

ASIA

SHALL THE U.S.A. STAY
IN THE PHILIPPINES?

TWO ARTICLES BY

EDGAR SNOW

ROBERT AURA SMITH





A GALLOPING HORSE—A GLAZED POTTERY RIDGE TILE, CHINESE, MING DY-
NASTY. COURTESY, THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY, TORONTO

THIS MONTH'S COVER was photographed on board the U.S.S. *California* in Long Beach harbor, California. Under an imposing battery of guns, Admiral E. C. Kalbfus (right foreground) turned over command of the Battle Force of the United States Navy to Rear Admiral J. O. Richardson (center, behind microphone). Admiral Kalbfus is to be president of the Naval War College.

EDGAR SNOW has spent considerable time in the Philippine Islands during the past year or so. In the meantime Mr. Snow has visited the New Fourth Army, of Communist origin, which operates around Shanghai.

ROBERT AURA SMITH was for seven years news editor of *The Manila Daily Bulletin* and Philippine staff correspondent of *The New York Times*, with which he is now associated in its New York office.

THEOS BERNARD went to Tibet to study Lamaism and before his return to the United States became a monk. He lived in Lhasa as a guest of the Tsarong Shapé and visited a number of Tibet's greatest lamaseries.

TSUYOSHI MATSUMOTO returned to the United States a year ago—he is a graduate of the San Francisco Theological Seminary and of the School of Sacred Music, Union Theological Seminary, New York. As an extracurricular activity, he contributes a weekly column to the *Rafu Shimpo*, Los Angeles.

JORIS IVENS is the young Dutch motion picture director whose *Spanish Earth*, filmed under fire in war-torn Spain, and *The Four Hundred Million*, which he made with two valued assistants on the battlefields of China, have brought him world-wide fame.

ALBERT PARRY, who has been a member of the research staff at the University of Chicago, writes largely on Russian foreign relations. Dr. Parry's new book, *Whistler's Father*, is to be published in October.

THOMAS HANDFORTH in June of this year was awarded by the American Library Association its Caldecott Medal for the most distinguished American picture book of the year—his *Mei Li*.

VERRIER ELWIN was vice-principal of Wycliffe Hall and lecturer at Merton College, Oxford, before he went to India in 1927. Mr. Elwin is the author of *Songs of the Forest*, *Leaves from the Jungle*, *Phulmat of the Hills* and *A Cloud That's Dragonish*.

NATHANIEL PEFFER, lecturer on the Far East at Columbia University, spent over eight years in China.

NELSON GLUECK completed in May his second season of excavations at Ezion-Geber. Dr. Glueck, who is on leave of absence from Hebrew Union College, has been since 1936 Director of the American School of Oriental Research, Jerusalem, of which he was previously Director in 1932-1933.

ZOË RAFIA BADRE is a free-lance journalist who specializes in writing about activities in Egypt, her father's country. Miss Badre's articles have been published in Great Britain, South Africa and the United States.

T. KERR RITCHIE, a retired officer of the British army, has spent much time in Egypt, India and the Orient.

ERNEST O. HAUSER is at present engaged upon a history of Shanghai, which is to be published this winter. Earlier this year Mr. Hauser visited Shanghai, Hong Kong and the Philippines on the latest of his numerous trips to the Far East.

ELIOT JANEWAY, whose page "Trade Currents" is a regular feature of *ASIA*, is a well-known writer on economic subjects and their international implications.

ASIA

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THE PERIL OF TIBET

By THEOS BERNARD

Far-reaching changes, little short of cataclysmic, threaten the land of Tibet and Lhasa its capital. Scarcely credible, yet here is what seems to be in store. Lhasa the

Forbidden, the Mysterious, is in danger at no distant date of losing its unique place on this planet and of gaining the more practical (if in some eyes the more dubious) position of the Chicago of Asia, with all that the title portends. This would mean the throwing open of the vast territory of Tibet, hitherto sacred and untouched, as a new area of exploitation by modern militarist powers previously held in check by the might of the British Empire. Such is the prospect if political and military events in Europe and Asia continue the course they have been taking, and there is no indication of their taking any other course.

