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TIBET AND FREEDOM

A TIBET SOCIETY PUBLICATION

“Above all things Truth beareth away the Victory”



HIS HOLINESS THE XIVTH DALAI LAMA.

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Dharamsala,
September 16th, 1961.

**SPECIAL MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS
THE DALAI LAMA.**

In the name of the Tibetan people, clergy and laity together, I wish to renew the appeal for justice to our suffering country. As Buddhists we harbour no hatred against anyone : our great neighbours on the eastern border can have Tibetan friendship for the asking, if only they will restore to us that right of self-determination which belongs to every free nation, so that we can once again lead our own life in our own way. Surely this is a just request which all other nations of the world must support if they value their own freedom. We appeal to them to raise their united voices on behalf of Tibet and to offer their mediation so that a settlement can be reached honourable to all parties concerned.

A world in which oppression and violation of national rights are condoned can never be a world of peace. Justice for Tibet is in the interests of all, and of China herself.

Sarva Māngalam : May all beings be happy.

A handwritten signature in Tibetan script, likely the name of the Dalai Lama, written in a cursive style.

TIBET—THE ESSENTIAL FACTS.

In 1949 Tibetan independence was a fact, judging by every test that an ordinary fair-minded person could apply: the Dalai Lama's sovereignty was the unquestioned focus of all loyalties and his government was in a position to deal fully and effectively with matters both internal and external without having to give account to any authority but his own. Furthermore, the Tibetans were one of the world's happiest peoples, as all who knew them at first hand will confirm. Now, after twelve years of foreign occupation, they have become one of the world's most unhappy peoples, with their cherished way of life under vicious attack and with their very existence as a people threatened by an influx of Chinese settlers into the Tibetan lands.

It is worth recalling the sequence of events: in 1950 the present leaders of China, basing their action on certain obsolete historical claims, inaccurately stated and tendentiously interpreted, faced the perfectly peaceful Tibetans with a choice between military invasion and capitulation. In 1951, in the absence of sufficient local resources for defence or of any outside aid, the second alternative was accepted and an agreement signed (in Peking), after which the Chinese armies occupied the whole country. Since that time growing resentment at the conduct of the occupation authorities has led to desperate armed resistance by patriotic forces, starting from the easterly region of Kham (in 1956) and culminating in the Lhasa uprising of March 10th 1959, following which the Dalai Lama and leading members of his government, after a formal repudiation of the 1951 agreement by the National Assembly and Cabinet, escaped to India; while the Chinese on their side, abandoning all further pretence at respecting local institutions as originally promised, have proceeded to remodel the social structure of Tibet on the usual totalitarian lines, including the forcible suppression of the Buddhist religion—this, to the accompaniment of unspeakable humiliations and cruelties, mostly inflicted in public with friends and neighbours of the victims compelled to look on. To escape such oppression, thousands of men and women, mostly belonging to the humbler strata of society, have been driven to seek refuge, and the rootless freedom of the exile, in the neighbouring lands of India and Nepal, braving, for this purpose, the hardships of mountain crossings and the greater dangers of inhuman reprisals if they are caught on the way; these refugees continue to arrive and they all tell the same tale of ruthless suppression and terrorism.

Meanwhile, in those parts of the country where the terrain favours the use of guerilla tactics, a heroic resistance still continues against superior numbers and equipment, in which both Khambas and Central Tibetans are jointly taking part. For arms these freedom fighters have to rely on captures from the enemy, for they have access to no outside sources of supply; but this has not caused them to give up the struggle, though it does necessarily limit the scope of operations.

Such are the broad facts of the case : they speak for themselves. It is on the basis of these facts that any realistic appraisal of the Tibetan situation must be reached. Historico-legal considerations, such as have often been cited in the course of international discussion on Tibet, admittedly have an accessory importance, as helping to confirm and clarify—certainly not to invalidate—the claim of the Tibetan people to the same kind and degree of freedom as is enjoyed by other nations, neither more nor less. Fundamentally, however, this claim needs no other justification than its own self-evidence, which all who care for justice and the human decencies will spontaneously recognise.

A question like that of Tibet has ultimately to be judged on broad lines, from a generous heart, and in reference to its fundamental realities, in which all free men have a stake. It is on this basis, first of all, that our present appeal on behalf of Tibet must rest.

* * * *

Such being the facts, the question is bound to be asked : then how is it that, as has been shown time and again, so much confusion has fogged the Tibetan issue in the minds of otherwise well-informed people, with consequent hesitation, on their part, to take a definite stand by the side of those who, according to every normal criterion, have suffered a great wrong ?

The answer is : chiefly through lack of information in the past, itself due to the traditional isolation of Tibet and to the fact that Tibetan foreign relations were until recently almost confined to immediate neighbours, namely British India (as it then was), Nepal and China. Apart from these meagre political exchanges, which, however, sufficed for the needs of the time, information about Tibet was limited to the accounts of a few travellers and scholars : no wonder that, for the majority of outsiders, the Land of Snows remained a “lost horizon,” seat of strange happenings upon which imagination could embroider as it pleased. When the crisis came in 1950, the world was largely unready to form a rapid judgment on the subject of Tibet and therefore let itself be persuaded into inaction by some who, though they had access to the vital facts, had their own reasons for wishing to get the Tibetan question shelved, and thus the crucial moment was allowed to slip by, with all the horrible consequences that this entailed for the Tibetan people. Since then Tibet has not ceased to be a factor in international politics, so that it is more than ever imperative that the lack of precise information should be remedied, though late in the day, and this indeed is the purpose of the present study.

The work itself has fallen to a small team of experts who have been guided all along by the following principles : utmost pains have been taken to exclude anything in the nature of factual inaccuracy, whether in the form of overstatement or understatement or by the introduction of unverified details ; likewise it has been a firm purpose to avoid drawing any unwarrantable inferences from the said facts. The case for Tibet is good enough as it stands, it needs no artificial bolstering ; one can safely leave all unscrupulous methods of propaganda to Tibet's persecutors.

Apart from accuracy, one other consideration has weighed with the editors, namely readability : if this paper is to serve its purpose it must

not only contain the essential information but also this must be offered in palatable form, concisely enough, that is to say, for busy people to grasp the contents without having to spend too much time and effort. Whatever was not deemed to be quite essential has therefore been omitted from the main text ; occasional references to other authorities will, however, be found in footnotes.

Lastly acknowledgment must be made to a document that is quite basic for any up-to-date study of the Tibetan question, namely the report of the International Commission fo Jurists (henceforth to be indicated by the letters I.C.J.) published from Geneva in July 1960. This masterly document is based largely on eye-witness accounts of refugees collected under rigorous cross-examination by competent lawyers. The committee responsible for the final report, consisting of seven Asians, one African and one European, all being legal experts of the highest eminence in the judiciary or the bar of their respective countries, found unanimously that the Chinese in Tibet, besides violating every accepted Human Right, had been guilty of the supreme international crime of *genocide*, by their attempt to eliminate a whole religious group (Buddhists) in that country. An analysis of these facts and also the matter of Tibet's sovereign status have between them provided the contents of the present paper. One can only pray that men of goodwill of every nation will give it their earnest attention, for if they do so, there is little doubt to what conclusion the evidence will lead them.

TIBET—THE VERDICT OF LAW.

The International Commission of Jurists, whose findings must now be considered in detail, is an independent association of advocates and judges open to all nations and all shades of political opinion. It enjoys consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The declared aim of the I.C.J. is to promote and uphold the Rule of Law throughout the world, a rule that must ultimately rest on truth and the dignity of the human person. Wherever there have been reasons for suspecting a serious breakdown of justice the I.C.J. has proceeded to a thorough investigation of the facts, prior to publishing them to the world : the scrupulous fairness with which those investigations have been carried out in numerous cases has won the praise of all but those who had an interest in hampering justice and suppressing truth. The report on Tibet is one among many examples of action taken in the above sense, a more recent report on S. Africa being another.

The fact-finding process, in regard to Tibet, included : a close study of all relevant documents ; a request to the Government of the People's Republic of China for information as also for permission to visit Tibet itself—this request was refused ; the obtaining of statements from the Dalai Lama and members of his government now in exile ; and, most important of all, the taking of personal depositions from Tibetan refugees who had been eye-witnesses of recent happenings in various parts of the country. Out of the mass of factual material submitted to the Committee in charge of this inquiry, after eliminating all that was found to be merely heresay or that seemed unreliable for other reasons, a sample of fifty-five depositions was selected as providing an adequate cross-section of the whole mass of evidence and it is on these that the final report has drawn

by way of illustration. It should also be noted that the fifty-five witnesses in question belong almost exclusively to the poorer sections of society—farmers, small traders, simple monks and so on : officials or others who could, however unjustly, be accused of belonging to “ reactionary classes ” do not figure in this list. Furthermore, the witnesses are drawn, in fairly even proportions, from all parts of Tibet, thus excluding the possibility that the happenings they described might perhaps have represented local exceptions.

After completing the examination of the evidence, the Committee agreed on its findings, which are described by the Secretary General of the I.C.J. as showing recent events in Tibet to be “ in breach of what jurists everywhere would understand by the rule of law in its most elemental meaning of a government of laws where human dignity is respected.”

