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

To: The Political Officer in Sikkim,
Gangtok.

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

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

*Monthly report of the Indian Mission, Lhasa,
for the period ending 15th June, 1951*

I. EXTERNAL RELATIONS:

(a) Sino-Tibetan Relations:

- (i) The outstanding, and from the Tibetan point of view rather astounding, event of the month was the conclusion of the talks at Peking, and the announcement of a Sino-Tibetan agreement in 17 significant articles. While the Tibetan Government hoped that the talks would drag on for some months, during which they would have time to modify or water down some of the well-known Chinese demands, they found the talks unexpectedly brief, and the settlement quick and decisive. Encountered with a fait accompli which falls far short of their expectations, they are at once bewildered and unhappy. Their first anxiety is to contact Ngapho Shap and discover how it all happened, and why it had to happen, and then await reactions of His Holiness. Ngapho would have ordinarily been censured and visited

with the usual penalties for his achievements at Peking, but for present state of affairs wherein swift retribution would follow any attack on him. At any rate, Ngapho is beyond their immediate reach, having been persuaded by the Chinese to return to Lhasa via Chamdo, despite his own desire to travel via India and to offer homage to the Dalai Lama at Yatung. The Chinese had other plans for him.

(ii) The one paramount desire among the Tibetans, high or low, for or against the Government, was to see the powers of His Holiness unimpaired, but it has grieved them to know that he has been reduced to a status of equality with a pretender, the Panchen candidate from Kumbum. That candidate has not only been restored to all the former glory of the Tashi Lamas, but has the added advantage of Chinese patronage.

(iii) Article 17 of the agreement states that it will come into force immediately after signatures and seals have been affixed to it. A curious position could develop if His Holiness refused to concur in the agreement.

(iv) Article (I) of the agreement has ominous implications for us, but if read with the clause in article 14 which allows 'peaceful co-existence with neighbouring countries and the establishment and development of fair commercial and trading relations with them' on the basis of a hackneyed formula, it would appear as though "the imperialist and aggressive forces" of article (I) do not bear any reference to India, but to some imaginary enemy that the Chinese have conjured up in Tibet, perhaps, on the basis of previous Tibetan activity, out-of-date Chinese propaganda, and confessions extracted from a few white prisoners taken in Kham; and yet this we say with no certainty.

(v) Articles in the agreement which assure political continuity, religious toleration and regional autonomy are clearly out-weighted by rights usurped by China to develop school education, the spoken and written languages of Tibet, Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, despite the mollifying clause to go 'step by step' in these matters. The agreement is in part self-justification, in part propaganda and for the rest a policy statement by China for the first few months of her rule in Tibet.

(vi) In separate and disconnected articles the status-quo as well as reforms have been promised, although the latter will be introduced 'if the people raise demands for reform' when the Chinese authorities would seek a solution of the problem through 'consultations with the leading personnel of Tibet'. Moscow radio commented thus: "The Tibetan people have been assured the freedom to change their religious beliefs, customs and habits".

(vii) Not the least important of the articles is that which proposes the setting-up of a Military and Administrative Committee in Tibet to implement the pact, and the intention is barely concealed that whether the Tibetans like it or not, they will have to accept and submit to the will of China, the assurances of autonomy notwithstanding; and with obvious circumspection the Chinese have agreed to incorporate into the committee elements in Tibet acceptable to Peking, no doubt to ensure a body of sycophants and supporters from among the Tibetans without whom Chinese rule will never be effective, nor ever take root in Tibet.

Tibet according to the agreement will no longer have an army of her own. Tibetan troops will become a part of the national defence forces of China, and the Chinese will have Military Headquarters in Tibet.

(viii) Thus, the saviours of Tibet have promised to come in swarms as educationists, technical advisors, masters and defenders of the Holy Land with a band of pro-Chinese émigré Tibetans in their wake as

partisans, and as rivals to the pretensions and titles of the regime that has all but foundered.

(ix) Once in the 7th century A.D., the pious king Song-tsen Gampo took as his two chief wives a princess from China and a princess from Nepal, and the two princesses being Buddhists prevailed upon the warrior-king to espouse their faith. The cycle of history has now turned, and two Buddhist dignitaries of Tibet are returning to the 'big' family of China as near apostates, and in the process of reconciliation they may well have to abjure their out-moded faith. One (the Panchen Lama) is already an indoctrinated Buddho-Marxist.

(x) While the new alliance steals the substance of power from the Dalai Lama's administration for the Chinese, the Tibetans will nevertheless be able hereafter to share in the glory that is China.

(xi) Much of the foregoing is speculation, both premature and prejudiced, for it remains to be seen how the Chinese intend to enforce the agreement in the early stages, and whether they can, and will, pursue a cautious policy of economic and political change in Tibet, minimizing friction with local traditions, and weaning away the people gradually from the established faith.

(xii) The auguries do not seem encouraging, for the Chinese appear to have decided on a policy of dividing the people, and exploiting the grievances of one section against another.

