

[SECRET]

1940

OFFICE OF THE ADVISER TO THE  
GOVERNOR OF ASSAM

File No. Tr. 16/44-Ad.

1929  
1940

71

---

Reports regarding the situation in Towang

---



[Secret]

## NOTES

File No.Tr.16/44-Ad.

### Reports regarding the situation in Towang

FROM THE POLITICAL OFFICER, BALIPARA FRONTIER TRACT,  
No.362/C., DATED THE 6TH APRIL 1940.

Secretary,

Submitted,

Satish—8th April 1940,

His Excellency,

A copy of the Political Officer's report on the deplorable state of affairs in the Towang area may be sent to India. His Excellency might perhaps wish to mention it to His Excellency the Viceroy, but it is doubtful whether a covering letter to India would do any good. The hint that Tibet may send troops across the McMahon Line might stir them, but their letter of 4th May 1939 to the Secretary of State in file G.S./4959/39 indicates a fixed determination to do nothing and to accept as suitable for part of our Tribal areas conditions which are no worse than those prevailing in Tibet generally. [Vide paragraph 3 (d) of the letter referred to]. Mr. Carge admitted to me that the arguments in the letter were simply special pleading.

8th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

As proposed at A, and in doing so it might be worth while to remind them of what we said in the past regarding oppression in this region.

2. Then let me have the case back as I should like to mention to His Excellency.

8th April 1940.

R. N. R[EID].

Please type draft below in half margin.

9th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

Secretary,

Typed draft put up.

Satish—9th April 1940.

His Excellency,

A draft to India is submitted below for favour of approval. A copy will go to Political Officer, Sikkim, and Political Officer, Balipara, will be informed of the action taken.

9th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

9th April 1940.

R. N. R[EID].

Issue and with copies to Political Officers, Sikkim and Balipara, for information.

10th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, No.1635-G.S., DATED  
THE 11TH APRIL 1940.

MEMORANDUM TO THE POLITICAL OFFICER IN SIKKIM,  
No.1636-G.S., DATED THE 11TH APRIL 1940.

MEMORANDUM TO THE POLITICAL OFFICER, BALIPARA FRONTIER TRACT, No.1637-G.S., DATED THE 11TH APRIL 1940.

Secretary,

The file is resubmitted, vide His Excellency's order of 8th April 1940.

Satish—19th April 1940.

His Excellency,

The file is resubmitted. It is regretted it was not put up in time to send by messenger yesterday.

19th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

I will have to leave it till next time. Meanwhile I return these papers.

22nd April 1940.

R. N. R[EID].

Please put up at the end of the month.

22nd April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

FROM THE POLITICAL OFFICER, BALIPARA FRONTIER TRACT,  
No.363/C., DATED THE 23RD APRIL 1940.

Secretary,

Submitted.

Satish—24th April 1940.

His Excellency,

We may forward a copy of this to India in continuation of our letter of 11th April 1940. These villages are referred to in Political Officer, Balipara's letter No.362/C., dated the 6th April 1940.

I will submit this file in time for His Excellency's fortnightly.

25th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

25th April 1940.

R. N. R[EID].

Draft, please. The file will be required on May 1st.

26th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

Secretary,

A draft for approval.

Satish—26th April 1940.

26th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, No.1843-G.S., DATED  
THE 27TH APRIL 1940.

MEMORANDUM TO THE POLITICAL OFFICER IN SIKKIM,  
No.1973-G.S., DATED THE 7TH MAY 1940.

Secretary,

Submitted, vide orders above.

Satish—30th April 1940.

His Excellency,

His Excellency's orders of 25th April 1940. The file is submitted for reference in connection with His Excellency's fortnightly.

30th April 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

Thanks, returned.

4th May 1940.

R. N. R[EID].

EXPRESS LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT,  
No. F.144-X/40, DATED THE 10TH MAY 1940.

Secretary,

Submitted.

Satish—14th May 1940.

Send confidentially copy of Mr. Gould's telegram to Foreign to Political Officer, Balipara, by express letter and ask for his comments at earliest possible moment. Say that India in particular wish to know how long it took the news of this incident to be received.

15th May 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

Secretary,

A draft for approval.

Satish—15th May 1940.

15th May 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

EXPRESS LETTER TO THE POLITICAL OFFICER, BALIPARA FRONTIER TRACT, No. 2093-G.S., DATED THE 15TH MAY 1940.



FROM THE POLITICAL OFFICER, BALIPARA FRONTIER TRACT,  
No. 369/G., DATED THE 18TH MAY 1940.

Secretary,

Submitted.

Satish—20th May 1940.

