

# **Walking the Thin Line: India's Anti-Racist Diplomatic Practice in South Africa, Canada and Australia, 1946-1955**

## **Abstract**

Historians of India's foreign policy have often failed to see beyond the 'Great man' Jawaharlal Nehru. This Nehru-centric vision is not only misleading, but unfair to Nehru. Here, we seek to take the gaze off Nehru and New Delhi so as to view Indian foreign policy from different locations. We examine the ways in which India's diplomats in Australia, Canada and South Africa resisted racial discrimination. India's anti-racist diplomacy has most often been viewed as pointless moralistic ranting: the domain of the 'hypersensitive, emotional' Indian. We argue, however, based on largely unexamined archival material and an emphasis on the practice of Indian diplomacy, that India's diplomats in these bastions of settler-colonial racism were tactful, strategic and effective in challenging racist, colonial practices and bringing an anti-racist discourse to international politics. Nehruvian foreign policy discourse, and its goal of an anti-racist world order, then, was tempered by its diplomatic practices. In particular, this occurred outside of New Delhi in places where India's hopes for productive international relationships clashed with its Nehruvian worldview.

**Key words:** Indian diplomacy, anti-racism, diplomatic practice, Commonwealth, Jawaharlal Nehru

## **Introduction: India's postcolonial Foreign Policy Beyond the 'Great Man'**

Even half a century after Nehru's passing, his foreign policy remains both misunderstood and deeply politicized. Most assessments of Nehru remain overwritten and yet curiously under-researched.<sup>1</sup> As Bajpai (2009) and Mallavarapu (2009) have argued, foreign policy analysis in India often lacks theoretical or descriptive richness, even if it is analytically rigorous. Thick descriptive accounts based on rich archival work are few and far between, which means that foreign policy analysis is predominantly based on either secondary accounts or inbred theoretical predispositions. This is perhaps most true of studies on Nehru's foreign policy. On the one hand, many have raised his foreign policy to a high pedestal, but on the other, a good majority of current analysts have been overly critical of Nehru's supposed moralistic rants. In a standard account of his foreign policy, for instance, Jaswant Singh vividly described it as 'almost always moralistic, needlessly arrogant, argumentative, mistaking such attitude as being an assertion of national pride'.<sup>2</sup> A host of other astute foreign policy analysts have, sometimes sweepingly, dismissed Nehruvian foreign policy as 'non-

existent', 'abnormal' or not 'grown up'.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, a more situated understanding of those years emerges in some of recent archival work. Here, we seek to add to this relatively-thin-but-growing body of literature which gives us a richer picture of Nehruvian years while also providing theoretical insights into his foreign policy.<sup>4</sup>

Two methodological concerns animate our discussions below. First, we are bolstered by the new 'practice turn' in IR which 'zooms in on the quotidian unfolding of international life'.<sup>5</sup> This 'practice turn' emphasizes not a dull recording of events, but decrypts the everyday of the 'international'. It forces us 'to engage with the relationship between agency and the social and natural environments, with both material and discursive factors, and with the simultaneous practice of stability and change'.<sup>6</sup> In other words, the study of practices helps us to unearth the intricate links between discourses, actions and institutions through the critical analysis of the day-to-day actions of diplomats. Practices are everyday rituals where meanings are generated, enacted and reproduced. The practice of diplomacy in this case reveals to us the rough edges that the discourse of foreign policy often flattens, but more so it helps us to appreciate how the discourse of Nehruvian foreign policy shaped, and was shaped by, the practice of international diplomacy and India's national interests.

Here, we see postcolonial India's national interest not as given by the system, but as socially and historically constructed – specifically by the colonial experience. India's interests were mutually constituted with its identity.<sup>7</sup> As Priya Chacko has shown, the guiding discourse of Nehruvian foreign policy was an effort to create a more ethical modernity and a decolonized international system.<sup>8</sup> India's interests, then, lay in a decolonized world order in which it could act independently and without facing old colonial prejudices. How, though, did this clash with day-to-day diplomatic practices? How did diplomats maintain friendly relations with potentially useful partners (like Canada and Australia, less so South Africa) and yet live up to Nehru's postcolonial project? Here, we consider the ways in which India's diplomats navigated the thin line between upholding India's declared principle of anti-racism in the still-racist White Dominions and staying within the established principles of diplomatic conduct. When it came to foreign policy, an Indian diplomat once describe Nehru as the painter – he was the one who set up the discourse - while the diplomats were 'merely touch-up artists' and 'brokers'.<sup>9</sup> But invariably, the burden of making the painting saleable was placed on just these 'touch-up artists'. This

required finding textures and strategies suited to their particular context. In the final analysis, it was the painting itself that was suitably enhanced by these diplomats.

This leads to our second methodological issue. The excessive focus on Nehru in studies of what is known as ‘Nehruvian’ foreign policy, while understandable, is also one of the reasons why these studies remain constrained. The obsession with locating all foreign policy activity at the feet of Nehru leads to an overemphasis on his agency. Archival sources instead lead us to alternative narratives on foreign policy that could confirm, correct or contest Nehru’s ideas. In seeking to draw from this narrative multiverse, we have chosen to write histories of little-known and lost diplomats, and avoided tracing diplomatic history only at the centre of decision making, (i.e. either Nehru or the Ministry of External Affairs). We attempt to write our narrative from the diplomatic field and see how the diplomats located outside India contributed to the development of a postcolonial foreign policy discourse.

Bearing in mind these methodological preferences, we look at India’s diplomatic practice with regard to three major settler-colonial states in the Commonwealth – South Africa, Canada and Australia – in the pre-Bandung era. We begin in 1946 when the interim government under Nehru came to power and close with India’s ending of diplomatic relations with South Africa in 1954. Post-1954, India’s Commonwealth diplomacy entered a new phase for two reasons. First, it had exhausted all bilateral diplomatic tools with South Africa and hence the focus shifted to the UN. Second, with Bandung conference, a whole new set of alliances and actors campaigned for a non-racial world order. Until then, India stood as the most significant agent that consistently strived for a non-racial world order.

India’s diplomacy, as we will argue below, tight-rope walked between campaigning for non-racialism while seeking to interfere, sometimes subtly, sometimes openly, in the domestic jurisdiction of its fellow Commonwealth states. By making calculated strategic choices, Indian diplomats navigated the terrain of the post-world war normative order, which was beginning to be more open to questioning racism - following the ‘boomerang effect’, as Aime Cesaire called it, of Nazism - but was still reluctant enough to embrace global non-racial norms.<sup>10</sup> The decolonisation process had pushed countries like India to the forefront of the calls for non-racial world order, but it had still not caught significant momentum of its own to generate non-western solidarity of the post-Bandung era. In this in-between phase, Indian diplomats posted in the White Dominions of the Commonwealth had to tread a

cautious line that advanced the Indian non-racial agenda but also did not offend their hosts by stepping on their domestic jurisdiction.

### **‘Presenting the New Spirit of Independent India’: India’s South African Policy**

We will begin with the most challenging environment for Indian diplomats to engage with, South Africa, before moving on to examples where Indian diplomats had to be more cautious. India’s complaint to the United Nations against the treatment of Indians in South Africa was its inaugural diplomatic move in world affairs.<sup>11</sup> Before taking the case to the UN, India had already broken off trade ties with South Africa and recalled its High Commissioner R.M. Deshmukh for consultations. Shrewdly, however, India’s moral outrage was channelled strategically. By presenting this recall as only ‘for consultations’, India let an otherwise fully functioning High Commission remain in the country thereby keeping its diplomatic ears close to the developments in South Africa.<sup>12</sup>

The 1940s were turning out to be a difficult time for South African Indians with the hardening of the racial laws in the country. The promulgation of the Ghetto Act in 1946, which had forced India to impose trade sanctions and recall the High Commissioner, led to a new phase in the Indian struggle in South Africa. A new generation of younger, more radical leaders stood up against the more conservative leadership within the Indian community and Indians launched a movement against the South African government. The High Commission, established in 1927 first as the office of the Agent and upgraded to High Commission in 1941, had traditionally played the role of a mediator between the three parties – the South African government, South African Indians and the Indian government. From the middle of the 1940s, however, a number of changes – both international and national – drastically altered the context in which the High Commission operated. The normative transformation of the international system, India’s independence, South Africa turn to the extreme right in the form of apartheid, and the shift in the leadership within the Indian community transformed not only the nature of relationship among the three parties but also pushed the High Commission to jettison its role as a mediator in favour of actively pushing for the principle of non-racialism.

