

**Far Eastern Economic Review**  
**SUPPLEMENT - TIBET**  
**Vol. 26, No. 15, 9 Apr 1959, 502**

**From the Archives –**  
**1959 Tibetan Insurgency**



**Most reports on** the recent riots in Tibet agree that the unrest began with small protests against Beijing on March 10 in Lhasa. These protests commemorated the 49th anniversary of the failed uprising in March 1959. That year THE FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW reported on the violence and ensuing Chinese crackdown that led to the Dalai Lama's departure for India. Here are three articles from our archives that detail the events of March

1959, the ensuing crackdown and the tightening of Chinese control in Tibet over the following year.

**I - THE FIGHTING**

First news of the drama came in press reports from New Delhi dated March 23. These reported that fighting had been going on in and around Lhasa for three days and that there had been widespread demonstrations by the Tibetans against the Chinese regime. It was later reported that hostilities had ceased in the vicinity of the Indian Consulate near the Potala Palace, the Dalai Lama's residence, which

stands like a fortress on a high hill dominating the city of Lhasa. During the hostilities, the Chinese liberation forces used artillery and automatic weapons.

### **Thousands of Casualties**

Fighting was resumed on the following day on a scale smaller than before, but it had apparently spread to other important centers in Tibet. Some 13,000 monks were stated to have joined the nomad tribesmen and casualties were said to run into thousands.

On March 24, a Kalimpong report stated that the uprising had been completely smashed by the Chinese but that the battle was going on very fiercely in other parts of the country. A large body of troops was moved into Lhasa and ordered to spread out throughout the country to bring the situation under control. These men were armed with modern weapons and machine guns but, it is said, they were unable to make full use of them due to their lack of knowledge of the mountainous Tibetan terrain. Communications were cut two days later but the sturdy Tibetans continued their resistance.

The Supreme Tibetan Council, calling upon its countrymen to continue the battle, denounced the Sino-Tibetan occupation treaty and declared Tibet's independence of Peking. A demand was also made that the occupation forces should immediately be withdrawn. Pointing out that the affair would, in due course, be brought to the attention of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of which could hardly ignore such a move as he did Tibet's appeal last August, the Supreme Council vowed to fight to the end for the independence of its homeland. "As

long as there is a single Tibetan alive, we will fight our Chinese oppressors," the Supreme Council said. "God will punish the Chinese Communists."

### **Monasteries Destroyed**

At the same time, Peking issued a communique dissolving the Tibetan administration and declaring that the Dalai Lama was being held under duress by the rebels, that the Supreme Council of Tibet had been dissolved, and that the Panchen Lama had been empowered to head the government pending the return of the Dalai Lama. On March 29, it was reported that the Chinese had shelled the Sera Monastery (two miles from Lhasa), which housed some 3,000 monks, and the Drepung Monastery (six miles from Lhasa), which housed about 10,000 monks. The former was completely destroyed and the latter heavily damaged. Later, both monasteries were surrounded and 13,000 monks were arrested and marched out. Large quantities of arms and ammunition, including hand grenades, crude bombs, rifles, guns and several boxes of ammunition, as well as a considerable quantity of foodstuffs, were seized and confiscated.

Following this engagement, in which more than 5,000 lost their lives, a military government was established by the occupation forces. Lhasa was swept clean of the rebels by March 30 and the city returned to normal. Shops and the market place were re-opened and social order was steadily restored. According to New China Agency claims, the local people expressed their pleasure at being freed from the disaster of rebellion.

## **Stern Chinese Warning**

Thousands of Tibetans were rounded up during and after the fighting and carted off in trucks, either to be executed or sent to forced labor camps, and, according to press reports, hundreds were shot in the streets or hanged from trees after summary trials and the corpses of those hanged were left as they were as a stern warning to other Tibetans not to emulate them.

The Peking Government disclosed for the first time on April 1 that counterrevolutionaries from China Proper had taken part in the Tibetan rebellion. In a broadcast, Peking alleged that the Tibetans had revolted at the instigation of imperialists and in collusion with special agents of the imperialists and the Chiang Kai-Shek regime and counter revolutionaries -- who had fled to Tibet from neighboring provinces and, since May and June last year, undertaken armed rebellion in some areas, "carrying out plunder, arson, murder, and rape everywhere."

