



SOONG CHING LING

GOOD  
NEIGHBOURS  
MEET

SPEECHES IN  
INDIA, BURMA AND PAKISTAN  
(1955-1956)

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## *PUBLISHER'S NOTE*

Between December 1955 and February 1956, Soong Ching Ling, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, visited India, Burma and Pakistan. Her visit promoted the understanding and friendship of the Chinese people and their neighbours. It also contributed greatly to the cause of peace in Asia and, therefore, the whole world.

This is a collection of the main speeches made by Soong Ching Ling during her visit. The report she made to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress after her return is also included.

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## OLD FRIENDSHIP AND NEW TIES

Your Excellency, Honourable Vice-President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I came to New Delhi yesterday to pay a visit to our great neighbour—India—on the invitation of the Indian Government and His Excellency Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. I have been accorded a very warm welcome by the Indian Government and people. This evening Your Excellency has given this banquet and provided me with an opportunity to meet friends from many circles. For all this, I feel honoured and grateful. Now that my long cherished desire to visit India has been finally realized, especially in this epoch-making period of world history of which we all feel proud, I cannot but be deeply touched. Please allow me to express my heartfelt thanks to you, Mr. Vice-President, and through you to the Indian Government and people. I should like also to express my sincere feelings towards the leader of India, outstanding statesman and peace fighter, my good friend Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, without whom, the happy gathering this evening would not have been possible.

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Speech at a banquet given by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India, on December 17, 1955, at the Government House, Delhi.

Relations between China and India, are just as His Excellency the Prime Minister said when he visited China last winter: "From the dawn of history, India and China have lived side by side in perfect friendliness and mutual concord." The histories of our two countries record only continuous cultural and economic exchange. This rare but natural tradition of peaceful coexistence among countries has been the basis of relations between China and India. In recent times, our two peoples have consistently struggled against aggression and oppression by foreign colonialism and for their own freedom and independence. Facing our common difficulties, our mutual sympathy and understanding have been deepened and they are never to be forgotten. Since the establishment of our new states, our traditional friendship has been even further strengthened.

We have a common desire to build our respective countries in a peaceful environment. We have made considerable progress in China since our national liberation and we are now striving to complete our First Five-Year Plan. We are also fully aware of the rapid advance that India has achieved in recent years. During my short stay in India, I hope to avail myself of the opportunity to learn from your achievements and experiences. Our common desire for peace is the foundation for the further development of friendship and co-operation. It is very gratifying that now the historical Five Principles or "Panch Shila" have not only become a guide for our relations but are being accepted by more and more nations.

Peaceful coexistence is now an objective necessity. The peace-loving people of India have made valuable contributions towards the establishment of Panch Shila, to expand the peace areas, to ease international tension, to consolidate the unity of Asian-African countries in the course of anti-colonialism.

The Chinese people will never forget the stand that our Indian friends have taken in support of China on the question of tension regarding Chinese territory in the Taiwan area, and on the issue of restoring China's legitimate rights in the United Nations. We are grateful to the Indian people for their support. The Indian people can be assured that in their fight for the integrity of India's territory and sovereignty, they will always be able to count on the whole-hearted support of the Chinese people. Both our countries are endeavouring to free themselves from their economic backwardness. Thus our co-operation in the economic sphere is of great significance. Our cultural relationships have been extended in the past few years. Undoubtedly, our closer co-operation and mutual assistance will not only benefit our own countries, but help to guarantee peace and progress in Asia and the world.



## CHINA AND INDIA WORK FOR PEACE

Mr. Chairman and Friends:

For many years it has been my wish to visit the great land of India. During most of those years, your country was in the midst of stern anti-colonial struggle, while my own country was engaged in a war for independence and democracy. The prospects of a visit on several occasions were tantalizingly near, but each time some obstruction arose. It was thus that I lost the opportunity during those testing times to bring the salute from one undefeatable people to another.

Only now do conditions prevail which have allowed my wish to become reality. I want to tell you, it gives me the profoundest pleasure to be here, to be among you who fought so long and valiantly for the historic victory of the independence of your land.

My wish to visit India is a symbol of the high regard in which my countrymen hold the Indian people. We have for centuries praised your art and culture. We have for ages prized your friendship and neighbourliness. Chairman Mao Tse-tung expressed

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Speech at a civic reception given by the Delhi Municipal Committee on December 18, 1955, at the Diwani Khas (Guest Hall) of the historic Red Fort, old Delhi.

our feelings succinctly and aptly when he said: "The Indian nation is a great nation, and the Indian people are an excellent people."

