

July 10, 1953

The First Secretary at London (Zimmerman) to the Department of State, 'Transmission of Summaries of Reports of Indian Consul General at Lhasa for the Periods December 16, 1952, to January 15, 1953, and January 16 to February 15, 1953'

Citation:

"The First Secretary at London (Zimmerman) to the Department of State, 'Transmission of Summaries of Reports of Indian Consul General at Lhasa for the Periods December 16, 1952, to January 15, 1953, and January 16 to February 15, 1953'", July 10, 1953, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Record Group 59, Central Decimal Files, 1950-1954, Box 4228, 793B.00/7-1053, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD. Contributed by Charles Kraus.

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Summary:

Reports of the Indian Mission to Lhasa from December 1952-February 1953.

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English

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PRIORITY

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SECURITY INFORMATION
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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH 10 1953

FROM : Amembassy, LONDON

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF el : Embdes 122, July 7, 1953

OFFICE OF CHINESE AFFAIRS
DEPT. OF STATE
JUL 15 1953

Assigned to
July 10, 1953
Action Taken DATE

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SUBJECT: Transmission of Summaries of Reports of the Indian Consul General at Lhasa for the Periods December 16, 1952, to January 15, 1953, and January 16 to February 15, 1953

There are transmitted herewith summaries of the monthly reports of Mr. A. K. Sen, the Indian Consul General at Lhasa, covering the periods December 16, 1952, to January 15, 1953, and January 16 to February 15, 1953. It is cautioned that this despatch and its enclosures should be treated as Eyes Only - U.S. Officials material. As the Department is aware, these reports were not previously shown to the Embassy but have only now been made available and fill one gap in the series.

Some further evidence of unrest in Tibet is brought out in these reports. Lhasa city, for example, was out of bounds for the majority of Chinese troops during the Monlam ceremonies and a guard was placed on the Potala, actions that probably would not have been taken if all had been serene. Further, wall writing derogatory to Mao Tse-tung appeared in Gyantse during the New Year festival. Large military barracks construction is reported in Kangho where troop strength is expected to be increased from 200 to 600. Finally, these reports of the Consul General refer to the failure of the authorities to initiate the trial of "four arrested monks" and note the arrest of an additional person, all apparently concerned with an alleged underground movement. It should be noted that this is the first news of four arrested monks and an alleged underground. Not noted in previous reports, these events were presumably mentioned in the period from August 16 to October 15, 1952, covered by two monthly reports which the Foreign Office has not made available.

There is some evidence of worry over Indo-Tibetan trade, at least on the part of the Chinese authorities. The Chinese Procurement Board held a meeting of various traders in Lhasa and attempted to impress on them that available foreign exchange should be used only to import necessities from India. The traders were told that the local Chinese authorities were prepared to help in procurement from India by negotiation with the Indian Government. Subsequently, the Chinese authorities called another trade meeting in Chumbi to discuss alleged Indian export restrictions. The Chinese claimed that such a ban would violate the existing trade treaty between India and Tibet.

RWZimmermann/mr
REPORTER

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The Lhasa Youth League was more active during this period and conducted a membership drive. It is possibly noteworthy that at one of the meetings it was considered necessary to urge members to strive for good will between the Chinese and Tibetans and the various local governments and the Central People's Government. At a final induction ceremony for new members, the foundation was laid for a Women's League.

Considerable publicity was given during this time to various delegations to China. Mr. Sen comments, however, that the Tibetans suspect that reported statements by delegation members are merely words put in their mouths by the Chinese. It was noted that the Dalai Lama's sister not only recently visited Moscow, but later attended the Vienna Peace Congress as a member of the Chinese Delegation.

Other miscellaneous highlights of the reports are as follows:

The Kantse-Chamdo road has been completed and is now open to traffic.

A Tibetan Traders' representative in Peiping, writing in the Tibetan News Summary, reported on Chinese plans for the "industrialization" of Tibet. Allegedly, the Chinese would supply technical and other assistance together with facilities for the export of manufactured goods.

Some reports were received at Lhasa of land reform efforts at Shigatse. Judging from later reports, forwarded by the Embassy's despatch under reference, local objections to this move were not long in forthcoming.

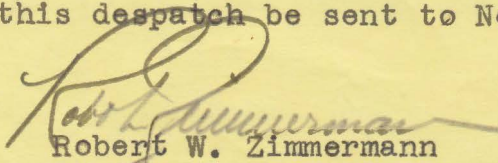
Transportation difficulties were reported from Yatung and Gyantse, chiefly over carrying rates. The ensuing squabble, significantly, was won by the headmen despite Chinese threats.