## **II - THE ESCAPE**

At first reported to be under house arrest in his winter palace at Potala, the 23-year-old Dalai Lama apparently succeeded in escaping before the arrival of the Chinese liberation forces. Indian reports stated that he and the members of his Cabinet had been spirited out of Potala Palace by the rebels a couple of days prior to the outbreak of fighting, and that he was believed to be leading the Tibetans in their battle against the Chinese occupation forces at a point where he was out of reach of the Chinese.

Aeroplanes, paratroopers and, it is said, some 50,000 troops, were sent out in a determined attempt to cut him off before he was able to reach the Bhutan, Nepalese or Indian borders, and it was thought that he and his mother and sisters were hiding in the mountains near Bhutan which abound in impassable valleys and caves.

On March 30, the New Delhi Evening News reported that the Chinese Communists had asked the governments concerned for permission to search the Indian, Nepalese and Bhutan missions in Lhasa for the Dalai Lama but, when they were informed that the Tibetan ruler was not in any of them, they did not press their request.

When it became known that he was still alive, the People's Government issued a State Council Order to the effect that the Dalai Lama was being held under duress by the rebel Tibetan Supreme Council, the dissolution of which was ordered, and pending his return to his throne, the Panchen Lama was proclaimed new Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet.

The Panchen Lama, regarded by many as a mere puppet, promptly accepted and promised full support to the Chinese in putting down the rebellion and thoroughly smashing the "shameless, traitorous intrigues carried out by the upper strata reactionary clique and the aid of the imperialists and the Chiang Kai-Shek clique."

On April 2, Peking (according to the New China Agency) learned that the "abducted" Dalai Lama, "under duress by the rebellious elements," had entered India with his entourage of 80 persons on March 31. He is stated to have evaded his pursuers and to be in good health. The Indian Government immediately granted him political asylum and treated him as an honoured guest.

### **III - REACTION ABROAD**

On March 28, Communist China alleged--and India promptly denied-- that the commanding centre of the Tibetan revolt was at Kalimpong, in Indian Bengal. In a communique making the charge, the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi declared that Sino-Indian relations must be guided by the Treaty of Co-existence signed in 1954. (This provides for respect of each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefits, and peaceful co-existence). China, said the communique, considered discussion on the internal affairs of a friendly country impolite and improper.

The Chinese charge was emphatically denied by the Indian External Affairs Ministry, which pointed out that its Government made it clear to Tibetan residents of Kalimpong that they would not be allowed to engage in propaganda activities on Indian soil against a friendly government. There had, it went on, been no unlawful activities in Kalimpong or elsewhere by these people or others, and it was entirely incorrect to say that Kalimpong was a center of any rebellious activities.

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister, also denied the Chinese charge and told Parliament that India should have friendly relations with Mainland China -- but the latter could not dictate to India. As to China's warning that China's internal affairs should not be discussed by the Indian Parliament, Mr. Nehru said he wanted to make it clear that no external force could restrict Parliament. As to the question of admitting refugees from Tibet, Mr. Nehru asserted that no one would be allowed to cross the border unless they possessed valid passports or certificates to enter India, India could not open its borders to half the population of another country. Many Indian M.P.s were highly critical of this position.

Mrs. Lakshmi Menon, Deputy External Minister, accused Peking of challenging Mr. Nehru's integrity and honesty, and said it was highly improper for the Chinese Embassy in India to circulate articles repeating Peking's charges after Mr. Nehru had denied them.

Addressing a delegation of Tibetans whom he received in New Delhi on March 31, Prime Minister Nehru pointed out that, while he extended his sympathies to the Tibetan people, India was not in a position to intervene with China over Tibet.

