

**January 31, 1952**

**The US Consul General at Calcutta (Wilson) to the  
Department of State, 'Transmitting Monthly Report  
of the Indian Mission at Lhasa for Period Ending  
December 15, 1951'**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

The report of the Indian Mission in Lhasa for December 1951.

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

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AGN SERVICE DESPATCH  
CONSUL, CALCUTTA, INDIA

FEB 14 1952  
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DESP. NO.

January 31, 1952

DATE  
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THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

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REF : Consulate General's despatch No.299 dated December 21, 1951.

SUBJECT: Transmitting Monthly Report of the Indian Mission at Lhasa for Period Ending December 15, 1951.

The attached report from the Indian Mission at Lhasa, Tibet, for the period ended December 15, 1951, has just been received from the Office of the British Deputy High Commissioner in Calcutta. The principal points of interest in the report appear to be:

- (1). The Chinese are continuing to ingratiate themselves with the Tibetan nobility by entertaining lavishly and have shown "consummate political skill" in this connection.
- (2). The Chinese are also wooing the common people by such means as cinema shows and a free dispensary.
- (3). On the other hand, the Tibetan peasants will undoubtedly become dissatisfied at the action of their Government in turning over to the Chinese all fallow and grazing land in the vicinity of Lhasa.
- (4). In reply to a Tibetan inquiry as to the size of the Chinese forces in Tibet, the Chinese declined to reveal their strength but stated that owing to the shortage of essential supplies, they have had to revise their original plans for stationing 50,000 troops in the country.
- (5). The Chinese have been pressing the Dalai Lama to become chairman of the Chinese administrative and military committees in Lhasa, with a view to capitalizing on his prestige. The National Assembly, after debating the matter at length, passed an inconclusive resolution on the subject and the Dalai Lama has not yet given definite reply to the Chinese.

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*Evan M. Wilson*  
Evan M. Wilson  
American Consul General

Enclosure: *act.*  
Report from Indian Mission at Lhasa.  
Copy to New Delhi.

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Enclosure to despatch No.372 from Amconsul, Calcutta, of January 31, 1952.  
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Monthly Report of the Indian Mission, Lhasa,  
for the period ending 15th December, 1951.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS:

Sino-Tibetan Relations:

On the whole, Sino-Tibetan relations tend to improve with each passing day, at least at the official level, although it is still early to prophesy that all would hereafter be plain-sailing for the Chinese in Tibet, particularly when the introduction of large Chinese forces has brought in its wake problems that are not easily soluble. It has added a load on to the limited resources of Tibet; it has badly shaken the economic structure of the country, and has already affected the livelihood of the poor man, whose share of food and daily necessities has been ruthlessly whittled down. Perhaps this is no more than a passing phase, for the Chinese already promise to be as industrious here as they are at home, holding out hope that the present shortage of the essentials of life would in the near future be overcome. That, however, is not the only problem; new political rivalries have been set into motion, and Tibetans, generally, feel the impulsion for readjustment to the changing political climate, a matter of inconvenience to themselves. Nevertheless the Kutras (official families of Tibet) have done well by themselves as a result of the influx of Chinese into Tibet, for the Chinese desperately needed goods and services (monopolized by the Kutras), and were almost incredibly over-generous in meeting their obligations with large sums of silver dollars, squandered with the liberality of princes and the sleek abandon of rakes. It so happened that the approach of the bitter Tibetan winter found the Chinese ill-prepared both in regard to winter quarters and supplies, and so they went about buying houses for fabulous amounts by standards here - and ungrudgingly, too, for after all the money spent gave them shelter from the cold winds of winter, and gained them the goodwill of influential men whom it is always worth having on one's side even at a price.

Below is a list of houses in Lhasa which the Chinese have either bought, leased, obtained as gifts, or taken over otherwise as they were left vacant by their owners: -

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Sadutsang house  | (bought at 170,000 rupees)        |
| 2. Trimon house   | (bought at 100,000 rupees)        |
| 3. Tagtsatsang.   |                                   |
| 4. Nyemo Dongkar's house  | (price not known)                 |
| 5. A house belonging to Dzasa Sampho, which was formerly KMT Mission's club house | (bought at 25,000 rupees)         |
| 6. Kusho Nampon's house   | (bought at 35,000 rupees)         |
| 7. Dzasa Yuthok's house   | (vacant)                          |
| 8. Kitopa house   | (belonging to Tibetan Government) |
| 9. Maga Sarpa   | (belonging to Tibetan Government) |
| 10. Yamen   | (belonging to Tibetan Government) |

**SECRET**  
**SECURITY INFORMATION**

**SECRET**  
**SECURITY INFORMATION**  
(Classification)

Enclosure to despatch No. 372 from Amconsul, Calcutta, of January 31, 1952.

- 2 -

11. Yapshi Langdun's house
12. Late Somphu Theiji's house
13. One outhouse of Dzasa Tsarong, near Tsarong house.

At Gyantse, too, the arrival of Chinese troops was marked by a similar scramble for houses and stocks of food and other supplies.

