

Lok Nayak Jaya Prakash Narayan on Tibet

Statement from Patna, 27 March, 1959

THE situation in Tibet must cause serious anxiety to all the peoples of Asia, particularly to us in India. The recent statement of the Prime Minister in Parliament is not likely to allay this anxiety.

From the time Red China decided to gobble up Tibet, our policy in regard to it has been marked by prevarication. We began by describing the Chinese advance on Tibet as aggression but immediately after recognised Chinese suzerainty over that unfortunate land. Tibet has never been a part of China, except by conquest when Lhasa paid tribute to Peking. But there was also a period when Peking paid tribute to Lhasa. The Tibetans are not Chinese and there is no evidence in history that they ever wanted to be a part of China.

The Chinese on their part have been an imperial power and in their expansionist drives they have always led campaigns against the Tibetans, who being numerically weak have sometimes been forced to accept nominal Chinese over-lordship. In this respect here Chiang-kai-Shek and Mao-Tse-Tung stand on the same ground. But that does not alter the fact that the Tibetans are entitled to their own freedom and, at the least, to the moral support of the world opinion.

When the Chinese communists took over Tibet they promised to respect the unique position of the Dalai Lama and the autonomy of his government. Those who were acquainted with the nature of communist rule understood even then that national autonomy under communism was an utter sham and that it would only be a matter of time for the Chinese to drive the nails deeper into the coffin of Tibetan

independence. Present events are proving how right was that understanding.

The question is what can we do to help the Tibetans. It is true, as the Prime Minister said in Parliament in 1950, that we cannot, like Don Quixote, go about fighting everything. No one expects India to go to war with China for the sake of Tibet. But every upright person, every freedom loving individual should be ready to call a spade a spade. We are not serving the cause of peace by slurring over acts of aggression. We cannot physically prevent the Chinese from annexing Tibet and subduing that peaceful and brave people, but we at least can put on record our clear verdict that aggression has been committed and a freedom of a weak nation has been snuffed out by a powerful neighbour. Let us too not waver to tear the veil from the face of communism, which under the visage of gentle Panch Sheel hides the savage countenance of imperialism. For in Tibet we see at this moment the workings of a new imperialism, which is far more dangerous than the old because it marches under the banner of a so-called revolutionary ideology. Tibet may be a theocratic rather than a secular State and backward economically and socially. But no nation has the right to impose progress, whatever that may mean, upon another nation. Every nation, small or big, has the right to choose its own way of life and the least we can do is to stand unwaveringly by this right.

We are rightly linked with China by the bonds of friendship and I for one am keen that these bonds be kept firm and secure. But friendship cannot mean abetment of crime. True friendship indeed, as I am sure some Chinese proverb will have it, requires that when friends go wrong they should be firmly told about it.

India does not believe in power-politics and she should have the courage to stand by the truth in every circumstance. We have nothing to lose. The Chinese need our friendship as much as we need theirs. But if the price of friendship is duplicity and condonation of wrong, we must have the courage and honesty to refuse to pay the price. The tragedy of Tibet then will not have happened in vain.

The Tragedy of Tibet

(Presidential Address delivered at the All India Convention on Tibet held at Calcutta on 30 & 31 May, 1959)

Acharya Kripalaniji and Friends,

I am sure there would be no need for another speech on Tibet after Acharya Kripalaniji's inaugural address. However, as President of the Convention, I believe I am expected to say a few words.

Let me begin by paying a tribute to Acharya Kripalani for the great service he has done to India and the cause of international justice and peace. His has been almost the only voice in the Lok Sabha which from the beginning of the Tibet affairs has been raised on the side of truth and justice. It is a sad commentary on the party system that even though overwhelming opinion in the Lok Sabha has been with him on this question, the House has had to follow a different lead. I should like at the outset to emphasise the need of more intimate study of international questions on the part of the public. The Prime Minister is considered to be the sole authority on foreign affairs. But events like Hungary and Tibet show how such a situation results in most unfortunate mistakes. With a better informed and active public opinion, such mistakes could perhaps have been avoided. It has been found that after the event, the Government has on occasions responded to public criticism, but it would have been much better not to have committed the mistake at the outset. The role of the Press cannot be over-emphasised in this respect. The Council of World Affairs, its branches and other similar institutions should receive greater attention from the educated section of the people. In the Lok Sabha both the opposition as well as the ruling party must produce more serious students of foreign affairs.

The broad policy of independence, sometimes miscalled neutralism, has no doubt over-whelming support of the people and, to my mind, is the only correct policy for us to follow. But the trouble is that this policy is not always strictly and impartially followed. This has cost us not only our good name and moral prestige, but has made us acquiesce in the suppression of human and national freedom.

Let me now turn to Tibet. One of the great tragedies of history is being enacted in full view of the world. Tibet is being gobbled up by the Chinese dragon. A country of less than ten million soul is being crushed to death by a country of six hundred and fifty million people. Patriotism, courage, faith can perform miracles. The Tibetans love their country; they are brave; they are devoted to their religion and their Dalai Lama. Yet, 1 to 65 is an odd that even a nation of Herculesees will find it difficult to overcome.

