

THE WATER-BIRD AND OTHER YEARS

*A History of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama
and after*

by
K. DHONDUP

RANGWANG PUBLISHERS, NEW DELHI

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Published by Rangwang Publishers, New Delhi. Printed at
Indraprastha Press (CBT), Nehru House, New Delhi.

Preface

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama was one of the most patriotic and independent leaders known to Tibetan history.

Greatest among the Dalai Lamas, he was restless in his search for a politically independent Tibet, free from the stranglehold of the Manchu-Chinese interference and influence that had choked and paralysed the growth of an original Tibetan political thinking and development.

The Water-Bird and Other Years is primarily a homage to the dedication and compassion of the great Thirteenth Dalai Lama who faced two exiles, one from the British and the other from the Manchu-Chinese, but finally succeeded in declaring the political independence of Tibet in 1912. For the first time in Tibetan history, since the glorious days of the early kings, Tibet once again became politically independent and remained so till the late-thirties when after the demise of the Dalai Lama, the first signs of Chinese interference emerged its ugly head in the form of a condolence mission. These years of uninterrupted peace and independence, from 1912 to the late-thirties, were the most glorious years of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's achievement. This book celebrates such triumphs with pride and admiration. Yet it is not only about political triumphs and spiritual glories. After the untimely demise of the great Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Tibet plunged into one of its darkest period. Selfishness, cowardice, corruption and intrigues, both aristocratic and monastic, emaciated the nation pushing it further and faster into the throat of Mao's China. *The Water-Bird and Other Years* is a sad record of this shameful and indifferent period when the hopes and dreams ushered by the presence and endeavour of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama were collectively dashed to pieces by the intrigues of the aristocracy, obstinacy of the monasteries and the general ignorance

of the common Tibetans. Though the main actors of this period are easy to identify the national guilt can not be washed away by condemning them alone.

A comprehensive and authentic history of the years from the Thirteenth Dalai Lama till the fateful year of 1959 must be written. But it can best be written by those who actually took part or had the opportunity to observe the events from close quarters. Many years ago, when I was at college, I heard that the brilliant Tibetan minister Surkhang Sawang Chenmo was writing a history of Tibet in America which promised the most detailed and authentic materials as the author belonged to those critical years. Unfortunately, Surkhang's *History of Modern Tibet* was never to see the light of day. It was variously rumoured to have been lost or stolen. It was said that many of its most important chapters and pages were found missing. Perhaps we shall some day see pirated versions of his work in one form or another. As a matter of fact, I unashamedly confess that *The Water-Bird and Other Years* is more or less a pirated version of Surkhang's *History*.

Some years ago, my director Gyatsho-la at the Tibetan Library in Dharamsala gave me two files containing numerous writings of Surkhang Sawang Chenmo for possible editing and publication in *The Tibet Journal*. These files contained incomplete drafts of the *History* he was writing. They were saved from oblivion by his wife Surkhang Lhacham and offered to Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche who in turn gave them to Gyatsho-la. I read through the English drafts. They fell into two categories. A large section of the writing was on the Tibetan taxation system. The others were on modern Tibetan history from the Thirteenth Dalai Lama onwards. I edited them into four sections and published them in *The Tibet Journal* Vol. VII No. 4 onwards under the series title *Tibet: The Critical Years*. Surkhang's sketchy drafts of the history first inspired me to attempt a book on the period and as a result *The Water-Bird and Other Years* follow the same pattern in which I edited and published Surkhang's own writings. Apart from Surkhang, I have exhaustively referred to Shakabpa's voluminous and invaluable

Political History of Tibet in both its English and Tibetan editions. Besides Surkhang and Shakabpa, the writings of Sir Charles Bell and H. E. Richardson have been invaluable to my understanding of the period. Bell's *Portrait of the Dalai Lama* and Richardson's *Tibetan Precis*, among others deserve special mention. To them I owe a lot. They gave me illuminating insight and details of the period. I have also consulted some of the interviews which the Tibetan Library has conducted on the period under study.

I am also very grateful to my friend Tashi Tsering at the Tibetan Library who is a mine of information on almost any aspect of Tibetan history and culture. Besides enriching and inspiring me with his original analysis and views of the different personalities and events he gave me issues of a recent journal published in Tibet by the Chinese. The title of the journal can be loosely translated as *Resource Materials for a History of Tibet*. It contains recollections of the events in which the authors have personally participated or have first-hand information. For example, Lhalu has written about his father Lunghsar, who was one of the main characters of the period, giving us valuable insight into the personality of this complex and uncomfortable man who was progressive and reactionary at the time. Similarly, the two body-guards of Radreng Rinpoche have given their own accounts of the ex-regent's last days in prison. And Tseten Dolkar, the lady whom Kunphela married after his return from exile in India and China has written her account of her husband who was once the most powerful man of his time. Such materials are vital to a correct history of the period. Though these materials are invaluable as they have been written by those that have actually lived the history that they are writing, I have not incorporated their details in the main book itself. I have translated and included them separately in the appendices. My reason is simple. They are important enough to be read as they are written. But here too the readers must be cautious. These writings are by people who have their own axes to grind and have been published under the supervision of the foreign power now ruling Tibet.

Fortunately, the Tibetan Library also has a valuable collection of similar writings and interviews by the elder officials of the Tibetan government who escaped to India with the Dalai Lama. Many of these writings have been edited and the interviews transcribed in an attempt to publish them. But of the two first books published, one on the *Office of Tibet in Nanking* ran into censor trouble with the Tibetan Kashag in Dharamsala. Some passages in this book, according to the authorities, were capable of jeopardising the chance of Tibetan independence. Swift and strong orders from the Kashag saw the book banned and the enthusiasm to bring out the others have been considerably stifled.

I personally feel that such a step is retrograde and narrowminded. It becomes more so in the light of the recent publications from Tibet itself where every aspect of modern Tibetan history and politics is thoroughly and frankly described and discussed. Facts of history can not be hidden or suppressed. Suppressing facts can not make the history of a country clean. No history is clean and no country has a clean history. Tibet is no exception. We should not hide the shame or guilt of it by suppressing facts. Rather we must learn from history as it is.

I would have liked the Tibetan Library to publish *The Water-Bird and Other Years*. But circumstances do not allow it. I publish it elsewhere. I thank my friend Sonam Chopel for typing the entire manuscript and Jamyang Nima for reading and suggesting improvements in the text.

Finally, *The Water-Bird and Other Years* is for the young whose cultural and historical education has the most important role in the survival of the Tibetan identity.

— K. Dhondup

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The Thirteenth Dalai Lama

In the beginning of 1913, all the districts and provinces of Tibet received a unique decree which had to be proclaimed in every corner of the country and a copy of which had to be kept in the records of each and every office. This unique decree was the declaration of Tibetan independence issued by the 13th Dalai Lama from the Potala palace — the like of which no Dalai Lama nor any other Tibetan leaders had issued before or after. In this decree, the Dalai Lama outlined that after the collapse of the Manchu empire, the Tibetans fought with zeal and courage to expel each and every Manchu soldier from Central Tibet and were in the process of driving away the remaining Manchu soldiers out of eastern Tibet. Triumphant in his victory of having fulfilled the latent Tibetan desire of ending the Manchu-Chinese domination of Tibet, His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama declared in the same decree that the Chinese aim of colonising Tibet under the guise of patron-priest relationship has faded like “a rainbow in the summer sky”. With the proclamation of this decree, Tibetans rejoiced in the relaxed atmosphere of the newly acquired independence and Tibet gained a political standing and prestige with which it was able to manoeuvre and compel the Chinese government to attend the Tripartite Simla Convention of 1914 on the border issues between Tibet, Great Britain and China.

Behind this declaration of Tibetan independence, lies the political determination and experience of one of the greatest Tibetan leaders of all times — the 13th Dalai Lama Thupten Gyatso — whose love for his people and dedication to his country were often tested by adverse and critical circumstances that frequently attempted to overshadow the political prestige and economic progress which he was introducing in Tibet. But time and again, he was able to overcome such

circumstances and prove himself triumphant against great political hurdles stumbled in his path by internal and international forces opposed to his efforts towards an independent Tibet. But he showed an uncommon maturity, skill and shrewdness in his political and diplomatic dealings, gained not from the comfortable surroundings of Norbu Lingka or the Potala palace in Lhasa but from the faraway plains and cities of Mongolia, China and India where in political exile, he became an eyewitness to the changing scenes of international events that were gradually shaping the destiny of the world. Indeed so penetrating was his insight of the emergence of forces that will uproot the traditional blend of the divine and secular systems that existed in one form or the other in almost every Asian nation that long before the world heard of Mao and his People's Liberation Army, the 13th Dalai Lama had unhesitatingly predicted in his *Last Political Testament* the destruction and uprootment Tibet was to suffer at the hands of Communist China.

From among the Dalai Lamas, the Tibetans have entitled the 5th and the 13th as Great Dalai Lamas. Such popular regard and respect do not come easily even from the Tibetans for whom the Dalai Lamas are above everything. From the long lineage of the Dalai Lamas, the 5th and the 13th are the first among the equals. While the fifth united the whole of Tibet under the divine institution of the Dalai Lamas by giving a concrete political foundation to the concept of *Gaden Phodrang*, the 13th zealously struggled and finally triumphed in keeping alive the undying — but seldom lit flame — of Tibetan independence. Such were their deeds and achievement that from the silence of the Tibetan masses sprang forth the popular reverence and faith rendered only to such great leaders.

The Great 13th Dalai Lama, in his search and struggle for the secular independence of his country, had to be alert to inside and outside dangers right from his youth. From the 9th to the 12th Dalai Lamas, all died young. In fact, so grim was the greed for power and so vulnerable was the monastic and aristocratic officials of the

then Lhasa that the Manchu Ambans were allowed almost a free hand in Tibetan administrative and political matters which compel many historians to suspect foul play in the demise of these Dalai Lamas at such young ages. History and more accurately the life and deeds of the 13th Dalai Lama, serves as a living evidence of truth that the Manchu Ambans, to perpetuate their domination over Tibetan affairs, did not desire a Dalai Lama who will ascend the throne and become a strong and capable ruler over his own country and people.

After the demise of the 12th Dalai Lama at the very young age of 19, the Regent Demo Tulku and the Kashag were preparing for the search and discovery of the 13th Dalai Lama. Oracles were being consulted. Supernatural signs were being awaited. A decree instructing all families to submit the names of the newly born sons to the government was proclaimed. And in Lhasa the ladies of the noble families were jealous of being the blessed mother of the coming Dalai Lama.

Phurchog Rinpoche, tutor of the late Dalai Lama, Panchen Rinpoche, Regent Tatsag Rinpoche and the oracles had clear indications that the child Dalai Lama will be born towards the south-east of Lhasa. On his way to Chokhorgyal monastery, Gyuto Khensur Losang Dhargyay, one of the members of the official search party visited the sacred lake of Lhamo Latso — the sacred lake which not only revealed Dagpo, a village to the south-east of Lhasa as the birth-place of the Dalai Lama but also showed a clear picture of the house in which the Dalai Lama was to be born. Enquiries there led the search party to a peasant house named Lang-dun where an exceptional child had taken birth on May 27th, 1876, to father Kunga Rinchen and mother Losang Dolma. As the child was only five months old, the search party returned to Lhasa, to report the findings to the Regent and the Cabinet.

So it was that a song hit the street of Lhasa:

The sun of Tibet
Has taken birth in Dagpo

The lady of Doring
has gathered soots in her buttock.

Not only the lady of Doring family but many others must have felt disappointed when all their prayers and purification rites of juniper and sandal smoke under their garments to welcome the blessed one went unanswered. Though there were two other candidates, the child from the Langdun family of Dagpo was publicly confirmed as the 13th Dalai Lama in 1877 and a year later, the Panchen Rinpoche conferred on him the monkhood name of Jetsun Ngawang Losang Thupten Gyatso Jigdal Wangchuk. By 1879 he was enthroned without any sign of interference from the Manchu Amban. As the Dalai Lama rightly claims with national pride in his *Last Political Testament*: "I was not selected by the customary picking of lots from the golden urn; it was judged unnecessary, as it was clear from the prophecies and divinations that I was the true Incarnation. And, so was enthroned."

Thus after his discovery and enthronement began his intricate studies in the Buddhist philosophy. In his own words, "the regent Tutor, Tatsag Hothogthu, my senior tutor Dorje Chang Phurchog Rinpoche and other learned teachers taught me prayers and verses to recite and memorise; ordained me as a novice, taught me the art of debating and initiated me to the sacred sermons and vows." Before long, the Dalai Lama had to visit the sacred lake, 150 miles to the south-east of Lhasa for a vision of his future and appease the Palden Lhamo — the guardian goddess of the lake and Tibet. Of the two, appeasing the goddess was the more fearsome as the boy Dalai Lama had to journey alone into the inner chapel and speak to her face to face which called forth both spiritual skill and mortal courage as the goddess was given to quick temper. But the boy Dalai Lama was able to succeed in this test and on his way back to Lhasa was given the customary holy pill. Tibetans believe that the previous Dalai Lamas died young as they failed to appease the goddess Palden Lhamo though many suspect the pill to be foul. Fortunately for Tibet, the strong willed

13th Dalai Lama was able to overcome all such obstacles as he himself told Sir Charles Bell that he was exceptionally lucky to have reliable attendants who were always on the guard.

Before he reached his 18th year and assumed his full secular and spiritual powers, two unrelated incidents occurred that in some ways gave him a taste of politics and contributed in shaping the negative policy of closing Tibet to foreigners which, after more than two decades of suspicion and anxiety, finally brought the British Indian troops to Lhasa. The first incident was the secret forays of the intelligent and observant Sarat Chandra Das accompanied by the Sikkimese Lama Urgyen Gyatso into central Tibet. Helped by Sengchen Lama Losang Palden of Shigatse and his cousin, the wife of Dapon Phala, Sarat Chandra Das visited Lhasa. Staying secretly in Tibet from 1881-83, he compiled geographical points on important landmarks and drew a new map of the turquoise lake of Yamdrok. Such secret explorations soon aroused the suspicions of the Tibetan government and plans were being made to arrest Das. But he escaped. Those Tibetans including Sengchen Lama and the Phala family who aided Das in his exploration of Tibet were severely punished. Sengchen Lama was mercilessly drowned in 1887. This severe penalty accorded on Sengchen Lama was probably the first seed of discord sown between Lhasa and Shigatse which, in later years, intensified into a serious problem of national disunity. The biggest estate of Phala family was confiscated. The honest and timely intervention of the father of the Dalai Lama in the National Assembly — then dominated by the Drepung Monastery — saved the Phala family from further confiscation. Though Sarat Chandra Das escaped into Darjeeling, his secret explorations done at the request of the British government of India made the Tibetan authorities very suspicious of the British policy and the gate of Tibet was closed to the world. The second incident was a minor quarrel between two Tibetan women and a Nepalese shopkeeper which flared into a major fight when the monks of Lhasa, leading a religious procession around the Jokhang temple, joined in

the dispute. When the first rays of the morning sun touched the streets of Lhasa, every single Nepalese shop had been looted and as in 1888 when the Gurkhas invaded and captured four districts in western Tibet and demanded an annual tribute to recover the districts, open war with Nepal seemed inevitable causing much anxiety to the young Dalai Lama and the Tibetan cabinet. To avoid a damaging war, Tibetan representatives met the Nepalese representatives at the border. After much negotiations, it was agreed to compensate all the losses accrued by the Nepalese shops from the Tibetan government treasure. Fortunately, the huge amount of money needed for the compensation was borne by the Mongolian Chahan Hothogthu Kunga Gyaltzen who had come to pay his respects to the Dalai Lama.

While the secret exploration of Sarat Chandra Das and consequences of looting the Nepalese business community in Lhasa made the Tibetan government apprehensive of the neighbouring countries which forced Tibet to follow a strictly closed door policy, there were strong indications of the declining influence of the Manchu-Chinese control over Tibet. In Lhasa itself, the most significant indication of this was the purely Tibetan discovery and enthronement of the 13th Dalai Lama without any reference to the Manchu Amban who remained a helpless spectator of the whole pageantry of the enthronement ceremony — honoured and seated in the same line and status as that of the Nepalese and Mongolian dignitaries. The Chinese were then fighting a disastrous war with Japan in 1894-95 followed by a very violent and bloody rebellion by the Chinese Muslim in north-western provinces which disrupted direct Manchu communication with Lhasa. Taking advantage of the situation, the Dalai Lama keenly took every chance to assert autonomy. The Tibetans declared the Conventions and Trade Regulations which the British and Chinese governments signed without Tibetan participation invalid. Trade itself was obstructed. Many boundary pillars were overthrown and even grazing rights were not allowed. The Chinese government was powerless and British attempt to negotiate the situation were rebuffed by the Tibetans. A sense of Tibetan inde-

pendence was in the making. One evening in 1895 when the Dalai Lama passed by in procession to bless the butter-lamp occasion (*Choenga Chopa*) of the *Monlam Chenmo* (Great Prayer Festival), indignant Tibetans saw some Chinese officials watching the Dalai Lama pass by from an upper balcony. Near being beaten to death by angry Tibetan mobs, the Ambans made the Chinese officials apologise to the Dalai Lama and promise in writing that such misbehaviour will never occur again. Then there was the case of Rampa appointed as a minister in the Tibetan cabinet by the Manchu Amban thinking he could bypass the young Dalai Lama. But His Holiness summoned Rampa and dismissed him from the Cabinet. Not knowing what to do in the circumstances, Rampa retired to his estate for a year and the Cabinet informed the Amban that Rampa had died. Though the Amban well knew Rampa was alive in his estate, he had no choice but to report to his emperor that his appointed minister Rampa was no longer in this world. As such false reports to the emperor from the Amban multiplied, due to the strong hand of the Dalai Lama in having his own way in Tibetan political affairs, Lhasa populace began to call the Manchu emperor "The Bag of Lies."

In 1886, after a tireless and selfless service of 12 years, Tatsag Jedung Chokyi Gyaltzen, one of the most popular Regent in the recent history of Tibet, died. As the Dalai Lama was still young, the Cabinet and the National Assembly appointed Demo Tulku Trinley Rabgay of Tengyeling Monastery as the new Regent. Tengyeling was one of the seven monasteries whose head incarnations were usually chosen as the Regents of Tibet. Though not large like the three great monasteries, it was an exclusive and exalted monastery. The Regent Demo Tulku, the head of this monastery employed his own brother as his chief minister who, in a short time, made many enemies by his oppressive rule, even doing innocent people to death.

On September 26, 1895, the Dalai Lama had attained the age to assume power and the Regent resigned. But as the unfortunate events to follow were to prove, the Regent's resignation from power was reluctant. As has happened

with other Regents, the desire of the Demo Tulku and his followers to recapture the lost power and prestige drove them into the dark world of black magic and sorcery. The Nechung Oracle had predicted dangers to the life of the young Dalai Lama several times. Brought face to face with the Dalai Lama, the Oracle wanted a thorough examination of a pair of Tibetan shoes presented to Terton Sogyal by a certain monk. When questioned Terton Sogyal revealed that whenever he tried to wear the pair of shoes presented to him by Chojor the steward of Tengyeling monastery, his nose started bleeding. When the soles of shoes were torn apart, a paper bearing the name and date of birth of the 13th Dalai Lama accompanied by a strong magical incantation invoking the Lord of Death to bring a sudden end to the Dalai Lama's life were found. Thus unfolded one of the most diabolical conspiracy in Tibetan history which came to be known as "The Pair of Cursed Shoes." Suddenly and swiftly, the Tibetan government went into action. The ex-Regent, his brother Norbu Tsering and abbot Losang Dhonden, alongwith a number of their followers were arrested. Their estates were confiscated. Though the Regent revealed that he dabbled in sorcery to regain his power mainly to avenge the neglect and persecutions which he suffered at the hands of many Tibetan officials once he was out of power, his brother Norbu Tsering took the entire blame on himself and declared the Regent Demo Tulku entirely ignorant of the conspiracy. But when his turn came, the ex-Regent took the whole responsibility for the dark plot on himself and pleaded mercy for the others including his brother who he said were mere tools in his plan to recapture the lost power. Popular indignation ran high. The Government was outraged by the plot and wanted to execute them. But the Dalai Lama revolted against capital punishment. After many days of hearings and investigations, everyone was judged guilty and confined to life imprisonment. Many of the subordinate were exiled. Some were flogged publicly and 16 Bon priests were also punished for their involvement in the plot. Apart from those that were actively involved in the conspiracy, Norbu Tsering's

wife, who was a daughter of the Doring family suffered in this conspiracy. To ease the condition of her husband in prison, she tried to bribe her way into the prison. This was discovered by the government. She was arrested, flogged and made to sit in one of the main streets of Lhasa with her wrists manacled and heavy wooden board placed round her neck. Years later, she was sent into exile. And the head of Doring family was barred from holding any administrative post.

Tengyeling, the monastery to which the ex-Regent Demo Tulku belonged was exceptionally rich and flourishing. But unfortunately, they took an exception to the government's handling of the case of "The Pair of Cursed Shoes." As the Manchu Amban was about to return to China, the monks of Tengyeling monastery bribed him with gold to present the conspiracy in a favourable light to the emperor and disturbed the settled dust of the old problem by saying that the whole case must be tried in the Amban's court. The Dalai Lama at once reprimanded the new Amban in a very strong and severe decree in which he made it clear that the Amban, filled with the bribes of gold, should no longer attempt to interfere in the judgements passed by the government of the Dalai Lama — the sole ruler of Tibet. Though Tengyeling remained unsuccessful in their efforts to bring the case to the Manchu court, the rancour remained like a festering wound. The bitterness of this affair was to surface time and again nearly forty years after the original affair had completely subsided. And the misguided steps pursued by Tengyeling with uncommon zeal was to cost them their very survival in 1912.

Facing such obstacles and clearing his way of the internal and external dangers that beset his path, the young Dalai Lama was growing up both in his religious and political duties. During the Great Prayer Festival, the entire maintenance of law and order passed into the hands of the monk-magistrates from Drepung monastery, who carry on enormous staff of office and employ their own monk police. Such sudden shifts of administration gave birth to abuses of the law as the confiscations of properties became com-

mon. The 13th Dalai Lama promptly checked such abuses by summoning the two monk-magistrates who claimed they did what they did by the authority of the Great 5th Dalai Lama. The young Dalai Lama asked: "And who is the Great Fifth Dalai Lama?". Overawed by the implications of this question they replied that "without doubt Your Holiness is he." From then on, the monk-magistrates were personally selected by the Dalai Lama himself from the name of the candidates submitted to him. And to the joy of the populace such abusive priestly privilege were effectively curtailed. As recorded in the official biography *The Wonderful Rosary of Jewel*, the 13th Dalai Lama reprimanded the heads of the large monasteries for not punishing the rough monks who drink, smoke and gamble and roam about in various dresses into the village oppressing the villagers. He warned the heads of these monasteries that if such slackness continued the very name of the monasteries and religion will be destroyed.

Perhaps the history of the Dalai Lamas reveal more than any other Tibetan records the strong control of Tibetan politics by the twin citadels of the aristocracy and the monastic establishment. Though often at each other's throats themselves, a Dalai Lama must chart a careful middle course between these two citadels of power and politics whose predatory nature does not tolerate novel challenges that seem even remotely capable of reducing their spheres of influence. And a Dalai Lama who has the courage, determination and skill to find an anchor in this sea of monastic and aristocratic rivalries and manœuvres, stands out above the rest. The 13th Dalai Lama was such a Dalai Lama. "I came into power" he said, "when I was twenty years old, but I did not know at all how to govern a country. For the first five or six years it was very difficult. I could see the administration was failing in many way, but I had no experience to guide me in making changes. However, within ten years I had in some degree improved the government." Gradually shaping himself into a true national leader, the common Tibetans were joyous at the reforms and changes the Dalai Lama was slowly introducing in the country. But

in the distant horizon one century was ending and the new — the 20th century was rising. And the opening of the 20th century was full of trial and tribulations for the young Dalai Lama. Prompted mainly by the discovery of Sarat Chandra Das's secret explorations at the request of the British Government of India, the Tibetan National Assembly, dominated by the elder conservative ministers and the abbots of the three monasteries, believed whole-heartedly in the Chinese and Manchu whispers of the British intention of abolishing Tibetan Buddhism by substituting it with Christianity. In defence of their religion and in fear of the polluting influence of the outside world, Tibet closed its door and zealously pursued an isolationist policy while the mercenary, colonial and imperialistic tentacles of the 20th century were reaching far and wide.

Unknown to the Dalai Lama, Tibet was becoming a pawn in the Great game of British and Russian imperialism. What went on behind the closed door of isolated Tibet was a mystery. Frequent reports which claimed growing Russian influence in Lhasa did not leave the British in India in peace. Two persons, more than anybody else, were to provoke British military invasion of Tibet. One was George Nanthaniel Curzon, appointed the Viceroy of India in 1898. The other was a Buriat Mongolian monk known to history as Dorjieff. His Tibetan name was Gomang Sogpo Tsan Zhab Ngawang Losang and he studied metaphysics in Lhasa. Lord Curzon, though an expert on Asia, gifted with an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of Asian history, had no fascination for Tibet. But his obsession was Russia and he suffered from Russophobia believing passionately in the theory that "Russia's ultimate ambition is the domination of whole Asia."

Relation between the Dalai Lama and the British Government in India were non-existent as Tibet had closed its frontiers to all foreigners. Unreliable and distorted information on Tibet came either through the frontier offices at Darjeeling and Kalimpong or else through the British Resident in Kathmandu, Nepal. The British Minister in Peking also supplied bits of news that filtered through missionaries

stationed in the Tibetan borderlands. In addition to the confusion of transliteration of the proper names contained in these reports, the date varying from each other as calculated according to the Tibetan, Chinese or the Nepalese calendars which not only differed from the Gregorian calendars but from each other made all such dispatches completely meaningless. Added to this lack of information and intelligence on the happenings in Tibet, the Viceroy discovered that nothing that can be called a British policy towards Tibet was ever formulated. To the British Government in India, as long as the Chinese occupied East Turkestan, India was safe from Russian incursion by two solid buffer zones. Only if Russia took over East Turkestan was it essential for the British to assert their influence in Tibet. But Lord Curzon was determined to change this vague attitude towards Tibet. Throughout the first two years of his term, he continued his patient attempts to settle the problems of the Tibetan frontiers, by arranging meetings with the Tibetan representatives. But he was not any more successful than the others that have tried to solve the same problem from 1890. A little impatient with the whole affair, the Viceroy dispatched the first of his two letters to the Dalai Lama on 11 August 1900.

The Viceroy's decision to obtain direct communication with the Dalai Lama was taken after every attempt to enter into negotiations with Tibetan authorities failed. Partly prompted by an early success he gained in visiting Afghanistan in 1894 by writing a letter covering seven large pages of vellum addressed to the Amir of Afghanistan when access into that kingdom was by no means easy the first letter to the Dalai Lama was taken by the British Officer stationed at Leh to Gartok in north-western Tibet. Six months later, the letter returned with its seal broken. No one had dared to forward it to the Dalai Lama.

But on 22nd October 1900, a short despatch was received by the British Foreign Office in London from the British Charge d'Affaires in St. Petersburg that on 30th September the Tzar Nicholas II received Lharampa Avgyan Dorjief, whom official column of the *Journal de Saint-Petersbourg*

described as "first *Tsanlt* (Metaphysic) Kambo (Khenpo) to the Dalai Lama of Tibet". The audience had taken place in the Livadia Palace, at the Black Sea resort of Yalta. Dorjjeff was delivering to the Tzar a letter from the Dalai Lama. Meanwhile, Lord Curzon was drafting his second letter to the Dalai Lama. If the first letter was polite, the second was less so. In it, the Viceroy clearly stated that if his attempts at negotiation "are treated with rudeness and indifference, my Government must reserve the right to take such steps as may seem to them necessary and proper —". Entrusted to a Bhutanese official Urgyen Kazi in June 1901 who was about to return to Lhasa with two elephants, two peacocks and a leopard for the Dalai Lama's zoo, the Viceroy was hopeful that his second letter will surely reach the hands of the Dalai Lama.

Though Dorjjeff had raised scant attention and only a suspicious curiosity in India and England at his first international appearance in the Great game, in the same month that Curzon wrote his second letter to the Dalai Lama the Buriat Mongolian was once again at the Tzar's court having made a secret transit of India on his way from Lhasa to St. Petersburg, in what the Russian press described as a "Extraordinary Mission of eight prominent Tibetan statesmen" whose aim was "strengthening of good relations between Russia and Tibet by establishing Mission". The Extraordinary Tibetan Mission led by Dorjjeff had the audience of both the Emperor and the Empress to whom they offered the gifts and a letter from the Dalai Lama. The same mission later met the Russian Foreign Minister Count Lamsdorf for whom the Dalai Lama had sent a letter. This Extraordinary Tibetan Mission sent by the Dalai Lama became a source of wonder and curiosity in the Russian Capital. Played up by the Russian press, it was to become the cause for grave consequences in the great game which either Dorjjeff or the Dalai Lama may ever have been imagined. The *Novoe Vremya* described this mission as a logical outcome of the favourable impressions created by Dorjjeff's first visit the previous year and the enhanced impression which Russian victories in Manchuria and northern China

has had on the Tibetan government. "Under the circumstances", the *Novoe Vremya* concluded, "a rapprochement with Russia must seem to the Dalai Lama the most natural step, as Russia is the only power able to counteract the intrigues of Great Britain, who has so long been endeavouring to obtain admission to Tibet, and only awaits an opportunity to force an entrance". Four months after the visit of the Extraordinary Tibetan Mission led by Dorjiew to the Russian capital, the second letter of Lord Curzon to the Dalai Lama returned unopened. The gates of Lhasa seemed determined to remain closed to Curzon's epistolary approach which five years ago had unlocked the gates of Kabul showering him with a meeting of the Amir of Afghanistan. But Lord Curzon was not ready to be offended and disappointed a second time. When Curzon reached India on the second last day of the year 1898, Tibet did not claim his immediate attention. But now, when his two letters to the Dalai Lama returned unopened while Dorjiew carried letter after letter to the Russian capital, "Tibet" in the words of Peter Fleming, the author of *Bayonets of Lhasa*, "became something about which that strange human being, George Nanthaniel Curzon, minded very much, without quite knowing why."

The Dalai Lama, after refusing the two letters of the British Viceroy, had indeed cast his eyes towards Russia. Though Russia was far, its power overlooking the whole of Asia and especially its connection with Mongolia rendered it in Tibet a prestigious power mightier than any other country in the world. Then there was Dorjiew, a Buriat by birth and a Russian by nationality. Having studied in Drepung monastery, Dorjiew attained to a very close and confidential position of the Dalai Lama. Being a *Geshe* (Doctor of Metaphysics) in the Tibetan Buddhist studies, Dorjiew's one privileged duty was to sprinkle water, scented with saffron flowers on walls, rooms, altar, books and a little on the person of the Dalai Lama, to whom Dorjiew enumerated the increasing influence of Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia and Russia and even the possibility of the Tsar himself adopting it. To a Dalai Lama who was always on the lookout for a chance to assert greater Tibetan autonomy, the person

and the power of the Tzar of Russia seemed a most welcome substitute for the suspicious and degenerated patron-priest relationship that existed with the Manchu Emperor. At a time when a mere charlatan like Rasputin was wallowing in the royal attention of the Russian court, the mysticism of Tibetan Buddhism could have claimed some attention of the Tzar. Dorjjeff's journey to St. Petersburg on behalf of the Dalai Lama was indeed arranged from Lhasa, by the Dalai Lama who felt drawn towards Mongolia and Russia in his struggle against Manchu China and British India. Count Lamsdorf, the Russian Foreign minister did try to clear British suspicion of Dorjjeff by declaring it "ridiculous and utterly unfounded" to charge him with any diplomatic or political mission. But to the British, the significance of Dorjjeff was not in who he was but in what he appeared to be. Though he disappeared from British view after December 1901, a year later on August 2, 1902, *China Times* published a summary of an agreement between Russia and Tibet, with the spectre of Dorjjeff's errand to and fro between Lhasa and St. Petersburg looming large over it.

In it, China agreed to relinquish her interest in Tibet to Russia who would establish Government Offices and control affairs in Tibet. One clause mentioned that Russia would abstain from introducing Christianity into Tibet and in the construction of railways and fortifications would avoid the destruction of temples and other sacred spots. Sir Ernest Satow, the British Minister in Peking, forwarded an extract of the secret treaty to London where it was considered with the seriousness which it deserved or so it seemed. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy in India, whose obsession to obstruct Russian expansionism in Asia was almost a boyhood phobia, wrote, "I am myself, a firm believer in the existence of a secret understanding, if not a secret treaty, between Russia and China about Tibet and, as I have said before, I regard it as our duty to frustrate their little game while there is yet time".

Lord Curzon's dogged determination to chase away the Russian spectre from Lhasa resulted in a preliminary British expedition led by Colonel Francis Younghusband in 1903.

Lhasa soon received the disturbing news that the British forces had arrived in Khamba Dzong to open trade and other border negotiations. The National Assembly instructed Dapon Tsarong and Losang Trinley, the two officers sent previously to the frontier to hold talks at the border without allowing the British troops to enter Tibetan land at all. Khamba Dzong was under the jurisdiction of the Tashi Lhunpo monastery. Therefore, both the Panchen Lama and the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo, at the instruction of the central Government tried to persuade the British troops to withdraw. But they were unsuccessful. As winter set in, the British withdrew to Sikkim.

At this interval, a series of emergency meetings took place between the Cabinet and the National Assembly. While Kashag preached prudence and peaceful methods to deal with the British expedition, the National Assembly dominated by the representatives of the three monasteries who were ignorant of British military might but had absolute faith in the power of their protective deities adamantly insisted that Tibet will fight to the last man. Such suspicious and anxious times of national crisis and panic relieves its tension by finding a scapegoat for sacrifice. And the National assembly now accused the Cabinet of being influenced by the pro-British Minister Paljor Dorjee Shatra. This was most unfortunate since Shatra was an extremely capable and intelligent Tibetan. But rumours soon began to spread that the Nechung Oracle has suspected a traitor in the Tibetan Cabinet. In a straight-forward approach, the Nechung Oracle was made to go into a trance right in front of the Dalai Lama and point out traitor or traitors then and there. Here the Oracle failed by not remaining in his trance long enough. Nevertheless, the four Cabinet Ministers Shatra, Sholkhang Dhondup Phuntsog, Horkhang Sonam Topgyal and the monk minister Changkyim Ngawang Khyenrab were arrested. The National Assembly at once formed a Commission to investigate the innocent ministers. However, Horkhang the most timid and inexperienced of the four committed a frightened suicide making the whole affair more controversial. The investigations commissioned by the

National Assembly accused Shatra of accepting British bribes during his term as the Tibetan representative in Darjeeling. The commission, as proof of this accusation, cited the reports which Shatra had submitted from Darjeeling imploring his government to develop closer contact with the British Government of India. Each Kalon was separately questioned on Shatra's relations with the British. The ministers unanimously upheld Shatra's innocence and honesty.

In his refutation of the accusations, Shatra pointed out that he submitted truthful reports out of loyalty and asked the National Assembly to study his suggestions on the future Tibetan policy and methods of negotiations with the British contained in his reports. He also stated that because he refused to collaborate with the British, they complained to the Dalai Lama asking for his replacement. And soon after the Dalai Lama replaced him with Kalon Bumthang. Shatra also revealed that he had a letter from the Nechung Oracle himself praising his work as the Tibetan representative in Darjeeling. Asking the National Assembly to confront him with those that have accused him of treachery, he once again cited that the Nechung Oracle congratulated him and commended him in front of the other members of the Cabinet on his return from Darjeeling. Finally he requested the National Assembly to prove him either a traitor or a patriot without leaving him in the vicious cycle of rumours and suspicion. It was clear that Shatra was innocent and had nothing to do with the British invasion. But he was the scapegoat on whom the National Assembly needed to blame the growing apprehensions of the British intrusion. And he was to remain in this painful position for a long time. While the National Assembly accused him of being pro-British, the British suspected him of being pro-Russian. His colleagues, despite their own innocence and able defense of Shatra, remained in prison for over a year. Four new cabinet ministers were appointed. They were Yuthok Phuntsog Palden, Sarchung Tseten Wangchuk, Tsarong Wangchuk Gyalpo and the monk Chamba Tenzin who formed the new Cabinet that would deal with Francis Younghusband and his military expedition advancing into Tibet once again.

At the close of 1903, Lhasa once again shook with the news of advancing British force. The crucial time they had to discuss means and methods of dealing with the British was wasted in accusing Shatra and his colleagues. In December, Colonel Francis Younghusband arrived at Nadong with five thousand Sikh and Gurkha troops armed with rifles, machine guns and artillery. The Tibetan soldiers and the untrained villagers called forth to defend their country and religion encamped at Chumik Shonko between Tuna and Guru. By January 1904, Younghusband had crossed the Dargla pass and entered Tuna. Tongsa Ponlop Urgyen Wangchuk and Kazi Urgyen of Bhutan arrived at Phari to mediate between the British and the Tibetan. After some fruitless negotiations, the British handed a letter to the Tibetans on March 30 informing in advance of their decision to march on to Gyantse the next day. The Tibetans verbally informed the British that they will be compelled to block their advance to Gyantse. But that night under the cover of darkness the British forces moved up from Tuna and secretly surrounded the Tibetan camp at Guru. The next morning, Dapon Lhading and Dapon Namseling with their escorts advanced half a mile to meet and discuss the situation with the British officers. Not knowing that their camp was surrounded, the two Dapons believed in the British promise of not loading their rifles if the Tibetans lay down their arms. In a matter of minutes, the British troops opened fire from every side and within a short time almost the entire Tibetan force was wiped out. About 600 to 700 were killed and wounded on the Tibetan side while seven sepoy were wounded on the British side. A few days later, the British advanced to Gyantse easily overcoming various Tibetan camps. On April 11, they reached Gyantse. Though the British insisted on meeting the Manchu Amban, the latter was denied transportation by the Tibetan authorities. At Gyantse, Younghusband declared his intention to deal directly with the Dalai Lama and began to chart his way towards Lhasa. Captain William O'Conner, a Tibetan speaking British Officer visited Tashi Lhunpo monastery whose abbots and officials developed friendly relations with

him. Some Tibetans did suspect that the attendant of Sengchen Lama who was punished by the Tibetan Government for helping Sarat Chandra Das was living in the British camp drafting their letters. Historically, it was not the first time that the Tibetans were experiencing a bitter defeat at the hands of the better equipped and superior British force. Way back in 1888, when the Tibetan authorities were trying to put into practise the theory of closed door policy which they had lately adopted for the defence of their country and religion, the Tibetan cabinet and National Assembly dispatched two Tibetan generals, Dapon Ngabo Tsering Palden and Dapon Surkhang Wangchen Norbu, with nine hundred troops under the overall command of the Cabinet Minister Lhalu Yeshe Norbu Wangchuk, to guard the border fortifications which the Tibetans had recently built to the growing suspicion of the British. Unfortunately, Changlochen, the Officer in charge of the local area was a restless character who began to march his small troops along the border without any regard for the consequences. Thuthob Namgyal (1860-1914) the then Sikkimese ruler had attempted his best to bring a truce between the Tibetan and the British. He also tried to explain what meagre chance the Tibetans had against the modern warfare methods of the British. And through this tireless Sikkimese ruler, the British warned the Tibetans that they would attack and drive out the Tibetans if the border fortifications and check post were not removed before March 15, 1888. Confident in the victory promised to them by their Oracle and encouraged by the various religious rites and rituals performed for their triumph against the British, the Tibetan Government refused to comply with the British warning and declared it perfectly legitimate to defend one's own territory. But Changlochen's restless march of his troops brought two thousand British troops accompanied by four canons to the border via Kalimpong. On March 21, 1888, the first clash of Tibetan army with modern equipment took place at Lungthur. If the Zulus of Africa in their defeat of British arms and morale render to primitive arms and human courage a place which history shall always honour, the first Tibetan

clash with the British arms at Lungthur was just the opposite. Utterly defeated by the British the remaining Tibetan soldiers were chased by the British as far as Dromo. General Surkhang who ran away with some of his troops found himself in Bhutan, having lost his way in the panic and chaos of the battle. The freak resistance of the Tibetan and their total defeat became the theme of a street song in Lhasa which conveyed the public opinion of the day:

Lhalu has come running back
Having lost his cannons
The post we laboured a lifetime to built
Was lost in the very dawn of morning
Ngabo pretends to *Ngar* (furious)
Surkhang has escaped by the *Sur* (corner)
Changchen is so *Changpo* (clever)
He ran his horse like wind.....

Therefore, the disastrous defeat which Tibetans suffered in 1888 despite the full backing of the Oracle and religious rituals should actually have hammered in a more rational approach to the British military invasion of Younghusband. But it was not to be. Even when the British force was nearing Gyantse, Kalon Chamba Tenzin was appointed as commander-in-chief and a defensive wall was built across Kharola pass. In a surprise and sudden British attack, over 300 Tibetans were killed and the new Tibetan commander-in-chief made a hasty retreat to Lhasa.

Staying in Gyantse for three months, Younghusband advanced to Lhasa on 14th July. Though Tibetan Government sent some ministers to negotiate and halt the British, Younghusband was determined to reach Lhasa and deal directly with the Dalai Lama. When the British forces were 35 miles from Lhasa, they started ferrying their arms and supplies across that Tsangpo river in their own boats.

In Lhasa, the Cabinet and National Assembly quickly convened and decided it wiser for the Dalai Lama to leave Lhasa for the time being as the British might force him to sign an agreement that may harm the interest of Tibet. Abruptly interrupting a three year meditation in which he

was engaged, the Dalai Lama appointed Gaden Tri Rinpoche Losang Gyaltzen Lamoshar as the Regent during his absence. Giving him the seal and careful instruction, the Dalai Lama told the Regent to release Shatra Paljor Dorjee and other ex-cabinet ministers still in prison. At dawn on July 30, 1940, the Dalai Lama, accompanied by a small escort left Lhasa and journeyed north. This was his first exile.

The British military expedition arrived outside Lhasa on 3rd August and camped there. Though the Cabinet and the National Assembly were unable to arrive at any consensus to deal with the British, the Regent Gaden Tri Rinpoche, who was an honest and forthright person, called on Younghusband without any ceremony and opened the door to negotiations. On September 7, 1904, the convention was signed witnessed by the Manchu Amban, Nepalese Representative and Tongsa Ponlop, the Bhutanese mediator. Accordingly, trade marts were set up at Gyantse and Gartok in addition to the one at Dromo.

With a weak Cabinet and National Assembly in Lhasa who were haunted by the punishment of Shatra and seemed afraid to take any bold decision in the absence of the Dalai Lama, the Manchu Amban saw his desired chance to create an avenue of Manchu influence which was almost vanishing from Tibetan politics. When Younghusband arrived with his mission, he was the first to jump on the British bandwagon. Borrowing some of Younghusbands' authority to increase his own prestige, the Manchu Amban Ya-t'ai set up proclamations in Tibet deposing the Dalai Lama. Such proclamations were either torn down by the Tibetans or else bespattered with manure. But the Manchu Amban tried to persuade the Panchen Lama to become the Regent of Tibet during the Dalai Lama's absence. Though Panchen Lama refused this offer it was an unkind precedent. The Manchus were to try the same trick later with much more success.

The 1904 convention was forced on the Tibetans. It forbid Tibet to have nothing to do with any foreign power. Its main terms were that the Tibetan Government agreed to the British protectorate over Sikkim and to promote trade between Tibet and India, and demanded an indemnity of

one and half million pounds sterling payable in seventy five annual installments. The spectre of Russian influence in Lhasa, which was the only compelling reason behind Lord Curzon's aggressive policy towards Tibet, was completely forgotten. Dorjiew, who was officially rumoured by the British to be in-charge of the Lhasa arsenal was nowhere to be seen. As a fitting end to his mysterious personality, it was officially reported to King Edward VII: "This man Dorjiew is now said to be devoting the whole of his attention to the minting of silver coins at the Lhasa arsenal —, and it may be enforced from his circumstances that he meditates flight from Lhasa before the arrival of the mission." In the confusion of their unnecessary military invasion of Tibet, chasing the ghost of Russian imperialism in Lhasa, the British Government severely criticised Lord Curzon and Younghusband for their aggressive Tibetan policy. The indemnity was considerably reduced. Curzon resigned the Viceroyalty amidst controversy and ill feeling in 1905. He died in 1925. Younghusband, an idealist, became increasingly spiritual in his later years. He worked tirelessly for reconciliation between Hindus, Christians, Buddhists and Muslims. He died in Dorset in 1942. On his coffin was placed an image of Buddha which Gaden Tri Rinpoche had given him on the morning he left Lhasa. A friend had testified that he treasured that little image more than all his earthly possessions.

The 13th Dalai Lama, after his escape from the British clutch, had decided at Radreng monastery to leave for Mongolia with Dorjiew and accordingly informed the Regent. After an arduous travel of three months, the Dalai Lama reached outer Mongolia. Received by the brother and two ministers of Bogda Lama, 8th Khalkha Jetsun Dampa Ngawang Losang Chokyi Nyima Tenzin Wangchuk (1870-1924) — the ruler of outer Mongolia — the Dalai Lama reached Urga (Ulan Bator) after twenty seven days. The Bogdo Lama was soon to suffer both in revenue and reputation from the presence of the Dalai Lama since the Mongolian faithfuls flocked to the Dalai Lama. Unfortunately for the Mongolian Lama, the Dalai Lama objected to his drinking wine and

smoking besides being married which was forbidden in the Vinaya rule which the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism practised.

At Urga, Mr. Pokotiloff, the new Russian minister to China arrived to call upon the Dalai Lama immediately, and presented two packages of presents from the Tzar. Leading Russians in St. Petersburg, close to the Tzar attached much significance to these courtesies shown to the Dalai Lama hoping that such acts would endear Russia to the whole Buddhist world over which the Dalai Lama's influence was great.

After staying in Urga for over a year, the Dalai Lama considered moving towards China as the growing tension in eastern Tibet caused by the Manchu oppression was a source of anxiety for him. By that time, the strained relation between him and the Bogda Lama had also been smoothed out by the reconciling efforts of the Mongolian ministers.

Around September 1906, the Dalai Lama was in the Kokonor region visiting the Kubum monastery — the birth place of Je Tsong Khapa. At his back, the Manchu government had stated that they had no intention of allowing the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet. But to him, they sent a cordial invitation to visit China. Though the Dalai Lama had also received an appeal from his government to return to Tibet, the Chinese oppression in Eastern Tibet and the British presence in Tibet after the 1904 convention made him to decide to visit China and look towards Russia for some guarantee of political help and protections. Encouraged by a telegraph from the Russian Tzar which said "A large number of my subjects who are Buddhists had the happiness of being able to pay homage to their great High Priest during his visit to Northern Mongolia, which borders on the Russian Empire. And I rejoice that my subjects have had the opportunity of deriving benefit from your solitary spiritual influence, I beg you to accept the expression of my sincere thanks and my regards". The Dalai Lama once again sent Dorjjeff to St. Petersburg to ask the Tzar for protection

from the "dangers which threaten my life, if I return to Lhasa as is my intention and duty."