It is no longer a secret that the prime movers of this new realistic adventure are Japan, Germany and Italy. The reasons are simple. Tibet is a country whose mineral resources have been untapped, even unexplored. Its large monasteries are repositories of untold gold and precious gems. Moreover, lying as it does between China on the east, the conquered Chinese provinces and Siberia on the north, India on the south and Afghanistan and Russia on the west, it forms the most direct route across the Asiatic continent. Tibet, as every one knows, has been serving England as a buffer State against the encroachment of any power (and of Russia in particular) upon India. The more immediate danger threatens mainly from Japan, which, having conquered large Chinese territories, is approaching within striking distance of Tibet. And airplanes now make possible what was before impossible.

It was in 1904, after a British military expedition under Sir Francis Younghusband had forced its way to Lhasa, that the Anglo-Tibetan treaty which still colors Tibet's foreign policy was made. This treaty was confirmed by a Convention between Great Britain and China in 1906, and further amended in 1908 by Tibet Trade Regulations made by representatives of Great Britain, China and Tibet, the latter being represented by the then Tsarong Shapé, perhaps the most advanced and enlightened Tibetan of his day. Incidentally, his successor, the new Tsarong Shapé, in whose house in Lhasa I was a guest for several months a year ago, is today the real pioneer of western ideas in Tibet: he has not only built a modern steel bridge near Lhasa but, making due allowance for the hostility of the more conservative Tibetans to innovations, has achieved a number of other things of an industrial and mechanical nature.

The above-mentioned treaties and a number of others concluded since have had but a single object in view, namely, to maintain the inviolability of Tibet. Does it not seem rather odd that a country

which many believe to be endowed with all manner of natural wealth should, by mutual consent of great powers, be allowed to lie fallow and undeveloped? The mystery deepens when you consider the countries surrounding Tibet, with the largest populations on earth: China with her five hundred millions or so, India with her four hundred millions, and the somewhat remoter Soviet Russia, which in her vastness harbors next to these the greatest of the world's populations. Here are potential markets for which Tibet, situated as it is between them, would seem to be a natural provider.

International politics, diplomacy, balance of power, status quo, are terms which have hitherto provided the answer to the Tibetan riddle. To maintain the precarious equilibrium between the hostile powers, the interested countries have adopted a keep-hands-off or, if you like, closed-door policy, mutually exclusive. For only thus could peace be maintained. And, incidentally, this policy has been to the liking of the theocratic oligarchs of Tibet, since it has enabled them to maintain their own centuries-old religious rule, holding a populace in subjection, batten- ing on dead ritual and superstition and filling their temples and their monasteries and sacred tombs with gold and precious stones. Putting aside the wisdom of Tibet's ancient sages, which is real enough and not to be minimized, the mystery of Tibet will be found to be largely a matter of economics, within and without. Yet the old border is breaking up, and if omens do not deceive us Lhasa, the Rome of Asia, will, and within our own lifetime, become transformed into the Chicago of Asia, a great stockyard and industrial center radiating not spiritual light but iron roadways and commercial airways spanning the continent east and west, and south and north.

Today Great Britain, commanding the greatest empire, has full control of the Indian market. But, even at the sacrifice of having to pay a tariff higher than the cost of the product, Imperial Japan is flooding the Indian market with cheap goods. Incidentally, Japan is also slowly and secretly flooding the bazars of Tibet with products of a shoddy type. While in Lhasa I heard complaints of the scarcity of English and American products, which the Tibetans must forgo in favor of the inferior but more easily obtainable Japanese articles. Not only the Japanese but also the Germans are making inroads on the Indian market: within the past year or two they have filled the country with an army of economic experts, who are making an analysis of that market with a view to ultimate business expansion.



A German mission (left) spent some months this past spring in Tibet gathering scientific data. As a good-will mission it paid a visit to the Holy City of Lhasa

Silver bullion, for government coining, is brought by caravan into Tibet from India. Each bar weighs eighty pounds; two make a full load for any pack animal traveling over the high passes



