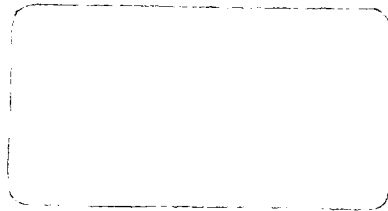


TIBETAN REFUGEES AND THE UNITED NATIONS

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PREFACE

The question of Tibet, first brought to the notice of the United Nations in 1950, remains unresolved after a period of nearly 30 years. The refugees who fled their homeland on a mass scale since 1959 have not returned. What the future holds for them cannot be predicted with any certainty. Two major issues are involved - the political and the humanitarian.

For many governments, there is no question of Tibet; it is a sensitive subject to pursue, especially, with the advent of the People's Republic of China as a member of the United Nations. New Governments might not even be aware of the question. What can the United Nations do, therefore, but reflect these attitudes? As evinced in different sessions of the General Assembly, could the question be regarded merely as a Cold War issue or the internationalization of a purely domestic problem? Or, in the larger interests, could it be only a concern for human rights and dignity and a natural development of modernity? While these present different facets of the problem, they cannot be knit together towards a total solution.

The historical break, however, remains. The situation cannot but be regarded as tragic, for no matter how necessary, a break with a whole way of life itself, especially a sudden one, is not only confusing but also painful. The victims of this tragedy, the Tibetan refugees, are placed in a frustrating dilemma of two worlds - insecure in both. Will

Tibet and the Tibetans be recorded as part of Chinese history or can the few thousands of exiles, and especially a new generation who have not directly known the old Tibet, forge and nurture a new existence relevant to their traditions? Could it be the fulfilment of a premonition expressed by the 13th Dalai Lama (1894-1933): "It may happen", he said, "that here in the centre of Tibet, the religion and the secular administration will be similarly attacked from without and within and the holders of the faith, the Glorious Rebirths, will be broken down and left without a name. As regards the monasteries and the priesthood, their lands and properties will be destroyed. The offices of state, ecclesiastical and lay will find their land seized and their other property confiscated and they themselves made to serve their enemies or wander about the country as beggars do. All beings will be sunk in hardship and fear, and the nights will drag on slowly in suffering...." Political Testament of the XIII Dalai Lama, in Sir Charles Bell, Portrait of the Dalai Lama (London, 1946), p. 387.

The present Dalai Lama clearly holds a delicate position. While he cannot seek outright provocations or follow a direct activist policy at the cost of jeopardising his position or that of his people in the new countries of residence, any offers of assistance, even questionable, cannot be totally ignored. He is fully aware of the reality of the situation and is prepared to acknowledge that he might be the last Dalai Lama, and after all, he reasons, the "Lord Buddha himself gave up a kingdom."

[Interview in Newsweek, 25 September 1972] Of course the Lord Buddha was under no compulsion to do so.

Whatever the final outcome, the Tibetan exiles cannot be denied an existence. While the United Nations often stands at default for political inaction, its larger aims for creating conditions for the well-being of man and promoting human rights and economic and social development through international co-operation, especially, when individual states can no longer act alone, is often lost on ready critics. Indeed, more than four-fifths of its time, money and personnel are devoted to economic and social programmes. Acting through its numerous agencies, it has helped to solve the vast problems of man. Many of these problems are the outcome of wars and natural disasters, and the stability of any state, which suffer such, require solutions through resettlement and rehabilitation. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was thus created and evolved out of the need to identify and alleviate the problems of refugees, whose numbers by the turn of the century were taking on tremendous magnitude. They not only presented humanitarian problems, but could have adverse repercussive effects on the society where they took shelter.

The role played by the United Nations through the UNHCR for the Tibetan refugees, is therefore, the main thrust of this dissertation. It is an attempt to show that while the problem of the Tibetan question was essentially political, its effects, the humanitarian problem, was no less. While the political

problem was receiving wide publicity with no solutions, efforts were quietly being made to resolve the humanitarian difficulties. While the major responsibility lay on the host countries concerned, this research seeks to draw out the necessity of UNHCR participation in the larger interests of welfare for mankind in general and that of the Tibetan refugees in particular. The study attempts to reveal the vital link that the United Nations provides, through its agencies, the UNHCR in this case, for eventual peace through international understanding and co-operation. It seeks to show the advantageous role that can be played by an international organization and its potential.

While much has been written on the political, religious and social history of Tibet and the uprising of 1959, very little has been researched on the traumatic life of the Tibetan exile and his attempts to build anew in alien, even if hospitable, surroundings. The major part of the data collected and utilized for this dissertation therefore comes from primary sources. These include United Nations and government documents, reports made by various agencies, particularly the Central Relief Committee, India [CRC(I)], the co-ordinating agency involved with work for the refugees; accounts of individuals directly involved, from interviews and articles, and information from Tibetan officials and refugees based on interviews and correspondence. Due to the limitations of the topic, however, it cannot be said that all data could be utilized and the details of the colossal work involved of individuals and agencies who

contributed the major share, could be recounted.

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor M. S. Rajan, who with great patience and understanding of the limitations of such a subject chosen, not only advised and supervised my work but enabled me, through his personal contacts, to obtain the necessary information from the UNHCR Headquarters, Geneva and permission to utilize material from the Indian Government sources. My thanks also go to Dr K. P. Saksena who advised me on the utilization of certain UN documents and Dr Sushil Kumar for his advice on approaches of methodology. Collection of data of refugees in India has also been relatively easier by virtue of the numerous family friends and contacts who were directly or indirectly connected with the work. Thus, through the introduction of Mr P. N. Kaul, and Mr A. Dhar, who were directly involved with work for the Tibetan refugees and Mr P. N. Luthra, former Secretary in the Rehabilitation Ministry, Mr R. N. Haldipur, Director, Indian Institute of Public Administration, and Professor Ram Rahul of the School, easier access was made to various government officials, dealing with the refugees, members of the CRC (I) and Tibetan officials. In this connexion, I would like to thank in particular Mr K. S. Gupta, former Secretary of CRC (I) who so kindly supplied me with reports of the agency, Mr G. Taring, Representative of the Dalai Lama, Delhi, the Information and Publicity Office of the Dalai Lama's Bureau and finally the

numerous Tibetan refugees personally encountered and interviewed.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

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Nestling in the heights between the Himalayas and Central Asia, Tibet has always invoked considerable interest and research not only by reasons of geography, but also because of its unique politico-religious system and traditions. Strategically placed between two giant neighbours, China and India, it assimilated two streams of civilizations, which culminated in the formation of a character all its own. This individuality has helped to keep it isolated, which in turn has contributed to doubts regarding its international standing. At various periods of its history, it came under the influence of the Mongols, the Manchus, the British and had thriving trade relations with India and Nepal. At various periods of history it had also sought to assert its independence and clearly so between 1912 and 1949, following the disorder and instability of the 1911 Revolution in China. Tibet managed to retain its distinctive individuality under the nominal authority of China.

With the establishment of the People's Republic of China on 1 October 1949, however, this loose relationship could no longer be tolerated by the Chinese. In January 1950, Peking announced that one of the basic tasks of the People's Liberation Army would be the "Liberation" of Tibet¹ and the

1 International Commission of Jurists, Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic: A Report to the International Commission of Jurists by Its Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet (Geneva, 1960), p. 160.

protection of China's frontiers. The only barrier that hindered them was geographical--the manoeuvring of troops in the frontier areas of Sikang and Chinghai being no easy task. It had become clear, however, that any move against Tibet was only a question of time and that the status quo of undefined relationship could not remain for long. The Chinese military attack launched on 7 October 1950, mainly in the Chamdo region of eastern Tibet, was not unforeseen. China announced that its troops had been ordered "to advance into Tibet to liberate three million Tibetans from imperialist aggression."³

Despite the shockwaves produced all over the world at this display of armed force against a militarily-weak Tibetan authority, when the Government of Tibet appealed to the United Nations on 11 November 1950, under the sponsorship of El Salvador⁴ "to intercede in our behalf and restrain Chinese aggression", the matter was deferred, mainly on the recommendation of the two most concerned states, India and the United Kingdom. India felt optimistic that the matter could be settled amicably by peaceful means and strongly swayed the opinions of others in favour of this stand.

At that time, a special delegation of the Tibetan Government, which had been sent to negotiate an agreement of its status

2 H. E. Richardson, Tibet and Its History (London, 1962), p. 179.

3 International Commission of Jurists, The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law (Geneva, 1959), p. 94.

4 UN Document A/59. Text of the Cablegram from the Kashag (Cabinet), Kalimpong, 11 November 1950.

with China, had been held up in India due to its inability to get visas to Hong Kong from the British authorities.⁵ Having found no tangible encouragement from either India or Britain and due to the urgency of the situation, a cablegram of appeal was thus despatched to the United Nations on 11 November 1950 by the Tibetan delegation in India.⁶ It described "the armed invasion of Tibet for the incorporation of Tibet in Communist China through sheer physical force" as "a clear case of aggression." "As long as the people of Tibet", it continued, "are compelled by force to become a part of China against their will and consent, the present invasion of Tibet will be the grossest instance of the violation of the weak by the strong. We, therefore, appeal through you to the nations of the world to intercede on our behalf and restrain Chinese aggression."⁷

Only the Republic of El Salvador, remarks Richardson,⁸

⁵ Curiously enough, the official passage to Lhasa or Peking was through Hong Kong and India and vice versa. Richardson is of the opinion that the talks were desired to be held on neutral ground, as Hong Kong, by the Tibetan Government. See H. E. Richardson, n. 2, p. 181.

⁶ The full text of the cablegram from the Tibetan Kashag (cabinet) is in the form of UN Document A/1549, dated Kalimpong 11 November 1950. Also A/1565 text of a cablegram dated 28 November 1950 from the Tibetan delegation (mimeographed document only). See General Assembly Official records (GAOR), V Session, Annexes, Agenda item 8 (New York, 1950), pp. 17-18.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ See H. E. Richardson, n. 2, p. 186.

"had the precipience and the courage to move the condemnation of the unprovoked aggression by the Chinese Communists." In his letter of 17 November 1950,⁹ the Chairman of the El Salvador delegation referred to his telegram of 14 November 1950 requesting the President of the General Assembly to include the "Invasion of Tibet by foreign forces" as an additional item in the agenda of the fifth session. A supporting memorandum of facts and a set of copies of the proposed draft resolution, mainly to condemn the Chinese act and set up a Committee or special study group, were also enclosed. The matter was considered at the 72nd meeting of the General Committee on 20 November 1950. As some members had not received instructions from their governments, however, a full discussion could not be held until the 73rd meeting of the General Committee on 24 November 1950. In explaining his country's stand, the representative of El Salvador referred to the terms of Article 1, paragraph 1 of the United Nations Charter in which the prime objective laid down was to "maintain international peace and security." Thus it considered that peace should be maintained not only between member states but throughout the whole world. He felt that the General Assembly would be neglecting its responsibilities if it disregarded the aggression of Tibet. On the status of Tibet itself as an independent state, he quoted profusely from Chambers Encyclopaedia (Vol. XIII), Encyclopaedia Universal Illustrada (Vol. X), and the

⁹ UN Document A/1534, GAOR, V Session. Annexes, Agenda item 8 (New York, 1950).

and the Encyclopaedia Britannica (Vol. 22). The delegate from the United Kingdom however, felt that the question at hand was one of procedure and moreover pleaded ignorance of clear accounts of the recent events in Tibet or of that country's legal status. He therefore proposed that the question be deferred. This proposal was supported by the Indian representative whose Government was certain, according to him, "that the Tibetan question could still be settled by peaceful means, and that such a settlement could safeguard the autonomy which Tibet had enjoyed for several decades while maintaining its historical association with China."¹⁰ Both these stands seem ironical after the Government of India's protest to the People's Republic of China, on 26 October 1950, against the use of force in Tibet and its statement that such an invasion could not be in the interests of China or of peace.¹¹ In a statement made to the House of Commons on 6 November 1950, the British Foreign Under Secretary had declared that Great Britain deplored the Chinese invasion and the use of force in Tibet and "fully supported the stand taken by the Government of India." The Soviet and Nationalist Chinese delegates opposed discussion of the question for different reasons. Other Powers not directly concerned, Australia and the United States, were influenced by India.

10 See "Request for the inclusion of an additional item (A/1534)", in United Nations General Assembly, Fifth Session, General Committee 73rd meeting, Friday, 24 November 1950.

11 Chanakya Sen, Tibet Disappears (Bombay, 1960), p. 66.

Thus the matter was adjourned.

Indecision at this juncture on the question of Tibet cannot be attributed entirely to the failure of the Indian and British to take positive stands; although the weight of their attitudes cannot be denied. Asia had just entered a new phase of life itself. Independence of small and relatively unknown states was then still a new phenomenon. The emergence of Communist China as a major power, though startling, could not fully be appreciated then. In any case Chinese power seemed less offensive than Soviet. More immediately, the importance and seriousness of the Korean crisis captured the attention and involvement of the United Nations, which itself was at the indecisive stage of infancy. In retrospect, however, the right opportunity for discussing and examining Tibet's status on an internationally recognized level was lost, much to the dismay and despair of the Tibetans who sent yet another cablegram of concern to the General Assembly on 8 December 1950.¹²

4 The situation ostensibly seemed less oppressive and desperate, after negotiations had been carried out in Peking between the Chinese and the Tibetans and a Sino-Tibetan Agreement concluded on 23 May 1951. It was the first treaty concluded between Tibet and China since 821 A.D.¹³ The Seventeen-Point Agreement, as it came to be commonly known, defined the country's

12 United Nations General Assembly, Fifth Session, Doc. A/1658, 11 December 1950.

13 H. E. Richardson, n. 2, p. 189.

future role as part of "the Motherland" [China] with national regional autonomy under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government.¹⁴ Referring to this Agreement, the Dalai Lama admitted in his statement made on 18 April 1959, on his arrival at Tezpur, Assam, that "the suzerainty of China was accepted as there was no alternative left to the Tibetans." He further disclosed that though the control of external events was to be in the hands of the Chinese Government, it was agreed that there would not be any interference by the Chinese Government with the Tibetan religion and customs and her internal administration. In fact, after the occupation of Tibet by the Chinese armies, the Tibetan Government did not enjoy any autonomy, even in internal matters, "the Chinese Government exercised full powers in Tibetan affairs." Despite the Preparatory Committee set up in 1956, consisting of the Dalai Lama as Chairman, the Panchen Lama as Vice-Chairman and General Khang Kuo Hua as the representative of the Chinese Government, "decisions in all important matters were taken by the Chinese authorities."

On 27 February 1957, in his speech on "contradictions" Chairman Mao stated: "Because conditions in Tibet are not ripe, democratic reforms have not yet been carried out there. According to the Seventeen Point Agreement reached between the Central People's Government and the local government of Tibet, reform of the social system must eventually be carried out. But we should not be impatient; when this will be done can only be decided when

14 Ibid.

the great majority of the people of Tibet and their leading public figures consider it practicable. It has now been decided not to proceed with democratic reform in Tibet during the period of the Second Five Year Plan (1958-1962) and we can only decide whether it will be done in the period of the Third Five Year Plan in the light of the situation obtaining at that time."

The "unripe" conditions referred to were in fact the resistance being encountered from the local populace to the "democratic reforms" - this having taken a militant form in the eastern Province of Kham as early as 1955. The Times of India on 18 July 1956 reported that "Communist forces have moved tanks to protect the Lhasa area from the threat of an anti-communist revolt." Two years later, on 31 July 1958, The Hindu reported that "the revolt has spread north into Sinkiang and west to the borders of India, fighting is going on over the whole of high Asia. An estimated 300 a day average is being added to the almost incredible total of deaths which obviously cannot be exact but certainly gives a true picture of the proportions of the revolt."

The trickle of refugees had already started and these had only horror stories to tell of Chinese actions - of monasteries being burnt and ransacked and monks humiliated, of tortures, indoctrination and brain-washing being carried out. The Dalai Lama himself stated that "In the consequential struggle,

15 Statement made by the Dalai Lama on 18 April 1959, on arrival at Tezpur, Assam.

the Chinese armed forces destroyed a large number of monasteries. Many lamas were killed and a large number of monks and officials were employed on the construction of roads in China, and the interference in the exercise of religious freedom increased." The relations of Tibetans with China became openly strained from the early part of February 1959. Events were clearly building up to a breaking point.

That point was not reached until 19 March. The Dalai Lama had already escaped two days before. In his own words, he describes the events leading to this turning point thus: "The Dalai Lama had agreed a month in advance to attend a cultural show in the Chinese headquarters and the date was suddenly fixed for 10 March. The people of Lhasa became apprehensive that some harm might be done to the Dalai Lama. As a result, about ten thousand people gathered around the Dalai Lama's summer palace in Norbulingka and physically prevented the Dalai Lama from attending the function. Thereafter, the people themselves decided to raise a body-guard for the protection of the Dalai Lama. Large crowds of Tibetans went about the streets of Lhasa demonstrating against the Chinese rule in Tibet. Two days later, thousands of Tibetan women¹⁶ held demonstrations protesting against the Chinese authority. Attempts to negotiate acceptable terms peaceably failed, for on 17 March, after reinforcements had arrived to strengthen the Chinese garrison, "two or three mortar shells were fired in the direction of the Norbulingka palace." "After this, the advisers

16 Ibid.

became alive to the danger to the person of the Dalai Lama and in more difficult circumstances it became imperative for the Dalai Lama, the members of his family and his high officials, to leave Lhasa."¹⁷

India was his destination. On 29 March, he sent two emissaries to cross the Indo-Tibetan border to ask the Government of India for permission to enter and also to seek asylum there.¹⁸ All frontier officers had been alerted and permission was immediately granted, and the Dalai Lama with some eighty persons including his mother and other relations, and his leading ministers¹⁹ both monk and lay, entered India on 30 March.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 H. E. Richardson, n. 2, p. 210.

