

SECRET

Copy No.....

OFFICE OF THE POLITICAL OFFICER IN SIKKIM & BHUTAN

GANGTOK (SIKKIM)

No. GAN/C/101/1/67

The Foreign Secretary,

Ministry of External Affairs,

New Delhi.

Subject: ANNUAL POLITICAL REPORT FOR 1967.

Sir,

I submit the following political report for the year 1967: -

#### INTRODUCTION

2. 1967 marked a significant development in the democratic processes in Sikkim, in that the general elections which were postponed in 1963 owing to the Emergency, were at long last held. A mood of restiveness against imagined restrictions placed by the Treaty with India was also discernible.

#### SIKKIM

Elections:

3. From the early months of the year the momentum of party activity to meet the challenges of the elections that were to take place in March, began to pick up speed. The three major parties, Sikkim National Party, Sikkim National Congress and the Sikkim State Congress, whose activities outside Gangtok had been negligible in the past, began to look

around for supporters and contest for the allegiance of local leaders in the various districts of Sikkim.

4. An innovation to the Election Law that placed restrictions on parties putting up candidates indiscriminately was the restriction that any nominee standing for election should furnish proof of possession of property and payment of taxes from the constituency in which he was standing. This not only retarded the efforts of some parties like the Sikkim National Congress for distributing their ablest members who were largely resident in Gartok or in Kalimpong or Darjeeling from putting up candidates in all constituencies; it also eliminated, to a substantial degree, the possibility of women standing for election as hereditary property is, by and large, in the names of the male members of the families who are also the principal tax payers.

5. The total number of elective seats were increased to 18 and together with six nominated seats formed a State Council of 24. The total electorate was of the magnitude of 87,000 of which approximately 40% cast their votes.

Party Positions:

6. The Sikkim National Party which is generally considered an instrument of the Chogyal and is of a predominantly Bhutia–Lepcha character, went to the polls with a manifesto that called for a revision of the 1950 Treaty with India, establishment of a responsible Government and the retention of communal parity.

7. The Sikkim State Congress largely Nepali in orientation, demand full responsible Government with the Chogyal as the constitutional Head. They also asked for an abolition of the concept of communal parity.

8. The Sikkim National Congress: The policies of the Sikkim National Congress were akin to those of the State Congress. Being, however, a broad based party of Bhutia-Lepcha and Nepalese elements, they

emphasized the necessity of establishing joint electorates. The fact that the elective seats were increased by 4, was welcomed by the Sikkim National Congress which, because of its broad organisation in Sikkim, felt that its chances for controlling the Sikkim Council would be thereby increased.

9. Sikkim Independent Front: A party that had a short existence was organized by a Lepcha lady, Ruth Karthak Lepcha lady, Ruth Karthak Lepchani, and her Indian husband, Ahsan Halim, called the Sikkim Independent Front. The main burden of their political stand was that the Chegyal, as a Bhutia, was a usurper to the throne that rightly belonged to the Lepche community. The political career of Ruth Karthak Lepchani prior to the elections, was short-lived as she was disqualified on the grounds that her marriage to an Indian national had deprived her of Sikkimese nationality. She and her husband were also arrested on security charges.

Distribution of Seats:

10. The distribution of seats in the 5 constituencies was as follows: -

	Bhutia-Lepcha	Nepalese
South	1	2
East	2	1
West	1	2
North	2	1
Gangtok City	1	1

11. A constructive factor introduced in the Election Law was that if a nominee is to be elected from his community, he must not only have the majority vote of that community but at least 15% of the total votes cast

in the other community. This stipulation led to two very crucial election petitions that have not still been resolved.

Nominations:

12. When nominations were finally received and scrutinized, 46 candidates stood for the elections. Their breakup partywise was as follows: -

Sikkim National Party	16
Sikkim State Congress	14
Sikkim National Congress	13
Independents	1
Scheduled Castes	1
Sangha	1

13. Two of the candidates, the representative of the Sikkim Scheduled Caste League, and the representative of the Tsongs were returned unopposed. As a consequence, 44 candidates contested 16 seats in 5 territorial, 1 general and 1 Sangha constituencies on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1967.

14. The results as they emerged proved most interesting. They were as follows: -

Sikkim National Congress	8
Sikkim State Party	5
Sikkim State Congress	2
Scheduled Cast	1
Tsongs	1
Sangha	1

15. Since the scheduled caste, Tsongs and Sangha candidates were prepared to throw in lot with the Sikkim National Party, the position that emerged was that of an even balance between the Sikkim National Congress and the Sikkim National Party. The elections indicated that the Sikkim National Congress was organizationally by far the strongest of the political parties in the country, it also marked the shrinking of the Sikkim State Congress, at one time the leading political party of the country, into a position of inferiority. In view of the fact that the elected seats were evenly balanced between the two other parties, the Sikkim State Congress though considerably reduced in size, had acquired some pivotal importance.

16. The Sikkim National Party found itself in an extremely strong position despite the fact that its elected seats were less than those of the Sikkim National Congress. With 5 seats of their own, 3 other elected seats and six nominated seats, it virtually held complete control of the State Council.

17. The Chogyal, however, showed reluctance to handing over power to the Sikkim National Party, but desired that his body of Executive Councillors should be drawn from all the parties that had contested elections. He hoped thereby to eliminate opposition to any of his measures within the Council. However, he had to ensure that the Executive Councillors so chosen were also amenable to his control.

18. His initial efforts were, therefore, directed towards the Sikkim National Congress in the hope that Kazi Lhendup Dorji, the President of the Party, would accept the post of an Executive Councillor. The Kazi, however, was of a different persuasion. Convinced by the performance of his party at the elections that he had a far greater following in the country than the two other parties, he probably calculated that by remaining in opposition, his party might one day acquire sufficient strength to capture complete power for itself. He consequently rejected

all advances on the plea that he could not accept office until more powers were delegated to the Executive Councillors.

19. The Chogyal did not unduly regret the rejection of the advances made by him as the presence of the Kazi among the Executive Councillors would have been resented by his own loyal supporters of the National Party and his hold over them would have consequently diminished. Nevertheless, to preserve the façade of an all-party Government, efforts were directed towards drawing away some of those elected under the Sikkim Congress tickets from the Kazi's fold. With uncanny foresightedness, the Chogyal chose as his principal victims, Bhim Bahadur Gurung, a young Nepalese from western Sikkim who, with his educated wife, were quite prepared to abandon his party for the fruits of office. The farsightedness of the Chogyal has become evident only several months later when it was obvious that B.B. Gurung has turned out to be the instrument for almost successfully dividing the Sikkim National Congress in two along the strictly communal lines of Nepalese and Bhutia-Lepcha. Not only was Gurung drawn into accepting office by various blandishments, but another elected member from the Sikkim National Congress, Thakur Singh Rai, was appointed as Deputy Executive Councillor. This reduced the membership of the Sikkim National Congress in the State Council.

17. The Chogyal, however, showed reluctance to handing over power to the Sikkim National Party, but desired that his body of Executive Councillors should be drawn from all the parties that had contested elections. He hoped thereby to eliminate opposition to any of his measures within the Council. However, he had to ensure that the Executive Councillors so chosen were also amenable to his control.

18. His initial efforts were, therefore, directed towards the Sikkim National Congress in the hope that Kazi Lhendup Dorji, the President of the Party, would accept the post of an Executive Councillor. The Kazi,

however, was of a different persuasion. Convinced by the performance of his party at the elections that he had a far greater following in the country than the two other parties, he probably calculated that by remaining in opposition, his party might one day acquire sufficient strength to capture complete power for itself. He consequently rejected all advances on the plea that he could not accept office until more powers were delegated to the Executive Councillors.

19. The Chogyal did not unduly regret the rejection of the advances made by him as the presence of the Kazi among the Executive Councillors would have been resented by his own loyal supporters of the National Party and his hold over them would have consequently diminished. Nevertheless, to preserve the façade of an all-party Government, efforts were directed towards drawing away some of those elected under the Sikkim Congress tickets from the Kazi's fold. With uncanny foresightedness, the Chogyal chose as his principal victims, Bhim Bahadur Gurung, a young Nepalese from western Sikkim who, with his educated wife, were quite prepared to abandon his party for the fruits of office. The farsightedness of the Chogyal has become evident only several months later when it was obvious that B.B. Gurung has turned out to be the instrument for almost successfully dividing the Sikkim National Congress in two along the strictly communal lines of Nepalese and Bhutia-Lepcha. Not only was Gurung drawn into accepting office by various blandishments, but another elected member from the Sikkim National Congress, Thakur Singh Rai, was appointed as Deputy Executive Councillor. This reduced the membership of the Sikkim National Congress in the State Council.