India had commenced a high pitched battle with South Africa, led by Jan Smuts, at the UN.<sup>13</sup> The newly independent India needed all its diplomatic mettle against Smuts. There were suggestions that either Nehru or Gandhi should lead the Indian delegation.<sup>14</sup> Expecting

that the case at the UN would be fierce and long drawn-out, India needed the High Commission to relay information on the fast changing situation in South Africa, convey the sentiments of South African Indians, keep the MEA informed of South Africa's expected diplomatic strategy and act as a point of both formal and informal contact between the two governments.

With the High Commissioner back in Delhi, the Secretary to the High Commissioner was the most senior Indian official in Pretoria. In 1946, the Secretary was a British Civil Servant, J.M. Meldrum who, in the opinion of Shafaat Ahmed Khan, the High Commissioner from 1941-1945, was 'loyal to the H.C. [High Commissioner] though spiritually he is European in sympathy and outlook'.<sup>15</sup> On the South African issue, it was generally understood that the British sympathized more with their white Commonwealth partner, South Africa, and its leader, Jan Smuts. With Churchill as Prime Minister, Amery as the Secretary of State and Wavell as the Viceroy of India – all personal friends of Smuts – the British administration had tried its utmost to dilute the Indian reaction to South Africa.<sup>16</sup> In 1946, when India finally took up the issue at the UN, the Commonwealth Relations Department, led by an Indian politician N.B. Khare and an Indian civil servant, R.N. Banerjee, was keen to pursue it broadly as an issue of racism. However, the British-dominated Indian External Affairs Department successfully suggested keeping it confined to the treatment of Indians, citing probable opposition from the United States.<sup>17</sup> One could speculate as to whether or not that might be reason enough to limit a case of such importance - but there was definitely an impression that the British civil servants were more concerned about not embarrassing Jan Smuts.

Meldrum's bi-weekly reports to the Ministry of External Affairs reflected his British conservatism. He was, as Shafaat Ahmad Khan had warned, "mixed up with [the South African Indian moderate leader] Kajee" and in his reports, he was consistently partial to the moderate leadership in South Africa.<sup>18</sup> The moderate leadership, mostly consisting of merchants, was more amenable to reaching a convenient settlement with the South African government, if the latter preserved their financial interests. In contrast, the radical leadership, led by Yusuf Dadoo, was more representative of a wider section of South African Indian interests and took a more principled stance against racism. The latter also enjoyed the support of the Indian National Congress. The moderates were also prone to being used by the South African government to influence the Indian government to keep the issue localized. The

radicals, however, wanted to internationalize the issue and generally favoured the stance being adopted by the Indian government.

This disjuncture between the South African Indian interests and the High Commission was resolved when Meldrum was replaced by an Indian diplomat, Rajagopala Thiruvankata Chari. Cambridge-educated Chari was serving in Ceylon before he was sent to South Africa in his mid-30s. His arrival in South Africa coincided with the ouster of Jan Smuts, another Cambridge alumnus, from power. In the next three years of his stay in South Africa, not only did Chari correct Meldrum's bias in his communication with the MEA, but he also proved to be far more imaginative than his predecessor in suggesting diplomatic manoeuvres.

### ***R.T. Chari and the Indian Question in South Africa***

'Presenting to [the South African Indians] the new spirit of an independent India', Chari arrived in South Africa free of any pro-British sympathies of Meldrum.<sup>19</sup> He quickly understood the dynamics of the internal politics of South African Indians and differed starkly from his predecessor. Sensing that the moderate leadership was both egocentric (if not racially inspired) and less popular, Chari brought the Indian government solidly behind the radical group of Yusuf Dadoo and G.M. Naicker. This shift in support was accompanied by subtle but significant changes in India's overall position on the South African issue.

Hitherto, the Indian struggle in South Africa under the moderates had kept itself separate from the African struggle and insisted on continuing this seclusion. The new radical leadership had instead favoured solidarity with the Africans. In 1946, Nehru before being appointed to the Interim Government had come strongly in favour of a joint struggle by Indians and Africans in South Africa and favoured the radicals when Dadoo and Naicker visited India in 1947.<sup>20</sup> Despite this, in official positions, the Indian government had not extended its diplomatic support to Africans in South Africa. Conscious of the stand of the moderates, the Indian government, well into 1950, was sending ambivalent signals about its support for the joint struggle.<sup>21</sup> Firmly backing the radicals, Chari asked the government to extend its solidarity to the Africans and the African National Congress (ANC). He, in fact, became the first diplomat from India to maintain close contacts with African leaders in South Africa.<sup>22</sup> He advised the government to use every opportunity to extend symbolically its support to the African population in South Africa. Strongly pushing for making anti-racism a sign-post of new India's foreign policy, he proposed organizing an "Anti-Racial

Discrimination”” conference on the lines of the Asian Relations conference. This, in his view, would help in coordination of a drive against such discrimination in South Africa.<sup>23</sup> Likewise, he admonished the moderate section for keeping the struggle limited to Indians.<sup>24</sup> Using his position as a link between the Indian government and the Indian population in South Africa, he advised both sides to broaden their political support to include Africans.

Chari’s counsel for broadening India’s support to the Africans was also driven by an acute analysis of Prime Minister Malan’s grand designs of White pan-Africanism. Malan had expounded a pan-African unity of white governments in Africa ‘to secure unity in colour policy and co-operation in defence’.<sup>25</sup> This was not new. Smuts had expressed similar ambitions for a ‘federation of white-controlled states’.<sup>26</sup> In Chari’s opinion, South Africa’s internal racism ought to be seen in conjunction with its external attempts at creating a pan-African unity of white governments in Africa. Given the significant diasporic presence of Indians in eastern and southern Africa, this was a worrying sign and India must subvert these designs by building a broader solidarity with Africans.<sup>27</sup> While the MEA thought of this picture as ‘overdrawn’,<sup>28</sup> the general advice of broadening the agenda was realized in 1952 when India helped in the introduction of racial discrimination under apartheid a separate agenda item at the UN General Assembly.<sup>29</sup>

While pushing for the broadening of Indian support to sections within South Africa, Chari advocated keeping all channels of communications with South Africa open. Until then, India had focused its energies at making a case against South Africa the UN. In 1947, a chain of letters had passed between Nehru and Smuts for initiating bilateral discussions, but procedural rather than substantive issues seemed to guide their concerns and these overtures failed.<sup>30</sup> Chari was aware that India could not rely only on shaming South Africa at the UN. The solution eventually would have to come through talks. The departure of Smuts from power, Chari felt, provided a window of opportunity for India. The new Prime Minister, D.F. Malan, was more conservative but was also keener and more earnest to solve the Indian issue. Smuts had a tendency to ‘let things develop’ and prevaricate on the Indian issue. Although a liberal, Smuts was reluctant to expend his hard earned political capital on an issue that touched the raw nerve of the South African white community, especially the mostly-English province of Natal. This was evident in Smuts’s previous face-off with Indian diplomats in the 1920s. In strategic terms, while Smuts’s internationalist liberalism meant that his original win-set in negotiations on the Indian question was larger than Malan, without a sound

domestic base he was reluctant to enlarge it further. Malan, in contrast, came with a smaller win-set but eager to gain international legitimacy and more sure-footed about his domestic legitimacy, he was likely to be far more elastic during negotiations.<sup>31</sup> In fact, Malan, in the past, had been a part of two roundtable conferences with India and was instrumental in achieving the Cape Town Agreement of 1927. However, there was only a small window of opportunity here. Any talks would have to happen before Malan had committed domestically in the form of an anti-Indian law and frozen his own win-set.

