar dated July 4. I have had the article examined by our experts here and enclose a note on the subject.¹⁸⁶ You will see that although the area under consideration was ceded by Bhutan to India by the Treaty of Sinchula, 1865, the cession never became effective and the area did not become part of Indian territory. The British Government of India decided more than forty years ago to award a portion of the area to Sikkim and let the remainder remain with Bhutan.

Yours sincerely,

Jawaharlal Nehru

To N.R. Pillai: Indian Troops at Nathu La and Kongka¹⁸⁷

I think some answer should be sent to the attached telegram¹⁸⁸ in which complaint is made about our aircraft etc.

2. So far as I know, no Indian troops have crossed beyond Nathu La, which might be verified from Defence. As for our aircraft flying over Kongka Pass, you might find out from Air Marshal Mukerjee but we need not have any kind

¹⁸⁴ Letter.

¹⁸⁵ Mohammed Elias, CPI, Lok Sabha MP from Howrah, West Bengal.

¹⁸⁶ See Appendix 99.

¹⁸⁷ Note, 26 June 1960.

¹⁸⁸ CCB No. 7887; it has not been traced.

of a specific or detailed answer. We may inform our Ambassador¹⁸⁹ that our aircraft are performing their normal duties on our side and visit some of our posts for supplies.

3. You might inform our Ambassador that I propose to pay a very brief visit to some of our border posts in Ladakh early next month.¹⁹⁰ He need not inform the Chinese about this. This is only for his own information.

¹⁸⁹ G. Parthasarathi, the Ambassador of India to China.

¹⁹⁰ For Nehru's speech to the officers and men of the Indian Army at Leh, 4 July 1960, see item 78.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 62

1-31 August 1960

In the Rajya Sabha: Tibetan Refugees in Bhutan¹⁹¹

M.H. Samuel:¹⁹² Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Government of Bhutan have requested the Government of India regarding the settlement of Tibetan refugees who are staying there, and

(b) If so, what action Government have taken in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Lakshmi Menon): (a) Yes, Sir. (b) The Government of Bhutan informed us through our Political Officer that their limited resources would make it difficult for them to undertake the resettlement of large number of Tibetan refugees in Bhutan. There are at present a little over 1000 refugees in Bhutan dispersed in a number of villages in east and west Bhutan. The Government of Bhutan have offered employment for about 3,000 refugees on road construction projects in Bhutan which would take a few years to be completed. Those refugees for whom employment cannot be found in Bhutan would be resettled in India.

In the Rajya Sabha: Press Reports on Chinese Incursion¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Written answers, 19 August 1960. *Rajya Sabha Debates*, Vol. XXX, cols. 1467-1468.

¹⁹² Congress.

Faridul Haq Ansari: Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in the *Hindusthan Standard* of the 8th June, 1960 (Delhi Edition) alleging that-

"Chinese Communists are occupying some more enclaves belonging either to Bhutan or to India in addition to the eight villages of Bhutan that still remain under the occupation of Chinese army"; and

(b) If so, how far the news is correct?

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Lakshmi Menon): (a) Yes, Sir. (b)

The press report is not clear as to which other, Bhutan or Indian enclaves reference was made as being under Chinese occupation. In any case, Government of India are not aware of any other enclaves except those about which protests have already been made.¹⁹⁴

Faridul Haq Ansari: May I know whether the Government of India has made any enquiry recently about this occupation?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Enquiry about?

Faridul Haq Ansari: Enquiry whether the Chinese have occupied parts of India or of Bhutan?

Jawaharlal Nehru: We are not even aware of any such enclaves. We cannot enquire into the air. Except the eight enclaves belonging to Bhutan which are known, to which reference is made in this question, we are not aware of any

¹⁹³ Oral answers, 8 August 1960. *Rajya Sabha Debates*, Vol. xxx, cols 41-42.

¹⁹⁴ See Appendix 49.

other enclaves. How are we to enquire and from whom?

Bhupesh Gupta: But the PSP knows!

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 63

September 1- October 31, 1960

(e) Tibet

In the Rajya Sabha: Tibetan Refugees in Bhutan¹⁹⁵

M.S. Gurupada Swamy:¹⁹⁶ Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government have banned the entry of Tibetan refugees into India through Bhutan?

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Lakshmi Menon): It is not a fact that the Government of India have banned the entry of Tibetan refugees into India from Bhutan. About 1800 Tibetan refugees have entered India so far through Bhutan.

M.S. Gurupada Swamy: May I know, Sir, whether any request was made before to the Bhutan Government that these refugees should be settled down there itself and not be allowed to come to India?

Lakshmi Menon: When the refugees entered Bhutan, they could have stayed on there, but because of the limited resources of the Bhutan Government we were settle them in India.¹⁹⁷ The Bhutan Government has given employment

¹⁹⁵ Oral answers to questions, 1 September 1960. Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol. XXX, Nos. 17-24, 31 August-9 September 1960, cols 3037-3038.

¹⁹⁶ PSP.

¹⁹⁷ See SWJN/SS/62/item 145.

for about 3,000 refugees in road making.

M.S. Gurupada Swamy: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that refugees are still coming from Bhutan to India, and, if so, what the number is in the current month?

Lakshmi Menon: I have not got the breakup for the current month.

Faridul Haq Ansari:¹⁹⁸ There has been a report in the press that these refugees who are in Bhutan are running away from Bhutan towards India. May I know how far it is correct?

Chairman: They are not running away from Bhutan.

Jawaharlal Nehru: The hon. Member's question is so odd that I do not understand it—running away from whom, how, who is running about, for physical exercise or what?

Faridul Haq Ansari: Leaving Bhutan and coming to India.

Chairman: The answer was that Bhutan had accommodated already three thousand refugees and more could not be accommodated, and therefore they were coming to India. That was the answer.