Tibetan Reaction:

(xiii) Initial Lhasa reactions to the agreement were both bitter and hostile. Prime Minister Lukhangwa, whom I met soon after the agreement had received publicity, launched forth into a virulent attack on the Chinese whom he accused of deliberately transferring the venue of the talks from Chamdo to Peking with the object of

isolating the Tibetan delegates from their Government. The Chinese, he thought, had used every insidious method known to man to undermine the Tibetan Government and the authority of the Dalai Lama, and had at last succeeded. In his view, which was more emotional than considered, much would now depend on His Holiness, for whom young and old, lay and monk in Tibet would be equally prepared to lay down their lives. He was quite willing to lead a resistance movement himself, if called upon by the Dalai Lama. Incidentally, he is an old man suffering from chronic Gonorrhoea.

It is, perhaps, of some significance that practically all Tibetans we have met since the Peking Agreement was announced have expressed doubts and fears about the future of this country. Lhasa traders, who were extremely cautious in their views, were prepared to wait and see how the settlement worked. They believe that China does not possess the manufacturing capacity to absorb the entire produce of Tibetan raw wool, and hope that the Chinese will allow some trade in the commodity between India and Tibet.

National Assembly:

- (xiv) On 11th June, the National Assembly was summoned in Lhasa, and the terms of the agreement were read out to the members thereof. They (the members) expressed deep dissatisfaction and surprise at the swift termination of the talks which did not allow the Tibetan Government time to give careful consideration to the terms. The monks and abbots were particularly hostile.
- (xv) It was unanimously decided at the meeting to send an appeal to His Holiness to return to Lhasa at an early date. Representatives of the various monasteries and Government offices in Lhasa, who signed the appeal, pledged their loyalty to the Dalai Lama come what may. On 13th June, a special messenger was dispatched from Lhasa with the appeal to Yatung. Meanwhile, preliminary

arrangements are in hand to organize reception parties to Welcome back the Dalai Lama to Lhasa; one such party will go to Yatung if the Dalai Lama decides to return. The general opinion in Lhasa is that the Dalai Lama's return will largely depend on the advice given him by officials at Yatung.

- (xvi) A note has reached Lhasa from Ngapho Shape informing the Tibetan Government that on his arrival in Chamdo, he will ask the Chinese to handover the administration of Kham to him. Thereafter, he proposes to tour important districts of Kham to assure the people of the continuance of the benevolent rule of His Holiness, and to restore their confidence in the Tibetan regime.

The Tibetan Government have recalled two junior assistants of Ngapho Shape from leave to rejoin him at Chamdo.

Chinese Officials:

- (xvii) The following Chinese officials were granted diplomatic visas to proceed to Lhasa via Calcutta: -

1. Chang Ching-Wu
2. Rimshi Sampo Se.
3. A. Lo
4. Liu Yu-Ping
5. Ho Chuang-Hsing.
6. Liu Tien-Chu

They left Peking on the 5th June.

Rimshi Sampo Se who has been described as a Chinese representative in the Peking telegram is a junior Tibetan official.

On the day we received the above information from the Government of India, a Tibetan official told us that they had heard from Yatung that 10 Chinese officials, headed by one Tu Jen, were coming to Lhasa via India.

It is believed that they are bringing with them presents for His Holiness from the Chinese People's Government.

Chinese in Lhasa:

- (xviii) The Chinese lady in Lhasa-popularly believed to be the mistress of the Chinese officer, but who passes for his wife-gave birth to a daughter late in May.
- (xix) Tibetan Government have requested the Chinese officer in Lhasa to help them establish radio contact with Ngapho Shape as soon as the latter reaches Chamdo.
- (xx) Two members of the staff of the Chinese officer in Lhasa called on me on the 18th May. Among other things, they told me of the likelihood of some of my ex-students of National Szechuan University coming to Lhasa as officers, and of the appointment of Professor Li, once Director of West China Border Research Institute, to an important post at Chamdo. They also wanted to know from me when our Mission was first established in Lhasa.

(b) Indo-Tibetan Relations:

- (i) On receipt of information regarding the Peking agreement, we submitted the following proposals for consideration of the P.O. in Sikkim:-
 - (a) Steps may be taken to have status of Mission defined and accepted by the Chinese.
 - (b) In view of the slender hopes of recovering cost of arms and ammunition supplied to the Tibetan Government, that Government may be approached to return such of these supplies as may be considered surplus to their needs.
 - (c) Permission may be granted for the destruction of our secret files.

We made proposals at (a) and (b) above for the following reasons: -

Without some status, we would find it impossible to function here when Chinese troops arrive, and we may be subjected to the usual harassment undergone not so long ago by our Consulate General at Kashgar.