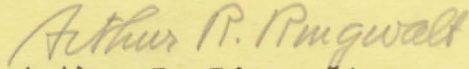
A 30-member Advisory Council, noted in the referenced despatch, was established with Ngapho Shape and Dzasa Liushar in charge.

ACTION REQUESTED:

It is requested that copies of this despatch be sent to New Delhi and Calcutta.

Approved:


Robert W. Zimmermann
Second Secretary of Embassy


Arthur R. Ringwalt

First Secretary of Embassy

Enclosures:

Summaries of reports
12/16/52-1/15/53; 1/16-2/15/53

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SUMMARY OF REPORT OF INDIAN CONSUL GENERAL AT LHASA
FOR PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 16, 1952 TO JANUARY 15, 1953

EXTERNAL

Tibet-China

Construction of the Kantse-Chamdo road has been completed and local Chinese authorities confirm that it is open to "wheeled traffic." The first car to travel over the route arrived at Chamdo towards the end of November 1952. A feature of the plush ceremony that took place at the grand opening was the reading of congratulatory messages from Mao Tze-tung to the liberation troops and Khampas who worked on the project. When extended, the road will link Chamdo with Lhasa. General Wang Ching-Ming, the liberator of Chamdo, inspected the progress of the Chamdo-Lhasa road in December.

The Lhasa Youth League received more attention during the period under review. The League, reportedly approved by both Mao and the Dalai Lama, opened its membership to "all comers" regardless of religion or sex. The aims of the organization are: (1) dissemination of knowledge about the people's representative form of government; (2) encourage games, music, and theatrical shows; (3) institution of a propaganda campaign by means of lectures, discussions, and the newspapers. The Youth League has urged its members to implement the 17 articles of the Sino-Tibetan Agreement without delay and has warned them not to be deceived by the "harmful policies" of the imperialists. Members have been further enjoined sincerely to maintain good will between the Chinese and the Tibetans and also between the local self-government authorities and the Central People's Government. Prominent speakers at a recent meeting of the League were: Ngapho Shape, his daughter, Mary Taring, Phuntso Wangyal, Tsatrul Rimpoche, Tendup Kapshopa, Shokhang Jetrung, and Barkat Ulla, a Muslim.

There has been considerable recent publicity concerning the activities of the various Tibetan delegations to China. The propaganda in general notes sight-seeing tours in China and Mongolia, lavish entertainments, and statements made by delegation members, which the Tibetans suspect merely parrot whatever the Chinese wish them to say. The Dalai Lama's sister, leader of one of the delegations, and described by the Chinese as a representative of the Lhasa Youth League, visited Moscow and later attended the Vienna Peace Congress as a member of the Chinese delegation.

During the Tibetan New Year's celebrations, students of the Chinese primary school and the Liberation Army staged dramatic shows for the Dalai Lama. At Gyantse the celebration was augmented by the formal opening of the Chinese Bank and the Assembly Hall for the

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Hui-Yuan Lekhung. In a street procession the portraits of Mao, Chu Teh, the Dalai Lama, and the Panchen Lama were carried in that order. The "rabble" of Gyantse noted their dissatisfaction by writing disparaging remarks about Mao on the freshly white-washed walls of the new bank, thus necessitating the posting of Chinese sentries.

Although Chinese troops are using Tibetan animal transport as much as possible, there are indications that the Chinese are building up pack transport of their own.

A party of medical men arrived at Chamdo en route to Lhasa. At present, they are organizing clinical centers in Kham for the treatment of v.d. One-half of the group is said to be trained mid-wives.

A veterinary hospital was opened at Lhasa this month.

India-China-Tibet

In Lhasa, a meeting of the China Procurement Board was held at the Bank of China to discuss Indo-Tibetan trade. Khampa, Nepalese, Chinese, and other Tibetan traders were invited to attend. The officials of the Board noted that while the Bank was becoming popular (the issuance of drafts increased from 60 to 600 during the past year), traders were asked to utilize judiciously the available foreign exchange in importing only those goods needed in Tibet. Assurance was given that the local Chinese authorities were prepared to help the traders in procuring goods from India by means of negotiation with the Indian Government. The traders were told not to be pessimistic as to the future of Indo-Tibetan trade. Tibet was exporting to India the wool needed by her and therefore Tibet could expect to obtain its requirements in exchange. (The Chinese had previously agreed that Tibetan traders could sell their wool stocks to any party offering better prices than the Chinese; hence the flow of wool to Kalimpong.) The meeting ended with a discussion of the "bright prospects" of overland trade with China in the future and the hope that Tibet might possibly soon be self-sufficient.

