

MELVYN C. GOLDSTEIN

A HISTORY OF MODERN TIBET



VOLUME 2 The Calm
before the Storm,
1951-1955

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Chapter 1

Chinese Perspectives

Radio Beijing

On 27 May 1951, the sixteen-year-old Dalai Lama was living in Yadong, a small town on the Sikkimese border, where he and his leading officials had moved a few months earlier so that they could easily cross into India if the People's Liberation Army (PLA) were to invade Central Tibet suddenly. A group of top officials headed by the Kashag ministers Ramba and Surkhang accompanied him, while the remainder of the government stayed in Lhasa, headed by two acting chief ministers (*sitsab*) and two acting Kashag ministers who were specially appointed to remain in Lhasa just before the Dalai Lama left.¹

The Dalai Lama was relaxing in his quarters, listening to Beijing's Tibetan-language radio broadcast, when he suddenly heard the Xinhua News Agency announce that a "Seventeen-Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet" had been signed on 23 May by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the "local" government of Tibet.² Tibet, the announcer enthusiastically said, was returning to the "motherland." The Dalai Lama was further shocked when he heard the list of points, because they included items the Tibetan government had explicitly instructed its negotiators not to accept, for example, that the local government of Tibet would actively assist the People's Liberation Army in entering Tibet, and because they reported that something ominously called the Military-Administrative

1. The officials who went with the Dalai Lama to Yadong were known as the "traveling government" (tib. *cheshung*), and those who remained in Lhasa were known as the "home government" (tib. *shishung*).

2. "Local government" (tib. *sane shishung*) was the name the Chinese Communist Party used for the Tibetan government of the Dalai Lama in order to avoid referring to it verbally as an independent political entity.

Committee would be set up in Tibet. The Dalai Lama's reaction was instant and visceral.

I could not believe my ears. I wanted to rush out and call everybody in, but I sat transfixed. The speaker described how over the last hundred years or more aggressive imperialist forces had penetrated into Tibet and "carried out all kinds of deceptions and provocations." It added that "under such conditions, the Tibetan nationality and people were plunged into the depths of enslavement and suffering." I felt physically ill as I listened to this unbelievable mixture of lies and fanciful clichés.³

MAO ZEDONG'S PERSPECTIVE

This Seventeen-Point Agreement dominates the history of the 1950s and even today continues to have an impact in Sino-Tibetan relations. It came about through a shrewd Chinese policy that was crafted and personally directed by Mao Zedong and applied a combined diplomatic and military pressure against an ill-prepared and weak Tibetan government.

No Chinese internal documents are available in which the issue of liberating Tibet was specifically discussed, but two fundamental reasons clearly appear to have informed the PRC's decision to do so. The most important was the issue of national honor. Over the past hundred years, China had become weak as a result of the corruptness of the previous Chinese regimes and the interference of Western and Japanese imperialists. The Chinese Communist Party was committed to expelling all the vestiges of foreign influence and power that had humbled China for so long and to reversing what it considered its national humiliation. A part of this restoration of national dignity was restoring full sovereignty (actual control) over all that had been China during the Qing and Guomindang periods.

Tibet was one of the most visible examples of China's decline from greatness. From Beijing's reading of history, British imperialism had played a major role in splitting off that vast territory from the Chinese state. The Chinese felt that the British invasion of Tibet in 1903-4 and Britain's subsequent support for Tibetan autonomy played a major factor not only in influencing the Tibetan government to desire independence from China but also in preventing China from reasserting its control over Tibet.⁴ Restoring Tibet to the People's Republic of China, therefore, had deep nationalistic and symbolic value, especially since another vast minority territory, Outer Mongolia, had already been lost during the Guomindang period.⁵ An exposition

3. Dalai Lama 1990: 63.

4. The history of this period is covered in detail in Goldstein 1989.

5. The history of this is discussed in Goldstein 1997: 40.

of some of these views occurred some years later in a 1954 internal party report on problems within the party in Tibet.

Tibet and the motherland have had a close, inseparable relationship since a long time ago. Tibet is one part of the territory of our great motherland. However, after the Republican Revolution (1911), Tibet's rulers, who were controlled and manipulated by imperialists, abandoned the motherland and went to rely on the imperialists. To a great extent, imperialists controlled Tibet, signed unfair treaties and gained great privilege in the spheres of politics, economics, and military. Also they took numerous pieces of territory from the border area of Tibet. Because of the development of the anti-imperialist struggle of the entire Chinese people and the existence of an anti-imperialist force within the Tibetan nationality (among them, including a part of the upper-class lamas and aristocrats), they failed to conquer the whole of Tibet. During this period of time, Tibet was semicolonial, and mainly took an independent attitude toward us.⁶

In addition to this set of powerful historical and nationalistic issues, and in a sense inextricably intertwined with them, was the geopolitical significance of Tibet for China's national security. Losing Mongolia was not a great security risk, because it was a loyal Communist satellite of the USSR. Tibet, on the other hand, was a religious theocracy in which the elite aristocracy was influenced by British customs and language. When the elite wanted to give their children a modern education, they sent them to British missionary schools in India. They clearly valued British education and the English language, not Chinese. Consequently, it was obvious that Western and Indian interests would play a major role in Tibet should it continue to be, as it then was, a *de facto* independent state. And more dangerous, it was also likely that the United States would come to play a significant role in Tibet, given the Cold War and U.S. support of Chiang Kai-shek against the Chinese Communist Party. The Tibetan government, in fact, had already sent a state mission to America in 1948, and the Tibet situation had received a great deal of publicity and sympathy in the United States as a result of the well-publicized visit of the famous journalist Lowell Thomas.⁷ For China, the possibility that countries hostile to it could influence or secure bases in Tibet was an unacceptable risk, given that Tibet bordered on Xinjiang, Qinghai, Yunnan, and Sichuan provinces—and, of course, on India, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Arunachal Pradesh. Mao alluded to this in conversations he had with the Panchen Lama and the Dalai Lama in 1954, saying to the Panchen, "Now that the Tibetans are cooperating with the Han, our national defense

6. Dui xizang gongzuo de zhongyao zhishi (wei chuban de shouji), n.d. All translations from foreign sources are my own unless otherwise noted.