A Benighted Land

The attention of the world is currently turned elsewhere. Moreover Tibet for most countries in the world, except its immediate neighbours, is an obscure, distant, benighted land not worth bothering about. This makes the tragedy of Tibet deeper. India, as an immediate neighbour of Tibet, and as a country regarded for its moral position, its detachment and freedom from power politics has a great responsibility in this matter. The world looks to India for a lead and India must not fail.

It is not only the question of the fate of ten million people. That of course is important and would be so whatever the number. But there is also the question--and this is of much greater importance--of the basis of international justice and peace. Is world peace possible if the strong are free to oppress the weak with impunity? Such a world

would be dominated by a few powerful nations and peace would consist in an uneasy balance of power between them and the small nations would be at their mercy.

International Morality

This surely is not the picture of the future world order that India has in view. We believe that just as inside nations, the rule of law must be established to secure human rights, so as in the international community too must the rule of law be enforced so as to ensure the freedom and rights of nations. That rule of law can only be based on an international morality which is universally accepted. Even the strongest power then might find it difficult to go against the moral verdict of the world. From my point of view, the greatest virtue of our foreign policy of nonattachment and independence of judgement is that it enables us to contribute, because of that very non-attachment, to the developments of international morality.

India, therefore, must not shirk her responsibility at this testing moment. Her responsibility is far greater at this time than it was at the time of Hungary. This is so not only because Tibet is our frontier and what happens there affects our security, not only because of our spiritual and cultural bonds with Tibet. The Panchen Lama, by the way, twitted us the other day for showing such solicitude for Buddhism abroad when we had not cared to preserve it at home. The learned Lama forgets that the Buddha's teachings have very largely become a part of Hindu life and thought and the Buddha himself is worshipped as our last Avatar. Howsoever, our bonds with Tibet are there and they no doubt determine our attitude towards their present plight. But our concern for and responsibility towards Tibet spring mainly from the fact that Tibet is a neighbour who has been wronged. The

responsibility is increased when it is recalled that the neighbour had put trust in our assurances.

Glib Talk of War

In this connection, there has been some glib talk of war. If you do this or that, it would mean war with China, it is said. It is amazing that people should talk of war in this loose manner. The whole world knows, and China more than them all, that India has no desire whatever to start a war with anyone. On the other hand, India has repeatedly reiterated her firm desire to continue her bonds of friendship with China. But if China seeks to exploit that desire for unjust purposes, India cannot be a party to it. Nor can India be browbeaten into doing something that she considers wrong nor prevented by threats from doing the right. The main elements of the Tibet situation have been clear enough from the beginning.

Tibet a Country by Itself

Tibet is not a region of China. It is a country by itself which has sometimes passed under Chinese suzerainty by virtue of conquest and never by free choice. Chinese suzerainty has always been of the most nominal kind and meant hardly more than some tribute paid to Peking by Lhasa. At other times Tibet was an independent sovereign country. For sometime in the 8th century Peking paid an yearly tribute of fifty thousand yards of Chinese brocade to Tibet.

After the fall of Manchu empire in 1911, Tibet functioned as an independent country till 1951 when the Chinese Communist Government invaded it. In between there were attempts to reimpose Chinese suzerainty by the treaty in which the British Government took a leading hand. Pressed from both sides by two powerful forces, Tibet

had little choice. Nevertheless, nothing came out of these attempts and till the Communist invasion, Tibet was a free country.

The British had their own selfish motives for agreeing to Chinese suzerain powers in Tibet. Being imperialists themselves they had, of course, no qualms in the matter. Their motive was to bribe the Chinese in recognising the monopoly of economic rights of Britain in Tibet.

Policy Born in Sin

It was this policy born in imperialist sin that free India inherited. Very rightly India renounced all the rights she enjoyed in Tibet by virtue of that inheritance. But, curiously, she re-affirmed that part of the sinful policy that related to China. India gave her assent to China's suzerain powers in Tibet.

That was a major mistake of our foreign policy. The mistake was two-fold. The first was that we accepted an imperialist formula. The very idea that one country may have suzerain powers over another is imperialist in conception. The second mistake was to believe that a powerful totalitarian state could be trusted to honour the autonomy of a weak country. It is true that we could not have prevented the Chinese from annexing Tibet. But we could have saved ourselves from being party to a wrong. That would have been not only a matter of moral satisfaction, but it would have also set the record right, so that world opinion, particularly in the Afro-Asian part of the world, could have asserted itself. That might have even halted the Chinese. The Communists are anxious to present themselves as liberators, so when Afro-Asian opinion had condemned their Tibet action as aggression they would have found it immensely difficult to go on with it. India's acceptance of the suzerainty formula gave to the Chinese action a

moral and legal sanction and prevented the formulation of Afro-Asian opinion on the question. It thus prevented the true aggressive character of Chinese communism from being realised by the backward peoples of Asia, aggravating the danger of their being enslaved in the name of liberation.