Chapter II

THE TIBETAN QUESTION IN THE UNITED NATIONS

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So it was that the "Shangri-La" peace and remoteness of Tibet was shattered when the Chinese forcibly spread their tentacles. The world waited and watched events that were often lost in a maze of obscurity. The flight of the Dalai Lama acted as a catalyst for a deluge of his fellowmen to follow suit and this flood of escapees set off rippling reactions of indignation, sympathy, optimism, pessimism and wide speculation of the outcome.

Thousands of Tibetans spilled out on to the neighbouring countries of Bhutan, Nepal and India braving the hardships of high mountains and impending threats of Chinese capture. How many succumbed to the hazards of high altitudes or in encounters with Chinese patrols will never be known. Refugees recount tales of almost super-human efforts to escape the changed circumstances of life and the unbearable suffering in Tibet after 1959. In most cases, desperation overcame fear of consequences, and the sorrow of parting from parents or children, sisters or brothers, husband or wife, friends and known surroundings, and led to flight.

Whose responsibility could these unfortunate refugees be - the world's or the individual countries concerned? Ideally, the whole problem could have been resolved politically between China and Tibet. That would, however, make too simplistic a

reading of international politics in general and that of China's aims in particular. Tibet, handicapped by its lack of recognized international standing could not but look to others for aid or mediation. Its strongest hopes were placed on India, the precursor of non-alignment, the initiator of 'Panchshila'. Yet, India's official stand, while being one of cautionary sympathy for Tibetan aspirations or autonomy, also recognized the suzerainty of China over Tibet and its own inability to intervene in the internal affairs of another country. Among his expressions of caution, Nehru had said: "The House will appreciate that this is a difficult and delicate situation and we should avoid doing anything which will worsen it. We have no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of China with whom we have friendly relations."¹ Britain, Tibet's next hoped-for champion could only follow India's cue. Lacking the crucial support of the most concerned states, therefore, the United Nations, that conscience keeper of nations, pledged to contain threats to international peace and aggression, could only watch dividedly, impotently. People's China, moreover, was not a member of that august body. Neither was Tibet. It was left to smaller Powers to take up a stand of interest and concern.

In an appeal addressed to the Secretary-General on 9 September 1959, the Dalai Lama referred to the UN decision in

1 "The Prime Minister's Statement in the Lok Sabha on Tibet, 23 March 1959, in Foreign Affairs Record, vol. V, no. 3, March 1959, p. 88.

1950, on the "invasion of Tibet by foreign forces" and regretted having to inform him that "the act of aggression by Chinese forces has not terminated." In these circumstances and "in view of the inhuman treatment and crimes against humanity and religion to which the people of Tibet are being subjected," he solicited "immediate intervention of the United Nations." He not only emphasized Tibet's sovereignty but also singled out a number of offences perpetrated by the Chinese forces and confidently hoped that the appeal would "receive the consideration which it deserves."

Again, the initiative was taken by smaller Powers. Malaya and Ireland took the responsibility of sponsoring the question at the 14th session of the General Assembly in a letter dated 28 September 1959.² First debated by the General Committee, on 9 October 1959, for inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly, it was recommended by a roll call vote of 11-5-4. This time, significantly voting in favour were the United Kingdom, Nationalist China and the United States, despite the adamant opposition of the USSR which felt that the matter was within the domestic competence of the Chinese People's Republic and as such had no right to be discussed or interfered with by other Powers. Raising the question, the Soviet delegate claimed, was "utterly illegal and at variance with the explicit provisions of the Charter, Article 2, paragraph 7."³ Furthermore, the delegate felt that this was only

² UN Document A/4234, 29 September 1959, Explanatory Memorandum.

³ The provision reads: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter...."

another attempt to rake up the declining Cold War tension.

Opposing the move to assign the question to the plenary, he was overruled by another vote of 12-6-0.

The recommendation for adoption of the 'Question of Tibet'⁴ on the agenda was thus discussed at the 826th and 827th plenary meetings, on 12 and 13 October 1959⁵ respectively. According to Rule 23 of the rules of procedure, debate on the inclusion of the item in the agenda was to be limited to three speakers in favour and three against. Speaking in favour were the representatives of New Zealand, Thailand and El Salvador and against, the representatives of the USSR, Indonesia and Romania. When called to vote, the question was placed on the agenda as item 73 by 43-11-25-1. India did not participate in the vote. The right of reply was given to the United States and the Soviet Union and explanation of votes and reservations given to Yugoslavia, Spain and Belgium at the 827th meeting. Full discussions of the item and draft resolution (A/L.264) submitted by the two sponsoring nations were held in the 831st through 834th meetings of the plenary on 20th and 21st October 1959. Arguments here resembled those at the earlier meetings. There could be little room for departure.

In general, those in favour dwelt largely on the humanitarian aspect of the problem, sympathising greatly with the Tibetan people in their sufferings and condemning repressive Chinese measures, many likening these actions to those of a

4 Third Report of the General Committee, A/4237, para 4.

5 Agenda Item 8: Adoption of the agenda.

colonial Power.¹⁶ Any reference to the underlying issue of the political status of Tibet, however, was vague and delicate. Although Tibetans were recognized as a distinct group of people, most delegations admitted that the international status of the country was complex and confused. Nonetheless, the moral obligation of countries to speak out for justice and the dignity of man, and especially when it concerned small or weak nations, could not be ignored. A wider interpretation of the UN Charter's Article 2(7) was thus given. In view of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, suppression of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world was undeniably the concern of the World Body if real peace were to be secured and maintained and could not be restricted by a literal translation of the Charter clause. The delegate from the United States moreover felt that Article 5⁷ and Article 10⁸ of the UN Charter could overrule that

6 In this context, allegations made by the Dalai Lama were not only proved by the mass exodus of his countrymen, but also were supported by the findings of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in a report entitled The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law: A Preliminary Report (Geneva, 1959).

7 The Article reads: "With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."

8 The Article reads: "The General Assembly may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter, and except as provided in Article 12, may make recommendations to the members of the United Nations or to the Security Council or to both on any such questions or matters."

of Article 2(7).

Led by the Soviet Union, those speaking against the draft resolution largely consisted of the Soviet bloc countries. In general, the contention of this group was that Tibet was, and had always been, an integral part of China and inclusion of the "so-called Question of Tibet" was thus a blatant attempt at intervention in the domestic affairs of the People's Republic of China, "constituting an outright violation" of one of the basic principles of the UN Charter, - Article 2(7). In the absence of any representative of the People's Republic of China, moreover, it was said, the Assembly could hardly be competent to discuss any matter concerning that country. In the "hypocritical guise" of concern for the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the item introduced was only a clumsy and provocative attempt to revive the Cold War and hinder efforts being made to improve international relations. The United Nations was unnecessarily being diverted from discussing important matters of real international concern, such as the problem of disarmament. The "democratic reforms" being carried out in Tibet were in fact for the betterment of the people who had been denied any form of human rights in the old "backward system of serfdom." The changing circumstances and process of modernization were being opposed only by a handful of "feudalistic reactionary elements" who were unfortunately being encouraged by "certain imperialistic circles," concluded the Soviet delegate.

Among those that abstained from the vote, the more prominent being the delegations from India and the United Kingdom,

generally sympathized at the tragedy being inflicted on the Tibetan people. Misgivings and doubts were, however, voiced as to the competence of the United Nations to act in such a situation. While the international and legal status of Tibet was confused and far from clear, the letter of the Charter was very clear. The link of dependence between China and Tibet could not be disregarded and therefore the Assembly ran the risk of contravening Article 2(7) of the UN Charter. In any case, the United Nations could have no accurate or balanced information of the real situation in the absence of the representative of the country directly concerned, the People's Republic of China. Inability to take direct measures of help was recognized. The Indian delegate, to this effect, quoted a statement made by Prime Minister Nehru as to the practical result of such a discussion or resolution in the United Nations. Having raised an "acrimonious debate" and "brought matters to a higher temperature", Nehru had declared, all the delegates would go home having "done their duty, because they can do nothing else" for "obviously, nobody is going to send an army to Tibet or to China." Yet, most of those who abstained felt that expression of their sympathy in the Assembly was more gainfully important rather than in a resolution which might have no effect.

The draft resolution (A/L.264) was extremely moderate in terms of language and reference. No mention of China was made, nor of the controversial issue of Tibet's legal status. The Malayan delegate, the co-sponsor of the item and draft resolution

had declared at the very outset that it was not his intention to turn the item into "a controversial political issue that might aggravate international tension" nor to raise "the issue of Chinese sovereignty or suzerainty over Tibet" since it had "no real relevance to the draft resolution under consideration." In fact, the subject for discussion had been described as "violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Tibetan people." The tameness of the resolution (Resolution 1353 (XIV, 21 October 1959) dealing with the fundamental human rights and freedoms in general, and that of the Tibetan people in particular, which was being denied them, was thus not totally unexpected. Adopted by a vote of 45-9-26-1, it could only deplore the effect of events which could only increase international tension and embitter relations between peoples and (1) affirm "its belief that respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is essential for the evolution of a peaceful world order based on the rule of law, and (2) call "for respect for the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people and for their distinctive cultural and religious life."

The status of Tibet was thus left undecided and no positive action in this regard, such as the sending of a fact-finding mission, taken. Despite the disappointment evinced by the Tibetans at the outcome, the question had received wide publicity in the course of the debate. People of responsibility from all over the world had taken specific stands on the issue and the plight of the Tibetans highlighted. An international awareness

of the situation had been fostered.

The Tibetan question was included again in the agenda of the 15th session of the General Assembly in 1960. Sponsored by the Federation of Malaya and Thailand,¹⁰ concern was expressed at the continued disregard of the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people despite the resolution 1353 (XIV) adopted by the General Assembly at its fourteenth session. The sponsoring nations were convinced that the United Nations not only had an obligation but also a duty "to address itself once again to this question" and thus to "pave the way for the restoration of the religious and civil liberties of the Tibetan people." Recommended by the General Committee,¹¹ it was considered at the 898th meeting on 10 October 1960 of the plenary and approved for inclusion on the agenda as item 78 by a vote of 49 to 13 with 35 abstentions.¹² Again as in the previous session, according to rule 23 of the Procedure, 3 speakers spoke in favour of the item for inclusion - New Zealand, El Salvador and Ireland and three against - Indonesia, the USSR and Romania. As fate would have it, however, the urgency of another international issue, the Congo crisis overshadowed other problems. The presence of a number of world leaders at this session also drew much of the limelight and time of the meetings. Due to shortage of time, therefore, the Tibetan question had little chance of being discussed. The voting pattern for the

¹⁰ Document A/4444, 19 August 1960, (XV).

¹¹ A/PV.898, 10 October 1960 (XV).

¹² India again followed her cautionary line of abstention.

inclusion of the item, however, indicated that no substantial change had been made on the different stands of governments and the speakers at the 898th meeting echoed pronouncements of the previous sessions.

In the following year, at the 16th session of the General Assembly (1961), the question of inclusion of the item on the agenda was again pursued by the Federation of Malaya and Thailand in a letter dated 18 August 1961.¹³ In the explanatory memo, reference was made to Resolution 1353 (XIV) and the approval of the item's inscription in the 15th regular session of the General Assembly, which because of the extreme pressure of work in the concluding stages of the session, the Assembly did not find it possible to consider the item and consequently no positive action was taken on the question at that session. Since the situation in Tibet had not improved and continued to remain a source of grave concern, the two countries felt that renewed consideration of the question would help to restore the religious and civil liberties of the Tibetan people.

On the recommendation of the General Committee, the question for inclusion was considered at the plenary on 25 September 1961 and placed on the agenda as item 83 by a vote of 48-14-35. Again, the voting pattern was similar to that in the earlier sessions. At the 1084th and 1085th meetings on 19 and 20 December

¹³ Document A/4848, 18 August 1961. Federation of Malaya and Thailand: Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the 16th session. See agenda item 83: "Question of Tibet", in Annexes, 16th session (New York, 1961-62), pp. 1-2.

1961, respectively of the General Assembly, the debate on the question of Tibet was again renewed.¹⁴ Included for discussion was also a draft resolution (A/L. 376) submitted by El Salvador, the Federation of Malaya, Ireland and Thailand. Due to shortage of time and heavy agenda, the discussion was limited only to a few speakers under rule 75 of the rules of procedure. These included the representatives of Malaya, El Salvador, United States, China, Ireland, the Soviet Union, Thailand, New Zealand, Czechoslovakia, Albania, United Kingdom and Bulgaria. India chose to remain quiet and abstain from voting. Ostensibly, this was in keeping with the line previously taken, but the embarrassing Chinese build-up and posture on the Sino-Indian border at the time cannot be ignored.

Certainly, a subtle change had taken place in this debate, although the arguments for or against remained, in the main, the same. Those that spoke for the resolution expressed their indignation and concern for the continued repressive measures by People's China on the Tibetan people despite the condemnation made by the United Nations in resolution 1353 (XIV). New and authentic information had come to light with supporting evidence to show the continued violation of human rights in Tibet in a report compiled by eminent lawyers from all over the world.¹⁵ It was submitted

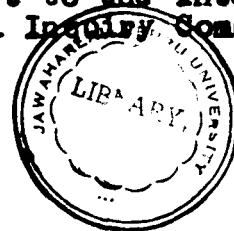
14 For full discussion see GAOR, Sixteenth Session, Plenary Meetings 1084th and 1085th meetings, pp. 1115-1128 (New York, 1962).

15 International Commission of Jurists, Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic: A Report to the International Commission of Jurists by Its Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet (Geneva, 1960).

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to the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva and published in 1960. In this report the de facto status of Tibet until 1961 was recognized and the observation made that from 1913 to 1960 Tibet "demonstrated the conditions of statehood as generally accepted under international law." Those that spoke against, mainly the Soviet Union and its allies felt that this question was still-born and was an artificially-created problem brought up by countries interested in maintaining the Cold War. Tibet had always been part of China and in the context of specific Charter provision, discussion of the question gravely jeopardized the authority of the United Nations. The French representative explaining his vote sympathized with the Tibetan people, but chose to abstain, because of the doubtful legal aspects. His stand might have been representative of many others that abstained. What was significant was the positive stand taken by the United Kingdom. In explaining his vote, the representative maintained that although his government had in the past recognized Chinese suzerainty, it was only on the condition that Tibet retained its autonomy. This suzerainty, however, did not entitle the Chinese to claim immunity from the condemnation of the world, nor impose terrible suffering on the Tibetan people. Indonesia which had previously voted with the Soviet bloc, this time chose to abstain.

The text of the resolution, 1723 (XVI) dated 20 December 1961

16 For full text see Supplement No. 17 (A/5100), General Assembly, Official Records (New York, United Nations, 1962), p. 66.

concluded in stronger terms than the previous one.¹⁷ It expressed grave concern at the continuation of repressive measures on the Tibetan people who traditionally enjoyed a distinctive cultural and religious life and who were now experiencing severe hardship "as evidenced by the large-scale exodus of Tibetan refugees to the neighbouring countries." These acts, which could only increase international tension and embitterment between peoples, were not only direct violations of recognized principles of fundamental human rights as set out in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but the principles of self-determination of the peoples and nations as well. The resolution thus reaffirmed its faith in these guiding principles "essential for the evolution of a peaceful world order based on the rule of law", renewed its "call for the cessation of practices which deprived the Tibetans of their fundamental human rights and freedoms including their right to self-determination" and concluded hopefully that all states would make all possible efforts to achieve the purpose of the resolution. It was adopted by a resounding majority of 56-11-29.

This impressive affirmation of the resolution was largely due to the entrance of a number of new members to the UN body, 21 to be exact, who were themselves small and newly-independent states and perhaps sympathetic to the pressures of a big Power on a small one. In general, the international situation was changing and, in particular, the situation in Tibet as evidenced by the

¹⁷ Resolution 1353 (XIV) of 21 October 1959.

continuing flight of refugees could not be disregarded. Some of the speakers had mentioned this aspect. In the main, therefore, what seems to have prompted most members was the humanitarian aspect yet again more than any political claims.

The Tibetan exiles, however, could not accept this as final and continuously sought to have the question discussed, yet again. In 1964, they succeeded in getting the sponsorship of El Salvador, Nicaragua and the Philippines,¹⁸ but since the General Assembly meeting was postponed the question could not be taken up. As early as 16 June 1965, therefore, request for the inclusion of this item in the provisional agenda of the 20th session was made again by these countries.¹⁹ In another letter²⁰ the sponsoring countries forwarded a fresh appeal made by the Dalai Lama on 23 September 1965, for the "sincere sympathy and support" of the member-nations on the issue and which was circulated as an official document in connexion with the consideration of the agenda item. The Dalai Lama described the deteriorating situation in Tibet and the increasing hardships being faced by the people. As a result there was an increasing number of refugees and for those who could not escape, courageous resistance at the risk of their lives. Even the Panchen Lama's life was now in grave danger after his later decision not to collaborate with the

18 A/5766 included as item 9 in the supplementary list for the 19th regular session.

19 A/5931 dated 16 June 1965.

20 A/6081 dated 19 October 1965.

Chinese. Moreover, the Peking announcement that Tibet would become fully autonomous on 1 September 1965 should deceive no one as to its sincerity, the Dalai Lama said.²¹

The question of Tibet was placed on the Agenda as item 91 and discussed at the plenary meetings of the 20th session.²² A draft resolution was jointly submitted by El Salvador, Ireland, Malaysia, Malta, Nicaragua, the Philippines and Thailand and was adopted by a vote of 43-26-22 as Resolution 2079 (XX)²³ on 28 December 1965.²⁴ This time the resolution specifically deplored the "continued violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet", reaffirming its respect for the principles of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and convinced that the suppression of the distinctive cultural and religious life of the Tibetan people could only increase international tension and embitterment. Finally, however, it could only renew its "call for the cessation of all practices which deprived the Tibetan people of the human rights and fundamental freedoms which they have always enjoyed" and thus appeal to all states "to use their best endeavour to achieve the purposes of the present resolution."²⁵ It was, in short, an elaboration of

21 Ibid.

22 For full discussions see General Assembly Official Records, 20th Session, Plenary Meetings, 1394th, 1401st 1403rd meetings (New York, 1965).