7. For his account of the trip to Tibet, see Thomas 1959.

line is not the Upper Yangtse River but the Himalaya Mountains.”⁸ And to the Dalai Lama, “If you had chosen to cooperate with the imperialists and made the Upper Yangtse River as the border with us and made us your enemies, things would be very difficult for us.”⁹ Thus, for both of these reasons, Mao and the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party were convinced that Tibet had to be liberated and reintegrated into the Chinese state and that this was best done at once.

Mao was realistic in undertaking this and believed military force would be needed to some degree. He was, in fact, prepared to achieve Tibet’s liberation entirely by force if China had to. However, he also believed that to do so could have serious international consequences for the legitimacy of the People’s Republic of China’s assertion of sovereignty over Tibet, as well as for the attitudes and loyalty of the Tibetans, who would become part of the new Chinese state. Because of this, he felt the ideal solution for China was to accomplish Tibet’s liberation peacefully, in other words, with Tibet voluntarily accepting Chinese sovereignty and allowing the People’s Liberation Army to enter Tibet uncontested. Military liberation was to be used as the last resort when “persuasion” failed or as a tactic to gain leverage with Tibet’s leaders. From early 1950, therefore, work proceeded both on military preparations for an invasion and on diplomatic and public relations activities to persuade Tibetans to accept peaceful liberation (ch. *heping jiefang*).

Mao’s emphasis on peaceful liberation stemmed from his realization that the situation in Tibet was fundamentally different from that encountered in the other areas the PLA had liberated and was potentially far more dangerous to the long-term interests of China. So while straight military liberation was the simplest and quickest approach, peaceful liberation was the safest and most advantageous strategy for China’s long-term interests. There were several major reasons for this.

First, unlike in other large minority areas such as Xinjiang, where tens of thousands of ethnic (Han) Chinese resided, virtually no Han Chinese were living in Tibet, and almost no Tibetans spoke Chinese. Therefore, no obvious internal cohort was likely to provide overt or covert support.

Second, not only was Tibet homogeneously non-Han, but also it had been operating totally independently of China for at least the past thirty-five years and had secured an international identity of sorts. It had conducted relations with, among others, India, Britain, Nepal, and, most dangerously,

8. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi; zhonggong xizang zizhiqu weiyuanhui; zhongguo zangxue yanjiu zhongxin 2001: 117–22.

9. Dui xizang gongzuo de zhongyao zhishi (wei chuban de shouji), n.d.

China's Cold War enemy, the United States. Conquering Tibet militarily, therefore, could easily become an international issue. Mao himself alluded to this in a telegram he sent from Moscow to the Central Committee on 2 January 1950, saying, "Although the population of Tibet is not large, its international position is extremely important."¹⁰

Moreover, Tibet clearly wanted to continue to be independent from China. This was stated clearly in a letter sent by the Tibetan Foreign Affairs Bureau to Mao on 2 November 1949

To:

The Honourable Mr. Mautsetung,
Chairman of the Chinese Communist Govmt., Peiping

Tibet is a peculiar country where the Buddhist religion is widely flourishing and which is predestined to be ruled by the Living Buddha of Mercy or Chenresig [Avaloketisvara, i.e., the Dalai Lama].¹¹ As such, Tibet has from the earliest times up to now, been an Independent Country whose Political administration had never been taken over by an [*sic*] Foreign Country; and Tibet also defended her own territories from foreign invasions and always remained a religious nation.

In view of the fact that Chinghai [Qinghai] and Sinkiang [Xinjiang], etc. are situated on the borders of Tibet, we would like to have an assurance that no Chinese troops would cross the Tibetan frontier from the Sino-Tibetan border, or any military action. Therefore please issue strict orders to those Civil and Military Officers stationed on the Sino-Tibetan border in accordance with the above request, and kindly have an early reply so that we can be assured. As regards those Tibetan territories annexed as part of Chinese territories some years back, the Government of Tibet would desire to open negotiations after the settlement of the Chinese Civil War.¹²

Third, Tibet was a traditional religious theocracy in which Buddhist ideology and values dominated the population's worldview and the state's *raison d'être*. The authority and stature of incarnate lamas and monastic leaders

10. Zhonggong zizang zizhiqū dangshì zìliào zhèngjī wèiyuánhui 1990, entry for 10 January 1950.

11. The Dalai Lama is an incarnation of Avaloketisvara. He explained the predestination idea in English in an interview: "Of course, firstly the Tibetans believe, almost believe, that we Tibetans are a chosen people. . . . Like the Jewish people [the Tibetan people are] the chosen people of Chenrezi. I think that that is our general conception" (Dalai Lama, interview, 1994, Dharamsala, India). (Unlike most of the interviews, which were conducted in Tibetan or Chinese, the Dalai Lama sometimes spoke in English. In these cases, I have left the syntax uncorrected.)

12. British Foreign Office Records, FO371/76317, copy of letter from the Tibetan Foreign Affairs Bureau, Lhasa, to Mao Zedong, dated 2 November 1949.

were enormous, and the underlying theoretical framework of Tibetan Buddhism effectively inculcated political passivity among the lower classes and the poor. The masses were not at all clamoring for change. Tibetan Buddhism taught that life is characterized by inherent suffering, so the harsh lives of the poor and down-trodden did not seem unusual, especially since Tibetan Buddhism also taught that the cause of suffering is one's own bad behavior in past lives transmitted to the present via the laws of karma and reincarnation. The impoverished poor in Tibet, therefore, were suffering not because of the inherent oppression of their lords and the estate system but, rather, because of their own deficiencies in a past life or lives. The way to improve one's current circumstances, moreover, was to perform religiously meritorious actions so as to amass karma in this life and thereby secure a better rebirth in the next life; it was not to kill the lords and change the current socio-political system. Consequently, in Tibet, even the poorest strata—those who would normally constitute the core constituency of the Communists—were unlikely to be receptive to a call to rise up and struggle against the lay and religious landowners, at least initially.

Fourth, Tibet's physical geography and climatic circumstances posed serious logistical obstacles to a military invasion. The absence of *any* motor roads or airfields in Tibet meant everything would have to be brought in and resupplied by pack animals on crude and difficult dirt trails that stretched for hundreds and hundreds of miles over high mountain passes, which were often blocked by snow for long periods of time in winter.¹³

Tibet, moreover, had a regular army, half of which, about thirty-five hundred to four thousand, were deployed on the Chinese border. These troops were supported by several thousand local militia, and there was a system for calling up still more militia.¹⁴ And although these troops were generally ineptly led and poorly trained, the Tibetan army in fact had some modern weapons—bren and sten guns, mortars, hand grenades, cannons, and machine guns.¹⁵ Moreover, the Tibetan government had started increasing the size of its army and was in the process of creating a new regiment (the Trongdra Regiment) because of the Chinese threat.¹⁶ Tibet's army, of course, was no match for the PLA in traditional combat, the latter having several mil-

13. The distance from Chamdo to Lhasa is roughly equivalent to the distance between New York City and Detroit (650 miles).

