

January 25, 1952

**The Second Secretary at London (Marvin) to the
Department of State, 'Indian Agent's Report from
Lhasa, September 16-October 15, 1951'**

Citation:

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Summary:

Reports from the Indian Mission in Lhasa for September-October 1951.

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English

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SUBJECT: Indian Agent's Report from Lhasa, September 16 - October 15, 1951

An Embassy officer has been shown by the Foreign Office a copy of a political report from the Indian Agent in Lhasa, covering the period September 16 - October 15, 1951. A summary of the report is enclosed.

Because of possible repercussions, should the Indian Government learn that the Agent's reports are being shown to American officials by the British Foreign Office, it is requested that this despatch be given limited distribution.

David K. Marvin

David K. Marvin
Second Secretary of Embassy

Enclosure:

✓ "Summary of Indian Agent's Report"

Approved:

Arthur R. Ringwalt
Arthur R. Ringwalt

First Secretary of Embassy

cc: New Delhi

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"SUMMARY OF INDIAN AGENT'S REPORT"

September 16 - October 15, 1951

A constant stream of Chinese troops were filtering into Lhasa during the period. The Chinese attitude and conduct had improved considerably, with the result that the Tibetans were losing their previous fear of the Communists and were beginning to have some confidence in the future. For instance, many Tibetans were now inclined to laugh at the foreboding which they had had in October, 1950, when the Chinese campaign to subdue Tibet began. The Indian Agent remarked that it seemed to have been Chinese Communist policy to intimidate the Tibetans and to cause great alarm, and to follow this up with a moderate policy which would have a good psychological effect, through the feeling of relief it induced in the Tibetans.

An important element behind the new policy appeared to be General Wang Ching-ming, a moderate and considerate person with a good knowledge of Tibetan customs and mentality. The General stands high in the estimation of the Tibetans. There is a legend, which has great currency among the Tibetans, that he was the general who captured Ngapho Shape at Drukho Gomba in October, 1950. When Ngapho was brought before him General Wang is said to have wept and embraced Ngapho. General Wang has visited important monasteries, admiring the appropriate objects and distributing gifts lavishly, and has also managed to bring Tibetan and Chinese soldiers together in informal gatherings. He thus has promoted goodwill and contributed markedly to Chinese efforts to win important Tibetans over.

In general, then, it may be said that the Tibetan attitude toward the Chinese is changing from distrust to calm acquiescence. Even the Proconsul from Peiping, Chang Ching-wu, has caught the feeling and has changed his former haughty ways markedly. There have been incidents in which young Tibetan rowdies attacked or insulted Chinese soldiers, but the soldiers have in general behaved very creditably in these situations. Chinese discipline has improved.

It is expected that Chang Ching-wu will return to China after the arrival of General Chan Kuo-hua, who is on the way with about two or three thousand soldiers and cultural and technical specialists. It seems that General Chan ranks higher in the Communist hierarchy, and he will probably be the top Chinese representative in Tibet. The influx of Chinese troops has continued until there are about two thousand within the city and about two thousand in the immediate vicinity. In addition, General Chan's column and a unit

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of about one thousand cavalry are said to be on their way through or to Lhasa. Because of food shortages in Lhasa the Tibetan authorities have given permission for food drops and the first of these has been made outside Lhasa. There is also a housing shortage. Some houses have been requisitioned at the request of the Chinese. The Chinese authorities are now making efforts to recruit Tibetans for the "Peoples Liberation Army". However, the response is not enthusiastic, as the Tibetans are not impressed with the living standards of the Chinese army.

Ngapho has reported to the Tibetan authorities about the agreement negotiated in Peiping in May, 1951. He was questioned as to the conditions agreed to with the Chinese, and has stated that he received verbal assurances that the Chinese would not interfere in the internal affairs of Tibet. Their military and administrative offices in Lhasa would exercise control over the Chinese troops and supervise Chinese interests. After hearing Ngapho, the Tibetan authorities decided not to ask the Chinese that the talks be reopened, but instead to request official assurances that the Chinese Communist's understanding of what was agreed upon corresponded to Ngapho's statement. If the Chinese reply was satisfactory the Tibetans would notify the Chinese of their acceptance of the Peiping agreement.

The Dalai Lama is having many receptions and religious meetings, apparently attempting to draw the people closer to him in devotion and worship. He has borrowed public address equipment from the Indians for this purpose. The Indian Agent concludes that he is standing aside from politics per se but is following the situation very closely.

Inflation continues in the city of Lhasa.

The Tibetan authorities have censured Rudok Dzungpon for his activities at Leh, about which the Indian Agent had spoken to them. The agent had earlier made plain to the Tibetans the attitude of the Indian Government toward the movement of Kazak's from western Tibet into Leh. For some unexplained reason, the Chinese had started taking the Tibetans into their confidence about Chinese operations against the Kazaks in western Tibet.

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