His Excellency,

Paper under consideration submitted for present information. Political Officer is seeing me in office to-morrow and I shall have an opportunity of discussing further if necessary.

Political Officer, Sikkim's telegram of the 6th May 1940, to Foreign is about as unhelpful as it possibly could be. In paragraph 3 of Foreign's telegram of 16th May 1938, we were told to inform all concerned that Tawang is by treaty Indian and is not Tibetan territory. Those instructions have been carefully observed and we have not gone beyond them. Yet Political Officer, Sikkim, *vide* paragraph 6(f) of his telegram, is prepared to concede that a Tibetan District Magistrate might have been justified in acting as such. Secondly, it was a very natural assumption on the part of the Monbas that, having been told that the territory is Indian, they could expect that we might be prepared to protect them. It is difficult to see in what way Political Officer, Sikkim, wishes us to disabuse them (paragraph 9 of the telegram). Are we to say bluntly that the territory is Indian but that we have no intention of protecting them from Tibetan oppression? Thirdly, throughout the telegram there is an assumption that the Tibetan Government can continue indefinitely to plead ignorance of the deeds of their officials in this area, and must be believed when they do so but that if we took any action there they would be instantly aware of it.

21st May 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

As Governor's Secretary says, very unhelpful.

21st May 1940.

R. N. R[EID].

His Excellency,

A draft express letter is submitted for favour of approval. I do not know whether His Excellency will think it is couched in rather too strong terms. According to the usual arrangement we shall have to send a copy to Mr. Gould.

22nd May 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

I have made some alterations. If Governor's Secretary accepts them the draft may issue.

2. Is not it time these papers running to 100 pages of correspondence been printed up?

23rd May 1940.

R. N. R[EID].

Issue, with clean copy for file.  
Please send the papers to the Press if they can be spared.

4th May 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

EXPRESS LETTER TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT,  
No. 2216-G.S., DATED THE 24TH MAY 1940.

MEMORANDUM TO THE POLITICAL OFFICER IN SIKKIM,  
No. 2217-G.S., DATED THE 24TH MAY 1940.

TELEGRAM FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT,  
No. 1708, DATED THE 27TH MAY 1940.

Secretary,

Reply was sent with our express letter No. 2216-G.S., dated 24th May 1940. A draft telegram for approval.

Satish—28th May 1940.

Mrs. Martin,

Please send.

28th May 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

Governor's Secretary,

I have despatched the telegram.

Martin—28th May 1940.

28th May 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

TELEGRAM TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, No. 348-C., DATED THE 28TH MAY 1940.

COPY OF TELEGRAM FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, TO MR. GOULD, No. 751, DATED THE 29TH MAY 1940.

Secretary,

For information.

Satish—4th June 1940.

His Excellency,

Submitted for information.

5th June 1940.

J. P. MILLS.

5th June 1940.

R. N. R[EID].



# PROCEEDINGS OF THE OFFICE OF THE ADVISER TO THE GOVERNOR OF ASSAM

File No.Tr.16/44-Ad.

Reports regarding the situation in Towang

No.362/C—LIV-1/2Nakh/39, dated Charduar, the 6th April 1940.

From—Captain G. S. LIGHTFOOT, I.P., Political Officer,  
Balipara Frontier Tract,

To—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam.

SUBJECT:—TOWANG.

With reference to your memorandum No 2500-G.S., dated the 9th August 1939, I have the honour to submit the following report on the present state of affairs in the Towangdzong and the Dirangdzong areas.

My Tibetan Agent has recently visited Dirangdzong and reported that there is a strong feeling of disaffection and resentment against the present regime, and that he was being constantly asked if the British Government was sending another column to Towang and if any action was being taken to take over the country as had been previously promised. The following occurrences will show that the Tibetan Agent's summing up of the state of affairs is true.

In June 1939, or thereabouts, two villagers of Mangnam [Sheet 78 M, (U), sq.S.6.5, 1.5, not actually marked on the map, but about 8 miles south-west of Towang], Tseringombu and Menkokti quarrelled and Menkokti reported falsely against Tseringombu to the Tsona Dzongpons, who live at Gyankar, about 2 miles east of Towang. On this report, the junior Dzongpon, without enquiring into the facts of the case, went to Mangnam taking gun and followers, arrested Tseringombu, a most influential villager, and attached and sealed all his property and house. Tseringombu was taken to Gyankar and imprisoned in the lower storey of the Dzong.

A few days later, the Tsona Dzongpons sent their followers to Mangnam to seize Tseringombu's property.