Conflict of Policies Inevitable

It has been said, more in whisper than aloud, that non-recognition of China's claims of suzerainty would have earned for us the hostility of the Chinese Government. In the first place, issues of right and wrong cannot be decided on consideration of pleasure or displeasure of the parties concerned. In the second place, it should have been foreseen that sooner or later the Chinese would try to destroy the Tibetan autonomy and then a conflict of policies would become inevitable. Furthermore, we could have made it clear that even though we were opposed to China's suzerainty over Tibet, we were on our side, keen and determined to pursue our policy of friendship. India had strongly opposed recent Anglo-French aggression in Egypt, but on that account she did not change her policy of friendship towards England and France. Nor was India's action construed by these powerful countries as hostile, nor did they themselves on that account become hostile to India. There are some who say that facts of history must be taken into account and if Tibet has sometimes been under China, it is irrelevant to raise the question of Tibetan independence now. This is an amazing argument. Any one who believes in human freedom and the right of all nations to independence, should be ashamed to talk in this fashion. According to the logic of this viewpoint, Hungary, for example, having long been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, should never be entitled to independence. Would any sensible person agree with this

view? Let us not therefore slip into the habits of lazy thought and give approval to wrong of history.

An Illusion in Making

For years an illusion was in the making. It was said that China was different. It had an ancient civilisation. Therefore, Chinese communism was different from Russian. And so on and on. That illusion has been shattered--to the great good fortune of the peoples of Asia, who have been warned in time.

China rants incessantly about imperialists and expansionists. But China herself has been revealed as a cruel imperial power. If communism had been truly liberating and anti-imperialist force, the Chinese Communists, on assumption of power, should themselves have proclaimed the independence of Tibet and foresworn the old imperialist notion of suzerainty and made a treaty with Tibet of equality and friendship. But communism under Russian and Chinese guidance has become expansionist and aggressive, just as nineteenth century capitalism under the leadership of Britain, France, Germany had become aggressive and expansionist. Somewhere or the other Marxism had gone wrong. Lenin wrote a famous thesis on imperialism as the last phase of capitalism. Some one should write another thesis on communism as the first phase of a new imperialism.

Here it may be well to cast a glance at the conduct of India which has been in such clear contrast with that of China. India also had inherited certain rights in Tibet from the previous Indian Government. But she unilaterally renounced them all. During the British period, Nepal was prevented from having any direct foreign relations; that matter was in the hands of the Indian Government. After independence, India surrendered those rights too and now Nepal is fully sovereign

democratic state with the full concurrence and support of India. Other instances may be given of India's clean record. It may be said without fear of contradiction that there is not a single Indian who wants to annex a single inch of foreign territory.

To return to Tibet. As on previous occasions of imperialist pressure from China, the Dalai Lama had no option but to agree to Chinese suzerainty and be content only with autonomous powers. This was in fact what the Dalai Lama himself hinted at in that most dignified statement that he had issued from Tezpur.

Not a Question of Reforms

Having annexed Tibet by invoking an outworn, imperialist formula, the Chinese Communists were in no hurry to go on with their plans of subjugating the country. They also needed time to build roads and military establishments and to haul up arms to the roof of the world. When they had sufficiently entrenched themselves, they began to tighten their screws. It was not a question of reforms. The question plainly was that of subjugation of Tibet. The Chinese interfered in everything, in the matter of religion as well as administration. Revered Lamas were purposely ill-treated, humiliated, imprisoned, tortured. The sanctity of shrines and images was violated. Monasteries were demolished and their properties confiscated. A new system of administration was imposed in which Chinese posted to all key points. The post and telegraph, the mint and the hydro-electric plant were taken over. Printing of Tibetan currency was prohibited. Chinese postal stamps were introduced. The powers and functions of the Dalai Lama were clipped. A vast scheme of colonisation by China was set on foot, so that large parts of Tibet should cease to be Tibetan and become Chinese. That was a process of stealing Tibet from the Tibetans that

caused deep anxiety and aroused bitter resentment. Centuries-old granaries, some of them with grain reserves to last for years, were emptied and the grains seized by the Chinese. Reserves of gold and silver bullion were appropriated on the pretext of taking it on loan. The so-called land reforms were introduced, softly at first, but later with the usual Communist disregard for popular feeling. Forced labour, so foreign to Tibetan tradition, was introduced on a big scale. The press and all other means of information were taken over by the Chinese. All this was happening over a number of years and to some of the administrative and constitutional changes the Tibetans were forced to give their assent. The rest was done at the sweet will of the overlords. Resistance to such a state of affairs was natural. Soon it took the form of a national resistance movement.