Based on these assumptions, Chari suggested to the MEA to seriously consider holding a Roundtable Conference as soon as Malan came to power. In any case, UN resolutions which were deemed condemnatory were likely to cut much less ice with Malan than Smuts and hence direct negotiations were preferable. Further, Chari argued that Indian passive resistance in South Africa was beginning to wane and talks between the governments will give South African Indians a breathing space and an honourable exit to withdraw from passive resistance.<sup>32</sup>

Following these reports from Chari, the Indian government shed its dogmatism about opening another channel of talks with the South African government, except at the UN. It was now keener to pursue talks with South Africa and Pakistan, and this resulted in preliminary talks at Pretoria. Although an agreement for conducting a Roundtable was achieved at these talks, the Group Areas Act in 1950 effectively killed hopes of such a conference.

Suggesting these changes in Indian strategy, Chari also advised the MEA to restrict – if possible, do away with – its cooperation with Pakistan on the matter.<sup>33</sup> In Chari's opinion, Pakistan was weakening India's negotiating hand, first by unscrupulously lifting the trade ban and more generally by diluting its opposition to South Africa. He argued that Pakistan had little interest in South African Indians, as there were only 80 people of Pakistani origin in South Africa. Given its limited interest, Pakistan was deliberately toning down its opposition to South Africa because of which the Indian position seemed excessively unreasonable to other countries. Eventually, however, while India could never disengage Pakistan from the issue at the UN even the South African diplomats at the UN felt that Pakistan was far less stringent in its criticisms and more generally resentful of India's strong stance.

Chari returned from South Africa in 1951. India did not send another Secretary and instead the office was run by Assistant Secretary, J.L. Malhautra. The High Commission did not last much longer either. For a long time, India had succeeded in retaining the High Commission despite turning down repeated requests from South Africa to send the High Commissioner back. Eventually, in May 1954, South Africa requested that India either send a High Commissioner or close the High Commission. Despite the fact that the High Commission had played a significant role in framing India's strategy, India was left with no option but to close it in July 1954.

Chari's stay was critical in developing India's position on South Africa. Lacing moral injunctions with strategic wisdom, Chari advanced the cause of India-African solidarity without advocating just a dogmatic boycott. Instead he advanced arguments for strategic uses of symbol and substance in pursuit of India's morally superior positions.

His promising diplomatic life was cut short by cancer. He died in September 1955 at the age of 42. But shortly before he died, the unity of the oppressed – Indians and Africans – in South Africa that he had strived for and pushed the Indian government to acknowledge and support was enshrined in the Freedom Charter. His role in Indian diplomatic history remains unacknowledged, like many others. But in South Africa he was, Ismail Meer tells us, a 'household name' who practiced India's postcolonial strategy of integrating moral positions and strategic compulsions in envisioning a non-racial polity.<sup>34</sup>

### **Negotiating 'unreasoning prejudice': India and Canada**

Unlike in South Africa, Indian diplomats in Canada and Australia were not prepared to undermine relations to achieve goals of racial discrimination. Given that India-South Africa relations were quite strained, Chari had a greater leeway in expressing his critical opinions within South Africa as well as to the MEA headquarters in Delhi than his counterparts in Canada and Australia. We can still see, however, that ending racial restrictions in these former settler colonies was still central to the practice of Indian diplomacy. Canada supported India's independence and in the period considered here, was able to develop what has sometimes been considered a 'special relationship', albeit one that disintegrated quickly.<sup>35</sup> There were two issues of racial discrimination and immigration that India sought to attack: the internal discrimination towards Indians already residing in Canada and the discriminatory policies denying Indians the ability to immigrate. All Indians in Canada had been asked to

report to the government in 1939, solely so that the government could gauge their population.<sup>36</sup> They were not deported, but were also denied any official status. After independence, the Indian government raised this matter with Canada, and negotiations followed quickly.

Discussions occurred because Canadian diplomats in Delhi had hinted informally, prior to partition, to Indian foreign affairs officials that they would be prepared to take representations from the Government of India on the matter. Leslie Chance, a Canadian Diplomat based in Ottawa, suggested that they could consider drafting laws ‘more acceptable to the susceptibilities of the Indian people’.<sup>37</sup> A few months prior, the interim Government of India requested that the Canadian Government pressure the government of British Columbia ‘to confer the franchise on the small Indian community in that province and thus rectify the present anomalous position which is a source of humiliation to Indians’.<sup>38</sup>

The immigration matter, and the possible negotiation, was put forward to the Canadians very early on as well. Bajpai, as was relayed to John Kearney, believed it would be impossible for India to remain part of the Commonwealth as a dominion.<sup>39</sup> It would be possible, however, to remain as a republic, but it was politically difficult. Kearney cabled back to Ottawa:

There are certain obstacles which if not removed, might make even this latter arrangement impossible, the chief of which is the immigration policy of some of the other Commonwealth nations, more particularly Australia and Canada.<sup>40</sup>

Bajpai went on to argue (reportedly) that it would be far easier for Nehru to argue for membership in the Commonwealth ‘if Canada and Australia made an immigration concession such as was made some time ago by the United States’.<sup>41</sup> The suggestion here was essentially that Australia’s and Canada’s restrictive immigration policies ensured that the Commonwealth was a space of discrimination - and not one that postcolonial India could be part of. Bajpai was willing to risk India’s relationship with the Commonwealth in order to extract concessions from Canada over its immigration policy, suggesting strongly that restrictive immigration policies deeply offended India. St. Laurent later gave his external affairs minister Lester Pearson full authority to do whatever was necessary to keep India in the Commonwealth, suggesting it was a major priority.<sup>42</sup>

Canada had been handed important reasons to consider accepting some small concessions to India on its immigration policy. Kearney relayed Sir Girja Bajpai's thoughts with some direct honesty:

Frankly, I am a little jealous of the way the Government of the United States has handled the Indian immigration problem. It has succeeded in preventing large numbers going to the United States by a method which seems completely satisfactory and praiseworthy to India, and it is something which I think we might usefully keep in front of us.<sup>43</sup>

With this, the goal of the Canadians becomes clearer: to enable relations with India to grow, keep India in the Commonwealth without having any 'threat' to the Canadian way of life being 'disrupted' by large numbers of Indians. Canada, despite its belief in its own liberal internationalism, held an identity tethered to its perception of self as a white dominion. In particular, the tales of three Indian diplomats in Canada are illustrative of India's methods of fighting Canada's racialized policies: Hardit Singh Malik, Santdas Kirpalani and Ramji R. Saskena.

### *Hardit Singh Malik, Santdas Kirpalani and Canada's discriminatory practices*

India's first two high commissioners to Canada were both products of the British Raj. Hardit Singh Malik was a well-respected Sikh diplomat with a history of sporting prowess and service in the Indian Army. He had served in World War One with Canada's foreign minister Lester Pearson.<sup>44</sup> Santdas Kirpalani, who succeeded Malik after just two years, had similarly spent 34 years working with the Indian Civil Service prior to becoming a diplomat after independence.<sup>45</sup>

Malik arrived in Canada just prior to Indian independence. He received a rousing welcome from the Indian community, especially the Sikh population. As he recalled in his memoirs, this deeply touched him and he felt committed to work for the citizenship rights of Indians in Canada.<sup>46</sup> In his short stay in Canada, his principle two achievements were the beginning of a productive India-Canada relationship and the removal of internal discrimination against Indians. Unlike diplomats sent to Australia and South Africa, Malik was given the opportunity to participate in negotiations over the removal of discrimination against Indians already in Canada.