When the followers arrived at Mangnam, they found that the villagers of Mangnam, Lumla, Tongleng, Nganpadung, Pamkerr, Shakti and Shakkur were actually at the moment holding an indignation meeting about the wrongful arrest of Tseringombu. When the villagers saw the Dzongpons' followers, they at once attacked them, and chased them back to Gyankar, where the villagers surrounded the Dzong and demanded the release of Tseringombu.

On receiving no reply, as the Tsona Dzongpons were hiding behind the salt bags in the upper room of the Dzong, the villagers released Tseringombu and returned to their villages. Since this occurrence, the Tsona Dzongpons have taken no action against the villages, but reported the facts to the Tibetan Government. It is now reported that the Tibetan Government is sending three higher Dzongpons with troops in June next to try the case, and that the Monbas concerned are preparing to run away to Bhutan.

It is also reported that the villagers of Nyukmadung and Sengedzong [83.A.(A) sq.U.8; 6. & 7, 9] are preparing to leave for Bhutan, due to the Tsona Dzongpons' oppression.

The villagers of Dirangdzong are also in trouble for the following reasons:

Two mules, belonging to officials of the Tsona Dzongpons, who were collecting revenue in Dirang area had a fight and one was injured.

The officials thereupon fined the village of Dirangdzong 1,500 Tankas (200 Rupees approximately). The villagers refused to pay the amount, whereupon the officials reported to the Tsona Dzongpons in Towang that the Dirang people had threatened to raid them.

The Tsona Dzongpons thereupon repeatedly summoned the headmen of Dirang to Towang, but they, being afraid, refused to go.

The Dirang people are now panic-stricken at the proposed arrival of the Tibetan Dzongpons and their troops.

It is not known for certain, whether the reports of the Tibetan Dzongpons' arrival in June is correct or not, though it is sure that the Monbas will have heavy punishments inflicted on them, unless they are protected.

I may add that the Tibetan Agent is a most reliable Agent and his reports have always in the past been found accurate in every way.

No.1635-G.S., dated Shillong, the 11th April 1940.

From—J. P. MILLS, Esq., I.C.S., Secretary to the Governor of Assam,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India in the External Affairs Department.

SUBJECT:—TOWANG.

I am directed to refer to the correspondence resting with your confidential memorandum No.F.8-X/38, dated the 8th September 1939, and to say that in accordance with the instructions contained in your confidential letter No.F.8-X/38 of the 31st July 1939 developments in the Towang area have been watched. A copy of the Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract's letter No.362/C. of the 6th April 1940 is enclosed for the information of the Government of India.

2. His Excellency, while fully appreciating the difficulties involved, especially at this present time, in stressing our claims in the Towang area, ventures to express the opinion that punitive action by Tibetan troops in British territory will result in a state of affairs even more deplorable than that to which he drew attention in this office letter No.3851-G.S. of the 7th September 1938. It would also be one which, he feels sure, must inevitably be worse than that prevailing in Tibet generally, and one which, judging from their projected flight, is far from being accepted by the inhabitants as tolerable.

No.1636-G.S., dated Shillong, the 11th April 1940.

Memo. by—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam.

Copy with a copy of letter No.362/C., dated the 6th April 1940, from the Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract, forwarded to the Political Officer in Sikkim, for information.

No.1637-G.S., dated Shillong, the 11th April 1940.

Memo. by—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam.

Copy forwarded to the Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract, for information, with reference to his letter No.362/C., dated the 6th April 1940.

No.363/C—LIV-1/2-Nakh/39, dated Charduar, the 23rd April 1940.

From—Captain G. S. LIGHTFOOT, I.P., Political Officer,  
Balipara Frontier Tract,

To—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam.

SUBJECT:—TOWANG.

In continuation of my confidential letter No.362/C., dated the 6th April 1940, regarding conditions in the Towang and Dirangdzong areas, I have the honour



to report that the villagers of Senge and Nyukmadung have abandoned their villages and fled to Bhutan. This is due to the imminent arrival of the Tibetan Dzongpons.

No.1843-G.S., dated Shillong, the 27th April 1940.

From—J. P. MILLS, Esq., C. I. E., I. C. S., Secretary to the Governor of Assam,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India in the External Affairs Department.

SUBJECT:—TOWANG.

In continuation of my letter No.1635-G.S., dated the 11th April 1940, regarding the situation in Towang area, I am directed to forward for the information of the Government of India, a copy of letter No.363/C., dated the 23rd April 1940, from the Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract.

No.1973-G.S., dated Shillong, the 7th May 1940.

Memo. by—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam.

Copy with enclosure forwarded to the Political Officer in Sikkim, in continuation of memorandum No.1636-G.S., dated the 11th April 1940.

Demi-official No.F.392-IX/39, dated Simla, the 23rd April 1940.