14. Goldstein 1989: 638–39; Lhalu, interview, 1992, Lhasa.

15. These had been bought from India in 1947 and 1949 (Goldstein 1989: 618–19). Khreng (Cheng Bing) (1981: 185) says that in 1958 the Tibetan army still had 490 sten and bren guns, 13 machine guns, and 48 cannons. However, it certainly had many more in 1950, before all the weapons with the main Tibetan army in Chamdo were captured in the war.

16. Lodrö Chönzin, interview, 1993, Lhasa.

lion battle-hardened and well-equipped troops, but as the letter to Mao insinuated, Tibet was saying it was prepared to fight the Chinese, and the Chinese side could not, given the terrain and climate, take for granted that the Tibetan army would not try to employ guerrilla tactics to cut the PLA's long and exposed supply lines, particularly if Tibet secured assistance from China's enemies, such as America. In turn, given Tibet's international relations and the realities of the Cold War, there was a danger that extended guerrilla warfare might internationalize the conflict with regard to the political status of Tibet.

Consequently, "peaceful liberation" for Tibet was the strategy Mao pursued. This type of liberation had already been achieved in Beijing and Xinjiang, but Mao felt an even more peaceful approach was required in Tibet because of its international identity and its *de facto* independent status. So in Tibet, peaceful liberation was to be effected with a formal written agreement in which the Tibetan government/Dalai Lama accepted Tibet's return to the "motherland" under Chinese sovereignty. Chinese troops and officials would then enter Tibet peacefully with the consent and assistance of the Dalai Lama. The presence of such a formal document would, of course, preclude any international attempt to challenge China's assertion of sovereignty over Tibet and would also preclude the need to launch a full-scale military invasion. This was to be the first time that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) incorporated a polity via a written agreement with the local government.¹⁷

However, since Tibet considered itself independent and did not want to be part of a communist Chinese state, achieving a peaceful liberation was not going to be easy, and to overcome this difficulty Mao pragmatically articulated a dual "carrot and stick" strategy. China would, on the one hand, offer the Dalai Lama very attractive terms to return to the "motherland" and, on the other hand, simultaneously threaten a full-scale military invasion if he did not.

MILITARY PREPARATIONS

It is not certain how early formal discussions started in Beijing regarding the liberation of Tibet, but it is clear that Mao had Tibet on his mind as early as August 1949, when the Northwest Bureau's (ch. xibei ju) First Field Army (ch. diyi yezhanjun), under the command of Marshal Peng Dehuai, was moving to liberate Qinghai and Gansu provinces.¹⁸ Mao's concern with winning over Tibetans was conveyed in a 6 August 1949 telegram to Peng, warning

17. It was also the only time. Even the case of Hong Kong, four decades later, was not analogous, because the CCP was dealing with the British.

18. At the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee, held 5–13 March 1949, China was divided into five large regions, each based on a "field army" (ch. yezhanjun)

him to be sure his troops were very careful about how they treated Tibetans in these areas, because this would have implications later for China's success in Tibet. The telegram said: "The Panchen [Lama] is in Lanzhou now. When you attack Lanzhou, please pay close attention to the Panchen and the Tibetans in Gansu and Qinghai provinces. Protect and respect them so as to lay the groundwork for solving the Tibet problem."¹⁹ Similarly, both of the Panchen Lama's 1 October 1949 telegrams to Mao and Peng Dehuai, congratulating them on the founding of the PRC, explicitly mention the liberation of Tibet. (They are cited in chapter 10.)²⁰

At the same time, it was obvious to Mao that military planning for invading Tibet had to begin immediately, and on 23 November 1949, Mao contacted Marshal Peng about this. Mao's assessment of the military situation in China had led him to conclude that the Northwest Bureau's First Field Army seemed the best choice to take the lead, because military activities in the northwest had basically come to an end by October-November, whereas the military campaigns of the Second Field Army of the Southwest Bureau, under Liu Bocheng and Deng Xiaoping, had just started.²¹ The southwest was the last major territory held by the Guomindang, the Nationalist Party of Chiang Kai-shek. The nationalists still had almost a million troops deployed there, so at that point it was not clear how much time Liu and Deng would need to defeat those forces. Consequently, Mao sent Peng Dehuai the following telegram, laying out his wish to liberate Tibet the following year (1950).

and each run by a bureau (ch. ju) representing the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. Each also had a military-administrative committee (tib. magsi uyön lhengang; ch. junzheng weiyuanhui), all of which functioned as transitional civil governments operated by the military until they could be replaced by people's governments. The Northwest Bureau was responsible for Qinghai, Xinjiang, Shaanxi, and Gansu. The Southwest Bureau (ch. xinan ju), based on the Second Field Army (ch. dier yezhanjun), was responsible for Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Xikang, and Tibet. By 1954, all these military-administrative committees had been replaced by people's governments.

19. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi; zhonggong xizang zizhiqu weiyuanhui; zhongguo zangxue yanjiu zhongxin 2001: 1.

20. British Foreign Office Records, FO371/83325, enclosure in Nanjing dispatch to the British Foreign Office, dated 27 December 1949. The enclosure was taken from the *New China Daily News*, Nanking, 25 November 1949.

21. Liu Bocheng and Deng Xiaoping were the leaders of the Second Field Army and the Southwest Bureau. Liu Bocheng, fifty-seven in 1949, was commander of the Second Field Army. He also served as second secretary of the Southwest Bureau, chairman of the Southwest Military-Administrative Committee, and vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission. Deng Xiaoping, forty-five years old at this time, was the first secretary of the Southwest Bureau, vice-chairman of the Southwest Military-Administrative Committee, and political commissar of the Southwest Military command and Second Field Army.

