

Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

Volume 33

Reference on Pondicherry

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Treaty of Cession of French Establishments¹

Jawaharlal Nehru: I should like to inform the House that this morning at 10 o'clock, the representatives of the Government of India and the Government of France signed the Treaty of Cession of certain French establishments.² I am laying copies of this Treaty on the Table of the House.

The House may remember that it was nearly nineteen months ago, I think on the 21st October 1954, the de facto transfer of these French establishments, Pondicherry and other places, took place and they were placed under the control of the Government of India.³ Since then talks have been taking place in regard to the Treaty of Cession so as to complete the de jure transfer. Although it has taken some time, I am glad to say that throughout this period, our conversations, that is, between the Government of India and the Government of France, were of a friendly and cooperative character and I am very happy that they have concluded successfully with

¹ Speech, 28 May 1956. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. V, Part 11, cols. 9711-9713. Extracts.

² This treaty provided for the de jure transfer to India of the French territories of Pondicherry, Karaikal and Yanam (on the east coast), and Mahe on the west coast, and was ratified by the Government of India on the same day.

³ This treaty provided for the de facto transfer of French territories with effect from 1 November 1954. It provided for maintenance of status quo in all matters and included a provision that any constitutional changes in the status of these territories shall be made after ascertaining the wishes of the people. See Selected Works (second series), Vol. 27, p.220

the signing of this Treaty today. The necessary ratification, according to the respective Constitutions of the two countries, will take place before long, I take it; so far as we are concerned, it will not take very long. So far as the Government of France is concerned, it will have to follow its constitutional procedures and I do not expect it to take long.⁴ Although in a sense, this is only something de jure, confirming what has actually happened de facto nearly nineteen months ago, nevertheless, it is a matter of some importance and I am sure the House will be happy to learn that this chapter has concluded successfully resulting in the formal and de jure addition of these territories to the Union of India. We have in these past eight or nine years, as the House knows, proceeded with great patience in regard to some of the foreign establishments in this country. That patience has borne results in regard to the French establishments.

Thus far results have not been achieved in regard to the Portuguese establishments. Anyhow, the process of completing the political unity of India proceeds apace and I have no doubt that the time may come when it will be my privilege to report to this House that the Portuguese establishments have also been transferred to the Union of India. I should like to express my high appreciation to the Government of France in this matter. In the past period, the Government of France has had to face big problems and naturally these rather delayed the consideration of this matter. Nevertheless, they have found time to take this up and ultimately to finalise this...

Sadhan Gupta (CPI-Calcutta South East): May I have a clarification?
As a result of this Treaty will the people of Pondicherry be able to participate in the next general elections as citizens of India?

⁴ The Government of France did so on 27 July 1962

Secondly, what would be the position of Pondicherry in the scheme of states reorganization? Has any thought been given to that?

J N: Firstly, these have to be ratified before they take effect. It may be that the ratification takes place in a month or a few weeks. After that, Pondicherry and other establishments will continue their separate existence in accordance with the Treaty itself and also in accordance with our assurance given to them. We cannot make a change in their status without their own consent-that is, the consent of the people. Therefore, it is not proposed to make any change at this stage. They will continue separately and not be absorbed or merged into any other state. I am talking about the major parts of territories.

What exactly will be done to others, I cannot say, may be some small part and it is difficult to keep that part. As for the type of Government that may be established there, that is a matter for separate consideration...

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French Territories in India⁵

The Prime Minister spoke to me later this morning. And, I told him about what I had mentioned in my previous note. He was first inclined to think that Yanam and Mahe might be included in Andhra and Kerala respectively in SRC Bill but on further consideration he decided that it would be better not to integrate the small bits into the existing states immediately lest it should be considered rather rushing things in indecent haste. There are the susceptibilities of the local population to be taken into consideration and we have promised to consult the local people before any major change is

⁵ Note recorded by A.Y. Pai, Home Secretary, 29 May 1956. File No.6/48/56-F.I., MHA. 2. See Selected Works (second series), Vol. 27, pp. 224-226.

made.² On these considerations, he decided that we might let things remain as they are for the present.

2. He was, however, anxious that action should be taken early for
 - (i) making arrangements even now for the de jure change over; and
 - (ii) representation of Pondicherry in Lok Sabha.

He asked me to discuss these matters with Chief Commissioner, Pondicherry, Shri Kewal Singh,⁶ who is here today.

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Freedom of Goa⁷

Friends and comrades,

I am very glad of this opportunity to meet you all here and to say a few words to you, about this question of Goa, or what are called the Portuguese possessions in India.