From—E. W. FLETCHER, Esq., I. C. S., Additional Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the External Affairs Department,

To—J. P. MILLS, Esq., C. I. E., I. C. S., Secretary to His Excellency the Governor of Assam.

SUBJECT:—BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE BHUTAN STATE AND BALIPARA TRIBAL AREA.

I am desired to refer to the correspondence ending with your letter No.921-G.S., dated the 2nd March 1940 and to enclose for your information a copy of the correspondence noted below\*.

\* (1) Letter to the Political Officer in Sikkim, No.F.392-X/39, dated the 29th March 1940, (2) Letter from the Director, Map Publication, Survey of India, Calcutta, No.66/2-D., dated the 21st March 1940, (3) Extract from telegram from the Political Officer in Sikkim, No.44, dated the 22nd March 1940, (4) Telegram to the Political Officer in Sikkim, No.997, dated the 3rd April 1940, (5) Telegram to the Political Officer in Sikkim, No.1009, dated the 4th April 1940, (6) Telegram from the Political Officer in Sikkim, No.56, dated the 8th April 1940, (7) Telegram to the Political Officer in Sikkim, No.1056, dated the 9th April 1940, (8) Demi-official letter to the Political Officer in Sikkim, No.F.392-X/39, dated the 16th April 1940.

No.66/2-D., dated Calcutta, the 21st March 1940.

From—Colonel O. SLATER, M.C., Director, Map Publication,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India in the External Affairs Department.

SUBJECT:—BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE BHUTAN STATE AND THE BALIPARA TRIBAL AREA.

With reference to letter No.383-G.S., dated Shillong, the 24th August 1938, from the Secretary to the Governor of Assam, addressed to you (copy with prints of sheets 78 M and 83 A attached for ready reference), I have the honour to request you to kindly inform me whether the alignment of the boundary as described in the letter has been approved and accepted by the Government of India.

Prints of 78 M and 83 A may please be returned to me with your reply.

Extract from Telegram from the Political Officer, Sikkim, to Foreign, New Delhi, No.44, dated 22nd March 1940.

Your letter No. F. 371-X/39, March 6th your letter No. F. 8-X/38, August 15th and Assam letters Nos. 3720

and 921-G.S., October 24th and March 2nd. From point of view of general policy Siang Towang and Tehri Garhwal problems are inter-connected. In view of Tibetan mentality it is desirable that either we should in each case take fullest effective action or that as far as possible we should leave things as they are until we are ready to tackle them.

\* \* \* \* \*

3. At point 14600 Assam and Bhutan representatives would be within about 10 miles from Towang. Is it really necessary to enter this area this year at risk of stirring up Towang question? There is little time for securing confirmation from Bhutan in regard to point 14860 before August. If this point is accepted further work appears to be simple and not urgent whereas pending its acceptance work further north would be "in air".

\* \* \* \* \*

No. F.392-X/39, dated New Delhi, the 29th March 1940.

From—The Additional Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the External Affairs Department,

To—The Political Officer in Sikkim.

SUBJECT:—BOUNDARY BETWEEN BHUTAN AND BALIPARA TRIBAL AREA.

In continuation of endorsement from the Government of India in the External Affairs Department No.D.7686-X/39, dated the 13th December 1939, I am directed to invite a reference to letter from the Secretary to the Governor of Assam, No. 921-G.S., dated the 2nd March 1940 (copy sent direct) and to enquire whether the Bhutan Government accept the boundary agreed to by their Representatives, i.e., from hill 10830 to hill 14860. The Government of India would also be glad to know whether you agree with the proposals of the Government of Assam for the settlement of the remaining portion of the boundary (i.e., from hill 14580—hill 14600).

Telegram XX No. 997, dated New Delhi, 3rd April 1940.

From—Foreign Secretary to Government of India,

To—Sir B. J. GOULD, Lhasa.

Your telegram No.44 dated 22nd March in so far as it touches Bhutan-Balipara boundary.

Government of India must be guided by your advice, but before deciding against proceeding with survey of this sector in 1940 wish you to consider following points—

(a) On Secretary of State's orders, Tawang question is to be again examined in July 1940.

(b) Portion north and west of hill 14600, which is closer to Tawang, has already been demarcated.

(c) Survey would apparently be conducted from Orica La which is separated from Tawang by Se La range.

Telegram XX. No. 1009, dated New Delhi, 4th April 1940.

From—Foreign Secretary to Government of India,

To—Sir B. J. GOULD, Lhasa.

Continuation of our telegram 997 of 3rd April.

A further point for consideration is that the survey of this sector might be a good way of making it plain, without proceeding to occupation or administration, that Government of India are keeping alive their claims in this region.