From Mongolia, the Dalai Lama journeyed towards Peking. Reaching Sianfu towards the end of 1907 the Chinese officials including the Governors, came outside the city walls to receive him. Here he received a further request from the Tibetan government to return to Lhasa. In reply, he decreed that the Shatra Paljor Dorjee, the scapegoat of 1903, should be reappointed to the cabinet. But Shatra refused to take up the post if his two colleagues Sholkhang and Changkhyim were not reinstated. After serious discussions, all three were appointed ministers and carried on the administration with the Regent. But the political implication of the British military expedition to Lhasa were now being felt in a very gruesome manner and sight in eastern Tibet. The Younghusband's military mission to Lhasa compelling the Tibetans to sign a convention on British terms made it crystal clear to the Manchu court that they had lost the little control they exercised in central Tibet. Their borders with Tibet looked vulnerable. Anxious and panic stricken Manchu and Chinese generals reasoned that if British military expedition could penetrate into central Tibet, they could reach China via Kham. For long the south-west border of China was safe from any Western power. Now it was no longer so. The lack of Manchu control over Tibet was obvious and immediate steps to establish Manchu control in Tibet seemed the need of the hour. One man alone seemed destined to fulfill this role of bringing Kham and with it the neighbouring regions of Tibet under Chinese political control. He was Chao Erh-feng. He was not a Manchu. He was a Han Chinese. As the Magistrate of the Yung-ning district in Szchewan, he distinguished himself by personally leading his troops in suppressing factional fighting between Chinese secret societies. After executing more than a hundred offenders, the rebellion subsided. Chao Erh-feng was then made Chieu-Ch'an Magistrate with his headquarter in Ya-an near the border of Kham.

In 1905, Chao Erh-feng, whom both Chinese and Tibetan history was to call "Butcher Chao" suddenly appeared in

Ba. Earlier that year the Manchu Amban Feng-Chien, on his way to Lhasa, prolonged his stay in Ba to recruit men for his army. Staying with his whole retinue and army at the expense of the Ba Chode monastery, the Amban observed that it will be useful if half of the large number of local monks could be recruited into the army or turned into farmers. The indignant monks took it as a deliberate insult to their religious sentiments and at once murdered the Amban and his escort. As a result, a Chinese General Ma Ti-T'ai from Szchewan executed 322 monks suspected of having a hand in the Amban's murder. A part of the monastery was put to the torch and the properties of the monastery confiscated after which the Chinese General returned to Szchewan.

And now the dark shadow of Chao Erh-Feng had already appeared on the doorstep of Ba Chode monastery with a force of 2,000 foreign drilled troops, equipped with rifles of German makes and four field guns to re-investigate the old case. This was a mere excuse to exert Chinese control over Kham. Unknowingly, the monks protested. Four monks were swiftly executed and the monastery heavily fined. Appalled by this unjust step, the monks of Lithang monastery screamed in support of the Chode monastery of Ba who had already paid dearly for their murder of the Manchu Amban. Chao Erh-feng, in his characteristic way of driving home a singularly grim point of view, had the two Tibetan Government representatives at Lithang summoned to confirm whether Lithang monks were indeed grieved at his injustice. When they replied so both were executed. The Lithang monks were silenced by that swift and merciless execution. But nearby, Chating was making all out preparations to avenge the injustice of Chao Erh-feng. Informed of their move to assist the monks of Ba, Chao Erh-feng sent his troops to Chating where within a short time, one thousand two hundred and ten monks and laymen alike were executed.

In June 1906, four head monks of Gongkar Namling monastery came to surrender. He had them all beheaded on the spot. Rest of the monks from the monastery ran away. Two old monks and three laymen guarding the mon-

astery were killed. After this, he beheaded 48 monks of Yangteng monastery. Chao Erh-feng, then widely infamous as "Butcher Chao" destroyed many more temple and villages by setting them to fire and massacred hundreds of monks and laymen without any provocation. He looted the gold, silver and rare bronze and copper offering vessels and made them into bullets and small coins. And as a vandalistic touch to his merciless killing he took the most sacriligious step of making paper shoe-soles from the sacred leaves of holy Buddhist scriptures for his soldiers. The terror of Chao Erh-feng in Kham reached far and wide. But despite protesting to the Amban and the Manchu court on his misdeeds, there was nothing the Tibetan Government could do as the Dalai Lama was still in China on the last leg of his first exile, waiting for a ray of hope to trickle from Russia to ease the critical political predicament he was in.

Unknown to the Dalai Lama, the Tzar was in a worse political predicament from which there seemed little hope of salvation. Rasputin, with his evil influence in the court, tolerated for his magical cure of prince Alexei's incurable illness, was reducing the administration into shambles. The numerous wars in which Russia engaged itself was devastating the country. The Russian socialists under Lenin and Trosky had by 1903, divided themselves into the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, intensifying their clandestine opposition against the Tzar. And, on 9 January 1905, the short sighted Tzarist guards were to kindle the first spark of the Russian revolution by mercilessly and indiscriminately massacring the peaceful and almost timid procession of workers led by priest Gapon marching towards the Winter Palace to submit a petition to the Tzar. To stress the faithful character of the demonstration, the workers carried many church icons and portraits of the Tzar. It was not a demonstration organised by the socialists in angry protest against Tzardom. It was a demonstration of faith of the workers — who believed that bad advisors had kept the true plight of the people from the Tzar. But the Tzarist guards fired volleys into the crowd, which in a sense, became the signal of the revolution. Strikes upon strikes spread across Russia.

Revolutionaries and terrorists sprang up to assassinate leaders of the Tzarist court and spread the tenets of socialism which finally sounded the death knell of Tzardom in October 1917.

By August 1907, the Dalai Lama's hope of political assistance from Russia were to be dashed to the grounds as the news of Anglo-Russian convention regarding Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet was brought to light. In this convention Russia agreed to leave Tibetan politics alone with only a faint interest in the "maintenance of the status quo in the external relations of Tibet." Though solely disappointed by this Russian move, the Dalai Lama, through his envoy continued to maintain relations with the Russian Legation which he judged might serve some purpose in his attempt to declare the independent position of Tibet. Despite the set-back contained in the Anglo-Russian convention, the Dalai Lama lost none of his diplomatic ability and shrewdness. If the Russians are far to reach, he was ready to shake the near hands of British India though their forces led by Younghusband had driven him out of Lhasa only a few years earlier.

By September 27, 1908, the Dalai Lama was in Peking. Received at the railway station by the Mayor of Peking and Home and Foreign affairs ministers with great ceremony, the Dalai Lama stayed at the recently renovated Yellow Palace originally built for the Great Fifth Dalai Lama. At Peking, the Dalai Lama met the American minister to China, William W. Rockhill, a scholarly man who had been interested in Tibet from his college days. Beside the American Rockhill, the Dalai Lama met the Japanese Ambassador, Gonsuke Haya, through the Japanese Buddhist priest Sonya Otani. The Japanese military attache, Masanoni Fufushima, also had an audience with the Dalai Lama during which he explained the military training of the Japanese soldiers which greatly interested the Dalai Lama, always anxious of the defence of his country with a modern military system. In 1913, the Dalai Lama was to experiment such military systems, one part of which was trained by a Japanese military expert. With Russia receding into the background, the

pragmatic Dalai Lama looked towards the British. In Peking he met Sir John Jordan, the British Minister to China, who was told that Dalai Lama now desires friendlier relations with the British.

After the honourable receptions in September came the real struggle. The Dalai Lama was to be received by the emperor on October 6th. The official arrangement from the Manchu side was for the emperor to stand and the Dalai Lama to ko-tow meaning kneel and touch the ground with his forehead. But to the Dalai Lama, this was totally unacceptable. So the meeting was postponed. And for eight days the Tibetans argued citing the example of the 5th Dalai Lama when the emperor came down from the throne and walked eighteen yards to receive him. But behind the 5th Dalai Lama stood the solid military might of the Mongols. Now Mongolia, as well as Tibet, was weaker in martial strength. Still the Tibetans argued till the meeting was made more acceptable. The empress Dowager and the Emperor were to receive the Dalai Lama separately. And the Dalai Lama was required to touch the ground slightly for a few second when meeting the standing emperor.

Meanwhile in Kham, Chao Erh-feng was declaring that the area from Tachienlu (Dartsedo) westward to Kongo Gyamda be annexed as a new province of China. Reinforced with troops from Szchewan, he was declaring in 1908 that since the Tibetans had established contacts with British, he would establish a local government at Chamdo and then advance to Lhasa.

At the Manchu court, ruled by the Empress Dowager who had drugged her son — the Emperor from being influenced by progressive and reform loving ministers — the Dalai Lama was to face further political problems. Knowing well that Younghusband's military capture of Lhasa in 1904 has cast the Dalai Lama to their mercy, the Manchu Government expressed their wish to annex Tibet outright, bringing it into the province of China and further added the phrase "The Sincerely Obedient" into the title of the Dalai Lama. But the Tibetans withstood all such measures and pointed out that China's relation with Tibet had always

been one of the religious patronage and mutual help. The Dalai Lama also complained both to the Empress Dowager and the Foreign Office that Chinese officers were oppressing Tibetans in Kham levying undue taxes on the local inhabitants and called for the withdrawal of such troops from Kham. The Empress Dowager, the real finger behind the throne, assured that the former relationship of religious patronage will not be altered. But the Foreign Office was disturbed and annoyed with the forthright attitude of the Dalai Lama insisting on purely religious relationship. They finally agreed to curb the excesses of the Chinese troops pillaging and looting the Tibetan villages and monasteries in Kham. But due to the uncompromising stand of the Dalai Lama, no solid agreement was drawn up. The Dalai Lama further strengthened his contacts with American, British, and the Russian representatives. Accordingly, Sir John Jordan, the British Minister, accompanied by his full staff of twelve persons, visited the Dalai Lama at the Yellow Palace. To Sir John Jordan, the Dalai Lama said "some time ago events occurred which were not of my creating, they belong to the past and it is my sincere desire that peace and friendship should exist between the two neighbouring countries".

Though harsh in political temperament towards Tibet, the Dalai Lama saw that the Manchu dynasty was on its final lap of decay and downfall. As a matter of fact, it had been in full decline for many years. And that decline was symptomatic of the decay of Manchu China as a power. Her own sovereignty was invaded at home by the political and commercial interest of the Western powers. The numerous wars and uprisings was mounting economic distress in every countryside. From the failure of the Manchu Empire to defend itself against the British in the Opium war to the devastations caused by the T'ai P'ing rebellion, the first truly great peasant uprising inspired by an esoteric creed against oppression and corruption, the weakness of China as a power was clearly established. As if these were not enough, a series of disastrous foreign wars were to further ruin the declining reputation of the Empire. The Anglo-French attack took Peking in 1860. The 1884 war with

France cost China her suzerainty over Indo-China. And, the final war with Japan in 1895 ended China's control over Korea and Formosa. To partially restore the confidence of the people in the Empire and regain the lost prestige, the Emperor Kuang Hsu influenced by the progressive elements of the court introduced a sudden wave of reforms in a last attempt to modernise the empire as did the Japanese restoration movement. Then came on the Manchu stage the forceful hand of a woman of few scruples, the Empress Dowager Tz'u Hsi who, with the help of the conservative elements arrested the downfall of the empire by totally dominating the decadent court and paralysing every inclination of reform. She had actually dethroned the emperor by keeping him virtually a prisoner in the Summer Palace — addicted to opium and his concubines. In her attempt to free the empire from the clutch of the western powers, the Empress Dowager allowed in 1900, the peasant rising — called the Boxer Rebellion — to indulge in large scale massacres of foreign missionaries and numerous attacks upon the legation quarters in Peking. This did not endear the Empress or the empire to the western powers. To the Dalai Lama and Tibet, the Manchu dynasty had always been harsh. But now the Empress Dowager herself was nearing the end of her days. Her dynasty was dying. But as Keren-sky's democratic government insisted upon its sovereignty over Finland in 1917 while its sovereignty over Russia itself was being reduced to a hollow pretence by Lenin, the Manchu court was working out and proclaiming wide its sovereignty over Tibet even while the death of the Empress Dowager and the forces of Sun-yat-Sen's ideology were to crumble the Imperial power bringing all to ruin. But a day before the last breath of the Empress, the Emperor dies, believed to have been poisoned by the Empress who wanted his policy of reforms to fade away with her. The Dalai Lama performed the appropriate religious rites for the funeral of the deceased Empress Dowager and the Emperor Kuang-Hsu. This cordial attitude of the Dalai Lama who had otherwise taken an uncompromising stand against the political desires of the Manchu court regarding Tibet, gratified the Govern-

ment of China. The Regent profusely thanked the Dalai Lama with numerous gifts. A young cousin of the late emperor was enthroned under the title of Hsuan T'uang. The Dalai Lama witnessed the enthronement ceremony of the young Hsuan T'uang whom fate had destined to be the last Manchu emperor. Those were the last days of the Dalai Lama in China. In historical retrospect, it was the Young-husband mission that shook both the Tibetan government and Manchu court. While the Dalai Lama was driven into exile encountering various experiences that enriched his political vision, the Manchus were alerted to their ambition of reinforcing their control over Tibet and invited the Dalai Lama to Peking hoping to force him, while in exile in their capital, to submit to the Dragon Throne as a subordinate and accept such changes in the government of Tibet that will increase the Manchu influence in Tibet. But the Dalai Lama proved both shrewd and uncompromising to the Manchus. Though they modified his title to "the Sincerely Obedient", the Dalai Lama made it clear that the relationship between Tibet and China was that of patron-priest and nothing else. In his *Last Political Testament*, the Dalai Lama referring to his visit to China said: "I went to China because the Great Fifth Dalai Lama and the Manchu emperor had made an agreement to help each other in the manner that a priest and a layman help each other."

On 21st October 1908, the Dalai Lama finally left Peking for Tibet. He was escorted to the railway station by a number of Manchu and Mongolian princes and other nobles, all of whom, as a sign of respect marched on foot. Arriving at Nagchuka in the early parts of 1909, the Dalai Lama was received by the Panchen Lama, the representatives of the Regent Gaden Tri Rinpoche and the Manchu Ambans. His three ministers met him at Phurbu Chok. He promoted all three ministers to Prime Ministers.

Severely shocked by the British capture of Lhasa in 1904 which starkly revealed the hollow hold of China over Tibet, the Manchu court was impatient to reassert their control. For this purpose, Chao Erh-feng was butchering Kham with the connivance of the Empire; the Amban was adamantly

refusing to stop him and was moreover increasing the strength of his own garrison with a reinforcement of six thousand troops. In 1910 the Tibetan government received information that a very large Chinese force was advancing on Lhasa to guard the trade marts guaranteed under the Anglo-Chinese Trade Regulations signed in April 1908 in Calcutta. As the Dalai Lama was still on his way to Lhasa taking time to strengthen the slack disciplines of Kumbum and other monasteries on his way, an anxious Tibetan Government sent Khenchung Jampa Chosang and his attendants to stop the advance of the Chinese army wherever possible. The Chinese army had already crossed Chamdo and met the Tibetan representatives at Tar Dzong. Without a single word of negotiations, the Tibetans were arrested and forced to march on foot for 10 to 15 miles everyday. As the Chinese did not carry any provisions they looted each and every village on the way. The day they reached Kongpo Gyamda, Khenchung Jampa Chosang and his Tibetan attendants were beheaded. Their message was clear. They did not intend to police any trade marts. They meant to capture Lhasa to reassert their lost control over Tibet.

In December 1909, the Dalai Lama reached Lhasa and after two days in Lhasa itself, the Dalai Lama entered the Potala after a 5 years absence. In defiance of the Manchu modification of his title, the people of Tibet now presented a new seal to the Dalai Lama on which was inscribed: "By the prophecy of Lord Buddha, the Dalai Lama is the holder of the Buddhist faith on the face of this earth". Great significance was attached to this seal since it was in defiance of the Manchu domination declaring the Tibetan will for independence and self-determination. To further mark the occasion new silver coins marked with *Gaden Phodrang* — the name of the Tibetan government was issued by the Dalai Lama and released into circulation. A foreign Affairs Ministry was established headed by Teji Phunkhang and Khenchung Gyaltzen Phuntsok. These courageous acts of defiance and declaration of Tibetan independence by the Dalai Lama under the approaching shadow of large Chinese

force to reassert their control over Tibet was in essence the characteristic of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama whose sole aim was to make Tibet an independent nation that need not bow down to any other nations. But his stay in Lhasa was to be short. A second exile was in front of him. As a prelude to this, there appeared in Lhasa for the first time a newspaper published by the Chinese in Tibetan. One of the issues said: "Do not be afraid of Amban Chao and his army. They will not harm Tibetans, but other people. If you recollect, you will remember how ashamed you felt when the foreign soldiers arrived in Lhasa and oppressed you with much tyranny. We must all be strong for this purpose, otherwise our religion will be destroyed."

As the advance of the Chinese army that had looted numerous villages and monasteries and murdered the Tibetan representatives drew near to Lhasa, representatives of the Tibetan National Assembly and the Cabinet were asked by the Dalai Lama to meet and detain the Chinese army. Fearing immediate executions, the Tibetan representatives took with them the Nepalese representative and leader of the Tibetan muslims. After negotiations, the deputy Amban accompanied by the Nepalese representative came to the Dalai Lama and explained that the Chinese army will be dispersed to police the trade marts and will not interfere with the political and religious affairs. As a guarantee of this, the deputy Amban brought a letter of assurance the next day and said that the Chinese army will not interfere in the "religious affairs of the Dalai Lama". The Dalai Lama was back in his capital for only two months now. Already, the preparation of the *Great Monlam Festival*, when the largest number of Tibetans from every corner of the country gather in Lhasa was bustling the usually quiet city. But the growing anxiety of the advancing Chinese army who had reached a short distance from Lhasa added to the tension. On 3rd January 1910, the advance unit of the Chinese army reached the banks of Kyichu river where the Manchu Amban was waiting for them. That very afternoon they burst into Lhasa. They randomly fired in the city, wounding and killing a number of policemen and

people. They then fired on the central cathedral (Jokhang) and attacked some officials on their way to the temple. One was Theji Phunkhang Tashi Dorjee, head of Tibetan Foreign Bureau and organiser of the *Monlam Chenmo*. Bullets fired at him were repulsed by his anti-metal amulet but his horse was killed. He was himself arrested and physically assaulted by the Chinese soldiers who took him to the Amban's residence. His assistant, Tsedron Jamyang Gyaltzen and a servant were killed. As if to make their intentions clear, the whole Chinese soldiers fired in unison towards the direction of the Potala where the Dalai Lama was having a hurried last minute meeting with his ministers.

Disgusted by the sacriligious behaviour of the Chinese soldiers, Tibetans were secretly organising a do or die fight against them. But the Dalai Lama, to save innocent lives that will be lost in such mob attacks, advised the Tibetans to tolerate the Chinese soldiers until a peaceful solution is found by dealing directly with Peking. Meanwhile, Tsomonling Hothogthu Ngawang Losang Tenzin was appointed the new Regent with Neushar Khenchung Khyenrab Phuntsok as his assistant. Instructing them to take over his political responsibilities, the Dalai Lama told them that he will leave for Dromo near the Sikkimese border. That very night, the Dalai Lama accompanied by his three Prime Ministers Shatra, Sholkhang, Changkhyim and a host of other ministers and his medical adviser escaped Lhasa by crossing over Ramagang river. With 30 body guards, the Dalai Lama and his ministers went westward in the direction of Chaksam.

As the morning dawned over tension ridden Lhasa occupied by the Chinese troops, the Tibetans were greatly relieved to learn that the Dalai Lama had escaped the Chinese clutch the previous night. At Yamon, the Amban was furious. Immediately after learning that the Dalai Lama had neatly escaped his net, the Amban solicited volunteers that will bring back the head of the Dalai Lama. A Chinese officer named Pawa Thontang and a Chinese Tibetan named Gyalgodong gi Thebdruk of Ramochi at once volunteered to capture the Dalai Lama dead or alive. With a force of 300 well equipped and trained Chinese troops, the

two volunteers rode on a hot pursuit of the Dalai Lama. But they were to be disappointed. At Chaksam the Dalai Lama heard that the Chinese persuers had arrived at Chushul. Without losing any time, the Dalai Lama and his retinue rode towards Samdhing monastery in Yamdrok. It was February. Twelve thousand feet above the sea-level, the full blast of the severe Tibetan winter was unleashed upon them. But the Dalai Lama rode as no Dalai Lama had, knowing well that the future of Tibet was at stake.

The two notorious Chinese volunteers with their hand picked troops arrived at Chaksam early next morning. But waiting for them at Chaksam was Chensel Namgang, soon to be well-known as Tsarong Dazang Dadul, with a host of untrained and poorly armed Tibetans. For two days, Chensel Namgang and his volunteers fought a courageous guerilla battle in which about seventy Chinese were wounded and two Tibetans killed. These two crucial days of fighting paralysed the Chinese persuers for the time being. The surviving Tibetan armies dispersed into the recesses of the mountains while Chensel Namgang rode fast to catch up with the Dalai Lama.

At Samdhing, the Dalai Lama was received with reverence by Dorje Phagmo, one of the highest female incarnations of Tibet. From here, the Dalai Lama informed Basil Gould, the British Trade Agent at Gyantse that if necessary, the Dalai Lama would seek political asylum in British India. Avoiding Gyantse itself which contained a strong Chinese garrison, the Dalai Lama took a mountainous track which enabled them to reach Cha-tsa monastery. Crossing the plains of Jomolhari mountain was the worst journey of all. Thirty mile long and fifteen thousand feet above sea-level, snow fell heavily and the icy wind pierced them constantly like thorns. Reaching Phari from Chatse, the Dalai Lama was met by Mr. Rosemeyer, a quiet and efficient British Officer in-charge of the telegraph lines in Tibet and Sikkim who lived his lonely life in close association with Tibetans. This was the Dalai Lama's first meeting with an official of the Government of India. Out of his own initiative, Mr. Rosemeyer opened the facilities of his Dak Bungalow for the

Dalai Lama who felt safer to spend the night there. At Phari he was visited by the commander of a small Chinese garrison at Dromo who requested him not to cross over into India. Replying that he will consider it when he reached Dromo, the Dalai Lama rode on. Now the Dalai Lama was accompanied by almost the whole population of Phari and Dromo, equipped with such antiquated weapons as they could lay their hands on. A section of these voluntary bodyguards ran in front while the others flanked the Dalai Lama and his retinue from right, left and the rear. Disturbing news of the Chinese persuers who were now in Phari reached the Dalai Lama while the small Chinese garrison at Chor-ten Karpo in Dromo was also showing signs of resisting the escape of the Dalai Lama. But the Phari and Dromo volunteers literally bullied the Chinese garrison by handing them a letter which warned the Chinese not even to peep out of their doors and windows the day Dalai Lama passed through or else the whole Chinese population in the area will be wiped out. This threat cowed down the Chinese and without further interference from the troops at Chorten Karpo, the Dalai Lama with a large collection of bodyguards, passed through the gates of Dromo where David MacDonald, the British Trade Agent, welcomed him. MacDonald had been to Lhasa with the Younghusband mission in 1904. He spoke and wrote Tibetan extremely well. The Dalai Lama spent the night at his residence. But the vehemence of the persuing Chinese soldiers disturbed him. As such, he had to forsake his former plan of forming a provisional government at Dromo to deal with Peking and decide on a fresh plan of escaping into India to reorganise his struggle for an independent Tibet. Leaving a letter with David MacDonald to be forwarded to the Government of India, the Dalai Lama left the very next day. Riding up and over Dze-lep la pass, the Dalai Lama reached Nadong — a bleak and lonely post manned by two ex-British soldiers Seargants Luff and Humphreys who marched off with the Dalai Lama for the first three mile the next morning with bayonets fixed to their two empty rifles. Three miles from Nadong, the hard track descended suddenly into the heart

of Sikkim with the Chinese persuaders far away. The Dalai Lama was in British India on his second exile.

Received in Sikkim by Raja Kazi Ugyen of Bhutan, the Dalai Lama journeyed to Kalimpong where the whole town turned out to receive his blessings. From Kalimpong, the Dalai Lama and his party went to Darjeeling — the summer capital of Bengal. The Dalai Lama was 34 years old when Charles Bell — the British Liaison Officer between the Tibetan and Indian Government met him. To Charles Bell, the Dalai Lama spoke directly as the former spoke and wrote Tibetan very well. The Dalai Lama told him: "I have come to India to ask the help of the British Government against the Chinese. Unless they intervene, China will occupy Tibet and oppress it, she will destroy the Buddhist religion there and the Tibetan government and will govern the country through Chinese officials. Eventually her power will be extended into the states on the border between Tibet and India. There are already 2000 Chinese troops in Lhasa and its neighbourhoods, others are following, and so large a number of troops is not needed to garrison Tibet alone."

From Darjeeling itself, the Dalai Lama sent several communications to Peking asking the Manchu government to withdraw the Chinese troops from Tibet. But these were ignored. Instead the Manchu released reports that the Dalai Lama has been deposed and his successor was being chosen by lottery. The Amban in Lhasa was busy circulating similar Manchu declaration. The Dalai Lama then saw the futility of dealing with the Manchus directly.

The British Viceroy Lord Minto invited his unusual guest who had descended from the Himalayan heights as a political refugee to Calcutta. Travelling by the little mountain railway of Darjeeling, the Dalai Lama, on his arrival at Calcutta station was received in vice-regal carriages to Hastings House, where usually visiting Indian princes were entertained as the guest of the Government. At his arrival, the fort fired a salute of seventeen guns. On the morning of 14th March 1910, His Holiness formally called on the Viceroy. That very afternoon, the Dalai Lama returned to the Government House to explain the Tibetan political situation. The Dalai Lama asked Lord

Minto for British intervention for the withdrawal of the Chinese troops from Tibet making it clear that he will neither return to Tibet nor trust the written assurance of the Chinese as they had completely violated the promises which the Empress Dowager made to him. The Dalai Lama expressed his strong desire to attain the position of the 5th Dalai Lama who was an independent sovereign. But the Viceroy had already received orders from Whitehall to observe strict neutrality as far as the Tibetan situation was concerned. While the Dalai Lama was making almost an impossible attempt to salvage the political fate of Tibet by consistently pressurising the British to grant some solid political favours, the Chinese were creating havoc in Lhasa. The Tibetan police was replaced by Chinese. The Lhasa armoury and magazines were emptied. The Tibetan mint and ammunition factory were seized. At Nagchuka, the Chinese stopped and confiscated the convoy of Dalai Lama's personal belongings still on the way from China. The Potala and Norbu Lingka palaces as well as the vast government treasury were thoroughly cleaned by the troops. The estates and the properties of those Ministers that had escaped with the Dalai Lama were constantly pillaged.

In the Tibetan administrative set up, the Chinese either dismissed or disqualified almost all the ministers appointed by the Dalai Lama or the Regent Tri Rinpoche. Kalon Tsarong was the only minister of the Dalai Lama's cabinet whom the Chinese retained. The new ministers appointed by the Chinese were Tenzin Chodak, Rampa, and Langthong. The assistant of the Regent Khyenrab Phuntsok Neushar was condemned to death. But on the repeated appeals of the Regent, he was exiled to Dartsedo. But the unkindest cut of all was the restoration of the properties and estates to the family of Demo Tulku of Tengyeling monastery — the ex-Regent who was found guilty of conspiring to assassinate the young Dalai Lama in 1899 and was imprisoned for life thereafter. In this and other political moves of the Chinese, the internal intrigue and mistrust of Tibetan politics was greatly to their advantage.

The Chinese soldiers plastered the Lhasa wall with dec-

larations deposing the Dalai Lama. The Tibetans either defaced these posters with cow dung or else removed them. More than anything else, the Chinese declaration deposing the Dalai Lama estranged the relationship between the Tibetans and Chinese. Neither the monasteries with the exception of Tengyeling nor the government officials would willingly cooperate with the Chinese dictatorship at Lhasa. They sent memorandum after memorandum to withdraw the declaration. In many parts of eastern and southern Tibet, Chinese nationals were frequently attacked by indignant Tibetans. As the Dalai Lama was now in exile in Darjeeling, many Tibetan districts started sending their revenue directly to Darjeeling depriving the Chinese of a vital source of income and provisions. Soon the Chinese military authorities put up check posts at the borders who searched all travellers travelling to and from India making it extremely difficult for the Tibetan ministers in Lhasa to communicate with the Dalai Lama as their letters were always confiscated.

Throughout the first year of his exile and during the greater part of 1911, the political problems for the Dalai Lama were never ending. And to add to the frustration, he received no committment for any help from British or the Nepalese governmets to both of whom he appealed for help. Then the Dalai Lama appealed directly to the Russian Tzar, the latter replied through the British Government as outlined in the Anglo-Russian convention of 1907 by which Russia recognised Great Britain's special interest in Tibet. The Tzar's reply was friendly but non-committal. As the Dalai Lama was alone in this whirlpool of political strife, he realised that Tibetans alone can free Tibet. The Chinese Government, realising that their policy of deposing the Dalai Lama was miscalculated and unacceptable to the Tibetans, instructed the Manchu Amban to send a Chinese representative Lo Ti-T'ai to Darjeeling to request the Dalai Lama to return to Lhasa with all his titles restored. In reply, the Dalai Lama wrote a detailed letter both in Manchu and Tibetan, narrating the history of Chinese deceit and treachery from the day he returned to Lhasa till his escape into India. Towards the end of the letter, the Dalai Lama declared ". . . . it is not possible

for China and Tibet to have the same relationship as before. In order for us to negotiate, a third party is necessary. Therefore, we should both request the British Government to act as intermediary. Our future policy will be based on the outcome of discussions between ourselves, the Chinese and the British". That winter, the Dalai Lama and his retinue toured the Buddhist pilgrim places in India. While the Dalai Lama was in exile in India, the Panchen Lama Chokyi Nyima came to Lhasa in January 1911. This provoked unkind looks from the Lhasa Tibetans. But the Panchen Lama, prompted by his attendants and the scheming Amban, first stayed in the Jokhang temple and then shifted to the summer palace of the Dalai Lama—the Norbu Lingkha. This enraged the Tibetans. The Lhasa Tibetans clearly felt that the Panchen Lama was trying to steal the power and prestige of the Dalai Lama. But this remained unfulfilled as the first sparks of the secret Tibetan resistance surfaced in Lhasa. What most hurt and angered the common Tibetans was the fact that the Panchen Lama, either by compulsion or design, was taking the same unpopular step for the second time. When the Dalai Lama was on his first exile in Mongolia in 1904 following British invasion, the Panchen Lama was in Calcutta as an honoured guest of the British. Both these acts of political intrigue, engineered by the Tashi Lhunpo officials who always remained suspicious of the Lhasa officials, created a gulf of differences that none succeeded in bridging.

While Lhasa seemed to be under the complete control of the Manchu Amban, events in China itself were far from favourable to the Manchu dynasty. On October 1911, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, a true Chinese patriot overthrew the last shackles of the decadent Manchu empire. A section of the Chinese soldiers in Lhasa who belonged to Ko-lao-hue, a revolutionary secret society, rejoiced in the news of the downfall of the Manchu and triumph of the Nationalists. At once, they attacked the Amban's residence who had earlier executed their leader which led to the surrender of a Chinese colonel and three other officers to the Tibetan side. The helpless Amban escaped towards Drepung monastery but was caught and taken as a hostage towards Shigatse. The

Manchu commander Chung-yin secured the release of the Amban, the rebel Chinese soldiers asked all the Chinese soldiers in the outlying districts of Tibet to gather at Lhasa for their long march home to China. The returning Chinese soldiers caused immesurable misery to the Tibetan villages and towns by pillaging and looting them. Even in China and across the borders, the chaos of the Manchu downfall was written large. Chao Erh-feng, the Chinese adventurer who butchered countless monks and other Tibetans had earned further hatred and blame for the immense number of people killed in the uprising resulting from the nationalisation of the Szechwan — Hankow railroad. As soon as the news of the Nationalist revolution in China reached Chao Erh-feng, he returned to Szechwan from Chamdo. But his troops rebelled and he was left at the mercy of the chaotic forces without any authority. He was captured by the self styled military Governor of Szechwan, Yin-Ch'ang-heng and taken to the provincial examination hall where he was executed in the same manner in which he had executed thousands that were at his mercy. Chao Erh-feng's role in subduing Kham area of Tibet was of decided value to the Chinese. Yet, he was an embarrassment to the Chinese historians, both nationalist and communists. The Nationalist mention him as an unfortunate example of one who placed undue emphasis on violent military measure while mainland describe him as an advocate of "Great Manchuism". To the Tibetans, he was "Butcher Chao." But Eric Teichman, the British Consular who was a witness of that period comments: "Though he was known to the Szechwans by nickname "Butcher Chao" owing to his alleged tendency towards wholesale executions, and though his proceedings were doubtless at times characterised by great severity towards the unfortunate Tibetans who objected to submitting to the Chinese yoke, his reputation was nevertheless that of a just man, and while he did not hesitate to behead a recalcitrant Tibetan chief or headman, he was equally ready to decapitate offenders amongst his own officers and men. Chao Erh-feng's justice and fair dealings are remembered in eastern Tibet as well as his severity. amongst the Lamas, however, his name is universally

execrated as the arch enemy of the destroyer of monasteries and killer of monks.”

For the Chinese soldiers in Tibet, things were going from bad to worse. Weakened by internal mistrust and disturbance, they heard the unpleasant rumour that the Dalai Lama was returning to Lhasa soon. Something of the sort became apparent when they felt the growing antagonism and the various provocations to which they were frequently subjected by common Tibetans who no longer had the patience to tolerate them. Tibetan impatience with Chinese presence surfaced in south-east Tibet when Kanam Depa of Poyul openly revolted by killing each and every Chinese soldier who had come to collect revenues. Fresh imperial troops from Chamdo and Lhasa were sent under the command of Lo Chang-cho to subdue the revolt of Kanam Depa. Due mainly to the steep, narrow and rocky passes, the Chinese suffered immense loss and returned to Lhasa, ashamed of their failure to suppress the Poyul revolt. But Kanam Depa was to misuse his reputation gained in this fight against the Chinese by refusing to pay taxes and revolting against the Tibetan government later.

In Darjeeling, the young Tibetan officials in the retinue of the Dalai Lama were getting impatient to get rid of the Chinese presence in Tibet while the homesick ministers like Shelkar Lingpa, a gifted poet, composed nostalgic and stirring poems recalling Lhasa. A number of the younger Tibetan officials led by Khyungram, Tethong, Thangpon and Menpal etc. volunteered to join the resistance forces in Central Tibet and embarked from Darjeeling. Lack of experience and poor organisation held them back from the victory which they hoped to attain by attacking the Chinese at Gyantse and Shigatse. They returned to Darjeeling in great dejection and were ridiculed by the elder officials for quite sometime. Shatra, the Prime minister summoned the young volunteers one day. They were ready for a severe reprimand for their poor performance. But instead Shatra declared them heroes whose courage and patriotism were praiseworthy. He expressed his hope that they will be more successful in their second venture. Inspired by this un-

expected evaluation from the Prime minister, the younger officials embarked on a second mission during which they successfully drove the Chinese out of Gyantse and Shigatse. Later, these volunteers were all promoted to generals. Moving to Kalimpong, the Dalai Lama dispatched his sealed orders addressed to Tsepon Trimon Norbu Wangyal and the khendrung chamba Tendar to organise a clandestine war Department. They were required to consult only the Dalai Lama directly in Kalimpong which implied that the Cabinet was to be left in the dark about the war department. Unfortunately, the Cabinet ministers were suspected by the Tibetans of being too close to the Chinese as they were either appointed by or else retained in the cabinet, as in the case of Tsarong, by the Chinese military authorities. The two commanders Chamba Tendar and Trimon saw that the Chinese military dictatorship in Lhasa was now becoming weak and disorganised. Chinese soldiers were selling their guns and ammunitions. The War Department sponsored their own members to buy as many Chinese guns and ammunition as possible. They contacted the proud and patriotic monks of Sera and secretly started recruiting Tibetan soldiers.

Sera monks were quick to defy and provoke the Chinese soldiers openly. This made the Chinese suspicious and decided to attack Sera monastery first. They were now cut off from Peking and sandwiched between growing Tibetan animosity and shortage of supplies. But the alert War Department received information on the intended Chinese move and they deployed the fierce fighters of the Banagshol Khampas to defend the monastery. The Chinese attack on Sera began on November 2, 1911. They burnt the surrounding hermitages and laid a seige on the monastery itself. In this, the four Chinese soldiers, who had earlier surrendered to the Tibetan government and entered Sera as monks proved useful. One of them joined the Chinese ranks giving the false impression that the monks were attacking from behind. As the Chinese attention diverted, the monks and the Banagshol Khampas took the offensive with such fierce determination that the Chinese soldiers were denied any headway

in this fighting that lasted for ninety hours.

While the Chinese soldiers were engaged in an unsuccessful effort to capture Sera monastery, the war department headed by of Chamba Tendar and Trimon openly declared war on the Chinese soldiers in Lhasa. Taken suddenly by surprise, the Chinese soldiers gave up their raid on Sera and turned their attention on Lhasa.

The Chinese soldiers occupied southern Lhasa, including the Drapchi cantonment. Sandbags blocked the doors and windows of every house. The northern side of the city, including the Tsuglagkhang was fortified by the Tibetans. Both sides dug underground tunnels into the enemy's zone to explode important outposts. But no significant fighting took place. Insults were shouted at each other from windows. Random sniping claimed many victims. Though the war Department wanted to keep Tibetan soldiers in Tengyeling monastery, the monks strongly claimed the right to defend their monastery by themselves. The monks of the three major monasteries and the local populace, including the fierce Banagshol Khampas joined the Tibetan army and their only weapons were stones, swords and spears. Guns were few and far between. Even then the Sera monks and the Banagshol Khampas carried on courageous raids on the Chinese garrison in Drapchi cantonment. In this attack on the Chinese, the Tibetans lost many men. By now, the war was almost a year old. The Lhasa street was strewn with the dead bodies of men, dogs, donkeys and horses. Sudden burst of bullets and war-cries of Tibetans filled the day and night. Each side displayed the severed head and hands of the other side to discourage each other. Tsepon Trimon of the War Department was wounded in the left arm during a night's skirmish. But he did not show the slightest hint of injury and continued to perform his duties as a war minister. From Kalimpong the Dalai Lama sent Dazang Dadul — the hero of Chaksam who stopped the Chinese persuers in 1910 for two days from catching up with the fleeing Dalai Lama — to Lhasa after appointing him as the commander-in-chief of the Tibetan army. He reached Lhasa in January 1912 and at once got in touch with Trimon and Chamba

Tendar of the War Department. Though the Tibetans lost a courageous commander of the Dagpo Kongpo Regiment named Gyari saychung Namgyal Wangchuk, they were able to capture all the routes to northern Lhasa and thereby effectively cut off the Chinese supplies. As a result, two hundred Tibet born Chinese soldiers surrendered to the War Department. It looked as though the Tibetans were going to win the war as the Chinese faced severe food shortages. But unfortunately, wealthy Tengyeling monastery of the late ex-Regent Demo Hothokthu opened their whole supplies to the Chinese soldiers. The war prolonged for another six months. And a song came in the street:

Spring has come
And the days have become long
Drimed Kunden was performed
And *Shide* was given in alms.

Spring here refers to Dazang Dadul whose arrival in Lhasa coincided with a gradual ebb in the flow of the war. *Drimed Kunden* refers to the opera about an Indian Bodhisattva prince who was ready to give everything in alms including his eyes. The Sera monks performed this opera. That very night the Chinese soldiers, taking advantage of the relaxed Tibetan vigilance, put Shide monastery to the torch.

Shaken badly by Tengyeling's protection of the Chinese soldiers and the burning of the Shide monastery, the War Department decided to line up and arrest all the Tibetans suspected of collaborating with the Chinese. One day in April 1912, a bunch of monks from Sera and a few army captains burst into the Potala while the Cabinet was in session and arrested the ministers. Kalon Tsarong Wangchuk Gyalpo, his son and cabinet secretary Tsargur Shagpa, were shot dead in front of the Inner *Doring* (stone edict). The three Chinese appointed Kalons Tenzin Chodak, Rampa and Langthong were taken into custody. Phunrabpa, Mondrong and Losang Dorje were executed for their connection with Tengyeling. At times of crisis, just as Shatra and

his colleagues became scapegoats and suffered degradation and imprisonment on some very vague charges about their duties when the British invaded Tibet in 1904, Tsarong Shape, his son and other colleagues suffered death for unconfirmed suspicions of collaborating with the Chinese. After this wholesale arrest and execution, the Kashag ceased to exist. The War Department was all powerful. It consulted the National Assembly sometimes and directly communicated with the Dalai Lama in Darjeeling who was now thinking of ending his second exile.

The British government in India was anxious over the war in Lhasa. They told the Dalai Lama through Sir Charles Bell that the lives of the Chinese must be saved. At this, the Dalai Lama was astounded and angry. He expressed his astonishment at the strange application of British neutrality towards Tibet. The Dalai Lama felt that the British applied their neutrality vigorously only when events were against him, but not when the tide turned in his favour. He strongly stated the point that if the Chinese soldiers could kill to capture Tibet, Tibetans can and must take to arms to defend Tibet. The Tibetan tactic at that time was pragmatic. Tibetan ministers from Darjeeling instructed a monastery where a Chinese captain with two hundred soldiers had arrived. "If they are stronger than you, send them on with soft words. If you are stronger than they are, cut them off by the root". Reports of Tibetan military success in Lhasa as well as in other parts of Tibet where the Chinese soldiers were regularly harrassed by the Tibetan populace and denied necessary supplies of foodgrains reached the Dalai Lama in the border town of Kalimpong. In June 1912, the Dalai Lama and his ministers returned to Tibet by Dzalep-la pass. Reaching Dromo, he wrote encouraging decrees to the various monasteries and chieftains of Kham inspiring them to oppose the Chinese. In these decrees, the Dalai Lama promised early liberation. To the Banagshol Khampas who showed exceptional courage in defending Sera and carrying out raids on the Chinese headquarters in Lhasa itself, the Dalai Lama sent a decree complimenting their courage and patriotism.

As soon as the news reached Lhasa that the Dalai Lama was returning, two hundred monks from the three monasteries led by Ragashar volunteered to join the Dalai Lama as his bodyguard. In addition Chopatsang of Gongjo and Pomdatsang of Markham also joined the Dalai Lama with their armed escort to protect him on his journey to Lhasa. At Ralung monastery, the Panchen Lama, quite regretful of his fraternal dealing with Manchu Amban and the Chinese soldiers in Lhasa in the absence of the Dalai Lama, came with his Tashi Lhunpo officials to receive him. Throughout his week long stay at Ralung monastery, the Dalai Lama invited the Panchen Lama to dine with him. They daily went together on visits to the places of 'worship in the area or sight seeing of the hills and the valleys. The officials responsible for attempting to create misunderstanding between the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama felt guilt stricken and embarrassed by the mutual respect and faith of the two spiritual personalities.

In Peking, Sir John Jordan, the British Minister who called on the Dalai Lama during the later part of his first exile in the Chinese capital, now protested to Yuan Shih kai, the new Chinese President. The British minister deplored the Chinese attempt in colonising Tibet with military force to make it a province of China. Yuan Shih kai, in turn send a letter to the Manchu Amban to return to China. The Chinese soldiers were willing to return. But they had no way. Tibetans had captured the routes and they were completely surrounded. Their hopes of reinforcement or supplies from China were dashed to the grounds. The huge provisions opened to them by the Tengyeling monastery was now empty. They began eating the many empty leather bags, dogs, horses and donkeys etc. Soon, the Chinese soldiers were thinking of surrendering to the Tibetan War Department. And, a street song cursed:

The Tengyeling monks
Now eat dogs and donkeys
It is useless pitying them
This is what they deserve.

Meanwhile, the Dalai Lama reached Samdhing monastery. Commander-in-chief Dasang Dadul secretly met the Dalai Lama for important consultations and at once rode back to Lhasa. The Nepalese representative contacted the War Department expressing the Chinese desire to surrender. Both the Amban and the Manchu commander Chung Yui wrote to the Dalai Lama requesting the Dalai Lama to send his representatives during the surrender. The Dalai Lama sent three representatives headed by Lonchen Changkhyim to accept the surrender and conduct the related negotiations.

In the negotiations witnessed by the Nepalese representative, the Chinese soldiers agreed to surrender all their arms and ammunition. In return they asked the Tibetan government to permit them to return to China via Kham with transport facilities and necessary supplies. They also appealed for appropriate compensation for their properties to be left behind in Tibet. All their requests, except the return route via Kham, was accepted by the Tibetan government. As Chinese leaders were still at large in eastern Tibet, the Tibetan government judged it safer to return the Chinese via India. The Amban and the Manchu commander were allowed to retain their rifles for personal safety. Chinese married to Tibetan women were allowed either to take their family to China or to settle down in Tibet as Tibetan citizens. This agreement was signed on August 27, 1912. By this agreement, all Chinese soldiers were to vacate Lhasa within a fortnight. But they prolonged their stay by seven months. The Dalai Lama remained at Samdhing monastery and Chokhor Yangtse. The Chinese soldiers were to leave in three different batches. The first batch left as agreed. The two remaining batches fought from what remained of their base at Tengyeling monastery. Infuriated Tibetans totally cut off their supplies. Nearing starvation, they came out to surrender. By January 6, 1913, Manchu commander-in-chief Yin and the last of the Chinese soldiers were leaving Lhasa. With them went the surviving monks of Tengyeling monastery disguised as Chinese and totally unashamed or regretful of their treachery. These last Chinese soldiers were escorted by Tibetans upto Dzalep la

pass. Most of them left for China by sea from Calcutta. Handful of these Chinese settled down in Gangtok, Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Calcutta etc.

At Chokhor Yangtse, the Dalai Lama received a letter from Yuan Shih-kai apologising for the excesses of Chinese troops in Tibet and restoring him to his former rank. To this, the Dalai Lama straightway replied that he was not asking the Chinese government for any rank or title as he intended to exercise both temporal and ecclesiastical rule in Tibet. This was the prelude to the declaration of Tibetan independence.

In January 1913, the Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa. Except for a few months in 1909 — 1910 the Dalai Lama was absent from Lhasa for over eight years. So his triumphant return to his capital was amidst great joy and celebration. That same month, Tibet and Mongolia signed a treaty at Urga. This treaty declared both Tibet and Mongolia free from the Manchu rule and separate from China. Both the Dalai Lama and Jetsun Dampa Hothogthu acknowledged the independent status of Tibet and Mongolia.

One month after the signing of this treaty, the Dalai Lama issued the declaration of Tibetan independence which was sent to each and every corner of Tibet and a copy of which had to be kept in the offices of every district. Almost the first thing the Dalai Lama did after arriving in Lhasa was to reward the heroes and punish the villains of the Tibetan struggle for independence. The Regent Tsemonling, who had served with great dedication in his absence, was rewarded appropriately with title and seating honour. His resignation was accepted as he was now very old. Chamba Tendar, who headed the War Department was promoted to the rank of a cabinet minister. His colleague Trimon was made a deputy commander-in-chief with the title of Teji. Dazang Dadul was made the senior commander-in-chief and granted the title of Dzasak. The Dalai Lama also approved the marriage of Dazang Dadul into the Tsarong family, both of whose father and son, were executed by the War Department for suspected collaboration with the Manchu Amban. Sera monastery was rewarded with eight nomadic

estates of Dam for their loyal service to the government. Ganden monastery was given half the district of Tsona for similar service. The Banagshol Khampas and others who rendered services were similarly rewarded with titles, estates and other gifts. No punishment was given to the Chinese who had lived in Lhasa for generations and did not side with the Manchu Amban or the Chinese soldiers in the recent war. They were permitted to remain in Tibet forever.

Among the guilty, the first was Tengyeling monastery. Some of the most guilty monks had left Tibet with the last batch of Chinese soldiers who left Lhasa before the arrival of the Dalai Lama. From the remaining monks, the more guilty were exiled. Rest of the monks were scattered into other monasteries. Tengyeling monastery itself was closed down forever.