### **Taiwan Promises Support**

As expected, Taiwan was not slow in promising support to the Tibetans. In a message dated March 26, President Chiang Kai-Shek promised the people of Tibet self-determination after the overthrow of the Communist regime on China's mainland. "If you remain firm and courageous, and if you continue to carry on the fight," he said, "I shall lead your compatriots, civilian and military, to join forces with you on the mainland and fight shoulder to shoulder for the fulfilment of our sacred mission for national salvation." The Nationalists promised to aid the Tibetans and assist in working out plans designed to con- the revolt.

The Chinese Communists were charged with killing some 10,000 Tibetans, including many religious Lamas, most of whom were locked up before being executed. Taiwan expects the revolt to develop into a major uprising and spread to the neighbouring provinces of Tsinghai, Sikang, Szechuan, Yunnan and Kansu, where there are more than two million Tibetans.

### **Indian Reaction**

The Indian left-wing Praja Socialist Party held a public meeting in New Delhi to rally Indian support for the Tibetans. Mr. N. G. Goray, the party's general secretary and a member of the House of the People

(the Lower House of Parliament), said it was clear that the Tibetan uprising was a national struggle against Chinese "colonialism" and Peking's suggestion that it was confined to Khamba tribesmen was a deliberate attempt to mislead world opinion. It was, he said, the whole Tibetan population which was fighting with bare hands against the massed might of Chinese militarism.

Daily newspaper in New Delhi demanded what the Hindustan Times described as a "realistic re-assessment of the basis of our foreign policy" against the background of the Tibetan happenings. The Hindustan Times, organ of the governing Congress Party and considered to be the closest to Mr. Nehru, did not mince its words. Under the headline, "Rape of Tibet," it wrote: -- "Let us hold our heads low to-day. A small country on our border has paid the ultimate penalty for its temerity to aspire for independence. Tibet is dead, and much else could die with Tibet if we do not even now heed the warning. There falls the shadow of China in lands all around us."

The Times of India warned India to seek an early agreement on the India-Tibet border so that consolidation of Chinese power there would not lead to any encroachment of Indian territory. Peking's military victory in Tibet, the paper said, was in fact a political defeat--it was an open admission of failure to create a popular base for Chinese rule in Tibet.

London papers called upon Prime Minister Nehru to speak out boldly against the suppression of the Tibetan uprising. India must be wondering whether her passive good-neighbour policy has proved right, said the Daily Telegraph (Conservative).

The New York Times, under the title "The Conquest of Tibet," says it is impossible to escape the cynicism and brutality in Peking's announcement of the fighting. In the abyss of the Chinese Communist



mind, a cry for independence was reactionary. The Tibetan revolt has stripped the veil of pretence from Peking.

#### **IV - The Rebels' Organization**

Latest reports stated that Peking had rushed 100,000 crack troops to Tibet in an all-out attempt to crush the rebellious Khamba tribesmen. Trouble is reported to have broken out in Tsinghai Province and the Sinkiang Autonomous Region, north of Tibet, where the authorities are said to have imposed travel restrictions.

The Khamba tribesmen, who are said to have borne the brunt of the fighting against the Chinese, are admittedly fierce warriors who do not know the meaning of fear. It was their bitter resistance to Socialist education and the "democratization" plans of Peking that led to the killing or wounding of many thousands of Communist Chinese and their supporters. There is no way of confirming the Tibetan reports that as many as 50,00 perished.

Ever since the Chinese Liberation Forces, about 100,000 strong, entered Tibet in 1950, they have encountered nothing but--trouble. Discontentment, open rebellion and scattered clashes became so bad that, in July, 1956, the People's Government in Peking officially announced that the original programme to lead Tibet along the Chinese road to democracy and Communism would be postponed for six years.

Most of the land in Tibet is owned by the monasteries and, when the Chinese sought to introduce land reform, they at once clashed headlong with the most powerful elements in Tibet--the Lamas, who are the backbone of the feudal quasi-religious Tibetan society.