20. The Chogyal's attention was next directed towards the Sikkim State Congress. Of the two nominees elected to the Council, one-Nahakul Pradhan – had already been an Executive Councillor since 1960. Nahakul Pradhan's overwhelming desire to continue in office led him to accept an invitation for Executive Councillorship with great alacrity despite the

objections raised by his party against such action. With the facade of an all-party Executive Council completed, the Chogyal felt the next few years would be one of a reasonable ease in the governance of his country along policies that he determined.

Sikkim National Congress'

21. The political situation did not resolve itself as easily as the Chogyal envisaged. Angered at the defection of B.B. Gurung from the party, the Working Committee decided to ask him for an explanation of the action he had taken and insisted upon his resignation from office. Gurung, however, proved himself equal to the occasion. He claimed that his nomination was not done by the Working Committee, but by the Maha Samiti of the party. Consequently, the former had no right to expel him. He, on his part, convened a Maha Samiti of the National Congress at Namchi, a town in Western Sikkim, and resolved that the party had lost confidence in its President, Kazi Lhendup Dorji, and Vice-President, Sonam Tsering, and had, therefore, removed them from office.

22. This was the first move towards splitting the best-organised political party in this country in two along communal – Nepalese and Bhutia-Lepcha-lines. Gurung has some degree of following among the Nepalese of Western Sikkim and the chances of his success in destroying a non-communal party by creating a purely Nepali organisation is not remote. It would, however, be most detrimental to the interests of building sound democratic traditions in Sikkim.

Sikkim National Party:

23. The Sikkim National Party has been dominated by the spirit of Netuk Tsering, a defrocked Lama, who was once a CPWD contractor and whose standards of incorruptibility are questionable. With the termination of the elections he finally succeeded in ousting his far gentler colleague,



Martam Topden, who had been the Executive Councillor representing the National Party in the earlier Council. Netuk, thanks to his limited education and abundant crudity, has played a dictatorial role in the party which has led to the slow creation of hostility against him. But for the conviction that he possesses the confidence of the Chogyal, opposition to his domineering character and his free exercise of patronage which is smouldering, would soon consume him completely.

Sikkim State Congress:

24. The poor performance of the party at the elections and the acceptance of office by Nahakul Pradhan against mandate of his party, has resulted in its slow but steady disintegration. Kashiraj Pradhan, the President of the Party, who was at one time an Executive Councillor, has gradually lost interest in holding the party together and has been spending a considerable period of his time outside Sikkim.

Anti-Indian Attitude:

25. The early part of the year saw sudden flare-up of anti-Indian attitudes. It is difficult to track down the catalytic agency responsible beyond suspecting that the energies generated by the elections found some sort of focus in anti-Indianism. Criticism of India's restrictive policies in providing grain, anger at adverse press commentaries in Indian newspapers and exposition of Indian domination and arrogance by a group of so-called "Young Turks" rose into a crescendo of hatred.

26. A month before the Independence Day of India, rumours had already been afloat that Sikkim had decided to consider August 15 as their own Independence Day and to boycott the usual march past and reception held by the Political Office. Reports were received of a meeting held by the Working Committee of National Party in which a decision was taken to encourage villagers from outside Gangtok to come to the

capital with Sikkimese flags to participate in their own ceremony. Indian shopkeepers were apprehensive of the threats held out if they were to fly Indian National Flags as they had done in previous years.

27. Fortunately, these threats were not carried out and the Independence Day ceremony passed off without incident. In fact, the attitude of the National Party resulted in the Sikkim National Congress canvassing far and wide for participation in this function. Record crowds turned out at the Residency and not only were flags displayed on every building in the city, but even on every taxi plying in the streets.

28. While the embers of anti-Indian sentiments continue to smoulder, they have not created much heat for two principal reasons. The Chinese action at Nathu La and Chola had a very sobering influence on the population of Sikkim. It was realized without any ambiguity that Indian forces alone could defend Sikkim's integrity and that Indian soldiers were prepared to die for that cause. The second reason may be ascribed to the diverting by the Chogyal of the multifarious minor grievances against India to one main channel. He has probably calculated that a series of pinpricks over a very wide range leads merely to the dissipation of Sikkimese energies and creation of a barrage of Indian hostility. It would, in his view, serve his purpose far better if all opposition were directed towards a revision of the 1950 Treaty with India from which all Sikkimese problems spring.

Treaty Revision:

29. As early as January 1967, the Chogyal had raised the question of Treaty revision in a monthly press conference that he had initiated. He claimed that he had raised the matter earlier and that formal request would be made to the Government of India at an appropriate time.

30. A group of pressmen visited Sikkim to publicise the work done by the Border Roads Organisation in May, 1967. While very little publicity

was given to the Border Roads, the Chogyal endeavoured to use them for giving prominence to his claims for a revision of the Treaty. Unfortunately, the Press Delegation was responsible for a spate of very adverse comments on Sikkim's demands for a revision of the Treaty and the Chogyal's role in it.

31. As a counter to the adverse publicity, the three Executive Councillors were called upon to issue a statement in which similar demands were raised. Since a statement by the E.Cs on a reserved subject as Treaty Relations lay outside the scope of their authority, they claimed that they had acted in their individual capacity. This naturally led to the political parties from which two of the Executive Councillors were elected, Sikkim State Congress and Sikkim National Congress, decrying their action and threatening to expel them for having made such a statement.

32. In the second half of the year there has been a slow decrease in pressure on the part of the Chogyal for Treaty revision. However, there is little doubt that he is convinced that his position internally within Sikkim and internationally outside Sikkim can only be strengthened and consolidated by a revision of the Treaty whereby India's role is only confined to providing the defence that this country requires against the danger from the North.

Chogyal's State Visit:

33. The Chogyal and the Gyalmo together with their children visited South India and Delhi for a period of 15 days as guests of the Government of India. He was given a reception that exceeded all his expectations. He responded to the consideration shown to him with corresponding graciousness and emphasized how closely Sikkim was "wedded" to India. After his return there appeared to be some reduction

in his resentments and fears of imagined throats and persecutions by the Government of India.

#### Chinese Military Actions:

34. While in 1965 Chinese military forces stationed in the Chumbi Valley had threatened to take military action, in September 1967, they actually did so. Hostilities began as a result of constant violations of the border at Nathu La by the Chinese forces. There was no ambiguity about the border which has been solemnly respected by the Chinese for several years. The Chinese in sending one or two of their personnel from time to time to cross the border and stand on the Sikkimese side of the watershed wished to assert symbolically their refusal to accept the demarcated border. The local Indian Commander decided to lay a concertine wire across the border to prevent such intrusions. Firing from the Chinese broke out with such spontaneity when the wire was being laid as to indicate a measure of pre-planning. The Indian response was conditioned to the extent of fire power brought to bear by Chinese forces. However, it was certainly of a magnitude that had not been anticipated. The gun duel ended as rapidly as it had begun and it is estimated that Chinese casualties were comparatively heavy. Another incident took place at Chola northwest of Nathu La about a month later.

35. There have been various assessments of the motivations leading to the Chinese embarking upon military action in an area where, they are aware, Indian forces are better prepared than in most parts of the Indo-Tibet frontier: a calculated effort to show China's military superiority in the context of internal disturbances; the necessity of recording some military gains in a period when Vietnam and the position on the Sino-Russian border had indicated military weakness; Red Guards activism calling for a bold military policy at least in areas where they have no fear of very sharp retaliation; presence of highly indoctrinated troops on

a sensitive frontier who are not amenable to much discipline. These are the many theories that have been current to explain away the sudden outbreak of hostilities. While no single reason can be scribed as being alone responsible for military action, the fact cannot be overlooked that Chinese troops will not embark upon hostilities in the massive fashion that they did at Nathu La without clearance from much higher formations reaching back to the Central Government.

36. The hostilities at Nathu La had a very salutary influence in Sikkim. The fact that a large number of Tibetan labourers and villagers living in the areas where the conflict took place left their homes and their occupations and came streaming to Gangtok, as well as the reported threats of air attacks caused very little panic either in Gangtok or the rest of Sikkim. There was calm confidence that the Indian Army was more than adequately prepared to protect Sikkim against Chinese incursions. It also had the side effect of making clear to the people of Sikkim that the Indian military personnel were absolutely essential for the preservation of the State as a single entity.