Comrade Peng Dehuai. Please pass [this on to] He [Long], Xi [Zhongxun], and Liu [Bocheng]:²²

. . . (2) (Peng) Please raise and discuss the question of managing Tibet at a meeting of the Northwest Bureau. . . . Try to solve the problem of Tibet by the fall or winter of next year [1950]. On the basis of the current situation, we should let the Northwest Bureau take the major responsibility for this task. The Southwest Bureau should take secondary responsibility for Tibet.

[The reasons for this are that] The war in the northwest finished earlier than that in the southwest, and some people say that the road from Qinghai to Tibet is flat and easy. In addition, the Panchen and his group are in Qinghai. We will not be able to settle the Tibet issue without sending troops (ch. jiejiu xizang wenti, bu chubing shi bu keneng de). [However] The northwest route is not the only way to send our troops. There is another route in the southwest. So after the Southwest Bureau finishes its tasks in Sichuan and Kham [of liberating them], they should start to manage things in Tibet. We probably will need three armies to attack (ch. da) Tibet.

It is hard to decide on the distribution of tasks and the nomination of commanders. However, the Northwest Bureau should make plans to train Tibetan cadres and also make preparations. What is your opinion? Please let me know.²³

This led the Northwest Bureau to conduct a detailed investigation of the feasibility of taking the lead in militarily liberating Tibet. Peng asked the head of his Liaison Office, Fan Ming, to research this, and after intensive examination of archival materials (from the Qing and Guomindang periods) as well as interviews with traders from Qinghai who had actually made the trip to Tibet, Fan Ming reported twenty days later that logistically it would be extremely difficult and time consuming to move militarily from Qinghai to Lhasa. Although Peng Dehuai was prepared to accept the task if Mao insisted, his reply to Mao and the Central Committee (sent on 30 December 1949) was based on and reflected Fan Ming's negative conclusions, saying, in part:

Generally speaking, it is very difficult to enter Tibet from Qinghai and Xinjiang. The difficulties are very hard to overcome. . . . If the task of entering Tibet is given to the northwest, we must gather soldiers and grain supplies in Yutian and Yushu [Jyekundo] and build roads; the preparation work may take two years. . . . If the task of entering Tibet is given to the southwest military region, we can try to send some of the Tibetans from the [Northwest Bureau's] training classes to enter Tibet with troops of the Second Field Army.²⁴

22. He Long was the second commander in the Second Field Army and the third secretary of the Southwest Bureau. Xi Zhongxun was vice chairman of the Northwest Bureau.

23. As cited in Ji 1993a: 4.

24. As cited in Ji 1993a: 7.

By this time, Mao was in Moscow trying to secure a defense treaty with the USSR, so he received Peng's reply there. Mao thought about this rather negative answer for two days and then took Peng Dehuai's advice. At 4 A.M. on 2 January 1950, he sent the following detailed telegram to the Central Committee, giving the Southwest Bureau the task of liberating Tibet. The Northwest Bureau would now play a secondary, supporting role.

[To] The Central Committee and Comrade Peng Dehuai:

Please pass this on to Comrades [Deng] Xiaoping, [Liu] Bocheng, and [He] Long

(1) I have received the telegram of 30 December from Comrade Dehuai regarding the situation in Tibet and the routes leading into Tibet. The Central Committee should pass this telegram to Comrades Liu, Deng, and He.

(2) The population of Tibet is not big, but the position of Tibet in the international arena is very important. We must liberate Tibet and change it into a Tibetan people's democracy. There are great difficulties in sending troops into Tibet from Qinghai and Xinjiang, so the task of sending troops into Tibet and of later managing Tibet should be given to the Southwest Bureau.

(3) There are only four months each year, from May to September, when roads to Tibet are passable. During the other eight months, heavy snow makes roads impassable. If that is the case, I am afraid that the time to enter Tibet from Kham (ch. Xikang) is probably the same.²⁵ [Thus] If we cannot send troops to Tibet between mid-April and mid-September this year [1950], we will have to postpone it until next year. My point is that if there are no unconquerable difficulties, we should try to start marching into Tibet this coming April and liberate Tibet before this October. Thus, I suggest:

- (a) Comrades Lui, Deng, and He should please convene a meeting soon (e.g., mid-January) to decide which troops should be sent to Tibet and which cadre will be responsible for the leadership in managing Tibet. Start making such arrangements immediately.
- (b) Immediately occupy Tachienlu [in Xikang Province], and make it a base for planning and preparing to enter Tibet.
- (c) From now on, build a road for trucks or carts that goes from Kham to Tibet as preparation for entering Tibet this April.
- (d) Recruit Tibetans and train cadres.
- (e) I heard that there are only six thousand officers and soldiers in the Tibetan Army and that they are scattered, so it seems that we do not

25. Xikang was the Chinese province that consisted primarily of the ethnic Tibetan Khamba areas east of the Upper Yangtse River that were not under the control of the Dalai Lama's government. It was called Kham in Tibetan, although the name Kham also included the Khamba areas west of the Yangtse River. The province was officially created in 1938 and was dissolved and merged into Sichuan Province in 1955. Its initial capital was Tartsedo (also known as Kangding or Tachienlu), but this shifted to Ya'an in the early 1950s.

need three army corps (ch. jun) as I suggested in my last telegram. We need only one army corps or four divisions with a total of about forty thousand troops. This will be enough. They will need special political training and superb arms.

(f) We can make it a rule that troops in Tibet will be changed every three years in order to create high morale among them.

(4) Sending troops into Tibet and managing Tibet are glorious tasks for our Party but they are hard tasks. The southwest has just been liberated, and our comrades in the Southwest Bureau are extremely busy. Now there is the additional task of liberating Tibet for you. I make the above suggestions, because this is an important task, and it has time limitations. The Southwest Bureau should reply to me by telegram, indicating whether my suggestions can be applied in practice.

Mao Zedong

4 A.M., 2 January, from a distance [from Moscow]²⁶

The Southwest Bureau responded on 7 January, agreeing to take the main responsibility for Tibet. It designated the Eighteenth Army Corps (ch. shiba jun) to take the lead (that telegram is not available). On 10 January 1950, Mao sent them the following telegram in reply:

[To] The Central Committee. Please pass this on to Lui, Deng, He, and the Northwest Bureau:

(1) I completely agree with Lui and Deng's plan to march into Tibet as conveyed in their telegram of 7 January. Great Britain, India, and Pakistan have all recognized us [the People's Republic of China]. This is favorable to our action of advancing into Tibet.