The Thirteenth Dalai Lama had learnt bitter political lessons during his exile years. His attempt to gain support from Russia, British, Nepal and Japan against the Chinese were largely ignored. At the close of his second exile, he realised that Tibet had to be strong and modern to maintain its independence. Moreover, the Chinese presence in eastern Tibet was still considerable. And he needed a military strong enough to drive them out. Towards this end, he embarked on a military training of the Tibetan soldiers by Japanese, Russian, British and combined Manchu and Mongolian systems. In addition, he sent young Tibetans of aristocratic origin to Quetta and Shillong for training in artillery and machine gun warfare. Out of the four systems of training, the Dalai Lama selected the British system as the most suitable. He speeded up the recruitment of Tibetan soldiers. Initially, the aristocrats did not approve of their sons being inducted into the military which they looked down upon. But soon the scene changed. It was not the aristocratic power but the monastic establishment that began to object and obstruct the military and other modern changes that the Dalai Lama was introducing. But the Chinese presence in Kham had to be rooted out. With this aim in mind, the Dalai Lama appointed the courageous and enduring Kalon Lama Chamba

Tendar to the governership of Kham. It was for the first time that a Cabinet minister was deputed as a governor of Kham. Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar was allowed to take with him eight generals, Dapon Phulung, Jingpa, Ragashar, Tethong, Khyungram, Tailing, Tsogo, Marlampa and Tana and was granted full authority to appoint administrators of the districts over which the governor exercised control. Kalon Chamba Tendar established his temporary headquarters nearby the Chinese occupied areas. From Lhodzong, he sent Tibetan troops under the commander of two generals each, in three different directions. After many months of fierce fighting, the Tibetan troops recaptured Rongpo Gyapthang, Khyungpo Sertsu, Khyungpo Tengchen, Riwoche, Chaksam Kha, Thok Drugugon, Tsawa Pakshod, Lagon Nyenda and Lamda etc.

Exile had taught the Dalai Lama the intricacies of international politics. On the one hand, he exerted military pressures on the Chinese and on the other, he asked the British government to arrange a Tripartite conference which was always in his mind ever since 1910 when he explained to the Chinese representative Lo Ti't'ai that the future Tibetan policy will be based on the outcome of discussions between Tibet, China and Britain as it is no longer possible for Tibet and China to have the same relationship as before.

The Chinese government was reluctant to accept British intermediary and objected to the equal status of Tibet at such a conference. But the pressure of Tibetan military might in Kham under Kalon Chamba Tendar compelled them to agree to a Tripartite conference. They wanted either London or Peking to be the venue. But the British charge d'affairs informed the Chinese government that all the three nations will attend the conference on equal footing in Simla. His Majesty's government of Great Britain was represented by Sir Arthur Harry McMohan. The Republic of China was represented by Ivan Chen and the Government of Tibet by Lonchen Shatra Paljor Dorjee. The Dalai Lama had great hopes that the Tripartite conference would agree on the following:

1. Tibet will manage her internal affairs on her own.
2. Important issues of external affairs will be referred to Great Britain.
3. No Chinese Amban, officials or soldiers would be stationed in Tibet.
4. Tibetan territory would include upto Tachienlu.

To support Tibetan claim of independence and refute Chinese claim of Tibet being an integral part of China, the Tibetan plenipotentiary Lonchen Shatra had brought fifty six volumes of State documents, consisting of revenue records, lists of houses, officials and headmen in the disputed areas in Eastern Tibet and their bonds of allegiance. Ivan Chen, the Chinese plenipotentiary had no such documentary evidence which Sir Harry MacMohan could verify. But the Chinese verbal claims were many and far ranging tracing the subjugation of Tibet from the time of Gengiz Khan. Lonchen Shatra and his assistant Teji Norbu Wangyal Trimon refuted each and every Chinese claim. As the two sides seemed irreconcilable in their interpretation and refutation of each and every claim, Sir Harry McMohan proposed a division of the disputed area into Inner and Outer Tibet on February 17, 1914. The Chinese were reluctant to give up their suzerainty over Tibet. The Tibetans were totally opposed to accept any kind of Chinese overlordship in Tibet. After six months of discussion on the initiative of the British plenipotentiary, a convention of eleven articles was prepared and accepted by both the Tibetan and the Chinese plenipotentiaries. What the Dalai Lama desired had been effaced by the very division of Tibet into Outer and Inner. Article 2 of the convention read:-

“The Government of Great Britain and China recognising that Tibet is under the suzerainty of China, and recognising also the autonomy of Outer Tibet, engage to respect the territorial integrity of the country, and to abstain from interference in the administration of Outer Tibet (including the selection, and installation of the Dalai Lama), which shall remain in the hands of the Tibetan government at Lhasa.

The Government of China engages not to convert Tibet into a Chinese province. The Government of Great Britain engages not to annex Tibet or any portion of it."

Part of Article 3 read:

"....., the Government of China, engage, except as provided in Article 4 of the convention, not to send troops into Outer Tibet, nor to station civil or military officers, nor to establish Chinese colonies in the country. Should any such troops or officials remain in Outer Tibet at the date of the signature of this convention, they shall be withdrawn within a period not exceeding three months."

Article 4 maintained the Chinese right to station in Lhasa, as in the past, a Chinese high official with suitable escort not exceeding more than 300 men. In the notes of exchange, which were to follow the main body of convention, the high contracting parties agreed that "Tibet forms part of Chinese Territory." Moreover, after the selection and installation of the Dalai Lama by the Tibetan Government, the Chinese Government had to be notified whose "representative at Lhasa will then formally communicate to His Holiness the titles consistent with his dignity, which have been conferred by the Chinese Government". The notes further went on to say that the selection and appointment of all officers in Outer Tibet will rest with the Tibetan Government. In the same vein, the Notes no. 4 noted that "Outer Tibet shall not be represented in the Chinese Parliament or in any other similar body".

All the three plenipotentiaries initialled the draft of the Simla Convention. But the Government of Republic of China ordered Ivan Chen not to sign the document itself. On June 25, 1914, Sir Harry McMahon communicated to the Chinese Government: "as it is, the patience of His Majesty's Government is exhausted and they have no alternative but to inform the Chinese Government that unless the convention is signed before the end of the month, His Majesty's Government will hold themselves free to sign separately with Tibet." The Republican China still refused. On July 3, 1914, the British and Tibetan plenipotentiaries rectified the convention. Now that the Chinese were out of the scene

completely, the British and the Tibetan plenipotentiaries signed a Trade Agreement of eleven articles and also confirmed the McMohan line as the boundary demarcation between Tibet and India. A month after the conclusion of the Simla convention, Great Britain entered the First World War on August 4, 1914. The Dalai Lama made an offer to send 1000 Tibetan soldiers to fight for the British side. His Majesty's Government welcomed the kind gesture of the Dalai Lama. Lonchen Shatra and his delegation returned to Lhasa. But the nationalistic Dalai Lama was dissatisfied and unhappy with the Simla Convention since it divided Tibet into two parts and accepted Tibet as a part of China with only Outer Tibet free of direct Chinese influence. Lonchen Shatra was summoned for an audience at 6 a.m. and was kept waiting till 5 p.m. Trimon was praised for his earlier work in the War Department and service at the Simla convention especially in the meticulous documentation of the proceedings. He was made a Kalon. Dazang Dadul, now known as Tsarong, was also made a Kalon in addition to his post as commander-in-chief.

While the negotiations for the Simla convention were going on, Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar wrote to the three Chinese commanders of Chamdo, Ba and Dartsedo that fighting should cease till the convention was over. The Chinese commander at Chamdo sent a parcel of Yak dung in reply. Another time, the same commander replied that the Chinese will advance upto Kongpo Gyamda. In 1916, Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar learnt that the Chamdo Chinese garrison was soon to be reinforced from Kanze and Ba. This was confirmed by a Chinese letter intercepted by the Tibetans which revealed that the Chinese were to advance upto Kongpo Gyamda after the reinforcement. The whole Tibetan military attention was then converged on Chamdo. Besides the local monasteries and chieftains complained of Chinese suppression and requested for quick liberation. Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar swiftly attacked Chamdo from three directions. In a fight that lasted for months, the Tibetans succeeded in cutting off the supplies to Chamdo forcing the Chinese to surrender.

Among the Chinese prisoners were the infamous General P'eng Jih-sheng whose merciless suppression of Tibetans and desecration and destruction of major monasteries of Chamdo, Draya and Nyenda were comparable to those of Chao Erh-feng. The Tibetans also recognised Wu who had earlier volunteered to capture the Dalai Lama dead or alive in 1910. He was imprisoned for life in Senge Dzong. Gyal-godong, the Chinese-Tibetan who had similarly volunteered to capture the Dalai Lama was killed by Tibetan troops at Tenchen. His dead body was identified as he had an extra finger on one of his hand. His head and hands were sent to Lhasa. Gara Lama, a Tibetan who collaborated with Chinese, was also captured and imprisoned. But he escaped to China and later died there. The bulk of the prisoners were taken to the Indian border and then left there to find their way home. General Peng Jih-sheng was humiliated by his defeat and asked for permission to settle down at Dobo Dzong in southern Tibet.

From the Tibetan side many were lost in these fightings. Three of the best generals Phulung, Jarigpa and Tailing were killed. But Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar was unyielding. He made Chamdo the permanent headquarter of the Tibetan army. Here, during a brief respite, he rewarded his able soldiers with promotions, punished the guilty and appointed new officers to administer the various provinces and districts which he had recaptured from the Chinese.

Tibetans in Markham, Draya, Sangen, Gojo and Derge etc. where the Chinese suppression was on the increase could wait no longer and started rebelling against the invaders. Poorly equipped and disorganised, they suffered terrible loses. Before long, Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar was able to assist them and liberate and recapture all these areas. One section of Tibetan troops penetrated into the Chinese province of Yunan in the south-east. Another section of Tibetan troops which had recaptured Derge, advanced on Tachienlu. When the news reached Tachienlu, the local Tibetans became excited to rise against the Chinese. The scared Chinese appealed to Britain to mediate for a cease-fire.

Erich Teichman of Great Britain's Consular Service negotiated a truce between Chinese General Liu Tsan-ting and Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar. A tripartite Agreement was signed on August 19, 1918 according to which the disputed areas were divided between Tibet and China. China retained the regions to the east of Yangtse, except the areas of Derge and Peyul. Tibet retained the rest in addition to control over all the monasteries in the areas that passed to China. A supplementary agreement calling for the cessation of hostilities and withdrawal of troops by October 31st was concluded on 10th October, 1918. This agreement as witnessed by Eric Teichman, proved beyond doubt that the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama had made Tibet a power not to be ignored. By 1920s the Tibetan army had become very strong. In addition to the older generals actively campaigning against Chinese aggression in Eastern Tibet, a host of younger generals led by Kalon Tsarong Dazang Dadul was gaining power and prestige in Lhasa.

Unfortunately for Tibet, the forty year old Panchen Lama suddenly fled to China in 1923, after some revenue disagreement with the Government at Lhasa. The Kuomintang regime received the Panchen Lama with great ceremony but were unable to use the Panchen Lama against Lhasa due to the solid power and prestige of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. Kanam Depa of Poyul, who was once a symbol of Tibetan courage by wiping out the Chinese tax collectors from his area in 1912 now proved to be a source of increasing problem as he refused to pay taxes.

In Lhasa itself, things were not that settled. The Dalai Lama's emphasis on raising a large army put into practice by the forceful personality of Shaphe Tsarong, the commander-in-chief was strongly criticised and disliked by both the conservative section of the aristocracy and the solid monastic establishment who were ready to stop the growing strength of the military. Moreover, when Tengyeling monastery was taken over by the Government, incriminating letters involving two leading treasurers from the Loseling college of Drepung monastery in the Chinese intrigues and plots against the Tibetan government during 1910-12 were found.

The government reaction was swift. Both were defrocked and banished at once. But Drepung was the largest monastery in Lhasa and Loseling was its most prestigious college. In the street, the people sang:

The Twin Jewels of the monastery
Have been exiled to the south
Drepung is now a nunnary
The monks wear their rosary as head-dress.

It seemed that the two treasurers, except for their intrigue with the Chinese, were remarkably devoted and efficient in their service to the monastery. And Drepung monastery, now stigmatised as a nunnary by the public, was on the verge of a rebellion. While the Dalai Lama was recovering from a recent sickness in Norbu Lingka, about two thousand monks of Loseling came marching from Drepung. At Norbu Lingka they demanded an audience with the Dalai Lama. But the ministers and the troops stood their place. This was in April 1921. In July, Drepung threatened to attack both Lhasa and Norbu Lingka. They openly declared their intentions to arrest the Secretary of the Dalai Lama. People in Lhasa were nervous as Drepung was trying to gain the support of Sera and Ganden. In August about three thousand troops arrived, and soon afterwards, the threatened rebellion was averted. The ring leaders were caught and imprisoned. On this the Dalai Lama told Sir Charles Bell, "I had to show myself the master; otherwise Sera and Ganden and others will be encouraged to break out when they wish to gain any end of their own."

The Chinese government had attempted to send their representative to Lhasa many times but they were always refused. In 1927 Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese President sent a letter to the Dalai Lama with a Tibetan abbot returning from the Yungho monastery in Peking. In this letter, Chiang Kai-shek agreed total support if the Dalai Lama agreed to make Tibet a province of China. He also agreed to return the Panchen Lama without any condition. The Dalai Lama welcomed the letter as it was the first letter from Chiang Kai-shek but remained noncommittal in his reply.

In the same year, some Buriat Mongols, led by a man called Zangpo, reached Lhasa. They wanted to promote Soviet ideas but had to leave soon after an audience with the Dalai Lama. A second Soviet-Mongol mission arrived in Lhasa led by a Soviet military officer from Mongolia. This too, left after an audience with the Dalai Lama. To the 13th Dalai Lama, Bolshevik Russia was no longer a source of support. The destruction of monasteries and the extermination of monks in Mongolia in the wars of Soviet occupation had opened his eyes. In 1930, a second letter of Chiang Kai-shek was brought by Miss Lin Man ch'ing, born to a Tibetan mother and Chinese father. She tried several informal approaches suggesting closer ties with China but remained unsuccessful.

Suydam Cutting and his wife were the first Americans to visit the 13th Dalai Lama in Lhasa. This American was able to maintain a very friendly relationship with the Dalai Lama. But among the westerners it was Sir Charles Bell who was closest to the Dalai Lama. Sir Charles Bell was a sincere friend of Tibet who attempted his utmost to benefit Tibet. He was in Lhasa from 1920-21 and was given the honorary title of Lonchen.

In Lhasa, Kalon Tsarong, Tsepon Lungshar and Kuchar Kunphela, all favourites of the Dalai Lama were rising in power and prestige. But among themselves, there was extreme jealousy. Every attempt was deemed justified to ruin the others. Lungshar, by far seemed the most sinister and successful. But for the time being Kunphela was the real power. Tsarong Shape had lost some of his grounds in the Lhasa political set up though his outlook was progressive. With Kunphela even the cabinet ministers were careful.

From 1918 onwards, there was uninterrupted armed peace on the Tibetan border. This was mainly due to the military efforts of Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar. But he died in 1922. His successor, Kalon Trimon completed his tenure in 1926. Kalon Menkab Todpa followed him. In 1929, Kalon Ngabo replaced Menkab Todpa. And the uninterrupted armed peace on the border was soon to be shattered. At the end of 1930 a dispute arose between the Beri and Dargyay monasteries,

both situated in the debatable area to the east of Yangtse river. The Szchewan warlord, Lin wen-hui, saw his chance and assisted the Beri monastery and attacked Dargyay monastery. The Tibetan troops stationed at Derge related fiercely in support of Dargyay monastery and forced their way upto Draggo. Szchewan warlord was ready to negotiate a ceasefire. But the Tibetan refused and adamantly advanced further striving to capture Tachienlu—the territorial border desired by the Dalai Lama during the Simla convention of 1914. The Szchewan warlord Lin wen-hui, was an ambitious man. He revived Chao Erh-feng's idea of making a province of Sikang hoping to add this new region to his province Szchewan which he ruled independently. The Kuomintang government at Nanking had no control or influence over him or any other warlord of the time for that matter. Though the Kuomintang government had its both hands full with the growing popularity of the communists in China itself, Nanking kept a vigilant eye on Tibet and tirelessly appeared as the arbiter of the disputes despite their inability to influence or control Lin Wen-hui. Consequently, a number of telegrams between the Dalai Lama and Chang Kai-shek in September 1931 brought the conclusion of an uneasy local armistice. But this armistice solved nothing. Everywhere in Nyarong, Kanze and the other frontier close to Szchewan to which the Tibetan penetrated earlier, Chinese and Tibetan troops were left face to face.

While the Tibetans took comfort in this local armistice arranged by a delegate of the Kuomintang government at Nanking, Li wen-hui procured the crucial interval needed to rearm and reinforce his troops. In April 1932, Li wen-hui attacked again causing embarrassment to the Nanking government whose weak control over the war-lord clearly showed. After five months of fierce fighting, the Tibetans began to retreat. The Chinese advanced during the Tibetan withdrawal back to Yangtse and came close to attacking Chamdo. Dargyay monastery, whose dispute with Beri monastery caused the war was ransacked by the Chinese troops. Desperate in their defeat, the Tibetan generals in

the field entered into a truce with the Chinese without informing the Dalai Lama or the British representative of the Nanking government. The Dalai Lama was distressed by this surrender and accordingly demoted the generals.

While Li Wen-hui was driving the Tibetan forces back, the equally independent Chinese Muslim warlord of Chinghai (Sining) took sides in a monastic dispute inviting the Tibetan troops who advanced up to Jeykundo (Kyekudo). But the massive reinforcement of Ma Pufang, who concentrated his military offensive with those of Li Wen-hui made the Tibetans retreat. To add to the confusion, a chaotic fighting broke out in Bathang where Kesang Tsering, a half Tibetan adventurer drove out Li wen-hui's Governor from the area. Claiming to act for Chiang Kai-shek, Kesang Tsering ran into trouble with a powerful frontier Lama of the locality who evicted him with the help of Tibetan government troops and occupied Bathang for the time being.

Ma Pufang, on the other hand, had inflicted a demoralising defeat to the Tibetan troops at Dan Chokorgon killing two of the best Tibetan generals. The dejected Tibetan troops retreated to Chamdo, Riwoche and Tengchen ready to be further repulsed and overtaken by the Chinese. Luckily, the Chinese did not pursue their attack. The armed peace brought to the border of eastern Tibet by Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar in 1918 when the Chinese themselves begged the British representative to intervene and negotiate a truce was now in shambles. And the man partly responsible was Kalon Ngabo—the governor of Eastern Tibet. Demoralised by the bitter defeat and pained by the behaviour of the Tibetan troops who no longer obeyed him, Kalon Ngabo died a dejected man at his post in Chamdo. As the Tibetans had lost much ground in eastern Tibet by August 1932, the Dalai Lama telegraphed the government of India asking for help and diplomatic intervention at Nanking. Colonel Weir, the British political officer in Sikkim, visited Lhasa and the Tibetan government drew up proposals for negotiation on the basis of 1914 Simla Convention. Before the Nanking government could take any initiatives towards a negotiation, situation of the Tibetan troops at the frontier had improv-

ed. Khendrung Ngoshi Thupten Kunkhyen was appointed the acting Governor. He was a courageous man who at once ordered the Tibetan troops to occupy the posts from where they had voluntarily retreated even before the Chinese soldiers came. Moreover, a civil war raged between Lin Wen-hui and his nephew Lin Hsiang in Szchewan. This eased the military situation and Li wen-hui welcomed the cease-fire order of Nanking. Local armistice was declared.

A similar armistice was entered between the Tibetan troops and Ma Pufang on June 15, 1933 at Nangchen Tetsagon. But the situation was far from settled. The armistice with Lin-hui of Szchewan and Ma Pufang of Chinghai only provided a breathing space during which the Dalai Lama attempted to come to an agreement with the Chinese Government on the eastern frontier—the issue on which the Simla convention of 1914 broke down while contemplating to recover by force some of the territories the Tibetan troops had to relinquish recently. Already in 1931, when Tibetans were showing the first signs of succumbing to the Chinese in eastern Tibet, the Nechung Oracle had predicted that the Dalai Lama was of indifferent health and every Tibetan should pray for his long life. In 1932 at the request of the Tibetan government and people to live long for the good of Tibet, the Dalai Lama wrote his *Last Political Testament*. In it he said, “In my lifetime, conditions will be as they are now, peaceful and quiet. But the future holds darkness and misery. I have warned you of these things because of my experience and other important reasons. More I cannot say or advise”. In the annals of the Dalai Lamas of Tibet, the life and deeds of Ngawang Losang Thupten Gyatso — the 13th Dalai Lama shall always remain in the forefront. He was great. And his greatness surpassed the traditional respect and prestige reflected by the divine nature of the institution that he symbolised and represented. His was greatness achieved by his own struggle under bitter circumstances against formidable odds. In the words of Sir Charles Bell, “., the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, was unique among all the Dalai Lamas, for he was the only one among them to exercise the worldly, as well as the spiri-

tual power throughout the whole of his adult life, that is to say, for thirty seven years.”

To the 13th Dalai Lama, nothing seemed to matter more than the complete independence of Tibet from the Manchu and Chinese yoke. This determination for the independence of his nation was further steeled by his two exiles when he had to leave Lhasa and flee to Mongolia and then China in 1904 during the Younghusband mission and in 1910 when the Manchu and Chinese soldiers ended his short stay in Potala driving him towards British India. Both the exiles were bitter. But they opened his eyes and brought to him a rare insight into politics that further sharpened his desire for an independent Tibet. When finally Tibet became independent in 1912, the Dalai Lama did everything in his power to modernise Tibet on all fronts, emphasising the most on military strength. The Dalai Lama introduced paper currency. Standardised the revenue system. Improved the legal procedures. Trained a new police system. Abolished capital punishment. Opened English school in Gyantse. Sent four students to England and opened an administrative school for the sons of the noble family. Tibetan medicine and astrology was revived. Doctors were properly trained and sent to every corner of the country. The Geshe Lhasampa degree was standardised. Even the oracles were tested and the frauds dismissed. Such were the kindness of the 13th Dalai Lama towards Tibet. But in his attempt to modernise Tibet, the 13th Dalai Lama remained unsuccessful. His emphasis on British education and expansion of the military with the British training was opposed by the combined opinions of the monastic establishment represented by the three major monasteries. The school originally scheduled to be opened in Lhasa was transferred to Gyantse and both Sir Charles Bell and Shape Tsarong, responsible for the modernisation of the military were threatened with dire consequences by the monks whose sheer number played a very dominating and often negative role at the time. In his *Last Political Testament*, the Dalai Lama once again emphasised the necessity of a strong military to strengthen the inde-

pendence of Tibet. He said, "Maintain friendly relations with the two great powers, China and India. Conscript able soldiers to guard the borders and make them sufficiently strong to ward off those countries with whom we have had border disputes. The armed forces should be drilled and disciplined so as to be effective and strong to overcome those who threaten us."

As is clear from the *Last Political Testament*, the 13th Dalai Lama was filled with immense mercy and compassion for the Tibetan people who failed to apprehend what fate awaited them. He saw clearly, as he had stated succinctly in the *Last Political Testament*, ". . . . if you are not able to defend yourself now then the institution of the Dalai Lama, venerable incarnations and those who protect the teachings shall be wiped out completely. Monasteries shall be looted, property confiscated and all living being shall be destroyed. . . . The property of the officials shall be confiscated, they shall be slaves of the conquerers and shall roam the land in bondage. All souls will be immersed in suffering and fear. And the night shall be long and dark".

Tsarong, Lungshar and Kunphela

On 17th November, the 13th Dalai Lama, already tired and distressed by the weak and inefficient conduct of his officials whom he severely reprimanded in his *Last Political Testament*, was taken with a slight cold. But he did not show it. He knew he was the link of unity on which Tibet survived. He attended the *Monlam Chenmo* and the people were relieved. But his health went from bad to worse. And he failed to attend *Gaden Ngacho* — the birth and death anniversary of Tsongkhapa — always attended by a Dalai Lama and the people suspected he was sick. But there was no way of knowing. Kunphela, the last favourite of the Dalai Lama, took every precaution to conceal it. On 3rd December, the Dalai Lama's condition became critical. Kunphela at once summoned the attendants and at 11 P.M. called the medium of Nechung Oracle who came at once, in great hurry, without even putting on his ceremonial robes. That same night, the Nechung Oracle medium gave the Dalai Lama a powder medicine. As the medium came out, Jampa-la, the Dalai Lama's regular doctor pointed out to the Nechung medium that the wrong medicine has been administered. Soon afterwards, the Nechung medium gave a second medicine according to the regular doctor's prescription. But both these medicines failed to improve the worsening condition of the Dalai Lama. That morning, the government officials were informed. The Gaden Tripa, the Prime Minister, the Cabinet members and the other important officials immediately rushed to Kunphela and requested for an audience with the Dalai Lama. Kunphela refused them an audience. In the afternoon, the government officials were admitted to his audience. They unanimously pleaded for his life. But the Dalai Lama had lost the power of speech. That night at about 7.30 P.M. the

Dalai Lama passed away. A gloom of sadness and irreparable loss descended on the city of Lhasa, and filled the whole landscape of Tibet with mourning. The future of Tibet looked uncertain. The government was dazed and distracted by the loss of the Dalai Lama. Into this beleaguered and uncertain scene, fate cast the dark shadow of Lungshar Dorjee Tsegyal, the second favourite of the late Dalai Lama. His lust for power and love for intrigue now found an avenue for its fullest expression against Kunphela with whom he had long sought his vendetta. Lhasa was thick with the rumours of poisoning and black magic. Many rumoured the Dalai Lama passed away in anger and distress as Kunphela thwarted his orders and issued his own orders in the name of the Dalai Lama. For Lungshar, the setting could not have been better. And once he set his mind on a vendetta, he persued it with diabolical vehemence and skill. But away and aloof from this political drama of cutting each other's throats stood Tsarong Dazang Dadul, the earliest and the most progressive favourite of the late Dalai Lama, whose demotion and downfall from the Lhasa hiererchy was partly engineered by Lungshar. Tsarong Dazang Dadul was not of the aristocracy by birth. He was born in 1885 in a peasant family in Phenpo, situated to the north of Lhasa. Here his father owned a small farm and made arrows. But it was in Lhasa, serving the headmaster of the Potala monk officials' school that he attracted the attention of the Dalai Lama. Impressed by the youth's skill and cleverness, the Dalai Lama made him his favourite and he was called Chensal (favourite) Namgang. He accompanied the Dalai Lama on his first exile to Mongolia and China in 1904. When the persuing Chinese soldiers threatened the life of the Dalai Lama in 1910, Chensal Namgang courageously stopped the 300 Chinese for two days at Chaksam ferry and became the hero of Chaksam. Following the Dalai Lama on his second exile, Chensal Namgang stayed in Darjeeling for two years. Because of his travel outside Tibet in China, Mongolia and India, he was able to communicate in English, Russian, Mongolian and Hindustani. Though he lacked formal education and the quiet and dignified courtesy of the

Tibetan nobleman, his personality brought a vigour to the lay nobility which it lacked before. A man of great energy and sound sense, he imbibed modern ideas and a progressive outlook which Tibet sorely needed but could not appreciate and implement. His strongest interest was in increasing the strength of the Tibetan military by raising a disciplined and modern trained Tibetan army that can maintain the independence of Tibet.

In 1912, Chensal Namgang was made the commander-in-Chief of Tibetan army and sent to Lhasa to drive away the Chinese soldiers. Working in close association with the War Department headed by Chamba Tendar and Trimon, Chensal Namgang succeeded in ending the Chinese dictatorship at Lhasa. In the suspicious circumstances of the fighting in Lhasa, further prolonged by Tengyeling monastery's open support of the Chinese garrison, the War Department ordered the arrest and execution of the Tibetan Cabinet members who were judged pro-Chinese for their soft attitude. In this execution, the father and son of the Tsarong family perished. Ironical as it was, Chensal Namgang who knew about the conspiracy to kill the suspected collaborators, could not warn his friend Samdup Tsering and his father Shape Tsarong, as it was a secret political move of the War Department. After the Dalai Lama's triumphant return to Lhasa and the declaration of Tibetan independence, Chensal Namgang was rewarded for his courageous fight with the Chinese at Chaksam ferry by granting him the estate of Lhanga. He was then a handsome, brave, honest and loyal young man who was a foremost favourite of the Dalai Lama. The Tsarong family had suffered the most in the confusion of the 1912 fighting in Lhasa. For no serious fault of their own, both the father and the son had been killed. The Dalai Lama allowed Chensal Namgang to marry into the family of Tsarong. Hence forth, Chensal Namgang was known as Tsarong Dazang Dadul. As the senior commander-in-chief of the Tibetan army, Tsarong Dazang Dadul enjoyed the full confidence of the Dalai Lama. As he was the Dalai Lama's foremost favourite, his prestige and power was unequalled by anyone at that

time. No one else but Tsarong was permitted to visit the Dalai Lama in his old white tweed pants and coat, or in khaki uniform of a soldier. During special holidays, when the Dalai Lama enjoyed flying kites, Tsarong sat ready by his side to run for the kites. But the Chinese presence in eastern Tibet took most of their time. The elder ministers led by Kalon Chamba Tendar were ceaselessly combating the Chinese soldiers and Tsarong, with the encouragement of the Dalai Lama and assistance of Sir Charles Bell, was building the Tibetan military strength.

In 1920, there were only about 6000 soldiers. Though hardy and accustomed to travel and live for many days on a small bag of barley, these soldiers had received no proper military training and remained scattered in different parts of Tibet. They had no artillery. Their rifles were almost primitive mostly manufactured a few miles outside Lhasa. The few British rifles they received were poorly kept. Above all, the prohibition of killing in Buddhism and inherent monastic distrust of the military made the life of Tibetan soldiers difficult. A military carrer was looked down upon in Tibet. Yet the Dalai Lama was anxious that the newly won independence must be kept and he knew in his heart that only a strong military can keep it intact from the Chinese. Tsarong proposed an increase in the army but the Dalai Lama did not at once accept it. After all, the aristocracy and the monasteries both looked down upon the idea. Sir Charles Bell strongly urged the increase of the military. Even the Gurkha representative in Lhasa, surprisingly, urged that Tibet should increase its army to 30,000 men and send their officers to India for training.

The Dalai Lama made known this proposal to the National Assembly. It was decided to recruit five hundred to a thousand soldiers yearly bringing the total to 17,000 gradually. For this the estates of the monasteries and the nobility were to be taxed and there was general tension and rumour that the monks will be recruited and Buddhism dishonoured. The Dalai Lama decreed that no monks will be permitted to join the army. Still, the general reaction was one of strong dislike and opposition to the idea. Chamon, a leader

of Sera monastery told Sir Charles Bell: "This proposal to increase the army is strictly disliked by the monks, who feel that is against the Buddhist religion."

Recruiting soldiers and training them in Lhasa was a problem in itself. To support the soldiers, new sources of revenue had to be found. And modern weapons demanded more money. Above all, Tibetan aristocracy and monastic establishment did not look on Tsarong's idea of strong military force with appreciation. The aristocracy was reluctant to support it as it called forth a male member of the family besides an increasing revenue. The monastic establishment saw in the growing military strength the death of their hold on the political pulse of the Tibetan government. But Tsarong forged ahead and soon the military strength started soaring. Side by side with his military duties, Tsarong had also imported machines that enabled the Dalai Lama to introduce paper currency. He also established a tea plantation in southern Tibet which was successfully managed by his soldiers. At his and Sir Charles Bell's suggestion, the Dalai Lama agreed to establish an English school in Lhasa. But opposition from the monastic establishment forced the school to Gyangtse where it was closed down after a few years. Some years before in 1913, four students were selected for study in England. With them went Lungshar Dorjee Tsegial, a 5th rank official as their guardian. Tsarong's son and other children of progressive noble families were already attending English schools in Darjeeling.

The Tibetan soldiers were then trained on British lines and promising youths were sent to Shillong and Quetta for further military training. As the senior commander-in-chief of the Tibetan army, Tsarong stationed a military guard at Tsarong House and gradually took the responsibility of deciding crucial matters of army discipline. An unfortunate incident occurred around 1917. A few Tibetan soldiers murdered one of their junior officers. Discipline was the backbone of the army and Tsarong at once ordered thorough investigations. When two of the culprits were found guilty, he shot them in the midst of people without any hesitation. As the Dalai Lama had decreed the abolition of capital pun-

ishment, Tsarong's decisive disciplinary action came as a rude shock and high-handedness to many. As the military steadily gained its strength, constantly supplying soldiers that were needed in eastern Tibet to defend the borders against Chinese incursions, the monastic reaction became bitter against Tsarong and even Sir Charles Bell and Kennedy, the two British officials then in Lhasa. During Monlam festival of 1922, when fifty to sixty thousand monks were in Lhasa, people begin to fear a clash between the soldiers and the monks. Many were hiding their properties. The monks turned aggressive and demanded to know who brought the British to Lhasa. Some placards urging to kill Sir Charles Bell and Kennedy were put up during the night. Groups of monks paraded the streets of Lhasa shouting slogans against Tsarong and the British visitors. Tsarong was now becoming unpopular. His life was often threatened. The windows of his house in Lhasa were broken by the monks who constantly demanded his resignation from the post of commander-in-chief and the cabinet. Tsarong knew the mood of the monastic establishment was against him. Therefore, he submitted his application for resignation directly to the Dalai Lama in which he said: "I am a man of the common people, I am not a member of the aristocracy. I am a man without learning. Thus I am unable to render good service. I therefore beg to be relieved of my three posts. If not all of three, then of two. If not even of two, then at any rate one." Tsarong was then a member of the Cabinet, Commander-in-chief and Master of the Mint. The Dalai Lama referred his application to the cabinet for their opinion. They refused to accept Tsarong's resignation for the third time.

The Tibetan military had undoubtedly become strong. But it was yet to gain respect and acceptance by the conservative society in which it functioned. Unfortunately, the elder generals were busy fighting the Chinese in eastern Tibet and the younger generals, trained in Gyantse and India tended to show off their progressive outlook a bit too much to the annoyance of the elder ministers. Soon rumours developed that civilian and military officials disagreed with

each other. This was soon confirmed when the Financial commissioners deliberately kept out the military members from a meeting of National Assembly whose sole purpose was to discuss the disbandment of an extra revenue raised by the military authorities. Not being able to get over this insult, the young generals led by Tsarong gate-crashed the meeting and quarreled with one of the Financial commissioners. During this scene, Tsarong demanded a military representative in the National Assembly. As it was an unheard of demand, Lungshar, the upcoming favourite of the Dalai Lama and president of National Assembly, secretly encouraged the monks to defy Tsarong's demand and make an issue out of it. Rumours spread like wild fire that Tsarong was on the verge of introducing a military government that will take the whole government under its control. At Lungshar's instigation, monks in thousand marched out to guard the Norbu Lingka and Potala palaces ostensibly to prevent a military take-over. None but Lungshar could have set this tense scene in Lhasa. The generals, including Tsarong were left stranded and shocked by the changes of the situation. More in surprise and panic than by any motive of a military take-over, Tsarong issued a hundred rounds of ammunition to the soldiers. Whole Lhasa was excited by this near confrontation of soldiers and monks. But nothing happened. The Dalai Lama was perturbed by this incident, and intervened directly in the dispute. The military was blamed and accused for unlawfully disturbing the session of the National Assembly. Two generals, Dapon Shazur and Dapon Tsogo were dismissed. A cabinet minister Kalon Kunsangtse was also dismissed. The monasteries were also warned to keep their monks under control or else the Dalai Lama would be severe with them. A calm was restored. Tsarong was becoming increasingly unpopular. A street song on this event said:

Oh! Cabinet ministers in session
What plans do they have?
They fail to cut out the root
And only succeed in peeling the branches!

The song implies that Tsarong — the root should be eliminated and not the younger generals who are mere branches. According to those that have been close to him, Tsarong was never a revengeful or opportunistic man. He was honest and farsighted. Above all, he was loyal to the Dalai Lama and Tibet. But incidents and his independent nature were to go against him. In 1923, the newly organised Tibetan police force clashed with an army garrison. Soon both sides started firing on each other. As the commander-in-chief, Tsarong put a stop to the fight and had the leg of the army instigator cut off. The other offenders had their ears cut off. This not only shocked Lhasa but annoyed the Dalai Lama who detected a strong streak of high-handedness in Tsarong. As Tsarong became more unpopular Lungshar gained more prominence. The rumour of Tsarong's military takeover did not subside in Lhasa. The Dalai Lama sent Tsarong to inspect the National Mint at Dromo because of the unfavourable situation in Lhasa. From there, Tsarong and his wife Pema Dolkar decided on a pilgrimage of India and Nepal. They arrived in Darjeeling during the winter of 1924 and visited Calcutta, Bombay, Bodh Gaya, Benaras, Kushinagar, Kathmandu. Everywhere, the British Indian Government showed him and his retinue the respect due to the commander-in-chief of Tibet. In Nepal, the Maharaja, Padma Shamsheer, sent his son and grandson to call on Tsarong. On his return journey, he was greeted at every stop. At Gyantse, Mr. Frank Ludlow, the Headmaster of the English school for Tibetan boys opened in 1923, had his students lined up to greet and welcome Tsarong.

But in Lhasa, the rumours of a military take-over supposedly master-minded by Tsarong once again came in street whispers and conversations. At Chushul — only a day's ride from Lhasa — a rude shock and disappointment awaited the Chaksam hero. A special messenger arrived to deliver a letter from the Kashag which read: "By order of His Holiness the Dalai Lama we have decided that the second-in-command, Dzasa Dumpa, can carry on the work of the Army headquarters as there is no anxiety in the country at the moment, so we need not a commander-in-chief". Tsarong

took the demotion in his dignified stride and returned to Lhasa. At once, he realised that his absence had cost him his post as his enemies had been active in their plot to degrade him. In his absence, all the younger officers loyal to him had been removed from the army for irrelevant and nonsensical reasons. General Dingja, Doring and Samdup Phodrang who had been trained in Shillong and Quetta were demoted for cutting their hair short during their training outside Tibet. Such were the ploy which were used to cut the very root of Tsarong's base in the military set-up. It was also said that his enemies had appealed the Dalai Lama to remove Tsarong from the Kashag and confiscate his properties. But the Dalai Lama, despite his suspicion of Tsarong's growing military strength and independent actions, always maintained his gratitude to the Chaksam hero who had once defended and saved him from the Chinese clutch. After his arrival in Lhasa, he was granted a private audience of the Dalai Lama. He left the new Tsarong house, built in 1923 which malignant gossip said was finer than the Norbu Lingka palace, in the morning and returned after a long conversation with the Dalai Lama at about 10 in the night. Once again, people thought Tsarong was back in favour. But this was to be his last private audience with the Dalai Lama for a long time. After this, Tsarong never went up to sit beside the Dalai Lama in the pavilion during public ceremonies but stayed in the Cabinet tent with other members. Gradually Tsarong was drifting away from the Tibetan political scene.

As a matter of fact, Tsarong could not have survived in the political jungle of Lhasa infested by the most unscrupulous and ambitious minds of the Tibetan aristocracy and monastic powers. Tsarong's main fault was his class. He was neither of the lay nobility nor of the powerful priesthood. He was a common Tibetan who was graced with the favour of the Dalai Lama due to his cleverness and courage. Having stayed in Urga, Peking and India at various stages of his life and having actively challenged the Chinese in mortal combat, he had more experience and shared a broader outlook than many of his contemporaries. His one aim was a

gradual modernisation of Tibet with the help of a strong military. Inspired and encouraged by the Dalai Lama, he embarked on his modernising mission but was soon blocked by the solid conservatism of the monasteries and the aristocracy. As the commander-in-chief of the Tibetan army, he often freed the Dalai Lama from the difficult situation of taking decisions connected with the discipline of the army. In this, he was too independent for his time. Even the Dalai Lama was shocked and annoyed. But Tsarong had his reasons. After his dismissal from the army, the Dalai Lama asked why he had shot and amputated men when Tibetan law forbid such punishments and why he kept a military guard at Tsarong house, a privilege reserved only for the Dalai Lama? Tsarong replied that as commander-in-chief of the Tibetan army, he felt it his duty to maintain the discipline of the army rather than refer such awkward questions to the Dalai Lama — the most spiritual institution of Tibet. The military guard at Tsarong House, he explained, was an honour not to an individual but to the commander-in-chief of the Tibetan army. But the real cause of Tsarong's downfall was not so much the monastic anger against his military modernisation and the jealousy of the lay nobility against his extensive influence and growing power or even the Dalai Lama's nascent suspicion of his independent action as the head of the military. Behind all these potential cause of Tsarong's downfall stood the diabolical genius of a self seeking and extremely brilliant Tibetan mind whose sole aim in Tibetan politics was to grasp the whole power in his hands to crush those that opposed and reward those that bowed. Such a personality is rare in Tibetan history. And he was Lungshar Dorjee Tsegal — already an established favourite of the Dalai Lama and the dominating voice in the *Tsongdu* deliberations that carried the National Assembly in the direction it wanted. Against Lungshar, Tsarong nor any one else had much chance. Whereas Tsarong was honest and forthright, Lungshar was scheming and self-seeking. He analysed and studied the mood of the time to jump at any opportunity to discredit or topple his enemy. In this, he was always successful leaving everyone aghast. And he

never defied the monasteries nor did anything to annoy them. He knew the power of the monasteries and used the monks to achieve his selfish ends with perfect timing and total effect.

After Tsarong's dismissal Dumpa Dzasa was appointed the commander-in-chief. He was a nephew of the Dalai Lama and Lungshar used him to fill the Dalai Lama's mind with doubt and suspicion against Tsarong. It is said Dumpa Dzasa shed tears before the Dalai Lama degrading and accusing Tsarong with the ambition of a military take-over. And the Dalai Lama, well aware of how Miwang Pholanay overshadowed the 7th Dalai Lama, may have actually feared and suspected Tsarong. But Dumpa Dzasa himself was a weak man, addicted to opium and incapable of managing the army. Perhaps it suited Lungshar's plan of a weak commander-in-chief who can not thwart his plan. Together, Dumpa Dzasa and Lungshar succeeded in degrading Tsarong by removing him from his powerful post. But unlike Lungshar, Tsarong did not have the wild drive for power. In his political wilderness, Tsarong remained a dignified personality and a jovial host of the many foreigners that visited Lhasa from time to time. Privately he may have resented the injustice which he had suffered but to his credit, he never shouted in public nor resort to political intrigue or military conspiracy to regain his lost power.

Lungshar was born in 1881 in Tsang Tanag to a poor noble family. But he was a brilliant and ambitious man who made his way to Lhasa for a job in the government. In December 1912, he was a humble 5th rank official working in the office of the Accountant General (*tsi-khang*) at Lhasa. Very soon after, the Dalai Lama appointed him to go to England with the four boys selected for modern education. Before leaving, he was promoted to the 4th rank. Lungshar was elated with the unexpected promotion and regarded himself in the light of a plenipotentiary entrusted with an important diplomatic mission. This irritated his British associates, who were disturbed by Lungshar's disposition to intrigue. Along with the four boys, Lungshar had brought his wife and two servants. They were travelling under the

charge of Mr. B.J. Gould and Mr. Laden la. At Calcutta, the Chinese representatives contacted Lungshar who made a faint attempt to divert the boys to China. From intercepted telegrams, it appeared that the Chinese minister in London was instructed to keep the Tibetan party under close observation. Gould's telegram dated 9th April, 1913 records: "The government of India are, I believe, in possession of information which shows that Kusho Lungshar engaged actively in intrigue with representatives, official and unofficial, of foreign powers while he was in India, and there is I believe, evidence that the Japanese would have been glad to secure the boys now in my charge for education in Japan. It will not be easy to control the movements of Kusho Lungshar when he is in England and it is possible that he will attempt to prosecute intrigues in that country. It is, therefore, I venture to think, politically desirable that he should be recalled to Tibet as soon as possible". Reaching England in June 1913 by sea from Bombay, Lungshar and the party were received in audience by King George V and Queen Mary to whom the letters and presents of the Dalai Lama were presented. The party spent some time in London and Aldershot. While in England, Lungshar took the opportunity to visit France, Germany and Holland and Belgium. On 21st September, 1913 Lonchen Shatra, the Prime Minister of Tibet, instructed Lungshar to pay £ 350 to the British government on account of the passage from India to England of the Tibetan party. But Lungshar failed to comply with the Prime Minister's instruction owing to the lack of funds. From an India Office minute dated 19th September, compiled by Mr. J.E. Shuckburgh it is stated: "I understand that Lungshar who brought with him about £ 400-500 in gold bars has spent a good deal of money in England and on his recent continental trip and is unlikely to be able to meet this bill for about £ 350". After more than a year's stay in England, Lungshar returned to Tibet in September 1914 with letter and presents from the British Crown to the Dalai Lama. His report of the Tibetan students progress in England and general observations about Europe and their political systems must have impressed the Dalai Lama whose

main concern after the recent declaration of Tibetan independence was its modernisation in every sphere. Soon afterwards, Lungshar was appointed a Minister of Finance.

Lungshar spoke a little English and sometimes wore a suit and a tie. The increasing military strength and training system called forth new sources of revenue. An office to revise the taxation and revenue system was created. Lungshar was one of its foremost champions. His main idea was to base the revenue in proportion to the size of the estates. With this idea, he visited Shigatse to adjust the financial and revenue arrangements between Tashi Lhunpo and Lhasa in 1919. His investigation of the revenue lapses of Tashi Lhunpo was thorough and meticulous. His report and recommendation to the government on his findings was straight and severe. The day the Lhasa government took their first step on Lungshar's recommendation was to open one of the saddest chapters in the history of modern Tibet. It led to the frightened flight of the humble and serene Panchen Lama to China in 1923.

The opium addict Dumpa Dzasa, the commander-in-chief was slack and inefficient. The Dalai Lama, disgusted with Dzasa, not only relieved him from his post but dismissed him altogether from the official group. In April 1929, Lungshar was appointed to the post. As the commander-in-chief and Financial minister of the Tibetan Government, Lungshar had reached the zenith of his power. Yet he was to pursue power with vehemence, plotting the downfall of his opponents with skill and sorcery.

As the commander-in-chief, he relaxed the discipline of the Tibetan army and increased their pay and rations. He did not forget the monasteries to whom he constantly offered gifts. This made him popular with both the army and the monasteries. But he remained extremely unpopular within the aristocracy. He was the favourite of the Dalai Lama. He commanded the Army and the Finance. Drunk with such power and influence he became callous and high-handed. Many of the lay officials had their estates confiscated right and left under Lungshar's direction. But for the time being, no one in Lhasa dared to openly oppose Lungshar.

The aristocracy, accustomed to such abuse of power and prestige by the corrupt ones like Lungshar was willing to wait for the day when they can give the dog a bad name and hang him.

In 1929, Lungshar's recklessness almost brought Tibet to war with Nepal over a very ordinary incident involving a Tibetan subject named Gyalpo married to a Sherpa girl who sold opium and liquor in his Lhasa shop named "Sherpa Gyalpo". As the Dalai Lama had banned such items, the Lhasa magistrates decided to arrest Gyalpo who sought asylum in the residence of the Gurkha representative. Things would have died down, but for Lungshar, who sent his troops into the Gurkha representative's residence to arrest the prisoner. This was against the rights granted to the Gurkha representative under the Treaty of 1856. Rumours of Gurkha soldiers marching against Tibet reached Lhasa and the Tibetan government prepared a few garrisons and despatched them to Shigatse. This crisis was brought on purely by the obstinacy of Lungshar but unfortunately Tsarong was to suffer a part of the consequence because of his friendship with the Gurkha government whose king he visited during his pilgrimage in 1924. As such, Tsarong went more out of favour with the Dalai Lama and was suddenly demoted from the post of a *Shape* — cabinet minister. Henceforth, Tsarong was merely a *Dzasa*.

Hardly had the cunning Lungshar taken a breath of fresh air in the volatile Lhasa establishment by acquiring the most important and powerful posts, his position appeared shaky and insecure. In the entourage of the Dalai Lama, a new star was rising. His name was Kuchar Thupten Kunphela. Like Tsarong, he was born to a poor peasant family. But unlike Tsarong, he was a monk — always present to attend on the Dalai Lama. Lungshar hated him as both their position and prestige survived on the favour of the Dalai Lama. But against Kuchar Kunphela, Lungshar's competition seemed futile if not suicidal.