This problem affects you intimately. But all of us are also interested very greatly in this problem which has become an international problem of some importance. The importance of a problem does not depend on the size of a territory involved, but rather on its wider implications. Only two or three days ago, you must have read a report of a speech delivered by the Prime Minister of Portugal, Dr Salazar.⁸ It is not right or proper for me to enter

⁶ Chief Commissioner of Pondicherry, Karaikai, Mahe and Yanam, 1954-57

⁷ Address to a rally of Goans, Murnbai, 4 June 1956, AIR tapes, NMML.

⁸ At the opening of the Congress of the National Union to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the revolution of 1926, Dr Antonio de Oliveira Salazar said in Lisbon on 30 May 1956 that Portugal was determined to maintain her sovereignty and her possessions in India. Goa, he said, "deserves every sacrifice not only because it is a part of Portugal,

into public controversies with foreign ministers and prime ministers of other countries. I do not propose to do so except to say that we utterly, absolutely differ with Salazar. I was a little astonished to read much that he said, which was so utterly baseless, that I wonder what his sources of information are. He talked of India "resorting to acts of terrorism, murders, assaults, robbery, sequestration, sabotage," also about "arrests and dismissals and violence against the Goan people in Bombay and other parts of India". Now, whatever our differences might be, I should have thought that the prime minister of a country, even of a country which has an authoritarian regime and there is no one to criticize him there, should not indulge in such rabid and absolutely false statements.

I do not have to say much in denial of them. He refers, more especially, to the Government of India and the Bombay Government committing, I quote "acts of terrorism, murders, assaults, robbery, sequestration and sabotage against Goans in Bombay and in the rest of India, also, dismissals from service, and arrests and violence against them." Well, this is one of the most extraordinary statements I have ever read. I could have understood him if he had complained against the economic blockade and the restriction on traffic and money transactions, which in fact we have done.⁹ But the other assertions he has made show the kind of world the Portuguese Prime Minister and his colleagues live in.

When we first tried to have discussions with the Portuguese Government over the question of Goa and other Portuguese possessions in India, I realised to my amazement how different were the worlds in which we lived, they and we. There was no common ground to talk about. The Portuguese

but also because of what it stands for in the history of the expansion of western civilization."

⁹ Economic sanctions against Goa included restrictions on money transfer, stricter control on import of essential goods, such as steel, textile, etc., and ban on the import of Indian labour.

Government insisted on talking to us as if we lived in the 15th century. In fact, they referred to papers of the 15th century to justify their position. There was not much common ground between us. Still, we discussed and as you know, we found that there was not much profit in discussing with them. They would not even accept our notes, our aide-memoires, and so we called back our representative in Lisbon.¹⁰ Even so, we did not formally close our Legation there. It was only later, a year or so ago, that we closed our Legation and asked for the withdrawal of the Portuguese Minister from India.¹¹

I should like you to go into the background. For generations, we fought against the British for the freedom of India. We didn't specifically raise the question of the French possessions or the Portuguese possessions. Indeed, if you may remember, we did not even raise the question of the Princely States within India. We took it for granted that the freedom of India meant the freedom of every part of India, certainly of the Indian States, as well as the French and Portuguese possessions. Reference was often made to this fact in our speeches in those days. In regard to the Indian States, Gandhiji advised us that while it was perfectly right for the people of the Indian States to struggle for their freedom from the autocratic rule of their princes, we should not trouble ourselves about it but concentrate on the fight against British rule. It was inconceivable to us that once British India was free, all these big and small Indian States could remain autocratic. In those states, we did not come in direct conflict with the British Government. The real basis of the power of the Indian princes, was British strength. And, we didn't want to fight somebody who was not the real power. So,

¹⁰ India withdrew its representative from Lisbon in June 1953 and sought the closure of the Legation there. See Selected Works (second series), Vol. 23, p. 548.

¹¹ On 8 August 1955

deliberately, the Indian National Congress did not directly organize powerful movements in the Indian States.

Now, what happened when freedom came to us? The British Government did something which we did not like at all. They hinted that, when India was going to become free on the 15 August 1947, the treaties between the Indian States and the British Government would lapse and therefore the Indian States might be considered to be independent. They added, that they hoped that the States would come to an agreement with India and thereby become parts of the Indian Union. But, as it was, they had left a big loophole for any Indian state that wanted to be troublesome. As a matter of fact, I would say this that the British representative who was here in those days originally as Viceroy, then as Governor General, Lord Mountbatten helped our new Government in every way to settle the problem of the States, and under Sardar Patel's guidance and strong hand, the problem was solved within a few months except for one or two States which gave trouble like Hyderabad. Some other States were privately very troublesome. But why did they give in? Because they found that although the British Government had given them legal and constitutional loopholes they had no strength to stand up. All their pomp and ceremony had no strength behind it. When the strength of the British Government was removed the major prop went. The only way they could possibly have continued for a while was if they had popular goodwill with them. But that was also against them and with the removal of British power, there was nothing left for them to rely upon and they had to give in whether they liked it or not. You may remember that the popular discontent against some of the ruling princes was so great in the last days of British rule here, the people of one or two States forcibly ejected the rulers and the Government of India had to give them some protection. But the whole Indian States system collapsed because it was an artificial creation of the British. The

moment this main prop went away, this system which seemed so well-established for a hundred years or more, collapsed.