(2) According to Comrade Peng Dehuai's information, the four months during which it is possible to march into Tibet start from mid-May (I made a mistake and [previously] wrote three months). If Liu and Deng push Zhang Guohua and the Eighteenth Army Corps, we have the time to do it this year.

(3) To manage Tibet, we need to establish a party leadership committee (ch. dang de lingdao ji guan) there.²⁷ As to what name it should have and the nomination of its members, the Southwest Bureau should make a plan and send a telegram to the Central Committee for approval. This committee should be set up immediately and should do all the planning and design of the practical work plans. It should then send the plans to the Southwest Bureau for approval. The Southwest Bureau should examine the committee's work once or twice a month. The first steps of the new office should be to complete investigative work [on Tibet], train cadres and troops, build roads, and march the

26. As cited in Ji 1993a: 3.

27. This, as we shall see, later became the Tibet Work Committee (ch. xizang gongwei; tib. phö leydön uyön lhengang), which was the leading Chinese administrative office in Tibet.

troops to the border between Kham and Tibet. This should be done within three and a half months. Some of the work of training cadres and troops and road construction should be completed after our occupation of the border areas of Kham and Tibet. In order to foster internal divisions among the people of Kham, please make sure to occupy the border area of Kham and Tibet by mid-May.

(4) As to cooperation from the Northwest Bureau, the Southwest and Northwest bureaus should discuss things among yourselves when specific issues arise. The Northwest Bureau should please make plans and cooperate with the Southwest whenever possible, and please ask the offices below you to do the same.²⁸

While still in Moscow twelve days later, on 22 January 1950, at the end of a discussion between Mao and Stalin, Mao casually mentioned his plan to liberate Tibet when Stalin asked him if he had anything else to talk about. Mao thanked Stalin for sending an air regiment to China and then asked that it be allowed “to stay a little longer, so that it could help transport provisions to Liu Bocheng’s troops, currently preparing for an attack on Tibet.” Stalin replied, “It’s good that you are preparing to attack. The Tibetans need to be subdued.” He said he would discuss the air unit request with his military personnel and get back to Mao.²⁹

Meanwhile, in Sichuan, Liu Bocheng had already set about organizing a strike force but, along the way, had to overcome a surprising series of problems with his troops. The Second Field Army’s Sixty-second Army Corps should have been the unit chosen to go to Tibet, since it was based in Ya’an, in Xikang; that is, it was situated closest to Tibet, and this proximity would have facilitated the transport of men and materials.³⁰ However, the Sixty-second Army was part of the Eighteenth Large Army (ch. bingtuan),³¹ under the command of He Long, and it had become part of the Second Field Army only a short time before. Because of this, Liu Bocheng worried that if he selected it to go to Tibet, He Long might think that Liu was giving a very difficult and unwanted task to these “newcomers.” Liu was reluctant to do this. The next logical unit to send was his own Tenth Army Corps. It had the strongest fighting capacity in the entire Second Field Army, but here too there was a problem: its commander, Du Yide, was then in bad health. So Liu discussed this with Deng Xiaoping, the political commissar of the Sec-

28. As cited in Ji 1993a: 11–12.

29. “Record of Conversation between Comrade I.V. Stalin and Chairman of the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China Mao Zedong, January 22, 1950,” cited in Cold War International History Project 1995–96: 9.

30. Ji 1993a: 8.

31. A bingtuan in the PLA military structure of that time was a unit larger than an army corps and smaller than a field army.

ond Field Army, and they both agreed that it would be best to replace Du with a young commander called Zhang Guohua.³²

Zhang Guohua was born in Jiangxi Province in 1914 and had joined the guerrilla forces in March 1929, when he was only fifteen years old. He joined the Communist Party two years later and became part of the Fourth Red Army, participating in the Long March. In November 1946, he became commander of the Yu Wansu Region, which had the hardest and toughest conditions among all the war zones in China. It was an isolated guerrilla region and did not have a rear area for supplies among other problems. When this region was included in the jurisdiction of the Second Field Army, Zhang became commander of the Eighteenth Army Corps and had a successful career in the war. His extensive experience working within an enemy-occupied region and opening up new regions led Liu and Deng to decide he was the best commander to replace Du Yide and head the Tenth Army Corps.

Liu Bocheng, therefore, sent Zhang a telegram on 7 January 1950, ordering him to come to Chongqing immediately. However, no sooner had Liu sent the order than he started worrying if replacing Du Yide would have a negative impact on the morale of the Tenth Army Corps and make it difficult for Zhang Guohua to lead it effectively. Consequently, he and Deng Xiaoping decided it was best not to send the Tenth Army Corps with a new commander but, rather, to allow Zhang to choose three of the best divisions (ch. sri) within the Second Field Army to form a new army corps that he would head. Zhang, however, did not like the thought of leading new officers and troops in the difficult task of liberating Tibet so asked to be allowed instead to take his own Eighteenth Army Corps, which had been with him for years. Although its fighting capacity was not as good as that of the Tenth Army Corps, he argued that since Liu and Deng did not expect major battles in Tibet, the Eighteenth Army Corps's experience in functioning in new regions would be particularly helpful. They agreed.³³

The decision to send the Eighteenth Army Corps, however, did not sit well with that army's rank and file and noncommissioned officers. In fact, a minirebellion occurred. After the campaign for Chengdu had been won (on 27 December 1949), the troops had been promised that they would be permanently stationed in Luzhou, a beautiful part of southern Sichuan Province, so the news that they were going to Tibet was an unpleasant surprise. The amazing story of what happened after this is detailed in Ji Youquan's *Bai xue* (White Snow), a book based on interviews with the soldiers involved as well as on otherwise unavailable primary documents. It was briefly published in China but was then banned and taken off the shelves.

32. Ji 1993a: 8.

33. Ji 1993a: 9–10.

All the officers and soldiers were very happy indeed [about being stationed in Luzhou]. The soldiers said, “We in the Eighteenth Army Corps have experienced the worst hardships and the leaders of the [Second] Field Army know this. So this time they are taking good care of us.” Veteran soldiers were thinking of getting married and settling down.

According to Chen Jingpo, then the director of the Eighteenth Army Corps’s Department of Enemy Work . . . , “When we moved into the rich ‘heaven’s province’ of Sichuan, our task was to take over southern Sichuan. The army commander, Zhang Guohua, was given the position of the director of southern Sichuan administrative office. . . . I was the general secretary. Most of the directors of our political departments were named head of various bureaus, and some of our political commissars became county mayors or party secretaries. After years of extreme hardship, all the troops were thinking of having a peaceful life. Nothing could be better for the officers and soldiers than to settle down in the rich and beautiful Luzhou area.

