

**Resume of a discussion with His Holiness The Dalai Lama
on the morning of April 6, 1959.**

I mentioned to the Dalai Lama that I had brought a message of welcome from the Prime Minister for him and that it would be my privilege to read it out to him and his principal advisers.

The Dalai Lama said that before he calls in his principal advisers, he would like to speak to me about the circumstances leading to his escape from Tibet. He enquired whether we had received any information from the Government about permitting his brother Shri Gyalo Dhondup to meet him in the Kameng Division.

I explained that at this stage it may be embarrassing for the Govt to allow Shri Gyalo Dhondup to come all the way from Kalimpong to see him in the Kameng Division and that there may be better opportunities later for him to meet his brother. The Dalai Lama said that he could quite see the point of view of the Government in this matter. He added that this was a small matter about which he was not much worried but that he had come from Tibet to seek the Government of India's help in bigger matters and he was hoping that in view of the traditional relations between the two countries this help would be given willingly.

He said that after the "peaceful liberation" of Tibet, the Chinese had wrested all powers from the Tibetan Government even in internal matters. In 1956, a National Assembly was set up consisting of the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama, Gen Chang Kuo Hwa representing the Chinese and several others, but this body had very little power in practice. Decisions on almost all important matters were taken by the Chinese who were in the habit of getting documents incorporating these decisions prepared beforehand in Tibetan and Chinese languages and the National Assembly had to give their consent to

the measures proposed, willingly or unwillingly, whenever these documents were brought before them.

During 1956, when he visited India, he was advised by the Prime Minister of India to adhere to the clauses of the 17 Point Agreement of 1951 [word missing]. China. He was also advised that whereas his Government should retain its internal autonomy, they should leave the regulation of [word missing] to the Chinese.

He and his Government had endeavoured to follow the [word missing] Minister' advice in letter as well as in spirit but this had not prepared the situation from getting bad to worse.

In 1957, there was struggle in Kham Province and the Chinese destroyed a very large number of Monasteries in that area. In 1958, several Lamas from Amdo area were killed and several others were burnt alive. A large number of monks and Lamas was taken to China and was employed on construction of railways and roads and for carrying stones. Strict censorship was imposed on the two newspapers published from Kham and Amdo areas. Schools and institutions were used for communist propaganda and people were told that the Lamas were enemies of the nation. As an extreme measure people were prohibited from displaying the pictures of the Dalai Lama and were told that he too was an enemy of the people. Thus there was gross interference in their religious freedom.

The relations of the Tibetans with the Chinese became openly strained from the early part of February, 1959 (1st Day of the 1st month of the Tibetan year).

He had an appointment which was made almost [word missing]. To attend a cultural show in the Chinese colony at 12 noon [word missing]. March 1959 (1st day of the second month of the Tibetan [word missing] Suspected foul play and therefore 10,000 of them surrounded [word missing]. From 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. and prevented him physically from attending the function. The

same day his senior officials decided to raise a Body Guard for him and 100 men were recruited immediately. (The number increased to a thousand in a few days' time).

After preventing him from attending the cultural show, the crowds went out in the streets of Lhasa to demonstrate against the communist regime.

A day later, nearly 3,000 women from Lhasa held demonstrations against the communist regime and demanded freedom for Tibet. They also sought help for their cause from the Consul Generals of India and Nepal.

While these events were developing, a political party came into being with the avowed object of gaining complete independence for Tibet. The membership of this party was drawn mainly from the three principal monasteries and the senior Government officials had no hand in its establishment.

In spite of this popular resentment he and his Government endeavoured to maintain friendly relations with the Chinese and in fact during the period between the 10th March and the 17th March, they carryout negotiations with the Chinese on how best to bring about peace. While these negotiations were going on, the Chinese continued warlike preparations to crush this movement and reinforcements from outside were culled in to garrison strategic points.

On the 17th March (8th day of second month) at 4 p.m. Lhasa Time, two or three mortar shells were fired from the North in the direction of his Summer Palace. The shells did not hit the palace and fell in a nearby pond. This was taken to be an auspicious omen.

After the firing of these shells he and his advisers became alive to the danger and, therefore, escaped from the Palace at 10 p.m. the same evening. Travelling southwards they crossed the Brahmaputra.

They had come to India in the hope that as India [word missing] had friendly relations and historical, religious and cultural, the Government of India

would not spurn them in their [word missing].

The people of Tibet were convinced that communists [word missing] religion [word missing] not go side by side and had given him the great assignment of liberating them from communism and bringing complete freedom for the [word missing] after seeking help from India. He was prepared for the struggle for liberation to continue for two or three years as indeed for ten or twenty years and would not rest in peace until their aim was achieved.

Concluding his narrative, the Dalai Lama asked if needed any clarification from him.

I said that he had spoken on a Bumber of occasions about his intentions to seek help from the Government and people of India and asked as to what was the nature of help that he intended to seek.

He said that this was a difficult question. The help that he intended to seek could be divided broadly into two categories – political and material.

Elaborating on what he meant by the [word missing]. He said that after destruction of Lhasa the seat of his [word missing] to Ulgelthinse on the 26th March corresponding [word missing] of the second month. They had terminated the existing [word missing] with the communist China and wanted that their [word missing] recognized by the Government of India and that the [word missing] should also help them in seeking recognition from [word missing].

He added that the Chinese had already destroyed several monasteries and had threatened to destroy those which were still standing. They had also bombed several places and had committed other acts of aggression. He wanted Government of India's help in circulating this news amongst the countries of the world and in building world opinion in their favour. He also wanted that the Chinese should be prevailed upon to stop active hostilities. Elaborating the point about the material help, he said that the Khampas and Tibetans, Armed Forces fighting against the Chinese - some 50,000 in

number - were lacking in arms and ammunition. He wanted to ask the Government whether they could supply arms and ammunition to these troops. The troops also needed medicines and he needed wireless equipment to keep constant touch with the rebels.

Summing up he said that though his demands sounded excessive and unlikely of fulfilment, it was also obvious that he and his Govt were in distress and they were not in a position to function or carry their aims further without active help from the Government of India.

On conclusion of this talk I asked the Dalai Lama if I had his permission to read the Prime Minister's message welcoming him to India. Thereupon he summoned four of his principal advisers before whom I read out the Prime Minister's message after which I handed over the typed text formally to the Dalai Lama. The principal advisers were then sent out.

I then sought Dalai Lama's permission to leave which was granted.

Sd/-

(HAR MANDER SINGH)

Political Officer

6.4.1959