We have always considered the French possessions and the Portuguese possessions in India almost as we considered the Indian States, that is dependent on the protection of the British power for their very existence. I don't mean to say that France is a small power, France is a great power. But what I mean is this, that the French possessions here obviously could not have continued except with the friendship and goodwill of the British power. In the Napoleonic wars and other times, they were taken away from France and they were returned. This applies much more so to the Portuguese possessions. They could not possibly have continued here as Portuguese possessions except with the goodwill and protection of the British power. There can be no doubt about it.

Quite apart from the fact that Portugal in the course of the last two hundred years had lost its former power and had become a weak country in terms of national power, it was not possible in this huge country of India for any foreign power, apart from the British, to maintain possessions except with their goodwill and protection. These were left over relics of the French power in India-the Portuguese never had much in India-because they were no danger to the British. It didn't matter to them. When they wanted, they could take them over. So they remained and we looked upon them also in a sense as outgrowths or consequences of the British power in India. We didn't trouble ourselves about them because we felt that the moment the British power in India was removed, automatically and inevitably these other enclaves, or little bits of territory, whether under the French or Portuguese, would revert to the motherland. There was no doubt in us. And, "I must confess to you, it never struck me for an instant in those old days that we had any controversy over the French or Portuguese Governments about it. So far as the Portuguese were concerned, I must

confess that we were not much acquainted with the Portuguese Government. But, we were fairly well acquainted with French history, with French development, French thought, the French Revolution, and so we were quite convinced that the moment India became free from British rule, the French Government and free India would decide about Pondicherry and Chandernagore and other French establishments in this country in a friendly way. It was inconceivable for bits of colonial territory to continue as islands in a free India.

When we became free, we started talking with the French Government with full confidence and with the Portuguese Government a little later. Though we did not know enough about the Portuguese Government, we knew it was likely to be a little less reasonable than the French, because we knew the internal conditions in Portugal itself were not free. Now, I do not wish to criticize internal conditions in any country, but, the fact remains a fact. Therefore, the argument of freedom would probably not appeal to an authoritarian Portuguese Government as it would to the Government of France. Whether that argument appealed to them or not, the force of circumstances would have to be recognized.

Well, we had not realized that the Portuguese Government had not outgrown the 15th century. And I must say, we found it, to begin with, very difficult to talk to a mind of the 15th century. With the French Government, it was different. It has taken many years to solve the problem of the French settlements, but throughout these years we have discussed this problem in a friendly way. We knew their difficulties, they recognized our position. We realized from the beginning that it was infinitely better for us to solve this problem in a friendly way with France, even though it might take a few years more. We valued the friendship of France, it is a great country. We valued French culture and in fact, we wanted the French settlements in India to maintain that French culture and French language. So, although it

took about six or seven years for us to come to a settlement, we were patient and we came to a settlement after negotiations. This was a little over two years ago. And that settlement was for a de facto transfer of the French settlements here. Even before that, some parts of the French settlements had been transferred like Chandernagore and other small enclaves.¹² Ultimately, about two years ago, the remaining French settlements, Pondicherry, Karaikai, Mahe, Yanam were also de facto transferred to us-not in law, de jure. But the main thing was done. And the rest was really working it out in law. That has taken longer than I expected-two years because, the French Government was rather busily occupied with other problems. We reminded them, but in a friendly way, because we realized their difficulties. And as you know, about ten days ago or so, the formal treaty of cession of the French settlements in India was signed on behalf of France and India.

We would have liked to follow the same course with Portugal. But as I have pointed out to you, the Portuguese Government made it impossible for us to follow that course. They wouldn't talk to us, they wouldn't accept the memoranda we presented to them. Whenever they did say anything, it had no relevance to the present age or century. Long ago, we stated what our intentions were in regard to both the French settlements and the Portuguese settlements¹³. We pointed that it was inconceivable for any foreign power to have a foothold in this country. Our national interests would be exposed to all kinds of dangers and difficulties. Here is Portugal, a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I do not mean to say

¹² Chandernagore in Bengal became a part of India de jure on 9 June 1952, when the ratification instruments of the Franco-Indian Treaty of Cession of Chandernagore were exchanged in Paris.