23 A/L.475.

24 At 1403rd meeting.

25 For full text see "Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, 20th Session, 21 September-22 December 1965 in General Assembly Official Records, 20th Session, Supplement 14 (A/6014) (New York, 1965), p. 3.

the earlier two resolutions but concerned mainly with the humanitarian suffering "as evidenced by the exodus of refugees to the neighbouring countries" of the Tibetan people.

In fact there was nothing radically new to be said. The old arguments were churned out in different language - mainly that Article 2(7) of the UN Charter specifically prohibited UN interference in the domestic jurisdiction of any state; that this was just an attempt to maintain the Cold War and that non-membership of People's China could not be ignored. Thus the competence of the United Nations to act in such a situation was again questioned. Those that spoke for the resolution emphasized the suffering of the Tibetan people and the violation of universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms.

What, however, was of positive significance this time was the stand taken by India. India had now a foretaste of the ruthlessness of China in the Sino-Indian war of 1962 and any feeling of generosity or caution as to China's true intentions were completely obliterated by then. Despite its humiliating experience, however, India expressed admirable restraint. The controversial issue of Tibet's legal status was not mentioned. Deep concern, however, was felt at the "terrible deterioration of the situation in Tibet." "Undoubtedly", the Indian delegate pointed out, "our national sentiments are now and again aroused as a result of the atrocities and cruelties committed by the Chinese against Tibetans, but we have exercised the greatest caution, for we believe that what should concern all of us is the much larger

human problem, namely, the plight of these good and innocent people who are being victimized merely because they are different, ethnically and culturally, from the Chinese." ²⁶ In fact, the absence of any reference to the political difference of the Tibetans seems to have, by implication, sealed the fate of that issue.

Diehard statements by the representatives of the Philippines and Ireland continued to include the legal status of Tibet as an independent nation. On the whole, however, the urgency of the problem had been lost and the discussion on Tibet was still, as it had been, largely concerning the suppression of human rights of the Tibetan people and their consequent suffering. The ineffective resolutions could only produce a stalemate situation and an unsatisfactory achievement of unresolved status. Old arguments repeated could only foster mixed reactions of embarrassment or boredom and eagerness to deal with something new. Thus, the question of Tibet in succeeding years has been discreetly avoided and with the full membership of the People's Republic of China and the expulsion of Nationalist China, the question has little chance of being revived or of positive results being achieved. It however continues to be a guilty reminder of the limitations of the United Nations.

Chapter III

**UNHCR WORK FOR THE TIBETAN REFUGEES
IN INDIA**

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While the United Nations could not resolve the political status of Tibet, the humanitarian situation had been acknowledged and deplored and the plight of the refugees highlighted, by virtue of long discussions held within the United Nations and outside. While the General Assembly could at most condemn the Communist Chinese actions, any idea of direct intervention could only remain frozen. Yet, unlike the political problem, the continuous flow of refugee numbers could not be conveniently shelved. The United Nations was ably supplemented by a varied number of agencies specialized to look into the vast problems of human welfare. Thus, while the brunt of responsibility for the refugees fell on the host countries, the United Nations could act through its Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to help alleviate the refugee problems.

In India, within a few months, the number exceeded 10,000 and still they continued to come. Whereas Tibetans had begun to leave the country as early as 1951, these were few in number and, in the main, relatively well-to-do, who foresaw the threat posed by the Chinese to their possessions. Moreover, since they did not come in large groups, they were able to merge into the polyglot and poly-cultural society of West Bengal - mainly in the Darjeeling and Kalimpong region and in Calcutta.¹

1 George Woodcock, "Notes and Comment: Tibetan Refugees in a Decade of Exile", Pacific Affairs (Vancouver), vol. XLIII, no. 3, Fall 1970, p. 410.

As the Annual Report (1959-1960) of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs records, however, "in the wake of the Dalai Lama, nearly 14,000 Tibetan refugees entered India through passes in the North-East Frontier Agency [present Arunachal Pradesh], Bhutan, Sikkim and Uttar Pradesh. It did not mention those that came into Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. A majority of these were utterly destitute, having been able to bring only a few, if at all, any possessions. On 8 May 1959, Prime Minister Nehru stated that "the present estimates are about 10,000 - and all kinds of refugees, the old, the aged, some young people, some women." Further, answering a member's insinuation that these 10,000 were "all well-to-do feudal lords," he cuttingly replied that he could not give any description of any of them, as they were still on the way "but it is hardly likely that Tibet will produce 10,000 lords." This group of "reactionaries" has also been a favourite target of criticism by the Chinese. According to the Tibetan administration in exile, however, the number of noblemen was 30 and that of high lamas 11. The rest of over 80,000 being common people, peasants and herdsmen. It was further established, that, when large-scale arrests were being made of the ruling class after the 1959 revolt, only 11 of the 33 leading

2 Indian Ministry of External Affairs, Annual Report, 1959-60 (New Delhi, 1960), p. 30.

3 "The Prime Minister's reply to the Lok Sabha Debate on Tibet", 8 May 1959, in Foreign Affairs Record, vol. V, no. 5, May 1959 (New Delhi, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India), p. 137.

4 See editorial entitled, "Will Tibetan Refugees Return Home", Tibetan Review (New Delhi), May-June 1975.

Lhasa-based aristocratic families managed to escape.

Despite its earlier stand of abstention on the political status of Tibet, India could not morally abstain on the humanitarian issue presented by the Tibetan refugees. A significant section of the Indian people and the Press, moreover, gave voice to vehement protests against Chinese actions and especially against the Indian Government's policy and even Prime Minister Nehru came in for scathing criticisms. When the Dalai Lama sought refuge, therefore, and sought similar shelter for his people, the Government of India responded positively to the situation.

Yet, Nehru's statement of 27 April 1959 to the Lok Sabha disclosed a more revealing situation. After reporting the entry of "considerable numbers of Tibetans" into the Kameng Frontier Division in the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA, now Arunachal Pradesh) and Bhutan, he said that temporary arrangements were being made in a camp for their maintenance until they could be dispersed according to their wishes and necessities. He concluded that "we could not leave these refugees to their own resources. Apart from humanitarian considerations involved, there was also the law and order problem to be considered."⁶ Many of the 20,000⁷ and 3,000 refugees that initially flowed into Nepal and Bhutan respectively found their way into India. In reply to the Rajya Sabha Debate on Tibet on 4 May 1959, Nehru had explained that "the Bhutan Government have asked us to receive the Tibetan refugees

5 Ibid.

6 Foreign Affairs Records (FAR), April 1959, vol.V, no. 4, p. 119.

7 Some accounts put this number at 30,000.

coming through their territories and we have agreed to do so."⁸

As mentioned earlier, the Ministry of External Affairs, which was put in charge of this problem, recorded 14,000 refugees in 1959-1960. In its 1960-1961 report the number reported had risen to 25,000.⁹ The next year the number of refugees was put at 23,000, some 4,000 being new arrivals.¹⁰ In 1962-63, 35,000¹¹ were recorded and in 1964-1965 the numbers had jumped to 45,000¹² in the country. This jump in number can also be attributed to the unstable conditions and disorder following China's Cultural Revolution, the impact of which Tibet did not escape. At the 20th session of the General Assembly (1965), the Indian delegate had also mentioned that, "today there are thousands of Tibetan refugees in my country -- approximately 50,000 -- who have left their hearths and homes and fled from their country to join their leader and seek refuge in India. The flight of these refugees still continues...."¹³

By 1967-1968¹⁴ the number had stabilized at 56,000 and the figure continued to be recorded in subsequent reports. New

8 EAR, vol. V, no. 5, May 1959, p. 141.

9 Indian Ministry of External Affairs, Annual Report, 1960-1961, p. 29.

10 Ibid., 1961-1962, p. 36.

11 Ibid., 1962-1963, pp. 28-31.

12 Ibid., 1964-1965, p. 31.

13 GAO, 20th Session, 1965, A.PV/1394, 14 December 1965, p.5.

14 Indian Ministry of External Affairs, Annual Report, 1967-1968, p. 18.

entries were becoming fewer in number and do not seem to have made an appreciable difference to the overall numbers. Most of those who managed, and still manage to escape the increased vigilance of the Chinese belong to the Southern parts of Tibet. As late as 1975, new entrants were recorded and in 1976, rumours ran rife, especially among the Tibetan community, that newcomers were stopped and sent back from the Leh-Ladakh checkpoints. Although no official comment was made, this has not been a new accusation or suspicion.

When the work concerning Tibetan refugees was taken over by the Indian Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation¹⁵ in 1968, the same number of refugees was recorded in its Annual Reports until as late as 1974-75. How far these figures are reliable is of course difficult to say, although actual numbers in reality are even more difficult to assess. Neither the Indian Government nor the Bureau of the Dalai Lama have very clear records, especially of the present increase. The 56,000 relates to refugees who came in since 1959, into India, including Sikkim and Bhutan of whom approximately 12,000 were children, 3,000 old and infirm and 2,600 were lamas. Originally, some 20,000 to 30,000 were said to have entered Nepal and dwindled down to 12,000.

According to the latest estimates of the Bureau of the Dalai Lama, there are approximately 83,000 refugees in India, Bhutan, Nepal, Switzerland, Canada, Europe (excluding Switzerland), Japan and the United States of America. The breakdown of figures

is given in Appendix I.¹⁶ These are engaged in various occupations such as agriculture, handicrafts, industries, business and office and labour and include students and teachers, monks and nuns, the old and retired and housewives. The Ministry of Rehabilitation, however, are wary of definite figures, attributing this uncertainty to the migratory nature of the Tibetan population. No official census has therefore been made and the figures provided by the Bureau, of refugees in India, have yet to be verified by Indian agencies.

It is noteworthy that the Tibetan refugees burst into the world scene in 1959 - the very year designated by the United Nations as World Refugee Year.¹⁷ In recognition of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' services and the need for enlargement of his duties and areas of supervision, it was then that the General Assembly had passed a resolution authorizing the High Commissioner "in respect of refugees who do not come within the competence of the United Nations, to use his good offices in the transmission of contributions designed to provide assistance to these refugees."¹⁸ It was a clear realization that the refugee problem was a continuing one, and not confined to the

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- 16 Issued by the Information and Publicity Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Dharamsala, 1976.
- 17 General Assembly Resolution 1285 (XIII), 5 December 1958.
- 18 General Assembly Resolution 1388 (XIV), 20 November 1959, 841st Plenary Meeting, General Assembly Official Records, Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/4354), p. 45, para. 81.

European sphere or limited to those refugees falling within the scope of the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.¹⁹ It was an awareness of the fact that refugee welfare was no isolated humanitarian expression but could be tied up with political, social and economic repercussions.

It was more significant, ironically, however, that it was the representative from Nationalist China who first welcomed the High Commissioner's reference to the refugees from Tibet.²⁰ Estimating the number between 12,000 and 18,000, he stated that all were in urgent need of assistance and added that he had the right to bring this matter to the attention of subsequent sessions.²¹ The High Commissioner's statement referred to had been made at the first special session of the Executive Committee

19 Broadly, this included all those who had fled their own country from fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality or political opinion and were thus unwilling to return. Unless, they were the concern of other organizations of the UN, it was the High Commissioner's duty to protect them wherever they might be. Both these, however, in practice covered only persons who had become refugees prior to 1 January 1951. The use of "good offices" was made more effective when in 1967 a Protocol was adopted which removed the dateline making the Convention applicable to all refugee situations, present and future.

20 Report of the United Nations High Commissioner (UNHCR) General Assembly Official Records (henceforth GAOR), Fourteenth Session, Supplement No. 11, A/4104/Rev. 1, p. 45, para. 81.

21 Ibid.

of the High Commissioner's Programme (Geneva, 15-19 June 1959).²² This session had not been convened with regard to the Tibetan refugees, but as the High Commissioner reminded in his introductory statement, it was to facilitate transition to a new schedule of meetings.²³ It was only in paragraph 11 that the High Commissioner briefly stated that he was aware of a new refugee problem in Southeast Asia, the refugees from Tibet, adding that he was following this question closely and would continue to do so.

Meanwhile, the immediate need of the hour was to arrange for the reception and relief of the refugees. In India, through the co-operation of the State Governments of West Bengal, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh²⁴ reception camps were opened at Misamari (Assam), Buxa, West Bengal and later Dalhousie (at that time in Punjab). Misamari, in the humid plains of Assam, turned out to be unsuitable for the new-comers accustomed to high altitudes and it had to be closed down and a new one opened at Bhalukpong (Arunachal Pradesh). From these centres, the refugees were dispersed to various areas of settlement.

Already, plans were being chalked out for the dispersal and settlement of the refugees in India as Mrs Lakshmi Menon, then Deputy Minister for External Affairs, revealed in her brief

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., p. 38, para. 6.

24 Ministry of External Affairs, Annual Report, 1959-1960, p. 31. The Report has not specifically stated which camp at UP, and neither has it mentioned Assam as one of the co-operating States.

and general statement to the Lok Sabha on 11 August 1959. For the moment, of urgent requirement and of utmost necessity was relief in terms of food, clothing and medical care. A rash of foreign non-governmental organizations and voluntary agencies apart from generous local contributions and donations came forward with immediate relief aid. Some were well-known international organizations, others were specifically devoted to Tibetan refugee aid. Certainly, the UNHCR was not in one of either group. This scramble of generosity however, could pose management problems, though unintended. P. N. Kaul, Deputy Secretary for Tibetan Refugees in the Ministry of External Affairs in 1961 has, in a recent book²⁶ briefly touched on the problem mentioned and underscores the magnitude of the work with his characteristic modesty in his admittance that "the settlement of Tibetan refugees in India was not too easy a task." The Government of India, however, "tackled the job with sympathy" and added "to some extent a number of voluntary agencies also gave their assistance." More revealing, however, is his statement, that "such agencies posed problems in that each wanted to help in its own measure according to its likes and dislikes." Therefore, a co-ordinating agency, much to the dislike of the relief-giving agencies, was formed in the Central

25 Foreign Affairs Record, vol. 5, no. 8, August 1959, p. 206.

26 P. N. Kaul, Frontier Callings (Delhi, Vikas, 1976).

Relief Committee, India, CRC(I). Its Chairman was (and still is) J. B. Kripalani, with the late Smt. S. Kripalani as its Vice-Chairman, and Mr K. S. Gupta as the Hony. General Secretary.²⁷ This resentment of the united CRC (I) channel was²⁸ also noted by Woodcock until a Master Plan Committee was set up under the auspices of the CRC (I) with the majority of members representing foreign agencies.

By 1961, the refugees had been dispersed to various organized locations for settlement. The CRC (I) monthly reports list some 32 locations either at camps or institutions including nurseries, schools, and hospitals being rendered relief assistance in the form of food, clothing and medicines. Stipends were also given to meritorious students, who were eligible to study in schools other than those created purely for the refugee children²⁹ and for those undergoing training in social welfare and later³⁰ for various trades and vocations. These localities were spread all over the country, and included Bhutan, at Arunachal Pradesh,

27 Ibid., p. 115.

28 See G. Woodcock, "Notes and Comment: Tibetan Refugees in a Decade of Exile", Pacific Affairs (Vancouver), vol. XLIII, no. 3, Fall 1970, pp. 411-12.

29 Undertaken by the Service Civil International at Mehrauli, New Delhi.

30 Early reports note cobbler and tailor training, later nurse aid and agricultural training are added. CRC (I) Monthly Reports, 1961.

West Bengal, Sikkim, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir in the north and Madras and Karnataka in the South, the majority being concentrated at Himachal Pradesh. Shortly after, when rehabilitation processes were begun in earnest, land settlements were also located at Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. Besides the Indian Government bearing the expenses of settlement, sources of relief aid mentioned in the 1961 reports were traced to some fourteen organizations and governments. These included the following, arranged alphabetically: American Emergency Committee for Tibetan Refugees (AECTR); Catholic Relief Service (CRS); Church World Service (CWS); Committee on Relief and Gift Supplies (CORAGS); Co-operation for American Relief Everywhere (CARE); Council of YMCA of India and Ceylon Refugee Section; Dr Thomas Dooley Foundation, California, USA; Government of South Vietnam; Indian Red Cross Society (IRC); Junior Chamber International, US (JCI); National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC); National Christian Council (NCC); Save the Children Fund, U.K. (SCF); Service Civil International (SCI).

The Church organizations often acted in co-operation with each other and much of the aid seems to have been provided by these and AECTR. This list, however, neither seeks to indicate the comprehensive assistance given through the years nor the total work involved--it does not for instance give any

indication of the personnel involved, either voluntary³¹ or attached to organizations, or individual donations. Besides, as noted by Woodcock, some organizations chose to ignore the CRC (I) channel and operated independently.³²

It seeks to indicate, however, the beginnings of wide participation, in which, significantly, UNHCR played no hand. Although, in all fairness, it must be mentioned that the UNHCR had concerned itself with assistance for the Tibetan refugees in Nepal³³ (to be dealt with separately),³⁴ and had contributed a total amount of \$151,493 during July 1960 through April 1962 for their welfare in that country. In India, the first indication of UNHCR involvement for the Tibetan refugees, besides "closely following the problem," was discussed at the 11th session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner in April

31 Many individuals devoted their services partly or entirely to the rehabilitation of Tibetan refugees. For instance, Mrs Freda Bedi, mother of the Indian film star, Kabir Bedi, started a school for monk novices at Green Park, New Delhi, which was later shifted to another location near Dalhousie. She was assisted entirely by independent volunteers, i.e., not attached to any agency or organization, and later became a nun of the Karmapa sect. Well established Tibetans also did much to assist their less fortunate brethren.

