

more definite than this telegram. But the despatch had not yet arrived. Some degree of discretion was left me. Was I justified by the very difficult circumstances in which I found myself in stretching it to seventy-five years? This was the question I had to settle in my mind while the Regent was waiting for my reply.

But this question of the indemnity did not stand alone. It had to be taken in connection with another clause which would give us the right to occupy the Chumbi Valley until the indemnity was paid. I had, then, to ask myself further: Would an occupation of the Chumbi Valley for seventy-five years as a guarantee for the payment of an indemnity run counter to any pledge we had given to Russia? Now, Lord Lansdowne, when he gave his pledge, distinctly said that the action of Government must to some extent depend upon the conduct of the Tibetans themselves, and that His Majesty's Government could not undertake that they would not depart in any eventuality from the policy which then commended itself to them.

This was said to the Russian Ambassador on June 2, before Government had heard the result of our announcement to the Tibetans that we would be prepared to negotiate at Gyantse up to June 25. Since Lord Lansdowne had spoken to the Russian Ambassador, the Tibetans had continued fighting, had attacked me at Kangma, and by June 25 had sent no negotiators. The conduct of the Tibetans had, therefore, been such as might very well cause Government to alter their action.

Further, the Tibetans, during our advance to Lhasa, had opposed us at the Karo-la, and fired on us from Nagartse Jong. This opposition was indeed slight, because we had been obliged, after June 25, to break down at Gyantse the Tibetan forces which intervened between us and our advance to Lhasa. Had General Macdonald not captured the jong and dispersed the Tibetan forces round Gyantse, the opposition to our advance to Lhasa would have been very much greater than it was.

Since Lord Lansdowne had given his pledge to the Russian Ambassador, events had occurred—the failure