Not even the bitter cold of winter cooled the ardor of the Chinese as they merrily went along feting Tibetans of all ranks and classes at meals noted for their excellence. It was the boorish Ch'an Kuo-hua who did most of the entertaining. On four successive days from 12th to the 15th November, he dined and wined the Shapes, the Dzasas, the Abbots of Sera and Drepung, the tutors of the Dalai Lama, incarnate lamas of fame and ill-fame and Tibetan ladies. This mode of making friends of erst-while enemies, of introducing strangers over a cup of wine, has much indeed to commend itself, but what is more it testifies to the consummate political skill of the Chinese communists whom the ill-informed prefer to under-estimate. Cinema shows and dance performances were a part of each day's festivities, and though much of the entertainment is undisguised propaganda, it did not fail to please and delight the simple Tibetans.

The Dalai Lama, too, contributed to this piquant merry-go-round when he threw a party for all the Chinese officials here at Tsetrunga Lingka on the 19th November. Even the acting Prime Ministers for once broke their convention and partook of the feast. Early that day a group of 70 Chinese, headed by Chang Ching-wu and Ch'an Kuo-hua, called on the Dalai Lama, took photos of and with him, and had a dance performance staged for his sole entertainment. A few days later on the 22nd November General Ch'an held a reunion party for all Tibetan officials who were at Chamdo when the Chinese captured the town. One would wish this to be a lesson to those who celebrate in lone glory victories like that of El Alamein.

It is not that the Chinese are solely devoting themselves to the pleasure and entertainment of the Kutras; they invariably keep half-an-eye cocked at the common folk, and advisedly, too. For three days running from 5th to 7th December, they held cinema shows for Tibetan troops and the Lhasa police. Public shows followed on the 10th and 11th December. Not content with amusing the varied elements of the Lhasa population, the Chinese seem to be anxious to carry their message and entertainments to nearby monasteries and villages. The villagers would be very happy indeed to be entertained, but not so the monasteries. The latter would rather tear down the noble edifices wherein they are lodged than throw open their doors to the vulgar influence of the screen and the stage.

The Chinese are making their influence felt not by entertainments alone, they have taken seriously to healing people and cultivation. They have opened a dispensary in Lhasa where the public receive free treatment from courteous medical attendants, and, although the institution is only five days old, it has deprived our hospital of nearly half its patients. Meanwhile they are working on a plan to set up a hospital near Lhasa.

**SECRET**  
**SECURITY INFORMATION**

SECRET  
SECURITY INFORMATION

(Classification)

Enclosure to despatch No. 372 from Amconsul, Calcutta, of January 31, 1952.

- 3 -

Plans are also ready to open a Bank in Lhasa partly to stabilize the value of the Dayang, and also to control the money market here. At present, the Newar traders of Nepal juggle with foreign exchange, which has resulted in the depreciation of the Dayang to 14 Sangs and 5 Shokangs, although the Chinese officially pegged it to 15 Sangs each. Indeed the Chinese seem to be very sore with the Newar money-changers.

Their fair and just attitude, their generosity and achievements notwithstanding, the Chinese leave the impression that they have entered Tibet like swarms of colonists to make this their permanent home. What are they but land-hungry peasants in the thin disguise of liberation uniforms? Hardly were they acquainted with the Tibetan environment, when they took over all fallow and grazing-land in and near Lhasa and turned it over to the army for cultivation. Whole fields near Drepung and Tsetrunga Lingka have been ploughed up for next year's crops, and their hawk-eyes have fallen on the distant but extensive pasture-land of Nagartse which they have every intention to turn over to the soldier's plough. Indeed Chinese policy-makers in Lhasa have laid down that the Chinese army will carry on these operations wherever they are quartered in Tibet provided there is land to plough anywhere near them.

How does the Tibetan peasant view these activities of the Chinese interlopers? Not with envy and distrust. Had the landed aristocracy of Tibet allowed the peasants to till fallow land, they would gladly have taken it over, and grown more crops. But they were kept away from the idle land. Now the Chinese have forcibly taken over all uncultivated land, and there were no protests. What of the Chinese promise to turn over all land to the tillers of the soil? Why has land gone to alien soldiers from afar and not to the Tibetan peasant? Besides much of the fallow land in Tibet had hitherto been used as pasture for Tibet's large livestock population which would now have to compete for existence with the men from Sining.

For a while the growing size of the PLA in Tibet alarmed the usually quiescent Tibetan Kutas, who feared that the Chinese would swamp the Tibetans and turn them into a minority in their own country. In despair they enquired of the Chinese officials here about the intended size of the Chinese army in Tibet. The Chinese replied that whereas Peking had modestly planned to introduce only 50,000 PLA troops into Tibet, they had later to make substantial alternations in the plan because of the shortage of essential supplies in the country. For security reasons, however, the Chinese were unable to reveal the present strength of their forces in various parts of Tibet, but they warned the Tibetans that there were still a number of posts which had to be manned along the frontier.