¹⁹⁸ PSP.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 64

1-30 November 1960

In the Lok Sabha: Air Space Violation by China¹⁹⁹

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It is all given in the White Paper.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: In this White Paper it is written that His Excellency Chou En-lai told our Prime Minister that some American planes might be flying over that area. The American planes can only go either from Bangkok or from Pakistan. While flying from Bangkok or over any other eastern area, they will have to fly over Burma and the Indian territory or Bhutanese territory. May I know whether on any occasion the Government of India noticed those planes either in the Indian area, Assam or Bengal--or over South Bhutan area, or, whether the planes were visible only in the northern side of Sikkim, Bhutan or Uttar Pradesh and the Ladakh area?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: What Prime Minister Chou En-lai said to me was more or less what the hon. Member has said, with a slight difference, namely, that these planes probably--he was not sure--come from Formosa or Taiwan or from Bangkok. These two places he mentioned, because, naturally, flying there, they must cross Burma somewhere or other, or they may even cross Chinese territory-- the mainland of China--and some part or corner of Assam might be crossed. I do not think they have been noticed by us up there. Such particulars as we could give are, I believe, in the White

¹⁹⁹ 21 November 1960. Oral Answers, Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. 47, 14-25 November 1960, cols 1226-1232.

Paper.

In the Lok Sabha: Refugees in Bhutan²⁰⁰

Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Bhutan Government is pressing the Government of India to take over 3 to 4 thousand Tibetans who are in Bhutan; and
- (b) what is the Government of India's reaction?²⁰¹

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon): (a) and (b). The Government of Bhutan informed us some time ago that because of their limited resources they would find it difficult to undertake the resettlement of any large numbers of Tibetan refugees in Bhutan. There are at present only about 1800 refugees in Bhutan.

The Government of Bhutan have however offered employment for about 3000 refugees on road construction projects in Bhutan which would take a few years to be completed. The Government of India have agreed to give financial assistance towards their maintenance.

²⁰⁰ 30 November 1960. Written Answers, Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. 48, 28 November - 9 December 1960, col. 3015.

²⁰¹ Question by Harish Chandra Mathur, Congress, and three other MPs, one Forward Bloc (Marxist), one PSP and one CPI.

In the Rajya Sabha: Foreign Agencies and Tibetan Refugees²⁰²

Harihar Patel:²⁰³ Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

- (a) the names of foreign countries and foreign private relief agencies engaged in the relief and rehabilitation work of the Tibetan refugees in India; and
- (b) the number and names of camps run by them in India, Sikkim and Bhutan?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Jawaharlal Nehru): (a) The Governments of Australia, United States of America and New Zealand have placed Rs. 10 lakhs, Rs. 4,75,000 and Rs. 2,63,920 respectively at the disposal of the Government of India for the relief and rehabilitation of Tibetan refugees. The Government of the Republic of Vietnam donated 1,300 tons of rice.

The following private organisations (foreign and Indian) have been providing foodstuffs, clothing, medicines, etc.:

1. Co-operative for American Relief Everywhere;
2. American Emergency Committee for Tibetan Refugees;
3. Rational Christian Council of India;
4. Catholic Relief Services in India;
5. World Veterans' Federation;
6. Indian Red Cross Society;
7. Junior Chamber International;
8. The Buddhist Society of Thailand.

(b) No camps are run by any foreign Government or private agency in India.

In the Lok Sabha: Settling Tibetan Refugees in NEFA²⁰⁴

D.C. Sharma:²⁰⁵ Will the Prime Minister be pleased to refer to reply given to

²⁰² Written answers, 19 December 1960. Rajya Sabha Debates, Vol. XXXI, cols 2459-2460.

²⁰³ Ganatantra Parishad, from Orissa.

²⁰⁴ Written answers, 21 December 1960. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. XLIX, 12-23 December 1960, col. 6694.

Unstarred Question No. 1709 on the 30th August, 1960 and state:

(a) the further progress in the work of settlement of the Tibetan refugees in Bhaluckung in North-East Frontier Agency;

(b) the amount spent so far for general development of that area; and

(c) when the work is likely to be completed?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Jawaharlal Nehru): (a)

The approach road to the land settlement area has been reconditioned, and construction of accommodation for the refugees has been completed. A hospital for 60 patients is being built. Cultivation of vegetables and fruits has begun and jungle clearance is proceeding. Teaching of Tibetan and Hindi to the refugees has commenced and a school for 700 students is being set up. A cooperative shop has been established at the Transit Camp.

(b) Rs. 5,43,000 upto the end of November, 1960.

(c) Progress of work has been hampered by the heavy monsoon this year, but it is likely to be completed as originally planned during 1962-63.

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 66

January 1 – February 14 1961

Bhutan

To K. D. Malaviya: Technical Education in Bhutan²⁰⁶

January 28, 1961

My dear Keshava,

Your letter of January 28th about the assistance to be given to Bhutan for its development.²⁰⁷ I am glad to learn that you have discovered various important deposits. Certainly we should consider our helping Bhutan from the point of view of exploiting these minerals etc.

To what extent we can go is, however, a matter for very careful consideration. It would be that in any event, but more so in regard to Bhutan we have to be very careful in many ways. To say that we should take up the problem of technical education for the Bhutanese people in a big way is not an easy matter to decide straightaway. In a country which is educationally very backward and technically practically non-existent, we cannot produce that background suddenly that may be necessary. Certainly we should train their people. But how many and how, I cannot say.

There is no particular point in your having a meeting, as suggested, till there is something much more definite produced for consideration. You may have

²⁰⁶ No.E-1/222/9/62/B.H., Vol-I, Sr. 3-A/Corr. Also available in NMML, K.D. Malaviya Papers, Subjects File No. 29 and JN Collection.