THEOS BERNARD



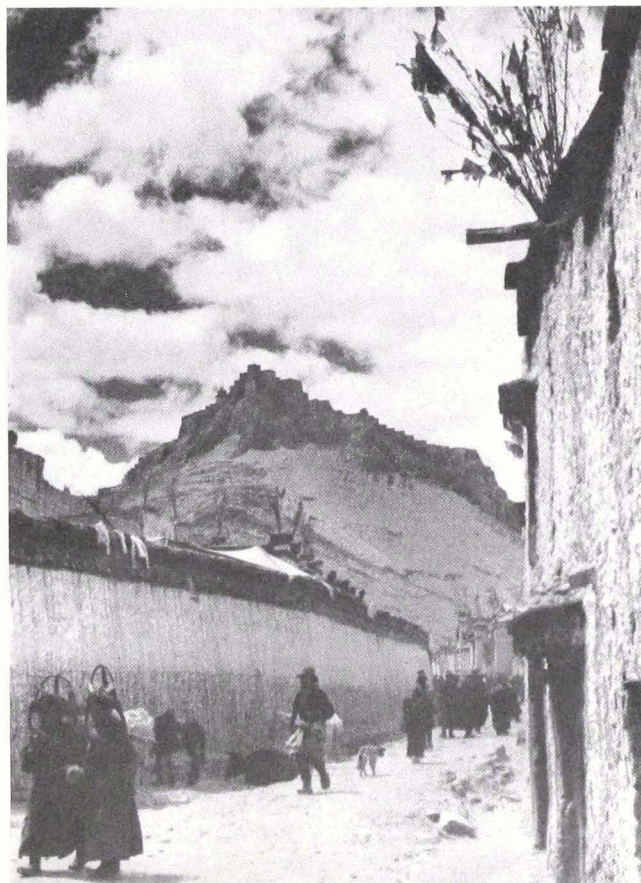
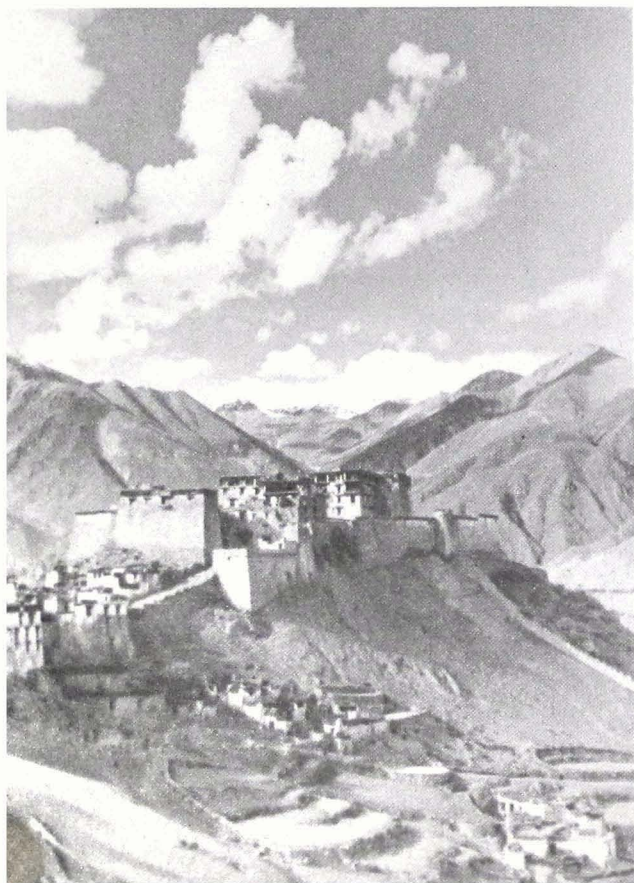
In Tibetan bazars are to be found imported combs, buttons and the like, of Japanese make. British and American goods, of better quality, are therefore more costly



THEOS BERNARD

Sebu La, a seventeen-thousand-foot pass which is closed much of the year by snow, is on one of the most frequented routes (Everest expeditions have used it) from northern Sikkim into the Himalaya and Tibet

Dzongs, or fortresses, may be found in remote spots like the Rong valley (below, left) as well as in centers like Gyantse (below). The Dzongpen, or commander, collects taxes in kind from the surrounding district



To maintain her monopoly of India, Britain, under the cloak of respect for Tibet's spiritual institutions, has carefully refrained from drawing upon the material resources of the country or encouraging industrialization. To be sure, there is in Lhasa today an electric light plant, which furnishes a very dim light for a few very wealthy officials; and there are telegraph wires which stretch from India to Lhasa, to say nothing of the presence of a radio station. The late Dalai Lama possessed an Austin and a Dodge, in one or the other of which he was chauffeured from his summer palace to Lhasa's famous cathedral, the Potala. But it is definitely to England's interest not to allow any general industrialization.