32 CARE, although listed, according to P. N. Kaul stopped its aid programme, almost in protest against pooling its resources with the co-ordinating agency.

33 Report of the UNHCR, GAOR, Seventeenth Session, Supplement No. 11 (A.5211/Rev.1), (New York, U.N., 1962).

34 Chapter IV.

35 1966. The High Commissioner had reported here that in agreement with the Government of India "towards the end of 1963, the proceeds of the 'All Star Festival' record³⁶ in India and other countries would "be used for the benefit of groups of Tibetan refugees in India." An amount of \$100,000 was being reserved by the High Commissioner from proceeds of the sale of the record in other countries. This amount would be transmitted to the CRC(I) and partly to the IAC for various projects. The High Commissioner also noted that the Indian authorities welcomed any outside support which the UNHCR could stimulate through the use of "good offices." Thus, in this connexion, the office had participated at a recent meeting called by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) at Geneva, to discuss the problem of refugees from Tibet and plans for its solution.

No particular reason is given for this late entry or for participation of UNHCR at this point. Negotiations, however, it is evident, were being actively sought. It might be pertinent, however, to point out that India was indicating a thawing

35 See "Refugees in India" in Report on the Implementation of the Current Programme for 1963 (including the Complementary Assistance Programme and other projects) submitted by the High Commissioner, A/AC.96/229, 15 April 1964 (United Nations, General Assembly), p. 35, paras. 143-144.

36 This record featured the special participation of stars of international fame and was an effective fund-raising campaign for the benefit of the refugees.

out in its rigid stand against United Nations involvement, particularly so after the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict, and as clearly evident by its stand in 1965 at the 20th session of the General Assembly. Any economic supplement at this point must have also been particularly welcome. For its part, India had assured the General Assembly of 1965 that "as in the past - we shall continue to give all facilities to the Tibetan refugees, and do our best to alleviate their sufferings and hardships. The Dalai Lama has been living in India for some years now, and is carrying on his religious and humanitarian activities without any restrictions from us. We shall continue to give the Dalai Lama and his simple and peace-loving people these facilities and all our hospitality."³⁷

Meanwhile, more agencies were becoming involved in the work for the Tibetan refugees. More prominent among others were Wings of Friendship (London), the Lutheran World Relief, the Indo-German Social Service Organization, the Swiss Aid Abroad (Switzerland), Tibetan Relief Aid Society, Canada - while large donations were made by the Government of West Germany and the Quakers. After the Chinese invasion of India in 1962, it had become quite clear that the refugee problem was not easily solvable, nor could it be regarded now as of temporary nature. The Tibetan refugee was not just awaiting repatriation to his

37 A/PV.1394, GAOR, 20th Session, 1965, Plenary Meetings, 14 December 1965, p. 5.

country. Certainly, he wanted to return - but to a Tibet of his own terms, and that, in the present conditions, was not foreseeable. The swing of concentration of aid by all participating agencies was therefore now to be of a permanent nature for the rehabilitation of the refugees. A Master Plan had to be chalked out and implemented to be able to avoid duplication and to obtain maximum benefit of the assistance from various agencies.

A special meeting of the voluntary agencies to discuss the problems of the Tibetan refugees thus came to be convened in October 1963 at New Delhi. Thomas Jamieson, Director of Operations in the Office of the UNHCR, was specially invited for the occasion, and addressed the gathering at a subsequent meeting on 10 November 1963.³⁸ This visit was to view the possibilities of stimulating interest of more voluntary agencies from abroad, and provided the spade work for the Geneva Meeting of early 1964.

As a result of this, Jamieson made a second visit to India and Nepal at the invitation of the respective governments from 10 September through 11 October 1964. A detailed account of the mission was submitted by the High Commissioner to the 12th session of the Executive Committee of the UNHCR.³⁹ The

38 C.A.C. (India), vol. 1, nos. 3 & 4, Oct-Nov 1963, respectively.

39 A/AC.96/INF.31, 23 October 1964, United Nations General Assembly, Executive of the High Commissioner's

Director noted distinct improvement in the general physical condition of the refugees since his last visit through the co-operation of the Government, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the CRC (India). Particular satisfaction was expressed at the development of the CRC (I) structure after the emergence of a comprehensive Master Plan. In addition to the General Committee, the CRC (I) had now three sub-committees: the Master Plan Sub-Committee; the Medical Sub-Committee; the Education Sub-Committee. An "Outline Plan for the Rehabilitation of Tibetan Refugees now in India", roughly estimated at some 40,000 was presented by the General-Secretary of the Committee was also included in the report. The break-up of the number was seen as follows: ⁴⁰

(previous footnote contd.)

Programme, 12th Session Account of the Mission of the Director of Operations to India and Nepal submitted by the High Commissioner.

40	Agricultural settlements (the figure showed the ultimate number envisaged. For the present there were 6,600/.	12,000
	Schools, excluding schools in agricultural settlements.	4,000
	Aged and infirm	3,000
	Lamas (not in full self-supporting occupations)	3,000
	Miscellaneous self-help centres and similar projects or in employment in the economy of India.	3,000

(footnote contd.)

The details of UNHCR provision of assistance for the various projects was stated. Of the \$100,000 to be made available, \$50,000 was to be given for the agricultural settlements and \$50,000 for the medical programme in the Simla area in agreement with the IRC through the League of Red Cross Societies. With regard to the former, \$30,000 would be spent on the purchase of a tractor with accessories, which in the first instance would be used at Bylakuppe land settlement near Mysore in Karnataka. A further \$10,000 would provide for seeds, fertilizers, poultry and livestock for the settlements at Chandragiri (Orissa) and Mainpat (Madhya Pradesh). The final \$10,000 would be for the provision of pumping equipment and piping for the irrigation of land at Chandragiri and two Indian-made tractors which could be utilized by any of the 3 settlements. The second amount for medical relief would benefit approximately some 3,200 in the Simla area. UNHCR contribution would be for the following: a clinic with indoor treatment facilities at Narbanda; a clinic with outdoor treatment facilities at Chota Simla and an ambulance; cost of reservations for 6 beds at Simla Sanatorium and Hospital; salaries for the appropriate staff.

In order to understand the totality of the task involved

(previous footnote contd.)

On road-works, until absorbed in permanent wage-earning occupations 15,000
 (in actual fact the number is 20,000, 5/6,000 out of these can be shifted to agricultural settlements as more land is cleared and reclaimed),

and place the work of the UNHCR in perspective, however, it is relevant to outline the general plan and pattern that has emerged through the years from accounts and reports of the Government of India (Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Rehabilitation), the CRC (I), and the UNHCR and articles issued by the Bureau of the Dalai Lama and interviews of several individuals, some of whom were actively involved in the programmes.

THE REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

Rehabilitation work in India has been pursued in two main fields -that of agriculture and that of industries and handicrafts. Although it was hoped that a major number could be rehabilitated on land, this was not easily possible in practice, for not only was land scarce but the site, as much as possible, had to suit the climatic needs of the Tibetans. More importantly, not all the Tibetans had an aptitude for agriculture. Reasons of security also played some part, for it was felt that large concentrations of Tibetans in the periphery of the northern borders might not prove desirable. ⁴¹ With the generous co-operation of various state governments, therefore, large tracts of jungle land were made available for the complete rehabilitation of some of the refugees on agricultural settlements which are located at Karnataka, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. Assistance of immense value was provided by the Swiss Association

41 There was a real fear at one time of Chinese spies posing as refugees.

for Technical Assistance (SATA). Under the Common Programme of the European Refugee Campaign an Indian partner, the Mysore Re-⁴² settlement and Development Agency (MYRADA) effectively assisted the development of not only land settlements for Tibetans in the south but also undertook similar development projects de-⁴³ signed to assist landless people of the region.

Because of non-availability of land, settlements of a mixed nature, more commonly referred to as multi-purpose societies, were established and are located at Dolangi, Simala, which is the largest of these settlements, Sonada, Darjeeling, at the Lama Hatta Tadda farms near Darjeeling, in Dehra Dun at the Tibetan Nehru Memorial Foundation, the Amdo Multipurpose Society, Sikkim and Rumtek Karma Group, Sikkim. Much of the assistance was given by the Catholic Relief Service (CRS) and AECTR.

Suitable industries which could place Tibetan goods at an advantage in view of the competition in the open market were also introduced. Since this programme envisaged such large-scale resettlement of some 5,000 refugees, a Tibetan Industrial Rehabilitation Society (TIRS) was established in 1966 with the help of voluntary agencies and as such no assistance was sought from the Government at that period. Specific projects that have been sponsored by TIAS are: a woollen mill at Bir,

42 Beginning in 1966, it has made available over \$3,500,000 for overall development of the Tibetan refugees.

43 J. S. Conway, "The Tibetan Community in Exile", Pacific Affairs (Vancouver), vol. 43, no. 1, Spring 1975, p. 79.

Kangra; tea estate, Bir, tea estate, Chautra; limestone quarry, Kumrao; fibre glass factory, Paonta; dehydrated lime plant, Satau, Tibetan craft community, Paprola and Sakya Agricultural Settlement, Puruwala.

Closely allied to the TINS programme, but independent of it and of a more spontaneous nature were the establishment of Handicraft Centres. While preserving the traditional craft of Tibet these served as a practical means of rehabilitation. There are seven such centres now: Tibetan Refugee Self-Help Centre, Darjeeling; Tibetan Refugee Handicrafts Training-cum-Production Centre, Dalhousie; Tibetan Chyosum United Association Centre, Kalimpong; Tibetan Women's Co-operative Association, Dharansala; Tibetan Craft Community, Dalhousie; Tibetan Chyosum United Association Centre, Simla; Dhondupling Settlement Craft Community, Clement Town, Dehra Dun. This list should not exclude handicraft work done in the various land settlements also, and that carried out in the Centre at Sikkim, however.

A vital aspect of rehabilitation was the accommodation of the vulnerable groups in the various programmes. These groups included the lamas, the old and infirm, the children and the sick. Lamas who could have proved a liability were encouraged by the Dalai Lama himself to be resettled in agriculture, at Mungod and Bylakuppe while facilities were provided for the continuation of their religious studies and preserving their religious order. Light assignments were chalked out for the old and infirm and special homes established in Mungod, Bylakuppe

and Dalhousie. Substantial funds were made available by Help the Aged, London. Responsibility of bringing up the children was of special concern especially to the Tibetans themselves. They had to be educated to cope up in a new society and yet not to forget their traditional lineage. In this regard, an autonomous Tibetan Schools Society (TSS) was formed as a special wing of the Ministry of Education which established seven residential schools and organized Day Schools in the land settlements as well, while five schools were opened at the industrial settlements. Scholarships are reserved for meritorious students and a number of children and students are sent abroad under various programmes of education or for adoption. Educational-cum-vocational training was introduced for a large number of over-aged students and those with special aptitudes. For those orphaned, the Tibetan Homes Foundation established 29 Homes at Mussoorie and Dharansala, recreating an atmosphere of large families. Much of the contribution for their upkeep has come from outside help and private organizations. Creches are also run for those that range from babies of a few months to children of 13 years of age, many of whom are orphans. Towards the total welfare for the Tibetan refugee, the medical programme organized by the CRC (I) has constituted a vital part of the rehabilitation programme, substantially aided by medical supplies and equipment from various agencies.

44 At Dalhousie, Mt. Abu, Kalimpong and Panchmarhi.

45 Bylakuppe, Tezu, Changlang, Mainpat, Chandragiri, Mungod.

Initially these included the AECTR, SHARAN, Thomas Dooley Foundation, Catholic Relief Services, and later I M Sweden, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the UNHCR.

SCOPE AND NATURE OF UNHCR ASSISTANCE

In this vast programme carried out for the Tibetan refugees, UNHCR gave in its contribution. Over \$1½ million was spent in various projects since the inception of its participation in 1964 through 1975 when its office closed down. A breakdown of this assistance in tabulated form is given in Appendix II.

As reported earlier (pages 40,44 infra) \$100,000 was made available from the sale of the 'All Star' festival record to the agricultural projects at Bylakuppe, Chandragiri and Mainpat and for the medical programme in the Simla area. This was in 1964, by the end of which, UNHCR had estimated its participation in projects for some 11,500 refugees, thus assisting one quarter of the total 40,000 Tibetan refugees then estimated. The following year, an additional amount of \$57,000 from the sale of the record in India itself was contributed,⁴⁶ and a further \$5,000 was specially donated by the Holy See.⁴⁷ This amount was used for follow-up of medical assistance in the Simla area for some 3,200 refugees and was put into effect by the Indian Red Cross Society through the League of Red Cross Societies. It helped to accelerate the reclamation of land in the agricultural settlements by providing an additional tractor which could be put to use under the

46 A/6011/Rev.1, 1965, para. 134.

47 A/6311/Rev.1, 1965, p. 16, para. 177.

guidance of the SATA experts in co-operation with the CRC (I). The amount contributed by the Holy See was used to instal one wheat grinding mill in each of the five agricultural settle-⁴⁸ments, at Bylakuppe, Chandragiri, Mainpat, Tesu and Changlang. Under the 1967 Programme of the UNHCR, \$9,000 was approved to⁴⁹ enable the medical programme at Simla to be continued, although \$7,000 was reported at the 23rd session of the General Assembly⁵⁰ as committed for this project during this period.

Further assistance was envisaged, and in its 1968 programme, UNHCR allocated \$19,000 for continued functioning of medical care in Simla and Narbanda and for the hospital at Mungod⁵¹ settlement. UNHCR was by this time showing signs of positive interest in the various aspects of the refugee problem in India and looking into areas where its assistance could be utilized best. One of these priority areas it discovered was the large section of the refugee population who still faced acute hardship--the aged, the infirm, the destitute. An amount of \$91,750 was therefore made available towards the construction of accommodation for 1,000 of these refugees who lived in inadequate shelter, many in the road camps of northern India. An equivalent amount was channelled through the UNHCR by the Netherlands Committee for the

48 A/AC.96/325, 15 April 1966, paras 125-127.

49 A/6711, 1967, para. 204.

50 A/7211, 1968, para. 200.

51 A/7612, 1969, p. 36, para. 207.

European Refugee Campaign.

Certainly, UNHCR interest in the Tibetan refugees in India was growing and came to be expressed in the establishment of its office in New Delhi. After consultations with the Government of India, a UNHCR representative was appointed on 1 February 1969, for an initial period of one year to co-ordinate the growing UNHCR assistance and participation.⁵³ For this year, a substantial amount of \$340,000 was committed for various projects.⁵⁴ At Mungod, it continued its activity in providing permanent housing for some old and infirm refugees who were at various road camps, and temporary shelters and by the end of 1969 some residential units were nearing completion. This scheme was being sponsored jointly with the Common Project of the 1966 European Refugee Campaign. New areas of need, however, had arisen. Some 900 lamas who had long lived in difficult conditions at Buxa were being relocated to land settlements at Bylakuppe and Mungod where they would be provided with housing, agricultural implements and livestock.

UNHCR decided to assist in this scheme of resettlement. A new situation had also arisen in the Mainpat land settlement where 304 families were engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry. Due to the unsatisfactory agricultural returns, small industries were being introduced, to the consolidation of which

52 Ibid., para. 206.

53 Ibid., para. 208.

54 A/8012, 1970, pp. 27-28, paras. 158-164.

UNHCR contributed. Its funds were also utilized in the continuation of medical assistance towards the running of various hospitals and clinics in different settlement areas. By this time, TLMS had come into operation and part of the UNHCR funds provided went into the repairing of homes and providing a working capital in the form of revolving loans for 5 industrial rehabilitation units in North India. These units were the Sakya Tibetan Society; Bir Tibetan Society; Tibetan Cholsun Industrial Society; Taopon Minerals; Tibetan Khampa Industrial Society; Kham Kathok Tibetan Society.

By this scheme, it was proposed that interest-free loans would be given to the different units which when recovered would form a Central Loan Fund out of which assistance could be available to other projects. However, the industries, instead of progressing showed signs of decline and thus these loans could not be recovered. An idea for action, however, had been introduced and in 1974 the loans were reduced and more positive returns were beginning to show. The balance of the 1969 allocation was to go for the strengthening^{of} the social and economic infrastructure in the established settlements and to develop their agricultural potential for which no funds were available.

After the New Delhi Office was established in 1969 and the substantial allocation made in that year, subsequent allo-

55 TLMS Information, April 1975.

56 Ibid.

cations, though somewhat reduced, continued to be substantial for continuing the various projects chalked out in 1969. Thus in 1970, \$100,000 was committed for the rehabilitation of 900 lamas in Karnataka originally in Buxa.⁵⁷ For strengthening the economic infrastructure at the Mainpat settlement, \$95,000 was committed.⁵⁸ To TIAS, provision of \$20,000 was made. This included working capital for a number of Tibetan industrial rehabilitation units and for three vocational training projects.⁵⁹ Assistance for the construction of accommodation for the aged and the infirm was still to be continued. To develop the agricultural potential of the Mahendragarh settlement which was being supervised by the Swiss Technical Co-operation (STC) an amount of \$50,000 was allocated under the 1970 programme. Further, with regard to the medical programme, an amount of \$3,000 was reserved for meeting the cost of treatment of some 150 tubercular patients in various sanatoria. In all, the 1970 programme committed an amount of \$300,000⁶⁰ to meet the needs of the rehabilitation programme for refugees.