²⁰⁷ See Appendix 41.

a careful paper prepared on what you think we should do and the expenditure involved. We are at present stretched out to our utmost in our Third Plan, and we cannot go on indefinitely adding to it.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

To K.D. Malaviya: Confusing Bhutan and Sikkim²⁰⁸

January 29, 1961

My dear Keshava,

In your letter, to which I sent a brief answer yesterday, you have referred to the various possibilities of Bhutan.²⁰⁹ Later in that letter you referred to the Maharajkumar, who obviously must be the Maharajkumar of Sikkim. You appear to have got mixed up between Bhutan and Sikkim. I have suggested to you to have a note prepared. I hope it will be made quite clear to what place this note refers.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

To K.D. Malaviya: Training Technicians for Bhutan²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Letter to the Minister of State for Mines and Oil. NMML, K.D. Malaviya Papers, Subjects File, 29.

²⁰⁹ See Appendix 41.

²¹⁰ Letter to the Minister of Mines and Oil. MEA, File No. E-V222/9/62IBH, Vol-I, Sr. 8-N COIT. Also available in NMML, K.D. Malaviya Papers, Subjects File No. 29 and IN Collection.

January 31, 1961

My dear Keshava,

Your letter of January 31.²¹¹

Although Sikkim and Bhutan may have roughly the same type of problems in regard to the exploitation of mineral resources, to some extent we have to treat them differently.

However, the present position is this. We should certainly send our Survey and Prospecting Teams at our own cost, if necessary, to Bhutan. I believe that we have already done so insofar as Sikkim is concerned. Anyhow to both these places our team should go.

The second and important question would be of educating people from Sikkim and Bhutan so that they can take up this work there later. I think we should agree to do this also. What requires consideration is the numbers of such people that we can train. Your suggestion in your previous letter that we should undertake to train 500 of them seemed to me much too ambitious for a variety of reasons.

Anyhow, the only way to consider such matters is to have a precise proposal, separately for Sikkim and Bhutan. This proposal should indicate the steps we should take and how much expenditure this would involve on our Government. I realise that it will not be easy to have a very precise proposal at this stage. Nevertheless, some attempt should be made to prepare it. The expenditure involved is likely to be considerable, and we shall have to see how we can find it.

Even apart from the question of finances, I rather doubt if we can really, at present or in the near future, get hundreds of people who can be suitably trained. As you perhaps know, the Maharaja of Bhutan is coming here on the 8th February and will stay here for about a week. I should, therefore, like to have some detailed information by that time so that we can discuss it with

²¹¹ See Appendix 42.

him. The Maharaja of Sikkim will be returning to Delhi about the 20th of February.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal Nehru

To Ram Subhag Singh: Jigme Dorji Wangchuk to Meet MPs²¹²

February 2, 1961

My dear Ram Subhag,

Your letter of January 27. I hope it will be possible for the Maharaja of Bhutan to meet Members of Parliament. The invitation should go to him from the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The only appropriate day appears to be the 14th February, that is the first day of the Session. He will be leaving Delhi for Madras on the 15th February morning.

I do not think it will be quite proper for you to invite him to visit your constituency. Anyhow this is not feasible as he is going from Delhi to Madras. After travelling about the South, he will go to Bombay and from Bombay straight to Calcutta.

You wrote to me about the joint session. I thought that you were referring to the joint session to consider one of our Bills. When that occurs, it will be desirable to have some arrangement for seating more or less on the lines you suggested.

But for the joint session to hear the President's Address, this does not appear to be necessary. For many years we have had no special arrangements, and members can sit where they like. I think that practice

²¹² Letter to the Secretary of the CPP.

can well continue.

Yours sincerely,
[Jawaharlal Nehru]

To S. Dutt: Development of Bhutan²¹³

I have read these notes.²¹⁴

2. I do not understand on what basis the Political Officer²¹⁵ has made his recommendations about fresh aid to Bhutan amounting to Rs 11.4 crores (exclusive of the Rs 15 crores for the current road programme and Rs 5 crores for exploiting mineral resources). Are these just odd figures put down or are they based on any calculation? Thus, what does the "Transport & communications 2.50 crores" mean when we have allotted Rs 15 crores for the road programme? Why are Rs 50 lakhs additional suggested for Mining & Oil Surveys when Rs 5 crores have been estimated for exploiting mineral resources?

3. Of course, one can put down any figure for health and education as also for agriculture and community development.

4. How far have these power projects on the Wangchu and Amochu rivers gone?

5. All this seems to me very amateurish and rather superficial. It is all very well for the Bhutan Government to be averse to the formulation of any overall plan. I am prepared for us to assist them projectwise. But even so some kind of overall thinking is necessary, even though it may not translate itself into a plan. The conditions, in Bhutan are in some ways so backward

²¹³ Note to the FS, 6 February 1961.

²¹⁴ Referring to notes on a previous page, not available here.

²¹⁵ Apa B. Pant.

and primitive that the first effort should be to improve this background before we deal with any major projects or even industries.

6. It seems to me that communications, i.e. roads, are of the first importance. We have taken them up. The next is educational advance, this including some kind of simple technical training. Probably, it would be desirable to have a number of Bhutanese technically trained in India.

7. In regard to industries I am completely vague as to what this means. Agriculture and community development are all very good, but they are no good at all without proper trained personnel. If we send too many of our trained personnel there, that itself may create problems.

8. I suggest, therefore, that we should give some organised constructive thinking to these matters and not adopt slap-dash methods.

9. Anyhow, I am agreeable to your recommending to the Planning Commission earmarking five crores to be used for specific projects.

10. I do not myself see the particular point in the Maharaja of Bhutan meeting the Members of the Planning Commission. I have no objection to it if he so desires. But, probably, he has not a ghost of an idea of what planning is.

Talk with Maharaja of Bhutan²¹⁶

The Maharaja of Bhutan called on the Prime Minister yesterday evening and

²¹⁶ Talk between Maharaja of Bhutan and Nehru, held on 8 February 1961; recorded by S. Dutt, the Foreign Secretary, on 9 February 1961. NMML, S. Dutt Papers, Subjects File No. 46.