Sikkim Development Plan:

37. Sikkim's Third Five Year Plan commenced from the 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1966. The tentative outlay for the Plan is Rs. 900 lakhs. From the beginning of this Plan, the Government of Sikkim have accepted responsibility for meeting from their own resources the committed expenditure which is estimated to be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 30 lakhs a year. They have also accepted that some of the schemes which are in the nature of commercial schemes should be financed by loans. The element of loans in the outlay of Rs. 900 lakhs is estimated to be Rs. 210 lakhs. The terms of the loans are still to be decided.

38. During 1966-67 a sum of Rs. 140 lakhs was released by the Government of India for Sikkim's Plan. During the year 1967-68 the

amount released so far has been Rs.110 lakhs. We have recommended the release of another Rs. 80 lakhs.

39. Sikkim is not self-sufficient in foodgrains. The shortage is met by releases by the Government of India. The Government of India have fixed monthly quotes of rice, atta, sugar and other commodities for release to Sikkim. During 1967, because of the scarcity at home, we could not release the full quantity of rice to Sikkim and at the end of the year there was a backlog of over 2,000 tonnes. Sikkim Darbar tried to make good part of the requirements by purchases from Nepal but this had the result of raising the price of rice, as rice supplied from the Government of India godowns at subsidized rates is much cheaper than the Nepal rice purchased from open market. Since the shortage of rice and its high price affected the common man, the politicians made good use of the opportunity to discredit India.

40. During the year ten new scholarships were granted to Sikkimese boys and girls for studies in public schools in India and twenty new scholarships were awarded for degree and diploma courses.

Conclusion:

41. The year has not been an unduly difficult one in terms of Indo-Sikkim relations. However, problems are lurking in the background which may lead to difficulties and misunderstandings unless we clarify to the Government of Sikkim and the Chogyal our views regarding the limits to which Sikkim's sovereignty can be exercised within the context of our responsibilities for the defence not only of Sikkim but of India as a whole.

#### BHUTAN

42. The centralized and unitary form of Government in Bhutan has resulted in far less problems of political nature developing in Bhutan than in Sikkim during 1967.

#### Appointment of Special Officer:

43. One of our principal political endeavours during 1967 was to obtain the agreement of the Government of Bhutan to locating an "Indian presence" at Thimpu. The increasing tempo of development assistance and the complexities of the Bhutanese political scene based so much on personality evaluation made it evident that apart from the Political Officer for Sikkim and Bhutan resident in Gangtok, there should be some person located in Bhutan to report on the developments. While Bhutanese self-interest had resulted in our successfully breaking their isolationism in 1960 and persuading them to accept Indian assistance, the fears of undue political involvement had not been sufficiently shed to accept an Indian representative at Thimpu. A letter sent by the Prime Minister to the King of Bhutan suggesting the appointment of an Indian Government official at Thimpu brought a response not from the King but the President of the Tsongdu. The reply stated that the Tsongdu feared the appointment of such a representative would bring more problems than solutions. Efforts were also made by the Bhutanese to give publicity to discussions in the Tsongdu stating that representatives could only be exchanged between the two countries at the level of ambassadors, obviously a move to pre-empt any further efforts by India.

44. It was only after the visit of Secretary-I to Bhutan in which he explained away the fears of the Bhutanese and indicated that the whole objective of locating an officer was to assist Bhutan that the King agreed to obtain the Tsongdu's approval for the appointment. He was, however, careful in defining the role of the Special Officer and ensuring that there were limitations to any plenipotentiary role that might be ascribed to him.

45. As has been stated earlier, Bhutanese isolationism has not sufficiently dissipated itself to make them view the growth of political

ties between Bhutan and India with anything but suspicion. Since the Treaty of Punakha, they have been quite happy that the political link with their southern neighbor was only manifested by a Political Officer living in Gangtok who would take some days to reach Thimpu, if needed.

46. Today as the extent of Indian aid to Bhutan grows, they fear that a political presence in their midst is intended to watch over and control utilization of Indian funds to a degree that would be uncomfortable. There are several vested interests among the principal Bhutanese families that have stood to benefit in various ways by Indian aid. There is a vague suspicion that with the presence of an Indian official in their midst these benefits may be circumscribed. However much they may have disliked it, the pressure of the Indian Government to accept a representative has resulted in their adopting a posture which they feel, would be next best to total rejection. They have insisted that the Special Officer should function for the limited purpose of expediting assistance channeled to the Bhutan Government and that the Political Officer for Sikkim and Bhutan would continue to be responsible for relations between the two countries.

King's Health:

47. A development that caused some anxiety to the Government of India during 1967 was a request from the Bhutan Government for a Heart Specialist to fly urgently to Thimpu as the King had had a third heart attack. A team of doctors and nurses under Brig. H.B. Lal was rushed to Bhutan and the findings indicated that the King had suffered a fairly serious attack. His health has since improved considerably and the tours made by him to eastern and southern Bhutan indicate that the strength and toughness he had acquired in youth has stood him in good stead.

48. The delicate balance of political forces in Bhutan depends much upon the King's state of health and his ability to give direction to a highly



contralised Government. One of the principal reasons why the group of exiles in Nepal, frustrated and to some degree impoverished, have not disintegrated completely is the hope that if the King's health were to fail, they would once again return to power. The structure of power in Bhutan itself has not been completely analysed, but there would inevitably be forces in the Army and Civil Government which may assert their right to leadership in the event of any untoward development as far as the King is concerned. India's stake in the continued leadership of the King for several years to come is of such a magnitude that self-interest demands our carefully ensuring that the King's health progresses from strength to strength. In the meanwhile, a careful assessment also requires to be made of the forces that may challenge the establishment of a Regency Council in case of an untoward eventuality.

#### Bhutan's Relations with China:

In July, 1967, there were reports of an incursion by Chinese troops across the border between Bhutan and Chumbi Valley opposite Yatung. About 400 Chinese troops were observed to have advanced as far as a Chorten at Panka La and advised all yak herders to the west to the Chorten that they were grazing their cattle in Chinese territory. The troops were then reported to have withdrawn from the area of the pass.

50. The Bhutanese took an exceedingly pragmatic view of the position. They were careful to ensure that they did not draft into a collision with Chinese forces. The King kept the area under observation. He also decided to send selected herders with yaks to the disputed area with strict instructions that taxes should not be paid by them if they were called upon to do so.

51. The incident at Nathu La had solutary effect on the Panka La area as well. Almost immediately after the incident all evidence of Tibetan presence in this area completely disappeared. The King, on his own,

took the initiative to send a man into this region to investigate the state of morale and the effect of the Indian Army's military action in the Chumbi Valley. The reports he received were well calculated to strengthen his confidence in the capacity of the Indian Army to defend Bhutan. There have been stray reports of the Chinese in the Chumbi Valley sending letters, presents etc to the King and the Paro Penlon. It has not been possible to corroborate any of these.

#### Indian Economic Assistance:

52. Bhutan's draft of the Second Plan which commenced in April, 1966, was ready for discussion with the Government of India only towards the end of 1966 and the preliminary discussions were held in Delhi.

Government of India team consisting of Shri S.K. Bhutani, Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Shri S.P. Krishnamurthy, Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and Shri Har Mander Singh, Financial Adviser in this office, visited Bhutan from the 30<sup>th</sup> January to the 5<sup>th</sup> February, 1967, to hold discussions with officers of the Development Wing of the Government of Bhutan on the Plan. The Government of Bhutan had provided for an outlay of Rs.22 crores but it was felt that an outlay of between 19 and 20 crores would be more realistic. The Plan has not, however, been finalized and the present arrangement is to make release on a year to year basis. These releases cover not only the Plan expenditure but also the committed expenditure as the Government of Bhutan have expressed their inability to meet the committed expenditure with their present resource. During 1966-67, a total of Rs. 275 lakhs was released for the Plan. During the year 1967-68, the releases so far have been of the order of Rs. 258 lakhs against the provision of Rs. 344 lakhs.

53. The Government of India have continued to provide funds for the Army and the Police in Bhutan. During the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 1967 upto the

end of the year Rs.40 lakhs were released for the Army, Rs. 30 lakhs for building programme for the Army and Rs. 12 lakhs for the Police.

54. As first step towards integrating the Development Wing with the General Wing of the Government of Bhutan, the offices of the Secretary General of the Development Wing were shifted from Paro to the capital on the 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1967.

55. The Thimpu Hydel Project with an installed capacity of 400 kilowatts was commissioned on the 8<sup>th</sup> February, 1967. The capital has now electricity for domestic use.