“[Before that] While we were marching south, there were rumors that we would end up settling in Guizhou. Most of our officers and soldiers had never been to Guizhou, but we all knew that it was a very poor place and all had heard that ‘the sky doesn’t have three sunny days [in a row], the land doesn’t have three li of flat ground, and people don’t have three liang of silver.’ Some rumors even said that mountain folks in Guizhou had tails. From such a place, we were suddenly ordered to Sichuan, a province rich like heaven, so who would not be happy? Everyone was conjuring up beautiful images of building a new socialist China there.” The whole Eighteenth Army Corps was soaked in this happy atmosphere. Nobody dreamed that a hard task [such as Tibet] would be given to them. . . .

Wei Ke recalled, “We of the [Eighteenth Army Corps’s] Fifty-second Division . . . were in good spirits. We had never felt so delighted. It was like everyone was embracing a beautiful wish that would soon be carried out. . . . On the morning of the 8th, after we finished breakfast and were preparing to start, we suddenly received an order that the troops should wait for further orders. At first, we thought we were simply being given a day’s rest, but later on there were rumors that . . . we would be getting a new mission. People asked what kind of task it would be and why it was so urgent. Why couldn’t we wait till we got to Yibin and take a break? Why did we have to stop on the way? We were all guessing and speculating. Soon we heard that an emergency telegram had been sent from the Field Army’s headquarters ordering our division’s commander to accompany the Eighteenth Army’s commander, Zhang Guohua, and go by boat . . . to Chongqing to accept a new mission.” . . .

Wu Zhong, the commander of the Fifty-second Division . . . , recalled, “It came so suddenly that we were not in the least prepared. So all sorts of guesses began circulating—if the commanders of both the army corps and the division were going to Chongqing to accept a new mission, it must be an unusual task. What could it be? To guard the city of Chongqing? It did not look like it. We had just left Chongqing. Besides, that would not need one entire army corps. Maybe we were going to be sent to take over Xikang Province. But that was also

unlikely, as we had heard that this task had already been given to the Eighteenth Large Army, which had moved down from the northwest.

“Then some people thought about the New Year’s Day editorial of Xinhua News Agency, which they had just finished studying. The editorial talked about things to be done during 1950, specifically ‘liberating Taiwan, Tibet, and Hainan Island to complete the unification of the whole of China.’ It was obvious that the tasks of liberating Taiwan and Hainan Island belonged to the Third and Fourth field armies, but what about liberating Tibet? Could it be ours? The more they analyzed, the more people believed that this could be right. Some officers rushed to me and asked, ‘Commander, can you leak some news to us? It is better to let us know earlier so that we don’t feel like we are hanging in the air.’”

When the commanders returned from Chongqing and announced that the task of marching into Tibet had been given to the Eighteenth Army Corps, chaos erupted. Wu Zhong recalled, “The response was very strong. It was truly a sharp turn. Many issues had yet to be resolved, for example, the practical issue of [the men] getting married and starting families. During all the years we were fighting, we had no time to consider such issues and problems, but now we had defeated Chiang Kai-shek, and the hope of solving such problems was close at hand. Marching into Tibet would make such things totally out of the question. Even aside from these other things, it was not easy to send a letter home from Tibet. Though there were not going to be tough battles in Tibet, everything would be ‘tough.’ It was really difficult to straighten things out in the soldiers’ minds. Although things were very difficult when the troops were marching into the Dabie Mountains, such chaos never occurred.” . . .

[Consequently] It was very difficult for the officers to persuade the soldiers about this. Former deputy chief of staff of the Tibetan Military Region, Wu Chen recalled, “The commander of the 160th Regiment . . . had guaranteed his soldiers that they could look for lovers if they wanted to, and they could start to prepare for their weddings if they so desired. He said that he had never imagined that he and his soldiers could end up settling down and enjoying the rest of their lives in the rich province of Sichuan. This was called ‘bitterness first, and sweetness afterward’ (ch. xianku houtian). If you have to move again, you soldiers can curse me (he said). He never imagined that in another few days the order to march into Tibet would be sent out. [After the order came] He hit his own head and said fuck it. I will never mobilize the troops.”

According to Liu Zhenguo, the former director of the political department of the Tibetan Military Region, “From information reported by all our troops, many people felt the order to march to Tibet came too suddenly. Particularly resistant to the new order were those who were ready to enjoy life in cities after the victories and those who already thought weapons could be left in warehouses and horses could be let loose in the mountains. They complained, asking why the hardest task was given to us. They even said that they were knocked down from the place of heaven to hell. Some people started to manifest their complaints by sleeping, running to the hospital for small ailments. . . . In a word, they were afraid to go to Tibet.”

The number of sick people increased day by day, and the number of those who were “too sick to get out of bed” increased day by day too. It was mealtime, but nobody came to eat. Company commanders and political instructors got worried and ordered company quartermasters to make good meals. The standard of meals was suddenly raised. Tofu and pork were [served] in container after container. Five-course meals plus soup [were served], and still nobody wanted to eat. The military camps were filled with complaints. Company commanders could not order platoon leaders, platoon leaders could not order squad leaders, and soldiers did not listen to squad leaders.

For example, a company commander once thought killing a pig would help improve the situation so one morning ordered a platoon leader to send four soldiers to kill a pig. Later that afternoon, however, no one had come with the pig, so the company commander summoned the platoon leader and said, “Are you still a platoon leader? You can’t even command four soldiers.” The platoon leader responded, saying, “I couldn’t get them to move.” The company commander then said, “You cannot even do that? What kind of a platoon leader are you? Why don’t you just quit?” The platoon leader said, “That is exactly what I am thinking. If you think you can get these soldiers to obey, try it yourself.” The commander said, “If I get them here, you will be placed in confinement for three days. [Then he asked,] Which ones did you order to come to me?” The commander got the names, rushed to the platoon, and found that the soldiers who had been asked to do the job were all lying in bed with quilts over their heads. None paid any attention to him. The company commander got angry and threatened he’d shoot them right away. The soldiers then sat up and roared in one voice, “Who did you say you would like to shoot?” The commander was stunned and said, “OK, OK, you enjoy your sleep.” Then he and his platoon leader killed the pig themselves to make a meal for the soldiers, but while he was doing this he kept muttering, “Rebels, rebels.”

