

Lamsdorff we had received his assurance with satisfaction, as any proceedings that might have a tendency to alter or disturb the existing status of Tibet, would be a movement in which His Majesty's Government could not acquiesce. This suggestion was adopted, and on September 2, 1901, our Ambassador informed Count Lamsdorff that His Majesty's Government would naturally not regard with indifference any proceedings that might have a tendency to alter or disturb the existing status in Tibet. The Russian Minister repeated his assertion that "the mission was chiefly concerned with matters of religion, and had no political or diplomatic object or character."

For the time being the Government of India itself took no action in regard to this new factor, though in concluding a despatch to the Secretary of State on February 13 of the following year (1902) they declared that it was desirable that the unsatisfactory situation in Tibet should be brought to an end with as little delay and commotion as possible, since there were factors in the case which, at a later date, might invest the breakdown of the unnatural barriers of Tibetan isolation with a wider and more serious significance.

They continued to plod steadily along at the settlement of the frontier, and corresponded with the Secretary of State and the Bengal Chamber of Commerce about the introduction of tea to Tibet now that the five years, during which it was to be excluded had expired. But they acted with much more decision than previously, and instead of waiting year after year for the arrival of Chinese or Tibetan deputies to meet our representatives, they sent Mr. White, in the summer of 1902, to Giagong, to reassert British rights to the tract of country which the Tibetans had been occupying in contravention of the treaty of 1890, and, if necessary, to expel them from the British side of the frontier. Mr. White had suggested that an effective and simple way would be to occupy the Chumbi Valley, but the Government of India, though they considered grounds for strong action were far from