Kunphela, it is said, would have become a good statesman had he received a good education. He was an intelligent boy from a peasant family whose work was carving wood-

blocks, for printing religious books, at Norbu Lingka. In 1925, when Tsarong fell from favour and stopped attending daily on the Dalai Lama, Kunphela started to attend on the Dalai Lama. Without any official standing or rank, Kunphela soon became a source of power and influence. Lungshar had plotted his way up to the commander-in-chief with brilliant and often unscrupulous and dishonest strokes. Kunphela had power and influence thrust upon him in an unexpected and almost accidental way. Having tasted power, both became ambitious. In the narrow corridors of Lhasa politics, they had to clash. It was only a matter of time.

After Tsarong's dismissal from the Cabinet, the Dalai Lama combined the mint, paper currency factory and the ammunition factory under one department called Drapchi Lekhung. He appointed Kunphela as its head assisted by Tsarong whose vast experience in Tibetan affairs commanded respect and recognition. This department steadily improved the quality of paper currency, imported ammunition and started electrifying Lhasa with the help of Ringang, one of the four boys, trained in England.

For Lungshar, Kunphela was almost a thorn in the throat. To crush Kunphela, he had to maintain his power, both in the military and civilian side. But his extreme partiality of defending his friends and high-handedness in degrading and demoting his foes had earned him such widespread unpopularity that very soon, the Dalai Lama relieved him from the post of commander-in-chief and conferred it on Kunphela. This was a severe blow to Lungshar who was left only with his civilian role.

Kunphela was now the real strong man of Lhasa. He controlled the military, mint, and the factories. With him, even the Kashag members had to be careful. The Dalai Lama favoured him strongly. Kunphela on his part was a devoted and dedicated man who, without a family or property to look after, directed his whole efforts towards the improvement of the administration. In Lhasa, Kunphela drove around in one of Dalai Lama's two private cars. It was an Austin A-40. When Kunphela drove around in Lhasa, it created quite a sensation. Everywhere, people crowded to see him.

Unlike Lungshar, Kunphela was not unkind towards Tsarong whose great experience and foresight in Tibetan politics he admired and respected. Often he sought advice and suggestions which Tsarong readily gave. Together they made the Drapchi Lekhung a model of success.

The Dalai Lama, overworked and strained by the administrative problems, was increasingly depending on Kunphela whom he trusted and favoured rather too highly now.

Williamson, the Political Officer of Sikkim, made this observation during an official reception at Norbu Lingka:

“The Dalai Lama was attended with tea on the dais by Kusho Kuhphel La, a tall rather good-looking young man of 28. He is, next to the Dalai Lama, undoubtedly the most powerful person in Tibet. He holds no official rank, but is always in personal attendance on the Dalai Lama who is very fond of him and treats him like a son. He has immense influence over the Dalai Lama. . . . He is extremely clever and intelligent and his talents would bring him to the fore anywhere.”

Kunphela's word became law and even the Kashag fully agreed with Kunphela on every matter, without raising a single question or voice in dissent. But Kunphela was not as high-handed or unjust as his power would entitle him to be. Though occasionally unpredictable and severe as when he dismissed a cabinet minister and several high ranking officials for inefficient handling of some renovation and construction work at the Potala and confiscated all their possessions, Kunphela did not seek thorough vengeance on his enemies as did Lungshar. He appointed two of Lungshar's own sons as ranking officers of the Dalai Lama's bodyguards although mutual tension and jealousy marked his relationship with their father. As the supreme favourite of the Dalai Lama he was said to have faithfully carried out the Dalai Lama's orders and wishes without any partiality. Nor did he try to play his role safe by aligning himself with a stronger party against another.

In 1931, Tibetan soldiers in eastern Tibet were able to drive the Chinese soldiers as far as Draggo but by 1932, the reinforced Chinese soldiers were steadily driving the

Tibetans back and threatening the capture of Chamdo. In Lhasa, the Dalai Lama dispatched troops after troops to repulse the Chinese and strengthen the Tibetan control in the region. In consultation with the Dalai Lama, Kuchar Thupten Kunphela embarked on recruiting the sons of the rich peasant families and the nobility into a special regiment called the Drong Drak Magar: *the Garrison of the Better Families*. There were about one thousand selected soldiers in this special regiment, housed in Drapchi. Yuthok and Jigme Taring who had received military training in Gyantse were appointed its senior and junior captains. Ngawang Jigme, later known as Ngapo, was also recruited in this regiment. Dapon Yuthok was responsible for recruitment and Dapon Taring for training especially in the use of machine guns under the overall supervision of Kuchar Kunphela. Though Kunphela never admitted that Drong Dark Magar was his political party which would keep him in power, his care and special treatment of this regiment left no doubt that it was to fulfil a special need which Kunphela must have foreseen. In the uncertain and blood thirsty arena of Lhasa politics where political hunters brought about the unexpected downfall of unsuspecting victims with the force and fury of fierce and angry hounds, Kunphela must have longed for a political base that will brave his storms and shield him from the clutch of the hunters and power hungry hounds. He fed his soldiers well. Gave them well tailored and good quality uniforms. He personally paid for the gold badges of the Dapons and ordered full British uniforms for the officers from Calcutta. Often delicious dried Yak meats were brought for the soldiers from Norbu Lingka. Though their pay was equal to that of the other soldiers, it was a special regiment of a special man. But unknown to Kunphela himself yet clear to others was the fact that the Drong Drak Magar was a colossal mistake. It made many unhappy and most of all the soldiers and the officers themselves. Being the sons of rich and well-to-do families and the nobility, they took no joy in joining the Army. Many, it is said, cried like babies when their hairs were cut for recruitment in this special regiment.

Street songs on the *Drong dark* regiment said:

Harsh orders of the Lord
Has forced me into *Drong dark* regiment
My hair, beautiful like flowers,
Has been cut as if it is willow.

and

Chensal Kunphela, the "favourite"
needs *Drong drak* regiment
We know not how long it will last
But for now, we have no choice
but to stay in the regiment....

Kunphela was powerful and his influence was harsh. Therefore, many unwilling families reluctantly send their unhappy sons to *Drong Drak* regiment. And once when an officer had the boldness to complain about the injustice of such compulsory recruitment, Kunphela had him lashed. No one really liked to be in *Drong Drak Magar*. Yet no one could escape it except by bribing or playing up to one of Kunphela's numerous favourites. Such a regiment, despite all its special privileges lacked the backbone to be a strong army or an effective political base. Instead of a strong ally who can withstand his adversaries, Kunphela had succeeded in building with great care and severity an extremely vulnerable conclave of young soldiers ready to desert their post and return home at the slightest excuse and provocation. With Lungshar standing by, looking for a chance to topple Kunphela whom he regarded responsible for his gradual downfall from the military power and the Dalai Lama's favour, *Drong Drak Magar* and its unhappy soldiers seemed to be the weak link in the chain of Kunphela's power and prestige. This weak link cracked and the crack widened when the Dalai Lama suddenly passed away under the strict and secret care of Kunphela. Many in Lhasa were dazed and surprised as few knew that the Dalai Lama was seriously ill. Leaving aside everything everyone went into mourning. The saddest and the most shocked must have been Kunphela himself. He knew he had come to the end of his political career. He turned over the keys and resigned his office

though many important officials and the Prime Minister persuaded him to remain in office and dined with him as an expression of their appreciation of his services to the Government. But premonition must have warned Kunphela that his days were now over. As of the grief and mourning mixed with the undercurrent of incertitude and panic prevailed in Lhasa at the demise of the Dalai Lama, Lungshar was sharpening his scimitar of vengeance against Kunphela. Tsarong was away from Lhasa and the scene of dirty politics that was to follow. On the fourth day after the demise of the Dalai Lama, all the government officials and the three abbots of the three major monasteries assembled to discuss administrative matters relating to the choice of a regent who must fill the interregnum before the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama is discovered. In keeping with historical tradition, the abbots of the three major monasteries opined that a reincarnated Lama should be elected to the regency. Most officials agreed with this suggestion. A few suggested that Prime Minister Langdun with a monk and lay associate should be bestowed the regency. Quite a strong section of the lay officials advocated Kunphela as the administrator. While practically the whole government was involved in this important administrative discussion, the impatient soldiers of *Drong Drak Magar* came marching to demonstrate before Norbu Lingka palace demanding their disbandment. Kunphela's backbone was being crushed. The tempting whispers of Lungshar telling the soldiers that the right time has come to resign from the special regiment had its effect. Deliberately misled by a few officers, the whole regiment, instead of mourning the death of the Dalai Lama, went to demonstrate in front of the Norbu Lingka. Breaking the important session of selecting the regent, the Kashag came out to quell the demonstrators ordering them to disperse and report back to their duty of guarding the mint and the ammunition factories. But instead of obeying the orders of the Kashag, the soldiers whom Kunphela had trained and brought up with such care and lavish facilities, returned to Lhasa. This miserable conduct of the *Drong Drak Magar* and their officers at this critical juncture disap-

pointed those that supported Kunphela in the session underway, hoping to make him the administrator. Their voice died down as if strangled suddenly by a sharp twist of fate and the field was open for Lungshar whose burning desire of the moment was to degrade and topple Kunphela. Taking the session under his control, Lungshar with his skill for demagoguery and forceful persuasiveness—influenced the abbots to demand that the deserters of the *Drong Drak Magar* be replaced by the monks who will guard the mint and the ammunition factory. The implication behind this suggestion was clear. The monasteries, the traditional rival of the aristocracy, was going to exercise a stronger influence in the coming events. But Kalon Trimon, the veteran of the 1912 War Department, rose to the occasion and rebuffed that the Kashag can not allow such an unwise and unnecessary step of monks doing the duties of soldiers and pronounced that the Dalai Lama's bodyguards will guard the mint and ordered them to shoot anyone who obstructs them from guarding the mint. This was a set-back for Lungshar but he had more cards up his sleeve. Plotting actively with his supporters, Lungshar quickly drew up charges that hit Kunphela where it most pained. In his petition to the Cabinet and the Assembly, he asked for an investigation into the circumstances that led to the demise of the Dalai Lama hinting that the Dalai Lama's sudden death, without any previous signs of sickness, came as a sad and mysterious blow to the people. Lungshar suggested that an investigation would reveal a very convincing and objective record of the circumstances that led to the death of the Dalai Lama. The Lhasa air became thick with various rumours of poisoning and black-magic. None but Lungshar could have conjured up such an atmosphere. Into this medieval drama, he introduced the first dose of a modern political idea. Being out of favour with the Kashag responsible for the daily administrative affairs, Lungshar suggested that the investigation should be headed by the Assembly, the body which in theory represented the Tibetan public opinion, but in practice was controlled by himself, shielded by the abbots of the monasteries. Accordingly the investigations were carried on.

Kunphela and his associates including the medium of Nechung oracle and the physician of the Dalai Lama Jampa Yeshe were interrogated. Once the investigations were concluded under the instigation of Lungshar, Kunphela, his father and friends were arrested and imprisoned. Lungshar sought to inflict either death or mutilation on Kunphela. In this, he remained unsuccessful as Kunphela's popularity drew many sympathisers from both the monasteries and the lay section of society. It was then decided to exile Kunphela to Demo Chabnag in Kongpo. His property was confiscated. Lungshar, the head of the Assembly was once again at the peak of power. Behind him stood the solid block of the three monasteries whose abbots supported his idea of subordinating the Kashag under the Assembly. Soon the Kashag had subjugated itself before the Assembly. Kunphela was degraded. During the investigations, he was made to stand and later kneel before the Commission. Soon after he was imprisoned in Sharchenchok and then accordingly exiled mainly by the manipulation of Lungshar but the decree confirming the crime and punishment of Kunphela was issued by the Prime Minister Langdun and the Kashag.

Street songs then said:—

Kuchar (Kunphela) is meditating
in Sharchenchok (the prison)
His car is in Norbu Lingka (the palace)
eating grass

After his exile, another song asked:—

That all powerful person
Who drives the British car,
That "favourite" son of the gods,
Please tell us where has he gone?

The Assembly was now all powerful. As an instrument of Lungshar's political ambition, he wanted to shape it into a concrete platform to support him in reducing the Kashag to virtual ineffectiveness. The abbots gave Lungshar a large measure of support at this critical time though it is unclear whether they were spellbound by Lungshar's political

strategies or deliberately supported him to use him to further their own political ends. Anyway, the Assembly selected to the regency a young reincarnation from Radreng Monastery. In the beginning of 1934, Radreng Rinpoche, little over twenty years of age and quite inexperienced in matters of state, was installed to the throne. Prime Minister Langdun was retained to serve as his associate. The regent was young and inexperienced. Langdun, the Prime Minister was a gentle person who lacked the inclination for serious involvement in politics. Perhaps, it suited Lungshar and his Assembly to conduct the administration as they wished.

Since the demise of the Dalai Lama, Lungshar's manipulation and achievement was impressive. He had degraded and exiled Kunphela. Disbanded the *Drong Drak Magar* and subordinated the Kashag to the Assembly of which he was the most influential speaker. His main support came from the abbot of the three monasteries whose monks he hoped will replace the soldiers of *Drong Drak Magar*. In this he remained unsuccessful as he was thwarted by Kalon Trimon. Somehow Lungshar had to do something to get rid of the Cabinet Ministers whose conservative, cautious and unimpressive Kashag thwarted his ambition to achieve total power.

In 1934, Lungshar founded a secret party. He called it *Kyichog Kunthun* (Harmonious Union). At first, it was small and held secret meetings. They send out appeals to recruit new members. Many junior officials, mostly unhappy, dissatisfied and hungry for changes signed up. Some of the members were learned and brilliant while others were opportunistic and treacherous. One such member to sign up was Kapshodpa Chogyal Nyima. As the *Kyichog Kunthun*, Lungshar's replica of Kunphela's *Drong Drak Magar*, increased in strength, they held their meetings openly and in general gave the impression of an active political organisation which worked feverishly in fulfilling its aims. Lungshar was talking in terms of a republic in which the Assembly, under his leadership, will speak on behalf of the country. At the same time, Lungshar adopted a very

anti-Chinese foreign policy. His behaviour towards the Chinese government was independent, haughty and often hostile. His anti-Chinese policy was partly due to the controversy over the return of the Panchen Lama whom the Chinese wanted to escort to Lhasa with 300 soldiers. To this Chinese initiative, everyone in Lhasa was opposed but more so Lungshar since he was mainly responsible for the flight of the Panchen Lama in 1923. Lungshar took no joy in the expected return of the Panchen Lama whom he had enough reasons to fear. Lungshar, therefore, contacted the British telling them to pay attention towards the strong Chinese request to accept a Chinese representative in Lhasa to conduct negotiations which will certainly be accepted just after the death of the Dalai Lama. A telegram was sent to Chiang-kai-shek and the Chinese government at Lungshar's initiative, informing them that all the matters relating to Tibet in China may be referred to the Tibetan representative in Nanking as the Prime Minister and the Kashang were conducting state business. The Chinese government was warned in clear terms that if anything were done through the influence of persons, who wanted to create trouble between the two countries, such action would never be tolerated even if Tibet were reduced to the last man. This was a veiled warning to the Panchen Lama's entourage and their politicking with the Chinese government. To the British officers, Lungshar's stand came as a surprise. As the commander-in-chief of Tibet and adviser of the Dalai Lama, Lungshar's ascendancy coincided with the sharp turn away from modernisation and British connection with Lhasa.

Meanwhile, Lungshar's idea of a republic was creating doubts in the minds of many. The monasteries began to wonder about the role of religion and monastic establishment in a republic. They began to wonder if Lungshar, a layman was not using them to get more power for himself. On the other hand, serious doubts began to appear in the Kashag whether Lungshar was being used to subordinate them by the monastic leaders. Unfortunately, Kashag did not have a leader so forceful as Lungshar. Their main figure was Kalon Trimon. He was a colleague of the courageous

Chamba Tender in the War Department which drove the Chinese away from Central Tibet in 1912. He also accompanied Kalon Shatra to the Simla Convention of 1914 and was rewarded by the Dalai Lama for his meticulous documentation of the proceedings of that convention. Lungshar hated him strongly. But Trimon was a conservative who was cautious and did not budge unless necessary.

Lungshar's party, after days and nights of feverish meetings and discussions drew up a petition which they presented to the government. In it, many reforms in the administration were suggested. The most crucial was the demand to have officials selected directly by the people. This was anathema to the aristocracy whose very life blood was its hereditary privileges. It seemed that even within the *Kyichog Kunthun* itself, there was a secret inner chamber whose members discussed the real and confidential scheme of Lungshar's party. And Kapshodpa Chogyal Nyima was a confidential member of this secret inner circle.

The Prime Minister and the Kashag consulted the regent Radreng Rinpoche on this petition. As they did not have an exact idea of the real strength of Lungshar's party and could not guess the reaction of the three monasteries on the issue, they were thrown into a state of fear. In the midst of this fear and chaos, Kapshodpa informed Kalon Trimon that Lungshar was plotting to kill him and the other members of Kashag. Kalon Trimon escaped to Drepung and sought asylum there. To his relief and surprise, Trimon realised that the monastery no longer showed any sympathy for Lungshar. From Drepung, he contacted the other two monasteries and thoroughly explained to them that if Lungshar's idea of a republic came into existence, both the Buddhist tradition and the monasteries will suffer. The Dalai Lama's *Last Political Testament* dangled before their eyes. To overcome such dangers, the three monasteries pledged their support to Kashag. Kalon Trimon was now confident that Lungshar had come to the end of his road.

On 10th May, the undercurrents of panic and tension created in Lhasa by the secretive events came to a point of crisis. The Regent, Prime Minister and the Kashag summoned

Lungshar to the Potala. An unsuspecting Lungshar walked into Potala with some armed servants. The regent questioned him in front of the government officials present. Lungshar began to suspect betrayal and ran for the door. One of the giant monk door keepers caught him. His armed servants ran away without even an attempt to rescue him. As a sign of dismissal and degradation, his official dress was torn off. When his boots were pulled off, some pieces of paper fell out. One such piece was swallowed by Lungshar immediately. The other piece was snatched by his captors. On it was written the name of Kalon Trimon. The other piece was presumed to contain the names of the Prime Minister and the regent. Apparently, Lungshar had engaged in his favourite pastime of sorcery to get rid of his enemies. But for once, Lungshar—blinded by his ambition and overconfident of his party had betrayed himself. Rimshi Kapshodpa was also taken into custody as a ploy to extort incriminating confessions against Lungshar. The remaining members of Lungshar's *Kyichog Kunthun* held a secret meeting and approached the monasteries for assistance to solve the crisis. The monasteries did not show any strong interest of support but agreed to send a deputation of senior monks to request the regent and the Prime Minister for Lungshar's release. But when the Prime Minister and the regent explained in detail the apparently criminal designs of Lungshar behind his slogan for a republic, the deputation of senior monks unanimously condemned Lungshar and agreed with the government that such a man was not worthy of support. Lungshar's fate seemed sealed. But worse was to follow.

The day after Lungshar's arrest, the Kashag, fully confident of the monastic support so far denied to them by Lungshar, arrested eight of the most prominent members. This arrest intimidated the other members who cared more for their personal safety rather than the political ideals to which they have been introduced by Lungshar. The party disappeared like drops of rain falling on sands. From the confession extorted Kapshodpa accused Lungshar, with documentary evidence of forging a plot to murder Kalon Lama

Gedun Chodar and Kalon Trimon, to procure complete political power. Other confessions disclosed that Lungshar was to have been made the colleague of the regent and perhaps even the king of Tibet. The secret inner chamber of this party was to plot the murder of a number of senior lay officers and debts owed to the Tibetan government by many of Lungshar's party members and supporters were to be cancelled null and void on the dawn of their victory when a Tibetan *People's Republic* was to be announced.

Lungshar's crimes were listed. The regent Radreng Rinpoche, unwilling to condemn Lungshar to death as capital punishment had been abolished by the late Dalai Lama, referred the sentence to the National Assembly. Though Lungshar had dominated this body for long, his harsh and high-handed conduct from the day he was appointed a *Tsipon* in 1919 as a rising favourite of the late Dalai Lama, had earned him a large section of silent enemies who eagerly awaited his end. To his enemies, the day had now come to give the dog a bad name and hang him. When it was suggested that Lungshar's eyes should be gouged out, it was unanimously supported. And for Lungshar, a lonely pseudo-revolutionary whose attempt at some form of democracy was crushed both by his own self-seeking methods and the conservative weight of his society, darkness surrounded him forever as he was given a strong toxic before he was blinded.

The cautious Kashag, perhaps fearing to try too far the remaining dissident elements at large in Lhasa, used their success over Lungshar's conspiracy with tact and moderation. Only eight of the most prominent member were banished. They were Changlochen Gung Sonam Gyalpo, Kusung Rupon Chapase, Sherpang Gyalkhar Nangpa, Shod-drung Drakthonpa Dorjee Rigzin, Shod-drung Manriwa, Tsedrong Letsen Kyidtopa, Chakpe Dodam Thupten Delek and Yulha Tenpa Tsewang. Other members were subjected to minor fines to within months the whole atmosphere of panic and political instability died down. Out of this short and exciting period of dissent and confusion emerged an unimpressive and mutilated government that was to waste itself dry under the rule of the regents. Lungshar, despite

his criminal or revolutionary designs, remains a controversial figure of Tibetan history. The Lhasa street singers sang:

Kapshodpa, the white cock
Crowed too early
Lungshar, like *Drimed Kunden*
Had to give his eyes in alms.

This song which compares Lungshar to *Drimed Kunden*, the hero of an extremely popular opera who gives even his eyes in alms out of compassion for suffering humanity, establishes evenly the popular base of his movement. Many member of his *Kyichog Kunthun* were intelligent Tibetans aware of the need for social and political changes that will enable Tibet to guard its independence. Lungshar's idea of a republic, implanted in his mind during his stay in Europe, would have served Tibet well had it been properly executed. But unfortunately the root cause of the failure was in Lungshar himself. Though extremely learned and brilliant, Lungshar's ambition for power was wild and he did not hesitate to justify any means to achieve his ends. In him, the western mentality and the Tibetan method brought an uncomfortable blend. His progressive outlook was overshadowed by his superstitious mentality. His skill for a sensible change of systems was poisoned by his strong selfishness. His extreme partiality brought him many enemies who had the patience to wait for him to rise high so that he fell down the heavier. When Lungshar tried to inflict death or mutilation on Kunphela, the Assembly did not support him. When his own mutilation was suggested the support was unanimous. In the end, it was Lungshar's warped personality that brought him to undergo such a rare and severe punishment. The story of Lungshar is a tragedy both of a callous system that crushed the progressive ideas of a brilliant individual and an intelligent individual overpowered by a lust for power which, disguised in numerous cloaks often more reactionary than progressive, tried to control the nerve-pulse of the system that he half-wanted to overthrow. Lungshar, a man of our own times, remains an enigma. His place in Tibetan his-

tory is controversial but never threatened. Though apparently self-seeking, revengeful and diabolical in his means and methods of attaining power and prestige, he was a cut above the others. History can condemn him but can not forget him. For he created history as very few Tibetans have done. In the words of H.E. Richardson: "Lungshar was an unusual phenomena in Tibet. In him certain qualities inherent in the Tibetan character were overdeveloped and exaggerated. A strain of recklessness made him in the well-worn phrase, "drunk with power."

The Regents: Radreng and Tagdra

In his *Last Political Testament*, the 13th Dalai Lama warned: "..... remember I am now reaching my fifty eighth year and as you all are aware that between me and the new reincarnation there will be a period when there will be no ruler." As a dismal fact of modern Tibetan history, the regents Radreng and Tagdra fulfilled the Dalai Lama's warning to the letter by their extremely callous handling of the Tibetan administration, by treating it merely as a source of personal enrichment and an avenue of rewarding friends and supporters and punishing enemies and critics. It was one of the darkest period of Tibetan history when corruption at every level was rampant and an undercurrent of tension and rapid deterioration in social and moral standards was gradually seeping across Lhasa. A song of the Lhasa street lamented:

Yesterday's Tibetan Government
Had Tigers and Lions facing each other
Today, the wolves and the foxes
Have blown the Government to wind.

Radreng and Tagdra followed each other as the regents of Tibet. Radreng was young and inexperienced. Tagdra was old and conservative. On their own, these two regents can not have intended to harm Tibet in the way they did as both were spiritually inclined and devoted to the propagation of Buddhism, if not anything else. But being recognised reincarnations of established monasteries, they were under the influence, if not the domination, of their chamberlains and attendants for most of whom the enrichment and welfare of their own monasteries was the first and foremost abuse to which they subjected their newly derived post and authority. But from the annals of the regents Radreng as

well as Tagdra, starkly stand out as said specimen of irresponsible rulers reluctant to rule and face the administrative problems of a tough time but rather hide themselves behind the false security of their attendants and friends, who ruled Tibet in their names.

Regents in Tibet were mostly selected from about seven prominent monastic establishments. The most important were Tengyeling or Demo Kundeling, Tsomonling, Radreng etc. It was after the death of the seventh Dalai Lama that the tradition of appointing high incarnate Lamas to the regency was adopted. The first *rGyal-tsab* or regent was Demo Tulku Ngawang Jampal Gelek Gyatso (1757-1777). Before him, a regent was called a *Desi*. The first *Desi* was Sonam Chopel and the most well known *Desi* was Sanggyay Gyatso, both appointed to the post by the 5th Dalai Lama, in recognition of their administrative talents and learning. Ever since 1757 when the tradition of appointing high incarnate Lamas to the regency was established, this institution deteriorated. Another factor which contributed to the abuse of power during a regency was the unquestioned support rendered by the monasteries to the regents. Any regent was either a graduate of the Sera or Drepung monasteries. Because the monasteries were ever ready to render their support, the regents begin to wield immeasurable power and establish their political foothold. As such, the flaw was inherent in the very institution of the regency which often conferred unexpected power on weak and confused individuals, who though trained in spiritual aspects, showed total lack of administrative experience and knowledge. Consequently, regents have contributed some of the most chaotic and disturbing chapters to Tibetan history. For example, the Tengyeling affair—involving an attempt on the life of the young 13th Dalai Lama was the plot of the ex-regent. From dismal and often sinister history of the regents of Tibet, the chapters of Radreng and Tagdra are the ugliest of all as the struggle for power and prestige was not between the good and the bad but between the bad and the ugly.

Perhaps because Tibet was inevitably weakened due to dissent and mismanagement during a regency, a progressive

section of the aristocracy strongly opined to dispense with the whole institution of the regency by conferring the same power either to the Prime Minister or else select a lay administrator. Such suggestions came forward quite strongly in the first meeting of the National Assembly after the death of the 13th Dalai Lama. Many hoped either Prime Minister Langdun or else Kuchar Kunphela could fill the post. Unfortunately, it was a time when Lungshar was manipulating the conservative ambitions and emotions of the abbots of the three monasteries against the dying influence of Kuchar Kunphela as related earlier. In the confusion and excitement of Kunphela's downfall at the hands of Lungshar, the progressive idea of replacing the regency with a more responsible institution was overlooked. Quite a strong opinion was also in favour of appointing to the regency an ordinary monk named Jampa Chodrag—an ex-Gaden Tripa who was learned and did not own any estate nor possessed much wealth. But the ex-Gaden Tripa refused the regency as he was very old, close to eighty and had no interest whatsoever in politics. Shortly afterwards, a young incarnate lama of the Radreng monastery was appointed to the regency. His name was Radreng Tulku Thupten Jamphel Yeshe Gyaltzen. It was for the second time that a Radreng incarnate was installed on the throne of the regency. The first Radreng Tulku Ngawang Yeshe Tsultrim Gyaltzen was appointed the regent in 1811 during the minority of the 11th Dalai Lama. As this Dalai Lama died very young, the same Radreng Tulku was appointed as the regent for a second term in 1856 when he conducted the search and discovery of the 12th Dalai Lama. Radreng is considered one of the holiest place in Tibet itself since the great Indian Pandit Atisha resided there for a long time and his foremost disciple Dromtonpa built the Radreng monastery. For many years, Radreng monastery was directly supervised by the government. It was only during the time of the 7th Dalai Lama that the monastery acquired its first permanent abbot. The 7th Dalai Lama offered this monastery to his tutor the first Radreng Trichen Ngawang Chogden. Since then Radreng monastery was firmly established.

Radreng, besides being holy was also a very beautiful place. Situated some fifty miles to the north of Lhasa, Radreng is between two high passes and a suspension bridge across the Phod do Tsangpo, the source of the Kyichu river. Its mountainous surrounding is filled with juniper forest and rhododendrons of many varieties. Down by the monastery with its roof of sithering gold flowed the Radreng river in the deep valley. In summer, wild flowers fill the whole valley, making it one of the most breath-taking pilgrimage site in northern Tibet. Among the monastery's most precious possessions were a small bronze image of Lord Buddha brought by Pandit Atisha from India and many volumes of Tibetan manuscripts and rare collections of Sanskrit manuscripts originally written on palm leaves.

In 1912 when the 13th Dalai Lama was returning from his second exile in India to Lhasa where the Tibetan War Department, under the combined leadership of Chamba Tendar, Trimon and Dazang Dadul were witnessing the surrender of the Chinese soldiers, a poor peasant family in the Gya-tsa district of Dagpo situated to the south-east of Lhasa was giving birth to a son who was to show a number of extraordinary signs in the coming months. First, he left a clean foot print on a slab of stone. One day he astounded his mother by closing the mouth of a clay pot with a string to save the boiling soup from spilling out. Another time, he struck a wooden peg effortlessly into a nearby rock claiming his visitors will need it to tie their horses. Visitors did indeed come. They were from the Radreng monastery. The miraculous deeds of the young boy had spread in the Dagpo district where not long ago, the 13th Dalai Lama had also taken birth in the family of Langdun. This little boy was brought to Lhasa on a very cold winter day, when unusually large flakes of snow fell, which the Tibetans consider an auspicious omen believing it to be a rain of heavenly flowers. Indeed the boy was unusually lucky. After his initiation in the Sera monastery as all the lineage of Radreng incarnates belonged to the Jay College of Sera, the Dalai Lama himself accepted the offer of his crown hair and bestowed on him the monkhood name of

Jampal Yeshe Tenpai Gyaltzen. After the required years of studies, he passed the special Geshe examination of the high incarnates which was both shorter and easier than the Geshe Lharampa examination undertaken by the ordinary monks. After graduation, Redreng Tulku settled in Radreng monastery. Those that went on pilgrimage to Radreng and sought his blessings found him a very warm hearted incarnate who saved the lives of hundreds of yaks and sheeps from the slaughter-houses and set them free. The innocent, if not the dull life of this young boy would have remained undisturbed in the beautiful valley of Radreng had not the the selfish politics of Lhasa selected him the regent with nothing but his youth and inexperience to help him in the affairs of the state. The reception in Lhasa for the newly appointed regent Radreng Rinpoche was ecstatic. People remembered the special visit the Dalai Lama paid to Radreng monastery a year before his demise. People beleived that the Dalai Lama at that time rendered detailed political and administrative guidance and advice to Radreng Rinpoche. However, the Dalai Lama himself did not issue any statement nor even vaguely hint that Radreng Tulku should be appointed to the regency nor did Radreng Rinpoche claim any special right to the regency. As mentioned earlier, the 13th Dalai Lama lamented that in the interval between him and the new reincarnation, there will be a time "when there will be no ruler."

Again it was a very cold winter day of thick snowfall when the Radreng regent made his entry into the Potala. Despite the weather, much pomp and ceremony greeted the regent carried in a green palanquin by four uniformed men. The regents residence—called the *Shod gzim Chung* or the Lower Chambers was one floor below the chambers of the Dalai Lama in the Potala palace itself. Near to the regent's residence was the office called *Shod-gag* entirely staffed by monks. The first day of the regent in Lhasa went off well except for the surprising fact that the snow washed away the colours off the ceremonial dresses of the officials made of rare brocade. Challenging political and administrative issues further complicated by sinister plots awaited the

young regent. Lungshar had just ruined the political fortunes of Kunphela who was imprisoned and then exiled to Kongpo. Further problems developed when Lungshar's plot of intrigue and murder surfaced as related earlier. Though young and inexperienced, regent Radreng presided over the arrest and imprisonment of Lungshar. When the Assembly and the Kashag sought the regent's verdict on the political conspiracy and crimes of Lungshar, Radreng warmly ordered that he should not be sentenced to death as it is against Buddhist religion. In the process, the Assembly and Kashag blinded Lungshar whose political fortunes had by then crumbled to pieces. By and far the regent with the support of the government and sympathy of the people was able to withstand the first political storms of his reign. Even before the interim government under the regent had settled down after this tense interlude, they were faced with a difficult problem. The Kuomintang government of Nanking persistently requested the Tibetan government to accept a Chinese condolence mission. Since 1912, when the last Chinese soldier was evacuated from Tibet, the 13th Dalai Lama had strictly forbidden any Chinese mission to enter Tibet. As Lungshar had foretold, the Chinese condolence mission under General Huang Mu Sung was allowed to enter Tibet. This was a serious mistake. A large Chinese party with a wireless transmitting station arrived in Lhasa in April 1934 and Tibetans gave them an elaborate welcome. At the same time, the British Indian government sent a similar condolence mission under Rai Bahadur Norbu Dhondup. The objective of the Chinese mission was to probe the political mood of Lhasa after the death of the Dalai Lama who had fanatically opposed any form of dealings with or concessions to China. They wanted to see whether the interim government and the regent Radreng could be persuaded or intimidated into some kind of compromise. The objective of the British mission was to keep an eye on the Chinese mission. Condolence was not a prerogative of politics. But Huang Mu-sung went out his way to prove he had journeyed to Lhasa only for the ceremonies of condolence and went visiting monasteries, offering lavish donations and

attending every reception. He also visited the Radreng regent and other high officials and offered lavish gifts to them. Somewhere in the numerous rounds of visits and gifts, he posthumously offered a seal to the Dalai Lama which the Dalai Lama, if alive, would never have accepted. After his initial round of success, General Huang touched on the subject of the return of the Panchen Lama which was a source of great sadness and anxiety for the Tibetans. He hinted in private that he was ready to discuss political issues if the Tibetans wanted. As the Tibetans stuck strongly to the preservation of Tibetan independence and adopted more or less the same line of the deceased Dalai Lama, General Huang turned the negotiations over to one of his Lhasa born staff Wu Min-Yuan on an informal footing. Before the termination of his visit, General Huang Mu-sung finally emphasised three points:

- 1) Tibet must become a part of China.
- 2) Tibet should cease to have direct relations with foreign countries.
- 3) A Chinese commissioner should be stationed in Lhasa.

The Tibetan government expressed their willingness to accept Chinese suzerainty according to the terms of the 1914 convention and affirmed that they would conduct their own foreign affairs and maintain their friendship with the British government. In principle, the Tibetan government made no political concessions except expressing their willingness to negotiate along the lines of the 1914 convention. Nevertheless, General Huang had succeeded in breaking down the door of Lhasa closed to Chinese for the past twenty years by the late Dalai Lama. He managed to get a foothold by leaving behind two liaison officials and the wireless set which gradually shaped into a regular Chinese mission. The British India also established a mission with a wireless station and a hospital. It was then that the Tibetan government opened a Foreign Affairs Office. While the British representative conducted his official communications through this office, the Chinese representative bypassed this office and went directly to the Kashag. Most ingenious of all,

the Chinese government sent regular payments to a number of Tibetan officials, from regent Radreng downwards. These payments were accepted as private presents and street rumours in 1934 and afterwards talked of how large sums of money from the Chinese government found their way to the regent's treasure. Perhaps it was because the regent often sent traders to China to purchase satin and porcelain some of which he used and the rest he sold in Lhasa.

The regent was then a pleasant and friendly young man. The two most important tasks before him were the building of the gold mausoleum of the late Dalai Lama and discovery of the 14th Dalai Lama. Meanwhile, the vague assurance and understandings between the Tibetan government and General Huang Mu-sung evaporated as the news of Panchen Lama's return to China with an escort of three or four hundred Chinese soldiers reached Lhasa. At the same time, Topgyal Pandatsang, a friend and supporter of Kunphela led his Markham militia and attacked the Tibetan government troops of Dapon Nornang and captured the whole of Markham. His idea of an independent Kham was widely distributed in pamphlets. In Lhasa his brother Yarpel Pangdatsang apologised on his behalf and compensated the government for the damages done by Topgyal. And the real danger, forecast in the *Last Political Testament* of the 13th Dalai Lama, made a brief appearance on the Tibetan frontiers. The Long March of the Chinese communists under Mao had touched Tibetan areas in Ba, Lithang, Nyarong, Derge and Horkhog etc. Overwhelmed by Tibetan hospitality to his thousands of poorly equipped and half starved troops Mao said: "Some day we want to repay the Tibetans."

In Lhasa, the regent was busy supervising the construction of magnificent golden tomb of the late Dalai Lama which Tibetans desired to equal if not surpass in magnificence the tomb of the Great 5th Dalai Lama who first founded and shaped the government and institution of *Gaden Phodrang*. The regent appointed Kalon Trimon Norbu Wangyal to head the committee for the construction of the tomb. The tomb finally measured six storeys high. As it

was enormous in size, an annexe temple was specially constructed and attached to the western face of the Potala to house it. The regent named the tomb *Gelek Dod-jo* meaning "Glorious like a Wishfulfilling Cow". The opening ceremony was celebrated in great pomp and show. Every one joined in rejoicing the important occasion of paying homage to the memory of one of the greatest temporal and spiritual leaders of Tibet.

Having completed successfully the construction of the golden tomb of the 13th Dalai Lama, the regent immediately embarked on the search for the 14th Dalai Lama. In the Spring of 1935, the regent Radreng accompanied by Kalon Trimon and Kadrung Letsap Shakabpa journeyed to Chokhorgyal monastery founded by the second Dalai Lama Gedun Gyatso. Ten miles to the east of this monastery was situated the extraordinary lake called *Lhamoi Latso* meaning "the life lake of Palden Lhamo" which revealed the future in vivid vision. The discovery of the 13th Dalai Lama was done successfully after a visit to the lake. After days of meditation and appropriate religious ceremonies, the regent saw the necessary visions which were carefully recorded. Back in Lhasa, the regent consulted the oracles and sought the advice of the high incarnate Lamas. He also took into careful consideration the various auspicious and significant signs which appeared in Lhasa itself. After such detailed consultation and considerations, the regent concluded that the new Dalai Lama will be discovered towards the east. Intelligent and responsible incarnate Lamas and dedicated officials were selected. Different search groups were dispatched to different districts in eastern Tibet to search for the child destined to be the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet.

The regent was now popularly loved and respected by the common Tibetans for his dedicated work towards the completion of the magnificent golden tomb of the 13th Dalai Lama and the efficient and honest way in which he conducted the preliminary search for the new Dalai Lama. Moreover, the regent had renovated *Tsuglag Khang* — the main cathedral in Lhasa alongwith many other monasteries

including Radreng itself. The credit of such achievement on the part of the young and inexperienced regent goes mostly to his private Chamberlain. He was an old man, experienced in the affairs of states as he had served the previous incarnation of Radreng Tulku for a very long time. According to those that knew him, he was a paragon of good virtue who guided and restrained the immature regent in managing the government smoothly without any cause for complaints. But within the Radreng enclave, there were elements who disliked the wise and restraining counsel and influence of the old Chamberlain. The two most prominent among them were Nyungnay Lama and Khardo Tulku. Both were incarnates and intimate friends of the regent. Nyungnay Lama was a petty incarnate Lama who did not own a monastery and was merely in-charge of small temple called Nyungnay Lhaxhang near Radreng Labrang in Lhasa. He was not highly trained in theological education but had some knowledge of the outside world as he had lived in Urga in Mongolia during the 1920s. The roots of their friendship went back to their predecessors's time. It was a very close friendship and Nyungnay Lama's advice on major administrative matters was much sought after. He was given the position of chief of newly established private secretariat under the regent. This private secretariat was more or less a business venture with a branch office in Kalimpong covering the Darjeeling district.

The regent's second friend, Khardo Tulku, was a high incarnate from the Jay College of Sera monastery. His predecessors were accomplished Lamas like Zodpa Gyatso and Rolpai Dorjee etc. Their friendship forged firmly during their college days in Sera university. Now they were often together and sought each other's support and suggestions.

But these friends of the regent were without official titles or posts. Nor did they own a permanent seat in the Radreng Labrang itself. But they were feared and respected by the people at large. Yet as long as the old Chamberlain remained in office, they could not wield the influence they had over the regent to their private end. And they conspired and started criticising the Chamberlain in various ways. Finally

the regent ceremoniously discharged his Chamberlain on the grounds of old age. The Chamberlain retired to Radreng monastery where he passed his days in peace — away from the stress and strain of the storm that was to gather out of the unrestrained poiticking of the Radreng enclave.

Immediately after the retirement of the Chamberlain, the Regent appointed his twenty six year old younger brother Jampal Gyaltzen as the new Chamberlain. As expected, his younger brother was quite immature and frankly uninterested with political administration. He was a vague man who had a taste for dressing well and riding good horses. Quite uneducated and uninformed in politics or religion, he never bothered with the responsibilities of his brother. In harmony with his happy-go-lucky nature, he was a gentle and quiet young man. His lack of interest and responsibilities came as a boon to the two friends of the regent who were tasting the lure of power and influence.

For more than a year, the regent and the Prime Minister worked together in close co-operation with the same level of authority. Prime Minister Langdun, who was a nephew of the late Dalai Lama and nine years older than the regent was more experienced in daily paper work having served the post for almost ten years. But gradually the regent grudged his influence in making decisions on important matters. A change of tactics was applied. The regent stopped attending the joint office in Potala, except on special occasions such as the new year and other religious and political ceremonies. All the departments including the Kashag had to submit their reports to the regent through the Prime Minister whose role was now cut down to that of a bridge between the office of the Cabinet and the regency. In his residence, the regent and his subordinates made all the important decisions independently, without consulting the Prime Minister at all. This was the beginning of a severe blow to the power and prestige of the office of the Prime Minister. But the latter did not show any sign of resentment nor did anything to obstruct the regent in his bid for more power. For the Prime Minister, this was nothing new. He had been constantly bypassed in his political career by his

colleagues right from the early days of his appointment to the post by the 13th Dalai Lama. Being the son of the late Dalai Lama's elder brother, the *gung* of *Yabshi Langdun*, he was made the Prime Minister ten years before the death of the Dalai Lama. Yet he remained a figure-head and served merely as a bridge between the Dalai Lama and the Kashag as the powerful private Chamberlain of the Dalai Lama dominated most of the proceedings. After the death of the Dalai Lama, he was the main political leader of Tibet. But even during this crucial interval when a strong willed Prime Minister could have become a dictator of sort, he was reluctant to exercise his power as the Assembly under Lungshar was dominating the whole scene. He agreed with the Assembly on every point and before long Radreng Tulku was appointed the regent. Backed by his many followers and the monastic establishment, even the regent unceremoniously bypassed the Prime Minister who was once again a mere avenue to exchange reports and decisions from one department to the other. But worse was to follow.

Even after reducing the Prime Minister to an ineffectual tool, the regent's thirst for power remained unquenched. The ministers of the Kashag at this time were old conservatives who sought political guidance in the *Last Political Testament* of the late Dalai Lama and took great pains not to deviate from this decree. It was a cautious and colourless government. But it had enough conservative sanity not to embark on anything rash in its internal administrative affairs and in its dealings with China. The young regent could not stand their conservative objections to his rule. In quick succession, he forced two ministers to resign against their wishes and appointed two of his own choice. This was merely the beginning.

During 1937, Lhasa was full of rumours regarding the regent wishing to resign. This originated from the regent himself as he informed the Kashag that he wanted to resign. The Kashag requested the regent to stay in office as he was young and healthy and had to supervise the discovery and reception of the new Dalai Lama in Lhasa. They asked the regent to frankly point out any misgivings that he may

have regarding the administrative performance of the officials. National Assembly was called at once and the matter was discussed at length. Representatives from this Assembly once again requested the regent to remain in office. The regent pointed out that it was difficult for him to decide important and critical political issues quickly as he had to consult the Prime Minister every now and then. Taking the hint, the Kashag conferred with the Prime Minister who willingly resigned.

All the same, the Kashag retained the same seating position, salary and reverence for the ex-Prime Minister as most felt that the regent was quite high-handed in further demoting the Prime Minister who was most unobtrusive in his dealings with the regent and the Kashag. For sometime there was an atmosphere of tension and unease as indignant public opinion said that the Prime Minister had been forced to resign by the regent. But true to his character, the ex-Prime Minister kept quiet and the dust of controversy slowly settled. Yet an undercurrent of excitement and anxiety now began to pervade the reign of the Radreng regent, though he was himself a pleasure loving young man who enjoyed various games. He learnt to ride a motor-cycle and took childish interest in photography. He became extremely fond of pets and had acquired several cages full of birds including a talking mynah and a laughing thrush. He had also obtained a monkey, a fox cub, a cage of ornamental pheasants and several kinds of dogs. When the Basil Gould Mission arrived in Lhasa in 1936 in connection with the imminent return of Panchen Lama to Tibet under a strong Chinese escort, the young regent Radreng was quite thrilled with the films, gramophones, and the public address system which they brought to Lhasa. Spencer Chapman, Private Secretary to the Political officer Basil Gould records: "nothing but the loudest possible noise would satisfy the regent, who made us play record after record at full blast. After blaring forth Scottish military music etc. over the public address system to the collection of astonished people in the street and the surrounding roof-tops, the regent sometimes spoke into the microphone himself, self-

consciously at first, but gradually amusing himself at the echo of his own words and laughter booming back at him". Although the rumours that the Panchen Lama had now reached Jeykundo with a strong Chinese escort had filled Lhasa with tension, Basil Gould and his mission was appalled to see the regent Radreng taking off for a six week visit to Samye monastery to the south-east of Lhasa in the Tsangpo river. They saw that the political situation was as bad as it could be yet the regent took two of the four cabinet ministers with him. To take photographs of the visit, he took the only captain who had some knowledge of using machine guns. The army was weaker than usual and there was no one else who could make important decisions on behalf of the regent. It seemed as if the regent who was then in a state of uncertainty and vacillation hoped that the critical events might settle themselves sparing him the responsibility of making difficult decisions.

Influenced by his friends, the regent Radreng had introduced a new paper currency worth 100 *Sang*. Formerly, the 13th Dalai Lama did not issue any currency worth more than $7\frac{1}{2}$ *Sang*. This financial policy of the regent was a failure since it tended to raise the price of all commodities. But no one dared to question the regent. Everybody, including the high officials, feared him as he had the strong will to dismiss officials unfortunate enough to provoke his wrath on even some very minor offences. The young impulsive regent knew the government officials were at his mercy and did not dare question him on anything. But out there, in the political jungle of the Tibetan landscape, were the monasteries, the best organised political parties of Tibetan society. Their strength was enormous as thousand of fanatic monks were at their command. Their influence was immense as even the 13th Dalai Lama hesitated to take liberties with them. For the regent Radreng it was a temptation to penetrate the domain of the monastic politics and taste his first bitter defeat. The regent desired to appoint a monk of his choice as the abbot of a monastery which had 2000 monks. The abbot of such a monastery would attend the National Assembly and exert considerable administrative

influence. Therefore, the regent called the incumbent abbot of the monastery and made him resign against his wish even though his term of office had not terminated. However, the monks of the monastery knew the plot of the regent. In their nomination of the candidates, they not only left out the name of the regent's candidate but added a note declaring that if he was appointed, the monastery will refuse to recognise him as the abbot. Though angry, the regent could do nothing against the monastery and the whole thing remained unsettled for a long time. At last the regent had to bend down before the monastic establishment and appoint the abbot of their choice. As far as the monasteries were concerned, the regent had to limit his liberties not only because of their stiff opposition to policies that did not suit their purposes but also because of their support on which the regent's reign survived. But in the administration itself, the regent was to reveal the further reaches of his increasing greed for power and wealth. The regent was now becoming quite unpopular due to the evil influence of his friends. Even then he had his moments of glory. The search for the new Dalai Lama had succeeded. They identified the exceptional child born in Taktser village in Amdo. Despite dissatisfaction and unease in some circles in Lhasa who criticised the regent for discovering the Dalai Lama from a province under the control of Chinese war-lord who might send their soldiers to escort the child, the regent Radreng after numerous difficulties was able to receive the new Dalai Lama in Lhasa in 1939. He had also the good fortune to shave the head of the child Dalai Lama and confer on him the monkhood name of Tenzin Gyatso before the image of Lord Buddha in the Jokhang temple. The regent installed the child on the throne in February 1940 as the 14th Dalai Lama in a splendid ceremony witnessed by the British, Chinese and the Nepalese representatives. The discovery of the correct child was the greatest contribution of the regent Radreng and his enthronement as the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet was perhaps the finest hour of his regency.