Until recently China has held no industrial ambitions, but the spiritual ties between China and Tibet have been strong. Hence possession of Tibet, which is still technically a dependency of China, would give Japan not only such material wealth as the country might prove to have, but probable domination over the spiritual rulers of millions of Chinese. Tibet is aware of this threatening danger, and last winter a large delegation of Tibetans went to Chungking to offer Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek support against Japan. They brought along with them ten thousand sheepskins and five hundred thousand Chinese dollars to be given to the soldiers, as a practical expression of the feelings of the lamas, officials and poor peasants, by whom these gifts were donated. But this is only a beginning.

The youth of Tibet are yet to be heard from, and from what I saw of them during my stay in Tibet they will be heard from, when the time comes, in a signal way. They are not behind the youth of any other country in spirit and energy. They have been held back by lack of contact with any stimulus from the outside world, by Buddhist teachings and precepts of humility inculcated in them by their elders. But, as soon as the old structure topples, as is inevitable under the pressure of external events, they will assert themselves unmistakably.

THE FORBIDDEN CITY OF LHASA is only a little over three hundred miles from the border of India, and the larger part of this intervening area is a vast plateau dotted over with great lakes fed by perpetual snows and intersected by enormous rivers which could be the source of electric power sufficient to furnish all India. The reclamation of such vast desert spaces may appear fantastic to oriental eyes, but we Americans who have watched the desert wastes of our own continent become one of the most fertile areas on earth can but regard such conversions of soil as commonplace. The quality of the soil is unquestioned, what with cabbages and cauliflowers flourishing larger than basketballs, celery stalks two feet high, radishes a couple feet in length. As for flowers, which grow in profusion, they loom above the head and hands of man in the Lhasa valley. Every foot of the Lhasa valley can be developed, as well as of the vast Gyantse and Shigatse valley, which extends through unmeasured miles of land irrigated by large rivers tributary

to the Brahmaputra. The ingredients are here for making Tibet into one of the biggest wool-producing countries in the entire world; nothing could be better for this than the high plateaus and vigorous climate. Again, the prospects are excellent for raising great quantities of meat. And there are spots galore any one of which would make a fishermen's paradise. Incidentally the finest natural musk may be obtained from the Tibetan deer; according to the experts, this musk in its pure quality is worth a little matter of \$40,000 a pound!

In other words, Tibet can be converted into the California of Asia, and soon its plateau will become the playground of the world, for the majesty of the scenery is beyond description. By the very nature of its position, it abounds in health.

No systematic exploration has ever been made of Tibet's mineral resources, but it has been the surmise of the few Europeans who have penetrated into its forbidden interior that the country is a treasure-house of unmined gold. My life has been spent in the mining West of America, much of it in association with a mining engineer. And so I may venture my own humble guess that those who have speculated before me on the mineral wealth of Tibet are not far from right. No one can be certain how much untapped mineral wealth there is so long as Great Britain's taboo on explorations of this nature still holds. The geologist tells us that in all likelihood this high plateau was at one time a swamp; and that would mean there is just as good a chance of discovering oil as there was in Oklahoma.

As for the accumulation of gold and jewels within the sacred confines of Tibetan shrines, it is difficult to estimate the wealth that would be uncovered. Until I visited Tibet, I was skeptical of the stories I had heard of the fabulous riches to be seen in the monasteries and the homes of the potentates. But what I have seen with my own eyes far exceeds any legendary tale. There are endless shrines containing an infinitude of images, often larger than life size, cast of gold, and there is yet a vaster number covered with gold leaf. Many of the thousands of small images to be found in the shrines are encrusted over with priceless gems. The smaller monasteries throughout Tibet are not so very well off, but every one of the great monasteries in Lhasa and its neighborhood is lavish in exposed and hidden wealth, worth the invasion of a hostile army.

If the country were opened up, Lhasa, by virtue of its position and the advantages it would offer, would be a natural communications center. Today all air transportation from China goes down to Singapore, almost to the equator, then up the Malay Peninsula to Burma and India and on across to Iran and Egypt, thence across Greece to Italy and on to Holland, winding up in London. If the airplane went in a direct line, it would pass over Tibet. An airline from Shanghai to Chungking, the present capital of China, has already established a permanent base in Szechwan, while in Sinkiang, on the other side of Tibet, there are railway connections with Moscow at

Yarkand and at Kashgar, which could also be made a permanent air base. When you consider that Lhasa is only a little over three hundred miles from India and is about midway between Chungking and Kashgar, which are a little more than two thousand miles apart, you begin to realize there would be little difficulty in making Lhasa the great air base of Central Asia. The situation would be ideal; for the Lhasa valley is protected from storms throughout the year, being hemmed in on both sides by ranges which rise over 20,000 feet above sea level. (Lhasa itself is at an altitude of about 13,000 feet.) The climate is extremely mild when compared with the rest of the high plateau region; and the Lhasa valley winds its way the entire extent of the country. Practically all of it could be utilized as a landing field, with all hazards of forced landing minimized. The first nation to attempt a test flight across Tibet was Germany, who sent airmen across the northeastern corner in her effort to find the shortest direct route to the South Seas. In this flight the aviators attempted to traverse one of the most difficult areas, whereas if they had followed the great Lhasa valley they would have avoided many of the risks due to climatic conditions.