The Committee examined evidence particularly in relation to the question of Genocide, the question of violation of human rights and the question of Tibet's legal status : the last-named subject will be discussed in a separate section. The Committee found that acts of Genocide had been committed in an attempt to destroy the Tibetans as a Religious Group and that the Chinese in Tibet had violated sixteen of the rights listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The gist of their conclusions is as follows :—

1. Genocide.

The Committee found that the Chinese have systematically set out to eradicate Buddhism in Tibet and to destroy the Tibetans as a Religious Group by refusing to permit the practices of religion, by killing religious figures and by forcibly transferring large numbers of Tibetan children to an atheist and materialist environment in China. The evidence relating to this question, as published in the Report, presents a picture of concentrated indoctrination accompanied by murder and torture on a scale proportionate to the religious fidelity of the people of Tibet. Of the fifty-five representative statements obtained by direct examination and published in the Report, twenty-six relate to the murder, frequently by fearful methods, of lamas and monks ; twenty-two refer to acts of sacrilege in monasteries ; twelve to the compulsion of monks to marry or associate with women in betrayal of their vows ; twenty-four refer to the imposition of forced labour on lamas and monks. A constant feature of the statements relating to the murder of lamas is a description of the Chinese method of assembling large numbers of terrorized persons to witness the torturings and executions and to *take part in them*, either actively or by an expression of acquiescence, under threat of receiving the same treatment. Numerous witnesses affirm that, in the same way, the Chinese would force devout lay folk to ridicule their most revered lamas by such means as dressing up in their robes and performing antics or prostrating themselves before persons dressed up as the Dalai Lama in mock worship. No reader who cherishes his own religion can fail to be humbled by the tale of martyrdom which emerges from statement upon statement. Typical is the case of the hermit Der Kong Chozey who, because no threats would persuade him to leave his prayer, watched his hermitage desecrated and was then machine-gunned before a crowd of people ; and that of the old lama Lobsang Choden who, for refusing the Chinese order to marry a prostitute, was forced to kneel on his bare knees

on broken stones for fifteen minutes and then on thorns for an hour, while the Chinese slapped him, pulled his ears and pricked his head with sword-points, after which he was imprisoned and then publicly beaten for two hours—"after which he died" concludes the statement. In the same category are the three lamas who were arrested, humiliated in various ways and finally thrown into a pit. The public were then made to urinate on them, while the Chinese invited them, since they possessed supernatural powers, to fly out of the pit. A monk who besought the Chinese to desist from using the Holy Scriptures as toilet paper had his arm cut off and was told that God would replace it. Again and again we read of tortures inflicted accompanied by this type of taunt.

In addition to the use of murder and torture as instruments for the eradication of religion, the Chinese have employed the method of forcibly deporting large numbers of children, including new-born babies, to China from Tibet. According to Statement No. 1 of the Report, in 1954 forty-eight babies under one year old, from the middle and upper classes, were removed from the village of Ba-Jeuba and taken to China; one parent committed suicide and fifteen who protested were thrown into the river. According to statements from numerous villages in the Amdo region, all babies from these villages were taken soon after birth, this procedure commencing about 1955-6. Statements from other regions mention the deportation of small children as a frequent occurrence. The children were taken forcibly and put on lorries. No news of them was ever received by the parents.

2. Human Rights.

The Committee unanimously concluded that the Chinese in Tibet had violated human rights as contained in sixteen Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—including the right to life, liberty and security of person; the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; the right of free assembly and association; the right to reasonable working conditions and a reasonable standard of living; and the right to a government of their own choice. Among the conclusions set out by the Committee in this connection it is stated that the Chinese committed "acts of murder, rape and arbitrary imprisonment" and that "torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment were inflicted on Tibetans on a large scale." It is further stated that the Chinese confiscated private property without payment; inflicted cruel punishments on critics of the regime; carried out large-scale deportations of adults and children; and prevented the Tibetans from taking part in the cultural life of their own community, which the Chinese had set out to eradicate. Chinese allegations that the Tibetans enjoyed no human rights before the entry of the Chinese were found to be based on "distorted and exaggerated accounts of life in Tibet."*

For confirmation of the Committee's conclusions, the reader is referred to the statements contained in the Report,† the allegations contained therein being so detailed and numerous that no attempt can be made to compress them into a small space. Not untypical of these statements is

* This aspect of the matter is discussed more fully on page 21.

† Obtainable from International Commission of Jurists, 6 Rue du Mont-de-Sion, Geneva, Switzerland.

the following deposition, which—let it not be forgotten—was obtained, like the other fifty-four, by direct personal examination conducted by experienced lawyers and passed by the Committee as reliable evidence.

“ In 1953 he (a farmer aged 52, from Ba-Jeuba) was called to witness the crucifixion in his village of Patung Ahnga, a man from a well-to-do family. A fire was lit underneath him and he saw his flesh burn. Altogether twenty-five people from the wealthy classes were crucified and he saw them all . . . Some time after the children had been sent to China‡ he saw twenty-four people killed in Jeuba by having nails driven into their eyes. Again the people were called to witness this. They were middle-class people and the Chinese state that this was being done because they were not going on the road to Communism, having expressed their unwillingness to co-operate and to send their children to school.”

* * * *

This concludes the summary of the I.C.J report itself: something must, however, be added on the subject of a report issued by the Refugee Relief Society of Khatmandu, Nepal, which collected a large number of statements from refugees arriving in that country; these people often belonged to districts further West, thus completing the general picture.

It is highly significant that these stories obtained in Nepal follow, almost exactly, the pattern of the stories collected by the I.C.J., from which it can be seen that Communist methods in Tibet have followed everywhere a set pattern, including the same exposing of Lamas and other prominent people to public insult, followed by their torturing to death, with the same compulsion applied to the local people to come and watch and express their approval; deporting of children is also a common feature of both reports.

Though the evidence received through Nepal could not have been sifted with the same professional rigour as was shown by the I.C.J., the mere fact that Chinese actions in Tibet, as recorded in both cases, agree so closely in detail makes this later evidence highly credible in the aggregate, even if some particular story were open to doubt. As confirming the general picture given by the previous report, this later one from Nepal is damning evidence indeed. Moreover, it must not be supposed that the ill-treatment of the Tibetans has diminished with the passage of time: numerous reports brought by refugees (some as recent as late summer, 1961) prove the contrary. These informants, who are mostly simple peasants, speak continually of enforced labour on roads, etc. carried out under barbarous conditions of underfeeding and excessive hours. Those whose strength begins to give way under this treatment are subjected to savage beatings and deaths among the enslaved labourers are frequent. Cases of men and women, while undergoing imprisonment, being starved to death have also been reported. Deliberate outraging of people's feelings by the defiling and destruction of cherished religious objects is constantly mentioned. One of the most common and horrible features in these stories is the way in which people are compelled, under threats, to join in the insulting and beating of their neighbours at a public meeting. This is a matter of systematic policy with the Chinese Communists in Tibet, as is proved by the continual reference to it by witnesses drawn from all parts of the country.

‡ See the same statement.



SEEKING FREEDOM.
Tibetan Refugee enters India.

CHART OF CHINESE COMMUNIST TERROR IN TIBET.

Compiled from the evidence collected by the International Commission of Jurists from refugee eye-witnesses.

The reader is reminded that these published facts amount only to a *sample* of a much larger body of evidence : this would have to be *multiplied many times over*, if one wishes to obtain anything like a complete picture.

Type of Atrocity.	Number of cases described in report.
beatings	27 identifiable cases and many others reported.
women raped	15
boys and girls deported to China	very numerous, including 465 cases that can be pin-pointed and a much larger number that can only be estimated roughly.
young babies removed from their parents	68 identifiable cases, plus many others.
persons thrown into rivers	29
crucified and burned	1
crucified with nails	14
beaten to death	7
nails driven into eyes	24
smothered in a pit of mud	1
tortured in various complicated ways	4
burned alive	3
killed in pitch	1
arm cut off	1
buried alive	1
boiling water poured on head	2
children induced to beat their parents	2
young girl induced to murder her father	1
executions	a vast number, running into several thousands : many cases are individually described, but others concern larger batches which the witnesses could only estimate approximately.

To the above must be added the very numerous cases of public humiliation of selected persons, arbitrary imprisonment, forced labour, deportation to unknown places, deprivation of private possessions, calculated sacrilege and suicides to escape the Chinese. Each of these categories provides numerous examples.

Evidence subsequent to the I.C.J. report, as collected by various agencies in India and Nepal, follows a similar pattern.

TIBET UNDER COLONIALISM.

It is commonly said today that colonialism is discredited, almost a thing of the past. This is true if the word is only meant to cover colonialism of the "classical" type, as formerly exercised by Britain, France and other European Powers, for these empires have all but disappeared in the present generation and, with the few surviving remnants of the system, it is now more a question of arranging and dating their orderly liquidation than of trying to prolong an alien control over peoples that will have none of it. Colonisation across the seas is indeed a thing of the past ; but the same cannot be said of colonisation carried out overland which, by comparison, is proving far more difficult to shake off : one has only to think of the Turkoman peoples who, despite some most heroic attempts at regaining their national independence, remain completely under foreign domination, partly Russian and partly Chinese. No one can pretend that colonialism has been abolished in Central Asia.

The subjugation of peaceful Tibet by the forces of the "Chinese People's Republic" marks a great extension of the areas where liberty is now denied. That this was able to happen within three years of India's attainment of independence and on her very frontier is indeed an ironic reminder of the fact that the evils of colonialism are still very much with us : moreover the extremely repressive form under which this newest version has clothed itself makes the old colonialisms seem, by comparison, almost like a pleasant holiday. Certainly the Tibetans, if offered a choice between the two, would gladly opt for a hundred years of British or French colonialist administration in preference to a single year of what they are now having to endure under Communist misrule ; which does not mean, however, that they would not prefer their own independence.

