

Viewpoint

The Battalion
Texas A&M University

Monday
October 10, 1977

Tibet mixture of old with Chinese new

By DAVID BRODER

LHASA, TIBET — And now, as the saying goes, for something completely different. An American political reporter, who has been accustomed to think of Slab Fork, W. Va., as an exotic dateline, is likely to go berserk when offered a chance to write from "the roof of the world."

Do not expect this scribbler to resist temptation. Tibet is a wonderful place to visit and, after a stay limited to three days, the temptation is strong to say you would not mind living here. The mountains are magnificent. The weather in this 12,800-foot-high valley is so mild that you can shed your early morning sweater well before noon. The air is so pure and the sun so bright that in two days you have a deep tan.

Beyond that, there is the priceless art produced in the court of the Dalai Lamas and preserved by the Communist masters of today's Tibet — a richness of color, fabric, tapestry, frieze, fresco and gold bead description. Unfortunately, you cannot just call up your travel agent and say, "Book me on the next tour to Tibet."

Lowell Thomas, the world traveler who is a member of this party, was "the last American out" in 1949, two years before the Chinese moved in and made Tibet an "autonomous region" ruled from Peking. Last year, the door was opened for the first time to a party headed by James Schlesinger. This group is headed by George Bush, the former head of the U. S. Liaison Office in Peking.

For reasons best known to themselves, the Chinese have built an airstrip serving Lhasa more than 50 miles northwest of the city. You alight from the Ilyushin aircraft that has brought you from Chengtu, and head off on a two-hour drive that provides an idyllic introduction to this hidden land.

Beneath the brilliant blue sky and the distant snow-capped mountains, the dominant color of the landscape is brown. Bare cliffs rise from one thousand to five thousand feet from the valley floor. Giant boulders spill from their sides.

The land is rocky and barren, with clumps of brush, like the high country of Western Montana or Wyoming. But there is plenty of water in the valley floor, with

rivers collecting the streams that flow down from the mountains. Along the riverbanks grow willows, their green and gold providing a needed touch of color. The road is dirt-bumpy and muddy. At points it is pinned between the cliffs and the river in a series of hairpin turns.

Where a washout has occurred, the passengers climb out, while the Bushes' Red Flag limousine and the smaller Shang-

hai sedans for the others are maneuvered to safety. At other places, the valley broadens, and fields of cabbages and barley, orchards and grazing land line both sides of the road.

The first signs of life are rude habitations — stone and mud, with thatched roofs and stone fireplaces in the fields. Then you see the Tibetan peasants, dark-faced men and women with bright teeth. You share the road with yaks and cattle, sheep and goats, donkeys, small Tibetan ponies with red pom-poms in their bridles, and ugly bristle-haired pigs.

A solemn-faced boy, riding bareback on his pony, does not acknowledge you. But another lad, barely nine, staggering under a heavy load of straw, turns and waves. Women, with bright bandanas on their dark hair, triangular brown wicker baskets loaded on their backs, smile a greeting.

It is a scene from a storybook, and you long to stop for a photograph. But the convoy — military jeeps fore and aft — does not slow its pace. Along the way, there are signs of the change the Chinese have brought since they ended the rule of the god-king who resisted all technology, even a simple wheeled cart.

A telephone line parallels the road. There are two tractors in the field, a new bridge across the river, compounds for Chinese migrants, with concrete barracks and tin roofs that shine in the sun.

As you near Lhasa, the dirt turns into cobblestones, then pavement. You pass a cement plant, make a curve, and there is the Potola — the Dalai Lama's hilltop palace, dating from the 7th Century.

Across its brown facade is stretched a red banner, exhorting the workers to greater efforts in the spirit of Chairmen Mao and Hua. It is a fitting symbol of the ancient theocracy and the new Communist state that coexist so uneasily in this exotic corner of the world.



The ultimate weapon: The nothing bomb

United Press International

WASHINGTON — President Carter's optimistic report on the prospects for another Soviet-American arms agreement leaves many people wondering what will happen to the neutron bomb.

Some military strategists believe deployment of the new enhanced-radiation weapon will increase the chances of all-out nuclear war.

But others see it as leading to total nuclear impotence.

