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SECRET

From: The Officer in Charge,
Indian Mission, Lhasa.

To: The Political Officer in Sikkim,

Memorandum No. 3(10)-L/51.

Dated, Lhasa, Tibet, the 15th February, 1951.

Monthly report of the Indian Mission,
Lhasa, for the period ending 15th February, 1951.

I. EXTERNAL RELATIONS:

(a) Sino-Tibetan Relations.

(i) Wintry conditions, transport problems and difficulties of local procurement of essential supplies seem to have frozen for the moment the military situation in Tibet. During the month under review there were stray reports of the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Eastern Tibet; they are reported to have posted only 25/30 troops under a junior military officer at Shobando and placed a similar garrison at Lhodzong. Obviously, the Chinese do not apprehend any revival in the military strength of Tibet, and these outposts which are equipped with wireless sets serve as

observation posts for the collection and transmission of political and military intelligence to Chamdo.

(ii) The precise reason for the withdrawal of Chinese troops from certain areas in Eastern Tibet is not known. This could have been meant as a gesture of good-will in order to create favourable conditions for a peaceful settlement of the Sino-Tibetan question; but unfavourable local conditions might as well have caused the invaders to order temporary withdrawals of their forces.

(iii) Some credit, however, for the general improvement in the situation belongs to Ngapho Shape who has impressed the Chinese by his sincere efforts for peace. In a message received in Lhasa through Lhalu Shape, he has informed the Tibetan Government that their reply to the Chinese terms has been referred to Peking for consideration. Ngapho appears to be optimistic about the outcome of the present talks at Chamdo, and has expressed the belief that there will be an early transfer of the administration of Kham to Tibetan officials.

(iv) Earlier reports from Kham stated that the Chinese were making frantic purchases of provisions and supplies from all over Kham, and paying for these in promissory notes. Yak-loads of barley were being transported from various places for storage at Riwoche and Chamdo. The Yaks, however, were not returned to their owners but were slaughtered for meat. It was reported that 20 Yaks a day were being slaughtered at Markham alone. Animals arriving from Kanze with supplies for Chamdo were also being turned into meat.

(v) A few cases of extortion were also reported. Certain monasteries were forced to surrender their surplus stocks of food on loan to Chinese. The Kindeling monastery alone had to give 8,000 maunds of food grains from their Pashu estate, and they do not seem to entertain hopes of recovering the loan.

(vi) These gastronomic activities of the Chinese have caused consternation amongst the Khampas whose earlier admiration for the conquerors seems to be dissolving in fear of famine. If the Chinese continue to slaughter Yaks at the present rate, it might adversely effect the economy of Kham and ruin the prosperity of the local peasants.

(vii) On 1st January, 1951, the Chinese were reported to have held a grand inauguration ceremony for the new council of administration for Kham set up by them. The occasion was marked by inspired public celebrations. Chamdo has now a supply of electricity which is exclusively for the use of the Chinese occupation forces. Regular theatrical performances and operas are staged for the entertainment of Chinese troops stationed there.

(ii) It is also understood that the Officer Commanding, Chinese forces, at Chamdo has been reprimanded and relieved of his command for the looting that followed the capture of Chamdo by Chinese troops.

(iii) Towards the end of January, the Chinese made a dramatic offer to Lhalu Shape. They tried to lure him into their camp with the promise of re-instating him as one of the Commissioners of Kham provided he repented his past and agreed to co-operate with them in their future programme for Tibet. The matter was referred by Lhalu to Yatung for orders. Lhalu does not seem to be very happy at Giamda with his flanks exposed, and has been importunating the Tibetan Government to allow him to withdraw particularly as his presence in Giamda is no longer of any consequence.

(iv) Earlier Lhalu had sent back the 10 representatives from the 3 large monasteries near Lhasa, who were despatched by the Tibetan Government to assist him and his work and to stiffen the morale of his troops. They

returned to Lhasa on the 20th January in an impressive procession followed by their 70 personal servants but without the knowledge of the Tibetan Government at Yatung who most certainly were not pleased.

(v) Ragashar, who was holding the northern route from Sining to Lhasa, left Dam for Shigatse on 10th January. It is not known why he had to decamp, but the general tendency amongst officials in and around Lhasa is to abandon their posts and move to areas of relative security. It is possible that the Yatung authorities had ordered him to re-inforce their troops at Shigatse.

(b) Indo-Tibetan Relations.