According to Nehru's engagement diary at the NMML, they met again on 9 February at 11.30 a.m. and on 10 February at 4.30 p.m.; but no records of these meetings have been found at the NMML.

was with him for nearly an hour. Prime Minister and the Maharaja had discussions between themselves, no adviser on either side being present.

2. Prime Minister summarised the talk as follows this morning.

The Maharaja raised the question of interpretation of Article 2 of the Treaty.²¹⁷ He said that Bhutan wanted to establish its right to have diplomatic relations with other countries but it is not Bhutan's intention to do anything for the next 15 years.

The Prime Minister advised the Maharaja against establishing diplomatic relations with other countries. Bhutan was extremely backward and had neither the resources nor the personnel to be able to deal with foreign countries. Prime Minister added that if despite this advice Bhutan wants to have diplomatic relations with other countries, he could not stop the Bhutanese.

Prime Minister stressed that the present moment was in any case extremely unsuitable for a change in the present position. Everything had to be judged from its effect on the border situation. As the Maharaja knew, China was not prepared to discuss with India the border dispute between Bhutan and China. Any step which the Maharaja would take to change the present position would strengthen the Chinese stand and this would be bad. The only straightforward attitude for Bhutan would be to tell China to discuss with India the border dispute between Bhutan and China.

It is quite possible that China would be encouraging Bhutan in the immediate future. Ultimately, however, Bhutan would be entirely outflanked. China will offer good terms to Bhutan and seek to come into Bhutan. Once China is there it will expand and at that stage Bhutan will find it difficult to hold back China.

The USA or the UK can give some money to Bhutan but the only countries

²¹⁷ Of the Treaty of Friendship between India and Bhutan, 8 August 1949. See Appendices 48 (a) and 48 (b).

which really can help Bhutan in any possible trouble with China are India and the Soviet Union, the latter by having a restraining influence on China.²¹⁸

To Apa B. Pant: Not Angry With You²¹⁹

February 11, 1961

My dear Apa,

Your letter. I am not angry with you. I like you too much to be angry, but I have felt that having been too long in our border regions, perhaps, your larger perspective might have been affected a little.

Come and have lunch with me, if you are free, on Monday, the 13th February, at 1.15 p.m. Bring your wife²²⁰ too with you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

To Jigme Dorji Wangchuk: Bhutan's External Relations²²¹

February 13, 1961

²¹⁸ See Appendix 48 (c).

²¹⁹ Letter to Political Officer, Sikkim and Bhutan. NMML, Apa B. Pant Collection, Subject Files. Also available in JN Collection.

²²⁰ Nalini Pant.

²²¹ Letter to the Maharaja of Bhutan. Two versions of this letter are preserved, both seemingly office copies. That of 11 February 1961 has the letter no. 282-PMH/61; this one of 13 February 1961 has the letter no. 297-PMH/61. Presumably, the letter of 13 February 1961 was the one finally dispatched.

My dear Maharaja Sahib,

It has been a great pleasure to us to have you in Delhi again as our honoured guest. Our only disappointment has been that Her Highness the Maharani Sahiba²²² could not accompany you here.

We have had long talks about Bhutan and India and the world situation. I think I have been able to understand what you have in mind in regard to Bhutan, and I hope that I have been able to explain to you my thinking, not only in regard to the future of Bhutan, but more particularly the world situation today, in the context of which we have to consider every problem. However, in order to clarify the position, I am writing this letter to you.

The relations of Bhutan and India are necessarily close, friendly and cooperative. That is due to geography and history and many cultural and other contacts which we have had for a long number of years. It is obviously advantageous and, I would add, essential for both these countries to continue and strengthen this relationship. In the Treaty which has governed the relations of our two countries, it was laid down long ago that Bhutan would have full freedom in regard to her internal affairs. As for foreign affairs, it was stated that Bhutan would be guided by India's advice. We have strictly adhered to the terms of this Treaty and not interfered in any way in Bhutan's internal matters. We have given such help as we could for development as and when desired by Your Highness's Government. In regard to external affairs, there has been no difference of opinion between us. Indeed, such questions have hardly ever arisen. It is only recently that the new developments on the frontier, flowing from Chinese claims and aggression, have led to fresh problems and difficulties which have demanded our careful attention. In considering these, the two countries have cooperated fully. Inevitably, we have felt that India was responsible to protect Bhutan from any possible aggression. That was a consequence of our

²²² Ashi Dorji Wangchuk.

relationship as well as our Treaty.

Bhutan has been isolated from the wider world more perhaps than any other country. It is undeveloped and, in a military sense, weak. It would be very difficult for Bhutan to resist successfully any aggression or invasion. In the case of any threat of invasion from China, the only country that can help Bhutan is India. No other country in the world, however powerful it might be, can directly help Bhutan because of geographical considerations.

Because of its isolation, Bhutan has, in a sense, been secure in the past. But the world is changing now rapidly and these winds of change must necessarily come to Bhutan. The only way to meet this situation is to develop Bhutan, educationally, industrially and otherwise, so as to strengthen the country and its people. This is necessary not only to meet the challenge of the time and give higher standards to its people, but also to ensure its freedom in future. Not to do so would create some kind of a vacuum in that country and possibly also this might lead to internal discontents because of the changing world. The vital question, therefore, for Bhutan is to devote herself to this internal development in various fields of activity. So far as India is concerned, it has no desire to come in the way of the advancement of Bhutan in any way. Indeed, it is to our interest and it is our desire that this should happen, and we want to help in this process.