Humor

A leading exponent of the later view is Commodore Claus von Frigate (ret.), former commander of the Tidal Basin paddleboat fleet and now a private military consultant and analyst.

Asked what the results might be if neutron bombs were excluded from a new weapons pact, von Frigate posed some questions of his own.

"First you must ask yourself why conventional nuclear warheads have never been used on the battlefield.

"The answer is that they are too destructive. They not only annihilate the enemy's military forces; they demolish everything and everybody in sight.

"Now ask yourself what advantage the neutron bomb has over conventional nuclear weapons.

"The answer is that while it may kill as many people as other warheads, it doesn't cause as much blast and heat damage to buildings.

"Then ask yourself whether the Russian army, when confronted with this improvement in nuclear weaponry, is going to be content with sending telegrams of congratulations to the Pentagon.

"Obviously not. You know and I know that the Soviets are going to go all out to perfect a further refinement.

"So ask yourself what the next logical step would be. And the answer is a warhead that not only causes less property damage but also kills fewer people."

The commodore paused to see if I was catching his drift. Then, syllogisms, awash, he proceeded with his own analysis.

"There is strong opposition to our bomb, mainly because killing people with neutron rays sounds kind of barbaric. But the Russians avoid that rap by building a bomb only half as deadly.

"Do we stand idly by with our bomb in abeyance while the Russians deploy theirs? Not in a million years we don't.

"We send our weaponeers back to the

drawing board with instructions to design a nuclear bomb that doesn't kill anybody. It just makes a loud noise that deafens the enemy."

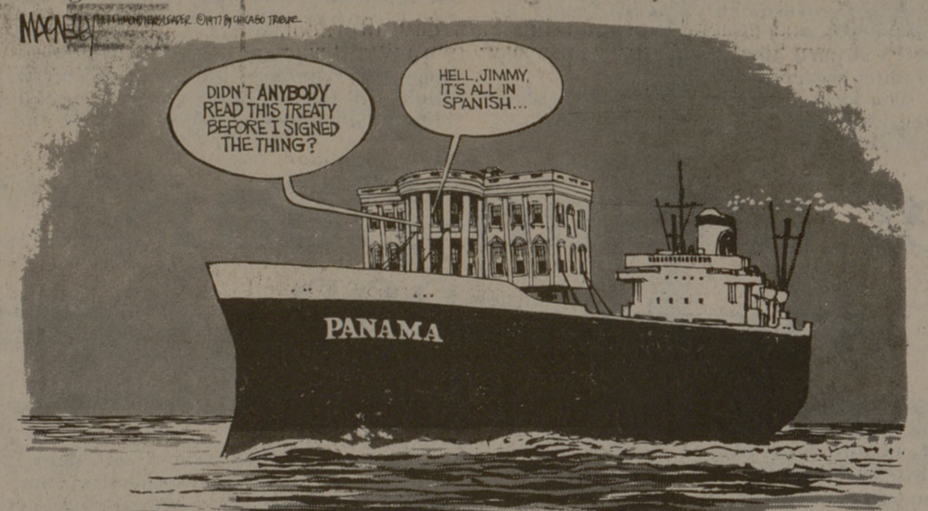
I clapped my hands in jingoistic glee. "I'd like to see the Russians try to top that," I chortled.

"They will, dear boy. As soon as we start testing a non-lethal nuclear warhead that

makes people deaf, the Russians will counter with one that is silent as well as non-lethal.

"I said, 'Is that what you call your ultimate weapon?'"

"Not quite," von Frigate replied. "This arms race won't end until it reaches the point where getting hit with a nuclear warhead makes you feel better."



Letters to the editor

President's inauguration deserved more students

Editor:

The inauguration of a new president at Texas A&M University is a rare event. I consider myself lucky to have witnessed President Miller's inauguration ceremony this Tuesday. Never before have I seen a ceremony with as much pomp and celebrity for one person.

The one thing that this ceremony lacked, however, was attendance of the university students. Where were all the "Aggies" who had been given the day off just so they could come and show respect for their own president? With a population of thirty thousand students, G. Rollie White Coliseum should have been overflowing. Instead, only a small crowd of

8,500 attended the event. Those "Aggies" who were given a holiday on Tuesday could have spent two hours of that day showing their respect and dedication for the next president.