¹³ This was embodied in a resolution drafted by Nehru and adopted at the Jaipur session of the Congress on 19 December 1948. See Selected Works (second series), Vol. 8, pp. 426-427

that the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are hostile to India. But many things may happen in the future. Suppose, God forbid, there is war. We do not propose to be party to it. If Portugal is a party to it, if the war is going to come to the shores of India, is it going to distinguish between that little bit of a territory and some other place? If Goa is to be made a base for attack or defence, immediately we are dragged into the picture, and poor Goa suffers. Because, if Goa is made into a part of the war area, Goa would be bombed, Goa would be attacked and so on and so forth. And India would be put in an exceedingly embarrassing position, an intolerable position. We would never tolerate that.

When I refer to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, I am not talking in the air. You might recall that Portugal has herself appealed to the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for help against India. The answers of the countries of that Organization have not always been quite candid and dear.

Generally, they have said: "Oh, we have no North Atlantic Treaty. We are not hostile to India." But they admit that, "if Portugal brings this matter before us in NATO, then we shall have to consider it. What we do is another matter." In other words, in some ways, if not directly, then indirectly, this question of Goa in India can be brought up before the NATO Council even in peace and more so perhaps in war. These are vital matters concerning India's national interests and safety.

I have spoken to you thus far on the basis of India's national interest, because I wanted to be quite frank with you. There is nothing to hide about it.

There are two sides to this problem, and there is no conflict between the two. One is India's national interest. I am quite convinced in my mind that the interests of the people living in Goa are similar or even identical to the interests of India. Therefore, no conflict arises between the two.

The other aspect of the question is of the freedom of the people of Goa. Again, I am going to be completely frank with you about this matter. Everybody in India wants the removal of Portuguese authority from India—any foreign authority, not a question of Portuguese. All of us want every part of this country to be free in the normal sense of the word, to have democratic liberties, civil liberties, freedom to progress and so on. But, suppose the question was asked me, "Oh! Are you going forcibly to extend the authority of the Indian Union to Goa against the wishes of the people of Goa?" What will my answer be? I will tell you what my answer would be. I would say, "No". Again I want to explain myself. If the people of Goa, when the Portuguese Government goes, people deliberately wish to retain their separate identity, I am not going to bring them by processes of compulsion or coercion into the Indian Union. I want them to come and I am quite certain they want to come too. But that is not the point. I merely say that my national interest involves the removal of the Portuguese from Goa and not the use of any coercion in bringing about the union of Goa into India, although I wish it, I desire it and I think, it is the only solution. That is a different matter, but that is a matter ultimately for the people of Goa to decide. It is obvious, you yourself realize that a small territory like Goa with thousands of intimate contacts with the rest of India, cannot flourish, cannot advance or progress as an isolated small entity. That is a practical reason. But, theoretically, I want to make it perfectly dear that I have no desire to force Goa to join India against the wishes of the people of Goa. Take another aspect of this question. When Goa and the other Portuguese possessions in India join the Indian Union, as I am sure inevitably they will, then what will be the status of these territories? I need not give you a specific answer. You have the practical example of what we have done in the case of the French Settlements. What have we done with them. First of all, we have maintained their identity. We could have easily absorbed them

into the State of Madras or some district of Madras. Pondicherry can be absorbed into some neighbouring district of Madras. We don't propose to do that, because we want to maintain the individuality of Pondicherry and Karaikal. We want to maintain the type of French language and French culture that has developed there. They have complete freedom to continue their own laws, their educational apparatus and everything. That is to say, we have given them freedom to continue as they want to. And in fact, it is an article in the Treaty between us, the Government of India and the Government of France, that we shall not make a change there except with the approval and consent of the people there. We have no intention of making any changes-not only because the people there might not wish it, but for our own sake, because we want a centre in India of French language and culture. It is a great language and a great culture, and it is of advantage to India to have a centre here, representative of that language and culture. But apart from that, the point is that, it is for the people of Pondicherry and Karaikal to decide what changes should be brought about and when. There is going to be no compulsion, no merger, I might say, of them into a district or state. They will maintain their separate identity so long as they wish, and I have no desire to hurry the process. I need not mention, of course, the question of religion, of worship and all that. Naturally, they are completely free there in matters of worship, in religion, as well as in cultural and other matters.

So, here is an example for you of what obviously would be applied by us to Goa when the time comes. And, now what I have stated previously in the shape of assurances about various matters like religion, like freedom of conscience, practice of religion and cultural matters, or language or service matters, or customs can be viewed in terms of the actual examples of Pondicherry, Karaikal, etc. It is not merely an academic question but of what we have done in practice.

I am saying all this to you, because some people are misled either by false propaganda or by over-enthusiasm and say, "Oh! Goa would be joined on to Maharashtra as a district or to Karnataka". Well, you are close neighbours of Maharashtra and the new Karnataka province. And, I hope you would be very friendly and cooperative neighbours. But the point is that we feel that Goa's individuality should remain. Whenever the time comes for any changes, internal or other, it will be for the people of Goa acting freely to decide upon them.