Wireless telegram XX No.-56, dated Lhasa, 8th April 1940.

From—Sir B. J. GOULD, Lhasa,

To—Foreign Secretary to Government of India.

Your telegram No.1009 of April 4th.

I hope to obtain opportunity of discussing several matters with Governor of Assam soon after my return from Lhasa. Would Government of India agree to postpone decision regarding any activities in Tawang direction until then? If desired I can state reasons in detail. Main point is that indecisive reappearance of British officers anywhere near Tawang would be apt to be misinterpreted as indecision and weakness.

2. As regards keeping the claim alive it would be possible to say something here. But it would be better to keep off the subject until we decide what to do.

3. Should I communicate to Bhutan copy of Assam letter No.921-G.S. of March 2nd?

Telegram XX No.1056, dated New Delhi, 9th April 1940.

From—Foreign Secretary to Government of India,

To—Sir B. J. GOULD, Lhasa.

Your telegram No.56 of April 8th.

2. Government of India agree to defer decision until you have been able to discuss question with Governor of Assam. Letter follows.

3. Reference paragraph 3 of your telegram. Please see our letter F.392-X/39 of March 29th.

Demi-official No.F.392-X/39, dated Simla, the 16th April 1940.

From—E. W. FLETCHER, Esq., I.C.S., Additional Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the External Affairs Department,

To—Sir B. J. GOULD, C.M.G., C.I.E., Political Officer in Sikkim.

SUBJECT:—BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE BHUTAN AND THE BALIPARA TRIBAL AREA.

I am desired to refer to the correspondence ending with our telegram No.1056, dated the 9th April 1940, and to adduce the following additional points for your consideration.

2. (a) It is not altogether clear to us how the re-appearance of a British officer to complete a definite piece of work—i.e., the delimitation of the boundary between Bhutan and the Assam tribal areas could be interpreted as indecision and weakness, especially as a part of the boundary further north has already been settled by the visit of an officer. I am to enquire whether it would not be possible to avoid danger of misinterpretation by telling the Tibetan Government plainly what the officer is doing? The Tibetan Government seem on their own showing to have extremely vague ideas about their own frontiers in this area, and have indeed said they did not know anything about the McMahon Line as they had lost the papers on the subject. Should they object that we are settling their frontier with Bhutan and not a boundary between Bhutan and the Assam tribal areas, we could refer to the Convention of 1914 and assure them that we know exactly where the Indo-Tibetan frontier is and are not in anyway encroaching on their preserves. This might have the advantage of leading them to find the papers on the subject of the McMahon Line. It seems, however, doubtful whether they will hear about the visit of the Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract, until long after it is over.

(b) It seems a pity to defer settlement of the last remaining portion of the boundary between Bhutan and the Assam tribal areas until we have reached a decision on the action to be taken about Tawang. It may take a long time to decide what is to be done and the Bhutanese may not be as ready as they now seem to be to agree with the Political Officer about the limits of the Bhutan State to the east. All

things considered there seems to be much to be said for completing the settlement of the boundary now while the going is good.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mills.

Telegram No. R.1280, dated Simla, 27th April 1940.

From—Foreign Secretary to Government of India,

To—Sir B. J. GOULD, Lhasa,

Your telegram No.56, April 8th, 1940, paragraph 1—Tawang.

2. Assam reports (copy by post) in June last a villager of Mangnam, about 8 miles south-west of Tawang, reported a quarrel with another villager to Tsona Dzongpons at Gyankar. The junior Dzongpon proceeded to Mangnam, arrested the other villager, attached and sealed his property and house, and took him to Gyankar. A few days later Tsona Dzongpons sent their followers to Mangnam. These met with resistance from villagers, who surrounded Dzong and released prisoner. Dzongpons reported matter to Tibetan Government who are said to be sending three higher Dzongpons with troops in June next.

3. Both village and Dzong are south of MacMohan Line and Government of India will be grateful if you will kindly elicit further details of the action said to be contemplated by Tibetan Government. Government of India consider that this incident cannot be passed over in silence, and if it is true that Tibetan Government propose to send officials and troops, they will be grateful if you will suggest on what lines Tibetan Government might be approached in order to dissuade them from any action calculated to raise the general question of Tawang in an acute form.

Wireless telegram R.No.84, dated Lhasa, 6th May 1940.

From—Sir B. J. GOULD, Lhasa,

To—Foreign Secretary to Government of India.

Your telegram No.1280, April 27th.

I have definite information that no report of Mangnam incident has reached Tibetan Government and that no troops are being sent to Tawang.