Under the present Treaty between Bhutan and India, Bhutan is to be guided by India in regard to her external relations.²²³ We have no desire to limit Bhutan's freedom in any way. But present day facts are such that Bhutan will find it difficult to enter the complicated field of foreign affairs by herself. She has neither the resources nor the trained personnel, nor the experience to do so. If, in spite of these drawbacks, she enters the international field

²²³ In the 11 February version of the letter this sentence reads as follows: "The present Treaty between Bhutan and India, in fact, makes India responsible for Bhutan's foreign relations. This necessarily includes defence."

directly, this will be a great burden on her, and she might well get entangled in the conflicts of the modern world. This is our judgement of the present situation. If Bhutan establishes direct relationship with any foreign country, this would lead to other countries demanding such relationship. Foreign Missions will gradually be opened in Bhutan, and they are likely to intrigue against each other and, sometimes, even against Bhutan. It would be difficult for Bhutan in the foreseeable future, to deal with the situations that might arise, and she would get more and more entangled in what are known as power politics.

As you know, it is the policy of the Chinese Government to create barriers if they can, between Bhutan and India. The object is that India should be isolated from her neighbouring countries so that China could more easily deal with each of these countries separately. In the present controversies and conflicts between India and China, we have repeatedly raised the question of Bhutan's border with China. We did so at the specific request of the National Assembly of Bhutan. Nevertheless, the Chinese Government has consistently avoided discussing this matter with us. Because of this attitude of China, it is of great importance that the present relationship of Bhutan and India should be made perfectly clear to China. Indeed, it would be desirable if, on a suitable occasion, Your Highness could state publicly that your Government had asked the Government of India to deal with this question. Nothing should be said or done which encourages China in driving a wedge between Bhutan and India.

However, so far as the broader question of Bhutan dealing with her external affairs is concerned, we would like to assist in the process and to help Bhutan to train her people so that she can ultimately undertake this responsibility. The process of development and training has necessarily to be slow because Bhutan has to start from scratch. Any premature attempt to take charge of external affairs before there is the training and capacity

would add to Bhutan's difficulties; and those who have no genuine interest in her welfare would take advantage of the situation, apart from the great burden that this will cast on her.

When the time comes for this, the existing treaty between our two countries will not be allowed to come in the way. We can interpret it in a new way or expand it if that is considered necessary. We are sure that even when that takes place, our relations will be close and cooperative. As I have told Your Highness, our only wish is to see Bhutan strong and prosperous. Also we are concerned about the security of Bhutan as that is a part of the security of India. As Your Highness knows, I have stated in Parliament²²⁴ that any aggression on Bhutan will be regarded by us as aggression on India.²²⁵

Looking at the world today, it seems to me that the next ten or fifteen years or a little more are bound to see a very great change. Either we have to face the terrible tragedy of a great war which will destroy a large part of the world, or there will be a progressive march towards a more peaceful and cooperative world with possibly some international authority controlling the relations of all the nations. This may well lead to each nation giving up a part of its independence in favour of that international authority. If this development takes place, we in India, in common with other nations, will gladly surrender a part of our independence so as to build up One World. But that is not yet, although many of us dream about it. National independence, however, is progressively becoming more and more attenuated because of world problems. Hence, we have groups of nations functioning together and sometimes forming military alliances. Very few nations today can be called really independent as they have to rely on others.

In the present context of events, we have always to remember the conflicts that have arisen over our border situations. In this connection, I think it is

²²⁴ On 27 November 1959; see SWJN/SS/54/item 162, p. 549.

²²⁵ The 11 February version does not contain this sentence.

important that China should realise that she has to deal with India in regard to Bhutan and that she cannot isolate Bhutan. If this is remembered and acted upon fully, then no difficulty arises about the future. As that future unfolds itself, we hope that Bhutan will play an ever-increasing role in it. There was one matter which I mentioned to you at our last meeting. This was that Bhutan should become a member of the International Postal Union. If it is your wish, we shall gladly sponsor this membership. It would be desirable, however, to consider previously the obligations that Bhutan may have to bear as such member. It will naturally affect the present postal system of Bhutan, which is not adequately developed. But there should be no difficulty in bringing about that development.

With all good wishes and warm regards,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

S. Dutt to Joint Secretary (East): Talks with Bhutan

Secret²²⁶

I spoke to the Prime Minister. He asked me to send a note to the Lok Sabha Secretariat saying as follows:

"The discussions between the Prime Minister and the Maharaja of Bhutan were secret. Both sides agreed that they should not be disclosed at this stage. Prime Minister regrets, therefore, that he is unable to make any statement on the subject."²²⁷

²²⁶ Note from the Foreign Secretary to J.S. (E), 14 February 1961. NMML, S. Dutt Papers, Subjects File No. 46.

²²⁷ See also Appendices 48 (a), (b) and (c).

From K. D. Malaviya: Assistance to Bhutan²²⁸

[Refer to items 115 and 116]

January 28, 1961

My dear Jawaharlal ji,

This is about Bhutan and the assistance that we propose to give them for their development. Our Political Officer, Mr. Apa B.Pant, met me this morning and we discussed the mineral development programme for Bhutan. The units that were sent to Bhutan by the Geological Survey of India have done commendable work there. In a very short time we have discovered several copper deposits, dolomite, limestone and gold. Further investigations are being followed in order to complete our assessment of these minerals. I need not discuss several other aspects of the assistance that is being given to Bhutan by us, but, in its generality, I think that our relation and assistance to Bhutan should develop in a big way and the construction of roads, prospecting of minerals and their exploitation cannot be divorced from giving education to their children. All these should go together because one is dependent on the other. For instance the good deposit of copper that we have discovered in Bhutan must be reached by roads which are under construction; and, therefore, road construction programme has to be connected with mineral development of Bhutan. What I learn encourages me to link up these two programmes fairly satisfactorily. Similarly, we have to give technical education along with elementary to the Bhutanese people in a fairly big way. A copper smelter, a cement factory, a power house, coal washeries, beneficiation plant, development of forestry and a few other activities of exploitation of natural resources will need a very large number of technical personnel. I am quite sure we will face lot of difficulties in providing required number of technicians to Bhutan within the next four to five years' time. We should, therefore, undertake to give the training to the

²²⁸ Letter. MEA, File No. E1/222/9/62/BH, Vol. I, Sr. No. 2-A/corr.