Except in the matters of foreign relations and national

defence, the regent Radreng exercised full authority in the civil administration. His two incarnate friends influenced him in the many cases of official appointment and dismissal, promotion and demotion and the granting of estates or confiscation of properties. Every inch of the administrative hierarchy was infringed and large scale corruption was rampant. In the beginning of 1940, the incarnate friends of the regent and a section of his supporters submitted a memorandum urging the government to grant as gifts a number of estates to the regent. The Kashag called a special session to discuss this matter. In the session, the regent had ready supporters in Kabshod Chogyal Nyima — the man who was appointed to Tsipon (Auditor-General) in 1935 as a reward for betraying Lungshar and his party and Sera Todpa Khenpo, the abbot of Sera monastery. Being prominent members of the Assembly, these two strongly urged the Government to grant the estates to the regent. None in the Assembly dared to oppose their proposal and the majority of the members were about to adopt this resolution when, to the shock and dismay of the regent's supporters, Horchi Khyungrampa (Governor of Hor) stood up and vehemently opposed the proposal of the regent by implying that some people are unquenched in thirst and hunger even after "eating hills" and "drinking rivers". This Khyungrampa was one of the most courageous captains of the Tibetan military. In 1912, he was among those young Tibetans who left Darjeeling to organise voluntary guerilla warfare against the Chinese soldiers in central Tibet. After independence the 13th Dalai Lama sent him to guard the eastern borders against Chinese incursion. Under Kalon Lama Chamba Tendar, Khyungrampa was one of the several courageous Tibetan Dapons who brought the Chinese to kow-tow in signing in 1918 the Agreement of Armed Peace on the eastern border which remained undisturbed till 1931. Khyungrampa's valiant stand against the regent was supported by Khendrung Khyenrab Wangchuk and Tsipon Lhukhangwa. Together they accused Kabshodpa and the Sera Khenpo for indiscriminate plan of squandering the national property. The special session failed

to come to an agreement and the regent was granted only one big estate with a few small ones. This angered the regent intensely. At the end of the year, Khyungrampa was falsely accused of mismanagement of the governorship of Hor and exiled to Ngari where he died. Lukhangpa and Khen-drung Khyenrab Wangchuk were also demoted. Such was the regent's youthful vengeance prompted by his incarnate friends whose evil hold over him seemed total.

Public sentiment towards the regent was fast deteriorating. The reasons were not far to seek. Added to his very vindictive way of dismissing those whom he disliked, his own moral conduct was not above questioning. He had taken to drinks and even women. People tolerated his political games as a part of Lhasa establishment where the rise and fall of personalities was frequent. But his moral irresponsibility towards monkhood came in bad taste especially when he had himself, in a moment of intense moral rectitude, decreed strongly against the monk officials who kept mistresses in secret. In 1940, posters appeared in Lhasa street, which chastised the regent for his laxity in keeping the monkhood vows. Name of a Lhasa lady who spent days in Radreng residence, ostensibly for spiritual reasons, was associated with the regent in those posters. Other criticism hurled at the regent in posters and slogans shouted mainly by the Drepung monks was his strong interest in trade for which he sent his merchants to China and India. At the end of 1940, after installing the 14th Dalai Lama, it was reported that the state astrologer and soothsayer predicted that the regent Radreng will not live long if he fails to dedicate the rest of his days in prayers and meditation. Inside the Radreng camp, his friends were asking the regent to withdraw his intended resignation. But the regent had determined to resign and forwarded his resignation to the Kashag and the Assembly. It seemed that the regent had actually consulted his regular astrologer Phenpo Senge Lama who advised him to resign the regency for the time being as it was fraught with danger for him. When the government received the regent's resignation, the representatives of the government once again requested him to

withdraw his resignation as the young Dalai Lama had to be trained both in spiritual and temporal matters by the regent. This time the regent was serious about his resignation. He refused to retain the regency and recommended Tagdrag Rinpoche as his successor. In one day itself, Radreng's resignation was accepted and Tagdrag's appointment was confirmed. Defying the usual rules, no session of the National Assembly was called to discuss this matter nor were the oracles and high incarnate lamas consulted as dictated by tradition. Posters in the street declared that the young Dalai Lama must be tutored by a learned Lama who has fully kept the monkhood vows. Perhaps this was the main reason why Radreng Rinpoche resigned. A second rumour of the time pointed to a secret understanding reached between Radreng and Tagdrag Rinpoche. The latter was to resign after three years when Radreng was to take over the regency again. This secret understanding was to cause the final conflagration that enveloped Lhasa in a brief but bewildering civil war. On the Tibetan New Year day of 1941, the inauguration ceremony of the new regent Tagdrag Rinpoche was held in the Potala. Both Radreng and Tagdrag Rinpoche had a formal audience with the Dalai Lama. The monk and lay officials of the government offered their traditional scarfs to his residence in Lhasa. Thus ended the harsh and unpredictable rule of Radreng Rinpoche who gradually retired to his monastery in Radreng.

The new regent Tagdrag Rinpoche belonged to a lineage of incarnate Lamas. He was not a rich incarnate and did not possess many estate. His monastery called Taglung Drag was small and situated some twenty miles to the west of Lhasa. It had twenty odd monks and an excellent collection of Tibetan texts and manuscripts. Born in a nearby village in 1874, he was recognised as the incarnation of 3rd Taglung Drag Rinpoche and admitted to the Gomang College of Drepung monastery and adopted the monkhood name of Ngawang Sungrab Tenpai Gyaltzen. He studied hard and completed his Geshe degree. Inclined to meditation, Tagdrag Rinpoche stayed away and aloof from politics. Around 1930, the 13th Dalai Lama appointed Tagdrag Rin-

poche alongwith Kongpo Gyalwang Choeji as *Tsen-Shab* (Assistants) in metaphysical debates. They had to enter the Tibetan officialdom with the main duty of debating with the Dalai Lama on Buddhist philosophy, correcting new Buddhist texts and examining the Geshe examination. When the 14th Dalai Lama started his quest for enlightenment, regent Radreng was appointed the senior and Tagdrag Rinpoche the junior tutors. As Tagdrag was more learned in spiritual studies, Radreng Rinpoche obtained many initiations and instruction on Buddhist philosophy from him and gradually came close to each other. It was based on such a relationship that Radreng recommended Tagdrag Rinpoche to the regency, though the latter did not belong to any of the monasteries from which regents were traditionally selected. Perhaps it was true that a secret agreement existed between the two incarnates to transfer the regency from one to the other after three years. Radreng Rinpoche needed time to heal the public opinion which went against him in the traumatic years of his regency. He needed an ineffective substitute who will easily hand over the regency to him when the time came. Tagdrag Rinpoche was very old and fundamentally uninterested in the affairs of state. He suited Radreng's plan perfectly. While Tagdrag Rinpoche occupied the regency, Radreng could live in peace knowing well that he can assume the regency whenever he wanted to.

The regent Tagdrag Rinpoche was offered, in recognition of his great spiritual learning the title of "Pandit Ken-ting Tah Koh-Shri" meaning "the Great and Honoured Teacher of the Country." This was a mixed Sanskrit and Manchu title selected from old Sanskrit and Manchu imperial records. Offering such honorific titles to the regent was not a new tradition. After the death of the 7th Dalai Lama the first regent Demo Tulku was offered the title of "Chi-chen Shan-sen" by the Manchu emperor. Similarly, other titles such as "Thong-shan Ho-tok-thu" was offered to regent Kundeling; "Samati Pak-shi Ho-tok-thu" to regent Tsemonling and "Ab-chi Ho-thok-thu" to Radreng etc. But the 13th Dalai Lama interrupted the flow of titles from the Manchu emperor to Tibetan dignitaries, as behind the

glamour of high sounding titles lay an expression of political subordination which the Tibetans ignorantly accepted and in most cases craved for and flaunted as a mark of distinction. However, the title granted to regent Tagdrag was concocted by the Tibetan officials from old records.

The regent Tagdrag Rinpoche, though old and spiritually inclined, proved to be a man of energy. Very soon, he established a well staffed private secretary headed by his private chamberlain Jampa Tharchin. Though traditionally the private chamberlain of a regent holds the title of a *Dzasak* and on some occasions, were seated at the same level as the ministers of the Kashag, the new regent's private chamberlain Jampa Tharchin was given the title of merely a *Khenchung* (a fourth rank monk official) by the retiring Radreng Rinpoche. This was a strong indication that Tagdrag Rinpoche will not remain in the office of the regency for long.

For about a year after Tagdrag Rinpoche assumed the regency, the relationship between the regent and ex-regent was very good. There was not the slightest clash of interest or friction of will. This was the honeymoon. Soon Radreng Rinpoche started interfering in the administrative decisions of the regent. In letters and messages, Radreng Rinpoche started making his influence felt in the appointment of new officials and dismissal of others. The regent Tagdrag found it extremely difficult to fulfill such dictates of the ex-regent due to varying circumstances. The honeymoon was coming to an end. Three years had passed since Tagdrag Rinpoche took over the regency. During these three years, Tagdrag had decided to remain as the regent for as long as he could. To achieve this end, a drastic reshuffle was undertaken in the whole administrative set-up. On almost every important civil and monastic posts, pro-Radreng elements were wilted out and his own supporters replaced them. This drastic reshuffle gave regent Tagdrag the necessary base to hold power indefinitely.

In December 1944, the Sera Jay College, to which Radreng Rinpoche belonged, invited the ex-regent to inaugurate the opening of an old temple that had been repaired recently.

At once a rumour circulated in the streets of Lhasa that Radreng Rinpoche will resume the regency and Tagdrag Rinpoche will resign. Once again the talk of an existence of a secret understanding between the two incarnates to rotate the regency came to the fore. The ex-regent Radreng was welcomed to the city of Lhasa with pomp and ceremony befitting a regent. Even the military salute was offered. After visiting the young Dalai Lama in the Potala palace, the two regents came together. Both seemed friendly but their conversation did not drift into politics. Radreng Rinpoche saw that Tagdrag had firmly established himself in the regency. But the visit and stay of Radreng Rinpoche at Sera Jay unfortunately coincided with a major trouble in Lhasa between the Jay and Ngagpa college of Sera on the one side and the government on the other. This trouble originated in the district of Phenpo Lhundrup Dzong at a day's distance to the north of Lhasa. This district was held by the Drungyig Chenmo (monk secretary) in turn, who appointed their representatives to administer it. In 1944, it was the turn of Khendrung Chopel Thupten. He appointed his brother Chokdrup Tendar as his representative to the district. Unfortunately for the inhabitants of the Phenpo Lhundrup Dzong, a group of very wealthy monks from the Jay and Ngagpa college of Sera had established a flourishing grain loan business based on an exorbitant rate of interest for a long time. At fall, many monks from this college came to this district to collect the grains taken on loan. After the installation of the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan government had freed all prisoners and also issued a law freeing the heavily indebted subjects in every district from paying their long accumulated loans. In Phenpo Lhundrup Dzong district, the debtors were determined to refuse to pay their debts to the monks. But that year the crop was bad and the monks who came to collect the grain debts were worse. They not only took away grains but even the horses and cattles of the villagers with great force and intimidation. The helpless villagers ran to the district officer Chokdrup Tendar who ordered the monks to cease robbing the villagers and **return** their horses and cattles immediately. Instead of obeying

the order of the district officer, the angry monks gathered in great emotional excitement and challenged the order of the district officer. After only a few exchange of words, the monks physically assaulted the officer who died of the injuries after a few days. Such blatant challenge to the order of the government did not go unheeded. Before long, the Lhasa government appointed an investigation commission led by Theji Sampho and Khenche Khyenrab Wangchuk. When the commission arrived in the district, the monks had returned to their monastery in Lhasa. They could only get one side of the story from the villagers. After considering the report of the commission, the government issued a warrant to the Sera representative Zim Khang Depa that the culprits should at once appear in court. Zimkhang Depa at once made a thorough investigation in every section of the monastery and arrested about thirty monks. But the college authorities refused to let the culprits appear in court and kept them in Sera itself.

Two days before the Tibetan New Year, a second notice was sent directly to the Sera monastery sternly asking them to hand over the members to the government before the start of the *Monlam 'Chenmo*. In reply, the monk authorities wrote that the whole assembly of the Jay and Ngagpa college of Sera regretted the unfavourable order to hand over the monks to a civil court. They further warned that if the government still insisted not a single monk from the two colleges will attend the *Monlam Chenmo*. The government had no choice but to drop the idea of arresting the guilty monks for the time being. The *Monlam* festival was always dominated by the monks of the three monasteries. Any insult to the monasteries during this festival could cause great unrest and damage to Lhasa, filled with monks in every nook and corner.

After three months, a third notice was sent. Almost the same negative reply came forth. Finally the matter was discussed in the National Assembly which felt that a special committee must be appointed to arrest and punish the guilty monks at any cost as it might give rise to other similar unlawful acts. The special committee held their office below

the Potala and called the abbots and other monk representatives of the two colleges of Sera. They were warned that unless the guilty monks were handed over, their charges will be imposed on the abbots and representatives. Seven guilty monks were then brought forth. The special committee carried on a prolonged trial. Twenty nine monks including a Mongolian monk were found guilty not only of murdering the representative but also of masterminding the idea of boycotting the *Monlam Chenmo*. The properties of these monks were confiscated and they were expelled from the monastery. The abbots were demoted and new ones appointed. Throughout this crisis, a dark shadow of fear and unrest was cast over Lhasa. Radreng Rinpoche left Sera Jay college in the midst of this crisis. He was bitter. Tagdrag Rinpoche did not show any sign of resigning. Nor did he do anything to save the monks of Sera from the punishment. Had Radreng been the regent, the monks would have escaped punishment since they belonged to his college.

After six years in the regency, Tagdrag Rinpoche conferred the title of *Dzasak* to his private chamberlain and bestowed him the same seat as the ministers of the Kashag. This was a clear message that Tagdrag Rinpoche was not going to resign the regency although rumours to the contrary persisted. Unlike his predecessor, Tagdrag Rinpoche kept himself away from any outsider except his private chamberlain who was also his nephew and had great love for him. Outwardly, Jampa Tharchin was only a private chamberlain. He had no official function either in the Kashag or any other departments. But he was the only way to the regent who controlled the whole civil administration including the promotion and appointment of officials. For the Tagdrag Labrang Jampa Tharchin was a mine. He accepted unlimited bribes from candidates who aspired to positions of influence and power in the government. He deliberately delayed many such promotions to obtain more bribes. Regency in Tibet had always been corrupt and on corruption alone they prospered. In time, the small monastery of Taglung Drag with twenty odd monks turned into a big monastery with one hundred fifteen monks. New construc-

tions were being added. A big hall, temple quarters for new monks and a splendid residence for Tagdrag himself were being built. In addition to these, the government had offered the customary estates to support the increased number of monks. More private estates were also added. Very soon, the small Taglung Drag monastery equalled the Kundeling which was the foremost monastic estates in Tibet as it had produced two regents. Distressing as it is, Tibetan history is witness to the fact that a Dalai Lama comes to salvage the administration which a regent will waste to enrich his own establishment. Radreng did the same. Tagdrag, though older and more learned, did not fare any better. From the reminiscences of those that have lived in Lhasa during the reign of the two regents two sharply distinct pictures emerge. Radreng Rinpoche was young. His outlook on life was liberal and lenient. He made no stringent laws curbing public behaviour and dress. Fond of entertainment and amusement himself, Radreng Rinpoche frequently hosted lavish *Lhamo* shows at Shide where the Chinese community in Lhasa performed the dragon dance when throughout the night the blaring of trumpets, beating of gongs and twisting and turning of the dragon chasing after the celestial fireball delighted adults and infants alike. Favourite Koumingtang tunes with Tibetans words were the most popular. The aristocrats who impressed the outsiders with their exquisite taste and manners lived a totally different and luxurious life. It was as if the aristocracy and the commoners belonged to different races. They talked and dressed differently. Manual work was absolutely forbidden to the aristocrats who were attended by hordes of servants. At the parties, frequent and fashionable, the ladies played badminton and the men *Mahjong*, carrom, dices etc. When evening descended, gas-lights and Tilley lamps lit the darkness. Scotch whisky, Golconda wine and liquor bottle opened to the tune of English dance music such as "Boombs-a-daisy" and "The Palais Glide" etc. Film shows of Charlie Chaplin and Rin Tin Tin brought by the British Mission delighted the aristocrats. The regent himself learnt to ride a bicycle and sometimes kicked a football, of which

the Dekyi Lingka team was the best. Whatever the intensity of internal politics, Lhasa during Radreng's reign was one of picnics, parties and *Lhamo* shows. At the Tsangpo river, the English doctor from the British mission performed diving demonstration to crowds of dazed Tibetan watchers. Occasionally he ran and hurled a stone in a strange overarm fashion to the surprise of the Tibetan bystanders who knew not he was playing cricket with himself. All these changed during the reign of Tagdrag. Old and conservative, his taste were restricted and straight and Lhasa likewise shrank back into its shell of monotony and growing tension.

In 1946, after Radreng Rinpoche left Lhasa for his monastery a strange tension and mystery filled the city. One night Tsipon Lhalu, son of Lungshar was returning to his residence after a late night party hosted by Ngabo. Suddenly snippers fired several shots at him. Luckily Tsipon Lhalu escaped but his horse was killed. This incident disturbed Lhasa and at once a Government investigation was carried on. But no trace of the sniper was found.

Unfounded rumours speculating assault on the regent Tagdrag were also rampant. In February 1947 on the night of Butter Festival when it was customary for the regent and other high government officials to pass in procession, Tagdrag Rinpoche suddenly cancelled his public appearance. It was learnt that rebels were awaiting to ambush and kill the regent and other high officials. Then a mysterious parcel arrived at the residence of Khendrung Ngawang Namgyal addressed to the regent. Too heavy for its size, the parcel remained in a corner. Soon, anonymous letters accused Khendrung Ngawang Namgyal of withholding an important parcel sent to the regent from the commissioner of Kham. Suspicion filled the household. When a servant opened the parcel, there was a big blast which damaged the house. No one was killed. But the mysterious sender had intended it for the regent Tagdrag.

As an explanation to these mysterious assassination attempts, the Tibetan Office in Nanking informed the Lhasa Government that the ex-regent Radreng had sent a representative with a letter to Chiang-kai-shek. In the letter, Radreng

accused the regent Tagdrag of unjust rule and asked for Chinese support in his plans of overthrowing Tagdrag. On the 14th of April an emergency session was called, attended by the regent Tagdrag, Kalon Lama Rampa, Kalon Surkhang, Lhalu, Kashodpa and the private chamberlain of the Dalai Lama Jampal Khyenrab Tenzin. Immediately after the session, the regent Tagdrag, with tears in his eyes, despatched Kalon Surkhang and Lhalu to Radreng to bring the ex-regent to Lhasa under arrest. They left that very night with an army contingent of fifty to sixty. At Lhasa, on 15th April the principal representative of the ex-regent and two other supporters of Radreng Rinpoche were arrested immediately.

Reaching Radreng monastery, Kalon Surkhang and Lhalu went inside. They prostrated to the ex-regent to receive his blessings. Uncharitable rumours said Lhalu slapped Radreng Rinpoche and pulled him out of the monastery. This does not seem to have been the case. In fact, the Kalons were quite scared thinking the ex-regent's attendant might shoot them while they were prostrating. But Radreng received them courteously. When he was informed of their mission, he accepted the news with resignation. Lhalu remained at Radreng monastery to seal the doors after careful check while Surkhang accompanied the ex-regent on his way to Lhasa. On the way, according to Surkhang, Radreng Rinpoche seemed greatly alarmed and frequently asked Surkhang to forgive him for having confiscated one of Surkhang's rightful estate. At Phenpo-Gola, Lhalu caught up with Surkhang and the ex-regent. From Lingbu Dzongsar, the two Kalons accompanied the ex-regent and preceded the army which followed them after a considerable gap. On 16th of April, the monks of Sera Jay college abruptly left their *Tsogs chod* ceremony and marched in rebellious mood to their college. They declared their support to rescue Radreng Rinpoche. The abbot of Sera Jay college Sogpo Tendar, a Mongolian, tried to restrain the rebellious monks from their warlike preparation. But the monks murdered the abbot in their determination to support Radreng Rinpoche. On this same day Nyungnay Lama, one of the two

friends of Radreng Rinpoche, committed suicide. On 18th of April, the two Kalon brought Radreng Rinpoche past Sera monastery. It was the best chance the monks of Sera Jay college had to rescue Radreng Rinpoche. But they let this chance slip by and could only fire at the soldiers from the outskirts of their monastery. On the same day Khardo Tulku, one of the two most influential friends of the Radreng Rinpoche was arrested.

The ex-regent was safely kept in the Potala. A curfew was imposed on the city. Sporadic firing took place during the night. The next day, tension and alarm intensified in Lhasa as arms were issued to the soldiers and young monks. Most of the nobles and their ladies kept their larger valuables with the Nepalese representative and quickly changed their silk and brocade robes into homespun and took refuge in the Potala. Any suspicious movement was shot at. On 20th of April, the Tibetan artillery was deployed and a few warning shots from two old mountain guns were fired towards Sera Jay college. The monks replied with rifles and their own home made cannon. Attempts were then made to negotiate a conciliation. At Lhasa, the Drapchi army created panic by looting shops. Supplies of essential commodities began to run out as people from outside Lhasa ceased to come in. On 27th of April, reinforcements arrived from Gyantse and vigorous attack was launched on Sera Jay college. But the militant monks refused to surrender and kept on fighting.

Meanwhile, the trial of the prisoners had begun before the National Assembly in the Potala. Radreng Rinpoche admitted his mistakes and asked the Assembly to allow him to appeal to the regent personally. This was refused. In further confessions, the ex-regent agreed that he had asked Chiang-kai-shek to send an aircraft to drop leaflets over Lhasa in his support. Khardo Rinpoche also broke down under interrogation and confessed to a large scale conspiracy including assassination attempt on the life of the regent. He also took responsibility for the unexplained attack on Lhalu when the latter was returning late at night from Ngabo's party.

The militant monks of Sera Jay college rushed during the night to Lhasa and took away guns and ammunitions. They also tried to break into the residence of Khendrung Ngawang Namgyal. In order to control the situation, Kalon Kashodpa, Magchi Zesak Kalsang Tsultrim, Khendrung Ngawang Namgyal and Tsipon Ngabo and Namseling were deployed at Drapchi garrison.

Prominent citizens of Lhasa including the representatives of Gaden Tri Rinpoche and some influential businessmen approached Sera Jay college to come to a compromise with the government. But the monks refused to listen and they had to return disappointed.

At Radreng monastery itself, Kalon Lhalu had kept about seventeen soldiers to guard the sealed properties. The monks massacred all the seventeen soldiers one night. Therefore, the government dispatched commander Zesak Kalsang Tsultrim, Jangchi Shakabpa and U-Dapon Shukudpa with a contingent of army who shelled the Radreng monastery. Soldiers stayed in the cathedral and their horses roamed inside the monastery itself. The private rooms and pavillions of Radreng Rinpoche were demolished. The whole complex was ransacked. The precious statue of Jowo Jampal Dorje was safely hidden by the monks. The gold cups and other valuable objects were stolen. Greedy soldiers cut out the gold letters of the sacred manuscripts. Groups of soldiers found themselves amidst huge hills of Chinese silver coins. Some soldiers filled the pockets of their *Chuba* with so many silver coins that when the captains ordered them to attention, they could not stand on their feet due to the weight of the silver coins in their pockets. Even the beautiful fruit trees were not spared and transplanted to other gardens. Final confiscation of the private property of Radreng Rinpoche included much gold and about eight hundred costumes of silk and brocade.

At Lhasa, the militant monks of Sera Jay college were finally showing signs of defeat. On 29th April, they took out the images of their protective deities and stripped them of their brocade robes and exposed them on the college roofs in extreme disgust at their divine's failure to protect

them. Then they ran into the hills making easy target for the soldiers who shot at them. Many of the monks ran towards Radreng monastery. But most were killed. Officially, three hundred monks and fifteen soldiers were reported dead. Sera Jay college was occupied by government troops who searched for hidden arms. Throughout the fight, the other colleges of Sera and the two monasteries Drepung and Gaden kept out of it. Had they joined in support of Sera, the Tibetan government would have been utterly shattered. After the defeat of the militant monks of Sera Jay college and confiscation of the properties of the ex-regent, it only remained to sentence the guilty. Talks of putting out the eyes of the ex-regent, as in the case of Lungshar, were brewed. But the Tagdrag regent rejected the evil suggestion. Nechung Oracle was consulted. But the Oracle seemed helpless. Throughout the brief trance he beat his breasts and threw grains into the air. Meanwhile, the ex-regent became sick. Personal physician of the Dalai Lama visited him. On 8th May, after an exciting life of glamour, power and intrigues, the ex-regent was reported dead. Rumours of murder and tales of shriek from the Potala at night circulated in Lhasa. Many believed he was killed by crushing his genitals. For all the excitement, intrigue and corruption his reign brought to Lhasa, the downfall and the death of the ex-regent Radreng was brief. He became the victim of a system that he had uphold, a system in which corruption and conspiracy dictated the norms rather than the strict but sensible administrative traditions introduced by the tireless efforts of the Great 13th Dalai Lama. It is hard to sympathise with the fate of Radreng Rinpoche. Harder it is to despise him. He was not a tragic hero whose attempt to better the system was thwarted. More precisely he was a pathetic figure thrust into the regency by an accident of birth. He was a reluctant regent who ran away from the difficult questions of the Tibetan administration. But he loved the power and affluence of the post and attempted to regain it as he knew the pleasures and luxuries that gushed out of absolute power conferred on the regency which had gradually eroded and corrupted his young mind.

It is said he enjoyed profane and pornographic jokes and stories, sported good horses and guns; paid any price to acquire horses of rare breed and persued the game of rifle-shooting with extreme relish. But he was young and inexperienced. Like many drunk with power, he was kind and loving towards his friends, and extremely vindictive towards those whom he disliked. Investigations later revealed that Radreng Rinpoche had time and again attempted to desist his friends and supporters from the violent ramifications of the plot for the *coup d'etat*. But this did not change the fundamental fact underlying the Radreng conspiracy that the ex-regent personally willed to return to the regency. Above all, it was the Chinese connection of the Radreng conspiracy that disturbed the Tibetan government. In addition to the large sums of money which Radreng Rinpoche received continuously from the Chinese, his request to Chiang-kai-shek to shower Lhasa with leaflets from an aircraft to bring about a change of regime in Lhasa, though naive and highly fantasised, distressed and disturbed the conservative and cautious government. In any event, Radreng Rinpoche's sudden end, to the mixed sorrow and relieve of Lhasa, eased the situation by saving the National Assembly the embarrassment of choosing an appropriate punishment for an ex-regent who was also a highly respected incarnate. Needless to say, his death or murder saved Tibet from a possible Chinese intrusion for the time being.

On 18th of April, the regent Tagdrag Rinpoche ordered the punishment of the rest of the conspirators. Radreng Rinpoche's elder brother who acted as his chief-secretary received two hundred fifty strokes of flogging. Khardo Tulku, in a state of semi-collapse, was flogged two hundred sixty strokes. Both were imprisoned in a specially prepared prison in the barracks in Norbu Lingka. Thirty monks of Sera Jay college and one minor official were flogged, shackled and entrusted to the custody of the various noble families. The private property of Radreng Rinpoche was sold in auction. It realised several millions of rupees for the Tibetan treasury. For many weeks afterwards gold cups, brocades and other valuables of Radreng monastery looted by

the soldiers kept turning up in the markets and street corners of Lhasa for sale. The mysterious death of Radreng Rinpoche and the series of unpleasant events that preceded and followed it came as a rude shock to public opinion. In the angry posters that appeared again, the regent Tagdrag Rinpoche was described as the modern Langdar. The other officials involved in the affair were vehemently blamed in such posters. Later in the same year, the young Dalai Lama visited Sera monastery to heal the wounds and scars of the recent fighting. But it was clear that the recent affair had almost uprooted the unity and solidarity which Tibet now needed more than ever before. Tagdrag Rinpoche did not fare any better than Radreng Rinpoche in his rule of Tibet. The only difference between the two reigns was that of youth and old age. Radreng was young and fun-loving. Lhasa saw some of the happiest days in his time. Tagdrag was old and conservative. Lhasa lost its mood of joy. But both the regents were corrupt in their own ways. Just as Radreng left the administration to the mercy of his friends and associates, Tagdrag did the same. His private chamberlain Dzasak Jampa Tharchin, his favourites Ngawang Namgyal and Thupten Lekmon etc. ruled Tibet according to their personal likes and dislikes. The military was neglected. Corruption was rampant once again and widespread. Informers paralysed the social life of Lhasa. It will only arouse indignation to further compare the rule of the two regents. Both created scandals, corruption and mismanagement instead of giving the country a resolute leadership. This becomes all the more distressing especially after the Great 13th Dalai Lama had so painstakingly urged for dedication towards the maintenance of independence of Tibet in his *Last Political Testament*.

Towards the end of 1950 when Tibet had lost Chamdo to the Chinese communists, the regent transferred the political and spiritual authorities to the young 14th Dalai Lama. The anguish of the people came forth in a street song:

Taglungdrag, the Regent

has made the government *tag-tag* (useless)

The young Dalai Lama has been offered

A government that has lost its system.

Panchen Lamas: Choskyi Nyima and Choskyi Gyaltzen

In 1923, the 6th Panchen Lama Choskyi Nyima suddenly escaped towards China with his entourage. This was a sad and anxious moment in the modern history of Tibet. The gentle and courteous Panchen Lama had left behind a heart broken letter implying that destructive elements had been misleading the 13th Dalai Lama. The sudden flight of the Panchen Lama and his letter distressed the Dalai Lama very much who lamented with a poetic flourish that the Panchen Lama should have consulted his "Father and Teacher" about his problems instead of "wandering away into uninhabited places, to his great peril like a moth attracted by the candlelight".

Perhaps the flight of the forty year old Panchen Lama Choskyi Nyima was the predictable outcome of the suspicions, jealousy and distrust that marked the political relationship between Tashi Lhunpo and Lhasa. Traditionally, the Panchen Lamas of Tashi Lhunpo in Shigatse were rested only with spiritual duties. In political administration over the whole of Tibet, the Dalai Lama and his cabinet in Lhasa was supreme. Throughout the history of Tashi Lhunpo, no Panchen Lama had ever tried to overshadow the Dalai Lama in his political role. At many critical times, the Panchen Lama had exerted their spiritual influence and guidance to foster peace and end chaos. Since a very close spiritual affinity existed between the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas throughout their successive reincarnations, the Tibetan government in Lhasa had conferred several major estates and *Dzongs* to the Panchen Lamas. In time, Tashi Lhunpo with a total of three thousand eight hundred monks became the headquarter of the Panchen Lama which gradually

acquired the features of a small government with its own official ranking systems, costumes and functions.

Relations between the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas remained one of mutual respect. But signs of increasing hostility between the entourage of the two became common. Therefore, personal visits between the two Lamas were rare. Yet when the 6th Panchen Lama paid a rare visit to the 13th Dalai Lama in Lhasa once, it was said that both spent so many hours conversing with each other that the Panchen Lama almost forgot the time he was to take leave. When he finally got ready to leave, the Dalai Lama himself carried a lantern in one hand and guided the Panchen Lama with his other hand and saw him off from the front gate. Though their personal relationship was cordial and steadfast, the conflicting events of the time and the political ambitions of those that served them were to strain their amicable relationship and plunge Tibet into sadness and anxiety.

In 1904 when the British military expedition to Lhasa drove the Dalai Lama on his first exile towards Mongolia, the Tashi Lhunpo officials persuaded the Panchen Lama to visit the Prince of Wales (later King George V) and Lord Curzon in Calcutta and made a pilgrimage of the principal Buddhist sites. This was an unkind move especially when the Dalai Lama was wandering the highlands of Mongolia as a political refugee due to British interference. This further angered the Lhasa government which expected a show of unity, if nothing else, from the Tashi Lhunpo officials in the face of such a crisis. But worse was yet to come. In 1910 when the Dalai Lama had to flee on his second exile towards India in the face of violent Manchu and Chinese invasion, after only about two months stay in Lhasa upon his return from his first exile, the Tashi Lhunpo officials had the indiscretion to invite the Panchen Lama to Lhasa in January 1911. At first, the Panchen Lama stayed in Jokhang temple. Then, to the shock and dismay of the Tibetans in Lhasa, the Panchen Lama moved to Norbu Lingka, the summer palace of the Dalai Lama. The insulted Tibetans were outraged when the Panchen Lama began to fraternise with

the Manchu Amban Lien Yu and accompanied him to theatres and parties in public. The bewildered people suspected the Chinese were intending to hand over the Dalai Lama's administrative duties to the Panchen Lama. They had to express their dislike and unwillingness to accept such a change. But they did not know how to. During the Butter Festival when both the Amban and the Panchen Lama were escorted in procession in sedan chairs through the Lhasa streets, the Lhasa Tibetans dropped mud and socks on the Amban and the Panchen Lama. By that time, the Tibetan War Department under Chamba Tendar and Trimon were making frenzied preparations for an uprising. But the Tashi Lhunpo policy was one of neutrality. Panchen Lama offered to send his officials to mediate but took no part in expelling the Chinese from Shigatse. A new song hit the Lhasa street:

The monk on Jokhang's roof
Would have been a thief
Had not dawn arrived
To chase him away.

The "monk" referred to the Panchen Lama and "dawn" meant the beginning of Tibetan resistance. As expected, the Panchen Lama personally regretted this. When a triumphant Dalai Lama returned to Tibet from India in 1912 and reached Ralung monastery, the Panchen Lama journeyed to Ralung and received the Dalai Lama with the greatest respect. Misunderstandings between the two were then cleared and both visited the nearby monasteries and pilgrim sites together.

Unfortunately for Tibet, the officials of Tashi Lhunpo and Lhasa did not forgive or forget each other that easily. They kept and passed on their grudges. It was in 1919 that Lungshar Dorjee Tsegyal, newly appointed to the post of *Tsipon* after his return from England, visited Tashi Lhunpo to audit the revenue accounts of their many estates. After a thorough investigation of Tashi Lhunpo, Lungshar revised the revenue system of the Tibetan government. Under the new system, Tashi Lhunpo was required to pay special military levy for

the defence of the country, which had been in force for sometime. This amounted to one fourth of the defence expenditure in times of war. A similar tax was willingly paid by Tashi Lhunpo during the Tibetan Gurkha war of 1788. But they delayed in paying the same tax during the Chinese invasion of 1910 and instead fraternised with the invaders. Lungshar as the rising favourite of the 13th Dalai Lama and the ambitious Tsipon harshly persued the payment of the tax partly to avenge the unpleasant conduct of the Panchen Lama and his Tashi Lhunpo officials during the two exiles of the Dalai Lama. The Tashi Lhunpo officials protested and argued against the Gurkha invasion as it was on their soil that the war was fought. The Panchen Lama approached the British government to mediate but the latter did not interfere in a sensitive internal affair. Lungshar and his associates may have misrepresented facts to the Dalai Lama. The military tax controversy lasted for a few years. In the midst of this confusion, the Panchen Lama with his private chamberlain Losang Gyaltzen and favourites Losang and Losang Palden accompanied by a number of minor officials, together numbering about a hundred left Tashi Lhunpo for China via the high plains of Jangthang on the morning of 15th November 1923. No one, including the Tibetan government officials in Shigatse knew about the sudden departure of the Panchen Lama.

When the news of the Panchen Lama's flight reached Lhasa, Tsipon Lungshar at once dispatched Dapon Tsogo with two to three hundred troops to bring back the Panchen Lama dead or alive. This rude act of Lungshar made many people sad. A song of the street said:

“Lungshar can not be such a
heartless hunter.
To send Tsogo as an hound
After the Panchen Lama
Who is not a hunting deer.....”

Luckily for the Panchen Lama, he was met by a welcome party of camels in the high northern plains. Dapon Tsogo and the other members of the search party were unable to

catch up with the Panchen Lama and returned to Lhasa empty handed. In the absence of the Panchen Lama, the Tashi Lhunpo monastery was without an administrator. The 13th Dalai Lama appointed Dzasak Lama Losang Tenzin and a number of monk officials to administer Tashi Lhunpo in close co-operation with the remaining officials of Tashi Lhunpo itself. However, large numbers of monks started escaping from Tashi Lhunpo to join the Panchen Lama. Many fleeing monks, including the father of the Panchen Lama were arrested. A law forbidding further attempts to escape was passed in Shigatse. And those caught were flogged.

In February 1925, the Panchen Lama finally reached China where he was warmly received by the Kuomintang government who had recently come to power. It was clear to Lhasa that the Kuomintang government will attempt to misuse the name and influence of Panchen Lama to cause internal strife and further weaken the Tibetan government. From 1911 onwards, the 13th Dalai Lama had established an office of Tibetan representative in Nanking. Now the Chinese established a similar office for the Panchen Lama. Though the Kuomintang government headed by Chiang-kai-shek desired to use Panchen Lama to their advantage, they were unable to do so during the lifetime of the 13th Dalai Lama whose strong hand in Tibetan politics had totally kept out Chinese influence. Moreover, Chinese warlords in Szechwan and Chinghai namely Liu wang hui and Ma-pu-fang acted independently of the Nanking government in their dealings with Tibet. As such, the Chinese central government sought to improve their relations with the Tibetan government. In 1931, the Chinese government sent a letter through the Tibetan representative expressing their desire to strengthen relations with the Dalai Lama. This letter of friendship was followed by the visit of a half Tibetan-Chinese woman named Lin man-chen who also expressed the hope of the Kuomintang government for friendly relationship. Seeing that the presence of the Panchen Lama and Tashi Lhunpo officials obstructed the gradually improving relationship with the Dalai Lama, the Chinese

government asked Panchen Lama to return to Tibet. In the presence of the Lhasa representative Ngagchen Ta Lama, the Panchen Lama conveyed his wish to return to Tibet. The Dalai Lama happily agreed to allow the return of the Panchen Lama and his entourage. The Lhasa government decided to restore the former rights, powers and estates on the condition that the Panchen Lama will return only with his Tibetan attendants and will agree to pay the controversial military tax for national defense programme. From this ensued the rumour of the return of the Panchen Lama. Before long, Losang Gyaltzen, the chief secretary of the Panchen Lama and his favourite Losang Wangchuk returned to Lhasa. These two were among the most important officials of the Panchen Lama. They were received with appropriate courtesy and a special house was allotted for their stay. Special aides were appointed to assist them and a committee was established to conduct negotiations relating to Tashi Lhunpo and the return of the Panchen Lama. This committee was able to engage in very useful negotiations with the two Tashi Lhunpo officials solving many problems that had thwarted mutual relations hitherto. A new resolution was drawn which fixed the controversial military tax in accordance with the size of the land they held and not the arbitrary one-fourth that was compulsory till then. Other important demands of Tashi Lhunpo that all the soldiers recruited from Tashi Lhunpo must be in a separate garrison to be known as Panchen Lama's bodyguards and that the Shigatse Dzong must be granted to Tashi Lhunpo remained unsettled. While the discussions were in full swing on the important issues of the return of the Panchen Lama, the 13th Dalai Lama passed away. The talks were postponed as Lhasa mourned the demise of one of the greatest leaders of Tibet. Soon afterwards, the regent Radreng Rinpoche and the Kashag sent a telegram, through the Tibetan representative, requesting the Panchen Lama to return immediately to Tibet on the conditions formulated earlier. The Tibetan government agreed to provide all the transportation facilities to welcome the Panchen Lama in Tibet and escort him to Tashi Lhunpo.

Now that the Dalai Lama had passed away, the Panchen Lama no longer trusted the Tibetan government and treated its message with disdain. In 1934, when the Tibetan government unwisely allowed a Chinese condolence mission to visit Lhasa under General Huang Mu-sung, the affairs of the Panchen Lama were discussed and a vague understanding that he should return as soon as possible was reached. Everyone in Lhasa was anxious for the return of the Panchen Lama. When the Panchen Lama demanded that several Tashi Lhunpo officials, thirty monks and three hundred people from among his subjects be sent to Kokonor, the Tibetan government at once consented to it hoping it will speed up the long awaited return of the Panchen Lama. A year later, the Kuomintang government announced that the Panchen Lama would establish his headquarters at Singing and then enter Tibet with a Chinese representative escorted by five hundred Chinese soldiers. Moreover, the Kuomintang government had conferred the title of "Special Cultural Commission for Western Regions" to the Panchen Lama. Through the Tibetan representatives in Nanking, the Tibetan government vehemently opposed the idea of sending five hundred Chinese soldiers to Tibet as an escort of the Panchen Lama. The Chinese were also informed that the title was unnecessary. This development disturbed Lhasa who asked the British government for intervention. Accordingly the British government in India issued objection to the Chinese foreign office in Nanking. From Sikkim, the Political Officer F.W. Williamson reached Lhasa to find a solution for the new problem. He fell sick and died. Again the British government sent Sir Basil Gould accompanied by Brigadier General P. Neawre and H.E. Richardson to Lhasa.

Through Ngagchen Rinpoche, the trusted adviser of the Panchen Lama, Sir Basil Gold was able to convey to Panchen Rinpoche the British anxiety for a peaceful solution to the problem. It then became clear to the British mission that the Panchen Lama's own camp was divided. One in favour of a reconciliation and return to Lhasa and the other determined on a return with the force of five hundred Chinese

escort. In Lhasa, the matter was discussed in an emergency session which resolved that the Panchen Lama's return with a Chinese escort of five hundred soldiers will be repulsed under any circumstances. The Lhasa government ordered the Governor of eastern Tibet to request the Panchen Lama to reject the Chinese soldiers or else the Tibetan government will be compelled to forcibly turn back the Chinese soldiers accompanying the Panchen Lama. By this time, the Panchen Lama had reached Kyekudo with his Chinese escort. When this message was conveyed to him, the Panchen Lama's officials met the governor of eastern Tibet at the border and discussed the matter for months together. Even after months of discussion, the Panchen Lama's officials refused to turn back the Chinese escort.

Meanwhile, the Kuomintang government informed Lhasa that the Chinese escort will not remain in Lhasa permanently. At Lhasa itself, several government officials felt that the Panchen Lama should be allowed to return with the Chinese escort who could be sent back via India. The Kashag did not accept this suggestion as history has more than once taught the Tibetans not to trust the Chinese soldiers. From Kyekudo, the Panchen Lama party had dispatched an advanced consignment of baggage to Tibet, containing a large number of hand-grenades. This shattered any hope of a peaceful solution. At Lhasa, recruitment of soldiers was intensified and the intention to resist the Chinese escort reaffirmed. In the midst of this confusion, the Secretary of the Panchen Lama sent an urgent letter to Tashi Lhunpo announcing that the Panchen Lama would arrive at Shigatse with twenty Chinese officials and five hundred Chinese soldiers capable of opposing any Tibetan force who obstructed their entry. The letter was attached to an arrow signifying great urgency and showed a map of the return route of the Panchen Lama and his party. This letter and its content further incensed the Lhasa government who issued strict orders to the governor of eastern Tibet that the entry of the Panchen Lama with Chinese soldiers must be stopped at every cost. The governor sent a copy of the Kashag order to Dapon Namselingpa and Horchi Khendrung

who were guarding the Tibetan border at Chaksam kha. Nevertheless, endless negotiations went on in Lhasa, Nanking and Chamdo.

In June 1937 war broke out between China and Japan. Even after that the Kuomintang government persisted with their plan to send the Panchen Lama to Tibet under their armed escort. Most probably, the Chinese intention behind this was to test Tibetan determination to resist their intrusion. When they were convinced of the stiff resistance from Lhasa to their plan of an armed escort, they were compelled to gradually call off the escort as the Kuomintang government could not risk a second war on their hands. When Lhasa sensed this weakening in their stand they offered a diplomatic counter stroke, by reverting the request to the Panchen Lama to return, hinting that Lhasa may consider allowing a small Chinese escort which Lhasa knew it could easily handle while China was fighting herself dry with Japan.

Kyekudo was one of the most flourishing trading centres in eastern Tibet. As the Panchen Lama's party was large, it began to affect adversely the trade of the region and supplies of essential commodities became scarce and inflation set in. The governor of eastern Tibet, in an effort to ameliorate the situation, provided endless loads of supplies. Winter was approaching and the climate in Kyekudo was getting severely cold. Soon the Panchen Lama had taken ill. When the governor heard this disturbing news, he sent two officials to request the Panchen Lama to come to the more pleasant and moderate climate of Chamdo. But he was under the domination of his attendants. His only reply to the Governor was that it made no difference where he stayed. As his health deteriorated, the 6th Panchen Lama Choskyi Nyima moved to a hot spring near Kyekudo. After a few months he returned to Kyekudo itself and soon afterwards, on 1st December 1937, he died. When the Governor of eastern Tibet heard the sad news of the Panchen Lama's demise, he at once despatched two officials to Kyekudo to offer condolence and inform the Tashi Lhunpo officials that they should now turn back the Chinese soldiers and return

to Tibet with the body of the deceased Panchen Lama. The two officials assured the Tashi Lhunpo party that they will be accorded the same treatment as during the life time of Panchen Lama. This news brought into open the schism within the Tashi Lhunpo officials. One party, consisting mainly of the older officials wanted to return to Tashi Lhunpo. They knew well that they could not return to China as the Panchen Lama was no longer with them. Moreover China itself was being ravaged by the war with Japan. And on the Chinese horizon, a red star was rising. Mao and his communists were making their presence felt in the much scarred political life of China. The Chinese escort was soon leaving them. But the younger officials, who actually held the power and made decisions did not want to return. So the elder officials returned to Tibet. They were received by the Lhasa government representative Datsap Chogpe and arrived in Tashi Lhunpo in 1938. The younger officials remained in Kyekudo itself. In their ranks, they had ambitious and capable officials who were bent on antagonising Lhasa as a revenge among others, for the military taxation controversy which caused the flight of the Panchen Lama. Their determination to return to Tibet with a Chinese escort of five hundred soldiers was most probably to cut down the Lhasa government to its size and make them beg forgiveness on their knees. Lhasa knew this well. History has taught Lhasa enough lessons from the days of the Manchu rule when the whole city witnessed the harsh and cruel Manchu punishments. Therefore, both the government and the people resolutely opposed the return of the Panchen Lama under Chinese escort. The Kuomintang government, though enraged at the stiff Tibetan opposition to their plan, were helpless as Japan had caught them by the throat. But history was to repeat. The younger Tashi Lhunpo officials in Kyekudo were tough men not easily giving up their efforts to disunite Tibet at a crucial moment. At Kyekudo, the younger Tashi Lhunpo officials with the body of the late Panchen Lama mobilised a strong garrison of Tibetan soldiers from the local Khamba tribes. After gathering this strong Tibetan escort, the Chinese soldiers returned to

China. From Kyekudo, the Tashi Lhunpo party moved to Karze monastery then under the control of Szechwan warlord, Lin Wang-hui. One of the Tashi Lhunpo officials married the only daughter of the Karze administrator which opened to them a new channel of influence and control over the local people. Gradually, the Tashi Lhunpo officials became the real power of Karze though there were about five hundred Szechewan troops and officers stationed as border security.