They also came into conflict with the fierce tribesmen in the Kham country, in eastern Tibet. The Khambas are mostly nomad herdsmen. When told to surrender their land or pay high taxes, these people

immediately rose and took up arms in guerilla warfare against the Chinese invaders. Tension grew stronger last July when the Chinese army authorities demanded that Tibetan troops should join hands with the Liberation Army in suppressing the Khambas. The Dalai Lama, however, refused to permit this and his action is believed to be one of the underlying reasons for the Chinese "invitation" to visit Peking. Meanwhile, the Khambas took to the mountains and, in spite of high prices (U.S.\$200 for an old rifle and U.S.\$3 per round of ammunition, bought arms from underground channels. Resistance against the Chinese was built around an organization known as the Mi-mun ("anti-tyranny"), which is understood to have a membership of between 35,000 and 40,000, enjoying wide support from the Tibetan people. In many ways, the guerilla tactics employed by the Mi-mun are similar to those used by the Chinese Communists when they fought against the Nationalist regime on the mainland in the years before 1949. Highways were sabotaged, supply depots attacked. Members of the Mi-mun became farmers during the day and partisan fighters at night.

### **Dalai Lama as Leader?**

While not actually head of the Mi-mun the Dalai Lama did not refrain from giving it his tacit support. He received numerous memorials from the Mi-mun to take over the leadership and guide his people, but there are no records to show that he acceded to these demands.

The resistance movement continued to gain strength and there were occasions when it drove the Chinese forces to temporary refuge in the mountains, and occupied key positions. So serious did the situation become that, last October, Marshal Peng Teh-huai, Vice-Chairman of the People's Government and Minister of Defence in Peking, visited Tsinghai (Tibet's neighbouring province) to direct operations against

the rebels. Comrade Peng's efforts were, however, not entirely successful, for the fires of revolt have since continued to smoulder. The rebellion grew bigger and more powerful and it is believed that, when the fighting broke out in Lhasa, some 310,000 Tibetans were engaged against the Chinese. Taiwan claimed to have contacted the rebels and to have given them support, but this could not be substantiated.

### **Peking's Military Preparations**

Peking divided the country into eight administrative areas, linked by a new network of highways with Lhasa as the hub. When any trouble breaks out in one unit, reinforcements can be rushed from the seven other administrative areas over highways which can handle heavy artillery with ease. At the same time, air drops can also be carried out.

### **Fighting Still Going on in Tibet**

Vol. 26, No. 21, 21 May 1959, 705

By Our Special Correspondent

*Our Special Correspondent describes the developments in Tibet between April 7 and May 13 1959. This article is a sequel to that published in the REVIEW on page 501 of the April 9 issue.*

Peking's claims to have totally crushed the rebellion in Tibet notwithstanding, it would appear that unrest still prevails in the Land of the Lamas. The revolt seems to have been quelled in Lhasa and some of the remote areas but fierce fighting is still going on in the southern-part of the country.

Hsin Hua Agency reports that the People's Liberation Army has captured a vast number of villages and crushed the rebellious Khamba tribesmen, with many casualties, at various places. In addition, it is said, many key points near the Loka border, the heart of the rebellion, and several thousand prisoners, have been taken. Only a few rebels have fled to the mountainous areas and these are being hunted down relentlessly. The Chinese Army has moved across the Tsangpo River by three routes and is carrying out mopping-up operations, while the rebels, under Amdotsong Gomputashi and other members of the nobility, flee in disorder when attacked. The latter, it is claimed, are receiving arms and supplies from unidentified foreign planes.

The rebel organization, known as "Four Rivers and Six Bridges" and said to have set up a vast military network throughout Tibet for the purpose of overthrowing the Chinese, is reported to have been broken up. This group, described as the scourge of Tibet, wrecked roads, ravaged the people, raided lorries ambushed Chinese forces and government functionaries and were fully armed.

While Peking's aircraft heavily bombed the areas adjoining India's northwest frontier in a bid to wipe out the rebel Khambas, ground forces, with the aid of pro-Chinese Tibetans, have been threatening them with complete annihilation, says Hsin Hua. Many hide-outs are reported to have been destroyed and a grim, bloody battle waged for days, with the Khambas finally retreating toward India, where 11,500 have now taken refuge.

Strict control is being maintained by the Chinese army at the border

passes and the Tibetan markets near the border have been closed, with the result that there is a severe food shortage.