Having disposed of this important matter, I should like to refer to Dr Salazar's recent speech. He has often mentioned as Goa being an outpost of Western civilization. Well, we have welcomed Western civilization in this country, at least the good part of it, and we have resisted its evil parts. Its principal evil part was its colonial character, and it is that evil part in Goa that we have to liquidate and push out. I do not wish to enter into any argument, but it does seem strange to me that Portugal or anybody in Portugal should stand out today as the standard bearer of European civilization. Whatever Portugal might have been six hundred years ago, I fear the civilizing mission of Portugal in India even four hundred years ago doesn't make very pleasant reading. It is a bad record, a terrible record. However, we needn't bother about today what happened in the past. For the Prime Minister of Portugal to say today that he is the torch-bearer of European civilization in India deserves, I think, not so much an answer from us but from the other countries of Europe. Do they accept that Portugal is the standard-bearer of European civilization? Does England, does France, does Germany, does Italy, does the United States of America- I only refer to the Western powers, not to the communists--consider the Portuguese system of government today, the lack of civil liberties, the authoritarianism of Portugal, as a symbol of present-day European civilization? Do they admire it? When they talk so much of democracy and

the democratic process, what exactly do they mean? I know they include Portugal in their NATO councils. I know and you know that some months back the American Secretary of State, Mr Dulles, issued a joint statement with Mr Da Cunha,¹⁴ the Foreign Minister of Portugal, in which reference was made to Goa, a reference which we in India thought highly objectionable and improper. Let us be clear about it. Leave out political and other aspects. I should like these European countries to state clearly whether they admit this kind of claim of Portugal to be a standard-bearer of European civilization and all that in the East, and whether they admit that Portugal has a right to have a colony merely by calling it a part of Portugal, which is six thousand miles away. Mr Dulles practically said that. It was an extraordinary statement to be made by the responsible head of the Foreign Office of this great country, America. I am astonished at this. Do we live in two different worlds of thought and action? I should not speak of Dr Salazar and the Portuguese Government because I said we live in different worlds of thought and action.

Dr Salazar referred to the dispute between India and Portugal over Goa being based on a divergence of political and moral views. The question is, which political and moral views are accepted by the United States of America, the United Kingdom or France or other countries of Western Europe? Dr Salazar's political and moral views or those expounded in our Constitution of India? I am not quite sure whether Portugal has a constitution, but whatever constitution they have, do they accept that as the right philosophy, or, do they accept the philosophy and the line of our Constitution? I am not referring to what I think or you may think. The Constitution is a fixed sacred document representing the outlook of India. Many of us may not live up to it. That is a different matter, but we try to live up to it. Therefore, we want a clear answer. Why this hedging and why

¹⁴ See Selected Works (second series), Vol. 31, pp. 423-424.

this business of anybody coming and telling me that: "Oh, we are neutral in regard to this matter. Neutralism!"

You know that one of the chief criticisms in some countries of the West about India is that we are neutralist. We are not neutralist. It is only a lack of understanding that calls our policy neutralist or passive: it is an active, dynamic policy pursuing its own aims and objectives. The use of the word 'neutral' has no meaning except when you think in terms of war. We use the words 'neutral, belligerent' when there is a war. Nobody ever heard before this era of cold war the use of the word 'neutral' in times of peace. It is because unfortunately, many countries have got so wrapped up in thinking always in terms of war that they bring in these words.

Why do they call us neutralist? Because they think that every right-minded person and every right-minded country should line up with them in this cold war. Because we don't, they call us neutralist. The analogy is quite opposite. But suppose, I said to some of these countries which object to our being neutralist: "Why are you neutralist about Goa? What is your opinion about it? It is not merely a question of Goa, important though it is for you and me. It is a basic question of colonialism. Why are many of these countries, well, so quiet! They are not neutral, they are very colonial. I should like to have their answer. When they talk about not taking sides on the Goa issue, they are trying to hide what they think, and they dare not say what they feel about it. It is a clear issue of colonialism. And I do say, it is the worst type of colonialism. For me, to be told that the Portuguese have been there for four hundred or five hundred years, therefore, they have established some kind of right to remain there for ever or for the future, it is really quibbling. That kind of argument will justify any colonial rule, any kind of tyrant's rule anywhere. The only reply to that argument is that they have been much too long here, and they have to get out soon.