Rebellion National, not Class

Marxism of Karl Marx was meant to be an objective science of society. But present day communism is nothing if not a complete travesty of objectivity. Had it not been so, all the wild charges could never have been made against India and Indians. Had it not been so, again, the Tibetan upsurge could not have been represented by the Chinese as only a minor disturbance caused by a handful of reactionary Lamas and landlords. It is not that communists do not know the truth. It is only that communism cannot bear the truth. Truth is communism's deadly enemy. There is no doubt that the vested interests are also with the resistance, but its character is national rather than class. The Tibetans are fighting to win their national freedom and not to defend the feudal rights of a few nobles and monasteries. The leaders of the movement are not feudal reactionaries, but the most progressive element in Tibetan society who stand for reform and changes.

The true history of the Tibetan national movement has yet to be told. There are Tibetans now in India who can give the world an authentic account. But one does not know when they will consider the opportune moment to have arrived to tell their story. In spite of all that has happened they perhaps feel that a settlement with the Chinese might still be possible. One admires the faith of these brave religious people and prays that their faith may be vindicated. One necessary condition for that seems to be unambiguous expression and assertion of world opinion on the side of truth and justice.

There is a point of view that is not so much expressed publicly as privately canvassed. It is said that even if the Chinese are behaving a little roughly in Tibet, why be so squeamish about it? Are they not forcibly rescuing the Tibetan masses from medieval backwardness and forcing them forward towards progress and civilisation?

Thrusting Progress Down the Throat

It is strange that as soon as some people put themselves outside their own country, they become screaming imperialists. If the right is conceded to nations to thrust progress forcibly down the throats of other nations, why were not the British welcomed as torch bearers of progress in India? But the defenders of the Chinese civilisers of Tibet will be the first to disown any such sacrilegious thought. They might, however, be thrown into real confusion if the Russians or the Chinese were to take it into their heads to march upon India to save her from foreign imperialists and lead her to progress?

Secondly, the question may be asked what is progress. To some, industrialisation, rising production statistics, communes, Sputniks, might mean progress. There is another view that regards progress in terms of humanity - the growth of human freedom, the decline of

selfishness and cruelty, the spread of tolerance and cooperation, and so on. For me Stalin was no improvement on the Czar and all the Sputniks of Russia leave me cold when I know that a sensitive and honest writer, Pasternak, the first literary genius in Russia since Gorki, is condemned raucously by so-called men of letters who have not even read the offending work. From the point of view of the Progress of Man, as distinct from the Progress of Things, Russia appears to me to be living in the Dark Ages.

It was hoped that China's ancient civilisation would prevent that great country from being plunged into the same darkness, but Tibet has shown that the sun of humanity is as much under eclipse in Peking as it is in Moscow. Apart from the progress of things, importance is attached to change of institutions. Destruction of temporal and spiritual feudalism might be considered to be an advance, but when that is replaced by a still more severe feudalism of Party and Bureaucracy. I for one am not prepared to call it an advance, far less a revolution. The yoke of native medievalism was surely going to be thrown off sooner or later. But who can tell when the foreign yoke of Communist medievalism will be overthrown? Who can tell when Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania will be free? And Hungary and the rest of them.

How can Tibet be Saved?

The question that I wish to consider finally is one that is on everyone's lips now: how can Tibet be saved? He would be a bold person who would venture to suggest a definite answer. A few considerations may, however, be advanced.

There is one thing of which I am absolutely clear: the need to create a powerful opinion on this question. The Tibet situation should be presented to the world in all its naked reality. No attempt should be

made for reasons of diplomacy to play down, cover up, belittle or misrepresent what is happening in Tibet. Diplomacy has a vast deal to answer for in history, and I do fervently hope that diplomacy, like the cold war, is kept out of the issue. The broad facts of the Tibetan situation are clear. Those facts must be broadcast, and on their basis a strong and united world opinion must be created--against Chinese aggression and for Tibet's independence.

Let no one cry "cold war" at this. This is not a part of Bloc politics. This is a fight for the Rights of Man. Did any one think that the world-wide condemnation of the Anglo-French attack on Egypt was a part of the cold war?

A Formula in Ruins

The Government of India is committed to the formula of Tibetan autonomy under Chinese suzerainty. That formula is in ruins. So is the much-trumpeted Panch Sheel. But, nevertheless, this whole question will have to be reconsidered sooner rather than later. What happens when the autonomy of a country (or a region for that matter) is destroyed? What happens when that autonomy is not restored? What happens, in short, when aggression takes place and succeeds? It would not do to evade these questions. Till these questions are answered, there is no hope of the Government of India discovering the next step. Paralysis of action in a fast-developing situation may be dangerous. However, of one thing I feel certain: the Prime Minister will never do a shoddy deal and pass off subjugation as autonomy.

It will be recalled that when the Chinese aggression began in 1950, the Tibetan Government had moved the United Nations. The El Salvadorian delegate had formally called on the UN to condemn China for her unprovoked aggression against Tibet, and had proposed the

creation of a special committee to study what measures could be taken by the General Assembly to assist Tibet. The matter went to the Assembly's Steering Committee which, on the strength of the assurances of India's representative, decided to shelve the Tibetan complaint indefinitely.