If it be objected that the Chinese do not use the word "colony" in reference to Tibet and that in other parts of the world they have been vociferous in denouncing the colonialism of the old Western Powers, the plain answer is that, with the Communists, their anti-colonialism is primarily a stick with which to beat their opponents, a thing kept strictly for export but quite unacceptable when applied, in reverse, to any territories fallen under their own domination. In the latter, national claims on the part of the subject peoples are summarily dismissed as "reactionary movements" (as has also happened in Tibet), usually with an additional allegation of having been fomented from outside, by Americans or others. According to Marxist political theory no one can for any valid reason, once under the Communist system, wish to exchange it for anything different, such as a parliamentary democracy for instance : if a fresh country is overrun, this is called "liberation" and if there is subsequent resistance then it cannot be "the people" who wish to resist, it must be reactionaries, which also means they can be crushed without scruple or mercy.

The following quotation from a leading party authority on the subject, Joseph Stalin, clearly illustrates how far the Communist doctrine of nationalities is meant to apply :—

"There are instances where the right to self-determination comes into conflict with another higher right—the right of the working class which attained power to fortify its own power. In such cases, it must be

stated frankly, the right of self-determination cannot and must not serve as an obstacle to the realization of the right of the working class to its own dictatorship. The first must recede before the second.” See Stalin—“*Marxism and the National Question*” 1913. (International Publishers, New York, brought out an edition of this book in 1942). Plenty of other examples could be found expressing the same views, in various forms.

By this principle the Party gives itself a blank cheque to retain or brush aside any existing national interest at its own pleasure ; it becomes the ultimate judge and all resistance to its action automatically becomes an offence deserving the severest treatment. Tibet is but one case among others ; all remaining countries are marked down for absorption if and when an opportunity arises. It will readily be seen that Communist practice up to date has stuck to the above model very closely in all areas of the world whenever there have been suitable opportunities. By the same token it can be understood that when the Chinese or their allies start ranting on the subject of other peoples’ colonialism, this is but a convenient smoke-screen covering repressive policies nearer home. It is high time people became aware of the degree of cynical double-speaking behind this persistent use of a word.

What, after all, is the characteristic that chiefly defines “ Colonialism,” under all its differing forms? Essentially, it is the denial to one people by another of the right to shape its own destinies, to choose its own forms of government and social organisation, to treat with its neighbours on equal terms about matters of common concern, to make its voice heard in international councils, above all to decide what is to be retained and what altered to meet the shifting needs of the times— if these things be refused to a people by a foreign government under potential threat of force, then, to all intents and purposes, a colonial relationship exists between the two, call it by what other name you will : no one can deny that such in fact is the relationship between the Tibetan people and their Chinese Communist overlords today.

Nor is this fact in any way mitigated by Chinese promises (never carried into effect) to treat Tibet as an “ autonomous region.” Many Colonial Powers in the past have, for one reason or another, been prepared to offer nominal concessions in territories occupied by them, under conditions of their own choosing ; but so long as the so-called local self-government remains something which the ruling Power can limit or set aside unilaterally the fundamental relationship remains unaltered. All important decisions affecting Tibet since the occupation have been taken by the Chinese Communist Party and by no one else. Those Tibetan officials who, from good or evil motives, have tried to collaborate with the occupation authorities know full well that they are regarded as mere tools and that Tibetan “ regional autonomy ” exists on paper and in the minds of Chinese propagandists and nowhere else.

A word here needs saying for the sake of those ill-informed persons in various countries who have used the argument of legalistic doubt to justify their own abstention from taking a firm line whenever the Tibetan question has come up for discussion : to such people one might well ask why, in that case, benefit of doubt should go to an oppressor trying to break a people’s will rather than to his victims ?

The artificial and unhistorical nature of the claim that Tibet is a domestic concern of China and therefore immune to foreign criticism is dealt with more fully in a separate section (see page 17): here we will confine ourselves to pointing out that no such hesitations have been felt over supporting the Algerians and many others in their endeavour to throw off the colonial yoke; nor has any breath been wasted in discussing whether their claims to national independence were legally watertight or not—all but the most hardened colonialists have unhesitatingly given their support to the national movements wherever they have arisen, and this, regardless of historical antecedents.

No one, for instance, has taken seriously the absurd argument that Algeria formed “part of metropolitan France” or the similar argument in respect of the far more anciently established Portuguese colonies; there is not the slightest reason for this kind of argument to be countenanced in Tibet either.

In S. Africa where, geographically speaking, the relations existing between its black and white inhabitants is undoubtedly an “internal question,” this fact has not deterred the free nations of the world—quite rightly—from expressing abhorrence of the oppressive policy of *apartheid* and from doing all they could, short of war, to get it changed. At the U.N. when the S. African government had defended itself by pleading article 2 (7) of the Charter—the one that forbids interference by one member nation in the internal affairs of another—this objection has been brushed aside as obviously irrelevant. The coercion of the Tibetans by the Chinese Communists has assumed forms which, even under *apartheid*, would be impossible: nowhere in the Western world, even under colonialism at its worse moments, would a government dare, for instance, to use public torture as a political deterrent; there are limits to what liberal opinion would tolerate without reacting violently—but these things have been happening all over Tibet.

In Algeria, when it became known that torture was being applied (in secret) during the interrogation of political suspects the world was shocked; however, it is only fair to remember that some of the promptest and strongest protests came from Frenchmen—priests, journalists and lawyers: this would be quite impossible in present-day China or under any totalitarian regime; anyone attempting such a thing would soon find himself in a concentration camp or in the grave: nor would the public ever be allowed to hear about it. These things must always be borne in mind when comparing this new colonialism imposed upon Tibet with the more familiar forms from other parts; if the latter are now regarded as intolerable, then the former must be accounted ten times more intolerable.

All one really needs to know, in the present case, is that the Tibetans are a distinct people, speaking a language unrelated to Chinese and possessing a culture quite their own, and that this people wishes to remain free: nothing else is relevant except in a very secondary sense. Anyone who has had personal contact with Tibetans will agree that they are second to none in their love of freedom; regimentation is abhorrent to them in any shape or form.

Tibetan resistance to the Chinese is also an undoubted fact: after the first shock caused by the arrival of foreign armies in the country it was not long before a widespread movement of passive resistance arose,



COMBATANTS OF THE TIBETAN RESISTANCE.

centred in Lhasa ; it bore the name of " Mimang " which is the Tibetan equivalent of " popular " or " national. " The armed rising of the Khambas, in the Eastern provinces of Tibet, which started in 1956, was a spontaneous expression of resentment at a whole series of impositions and repressions, culminating in the bombing from the air of the chief monastery in a valley where attempts were being made to introduce Chinese settlers in opposition to the wishes of the native inhabitants ; from there the revolt spread to adjoining regions. Resistance by guerilla forces, to which the country of Kham lends itself, has gone on ever since ; the determination of the Khamba fighters can be gauged from the fact that all their arms have first to be captured from the enemy ; unlike the Algerian or Vietnamese guerillas they had no friendly nations close to their borders ready to supply arms or to provide a refuge when the insurgents were too hard pressed. As for the Lhasa rising in March 1959 this was an explosion of popular feelings long pent up, being actually touched off by fear for the Dalai Lama's personal safety ; in a purely military sense this attempt, which recalls the events of Budapest in 1956, was hopeless from the start ; but it showed that even the most patient of peoples can come to the limit of endurance, when all calculations of safety go by the board. Lhasa has been crushed, but fighting still continues in remoter places.

In the face of popular resentment an argument that is continually being used by the Chinese to justify their action in Tibet is by saying that they brought " progress " and various listed " benefits " to a dismally backward country. In another section (see page 21) we will let the reader see for himself how misleading the above statement is, by giving him the relevant facts about Tibet prior to the occupation. As far as the colonialist issue is concerned, however, this argument has quite a familiar ring, for it has been used by all colonial governments in turn in order to justify their control of their respective possessions in Asia and Africa as also their refusal to withdraw in the face of the rising nationalisms there. Among benefits most often mentioned roads, hospitals and schools have usually enjoyed pride of place ; and now the very same argument has cropped up again in Tibet.

Before examining these benefits on their merits, one is first prompted to ask : can such things really offset the loss of a people's liberties, both national and private, or the use of torture and penal labour as means of political coercion, or the deportation of young children in order to indoctrinate them, or the systematic disruption of a cherished way of life ? Unless one keeps some sense of proportion it is idle to talk about progress in any sphere. Benefits are, after all, relative things and in any case highly debatable. Who is to be the judge of what is or is not beneficial to Tibet, the Chinese or the Tibetans themselves ? Only a pro-colonialist could hesitate over the answer to this question.

As for the examples chosen : like other conquerors before them, the Chinese constructed highroads for the rapid passage of their own armies in case of resistance ; without these roads, in a country as mountainous as Tibet, their hold would have remained precarious. Can one then, from the Tibetan point of view, call these new roads an unqualified benefit, seeing they are an essential means of keeping the people down ? In the case of hospitals, on the other hand, it can fairly be argued that they constitute a relative benefit, since under the old conditions the medical

resources available to the Tibetans were inevitably limited. All one can say is that they were, generally speaking, a healthy race living in an exceptionally healthy climate where the danger of disease was less than in many other parts of the world. Having said this much, one can evidently admit the usefulness of the new hospitals, always provided one sees the whole thing in proportion ; when, however, the existence of hospitals is used as an argument to justify the suppression of Tibetan liberties and the abolition of all the decencies of life, their other beneficial uses cease to make sense.