You all know the state of freedom and liberty that people in Goa enjoy or do not enjoy. You know that there is an utter, absolute lack of civil liberty. They cannot do anything without permission. They cannot hold a public meeting. Even a prayer meeting, I believe, requires permission. Now, for us in India who have got out of this colonial condition and who are tied up with our Constitution with its fundamental rights and civil liberties, and who try to maintain them even in times of civil uproar as far as we can, it is really extraordinary that this backward, somnolent area, under the Portuguese authorities should advance these curious arguments of being defenders of civilization, culture, etc. You know what happened on the borders of Goa a little more than a year ago when a number of persons went peacefully across the border and were shot down.¹⁵ Many of them were imprisoned. Within Goa, thousands of persons who faced the Portuguese authorities, have been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment and even exiled to the other colonies, such as Angola. You know that even now large numbers of political prisoners, both Goans in the sense of being Portuguese nationals and Indian nationals are imprisoned. For what offence? For peacefully walking into Goa, most of them have been sentenced for 10 years and 20 years. I should like really for the champions of European civilization to tell me in whatever country they might be, whether America or England or France or anywhere, whether this business of sentencing people, who have not committed the least violence, but peacefully breached the law by walking in, to 10 and 20 years of imprisonment and keeping them in foul inhuman prisons-is that a symbol of European culture and European civilization? Leave out the bigger questions. I think, the way political prisoners have been and are being treated in Goa, is scandalous in the extreme, and people in other countries, should realize what is happening in Goa and should at least condemn this thing. It is a

¹⁵ See Selected Works (second series), Vol. 29, pp. 410-414.

barbarity which no decent or civilized nation can endure, and yet this is being done by these champions of Europe in India.

More especially the treatment of women. You heard recently of the hunger strike of Mrs Sudha Joshi and others¹⁶. Mrs Sudha Joshi according to us is Indian national.¹⁷ They won't admit it. But leave that out. Whatever her nationality, she is a human being as others are. They were kept in police lock ups for years, I believe they have been removed now recently. In the course of the last many months, we have continually drawn the attention of the Portuguese Government to this. We cannot do it directly, because we have no relations now, but we do it through the Egyptian Embassy which has been good enough to undertake protection of our interests vis-a-vis Portugal, and through the Brazilian Embassy which represents Portuguese interests here.¹⁸ But there is no reply and no improvement. I feel sorely tired by all this and yet we cannot allow ourselves to be driven to wrong courses of action, because of anger. We are after big prizes, which are the advancement of the millions of India; and peace and friendly relations with other countries. We must not lose sight of these big things in a fit of temper, even though the temper might be justified.

¹⁶ Nehru informed the Lok Sabha on 22 May that Sindhu Deshpande and four other Goan women prisoners embarked on a hunger strike on 9 March and Sudha Joshi joined them on 14 May

¹⁷ Nehru informed the Lok Sabha on 22 May that, "Sudha Joshi, though born in Goa and married to a Goan has been domiciled in Bombay for nearly 20 years and is a registered voter in Bombay State. She has thus acquired Indian nationality under our law. These facts and the legal position in respect of Smt. Joshi were placed before the Portuguese authorities when Smt. Joshi was being tried."

¹⁸ Indian Government requested Egypt to look after India's interests in Portugal in October 1955. In November 1955, India and Portugal entered into a reciprocal arrangement whereby Egypt was allowed to look after India's interests in the Portuguese possessions, while Brazil was allowed to look after Portugal's interests

Therefore, in keeping with our larger policies, we have pursued peaceful methods in regard to Goa. It has been a difficult choice for us, because the provocation has been very great. But, we have deliberately accepted that path, not only because of the larger considerations that I have mentioned but because we feel that the solution of any problem brought about by wrong methods produces other problems and other difficulties.

Take the solution of the Pondicherry problem. It is a problem which has been solved leaving no other problem and actually leading to greater friendship and cooperation between France and India. That is what I call a real solution.

Proceeding along right methods may appear to be tedious and slow sometimes but ultimately, in terms of solving a problem fully, and completely, they are quick. Whatever reputation we have built up in the world about our foreign policy is due to the fact that the world has recognized in some measure that we do not act in haste, that we give mature consideration to problems, we function as a mature nation, and not an immature nation getting excited and shouting and rushing in here and there. The world pays attention to what we say. We have no armies, no wealth and no financial position to impress the world with. We are a poor country struggling hard with all our might and with our own resources to build ourselves up and making good in the process. We have enormous difficulties. And among the greatest difficulties are, as always, our own weaknesses and fallings, not difficulties created by some external country. However, we are making good, and the world pays increasing attention to what we may think or what we may do. You know, and I know, and I shall venture to say Dr Salazar knows quite well, that it is inevitable that Goa must come to India. But, an authoritarian regime depends so much on its prestige that it cannot afford to take a straightforward logical action. I meet many leading and prominent statesmen in the world and I can tell you that

whenever I have talked to them about Goa, even those who are tied up in NATO with Portugal, they have said, "Of course, Goa will come to you. Can't you wait a few years?" We have been waiting for a long time. Now, the question really before us is: what we are to do? So far as the Government of India is concerned, its policy is quite clear, things may be slightly varied now and then. It is a policy of peaceful negotiation and settlement. We consider ourselves entitled to bring economic and like pressures. We know that these economic pressures by themselves may not be adequate to solve this problem. We know that.