A&M will not settle for anything but the best; the best educators, the best students, and the best president. The spirit of A&M is only as great as the students. What happened to that spirit during a ceremony as important as the inauguration of our university's new president. After all, how would you feel if you were inaugurated as the eighteenth president of A&M, and less than 40 per cent of the

student body attended the ceremonies? —fish Elkins, '81

Editor's note: The situation is nothing new. Aggies have never needed an excuse to take a holiday and when they're given the day off, you can expect plenty of students to either leave town or disappear for the day. The committee which planned the inauguration had emphasized student participation. But the way to get students to attend such ceremonies is not to give them the whole day to find something else to do. Whether "enough" students attended the inauguration is academic — but if 40 per cent did attend, as you suggested, that's very good student attendance.

No angels here

Editor:

We're just three Aggies sitting in Dudley's Draw sipping on longnecks and contemplating A&M. We're snuff-dipping, bicycle riding, crude and generally uncouth Ags who are perturbed about recent letter in this space blaming one faction of A&M for all the problems (real or imagined) that exist here. Each day, almost without fail, at least one letter will slander, malign, cast aspersions on, and generally blame one group of students. We've read about the indifference of bike riders on campus, tobacco and snuff enjoyers, the Greeks, the Poles, the Blacks, the Whites, and the kitchen sink.

Frankly, Ags, we're damn tired of it. We've missed a couple of Silver Taps due to pending examinations (all of them passed), we've skipped Thursday night play practice to go to Lakeview on occasion, and we missed President Miller's inauguration because we were too hung over to get out of bed. We're almost certain that if some of the Aggies who are so concerned about Aggie spirit had seen us, there

would have been one hellacious letter to this celebrated paragon of intellect (the Batt) concerning our activities. And these Aggies have every right to do so. We're not here to point fingers, to blame this clique or that organization for all the "digusting" things occurring here, i.e. lack of spirit and consideration, but we would like it understood that even though we're Aggies, we're still human. Even though as a student body we are unique, individually, we are not angels by a long shot. We all have our share of shortcomings. We're not perfect, and few of us ever claimed to be. Please, Ags, don't expect us to be. We as Aggies have seen things here we don't agree with, and we've seen people do things we think they shouldn't, but part of being an Aggie, we believe, is understanding that people are different, they have different goals, different beliefs, and different ideologies.

As Aggies, we should accept and tolerate these differences, not accuse them of being the root of all that is detrimental to Aggie spirit. Nor should we accuse all those who believe in different things than we do as being two-percenters. Remember that A&M is a united body, probably the largest in the world. Let's try and keep it that way.

Well, Ags, we spent over \$8 on beer and nachos in the process of drafting this letter, and we hope you appreciate it. At least tolerate our right to believe it. —Jeff Mulkey '79
Brian Euwer '79
Tom Beecroft '81

Not all Ags lonely

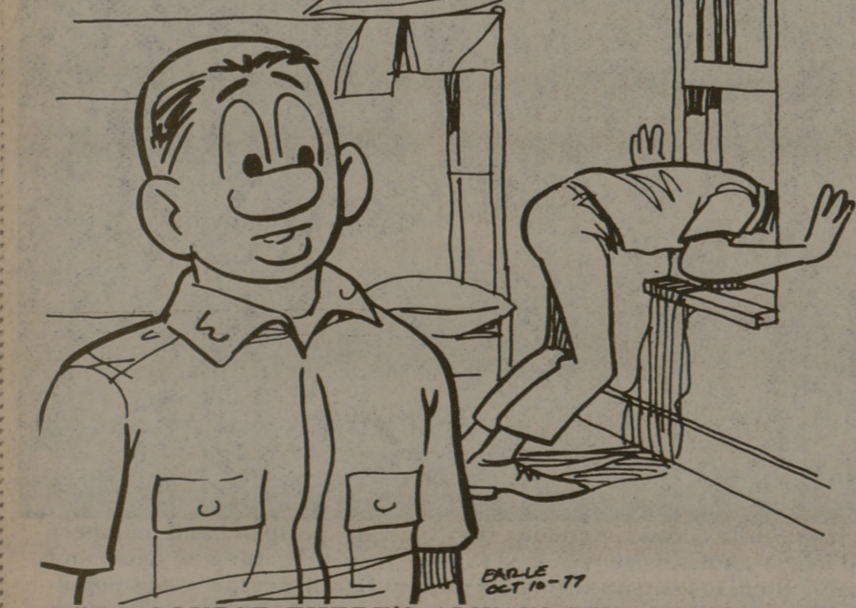
Editor:

I read "Dear Mom: Your black Aggie is lonely," and felt sad for someone I didn't know.