When we pass to our third example, namely schools, the falsity of the argument is so patent as hardly to need pointing out : before any schooling can be accepted as a benefit one must first know what is to be taught, by whom and for what purpose. A genuine education is one thing and an arbitrary indoctrination quite another. Given a choice, no self-respecting parent could but prefer his child to stay illiterate rather than undergo the mental and moral distortion that a Communist-imposed schooling implies. Whatever other subjects may be included in the curriculum, the central aim of a true education must always be to foster a love of truth extending to things both great and small, otherwise it does not deserve the name. To foster an attitude of fanaticism, of passivity to slick solutions and slogans, and of inhuman subordination to a Party machine is the very denial of education in the proper sense.

So much for the supposed benefits introduced by the Chinese. In this same connection it is not without relevance to recall the fact that in one important sphere, that of land distribution, it was the Dalai Lama who (in 1952) attempted to bring about a change to meet the demands of the times, by extending a system of peasant proprietorship to cover the whole of Tibet, coupled with compensation to existing landowners, and it was the Chinese who, in their fear lest the Tibetan national spirit should be further consolidated as a result of this popular move, blocked the proposed reform as not conforming to the accepted Communist pattern. This again gives its measure to the so-called autonomy of Tibet under the Chinese : can anybody deny that the Tibetans are living *in a state of colonial subordination*—unless one prefers frankly to call it national slavery, a term which goes much nearer the truth ?

* * * *

Brief as it is, this description of the latest and most deadly form of colonisation the world has yet known would remain incomplete without some reference to one feature of Chinese domination that renders it, if anything, still more deadly for the inhabitants of a conquered territory like Tibet : we mean the power to settle large numbers of actual colonists drawn from the over-populated areas of China on lands taken from the indigenous inhabitants, whose very existence is now threatened as a result of this racial swamping. Already this method is being used on a considerable scale in various parts of Eastern Tibet and on a smaller scale in other parts : though exact numbers are hard to determine, accumulated evidence seems to suggest that several hundreds of thousands of Chinese have been installed on plots of Tibetan farmland, with menace of more to follow. This is a fate hanging over all those parts of Asia now running the danger of absorption into the Chinese sphere of control ; it is something that should make people think all the more seriously about the consequences of letting the Chinese have their way in Tibet. The lesson is for all to learn, while there is yet time.

STATUS OF TIBET.

The Tibetans are admittedly by race, language, culture and religion a separate entity.

From the beginning of their recorded history in the 7th century A.D. until the mid-13th century, although not always having a unified government, they were completely independent.

In the 13th century the Mongols, before their conquest of China, exacted submission and homage from the Tibetans. That was done without military invasion or occupation ; and control of the country was exercised through a Tibetan religious dignitary appointed by the Mongols, the Sakya Lama.

Even before the collapse of the Mongol Yuan dynasty in China in the mid-14th century their religious viceroy in Tibet was displaced and Mongol authority eliminated by a line of lay kings who re-established effective Tibetan independence.

Later, in the mid-17th century a Mongol prince defeated the King of Tibet and established the Fifth Dalai Lama in a position which the Lama rapidly converted into full sovereignty over Tibet.

In 1720 the Manchus, who had made themselves masters of China, entered Tibet as friends in order to drive out hostile Mongol invaders and used that opportunity to appropriate the position of overlords, which they exercised by maintaining representatives and a small military force at Lhasa. That link, which was based on no treaty, subsisted in frequently varying forms down to the fall of the Manchu Ching dynasty in 1911. The relationship between Tibet and China was of a characteristically Asian and Medieval type, described as that of " Patron and Priest." (In Medieval Europe, a comparable relationship was that of " Holy Roman Emperor " and Pope. The parallel is not a very close one, however). The Dalai Lamas acknowledged the nominal overlordship of the Ching Emperors, from whom, in an emergency, they could claim protection of their country and defence of their religion. Down to the year 1910 Tibetan administration, including relations with neighbouring countries, was, generally speaking, entirely in Tibetan hands. The Chinese representative sought to influence the Tibetan Government by his advice ; but only for brief periods and in special circumstances (in 1728, 1750 and 1792) was there any active imperial intervention in Tibetan affairs. It is impossible to claim that Tibet was at that time " a part of Chinese territory." Independent evidence shows that by the end of the 19th century imperial authority in Tibet had become merely a fiction. British relations with Tibet reflect that position and the uncertainty as to where actual authority in Tibet resided. When it was found that treaties with the Chinese Imperial Government about Tibet could not be carried out by the Chinese, the British Government proceeded to deal directly with the Tibetans, trying at the same time to observe the nominal connection between Tibet and China.

The position was clarified in 1910 when the Chinese Empire attempted to convert its nominal overlordship into actual mastery. That was the first instance in recorded history of a hostile Chinese invasion of Tibet. As a result the reigning Dalai Lama denounced the previously existing relationship with the Emperor of China and declared the independence

of Tibet. The Chinese revolution of 1911 enabled the Tibetans to make good that claim by evicting every trace of Chinese authority from Tibet. In 1912 the former relationship between Tibet and China was brought to an end. In 1913 the British and Chinese Governments demonstrated their acceptance of the effective independence of Tibet by participating in a Conference at Simla, at which Tibet and China were represented each by its own properly accredited plenipotentiary and were placed on the same treaty-making footing as the British Government.

The British aim in those negotiations was to restore peace between Tibet and China ; and to that end Tibet was prevailed on to agree, provisionally, to surrender some part of its re-established independence by consenting to acknowledge the suzerainty of China on condition that China guaranteed the autonomy of Tibet and agreed on a common frontier.

The meaning of “suzerainty” and “autonomy” are implicit in the provisions of the draft agreement. “Suzerainty” was limited by engagements to respect the territorial integrity of Tibet ; to abstain from interference in the administration of the country, including the selection of the Dalai Lama ; not to send troops, officials or colonists into Tibet except for a high official at Lhasa with an escort of 300 men ; not to negotiate agreements about Tibet with any other power ; not to invite a Tibetan representative to any Chinese parliament. It was nowhere specified that Tibet would concede to Chinese control over its external relations.

In the event, not even that limited suzerainty was accepted by the Tibetans. After initialling the draft Convention, the Chinese plenipotentiary declined to proceed to full signature. Thereupon the British and Tibetan Governments signed the Convention as valid between themselves and made a declaration that until the Chinese Government also signed the treaty they would regard it as not entitled to enjoy any of the benefits which would have accrued thereunder, one of which was suzerainty. The negotiations having failed, it is inescapable that the Tibetan Government thus retained, at least *de facto*, the full independence regained in 1912. This view is supported by the findings of the final Report of the International Commission of Jurists.

From 1914 until 1947 the British Government continued to treat Tibet as in practice independent. In no matter, including such things as the posting of British officials in Tibet and the supply of military material to that country, was any reference made to the Chinese Government ; and when, after 1935, the Chinese succeeded in establishing again diplomatic representatives at Lhasa, facilities for them to travel to Tibet through India were never granted without the express permission of the Tibetan Government. A distinguished official of the Chinese National Government, who was for some time Chinese representative at Lhasa, has admitted that since 1911 Tibet had to all practical purposes enjoyed full independence.

During this quiet period the foreign policy of Tibet consisted in maintaining friendly relations with the countries on its borders, namely India (British as it then was), China, Mongolia (till it fell under Communism), Nepal, Bhutan and also, within the Indian borders, with the Himalayan States of Sikkim and Kashmiri Ladak, with all of which

countries Tibet had had relations since ancient times. Having successfully preserved their independence on this basis for a long time, the Tibetans saw no particular reason for a change of policy, while their voluntary isolation from foreign influences, chiefly with a view to safeguarding religion, made them chary of opening up more distant contacts. These arrangements were, for them, happy enough until other changes in the political alignment of the world eventually upset the existing balance, with the disastrous results we know of. It is important to understand the special conditions governing the situation of Tibet at that time, conditions which made certain things possible while excluding others. Criteria deriving from ignorance of the above facts can only go wide of the mark.

When the British withdrew from India the Indian Government took up the former relationship with a sovereign Tibet.

Such was the position when in October 1950 the Chinese Communists invaded Tibet and (in 1951) forced the Tibetan authorities to sign the 17-point Agreement.

In this way, and under duress, the status of an "integral part of China" was forced upon Tibet *for the first time*.

Soon after establishing their military and administrative headquarters at Lhasa the Chinese began a series of breaches of the provisions contained in the 1951 Document which they themselves had dictated. Articles 4 and 5, which guaranteed the maintenance of the existing political system in Tibet, the status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama, and those of the Panchen Lama, were contravened in the following ways : the Chinese demanded the dismissal of two leading Tibetan officials and insisted, in writing, that no new appointments should be made without their agreement ; they created a "Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region" on which Chinese influence was dominant and which issued orders to the existing organs of Government ; they divided Tibet into three parts, thus altering the existing administration and reducing the authority and prestige of the Dalai Lama ; they publicly announced that if the Dalai Lama did not follow their advice he would be removed ; they conferred territorial powers, which he had never previously enjoyed, upon the Panchen Lama, including the right to maintain an army.

The destruction of the monasteries and slaughter of monks have been detailed in the two reports, preliminary and final, by the I.C.J. on the Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law by the International Commission of Jurists. In addition, Article 7 of the "Agreement" guaranteeing the religious beliefs, customs and habits of the Tibetans, and the position and income of the monasteries, was contravened by broadcasts, public speeches, newspapers, and by teaching in schools, in which the Tibetan religion was vilified and the Lord Buddha and his teachings traduced. Tibetan religious scruples were disregarded by the slaughter of animals on prohibited days. The income of religious foundations was adversely affected by Communist Chinese propaganda urging Tibetans not to pay dues or contributions to monasteries.

In spite of a promise (Article 9) to promote the teaching of the Tibetan language, time set apart for this purpose in schools was progressively reduced.