In 1971, UNHCR committed a further \$201,667⁶¹ for the continuation of its assistance to various projects--consolidating existing settlements, providing vocational training and medical

57 A/8412, 1971, p. 31, para. 173.

58 Ministry of Rehabilitation, Annual Report, 1970-1971, p. 97. A/8412, 1971, p. 31, para. 175.

59 Ibid., p. 98, A/8412, 1971, p. 31, para. 177.

60 A/8412, 1971, p. 31, paras. 171-179.

61 A/8712, pp. 25-26, para. 131.

facilities and assisting the handicraft centres. In particular, this meant assistance in consolidation and development of the Mainpat settlement, resettlement of 900 lamas from Buxa at Karnataka, agricultural development of Mahendragarh settlement, prevention and control of TB, vocational training and reorganization of several handicraft centres.⁶²

In 1972 UNHCR provided \$134,250 for the completion of its previous assistance measures.⁶³ Clearly, a drop in the assistance was indicated--not only in the amount allocated but also in the depth of its participation--the focus now being on vocational training, medical facilities in the settlements and road camps and support to the handicraft centres. The Joint Medical Scheme, of the Government of India, CRC (I) and the World Health Organization (WHO) for the prevention and control of TB attracted its main interest.

This interest was emphasized in the following year's report by the High Commissioner where marginal assistance of \$141,347⁶⁵ was reported to have been made for the rehabilitation of the Buxa lamas, vocational training schemes and the consolidation of a number of rural settlements in which it had participated earlier. The phasing out of UNHCR activities which was evident was finally recounted in the High Commissioner's Report in 1975,⁶⁶

⁶² Ministry of Rehabilitation, Annual Report, 1970-71, p.98.

⁶³ A/9012, 1973, p. 26, para. 127.

⁶⁴ A/9612, 1974, p. 26, para. 129.

⁶⁵ A/AC.96/506, 28 August 1974.

⁶⁶ A/10012, 1975, p. 27, para. 143.

and only \$60,000 had been committed for vocational training⁶⁷ (\$8,000) medical programmes (\$42,000) and the Bonpo handicraft centre (\$10,000). In 1976, the High Commissioner announced that the progress made over recent years in rehabilitating the Tibetan refugee communities enabled UNHCR to close its Branch Office in New Delhi in 1975⁶⁸ and \$55,000 was allocated to wind up its activities in the medical (\$38,000) and vocational training (\$17,000) programmes. Thus officially ended the participation of UNHCR work for the Tibetan refugees in India. Some more hardened sceptics attribute termination at this point to Chinese pressure rather than on the successful conclusion of UNHCR work. Whether imagined or real, what is of substance, however, is to remember that the UNHCR was not created to cater to the needs of only a particular group of refugees, but to constantly be aware and assist new and possibly larger priority areas.

Refugees in Bhutan

In Bhutan, with a population of a little over a million, where some 3700⁶⁹ Tibetan refugees are said to reside, rehabilitation and assimilation has been easier due to the close similarities in racial and socio-economic relations between the two. Here, mainly because of lack of resources and the required personnel, and partly because of its special relationship with India, the

67 A/10012, 1975.

68 A/31/12, 1976, para. 215.

69 See Appendix I.

Bhutanese authorities approached those of the latter to take the responsibility of the rehabilitation programmes for the Tibetan refugees. Following a meeting held in June 1962⁷⁰ between the Governments of Bhutan and India, including Sikkim and attended by a representative of the Dalai Lama, therefore, it was agreed that the Indian Government would make funds available for rehabilitation schemes on land, to be provided by the Bhutanese Government, largely under Tibetan supervision.

Any outside assistance has therefore been channellized through the Indian Government. Donations, however, have come in the form of medicines, food or tools and equipment, mainly through the CRC (I), ABCTd, JCI, SHARAN and individuals. The settlements in Bhutan located at Paro, Thimpu, Khasakha, Jigme Nang and the newly-established at Bhumthang, have been largely agricultural, and self-sufficiency on the whole has been attained in a very short time. With the sensitivity created by the scare of the assassination attempt on King Jigme Sangye Wangchuk in March 1974, however, where the Dalai Lama's elder brother was allegedly involved, the refugees have been confronted by the precariousness of their position. Complete assimilation by adopting full Bhutanese citizenship has been encouraged and the policy of scattering the populations confined in the ghetto-like settlements is being pursued.

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Bureau of the Dalai Lama, Tibetans in Exile 1959-69: A Report on Ten Years of Rehabilitation in India (New Delhi, 1969), p. 162.

Chapter IV

UNHCR WORK FOR THE TIBETAN REFUGEES IN NEPAL

UNHCR WORK FOR THE TIBETAN REFUGEES IN NEPAL

As work by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Nepal has been substantial and distinct from that carried out in India, a separate chapter to deal with this involvement has been deemed necessary. Due to the limitations of contact and time regarding such work, however, much of the data gathered has been confined to United Nations documents.

Nepal, a small mountain kingdom of some 12 million¹ people wedged in between two giant neighbours has, by virtue of its position and size, had to take a cautionary role in foreign affairs. Being in contiguous proximity with Tibet it cannot but be affected indirectly or directly with events relating to that region. On 31 July 1955, Nepal formally recognized the People's Republic of China and thus opened channels for regularizing further relations with that country. This act brought to an end Nepal's direct relations with Tibet, where it enjoyed a certain amount of trading rights and privileges, and an acceptance of China's new position in Tibet.² It also served to safeguard its own position vis-a-vis China which had listed Nepal as a "tributary state" and which in 1950 had declared its objective of liberating Nepal after Tibet.³

1 Total population in 1975 was 11,555,983 as recorded in Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Statistical Office, Statistical Yearbook 1975, 27th issue (New York, United Nations, 1976), p. 91.

2 These actions on the part of Nepal might have been urged by the Agreement concluded between China and India in April 1954.

3 See Stuart H. Schram, The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung (New York, 1963), p. 257 in S.D. Muni, Foreign Policy of Nepal (Delhi, 1973), p. 70.

The year 1955 was also significant for Nepal in international standing, for it was then admitted to the United Nations. Its stand on Tibet, when the question came up before the United Nations was therefore no isolated instance of reasoning but one fashioned by an awareness of its own position and the safeguards which it had to pursue to maintain or enhance this position. From a stand of abstention either for the inclusion of the question of Tibet on the General Assembly agenda, or for a vote on the draft resolution, Nepal shifted to a stand of negation.

Its contention as expressed at the 14th session of the General Assembly in 1959⁴ was representative of its future stand on the issue. The "question of Tibet", the representative of Nepal felt, was one that was intricately connected with the question of Chinese representation. In the absence of such a representative of an undoubtedly interested state, the utility of such a discussion was questionable. Many states recognized the special relationship that existed between China and Tibet, and as far as Nepal was concerned, Nepal and China had a definite agreement "defining clearly our relations with China, including the matters connected with Tibet." On the question of human rights, it was first pertinent to point out what human rights the Tibetan people enjoyed previously. For, especially in Asia, which was in need of social progress, a "reversion to the traditional way of life" could not always be desirable or

4 GAOR, 14th Session, Plenary Meeting, 831st, 20th October 1959, pp. 474-5.

maintained. Inscription of such an item and its consequences moreover, could only defeat the relaxation of tension of a thawing Cold War. Keeping its larger interests intact, therefore, it abstained from voting on the draft resolution (A/L.264).⁵ It abstained again when called to vote for the inclusion of the item at the 15th session (1960) discussion of which could not be held in any case, due to lack of time. In 1961, at the 16th session, it continued to maintain its stand of abstention both on adoption of the item on the agenda and on voting on the draft resolution (A/L.376).⁶ In 1965, however,⁷ it took a negative stand against the resolution conveying a definite development in its national interest in general and external relations in particular.⁸

The work for the Tibetan refugees has therefore to be appreciated with this official attitude in mind. The inherent handicaps of refugee status was of course in itself a major obstacle to be overcome. Not only had the uprooting deeply disturbed the traditional pattern of Tibetan life, but many of the refugees who had earned a living in independent occupations as tradesmen, craftsmen and herdsmen, found that there were few openings in Nepal. The situation was rendered even more

5 Resolution 1353 (XIV), 21 October 1959.

6 A/PV. 898, 10 October 1960.

7 Resolution 1723 (XVI), 20 December 1961. See GAOR, 16th Session, Plenary Meetings, 1084th and 1085th, 1961.

8 Resolution 2079 (XX), 18 December 1965.

difficult as most adults were illiterate. Nevertheless, the initial apparent indifference of the host country for their welfare was discouraging. However, the political sensitivity of the Nepal Government, to the existence of refugees of so large a number within its borders and to the guerrilla activities carried out by the militant Khampas of eastern Tibet, many operating from the northern reaches of Nepal, at a time when it was making decided overtures of friendship with China, can well be appreciated. Lacking resources and personnel and easily available cultivable land, moreover, the country by itself could offer little hope or encouragement for quick and permanent rehabilitation and settlement. This was aggravated by the lack of easy communications in the mountainous region, making it difficult for effective relief and rehabilitation assistance. In addition, the comparatively high rate of physical ailments (such as TB) among the refugees, which was said to have been brought about by the change of climate from high altitudes to lower level areas, only served to compound the situation.

As for the refugee inflow, at the time of the Chinese invasion, many Nepalese residing in Tibet, mainly traders, had fled in panic. This was generated mainly from a feeling of insecurity of their own position and fear and horror at the atrocities being perpetrated on Tibetan nationals. However, as corroborated by statements of refugees of Nepalese origin, the Nepalese in Tibet were not harassed. While Nepalese who had fled Tibet constituted a handful of people who could merge with and into their own, the large numbers of Tibetans that flowed into

Nepal since 1959, some 20,000-30,000 could not be unobtrusively absorbed or easily explained. The Nepalese Government however did not acknowledge openly, for some time, that a refugee problem existed.⁹ The exodus of Tibetans was explained by the nomadic traditions of the Tibetans around the border areas who were thus largely left to fend for themselves.

It was true, however, that many of these refugees were herdsmen from the border areas and a number of them had been able to bring part of their possessions with them. They could not, however, depend on these meagre possessions to satisfy their needs for an indefinite and unknown future. Large groups of these refugees, moreover, were lost in the pockets of high mountains, in uninhabited and uninviting terrain, where programmes for their welfare could hardly be effective or practicably carried out. Thus, the Nepal Government, while not hindering the inflow of refugees, could not provide for their welfare in an organized manner, as in India. Many refugees therefore found their way into the latter country. With the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962, however, severe restrictions were placed on the entry of refugees into India from Nepal, making more desperate their conditions. A number of deaths were recorded due to starvation or sickness during this early period and many were compelled to return to Tibet. It was at this critical juncture that the Nepalese Government turned to the United Nations High Commissioner

⁹ George Woodcock, "Notes and Comment: Tibetan Refugees in a Decade of Exile", Pacific Affairs (Vancouver), vol. XLIII, no. 3, Fall 1970, p.410.

for Refugees and at the beginning of 1964 asked the High Commissioner to investigate the position of the refugees with a view to lending his "good offices" for their assistance.¹⁰

However, it was not the first involvement of the UNHCR in assisting the Tibetan refugees in Nepal. Since no official help had been forthcoming from Nepal for the refugees, the Tibetan authorities in India had appealed to the International Committee of Red Cross Societies (ICRC) and the Swiss Red Cross to help alleviate and rehabilitate these refugees in an organized manner.¹¹ The ICRC actively concerned itself with the problem since June 1960.¹² At the request of the ICRC, therefore, UNHCR made available its good offices to facilitate the task of assistance. In this connexion, it was able to channellize a contribution of \$151,493 during July 1960-April 1962.¹³ With the help of governmental and non-governmental contributions from Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland moreover, the UNHCR was promoting the implementation of a scheme for the education and training of young refugees in these countries. Towards this scheme, the UNHCR had contributed \$20,000 from proceeds of the UNHCR/UNRWA (United Nations Relief Works Agency)

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- 10 GAOR, Report of the UNHCR, 19th Session, Supplement No. 11 (A/5811) Rev. I (New York, 1964), p. 19, para. 184.
- 11 Office of the Dalai Lama, Tibetans in Exile 1959-1969 (Dharamsala, 1969), p. 157.
- 12 GAOR, Report of the UNHCR, 17th Session, Supplement No. 11 (A/5211/Rev. I) (New York, 1962), p. 12, para. 119.
- 13 Ibid.

Stamp Plan, for a group of refugee children in France.¹⁴ At the request of the ICRC and in agreement with the Office of the UNHCR, the Sovereign Order of Malta had also placed a DC-3 aircraft at the disposal of emergency relief work transporting supplies between major bases and high altitude camps.¹⁵ This gift had provided a real asset in relief work--by air dropping food etc.--in the remote northern regions where many groups of refugees had been stranded. A substantial amount of provisions was made available by the US AID Mission during 1960 through 1966.¹⁶

Yet the ICRC was still confronted with the problem of obtaining the required funds to implement emergency relief and rehabilitation programmes. The High Commissioner, in 1962, was able to muster \$14,000 towards the ICRC work and in addition received \$20,162 to be used for the education of 20 children in France.¹⁷ In 1963 another contribution of \$6,000 was made to enable 20 Tibetan children to receive education in Denmark.¹⁸

14 Ibid., para 120.

15 Ibid., Appendix Part II. Report on the 7th session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, Geneva, 14-22 May 1962, p. 28, para 76.

16 Tibetans in Exile, n. 11, p. 138.

17 GAOR, Report of the UNHCR, 18th Session, Supplement No. 11 (A/5511/Rev.1) (New York, 1963), para 129.

18 A/AC.96/229, 15 April 1964, Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, 11th Session, Report on the Implementation of the Current Programme for 1963 (including the complementary assistance programme and other projects), p. 36, para. 148.

Since the ICRC could not continue indefinitely in rehabilitation work, it wound up direct participation in these programmes on 31 May 1963.¹⁹ By this time, the Nepal Government came to realize the social, economic and political problems that might arise from such a large group of stateless people if left to their own devices. Lacking the required resources and trained personnel to initiate further programmes for rehabilitation or carry out programmes already started, it was compelled to seek out avenues of help. Under bilateral agreements with the Swiss Government, therefore, Swiss technical assistance (SATA)^{*} was promised in close co-operation with the Swiss Red Cross Society (SRCS), which had been picking up the threads of the ICRC. Furthermore, a Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)²⁰ was constituted in September 1963. It had not only applied for recognition by the ICRC but admission to the League of Red Cross Societies in Geneva also and showed willingness to undertake wide responsibility.

At this period of transition, the Nepal Government also requested the High Commissioner in February 1964 to send a representative to study the problem. The representative spent three weeks in Nepal and on the basis of his recommendation, the UNHCR was prepared to assist the refugee problem. Meanwhile,

19 A/AC.96/241, 4 May 1964. Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, 11th Session, Notes on the Situation of Refugees in Nepal, para. 3.

* Swiss Association of Technical Assistance.

20 Ibid., para. 13.

however, the High Commissioner informed the Government of
 21
 Nepal that an amount of \$50,000 was being reserved from his
 Emergency Fund for this group of refugees, in case it was
 required.

The UNHCR Representative's report accounted for 11,000
 22
 Tibetan refugees in Nepal. The Swiss Red Cross was providing

21 A/AC.96/229, 15 April 1965, p. 36, para. 147.

22 A/AC.96/241, 4 May 1964:

Location of Refugees

Area	Covered by Swiss Pro- grams	Others	Total
Chialsa	400	-	400
Dholpa	-	1,600*	1,600
Dhor Patan	250	-	250
Helsu	-	250	250
Janakpur	512 ^a	-	512
Kathmandu	330	550	880
Luntung	-	400*	400
Limi/Humla	-	1,000	1,000
Mustang	-	500*	500
Nubai	-	400	400
Pokhara	671	-	671
Solu Khumbu	-	1,100	1,100
Tanke	-	300*	300
Trisuli	1,100 ^a	-	1,100
Tsun	-	400	400
Walungchung	-	1,000	1,000
Various areas	-	237*	237
Total:	3,263	7,737	11,000

a. Assisted by Swiss Red Cross only in emergencies.

* These figures include the 4,000 refugees generally located in the far north-west; the other figures include the 3,700 refugees in the north and north-east. These figures are subject to fluctuations as refugees do not constantly remain in the same place.

medical care, food and welfare to some 3,300 who were living in some organized centres and the operational costs for this group had been \$75,000. SATA activities, financed by the Swiss Government had included technical training in wool spinning, carpet weaving, tool-making, tailoring, carpentry, building and agriculture for some 1,000 of this latter group. The Swiss Government was spending some \$230,000 a year on this programme. Little was known of the condition of the estimated 4,000 living in the northern borders and some 3,700 living on the borders north and north-east of Kathmandu who were in immediate need of assistance. The Report also noted hospital care for the refugees being provided by the (Protestant) United Mission at their hospitals at Kathmandu, Okhadunga, Pokhara and Tansen. Educational facilities were being provided for some 715 refugee children by the Nepal International Tibetan Refugee Relief Committee (NITRRC) under the chairmanship of Rev. Fr. M. D. Moran,²³ S. J.

The Report whilst expressing satisfaction at the progress achieved by the SATA rehabilitation and technical training programmes, highlighted the plight of those outside the pale of Swiss assistance. Lodged in areas not easily accessible, this group of refugees, was reportedly living in desperate circumstances, despite any help given from the local Nepalese population. Not only health and nutrition problems faced this group, but they had little opportunity or the required skills to pursue

²³ Ibid., paras. 7-8.

their own living. In general, relief and rehabilitation measures were necessary, but in particular recommendation for extension of relief and training programmes to as many as possible not receiving outside help was emphasized. The appropriate agency to carry out this relief programme was the newly formed NaC, but the necessary funds, supplies and initially experts trained in relief work had to be made available from abroad. UNHCR would give financial support for this programme which envisaged the provision of medical care, food and welfare to refugees centre by centre in the accessible areas with a view to reaching all 3,700 in the north and north-east. Thus with the 2,300 already receiving Swiss Red Cross relief a total of 7,000 would be assisted. With the approval of the Government, the NaC could extend this programme to inaccessible areas of the north-west at a later period.