The Indian people have always reciprocated our feelings with deep feelings of their own. This mutual respect has through millennia engendered peaceful contacts between our countries which is indeed unique in the annals of man. I venture to say that it has rarely been matched in history over such an expanse of time.

This precious heritage, enhanced by our common struggle over long years against colonial oppression, provided the foundation upon which we have built the harmonious bonds which link us in the present era. The past several years particularly have seen the contacts between China and India enter a new stage of development. These have reflected, on the one hand, mutual concern and sympathy between our peoples as we both enter upon the task of reviving and reconstructing our nations; on the other hand, our relations have reflected our earnest strivings for peace in Asia and the world. This has been demonstrated particularly by our co-operation and mutual support in opposing the main cause of tension in the Far East, the foreign intervention which persists in our internal affairs and those of other peoples.

The culmination of the new development in China-India relations was the historic pronouncement by our premiers of the Five Principles of peaceful co-existence, Panch Shila. Since that time, we have been assiduously carrying out these principles in our

day-to-day affairs, proving in actual practice that only good can come from their observance. This has not only consolidated peace over a considerable part of Asia, but has successfully promoted the idea of peaceful coexistence in the East and West, with many countries finding the Five Principles a completely practical set of standards by which to guide international conduct. We can see from this and many events which preceded and followed the enunciation of the principles, that friendship and co-operation between us are of immense value to our countries, to the Far East and the world.

There was a time, and it was not too long ago, that careful suppression by outside forces prevented general knowledge of the closeness between the Chinese and Indian peoples. Today such suppression is no longer possible. Consequently, what takes place between our two countries is now constantly claiming public attention.

This can be explained by the fact that since the end of World War II, there has been a turn of events in Asia. The peoples of this area, long on the move for their national rights and security, have won these in a number of countries. China and India, two great Asian powers, have by their actions as independent nations, asserted the will of New Asia rising out of bondage and backwardness. Since this will is the decisive factor in all Asian matters, since it must be taken into account in all world matters, what China and India think and do are bound to be of special importance.

This is a salient fact if one looks at it in the context of contemporary life.

The prime issue facing people today is peace. The great majority are unequivocal in their desire to eliminate the possibility of another world war. But one cannot deny that there exist a minority who act contrary to that desire, manoeuvring and projecting their military strength far beyond the normal points for national defence, thereby threatening others. Thus, two main forces are at work, and the question of war or peace is the crux.

Since time immemorial, war has been the last resort in settling questions existing between states. And if, from the people's point of view, this never was a sane way to resolve differences, the only reason it was not vetoed was because history had not advanced to a point where people could exert their wisdom on such decisions.

But today we have arrived at a point of departure in history. Ordinary men and women everywhere in increasing numbers are becoming cognizant of their rights as members of the human race to decide their destiny. States have been founded and are operating on the basis of that cognition. What is more, the peoples see that now war is a matter of instantaneous mass destruction. It is obvious that war or peace is an issue the peoples can and must take into their own hands. This is the present trend in thinking and understanding. This is the impetus behind the fast-growing movement by which the majority is throwing down its veto in the path of that minority which

would violate the reason of man's intellect and the security of his being. The demand is that questions between states be settled peacefully, and the wonders of science be used to fulfil the promises of a decent life for every people. Whosoever refuses to heed this demand will bring down the condemnation of the whole world on his head and thereby assure his inevitable defeat.

China and India, 960 million strong, have taken a firm stand on the side of the great majority. We say that all peoples must have justice and peace. We have shown by word and deed that we are ready and able to take up heavy responsibilities to move this noble cause forward. On successive occasions, often working together, we have been able to register gains significant to the progress and security of Far Eastern and other peoples.

In reviewing just the recent past, one can observe the impressive list of accomplishments. Both the ceasefire in Korea and the restoration of peace in Indo-China were brought about by the strivings of China and India with the vital collaboration of the Soviet Union and other countries. Today India is carrying out important duties connected with supervising the agreements reached at Geneva.

In April this year, the historic conference at Bandung was held, which gave new stimulus to the cause of self-determination of Asian and African peoples, and linked it even more firmly with the broader cause of achieving friendship and co-operation internationally. The world knows what valuable contributions

both China and India made to that conference and its unanimous agreements, especially its Resolution on World Peace and Co-operation.