More ambitious than ever, the Tashi Lhunpo party planned to establish an alternative Tibetan government by extending their authority over all the regions to the east of Drichu. They drew up a resolution to this effect and circulated it among the monasteries and local chiefs of the different regions. In this they remained unsuccessful as the Lhasa government maintained good relationship with the monasteries and the important chiefs like the king of Derge etc. Frustrated by this failure, the Tashi Lhunpo party with the support of the local people, suddenly attacked the Szechewan troops and drove them out of the region after a few days of fighting. After this initial success, they called upon the Tibetans of eastern part of Kham to drive out the troops of the Szechewan warlord.

The Governor of eastern Tibetan then deputed two officials Losang Damcho and Kyarsib who persuaded the Tashi Lhunpo party to shift the body of the late Panchen Lama to Chamdo as they may not be able to hold the territories they have captured in their initial attack from the Szechewan troops. The two officials also conveyed the Governor's willingness to combine forces with the Tashi Lhunpo party to drive out the troops of the Chinese warlords. Tashi Lhunpo party received the two officials with elaborate welcome. For the moment it looked as though real unity had blessed the faction ridden Tibetans at last. But combining forces with Tibetan Government troops was repugnant to the Tashi Lhunpo party whose sole aim was to found an alternative government that can effectively challenge Lhasa. A few powerful officials of the Tashi Lhunpo party openly disclosed that they were strong enough not only to defend

Karze but to further consolidate and unite the whole eastern regions under their might without Tibetan government help and if necessary they would themselves bring the body of the late Panchen Lama to Chamdo. This utterly negative attitude of the Tashi Lhunpo officials destroyed any hope there was for a united Tibetan front against the Chinese warlord. The Tibetan Governor tried once again to come to an understanding with the Tashi Lhunpo officials by sending a delegation. But Tashi Lhunpo party remained adamant in their refusal. In the meantime they had consolidated their power over many areas of Kham. This was deeply resented by the helpless Szechwan troops who were awaiting reinforcement. As the Tashi Lhunpo party became strong, there were indications that many Khampa tribes wanted to join them. Suddenly one day the Szechwan troops arrived in large numbers and literally flooded the Tashi Lhunpo party out of Karze. The remaining members of the Tashi Lhunpo party fled to Kokonor as they were surrounded by the Tibetan troops on the west and Szechwan troops to the east. Much had been lost by the Tashi Lhunpo party but they had preserved the body of the Panchen Lama. Now a section of the party brought this to Tashi Lhunpo and erected a tomb for it as for all the other previous Panchen Lamas. Then they started the search for the reincarnation of the 6th Panchen Lama Choskyi Nyima. As it was an important matter, the Tashi Lhunpo officials in Tibet began the search in collaboration with their officials now in Kokonor.

In 1944, the Tashi Lhunpo officials discovered two candidates, while the search party in Sining discovered one. The Tibetan government instructed that all the three candidates be brought to Tashi Lhunpo to undergo the traditional spiritual tests for the final discovery of the true reincarnation of the 6th Panchen Lama. However, the Tashi Lhunpo officials of Sining asked the Tibetan government to confirm their candidate as the true reincarnation of the 6th Panchen Lama after which they shall bring him to Tibet. Soon after this, the Sining Tashi Lhunpo officials initiated their candidate into monkhood at the Kumbum monastery. The Tibetan

government accordingly brought the other two candidates and initiated them into monkhood, one at the Drepung monastery in Lhasa and the other at Tashi Lhunpo monastery in Shigatse. As such, the recognition of the Panchen Lama was postponed due to the conflicting views of both the Tibetan government and the Tashi Lhunpo officials. An unpleasant development had meanwhile crept in. The Sining candidate was being financially helped by the Kuomintang government. When the Tibetan government in Lhasa forcibly asked the Chinese mission in Lhasa to leave, the Kuomintang government in Nanking sent a representative to Kumbum monastery where the Sining candidate was residing. On 10th August 1949, the Sining candidate was recognised as the reincarnation of the 6th Panchen Lama by the Kuomintang representative and the Tashi Lhunpo officials. Majority of the Tibetans could not accept the choice of the Panchen Lama then. A few weeks later, Sining, the capital of Chinghai, fell into the hands of the Chinese communists. The Kuomintang government had moved to Formosa. Ma Fu-fang, the governor of the Changhai had deserted to Cairo. The 7th Panchen Lama Choskyi Gyaltzen — the controversial Sining candidate had fallen into the hands of the Chinese communists.

Once in their custody, the Communist Chinese were not long in exploiting the name of the Panchen Lama to their advantage. On November 24, 1949, Radio Peking announced that the Panchen Lama, who was only 12 years old at the time, had "appealed" to Mao to "liberate" Tibet. Earlier, a telegram of "congratulations" from the Panchen Lama on the founding of the People's Republic of China was widely publicised.

When Tibetan plenipotentiaries went to attend the meeting for the 17 point agreement, the Dalai Lama received a telegram from Ngabo pointing out that if the Tibetan government refused to recognise the Panchen Lama, it would hinder the negotiations underway. Under the circumstances, the Sining candidate was accepted as the 7th Panchen Lama.

No reincarnation is accepted publicly in Tibet without

the traditional religious test. And for a reputed reincarnation of the stature of Panchen Lama, it was highly essential that the government and monastic officials carry out the traditional tests with the accompanying religious ceremonies. But for once the significance of traditional tests and Tibetan religious sentiments did not prevail against overwhelming political events that were conspiring to crumble the nation. On April 28, 1952, the Panchen Lama, escorted by a large number of communist Chinese troops arrived in Lhasa by way of Sining. After a brief call on the Dalai Lama in the Potala, the Panchen Lama was escorted to Tashi Lhunpo by the Chinese and installed on the throne. Under such strained circumstances, the majority of the Tibetans did not particularly take the Panchen Lama to heart. In most Tibetan circles in the 1950s he was a "Chinese made-reincarnation" and "Mao's Panchen". As Tibet gradually passed under the effective control of the Chinese occupying forces, they began to enlarge and enhance the role of the Panchen Lama in the political life of the country and use him as a pawn against the Dalai Lama and Tibetan government.

In 1954, the Chinese government invited the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama to visit Peking. Before the end of the visit, the Chinese called a meeting of the State Council on March 9, 1955, attended by both the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. At this meeting, it was formally decided to establish the Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet (PCART). But the inauguration of the PCART was delayed by almost a year. When finally it was inaugurated amidst banquets and parades from April 22nd to May 1st, 1956, the Chinese were confident that the PCART will be able to do nothing that will go against their policy. In the interval of one year, the Chinese gave the Panchen Lama a political standing which none of his predecessors enjoyed and created the Panchen Lama Committee in Western Tibet. This committee served the same function as the Chamdo Liberation Committee created by the Chinese in eastern Tibet. Together they had 20 representatives in PCART. Along with the 5 Chinese members, the duty of

these two committees were to veto anything proposed by the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government. When the first meeting of PCART took place on the 6th May 1956, during which the Dalai Lama was named its Chairman with the Panchen Lama and Chang Kuo-hua as the first and second Vice-Chairmen, the true colour of PCART as a Chinese tool was more than clear.

On 25th November, 1956, both the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama arrived at New Delhi to take part in the 2500th death centenary of Lord Buddha. Throughout this period, whenever and wherever possible, the Chinese did their best to revive the differences between the Panchen Lama and the Dalai Lama. While in Peking in 1954, Mao himself mentioned the misunderstandings that existed between the Panchen Lama and the Tibetan government at Lhasa. To this the Dalai Lama replied that he harboured no personal differences with the Panchen Lama and will be happy to settle any remaining differences which in any case were "a legacy of the past". In an effort to settle the existing problems, discussions were undertaken and a formal agreement, consisting of 15 points was finally reached. But the Lhasa uprising of 1959 saw the Dalai Lama escape to India.

The years immediately following the Lhasa Uprising were cruel. Everywhere Tibetans were seething with discontent. Imprisonment, executions, starvations, suicides increased in every part of the country. During this time, the Panchen Lama was cautiously kept away in Peking, visiting the various parts of China from September 1959 onwards. In the interval, the Panchen Lama was appointed the Acting Chairman of the PCART. From then till late 1964, the Panchen Lama acted more or less as a Chinese puppet. On his way to attend the 2nd National People's Congress at Peking, the Panchen Lama stated that he firmly believed that the "rebellion" in Tibet will be "thoroughly crushed." On April 29, 1959, the Panchen Lama criticised certain political circles in India for unfriendliness and rejected Mr. Nehru's invitation as "unnecessary" and further declared that the "Tibetan question can be solved only in Tibet". On April 30, 1959,

the Panchen Lama informed the world that the "rebellion" in Tibet has been liquidated, order re-established and democratic reforms implemented." But, as early as 1962, the Panchen Lama was showing some sort of a defiance even under extremely restricted and trying circumstances. When Stuart and Roma Gelder, the authors of *The Timely Rain* met him in Lhasa, the Panchen Lama told them that he was following two courses of "doing his revolutionary duty to the people" and also living "the life of a good Buddhist" as he had his "next reincarnation to consider". He also told them that many people believe Buddhism was responsible for serfdom in Tibet and the accompanying oppression and exploitation of the people. But the Panchen Lama himself does not acknowledge that this is in the nature of Buddhism. He cited the Vinaya rule that a Buddhist should not cheat a needle or a piece of thread of others, let alone enjoy the property of others. He explained that the feudal serfdom of the past Tibet was created by people who were Buddhists in name only. To the Gelders, he also explained that since according to Communist theory the state will eventually wither away, so, according to Buddhist belief, religion will serve no purpose when men are perfected. "Therefore", the Panchen Lama said "eventually all Governments, together with all theologies, will disappear".

Soon afterwards Mao invited the Panchen Lama to Peking. Crowds of wretched Tibetans gathered along his route to seek an end to the hardship and sufferings under the Chinese occupation. In Peking the Panchen Lama took a bold and significant step by appealing personally to the Chinese leaders to cease persecution; increase food rations; institute state care for the aged and infirm and respect the religious freedom of the people in Tibet. It seems that the Panchen Lama had, during several sermons at Shugti Lingka in Lhasa, advised the Tibetans to preserve their cultural identity and remember the Dalai Lama. In 1962 itself, the Panchen Lama was said to have submitted a memorandum in Chinese to the Chinese officials deploring the harsh, authoritarian and selfish rule of the Chinese occupying forces which caused innumerable suffering to the Tibetans.

Soon after the Panchen Lama's return from Peking, Chang Chin wu, Secretary of CCP Tibet work committee instigated him to publicly denounce the Dalai Lama as a reactionary, assume the position of the Dalai Lama in PCART and shift his seat from Tashi Lhunpo to Potala. But the Panchen Lama refused.

The public denunciation of the Dalai Lama was the test of Tibetan puppets. For political convenience, the Chinese wanted the Panchen Lama to denounce the Dalai Lama. In October 1964, the Panchen Lama was again asked to denounce the Dalai Lama. At the sermon in Lhasa town hall, packed with the few remaining monks and people of Lhasa, the Panchen Lama reportedly expressed his faith in the Dalai Lama's leadership and prayed for his long life and quick return to Tibet. Were it not for the large number of crying Tibetans who crowded him to pay their respect, the Chinese would have arrested the Panchen Lama then and there. According to eyewitness accounts, almost all the Tibetans including the China trained youths wept to hear the Panchen Lama speak from his heart for his land, people and the Dalai Lama. If a large segment of Tibetan society, both in and outside Tibet, had but scant faith in the Panchen Lama as a true reincarnation, this brave stand destroyed their suspicion and confirmed their faith in him. As the Panchen Lama turned into a national symbol of Tibetan courage and patriotism, the Chinese quickly branded him a "reactionary traitor" and banned Tashi Lhunpo from public visit and worship. The Panchen Lama Choskyi Gyaltsen was imprisoned along with his tutor Ngulchu Tulku and a top ranking official Zesak Tethong. During the fourth PCART plenary session in August, 1964, the Panchen Lama was denounced as "a rock in the path of socialism" by Chang Kuo-hua and Chang Chin-wu. In the trial that lasted for 17 days, Chinese tutored Tibetan quislings lead by Phagpa Lha Gelek Namgyal, Yeshey Tsultrim and Trantsa Tamdin Gyalpo charged the Panchen Lama with numerous "crimes." During these trials, the Panchen Lama was also charged with plans to launch a clandestine guerilla war to overthrow the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

Unlike the Dalai Lama whom the State Council dismissed on 17th December, 1964 from the Chairmanship of the PCART as "an incorrigible running dog of imperialist and foreign reactionaries who has organised a bogus government and a bogus constitution," the Panchen Lama was given "a final chance for repentance", in a speech by Chou-En-Lai on 21st December 1964. But the Panchen Lama refused to repent. His membership in the National People's Consultative Conference was retained. His whereabouts became unknown.

After Mao's death and the fall of the 'Gang of Four, the Panchen Lama surfaced again. In 1978, he was seen attending the Chinese People's Political and Consultative Conference in Peking. Later reports said he was married. In 1979 he met the first Fact Finding Delegation sent by the Dalai Lama from Dharamsala. In July 1982, the Panchen Lama visited Tibet and arrived at Lhasa. Before a crowd of 20,000 people in front of Tsuglag Khang temple in Lhasa on July 6, the Panchen Lama said "The young people must use their youth to study hard, especially Tibetan culture, raising the level of the entire nationality and moving them into the ranks of the advanced." On 24th July, more than 550 monks welcomed the Panchen Lama with traditional trumpets to Tashi Lhunpo monastery, in Shigatse, after a gap of 20 years.

The 7th Panchen Lama Choskyi Gyaltzen has undergone numerous trials and tortures of harsh and hard prison life ever since 1964. Under the most trying and difficult circumstances, the Panchen Lama has proved himself to be a true Tibetan who command the admiration and faith of Tibetan in and outside Tibet.

APPENDICES

3

The Last Testament of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama*

With obeisance, we subjects, First Secretaries, Officials led by the Kashag in union state:

On the day of the Torgyag ceremony, during the supplementary session of the *Great Prayer*, the *Nechung Oracle* in the course of his trance, directed the people of Tibet to conduct prayers and services for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. To confirm the statement made by the Oracle, the Kashag and the chief abbot officially approached him. The Oracle repeated his earlier statement. All the prayers and services directed by the State Oracle was then carried out and finally we, the Kashag, with the subjects approached His Holiness the Dalai Lama beseeching him to allow us to offer Him the *Long Life Prayers*.

Then, we the subjects, pledged to rededicate ourselves with renewed vigour to our duties. To this, His Holiness replied thus:

“As you all know, I was selected not in the customary way of picking lots from the gold urn but my selection was foretold and divined. The regent tutor, Tatsang Hothogthu, my senior tutor Dorjechang Phurchog Rinpoche and other learned teachers taught me prayers and verses to recite and memorise; ordained me as a novice, taught me the art of debating, and initiated me to the sacred sermons and vows. When I was 18 years old and was making steady and sure progress in my religious studies, as was the custom, I was called upon to take over the burden of managing the political and spiritual affairs of my country. Though completely new to the political matters, I had to accept this responsibility imposed upon me by the fervent appeals of my people.

When the English marched into Tibet in the *Wood Dragon*

year (1905), it would have been convenient and easy to adopt a policy of friendship and make efforts to please them. But realising the dangers and implications of such a policy in the future, I, inspite of the hazardous and difficult journey, went to Peking, the Chinese capital via Mongolia. There I was received with much pomp, reverence and splendour by the Chinese Emperor and his people. I went to China on the basis of the teacher-disciple relationship prevalent since the time of the great Fifth Dalai Lama between the two countries. Not long after my arrival the Chinese Emperor passed away and the country was ruled by his sons to whom I explained the situation and problem of Tibet.

While I was returning to Tibet, the *ambans* in Tibet sent false reports to the Chinese Emperor and as a result commander Lui Chan and his soldiers were ordered to march into Tibet. They started interfering and even managed to take considerable political power into their hands. Consequently, I, my ministers and important officials of the State, inspite of the difficult journey, had to leave Tibet and go to the noble land of India. There, I appealed to the then English Government of India who brought the matter to the notice of the Chinese king. However, the Chinese king refused to reply and nothing came out of it.

As a result of our past meritorious *karma*, and the numerous prayers and services that were conducted in Tibet, internal strife took place in China. It was no problem, therefore, to completely drive out the Chinese force from Tibet.

From then on the year of the *Water-Monkey*, there was renewed happiness and peace reigned in Tibet. The high and low, rich and poor, all were content and welcomed this period with great joy and happiness. As it would take time to go into all the events that occurred, I have only spoken about the main events. I need not go into details, as all of you are aware of the events, and, moreover, they are clearly recorded in the various treatises. I myself, I am sure, have carried out my duties to your satisfaction.

I would like to make it clear here, however, that I am not reminding you of these events for the sake of it or because I want to bring what I did to the forefront.

I am now of advanced age and it is time I relinquished secular and spiritual duties so that I can start earning merit and concentrate on religious studies, keeping well in mind the future which is what really matters.

However, the Gods whom I followed like a shadow, the venerable teachers, those who revere me, those who offered me their wealth and property, the rich and the poor, they, my subjects, all have not only in words but in heart imposed upon me their hopes and aspirations. Because of this, I can not think of giving up my responsibilities. Therefore, with what little I know, I am trying my best to serve you all earnestly and honestly. But remember I am now reaching my fifty eighth year and as you all are aware that between me and the new reincarnation there will be a period when there will be no ruler.

Therefore take measures now. Maintain friendly relations with the two great powers, China and India, conscript able soldiers to guard the borders and make them sufficiently strong to ward off those countries with whom we have had border disputes. The armed forces should be drilled and disciplined so as to be effective and strong to overcome those who threaten us. These precautions should be taken at a time when the *forces of degeneration* are most prevalent and when Communism is on the spread. Remember the fate that befell the Mongolian nation when Communists overran the country and where the Head Lama's reincarnation was forbidden, where property was totally confiscated and where monasteries and religion were completely wiped out. These things have happened, are happening and will happen in the land which is the Centre of Buddhism (i.e. Tibet). So, if you are not able to defend yourselves now, the institutions of the Dalai Lama, venerable incarnates and those who protect the Teachings shall be wiped out completely. Monasteries shall be looted, property confiscated and all living beings shall be destroyed. The memorable rule of the *Three Guardian kings* of Tibet, the very institutions of the state and religion shall be banned and forgotten. The property of the officials shall be confiscated; they shall be slaves of the conquerers and shall roam the land in bondage. All souls shall be immersed

in suffering and the night shall be long and dark.

Now, when there is peace and happiness, when you have the power, work, work earnestly and wholeheartedly for the general welfare. Use peaceful methods where peace is due, use force where force is necessary: work and persevere now, that there are no regrets later. In your hands, officials of the Government, the holders of the Teachings and my people, lies the future of the country. Without employing wrong and base methods, rise up together and work for the general good of the land. If you do, we too will have the assurance and protection given by the State Oracle to Guru Rinpoche and the lineage of the previous Dalai Lamas. For my part, to those who work and persevere for the general good, I offer them my prayers and blessings. For those who only work for their own welfare, the fate and Karma will take care of them. Though they might prosper for some time, leaving aside their Government duties and watching the time pass, all I see is disaster in the future. It would be too late then to regret.

In my lifetime conditions will be as they are now, peaceful and quiet. But the future holds darkness and misery. I have warned you of these things because of my experience and other important reasons. More I cannot say or advise.

Outwardly, many religious services and prayers were and are being conducted. But what actually matters is your inward way of thinking and your devotion to your duties. If you work earnestly and wholeheartedly, I for my part shall work ceaselessly for the enhancement of the Teachings and officials of the Government, for prosperity, happiness and peace as it has been in the past, so that the people may be content, rest and labour in peace. Thus I have advised you: examine well what is to be done and what is to be discarded, purify your daily life. These things are of supreme importance and value.”

* Translated by Dr. Lobsang Rabgyay, Dharamsala.

Jampala : The Personal Physician of the 13th Dalai Lama

by Drag-seb Thupten Chogyal

Even at the early age of 14, I liked to study medicine. Through my friend Lodro Sangpo, I became the student of Jampala, the personal physician of the 13th Dalai Lama.

Jampala was a monk of the Dorjee Drak monastery in Lhoka. Later, he studied medicine, astrology and astronomy with diligence at the Lhasa Medical Centre and soon became very competent.

He was a good man. Honest by nature, his talks and teachings were clear and easy to understand. Friendly and easy to get along, his knowledge of Tibetan medicine and astrology was deep and wide.

He was always dressed in a monk's robe. Every morning he went to examine the pulse of the Dalai Lama and had to instruct the holy kitchen to prepare the dishes that will suit the system of the Dalai Lama's daily health. Besides numerous astrological calculations for the Dalai Lama, he also had to serve as a calligrapher and personally prepare the Dalai Lama's medicines. Though the title of the "personal physician to the Dalai Lama" was taken by the Medical Centre doctor Khyenrab Norbu, it was my teacher Jampala who stayed close to the Dalai Lama carefully attending to the daily duties. As he served sincerely, the Dalai Lama trusted him enormously. At that time, he used to take great pains to teach me Medicine and Astrology. But as he was busy, it was extremely difficult to get an opportunity to learn from him.

On the circumstances surrounding the demise of the 13th Dalai Lama, my teacher Jampala told me: "From the 22nd of the 10th Tibetan month of the water-bird year, the Dalai Lama was ill with cold. The medicine *Norbu Dunthang* was

administered. It did not ease the cold nor did it make the illness worse. On 24th after the conventional audience to the Gyutod monks, the fever became very high and Kuchar Kunphela was worried and kept on asking what best could be done? Either on the 26th or 27th, it seems Kuchar Kunphela went to Nechung for an oracular consultation. On the morning of the 28th, the medium of Nechung oracle reached Norbu Lingka palace. Later that day in the Chime Chog kyi chamber of the Norbu Lingka, the Nechung medium went into spontaneous trance and came in front of the Dalai Lama. According to medical diagnosis, the Dalai Lama at that stage had reached *Tsa-we ri-thang tsam-la* meaning "the fever had climbed high and the "wind" has spread wide making the condition extremely critical". At that moment, I, Kuchar Kunphela, the medium of Nechung oracle and the Dalai Lama were the only persons present. The Nechung Oracle asked me if I had *Chamjom Pawo 14*, a medicine for cold disease. As this medicine was very strong, I could not risk giving it to the Dalai Lama. Therefore, I told the Nechung Oracle I did not have this medicine at all. Then the Nechung Oracle told us to ask his own attendant. Kuchar Kunphela quickly went outside and most probably met the attendant and obtained the medicine as he returned with a medicine bag with a spoon ready in it and offered the bag to the Nechung Oracle. The Oracle took a spoonful of medicine and offered it to the Dalai Lama. I did not know whether the medicine in that bag was *Chamjom Pawo 14*. Then the Oracle lost his trance. From that night onwards, the fever rose higher than before and the Dalai Lama was delirious. The illness went from bad to worse and on the 30th of the 10th month, the Dalai Lama passed away.

After that the National Assembly summoned us and told us that it was a very serious matter not to have informed the Prime Minister and the Cabinet even when the illness had become so critical. I was asked to report on the medical treatment offered to the Dalai Lama. At that time, I gave a detailed report on the beginning of the illness, my personal prescription of medicines and the final medication by the Nechung Oracle before the demise of the Dalai Lama

when Kuchar Kunphela was also present.”

Later, at the final hearings of the trial, it was observed that whenever a Dalai Lama passed away, it was customary for the personal physician to suffer judgement. The property of my teacher Jampala was confiscated and he was imprisoned at Sharchen Chok prison. Then on the 29th of the 12th month, my teacher Jampala was taken out of Sharchen Chok prison, disrobed, dressed in a white *Chuba* and was made to ride an Ox with two soldiers guarding him. He was banished to Gyatso Dzong in Dagpo.

I felt very sad that my teacher should suffer such misfortunes. But there was no way for me to go and meet him. That night they were to stay at Dechen. I sent my servant with tea and 50 Tibetan *Sang* currency notes to meet my teacher. After giving one *Dotse* to each soldier, they permitted my servant to meet my teacher. As I instructed, my servant consoled my teacher telling him not to worry and encouraged him that we shall all meet in the near future. My teacher told my servant to thank me for helping him in his time of trouble and advised me to look after my health properly. As the soldiers were present, he could not send any message to me. After this we did not meet for several years. As I had a teacher-student relationship with him, I submitted a petition to the cabinet for his possible return to Lhasa mentioning that as he is not keeping well he may be permitted to return to Lhasa for spiritual prayers and prostrations before the Jowo Rinpoche and proper medical treatment. I further assured the Cabinet that in future he will not involve in any contradictory behaviour and that the Dragseb Labrang will take full responsibility for any such involvement. Before anything came of this petition, Radreng Rinpoche took over the regency. Soon afterwards, my teacher Jampala was permitted to return to Lhasa on the condition that he will not involve in any disturbing affairs. When Jampala returned to Lhasa from Dagpo, he was no longer a monk and had even a wife with him. When I met him in Lhasa he was no longer the Jampala I knew. A change had overcome him. The precious theoretical and practical knowledge he had of Tibetan medicine which he

should impart to the young was lost to all. He no longer wanted to part with them. When I asked him to teach me medicine, he told me: "You are a Tulku (incarnate). Up in the hills you have nomads. Down in the valley you have estates. In between you have monasteries. In this life you do not have to worry about your livelihood. So what is the use of learning medicine? I also studied medicine undergoing many difficulties and for a time had the opportunity to serve as the private physician of the Dalai Lama. But a time came when my property was confiscated and was exiled. The life of a doctor is this: 'When someone is sick we are remembered; when his illness is cured we are forgotten and when death strikes him we are blamed.' This saying is really true."

Later again he told me "If the remaining short days of my life could be spent in eating and doing whatever I wish to eat, dress and do, then it is fair enough for me. Otherwise, my life has achieved nothing." He then took to drinks. Very soon his health was ruined. He was 47 years old then and was very sick. When I went to meet him he was lying on bed. As I took his leave, he gave me a very rare handwritten Tibetan medical text and some pills of *Rinchen Tso thal*. My beloved teacher and such a sublime scholar of Tibetan medicine and learning should die under such circumstances at the age of 47 and be taken away from us, forever, pains my heart with sorrow even now.

The revolt of Powo Kanam Depa

by Jampa Yeshi

Powo Zong is now under Chamdo district. It was one of the major provinces in Tibet. Powo Kanampa were the descendants of the early kings of Tibet. King Nyatri Tsenpo's descendant Drigum Tsenpo was killed by Longam Ta-dzi. His sons Sha-tri, Ja-tri and Nya-tri escaped to Kongpo through Lhoka Yarlung. From Sha-tri descended Kanam Depa who ruled the whole province of Poyul. These are recorded in the old annals and the ruler was also referred to as king Kanam. In the official Tibetan records, he was referred to as Kanam Depa.

Though the Kanam kings and their ministers ruled over six valleys known as Polung Mabu'drug or Pochu lung'drug, every year they were required to pay an annual grain and butter tax to the Tibetan government in Lhasa. But the Kanam king sometimes paid and sometimes did not pay this tax. Yet while collecting the tax from the people, Kanam Depa always said: "first the government Gaden Phodrang and the three monasteries Sera, Drepung and Gaden must be paid and secondly my stores must be filled. Therefore, the grains must contain no dust and the butter must not have a single grain of hair."

The Tibetan government wished to subdue Kanam Depa to an equal position as the other provinces under its administration. During the reign of the 13th Dalai Lama, Kalon Tsarong Dazang Dadul gave away his younger sister Tsering Dolma in marriage to Powo Kanam Depa. After a few years of this marriage, Tsarong wrote a letter to Kanam Depa. It said: "Is it necessary for the Depa and his wife to stay in Powo? I feel it is best for the two of you to come to Lhasa. The government will give you an official rank

and also an appropriate estate for livelihood." In about the wood-bird year (1924) Kanam Depa Wangchen Dudul's wife undertook the journey to Lhasa with a considerable retinue of wealth and belongings followed after eight days by Kanam Depa himself. When he reached Powo Thang-mde, many representatives of the Powo people stopped him and requested him not to go to Lhasa and Kanam Depa gave up the journey. Tsering Dolma with her retinue and belongings reached Lhasa. Also at that time, Dochi Kalon Mentodpa sent Rutsa Khenchung Gonpo Sonam from Chamdo to Poyul under the title of Powo Tsongchi (Chief Trade Agent of Powo). During his three years stay in Powo, he made detailed notes on the geography, economic production and population of Powo, the five districts of Mon and Lhodrag. Kanam Depa soon realised that it was a plot to usurp his power and he decided to massacre Rutsa Khenchung Gonpo Sonam and his retinue. But a secret message warned Rutsa Khenchung of Kanam Depa's decision. Though he had no soldiers Rutsa Khenchung hoisted a military flag from the top of his residence known as Nagma Zong belonging to Chudo Gonpa. Having done this to show as if he had many soldiers, Rutsa Khenchung and his retinue disguised themselves completely as Powo natives and escaped to Chamdo. To look after the properties, Rutsa Khenchung had kept three storekeepers Chosang, his son and Wangdu. Kanam Depa tortured Chosang and his son to death. Wangdu and Dronyer Dongyal were able to escape as they were hidden in the grain store of Shulmo Zong by Zerabu. Rutsa Khenchung made a full report of his observation and the recent incident to Dochi Kalon Mentodpa who immediately took up the matter with Lhasa. With instructions from the Tibetan government, Dochi Kalon sent Jathang Dapon Tagna with 500 soldiers to Poyul. They camped at Da-shing monastery. Summoning Kanam Depa to a feast, Dapon Tagna and Kanam vowed to lifelong friendship and concluded negotiations on the investigations of the land and population of Powo. Sometime after this, Dapon Tagna sent a letter to Kanam Depa. The letter said that with the assistance of the heads of the district and the monasteries, they have

begun the investigation of the land and requested Kanam Depa to personally attend the proceedings and also bring all the different sizes of grain measurement bowl (Bo) which they had been using so far as it would be necessary to establish one standard grain measurement from now on. This letter was sent with one Shel-ngo and four soldiers. Kanam Depa massacred the Shel-ngo and the four soldiers and at once prepared for war. In 1928 Tagna Dapon and Powo Kanam Depa fought for two days. In this battle Tagna Dapon made one soldier carry the ammunition box and another soldier to fill the guns in turn and the Dapon himself courageously marched right in the front ranks firing continuously at the Powo soldiers defeating Kanam Depa. Desperate at this defeat, Kanam Depa ran away to India with four bodyguards carrying a considerable amount of gold, silver and other valuable things. The remaining wealth and house, a year's store of grain and butter tax, other belongings including horses were set to the torch by Kanam Depa who said he would rather destroy these properties than surrender them to the enemy. In the next day's fight Tagna Dapon once again led the soldiers from the front and was killed by the Powo soldiers. The Jathang soldiers, having lost their leader, became discouraged and ran away to Riwoche in panic. In Kanam Depa's defence, the forces of Yiwongpa reached Showakha. But when they heard that Kanam Depa had already run away to India, they returned to Yiwong. As the fighting erupted suddenly, the forces of Yiwong Zong were unable to reach in time to help Kanam Depa. The Chosong zong forces said they were ancient subjects of the government and kept aloof from the fight. Therefore, it was only the Potodzong who took up the fight which could not last more than two days and ended in their total defeat. In the two days fight, about 200 Powo soldiers were killed. About 90 Jathang soldiers were either wounded or killed. At that time, from Chamdo Phenchung Dawa brought the voluntary soldiers of Shotar Lhosum province via Khyungtor Lho to Powo Chudo. At the same time, Dapon Dokharwa brought about 500 soldiers via Gangring, 500 Dingri soldiers via Gotsa La and via Kongpo

Luna, Dapon Khemay brought 500 Drashi soldiers. Surrounded by all these forces, the chief ministers of Kanam Depa called Nyelog Depa, Khartag Depa, Gontsa Depa, Khardhog Depa and Bomda Depa and a man called Kanam Depa was arrested and sent to Lhasa. Their properties were confiscated. While the 500 Dingri soldiers returned via Potod Dung La where the roads were very narrow, the people of Potod Yuri-gon blocked their path and killed 83 of the soldiers. About 40 of Powo people were also killed in this skirmish. The other forces returned safely and no killing or injury on either side took place.

When Kanam Depa escaped to India, a Gyapon with 50 soldiers were sent via Yuphug Ronglam to Sang ngag Chodzong and Zayul to intercept him at the border. But he escaped and reached India. The soldiers returned with the head of man claiming it to be that of Kanam Depa and showed it to the people of Powo. But the Powo people said the head was not that of Kanam Depa as the two front teeth of Kanam Depa protruded while all the teeth of the severed head were all in good line. Later Kanam Depa's bodyguard Zul Sonam Wangdak returned to Powo and told the people that Kanam Depa, while he stayed in India, was looked after by the British who gave him the title of Sahib and also commissioned a monthly salary. He was later sent to Lhoyul. While in Lhoyul, he took to heavy drinking and ate various kinds of meat. He fell sick with a relapse of fever and died. Then Dochi Kalon Mentodpa came to Powo and appointed Dapon Tsogowa and Tsedron Rampa Thupten Kunkhyen as the land and settlement commissioner with 500 Jathang soldiers as the border guards. The rest of the forces were then withdrawn.

The Fate of the English School in Lhasa

By Kashopa Chogyal Nyima & Lhalu Tsewang Dorjee

Following is a true account of how an English school opened at Lhasa towards the end of the second world war was closed just after five short months.

First, in 1944, Richardson, the British Trade Agent of Gyal Tse residing permanently at Dekyi Lingka in Lhasa and later Major Sherab, the assistant Political Officer of Sikkim suggested to the Kashag that English being the most widely used language in the world, it may be a good idea to give English education to as many Tibetan students as possible so that Tibet is able to stand on its own in political and military administration, electrical and mining engineering etc. At that time, except for a few noble families and wealthy traders who sent their sons and daughters to English schools in India, the majority of even the aristocracy and the trader were unable to send their children for English education outside Tibet due to the exorbitant expenses involved. Desiring English education for their children, they were hopefully awaiting the opening of an English school in Lhasa itself. Taking all these into consideration, the regent Tagdra Rinpoche, Kalon Lama Tenpa Jamyang, Kalon Bonshod Tseten Dorjee, Kadrung Phunkhang Tashi Dorjee, Kalon Surkhang Wangchen Gelek, Chikyab Khenpo Serjey Ngawang Tenzin approved the idea of opening an English school in Lhasa. The Kashag at once sent Rimshi Jang Ngopa to the British representative major Sherab at Dekyi Lingka with the request to arrange an English teacher for the proposed school. Major Sherab informed the Kashag through the foreign office that the Political Officer in Sikkim has sent a telegram saying that as requested by the Tibetan Government an English teacher has been arranged. They

also requested the political Officer to arrange a second junior teacher with a knowledge of Tibetan language and literature.

At that time, Zesak Surkhang Zurpa Wangchen Tseten was the in-charge of the Foreign Office assisted by Tsipon Shakabpa Wangchuk Deden. Both of them unanimously requested the Kashag to undertake the opening of the English School in Lhasa as it will prove very useful to Tibet. Kashag accordingly submitted their approval to the regent Tagdra who was highly impressed by the idea and instructed that for the immediate opening of the English school in Lhasa, Kashag and Drung-Tsi should be fully responsible. The Kashag, in turn sent a circular investing the Drung-Tsi Lekhang with full authority to immediately open the school by selecting the suitable location and the necessary students. After that, in consultation with each other, the Drung-Tsi Lekhang and the Kashag selected vacant and open space near Lubuk to start the construction of the school and staff quarters and appointed Tsipa Dumrawa as the head of the construction department.

Sometime later the English teacher, Mr. Parker, reached Lhasa via Domo and Gyaltse. In consultation with the British representative at Dekyi Lingka, a blue print for constructing the school building, garden, play-ground and road etc. was prepared which the Kashag approved. For recruiting the students, Drung Tsi Lekhang, the administrative in-charge of the school notified that the Lhasa Tsidrungs and the Shodrungs must meet and discuss in the Tse Yigtsang and Tsi Khang respectively to send children of the Government Officers, from Shodrung and Tsekor to the English School to train them for administration. The Yigtsang immediately informed the Tsikhang Lekhang expressing their inability to suggest names from their newly admitted students to the English school and agreed to send students as they graduated from their school.

At that time, the regent Tagdra instructed that as it may not be proper from a religious point of view for the Tse Yigtsang to supervise the opening of the English school, the important matters relating to the English school must

be jointly discussed by the Drung Tsi while it will be seemingly under the over-all in-charge of Tsi-Khang Lekhang who must daily consult the British representative on matters related to the English school through the Tibetan Foreign Office.

At that time, we were four ministers in the Finance Department, Dekhar Tsewang Rabten (Lukhangwa), Lhalu Tsewang Dorjee and Shakabpa Wangchuk Deden. A junior English teacher named Kartruk Tsering was arranged. Richardson also handed over the bills of the school stationery and other letters brought by Mr. Parker. As both the teachers had arrived, Tsi Khang then approached the regent Tagdra through the Kashag and expressed the need to start the school soon, despite the incomplete construction of the building. The regent Tagdra approved and sanctioned Tsi Khang's plan to start the school for the time being at Drungchi Trokhang till the school building was complete. So it was decided to start the school on 11th June 1944.

On the day the school finally opened, it was attended by the two English teachers and a Tibetan teacher named Aepa Yondag Phuntsok Dhondup. The students consisted of the sons of the high and low ranking government Officers. All the 42 students were present at Drungchi Trokhang to start the first English school in Lhasa. Soon after, Tsipon Kashodpa and Tsipon Shakabpa arrived carrying with them the sealed decree declaring the inauguration of the school from the regent. The Tibetan teacher and the students lined up according to their admission number. At the door, the two English teachers received the two Tsipons. Inside, the Tsipons prostrated and offered silk scarfs to the photographs of the Dalai Lama and the regent after which they sat on their seats. Then the Tibetan teacher and the students prostrated before the altar and the two English teachers took off their hats in salutation. All the three teachers and the students above the hereditary rank of Saynampa offered silk scarfs while the ordinary students offered ordinary scarfs before taking their seats. Auspicious flour and wheat and money were offered, so were rice and tea etc. The Tibetan teacher started chanting the daily

prayers and the student followed. After the chanting of prayers, the students were given Tibetan slate and a master copy of calligraphy. Dry tracing calligraphy on the slate was done by the Tibetan teacher and the Tibetan lesson was inaugurated. Similarly, Mr. Parker distributed English text-books and started the English lesson. Tsi Khang presented a silk scarf to the Tibetan teacher Aepa Yondag Phuntsok Dhondup with various gifts. The English teacher Mr. Parker was presented with a silk scarf and various gifts. A silk dress material and silk scarf were also presented to junior English teacher Babu Kartruk Tsering. Then Tsipon Kashopa read out the sealed decree of the regent declaring the opening of the school, translated simultaneously into English by Lhanyer Jang ngopa explaining clearly the precepts of conduct to all the students and teachers after which the decree was handed over to all the three teachers. Thereafter, this English school daily held classes. But the monk and lay factions of the ex-regent Radreng began to instigate rumours against this school specially in the three major monasteries of Sera, Drepung and Gaden accusing the school of inimical designs on the Buddhist religion of Tibet. The air being thick with such rumours against the school, the abbot of the three major monasteries took the opportunity in hand by gathering ranking monks of the various monastic sections and discussed the issue. This gathering of the abbots and representatives of the three monasteries resolved first to approach the regent Tagdra and the Kashag to request them to consider closing the English school immediately which the Tibetans were unwilling to accept as it would prove extremely harmful to the political administration and Buddhist religion of Tibet. They further resolved that if the regent and the Kashag does not take their request into consideration, the three monasteries will collect a large number of monk *Dab Dobs* who will gather in Lhasa and destroy the school then and there. Thereafter, the abbots of Sera and Drepung accompanied by the representative of Gaden approached Kashag and requested the ministers to convene the National Assembly as they had a most important political and religi-

ous point to discuss.

The Kashag told the abbots and representatives of the three monasteries that whatever important questions they had to discuss must first be brought before the Assembly of Drung Tsi. Accordingly, a Drung-tsi conference was called in *Zimchung Kunsel* at Lhasa Labrang Teng. At this conference, the abbots and representatives of the three monasteries stated that recently an English school was opened at Lhasa without discussing the matter in the National Assembly and as the school was harmful to the religion and politics of Tibet, they felt concerned to question on the why's and how's of this school. The Drung-tsi accordingly informed the Kashag of the development. The ministers of Kashag gave a stern reply by stating that the school had been opened with the permission of the regent Tagdra and in collaboration between the Tibetan and British Government as it would prove useful to the present and future political and religious requirements of Tibet. Therefore, the ministers felt it unnecessary on the part of the abbots and representatives of the three monasteries to act the fools before a wise decision. When Drung-tsi conveyed the Kashag's reply to them, the abbots and representatives got infuriated and through the mouth of Dre-Ngagpa Khensur Ngawang Kechog remonstrated that "as the political and religious conditions of Tibet is critical, we felt it best not to degrade and degenerate the situation any further and therefore hoped that what has been burnt by fire can be healed by fire. But, if the "river has no bridge across it, there is no way out but to cross it by swimming." As such, we are convinced that the opening of this English school is harmful to the religion and politics of Tibet and therefore we are determined to close it down." The Khensur further claimed that as the nobles or trading families of the students admitted to the English school belong either to one of the three monasteries, they will send monk *Dob-Dabs* who will forcibly take the students to their respective monasteries of their parents and will throw the black board down and empty the school. When the abbots and the representatives led by Kenschur Ngawang Khechog got up to leave, the Drung-tse requested them not to leave and assured them that the

matter can be amicably solved by further discussions.

Though they stayed for further discussion, the abbots were determined to destroy the school as they were convinced that the noble and rich families of the students working in the Government will slowly shift their loyalty and patronage away from the monasteries and when in future the students take over the political jobs in the Government, they will further injure and harm the religion and politics of Tibet. As the abbots and the monk representatives were adamant in their demand to destroy the school, the Drung-tsi in deliberation with the Kashag finally had no choice but to agree to close down the school. At that time, among the aristocrats who wanted the school to remain open, there was a whisper that the whole incident had been instigated by the Kuomingtang Chinese.

The Drung-tsi informed the Kashag and the Kashag in deliberation with the regent discussed the developments in detail and were in search of a possible solution. Both the Kashag and the regent did not desire to close the school at all. But in the streets of Lhasa disturbing rumours circulated that the three monasteries will send monk *Dob-Dabs* to kidnap the students of the English school and many even said the *Dab-Dobs* had already come into the streets of Lhasa. Such fearful rumours scared both the students and the parent who thought the monk *Dob-Dabs* might beat the students and thereafter kept their sons away from attending the school. Such incidental and internal cause created a critical situation for the regent and the Kashag who lost control of the situation and were compelled to inform the three monasteries that the English School in Lhasa will be closed.

At the time, the school was on the eve of winter vacation. Mr. Parker left via Gyaltse to visit the places around Shigatse. Babu Kartruk Tsering left for Gangtok in Sikkim with a horse and passport supplied by the Tibetan Kashag along with three months salary in advance.

The Foreign Office informed the Assistant Political Officer Major Sherab on the closing of the English School in Lhasa. It said, due to unfortunate reactions from the monk and lay populace of Lhasa, the English school had to be closed down

and requested Major Sherab to request both the teachers not to return to Lhasa. The Foreign Office begged forgiveness of the teachers for the great difficulty in their journey to Lhasa and volunteered to meet all the expenses incurred on this journey. The Foreign Office sought assurance on the friendly relations between the British and the Tibetan Government and stated that the Tibetan Government has now decided to send students to English schools in India and sought continuing British help in this. In Lhasa, the Tsi Khang had to publicly declare that the English school in Lhasa will be closed.

But Mr. Parker returned to Lhasa from Shigatse and the Tibetan government gave him a very good reception. The four ministers and the Chikhyab Khenpo gave Mr. Parker a feast inside Tsom-chen of Tsuglagkhang and explained to him as politely and as sweetly as possible the reasons for closing the school. The English teacher made a denigrating remark that the ministers were like children who run after whatever others say. Not to hurt the sentiments of Mr. Parker any further the Kashag submitted the draft of a certificate to the English teacher which stated that in order to institute an Anglo-Tibetan school in Lhasa itself, the Tibetan Government requested the Political Officer of Sikkim to recommend and send an excellent English teacher to Lhasa. Mr. Parker, well educated and skilled in the teaching of language arrived in Lhasa and in a brief time of five months had succeeded in imparting a considerable knowledge of English language to the students and would have produced excellent results given more time. As the students were young, the Tibetan populace suspected they might forsake their traditional behaviour. As such, due to the unfavourable reaction from the Tibetan public, the school had to be closed for the time being as already conveyed to the Political Officer of Sikkim through assistant Major Sherab. Otherwise, Mr. Parker was dedicated to teaching and had no fault whatsoever. To keep his sentiments, the Tibetan Government provided every facility possible and requested the Indian Government, in the interest of Anglo-Tibetan friendship, to be more considerate and helpful to Mr. Parker. This certificate was dated Tibetan Wood-

Bird Year, 29th of 1st month. Along with this certificate Mr. Parker was offered a silk scarf, one full piece of copper coloured brocade, three full-rolls of Tibetan cloth with medalion designs, ten Yak loads of fine butter, a full length piece of ochre coloured brocade, a pair of fine antique gilded flower urns with their stands, a copper urn adorned with small silver urns with silver handles resting on a painted and carved wooden stand, a colourful pair of small flower pots made of enamel with stands, a pair of antique tea cups made of colourful enamel, a big tea kettle made of chinese bronze with beautiful enamel stopper on the spout, lid at the top and case on the handle, a fine flat pen case made of iron with gilt and beaten designs and bid goodbye to him. This English teacher left Lhasa a very sad and dejected man.

In this way, the English school in Lhasa was rooted out.

Lunghsar: My Father

By Lhalu Tsewang Dorjee

Lunghshars are descendants of Zurchung Sherab Dakpa. The old residence of Sharchog Zurchungpa under the administration of Lunghsar is known as Zur Lung these days. Therefore, from the time of the 5th Dalai Lama, the family hereditarily served the official ranks of the Tibetan Government. Lunghsar family was a Gerpa (Private nobleman) from Tanag under the Zhad Thong mon Dzong of Shigatse. My grandfather, Lunghsar Lhundup Dorjee, a Drungkhor (lay official) in the Tibetan Government and grandmother Dechen Palmo gave birth to my father in 1881. He was named Dorjee Tsegyal.

His father died when he was about 8 years old. But his mother brought him up with great love and care. She paid special attention towards his education by training him under numerous learned teachers. Therefore, he always remained respectful and grateful to his mother.

My father was keenly interested in the study of Tibetan medicine and trained himself under medical teachers and applied himself to the art with diligence. As he had attained considerable knowledge in the field of medicine, we remember seeing him practising urine and pulse diagnosis and prescribing Tibetan medical pills. Similarly, from his young days he loved music and dance and daily played the *Hochin* and *Yangchin*. Many a times, we saw him gathering dancers and musicians of Lhasa in a merry picnic. Some of the main musicians who attended such gatherings were Bai Wali (Hui), Dal Zho Li (Chinese). Wa man ri, Namgyal etc. with Nangma singers Ye Tsa (Hui) and the popular trio female *To shay* singers Phurba Dolma, Sonam Kyizom and Yangkyi etc.