56. 15 scholarships for studies in public schools in India and 5 scholarships for degree and diploma courses were awarded during the year by the Government of India to Bhutanese boys and girls.

United Nations Membership:

57. Interest in becoming a member of the UN is widespread in Bhutan. The older generation of Bhutanese leaders feels that international recognition by the UN of Bhutan's sovereignty will prevent the fate of Tibet some day overtaking Bhutan. Goshe Tschewang, one of the Royal Councillors, once mentioned that if Tibet had been a member of the UN, she would never have been laid low by Chinese forces. Second consideration is the feeling that membership to the UN would open a treasure house of international aid which has so far been denied to Bhutan. Among the younger officialdom is also the glamour of lights of New York and the possibilities of extensive international travel.

58. No thought has been given to the expertise and personnel required, the communication facilities needed, the political commitments and posture the country will be compelled to take etc. Nor has any thought at all been given to the financial implications of the enterprise.

Conclusion:

59. As long as the King remains in satisfactory state of health, India's position in Bhutan will continue to be source. We shall, however, have to rationalize India's aid commitments in Bhutan in order to see that the assistance rendered does not lead to the development of social tensions that may endanger both India's position as well as the primacy of the King in the country.

(N.B. Menon)

Political Officer

Distribution: As usual.

CONFIDENTIAL

COPY No.5

INFORMATION SERVICE OF INDIA, GNAGTOK.

Annual Publicity Report for the period from 1 January 1967 to 31 December, 1967, and Handing Over Notes of Shri B.B. Iyer, Second Secretary (Information).

....

As the undersigned is due to relinquish charge in February, 1968, after little over four years of service at this post, for reasons of convenience, the Annual Report for the past year and Handing Over Report are submitted together.

PART I – THE BACKGROUND

2. Origin: The Information Post at Gangtok came into existence in the middle of 1955. The reasons for starting the set-up was the misgivings among the Sikkimese and Bhutanese people when the Chinese began to erode their Seventeen Point Agreement with Tibet, based on the principle of respect for Tibetan autonomy. The principal effort of the Post, set up by us, became the promotion of pilgrim traffic from Tibet to India and vice-versa, the production of Tibetan literature suited to meet the thirst for factual information and works of literary merit and aesthetic appeal to the people of Tibet, and the Tibetan knowing people of Sikkim and Bhutan, and the organisation of Tibetan broadcasts by the External Services of the All India Radio. As the Post is based in Sikkim, where the majority of the people are Nepalese and practically everyone reads and writes Nepali, an effort to produce publicity material in Nepalese was also attempted. This Post, working in close collaboration with the Chogyal, who was then the Maharajkumar, helped to set up the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, for presentation and study of rare Mahayana Buddhistic texts which were in danger of misuse. The

exhibition of our documentary films was attempted in all areas of accreditation. The programme undertaken was extremely limited in scope, partly due to paucity of resources and difficulties of the terrain in which we operated and partly due to restrictive attitudes of the Chinese, Sikkimese and Bhutanese authorities whose permission was required to be taken for performances other than those in the Mission's premises. Among programmes administered by the Mission having bearing on our publicity were award of scholarships and organisation of Bharat Darshan tours. So far 250 Sikkimese and 350 (this figure includes Bhutanese students who are being subsidized from our aid funds) Bhutanese have availed of the Indian scholarship opportunities and many of them who have returned, now occupy key positions in the affairs of their homeland. The goodwill of these persons towards India has obvious potentialities. Most of the teachers in Sikkim and Bhutan are Indians. The manner in which they fare could make a vital difference to us. During the last ten years, about 100 Sikkimese have gone on Bharat Darshan Tours. Conditions of recurrent crises were responsible for limited activity in Bhutan and only one Delegation in 1963 of about 30 Bhutanese went on a Bharat Darshan Tour. Thereafter, in 1967 two delegations – 20 Bhutanese Lamas early in the year, and seven Royal Councillors, towards the close of the year – visited India. The existence of two schools of thought in Sikkim, one asking for the dilution of the Indian role (by the 1950 Treaty, India is responsible only for conducting Sikkim's defence, communications and external affairs, but confidential letters exchanged immediately after the signature of the Treaty vest India with broader responsibilities than mentioned in the Treaty), and another for a more active role in Sikkim, are prominent factors in shaping the publicity and public relations programme of the Post.

3. Impact of Chinese Aggressive Postures: The provocative Chinese activities on its border with India taken in conjunction with the Chinese repudiation of its erstwhile recognition of India's special relationships

with Sikkim and Bhutan in 1959, had a chain reaction. Ten years earlier, Bhutan had hastened to conclude the 1949 Treaty conceding conduct of external relations to India in exchange for a guarantee of its internal autonomy, no doubt influenced by the plight of the Sikkim where the chaotic conditions demanded a measure of control on internal affairs as well, which the Government of India were insisting on, as conditions precedent to the conclusion of a Treaty. For the first time in 1959, the Bhutanese publicity advanced the thesis that Indian "guidance" in the conduct of external affairs, which they were required to seek under the 1949 Treaty, did not impose any obligation that the Indian advice tendered, was binding on them. However, at the same time Bhutanese decided to give up their centuries old isolation and accept substantial Indian technical and financial aid for building roads. In 1960 the Government of India took steps to strengthen the publicity activities of the Mission by opening a new set up at Kalimpong under a senior officer to counter Chinese subversive activities. In 1961, the Bhutanese gave discreet publicity to the Chinese overtures to them, offering them unlimited aid and cautioning them against the Indian aid for their contemplated First Five Year Plan. Bhutan, however, went ahead with its Indian aided Five Year Plan and in 1962, even accepted an Indian military training team to re-organise and expand the traditional Bhutanese militia into a modern army. In 1962, a Government of India Press was established at Gartok for the production of attractively brought out illustrated literature in English, Nepalese and Tibetan, for distribution in border areas. In the same year, a radio station was established in Kurseong to organize broadcasts in Sikkimese, Nepalese and Bhutanese. The press – Indian and international – started showing interest in Sikkim and Bhutan in the sixties and half a dozen newspapermen were based by their organizations in Gangtok and Bhutan started opening its doors to the members of the newspaper fraternity.

4. The Chinese Invasion: The tempo of publicity activities was stepped up to counter the adverse impact of the Chinese invasion in 1962. The daily printed bulletins which we started issuing then in English, Nepali and Tibetan with the help of the Government of India Press, proved timely and invaluable, when Indian newspapers were not reaching Sikkim and rumour was rife. The Kurseong broadcasts as well as the bulletins brought out by our office in Kalimpong rendered useful service to the entire region on the borders of North Bengal and Sikkim and Bhutan. When the situation became more normal because it was found that there was some duplication between the work of our posts at Kalimpong and Gangtok and the publicity agencies of the Government of West Bengal, the Kalimpong office was closed.

5. Affects of military debacle: The Indian military setbacks of 1962 tempted Sikkim and Bhutan to reappraise their position vis-à-vis India. In 1963, the ruler, hitherto known as His Highness the Maharaja (in Bhutanese the Druk Gyalpo) now started calling himself "His Majesty the King". At Bhutan's request India sponsored Bhutan for membership in the Colombo Plan. In 1964, the Sikkim Ruler indicated that he would like to be called Chogyal and not Maharaja. Both in 1964 and 1965, China and Pakistan corresponded directly with the Sikkimese and Bhutanese Rulers on ceremonial occasions in violation of the treaties with India and both rulers showed some inclinations to respond to their overtures.

6. Impact of economic Aid: During the period 1962-65 boom conditions prevailed in Sikkim. Planned development had commenced with Indian aid in 1953. The consequent prosperity was augmented from 1960 onwards when the construction of border roads were taken up by the Government of India earnestly. When the Indian armed forces took up positions in strength, after the Chinese invasion in 1962, another contributory factor to economic prosperity was introduced.