2. Nor has any rumour of any serious occurrence reached Lhasa. This is strange if any serious occurrence actually took place.

3. It is not improbable that whatever actually happened may have been precipitated and that account of it which reached Balipara Agent may have been coloured by fact that (see paragraph 2 of Balipara letter No.362-C., April 6th) Ponbas continue to be under impression that Government of India have promised to take over their country. On this point please see Government of India's Express Letter to Secretary of State No.F.8-X/38, May 4th, 1939, paragraph 3(e).

4. There is reason to suppose that Tibetan Government are not at present at all inclined to raise question of Tawang in acute form.

5. In view of above question for consideration is whether any overt action is desirable before I have opportunity of discussing Tawang question with Governor of Assam.

6. In connection with advisability of mentioning incident to Tibetan Government the following points may be taken into consideration:

(a) Tibetan Government would truthfully deny knowledge of incident.

(b) Mention would inevitably involve risk of raising general question.

(c) Evidence regarding event of nearly a year ago is not very clear or strong.

(d) It is implicit in Government of India's Express Letter referred to above that *de facto* Tibetan control of area will continue unless and until Government of India assume control.

(e) But until future policy is decided we do not want to emphasise this fact.



(f) Gist of report which reached Balipara seems to be that acting District Magistrate on complaint of one Monba proceeded to arrest another Monba and that there then ensued a riot in defiance of *de facto* local authority. There is very little to show whether District Magistrate was or was not justified in his action.

7. Main theme of letter No.1635-G.S., April 11th, was prospect of punitive action by Tibetan troops and consequent projected flight of Monbas. These developments do not now appear to be probable.

8. In the circumstances Government of India will not perhaps consider any present mention of incident to Tibetan Government advisable. If there should be any deterioration in situation it will always be possible for Mission to communicate with Tibetan Government in such terms as in view of actual circumstances may be considered suitable.

9. Quiet hint to Tibetan Government that they would do well to advise their local officers to act considerately. Their task would be rendered easier if from Assam side action could be taken to disabuse Monba.

Express Letter No.F.144-X/40, dated Simla, the 10th May 1940.

From—The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India in the External Affairs Department,  
To—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam.

SUBJECT:—SITUATION IN TOWANG AREA

Reference your letter No.1843-G. S., dated the 27th April 1940. Copies of the correspondence noted below \* are forwarded for information.

2. Government of India will be glad to receive your comments as soon as possible on telegram No.84, dated the 6th May 1940, from Mr. Gould. In particular they would be interested to know how it was that it took so long for news to be received of this incident. [Please see in this connection paragraph 6(c) of Mr. Gould's telegram].

\*(1) Telegram No.1280, dated the 27th April 1940, from the Government of India to Mr. B. J. Gould, Lhasa,

(2) Telegram No.84, dated the 6th May 1940 from Mr. B. J. Gould, Lhasa, to the Government of India.

Memo. by—The additional Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, External Affairs Department.

The issue of the above has been authorised.

Express Letter No. 2093-G. S., dated Shillong, the 15th May 1940.

From—J. P. MILLS, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S., Secretary to the Governor of Assam,

To—The Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract.

SUBJECT:—SITUATION IN TOWANG AREA

Reference correspondence resting with your letter No. <sup>363/C</sup> LIV-1/2 Nakh/39, dated the 23rd April 1940. A copy of telegram No.84, dated the 6th May 1940, from Mr. Gould to the Government of India in the External Affairs Department is sent herewith for favour of your comments at the earliest possible moment. The Government of India in particular wish to know why it took so long for the news of the incident to reach you.

No.369/C/LIV-1/2-Nakh/39-40, dated Charduar, the 18th May 1940.

From—Captain G. S. LIGHTFOOT, I. P., Political Officer, Balipara Frontier Tract,

To—The Secretary to His Excellency the Governor of Assam.

SUBJECT:—SITUATION IN TOWANG AREA.

With reference to your Confidential Express letter No.2093-G. S., dated the 15th May 1940, I have the honour to state that the delay in submitting the report was due to the fact that there is no regular Agent, who lives permanently in the Towangdzong area. The present Tibetan Interpreter only serves in the Balipara Frontier Tract in the cold weather, and as a result, no information can be obtained during the rains, when, also, passes are closed.

The Tibetan Interpreter was sent to Dirangdzong as early as possible in the cold weather expressly for the purpose of getting any information available. This visit was made in

March as soon as was practicable after the completion of other necessary duties.

In order to obviate such delays in the future, it would be a very great help if a permanent Agent could be appointed as suggested in my confidential demi-official letter No.38/C., dated the 16th October 1936, to Mr. Dennehy.