Large numbers of Tibetans have been sent away to unknown destinations, presumably, it is thought, to forced labour camps and Chinese. families from thickly populated provinces have been settled on the fertile land of the Tibetans.

About 150,000 Chinese troops are now reported to be guarding Lhasa's population of 50,000 and a complete census has been taken to enable them to be traced at short notice.

In an effort to win over the support of the Tibetans, the Chinese Army authorities have ruled that Tibetan farmers may keep their own produce this year and they will not have to deliver any grain to the public granaries nor will they have to pay taxes until further notice.

Taipei reports that the rebels, who claimed to have slain a Peking general, may withdraw to the Burma-Yunnan border to join the anti-Communist forces.

### **Dalai Lama's Statement**

Following his dramatic escape to India, the Government of which granted him political asylum, the Dalai Lama, Tibet's temporal and spiritual leader, issued a statement categorically denying that he was being held under duress in India and emphasizing that he had entered India of his own free will. He accused China of interfering with Tibetan affairs, contrary to the 1951 agreement granting Tibet full autonomy,

and expressed sincere regret over the tragedy which had befallen his country as well as the hope that the trouble would soon end without bloodshed. It had, he went on to say, always been accepted that the Tibetans were different from the Han people of China and there had always been a strong desire on the part of the former for independence. Under pressure and without alternative, said the Dalai Lama, Tibet accepted Chinese suzerainty on condition that they enjoyed full autonomy and that the Chinese would not interfere with their religion, customs or internal administration but the Chinese had ignored this agreement.

The Tibetan ruler's statement was issued about the same time as the Chinese Prime Minister, Mr. Chou En-Lai was addressing the Second National People's Congress in Peking and telling the deputies that the Dalai Lama had been abducted to India where he was being held in duress. Mr. Chou hoped that the Dalai Lama would free himself from the hold of the rebels and return to his motherland.

Shortly after making his statement, the Dalai Lama met Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister, and told him why he had fled from Lhasa. Up to April 17, he is reported to have said, he had no idea that he would be leaving his capital but, when the gunfire became excessively heavy and shells fell perilously near his place, he and his retinue made up their minds to flee and they left six hours later.

### **Anti-Indian Outburst**

Release of the Dalai Lama's statement led to an outburst of anti-Indian "imperialist" and "expansionist" attacks which have been going on

since the middle of April up to the time of writing. Serious charges, distributed by the official Hsin Hua Agency, were made, alleging that the Indians had deliberately sought to make fools of Communist China, as the timing of the statement was arranged with care and detail and prompted by ulterior motives. "Slander," "Imperialism," "Expansionism," "Invasion of Tibet," "Destruction of Friendly Sino-Indian Relations," "Diehards Must be Punished," "Flagrant Calumny," and "No Toleration of Indian Aggression," were some of the expressions used in speeches at the National People's Congress, public meetings, press articles, etc., and India was warned to mind her own business and keep out of Tibetan affairs. Mr. P. N. Menon, an Indian Foreign Ministry official who was deputed to meet the Dalai Lama and who released his statement denouncing Chinese rule in Tibet, was accused of acting as outright spokesman of the Tibetan rebels in India and branded as a "fool and blunderer," while the statement was described as a fake, authored and dictated by others.

Anger and resentment over this anti-Indian campaign were voiced throughout India, the people of which stated that China had gone too far in alleging that the Dalai Lama was kept prisoner in India. There was great disillusionment over China's apparent brutality in Tibet, and Peking's hostile attitude was contrasted with Mr. Nehru's moderate and conciliatory stand.

### **Moderation Urged**

On his part, the Indian Prime Minister told the House of the People, in the strongest statement ever made against a Communist country, that China was using cold war language, totally regardless of truth or

propriety. The Dalai Lama, whose only wish was that fighting should end, was not held in duress: he could go to Tibet or anywhere he wished. He (the Dalai Lama) was entirely responsible for his statements and Indian officials had nothing to do with them. Mr. Nehru expressed the hope that China would win the Tibetans over by friendly cooperation in accordance with promises of autonomy which they had given. He said he had conveyed to China a deep feeling of regret at the charges made, especially during the National People's Congress.