Nevertheless, they make a difference and they will continue. There are other steps also of that type which we may take. In the main, we shall pursue the policy we have pursued. That policy, I believe, has had considerable effect on many great countries abroad in the international sphere. They are beginning to realize more and more both the justice of our position, the inevitability of our position and the patience that we are showing, because of our love of peace.

All that is to the good. Because, remember, that just as the Indian States collapsed in India. Then the British power went, if the international support of the Portuguese Government in regard to Goa went, it would be very difficult for Dr Salazar to repeat those grave words that he goes on repeating.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that freedom is not a gift from outside. It has to be earned and sacrifices have to be made for it. Nothing is worth having unless you pay for it. These doles and gifts cause an enormity of trouble afterwards; we begin to depend on doles and gifts and not develop our own strength. Fortunately for us in India, one of the basic lessons that we learnt at the feet of Mahatma Gandhi was to depend upon ourselves, not to look to others. Although, we wanted to be friendly with others and we welcomed the sympathy .of others, we looked to ourselves always, and

because of that we built up some strength in India and produced a rather remarkable example of a peaceful people standing up to a proud and armed Empire. In these days of some unfortunate trouble in the streets of Bombay, I should like to remind you of the days when I was younger and when we carried on our struggle. At a time when passions ran high, whether it was in Bombay or Delhi, or Allahabad, when police firing had taken place and our people had died, an Englishman could walk through the biggest crowd in India without being touched. That was the discipline that Gandhiji had taught us and which, the people of India imbibed to an extraordinary extent. What then are we to do now? Leave out the Government. The Government will do what it can in its own way. But what are you Goans in India and, more especially, in Bombay to do? The burden rests chiefly on the people in Goa. In spite of all the oppressive measures and the terrorism of the Portuguese Government, the people of Goa, I mean, have at no time given up the struggle. They have carried it on in spite of all difficulties. Many people from Bombay have joined the struggle in various ways. Nevertheless, you will permit me to say that the Goans in Bombay have not come up to scratch. Goans in Bombay occupy a highly important and strategic position in the struggle for Goa's freedom. There is a large community of Goans in Bombay. I know that they are busy with their businesses, occupations and all that and normally people engaged in those businesses, do not indulge in politics. But when you face big problems, you have to take up that responsibility. You have done it but I say you have to do it in a much bigger way. You know better than I do that a number of Goan organizations here spend a fair amount of their energy in quarrelling with each other. It is about time that some measure of unity was evolved.

You have got a large number of clubs here, not political clubs, but other types of clubs. I know that in the past, those clubs were used to be

exploited on behalf of the Portuguese authorities. There is much less of it now, I believe. Even so, there is a good deal of pro-Portuguese activity in Bombay. We know it but being a free country, we permit it. It is the time that Goans and their organizations here made a dead set against these Portuguese activities in Bombay and in other parts of India. In this connection, I should like to pay a tribute to many Catholic missionaries and priests who have sympathized with and helped the Goan liberation movement. But, I should also like to point out that there are other priests who work for the Portuguese, and I am afraid the Patriarch of Goa¹⁹ spreads out his tentacles outside Goa too-tentacles in the religious sense-and tries to do a good bit of Portuguese propaganda through his religious authority. This is highly improper. It is open to him, of course, as a religious dignitary, to say what he likes, to behave as he likes in the field of religion, but if he functions in the political field, then he functions wrongly. I shall tell you an old story about Christianity in India. Many of you must know that Christianity came to India in the first century long before Portugal was Christian. It came briefly to the south of India and there it is well-established and well-respected in that part of the country. When many hundreds of years ago, Jesuit missionaries came to India at the time of the Mughals, they came quietly and went to Central and South India. They did their work quietly and they were generally accepted and respected for their learning and piety. The point is that when Christianity was brought to South India by the Syrian Church in the first century and by the Roman Catholic church in the Mughal times, it did not come supported by the bayonets of a colonial authority. Therefore, it was respected as a religion. But the British brought the religion supported by the bayonets, with the result that the religion that came with the British troops came as a part of colonialism to India. I have no complaint against the Church of England-but I am pointing

¹⁹ Dr Jose Alvemaz.

out that the reaction of the people to the Christianity that came with the British colonial authority was different from the reaction of the people to the Catholic missionaries or the Syrian missionaries, because the two previous ones were not connected with colonialism, and came as a religion, pure and simple. Therefore, if you go to North India, you will find a prejudice, against that type of Christianity which was supported by the British bayonet. That prejudice is now vanishing, because British colonial authority has gone.

