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**China's Second Assault on Tibet, April 1959**

WHEN the 'Baby Murder' in Tibet took place nine years ago most of the people who today are raising a hue and cry over the second instalment of Chinese assault on the Tibetan people were, as far as I remember, silent. Something ought to have been done then, something ought to have been said. Which, however, does not mean that nothing should be said now. But while saying it people should not forget their weaknesses; as they say, when the peacock dances it should do well to be aware of its legs. A fundamental lack in foreign policy opinions is that they are formed not on the anvil of the question of justice and injustice, but around such passing considerations as interests, party interests or personal interests. Nine years ago the India government, and to some extent the Indian people, had such friendly relations with the China government that no party or leader in India dared to speak boldly on the Tibetan issue. The situation has now altered. The superficial relations between the two governments are perhaps intact, but underneath a tension has been smouldering for the last one or one-and-a-half years.

That is the reason why people were found tongue-tied in those old conditions are now shouting themselves hoarse in defence of the Tibetan people. The state of public opinion on foreign policy matters is everywhere marred thus with superficiality, more so, in India, where the native government and the British Ruler possess the monopoly of deciding as to which issues should agitate people's mind, by giving excessive publicity to relevant news and information. The sooner the people of India try to observe deeper than such superficial layers, the

better for the country. The foreign policy of India is called neutral, and, in a sense, it is so because it is not slave to either of the power blocs but does alternate service to both. During the past one or one-and-a-half years the India government's policy has tended more towards the camp of capitalist democracy and America just as in the four or five preceding years the shift was in favour of the Soviet bloc. The alignment, however, is never definitive but the balance of the two scales is tilted a bit one way or the other. It is in this context that the Tibetan issue is being treated. A country's foreign policy should be objective, rational, concrete and, as far as possible, idealistic. Today it is subjective and emotional. What doubt can there be now that had India's prime or foreign minister been a man of Bengali ancestry, the core of the conflict with Pakistan would have been formed out of the problem of refugees from East Bengal; had he been a man of Tamil ancestry, the problems of Indians in Sri Lanka would undoubtedly have become the biggest single issue of India's foreign policy; now that he is a man of Kashmir ancestry the Indo-Pakistan conflict has sharpened around the issue of Kashmir which has, consequently, become the biggest single problem of our foreign policy! Every Indian has a special affection for Tibet. On the one hand, there are such reasons as Manasarovar. The Indian heart overflows with a calm but curious joy at the mention of the name of Manasarovar.

On the other hand, the childlike and innocent people of Tibet have an irresistible appeal to us. There is not the least doubt that Tibet and especially its western part has greater cultural, religious and geographical affinities with India than with China. Many people may not be knowing that the Tibetan alphabet is a variation of the Indian alphabet, and the Tibetan outlook is a curious blend of knowledge and innocence. A Tibetan Buddhist nun at Sarnath once said: "Man

everywhere is bad, but a little less so in India and a little more so in Tibet, which is why someone or other of the Buddhist preachers and doctrines had to go to Tibet". There can be no second thoughts as to whether the Dalai Lama should be accorded shelter in India. If the government has any, it would be guilty of another baby murder. A self-respecting nation must provide protective asylum for political sufferers from foreign countries.

We have no partiality towards the Dalai Lama or the other Lama. Nobody should have any. Those who today show preference for one to the other have cold-war ties with either America or Russia. The thought of Tibet and its Lamas does arouse in the mind a natural romance but such sentiments should only strengthen our demand for the religious independence of Lamas and not their political authority. The political authorities of the Lamas must be brought to an end. It is said that the Chinese are doing that. But the China government is doing that at the point of bayonet, and thus it may turn out to be worse than the Lama rule itself. The efforts of sane people should be directed towards awakening the Tibetan masses so that their attitude towards the Lamas may change and the rule of the Lamas may be liquidated.

The Chinese assault on Tibet is a brutal act. But its evil inheres in communism as much as in capitalism. The Russian aggression on Hungary, the Chinese aggression on Tibet, the Anglo-French attack on Egypt — all these are outbursts of the same evil. The two blood-thirsty giants — communism and capitalism--are sitting across man's breast and a man is a fool to be trying to prefer one to the other. The events of the world get distorted when they are seen either through the Atlantic or the Soviet spectacles. The so-called neutral spectacles of India also obstruct clear vision.

We always wish for a rapprochement between America and Russia, that Eisenhower and Khrushchev should embrace each other and behave like brothers, which in fact they are. Both America and Russia are great--great in wealth and great in arms--and all other countries are dependent on them for something or other.

That gives rise to the tribe of jackals and foxes in international politics. All nations of the world behave either as jackals or as foxes towards these two colossi. Some jackals are tied to one or the other of the two lions. But there are also foxes who change their masters according to convenience. The India government and people have acquired the traits of the latter. A misunderstanding, in connection with India's foreign policy, has been persisting and that is about Mr. Krishna Menon, who has for a very long time been looked upon as pro-Communist and pro-Russian. However, throughout he has remained loyal to the British. The British foreign and military offices have a wide network of agents all the world over, who are given absolute freedom in all other matters except that they should help preserve the influence of the British empire. Sometimes this work is done not through the foreign office but through the left parties of Britain. It looks at times as if not only Mr. Menon but people greater than him are also tethered to this elastic British policy.

Another point may be noted about the Chinese aggression. China has already achieved steel production of one crore tons. After four or five years India will reach the target of 60 lakh tons, by which time China will be producing one crore and 70 lakh tons. We do not attach the highest importance to material prosperity; but how does the world look upon it? All the sins of Russia, even its sins in Hungary, could be washed away by the invention of sputnik. Great thinkers and great philosophers of the world bowed their heads before the technological

power of the Soviet government. People worship power, however, merciless. The India government and the Praja Socialists do it as much as people elsewhere. Then, the increasing steel output of China will also have its inevitable effect. So long as the India government and people do not bring about radical changes in the socio-economic conditions they won't be able to take out the Chinese dragon's teeth. Everything depends on American- Soviet relations. If they are not coming closer the tension with regard to Tibet will grow. The innocent, childlike countenance of the Tibetans will incite the capitalist world and enrage the Communists. Nothing more will happen. If war was not waged over white Hungary, it won't certainly be waged over coloured Tibet!