The Sikkimese response was qualified by a latent feeling that much of the profits of this period had gone to the Indian business community and an obsessive fear that Sikkim would never develop the resources to pay for the maintenance costs of the various projects initiated under the plans for which the capital costs had been donated by India. Our publicity at this stage gave full prominence to the prosperity Sikkim had been able to achieve with Indian help and imply that this wave of progress generated would automatically solve the problem of meeting maintenance costs of development projects for which capital had been donated by India. Also stress was laid on the fact that per capita income of the Sikkimese was at least twice that of an Indian. In Bhutan the revolutionary changes initiated by planned development were marred by the assassination of the then Prime Minister Jigmie Dorji and a prolonged period of internal unrest during which some officers of the Bhutan Army were found guilty by a court martial and shot by a firing squad, the flight of some Bhutanese army officers and civilians in high positions after an alleged unsuccessful coup, and ultimately an attempt on the life of the King himself. A factor for these troubles was the impression among the Bhutanese that the assassinated Prime Minister, his brothers, sister and other relatives, were monopolizing the spoils, which the new boom conditions had brought. The use of traditional methods of conscripting Bhutanese labour for road construction, later given up in favour of imported Nepalese labour gangs, also played a part in promoting resentments. Conscription was not popular with the Bhutanese. Occasionally there were troubles with the Nepalese labour, caused more often than not by the usual mutual suspicions that prevail between different ethnic groups. We gave due publicity to the measures taken by His Majesty Bhutan King to correct the stresses that had developed. The statements that the Bhutan King made at this time acknowledging Indian help but stressing the need for proper use of our aid were very helpful to us and we publicized them.

7. Abortive Pakistani Invasion and Chinese Ultimatum: The abortive Pakistani invasion and Chinese ultimatum in August-September, 1965, was followed by an intensification of propaganda by these countries, particularly the latter, against India's friendly relations with Sikkim and Bhutan. Soon after the ill-fated ultimatum, Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi took the opportunity to reaffirm Chinese repudiation of India's special relationships with Sikkim and Bhutan. Chinese protest notes to us for the first time in 1966, started harping on Sikkim's "sovereignty" and impugned its protectorate relationship with India; the presence of Indian troops in Sikkim was assailed as provocative and allegations were made about India tightening its hold on Bhutan which was encouraged to negotiate directly with China. Pakistani propaganda organs echoed faithfully the Chinese propaganda. From the middle of 1966, the Chinese started playing taped music and making loudspeaker broadcasts addressed to the Indian troops at Nathu La. They said that Sikkim belonged to China. According to them there was no quarrel between the Chinese and Indian soldiers and, therefore, the latter should go back. As the Government of India had made no arrangements for the entertainment of its troops, the Chinese were arranging for their entertainment. Ever since 1959 when China brought Tibet as its inseparable part within its full jurisdiction India, they said, had given asylum to the rebels and concentrated its army on the borders thereby behaving in a reactionary manner. In 1962 it was India they alleged which attacked China resulting in estrangement between India and China. They asked the Indian troops not to listen to their reactionary government. They further complained that since June 1962, India had stopped trade between Sikkim and Tibet which was against the interests of the Sikkimese people. Before 1963, the Chinese Government had never sent its troops to the Sikkim-Tibet border but it had been obliged to do so since then, because India had been increasing its troops in Sikkim and instigating them to fight the Chinese, the broadcasts said.

8. The Directorate of Field Publicity of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in collaboration with the army authorities followed soon by organizing counter broadcasts addressed to the Chinese forces across the border at Nathu La which provided at the same time entertainment to our armed forces. An extension of these type of broadcasts at some of the other strategic passes is also being contemplated by the Government.

9. To cover the Chinese provocative activities, journalists in large groups – both Indian and international – came to visit the Sikkim-Tibet border. This influx greatly increased the press relations responsibilities of the Post notwithstanding the fact that the primary responsibility for bringing and taking back such journalists lay with the army authorities. The despatches of these correspondents aided our publicity. One effect of the Chinese to make good their threats was that it dispelled both Sikkim's and Bhutan's desires to cultivate links with Pakistan and China. With India their desires to redraw the pattern of their association became more pronounced.

10. The Chogyal who always makes it a point to meet all the journalists visiting Sikkim, not only spoke freely about his views urging a revision of the 1950 Indo-Sikkim Treaty but also, in contrast to the practice in previous years, did not put any curbs on the publication of all that he said. There was a tendency on the part of the Chogyal in these press briefings to exaggerate the so-called sacrifices of Sikkim (Wool trade had been hit when the Sikkim-Tibet trade was closed) to minimize the extensive aid Sikkim had received from India and a total absence of acknowledgement of the stability which India's presence through the 1950 Treaty had given Sikkim. The Chogyal's views were buttressed by interviews to correspondents by functionaries of the Sikkim Government like the Executive Councillors and senior officials, the latter styled themselves as a "Youth Forum" were mainly hand picked people who had prospered under the Chogyal's patronage, and the editor of a so-

called independent fortnightly "Sikkim" (reported to be receiving a subsidy from the Chogyal and being given official encouragement in different ways). These aides went further than the Chogyal, claiming that Indian aid had cancelled itself out because Sikkim had been denied the facility of levying excise duties on the Indian goods passing through it. On the Bhutan pattern outlined in paragraph 5, "independent" fortnightly, "Sikkim's" editor, became the avant garde by referring to the Chogyal as "His Majesty" in his paper from September, 1967. The opposition parties in Sikkim ridiculed the postures taken up by the Chogyal and his supporters and argued that it was more appropriate for Sikkim to concentrate at this stage, on speedy introduction of political reforms and bringing the benefits of basic amenities of a modern welfare state to the common man. These parties also reminded that the Government of India should not forget that it had some obligations for the promotion of good government in Sikkim. Our replies to these grievances which were made in private conversations were to stress the positive aspects of the Indo-Sikkimese relationship. We also pointed out that strategic location of Sikkim, the complexities inherent in its population composition and its economic inviability ruled out drastic review of the existing pattern of relationship. The Bhutanese elite started speaking freely to Indian and foreign newspapermen about their desires for a speedy Indian sponsorship of the membership of their country in the United Nations (the issue was first raised by the Bhutan King in his talks with late Prime Minister Shastri at Calcutta in January, 1965). In our conversations we mentioned that Bhutan and India were in constant contact about this and at the appropriate time the matter would be taken up.

11. Excesses of Chinese Revolution: The adverse effects of the ..... Chinese ultimatum was carried a stage further ..... the excesses of the cultural revolution there. Chinese attitudes in Nepal and Burma at the height of this movement, and the shocking treatment meted out to

foreign diplomats in Peking caused concern among the Sikkimese intelligentsia. The failure of the Chinese to gain any military advantage out of the artillery battle at Nathu La in September 1967 despite considerable human and material losses and the incident at Chola on 1 October 1967, proved another set-back for them and of some gain to us.

12. Soviet interested in Sikkim & Bhutan: Before concluding this part of the report, it would be appropriate to draw attention to the interest evinced by the Soviet Union in India's relations with Sikkim and Bhutan since 1964. At the time of the assassination of late Prime minister Jigme Dorji in April, 1964, "Izvestia" had carried an article supporting India's treaty relationship with Sikkim and Bhutan. In October, 1965, M. Popov, New Delhi correspondent of "Izvestia", had visited Sikkim ostensibly to report on the situation created by the Chinese ultimatum (though no articles by him came to our notice after his visit). Soon after the Chinese flare-up, Mr. Morozov on 20 September and Mr. Nikolai Markov on 20 October, both of Soviet TV, visited Sikkim, ostensibly to report on the Chinese provocative activities at Nathu La and Chola. During the visit of the Soviet Buddhist Delegation in January this year, the Delegation managed to extend an invitation to the Chogyal to visit the Soviet Union, although the Political Officer had suggested that any such invitation should be channeled through the Government of India. The manner in which this Delegation conducted itself made it clear that the Soviet Union is determined to establish connections with border areas of China in spite of any Indian sensitivity to such attempts. Such an initiative is welcome from the point of view of the Chogyal who is anxious to project Sikkim internationally in every possible way.

## PART II – ANNUAL REPORT

13. Keeping in view the Chinese threat on our northern borders the Post endeavoured to bring out informative publicity literature for the people

of this area. Besides the usual publicity media like films and bulletins, cultural functions were utilized as much as possible to project India in this region.

14. Publicity Literature: Apart from the daily printed news bulletin in English, Nepali and Tibetan, the fortnightlies in Nepali, "Himbani" and "Himalaya Sandesh", and the Nepali and Tibetan quarterly "Pragati" were brought out during the period under review. Extensive coverage was given to all local events in Sikkim which helped to maintain the popularity of these publications among those who received them. Most detailed coverage was attempted of the State Visit of the Chogyal and the Gyalmo to South India and we were gratified that our releases were reproduced in full in the printed bulletins of the Government of Sikkim and in the fortnightly "Sikkim". We received many appreciative references about our coverage from our readers. A pictorial brochure on the State Visit is under print. Material has also been prepared for printing a booklet on Sikkim and Bhutan with accent on the Indian aid received by them. Some horticultural notes in Bhutanese for guidance to Bhutanese farmers have been printed by us at the request of the Bhutan Government.