When he was about 20 years old, he married a girl Lhay-khudpa from Tanag. A son named Chapa Ruzur Wangchen Lhawang and girl named Dolma Phug Pema were born. Then he came to Lhasa to serve the Tibetan Government in the rank of a Drungkhor. As his mastery over the Tibetan language and literature was excellent, he was appointed as a Tsi-pa in the Tsi-khang office. During his decade long service in the Tsi-khang, he applied himself to his duties with great dedication, intelligence and efficiency and for the first time achieved fame as Tsipa Lungshar. During a journey to Lungshar estate to collect autumn harvest, his wife unfortunately died at the estate itself.

After about three years, he married our mother Tenzin Dolkar. Five of us sons and a daughter were born.

The 13th Dalai Lama learnt much about foreign countries which gave His Holiness the idea of persuing modern science to improve Tibet while in exile in 1911. On the Dalai Lama's return to Lhasa in 1913, he selected a few sons of the nobility for education in England and my father was promoted to the rank of a Rimshi to accompany and supervise the journey to England. The students were Mondrong Khyenrab Kunzang, Jang ngoepa Rigzin Dorjee, Kyibuk Wangdu Norbu and Gogkharwa Sonam Gonpo. Together they journeyed to London. The British Government received them with Gould Sahib as the guide and Langden la, a Tibetan as interpreter. The presents and the letters of the Tibetan Government were handed over to the British. The students were admitted in one Rugby School. Later the students specialised in different fields of studies. Mondrong was trained in Mining. Jang Ngoe pa Rigzin Dorjee in electrical engineering. Kyibukpa in Telegraphy and map-making and Gogkharwa in military affairs. All the four students returned to Lhasa after their training. At that time, both my parents had learnt a little English besides visiting France and Italy. Perhaps influenced by such exposure, my father seemed to consider it dangerous for Tibet to remain unreformed in its old system. Whenever he had time, he read over the history books written in English and often during family gatherings, he used to tell us stories of how the

monarchy was destroyed in France and Italy during times of turmoil and revolutions.

After returning to Tibet from England, the 13th Dalai Lama paid special attention to my father and appointed him to the rank of a Tsipon. As there was a shortage of provision for the military, a new taxation scheme known as *Bab-zhib lay-khung* meaning "Grain Taxation according to Income", was evolved to collect more grains. Drungyig Chemmo Losang Tenkyong and my father were appointed the supervisors of the scheme by the Dalai Lama. According to the scheme, excessive grains to be taxed were from the Depon Midrag, (leading noble families) Yabshi (families that have produced Dalai Lamas), Gerpa (private noble families) and the major monastic estates. Also the Kashi (Kalon's estate), Dashi (Dapon's estate) and the private noble families who no longer serve the government were also taxed accordingly. As such the bigger estates and the major monasteries had to pay 4 to 5,000 khels of grains and lesser ones about several hundreds. This brought in so much grains for the Tibetan government that during the later years of the Dalai Lama, most of the old grain stores were fully filled and the government ran short of spaces to store grains. All the same, after the death of the 13th Dalai Lama, the Kashag made concessional postponement of the grain tax for several years. Moreover the Government grain was given on loan to major families without any interest. Besides, the same grains were distributed as rewards and gifts at every occasion. This caused a great loss to the government and the Lhasa public joked about it. At that time, because of great loss to the grain stores of the major noble families due to the new taxation, my father was talked about in some high circles with great annoyance and hatred. But because he was under the special favour of the 13th Dalai Lama whose strong support he enjoyed, no one was able to harm him. Yet because of this grain taxation episode, my father had to undergo severe consequences as I shall narrate hereafter.

My father always used to advice me to study hard and accumulate knowledge. He always told me to think of ser-

ving the government. On the day I was appointed to a government post, I got ready to visit the monasteries to offer prayers. My father then advised me to pray to the gods to help me to serve the government in my best capacity and ability. He further told me to refrain absolutely from gambling, drinking and smoking. He advised me to take up music and dance as a source of entertainment for which he arranged a special tutor for me. I too began to like music and dancing from then on.

While my father was holding the post of Tsipon and was also the supervisor of the Grain tax, the 13th Dalai Lama appointed him the commander-in-chief of the Tibetan army. This was the time when my father became very famous as Tsipon Lungshar and the Dalai Lama took him into close confidence. Important and confidential letters were drafted by my father. As a sign of special favour, the Dalai Lama gave my father a statue of Thugji Chenmo (Buddha of Compassion) with pure gold head-gears and earrings. His Holiness further assured my father that he will offer special prayers to remember my father in every life time. But such auspicious times were not to last for long.

Then came Chensal Kunphela who was equal in power and favour with my father. As the two favourites, they could not get along together and it seemed Kunphela misinformed the Dalai Lama against my father. For example, as my father loved music, they reported to the Dalai Lama how every month he spent two afternoons singing and dancing with the musicians and dancers of Lhasa implying his neglect of state affairs. Soon after, the rank of commander-in-chief was taken away from my father leaving him with the only post of Tsipon. But his job of writing important letters for the Dalai Lama etc. continued and he attended the retinue of the Dalai Lama as before.

Though he continued his work as Tsipon and the Supervisor of the Grain Tax scheme, a rheumatic attack on his knees kept him in bed for several months from the beginning of the water-bird year. When he was a little better my father told me that as he was above 50 years of age and stricken with a disease in the legs, he thought it better to

resign both his posts and stay at home in retirement. For this, he wanted to obtain the personal permission of the Dalai Lama and instructed me to obtain it through a better favourite of the Dalai Lama. During my days as the Rupon (Captain) of the Kusung (bodyguards), I was close to Sonam Norbu and Dechen Yingsel—both of whom were No. 2 favourites of the Dalai Lama. In the first week of the 10th Tibetan month, I went to them with 5 srang of silver tamka (coins) and a packet of scarfs as required for Mendel Tensum and requested them to submit the resignation and retirement of my father from the government posts to the Dalai Lama. The two favourites in reply told me: "Do not insist on a resignation this time. The Dalai Lama is still favourable. From now on, the Dalai Lama plans to lessen his own work by appointing your father and Dronyer Chenmo Kogpowa as ministers. At the same time, during the *Molam* at New Year, Sonam Norbu will ordain as a monk as it has been decided to promote him as an important favourite." I was very happy to hear all this and returned to my father and told my father so.

But as the Dalai Lama suddenly passed away soon after, my father was plunged in grief and sorrow. After that, the National Assembly questioned those always in the presence of the Dalai Lama on the circumstances surrounding the demise of the Dalai Lama.

The personal physician of the Dalai Lama Jampa confessed: "I did not have the freedom to prescribe and offer medicines. Nechung Oracle foretold that *Chamzom Pawo 14* must be prescribed and Kunphela asked me where the medicine was. In reply to this, I told them it is not right to offer this medicine. Nechung Oracle said the medicine bag is with my attendant which must be procured. Kunphela took the medicine bag and offered the medicine to the Dalai Lama. Because of this, the illness deteriorated". On this confession, the National Assembly arrested Kunphela at once. Similarly, Nechung medium, Amchi Jampa and other attendants were arrested and interrogated. During the interrogation, Kunphela described how he went to Nechung monastery to offer prayers and request the Oracle

to come. The same medicine, as prescribed by the Oracle was offered. When the Nechung medium was questioned, he said as he was in a trance he did not remember which medicine was prescribed. When the attendant of Nechung medium was questioned he said he brought the bag of medicine as instructed by the medium himself. In brief, the National Assembly was convinced that a medicine which the doctor considered unsuitable was offered by force to the Dalai Lama. As such, Kunphela was exiled to Tsegang Dzong in Kongpo, Nechung medium was given to the charge of Dre-pung Loling Dratsang. Though doctor Jampa was not that seriously guilty as far as the medicine was concerned, he was exiled to Gyatsa Dzong for negligence of his duty.

My father, because of his trip to Europe was greatly influenced by the outside political developments. In order to bring some changes in the Tibetan political set up, he founded an association known as Kyid-chog Kun-thun (Happy Union). It was also known as the Lungshar movement. This association increased at once when about 100 officials became its members. Drepung Sog Depa, Sera Jam mon Depa and Gaden representative Kongpo Thinley Gyatso etc. gradually entered the association. On entering the association, each member had to sign the manifesto. The first to sign was my father Lungshar. After him, my brother Chapa Rusur and myself signed. About 100 officials and the representatives of the three major monasteries mentioned above signed the manifesto too. In many secret meetings of the association, it was resolved to request the Tibetan government that the ministers in the Kashag must be elected by the National Assembly after every four years. A memorandum to the effect was submitted to the Kashag. At that time, one of the members of the association, Kasho Chogyal Nyima was a trusted friend of my father and inner member of the association. As such, my father discussed and consulted him on many matters of the association and thereby kept him fully informed of the developments. Prompted perhaps by selfish motivation, Kashopa took an unimaginable step by going directly to

Kalon Trimon Norbu Wangyal and informing him with all the details of the association and further adding that the association planned to murder all the ministers. Panic stricken and scared, Kalon Trimon went straightaway to the regent Radreng Rinpoche and asked him to immediately arrest my father as the mastermind of the movement. As the regent Radeng and my father Lungshar maintained close relationship, the regent sought for an excuse to delay the arrest. But Kalon Trimon was most persuasive. As the regent Radreng had been in the post of regency for only two months then, he did not have the proper experience and authority to delay the arrest and had to agree to arrest my father. After this, Kalon Trimon went to Drepung monastery. From Shod Zimgag, a messenger was sent to my father Lungshar asking him to attend an important meeting at the earliest. My father came to attend the meeting straightaway taking it to be a usual summon when in fact the Shod Zimgag had already sent out orders to arrest and imprison him. Sensing the trap, my father saw a chance of escape when the officials went to prepare the prison and he was left with only two guards. Remembering the pistol which he had asked his servant Loden to bring with him, my father ran to get hold of the weapon. Reaching the back door of Tse, Loden saw his master running towards him and got ready to hand over the pistol to my father by shouting "master your gun is here." But the sweepers and houseguards got around Loden, overpowered him and snatched the gun and took him under custody. My father was stranded. Suddenly the guards of Tse Zimgag and other people around overpowered him. He was imprisoned in the Sherchenchok. As a witness to disclose the secret resolutions of the association was needed, Rimshi Kashopa was also taken into custody for the time being. Similarly the main characters involved in the Lungshar conspiracy like Changchen Gunj Sonam Gyalpo, Sherpang Gyal Nangpa, Tsedrung Letsen Thupten Geden, Tsedrung Letsen nicknamed Tha kha li, Shod-drung Manriwa, Shoddrung Draktonpa, Shod-drung Yul Lhawa Tenpa Tsewang, Kusung Rupon Chapa Wangchen Yulha and myself were arrested. In the

investigative committee, the interrogators were: Khen-drung Khyenrab Wangchuk, Magchi Nangkarwa Wangchuk Tharchin, Lha-nyer Dekarwa Tsewang Rabten (Lhukangwa) and Tsedrung Terpa Jamyang. During the interrogation, Rimshi Kashopa revealed everything about the association and even added that there were plots to assassinate the four cabinet ministers. My father Lungshar told the committee that the resolutions only emphasised the absolute necessity of electing the ministers by vote and nowhere was there any plot to assassinate the ministers. But the investigative committee, did not pay any attention to what my father had to say. At last, my father said: "If you do not believe what I say, do as you please. I will not say a word further". From then on, whatever questions the investigative committee asked, my father kept silent. Then the investigative committee made a plan to punish my father by gouging out his eyes. When this sentence was submitted to the regent Radeng Rinpoche, he told them: "As I am a monk I can not sign this sentence. Please decide it for yourselves." At this, the Prime Minister Langdun said: "We understand your position. We shall decide it ourselves" and in consultation with the other ministers Trimon, Gedun Chodar, Nangjung and Nedron Phunrabpa, they accused my father of spreading the red ideology of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Prime Minister signed the decree sentencing my father to blinding and life imprisonment. The others involved were exiled. My brother Chapa Rusur and myself were singled out as the foremost signers of the manifesto of the association after our father and sentenced to an amputation of a hand each. When they were preparing our amputation, the Pabongka Rinpoche and the Serjay Khenpo Thupten Nyingpo personally requested Kalon Trimon not to amputate us as a result of which Kalon Trimon agreed to withdraw the sentence of amputation. Both I and my brother were expelled from our governmental posts. A proclamation of penalty that descendants of the Lungshar family will be never be allowed to serve the government was made.

When my father was in prison, we daily supplied the

necessary food etc. Though blinded, he sent us short letters in which he listed the few things and medicines etc. which he required. In one of the letters he mentioned that the mud prison-room of the Shol bred many scorpions and he needed a sleeping net to keep them away. We sent him a net which kept away the dreaded scorpions. The precious incarnation of the Lama of Zarongphu was one from whom my father obtained religious teachings. To this lama, my father wrote a letter which was dictated by my father to one doctor named Thupten-la. This letter outlined the whole life of my father in verse. I saw and read this epistle at the time but after so many years, I could only remember the following verses from the letter:

When I took up the movement for the happiness for all
I was enveloped by the dark clouds of obstruction
At that moment, thousands of foes surrounded me
With harsh words, they gouged out my eyes to the
ground

Though my human eyes are gouged out
Who can blind the wisdom eye?

A blind man always lives in darkness
It is strange to imprison him a dark prison.
Though my worldly wealth is usurped by others
Who has the means to usurp the spiritual wealth of the
Seven Noble Possessions?

Others tell me prisons are dark and deep
But from the cave of the Clear Light Expanse
The Self is luminous
I, Lungtsar Dorjee Tsegial, a victim of samsaric
activities

Offer this with prostrations

After this misfortune, I was able to serve the Tibetan government once again and attain the post of Kalon in the Kashag. As I inculcated a very friendly relationship with the ministers, I was able to submit an application for the release of my father and personally visit and tell my difficul-

ties to the regent Radeng Rinpoche. The regent Radeng then told me: "When Lungshar was arrested, I tried to obstruct it. But as Kalon Trimon and Silon Langdun did not listen to me I was helpless. At that time, I thought of sending a secret message to Lungshar. But I could not go outside myself and under the circumstances, it was dangerous to sent a secret message through someone else. It was a very desperate situation". With the regent's backing, my father was released and was able to return home. At home, we asked our father if he suffered great pains when his eyes were gouged out. Our father said: "When my eyes were about to be gouged out, I was given a medicine known as Langchen Nyonpa (mad elephant). Then a yak's knee-bone were kept on the right and left of my temple and my head was tightly bound with ropes and pressed. When the eye-balls were about to fall, they cut the veins with a knife and threatened that your two sons will suffer the same fate. Later I heard my two sons were unharmed and I am very happy to be with both of you today. Why we suffered such consequences was because of my own failure to organise the movement on a more resourceful and efficient line. Others need not be blamed. There is no need to harm and hate the enemies. It is now useless. While in prison, I always recited the *Mani* (the six syllable mantra) and was able to recite one trillion. This has been a blessing in disguise."

During those days, among the higher circles in Lhasa, quite a few rich families who disliked the grain tax showed satisfaction at the punishment meted out to my father and family. Most of the officials showed signs of sadness. Generally, the good hearted public were horrified by the act of blinding my father's eyes and kept on condemning it in loud voice. Some, as a sign of sympathy, came to offer food stuffs etc.

When my father returned home, he was not very well. After about a year, he died of sickness in the iron-dragon year(1944).

How I Joined the “Lungshar Movement”

By Lhawutara Thupten Tendhar

After the death of the 13th Dalai Lama in 1933, Kuchar Thupten Kunphela fell from power. Radeng was appointed the regent. The Prime Minister Langdun was appointed to assist the regent. In the Kashag, Kalon Trimon Norbu Wangyal, due to his experience and prestige, was very powerful. Also famous and powerful was Tsipon Lunshar Dorji Tsegyal. As such, the political situation of Tibet was uncertain and unstable. Under such historical circumstances, it seems that in 1934, Tsipon Lungshar had formed a secret party to capture political power. At the Potala, a member of this party was Tsedrung Thupten Gedan popularly known as Karma Khang gi Kong Trug. Daily during the tea break, he took the opportunity to raise discussions among the officials at Tsekor. Quoting a prophecy that “there will be a stupa without head”, he raised concern on the proper construction of the golden mausoleum of the departed 13th Dalai Lama; the proper search and accurate discovery of the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama and the general well-being of the political administration of Tibet. Encouraging discussions, he urged that all the Tsekor officials, in gratitude to the kindness of the government who sustained their living, must take initiative and make others aware of the developments. As no one in Tsekor knew that he was a member of secret party, many agreed with him on his view for the welfare of Tibet. Daily three to four people used to follow him to his doorstep from where he invited them for a cup of tea and made them sign a petition upholding such a general opinion.

One day when I and Tsedrung Jamyang Monlam were returning home after *Drung-ja*, we accidentally ran into Thup-

ten Geden who asked us to tea in his room. Once in his room he showed us the petition signed by many Khendrung, Tsedron, Shodron and ordinary officials who upheld the above mentioned views and told us to sign the document if we too agreed with them. We carefully observed the document and saw that it contained no implication and threat of any kind. We told him that we agreed with its content but did not have our seal with us to sign it that day. Returning home that day, I went to Tsedrung Jamyang Monlam's place and discussed the matter. As the document seemed harmless, and as more than forty minor and major officials had already signed, the two of us signed the document with our seals after a few days. Now there were about 80 Tsedrungs in total who had signed the document.

One day Kong Truk Thupten Geden informed the signatories one through another to come to attend a meeting in his house. We reached his house which comprised two rooms attached to each other, a hall and a verandah. He asked everyone present if anyone had changed his mind towards submitting the petition to the government. Everyone unanimously upheld the contents of the petition. Then Kong Truk said that our move to submit such a petition was known to the officials of Shodkor and in three days time some of the Shodkor officials were coming to join us on this. A few Tsekor officials pointed out that it may disrupt the unity of the Tsekor if Shodkor officials came to join. Anyway, on the appointed day, the Shodkor officials Sherpang Gyalkhar Nangpa, Shodrung Manripa, Shodrung Drakthonpa and one more Shodrung came to attend the meeting. Shodrung Manripa said: "We, the Shodkor officials, born with the good soil to live on and good houses to live in without having to face any difficulty of livelihood, should have been the first to initiate such a movement when the political situation has become so critical. But since you, the Tsekor officials have taken the initiative, we are grateful and thank you for taking the first step. We have 23 Shodkar officials who will join this. Today I will not give the names. We four are the representatives. The government's system of promotion and demotion is unfair. From among the four cabinet

ministers in the Kashag there is only one from Tsekor which shows clearly that the system is unfair. By appointing an extra Kalon Lama from the Tsekor, the Tsekor and Shodkor will have two Kalons each. Right now, nothing is fair and honest in Kashag as Kalon Trimon is dominating and influencing everything." To this, Tsedrung Losang Tashi said: "Shodkor's plan of giving the Tsekor an extra Kalon sounds like the case of a bad penny that is not accepted in the market. From among the Tsekor officials gathered here, we do not have even one who can take up the duties of a Kalon Lama. We do not need an extra Kalon Lama. Thank you. I can not say whether Kalon Trimon is fair or unfair," and asked others if they knew whether Kalon Trimon was fair or unfair. The other Tsekor officials said: "our ranks have been awarded by the Yigtsang and has nothing to do with Kashag. We do not know whether Kalon Trimon is honest or not. If Trimon has been dishonest and unfair, Shodkor must submit a separate petition. We, the Tsekor officials will not involve in this." I joined in and said: "even if we take it for granted that Kalon Trimon has been unfair, the decisions are made by the regent Radreng Rinpoche. If the regent, in anger at our petition, decides to resign from the regency, what are we going to do". To this, Kong Truk Thupten Geden asked me that if he revealed to the meeting that the regent had agreed to the petition will I be responsible for the consequences. Being unable to take up such a responsibility, I stayed quiet in embarrassed silence. When all the other Tsedrungs raised different points and argued for long, Kong Truk Thupten Geden concluded the meeting by saying: "We shall ask the advice of Tsedrung Tenpa Jamyang tonight. If he supports to submit the petition, we will submit it without hesitation."

As the Shodkor officials took exception to Kalon Trimon's sense of fairness and the Tsekor's argued against it in the meeting, three distinct groups emerged from about the 80 Tsedrung signatories of the petition. About 15 Tsedrungs supported and followed Kong Truk Thupten Geden. About 40 Tsedrung opposed this either by arguing or gestures of disapproval. About 30 were neutral. This caused a tense situation of doubt and suspicion making it difficult for us to

trust each other.

In a meeting after that, Kong Truk Thupten Geden said that they did not get an opportunity to meet Tsedrung Tenpa Jamyang the previous night. He however told us to come to a meeting the next day as he was going to meet Tsedrung Tenpa Jayang for his advice that very night. It was very risky to retreat and withdraw one's name from the petition. I was being very careful in what I was doing or where I was going. At such an unpleasant and suspicious moment, Lhanyer Losang Kelsang and Tsedrung Nechung Thupten Senleg came to my place. They told me that it was dangerous to withdraw from this alone and we must discuss and contact about five persons who will be willing to withdraw. We then agreed to contact Kog Phentse Jamyang Monlam, Tsedrung Thupten Jangchub and Yiglob Losang Tsewang. To avoid suspicion, we all gathered under the pretext of a game of dice and mah-jong. During this gathering, we all agreed to withdraw our names from the petition and further decided to scatter ourselves in the next meeting to try to probe the real aims and objectives of Kong Trug's faction. As Lobsang Tsewang was a young student we agreed that he will be least suspected of anything and asked him to go everywhere in the meeting to gain more information.

In the meeting attended by everyone the next day, Kong Trug Thupten Geden said that when he met Tsedrung Tenpa Jamyang the previous night, the latter told him to submit the petition without hesitation. Then Kong Trug read out the petition drafted by them. As discussed earlier, the petition contained the three above mentioned appeals on which all agreed and signed. Towards the end of the petition, it accused Kalon Trimon of unfairness and partiality etc. It was signed by a few Shodkor officials. From among the 10 Tsekor signatories, they included Ngawang Samten and myself. The six of us and the other Tsekor officials took exception to the accusation on Kalon Trimon and tried to probe their real intentions. But they would not let out a word. And Yiglob Ngawang Tsewang had seen them marking against the names of Tsedrung Ngawang

Samten and myself as unreliable from among the signatories.

After that I learned that the signatories of the petition were to meet secretly below the Tsedrung Lingka at a place known as Kunma Lingka. We, the six above mentioned Tsekor officials who wanted to withdraw, met and decided that I should go to attend the secret meeting at Kunma Lingka. The five of them would stay in different places closeby the Tsedrung Lingka and come to my rescue if they hear gun shots or the like. On a small paper I wrote that if I do not return tonight it must be understood that I have been killed secretly by such and such Tsedrungs and Drungkors at Kunma Lingka and the Yigtsang must be notified at once. I kept this piece of paper under my inkpot in my place. At the meeting, there was Changchen Sonam Gyalpo and a few others from Shodkor and about ten officials from Tsekor. While they were chattering and beating around the bush without being able to come to a discussion of the main points, a servant came and said that he had been asked to inform them that it was best to disperse the meeting as Prime Minister Langdung is watching the proceedings from the Potala palace through a binocular. At this Changchen Sonam Gyalpo said it was best to disperse the meeting and they all scattered and returned home through the various openings in the park. Ngawang Samten and I returned from the meeting by the main road of Tsedrung Lingka. When I reached my place, Lobsang Tsewang and others joined me. I told them the details of the incomplete meeting. They said that it was very good that the meeting had been disrupted.

As the petition was being submitted to the Kashag, I went with the representatives and stayed at the door of the Kashag. That night I went to the Sonam Norbu, the son of Kalon Trimon. But as he was suffering from insanity, I went to the other son Chagzod Wangdu Gyurme and told him to tell his father to be very careful as Shodkor, after numerous meetings, had already submitted a petition to the Kashag accusing him of unfair practices. He told me that his father had left for Drepung two days ago as Rimshi Kapshodpa had forewarned him of everything. He also told me that

they could not believe it when others told them that I was also a signatory to that petition. This ashamed me and I could not show my face to him. And to add to the shame, my warning came too late and was of no use.

A few days after that Tsipon Lungshar Dorje Tsegyal was summoned to Shod Zimgag and was arrested and dismissed from his official ranks. When his dresses were being taken off, Lungshar took out a paper from one of his boots and ate it. When the guards tried to get it out by squeezing his mouth, Lungshar had already swallowed it. The other boot was thoroughly checked and a piece of paper was found in which was written "Kill Trimon Norbu Wangyal" under a witchcraft Mandala. Lungshar was imprisoned in Tse Sherchenchok prison. Changchen Sonam Gyalpo, Gyal-karnangpa, Manriwa, Dragtonpa, Chapa Sey Wangchen Yulha, Tsedrung Khyenrab Chopel, Tsedrung Kong Trug Thupten Geden were arrested and imprisoned. Even Kapshod Chogyal Nyima was dismissed from his official ranks and imprisoned at Sherchenchok. It was said that when the Investigative Commission interrogated Lungshar, he would not confess to anything. When Kapshodpa revealed one secret of the party after another on the face of Lungshar, he remained dumb-struck looking towards the ground without being able to refute anything. It was also said that there was a manifesto of the secret party founded by Lungshar. But I never knew what it contained. All the Tsekor officials mentioned in the petition were summoned by the Kashag and told to submit their report as it was illegal to sign any petition without the permission of the government. I and all the others submitted our written reports. Lungshar's Commission submitted a plan to the regent to gouge out his eyes as a punitive measure. As the regent Radreng was a monk who must not be visited by the sin of such a verdict, he asked the Prime Minister to approve it. Accordingly, the Prime Minister Langdun signed the verdict. Lungshar was blinded and imprisoned in Shol prison. Changchen Sonam Gyalpo, Chapa Sey Wangchen Yulha, Tsedrung Khyenrab Chopel were banished to Kongpo. Kong Trug Thupten Gelek, Gyalkar Nangpa, Manriwa, Draktonpo etc.

were also banished.

Yigtsang Lekhung did not go into the details of the Tsekor officials who signed the petition. They reduced the punishment. Khendrungs were fined four *Ser-sang* each; As I was a Tsanyer Letsenpa, I paid two *Ser-sang* in fine. The fine was not high. But nevertheless it was punishment for "following the rabbit without finding the truth about the sound" and I am a man listed as such in the official records of the old society.

Radreng and Tagdra Regents

By Le-zur Jigme Wangchuk

In 1933 the 13th Dalai Lama passed away. The administration was taken over by the Prime Minister Langdun Kunga Wangchuk, Kalon Lama Gedun Chodar, Kalon Trimon Norbu Wangyal (also referred to as Norbu Wangchen) and Kalon Ngang-jug-pa for two months when it was being discussed in the National Assembly whether a regent to represent the Dalai Lama should be selected in the traditional manner or a new substitute evolved. It was opined by some that the person trusted by the Dalai Lama deserves to be selected. This referred to Kuchar Kunphela. But others opined that as the Prime Minister Langdun was in power, two additional Prime Ministers, one each from the lay aristocracy and the monastic establishment should be appointed to assist him. But most were of the opinion that the best was to select a high incarnate Lama as the regent who would be assisted by the Prime Minister. But the discussions, now degenerating into squabbles in support of different factions, continued for quite some days. In one such meeting, Kuchar Kunphela's supporter Changlochen Gung Sonam Gyalpo, opposing the selection of a high Lama incarnate as the regent said, "In the name of a high incarnate Lama, a young and small monk will sit on the high throne. Under him, there will be an old monk who knows nothing but to smoke a bowlful of snuff and he will be addressed as the Chagzod Chenmo or the High Treasurer." So from such remarks, praising one's own candidate by denigrating the others it was clear how everyone tried to achieve their selfish ends. However, it was unanimously agreed that a high incarnate Lama will succeed as the regent. The Cabinet ministers and other responsible individuals privately

requested the Radreng Rinpoche to accept the post of the regency. But the Radreng incarnate refused. They had their reasons.

During a visit to the Radreng monastery, the 13th Dalai Lama gave his own Divination text entitled *Lhamoi-Mo-pe* to Radreng Rinpoche and told him that it will be useful in future to decide on important matters of right and wrong etc. The Dalai Lama, during this visit, showed special affections towards the young Radreng incarnate and advised him to study hard. From the famous juniper trees of Radreng, the Dalai Lama personally selected a huge juniper tree for use in his own maosoleum and marked it as such. From this visit onwards, the elder monks of Radreng monastery used to whisper that perhaps their young incarnate will be appointed a Kuchar Tsen-shab (a debating partner of Buddhist philosophy always in presence of the Dalai Lama). Other farsighted elder monks said that as the Dalai Lama was advancing in age, the special affection and attention towards Radreng incarnate may be an indication that he will be required to serve as the regent of Tibet. If such a day comes, the elder monks warned, Radreng monastery should never accept the regency. They cited history and said that it was clear that regents like Demo Tulku from Tengyeling and Tsemonling Rinpoche etc. had suffered enormous losses. Even in their own case, they said one of the previous Radreng incarnate had to face grave consequences. This referred to 1862 when the Radreng Tulku Yeshe Tsultrim, due to unstable circumstances had to escape to China with the seal of the regency. The elder monks of Radreng often used to warn that the aristocrats of Lhasa were untrustworthy and shameless in what they desired to do. At this time, it was also said that Radreng Tulku's own father Phuntsok Dadul who died in 1933 requested the incarnate not to accept the regency if offered and emphasised that it was the only wish of his old father that he must uphold. Because of the above mentioned reasons, Radreng Rinpoche and his attendants did not at once accept the regency. It was said that because of this refusal, it became necessary for the government to write down the

names of several high Lamas and incarnates including Radreng Rinpoche for selection by casting of lot. When it was known that Radreng Rinpoche was among the candidates for the regency, Zesak Jamyang Delek, the steward of Radreng wrote a letter from Lhasa to the incarnate then residing in Radreng Gephel Ling itself. The letter confirmed that Radreng Rinpoche was among the candidates for the regency. It said: "as we know well that the office of regency does not portend auspicious suitability to our monastery, we are offering ritualistic prayers here in Lhasa to divert the lot from falling on us. You must also perform rituals and offer prayers to ward off your selection as the regent." This letter was found among other letters in 1947 when Radreng monastery was confiscated by the government. My friend Shadra Gaden Paljor told me that this letter was seen and read by Lhachak Khenchung Thupten Tenpa who told him about it. From this documentary evidence, it was clear that even before Radreng became the regent, his steward Zesak Jamyang Delek, with the benefit of the experience and knowledge gained from past history, was able to warn of the coming consequences. In 1947, Chagzod Jamyang Delek then referred to as the old ex-Chagzod was singled out as the man who was not involved in the Radreng conspiracy.

Among the candidates for the regency to be selected by lot were Gaden Tripa Minyag Ami Yeshe Wangden, Radreng Hothok thu Thupten Jampel Yeshe Tenpai Gyaltzen and Yongzin Phurchok Tulku Thupten Jampa Tsultrim. In front of the Avalokiteshvara, the sacred and main statue of Potala, with elaborate religious ceremonies attended by the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, Chikhyab Khenpo, the four General Secretaries, the Finance Ministers and other members of the National Assembly, the ex-Gaden Tripa Jampa Chodrak cast the lot after offering appropriate prayers and the lot fell on Radreng Rinpoche. At once, the representatives of the National Assembly proceeded to Radreng monastery and informed the Radreng Rinpoche of his selection by lot and requested him to accept the office of the regent. As the selection was done by lot, Rad-

reng Rinpoche had to accept the regency. Accordingly in 1934, he ascended the throne of the regency. At the same time, Prime Minister Langdun accepted the post of the regent's assistant and from then on the regent and the Prime Minister administered together.

Radreng Rinpoche, during his seven years of regency achieved quite a few remarkable success on the whole and was popularly referred to as "sKu-bSod Wang-thang chen-poi' rGyal-po" (The King of Great Fortune). During his regency, Tibet never faced any problems of war with foreign powers on the border. Inside Tibet itself, there was economic stability due to peace in the country and basic economic units like agriculture and nomadism prospered as there was no natural calamity. Therefore, grains, meat, butter etc. were available in abundance and the prices were not very high. As such, Radreng Rinpoche was also referred to as "Kya-thang Gyaas-pai's rGyal-po". (The King of Abundance) in many parts of U's and Tsang.

As soon as he took over the regency, Radreng Rinpoche undertook the responsibility of constructing and completing the golden mausoleum of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. It was painted with 18870 gold *Srangs*(coins) and beautifully studded and decorated with diamonds and other priceless precious stones. Named *Gelek Dodjo* (the wish fulfilling Cow) this unique and magnificent mausoleum is in the west side of the red palace of the Potala. This was completed by the Radreng regent in two years time. From among the golden mausoleums of the Dalai Lamas in the Potala, this mausoleum surpasses all the others except that of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, in the skill of the craftsmanship, in the quality of the preciousness of the decorative stones etc. Because of such rare and unique values, this mausoleum stands as a magnificent monument of Tibetan skill at which other remain astonished and wonder-struck.

For the proper search and discovery of the true reincarnation of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, the regent Radreng Rinpoche accompanied by Kalon Trimon, Khendrung Rampa Thupten Kunkhyen etc., under the pretext of a pilgrimage to Samye and Lhoka went to the sacred lake Lhamoi

Latso at Chokhorgyal.

As the 14th Dalai Lama was born in Taktser, a region then under the administration of Ma-phu-fang, the Chinese-Muslim warlord, the regent Radreng Rinpoche had to spend enormous wealth and men to make unprecedented arrangements for the identification and reception of the Dalai Lama, overcoming many internal, external and secret obstructions. For example, for a few years, the regent consulted the previous Panchen Lama, oracles and other high incarnate Lamas for an accurate divination and journeyed to the sacred lake of Lhamoi Latso for an unmistakable revelation of the coming Dalai Lama. As a result of such careful and concerned consultations, it was known that the Dalai Lama had taken birth in a farmer's family in a village called Taktser nearby the famous monastery of Amdo Kubum to father Chokyong Tsering and mother Sonam Tso in 1935 with the childhood name of Lhamo Dhondup. These facts were accurately ascertained and the discovery of the Dalai Lama was finalised. At that time, Ma-phu-fang demanded a release ransom of 40,000 Chinese dollars of which 20,000 were to be paid in Indian rupees to a Sinning trader of Hui nationality named Kao Tun Trang who was going on a pilgrimage of India. Sumdowa Gyaltzen Yonten was then sent to India who exchanged the money and paid the ransom accordingly. When he returned to Tibet, the regent promoted him to the post of a *Letsen-pa*. For the remaining ransom of 20,000 Chinese dollars Tsedrung Losang Tsewang, a member of the search party, was kept as a hostage by Ma-phu-fang. Soon afterwards, the hostage secretly escaped to Tibet and it was said that the remaining ransom was not paid.

In 1935 when Keutsang incarnate Lama Darhan Ngawang Monlam, Khemey Sonam Wangdu, Tsedrung Khyenrab Tenzin and Tsedrung Losang Tsewang and their attendants were in Amdo searching for the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama, the 9th Panchen Lama Losang Thupten Chokyi Nyima Gelek Namgyal Pal Zangpo was residing in Kyekudo. The search party headed by Keutsang Rinpoche went to receive the blessings of the Panchen Lama and convey the request

of the regent Radreng Rinpoche and the Kashag to seek the divine help of the Panchen Lama who received the search party in the traditional manner of how a Lhasa government official was received in Tashi Lhunpo. Offering tea and ceremonial rice etc. the Panchen Lama leisurely conversed with the members of the search party and advised them on many matters. Giving a special audience to Keutsang Rinpoche in his room, the Panchen Lama gave a detailed account of the birth-place and the location, size and shape of the house etc. of the 14th Dalai Lama and frankly instructed Keutsang Rinpoche that the Panchen Lama himself was fully convinced and confident that the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama was none other than this child born in Taktser. Keutsang Rinpoche, with tears of faith in his eyes told this to Tsedrung Losang Tsewang whom I have personally seen carrying a photograph of the Panchen Lama with him wherever he went. Folding his hands in respect before the photograph, he kept on telling everyone that the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama were united in their soul and the differences between the Lhasa government and Tashi Lhunpo were created by a few people for their own selfish gains. In the 1940's, Khenchung Losang Tsewang as the head of the Gyaltse Traders came to supervise the investigations of the letters and documents in Shigatse. At that time, he told us in great detail about the search, discovery and the journey of the 14th Dalai Lama to Lhasa. A detailed account was also being compiled by him. At that time, I took notes and assisted him in the compilation. Whatever I can recollect and have written here is purely due to his kindness which I remember and cherish.

About the return of the Panchen Lama from Sinning to Tibet, the Tashi Lhunpo officials Ngag-chen Ta Lama Tenzin Jigme Wangchuk and Khendrung Dangchenpa Losang Gyaltsen with their attendants had reached Lhasa via India during the lifetime of the 13th Dalai Lama. Discussions had taken place and certain important decisions had been reached. But the talks were postponed indefinitely due to many adverse circumstances. Moreover, the Chinese Kuomintang regime had offered the Panchen Lama the

title of "Nub-chok 'yong-kyi Gegen Chenmo" or the *Great Teacher of the Whole West* and a 500 member strong personal bodyguards. This disturbed Lhasa where unpleasant rumours began to spread. Overlooking such unpleasant developments and rumours, the regent Radreng Rinpoche, in consultation with the Kashag, sent a letter via the Nanking Tibetan Bureau to the Panchen Lama. It said: "we desire very much that the All-Seeing Panchen Lama should return to Tibet and step in one's own monastery Tashi Lhunpo to look after one's own subjects. The Tibetan government will see to all the details of the reception." This letter was submitted personally by the Nanking Tibetan representative to the Panchen Lama himself. At the same time, a Reception Committee to welcome the Panchen Lama was formed under the supervision of Rimshi Gashiwa. Decrees were simultaneously despatched to the Domed Chikyab, Horchi and the border security forces in the north to receive the Panchen Lama wherever and whenever possible with the utmost care and courtesy. So even in this attempt to receive the Panchen Lama back in Tibet, the regent Radreng Rinpoche did his best not leaving the matter to laziness and negligence. I was told about this by Salungpa Losang Thupten who was the Dronyer Chenmo of Tashi Lhunpo. I have narrated here whatever I could recollect from his account.

As stated earlier, the regent Radreng Rinpoche was assisted in his daily administration by the Prime Minister Langdun.

In 1938 when the Tibetan government was busy with the important matter of the discovery and reception of the 14th Dalai Lama, the regent Radreng Rinpoche one day told the Kashag of his intention to resign the regency. Taken by shock and surprise at this sudden decision, the Kashag approached the regent with *Mendel Tensum* (Mandala Offering) and requested the regent not to resign. The Kashag told the regent that he was young and healthy. The country was peaceful. Moreover, the Kashag said, the important matter of the discovery and the reception of the Dalai Lama was incomplete. Therefore, they requested the

regent that until such times as the Dalai Lama takes over the administration, he must agree to be the regent. They further requested the regent to frankly point out if it was their fault or the fault of people working under him that has prompted his resignation. Then the Kashag and the representatives of the National Assembly approached the regent again and repeatedly requested him not to resign and assured him that they will obey his orders strictly and serve him with total dedication. At last, the regent Radreng Rinpoche frankly confessed that as numerous important political matters must be decided in consultation with the Prime Minister Langdun, it became inconvenient and difficult for the matters to be expedited as some times they were unable to meet and sometimes differences of opinion arose delaying decisions on important political matters. Whether right or wrong, the regent spoke frankly and the National Assembly decided that the Prime Minister must resign. In some circles it was rumoured that Radreng Rinpoche told the Kashag that there have been many regents in Tibetan history but all of them were independent and did not have a Prime Minister as an assistant as in his case and made it clear that he did not want two *Tonpa* (Preachers) for one *Tenpa* (Doctrine). Anyway, the regent was able to achieve his desire of running the administration independently. Moreover, he was able to elicit a written oath from the Kashag and the lesser officials and abbots of the three monasteries saying that they would obey the orders of the regent without fail. In addition, the National Assembly offered new and special seals to the regent with his full name in *Horyig* and also a decree instructing how to address the regent, now that he had become the supreme ruler, when submitting petitions and applications to him, was despatched to all parts of the country.

But before long, the regent Radreng Rinpoche once again expressed his desire to resign the regency. The reasons why Tagdra Rinpoche was appointed as the regent is not known and needs special insight and information to understand it properly. But once again, numerous street rumours spread. Whatever their merits, in 1940, the regent sud-

denly informed the Kashag that he wished to resign as high incarnate Lamas had predicted a very critical time for him if he failed to pursue spiritual activities like meditation etc. When the Kashag, Chikhyab Khenpo, Drung-Tsi officials and members of the National Assembly met to discuss the matter, many felt that once again the regent was desirous of dismissing certain officials like he dismissed the Prime Minister earlier. Anyway, they approached the regent and with *Mendel Tensum* requested him to continue holding the regency as the government itself will offer all the necessary ritualistic prayers to ward off the critical influences on the regent. With prostrations, they further asked the regent to point out his dissatisfaction with any of the time in their performance of their duties. But the regent firmly said that the transfer of the regency has been decided and vowed that he can no longer continue as the regent. He also emphasised that the most suitable incarnate to take up the regency was none other than his teacher Tagdra Rinpoche. The regent said, he had already approached the Dalai Lama and obtained permission to resign the regency and appoint Tagdra Rinpoche as the regent. Accordingly, the members of National Assembly approached Tagdra Rinpoche with *Mendel Tensum* and requested him to take over the regency after informing him of the developments. Tagdra Rinpoche informed the members of the National Assembly that the matter had already been decided between him and Radreng Rinpoche. This referred to the internal agreement that Radreng Rinpoche would pursue religious meditation for three years after which he will take back the regency from Tagdra Rinpoche. As such Tagdra Rinpoche accepted the regency at once. On the 12th month of iron-dragon year, Radreng Rinpoche resigned from the regency and on the 1st day of the 1st month of iron-snake year (1941) Yongzin Tagdra Ngawang Sungrab Thutob Tenpai Gyatlsen took over the regency. From then till the 7th of the 10th month of iron-tiger year (1950), Tagdra Rinpoche ruled Tibet as the regent for a period of 10 years.

As related earlier, the resignation of Radreng Rinpoche from the regency and the appointment of Tagdra as the

regent was based on their deep spiritual relationship of teacher and disciple. But the powerful Tagdra faction, like a rain bringing a storm, gradually oppressed the Radreng faction ultimately culminating in the Ra-Tag conflagration. This ancient fable which says: "The *Tag* (tiger) and the *Ribong* (rabbit) became friends. The *Tag* one day killed the *Ribong* "seems so true when applied to Tagdra and Radreng regents. The ex-regent Radreng, with great trust and faith, appointed his teacher Tagdra as the regent. It was like the Tibetan proverb "catch me and skin me alive" for the Radreng faction as it became the seed for the angry and sad chapter of *Ra-Tag* conflagration in Tibetan history.

The Death of the Ex-regent Radreng in Prison

Lungshar Ugyen Namdrol

On the murder of the ex-regent Radreng Rinpoche in his prison, different rumours have spread in the society. Some said that Tseprung Yeshe Thupten strangled Radreng Rinpoche. Others said that I killed him by crushing his genitals. The same rumours also said that as a reward Yeshe Thupten was appointed Governor of Drachen Dzong and I was given the post of Lhasa magistrate. Moreover, songs were composed which said, "for the sin of killing Radreng, the reward was the post of Lhasa magistrate," and in the theatres, dramas of the murder of the ex-regent according to this version were performed putting the serious blame of such an important chapter of history on my head which I have borne for about three decades now. But truth must prevail. However hard an attempt is made to falsify it, the truth will emerge as the dawn of morning and I am going to give a true account of what I have heard and seen during my tenure as the personal bodyguard of the ex-regent in prison so that the readers of history will have yet another account of the incident to examine. At the same time, it goes without saying that this true account will take off the hat of blame from my head.

On the 29th day of the second month of the fire-pig year (1947) I was at Pari khug when suddenly a servant came and told me that urgent messengers have come to summon me to the Potala palace immediately. My official hat and dresses were being brought to the back of the Potala where I must reach at once. I wondered what could be the urgent matter as I had neither applied for a promotion nor a transfer. Very worried and troubled by this summon, I rode my horse fast to the back of the Potala palace. There my Nyer-

pala was waiting with my bag of dresses and hat etc. As soon as he saw me, he told me to dress up quickly as messengers had come one after another to summon me. I changed into the official dress very quickly and went into the Potala palace. The emergency assembly was in session at the Rabsel of Phodrang Marpo. Tsedrung Meru Thupten was there waiting for me. Together we went in. The Drung-Tsis in the emergency meeting told us; "you two have been appointed to guard the ex-regent Radreng. The prison of the ex-regent has been prepared by the Tsechag in the room beneath the residence of the Tse Sherchenchok cook Shibpa la. Mattresses and tables etc. will be provided by the Tsechag and the whole thing must be arranged just now. The supervisors will be Tsechag Darhan and Shodron Kelsang Ngawang. The two of you must follow their instructions strictly." We went to Sherchenchok at once. Below the residence of Shibpa la, we saw a room with two small windows which was being swept and cleaned. After that, the Tsechak brought a pair of thick mattresses and an old carpet with an old table, an old chair and an old cupboard. After setting the room we went to report to the Assembly that the arrangements have been completed. But no one was at the meeting hall. Quite surprised, we asked the sweeper who told us the officials were on the verandah of the Phodrang Marpo. We at once went there and saw all the officials scattered and intently looking towards Dogdhe. Most of the Drung-Tse officials, the Zasaks and the Thejis were using binoculars and looking towards Dogdhe. On asking some lower officials, we learnt that the ex-regent Radreng Rinpoche was being brought through Dogdhe. After about 20 minutes, many cavalry came from the side of the Langchen Ri (Elephant hill) towards the east of Sera monastery. Exactly at that time, many monks came running out of Sera monastery. At the sight of monks, the cavalry retreated their pace for some distance. Then we saw the soldiers stationed at the lower Jerag. It seemed that the soldiers at upper Jerag were in hiding. At once the soldiers opened fire from their bren-gun for about ten minutes. The soldiers from lower Jerag ran to join the

soldiers at upper Jerag and opened fire from their machine-guns. Then monks ran helter-skelter. Some ran back into the monastery. Others ran towards Changra. As the monks did not fire back, it seemed to me that the soldiers fired in the air. I saw no injured or dead monks. It seemed there were about 300 monks in this. After the monks had scattered, the cavalry proceeded in line. Led and flanked by the cavalry, the ex-regent Radreng Rinpoche was in the middle. Both the ex-regent and the horse on which he rode were dressed and decorated in the traditional manner of a regent. As soon as they reached the back of the Potala, we the two bodyguards went down near the door of the prison to receive them. With us was the supervisor Shod-dron Kelsang Ngawang. As we saw the ex-regent entering the Sherchenchok gate, soldiers lead and followed him. At the centre, Radreng Rinpoche was being escorted by Drashi Dapon Shukudpa and Drashi Rupon Zhipa Kelsang who each held a hand of the ex-regent. When they saw us, in our official dress, waiting for them they asked where was the room for the ex-regent. Folding our hands in respect, we showed them the room and the ex-regent was taken in. The officials accompanying the ex-regent like Kalon Lhalu, Dapon Shukudpa etc. handed to our care the mattresses, blankets and the other belongings of the ex-regent in a white box.

When Radreng Rinpoche was first brought to the Sherchenchok prison, he really seemed frightened and the colour of his face changed. We had our own tea and offered it to him. After sometime he took a long breath and looked really troubled and asked, "Why am I being kept in such a room?". I replied that it was the decision of the Emergency Assembly. The ex-regent then said, "Previously the Tengyeling regent was kept in Tse-de Yangsher. Please ask a better room for me." I replied that I shall take up the matter with the supervisor. We approached the supervisor for a change of room. But nothing came of it. At that time, it often used to struck me that when he was the regent of Tibet, he used to be surrounded by numerous monks and lay officials. During ceremonies, he used to be taken in a

palanquin followed by monk and lay officials, incarnate lama, abbots of the three monasteries and thousands of ordinary monks and lay people. Soldiers received and saluted him. His power was supreme. No one could compete with him. Now I see him suddenly turned into a prisoner in very wretched conditions. When I saw such sudden changes I really felt that nothing is permanent in this life.