With regard to Article 11, promising not to introduce reforms by compulsion and to allow the Tibetan Government to carry out its own reforms, the Chinese prevented effect being given to proposals made in 1952 by the Dalai Lama for the reform of land tenure, the abolition of *corvee* labour, etc., and the cancellation of agricultural debt. Much later, to win credit for themselves, the Chinese proposed similar measures, but in a form unsuited to Tibetan conditions.

Chinese disregard of their treaty obligations, and the ruthless and cruel treatment by them of the people of East Tibet, created bitterness and tension in adjoining regions which eventually flared up in the disturbances of March 1959.

In spite of allegations to the contrary, this was entirely a movement of the common people, stirred by anger against oppression and fear for the safety of the Dalai Lama.

Although the Tibetan populace certainly defied the authority of the Chinese in Lhasa, it was the Chinese who were the first to open fire ; and they have since declared the abolition of the existing Tibetan Government, conducted a campaign of military repression, and established a police state throughout Tibet.

In short, during certain periods prior to 1912 the relationship between Tibet and China was of a special nature, never amounting to the acceptance of Chinese sovereignty. From 1912 until 1951 Tibet enjoyed independence. The Tibetan signatures to the agreement of 1951 asserting Tibet to be an integral part of China were extorted under duress and the Agreement is not recognised as valid by the Tibetan Government. Chinese rule in Tibet today rests on force alone.

It cannot therefore be claimed that the question of Tibet is one of Chinese domestic jurisdiction : plainly it is a matter of international concern and within the competence of the United Nations. This is the substance of the finding of the International Commission of Jurists as given on pages 5 and 6 of its final report. For the full text of their findings on Status the reader is referred to the Appendix at the end of this pamphlet.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN TIBET BEFORE THE CHINESE OCCUPATION.

The following notes on conditions prevailing in Tibet prior to the invasion of 1950 are based partly on published data of historians and travellers and partly on first-hand observation by several members of the Tibet Society who, in the course of service or study, have visited Tibet in the past, for more or less prolonged periods. In presenting the reader with this inevitably brief account, we can only ask him to keep a mind uninfluenced by labels and slogans, whether ancient or contemporary, for these can easily become a source of unconscious prejudice, as the world's demagogues know full well, since the tendentious use of labels forms one of their chief means of persuasion. For example, Communist propaganda on the subject of Tibet has done its best to exploit the current unpopularity of such labels as "feudal" or "reactionary," words which, in the Marxist jargon, can be made to mean almost anything : even Mahatma Gandhi was described as "reactionary" in his time, and the present Indian Government as "expansionist!"

The only way to judge the Tibetan issue, under its social aspect or any other, is to let the facts speak : if people will but do this consistently, the Tibetan cause will never want for champions.

As everybody knows, Tibet was a "theocracy" : that is to say, certain religious and moral values were universally acknowledged and by these the form of society was determined in large measure. Under this system the people remained highly contented : no case of a popular uprising due to bad social conditions is recorded in Tibetan history until the Communists came—this was the one and only occasion, truly a remarkable record.

Life in Tibet was simple—soft liners would have called it uncomfortable—but it possessed a high quality, of a kind that wealthier societies have often lacked. The three elementary needs of food, clothing and housing were met in a sufficient degree : an underfed Tibetan was practically unknown, a fact which may well arouse wonder, if not envy, when one remembers what happens even today in many supposedly richer lands. Over and above, the typical Tibetan possesses an innate sense of personal independence which makes him resist any attempt to impose a rigid system upon him by every means in his power ; his one wish is to stand on his own feet and, if trouble comes, to extricate himself by his own efforts : if, however, those efforts fail, no man will surpass him in patience. All those who have had to do with Tibetans as refugees in the last year or two, as well as those who knew them in the days of their national freedom, will agree with the above description.

The strong religious sense of the Tibetans is too well known to need extended comment here : it is, however, relevant to the subject of this paper to note the fact that all the refugees arriving in India or Nepal have been unanimous in lamenting, first and foremost, the assault on religion ; they have gone out of their way to point out that Chinese promises to respect freedom of worship have been nothing but a mockery. Men and women who show the most admirable fortitude when describing the loss of their own homes and all their possessions will break down in tears as they relate the maltreatment of monks and Lamas, or the desecration of sacred places and objects. Those who have not had personally to do

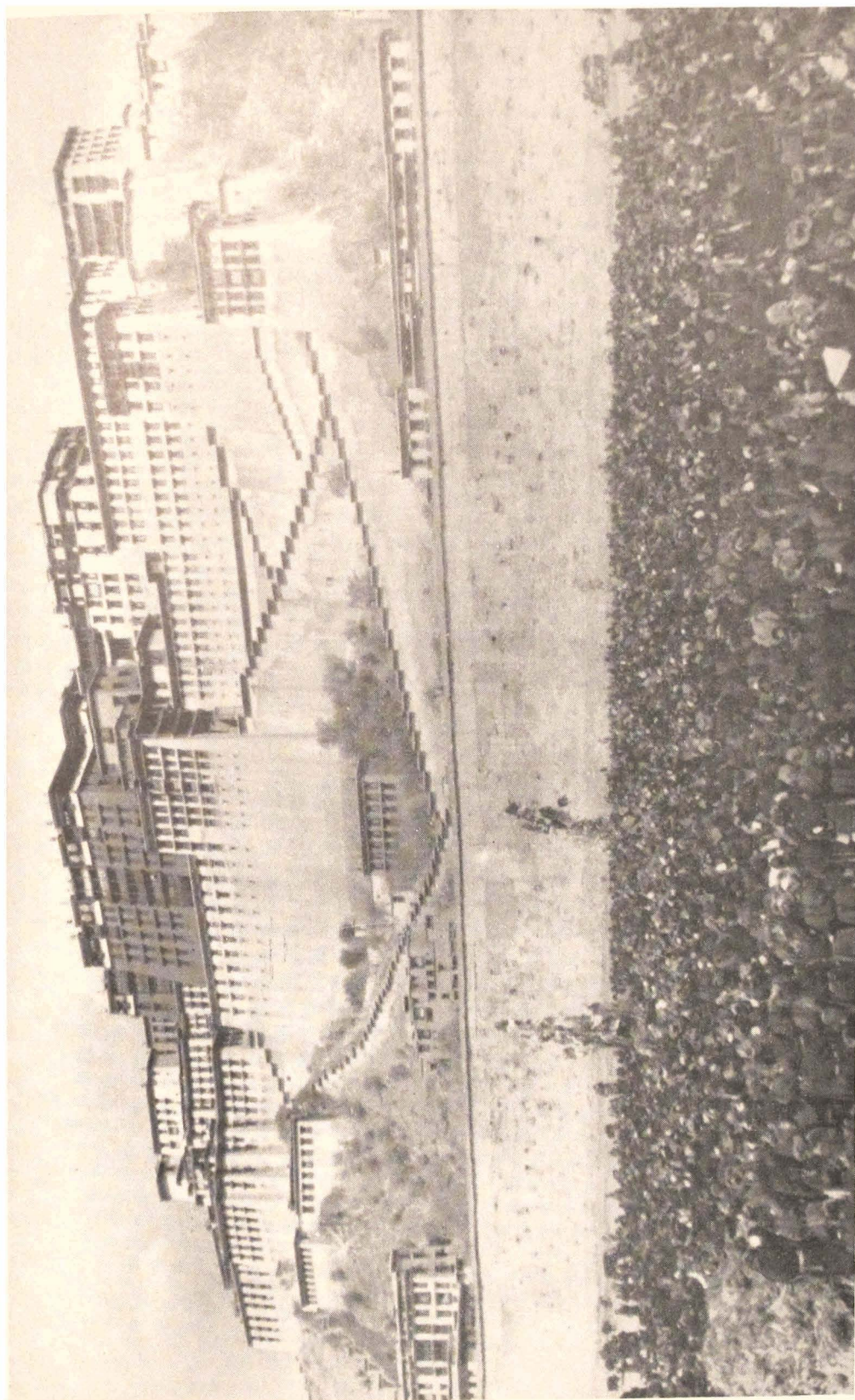
with Tibetans can hardly imagine what all this means to them. The tragedy of Tibet is not reducible to the sum of its material suffering, great as it is : the moral and spiritual damage exceeds all calculation.

The head of the Tibetan State is the Dalai Lama : in the eyes of his people, he symbolises first of all an outflow of Divine Compassion, for which his person provides the temporary fountainhead ; his ecclesiastical status and political sovereignty come second. This conception may seem strange to some people, but this is not the place to enter into details on the subject, which can be studied elsewhere. The practical point to observe, however, is the power which this idea of Compassion has exerted over the minds of the Tibetans through the centuries, and this is evinced both in their human relations, their treatment of animals and in the singularly benevolent attitude of both rulers and people towards all their neighbours, one which has not varied even under the terrible provocation received in recent years. Indeed the present writer cannot recall a single occasion when any Tibetan, great or small—even a refugee who had lost his home—expressed anything like a wholesale hatred of the Chinese as such, because of the unjust policies of their present leaders. People have described the horrors they had witnessed, others have fought in the ranks of the insurgents, but the feelings of indiscriminate hate towards national enemies such as have been habitual in so many other lands are here happily absent. If this spirit were more widespread in the world, how easy would be the problem of peace!

Surely this is enough to show that the Tibetans, whatever may be their human weaknesses (and who is without them?), have already contributed something precious to the common store of mankind, something for which they should be given full credit instead of being reproached, as sometimes happens, with “backwardness” simply because they were without motor-cars or up-to-date medical appliances or because they did not use the now fashionable socio-political catchwords. If this attitude of the Tibetans is among the signs of backwardness, then words have no meaning.