The principles of co-existence, which included mutual respect, were impaired, he said, but India would follow a policy of avoiding the development of a hostile feeling between the two countries and he hoped the Chinese would do likewise, for it would be a tragedy if such a feeling developed which could endanger relations and the peace of Asia and the world. Mr. Nehru called on the press and the public for moderation and expressed his regret over the action and grave discourtesy of certain irresponsible Indian elements who had thrown tomatoes at the portrait of Chairman Mao Tse-Tung. The Prime Minister urged his compatriots to avoid such incidents and to restrain their language and keep their tempers. He denied any expansionist aims on Tibet on the part of his country and said his only interest was historical, sentimental and religious--not political. He looked forward for a quick and peaceful settlement of the Tibetan affair and hoped the present fighting and killing would cease.

In the course of another statement, Mr. Nehru said that India was standing by the Sino-Indian Treaty and voiced bitterness over China's repeated charges, which coming from leaders of a country which India honoured and respected, were shocking to him. Despite their



disagreement over Tibet, he said, India would continue to support China's fight for admission to the United Nations, but her (China's) charges were so fantastic that words seemed to have lost their meaning and he did not know how to reply. As to the charge that Indians were the "stooges and fools of Britain," Mr. Nehru denied that this was the case.

Formal protests were made both by New Delhi and by Peking, the former against the tone of recent speeches criticizing India's viewpoint on Tibet, and the latter against the insults to China and to Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, at whose portrait tomatoes were thrown.

Invited to visit India to help in the solution of the Tibetan affair, the Panchen Lama said that such a visit was not acceptable under present circumstances: the Tibetan problem was one that only the Tibetans themselves could solve. He criticized India for hostility shown to him during his stay there three years ago.

Mr. Nehru stated that such a reply was lacking in generosity and dignity by someone who had been India's honoured guest.

### **"Earth-Shaking Struggle" in Tibet**

Vol. 28, No. 14, 7 Apr 1960, 727

By Daniel Wolfstone

Tibet to some extent provides the key to the forthcoming talks in Delhi between Mr. Chou En-lai, the Chinese Prime Minister, and Mr. Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister. Whether Mr. Chou will prove "compromising", as Mr. B. P. Koirala, the Nepalese Premier, recently

suggested, or intractable on the Sino-Indian border question may in part be determined by the extent to which the Chinese administration has consolidated its position in Tibet in the twelve months since the Rising.

Border reports reproduced by Indian newspapers have suggested that last August there were incidents between Khambas and Chinese troops in western Tibet, and another series of these reports claimed disturbances in the north-west and north-east around September of 1959. A Taipei report in September said that some 130,000 Chinese Army personnel were tied down in Tibet, and Gyalo Thondup (the Dalai Lama's elder brother) claimed last autumn that 500,000 Chinese troops were engaged in holding down about 50,000 Tibetan guerillas. How much of this is fantasy, how much bearing some resemblance to the truth, is impossible to judge.

Equally imponderable is the question of migration. Unofficial Delhi reports suggested in October that 500,000 Chinese farmers, technicians and roadbuilders had settled in Tibet and 80,000 Tibetans moved to other parts of China. The prominence of both Han and Hui leaders in Tibetan local affairs since last spring has, in the opinion of some observers, lent some weight to this kind of speculation. But there is no way of testing these allegations, or of the varying figures of Tibetans killed in the fighting (the Dalai Lama's estimates vary from 20,000 in the Rising to 80,000 over the past few years).

During August there were persistent rumours from the Indian side of the border that the Panchen Lama (Panchen Erdeni Chuji-Geltseng) was under house arrest at his Shigatse palace of Dichen Photang. The

next that was heard was his journey to Peking in October. On October 14 he addressed the tenth enlarged session of the Standing Committee of the Second National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China in terms that followed entirely the Communist Party line. His speech provided a summary of the Tibetan situation as it then stood.