Raising Tibet at the UN

The full facts of that affair and our part in it have not been made public and I can not say where the matter stands now according to the workings of the United Nations. Nevertheless, it seems to be utterly wrong that such an important event as the suppression of the freedom of a nation should take place and the world organisation should not even take notice of it. It is not that the mere raising of an issue in the United Nations means that a solution will be found. We have some experience of the working of that august body ourselves. But, after all is said and done, the UN is the only organisation the human family has that gives some guarantee that the world will not be converted into a jungle where the strong will eat up the weak. I have no doubt there will be many constitutional barriers and such things as vetoes in the way of the Tibet issue entering the portals of the UN. But if rule and procedures and technicalities stand in the way of international justice, it is not the latter but the former that should suffer. In whichever form the Tibet question is presented to the UN, I have no doubt that the Afro-Asian bloc must present a common front. This is the least that the countries of Asia and Africa must do to defend the right of small nations to freedom and also to assure against the danger to their own freedom from the both old and new imperialisms.

Tibet is not Lost

It is not for me to advise the Tibetans. There is one thought, however, which I cannot help expressing. Tibet, being a devoutly Buddhist country, could perhaps have turned its moment of tragedy into one of profound victory if it could have turned to the Compassionate One and met hate with love, oppression with suffering, violence with non-violence. Maybe, even then Tibet would have been destroyed, but not the soul of Tibet, not the Religion of the Buddha.

Then, is Tibet lost for ever? No. A thousand times No. Tibet will not die because there is no death for the human spirit. Communism will not succeed because man will not be slave for ever. Tyrannies have come and gone and Caesars and Czars and dictators. But the spirit of man goes on for ever. Tibet will be resurrected.

On India's Responsibility
***(Extract from his speech at the Tibet Convention,
Madras, 3 June, 1959)***

ONLY few days ago I spoke on Tibet at the All India Tibet Convention in Calcutta. Therefore, there is not much that I have to say this evening. However I should like to say a few words by way of clarification. It may be put to me that by speaking of Tibetan independence I am queering the pitch for those who may be trying to bring about a peaceful settlement. I am anxious not to queer the pitch for any one, nor do I doubt that the Tibet question can be solved in no other way than peacefully. It is for that reason that I have emphasised the need of a strong and united world opinion so that its moral pressure might persuade the Chinese Government to seek a peaceful settlement.

Speaking about Tibet in December 1950 the Prime Minister used the following words: "I see no difficulty in saying it to the Chinese Government that whether you have suzerainty over Tibet or sovereignty over Tibet, surely, according to any principles, principles you proclaim and the principles I proclaim, the last voice in regard to Tibet should be the voice of the people of Tibet and of nobody else." I should like whole heartedly to support the Prime Minister's words. If the demand for independence is found objectionable because it prejudices the issue, no civilized person or nation could object to the right of self-determination. The Calcutta Convention also has, with my full approval, passed a resolution in these very terms.

The Chinese Government have tried to by-pass the question of self-determination by pretending that the Tibetan national revolt is the work of a handful of reactionaries. The fact that the Dalai Lama himself

had to flee from Tibet proves the national character of the upheaval as also the fact of massive Chinese intervention putting an end to the autonomy of Tibet. The Chinese have tried to get around this fact too by pretending that the Dalai Lama was forcibly abducted by reactionaries and is still held under duress. It is under this pretext that they have elected the Dalai Lama as a Vice-President of the Chinese Republic. The whole world knows, however, that the Dalai Lama left Tibet of his own free will, because the Chinese left him no other option. In such a situation the Tibetan people cannot exercise the right to self-determination unless the Chinese armed forces are withdrawn from Tibet and the Dalai Lama is restored to his previous position of authority and power.

When in November, 1950, the invasion of Tibet by Chinese armed forces was referred to the General Assembly of the UN by the El Salvadore delegation and the matter was sent to the General Committee, the latter dropped the question "for the time being" because India's delegate, the Jamsaheb of Nawanagar, assured the Committee that the Chinese forces "had ceased to advance after the fall of Chamdo, a town some 480 kilometres from Lhasa" and that "the Indian Government was certain that the Tibetan question would still be settled by peaceful means". It is clear from recent events in Tibet that the Chinese Government have again resorted to large-scale and ruthless violence. Under these circumstances, it is reasonable to hope that the action of the UN that was abandoned for the "time being" would be resumed again. India has a clear responsibility in this matter because of the assurance that she gave to the General Committee.

(iv) Why Support Tibet?

***(Speech at the Indian Council of World Affairs,
Sapru House, New Delhi, 10 July, 1959)***

I am very thankful to my old friend Prof. Poplai--by the way, it may not be known to many of you that Prof. Poplai was one of those friends who gave me shelter in their homes when I was living "underground" in Delhi during the August Revolution--for his kind invitation to address this distinguished audience. I should like to begin with a few preliminary observations. First of all, let me make it clear that I stand before you as an individual, and all that I shall say tonight will be my personal opinion.