Then in June, Premier Nehru visited the Soviet Union and other European countries. Along with the Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers, N. A. Bulganin, he issued a historic statement. That statement stands as proof of the great friendship between the Soviet and Indian peoples. It also stands as a living example of how nations with different backgrounds, customs and systems can live side by side in peace, co-operating with one another to extend goodwill over the widest possible area. The Nehru-Bulganin statement was another important triumph for the Five Principles and the cause of peace. This has been further strengthened by the recent visit to India of Marshal Bulganin and N. S. Khrushchev, Member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

Finally, one can observe various moves made by China and India to reduce the tension in the Far East, seeking to establish a fresh approach to outstanding problems. One can especially note our efforts to eliminate the points of contention between China and the United States, in the hope that progress can be made towards a fundamental change in relations between these two important powers, the normalization of which means so much to relations in the whole of the vast Asian and Pacific regions.

Regarding this, one cannot but mention the difficulties and tensions caused by the United States

occupation of China's territory of Taiwan and the interference in the liberation of China's coastal islands. On a number of occasions China has made the proposal that the United States and China sit down and discuss ways of easing and eliminating these tensions. This proposal has received the widespread support of all those genuinely interested in peace, and especially of the Indian people, who recognize the justice of China's demand that the internal affairs of a sovereign nation be settled according to its own dictates.

The Indian people support the Chinese people on the question of Taiwan, just as we give full support to the Indian people on the question of Goa, which is another instance of flagrant infringement of the territorial integrity of an independent nation. I am certain that both China and India will continue to work towards the just solution of these and other sources of discord in the Far East, using every means and form of communication available.

In all of these activities, the Chinese people have been moved by the perseverance of Premier Nehru and his Government in their pursuit of effective means to bridge the gaps in international contacts. Upon his visit to our country, he saw first hand how deep is our gratitude for his tireless efforts, especially in applying his good offices to several specific problems involving China. We appreciate those efforts because they come from a good and well-meaning neighbour, and at the same time they serve the best interests of people everywhere.

The Chinese people, for their part, take a simple, easily understandable position: we want peace; we bear no grudge against any people; we threaten no one, and we will not tolerate threats from others, in the present as in the past. We are proud of our achievements and we mean to protect them, but we are also willing to share them; we are ready to co-operate with any country to bring to fruition any plan which works for peace by recognizing the legitimate rights of the peoples and is conceived from the premise of true equality among nations. This stand of ours applies to all questions, whether they be those concerned with China and its territories, or those concerned with other lands.

The attitudes and actions of China and India, the actions of the Soviet Union and other peace-loving countries, which have consistently maintained a policy aimed at terminating the "cold war" and re-establishing confidence between nations, the recent attitudes assumed by other powers in response to the overwhelming desire of the peoples for peace, have all made for a change in the international climate. This new condition, initiated by co-operation and willingness to listen to other people's points of view, displayed at the Four Heads of Government Meeting at Geneva, was heartily welcomed by everyone. The world eagerly awaits further steps that can be taken, given the continuation and development of this healthier atmosphere. Although the recent Foreign Ministers' Conference of the Four Powers did not attain positive results, still, the peoples of the world want



to preserve the Geneva spirit and demand that more concrete actions contributory to international peace and security be taken along the path already paved.

This has had its effect on our part of the world, but what is urgent is that there be a full-fledged extension of the new spirit towards the Far East, leading to a thorough examination of the problems that exist there. The point is that Far Eastern problems cannot be left to “hang fire” indefinitely. It also cannot be a question of one “learning to live” with them, as some people suggest, since that would be like learning to live with a time-bomb. The point is that all those interested in peace want to see these problems fairly dealt with and the sooner this takes place, the sooner everyone can rest assured that a new atmosphere is truly encircling the globe with a degree of permanency.

On July 30 this year, Premier Chou En-lai presented a foreign policy statement to the Second Session of the First National People’s Congress of China. In that statement he took the following position on the above question:

“Many Asian countries have proposed the holding of a Far Eastern conference, so that countries concerned can enter into negotiations to settle the question of easing tension in the Far East. We support this proposal; moreover, we hold that Asian countries should be widely represented at this conference.”

This is how China stands on the urgency of questions in the Far East. Premier Nehru has voiced a similar opinion.