Relief supplies from abroad were to enter the country free of customs and taxation. Food as well as funds to meet the costs of transportation and distribution within Nepal would be mainly supplied by the US authorities. As for trained staff, the League of Red Cross Societies had agreed to make available expert personnel to operate the programme. On the UNHCR's part, a Representative was officially to take up office in Nepal to ensure the necessary liaison with the Government and the agencies working in Nepal. ²⁴ Of the \$50,000 allocated from the UNHCR Emergency Fund, \$1,000 would be given to the SRC for medical

24 Appointed at end September 1964. See A/AC.96/INF. 29, 23 October 1964, p.13, para 33.

assistance and \$7,500 for supplementary food to the Trisuli area, where, particularly among the children, the health was very poor. Meanwhile, the Swiss Government would expand as far as possible the SATA training programmes. NITRRC would also expand its educational programmes to which UNHCR would give financial support. With this general outline in hand, UNHCR initialled its career in direct participation for Tibetan refugees in Nepal.

Based on this recommendation, a series of UNHCR missions visited Nepal to hold further discussions with the Government and make further assessments of the situation. Thus, it was not until after these visits that a firm plan of action was chalked out and active work begun. Meanwhile, in addition to the \$8,500 given for emergency assistance for supplementary food and medicines out of the \$50,000 reserved from the High Commissioner's Emergency Fund another \$20,000 was to be utilized for two multi-purpose centres to be created in areas where assistance was not being given. These were located at Janakpur and Trisuli. It was hoped that each centre would not only benefit some 1,300 refugees and local Nepalese but would augment in a small way the

25 The UNHCR Director of Operations visited Nepal in end September 1964 and in March-April 1965. See A/AC.96/INF.31, 23 October 1964, and A/AC.96/286, 21 April 1965.

26 A/AC.96/241, 4 May 1964, para 17.

27 A/AC.196/INF.31, 23 October 1964, para 25. Later \$23,370 in A/AC.960277, 30 March 1965, para 181.

28 A/6011/Rev.1, 1965, para 132.

comprehensive work already being undertaken by the SRC and SARA with essential food being provided by the US AID food programme. Each centre would comprise a small school, clinic, milk station and food distribution point and for the first time the interest of another UN agency, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to involve its services was mentioned. ²⁹

In 1965, as a result of the negotiations carried out between UNHCR officials and those of the Nepal Government, a comprehensive programme was drawn up with a view to helping the refugees become self-supporting and bringing to an end prolonged distribution of relief. At the 13th session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, ³⁰ the High Commissioner's submission of new and revised projects included a ³¹ detailed account of the proposed integrated plan of action. It was noted that of the earlier 11,000-12,000 estimated number of refugees, there were at present only some 7,000-8,000 left ³² as some 4,000 had since moved on to India. The majority of these refugees lived in remote mountainous areas and were thus difficult to locate, leave alone, assist. However, ³³ even among those receiving assistance in the five settlements already

²⁹ A/AC.96/INF.31, 23 October 1964, para 26.

³⁰ A/AC.96/286, 21 April 1965.

³¹ Ibid., Section II, paras 14-30.

³² Some had been compelled to return to Tibet.

³³ Javalakhel, Kathmandu; Chialsa; Pokhara-Hyanja; Dherpatan; Pokhara Lake.

organized by SMC and SATA, with help from NITRAC and the NRC and provision of food by the US Government under the US Agricultural Assistance Act, more than 2,000 were still in urgent need of assistance in these very settlements. While SATA was operating handicraft centres at Jawalakhel, Chialsa and Pokhara-Hyanja, and taking care of the agricultural settlement in Dhorpatan, the NRC was in charge of the settlement at Pokhara Lake. Yet, so far, refugees in these settlements had not succeeded in becoming self-supporting largely because of the enormous practical and psychological problems that confronted them.

A significant development now was the decision of the Nepal Government to make land available to the refugees in order to enable their permanent settlement.³⁴ This positive gesture enabled preparation of plans to seek permanent solutions. The cessation of distribution of food rations, hitherto generously provided by the US Government, could thus be envisaged, in principle, by the end of June 1966 at the Kathmandu and Pokhara Lake settlements, by which time most of those refugees would be able to earn their own living at standards comparable to the local population.

In pursuit of this plan, UNHCR, apart from supervising and co-ordinating assistance from other agencies and the Government would concentrate its inputs in four specific projects. An

amount of \$143,750 was thus requested and allocated for 1965 to assist approximately 100 refugees to become self-supporting and was calculated not to solve the problem as a whole but to pave a way for a global approach to a permanent solution.

Two of these projects related to the settlement of refugees in the areas around Pokhara Lake and Kathmandu. Under the former project, an amount of \$65,750 for the construction of houses, the setting up of a workshop and multi-purpose centre with NRC help to which local inhabitants would also have access and providing assistance to individual families to help in their establishment. This latter included an agreement with Indian authorities, who were operating 3 hydro-electric projects in the vicinity, to grant the refugees priority in the recruitment of labour. At Kathmandu, consolidation of the settlement was planned whereby, the Nepal Government would make more land available for permanent housing and invaluable assistance would be rendered by NITARC, which was prepared to construct a school, and SATA which was already operating a handicraft centre at Jawalakhel and was also prepared to expand its activities not only by providing seeds and tools and technical advice but also by providing a central water supply. NITARC expenditure would be \$5,000 and that by SATA, \$18,000. An amount of \$45,000 was required by UNHCR for the overall project which included construction of a permanent

35 Ibid., para. 20.

36 A/6011/Rev.1, 1965, para. 133.

clinic necessitated by the impending departure of the SRC. The third project related to the care of tubercular cases and provision for five beds at the Kathmandu TB Sanatoria was to be made available. This project which would be implemented by NRC in conjunction with the TB Association of Nepal would involve \$5,000 of UNHCR expenditure. Since it was seriously felt that management and counselling services would provide an effective help to solve individual refugee problems, a sum of \$9,000 was allocated for the purpose. This project would be implemented by the NRC, but in view of its lack of experience, 3 volunteers of the UN Association in the UK arrived at the end of 1965³⁷ to assist in the implementation of the project for a period of two years. Their presence in fact led to the preparation of a number of imaginative and effective plans for individual families and concentrating particularly on activities that would have an impact on the economic life of the settlement.³⁸ Depending on the results of these projects it was felt that more comprehensive planning could be made in the future.

By 1965, marked progress had been made in these projects despite various drawbacks encountered. The main obstacle³⁹ had been the formalities relating to the transfer of land. In 1965 also, due to the severity of the monsoon, an emergency⁴⁰ contribution of \$656 had to be made available for damages caused.

37 A/AC.96/325, 15 April 1966, para 166.

38 A/AC.96/INF.64, 18 October 1966, para 44.

39 A/AC.96/INF.44, para 43.

40 A/AC.96/325, 15 April 1966, para 164.

Progress, however, was undeniably made, which enabled the discontinuation of food rations to be distributed to all, except the aged and handicapped in the settlements, except at Pokhara Lake and Pokhara Hyanja. Even in these settlements, it was envisaged that such donations on the present scale could end by 1966⁴¹ and on a diminishing scale during the first six months of 1967.⁴² Thus, the High Commissioner in his annual report was also able to disclose that a number of able-bodied persons had been provided with regular work at construction sites or in handicraft centres among other occupations and report on the general progress⁴³ which was confirmed by his subsequent report to the 22nd session of the General Assembly.

In order to help consolidate the rehabilitation programmes for the estimated 2,500 refugees living in organized settlements, the Executive Committee had approved of \$71,000 to cover expenditure in 1967.⁴⁴ Although the majority of refugees lived in precarious conditions in mountainous regions, the local population of the areas shared their plight. Therefore, even though a subject of concern, it was felt that their needs could best be met by the Nepalese Government to include the development of these areas within the framework of their general development plans. Only then might it be possible to secure funds from

41 A/AC.96/INF. 64, 18 October 1966, para. 45.

42 A/6311/Rev. 1, 1966, 21st session.

43 A/6711, 1967.

44 Ibid., para. 202.

international sources for assistance. Meanwhile, the amount allocated for 1967 would go to three further projects.⁴⁵ Of the total sum approved, \$25,000 was for the construction of housing units and a school at Chialsa and \$6,000 was further needed for management and counselling to facilitate local integration. Of significance was also \$40,000 earmarked for a fund for permanent solutions.⁴⁶ Although there was an increasing tendency towards self-reliance, there remained a number of refugees who required financial aid in order to establish themselves in various crafts, trades and professions. This allocation was thus to provide selected refugees with funds to learn the different crafts or trade and thereafter equip themselves with the necessary implements. During the year, a number of schemes were started by means of which over 50 young refugees received training in various crafts and trades. In addition, this fund enabled a number of refugees to engage in various trading activities such as through the purchase of mules for transporting commodities or opening of simple rest houses and tea shops.

During 1967 a number of refugees (about 300) came down from the mountain regions into the Kathmandu valley. It was expected that there might be more coming. Those who had done so however were in urgent need of housing and general rehabilitation. Thus, in continuing its programmes for refugee welfare, the

45 A/AC.96/39, 30 April 1968, para 158.

46 Ibid. See paras 162-64.

47

Executive Committee at its 18th session approved of \$65,000 to be utilized in 1968. Of this amount, \$49,500 was to facilitate settlement of the new refugees who had entered the Kathmandu Valley. The rest was to continue and consolidate the previous programmes - \$8,000 for the fund for permanent solutions, \$4,000 for management and counselling and \$3,000 for medical care. Already food distribution had been discontinued by the end of 1967 and the refugee communities themselves had begun to assume responsibility for their weaker members, among whom were some 600 aged and handicapped. The management and counselling project was a remarkable success, and as regards medical care for TB cases, a small isolation ward had been constructed in Kathmandu.⁴⁸

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The High Commissioner was thus able to report to the 24th session of the General Assembly that the settlements during the year had largely become self-supporting due to the general improvement of the economic situation. In particular, the construction of all buildings, schools, dispensaries and workshops financed by the UNHCR in the organized settlements in the vicinity of Kathmandu, Pokhara Lake and Chialsa were completed during 1968. Both in the overall aspects of health, hygiene and general appearance of the settlements and in the development of handicraft industries and other small self-help projects the

47 A/AC.96/379, 13 September 1967, Section XIV, paras 99-106 and A/7211, 1968, p. 36, para 206.

48 A/AC.96/390, 30 April 1968, para 161.

49 A/7612, 1969.

progress made so far was encouraging. Each of the settlements had an officially registered co-operative which not only made good profit locally but also earned a considerable amount of foreign currency from the sale of handicraft goods. In this connexion, the Swiss Technical Co-operation had done much to find markets in Europe and the possibility of introducing Tibetan handicrafts in America was also being explored.⁵⁰ On the whole, the total number of refugees who might be considered as settled was approximately 3,000⁵¹ in five settlements.

However, further assistance was necessary especially in the medical and educational fields. It was also felt that a closer look should be given to those refugees scattered in the mountainous areas. As a result of field trips carried out by representatives of the Government, NRC and UNHCR a limited programme for some 300-400 refugees in the Rasua area was proposed.⁵² For this purpose, the Executive Committee allocated a sum of \$49,000 at its 19th session to cover operations during 1967. These included \$40,000 for local settlement in the Rasua area, \$4,500 for counselling and \$4,500 for medical care besides consolidating the existing projects and the number of small projects for housing, agriculture, education and co-operatives⁵³ successfully concluded.

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- 50 A/AC.96/407, 6 June 1969, paras. 145-146
- 51 A/AC.96/396, 2 September 1968, para. 117.
- 52 Ibid. Section XV, paras. 115-124. The number, however, increased to 550.
- 53 A/8012, 1970, para. 178.

What was significant during 1969 was not only the strengthening of relations between the UNHCR and the Government of Nepal through the various Ministries and Departments with which it directly collaborated, but also the inter-agency co-operation, with UNDP, FAO, UNICEF and WHO. ⁵⁴ SATA still continued to provide technical advice. Nevertheless, collaboration with the Government and agencies of the United Nations helped UNHCR plan projects ensure speedy implementation. This was markedly evident in the local integration of refugees in the Rasua area in Trisuli Province. The project was implemented by the Remote Areas Development Board in collaboration with the FAO/UNDP, UNICEF and WHO on land made available free of cost by the Ministry of Forestry. Through the Trisuli watershed project support from the FAO/UNDP Special Fund was secured for the construction of a health centre at Thangmujet. Medical equipment and supplies were provided through the Ministry of Health by UNICEF, while WHO had agreed to include the refugees in its projects such as anti-goitre campaign. Further, UNICEF provided supplies and equipment, through the Ministry of Education, for the construction of a school at Syabra. An FAO expert was also to carry out a feasibility survey for sheep and yak breeding in the area where it was envisaged to settle a number of refugees in animal husbandry and cottage industries.

Medical expenses covered services and supplies available to dispensaries in four settlements and for mobile clinics

54 A/AC.96/428, 2 June 1970, Section XV, paras 166-179.

operating in Kathmandu Valley and Balaju areas, while the counselling expenditure had gone to ensure satisfactory handling of problems arising in the refugee settlements. During 1969, housing construction in Kathmandu Valley which had been delayed by non-availability of land was begun. The fund for permanent solutions also continued to be a realistic asset and helped to consolidate settlements at Tashiling, Tashi Palkhiel and Dhorpatan.⁵⁵ An interesting example of benefits accrued from an allocation made from the fund was the successful Hotel set up at Namche Bazaar at the foot of Mt. Everest, catering to an increasing tourist trade.⁵⁶

With the immense progress made, stepped-up by the assistance of a number of UN agencies, UNHCR now felt prepared to enter the final phase of its work. Future programmes could now envisage the consolidation of established settlements, while at the same time identifying problems of scattered groups of refugees in the northern areas. The 1970 programme thus planned to meet both the immediate and long-term needs, paying particular attention to the local integration of the scattered groups and to the need to establish a strong and viable infrastructure responsive to the needs of the refugees.⁵⁷ A similar amount of \$49,000 was⁵⁸

55 Ibid., para. 176.

56 A/8012, 1970, para. 183.

57 A/AC.96/428, para. 179.

58 A/8412, 1971; A/AC.96/412, 15 September 1969, Section XV, paras. 126-135.

allocated by the Executive Committee of the UNHCR's programme seeking to meet the essential needs of scattered groups in particular and consolidate local settlement of refugees in general. A sum of \$20,000 was proposed to finance the local integration of refugee families, mainly nomadic in northern Nepal,⁵⁹ and which could directly benefit 1,000 and indirectly some 2,000 persons. An amount of \$10,000 was utilized for local settlement in Lumbini close to the Nepal/India border, south-west of Kathmandu. This amount would help develop it as a pilgrimage centre and also settle a few lamas in the area. The rest of the commitment would go for consolidation purposes - \$10,000 for the building of two primary schools,⁶⁰ \$4,500 for the provision of medical care and \$4,500 for management and counselling services.

With this new thrust in mind, the planning for the 1971 programme was influenced by two factors: (1) the need to continue assistance to scattered groups in northern Nepal; and (2) to provide marginal assistance to settlements in such fields as medical care, management and counselling services and promotion of the handicraft industry.⁶¹ Thus of the \$65,000 approved for 1971, a major part of \$35,000 was to be utilized for those scattered groups of refugees. As a result of several tours made by UNHCR officials and those of the Government, three areas were found to require help - Dolpo in the north-west, Walungchung in the north-

59 Mustang area for some 500 people. A/8412, para 198.

60 One in North-East and the other in North-West Nepal.

61 A/AC.96/429, 12 August 1970, Section XV, para 121.

east and Mustang in north central Nepal. Of these, the latter, where over 800 refugees were estimated to be living, was in greatest need of assistance. At least \$20,000 was envisaged for this area to provide housing, health and education facilities and promote local settlement opportunities in animal husbandry and handicrafts.⁶² The remaining \$18,000 could be utilized for similar assistance in the other two areas. While continued financial assistance was given for the fund for permanent solutions, \$10,000 and \$6,500 towards medical care and \$3,500 for management and counselling services, a revolving fund was added to encourage activities in the handicraft sector. A sum of \$10,000 was reserved to be administered by a supervisory committee under NRC guidance. This would provide interest free loans to refugee enterprises in and outside settlements.⁶³

At the 28th session of the General Assembly, 1973,⁶⁴ the High Commissioner reported the impending closure of the UNHCR branch office at Nepal. This was made possible after consultation with the Nepalese authorities, and the positive progress made in the country. This area, he noted, was on the way to achieving self-sufficiency and only marginal assistance was required. No new refugee settlements were planned and UNHCR assistance in 1972 was directed mainly to the provision of

⁶² Ibid., para. 123.

⁶³ A/8712, 1972, para. 141.

⁶⁴ A/8012, 1973, para. 125.

ancillary services - medical care, management and counselling, the provision of a working capital to refugees engaged in small trades or in professional occupations and supplementary assistance financed from a fund for permanent solutions. Thus, an amount of \$46,000 was committed for the purpose of which \$20,000 was earmarked for the fund for permanent solutions, \$8,000 for management and counselling services, \$8,000 for medical care, \$5,000 for the revolving fund and \$5,000 was for air services to facilitate transportation.

In view of the steady progress made, the UNHCR office in Nepal was closed in mid-'73. During 1973, completion of the previous years' programmes was implemented and a further sum of \$4,000 was disbursed for counselling services and another \$4,000 for supplementary aid to enable the NRC to continue its medical and counselling activities. Programmes benefiting the refugee community in the Mustang area was in fact not completed until early 1974.

A satisfactory level of self-sufficiency was, however, achieved to enable the UNHCR to withdraw its involvement and channelize its resources to new priority areas. Since the

65 A/AC.96/455, 27 August 1971, para. 108.

66 Ibid., paras. 106-114; A/9012, 1973.

67 A/9612, 1974, paras. 127-128; A/AC.96/487, 27 August 1973, para. 353.

68 A/AC.96/506, 28 August 1974, para. 281.

69 Ibid., para. 280.

establishment of the UNHCR Branch Office in 1964, NRC acted as its main operational partner. This collaboration was essential in making possible the programmes of assistance. The NRC had gradually assumed the central role of overall operational responsibility and had effectively acted as a link between the Government and UNHCR. Later, there was an increasing measure of direct support and collaboration with various governmental agencies and those of the United Nations. These, therefore, had not only enabled UNHCR programmes to be effectively implemented but also ensured future assistance upon the termination of that by the UNHCR.