INTERNAL

Costly presents for the Dalai Lama from Mao Tze-tung were brought to Lhasa by the Tibetan Traders representative Goshampa on his return from Peiping. The gifts were presented in a colorful ceremony with Goshampa relegated to the rear of the Chinese officials.

An Advisory Council to the Dalai Lama was formed with a membership of about 30. Ngapho Shape (lay) and Dzasa Liushar (monk) are scheduled to be in charge of the Council. The trial of "four arrested monks" has not yet begun. Meanwhile, the monks of Drepung Monastery were on the verge of creating an unpleasant situation over the arrest of their colleagues but were finally pacified by the monk prefects with an assurance that a petition would be sent to the Tibetan Government.

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SUMMARY OF REPORT OF INDIAN CONSUL GENERAL
AT LHASA FOR PERIOD FROM JANUARY 16 TO FEBRUARY 15, 1953

EXTERNAL

Tibet-China

Reports from Shigatse speak of efforts toward land reform in that area. All land under the Tashilhunpo administration is said to have been taken over by the administration and distributed equally among farmers following the Chinese practice. The Tashilhunpo Dzasa (Che Jigme), who arrived at Gyantse during General Chang Kou-hua's presence there, had been propagating Communist theories on their estate at Draku Shika.

The Youth League of Lhasa closed its enrollment lists for the year and inducted the new members before a distinguished gathering of all Shapas and other Tibetan officials on January 31. Following this Madam Chang Ching-wu and Ngapho Lacham Kusho were elected as joint presidents of a Woman's League to be organized in the near future.

The Kundeling Rimpoche, in connection with his forthcoming journey to Peiping, was appointed chairman of a school committee at Paksho in Kham and was asked to stop there en route to instruct his people at that spot to change their "outmoded ideas" and be more helpful in the future. It seems the Kundeling Monastery has an estate at Paksho where the local Tibetans are refusing to cooperate with the Chinese in opening a school.

An article by Goshampa, one of Tibetan Traders' representatives to Peiping, has appeared in the Tibetan News Summary which appears to throw some light on the future plans for industrializing Tibet. It seems he attended an important meeting in Peiping on the subject and was convinced that agriculture alone could not improve the lot of poor Tibetans. It was impressed on him that wool, leather, match, soap factories, etc., and a work shop to repair machinery should be immediately started in Tibet. Technical and other assistance would be supplied by the Chinese together with facilities for exporting manufactured goods from Tibet. The meeting also emphasized the utilization of mineral resources. A Government-sponsored joint stock company is to be established, but it will be open to individual traders on a limited basis only.

A work shop has been opened in Po Linga, Lhasa, ostensibly to manufacture and repair agricultural implements. The shop is to be expanded in due course to handle other mechanical equipment. At

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present small arms are being repaired there. A laboratory is located on the premises to experiment, it is understood, on explosives. The Chinese have told the Tibetan Government that it is possible to manufacture dynamite from materials available in Tibet.

Recent arrivals from Kangho report that large military barracks have recently been constructed there. The present strength of troops at Kangho is about 200 but with the addition of a military administrative officer it is expected that the strength will be increased to 600 troops.

Transportation difficulties have been reported at Yatung and Gyantse. At Gyantse headmen and mandals protested against the non-payment of transport charges whose rates the Chinese had fixed themselves last year. The men demanded that new rates be fixed and despite attempts at bullying by the Chinese, won their point.

The Dalai Lama's representative in China, Rampa Namgyal, reportedly reached Peiping via Chamdo and Jyekundo on December 24. He will be in charge of the Tibetan mission there for about three years.

India-Tibet-China

A meeting was held at Chumbi by the local Chinese authorities with Tibetan Traders Agents representatives attending, plus a few selected headmen. The meeting discussed a report that the Government of India had imposed export restrictions. The Chinese reportedly said that if this were true, the ban would violate the treaty between India and Tibet providing for friendly trade. Prices at Gyantse are now higher as a consequence of the rumor.

INTERNAL

The Chinese authorities placed Lhasa city out of bounds for the majority of their troops during the Monlam celebrations. A Chinese guard was placed at the Potala for the duration of the celebrations on the pretext that the Chinese and Tibetans were "brothers" and therefore should have the privilege of serving the Dalai Lama equally.

There has been another arrest in connection with the alleged underground movement. The person arrested was an ordinary office bearer at the Lhasa Cathedral. The four arrested monks continue to deny completely charges of attending or holding secret meetings. No trial has yet been held. The monk Shape Khenrab Wangohuk (alias Tombo), who for a while was on protracted leave and later looked after Ganden Monastery affairs, has rejoined the Kashag. A number of transfers, promotions, etc., has been announced by the Tibetan Government.

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