Some of the soldiers called going to Tibet “being buried.” [In Chinese, *bury* is *xia zang*, and *Tibet* is *Xi zang*.] They said that they did not lose their lives when they fought the Japanese and the Guomindang, but this time they would lose their lives in Tibet. It would be the end for them. Some started crying at hearing the term *being buried*.

Following the complaints, unthinkable things occurred in the Eighteenth Army Corps, which had heretofore been known as the iron troop when it had been fighting the Japanese and the Guomindang. . . . But this time, there were deserters, and more and more of them. In some squads, only squad leaders and deputy squad leaders were left; everyone else had disappeared. Company commanders and political commissars panicked and were afraid to sleep at night. They took turns watching the soldiers. Battalion commanders got upset, and regimental commanders got upset too. There were fewer and fewer soldiers they could command. If there was a battle, how could they fight without soldiers? They called company headquarters all the time, and every evening they asked each company for the number of deserters. . . .

The increase in the number of deserters made the leaders of the Eighteenth Army Corps upset. Its commander, Zhang Guohua, got angry and banged the

table saying, “These deserters are terrible. Why are they so bad? Why? Catch all of them for me!”

So action was taken in each troop. A strong force made up of Communist Party members, Communist League members, and activists was organized to catch deserters. They were called “deserter catchers,” and most of the deserters were caught. . . . Their shirts were first taken off, and then they were completely tied up by coir ropes. It was unbearable to be tied up for a long time, so they cried and begged company commanders for a pardon. The officers would roll up their sleeves, pick up a whip, raise their voices, and roar, “Let me see if you are still running away.” When they got really angry, they would whip the deserters hard on their arms and behinds, which were already bruised and swollen. Afterward, the deserters had to listen to criticism and education, make self-criticisms, and write confessions. Only then would they be counted as having regretted their mistakes and returned to the ranks of revolutionary troops. They would [be expected to] make achievements in wars to make up for their mistakes and become new persons.

Not only were there deserters among the soldiers, but even among officers there were requests not to go to Tibet. Lui Jieting, political commissar of the artillery battalion of the Eighteenth Army Corps, for example, . . . informed Zhang Guohua and Tan Guansan (the Eighteenth Army Corps’s political commissar) that he was not in good health and did not want to go to Tibet. Zhang got so angry when he heard this that he bit his lower lip, which started bleeding. He said over and over, “This Lui Jieting is very bad. I did not know that he could be this bad. How could he be so bad?” Tan Guansan also was furious. He banged the table and started yelling, “He is not going to Tibet? How can he decide that? Tie him up and bring him to me. So he doesn’t want to go. I will tie him up and take him to Lhasa. If he cannot walk, I will tie him to the tail of my horse and drag him, even dead, even in small pieces, to Lhasa.” Zhang and Tan were really tough this time. Lui . . . was tied up and brought back. . . .

The Eighteenth Army Corps then started a large rectification campaign. . . . From 27 to 30 January (1950), they first held a meeting of the twenty-four party officials above the division level. These leaders committed themselves to accomplishing the sacred historical task of marching to Tibet to raise the five-star red flag on top of the Himalaya Mountains, whatever price they had to pay. . . .

Afterward, the Eighteenth Army Corps held a mobilization meeting in each division called—“Marching into Tibet, the border area of our country.” The leaders of the army attended these meetings. From 5 to 10 February, Zhang Guohua attended the mobilization meeting of the Fifty-second Division. . . . In Zhang’s mind, the Fifty-second Division would be the major force in the march to Tibet. If they could not do a good job with the ideological work in this division, it could have a very large negative impact for the entire army corps. So not only did Zhang attend, but he made a [two-hour] speech himself. . . . Again on 9 February, Zhang made another down-to-earth speech . . . saying, “Regarding personal questions, there is an old saying that ‘since ancient times beautiful women love heroes.’ We will carry out the great historical task of liberating Tibet, and we can say that all of you are heroes. If we study hard, work hard,

and happily accomplish the task, it will not be a problem for you to find a wife. Girls from cities or rural areas will fall in love with you. Some people asked if they could consider marrying Tibetan girls. Everyone knows that more than one thousand years ago during the Tang dynasty, Princess Wengcheng married the Tibetan king Songtsen Gambo and [later] Princess Jincheng married the Tibetan king Tride Tsugtsen. When we get to Tibet, you can consider marrying Tibetan girls. Tibetan girls are very hard working and kind. They are pretty too.

“In the past, because of wartime restrictions, we had strict regulations for marriage. In one or two years, when we set up our salary system in the country, we will loosen up our regulations. We will allow officers’ wives to live in our military camps, and as the voluntary system is carried out, soldiers can solve their problem of marriage too. We must see that our march to Tibet is different from the Long March made by the Red Army. At that time, we were making a strategic move. Chiang Kai-shek sent his troops to block us at our front and attack us at the rear. Their planes were following us and bombing us. This time, we have the support from people in the entire country. In addition, we have the support and help of people in the USSR. Our conditions are hundreds of times better than those during the Long March. They are better than the conditions during the anti-Japanese war and the Liberation War. Our weapons and supplies will be better than at any time since the founding of our army. We know that those comrades who are a little older do not want to go. They think they already have two or three of those glorious medals, and they want to sleep on their past glories. This is wrong. Officers should take a leading role, and everyone has to truly accept the task. We will go to Tibet happily.” The two speeches of Zhang were printed and distributed to the whole army.³⁴

Gradually, the leaders of the Eighteenth Army Corps regained control and created enthusiasm among the troops slated to go to Tibet. Ji’s *Bai xue* explains,

There was excitement again in the Eighteenth Army Corps. . . . everybody asked to go to Tibet. Letters expressing determination and letters written in blood [to show their determination] flew like snowflakes into the hands of commanders of companies, battalions, and regiments. Even those who had deserted asked the leaders to let them go to Tibet. Those who were not in good health also asked to go. . . . The Eighteenth Army Corps had now made the sharp turn from “settling down in southern Sichuan.”³⁵

China’s military preparations also included a cavalry unit from the Northwest Bureau, which, although numerically small, ultimately played a major role in the Chamdo campaign. As we shall see, throughout the 1950s, the ideas of the Northwest Bureau troops about how to deal with Tibet were very

34. Ji 1993a: 18–25.

35. Ji 1993a: 26.

different from those of the Southwest Bureau, and conflict between the two units' leaders plagued the CCP in Tibet throughout that decade. This will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

PUBLIC RELATIONS (UNITED FRONT) WORK

During the spring and summer of 1950, while military preparations were underway, China tried to persuade the Dalai Lama to send representatives to Beijing to negotiate.³⁶ Prominent lamas and leaders from the already incorporated ethnic Tibetan areas outside Tibet (in Xikang and Qinghai provinces, i.e., in Kham and Amdo) were sent to try to assure Lhasa that Tibet's religion and monasteries would not be harmed.