15. Publicity build up urging revision of Indo-Sikkim Treaty of 1950 and repercussions thereto in Indian press:

(a) As mentioned in Part I above and also in our periodical reports during the first half of the year to the Ministry, the Chogyal talked freely to quite a large number of Indian and foreign newspaper correspondents about the need for a revision of the Indo-Sikkim Treaty. Functionaries of the Sikkim Government spoke in stronger terms urging a re-appraisal of the pattern of relationship between Sikkim and India. There was extensive publicity in Indian newspapers to all these views. Till last year, when Her Highness the Gyalmo wrote an article on some aspects of the Sikkimese cession of Darjeeling to the East India Company, the Indian

press which had been friendly to the Sikkimese ruling family became critical of them. "Blitz" published a number of articles in July 1967 by a gentleman named Howard D. Ady which made personal attacks on the Gyalmo besides being trenchantly critical of Sikkimese policies and casting suspicion on the bonafides of the work of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology. These articles deeply hurt the Sikkimese ruling family and as a counter we published an editorial in our printed bulletins deploring such personal attacks and reminding newspapers of their responsibilities in maintaining cordial Indo-Sikkimese relations. "The Indian and Foreign Review" has agreed to publish an article on the unique work being done by the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology for the promotion of Mahayana Buddhist studies.

(b) The so-called independent fortnightly, "Sikkim", which is actually a mouth-piece of His Highness the Chogyal was a strong advocate of the revision of the 1950 Treaty. This paper painted a consistently gloomy picture of "tiny" Sikkim suffering under Indian protection. Attention was focused on the Indian inability to keep up food supplies to Sikkim either adequately or in time and Indian help in organizing the defence and economic progress of Sikkim were made light of. The paper argued that if India defended Sikkim, it did so for its own sake, at best the Indian role had been to the mutual advantage of Sikkim and India; Sikkim had to pay a heavy price by losing its border trade with Tibet, by the diversion of its agricultural labour to road work which had created a food problem, and lastly, in any event, Indian aid had largely cancelled itself out because Sikkim had been denied the levy of excise duties on Indian goods coming to Sikkim. This paper also suddenly in September, 1967, started calling the Chogyal as "His Majesty".

16. Independence Day Celebrations: The Independence Day Celebrations, 1967, was celebrated with great enthusiasm and the function was attended by Their Highnesses the Chogyal and the Gyalmo of Sikkim and Sikkimese and Indian dignitaries, numbering about 2000.

Sikkimese school boys and girls participated in the march-past. Later, at the initiative of Executive Councillor, Shri Nahakul Pradhan, a cultural evening was organized by Sikkimese artistes. The massive participation of the Sikkimese was an unexpected surprise, particularly because a lot of rumours had been circulating for some weeks before that there would be a boycott of the celebrations. "Sikkim" had even published a letter talking of the need for a parallel Sikkimese Independence Day Celebrations at the Palace.

17. Cultural activities sponsored by the Ministry of Education and I.C.C.R.: A 16 member Kathak Kendra Troupe from New Delhi, performed in Gangtok on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1967, and gave other performances as well (one of them was in the forward areas for our troops). The troupe was adjudged by the local critics to be the best among those which had visited Sikkim in the last five or six years. A team of eight Rajasthani puppeteers, belonging to the Bharatiya Natya Sangh, New Delhi, came to Gangtok, for Children's Day Celebrations. They gave the performances during the period 14-16 November which were greatly appreciated. A 20-member delegation of farmers, village mandals, and junior officials went on a Bharat Darshan tour of India in March, 1967. An essay competition on the subject "what I can do for Sikkim" attracted wide participation by Sikkimese students and the prize winners (for Tibetan and Nepali entries) received their prizes from His Highness the Chogyal at the Independence Day Celebrations at the Residency.

18. The Kathak Kendra Troupe which toured Sikkim, about whose success we have narrated in the previous paragraph, visited Bhutan during the period 6-9 March, 1967. This was the first ever cultural troupe to visit Bhutan. It performed before His Majesty the Bhutan King at Thimphu and performances were given as well in Paro, Honka and Phuntsholing. The tour was an outstanding success and we are getting frequent requests from the Bhutanese for another cultural troupe. The



Bhutanese Royal Advisory Councillors who occupy a position in the public life of Bhutan similar to our Ministers, toured India for a period of over two weeks in December. An essay competition on the subject "Economic Development in Bhutan, especially construction of roads" attracted wide participation from Bhutanese students and the winners received prizes from His Highness the Chogyal of Sikkim at the Indian Independence Day Celebrations at the Residency.

19. Cultural activities by the Mission: A variety entertainment was organized on the occasion of a get-together of the Sikkimese and Indian employees of the Political Office, Gangtok, on 20 December. A Hindi play, adapted from a short story of Tagore by an officer of the Mission, and acted mostly by Indian employees, received a very appreciative review in a Calcutta newspaper. The variety entertainment programme as a whole was highly commented by all those who saw it and we have demands for staging the same to outside audience as well.

20. Films: During the period under review, this Post received 34 (16 mm) and 85 (35 mm) I.N.Rs., 79 (16 mm) and 10 (35 mm) documentaries and four (16 mm) and one (35 mm) feature films. The films were exploited both in Sikkim and Bhutan. 35 mm I.N.Rs. were immediately passed on to the Denzong Cinema at Gangtok for use in the capital and at their branch in Singtam, an important Sikkimese town, and the MIG Theatre at Phuntsholing. On an average about 2000 people see them daily at Gangtok while 1000 see them at Phuntsholing. 16 mm documentaries are placed at the disposal of local institutions and dignitaries both in Sikkim and Bhutan. Till recently the Rigdey theatre in Thimphu also used to screen our 16 mm films regularly. At the moment they have requested us to arrange for 35 mm documentaries, as they do not screen 16 mm films any longer. 27,700 people witnessed our documentaries, I.N.Rs. and features in Sikkim in 1967. (This does not include the audience at the Denzong Cinema). In contrast to our encouraging performances in Gangtok and some Bhutanese towns, our

tours in internal areas, which had done well about two years ago, have suffered set-backs because our movie-cum-publicity van is fully occupied with tasks connected with the distribution of our regular daily bulletins and other publicity literature and film shows near about Gangtok. We are processing the case for a movie van for Bhutan to be operated under the control of our Post here. The arrival of this vehicle will prove of great benefit to our film publicity. For our documentary films to be more effective it is necessary to undertake the work of dubbing them in Nepalese, Sikkimese and Bhutanese. A steady programme of dubbing of films in Nepali came to a stop in 1963 when our Post at Kalimpong which was doing this work was closed. 16 scripts of documentaries translated into Nepali by this Post and sent to the Films Division through XP Division in 1964 for ultimate production of Nepali dubbed copies of these have run into a series of seemingly endless obstacles. We are hopeful that the final product will soon reach us for due exploitation.

21. Before concluding our remarks under this head it would be pertinent to mention that the Cinema theatres operated by private entrepreneurs at Gangtok and Singtam in Sikkim, and Thimphu and Phuntsholing in Bhutan, are playing a notable part in promoting India. Both in Sikkim and Bhutan there were reservations on the part of the ruling elite (in Bhutan this was true during the times of power of Jigmie Dorji but later there was a change in position) about allowing the exhibition of Indian films. The profitability of running a cinema has thawed the attitude of the authorities and Indian feature films which are the easiest to procure have captured the market bringing with it as a by-product a wider insight to the local population about daily life in India and the current ideals that motivate our society.

22. Radio: The All India Radio Station at Kurseong with a 20 KW transmitter established in 1962, serves Sikkim and Bhutan. The total broadcasting time per day of this station is 12 hours and 25 minutes.

Out of this, apart from 100 minutes for broadcasts in Tibetan, 25 minutes in Sikkimese and 15 minutes in Bhutanese, the rest of the time is devoted to Nepali. Nepalese broadcasts of AIR, Kurseong, are quite popular. The reception conditions vary from place to place. At Gangtok the broadcasts are heard well without much interference. The Nepali speaking population of Sikkim and Bhutan would have appreciated AIR, Kurseong, more if it had been an exclusively Nepali broadcasting station. Broadcasts in Sikkimese consist of spoken-word items in the form of discussions/dialogues, daily for a duration of 15 minutes and Sikkimese songs for about 10 minutes. Both the Nepalese and Sikkimese broadcasts have enhanced their appeal to local listeners by the promptitude and extent of coverage of Sikkimese events. In this effort this Post has helped AIR, Kurseong and with further extension of coverage to items of local interest the impact in Sikkim can be bettered. Bhutanese broadcasts consist of spoken-word items in the form of discussion/dialogues every day for a duration of about 8 to 10 minutes and Bhutanese songs for 5 to 6 minutes. The Bhutanese broadcasts have to be extended and the quality of spoken Bhutanese has to be improved. Some organizational difficulties have come in the way of the A.I.R.. Kurseong, during the period of report but they are giving thought to the problem and the next year might see some progress. There is brief 15 minute morning broadcast relayed from the External Services, New Delhi. In the afternoon, there is a 40 minute programme broadcast from Kurseong. In the evening, there is a 40 minute programme also relayed from New Delhi.