Coming down to the more material sides of life, a number of points deserve mention. Firstly, as regards *the Tibetan economy* : this was practically self-contained until the 1950 invasion. There was always enough surplus food stored both in monasteries and government granaries to meet occasional emergencies such as hailstorms, a poor harvest, etc., but otherwise people could manage from season to season.

The arrival of the Chinese armies was followed by immediate shortages coupled with an unprecedented rise in prices and this caused much distress among the people, which still continues. As already mentioned, the Tibetans were sufficiently provided in respect of food, homes and clothing ; by this criterion their “standard of living” was above average. Houses were solidly built ; clothes were mostly of homespun wool, warm, hard-wearing and pleasant to the eye. Now these people are being asked to exchange their national costume for the drab overalls which, in Communist China, have become the emblem of man’s dehumanisation, of his total servitude to the Party machine.



ON THE EVE OF THE 1959 RISING.
Citizens of Lhasa gathering in protest against the Chinese occupation.

The ancient *system of land tenure*, in Tibet as elsewhere, was feudal in character* and in the past it had worked in a reasonably fair and efficient manner. Nevertheless, in more recent years, signs of strain had appeared in the structure due, among other things, to an increasing tendency towards absenteeism on the part of the landowning families. Though Tibet down to the moment of the Chinese aggression remained immune to anything that could be described as oppression—the picture painted by Chinese Communist propaganda of a society made of miserable “serfs” exploited by rapacious landlords and lamas is patently false†—there were nevertheless reasons for expecting some changes to take place in answer to the increased stresses of the age. The obvious solution was a land reform in the sense of a general extension of peasant proprietorship—a change rendered all the easier by the fact that in their traditional village community the Tibetans already had an excellent basis of neighbourly co-operation in the use of land—and this had in fact been a declared intention of the Dalai Lama and his government, one which was frustrated by the Communists for whom the idea of a self-reliant peasantry is always anathema.

The *Monastic Order*, in Tibet, enjoyed a very great extension and prestige, and every family wished to dedicate at least one member in this way. Obviously, where numbers are so great, one must not expect transcendent qualities of intelligence or virtue from the majority, for this would be humanly impossible. The religious life of Tibet produced a number of men of shining saintliness both in former and in recent times, it also produced a much lesser number of inferior characters. Mostly it produced, simple, kindly souls and of scholars not a few. Taken as a whole the average Tibetan monk compares creditably with his fellow clergyman in other lands, as judged by any reasonable standard, while his freedom from religious bigotry could be an example to many.

Generally speaking, Tibetans, whether they be laymen or attached to the religious life, are physically sturdy, cheerful, honest, kindly and full of individual initiative, as well as noticeably unquarrelsome. The above facts do not agree with the picture of a socially depressed people.

Schooling in Tibet : greater centres of learning all remained monastic, drawing their students from all parts of the Lamaist world from Ladak in the far west to Kham and Amdo (including both sides of the old Chinese frontier) and also from distant Mongolia. Most of these students eventually returned to their own districts so that in this way the Buddhist tradition with its attendant culture was kept alive through a process of continual exchange.

Apart from these centres of higher study, a number of small private schools existed all over the country maintained by the land-owning families, to which children from the neighbouring villages also had free access.

* It is wrong to suppose, however, that every peasant owed allegiance either to a big land-owning family or a monastery ; a large number held their land direct from the Government.

† It is noteworthy that wholesale accusations of oppression and serfdom, etc., only began to figure in the Chinese propaganda on Tibet *after* the 1959 revolt. Compare Li-po's report of a survey party conducted by him in 1951 (published in the Peking *Kuang Ming Jih-pao* of April 20th 1956) where Tibet is actually described as “ a land of plenty with hard-working people who love their country.” The discrepancy between the two versions, both of them Chinese, tells its own tale.

Teaching there was on modest lines : reading, writing, simple reckoning and good manners were the chief subjects taught, the teachers being usually drawn from the local monastery. Obviously, in this case, there would be nothing like a modern educational system with its varied curriculum or its emphasis on technological instruction. Training in various crafts, in Tibet, was received in the course of apprenticeship and each craft had its own guild which was responsible both for regulating the working conditions of its members and for seeing that the work itself kept up to a certain standard. In this respect the guilds were socially very useful, a fact which the government recognised. Taking all in all, it would be a mistake to regard the Tibetans as mostly illiterate and, still less, as uninstructed people, especially as regards the deeper things.

The Criminal Law : Much has been made by hostile propagandists of the supposed prevalence in Tibet of various cruel punishments : the following are the true facts of the case. Under the ancient laws penalties for crime did include mutilations, etc. (the death penalty being relatively rare because of the Buddhist objection to taking life), but these were abolished, except for treason, already in 1898 by the 13th Dalai Lama. It is possible that such punishments may have persisted after that date in remote corners, but they were in fact illegal in all territories under the Lhasa government. What the position may still have been in some of the small, semi-independent principalities in Chinese territory we cannot say. The last known case was the blinding (for treason) of Lungshar in 1934 : despite Chinese allegations, no such reversion to old-time practice took place at the time of the Reting conspiracy in 1947. The story that Reting was blinded is untrue, though he probably was put to death in prison.

With regard to *flogging*, this remained a common punishment, imprisonment being far less common. Flogging could be inflicted on the order of a magistrate and also, in case of a delinquent tenant, by the feudal landowner. The nature and degree of punishment was regulated by *custom* having the force of an *unwritten law*. If someone went too far there was an outcry and Lhasa would intervene.*

Ulag : This was a form of obligatory service, often tendentiously translated as "forced labour." It consisted in the providing of transport (by pack animals or porters) over one of the regular stages, by local villagers, during the passage of travelling officials. This was part of the service owed to the State and prior to 1946 it did not have to be paid for ; after that date an ordinance was issued imposing payment. Cases of abuse occurred from time to time through an official exceeding his rights, but here again local protest to Lhasa provided a remedy.

It is worth noting that the Chinese, during their expedition to Tibet 1908—1912, exploited this right of *Ulag* enormously, for the simple reason that they ignored the unwritten rules in this respect, thus creating a serious grievance. Since the Communist occupation, though *Ulag* has been abolished in theory, forced labour on an unprecedented scale has been resorted to, under no safeguards whatsoever and lasting for periods practically unspecified, this labour being used for road construction and

* Similar considerations applied to the perquisites that officials were allowed to receive when exercising office in distant provinces : custom determined their just limits.

other exceptionally heavy tasks : some of those conscripted are said to have received some payment but others have been put on the work by way of punishment for alleged political offences. According to many recent reports, rations have been grossly inadequate and mortality high. By comparison, the old *Ulag* service, though occasionally burdensome, did not amount to much.*

One last illustration of Tibetan social arrangements must be given, namely the treatment accorded by the Government of Lhasa to the small but important Muslim trading communities which had established themselves in course of time both in the capital and elsewhere. These people kept up business and cultural connections with India, West China and Turkistan, they travelled widely and amassed considerable wealth.

No attempt was ever made by the Tibetans to bring about their assimilation to the ways of the majority ; they did not become objects of envy nor suffer any kind of social deprivation. The government even assisted them with setting up their own schools and places of worship, with the result that no more loyal or contented minority was to be found anywhere. Many of these people, after the Chinese came, stayed on in the hope of being allowed to carry on in the old way, but soon conditions became intolerable and most of them left for India where they are among the most homesick of the refugees. For them Lhasa was home and remains so in memory.

This treatment of a small religious group in Tibet may not seem very important to some people ; all one can say is that everyone has not been either so tolerant or so far-sighted in this respect as the Tibetans. For the sake of any Muslim reader who happens to see this pamphlet we would add this : is it right for this highly religious people to be forcibly subjected by those who, on their own admission, have gone as far as to make *Kufr*, the denial of God, into a guiding principle of life? Surely there cannot be two answers to this question ; and if anyone doubts the facts, as given above, let him only ask some of those former Muslim residents in Tibet how things were in that country before and after the Communists took over. They can certainly be trusted to give a good name to the kindly land that received them so well.

* The rationing of all foodstuffs has become a principal means of coercing the people into working at the tasks set for them by the Chinese authorities : only "producers" are entitled to rations and anyone unwilling to join in production as laid down by the Communists is ranked as an idler, to be starved into submission by the withholding of a ration-card.

“ TIBET WILL LIVE.”

Words of the 14th DALAI LAMA taken from an interview given by him at MUSSOORIE on June 6th, 1959.

“ It may happen that here in the centre of Tibet the religious and the secular administration will be similarly attacked from without and from within and the holders of the faith, the glorious Rebirths, will be broken down and left without a name. As regards the monasteries and the priesthood, their lands and properties will be destroyed. The Officers of State will be made to serve their enemies or wander about the country as beggars do. All beings will be sunk in hardship and fear, and the nights will drag on slowly in suffering . . .”

From the political testament of the 13th DALAI LAMA (d.1933).

“ The Chinese Peoples’ Liberation Army must enter Tibet, liberate the Tibetan people, and defend the frontiers of China.”

From Chinese Government’s letters of October 30th and November 16th 1950, addressed to the Government of India.

“ Liberated from whom ? ”

Premier Jawaharlal Nehru’s response to the above letters.