At that time, the Sharchenchok prison was under the security of the Drashi and Nga-dang battallions. One group of soldiers camped on the top front of the prison in tent. The second camp was on top of the Sharchenchok hill. Together, these two camps had about 200 soldiers. The Sharchenchok prison at the time had the following prisoners: Phunkhang Gung Tashi Dorjee, Phunkhang's son Gonpo Tsering, Radreng Zasak Jampal Gyaltzen, The ex-Zasak Jamyang Delek, Khardo Tulku Kelsang Thupten, Sandu Lo Gedun, Chibche Jinpa Phuntsok Tseten etc. The prison of Khardo Tulku was the darkest as it had only the door and no windows of any kind.

For Radreng Rinpoche, the Radreng Labdrang daily supplied the necessary foods twice. They brought it up to the gate and we took it up and later returned the empty utensils to the gate. We used to ask Radreng Rinpoche for his daily preference of rice and flour etc. But most of the time he was indifferent and in any case he could not eat very well. From the first day of his arrival, he complained of high blood and "wind" disease and slept with the pillows high on his back. Though we two were the personal sentinels, after some day Meru Thupten Nyima was transferred to another job and a new sentinel Tsedrung Yeshe Thupten was appointed in his place. After about only two days of Radreng's imprisonment, the Sera crisis began and most of the crucial hill spurs and crossroads of the Sera area were captured by the monks. The Government had appointed Kalon Kapshodpa Chogyal Nyima and others under him as the military commander in the area to subdue the rebellion. The Sera monks fired their cannons and guns towards Drashi barracks and the Drashi soldiers fired back on the entrance and the hills surrounding Sera monastery. When

the ex-regent heard the noise of the guns, he asked us: "I hear noise of guns and cannon fire. What is going on?". We told him that the Sera monks and the Drashi soldiers were firing at each other. He was worried and kept on asking if many monks were being killed and the monastery was being destroyed. We told him that we have not seen many monks being killed and that the monastery was safe. At night, the two of us had to sleep in the same room as the ex-regent. In the room next to us, five soldiers slept with their weapons ready.

After about 3 days, the trial began. Radreng Zesak and Khardo Tulku etc. were taken to the trial first. After a few days, we received information through the guards that the ex-regent must attend the trial. The two of us took up Radreng Rinpoche by his hands. About ten soldiers and supervisor Kelsang Ngawang accompanied us. The trial took place underneath the pavilion of De Yangshar in the Potala. When the soldiers waited outside, we took the ex-regent inside for the trial. The main tribunal were the Drung-tsi. They were seated in front. On the lower stone floor was a single cloth mattress on which the ex-regent was made to sit. We closed the door behind us while coming out and waited for the end of the trial with the soldiers. The main officials attending the trial were the following: Khendrung Ta Lama Thupten Norsang, Khendrung Bumthangpa Thupten Chophel, Khendrung Ngawang Namgyal, Khendrung Lhading Ngawang Dakpa, Tsipon Lukhangwa Tsewang Rapten, Tsipon Shakabpa Wangchuk Deden, Tsipon Ngabo Ngawang Jigme, Tsipon Namlingpa Paljor Dorjee, Zesak Tsarongpa Dazang Dadul, Magchi Sermowa Zesak Kelsang Tsultrim, Magchi Zesak Dokharwa Phuntsok Rabgyay, Zesak Khemedpa Sonam Wangdu, the abbots and representatives of the three monasteries and other representative of the Rimshi Letsen etc. The trial lasted for 2 hours. After the trial when we received the ex-regent as before, he seemed very angry and agitated. He was breathing tiredly. That day he did not say anything. The next day or the other he said: "My people have caused a lot of trouble. I did not know anything at all." More than this he

did not say. We consoled him that everything will be alright. The truth will come up. In total, he had to attend about three trials.

Suddenly one night about 11 p.m. a lot of noise was being made by the soldiers and we saw many torchlights gleaming from the direction of Deyang in the east. When we went out to see what was happening, we saw a few Tseprung were also with the soldier. Among them was a man dressed in red wollen outfit with a yellow *bogdo* hat. He was obviously under arrest and was being dragged down towards the prison. I thought some fighting had broken out in the meeting. The man was dragged down and imprisoned in the lower prison. Our supervisor Kelsang Ngawang came to us. We asked him who was the man imprisoned. He told us, "He is Chibchi Jinpa. He has committed a serious crime. Formerly, when one of their late relative was the *Dapon*, they did not return a grenade given to his charge. This grenade was sold to Radreng's men by Chibchi Jinpa. This was revealed in the trial and Chibchi Jinpa Phuntsok Tseten was arrested."

One day Radreng Rinpoche asked us to arrange some papers and ink as he intended to write to a few close friends. We took the matter to our supervisor Kelsang Ngawang who said he will take the opinion of his supervisors. The next day, our supervisor provided us with papers, ink and pen and said we must let Radreng Rinpoche write letters. We offered these to the ex-regent who wrote letters to Kapshodpa, Bumthangpa and Trijang Rinpoche and enclosing a pair of Zi from his necklace in each letters, he told us to secretly reach them to their address. Accordingly we took the letters to Kelsang Ngawang who said we must read the letters. The main content of the letters was to "assist in my release from imprisonment and help in saving the Radreng monastery from confiscation." In the letter to Kapshodpa it was written that Radreng Rinpoche had confessed nothing about the letter to Shide Nyungnay Rinpoche in the trial. In the same letter, there was something about Radreng and Tagdra conflict. But I just had a cursory chance to read that letter and can not recollect the contents

after so many years now. Then our supervisor Kelsang Ngawang took the letters as well as the enclosed Zis and said he had given them to his supervisor Thupten Lekmon and told us that he had been instructed to keep it a secret. This was unknown even to the National Assembly then.

As mentioned earlier, the ex-regent Radreng Rinpoche was suffering from high blood and "wind" disease. It went from bad to worse. And Rinpoche asked us to inform his Labrang to send the bottle of foreign medicine that he used to take for his illness. Soon we received the bottle containing white tablets. About this our supervisor Kelsang Ngawang went to consult the National Assembly. They said: "This medicine can not be allowed. We will send our doctor." As the illness became serious, one night the ex-regent was screaming in his sleep which not only awoke us but even the soldiers around the prison. We lighted the lamp and asked Rinpoche the reason for screaming and he said: "A fierce looking monkey wearing a *Thang-shu* hat came inside through the window. Please search for it." We assured him that there was nothing and told him to have no fear whatsoever. We checked the whole prison with torchlight. But we saw no one there. The next morning we went to check the wall at the back. Nothing had happened to it.

We once again approached the National Assembly through our supervisor on the deteriorating condition of the ex-regent. As a result, they sent Dr. Khyenrab Norbu of Lhasa Medical Centre. The disease was diagnosed as high blood and "wind" problem and some medicines were given. But this did not improve the condition and Radreng Rinpoche himself wanted to consult the Indian doctor at Dekyi Lingka. But this was refused by the National Assembly. Dr. Khyenrab Norbu came twice to offer medicines accompanied by Kelsang Ngawang. The doctor said the illness was very serious. On high blood and "wind" problem the ex-regent also had "wind pollution". Now the ex-regent stammered while he talked and was not able to go to the toilet. We arranged a pitcher for holding his toilets which the guards took out. Later we received three pills said to be *Aagar-35*

through our supervisor Kelsang Ngawang. We offered two pills one after another with pork soup and the condition turned critical. The supervisor Kelsang Ngawang came to ask the effect of the pills. We told him that the pills made the condition worse and did not help the ex-regent at all. On his instruction, we offered the remaining pill and at around 3 in the morning, the ex-regent stopped breathing. At that moment, the supervisors Tsechag Darhan and Shodron Kelsang Ngawang; myself and Yeshe Thupten, Jolak Jampa and the guards were all present. Tsechag Darhan at once lighted an oil lamp and kept it near the dead body. The two supervisors said: "we must inform a few of the Drung-Tsi officials at once and inform the National Assembly as soon as it is convened." The next day, the session of the National Assembly began earlier than usual. First the two supervisors made their report. Then we went and made our report. We were instructed to submit our report in writing which we did accordingly. That day as the room was small, those in front mainly Zesak Tsarong instructed us to take away the blankets from the dead body. The ex-regent had faced east while dying. Amidst prayers recited by the abbots and monk representatives, they were saying to each other that the body should face east while dying indicates that the reincarnation will be born somewhere in the eastern direction. There was a bluish mark on the thigh. At this Zesak Tsarong jokingly said: "people may say that bluish mark has been caused by strokes of lashes." They wrote down their observations after investigating the body. When the front line finished their investigation, they went back to allow the remaining members to carefully inspect the body of the deceased Radreng Rinpoche. That day Shasur Theji Gyurme Dorjee and Khenche Tethongpa Losang Namgyal were appointed to look after the dead body. Three days later, eight monks from Shide monastery came at late midnight and took the body to their monastery. With our two supervisors, we made a list of all the belongings of the ex-regent and handed them over to the two officials appointed to look after the body.

I and Yeshe Thupten went to Shide monastery to hand

over a few things left behind by the ex-regent. We saw that the body of the dead ex-regent, completely dressed in religious garb, was placed on the throne with butter lamps burning in front. All the monks were reciting prayers. At that time, Shasur Theji said that the dead body is emitting a light blood from the nose which is a sign of disruption in the teacher and student relationship. Others in faith said the light blood from the nose was a clear indication that the deceased was a high incarnation of realization.

A long time after that, in the social conversations, it was rumoured that the dead body emitted a light blood from the nose which showed that the ex-regent was murdered. Others said the balls in the testicles were hanging loose from the dead body which showed that he was killed by crushing his genitals. This version seemed to be the most widespread. Later the reincarnation was discovered in Lhasa itself. Rumours said the reincarnation had marks around its neck which showed clearly that the ex-regent was strangled to death. And while the reincarnation was young, the rumours said, he saw a black man with a rope coming to kill him. These loose talks, in the old society, gained no listeners. Nor was anyone interested in investigating them.

Radreng Rinpoche in Prison : His Last Days

By Tsedrung Shartse Yeshe Thubten

On 20th of the second month of the fire-pig year, the ex-regent Radreng Rinpoche was forcibly arrested from his Radreng monastery by Kalon Surkhang Wangchen Gelek, Kalon Lhalu Tsewang Dorjee and Drashi Dapon Shukudpa sent from Lhasa with a small force for the purpose. He was imprisoned in the Sherchen Chok prison at the Potala palace. On that day, a section of the monks from Sera monastery planned to ambush and free the ex-regent. A day before Radreng Rinpoche reached Lhasa, a rumour was spread that the ex-regent will be brought to Lhasa from its eastern entrance via Phenpoi da. Accordingly a section of Sera monks kept guard of this route to ambush. But Radreng was actually brought to Lhasa from its northern entrance via Phenpo Gola pass. When they neared Lhasa, their route was guarded by government troops who fired many warning shots. That day the monks were deceived by the misinformation.

Soon after that, many attendants of Radreng Rinpoche including Radreng Zesak were imprisoned in the Sherchen Chok prison in the Potala. When the government got ready to arrest Nyungnay Lama, the latter committed suicide by shooting himself. He was a close confidante of Radreng Rinpoche who consulted him on all the major affairs.

The day the ex-regent was imprisoned, the Kashag decided to appoint a Tsedrung and a Drungkhor to keep guard of the prison. Accordingly, for the Drungkhor guard, Lungshar Urgyen Namdol was selected as he had an old enmity with the ex-regent. For the Tsedrung guard, the Kashag at first selected Norling Khangnyer Tsedrung Meru Thupten Nyima. But soon the regent Tagdra and the Kashag

began to suspect him as he folded his hands and bowed with respect to Radreng Rinpoche in his prison cell. The Kashag removed him from the guard. At that time, I was serving as the estate manager of Gorab monastery in Dagpo and had come to Lhasa. When I was at Tse-gag, the Tse-Yigtsang instructed me through Yig-nyer Tsedrung Ngawang Tashi that I must report to the Kashag immediately as there was an assignment. When I reported to the Kashag that day, I was called into the inner chambers of the cabinet as a special case. Kalon Lama Rampa and Kalon Surkhang etc. were in conference and informed me that I was selected to guard the ex-regent Radreng in prison and instructed me to fulfill my duties without lapses. I was strictly ordered not to let any outsider meet the prisoner. That day was the third day of Radreng's imprisonment. I also had an old enmity with Radreng as my lay estate Logo Nangpa in central-western Tibet was confiscated and given over to the Phara Nyertsang — the general store of Drepung monastery during the regency of Radreng Rinpoche. Apart from this, I did not stick to any one section of politics in Lhasa and was not among those who were submissive to a particular religious sect, high Lama or an important chief. Therefore, the regent Tagdra and the Kashag selected me to guard Radreng strictly. I requested the readers to make this observation: Doesn't the story of the ex-regent Radreng's prison-guards strike you as similar with the story of the Tibetan opera *Drowa Sangmo* in which the evil queen Hashang hires two brother undertakers to murder the prince and the princess?

While guarding the prison, the ex-regent told me: "I was living quietly in the Tro-khang of Radreng monastery when suddenly one morning the fourth Rupon of Drashi regiment named Kelsang came to me. After prostrating for three times and offering me a scarf, he informed me that two Kalons and a battallion of soldiers are arriving any moment. I came here ahead of them. We have come to invite you to Lhasa. Therefore, you must get ready for the trip. At that moment, I realised something ominous was in store and decided it better not to hand over myself. I went to the stables by

the back door of the Tro-khang and even put the Nam-chag phurpa (meteoric vajra) talisman into my pocket. My two *Sol-zim* were with me. But Rupon Kelsang blocked my path and with prostrations requested me not to leave as even if I was able to escape, my relatives like Zesak in Lhasa were bound to suffer. Then I realised that if I rebel against these people, my relatives like Zesak and the retinue members will surely suffer at their hands. Therefore, I returned to the Tro-khang and asked him if Zesak etc. have been arrested. He told me that they have not been arrested as yet and requested me to discuss these matters in greater detail when the Kalons arrived. Before I could reply, Kalon Surkhang and Dapon Shudkudpa arrived one after another with their soldiers. Surkhang at once said, "we have come to take you to Lhasa. Please get ready immediately." I questioned him why was I being called to Lhasa so suddenly and how should I prepare for the trip? In reply Surkhang said; "These days in Lhasa, the news about Radreng monastery and its members are not very good. Details you will learn in Lhasa itself. As you are the tutor of the Dalai Lama who ordained His Holiness, nothing bad can befall you. Three riding horses and one horse for the luggage should be enough. You will be free to take anything with you except guns and other weapons." Hearing this, I asked my stable master to rein and ready the horses. My saddle was placed on my favourite horse Yungdrung. I put on a very good monk dress and packed all my ritual and prayer objects including *Torchas* and a stack of one hundred Tibetan currency notes. I took a personal bodyguard and the younger steward. When I was about to ride my favourite horse Yungdrung as my saddle was placed on it, Kalon Surkhang told me: "Rinpoche, you must not ride this horse but the mule. My horse Yungdrung, unlike ordinary horses, is capable of leaving his footprints on stones and rocks. Surkhang perhaps knew this and thought that I might run away on this horse. After reaching Ling-dzong via Phenpo Gola pass, we rested for about an hour. Surkhang then told me, Rinpoche, you must go directly to Potala. The bodyguard, and the steward will be sent to Lhasa from here. Tonight, the two

of them must stay at Drashi military camp. From the stack of one hundred *Srang* notes, I gave about half to the two of them. When we were about to leave Ling dzong, Surkhang made a thorough physical check and took away the meteor vajra in my pocket saying that I must not carry that. On the route to Potala, I saw groups of soldiers placed at different points. These soldiers fired their guns many times though I was unable to know at whom they were firing. From the many cavaliers like Kalon Surkhang, the Drashi military captain named Kelsang came forward to ride beside me. Clutching the barrel of his gun, he kept looking at me with piercing eyes. If anything happened that day, I think he was the man assigned to kill me.”

On another occasion, the ex-regent Radreng Rinpoche told me: “Tagdra and I maintained very good teacher-student relationship. As Tagdra monastery was poor, we secretly agreed that to enrich the poor condition of his establishment, I shall resign the regency for the time being and appoint him as the regent which will be returned to me after the lapse of a few years. But instead of returning the regency to me, Tagdra attempted time and again to hinder and harm my monastery. That is why we became enemies. The Kashag, Yigtsang and the other aristocrats close to Tagdra try their best to harm and injure Radreng establishment. Therefore, I sent the sons of Khamba traders Gyapon Tsang and Lhaka Tsang to China to ask Chiangki-shek to help me in regaining the regency either by peaceful or violent means. But no substantial response has come out of this.” One night when the many guards scattered around the Sharchen Chok prison at Tse Potala were moving around making a lot of noise, the ex-regent Radreng was disturbed and frightened. He told me: “there is much disturbance tonight. Am I going to be killed. You must tell me the truth. It will help me in making up my mind. Yeshe Thupten, you have been most helpful to me in my present state of utter misery. Please continue this help. If ever I get out of this prison, I will promise to feed, house and clothe you for your entire life.” The Radreng Rinpoche also said: “I am extremely worried. There is

noise of incessant firing going on these days. It seems the government and the Sera monastery are fighting with each other. Sera monks must have risen in arms for me. If the Sera monks came anywhere near this prison, the government will kill me first and then my close relatives and attendants." By his close relatives and attendants he meant the following: Radreng Zesak Jampel Gyaltzen, Khardo Lama, Sadutsang Sicho and Radreng's younger brother Thupten Gyaltzen.

The Trial

The ex-regent Radreng was taken out of prison thrice to face the trial of the Tibetan Assembly. Returning to his prison after facing the first trial, he told me: "The National Assembly is making accusations to which I can never agree. They say that my men tried to kill Tagdra many times and I must reveal the whole conspiracy to the National Assembly. They informed me that I was arrested and imprisoned because of this conspiracy. To this I replied that though Tagdra regent, betraying its promise and agreement with Radreng monastery, harmed us in many ways I never conspired to kill him. As we are bound by the Buddhist link of teacher and student, it is impossible for me to think of endangering his life."

After the second trial, the ex-regent told me: "The National Assembly is accusing me of crimes that I am totally innocent of. They accuse me of placing a bomb in front of the regent Tagdra; of plotting to ambush him at Trisam bridge at Tohlung—on his way to the hermitage by keeping my men waiting for him in hiding and also of firing at Sawang Lhalu at Jerak bridge etc. I remonstrated to the National Assembly that I will not admit or deny your accusations. Please favour me with an audience with the regent Tagdra and at this personal meeting I will give my correct and clear explanations. To this the National Assembly stated that a prisoner does not deserve an audience with the regent. If you don't confess to the crimes, we shall produce before your eyes your own signed letters to the effect."

After the third trial, the ex-regent told me: "After the

Tagdra and Radreng monasteries fell out with each other, I sent a few letters from Radreng monastery to Zasak and Nyungnay Lama in Lhasa which the National Assembly read out to me today. I replied to the National Assembly that though the main theme of the letters stated that the severe oppression of the Tagdra regent on the Radreng establishment can not be tolerated any more and there is no choice but to retaliate with appropriate measures, I confessed my total ignorance of the bomb incident. I asked them if they remembered how when I expressed my desire to resign from regency after two years of office, the National Assembly unanimously requested me not to resign and even gave me the sealed document promising to support and help the Radreng monastery at times of crisis and adversary. I reminded the National Assembly that the time to support and protect the Radreng monastery has now come. Yeshei Thupten, you must please convey this secret message to my cousin Zasak in the lower prison that I did not admit to anything in the trial and Zasak must also keep his mouth firmly shut." But I did not dare to convey this secret message to anyone.

Secret Correspondence

One day, the ex-regent asked me and Urgyen Namdol if he could write to his friends in the aristocracy and a few high lamas requesting them to release him from imprisonment. Urgyen Namdol told Radreng Rinpoche that it would be good to write especially to Sawang Kapshodpa who might be of some help as he was very powerful. Then the ex-regent requested for some papers which we provided. He wrote three letters. In his letters to Trijang Rinpoche and Drungyig Chemo Bumthang Chopel Thupten, Radreng Rinpoche had written: "please try to release me from imprisonment this time. Enclosed is a pair of *zi* as a *skyabs-rten* (protection fee)." In his letter to Sawang Kapshodpa Chogyal Nyima, Radreng Rinpoche has written: "You know very well the beginning, middle and end of the conflict between our Radreng monastery and Tagdra. Therefore, now you must help and release me from imprisonment. If on the

other hand, I am to remain in prison undergoing the tortures continuously, there is no way but for both the "water and the fish to suffer." As such, please consider. A pair of *zi* is enclosed as *Zig-rten* (reading fee)."

There were eighteen *Zis* on the strings of Radreng's talisman. In each of the three letters, the ex-regent enclosed a pair of *Zis*. Radreng Rinpoche requested me and Ugyen Namdol to secretly deliver the letters to their address. We did not dare to deliver the letter to their respective address and instead gave all the letters to the Zimchung gag of Kabshodpa. Two days after delivering the letters sent by Radreng to Kabshodpa, Shodron Kelsang Ngawang came to me with the letter, called me near Potala and said: "You must read this letter to me as you are familiar with the handwriting. Radreng's letter is not clear in its content and handwriting is very messy making it very difficult to understand anything." When I read the letter to him, Shodron Kelsang Ngawang said: "Really look at what this Kabshodpa is doing. It wont be good for him" and he went away with the letter to Potala.

The Death of the Ex-regent

Shodron Kelsang Ngawang, the room-mate of *Magchi* Kelsang Tsultrim was the man who had the real authority to look after the ex-regent, his Zesak and the other retinue members in prison. Orders and instructions to all the sentries of the prisons came directly from him. This Kelsang Ngawang was from Ba Lithang. As he enjoyed a very good and special relationship with the regent Tagdra Rinpoche, he was entrusted with full confidence and appointed as the supervisor of the prison guards. Shodron Kelsang Ngawang told me and Ugyen Namdol: "If the monks of Sera monastery come rushing anywhere near the prison, first and foremost we have to destroy him (referring to the ex-regent)." One day, instructing me to guard the ex-regent strictly, he said: "Radreng must be guarded strictly. There is trouble. He has strong backing from Changkai-shek. And the Sera monks are restless in his defence." A few days after, the ex-regent had a slight headache. That

day he told me and Urgyen Namdol: "this room is dark and the ceilings are low causing headache. Please try to shift me to a room less darker than this." To this, Urgyen Namdol replied: "My father Lungshar's square prison room which was just one step wide was so dark that one could not see one's own feet. Compared to that, your prison-room is much better. You are also a prisoner just as my father was." After this, in the absence of Urgyen Namdol the ex-regent told me: "Urgyen Namdol is telling me the grudges of his father. At that time he was a child and did not know the happenings properly. At that time, his father Lungshar was punished by the aristocrats of the Tibetan government. They made an evil plan to blind Lungshar and brought it to me. I told them that as I am a monk I can not be a part of a plan to deprive a man of his eyes and did not stamp and seal the decree with the seal of the regency. And also in the case of Sawang Lhalu, I did not persue and probe the matter whether he was a son of Lungshar or not and simply kept him in the government service as the other sons of Lungshar had lost their standing in the government hoping Lhalu's service may be of some help in the livelihood of the other sons."

When we, Urgyen Namdol and myself reported the illness of the ex-regent to the National Assembly, the assembly instructed us to continue guarding the prison and ordered: "a doctor will be despatched immediately to examine the illness. The prisoner and the doctor will be allowed to talk only about the illness and nothing else." A few moments later, Shodron Kelsang Ngawang and the Mentsi Khyenrab Norbu came together. Doctor Khyenrab Norbu took the pulse of the ex-regent Radeng Rinpoche and diagnosed the illness to be *Drip Lung* (polluted wind disease) and prescribed the Tibetan pill *Aagar-35* (Eaglewood 35). But the medicines were to be given only after obtaining permission from National Assembly. Radreng Rinpoche requested that as *Drip-Lung* was his regular problem, as many pills of *Aagar 35* may be given to him after consluting the National Assembly. Around 4 p.m. Shodron Kelsang Ngawang brought three pills supposed to be *Aagar-35*

wrapped in paper and gave it to the two of us. He said the pills were *Agar-35* and instructed us to give one pill at a time with meat soup. That evening, around 5 p.m. we gave two pills one after another to the ex-regent with pork soup. And the illness became worse. The pills, when pressed were jelly like and yellow in colour which stuck to the wrapping papers. Late that evening, the secretary of the National Assembly Tsedron Tenpa gave us another paper-wrapped pills saying the pills were for the ex-regent. As the pills brought by Shodron Kelsang Ngawang had been administered twice to the ex-regent, we did not get the opportunity to use the medicines brought by Tsedron Tenpa.

When night was about to fall Shodron Kelsang Ngawang came and asked: "Did you give the medicines that I brought? What has been the effect." We told him that though we administered two pills, the illness was going from bad to worse. He told us that the remaining one pill must also be offered and he will return in a short while to see the condition. Accordingly, we administered the remaining one pill. Till dawn that night, the ex-regent Radreng's illness was critical. He wanted to vomit but could not. His breathing was thwarted and his body became restless. Under such critical circumstances, the ex-regent requested us with difficulty and in an unclear voice to call the Indian doctor from Dekyi Linga to give him an injection. At around 11 in the night Shodron Kelsang Ngawang came to inspect again. We informed him of the ex-regent's desire to get an injection from the Indian doctor at Dekyi Lingka. Kelsang Ngawang said: "Who has the luxury to get an injection at this hour" and went away. After that the ex-regent expired. We at once informed the Tsechag Darhan Thupten Thardod. The next day, we made a complete report of the illness, the medication and the circumstances surrounding the death to the National Assembly. They observed: "Nothing can be done when a person dies of illness. But the two of you must submit a written report from the beginning of the illness to his death with exact date and time." This we did accordingly. Moreover the National Assembly told us that till the body was handed over to undertakers, the two of us

must continue guarding it. But just after a day and a night, the body was taken away by Shide monastery.

To complete the funeral process, Khenchung Tethong Losang Namgyal and Rimshi Chabpel were appointed the supervisors. Radreng Rinpoche had a necklace of 18 Zis of different sizes and an amulet made from three small gold amulets. Deducting the 6 Zis sent in pairs in the letters to Kabshodpa, Bumthang and Trijang Rinpoche, the remaining 12 Zis and three small amulets were secretly distributed between Urgyen Namdol, Shodron Kelsang Ngawang and myself. Soon after, Khendrung Ta Lama Chok Teng whom I knew closely told me privately to be careful as the National Assembly will gradually investigate the amulets etc. of Radreng Rinpoche. The three of us secretly met and handed over the items to Shod Gag through Urgyen Namdol.

Kuchar Thupten Kunphela

by Lhazom Dolkar

Thupten Kunphela was born in 1905 in a farmer's family known as Yakhar under the jurisdiction of Zhu Trag Shongnub of Nyemo. His father's name was Tashi and mother's name was Sonam Lhamo. His mother could not deliver him even after 12 months and the family, scared of endangering the lives of the mother and child, approached Tagna Tsibbu Rinpoche who told them that the coming child would be a son of great fortune and in order that no misfortune befell the family in anyway, they will not only have to offer major prayers and religious rites but must also agree to give the coming boy a girl's name so that the delivery can be safe. Accordingly, Tagna Rinpoche named the unborn boy Dechen Dolma. During his childhood he was known by this name. Dechen Dolma was very clever child who respected his parents and loved his domestic animals very much. Till his 12th year, he remained a shepherd. Traditionally, clever boys of clean birth from Lhoka and Nyemo known as Ae boys and Nye boys used to be selected for the purpose of scribe and gardener in the Dalai Lama's palace in Lhasa. In 1916, Dechen Dolma was selected as one of the Nye boys for the purpose. As he was the only son, the family tried their best to obtain permission to keep him with them. But they were given tax concession on their property and he was taken to Norbu Lingka palace in Lhasa with the other Nye boys that very year. For about five years, he remained in Norbu Lingka studying Tibetan *U'chen* script. The teacher was very strict. Discipline was harsh. The food supplied by the government was meagre and the family had to send additional supplies. Moreover, the 13th Dalai Lama was very strict and stern. He took personal

interest in the education of the boys and punished them when they failed to live up to his expectations. Added to these, the boys missed their parents and home and did not want to stay and study in Norbu Lingka palace. One day some stablemen were playing a game of dice in the stable of Norbu Lingka. Dechen Dolma and some of the other Nyemo boys left their study to watch the game when suddenly the 13th Dalai Lama himself appeared from nowhere and scolding them for leaving their studies, hit them on the head with his rosary and further frightened them by saying that they will be lashed the next day. Scared by this development, Dechen Dolma decided to run away to home in Nyemo and alongwith another Nyemo boy they escaped through Chushul. At the place called Nam, they were caught by the persuing men from Norbu Lingka. Being desperate, Dechen Dolma jumped into the river but was saved and taken back. Utterly scared that he will be lashed when they reached Norbu Lingka, he was astonished beyond belief when the Dalai Lama appointed a special attendant for his medical treatment and fooding arrangements and treated him with kindness. Not only that, the Dalai Lama himself came to see him and often advised him to conduct himself well in everything. From then on, his faith in the Dalai Lama strengthened and he studied harder and took an active interest in everything. The Dalai Lama also mentioned that the boy was clever and took him for walk, made him attend to the Dalai Lama's garden and paid a special attention towards his development. On his part, Dechen Dolma worked sincerely for the Dalai Lama. Till then he was a layman. In 1921, he became a real Kuchar—somebody always in the presence of the Dalai Lama and at the same time, on the instructions of the Dalai Lama, he became a monk in the Jay college of Sera monastery and was named Thupten Kunphel by the Dalai Lama himself. As he had served the Dalai Lama as a Kuchar for about five years with dedication and diligence, the Dalai Lama's favour increased and he was asked to take up service in the government administration. Though Kunphela refused to take up official service, the Dalai Lama pointed out that if he wanted to serve him

he must begin to think of serving the government with the same dedication and fortitude. But he continued to serve the Dalai Lama as a Kuchar for another 8 years. At that time, he was very famous and powerful in Tibet. For example, when the Dalai Lama or the regent sent the Tse Khendron to Kashag for a special consultation, first the Kashag reception secretary must be approached who will inform the Kashag and obtain permission to prepare the seat for the Tse Khendron to meet the ministers. But when Kuchar Kunphela was sent to Kashag by the Dalai Lama, he bypassed all these formalities and directly approached the ministers and took his seat there. Not only that, the ministers showed both respect and fear in his presence.

Also at that time, there were two cars in Lhasa brought from outside. These were almost the first cars in Tibet. In one car sat the Dalai Lama and in the next sat Kuchar Kunphela. Sometimes, when he came out on official work, people used to gather to have a glimpse of the famous Kuchar Kunphela and at the same time feel subdued and scared of his enormous power. Though he was famous and powerful, he never used to dress in the official dress of the government and used to prefer the ordinary woollen dresses of the people with red or brown being his favourite colours. He was a man who got along well with both the high and the low and never used to be proud or snobbish. When necessary, he never hesitated to labour with his own hands. Besides the daily assistance he provided the Dalai Lama in upholding the various political matters, under the supervision of the Dalai Lama, he repaired the eastern side of the Potala palace, constructed an iron-fence around Norbu Lingka palace, introduced a power-house at Dogde and large iron pipes for water for the Monlam Chenmo festival. He also planned a free water-supply from Sang yib to Potala palace but this remained incomplete. Not only that, the Drashi Power house was renovated and a Tibetan mint and ammunition factory were opened. This was the first Tibetan factory using modern power. The Dalai Lama was very happy and personally attended the celebration and appointed him and Zesak Tsarong Dazang Dadul as the supervisors of the

Drashi Power-house and rewarded them with decorations. Nearby this power house, the Drong Drak Magar or the *Battalion of the Better Families* was founded by Kuchar Kunphela. Soldiers were collected and a code of discipline was evolved. Though Norbu Lingka, the summer palace of the Dalai Lama was constructed during the time of the 7th Dalai Lama, Kuchar Kunphela repaired and renovated the palace and especially expanded the Chensal Phodrang (the Favourite palace), improving the design and decoration of the whole complex in accordance with the wishes of the Dalai Lama. On the day of the ceremony of the completion of Chensal Phodrang, the Dalai Lama gave the seat of the Ta Lama at Tsekor office to him as a special reward and Kunphela in turn offered the Mendrel Tensum to the Dalai Lama. Till then, he did not have an exact official standing.

Because of his dedication to work, the Dalai Lama favoured him highly. For example, once when his mother was very sick, he took leave and was granted only three days off. Even then the Dalai Lama sent a few people to receive him and the Dalai Lama himself came to the north gate of Norbu Lingka to see him return. This was the only time he was granted leave during his 15 years service as the Kuchar of the Dalai Lama. Similarly, many aristocrats in the government and people in the public loved him. But because of his influence and power during his tenure as the Kuchar, some families in the government had suffered and others disliked his power. As a result of this, when the 13th Dalai Lama died he and his family suffered misfortune.

At the demise of the 13th Dalai Lama, Kunphela was accused by the emergency session of the National Assembly for negligence in informing the Kashag on the condition of the Dalai Lama's health. Kunphela knew what was coming and prepared his guns to kill the opponents and be killed. But his personal teacher Yongzin Phurchog Tulku Jampa Thupten Tsultrim dissuaded him from this suicidal decision and reassured him that nothing bad can happen to him as he had served the late Dalai Lama with dedication and sincerity and added that Phurchog Rinpoche would

be personally responsible to see that no physical harm came to him. Soon afterwards, Kunphela was imprisoned in Sharchenchok prison. To see that no physical harm came to him, Phurchok Rinpoche and the representatives of the Sera monastery took the responsibility of guarding him in prison and kept twenty five monks from sera Jay for the security of Kunphela. The National Assembly accused Kunphela of not informing the Kashag in time and offering the wrong medicines prescribed by the Nechung Oracle to the Dalai Lama. Kunphela refuted these charges and said that he wanted to inform the Kashag in time and again but the Dalai Lama personally stopped him from doing so as he did not want the aristocrats to come and create a lot of fuss about the offering Mendrel Tensum and long life prayers etc. which would harm his condition. But the National Assembly did not consider his refutations and instead a section of the officials advocated severe physical punishment. At the same time, the government imprisoned his father Tashi at Nangtse Shar prison in Lhasa. At the emergency session of the National Assembly, some officials led by Tash Lingpa Khyenrab Wangchuk supported Kunphela and said that he had served the Dalai Lama with dedication and sincerity and it was not right that the government should deal with him in such a disgusting way as soon as the Dalai Lama had passed away. But the National Assembly still charged him with the death of the Dalai Lama and made known its verdict. Accordingly, Kunphela was banished to Tselagang Dzong in Kongpo. His father was given to the charge of Nyemo dzong and the family property confiscated. Under the supervision of a monk and a lay official escorted by ten soldiers, he was taken out of prison and sent to exile from the main market of Lhasa via the north route of JudeLing. At that moment, his father Tashi was taken out of Nangtse Shak prison. Under the supervision of a Sholdrung, he was taken via the south route of Judeling. That day the father and the son were banished from Lhasa to their respective destinations at the same time. They saw each other from afar but were not allowed to talk to each other. At the same time, the government confiscated his residence in Norbu

Lingka; the new residence in Lhasa; Changru estate in Todlung; the family house in Zhuyakhar in Nyemo; the residence of his monk cousin in Gyalje monastery in Nyemo; the residence of his nun cousin in the hermitage of Kharag Ghomchung and the family property of his brother Nyerchung Ngawang in Lhasa. All those related to Kunphela suffered this misfortune.

When they reached Tselagang Dzong in Kongpo, he was given to the charge of Chabnag monastery. He stayed there for 3 years. As his fame as the Kuchar of the 13 Dalai Lama had spread to Kongpo, a section of the people loved and respected him. They secretly helped him in his livelihood and during his stay there he did not face much difficulty. After about a year, he was joined by Changlochen Gung Sonam Gyalpo who was banished from Lhasa for his involvement in the Lungshar affair. The two of them became good friends and helped each other. Later some of the banished officials were able to return to Lhasa and resume government service. The two of them applied for similar consideration. But they received secret message that the Kashag had decided to sent a decree to Tselagang Dzong to tighten the security around them and stop them from spreading disruptive activities. Having lost all hope of reinstatement, they decided to forsake their homeland and seek refuge in another country. They obtained two months leave from the governer Shodrung Tsati Tseten Dorjee for the purpose of pilgrimage and small business around Kongpo and escaped to India via Bhutan.

In 1936, they reached India through Bhutan. At first they stayed at the Radreng guest house in Kalimpong. Kunphela helped the Radreng traders and side by side did some petty business to maintain his living. But after about a year, the Tibetan government ordered the Drochi (the governor of Dromo) to ask the British government to arrest and repatriate Kunphela to Tibet as he was a political culprit. The Drochi at that time was Pomda Yarphel. He was placed in a difficult situation by this instruction. He knew that if he did not inform the British government, the Tibetan government will turn against him. But as Kunphela was a popular

man, his repatriation to Tibet may turn many well-placed supporters of Kunphela against him. Moreover, he had maintained good relationship with Kunphela when he was the Kuchar and he did not now dare to cause such trouble against him. Therefore, Pomda Yarpel, before informing the British, informed Kunphela of the instruction from Lhasa. Together they discussed for a way to escape this instruction so that both of them will remain unharmed by it. It was then decided that Pomda Yarpel will notify the British officials and as soon as the talk of repatriation began, Kunphela will take the help of the international law that any refugee who does not go against the penal code of the host country cannot be repatriated arbitrarily and if necessary Kunphela will find an advocate to fight the case in British court and Pomda Yarpel will meet the expenses of the legal battle. They did accordingly and Kunphela won the case and was able to stay in India for the time being.

After that when Kunphela heard that the British were encroaching on Tibetan territory around the border of Mon Tawang, he discussed the matter with Tibetan scholar Gedun Chopel, Changchen Gung Sonam Gyalpo and Pomda Yarpel. They discussed and sent Gedun Chopel, disguised as a beggar on pilgrimage to Mon Tawang to observe and prepare a map of the territories illegally encroached by the British. Later Kunphela sent an anonymous letter to the Tibetan government on the border situation. Unfortunately, some imperialist lackeys in the Tibetan government found out the letter was from him and secretly informed the British authorities of Kalimpong. From then on, the British spies were daily after him. At that time, the Tibetan traders had to obtain a special permit from the British authorities for trading outside Kalimpong. This restriction was a source of great loss to the Tibetan traders. On Kunphela's suggestion, the traders founded a Tibetan Trader's Association, hired an advocate in its name and complained in the court against this restriction from the British authorities. The case was won by the Tibetan Traders Association. The restriction was lifted and the Tibetans gained the freedom to trade in other parts of the country. But Thupten Kunphela

himself came more under the shadow of the British intelligence who daily followed him and suspected all those who came in his contact. Suddenly one day his residence was raided and he was branded as an unlawful man and told to quit India in seven days time. If he lived a day more in India, the British authorities informed him that he will be imprisoned for 14 years. He could not return to Tibet and he did not want to go anywhere else.

Therefore, he announced that he will go to New Delhi, hire an advocate and fight for his right to stay in India. In fact, he went to Calcutta and secretly met the Kuomintang representative in India and told him everything and asked for passage help to Nanking. The Kuomintang representative agreed to help. It was difficult for Kunphela to travel as an ordinary passenger since he was under British suspicion. Fortunately that day, the offices were closed as it was a national holiday due to an Indian festival, and Kunphela safely boarded the plane with the passport issued by the Kuomintang representative.

In 1946, he contacted the Tibetan Bureau in Nanking. But as the Tibetan representative did not help him very much. He lived in a small guest house for about 6 months. At that time, he sold all his belongings and sometimes had nothing to eat except a cup of porridge for a whole day. These were the times when contradictions had developed between the Tibetan government and the Panchen Lama. As such, the Bureau of the Panchen Lama's main representative Zesak Chi Jigme and Lhamon Yeshe Tsultrim called Kunphela, listened to his history and provided him with fooding and lodging. Moreover, they introduced Kunphela to an officer of the Tibetan Mongolian Affairs Office of the Kuomintang government. They decided that either the Bureau of the Panchen Lama or else the Tibetan-Mongolain Affairs office will ease his difficulties and expressed their hope for Kunphela to join them. When the Tibetan Bureau heard about this, they reported it to the Lhasa government expressing the fear that Kunphela will be used by the Panchen Lama Bureau. The Tibetan Bureau then informed Kunphela that it will be better for him to return to Tibet

since he belonged to Tibet and the Tibetan government had already decided that he was free to return to Tibet. He returned to Tibet via India which had won its independence from the British.

Late in 1947, he reached Lhasa where he had no place to stay. Yabshi Yuthog rented him a place. He helped in the business affairs of the Yuthog and carried on a small side trade. After that, the Tibetan government took over the whole Yuthog residence for housing the Chinese Liberation Army and Kunphela rented a house from Yabshi Taktser. Here he met the 14th Dalai Lama's brother Losang Samten to whom he told his history. Losang Samten told him that he had heard of Kuchar Kunphela's service to the 13th Dalai Lama and said it was not right for the government to neglect him even after he had returned to Lhasa for a few years now. Losang Samten told Kunphela that he would take up his issue with the 14th Dalai Lama and request His Holiness for a consideration. At the same time, he suggested Kunphela to submit a petition to the Kashag. Accordingly, Kunphela wrote a detailed petition in which he requested the government to consider returning his new residence in Lhasa to him and give him a suitable job in the government.

In 1952, the Kashag decided to return him his new residence in Lhasa and 2000 silver coins in compensation.

In 1954, he gave up the vows of monkhood and married me. We had three children.

On 22nd December 1963, he died due to a number of illness.

The above account is based on what my husband told me and what I have heard from others. Mistakes are purely mine and I ask for the forgiveness of the readers.

Translator's Note :

Since his return to Lhasa coincided with the Chinese invasion of Tibet, it seems Kunphela gave himself up totally to the building of the new

Tibet in collaboration with the Chinese and took up every work given upon him with dedication and efficiency. I did not translate the account from 1950-1963 as it is purely an account of how hard he worked in one department or the other under the Chinese and do not contain even a glimpse of his feeling of either joy or sorrow, laughter or pain under the new system.

Note

I am including a list of books and journals supplied to me by my friend Tashi Tsering. I am sure readers will find it useful since I did not get the time to consult them for the present edition of my book on modern Tibetan history. At the same time, the recent flood of articles and writings by Tibetans from Tibet are to be read and quoted with care and caution. They have been written under strict Chinese supervision. Most of them either claim Tibet as a part of China or else belittle the old Tibetan political and religious system and in some cases attempt to create misunderstandings amongst Tibetans by digging out old feuds and disagreements.

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3. (a) Lha-klu Tshe-dbang rdo-rje, *Rwa-stag gnyis kyi 'gal rkyen dang rgyal zur Rwa sgrenng Lha sar skong gug byed par brgyud rim* in *Lo rgyus bdams bsgrigs*, Lhasa, 1985, vol. V, pp. 1-58
(b) Rwa-sgrenng mkhan-po 'Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho, *Bod dmag gis Rwa sgrenng du spel ba'i spyod ngan* in *Lo rgyus bdams bsgrigs*, Lhasa, 1985 Vol. V, pp. 78-91
(c) Khung-chin-Tsun, *Hong-Mu'o-Sung Bod du bskyod*

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- (d) *Khreng-Shis-'U'u, Go min tang gis Lhasar slob gra chung ba btsugs pa'i gnas tshul mdor bsdus in Lo rgyus bdams bsgrigs, Lhasa, 1985, Voy. V, pp. 162-177*
- (e) *Thang-smad bdud-'dul Tshe-ring, Lhasar chu glog khang thog ma btsugs pa's skor in Lo rgyus bdams bsrigs, Lhasa, 1985, Vol. V, pp. 229-244*
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- 4. (a) *Late Don-khang skal-bzang bde-skyid, Pan chen sku phreng dgu pa mes rgyal nang du gsang phebs kyi snga rjes in Lo rgyus bdams agrigs, Lhasa, 1984, Vol. IV, pp. 1-32*
- (b) *Bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho, Panchen bzhugs sgar dang Li'u 'un hu'i dbar gyi dmag 'khrug in Lo rgyus bdams sgrigs, Lhasa, 1984, Vol. IV, pp. 43-65*
- (c) *Bkras-dgon lo rgyus rtsom-sgrig tshog chung Sngag chen bdar pa Ho thog thu blo bzang bstan 'dzin 'jigs med dbong phyug gi rnam thar rag bdus in Lo rgyus bdams sgrigs, Lhasa, 1984, Vol. IV. pp. 80-91*
- (d) *Late bde-gzim dpal mgon Tshe-ring, Mes rgyal nang sar bskyo de Panchen sku phreng dgu pa'i 'os sprul Bod du gdanzhu'i skor in Lo rgyus bdams sprigs, Lhasa, 1984, Vol. IV, pp. 92-122*
- (e) *Phun-rab Rin-chen rnam rgyal, Gzung bla'i dbar thog ma'i 'gal ba yong rkyen, in Lo rgyus bdams sprigs, Lhasa, 1984, Vol. IV, pp. 123-132*

- 5. *Sle-zur 'jigs med dbang phyug, Tah bla bca gsum pa gshegs rjes Bod kyi chab srid dus babs in Lo rgyus bdams sgrigs, Lhasa, 1984, Vol. III, pp. 1-25*

- 6. (a) *Bya-dngos-pa rdo rje dngos-grub, Bod sa gnas srid gzhung gis 'thus mi tshogs pa btang nas*

mthun phyogs rgyal khab la g-yul rgyal bkra-shis bde legs zhu ba dang "go min rda hud" tshogs 'dur zhugs pa'i don ngos in Lo rgyus bdams sgrigs, Lhasa, 1983, Vol. II, pp. 1-27

- (b) *Bsam-pho bstan-'dzin don drub, et al, Bod sa gnas srid gzhung nas 'thus mi btang ste rgya dar ldi lir Aesheya mi rigs ser po'i tshogs 'dur zhugs pa'i gnas tshul in Lo rgyus bdams sgrigs, Lhasa, 1983, Vol. II, pp. 28-37*
- (c) *Sreg-shing blo-bzang don-grub, Go min tang gi 'thus mi Hong mu'o sung Tah la'i bcu gsum pa'i dgongsrdzogs mchod spren spro 'but du yong ba'i gras tshul thor bu in Lo rgyus bdams sgrigs, Lhasa, 1983, Vol. II, pp. 73-81*
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The Thirteenth Dalai Lama was one of the greatest leaders known to Tibetan history. Tireless and undaunted in his search and struggle for a politically independent, militarily strong and socially modern Tibet, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama faced two exiles, underwent difficult political challenges and ultimately inspired Tibet to declare its political independence in 1912 after completely shaking off the Chinese military presence from central Tibet. *The Water-Bird and Other Years* is primarily a homage to the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama and his kindness to Tibet. But the critical years following the demise of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in the water-bird year (1933) were disastrous for Tibet. Aristocratic and monastic political plots and counter-plots hatched and exploited by the destructive genius of unscrupulous and scheming individuals and factions emaciated the national strength and unity when Tibet needed it most. *The Water-Bird and Other Years* is also an indictment of these critical and sad years when the political independence achieved by the hard and harsh struggles of the late Dalai Lama were lost by the selfish and self-defeating politics of Lhasa and its self-styled politicians infesting its aristocratic and monastic labyrinth.