Following the removal of internal discrimination, Malik was sent to France, and replaced by Kirpalani two years early. Kirpalani was careful, as Malik was before him, not to antagonize the Canadians. Kirpalani reflected upon Canada's understanding of India, as both supportive of India and seeking a close relationship, but unsure as to how to go about it:

Many responsible Canadians recognize India as the one politically sound and economically stable country of Asia and want to get closer with India. The desire is there but the approach and methodology has not yet acquired articulation.<sup>47</sup>

Kirpalani was responsible for the negotiation of an immigration agreement, which eventually led to a quota of 150 Indians allowed to emigrate to Canada per year.<sup>48</sup> Unfortunately, very few details of this are available from the Indian side.

Kirpalani dealt with matters gradually and carefully. He reported to the MEA that he had first negotiated successfully with Canada over the [regularization] of the entry of over 200 Indians who entered Canada illegally. They then allowed [the admission of] the children of these illegal immigrants.<sup>49</sup> Canada then 'agreed to consider favorably cases of young men whose immigration is sought for the purpose of marriage with girls of Indian descent already resident in Canada'.<sup>50</sup> Once these concessions had been gained, he concluded, that he had taken up the 'question of immigration quota for Indian Nationals ... informally with the Department of External Affairs.'<sup>51</sup> The finalized agreement was entered into in January 1951, and Kirpalani departed just a few months later.<sup>52</sup>

That negotiation over matters of immigration happened at all needs to be emphasized strongly here. As will be seen in the case of Australia, the matter of racial discrimination was not openly discussed, and so no negotiations ever took place. It is clear that India's policy on commenting on these matters was contextual rather than ironclad: in the case of Canada, it was worth making such a request as doing so had some hope of success. As a result of this agreement the perception of Canada in India had risen sharply. As John Kearney, Canadian High Commissioner to India put it, 'compared to fellow Commonwealth countries, however, such as South Africa and Australia, Canada in Indian eyes is regarded almost as a paragon of virtue, especially since the granting to Indians federal and provincial franchise.'<sup>53</sup> This immigration quota of 150 Indians was most certainly a token agreement. The Canadians had been careful to maintain their sense of whiteness with such small token. However, for the Indians the principle that an Indian could become a Canadian was more important than the

practice. In the long run, however, once the principle had been enshrined, the practice of allowing Indians to move to Canada was sure to follow.

### *Ramji Saksena and the India Quota*

Given how easily negotiations on the position of people of Indian origin in British Columbia and the immigration agreement had proceeded, the Canadians might not have expected any further troubles on this front. The quota, however, was an obviously token arrangement. Despite India's willingness to accept a token quota of emigrants, the matter was not closed. Ramji Saksena replaced Malik early in 1951. In 1953 and 1954, towards the end of his tenure Saksena complained to the Canadian government about ongoing racial prejudices in Canada's immigration policies, including those within the original agreement negotiated. The provision allowing for the wives and families to immigrate to Canada but explicitly excluded any immigrants of an 'Asiatic race'. The Canadian immigration agreement allowed various benefits to family members and to people entering Canada in order to marry a legal resident of Canada. However, these immigrants had to be included as part of the quota, and could not enter outside of it. Saksena enquired 'informally' as to whether or not this proviso might be changed, to allow more Indians into Canada.<sup>54</sup> He argued that the number of Indians in Canada had actually dropped from 5,000 to 1,200 since 1908, and that under his plan, it would still take several years for the number to rise back to such a level. In this sense, the argument that Indians might disrupt Canadian life was somewhat absurd. Saksena later argued that:

The grievance of Canadian East-Indians that in this regard they were being discriminated against on grounds of race, has not been removed wholly or even partly. My submission to the Minister was that he might now feel disposed to grant Canadian East-Indians the same rights as were enjoyed by other Canadian nationals. I had also pointed out that the grant of this privilege would not have any far-reaching effect as the numbers involved were, on the whole, small.<sup>55</sup>

He continued 'your regulations force a Canadian East Indian, in case he desires to marry an Indian national, to incur substantial expenditure in travelling to and from India. You thus place in his way a formidable obstacle.'<sup>56</sup> The other option for Indians in Canada wishing to marry an Indian was to have them counted under the quota. Saksena continued, 'This, if I might say so with respect, is adding insult to injury. You debit to the annual quota, small as it is, a number of person or persons who should be allowed to enter Canada in their own

right.<sup>57</sup> By using the quota, Indian-Canadians took the place of another Indian who may wish to emigrate. Crucially, white immigrants faced no such test.

Saksena further argued that Indians in British Columbia had assimilated, and ‘acted Canadian’, suggesting that:

...the fear that new entrants from India will remain isolated and conspicuous as their compatriots of an elder generation is, therefore, in my view, entirely wrong and is based on an unreasoning prejudice which unfortunately still exists.<sup>58</sup>

He concluded that ‘...from whatever point of view you may look at the position the maintenance of discrimination in regard to admission of relatives against this small minority is undesirable, injurious and without justification.’<sup>59</sup>

Laval Fortier of the immigration department relayed his concerns to Dana Wilgress of the MEA, commenting that that ‘Mr Saksena does not seem to know that the Canada-India agreement on Immigration was suggested by his government.’<sup>60</sup> He continued: ‘Mr Saksena’s attitude is somewhat ambiguous. One may wonder if his representations are made as High Commissioner for India or as representative of the Canadian East Indian racial origin living in Canada.’<sup>61</sup> Fortier dismissed Saksena’s right to advocate for Canadian citizens of Indian descent – as they had become Canadian citizens. No such complaint was raised in 1947. Later, Escott Reid wrote Saksena off, over the immigration issue and his criticism of a decision by the US to sell arms to Pakistan:

...one of those Indians who combines a love of the kind of life he can lead in North America with the most violent criticism of the United States. He could have had the post of head of the Colombo Plan directorate in New Delhi but he pleaded an ancient lung condition as a reason for not returning to ‘the tropics’. He is a favorite of R. K. Nehru’s and Mrs. Pandit’s whom he flatters.<sup>62</sup>

Saksena is depicted here as irrational and difficult. Even though India was initially invited to act on behalf of Canada’s Indian population, this opportunity was revoked by 1954. While some Indian diplomats were determined to resist colonial legacies wherever they found them, others were more pragmatic. Raghavan Pillai, for example, spoke frequently and kindly to Reid, and was responsible for Reid’s later belief that Saksena was prone to overstepping his boundaries with the MEA.<sup>63</sup>

From the pragmatic Malik and Kirpalani, to the more aggressive Saksena, Indian diplomats consistently sought to undermine Canada's racist policies, with some success. India pragmatically pursued concessions over immigration, having successfully gained the right to intervene on behalf of disenfranchised Indians. By the time of his departure, however, Saksena frustrated the Canadians with his more aggressive critique of racial discrimination in Canada's policies. It was clear to all involved that a quota of 150 was a token, but one mostly acceptable to the Indians as they wished the Canadians to accept the principle of Indian immigration. India's diplomats combated Canada's discriminatory practices through a mixture of threats, negotiation and finally, an outspoken critique. By the time this critique was made, however, Canadian diplomats had moved on from seeing it as reasonable for Indians to intervene in their practices of racial discrimination. When operating in a more favourable environment, the Indian diplomats were able to open negotiations and raise the issue directly. These successes were tempered by the limitations of diplomacy. Nehruvian globalism sought non-interference and friendly relations with other countries where possible. This led to a combination of friendly nudging and negotiation from some diplomats, and outright critique from others. This shows that Indian diplomatic practice in Canada dealt with issues of race and racism on a day-to-day basis. While in Canada they faced a friendly environment, Indian diplomats operated in far more difficult circumstances in Australia.