I'm comfortable here at A&M. —Kerry Falls

Slouch

by Jim Earle



OF COURSE THERE'S ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY THAT YOU'RE JUST NOT CUT OUT TO BE A TOBACCO CHEWER!

Top of the News Campus

Student senate hearing set

Student Senate will be conducting a public hearing on an injunction against the existence of the position of comptroller, tonight at 7 in the MSC council conference room.

Waco buses available

Seats are available on charter buses to Waco for the Texas A&M-Baylor football game Oct. 10. Two or more buses will depart parking lot 60 near Rudder Tower at 12:30 p.m. on game day. They return immediately after the 4 p.m. game, according to Brazos County A&M Club President Malon Southerland. Bus seats will cost \$8.25 each, with persons providing their own game tickets. Buses are expected to arrive at Baylor Stadium in time for persons to walk to nearby restaurants, but Brazos Aggies suggest carrying a sack lunch. Refreshments will be available on the buses. Reservations should be made at the Association of Former Students offices in the MSC, or by mailing a check to the club, Box 4, College Station, 77840.

Congressman to speak

Former Republican congressman Charles Mosher of Oberlin, Ohio will deliver two addresses at Texas A&M University today and tomorrow. Mosher, now executive director of the U.S. House of Representatives' Science and Technology Committee, was invited to the campus to talk to the Professional Development Seminar of the Doctor of Engineering Program and the engagement was expanded to a two-part program, the first of which is open to the public. His address is entitled "Congress Gropes for Better Information" and will be presented at 8 p.m. tonight in room 102 of Zachry Engineering Center. It will be continued Tuesday afternoon at 2 p.m. in room 342.

State

Davis trial enters eighth week

The murder trial of Fort Worth millionaire T. Cullen Davis entered its eighth week today in Amarillo. Prosecutors, despite vigorous defense objections, were permitted Saturday to recreate two 1976 deposition hearings in which a teenager named the defendant as the man who shot her boyfriend. Prosecutor Joe Shannon Jr. assumed the role of Beverly Bass, 19, as he sat in the witness chair and read portions of her October and December explanations of the August, 1976 assault on Gus Gavrel Jr., 22. Prosecutors said they were offering portions of the sworn statements not previously introduced into evidence to rehabilitate the teenager's testimony before the jury.

Nation

Siamese twins critical

Ferra Hope, the infant surgically separated from her Siamese twin Oct. 1, was in "extremely critical condition" Sunday at the University of Arkansas Medical Center in Little Rock. Ferra Hope developed severe pneumonia and kidney failure Saturday, a hospital spokesman said. She was in critical condition for several days after the operation but her condition improved last week and she was removed from the critical list Friday. The infant was separated from her twin, with whom she shared a torso and conjoined hearts. Her twin died during the operation. Ferra Hope is the first infant to survive such an operation for more than six hours.

Ships line up, strike continues

Several ships were lined up along docks waiting to be unloaded at the nation's second largest port Sunday in New Orleans, as local dock workers continued their general strike. Harbor police reported no picket lines Sunday, but dock foremen said no one had shown up for work. The longshoremen, defying the wishes of local and national union, voted Saturday to continue a general strike against the Port of New Orleans. General strike supporters said the selective strike strategy was unworkable in New Orleans because container ships account for a smaller percentage of port traffic than in New York.

Weather

Mostly cloudy and mild today with southerly winds 10-18 mph. Twenty percent chance of rain. Decreasing cloudiness and cooler tomorrow. High today mid-80s, low tonight, low 60s, tomorrow's high mid-70s.

The Battalion

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Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification.

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