My present Tibetan Interpreter, Mr. A. T. La, is a resident of Sikkim and will not live in the plains. Thus he serves for 7 months only and returns to his home on leave without pay for the remaining 5 months, *vide* Government's letter No.Pol.1453-4565-A. P., dated the 17th June 1932. He is willing to move permanently to Dirangdzong if Government wishes, and I suggest that he be given whole time employment, which would enable him to move to Dirangdzong. Thus a permanent Agent would be available, and it would only cost Government the extra 5 months' pay of the Tibetan Agent.

As regards the telegram R. No.84, dated the 6th May 1940, from Mr. Gould in Lhasa, to Foreign, Si nla, I beg to submit the following comments:—

Paragraphs 1 and 2.—The fact of the occurrence having taken place is true but the report of troops being sent has not been verified again and is perhaps not correct.

During my last tour to Nakhu, information was received that both the Towang Dzongpons of Gyankar have been replaced, but this information cannot definitely be said to be accurate as I have not been able to verify it.

Paragraph 3.—I have no doubt that the incident was precipitated by the fact that the Monbas believe that Government intend taking over the area sometime, as they were told that the territory was Indian and not Tibetan, *vide* the Governor's Secretary's demi-official No.2401-G. S., dated the 19th May 1938, but no mention was made of occupation though such an inference might have been possible.

As regards paragraph 9.—Until Government come to a final decision, I would definitely oppose any disabusing of the Monbas' present beliefs, as such action would make the Monbas very chary of believing anything that Government might wish to say in the future. At present they implicitly trust Government and look to Government for protection, and it would be very wrong to destroy such trust.

Should the Tibetan officials behave reasonably towards them, they should have no trouble.

I would refer to my letter confidential No.290/c/Twg. dated 19th January 1940 and again request permission to visit Dirangdzong in August next.

Express Letter No. 2216-G. S., dated Shillong, the 24th May 1940.

From—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam,

To—The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India.

SUBJECT:—SITUATION IN TAWANG AREA.

Your No. F.144-X/40, dated the 10th May 1940. I am directed to say that the reason why it took so long for news of the incident to reach the Political Officer was that the Tibetan interpreter is only employed for the seven cold weather months and when the incident occurred he was at his home in Sikkim. During most of the cold weather he was busy with his ordinary duties and could not be sent up to the Tawang area until March. There being no other channel of communication, the Political Officer did not hear of the incident until his Tibetan interpreter had been up.

2. Paragraphs 3 and 9 of Mr. Gould's telegram.—Mr. Gould does not specify of what he wishes the Monbas to be disabused, but His Excellency presumes it is the idea that they are within British territory and therefore entitled to claim protection. The position however is that in accordance with paragraph 3 of the instructions contained in your telegram No.818, dated the 16th May 1938, the Monbas were informed that Tawang is by treaty Indian and not Tibetan territory. On this information it is only natural that they should expect some protection from the Government of India. In view of the orders contained in the Secretary of State's Express Letter No. P. Z. 2976/39,



dated the 13th July 1939, a copy of which was sent with your memorandum No. F. 8-X/38 of the 8th September 1939, His Excellency feels that it would be impossible to give the Monbas to understand, pending further consideration of the position, that the Government of India intend never to occupy the territory which the Monbas have been informed is theirs by treaty and that the Monbas need expect no protection in the future.

3. Paragraph 6(d) (e) and (f).—In view of the orders contained in your telegram of May 16th, 1938, referred to above, that it should be impressed upon Tibetan officials that the Tawang area is Indian by treaty, His Excellency is unable to accept Mr. Gould's contention that it is implicit in Government of India's Express letter of 4th May 1939 to the Secretary of State [paragraph 3(e)] that *de facto* control by Tibetan officials is to be recognised and that the official whom Mr. Gould terms the "acting District Magistrate" can, under any circumstances, have been justified in acting as if the area were Tibetan.

4. Paragraph 7 of Mr. Gould's telegram.—It was not expected that Tibetan troops would in any case enter the area until next month, but the Political Officer is now of the opinion that they may not be brought down at all as both the Towang Dzongpons of Gyankar have been replaced.

5. His Excellency realises that Mr. Gould, situated in Lhasa, has exceptional opportunities for ascertaining what information does or does not reach the Tibetan Government, but he notices that the assumption is made that the Tibetan Government may continue indefinitely to plead ignorance of the actions of their own officials in the Tawang area, and are to be believed when they do so, but that they are likely immediately to become aware of any action on our part in that area.

His Excellency agrees that, if Tibetan troops are not sent into this area, action may be postponed until an opportunity of discussion with Mr. Gould occurs.