MY GUESS WOULD BE that it is only a question of time before a railway is brought up through this valley to Lhasa, especially if the Japanese should obtain control of East Asia. The British have already surveyed a route for a railway from Assam through the beautiful Chumbi Valley, which is an ideal place for one of the finest health resorts on earth. It would require but little effort to establish a motor road from the edge of the Tibetan plateau on to the Lhasa valley. For a while, indeed, the British used automobiles to travel from their post at Phari to Gyantse and made the journey in less than a day. The British government took heed of the Tibetan government's protest and forbade its agents to use cars, but the garages are there; so it would take no time at all to resume travel by car. In any case, Shigatse would make the preferable motoring center, situated as it is in Tibet's largest and widest valley, obviating the necessity of crossing any passes to enter it. Not only have the British made a survey for a railway, but they have also mapped out the country and selected areas for immediate conversion into landing fields for airplanes, should the necessity arise.

It is of deep significance that the countries which are doing the most in the field of Tibetan research happen to be: first, Japan; second, Germany—with Italy as a close third. Japan has sent men to live in the great Tibetan monasteries and through them is in intimate contact with the country; in a theocracy the most natural way of dealing with any situation is through religion. Germany, for her part, is untiring in sending her mountain climbers to explore the Himalayan peaks. Also, there has recently been a visiting Nazi delegation in Lhasa, and it may be safely assumed that its several members did not come for their health.

Finally, there is grave significance in the fact that today, for the first time in the history of the Theocracy, the country stands without either of its divine rulers. The last Dalai Lama died some five or six years ago; never in the past did such a long period pass without the discovery of a new Dalai Lama. Two children out of the original group who, according to all the portents, were likely to be the incarnation of the late Dalai Lama, have finally been selected, I learn in letters from my Tibetan friends. But Tibet today is on the verge of a civil war, three parties maneuvering for control. There is the Old Monastery Group of the Dalai Lama, which wishes to continue the policy of isolation and to leave everything unchanged from the order of centuries. There is a second group, the followers of the Tashi Lama, consisting of the rich gentry who, while desiring to maintain Tibet's isolation, would like to introduce into the country those things which would enable them to develop their own natural resources. Lastly, there is a younger group, which wants to change the entire policy and throw the country open to the outside world, and to accept all the consequences of such a revolutionary course. Some of the young leaders have been educated in British India and speak English almost as a native tongue; they are wholly familiar with western ideas and eager to develop their country. I recall, while in Tibet, spending hours on end discussing with them the possibilities.

I have been importuned by my progressive Tibetan friends, met along the fifteen hundred miles I have traveled through their country, to give them practical advice as to ways and means of converting their land into one improved by industry. Only lately I received a letter from an influential Tibetan friend, informing me that he had started work on the proposed highway which we had discussed while I was living in Lhasa. I have also received inquiries from other well-to-do Tibetans asking me to put them in touch with concerns which supply farm machinery (nonexistent in Tibet), with manufacturers, buyers of wool, as well as exporters of jewels, more especially of turquoise, of which they are exceptionally fond. They are also anxious to buy silks, which in pre-Revolution days came largely from Russia, and they do not mind paying good prices for good articles. They are also interested in buying small Buddha images cast in copper; there is a vast market for these, and I am assured that the monasteries would buy them in hundred-thousand lots.

I have but touched here upon the high spots of possibility which have come within my own experience, but they are symptomatic of the general demand of a market waiting upon events to have it tapped. It is the young group—call it the Tibetan League of Youth, if you like—that would open it wide and release one of the greatest industrial floods of the twentieth century. Even the second group would do this, but perhaps not quite so suddenly.

Untouched and unchanged for centuries, the old powerful Theocracy is on the verge of a breakdown, and the nation that is wise will prepare for it.