After declaring that "bliss and joy fill all hearts" in Tibet, the Panchen Lama divided the population into 900,000 in agriculture and 300,000 in stock breeding. Of the former 400,000 had by October been touched by the first stage of the "democratic reforms". These consisted of the "three oppositions" (to rebellion, to unpaid ula corvee and to slavery) and the "two reductions" (in rent and interest rates). The second stage, of land redistribution, was in progress in "individual places". Meanwhile the first stage was being prepared for the remaining 500,000 agriculturalists. Democratic reform, the Panchen Lama declared, was an "earth-shaking" struggle which was being carried out "by peaceful methods". But this did not mean that the masses were not being "mobilised"--"on the contrary, it would be absolutely impossible thoroughly to destroy feudal serfdom . . . without the masses rising to take part in the struggle on their own initiative". The reforms, then, were being undertaken by encouraging the revolution of the slaves (5% of the population), poor serfs (70%) and middle and rich serfs (20%) against those of the remaining 5% who had oppressed them before.

During the reforms, "the land, livestock, houses and farm tools" of the rebellious serf-owners were confiscated and distributed to the peasants: those who had not joined the rebellion were bought out and their means of production distributed. This was to encourage the upper

strata to gain confidence in the regime. As for monasteries whose income was inadequate after their feudal privileges had been abolished, "an appropriate subsidy will be granted by the state", but lamas capable of working were expected to work. As a result of this campaign, the Panchen Lama stated, a total of 360,000 serfs and 20,000 slaves had been emancipated by October.

The Panchen Lama thereupon embarked on a series of long tours around China, and did not return to Lhasa until February 15. Eleven days later he chaired a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibetan Autonomous Region which declared that "democratic reforms have completely destroyed feudal serfdom in the Tibetan region" and urged hard work on the spring sowing, afforestation etc. But much had happened in the meanwhile.

On October 29 the Preparatory Committee for the Tibetan Political Consultative Conference had its first meeting in Lhasa. Chang Ching-wu took the chair, and Chan Ching-po and Sampo Tsewong-Rentzen were vice-chairmen. Of the 17 present eleven were Tibetan: the Central Chinese Government's Representative in Tibet and Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Tibet Working Committee, Chang Ching-wu, was present.

Two months later, from December 20 to 27, the First Tibetan Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference met in Lhasa. This was composed of 134 members, just over half of whom were described as "upper strata and religious circles". Another 215 representatives from various parts of Tibet attended as observers. The Chairman was Tan Kuan-san, and the eight vice-chairmen were

Gahden Tsripa Thubten Kunga, Chou Jen-shan, Namdon Kunga Wongchug, Sampo Tsewong-Rentzen, Yabshi Gonpo-Tsetan, Thubden Nima, Pangda Dorje and Sampo Doje-Phagmo. Chang Ching-wu told the committee that the most important task was to consolidate and expand the democratic reforms: Chang Kuo-hua, the Party vice-secretary, apparently emphasized the priority of agricultural development.

Finally, in January, the First Lhasa City Conference of People's Deputies was held. A Tibetan, Tsuiko Donhchu-Tseren, was made acting Mayor, but the two Vice-Mayors, Chang Chen-sheng and Wang Pei-sheng, are said to be both Hui, the latter a Moslem. Tsuiko himself is a deputy head of the Military Government of the city. It was said that representatives of 170,000 people attended the meeting (pre-Rising estimates of Lhasa were around 60,000, but it is not clear if the area covered is the same: there is some speculation that this may indicate the extent of immigration from other parts of China). "To date," the conference declared, "democratic reforms in the agricultural areas have been virtually completed. In the pastoral areas democratic reform is proceeding smoothly." (Hsinhua, Lhasa, January 25, 1960). It sounds as if the key word was "virtually."