### ***Official Silence, Unofficial Resistance: India and the White Australia Policy***

While India's diplomats found relatively easy environment within which to operate in Canada, they were not nearly so lucky in Australia. First, Bajpai's suggestion that India might withdraw from the Commonwealth if it was perceived as a racist organisation does not seem to have been repeated to the Australians. Here, the Indians were tactful, and mostly resisted silently through their form of diplomatic practice. Numerous Indian diplomats mention in dispatches, however, that the Australians were 'jittery' or anxious about their immigration policy and criticized it, keeping track of it on a regular basis. Indeed, we would go so far as to argue that an official silence was a considerable part of India's approach to the White Australia policy. However, unofficial, unsanctioned criticisms were made by at least one Indian diplomat.

Jawaharlal Nehru very rarely commented on the White Australia policy. There was one occasion, however, when Nehru was asked if he thought there was a place for a White Australia in Asia. He responded that Australia could justify the policy in short term, provided

it was only done so for economic reasons, rather than racial ones. He added that in the long term ‘...it is difficult to see in the world today how far it is possible to keep a vast continent undeveloped’. He went on to further say that ‘Australia should not discriminate against the rights and privileges of Asians living there’.<sup>64</sup> This was grossly misinterpreted by Herbert Evatt, Australian foreign minister as an assurance that Nehru supported the White Australia policy.<sup>65</sup> Nehru responded that:

In the course of an interview with an Australian Newspaper correspondent some time ago I stated that I could understand an emigration policy based on economic considerations with a view to maintain certain standards and ways of living, but that I thought a racial policy was wrong and to be deprecated.<sup>66</sup>

Nehru was pressed on this by an Australian Labor Party Member, to which an MEA undersecretary responded: ‘it is essentially an Australian question within the sovereign jurisdiction of your people and parliament’.<sup>67</sup>

A consideration of Indian diplomatic practice in Australia, however, leads to a very different interpretation. The first Indian High Commissioner to Australia was Ragnath Paranjpye. Paranjpye held the post prior to independence, and served only during the Ben Chifley government. Sadly, only limited official sources are available on his tenure, but his memoirs provide a useful account of the period. He took as his starting point that ‘there were no intricate political questions between the countries’ during his time in Australia.<sup>68</sup> In his mind, this meant that ‘the main function of the High Commissioner and his Office was to make India better known to Australia’. This being the case, the main struggle for Paranjpye was the White Australia policy, which he believed ‘naturally this causes a great deal of heart-burning and resentment among non-white people’, and particularly offended Indians.<sup>69</sup>

Paranjpye also emphasized that, while this was offensive to India, it was not the place of the High Commission to actively attack a domestic policy. He argued that changing this policy was not the place of India, but that it could be brought about by a ‘better understanding among different nations, through closer trade and cultural relations, and through an increase in tourist traffic.’<sup>70</sup> Thus, educating the Australians about India was his focus, attempting to dispel stereotypes and misperceptions of India in Australia. This became a very important practice of later senior Indian diplomats in Australia.

In 1947, under the tenure of High Commissioner Daya Singh Bedi, it was debated between the MEA and the Indian High Commission in India whether or not it was within the bounds of the ministry to consider and keep track of the Australia's immigration policy.<sup>71</sup> It was concluded by the MEA that, while it was not their place to complain, it was within their remit to report on the policy. India and Indian diplomats, as will be seen, instead took the approach more generally of trying to raise the profile of India in Australia in the hope that a more informed Australian public would appreciate India's non-alignment and opposition to racism and discrimination in world affairs. On a visit to Queensland, Bedi argued to the MEA that 'although there is no racial discrimination, particularly in the common man, there is that racial prejudice which is inherent in the white man and it will take time before that is finally eradicated.'<sup>72</sup> He continued that 'they will be inclined to adhere to the tradition of following in the wake of the British and to an extent the United States of America', as Australia was 'very much concerned to save [its] "white democracy" in the southern hemisphere...'.<sup>73</sup> The rest of Bedi's tenure is very poorly documented at the NAI, though he was clearly concerned about Australia's racist practices.

### ***General Kodandera Cariappa and the White Australia Policy***

While the official policy of India was not to interfere directly with the White Australia policy, but to report on it and to raise the profile of India, one Indian diplomat, General Kodandera Cariappa, spoke out against the policy without official consent from the MEA. Cariappa was pulled out of retirement from the Indian army personally by Jawaharlal Nehru to act as High Commissioner to Australia. He was deeply idealistic about the Indian Army, and believed in the ideals of the British Empire. His experience in Australia, however, severely tested his beliefs. Cariappa was quoted as saying in the *Courier Mail* 'what you people are doing is driving the people of India and Pakistan away from the British Commonwealth and into the arms of Communism.'<sup>74</sup>

Cariappa's comments were widely reported in the press, generating very negative coverage. An editorial in *The Argus* expressed the hope that the intensity of the debate would die down so that a conversation could take place about the white Australia policy as shaping Australia's international relations without 'wanting to fling off our coats and punch General Cariappa and other critics on the nose.' The editorial continued that '...it is about time that Australians, like any family which is doing something to irritate the near neighbors, took a good look at the White Australia policy in the light of today's realities.'<sup>75</sup>

Following the controversy, Cariappa attempted to clarify his position by trying to appeal to Commonwealth and military solidarity in an interview with *Reveille* an official publication of the Australian RSL.<sup>76</sup> He wrote that ‘Indians have shared in battles and shed their blood in protecting this precious heritage’. For Cariappa, this meant that Indians ‘should not be denied a natural equality with other immigrations from countries of the British Commonwealth.’<sup>77</sup> His argument was also tied, perhaps due to its intended audience, to World War Two, as he argued that the offence of Indian servicemen was heightened as ‘tens of thousands of Germans and Italians have been encouraged to emigrate to Australia.’<sup>78</sup>

Throughout this argument, he makes it clear that only very limited numbers of Indians would want to immigrate to Australia, and that a quota system would be inoffensive. He further underlined Australia and India’s connections through the Commonwealth:

As a soldier myself, I believe that strategically Australia needs India’s continued friendship. The Parliamentary Constitution of India, the principles on which its political life functions, all stem from the home of democracy – Great Britain.<sup>79</sup>

Here, Cariappa evokes a shared colonial heritage to argue that the White Australia policy discriminated against Commonwealth allies in favour of WWII enemies. This argument was extremely well tailored to its audience.

The official response to Cariappa’s comments was muted, despite the press hysteria. Walter Crocker, Australia’s High Commissioner in India investigated briefly, and concluded that Cariappa’s ‘standing with the powers-that-be here is weak’ and that the MEA believed him to ‘have failed in Australia... due to his vanity’.<sup>80</sup> Crocker did, however, discuss the matter with the Commonwealth Secretary Subimal Dutt, who reportedly told him that Indians had ‘no interest in Australian immigration policy’.<sup>81</sup> Crocker concluded that Dutt ‘obviously thinks that Cariappa is not all there’ in his failure to follow the government line.<sup>82</sup> Given Cariappa stayed in Australia until 1956, he was too easily dismissed by the Australians.