Now, apply that to Portugal and Goa, the colonial authority and the arguments that Dr Salazar is using essentially mix up colonialism with the Catholic Church. That makes the religion lose its force in the eyes of the people. It is a bad thing for any Church or any religion to be tied up with political authority in this way, and especially, colonial authority. And, it is a bad thing for the leaders of that religion, bishops and archbishops and patriarchs to get tied up with colonialism in any way. We don't want priests to take part in political matters-priests of any religion, whether Hindu, or Muslim or Christian, whatever it may be. There is difference, however, when India fought for her freedom, you might have called it a political question, but it was something much bigger than a political question. It was a question of human freedom, and therefore, it was perfectly right for priests and the like to take part and encourage that struggle of freedom. In fact, it was the duty of every right thinking man, priest or other, to support the struggle for freedom. And, you will remember-was it last year-at Christmas time (I forget) a message²⁰ of His Holiness the Pope in which he

²⁰ Pope Pius XII, on 24 December 1955, said: "In last year's Christmas message we indicated the points of dispute in the relations between Europeans and those non-Europeans who aspire to full political independence. Can these disputes be allowed to run their own course, so to speak-a procedure which might easily increase their gravity, sow hatred in men's souls and create so-called traditional enmities? And might not a third party

used his powerful voice against colonialism. Now, if any international Church, whether it is Catholic Church, whether it is Islam, whether it is Buddhism, begins to support a colonial authority, then it sows the seeds which disrupt its international character. If the Catholic patriarch of Goa functions as a political symbol of colonialism, he is doing great injury to the Church of which he is a great leader. I think, the way should be completely clear for any priest or churchmen, as for any layman to support the cause of freedom everywhere. A person who does not support the cause of freedom falls in his duty both to his country and to his church. For him to take up that middle of the road attitude in such matters would involve the risk of doubts being cast on his bona fides. If he is an Indian national, I expect him to behave like an Indian national whether he is a Muslim, or a Parsee, Christian or Catholic or anybody. An international Church like the Catholic Church has to function nationally in the political domain wherever it is. Or else it becomes a colonial Church. The Church of England in India was a colonial Church upholding colonial authority. Therefore, it was no real Church in India, so any Church that upholds a colonial authority actively or passively, ceases to be a real Church; it is only an agent of colonialism. Well, I have taken up a lot of your time I have now got to rush off, to meet the Prime Minister of Australia,²¹ who is passing through Bombay this evening on his way to England. He is just stopping for the night. But since I had this privilege of meeting you today, I have spoken to you many things that I had in mind, which have a bearing on this question of Goa and on what our duties and what your duties are. I have no doubt at all that you can make a tremendous difference to this Goan question if all of you function in a united way. You must have read, the resolution that the AICC

come to profit from such enmities... At any rate let not those peoples be denied a fair and progressive freedom.

²¹ R.G. Menzies

passed on Goa yesterday, or the day before? It is a fairly comprehensive resolution. I want you to realize that this question of Goa is not going to be solved in some adventurous way. We have to function as a mature nation, thinking well and wisely, and taking firm steps from which we do not withdraw. We have to function in the international field and in the national field, and we have to be consistent in both. We cannot do something in one place and something else in another. That will take away our consistency, our dignity and our bona fides. I know that people in Goa especially, have to suffer, they have to suffer not only because of the Portuguese rule, but also because of some of the economic sanctions that we have imposed. I am sorry for that, but there is no escape from it.

In conclusion, I should like to welcome back to India two of our compatriots who have spent nearly ten years in Lisbon or in Portugal. One of them opened this meeting, Dr Hedge. The other, Mr Kakodkar,²² is also back with us after nine or ten years.²³ When I met him, he reminded me of meeting me ten years ago and discussing these problems. Well, ten years in prison in Portugal have not damped their ardour and they are young and vigorous. And I hope their return here will add to the strength of those who are working for the freedom of Goa.

Thank you. Jai Hind!

²² Purushottam Kakodkar (1913-1998); nationalist leader from Goa; imprisoned during Quit India movement; founder-member, Goa National Congress; arrested in Goa in 1946 and imprisoned in Lisbon; released in 1952 but was sent to India in 1956; President, Goa, Pradesh Congress Committee, 1963 and 1968; elected to Lok Sabha, 1971

²³ Dr Raw Hedge and Purushottam Kakodkar participated in the first civil disobedience movement in Goa, in June 1946. In January 1947, they were deported to Lisbon and imprisoned there