Secondly, I have seen reports in the press that my little incursion into the diplomatic role has caused embarrassment in certain quarters. If there is any truth in these reports, I should like unreservedly to offer my apologies. Nothing could have been farther from my mind than to cause embarrassment to any one.

Thirdly, let me make it clear that my stand on Tibet is not due to the fact that I am opposed to China and wish to see her harmed. Nothing can be farther from the truth. I have friendship at heart for China and wish her well. My stand on Tibet is based on the merits of the situation, and it is my belief that even when a friend is in the wrong, it is one's duty to tell him firmly about it. It is in that spirit that I am criticising China and opposing her action in Tibet.

Nor has my Tibet stand anything to do with my attitude to communism. When one speaks of communism, one is immediately faced with a semantic problem. Communism means different things to different people. I am a great admirer, for instance, of many features of Yugoslav communism, but I have been a strong critic of Stalinist communism. However, as I have just said, my views on Tibet have

nothing to do with communism. I would have taken the same view if Chiang-Kai-Shek had been ruling in Peking.

Having made these preliminary remarks, let me now turn to the main subject. I feel that the whole Tibet question has undergone a revolutionary change since His Holiness the Dalai Lama put the case for his country fairly and squarely before the world on June 20 last. It would be silly for any one who knows anything about Tibet to doubt the authority and authenticity of the voice of the Dalai Lama. His voice is the voice of the head of the Tibetan State, irrespective of whether the international status of that State was one of autonomy or independence. Again, the voice of the Dalai Lama is the authentic voice of the people of Tibet, who worship him as no other living person is worshipped anywhere in the world.

Apart from the unique position that His Holiness commands in Tibet, the Dalai Lama has an international status and personality. Throughout the Buddhist world, and particularly in the Mongolias and China herself and other regions where the Mahayana School of Buddhism reigns, the Dalai Lama is held in the highest regard as a spiritual Master.

To me the Dalai Lama has a significance even greater than these unrivalled positions imply. That is the peculiar spiritual quality of the man himself. Even such a rationalist as Prime Minister Nehru has spoken of the "halo" and "radiance" of the Great Lama.

It was my good fortune to have had my first meeting with the Dalai Lama at Bodh Gaya in 1956. Even at that time I had found him to be filled with anxiety for the future of his country. Recently again I had the privilege of having long conversation with him at Mussoorie. On both occasions I was conscious of being in the presence of an extraordinary person, who seemed to be complete master of himself

and was filled with an inner joy and peace that were radiated all around.

When such a rare and authoritative person spoke out his mind about a matter on which he more than any one else was entitled to speak, it was natural that the whole situation should have been revolutionalised. It is therefore strange to find persons talking even now in terms that have no relevance to the changed situation.

The main elements, as I see them, of the present situation are:

1. The Dalai Lama has proclaimed independence to be the goal of his country.
2. He has said that his government signed the 1951 Sino-Tibet Agreement because of China's armed intervention had left no alternative, and, further, that the autonomy pledged in that agreement has been forcibly abrogated by China.
3. He has disclosed the fact of large-scale and brutal repression, including massive killing and deportation of the Tibetan people by the Chinese authorities.
4. He has further disclosed that the Chinese are colonizing Tibet on a vast scale.
5. He has revealed how the Chinese are attempting deliberately to destroy the noble religion of the Buddha.
6. In spite of all that has happened, he has declared his desire for a peaceful settlement.
7. He has appealed for help from India and the world to secure justice for his country.

In view of these statements from a person of the status of the Dalai Lama, to go on repeating parrot-like the outworn formulas about China's suzerain rights in Tibet and about Tibet being an internal affair of China is, to say the least, to shut one's eyes to realities and to

acquiesce in one of the great wrongs of history. Such moral abdication will only lead to more wrongs and ultimately to war.

There are three points of view from which the present situation in Tibet can be looked at.

The first is the point of view of those who never accepted suzerainty formula and always stood for full independence for Tibet. For them the events in Tibet and the declarations of the Dalai Lama have come only as confirmation of their own view. The present situation is more or less what they had anticipated from the beginning.

The second is the point of view of those who accepted the suzerainty-with-autonomy formula. It is painful to reflect that this formula was accepted even by countries that had but recently won their own freedom. This is an age above everything of anti-imperialism and national freedom, and the very concept of any country's suzerainty over another is alien to it. At any rate, those who had been themselves victims of imperialism should have given it no quarter. The right of Tibet to national freedom should have been accepted without question. However, the fact is that the imperialist formula was accepted by India and most countries of the world. The question now is whether that formula stands in tact in the present situation. The answer obviously is in the negative.

When a question was recently asked in the British Parliament about the policy of her Majesty's Government in regard to Tibet, Mr. R. Allan, who replied for the Foreign Secretary, said : "I would refer my Hon. Friend to the statement made by my predecessor in reply to questions in the House on 6th November, 1950. He said: `We have over a long period recognised Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, but only on the understanding that Tibet is regarded as autonomous'. This is still Her Majesty's Governments' position."

Mr. Allan has hit the nail squarely on the head : suzerainty was to be recognised only on the understanding that Tibet remained autonomous.