The distinction between the farmers and the shepherds is explained in a long article by Chang Ching-wu himself in the Jen-min Jih-pao, Peking, on March 1, 1960. "During the democratic reform," he states, "the prime function of the Party in the pastoral area is to adequately mobilise the masses, launch the "three-anti" and "two-benefit" drive (beneficial to both cattle owners and their employees), establish the people's dictatorship, and properly arrange for the livelihood of the

herdsmen with a view to all-out development of the cattle-raising economy. As pastoral areas are different from agricultural areas, apart from confiscating the assets of rebellious cattle-owners for the benefit of the poor herdsmen, there should be no struggle, no redistribution of cattle, no class distinction between cattle-owners and employees in pursuance of the mutual-benefit principle in order to boost activism on the part of both groups."

Chang goes on to describe the democratic reform campaign, Tibetan and Han cadres working together with the masses in the "three-togetherness and one-communication" system (eat, live and work together with the masses "and communicate their innermost thoughts with them"). The Tibetans were pictured by the Panchen Lama in his Peking address last October as saying to themselves that they were the same as the Han liberators, although the latter spoke no Tibetan, and were different from the Tibetan feudal lords although they spoke the same tongue. As Chang asserts, "the launching of the revolt and its suppression should by no means be looked upon as 'a war between nationalities' but a war between social classes." Probably this has to be hammered home rather frequently.

Chang concludes his article with an assessment of the "favourable" development of the revolution in Tibet. Democratic reforms had been launched by January 31 in 57 of the total 78 hsien (i.e. among 790,000 people), and of these 40 hsien (610,000 people) had completed the "three-anti and two-reduction" routine. The same routine "is" being launched among 70,000 people in 12 hsien in the pastoral area. In other words it is still necessary, particularly among the herdsmen, to preach "anti-rebellion", and the conclusion seems

inescapable that the danger is not yet past.

Border reports reproduced in the Indian press have suggested a great number of airstrips being constructed along the Nepalese frontier, together with military build-ups in the same area. The Sining-Tibet road (described by one Chinese reporter as the local people's "Golden Road to Happiness") was opened in 1954. A highway from Tingri, in the shadow of Mount Everest, to Gartok in western Tibet is planned to be completed by July of this year, and another one is to be built from Tsethang, in south Tibet and already linked to Lhasa by road, to the border near Tawang in the Indian North-East Frontier Area.

Work on the 7,500 kW hydro-electric power station near Lhasa was begun in October of 1958: recent reports state that 4,000 Tibetan and 3,000 Chinese Army workers are engaged on its completion. In December, 1959, work began on another 1,000 kW station at Chamdo, with 3,000 people at work. At present there are apparently only three small hydro- and steam stations in Lhasa, Shigatse and Chamdo producing 800 kW between them.

In February of this year the authorities were described as rushing 136,000 new farm implements from Changtu and Lanchow to Tibet, and there are numerous references in Hsinhua dispatches to the distribution of new ploughs. In December the first agro-technical training class was reported to have been opened with 80 "newly-liberated Tibetan serfs" attending. Nor has education been overlooked. In November it was reported that there were 72 film projection stations and mobile projection teams in Tibet (four times the pre-Rising number) and audiences in October alone totalled 437,000.

Savings accounts were claimed to be being operated by peasants.

All in all the position seems far from resolved to Peking's satisfaction. The non-Tibetan element in the political leadership, the frequent exhortations to Han-Tibetan amity, the failure after almost a year to spread the "anti-rebellion" campaign throughout the land--all these suggest that the Chinese do not yet feel secure. On the other hand construction work is proceeding rapidly, there is considerable emphasis on assisting the Tibetan to improve his agricultural yields, and it should not be supposed that China's position is precarious in Tibet.

The Lhasa dispatches of Hsinhua still refer to Indian "violation" of the border, and it is of particular interest that one old man of 78, Laman Chingring Lobu, has been found who is claimed to have been an attache to the Tibetan representatives at the Simla Conference. "We officials of the Tibetan authority," he told a Hsinhua reporter in Lhasa on September 14, "set out for India in August, 1912. We took part in several conferences, but none of the documents was signed by the representative of the Chinese Central Government. That so-called McMahon Line was not mentioned at those conferences. It was decided on secretly by the British imperialists and individual Tibetan officials. The majority of the officials of the then Tibetan local government did not know of it." One wonders if Laman Chingring will be produced at the border talks, when they begin.