Following the negative press commentary, Cariappa wrote to N.R. Pillai, then Secretary General of the MEA. He complained that Indians were not well treated in Australia, and were not given the rights that they should have as citizens:

Having met a number of Indian settlers here and in New Zealand... I cannot help the feeling that the people of this country, although they profess to be very democratic, simple friendly and all that, have a very poor opinion of Asians in regard to our standards of living and so on.<sup>83</sup>

He further wrote that he had tried to use the Commonwealth as a means of shifting opinions on Indians, but was always told that 'if we took you what about the Chinese and the Japanese...'.<sup>84</sup> He concluded: 'This is the way they think. They are scared stiff of Asians over-running their country if the relaxed their Immigration policy!!'<sup>85</sup> He felt that he was unable to leave immediately, instead changing his 'mission' in Australia to change the Australian people's mind with regard to Indians and Asia in general. As he put it, 'Self-respect demands that I must return at once, but my sense of duty to our people demands that I should stay here'.<sup>86</sup>

Cariappa further expressed his irritation at Australia's obsessive racist fears, though this time with regards to standards of living rather than immigration policy. His annual report of 1954: 'in everything they say or do, I frequently hear, to the extent of being tired of hearing, such expressions "we must maintain our high standards of living and therefore we must have only such people living with us who have our high standards"'<sup>87</sup>. He continued: 'I have often asked Australians what exactly this means... no one has given me a satisfactory answer.'<sup>88</sup> Much of the tone of Cariappa's writings on Australia in private communications implies his irritation with Australia's foreign and security policy. He further complained of Australia's crippling fear of communism, writing that, as far as he could gather Australia 'seems to be obsessed with the fear that Communism is almost at her door-steps and her security, therefore, is very gravely in danger.'<sup>89</sup> Cariappa was not a professional diplomat, and perhaps had behaved in an unprofessional way by bringing up the policy. Judging by the tone of his writing, he found Australia's endemic racism deeply depressing.

Cariappa, Paranjpye and Bedi had to control their instincts and temper the anticolonial framings of Nehruvian foreign policy. They were acting in an environment where being 'emotional' was seen as both weak and particularly Indian, and so had to remain tactful. As the response to Cariappa's comment shows, any public statement against the White Australia policy was sure to be met with accusations of Indian hypersensitivity and emotionalism. And yet, the Australians, Canadians, and South Africans were just as sensitive to perceived Indian 'hypersensitivity' as Indians were sensitive to racism. By staying mostly quiet, disrupting

stereotypes and raising the profile of India, these diplomats were able to resist racial discrimination while tactfully showing their displeasure. When Cariappa did speak out, he did so forcefully and by tailoring his arguments to his audience, appealing to the Commonwealth and shared sacrifices rather than wild accusations of racism. For the most part, though, the Indians were careful not to speak openly, as they knew this would be unhelpful. Nehruvian globalism as a discourse had to be tempered through a strategic and cautious approach was. As such, Indian diplomats saved their public condemnations for South Africa and practiced a subtle form dissent in Australia and Canada, so as to gradually reshape the attitudes of these settler-colonies.

### **Conclusion: Foreign policy as Postcolonial Practice**

India's independence was, in the words of WEB Du Bois, 'the greatest historical date of the nineteenth and twentieth century'.<sup>90</sup> The pan-Africanist scholar had hailed it as the inaugural move of de-racialization of the world. But these proclamations had to be tempered with the limits of diplomatic practice. With some notable exceptions, Indian diplomats in Canada and Australia were cautious, tactful seeking to educate these settler-colonial states about India, disrupting stereotypes, and arguing against discriminatory policies only when such arguments were ready to be heard. In South Africa, however, such practices had long been exhausted before independence. The political struggle in South Africa was in far more advanced stages, as both South African Indians and Indian diplomats had long been seeking to dismantle South Africa's racist practices. Consequently India was prepared to refuse diplomatic relations, amid loud and very public condemnations of racial policies, so abhorrent was apartheid to postcolonial India. In each case, the context shaped the method of resistance. India's efforts were largely successful in Canada, less so in Australia, and ultimately could not persuade South Africa to give up its racist policies. They did, however, play a key role in South Africa becoming an international pariah, and the pressure generated was eventually part of the end of apartheid regime. In each case, however, they succeeded in making racial discrimination an international issue.

Nehruvian globalism as the dominant ideology of India's foreign policy was constrained by India's entry into international diplomatic circles after independence. India's postcolonial national interest, as it was constructed, lay in the removal of racial discrimination and the decolonization of world order. It pursued this goal throughout the

Commonwealth by various means. Many of these Indian diplomats had been educated through British institutions, and had respect for international norms of non-interference. They could not pursue this goal single-mindedly - as a civil society group like the NAACP was able to do from America.<sup>91</sup> They were, however, prepared to take such an approach with South Africa. At each and every opportunity, however, Indian diplomats nudged their Australian and Canadian colleagues within the 'acceptable' confines of the international system India now found itself. 'The problem of racialism and racial separation', Nehru stated in 1954, 'may become more dangerous than any other problem that the world has to face'.<sup>92</sup> Aware of the discursive ramifications of the security driven discourse of post-WW II era, Nehru recognized that India 'cannot do anything effective' by 'mere shouting' from every platform. Instead, he said, 'we remain quiet'.<sup>93</sup> Yet, between and betwixt these shouts and silences, there remained the grey zone of subversive politics. The diplomats in South Africa, Canada and Australia played instrumental roles in surreptitiously and cautiously engineering a complex debate on racism. More than anything else, the responses of these diplomats were driven by the context rather than uncritical fealty to either moral politics or diplomatic practice based on just a narrow conception of material national interest.

This then, leads us to end this discussion with three general points about Indian foreign policy and international relations. First, as Nicolas Guilhot has persuasively argued, decolonisation and race were deliberately excised from narratives of post-World War II order.<sup>94</sup> Security became the primary concern of theories and discussions on international relations. While this has, on the one hand, made our understanding of the 'international' poorer by enshrining a natural hierarchy of issue areas, on the other, it has hidden from us foreign policy practices that are deemed outside the remit of 'security studies'. Consequently, the studies of Indian foreign policy, for instance, assume any discussions on 'non-racial world order' as inherently 'moral' discussions and hence not foreign *policy* per se. Yet, discussions of these issues - often assumed peripheral to foreign policy - were at the centre of India's diplomacy because they had wider ramifications on India's place in the world and its own understanding of self.

Second, the focus on diplomatic practices allows us to appreciate linkages between agency and structure, individuals and institutions, and discourse and practice. In seeking to create a post-racist world, Indian diplomats often were not always aggressive - except perhaps at the United Nations. Instead, in this case, the supposed high-octane 'revolt against

the West<sup>95</sup> was more about nudging, often gently, sometimes less so, the settler-colonial powers to end their practices of racial discrimination. The diplomats often nibbled at the boundaries of agreeable conduct but through this pushed the normative boundaries of the contemporary order. The practice of Indian diplomats, particularly in Australia and Canada, reveals a subtle resistance to the norm of non-interference. On a day-to-day basis these diplomats routinely looked for ways in which they could fight racial discrimination and challenge racialized stereotypes. In South Africa, the moral talk of post-racial order was married with the desire for pragmatic results. But this went hand-in-hand with a course of self-correction – making a common cause with Africans (which was a significant departure from the Indians struggle in South Africa since the days of Gandhi). Collectively, this practice revealed to the policy makers, Nehru in particular, the limits as well as possibilities of India’s anti-racist discourse. Regardless of whether or not these diplomats were successful – and they were to a limited extent - this adds a new layer of understanding to the formulation of Indian foreign policy under Nehru.

Finally, and this is symbolic of the tyranny of the ‘great man’ school of diplomatic history, these Indian diplomats have been lost in India’s dusty, unexplored and overly censored archives. Without seeking to end on a lament, although Indian archival practices are themselves complicit in this dearth of information, diplomatic historians have also been responsible due to their reluctance to access and utilize these sources. Nevertheless, studies of Indian foreign policy would allow us a much wider canvas to paint with our analytical brushes if diplomatic history becomes at least an important sub-school of Indian IR.