Well, Tibet is no longer autonomous, China has deliberately, and against the advice and warning of her friends, forcibly extinguished the autonomy of Tibet. Can China's suzerainty survive the assassination of Tibetan autonomy? The answer is clearly 'no'. China can no longer claim any suzerain powers in Tibet. Quislings sitting in Lhasa cannot change this situation in the least.

In these changed circumstances there is hardly any difference left between those who stood for Tibetan independence and those who were not prepared to go beyond autonomy.

The question that arises now is, what needs to be done. The least that to my mind should be done is for the countries that had accepted Chinese suzerainty to declare that they do not recognise the forcible annexation of Tibet by China and demand the right of self-determination for Tibet. It would be meaningless to ask for restoration of the status quo ante because of the failure of China to keep her pledged word.

When a free nation is attacked it is called aggression and other nations move in concert to prevent the aggression and save the victim. In such situations the free nations unhesitatingly acknowledged their moral responsibility. Should it be otherwise in a case where the pledged autonomy of a nation is threatened or destroyed? Can an international instrument such as the Sino- Tibetan Agreement of 1951 be only a private concern of China? It seems clear to me that as soon as that Agreement was signed it became a property of the whole world and all the nations separately, and jointly, became charged with the moral obligation to see that the Agreement was honoured in practice

by both sides. If this were not so, what was the value of that Agreement made between a powerful and big nation and a weak and small one? What also was the value then of any country's recognition of the respective rights and powers of both sides to the Agreement? I am not a student of International Law, but I refuse to believe that after that Agreement no matter what China did in contravention of it remained an internal affair of China, with which no one had any right to interfere. Clearly, if either party to the Agreement broke its terms unilaterally, the other had a right to appeal to other nations and to expect their support and help.

It is said to reflect that while a great tragedy has befallen Tibet and the 1951 Agreement has been torn to shreds and Tibet has appealed for help and support, the world is content to look on with glassy eyes, too dazed or frightened or short-sighted to act. This can only encourage the wrong doing and lead us all nearer to the brink of danger.

There is a third point of view from which to look at the recent happenings in Tibet. That is the human point of view. The miseries and misfortunes of the Tibetan people, the injustices and wrongs to which they have been subjected, the crimes and atrocities that have been committed there have all combined to lift up the issue of Tibet from the tangled domain of legal and constitutional disputations to that of simple, unvarnished humanity. The human issue that has been raised in Tibet is beyond all legal and constitutional and diplomatic argument. It has nothing to do with the issue of autonomy vs. independence or with the rights of China. The human issue is a universal issue and concerns the entire human family. In its very nature, it cannot be an internal affair of China. Is there an Indian who regards the treatment of Negroes and Asians in South Africa as an internal affair of that

country? Has not that question been raised in different international bodies? Is there not a Declaration of Human Rights that the UN adheres to and holds itself morally responsible to protect? Therefore, before every legal and constitutional question, this supreme question of suppression of human rights in Tibet must be faced by the peoples and governments of the world. Not to do so is abdication of humanity. Even when all this is conceded there is a view that regards it futile to do anything about Tibet, because the Chinese are firmly established there and nothing can dislodge them. This view holds that therefore the wisest course is to keep quiet and forget all about Tibet. To my way of thinking this is not only immoral but even politically unwise. If this were the attitude to be adopted towards every so-called accomplished fact of history, this world would become a veritable hell and every wrong committed by the strong would be perpetuated for ever. It is difficult to see if any thing possible to be done in the immediate future to obtain justice for Tibet. But, let us remember that there is nothing in history that is unchanging. Even the greatest empires have withered away with the passing of time. Therefore, there is no reason to believe that there will never be any change in China and Tibet. And because there is this ever-present possibility of change, it would be inexpedient to keep quiet only because a wrong appears to be irremediable at present. If nothing is done about it in the present, if the wrong is not even clearly defined, if the conscience of the world is not aroused, the danger is that the present wrong may never be righted.

It is for this reason that I have been advocating, mobilisation and informing of public opinion on the question of Tibet and the need for governments, particularly of Asia and Africa, to declare their position unequivocally. Our attempt to form an Afro-Asian Committee on Tibet

is also a step in the same direction. Leaders and organisations of Asia and Africa have raised their voice individually but if they come together and speak in unison, the effect would be far greater.

It is also for the same reason that I consider that the Tibet question should be raised in the United Nations. As I said at the Calcutta Convention, "It seems to be utterly wrong that such an important event as the total suppression of the freedom of a nation (to which I might add genocide on a massive scale and attempted absorption of a whole racial stock by colonization) should take place and the world organisation should not even take notice of it. It is not that the mere raising of an issue in the United Nations means that a solution will be found. We have some experience of the working of that august body ourselves. But, after all is said and done, the UN is the only organisation the human family has that gives some guarantee that the world will not be converted into a jungle where the strong will eat up the weak".

