

NOTES FOR DCI BRIEFING OF  
SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS  
COMMITTEE ON 28 APRIL 1959

27 April 1959

BACKGROUND

TIBET

- I. "Tibet" includes Tibet proper plus its eastern area known as Chamdo, formerly included in Chinese province of Sikang.
  - A. Total area about equal to twice that of Texas.
  - B. Population Tibet about 1,300,000. About same number Tibetans live neighboring areas China, Nepal, Bhutan, India.
- II. Long history of conflict between Tibetans and Chinese.
  - A. Chinese suzerainty forcibly imposed by Manchus 1720.
  - B. Suzerainty claimed by subsequent Chinese governments.
  - C. About 250,000 Khamba tribesmen in Chamdo notorious for resistance to Chinese authority.
- III. Dalai Lama political and religious ruler of Tibet. Panchen Lamas, of lesser spiritual authority, have resided at Shigatse, in a monastery where there are some 12,500 monks.
  - A. Present Dalai is fourteenth in succession.
    1. Born 1935 in Chinese province of Tsinghai of Tibetan parents.
    2. Brought to Lhasa 1939.
  - B. Present Panchen Lama is ninth.
    1. Born 1937, also in Tsinghai province of Tibetan parents.  
(Not related to Dalai Lama)
    2. Remained in Tsinghai until brought to Tibet by Chinese Communists 1952.
- IV. Chinese troops entered eastern Tibet autumn 1950; token Tibetan force capitulated.

SECRET

A. Tibetan envoys concluded agreement with Chinese Communists at Peiping May 1951.

1. Chinese given right maintain troops in Tibet, conduct Tibet's foreign affairs.
2. Peiping promised retain Tibetan government, preserve political and religious status Dalai and Panchen Lamas.
3. Tibet referred to as "Tibet Region of China."

V. Tibetan resistance continued, especially after Communist collectivization drive began affect Tibetans in Chinese territory late 1955.

VI. US policy toward Tibet

A. US has not come out with flat assertion that China has sovereignty over Tibet, but has not questioned the Chinese Nationalist position

1. Chinese Nationalists insist Tibet is an integral part of China.
2. After the start of recent revolt, President Chiang Kai-shek stated equivocably that following the Nationalists' return to the mainland, "we will assist the Tibetan people to realize their own aspirations in accordance with the principles of self-determination."

B. US during recent revolt maintaining ~~strategic~~ silence on status of Tibet.

VII. Himalayan Border States

A. Nepal: Population is an estimated 8,500,000. Area: 54,000 square miles. An independent kingdom. The recent national elections--the first in the nation's history--resulted in the moderate-socialist and neutralist Nepali Congress Party winning over two-thirds of the seats.

- B. Bhutan:** Area: 18,000 square miles; population estimated to be 600,000. Bhutan's foreign relations and defense are a responsibility of India while the country enjoys autonomy in internal affairs.
- C. Sikkim:** Area: 2,800 square miles. Population estimated at 145,000. A protectorate of India which enjoys some internal autonomy.