Bhutanese youth right from the beginning. The Maharaja of Bhutan is coming here early next month and, subject to your approval, our Ministry proposes to hold meetings with them to explain what has so far been done and what further could be done in a scheme of our assistance to Bhutan. Incidentally, the Maharajkumar is quite friendly with our Joint Secretary, Kashyap,²²⁹ who is in charge of mineral side and so we have been able to do things there smoothly, although, as you know, they are very sensitive to any offer of help that we might make to them. There is more readiness today to accept our assistance with appreciation than what it was sometime back. Maharajkumar of Bhutan discusses schemes with our Joint Secretary quite freely as they happen to be the students of the same institution and had read together. I have asked Kashyap to include in our assistance the scheme of training of technicians in a fairly big way. In this we propose to invite the Bhutan Government to send about 500 boys in the next five years for receiving theoretical and practical training necessary for their economic development schemes in which we are concerned.

All this is possible only when the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry agree to give them help in a big way. I propose that the training of Bhutanese technicians, search for minerals, its exploitation, and construction of roads, buildings and power should be put together and made into a good size of help. Out of this, training of technicians, search of minerals and its exploitation can be entrusted to our Ministry.

If you approve the general line, a meeting could be held between our Ministry, Planning Commission, Finance Ministry and the External Affairs Ministry to bring all these into one proposal and thereafter to pursue it in the Third Plan period. I learn that the Planning Commission is already seized of the question of rendering assistance to Bhutan.²³⁰

²²⁹ N.N. Kashyap.

²³⁰ See also Appendix 42.

Yours

(Keshava Deva Malaviya)

From K. D. Malaviya: Training Personnel for Bhutan²³¹

[Refer to item 117]

January 31, 1961

My dear Jawaharlalji,

Please refer to your two letters regarding Bhutan, which I have received this morning on return from Debra Dun.²³²

2. I am sorry I confused between the Maharajkumar of Sikkim and the Prime Minister of Bhutan who is Jigme Dorji. But for practical purposes, what I said is true i.e. our Joint Secretary is personally known both to the Maharajkumar of Sikkim and Jigme Dorji, Prime Minister of Bhutan. The three of them are reported to have read together and Kayshap's personal acquaintance with Jigme Dorji has helped a lot in getting our work done in Bhutan smoothly. Similarly, with Sikkim, where our Corporation is making headway, we are now having very good prospects there. What I told you about discoveries is in connection with Bhutan and, undoubtedly, we have done some good work there.

3. What you have written about Bhutan in your letter No. 167-PMH/61 dated the 28th January will receive careful consideration. So far as the problem of the technical education is concerned, I know it is very difficult because educationally Bhutan is very backward. When Kayshap requested the Prime Minister of Bhutan to send some students to Calcutta for some preliminary

²³¹ Letter. MEA, File No. EI/222/9/62/BH. Vol. I, Sr. 7-A/Corr.

²³² See also item 115.

training in the Geological Survey of India, Jigme Dorji replied that he had not a single Matriculate in his country. Educationally or technically, as you have said, nothing exists there. Nevertheless, I thought that we would pick up some healthy intelligent young men and give them some education quickly and thereafter some elementary technical training. There seems to be no alternative to this because who is going to Bhutan to develop their copper and other mines in about 24 months from now when we would have completed our investigations? I know for certain that India cannot afford to give Overseers and Engineers in any adequate numbers. I still think, therefore, that whether they are educated or not, a good number from them should be picked up for training in Overseer Class and a little advanced training, if possible. Two years of general education and, thereafter, 18 months of technical training can make them into good overseers and or equivalent of a Diploma Engineer. Once they have such a Bhutanese Team, one or two from India can go to lead them for their mining activities.

4. Even if the Private Sector of India is encouraged to go and develop mining there, they will compete with our Public Sector Projects and entice our younger people on unreasonably higher salaries. This is happening in our country in a big way and if countries like Nepal and Bhutan invite our Private Sector, it is likely to happen in a bigger way. Considered from every angle, therefore, I would plead for a bold training programme for Bhutan. But this is only to be considered if, from policy angle, you approve of this. We have also to decide as to whether we should send our Survey and Prospecting Teams at our own cost, if it cannot be followed up by a programme of exploitation.²³³

Yours affectionately,
Keshavadeva
(Keshava Deva Malaviya)

²³³ See also Appendix 41.

From K. D. Malaviya: Development of Bhutan²³⁴

[Refer to item 117]

New Delhi

February 7, 1961

My dear Jawaharlalji,

Please refer to your letter No. 186-PMH/61 dated 31st January 1961, regarding the exploration and exploitation of mineral resources in Bhutan and the training of Bhutanese in the various technical trades connected with exploration, prospecting and mining.

2. As a result of their reconnaissance mineral survey in Western, Central and Eastern Bhutan during the period July-November 1960, the parties of Geological Survey of India have reported the occurrence of copper, pyrite, gypsum, graphite, soap-stone, magnetite, ochres, limestone, dolomite, gold and coal. The information obtained is only of a preliminary nature and it will undoubtedly have to be followed up to assess the economic potentialities.

3. A scheme has now been drawn up for geological survey in Bhutan on the basis of the work already carried out for the period 1961-66. The deposits are proposed to be investigated in further detail in order of priorities. The first priority is being given to copper occurrences, several of which are reported from Samchi area. The other minerals to be investigated in a descending order of priority are gypsum of Shumar-Nangkur area, cement grade limestone of Kurtu area, graphite in Paro-Ha area and accessible dolomite in Samchi area. A detailed schemes has been drawn up, a copy of which is enclosed, giving the year-wise targets of work on different minerals

²³⁴ Letter. NMML, K.D. Malaviya Papers, Subjects File, 29.

in different parts of Bhutan. The scheme has necessarily to be of a flexible nature at this stage. On the basis of further detailed data collected, we might have to make adjustments later on as is also the practice elsewhere in India.