The 13th Dalai Lama, predecessor of the present incarnation, based his prophecy on what he had himself known of the coming of Communism to Mongolia. The evidence of refugees, and the conclusions of a judicial report, establish that all, and more than all, the sorrows he foretold have now fallen upon his own country, held in the grip of the new expansionism, ground down, broken and bleeding. Meanwhile the uncommitted peoples of the world are courted with argument, shrill and sustained, as in the November manifesto of the 81 Communist Parties with its two-fold theme. In this theme the positive message is a verbal reconciliation of universal socialism and particular nationalism to be brought about “ by the Communist Parties, who tirelessly educate the working people in the spirit of international Socialism . . .” and worked out in practice by constitutions permitting of “ local autonomy,” as in the so-called 1951 Agreement over Tibet. Events since 1951 have shown what in Chinese eyes is the practical meaning of the tireless education provided by the Party. “ Liberation ” and “ Autonomy,” noble words, have been spelled out in terms of human misery, degradation, death and an exodus of those who were able to use the difficulties of the Tibetan terrain and the proximity of a truly free India to escape the rigours of their present taskmasters.

It is the difficulty of sustaining the paradox between Communist expansionism and national interests that induced the writers of the November declaration in the more negative part of their essay to roll up their positive conclusions in the easier denunciation of the systems that Communism, according to their creed, is destined to overthrow. More than half the document is devoted to this negative aspect, an assault on what is described as “ imperialism ” and “ colonialism,” coupled with the need to “ liberate ” peoples therefrom. The argument proceeds on the necessary premise that the Communist powers themselves have an unblemished record in this respect and are justified in standing before the world as the champions of oppressed peoples. To the objective reader it seems as if words were

being thrown into a machine, a flow of abstractions strung together on a feeder-belt, with a surface clatter behind which it becomes impossible to detect the rhythm of real life. It is odd that so many should seem bemused by these abstractions; a more human reaction would be that of the Persian proverb—the dog barks, the caravan moves on.

In dictionaries of foreign words in common use in the Communist vocabulary “colonization” is defined as: the seizure of a country or region by imperialists accompanied by the subjection, brutal exploitation, and sometimes annihilation of the local population. If deportation of children and destruction of religious houses be added, it is hard to think of a more succinct definition of the processes shown by the Jurists’ Report to have been followed by the Chinese in Tibet. The Tibetans have a proverb they have applied to the sufferings they now undergo as compared with the more tolerable ups-and-downs of their previous experiences: When you have known the scorpion, you look on the frog as divine.

What then is the Tibetans’ answer to the faint-hearted who despair of their cause? First it would be that in history the Tibetans have always been a separate people, of an independence, political and other, which may at certain times indeed have had to be adjusted to surrounding pressures, but which has always been real and was total after the fall of the Manchus in 1911 until the Communist conquest of 1950. Next, they would point to the proven character of the present domination by Peking, echoing the words of the Secretary General of the International Commission of Jurists in his preface to the Report:

The events in Tibet, as shown in the findings of the committee, are in breach of what jurists everywhere would understand by the Rule of Law in its elemental meaning of a government of laws where human dignity is respected . . . The only force at the Commission’s disposal is the force of ideas . . . This force may or may not ultimately prevail, but . . . it must be tried.

Then they would claim that, whatever the view in other countries may be about Tibet’s international status, self-government—to quote Mahatma Gandhi’s words—is better than good (or bad) foreign government, and that they are entitled to expect the world outside to support their struggle for self-determination. And finally, and more deeply, they believe in the doctrine of rebirth. A study of Tibetan history shows how on the larger stage events, and even impressions, repeat themselves, in other guises no doubt but still in a tidal movement. The Chinese flood has swept over Tibet already once in living memory, and ebbed again; the ebb of the tide will come once more. The Dalai Lama, in different bodies, departs from Lhasa, returns, departs, returns, departs again. He will once more return. Tibetans are fervent in prayer; they believe whole-heartedly in its efficacy. The prayers of those with a good cause do not go unanswered. So they will say, and believe.

Everyone from Mr Nehru down who has met the 14th Dalai Lama has been moved by the spirit of calm and clear serenity which surrounds him as a halo. It shone about him as a child, and the radiance is not dimmed by years or by sorrow. He will quietly relate the afflictions that have fallen, and still fall, upon the Tibetan people from the humblest to the greatest, but his voice remains gentle and collected, and it is as though he were able to see beyond the turmoil and trouble of today to some

divine compassion which shall swallow up oppression and cruelty and point a path to the summit for those who do not faint by the way. The Mahayana, the Tibetan form of Buddhism, is no pessimistic faith, it has within it a dynamic core and a hope that will not be denied.

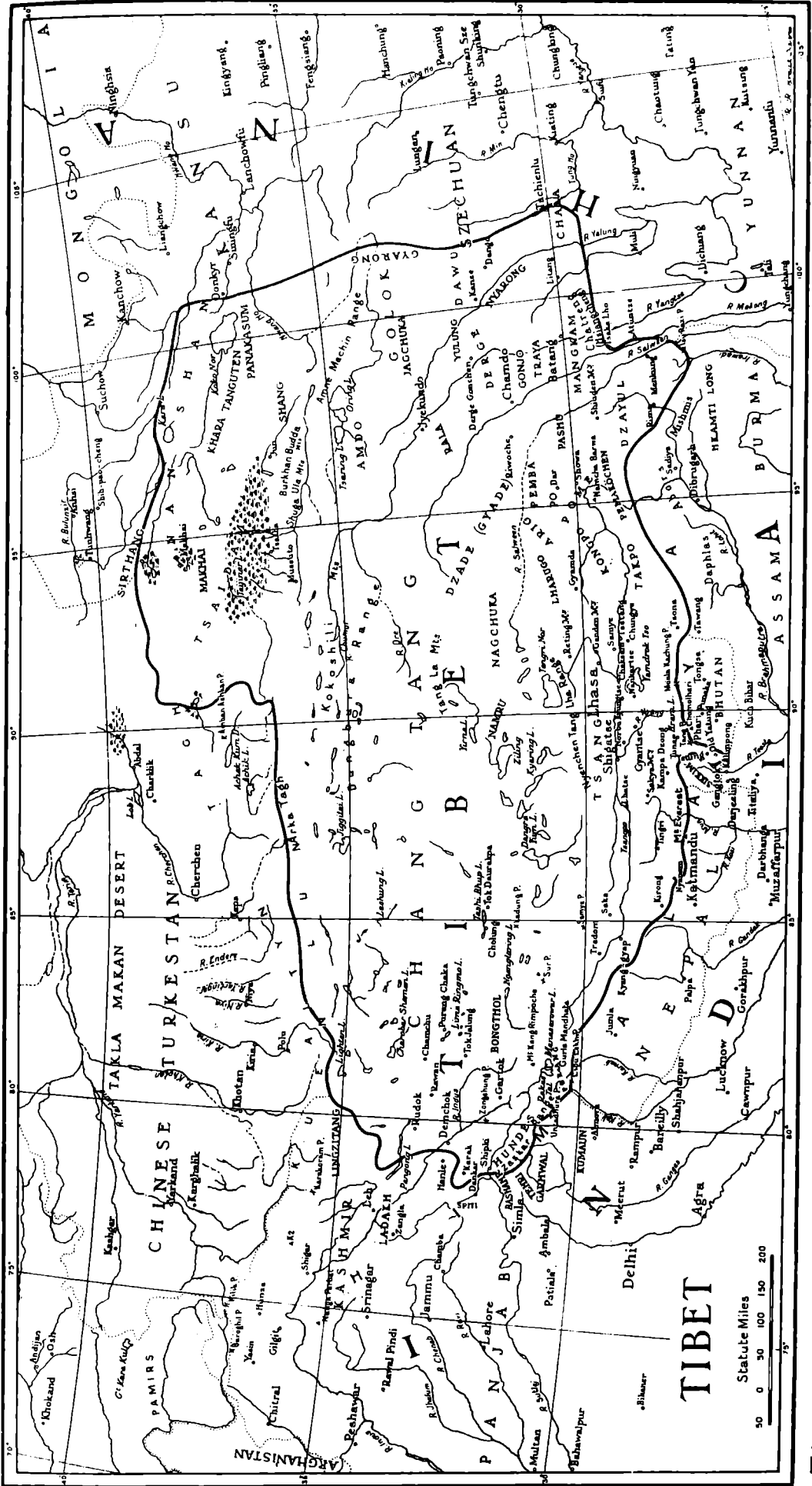
Two years ago Mr Jayaprakash Narayan, the great Indian socialist, closed a speech on Tibet before an All-India convention with these ringing words :

Then is Tibet lost forever? No, a thousand times, no. Tibet will not die because there is no death for the human spirit. Communism will not succeed because man will not be slave for ever. Tyrannies have come and gone . . . but the spirit of man goes on for ever.

Tibet will be resurrected.

Tibet shall not die.

TIBET SHALL RISE AGAIN.



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PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN TIBETAN HISTORY.

Period of Independence under native kings and princes.

- c.625 Song-tsen Gam-po (c.613—650) becomes king of Tibet.
c.641 Introduction of Buddhism. Building of Tsug-lag-khang (Cathedral of Lhasa).
763 Tibetans capture Ch'ang-an, capital of China.
c.779 King Tri-song De-tsen (742—797) founds the first monastery of Sam-ye with help of Indian Buddhist teachers.
821 Treaty, surviving on stone pillar at Lhasa, fixes frontier between Tibet and China near present boundary of Chinese province of Shensi.
c.838 Accession of king Lang Darma. Persecution of Buddhism.
842 Assassination of Lang Darma followed by break-up of Tibetan kingdom into numerous small monastic and lay principalities.
1042 Visit of Buddhist saint from Bengal, Pandit Atisha, stimulates revival of religion in Tibet.

Period of Mongol suzerainty.

