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NSC BRIEFING

23 April 1959

TIBET

- I. Reaction to Tibet revolt from neutralist Asia extremely critical of Chinese Communists.
  - A. In meeting with Indian cabinet on 20 April, Nehru made following points
    1. Chinese Communists had failed from the very first to respect internal autonomy of Tibet.
    2. Rebellion thus inevitable and Peiping will now have to rule indefinitely by repressive measures.
    3. Chinese Communists "naturally cruel" and their behavior "brutal."
    4. Dalai Lama's return to Tibet now seems out of the question since Chinese policy unlikely to change.
    5. Nehru plans to inform Peiping of the "facts" of the Dalai Lama's arrival in India but not to apologize for Indian popular reaction.
  - B. In Ceylon, Chinese embassy committed blunder in refusing to see high-level Buddhist delegation, bringing additional unfavorable publicity.
- II. Peiping views the reaction as serious diplomatic setback; has tried to smooth over its differences with India.
  - A. Chou En-lai stated on 18 April there no reason why 2,000 years of friendship with "great India" should be shaken by "handful" of rebels.

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- B. Chinese Communists sidestepped most of Nehru's critical statements and stressed his remarks on non-interference.
- C. But Peiping obviously annoyed over Nehru's sympathy for rebels; reported to have requested Indian Consul General in Lhasa be replaced.
- D. And on 22 April, at National Peoples' Congress, a spokesman made inference to expansionist elements in India and asked "why is it that the so-called Dalai Lama's statement was distributed by officials of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs?"

III. India will try to keep Dalai Lama relatively quiet.

- A. Nehru again told parliament on 20 April that Dalai Lama free to conduct religious activities but "political activities are not carried on from one country against another."
- B. Nehru, however, needled Chinese on their charge Kalimpong was control center for Tibetan revolt; he presumed it was Peiping's agents there who reported this.

IV. High-level committees set up in India to handle expected flow of Tibetan refugees.

- A. Flow insignificant thus far but will probably increase, posing new problems.