4. No specific scheme for detailed prospecting and exploitation of minerals by I.B.M. can be drawn up at this stage in the absence of full geological data which will be available only after the Geological Survey of India has done the preliminary investigation in greater detail. It is, however, estimated on the basis of our experience in Sikkim on the nature of preliminary occurrences reported so far in Bhutan that at least three or four deposits might come in for detailed prospecting and subsequently one or two for actual exploitation. On the above assumption, a provision of funds of the order of Rs. 1.05 crores has been proposed for the work that the Indian Bureau of Mines may take up. This also includes a provision of a sum of Rs. 10 lacs for training purposes,

5. Both the G.S.I. and the I.B.M. would train up Bhutanese nationals in the various technical trades on their respective sides so that they might be associated with the geological and mining work in their country from the very start. The G.S.I. proposes to train 20 literate Bhutanese to start with, the number will gradually go up in stages to about 50 or 80. The Bureau of Mines proposes to start with 30, the number gradually going up to 100 by 1966. Both the Departments propose to take up such literate people as may be available in Bhutan and give them general all round education in the first instance and to be followed thereafter by preliminary theoretical technical training culminating in actual practical training in the field, laboratories and workshops etc. We have estimated an expenditure of about Rs. 12.5 lacs on training the Bhutanese over a period of 5 years in both G.S.I. and I.B.M. The details of the scheme undoubtedly will have to be drawn up later after a more detailed study of the problem.

6. The total expenditure over a period of five years from 1961 to 66 for G.S.I.'s exploratory work-cum-training scheme is estimated at Rs. 1.20 crores with a foreign exchange component of nearly Rs.20 lakhs. For detailed prospecting work followed by actual exploitation including expenditure on training scheme, the total expenditure estimated is about Rs. 1.05 crores including a foreign exchange component of Rs. 40 lacs. The total provision that we might have to make in this respect would be of the order of Rs. 2.25 crores which will also include a foreign exchange expenditure of nearly Rs. 60 lacs. The above exercise has been undertaken on the basis of practically very little data available and, therefore, it is only indicative of the order of expenditure that may be necessary rather than the actual expenditure that we might have to incur.

Yours affectionately,
(Keshava Deva Malaviya)

From K. D. Malaviya: Development of Bhutan²³⁵

[Refer to item 117]

New Delhi
February 7, 1961

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²³⁵ Letter. NMML, K.D. Malaviya Papers, Subjects File, 29.

Eastern Bhutan during the period July-November 1960, the parties of Geological Survey of India have reported the occurrence of copper, pyrite, gypsum, graphite, soap-stone, magnetite, ochres, limestone, dolomite, gold and coal. The information obtained is only of a preliminary nature and it will undoubtedly have to be followed up to assess the economic potentialities.

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4. No specific scheme for detailed prospecting and exploitation of minerals by I.B.M. can be drawn up at this stage in the absence of full geological data which will be available only after the Geological Survey of India has done the preliminary investigation in greater detail. It is, however, estimated on the basis of our experience in Sikkim on the nature of preliminary occurrences reported so far in Bhutan that at least three or four deposits might come in for detailed prospecting and subsequently one or two for actual exploitation. On the above assumption, a provision of funds of the order of Rs. 1.05 crores has been proposed for the work that the Indian Bureau of Mines may take up. This also includes a provision of a sum of Rs. 10 lacs for training purposes,

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Yours affectionately,
(Keshava Deva Malaviya)

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Series II, Volume 67

February 15- March 31, 1961

Bhutan

103. In the Lok Sabha: Roads to Bhutan²³⁶

P.C. Borooah: Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

- (a) how many link-roads are proposed to be constructed in Bhutan with Indian aid; and
- (b) what is the cost of the scheme?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Jawaharlal Nehru):

(a) It is proposed to construct the under mentioned 5 roads: -

- i. Jaigaon to Paro;
- ii. Darranga to Tashigang;
- iii. Sarbhang to Wangdiphodrang;
- iv. Hathisar to Tongsa;
- v. Timpbu to Tashigang

(b) The estimated cost is Rs. 15 crores which would be borne by the Government of India.

²³⁶ Written answers, 8 March 1961. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol 51, 28 February-13 March 1961, pp. 3597-3598.

246. In the Lok Sabha: China-Bhutan Border²³⁷

Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:²³⁸

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Chinese Government have approached Bhutan Government directly for settling China-Bhutan border dispute;
- (b) whether the Bhutan Government have informed the Government of India about it; and
- (c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of External Affairs (Sadath Ali Khan):

- (a) Apart from what has been reported in the newspapers Government have no other information;
- (b) No;
- (c) In accordance with the request of the Bhutan Government the Government of India have taken up the question of the border between Bhutan and China with the Chinese Government. Notes exchanged with the Chinese authorities have since been published in the White Papers.

Raghunath Singh: May I know the areas of Bhutan which are claimed by China and the reasons for their claim by China?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Sir, all these numerous documents that have been placed before the house from time to time deal inter alia with this particular matter also. How can I in answer to a supplementary give the Chinese reasons, which I consider to have no force at all? It is true, as hon. Members will find

²³⁷ Oral answers to questions, 15 February 1961. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. L, 14-27 February 1961, cols 69-70.