23. While the Tibetan programme broadcast by External Services of New Delhi is appreciated both in Sikkim and Bhutan, the same cannot be said of the Tibetan put out by Kurseong itself from its own resources. The general complaint is that the speaker/speakers of Radio Kurseong use the Ladakhi accent not at all popular either in Sikkim or in Bhutan where the Lhasa dialect alone is intelligible and considered cultured. Apart from

this criticism, both in Sikkim and Bhutan, Radio Lhasa scores over all the Tibetan services that we are able to provide, merely because of the fact that it is a station to which one could tune to at all times and except to hear Tibetan instead of the Indian stations which broadcast Tibetan only for limited periods and the listeners have to put up with other languages in between.

24. Visits: Exchanges of visits by prominent Indians to Sikkim and Bhutan and vice-versa was unprecedentedly high during the period of review. Some of these visits have been listed at paras 17 and 18. Others are listed below:

(a) A party of 108 Indian students from two Baroda schools paid a week-long visit to Gangtok in May 1967. Accommodation facilities were extended by the local public school and the visiting children gave a variety entertainment programme of high standard which was witnessed by 300 Sikkimese who included Their Highnesses the Chogyal and Gyalmo. This visit provided an excellent opportunity for the students of India and Sikkim to know each other better and we should try to promote this type of activity.

(b) Some Indian, Ceylonese and Thai Bikshus following the Theravada faith, belonging to the Mahabodhi Society visited Sikkim in May 1967 for a few days. The visit had been initiated by the Chogyal, who is the President of the Mahabodhi Society of Indi. Later on arrival in Sikkim the Bikshus requested the Bhutanese authorities for permission to visit their country. The Bikshus were impressed by the state of vigour of the Mahayana faith in both Sikkim and Bhutan, particularly the latter, and they wrote articles, testifying to this in the journal of the Mahabodhi Society. The Bhutanese wrote appreciatively about the visit of the Bikshus in their official journal "Kuensel".

(c) The Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Shri T.N. Kaul, paid a visit to Bhutan and Sikkim from 2-5 August and held useful

discussions with the King of Bhutan and the Chogyal of Sikkim. Her Majesty the queen of Bhutan paid a visit to Sikkim during the period 2-3 August. She was given a very warm reception by the Sikkimese. A state visit by the Chogyal and Gyalmo to South India and New Delhi during the period 27 August to 11 September was the most important visit to or from Sikkim and Bhutan. The warm reception they received everywhere and the splash of publicity they got appears to have moved them considerably. (There was some dissatisfaction among the current Sikkimese agitators for a revision of the Indo-Sikkim Treaty that the Chogyal had refrained from discussing this subject during the state visit and a very mild note of discontent about this aspect was noticeable in the editorial comments of "Sikkim").

(d) Under the Indo-Soviet cultural scheme, a delegation of Sikkimese Tibetologists under the leadership of Her Highness the Gyalyum (the Chogyal's mother) visited the Soviet Union in September-October 1967 for about a month to study and examine Tibetan Xylographs and manuscripts in Russian museums and libraries. During the period September-November, His Holiness the Gya wa Karmapa, the highest ranking Red Hat Lama now resident in Sikkim, went on a two months visit to Bhutan. He was given a rousing reception there and Bhutanese official journal "Kuensel" played up his personality and highlighted his activities throughout his stay.

(e) An 1-member Indian Parliamentary Delegation visited Nathu La and Gangtok from 16 to 18 October. They were greatly impressed by the morale of our armed forces and paid glowing tributes to them for their valorous conduct when faced with the Chinese challenges that had just preceded their visit.

(f) An Indian Parliamentary Delegation under the leadership of the Chairman of the Indian Administrative Reforms Commission visited Bhutan during 19-26 October. They were greatly impressed by the

personality of the King, the progress achieved in Bhutan and the dedication of Indian officers serving in Bhutan and issued a statement at the end of their tour expressing these sentiments. The Secretary (EA-I), Shri T.N. Kaul, visited Bhutan with the Special Officer (designate), Shri B.S. Das (he has since assumed charge of his post) and met the King and other Bhutanese dignitaries for introducing Shri Das. A Parliamentary Working Group on Posts and Telegraphs visited post offices in Gangtok and forward areas from 3 to 5 November.

### Hostile Propaganda

25. The Tashkent Declaration notwithstanding Radio Pakistan's and Pakistani newspapers' venomous propaganda against India continued unabated. During the crisis at Nathu La and Chola the Radio, true to past patterns, gave utmost publicity to the versions put out by Radio Peking.

26. Peking Radio and periodicals from China capitalized on the difficulties experienced by India due to internal crises and shortage of food. Anti-Indian items put out by Pakistan Radio and Pakistani newspapers were used freely by the Chinese propaganda organs. The propaganda reached its highest pitch during the months of September and October when there was firing at Nathu La and Cho La. A mischievous twist was given to the facts and it was alleged that firing had been pre-planned by India to extract aid from "imperialist" U.S.A. and "revisionist" Soviet Union for which the Deputy Prime Minister and the Defence Minister were visiting these countries respectively just at that time.

27. The Chinese continued playing taped music and making loudspeaker broadcasts addressed to Indian troops at Nathu La which had commenced the previous year.

28. Printed material from Peking has hardly any circulation in Sikkim or Bhutan. Though the audibility of Radio Peking is excellent because of the boring propaganda most of the time, and music of a type which does not appeal to the common man in Sikkim or Bhutan very few people, if any at all, follow this station in these two Himalayan States. The Chinese loudspeaker broadcasts at Nathu La are aimed at undermining the morale of our troops in the area but our own counterbroadcasts provides a complete answer to the problems posed by the Chinese loudspeaker broadcasts.

29. Radio Lhasa reproduces a day late all the propaganda material put out by Radio Peking. Apart from this there are other broadcasts intended to educate and entertain the average Tibetan so that he can play his part in the new order Peking has imposed.

30. None of the three hostile radio stations – Pakistan, Peking or Lhasa – broadcast in Sikkimese or Bhutanese. When they do, the challenge posed by them would have to be met by providing a special service in Sikkimese and Bhutanese which will have to be greater in extent than that presently provided by A.I.R., Kurseong.

31. Press Relations: The six-member resident Indian press corps do not offer much problem for putting across our case. They understand our case and being patriotic, are ungrudging in their help. Shri Kashiraj Pradhan, editor, "Nanchenjunga", a Nepali fortnightly is also most friendly to India. The tenor of the material which appears in "SIKKIM", a so-called independent fortnightly in English, edited by Shri Kaiser Bahadur Thapa, which reveals some anti-Indian bias has already been referred to in paragraph 15(b). A continuous and vigilant watch is being kept on the contents of this journal and no opportunity has been lost sight of to request him to maintain objectivity in the interests of harmonious Indo-Sikkimese relations (brief notes on these newspapermen have been left by me separately).

32. Library-cum-Reading Room in the bazaar: We have a library situated in the Chancery of the Political Office. It has 3,706 books. The collection in this library includes some of the rare works on this region and the library is considered one of the best in this region. Because it is situated 1 ½ miles away from the bazaar, and no public transport facilities exist, this library is not utilized by scholars and our officers and staff. To make this up, a library-cum-reading room was started in the bazaar two years ago. It has now 1,444 books. About 20 people come on an average daily here. Styled as the India Information and Study Centre, it has proved quite popular with the Sikkimese public. Every week we hold a film show which is attended by 60 people. We also hold cultural functions from time to time here.

Confidential

### PART III – HANDING OVER NOTE

33. The background to the publicity work of this Post enumerated in Part I and the detailed description of the work we have in hand under different major heads in Part II, should have given some idea of the functions of this Post. I draw attention now very briefly to a few aspects of the work.