## End Notes

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<sup>1</sup> In recent years some work has resisted this trend, for instance: Manu Bhawan, *The Peacemakers: India and the Quest for One World* (New Delhi: Harper Collins, 2012); Srinath Raghavan, *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2010); Priya Chacko, *Indian Foreign Policy: The Politics of Postcolonial Identity* (London: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Jaswant Singh, *A Call to Honour: In Service of Emergent India* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), pp. 276-277.

<sup>3</sup> Here, we particularly refer to the works of foreign policy analysts who tend to see Nehruvian foreign policy in idioms of non-existence. For Harsh Pant, there is no Indian foreign policy before 1991 and its ‘search for foreign policy’ begins only after the liberalization of Indian economy. Nehru years, for C Raja Mohan, were not ‘normal’, and Sumit Ganguly believes Indian foreign policy was beginning to ‘grow up’ in the new millennium. Curiously, these judgments are made with minimal investment in primary sources. See, Harsh V. Pant, ‘A Rising India's Search for a Foreign Policy’, *Orbis*, 53, 2, (2009), 250-254; and Harsh Pant, ‘Introduction’ in

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idem. (ed.), *Indian Foreign Policy in a Unipolar World* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2009); Sumit Ganguly, 'Indian Foreign Policy Grows Up', *World Policy Journal* (2003/4), 20, 41-46; C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon: The Shaping of India's New Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Penguin Viking, 2003); Baldev Raj Nayar and T.V. Paul, *India in the World Order: Searching for Major Power Status* (New Delhi: Foundation Books, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Bhagavan, *Peacemakers*; Raghavan, *War and Peace*; Andrew Kennedy, *The International Ambitions of Mao and Nehru: National Efficacy Beliefs and the Making of Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Rudra Chaudhuri, *Forged in Crisis: India and the United States since 1947* (New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2013)

<sup>5</sup> Emanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot, 'International Practices', *International Theory*, 3(1), 2011: 1

<sup>6</sup> Adler and Pouliot, 'International Practices', p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> In this sense, we accept that, as critical constructivist scholars have, that national interests are constructed historically, rather than given by the international system. In India's case, this was through the colonial period. See Jutta Weldes *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, (1999, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

<sup>8</sup> Chacko, *Indian Foreign Policy*.

<sup>9</sup> Badr-ud-Din Tyabji. *India's Foreign Policy – The Implementation Angle*, in V. Grover (Ed.), *Indian International Relations and Foreign Policy of India, Volume I* (New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications, 1992) pp. 461..

<sup>10</sup> Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, (New York, Monthly Review Press, 2000), p. 41.

<sup>11</sup> This was quite literally the inaugural move as the file on the treatment of Indians in South Africa was the first that Nehru sent to the viceroy after taking up the office of the Vice-President of the interim government in 1946.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion on this, see R.M. Deshmukh Papers, Subject Files, F.No. 57, at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (hereafter NMML), New Delhi.

<sup>13</sup> For India's extended discussions on opposition to the treatment of Indians in South Africa, see Hugh Tinker, *Separate and Unequal: India and the Indians in the British Commonwealth, 1920-1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971) and Pachai, *International Aspects*. For an excellent historical account of India's diplomatic strategies at the UN in late 1940s see Lorna Lloyd, Lorna Lloyd, 'A Most Auspicious Beginning: The 1946 United Nations General Assembly and the Question of the Treatment of Indians in South Africa', *Review of International Studies*, 16, 2 (April 1990), 131-153.

<sup>14</sup> The delegation was eventually led by Vijayalakshmi Pandit, who did a sterling job. For more on this, see Lloyd, 'A Most Auspicious Beginning' and Bhagavan, *Peacemakers*, 70-81.

<sup>15</sup> Shafaat Ahmed Khan to R.S. Deshmukh, 5 March 1945, R.M. Deshmukh Papers, Subject Files, F. No. 55, NMML, New Delhi.

<sup>16</sup> Pachai, *International Aspects*, chapter 5, and Tinker, *Separate and Unequal*, chapter 7, discuss this in detail.

<sup>17</sup> See, 'United Nations: Questions of Raising the South African Indian question in the United Nations Assembly', Government of India, External Affairs Department, PWR Branch, 14 (25)-P.WR./46, 1946, at NAI, New Delhi.

<sup>18</sup> Khan to Deshmukh, 5 March 1945.

<sup>19</sup> Ismail Meer, 'Chari, Indian Diplomat Arrives', in idem. *I Remember: Reminiscences of the Struggle for Liberation and the Role of Indian South Africans, 1924-1958*, edited by. ES Reddy and Fatima Meer, available online [http://www.v1.sahistory.org.za/pages/pdf/I\\_remember\\_IC\\_Meer.pdf](http://www.v1.sahistory.org.za/pages/pdf/I_remember_IC_Meer.pdf), accessed 12 January 2015.

<sup>20</sup> Pachai, *International Aspects*, 192.

<sup>21</sup> For instance, in 1950, HN Kunzru, as the leader of the Indian delegation for preliminary talks on the Roundtable Conference to South Africa, vaguely stated to the Indian community that they should keep their struggle separate from the African community. Disagreeing strongly, Chari wrote to the headquarters that this was contrary to the wishes of the Indian community in South Africa and played into the hands of the moderate

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section who were close to the government in South Africa. See, RT Chari to Subimal Dutt, 18 April 1950, Ministry of External Affairs, AFR I, F. 4/50 –AFR I – 1950, NAI, New Delhi.

<sup>22</sup> Ismail Meer, 'SAIC moves to Johannesburg with Dr. Dadoo as President', in *I Remember: Reminiscences of the Struggle for Liberation and the Role of Indian South Africans, 1924-1958*, edited by. ES Reddy and Fatima Meer, available online [http://www.v1.sahistory.org.za/pages/pdf/I\\_remember\\_IC\\_Meer.pdf](http://www.v1.sahistory.org.za/pages/pdf/I_remember_IC_Meer.pdf), accessed 12 January 2015.

<sup>23</sup> RT Chari to Subimal Dutt, 'A Note on negotiations with the Union of South Africa', 24 October 1949, External Affairs, AFR I Branch, F. 2-1/49 – AFR, Vol. 1, NAI, New Delhi.

<sup>24</sup> Following the riots in Durban between Indians and Africans, he demanded that the relief support from India be used for all sufferers, Indians and Africans and strongly admonished efforts by the moderate section which called for keeping the Indian political struggle separate from Africans. See, Joe Soske, 'Wash Me Black Again': African Nationalism and Indian Diaspora, 1944-1960, Unpublished PhD Thesis (Canada: University of Toronto, 2006).

<sup>25</sup> Chari to Dutt, 24 October 1949.

<sup>26</sup> William Keith Hancock, *Smuts: Volume II – The Fields of Force 1919-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1968), 223. For both Smuts and Malan, India's concerns about the treatment of Indians masked the more sinister Indian ambition of colonizing Africa.

<sup>27</sup> Chari to Dutt, 18 April 1950.

<sup>28</sup> In somewhat paternalistic tone towards Africa, Girja Shankar Bajpai scribbled on his copy of Chari's letter: 'I think Mr. Chari's picture of ... Malan's doctrine and ways is overdrawn. The days when a handful of whites could hold down a continent, even a backward continent like Africa, are numbered.' (ibid.)

<sup>29</sup> Chari to Dutt, 18 April 1950.

<sup>30</sup> Nehru-Smuts full correspondence can be accessed in RM Deshmukh papers, Subject Files, F. No. 57, NMML, New Delhi.