²³⁸ Question by Congress MPs Hem Raj and two others; Jan Sangh MP Assar; Ganatantra Parishad MP P.K. Deo and Independent Raghunath Singh.

in the latest rather big volume that has been placed, that on several occasions we mentioned that we wanted to discuss the Chinese claim on some Bhutan territory, to show them how erroneous it was, but the Chinese Government or their representatives were not prepared to discuss the Bhutan matter as one or two other matters. But again and again this was repeated to them that this is our concern. In fact, not only would it have been our concern, but the Bhutan National Assembly had specially asked the Government of India to deal with this matter with the Chinese Government and we informed them of this.²³⁹

Hem Barua: May I know whether it is a fact that China has of late refused to recognise India's traditional relations with Bhutan and Sikkim and they have said that China is ready to recognise only "proper relations"? If so, may I know what they mean by this extra emphasis on the word "proper", which they have themselves inserted?

Speaker: He has answered it.

Jawaharlal Nehru: How can I answer, Sir, what the Chinese Government or their representatives may mean by a word they use?

Speaker: The hon. Minister has said he was willing to negotiate on behalf of Bhutan but the others are not prepared to negotiate with the Indian Government.

Tyagi: In case the Bhutan Government requested the Government of India to come to their rescue to defend their territory, if there is any showdown, may I know if the Government of India will readily render help for their

²³⁹ See SWJN/SS/62/ Appendices 49 and 66.

defence?

Jawaharlal Nehru: The position is, as I have stated in this House previously, that we have undertaken full responsibility for the defence of Bhutan in case of any aggression. How we do it, what we do, is a matter for consideration by our experts. But what we have said is, any aggression on Bhutan will be considered as aggression on India.

255. In the Lok Sabha: Danger of Chinese Attack²⁴⁰

Speaker: I have received notice of an adjournment motion from Shri Khushwaqt Rai on the following subject:

"The gathering of troops by the Chinese in Tibet just near the border of Bhutan and Sikkim and the northern border of India, conscription of thousands of men from prisons and monasteries, continuous pouring of Chinese troops equipped with anti-aircraft guns into the Loka area and building of roads and laying a railway line from Lhasa to Lanchow by working day and night. Due to all these activities grave danger of military attack on Bhutan and Sikkim, with whom we have entered into special defence pacts, and on the border of India, has arisen. To consider this."

The hon. Member has produced The Hindustan Times of today in which an article entitled "China Prepares for Fight" has appeared.²⁴¹ What is the position?

²⁴⁰ Motion, 22 February 1961. Lok Sabha Debates, vol. 50, 14-27 February 1961, pp. 1361-1362.

²⁴¹ Appendix 25.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Jawaharlal Nehru): The Hindustan Times sources of information are much greater than mine!

Speaker: Anyhow, it is alarming.

Jawaharlal Nehru: It is not only alarming but it is largely untrue. So far as we are concerned, I cannot, of course, definitely say what is happening inside Tibet here and there, but we have absolutely no report of this kind. And so far as we are concerned, our borders are well protected.

Khushwaqt Rai:²⁴² This report comes from Darjeeling and, as such, Government must have some information.

Jawaharlal Nehru: How can we have any information on something which perhaps does not exist at all?

Hem Barua: Whenever there is any report of this kind in the newspapers, involving the security of the country, will the Prime Minister take the trouble of contradicting it, or enlightening the public and the House about such reports?

Jawaharlal Nehru: It is obvious that here is an Adjournment Motion and the hon. Member has put a question, and here I am, making a statement. What greater publicity can we give? As a matter of fact, it so happened that in the last few days the Maharaja of Bhutan has been here, his Prime Minister has been here; the Maharaja of Sikkim and the Maharajkumar and his Dewan had been here. None of these persons knew anything about it. I do not know how the correspondent of that paper got to know it in Darjeeling.

²⁴² PSP.

Speaker: I do not give my consent to this Adjournment Motion.

25. China's War Plans²⁴³

[Refer to item 255]

China Prepares For Fight On Sikkim

Darjeeling, Feb. 21- The Chinese authorities in Tibet appear to be preparing to battle with India over the border states of Sikkim and Bhutan, according to reports reaching here.

India is trying to consolidate her interests there.

A reliable source who was in Lhasa just over a week ago said the Chinese authorities there were assiduously courting all Bhutanese and Sikkimese nationals. They were also organising an intensive series of study courses for teaching military officers the Bhutanese, Sikkimese, Nepali, Hindi and English languages.

New reports confirm the recent information of intense Chinese military activity along Tibet's southern border with Bhutan and India. Tens of thousands of men have been conscripted from prisons and monasteries.

They are being used to push ahead with a road from Lhasa through Gyamda to Pemako. A large airfield and military base is being established there right on the Indian border just east of Bhutan and north of Dibrugarh.

Troops equipped with anti-aircraft guns are pouring into the Loka area south of Lhasa. At least another 15,000 recently joined a force of 10,000 already in the Ari area.

²⁴³ Reproduced from The Hindustan Times, 22 February 1961, p. 1.

Garrisons for them cannot be built quickly enough, and monasteries are being ruthlessly requisitioned as barracks.

As the road supply routes are vulnerable to attacks by Tibetan guerillas, the Chinese are also driving ahead in strictest secrecy with the railway from Lhasa to Lanchow. No propaganda is attending this ambitious project. This in itself is suspicious. Night and day the truck is being driven ahead. The railway is expected to be completed within a few months. It will run from Lanchow through Karmoo, Nagchuka Dham and Medogonkar to Lhasa. In the midst of this ruthless drive for more Himalayan territory the Chinese authorities in Tibet continue to send hundreds of lorries of grain to China. Yet there are famine conditions throughout Tibet. That they scrape the bottom of the barrel there shows how desperate the situation in China itself must be.

In these circumstances Bhutan-with its small population, large stocks of grain and high productivity in the paddy fields and its vulnerable political position vis-a-vis both China and India-must seem an irresistible attraction to the rulers in Peking.

But India remains slightly ahead in her attempts to gain influence there.-
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