Meanwhile long caravans of fresh Chinese troops continue to pour into Lhasa. On 27th November and again on 18th December, some 1,500/1,600 troops entered the Tibetan capital.

The services of all Lhasa tailors have been commandeered by the Chinese for making cloth stockings for the troops. The tailors receive a paltry 2 Sangs and 7 Shokangs per pair of stockings, but they are likely to be employed on the job for two months.

SECRET  
SECURITY INFORMATION

**SECRET**  
**SECURITY INFORMATION**

(Classification)

Enclosure to despatch No. 372 from Amconsul, Calcutta, of January 31, 1952.

- 4 -

We have heard knowledgeable people in Lhasa say that some Chinese troops have moved from Kongbo to Tsona, and that they are equipped with mountain guns.

The arrival of three Chinese jeeps in Lhasa has created quite a sensation among the common people, many of whom have never seen a car in their lives.

Tibetan Government have been asked to make over the three Chinese prisoners now in Phari Jail to the officer Commanding, Chinese troops, at Gyantse.

INTERNAL

On 25th and 26th November, the National Assembly met in Norbulingka to debate the issue as to whether His Holiness should (or should not) accept the Chinese offer to become 'Chairman' of the Chinese administrative and military committees in Lhasa. Having already nominated Ch'an Kuo-hua and the Panchan Rimpoche as Vice-Presidents of these committees, the Chinese sought to rope in the Dalai Lama so as to be able to use his prestige and authority for their policies and acts in Tibet. They want the Dalai Lama as Chairman of the committees, but as a Chairman with little effective power to interfere in their activities which are to be directed by and from Peking. Tibetans, however, saw another aspect of this offer which is that the Chinese shrewdly expect the Dalai Lama to become their nominal leader in Tibet, leaving the Tibetans to follow him and through him the Chinese. They had doubts and fears and hesitations but these were craftily encountered by the veiled Chinese threat that if the Dalai Lama hesitated in accepting the post, the Panchen Rimpoche would only be too glad to step into it.

The Assembly's debate was interesting insofar as it revealed the new affiliations of some of its old members. Of these, Dzasa Tsarong, the wily old fox, known for years as the most pro-British of Tibetan officials, took the lead in advocating that the Dalai Lama should accept the post, and bow to the wishes of Peking. This demonstration of his loyalty to China earned him overnight the reputation of being the most pro-Chinese official here, but Tsarong is a shrewd judge of the political climate and he knows his views, however unpopular, will not bring retribution but acclaim from the Chinese. Privately, he has been entertaining and throwing dance-dinner parties for the Chinese.

Although Tsarong faced the opprobrium of the Assembly, the Assembly itself could do no better than to adopt a resolution that while the Dalai Lama might accept the post, he should not personally attend office.

His Holiness has not yet sent the Chinese a final reply, despite a good deal of Chinese pressure.

Meanwhile Peking has nominated His Holiness and Ngapho Shape to the Standing Committee of the People's Political Consultative Council of China. It is said here that Ngapho will attend the meetings of the Council once a year.

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**SECURITY INFORMATION**

**SECRET**  
**SECURITY INFORMATION**  
(Classification)

Enclosure to despatch No.372 from Amconsul, Calcutta, of January 31, 1952.

- 5 -

Three members of the Panchen Rimpoche's staff arrived in Lhasa from Nagchuka on 1st December. They were escorted by 1,500 mounted Chinese troops. These officials are Che Jigme (Che Tru-tang), who was head of the Provisional Tibetan Government set up by the Chinese in Sining, a Ta Lama of Shigatse and a Rimshi. They called on the Dalai Lama with the customary pomp and ceremony, and later saw the Shapas. Along with them there arrived another Chinese Communist General, called Fan (Giles Number 3426).

It is now said that Panchen Rimpoche is leaving Kumbum for Lhasa in mid-December. He is expected to reach the Tibetan capital not earlier than February next.

The truant Panchen's home-coming after long exile in China is not likely to be a pleasant one if songs now being sung in Lhasa are any indication of his popularity. Here are 2 verses of a popular song about the Panchen: -

"We won't see, won't see,  
Won't see the Chinese Panchen;  
Panchen be not angry, please,  
We don't want your blessings.

"Why give up the golden mushroom (growing) on our  
hillside, and pick the white (mushroom)?  
Why forsake the Dalai Lama,  
What have we to do with a Chinese Lama?"

At Chinese request, Tibetan Government have agreed to procure and supply grain to all Chinese establishments in Tibet for a period of one year. Grain collecting officers are being despatched to places where the Chinese have military establishments. Khenchung Thupten Tshephel and Kusho Bartso Wa II have been appointed grain-collectors in Tsang (Gyantse-Shigatse) area, while Horkhang Se and Tsendron Gyantsen La have been appointed grain-collectors for the Lhasa area. They will collect grain at moderate prices for Chinese troops and officials.

ECONOMIC

Prices are again rising in Lhasa after a slight decline in November. The rupee has gone down to 4 Sangs and 9 Shokang, and is expected to fall further.

Sd/-(S. Sinha)  
Officer in Charge.