It is true that every issue that is sent to the UN gets involved in the cold war. But that has not prevented India and other countries from appealing to the UN when the occasion demanded it. Therefore, there is no reason why the cold war should come in the way of Tibet alone being taken up by that body.

"It will be recalled"--to quote again from my Calcutta speech- --"that when the Chinese aggression began in 1950, the Tibetan Government had moved the United Nations. The El Salvadore delegate had formally called on the UN to condemn China for her unprovoked aggression against Tibet, and had proposed the creation of a special committee to study what measures could be taken by the General Assembly to assist Tibet". When the question was taken in the General Committee, Mr. Kenneth Younger of the United Kingdom proposed that consideration

of the issue be postponed because a possibility has arisen of peaceful settlement. The Indian representative, the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, who followed, supported Mr. Younger's proposal and assured the Committee that the Chinese forces "had ceased to advance after the fall of Chamdo, a town some 480 kilometres from Lhasa" and that "the Indian Government was certain that the Tibetan question would be settled by peaceful means". Subsequent events have shown that the assurance of the Indian Government was premature. The question has not been solved by peaceful means at all. On the contrary, it is being sought to be solved by ruthless military means. In this situation our responsibility becomes clear, as also the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government. It would not be a good precedent to set up if we were quietly to acquiesce in the use of violence for the settlement of international disputes for fear of causing offence to the offending power. We were not afraid of offending Britain and France when we condemned their action in Egypt. We are not afraid again of offending France when we so correctly uphold the right of Algeria to national independence. As for the United Nations, it seems but proper to take up again an issue that had been dropped on grounds that have been falsified.

In this connection the question is raised of China not being a member of the UN. I have always supported the Prime Minister's stand in favour of China's admission into the UN. The Tibet affair has further strengthened me in that view. China at present is in the position of an out-law from the family of nations and is therefore not susceptible to any moral pressure of the UN. I believe China finds the present position rather convenient. On the one hand, she is under no international restraints and, on the other, she exploits American

opposition to her UN membership in order to whip up war hysteria among her people by depicting almost the whole world as her enemy. I should like, however, to make it clear that while I support China's membership to the UN, I do not think that her not being a member should stand in the way of the Tibet issue being raised in the world organisation.

I should like to say a few words now about the recent controversy regarding the status of the Dalai Lama. I am sure that the Dalai Lama does not want to embarrass India which has given him asylum. But we on our part must appreciate his position. Let us understand that the Dalai Lama has not come to India for a change or to preach Buddhism. He has come here to fight for his country and his people. Whether he will succeed or fail is not the point. Any patriot in his position would have done the same thing. In fact, I am sure that in his position I would not have been so patient and restrained. And if I may treat on delicate ground, with due apologies, will you please imagine what would have happened if Sri Jawaharlal Nehru at the age of 25 had found himself in the place of the Dalai Lama. I personally do not find it difficult to imagine the storm and thunder that would have burst upon the world from the hills of Mussoorie! Therefore, let us give this young man his due and not preach to him how to behave. It is a different matter what freedoms we are prepared to give him. When he said at his press conference that wherever he was with his ministers, the people of Tibet regarded them as the government of Tibet, he was only stating a truth, which no one who knows Tibet will dispute. Whether we are prepared ourselves to look upon him and his Kashak as the lawful government of Tibet in exile is again a different matter. For those who never accepted Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, the question is not difficult to answer.

The Government of India, however, has its real difficulties in this matter and every one concerned, including the Dalai Lama, must appreciate them. I am sure that the Dalai Lama will do so. Be that as it may, there is one thing which should be appreciated on our part. To expect that the Dalai Lama will forsake the cause of Tibetan freedom and confine himself purely religious pursuits is to under-estimate the strength of the urge of nationalism, to misunderstand the personal character of the Dalai Lama and to forget that he traditionally combines in himself spiritual and temporal powers and functions. I spoke just now of the strength of the nationalist urge. Let us be reminded that even communism has not been able to break that strength. I am not sure if the national republics of the USSR would not want to re-assert their national autonomy at the first real opportunity. The undying urge to national freedom has been proved in the case of Yugoslavia, Hungary and Poland. The Chinese themselves have had bitter proof of it. Since 1951 they have been taking away from Tibet hundreds of Tibetan youths for indoctrination. But they have discovered to their dismay that the Tibetan young men, inspite of ample doses of indoctrination, remain ardent partisans of Tibetan freedom! Some may wonder why I have so ardently taken up the cause of Tibet. Well, firstly, because I believe in human freedom and the freedom of all peoples. I believe in the freedom of Algeria, for instance, as much as in the freedom of Tibet. Secondly, because I believe in international peace, which is impossible without international justice. Thirdly, because Tibet is our neighbour and it is our neighbourly duty to help her. Fourthly, as a Hindu I am an ardent devotee of the Lord Buddha and feel a spiritual kinship with all Buddhists. Fifthly, I came to know His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I have come deeply to respect and love him. And lastly, because I am one of

those fools of history who are forever fighting for what the worldly wise consider to be lost causes.