Should arms and ammunition now lying unused at Lhasa, Gyantse, Phari and other places fall into the hands of the Chinese, it would not only provide them an opportunity to prove and assert that we had conspired with other 'Imperialist aggressors' against China (see article I of the Agreement), but should occasion arise, they could use these very arms against us on the plausible ground that areas seized from Tibet should be restored to her. Regarding (a) and (b) above Government of India's instructions were as follows: -

1. They would leave it to the Chinese to raise the question of the status of this Mission.
 2. That no useful purpose will be served by attempting to collect arms and ammunition supplied to the Tibetan Government or to recover their cost.
- (ii) Government of India also communicated to us during the month under review that strong rumours were afloat in Tawang that the Lhasa Government were sending out 5 high ranking officials to the area. The rumour was denied by Foreign Bureau officials who assured us that the Lhasa Government had no intention of dispatching officials to Tawang.
- (iii) Our own information on the subject indicates that the Tawang Dzongpon, finding himself virtually relieved of his responsibility, had asked the Lhasa Government for permission to leave his post. We also gathered that the general impression among junior Tibetan officials is that the Government of India will handover Tawang to China when Chinese rule is established over Tibet.

Nepal and Tibet

The Nepalese officer sent his Subba down to sound the Tibetan Government on the possibility of revising the 1856 Treaty. He has not yet heard from his representative.

II. Internal

- (i) Khenchung Lotyo Kesang, who was dispatched to Chamdo with money for Ngapho Shape on 1st April, returned from Sok, where he heard that Ngapho had already departed for Peking.

During April and May, 1951, there was only one Tibetan official, Derge Se, left in Chamdo. He had earlier opted for the Chinese and was appointed one of the six administrators for Chamdo.

- (ii) On 21st May, the Saga-Dawa festival was observed in Lhasa with the usual pomp and ceremony.

- (iii) With the acceptance of the Kumbum candidate for the exalted office of Panchen Rimpoche by the Chinese, it is believed in certain quarters in Lhasa that the candidate from the Paksho estate of the Kundeling monastery will now become a Tshogchen Trulku in one of the three large monasteries near Lhasa.

- (iv) It was reported that a number of people in Lhasa had seen the unusual phenomenon of 'three Suns' on 6th June, with a halo round the central Sun. While this might be the result of imaginative flights on the part of interested people, or pure hallucination, the general feeling in Lhasa is that the phenomenon is of evil portent. Anyhow, there seems to be a reasonable connection between the mysterious appearance of 'three Suns' and the announcement of the Peking agreement.

- (v) Another current sensation in Lhasa has been created by the publication and wide circulation of a 9-page booklet containing a revealed message from the God of Mercy to a Chinese monk in Wu Tai Shan. The message was revealed 4 years ago but until recently it was not published. In the manner of Jeremiah, it castigates the Tibetans for their wickedness and lack of religion and exhorts them if they wished to avoid doom, to return to religion and the path of righteousness. Superstition has linked the publication of the message with the popular belief that before disaster comes a holy man warns the people. Tibetans, therefore, feel that the

wrath of God is now on them, and as an example they quote the rise in the mortality rate. They fear that there is worse to come.

- (vi) Dzasa Surkhang Surpa, lay Foreign Secretary of the Tibetan Government, returned to Lhasa on 6th June. He wrote to inform us of his return and of his inability, owing to sickness, to rejoin his office. A member of my staff, who called on him, found him a sick and disillusioned man. He remained unusually quiet during the interview, and was heard to make one remark only: "Sardar Panikkar seems to be a great friend of the Chinese Surkhang Dzasa is easily the most intelligent of the Tibetan officials we have met in Lhasa.

- (vii) It is understood that a belated attempt is being made by the Kashag to revise official rates for transport hire. Hitherto, transport animals were requisitioned for official use from villagers at nominal rates.

- (viii) Of the two boys, suspected of being reincarnations of the late Reting Rimpoche-one from Lhasa and the other from Samye-the Dalai Lama has chosen the former as the true reincarnation. He is 4 year old son of a Government clerk living at Thebungang, Lhasa.

- (ix) Loseling abbot of Drepung monastery died recently. Sera Che abbot resigned and a new abbot has been appointed in his place.

- (x) Lhalu Shape who had applied for leaving to return to Lhasa has been asked to remain at his post pending further orders.

III. Economic

- (i) Following are the current prices in the Lhasa bazaar for essential supplies:-
 - RiceRs. 120/- per maund (Supplies seem to have come from Kalimpong)
 - Flour (local)Rs. 40/- per maund.
 - OilRs. 4/- a seer.

Butter (local)Rs. 8/- a seer.

SugarRs. 190/- per maund.

- (ii) There is a very great demand in Lhasa for cloth, particularly for the Chinese market. A few traders appear to have returned from Kalimpong without supplies as the Syndicate at Kalimpong were not able to meet their requirements for particular types of drill-cloth.
- (iii) The rate of exchange remained at the low level of 4 Sangs to the rupee.

IV. Miscellaneous:

- (i) The 4 men of the Gyantse escorts who came here to protect the Mission left Lhasa on 13th June. Government of India sanctioned the employment of one guard-cum-orderly for the Mission on a salary of Rs. 75/- per mensem. A suitable man for the job has not yet been found.
- (ii) Under orders from the Government of India, We have sent some of our secret files and photostatic copies of documents and maps to Gangtok for safe custody. Other secret files of the Mission for the years 1947 to 1951 are being destroyed.
- (iii) It is likely that this will be our last report for sometime to come.

Sd/:-

(S. Sinha)

Officer in Charge.