- 1207 Tibetan leaders offer submission to Chingis Khan.
1244 Abbot of Sakya Monastery (Sakya Pandita) named as viceroy of Tibet on behalf of the Mongols.
1253 The Sakya Lama, Phagpa, appointed viceroy by Kublai Khan.
1260 Kublai Khan conquers China and establishes Yuan dynasty.
c.1350 Chang-chub Gyaltsan of Pagmotru, takes power from Sakya Hierarchy. Formal relations with Yuan dynasty maintained.
1357 Birth of Tsong Khapa, founder of the Gelugpa (Yellow Hat) sect.

Period of renewed independence.

- 1368 Mongol Yuan dynasty evicted by the Ming. Tibet recovers complete independence.
c.1481 Rimpung princes supersede Pagmotru family.
c.1565 Princes of Tsang establish themselves as kings of Tibet.
1578 Lama Sonam Gyatso (1543—1588), third successor of Tsong Khapa, given title of Dalai Lama by Mongol chief, Altan Khan.
1642 Qosot Mongol chief, Gusri Khan, invades Tibet, defeats the king and sets up Vth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso (1617—1682) as ruler of the country.
1644 Manchu Ch'ing dynasty replaces Ming dynasty in China.
1717 Dzungar Mongols invade Tibet and seize Lhasa.

Period of Manchu suzerainty.

- 1720 Expedition sent by Emperor K'ang Hsi evicts Dzungars and establishes Imperial supervision over Tibetan Government.
- 1723 Withdrawal of Chinese (Manchu) troops from Lhasa.
- 1728 Civil War in Tibet leads Emperor, in fear of further interference by Dzungars, to send another expedition to restore peace. Tibetan Government reorganised, and Imperial representatives (Ambans) stationed at Lhasa with a Manchu escort.
- 1740 Sonam Topgye of Phola, Chief Minister since 1728, given title of King of Tibet.
- 1750 Trouble at Lhasa after death of Phola leads to another Chinese expedition. Tibetan kingship ended. Authority restored to Dalai Lama (VIIth Dalai Lama Kesang Gyatso 1708—1758).
- 1791 Nepalese (Gurkha) invasion of Tibet repelled by Chinese Army.
- 1855 War between Nepal and Tibet. No help sent by China.
- 1890 Anglo-Chinese Convention fixes frontier of Sikkim and Tibet.
- 1893 Tibetan Trade Regulations agreed with China, without Tibetan participation.
- 1904 British invasion of Tibet under Colonel Younghusband. Lhasa occupied. Anglo-Tibetan Treaty signed, to which Chinese are not a party. XIIIth Dalai Lama (Thupten Gyatso 1876—1933) flees to China and Mongolia.
- 1906 Anglo-Chinese Convention secures Chinese adherence to 1904 Treaty which it also modifies—without consulting Tibetans.
- 1908 Vigorous Chinese reassertion of authority, by diplomacy in Chumbi Valley and by force on eastern border.
- 1910 Chinese army of invasion despatched by the Viceroy of Szechuan, Chao Erh-feng, occupies Lhasa. XIIIth Dalai Lama takes refuge in India. He declares the independence of Tibet.

Modern period of complete independence.

- 1912 Revolution in China and overthrow of Manchu dynasty. Tibetans drive out all Chinese forces from Tibet as far as Mekong river.
- 1913 January : Dalai Lama re-enters Lhasa.
October : Simla Conference, where British, Chinese and Tibetan plenipotentiaries meet on equal footing.

- 1914 March : Eastern section of Indo-Tibetan frontier (the "McMahon Line") negotiated directly between British and Tibetan plenipotentiaries.
- April : Chinese government refuses to ratify initialled draft of the Simla tripartite convention. British and Tibetan plenipotentiaries sign declaration making the convention binding on their governments and excluding China from all advantages under the treaty until Chinese government should adhere.
- 1918 Tibetans push Chinese to east of the Yangtse.
Tibetan advance halted by truce of Rongbatsa.
- 1919 Chinese proposal to reopen negotiations on 1914 basis comes to nothing.
- 1921 Mission of Sir Charles Bell to Lhasa establishes closer relationship between British and Tibetan governments.
- 1923 VIth Panchen Lama (Chos-Kyi Nyima 1883—1937) quarrels with Dalai Lama and flees to China.
- 1930 Unsuccessful Chinese overtures through Tibetan Lama, Yungon Dzasa, for direct settlement with Tibet.
- 1933 Death of XIIIth Dalai Lama.
- 1934 Chinese Mission under General Huang Mu-sung allowed to visit Lhasa in order "to condole on death of Dalai Lama." Tibetans resist diplomatic pressure to accept Chinese suzerainty.
- 1937 Death of VIth Panchen Lama.
- 1940 XIVth Dalai Lama (Tendzin Gyatso b. 1935) enthroned at Lhasa. Mission of Mr Wu Chung-hsin makes further attempt to secure settlement with Tibet.
- 1943 Under pressure from both the British and Chinese Governments to allow passage of war supplies for China through Tibet, the Tibetans firmly maintain their own neutrality.
- 1946 Tibetan Goodwill Mission visits India and China.
- 1947 Tibetan delegates attend Asian Relations Conference at Delhi.
- August : Transfer of power to new national Government of India, which takes over rights and responsibilities of its predecessor towards Tibet.
- 1948 Tibetan mission, travelling with Tibetan passports, visits U.K. and U.S.A.
- 1949 Chinese Nationalist Government set up puppet Panchen Lama.
July : Tibetan Government expels Chinese Nationalist Mission from Lhasa.
September : defeat of the Nationalists. Communist Government established at Peking.
- 1950 January : Indian Government recognises Communist Government of China. Communist threats to "liberate" Tibet.
October 7th : Chinese Communist troops invade Tibet. Indian Government's protest met with reply that "Tibet is part of China."

- November 6th : Mr Ernest Davies states in Parliament that Tibetan autonomy amounted to *de facto* independence.
- November 7th : Tibetan Government appeals to United Nations.
- December : Discussion of Tibetan appeal postponed. Tibetan request for Commission of Enquiry left unanswered.

Period of Chinese Communist domination.

- 1951 May 23rd : Capitulation of Tibetans—"Seventeen Point Agreement" signed at Peking.
- 1952 July : Chinese Military and Civil Headquarters set up at Lhasa.
- September : Chinese troops begin to occupy key points throughout Tibet. The Chinese nominee put in possession of the Panchen Lama's see of Shigatse.
- 1954 April 29th : Sino-Indian Agreement regarding Tibet signed. Dalai Lama visits Peking.
- 1955 Chinese Government announces the "Preparatory Commission for Tibet Autonomous Region."
- 1956 People of Kham and Amdo rise against Chinese. Dalai Lama visits India in connection with the 2500th anniversary of the Buddha's Enlightenment.
- 1957 Chinese announce a six years' postponement of plans to socialise Tibet.
- 1958 Guerilla warfare extends from Kham to neighbourhood of Lhasa. Mr Nehru's proposed visit to Lhasa cancelled at request of Chinese.
- 1959 January : Dalai Lama declines invitation to Peking.
- March 10th : Denunciation of the "Seventeen Point Agreement" and affirmation of Tibet's right to independence by special session of National Assembly at Lhasa, formally promulgated by majority of the Cabinet.
- March 17th : Flight of Dalai Lama, with many followers, to India. Fighting breaks out soon after.
- March 28th : Tibetan Government abolished by the Chinese and replaced by military dictatorship.
- June : Dalai Lama at Press Conference formally repudiates Sino-Tibetan agreement of 1951.
- October : Debate on Tibet in general assembly of United Nations. Resolution demanding respect for human rights in Tibet passed by 46 votes to 9 with 26 abstentions.
- 1960 July : Report of International Commission of Jurists ("Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic") published at Geneva.
- 1961 April : Further debate on Tibet at United Nations postponed till the next session.

APPENDIX.

Extract from the findings of the International Commission of Jurists 1960.

The Status of Tibet.

The view of the COMMITTEE was that Tibet was at the very least a *de facto* independent State when the Agreement on Peaceful Measures in Tibet was signed in 1951, and the repudiation of this agreement by the Tibetan Government in 1959 was found to be fully justified. In examining the evidence, the COMMITTEE took into account events in Tibet as related in authoritative accounts by officials and scholars familiar at first hand with the recent history of Tibet and official documents which have been published. These show that Tibet demonstrated from 1913 to 1950 the conditions of statehood as generally accepted under international law. In 1950 there was a people and a territory, and a government which functioned in that territory, conducting its own domestic affairs free from any outside authority. From 1913-1950 foreign relations of Tibet were conducted exclusively by the Government of Tibet and countries with whom Tibet had foreign relations are shown by official documents to have treated Tibet in practice as an independent State.

Tibet surrendered her independence by signing in 1951 the Agreement on Peaceful Measures for the Liberation of Tibet. Under that Agreement the Central People's Government of the Chinese People's Republic gave a number of undertakings, among them: promises to maintain the existing political system of Tibet, to maintain the status and functions of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, to protect freedom of religion and the monasteries and to refrain from compulsion in the matter of reforms in Tibet. The Committee found that these and other undertakings had been violated by the Chinese People's Republic, and that the Government of Tibet was entitled to repudiate the Agreement as it did on March 11, 1959.

On the status of Tibet the previous inquiry was limited to considering whether the question of Tibet was a matter essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of the Chinese People's Republic. The Committee considered that it should confine itself to this question and it was therefore not necessary to attempt a definitive analysis in terms of modern international law of the exact juridical status of Tibet. The Committee was not concerned with the question whether the status of Tibet in 1950 was one of *de facto* or *de jure* independence and was satisfied that Tibet's status was such as to make the Tibetan question one for the legitimate concern of the United Nations even on the restrictive interpretation of matters "essentially within the domestic jurisdiction" of a State.

Purshottam Trikamdas, Chairman

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