Phünwang, a Tibetan cadre in the Southwest Bureau, recalled,

We were trying to do two things at once. On the one hand, we were organizing for a military attack. On the other, we were doing what we could to persuade the Tibetan government to accept peaceful liberation. We sent religious leaders like Geda Trulku to Chamdo to talk with Lhalu, the governor general. . . . And I went to see Panda Tobgye and persuaded his brother, Raga, also to go to Chamdo and try to influence Lhalu.³⁷

Furthermore, a ten-point document laying out terms for what a peaceful liberation agreement might look like was distributed. This document, initially drafted by the Southwest Bureau, is important because it embodies the core of Mao's thinking on how to incorporate Tibet—what we can think of as Mao's "gradualist" strategy. It contained the following points:

1. The Tibetan people will unite and drive the invading British and American imperialists out of Tibet. The Tibetan people will return to the big family of the motherland.
2. Tibet will become an ethnic autonomous region.
3. The existing political system in Tibet will stay, and there will be no changes in this area. The power and prestige of the Dalai Lama will remain the same, and officials at various levels will remain in their positions.
4. Religious freedom will be implemented, monasteries will be protected, and the religious beliefs and customs of Tibetans will be respected.
5. The existing Tibetan military system will not change. The Tibetan armed forces will become part of the national armed forces of the PRC.

36. "United Front work" refers to the Chinese Communist Party's strategy of building a broad consensus among non-party members and minorities for party-supported programs and goals. The party's United Front Work Department is responsible for this.

37. Quoted in Goldstein, Sherap, and Siebensschuh 2004: 138–39.

6. The Tibetan oral and written language will be developed, as will a school system.
7. Agriculture, animal husbandry, industry, and commerce will be developed in Tibet. The living standard of the Tibetan people will be improved.
8. Various reform issues in Tibet will be fully decided according to the will of the Tibetan people. The Tibetan people and leaders will discuss and make decisions regarding reforms.
9. Officials who were pro-British and American imperialists and pro-Guomindang may remain in their positions if they break their relationship with the imperialists and the Guomindang.
10. The PLA shall station troops in Tibet for the purpose of national defense. The PLA shall observe the above policies. The Central People's Government shall be responsible for the expenses of the PLA in Tibet. The PLA shall purchase/sell fairly in Tibet.³⁸

Mao's gradualist strategy, therefore, gave primacy to pragmatism over ideology and had two primary goals. The immediate goal was to induce the Dalai Lama to accept an agreement that would allow for the peaceful liberation of Tibet. To facilitate this, as the Ten-Point document outlined, Tibet could continue to operate much as in the past, as an autonomous region, at least for some unspecified period of time. Despite the ideological foundation of the Chinese Communist Party, according to this document, the theocratic political system headed by the Dalai Lama would continue to operate without changes. Similarly, there would be no attempt to impose reforms, for example, to end the exploitive feudal system via socialist land reforms. Reforms of all kinds would happen only with the agreement of the Dalai Lama's government and the Tibetan people. And there would be religious freedom, including the protection of monasteries. This was the carrot that Mao dangled.

Mao's longer-term goal was to incorporate Tibet in a way that would generate cooperation and friendship. In today's language, it sought to win over Tibetans to willingly become loyal citizens of the new multiethnic China. However, given the attitudes and realities of 1950 Tibet, the focus was to be on winning over the aristocratic and religious elites, especially the Dalai Lama. Winning these elites over, however, would take time and require much more than just holding meetings and giving propaganda speeches; it would require correct behavior on the part of the PLA and the slow and gradual development of a cooperative relationship between Tibetans and the "new Chinese"

38. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi; zhonggong xizang zizhi qu wei yuan hui; zhongguo zangxue yanjiu zhongxin 2001: 20–21 fn. 2. This was officially approved by the Central Committee on 27 May 1950.

[To view this image, refer to
the print version of this title.]

Figure 1. Eighteenth Army Corps troops training for the Chamdo campaign, Xikang, 1950. Source: Chen Zonglie

(tib. *gyami sarpa*), as they called themselves, who would be committed to help Tibetans modernize and develop, not to exploiting and abusing them. At some point Tibet ultimately would be administratively incorporated and undergo socialist reforms, but not immediately. Mao, therefore, ordered the CCP cadre in Tibet not to rush change but to do things gradually and steadily. And while there were obvious risks in allowing the feudal secular and religious elites to retain real power, so long as the risk of *losing* Tibet was nil—which would be the case, because the Chinese army would be stationed there—the long-term benefits of winning over Tibetans were so huge that Mao was willing to make extraordinary concessions. It was a shrewd strategy that traded short-term negatives (permitting the theocratic government and the feudal manorial estate system to continue) for the achievement of long-term national interests (Tibetans' genuine acceptance of being part of China and their own conclusion that major reforms were needed).

At the same time, as indicated above, the “stick” was also at play, namely, the well-trained, well-armed military troops of the People's Liberation Army. In the spring and summer of 1950, the Eighteenth Army Corps began intensive training at high altitude. At the same time, the Southwest Bureau launched a crash program to build roads toward Tibet from the areas that it already held outside Tibet (in Kham [Xikang]) and to recruit Tibetans to provide thousands of their yaks to transport supplies for an invasion if the “carrot” failed. Phünwang, who was responsible for organiz-

ing transport in one part of Kham, recalled it was not difficult to do this. “Everyone was happy to do this because the PLA was paying in silver dollars (dayan) [ch. da yang]. Many Tibetans made a lot of money from this.”³⁹ Mao, therefore, gave the Dalai Lama and his elite a clear choice of how they would be incorporated—peacefully via negotiations or militarily via invasion.

39. Quoted in Goldstein, Sherap, and Siebenschuh 2004: 138.