VERY IMPORTANT

34. The Deputy Prime Minister will be visiting Sikkim and Bhutan in March-April. Organisation of publicity for the visit has to be planned. It may be useful to have a look at our file concerning the then Foreign Minister, Shri Swaran Singh's visit to Bhutan in February, 1966. The Films Division may be asked to prepare a compilation film in colour of the visit as this would be most useful. The All India Radio may also be associated to a greater extent than previously. Other details can follow the 1966 pattern.



35. Follow-up of H.M. Bhutan King's Visit: We have asked for film and photo coverage of the above-mentioned visit. Albums for presentation should be procured quickly Colour transparencies may also be got as soon as possible for use in the publication of a brochure about the visit which should also use black and white photographs. The relevant file may be seen.

36. Visit of a cultural troupe to Bhutan in March, 1968, coincident with the D.P.M's visit: We have recommended that the Uday Shankar's troupe might visit Bhutan to synchronise with the Deputy Prime Minister's visit. Organisation of a cultural tour in Bhutan is an extremely complicated matter and every detail has to be worked out with the Bhutanese authorities with utmost thoroughness. Our file regarding the arrangements we had made for the first ever cultural troupe to Bhutan last year may be seen. In my view, it will be necessary for an advance tip by a competent officer to settle all the details at every place in which the troupe will give performances. The funds allotted have to be spent within the financial year. I have asked that the allocation be sent to us in advance and it must be ensured that this money becomes available and the bills are settled quickly and the accounts rendered to I.C.C.R.

37. A film on the State Visit of His Highness the Chogyal is expected at any time. The premiere of this film will have to be arranged. Great care is required about the seating arrangements of the invitees. There are only about 180 seats in the balcony of the Denzong Cinema and a list will have to be drawn up taking into consideration the requirements of the Sikkim Durbar, the army, the press corps and the public of Sikkim. Downstairs, there is accommodation for about 600 people where school children, subordinate staff, less important members of the mercantile community, etc. can be accommodated. A brochure on the State Visit is under print. I hope to submit the proof copy to the P.O. before I go. However, if for some reason, I am unable to secure the approval, the printing should start only after the P.O. clears it. This brochure which

will be in three languages, is meant not only for distribution at the film show, but also as a publication to be available with ISI, for satisfying ad-hoc requests for some more months. Its distribution to all schools and administrative offices in Sikkim should be arranged. Balance copies in sufficient number to meet ad-hoc requests should be kept.

#### IMPORTANT

38. Allocations had been made for presentation of books to schools in Sikkim and Bhutan by ICCR. These have to be spent within the financial year. The relevant file may be seen and required action taken so that grants do not lapse.

39. Essay competitions. The ICCR have sanctioned prizes for essay competitions from their grant for 1967-68. These prizes should be secured immediately and an essay competition organized in such a manner that the Bhutanese and Sikkimese prize winners ultimately receive their prizes on the Independence Day Celebrations in August, 1968.

40. In May 1968, an enquiry should be made with the ICCR asking about the decisions on the proposals that we have made for 1968-69 and at the same time proposals for 1969-70 should also be submitted.

41. A pamphlet entitled "Sikkim and Bhutan" originally prepared by our former First Secretary, Shri A.R. Kakodkar, has been a bridged and made up-to-date with respect to the political portion of it, and an economic portion has been included as well. Illustrations have to be ordered speedily and the booklet produced as soon as possible. This booklet should be distributed to people who show interest in literature of this type. It is mainly intended for distinguished foreign and Indian visitors and journalists who ask for informative material.

42. Closing down of the Process Section of the Government of India Press: The Government of India planned to have facilities for doing both

black and white and colour reproduction work. However, from the very beginning, they filled only one of the six sanctioned posts in this Department. Consequently, on the one hand, they were neither able to do all the work that we were able to give them nor keep up the quality that we desired and on the other hand, audit kept on objecting that this section was working only to 1/12<sup>th</sup> the capacity of the equipment. Reluctantly we recommended about a year and half ago that the process section might be closed. This requires to be done urgently because the department charges all its cost of maintenance, on the blocks which we order from them. Thus a block ordered from them costs four times the commercial rate. We cannot afford to pay such exorbitant amounts. Relevant file may be seen.

#### ROUTINE

43. The Special Officer, Shri B.S. Das, has assumed charge in Bhutan. We can certainly make available a set of books for setting up a library there as some of the old sets from the Tibetan agencies are available with us. These should be sent as soon as possible. Help should also be rendered to him to organize a film library. It may also be possible to spare a projector for him from our stock. In consultation with Shri Das, arrangements should be made to secure periodic information about the publicity work that they are able to organize with their present resources.

44. Movie van for Bhutan: For more than a year, an agreement between His Majesty the Bhutan King and the then Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Dinesh Singh, for the speedy operation of a movie van in Bhutan, has remained suspended because of financial difficulties. This matter must be pursued vigorously and at least in the financial year 1968-69, the van should be procured and operated without further delay. Please see also paragraph 20.

45. The distribution lists for our publicity literature in Sikkim and Bhutan was revised about a year ago. It is necessary for the Press Attache himself to tour as many areas as possible in Sikkim and Bhutan, where our bulletins reach and plan revision of these lists to achieve the maximum utility of our publicity literature.

46. India Information & Study Centre: I make it a habit to go myself to the weekly film show held at the India Information & Study Centre. In my view, it is necessary that a senior official should attend. But this is a matter which may be examined.

47. Annual Stock Register: The Annual Stock Register of furniture of India-based officers and staff of ISI and the furniture of the office has to be furnished in March. The check of furniture in my house would have been done by the time I relinquish charge. The rest would have to be undertaken and the required information furnished to the Chancery in the prescribed proforma.

48. Check of library books: The annual check of library books is already under hand and would probably be complete by the time I relinquish charge.

49. Audio-visual equipment: the annual check of audio-visual equipment has also been taken in hand and would probably be complete by the time I relinquish charge.

50. Photo enlargement of thankas of Rumtok monastery and production of a brochure on Red Hat saints: For a long time, His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa, has been asking that we should underwrite the cost for enlarging 36 rare thankas which he proposes to hang on the walls of this monastery which was recently renovated and which is considered to be Sikkim's most important one. The Government of India had agreed in principle that we could underwrite these costs (they have agreed to give us Rs. 15,000/- and we could meet the balance from our publicity

contingencies) and also that we might bring out a brochure using some colour blocks on the subjects of these rare thankas. Both the enlargements as well as the brochure are likely to be of great advantage to our publicity because the Gyalwa Karmapa is held in very high esteem both in Sikkim and Bhutan and the brochure will serve as a unique literature on Red Hat saints, about whom there is great curiosity and on whom information is lacking to the general public. The relevant file should be seen and the matter pursued so that the project is speedily implemented and sanctioned fund utilized before the close of financial year.

51. A book on horticulture in Bhutanese: Some horticultural notes in Bhutanese for guidance to Bhutanese farmers which we are printing at the request of the Bhutan Government, have not yet come out of the Government of India Press. This matter should be pursued and the copies sent to them.

52. Song and Drama Troupes: The song and Drama Division of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, have promised to consider sending troupes for the entertainment of civilian as well as army personnel in Sikkim and Bhutan. The relevant file should be read and whenever an opportunity presents itself, this Division should be approached to supplement our cultural programmes in Sikkim and Bhutan.

53. "Our India" photographic exhibition: The XP Division have offered us photographs for holding exhibition entitled "Our India" photographic exhibition. We have asked for these photographs. The matter should be pursued and the exhibition organized at a convenient time.

54. Standard invitation list for cultural functions: It is customary to hold our cultural functions at the Denzong Cinema which has a seating capacity of 800. I am leaving our latest invitation list used on the occasion of Republic Day Celebrations, 1968. I have indicated in my

covering note that Their Highnesses the Chogyal and the Gyalmo and the Executive and Deputy Executive Councillors of the Sikkim Government were out of station at that time. Barring this, everyone was catered to and our seating arrangements were found satisfactory, except for a group of 8 merchants who had been black-listed long ago (for their low contributions to the National Flag Day Fund, etc). These merchants have later seen me and P.O. has now ordered that they might also be included in future as their omissions relate to a long time back. This list may be used as a model and would save a lot of work and botheration in preparing for the coming functions. Similarly, for cinema shows to be held by us any list that may be drawn for the premiere of the Chogyal's State Visit film, might be kept for the future guidance, the drawing up of such lists (seat numbers) takes a lot of time.

55. Alphabetical Charts: We are printing alphabetical charts for the Government of Sikkim for use in different schools. The work is pending with the Government of India Press at New Delhi. Relevant file may be seen and the matter pursued.

(B.B. Iyer)

Second Secretary(I)

9.2.1968.