At the time of this writing (March 1977), seven settlements have come into being at Jawalakhel, Dhorpatan, Solo Khumbu, Pokhara-Ryanja, Tashiling, Walung and Chili of which the first five are properly established and the new areas still being explored. Due to the scarcity of available agricultural land, these have had to be of a mixed type of settlement which potential agencies such as UNHCR could tap and further. Most of the settlements thus operate on a co-operative basis - whether cultivation of land or business. But for the most part, the essential activities have centred on handicrafts. Since initially the refugees here were largely left to fend for themselves, a great deal of leadership was called for from the Tibetans themselves. Thus, Tibetan authorities maintained an independent office headed by a representative in Nepal to cater to the interests of

the refugees. At the latest count ⁷⁰ there are some 8,764 Tibetan refugees in Nepal engaged in and pursuing various trades, business and professions.

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Made by the Bureau of the Dalai Lama. See Appendix I.

Chapter V

CONCLUSION

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The preceding chapters have made an attempt to study the nature and content of United Nations involvement in Tibetan refugees. On the one hand, the United Nations was unable to resolve the political problem which related to the status of the refugees. On the other, their desperate conditions could be and was, attended to. Yet, how much of what has been achieved can be said to be the direct consequences of UN involvement? Can it be said that this involvement was at all crucial or even necessary? Did it make a difference to the refugee situation?

No doubt, UN involvement in any work, no matter how small or little its impact, carries with it a certain weight and commands a certain amount of respect and resources. UN agencies have proven themselves, in unprejudiced and dedicated work, in seeking or helping to create the ideal conditions for human welfare and progress as pledged in the UN Charter. In time of trouble the United Nations, therefore, is more naturally turned to and any assistance from it is more acceptable. In particular, UNECR is an agency exclusively dealing with refugee problems and from its wide and long experience specialized to do so.

Yet, despite the psychological support and confidence that an agency of the United Nations might promote, with regard to the Tibetan refugees in particular, the UNECR faces the

possibility of being criticized for having contributed so little compared to the vast amount of contributions made by various other organizations and agencies. In India, where the largest number of refugees came, a little over \$1½ million was spent since 1964 through 1975 and in Nepal some half a million dollars between 1963 and 1973. The spring 1973 issue of Tibetan Messenger¹ lists some 70 organizations or concerns associated with Tibetan refugee work in some way, directly or indirectly.² Whereas it is useful to go through this list to get a perspective of where UNECR stands, it does not indicate the actual involvement of each.

In India, the CRC (I) reports had on several occasions given short accounts of work done or contributions made by different agencies.³ In the milieu of generosity and concern, UNECR seems to have filled a small gap of need. Its most remembered, significant, contribution seems to have been the donation of two bull-dozers and money made available for agricultural and husbandry development. Later, mention is also made of its involvement in projects for the aged and medical welfare. Not that the CRC (I) showed no appreciation of UNECR work. Both officials of the CRC (I) and TRS did express their gratitude to UNECR participation in the various rehabilitation programmes.

1 A quarterly bulletin of news and features on Tibetans and the work being done for them. Utrecht, The Netherlands.

2 See Appendix IV.

3 See Chapter III, pp. 38, 41.

In the Independence Day issue of the CRC (I) 1970 Report, J. B. Kripalani, its Chairman, in his "Message" included a brief reference to UNHCR, after mentioning various support from abroad in the 11 years (since April 1959) of CRC work, "From 1968 onwards", he said, "the UNHCR has also helped in the work of the rehabilitation of the Tibetans by making generous allocation of funds for specific projects like the Homes for the Aged, T. B. eradication programs, etc." The Rehabilitation Ministry took serious note of UNHCR participation. All do admit, however, that in the overall assistance given, the UNHCR contribution was comparatively minor. More substantial aid (in India as well as in Nepal) seems to have been provided by CARE, AECTR, the Church Organizations, or the US AID Mission, funds from the Norwegian Refugee Council and the European Refugee Campaign and significant all round contribution made by various Swiss organizations. The foremost group provided both emergency relief in the form of food, medicines and clothing as well as took up specific projects as in health, education or training. The middle group committed major finances for industrial projects, in particular, and the Swiss agencies undertook a very responsible part in the rehabilitation of the Tibetan refugees especially with expert assistance in agriculture, handicrafts and various trades.

In assessing the role played by UNHCR for Tibetan refugees, it would be well to know within what framework this agency is able to function. This office was the latest of a series of

ad hoc arrangements created out of the need to cater to the vast problems of the refugee, which, at the beginning of the century were taking on alarming magnitude. It was seen that while the "refugee" as distinct from the "migrant"⁴ can be the object of sympathy and could obtain private relief, when belonging to a group, he presented enormous problems of assimilation. His presence gave rise to the problems of lodgings, maintenance and legal protection, not to mention those from psychological pressures, which neither governments nor private organizations could satisfactorily take charge. Governments might be haunted by prejudices and sensitivities of economic and political repercussions. Private organizations might be limited by finances or legal mandate.

Several attempts were made by the League of Nations to look into this problem, and prior to this, the League of the Red Cross Societies had done much to point out the necessity for such an organized body to deal specifically with refugees. Thus in 1921, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees came into being with Dr Fridtjof Hansen of Norway as its first High Commissioner. Under his far-seeing guidance, a methodical blueprint for future use was set down--one of the most enduring being the establishment of identity documents, known as the Hansen Passport, necessary to legalise the status of the refugees. With his death, a vacuum was created which the Secretariat,

4 Louise W. Holborn, "Refugees: World Problems", in David L. Sills, ed., International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 13 (New York, 1968), p. 362.

which took over the work, could not fill. The Nansen Office was thus created as an autonomous body starting its work in 1931. The growing hostility of Germany, however, prevented it from effective functioning and an independent agency mainly catering to the needs of refugees from Germany came into being. Considering the strain resulting from two organizations doing the same work, yet another arrangement combining these two organizations was made on 30 September 1938 under a High Commissioner. The United States, not being a member of the League, and sensitive to the problems of migrating refugees, further initiated a conference at Evian in July 1938. As a result, the Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR) came into being, bringing for the first time, on an international level, assistance in legal and orderly migration of the refugee. During the course of the Second World War, foreseeing the formidable task of essentially European reconstruction, joint Anglo-American interests and initiatives also gave birth to the formation of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). This was set up formally in December 1944.

By the end of March 1946, however, some 1,675,000 refugees and displaced persons in Europe, Middle East and Africa in the hands of UNRRA, IGCR and the League High Commissioner for

5 George Woodbridge, UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, vol. 1 (New York, 1950), pp. 3-4.

Refugees still had to be resettled. Thus, the International
 Refugee Organization came into operation on 20 August 1948,⁶
 after innumerable discussions had been held by the Preparatory
 Commission for the United Nations, the Third Committee of the
 General Assembly and finally the Economic and Social Council
 (ECOSOC). After a career of four and a half years' duration,⁷
 however, the problem of the refugees still remained. The need
 for continuous protection of refugees featured largely in the
 agenda of the UN Commission on Human rights as in the ECOSOC.
 "A Study of Statelessness"⁸ was thus prepared by the Secretary-
 General proposing the establishment of a new organization. In
 1949, the General Assembly agreed in principle to setting up the
 Office of the UNHCR. At the next General Assembly session, on
 14 December 1950 the Statute of the UNHCR was adopted and the⁹
 office came into being on 1 January 1951.

Its main objective was seen as providing international
 protection for refugees falling within the competence of the Statute.¹⁰
 Permanent solutions, by assisting governments, and, subject to
 approval of the governments concerned, private organizations to

6 GA Resolution 62(1), 15 December 1946, 67th Plenary Meeting.

7 Although its term of existence was to have ended in June 1950, it was actually wound up in the spring of 1962.

8 August 1959.

9 GA Resolution 428(v), 14 December 1950, 325th Plenary meeting.

10 This extended to: (i) Any person who has been considered a refugee under the Convention of 28 October 1933, 10 February 1938, the Protocol of 14 September 1939, or the Constitution of the ILO. (ii) Any person, who as a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951...."

facilitate the voluntary repatriation of such refugees on their assimilation within new national communities, were to be sought.

The High Commissioner's duties involved political and legal protection for refugees and assisting governments and private organizations materially in the task of helping refugees to become self-supporting in their new situations or in facilitating repatriation. With regard to international protection, a "Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees" was adopted in 1951¹¹ its immediate object being to ensure for the refugee certain fundamental rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This instrument, however, was limited in scope in that it covered only persons who had become refugees prior to 1 January 1951. Consequently, a Protocol, adopted in 1967, removed the dateline making the Convention applicable to all refugee situations, present and future and ensuring him a legal status. Furthermore, although the Convention applied to refugees who had gained asylum, it did not guarantee the right of asylum itself. To protect the interests of the refugee therefore, a Declaration on Territorial Asylum¹² was adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 1967 which, though recognizing asylum as the prerogative of the state also recognized it as "being a peaceful and humanitarian act it

11 It took nearly three years to secure the necessary ratifications and was finally brought into force only on 22 April 1954.

12 Resolution 2312 (XXII) 14 December 1967, 1631st plenary meeting.

cannot be regarded as unfriendly by any other state." These steps, however, while they could not be binding, could produce tremendous psychological and moral pressure on states. One practical result of this concept of protection was the provision of identity and travel documents and papers.

Although international protection is essential, it alone is not enough to enable a refugee achieve a permanent solution to his displaced situation. Material assistance has therefore, been regarded as an important factor in helping the assimilation of refugees in their new community. Lack of finances, however, severely limits its operations and its projects are thus designed to supplement the assistance given by governments and other organizations. Recognizing the urgent necessity of adequate funds to carry out effective work, the High Commissioner's earlier reports made repeated appeals to the international community dispelling all complacent beliefs that the refugee problem had been solved or that it related only to the world war situation. As a result, the Ford Foundation made a grant of \$3.1 million in August 1954, setting a precedent for other grants and donations. At the following ninth session of the General Assembly, a United Nations Refugee Fund (UNREF) was also set up formally on 21 October 1954. A target amount of \$16 million was fixed to be raised every four years from voluntary contributions. Since the UNHCR could not pursue programmes from funds provided on an irregular basis, even if generous, the General Assembly decided to evolve a system whereby UNHCR assistance could be provided under a series of annual programmes to tackle situations as they emerged. By

January 1960 itself, a total number of 1,326 projects were being carried out firstly under UNRRA and later under the yearly programmes. Since emergency situations cannot be ruled out and the Office is often called upon to provide immediate relief assistance in the initial phase of a new refugee problem, an Emergency Fund was established in 1957 by the General Assembly. ¹³ Maintained at \$500,000, it is made up of repayment of loans granted to refugees and usually covers assistance in the form of food, medical supplies and shelter. Settlement projects are only started when it is clear that the refugees will not be able to return home. Campaigns such as the issuance of stamps or the sale of an international-starred record have also been launched to seek out more funds. Further, contributing substantially to the accrualment of additional funds was the impact ¹⁴ created by the World Refugee Year (1958), dramatizing the plight of the refugee.

Lack of adequate finance, although constituting a major limiting factor, is not the only one curbing UNHCR activities. Realism, rather than impractical concern of a given situation,

13 GA Resolution 1166 (XII), 26 November 1957.

14 The aims of the year which began on 1 July 1958 had been: "(a) to focus interest on the refugee problem and to encourage additional financial contributions from governments, voluntary agencies and the general public for its solutions; (b) to encourage additional opportunities for permanent refugee solutions.... on a purely humanitarian basis and in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the refugees themselves...."
GA Resolution 1285 (XIII), 5 December 1958.

guides its actions. Dr Schnyder, the third High Commissioner, expressively voiced this awareness. "It is not because somebody uses the word 'refugee', he said, "that we should be present with a material assistance programme.... The responsibility of meeting a refugee problem falls in the first instance on the country of asylum. Only when that country feels that it cannot cope with the problem without outside help and asks us to act, do we have a role to play." Certain conditions also have to be fulfilled prior to assistance. "we must realize," he said, "that we are not more than an instrument of the international community. We must make sure, therefore, that governments will support us and provide the means, either directly or indirectly, for an action that can be carried out until its successful conclusion. It is useless to create hopes and then discover that we have made unrealistic promises." The assistance to be given was only a part of the overall efforts of governments and private bodies to solve refugee problems. It could therefore be "no more than a drop of oil that permits the international machinery of assistance to work smoothly and effectively."¹⁵

However, the UNHCR does not operate only within limitations. It has become evident that the refugee problem is not one of the past and that the Office must therefore be fairly equipped to deal with possible recurrences in the future. The mandate years, first of all, have been extended from three to five years to enable the High Commissioner to "plan ahead for a period of

years." ¹⁶ The concept of "good offices" instituted by the General Assembly in 1957, ¹⁷ extended the High Commissioner's field of action beyond the strict legal limits set out in the Statute. In effect it authorized the High Commissioner to help all refugees whether formally coming under his mandate or not. Finally, two resolutions of the General Assembly in World Refugee Year (1959) reinforced the need for assistance to all refugees irrespective of whether they came under his mandate or not. The refugee was given a social definition and authority was given to the High Commissioner "in respect of refugees who do not come within the competence of the United Nations, to use his 'good offices' in the transmission of contributions designed to provide assistance to those refugees." ¹⁸ In yet another resolution adopted in 1960, governments were invited "to continue to consult with the High Commissioner in respect of measures of assistance to groups of refugees who do not come within the immediate competence of the United Nations." ¹⁹ Now, not only was the High Commissioner given greater freedom to deal with new and emergency situations, but no longer was assistance confined largely to the European sphere.

16 GAOR, 8th Session, Third Committee, 499th Meeting, 15 October 1953, p. 89.

17 GA Resolution 1167 (XII), 26 November 1957.

18 GA Resolution 1388 (XIV), 30 November 1959.

19 GA Resolution 1499 (XV), 1960.

The work of the UNHCR is now also increasingly assisted by much closer and more widespread co-operation with many other United Nations agencies. The International Labour Organization (ILO) had, in fact, under the League been involved with finding suitable employment for refugees as early as 1929. Today, other agencies catering to various aspects of human development - the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) among others, assist in the overall welfare of the refugee. Significant participation has also been that of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), which, initially established in Europe, has today extended its operations and plays a dynamic part in organizing the transportation of refugee migrants in need anywhere in the world, while leaving the care and maintenance of refugees to the UNHCR.

More significant collaboration is that with the numerous governmental and non-governmental or semi-official organizations that deal wholly or are concerned largely with refugees. These have often provided the vital links for comprehensive work between governments and international organizations or private agencies. In some instances, they are non-denominational, like the League of Red Cross Societies, whose work for refugees inspired the creation of an international machinery. In many cases, they are linked with Churches and often the strength of their financial resources and the scope of their programmes have

exceeded those of the UNHCR. Voluntary agencies are also of significant importance by virtue of the funds they make available - usually those private bodies from the Nordic countries or in acting as operational partners of governmental and international agencies on the one hand and in providing the human link between undertakings and individual refugees on the other. More than a 100 such agencies, most of them incorporated in the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), work in close co-operation with UNHCR playing a crucial role in its overall aim. Together with all these concerns, the UNHCR has succeeded in overcoming the enormous difficulties and limitations originally encountered by comprehensive collaboration to give the refugee a new lease of life.

In assessing the role played by the UNHCR in any refugee situation therefore, it is necessary to keep this framework of its functioning in mind. With particular regard to the Tibetan refugees, the peculiar situations and attitudes of the host countries should also be taken into account. As seen in chapters 3 and 4, both India and Nepal, where UNHCR eventually participated in work for the Tibetan refugees, initially chose not to avail of the services of the UNHCR. The High Commissioner had little option but to follow the question closely and continued to do so for some time. Despite the stand taken by both countries, however, the High Commissioner was able to make use of his "good offices" to channellize additional funds and

assistance to Nepal, which of the two suffered a more critical situation. What the High Commissioner could do at this point was expressed clearly in his 1962 report. "The essential task of the High Commissioner", he said "with respect to new groups of refugees, is to draw the attention of the international community to their existence and their problems, and to stimulate and co-ordinate the measures required for the earliest and most appropriate solution of those problems."²¹ This accounts for²² many refugees settled outside the Indian sub-continent. In this connexion a number of children were adopted or were sent for education abroad to many European countries -- largely financed by organizations within those countries and the UNHCR had played a prominent part, especially in Nepal, to seek out possible assistance. Switzerland has been responsible for sharing a major responsibility in the overall welfare for the refugees, and it is therefore natural that most of the refugees abroad are²³ in fact settled in Switzerland, sponsored either by that Government and various non-governmental and private sources or voluntarily by the refugees themselves. Others have settled down²⁴ in Canada, the USA, and a few in Japan and Taiwan. Many have gone under various programmes sponsored by the different countries concerned and have achieved complete self-reliance. Others

21 GAOR, A/5211/Rev.1, 1962, para. 1.

22 See Appendix I for details.

23 Some 1,170.

24 See Appendix I for breakdown.

were able to benefit from further education or training in these countries before returning to serve their communities in India or Nepal faced with larger problems. Since resources for their welfare were adequately made available by the different donors, it was hardly necessary for the UNHCR to assist them directly. Through his good offices, however, the High Commissioner did help to awaken the conscience of these countries to the helpless plight of this group of refugees.