<sup>31</sup> In a two-level game, win-set is the possible set of acceptable outcomes from the point of view of a party in a negotiated settlement. Agreements are more likely to happen when win-sets of the involved parties converge. See, Robert Putnam 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games', *International Organization*, 42, 3 (1998), pp. 427-460.

<sup>32</sup> Chari to Dutt, 18 April 1950.

<sup>33</sup> RT Chari to Subimal Dutt, 17 April 1950, Ministry of External Affairs, AFR I, F. 4/50 –AFR I – 1950, at NAI, New Delhi.

<sup>34</sup> Ismail Meer, 'Death of RT Chari', in idem. *I Remember: Reminiscences of the Struggle for Liberation and the Role of Indian South Africans, 1924-1958*, edited by. ES Reddy and Fatima Meer, available online [http://www.v1.sahistory.org.za/pages/pdf/I\\_remember\\_IC\\_Meer.pdf](http://www.v1.sahistory.org.za/pages/pdf/I_remember_IC_Meer.pdf), accessed 12 January 2015.

<sup>35</sup> This term is mostly derived from the writing of Escott Reid. See Escott Reid, *Envoy to Nehru* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981)

<sup>36</sup> Leslie Chance, 'Memorandum for Mr Pearson', March 26, 1947 at Libraries and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC) RG26-A-1-c, vol. 127, part 1, no. 6-1-16, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> Leslie Chance, 'Letter to Department of Mines and Resources', September 2, 1947 at LAC RG26-A-1-c, vol 127, part 1, no. L-1-198, pp. 1-2.

<sup>38</sup> Government of India, cited in Reid, *Envoy*, p. 19.

<sup>39</sup> John D. Kearney, 'Dispatch to Ministry of External Affairs', October 26, 1948 at LAC RG26-A-1-c, vol .127, part 1, no. 9193-D-40, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

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- <sup>42</sup> John English and Ryan Touhey, 'Canadian-Indian Relations: A Historical Appreciation', in Sam Raj and Abdul Nafey (eds), *Canada's Global Engagements and Relations with India* (New Delhi: Manak Publications, 2007), p. 255.
- <sup>43</sup> John D. Kearney, 'Dispatch to Ministry of External Affairs', October 26, 1948 at LAC RG26-A-1-c, vol .127, part 1, no. 9193-D-40, p. 4.
- <sup>44</sup> H. S. Malik, *A Little Work, A Little Play* (Delhi, 2010), pp. v-vi
- <sup>45</sup> Santdas K. Kirpalani, *Fifty Years with the British* (Hyderabad, 1993).
- <sup>46</sup> Hardit Singh Malik, *A Little Work, A Little Play: The Autobiography of H.S. Malik* (New Delhi: Bookwise, 2011).
- <sup>47</sup> Santdas K. Kirpalani, 'Political Report on Canada for the Year 1949, in 'Annual Report(s) on Canada', at NAI, File No. 3(13) – R&I/50, p. 12.
- <sup>48</sup> Santdas K. Kirpalani, 'Political Report on Canada for the Year 1949, in 'Annual Report(s) on Canada', at NAI, File No. 3(13) – R&I/50, p. 11.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>52</sup> Ramji R. Saskena, 'Annual Report, 1955', at NAI 'Annual Report from Canada – 1955', File no 17-RI, 1955.
- <sup>53</sup> John D. Kearney, 'Dispatch to Ministry of External Affairs', October 26, 1948 at LAC, RG26-A-1-c, vol.127, part 1, no. 9193-D-40, p. 1.
- <sup>54</sup> Ramji R. Saksena to W. E. Harris, February 2, 1953 at LAC RG26-A-1-c, vol 127, part 2, no. 16-HC/53, pp. 1-5.
- <sup>55</sup> Ramji R. Saksena to Laval Fortier, 6 July 1953, at LAC RG26-A-1-c, vol. 127, part. 2 no. 152-HC/53, p. 2.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- <sup>60</sup> Fortier to Wilgress, 15 July, 1953 at LAC RG26-A-1-c, vol. 127, part 2, no. 157-HC/53, p. 2.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>62</sup> Escott Reid 'Interview with Sir Raghavan Pillai', January 6, 1954 at LAC, MG31-E46, vol 8, file. 20, no. Jan6/54, p. 2.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>64</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, Quoted at 'Nehru Warns Us that Racial Policies are Out', *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney), 25 January, 1949, at NAI, White Policy of Australia, File No. 208(2) – I.A.N.Z, p. 19.
- <sup>65</sup> Herb Evatt, quoted at Indian News Chronicle, Delhi, 21 February, 1949, at NAI, White Policy of Australia, File No. 208(2) – I.A.N.Z, p. 32
- <sup>66</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, quoted at Indian News Chronicle, Delhi, 21 February, 1949, at NAI, White Policy of Australia, File No. 208(2) – I.A.N.Z, p. 32
- <sup>67</sup> Under Secretary to the Government of India, to W. Hawks, 27 April, 1949 at NAI, White Policy of Australia, File No. 208(2) – I.A.N.Z, p. 48.
- <sup>68</sup> Ragunath P. Paranjpye, *Eighty-Four Not Out* (Delhi: Government of India, 1961), p. 131.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>71</sup> See: ‘White Australia Policy’, NAI, Progs., Nos. 269-IANZ, 1949 and NAI, ‘Immigration policy regarding Australia High Court’s decision referred to in the fortnightly report of H.E. the H.C. for India in Australia dt. 31.3.49 Request for’, NAI, Progs., Nos. 291-I.A.N.Z, 1949.

<sup>72</sup> Daya Singh Bedi, Annual Report from Australia – 1950’ at NAI ‘Annual Report from Australia’, File No. 3 (3) R&I, pp. 6-7.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> On the copy of the Indian Archives, however, General Cariappa has placed brackets over this part of the quote and written ‘I did not say this’ after it. Though we cannot confirm this, we find it highly unlikely that Cariappa would have made this comment. Kodandera M. Cariappa, quoted in *The Courier-Mail*, June 23 1954, at NAI, General Cariappa Private Papers, part 1, group 47, no. 2.

<sup>75</sup> Anon, ‘White, or “Off-White” – It’s Vital Now’, in *The Argus*, Melbourne, July 2, 1954, at National Archives of India, General Cariappa Private Papers, part 1, group 47, no. 1.

<sup>76</sup> Kodandera M. Cariappa, ‘Report of Interview with Reveille’, 1954, at NAI, General Cariappa Private Papers, Group 23, Part 1, no. 43, pp. 276-277.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Crocker to Secretary, Dept of External Affairs, Canberra, 25 Aug. 1954, Crocker Papers, Series 10, V2.2, Barr-Smith Library, University of Adelaide.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> Kodandera M. Cariappa to N. Raghavan Pillai, 7 July, 1954, at NAI, General Cariappa Private Papers, group nine, part II, no. 17.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p1.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>87</sup> Kodandera M. Cariappa, ‘Annual Political Report for the year 1954’ at NAI, Reports for 1954 in Respect of Australia, file No. 3 (31) R&I /55 (s), p. 2.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> W.E.B Du Bois, ‘The Freeing of India’, *Crisis*, 54, 10 (1947), p. 301.

<sup>91</sup> Carol Anderson, *Bourgeois Radicals: The NAACP and the Struggle for Colonial Liberation, 1941-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2015)

<sup>92</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, ‘India and World Affairs’, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*. Vol. 28, *Second Series*. (New Delhi: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, 1954), p. 315.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Nicolas Guilhot, ‘Imperial Realism: Post-War IR Theory and Decolonization’, *The International History Review*, 36, 4, (2014), pp. 698-720

<sup>95</sup> Hedley Bull, *The Revolt against the West, The Expansion of International Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 217-228; Pankaj Mishra, *From the ruins of Empire: The Revolt against the West and the Remaking of Asia* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2012)