No. 2217-G. S., dated Shillong, the 24th May 1940.

Memo. by—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam.

Copy forwarded to the Political Officer in Sikkim.

Telegram No. 1708, dated Simla, 28th May 1940.

From—Foreign Secretary to Government of India,  
To—Secretary to Governor of Assam.

Our Express letter No. F.144-X/40 of May 10th, Tawang. Grateful for early reply as Gould is likely to leave Lhasa probably June 3rd.

Express Letter No.-2216 G.S., dated Shillong, the 24th May 1940.

From—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam,  
To—The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India,

#### SITUATION IN TAWANG AREA.

Your No. F. 144-X/40, dated the 10th May 1940. I am directed to say that the reason why it took so long for news of the incident to reach the Political Officer was that the Tibetan Interpreter is only employed for the seven cold weather months and when the incident occurred he was at his home in Sikkim. During most of the cold weather he was busy with his ordinary duties and could not be sent up to the Tawang area until March. There being no other channel of communication, the Political Officer did not hear of the incident until his Tibetan Interpreter had been up.

2. Paragraphs 3 and 9 of Mr. Gould's telegram.—Mr. Gould does not specify of what he wishes the Monbas to be disabused but His Excellency presumes it is the idea that they are within British territory, and therefore entitled to claim protection. The position however is that in accordance with paragraph 3 of the instructions contained in your telegram No. 818, dated the 16th May 1938,

A. G. P. [Adviser—(c)] No. 2—3—14-6-1946,

the Monbas were informed that Tawang is by treaty Indian and not Tibetan territory. On this information it is only natural that they should expect some protection from the Government of India. In view of the orders contained in the Secretary of State's Express letter No. P. Z. 2976/39, dated the 13th July 1939, a copy of which was sent with your memorandum No. F. 8-X/38 of the 8th September 1939, His Excellency feels that it would be impossible to give the Monbas to understand pending further consideration of the position, that India intend never to occupy the territory which the Monbas have been informed is theirs by treaty and that the Monbas need expect no protection in the future.

3. Paragraph 6(d) (e) and (f).—In view of the orders contained in your telegram of May 16th, 1938, referred to above, that it should be impressed upon Tibetan officials that the Tawang area is Indian by treaty, His Excellency is unable to accept Mr. Gould's contention that it is implicit in Government of India's Express letter of 4th May 1939, to Governor's Secretary, paragraph 3(e) that *de facto* control by Tibetan officials is to be recognised and that the official whom Mr. Gould terms the "acting District Magistrate" can, under any circumstances, have been justified in acting as if the area were Tibetan.

4. Paragraph 7 of Mr. Gould's telegram.—It was not expected that Tibetan troops would in any case enter the area until next month, but the Political Officer is now of the opinion that they may not be brought down at all as both the Towang Dzongpons of Gyankar have been replaced.

5. His Excellency realises that Mr. Gould, situated in Lhasa, has exceptional opportunities for ascertaining what information does or does not reach the Tibetan Government, but he notices that the assumption is made that the Tibetan Government may continue indefinitely to plead ignorance of the actions of their own officials in the Tawang area, and are to be believed when they do so, but that they are likely immediately to become aware of any action on our part in that area.

His Excellency agrees that, if Tibetan troops are not sent into this area, action may be postponed until an opportunity of discussion with Mr. Gould occurs.

No. 2217-G.S., dated Shillong, the 24th May 1940.

Memo. by—The Secretary to the Governor of Assam.

Copy forwarded to the Political Officer in Sikkim.

Telegram No 348-C., dated Shillong, 28th May 1940.

From—Secretary to Governor of Assam,

To—Foreign Secretary to Government of India.

Reference your telegram 1708 of 28th instant—Tawang. Reply sent with my Express letter 2216-G. S. of 24 instant.

Wireless telegram R. No. 1751, dated Simla, 29th May 1940.

From—Foreign Secretary to Government of India,

To—Sir B. J. GOULD, Lhasa.

(Copy by post to Secretary, Governor of Assam)

Your telegram 84 May 6th.—Tawang.

2. Governor of Assam has been consulted and on main question agrees that, if Tibetan troops are not sent to Tawang, action can be postponed until you have been able to discuss whole matter at Shillong. Assam information further is that both Tawang Dzongpons of Gyankar have been replaced, thus tending to confirm your conclusion that Tibetan troops will not be despatched to area.

3. Government of India leave it to your discretion whether to give quiet hint to Tibetans as suggested in paragraph 9 of your telegram. Should you do so you would no doubt bear in mind that India's claim to this area should not be compromised and it might be possible merely to refer with satisfaction to Assam information that previous Dzongpons have been replaced.