If the initial attitude of the two concerned countries was similar, the situation existing in both these countries was not. For while a much larger number of refugees found their way into India, it was also a large country and despite its own pressing population problems, had greater potential for settlement. Moreover, it had an organized agency, with specific relief and rehabilitation programmes, backed by the Government, to centralize and control various aid received. This aid, both from within and without was also of no mean measure. When the UNHCR did finally participate in the programmes for Tibetan refugees, its assistance was limited to specific projects "in view of the fact that considerable assistance was given by the Government of India, CRC (I), through which voluntary contributions from abroad was channelled, as well as various voluntary agencies represented in India." ²⁵ Yet, India needed supplementary aid, especially, with the impending withdrawal of participation of several major agencies such as AECTA, the National Council of

25 GACR, A/7612, 1969, p. 36, para. 204.

YMCAs and SHARAN all within 1967-68. UNHCR, therefore, sought to fill this vacuum by contributing a substantial amount to the various programmes being carried out in 1969 and at the same time establishing its Branch Office in New Delhi. In the subsequent projects that it took up, therefore, UNHCR provided urgently required assistance, not available from other sources, mainly for the consolidation of existing land settlements and to provide vocational training opportunities and medical assistance. ²

In Nepal, however, its responsibilities and therefore, participation, were much heavier, for, lacking the initial required support by the Government, no united large-scale programme could be launched. The ICRC work was essentially that of co-ordinating relief, although settlement at various camps was initiated. Winding up direct participation in 1963, its work was then taken over by the Swiss Red Cross. Here again was an agency specialized in relief work, but not fully competent to deal with long-term rehabilitation work. The US AID Mission provided essentially needed food and the Swiss Service for Technical Co-operation working through SATTA expert advice and training programmes for refugees provided a pertinent aspect of rehabilitation but these activities could not look after the total programme for refugee welfare. Neither could the Nepal Government, lacking in resources and specialized experience. Thus, it felt compelled to turn to the UNHCR, an impartial agency, with the required knowledge and experience of refugee work to provide the

necessary overall balance needed to supervise and co-ordinate all assistance for the settlement of the Tibetan refugees. Close co-operation between the Nepal Government and the UNHCR followed. With remarkably little input in specific projects for a period of less than ten years, therefore, the UNHCR was able to declare, upon its withdrawal, that its aim had been achieved as the refugees for whom the various programmes were carried out had gained a level of self-reliance. The numbers involved were of course far less than those in India. Side by side, it also nurtured the NRC to eventually take over effectively from it. In this work in the latter stages, it was prominently assisted by a number of UN agencies in various projects.

From its participation in work for Tibetan refugees in India and Nepal, it can be said that the UNHCR did achieve what it set out to do, given its built-in limitations. It was not required and could not, even if it wanted to, solve the refugee problem on its own. It was however, required to assist both governments and voluntary agencies in the assimilating processes and assemble all available aid to find a permanent solution. It was not required to compete, nor could it do so, with either governments or voluntary agencies in this assistance, but was called upon to form a part of the whole collaboration. Its participation was as necessary and as vital as that of other agencies in helping both countries to solve the problem effectively. For, while it recognized that the main responsibility for the refugees fell on the concerned states, as expressed in

its Declaration on Territorial Asylum, 1967, it added that the international community should also "consider appropriate measures to lighten the burden on states that find difficulty in granting or continuing to grant asylum."

While the Indian Government which holds a greater responsibility for a greater number of refugees obviously spent, and continues to spend, a vast amount of resources for the Tibetan refugees, its actual expenditure, especially in comparison to expenditure on other refugees is not known. It is reasonable to assume that the scale of expenditure differed from the situation of other groups of refugees. There is no doubt, however, of its unstinting efforts and contribution in all respects to help settle the Tibetan refugee although for what length of time cannot be definitely predicted. Generously helped by numerous organizations in India and abroad, it lightened the role and responsibility of the UNHCR. In Nepal, where the Government could not command such wide resources, the UNHCR was called upon to play a major role in helping to solve the refugee problem. While its participation was necessary in both situations, its impact differed according to the situation and its involvement. Its indirect impact, moreover, from the use of its "good offices" making available large amounts of funds

27 Mainly people of Indian origin from Burma or Ceylon.

28 Woodcock is of the opinion that different policies are not followed for different refugee situations and that the total amount for all is the same, about \$400 per head, p. 418.

while easily forgotten or not fully appreciated, cannot be ignored.

Finally, it is the Tibetans themselves, the people directly affected, who, determined not to be permanent liabilities in their adopted country have, through their co-operation, facilitated programmes for their rehabilitation. In general, they are not aware of where the aid to help in their adjustment comes from, but are nevertheless grateful for any assistance. Their large exclusive settlements have helped to keep their identity intact and the presence of the Dalai Lama has done much to knit together the people in a common interest which accounts for much of their progress made. Thus, they have been able to organize themselves under an effective administration headed by the Dalai Lama, based at Dharamsala. It is a decentralized form of the old Tibetan Government consisting of separate departments with their individual responsibilities and functions, though under the general supervision of the Kashag (Cabinet), especially in the formulation of important policy matters. Under this administrative set-up, a Home and Rehabilitation Office was established, forming an essential liaison between the Government or other organizations and the people and thus protecting the interests of the refugees being settled. Other departments set up to look into the different aspects of Tibetan life are the Council of Religious and Cultural Affairs, the Council for Tibetan Education, the Information and Publicity Office, the Security and Personnel Office. Representatives of the Dalai Lama are also located in New Delhi, Geneva and New York to keep

up world interest in general and to enable contact for any potential opportunity to renew UN discussions on the Tibetan question.

Faced with the dilemma of two worlds, the future of the Tibetan exiles cannot be predicted with any known certainty. While it is the avowed aim, as expressed by the Dalai Lama himself, for all Tibetans in or out of Tibet, to have as the common goal of a Tibet for Tibetans. The present circumstances give little hope. No Government would be prepared to challenge the status quo at the cost of injuring their wider national interests, and with People's China a full fledged member of the United Nations, there is very little chance of the Tibet question being reopened. Unable to take a positive stand on their own, the Tibetan exiles are therefore compelled to make the best of what they have now and have realistically settled down to adjust wherever they are. ²⁹

The vulnerability of their situation, however, is a constant source of anxiety. In India, the Government's action in Sikkim caused some consternation among the community, despite their having comparatively settled most successfully here. In Bhutan, the Tibetan community is treated with suspicion after the assassination attempt made on King Jigme Sangye Wangchuk in 1974, in which well known Tibetans were allegedly involved. The Khampa guerrilla activities operating from Nepal, on the other

29 Many among the younger generation, frustrated with their present situation, have repeatedly advocated direct use of force, however. Some advocate "non-violent" means of attracting attention to their plight. At the time of this writing, a group of Tibetans in New Delhi have threatened to undertake a fast unto death unless the United Nations reopens the Tibetan question or ensures the fulfilment of the resolutions passed at its earlier sessions on the question (See Ch. II). Subsequently, Tibetan refugees all over the world joined in a one-day token fast to show their consolidated support on 25th March 1977.

hand, is a cause of not only concern but also embarrassment to that country in the light of its friendly relations with China. In 1974, therefore, the Nepal Government decided to adopt a "firm line" towards these armed refugees who were required to have their arms registered and to carry identification cards.³⁰ This was followed by orders to totally surrender their arms, rendering any attempt to sabotage the Chinese hopeless.

The real fear shared by the refugees, however, is the loss of their cultural identity, in the process of assimilation, despite their serious attempts to keep their traditional heritage intact. Whilst this might be true of Tibetans scattered in European countries, in India with its multi-cultural society, they have, because of their larger numbers greater opportunity to preserve their own character and in this they have been encouraged by the Government. Possible friction with the local population can also not be ruled out and the Indian Government, in particular, has taken care to attend to the social needs of the area as well and by the sharing of common facilities.

While most of the refugees express their desire to return to Tibet, placing their hopes in the unpredictability of the times, it would also be no easy decision for many who have been remarkably successful in their new circumstances to return to a Tibet of unknown conditions. What happens to the future generations of Tibetans being nurtured on foreign soils

cannot therefore be easily visualised. Only, the age-old solution to all problems, time, will evolve a final settlement. Meanwhile, the Tibetan exile continues to eke out a meaningful living for survival with dreams of a new world all his own, one day. While the UNHCR may not share this dream, it has helped to create a respect and confidence in himself to face a new world.

APPENDICES

Appendix III

BREAKDOWN OF UNHCR ASSISTANCE IN NEPAL

<u>Documents</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Allocations:</u> <u>Current Programmes</u>	<u>Programme year</u>
A/AC.96/229)	15 April 1964	50,000	1963
)		(Emergency Fund	
)		Reserve)	
A/5811/Rev.1)	1964		1964
A/AC.96/286)	21 April 1965	143,750	1965
)		(including \$19,000	
)		for Administration)	
A/6311/Rev.1)	1966		1966
A/AC.96/363)	6 April 1967	71,000	1967
)			
A/6711)	1967		
A/AC.96/379)	13 Sept. 1967	65,000	1968
)			
A/7211)	1968		
A/AC.96/396)	2 Sept. 1968	49,000	1969
)			
A/7612)	1969		
A/AC.96/412)	15 Sept. 1969	49,000	1970
)			
A/8012)	1970		
A/AC.96/429)	12 Aug. 1970	65,000	1971
)			
A/8412)	1971		
A/AC.96/455)	27 Aug. 1971	46,000	1972
)			
A/9012)	1973		
A/AC.96/507	28 Aug. 1974	8,000	1973
		(Supplementary aid)	
	Total	<u>486,750</u>	

This amount, however, is not the entire sum spent by the Office of the UNHCR or channelled through it for Tibetan refugees in Nepal. Before being directly involved in work for this group of refugees, it had contributed to the ICRC an amount of \$151,493 [A/5211/Rev.1, 1963] between July 1960 and April 1962 besides arranging for the gift of a DC-3 aircraft from the Sovereign Order of Malta for air-dropping food and medicines to remote areas of Nepal. Through its good offices also, it was able to settle groups of children in various countries in Europe which contributed for their upkeep and from funds collected from the UNHCR/UNRWA Stamp Plan (\$20,000). Other donations for its projects in Nepal itself such as \$10,543 [A/AC.96/390, 30 April 1968] for the Pokhara Lake settlement from the Norwegian Refugee Council was also received and from Save the Children Fund. It does not also include the expenditure met by UNHCR to cover repairs or emergency aid as a result of natural disasters or accidents.

Appendix IV

**LIST OF THE ORGANIZATIONS ASSISTING THE TIBETANS
IN SOME WAY**

Those marked with 'x' work exclusively for Tibetans, while the others include programmes for the Tibetans in their wider assistance they provide ^(*).

AUSTRALIA

- x Tibetan Friendship Group
Box 39 P.O. Gordon,
N.S.W./2072
- x Tibetan Refugee Children x
Sponsorship Committee of
Australia
c/o Mrs F. Cockerill
26 Swanston Street
Queenscliff, Victoria, 3225
- x The Tibet Society of West-
Australia x
Post Office Box 35
Quilford 6056, West
Australia

AUSTRIA

- The SOS Kinderdorf Interna-
tional Prechtlgasse 9,
1094 Wien
- x Mrs A. Belderhey x
Schlosselgasse 9/11/3
1080 Wien

BELGIUM

Le Coeur Ouvert Sur Le Monde x
35 Rue du Marche, 5200 Huy

CANADA

- x Tibetan Refugee Aid Society
4345 Locarno Cress
Vancouver 8, B. C.

DENMARK

Danish Refugee Council
Frederiksborgvej 5,
D.K. -2400 Copenhagen N.V.

x Tibetan Friendship Group
c/o Ove Skod
20 Volmerkiers Alle
Kastrup, Copenhagen

FINLAND

x c/o Mrs M. Sipola
Dragonsvagen 10 A 15
Helsinki

FRANCE

CIMADE
176, Rue de Grenelle
75 Paris 7^{me}

x Tibetan Friendship Group
c/o Mrs N. Proisy
72, Rue de Dunkerque
Paris 9^{me}

GERMANY

German Aid to Tibetans
Schrotteringsweg 14
2000 Hamburg 22

* Appeared in the Spring 1973 issue of Tibetan Messenger, vol. II, no. 1 (Utrecht, The Netherlands). A Quarterly Bulletin of news and features on the Tibetans and the work being done for them.

x Tibet Hilfe Aktion Konigsfeld

D7744 Konigsfeld/schw.
Friedrichstrasse 13

Kinderdorf Pestalozzi
Walwies

Deutsche Walthunzerhilfe
D-53 Bonn, Adenaueralle 49

x Fr. Dr. Med. Lotte Kahler
7742 St. Georgen/Schwarzwald
Robert-Koch Str. 12.

INDIA

Central Relief Committee
Lok Kalyan Bhawan
11a Rouse Ave. lane
New Delhi

Catholic Relief Services-India x
B 88 South Extension-1,
New Delhi-49

x Tibetan Industrial Rehabilitation Society (T.I.R.S.)
14 Birbal Road
Jangpura Extension
New Delhi-14

x Himalayan Marketing Ass.
14, Birbal Road
Jangpura Extension
New Delhi-14

x Tibetan Friendship Group
Sister K. T. Kheebog Palmo
10 Parliament Street
New Delhi.

Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees x
1, Ring Road, Kilokri
New Delhi-14

LUXEMBOURG

Croix Rouge Luxembourgeoise
Pare de la Ville
Case Postale 1806

NEPAL

Swiss Association for Technical Assistance (SATA)
P.O. Box 113
Kathmandu

The Red Cross of Nepal
Kathmandu

THE NETHERLANDS

x Stichting Hulp Aan Tibetanen (SHAT)
c/o Cronenburgherlaan 1
Loenen a/d Vecht

Tibetan Messenger
Postbus 1276
Utrecht

Board of Trustees for the Common Project of the European Refugee Campaign
Koninginnegracht 8
The Hague

MEMISA

Eendrachtsweg 49
Rotterdam 3002

NEW ZEALAND

x Tibetan Children Relief Society
Box 10085, Wellington

Auckland Section,
Box 3040
Auckland

- x Christchurch, c/o Mrs Hamilton
270 Kennedy's Bush Road
Christchurch
- COCSO
National Headquarters
303 Willis Street
Wellington-1
- NORWAY
- x Tibetan Friendship Group
c/o Mrs K. Aarsand
Ammerunghellingen 62
Oslo-9
- x Tibetanerhjelpen
Tidemanns Gate 24a
Oslo-2
- Action 7,600 Children
c/o Miss Anne Fikkan
Sinseveien 75
Oslo-5
- Norwegian Refugee Council
Professor Dahls Gate 1
Oslo-3
- SOUTH AFRICA
- x Tibetan Friendship Group
c/o Mrs H. Vosse
"Watersedge", Malton Road
Wijnberg (C.P.)
- SWEDEN
- x Tibetan Friendship Group
c/o Sister A. Nisatta
Ringvagen 103 B1
116, 60 Stockholm
- x Swedish Tibet Committee
Box 30
13301, Saltsjorbaden
- Individuell Manniskohjelp
Fack 1094
Lund
- SWITZERLAND
- x Swiss Aid to Tibetans
Postfach 234
6000 Luzern-2
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees
Palais des Nations
Geneva
- International Council of Voluntary Agencies
7, Avenue de la Paix
Geneva
- x Verein Tibeter Heimatatten
c/o Dr O. Wenger
Junkerngasse 31
3000 Bern
- x Tibetan Monastic Institute
Ch-8486 Nikon-ZH
- Swiss Red Cross
Taubenstrasse 8
3000 Bern
- Swiss Technical Cooperation
Eigerstrasse 71
3000 Bern
- Kinderdorf Pestalozzi
9043 Trogen
- x Tibeter Pflegekinder in Schweizer Familien
c/o Mr C. Aenschmann
Bahnhofquai 14
4600 Olten
- World Council of Churches
Commission on Inter-Church Aid
Refugee and World Service
150 Route de Ferney
1211 Geneva 20
- x Tibet Kinder Hilfe Schaffhausen

UNITED KINGDOM

x The Tibet Society of the UK
63 Tachbrook Street
London SW 1

Pestalozzi Children's Village
Sedlescombe, Nr. Battle
Sussex

x Tibetan Farm School Strive Ltd.
Talyboon - on - Uak
Breconshire, S. Wales

x Tibetan Association of the UK
c/o Mr J. Mangyal
Broken Hill, Guildford Road
Woking, Surrey

x Sam-ye Ling Tibetan Centre
Eskdalemuir, Mr Langholm
Dumfriesshire, Scotland

x Cambridge Development Project
for Tibetans in Nepal
c/o Mr R. Catchpole
37 Mill Street, Bideford
North Devon

x Tibetan Friendship Group
78 Alexandra Crescent
Brookley, Bk1 4 EK/Kent

The Wings of Friendship
35 Stile Hall Gardens
London W4 3 Bs
(Temporary address)

Help the Aged
P.O. Box 2AP
86 Baker Street
London W1

x The Tibet Shop
63 Tachbrook Street
London SW1

Christian Aid
P.O. Box No. 1
London SW1

Save the Children Fund
29 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

x Standing Conference of British
Organizations for Aid to Refugees
The International Development Centre
Farnell House
25 Wilton Road
London SW1 V1 JS

x The Tibetan Society Inc.
Indiana University
Goodbody Hall
Bloomington, Indiana
4701

Ockenden Ventura
Broken Hill
Guildford Road
Woking, Surrey

x Friends of Tibet
162 East 61st Street
New York, N.Y. 10021

x Tibetan News Agency
FCI House
4 Holland Road
London W14

x Tibetan Friendship Group
c/o 11133 Ventura Avenue
Ojai, California 93023

x Mrs Eric Muhlmann
P.O. Box 356
Kailua-Kona
Hawaii 76540

UNICEF
United Nations
New York, N.Y.

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Bureau of the Dalai Lama and their offices;
Office Members of the CRC (I); Tibetan Refugees
in Delhi; Dharamsala, Mussoorie, Darjeeling.

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