(i) Under orders of the Tibetan Government, Surkhang Dzasa and Trungyik Chhempo Chombay Thupten left Kalimpong for Delhi on the 23rd January to deliver a message to the Chinese Ambassador in New Delhi. What the message contained is not known to the Mission but it is probable that the Tibetan Government in their unbefriended state are just a little more anxious than before to come to a settlement with the Chinese.

(ii) In my talks with high Tibetan officials on the 10th February (reference my Memo No. 3(3)-L/51 dated 11th February, 1951) it appeared to me that the Tibetan Government were not very hopeful about the outcome of their direct negotiations with Chinese officials. They are inclined to think that if the Government of India could act as mediator, Tibet would have a fair chance of preserving her autonomy. I had earlier suggested to the Government of India that an informal approach may be made to Peking for a conference on Tibet of representatives of China, Tibet and India at Peking. The Indian Ambassador in China could represent India at the conference either as observer or mediator.

2. National Assembly.

In an emergency session of the National Assembly summoned on the 31st January, 1951, the following matters were discussed:

(c) A request from the Chinese officers who came from Sining with the Taktser Rimpochhe for permission to visit Lhasa. He, his wife and an assistant, were being detained at Nedong. In his letter to the Tibetan Government the Chinese officer threatened to return to Chamdo if the Tibetans refused his request. After a prolonged discussion in the Assembly, it was decided to allow him to come to Lhasa.

(ci) The Assembly also discussed a request from the Nepalese Legation in Lhasa for permission to use their wireless set which is already in Lhasa. The permission was refused on the ground that the Nepalese Government had not replied to the Tibetan Government's request for military aid.

3. Internal:

(i) 3 abbots from Sera, Drepung and Ganden left for Yatung ostensibly to pay their respects to the Dalai Lama. They are reported to have said prior to their departure that the Dalai left Lhasa in such haste that they could not offer Him the customary parting gifts. At any rate, without their presence the National Assembly at Yatung will not have the requisite quorum. It is also possible that they might persuade the Dalai Lama to return to Lhasa, but it is unlikely that the Dalai will return unless he is assured of an honourable peace.

(ii) The Tibetan New Year fell on the 7th February, 1951. The customary celebrations are taking place on a modest scale. The monks from the neighbouring monasteries moved into Lhasa on the 4th day of the Iron Hare year, and Lhasa is now under the rule of monk-officials.

(iii) The Chinese officer who was granted permission to enter Lhasa was put up on his arrival here at Kitopa House, the former quarters of the K.M.T.

Mission in Lhasa. Subsequently, however, he declined to stay there and moved to Tshatrul Tshang. He has not been having any consultations with the Tibetan Government but is reported to be spending most of his time loitering in the bazaar. A band of unruly young monks mobbed him on the streets of Lhasa but he was rescued by the local police. The New Year festivities (the Monlam) will last for about a month.

(iv) Except for the seasonal glut of brawls and armed robberies, Lhasa has remained quiet.

4. Economic.

The rupee has steadily declined in value to 3 Sangs and 7 Shokangs. Rupees are not much in demand in Lhasa, and trade on the whole is dull.

5. Social & Personal.

Yolbuz Khan, Ex-General of the Sinkiang Army, came to lunch on the 14th January.

On the 1st anniversary of the Indian Republic (26th January, 1951) the following guests were invited to lunch and tea:

Chikhyap Khempo, 2 Acting Shapes, Kundeling Dzasa, Doring Theiji and his wife, Major Nayan Bahadur and his Subba, Duk Lochak-the Bhutanese representative, 2 Foreign Bureau assistants, the Kashag's staff of 5 junior officials, and a few Ladakhis. They brought with them about 50 servants who had also to be entertained.

6. Miscellaneous.

(i) Yolbuz Khan applied for entry visas for himself, his 2 sons, his Chinese Secretary, a Sinkiang official and a servant. The party left Lhasa on the 21st January for Yatung, where they intend to wait for their visas.

(ii) 23 White Russians, who also arrived in Tibet from Sinkiang, approached this Mission for assistance in evacuating them from Tibet. However, on the advice of the Government of India, we have informed these White Russian refugees that they may approach the I.R.O., Geneva, direct for help.

(iii) A Chinese trader, Mr. Tsao Tze Nien, of Lhasa also applied for an entry visa for 3 months stay in India. He proposes to visit India for medical attention. His case has been referred to the Government of India for orders.

(iv) The Ceylonese monk, Jayavardhane, left Lhasa for India on the 8th February.

(v) I paid new year calls on the following Tibetan officials on the 10th February (4th day of the Iron Hare year): -

1. 2 Prime Ministers
2. 2 Acting Shapas.

(S. Sinha)

Officer in Charge.