

back at the Chinese in the Indies as they were fifty years ago, we can see coming into being the complex inter-relationship between the modernisation of China, the rallying of Overseas Chinese forces, and the growth of local nationalism in South-East Asia. One could wish that Dr. Williams had said more on the last point (and so brought his book even more fully within the category of Indonesian studies), but that we are able to see so much of interest in his study is a tribute to his research and his analysis.

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Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic. A Report to the International Commission of Jurists by its Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet. [Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1960. xiii and 345 pp. 7s. 6d.]

IN 1959 the International Commission of Jurists published a document entitled "The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law" which was directed to proving that Tibet was not part of China and was the victim of unprovoked aggression. Many readers of that volume regarded the documents compiled by the Commission as being its most valuable part, although a large number of them were unable to accept the Commission's interpretation that they proved Tibet's independent international status.

The present Report is that of the Legal Inquiry Committee established by the Commission to investigate events in Tibet. The Committee was unable to enter Tibet and conduct its investigation on the spot, so that everything is based on secondary reports. Due allowance must, therefore, be made for the natural exaggerations of refugees and other non-objective or partisan witnesses. In fact, the reviewer finds the most valuable part of the volume is Appendix III consisting of five documents relating to the international status of Tibet.

The whole tenor of the Report, and of the general view of the Commission, is based on the conviction that Tibet was an independent sovereign state and not a Chinese possession—this ignores the fact that no existing state recognises this independence. It is possible that a narrow and unanalytical view of the relevant documents will support this argument. Such an interpretation would not, however, warrant the amount of attention that is paid by the Inquiry Committee to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The People's Republic of China has never accepted this Declaration, and even if it had it would

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amount to no more than a pious wish of conduct to be achieved some time in the future—a point emphasised by Mr. Attlee (as he then was) while Prime Minister.

Likewise, the arguments concerning genocide are based on an entirely false premise. In the first place, the secondhand evidence called in support is far from convincing. More important, however, is the fact that the Genocide Convention only creates the offence—not formerly known in international law—for those states which have ratified the Convention, of which the People's Republic is not one. Further, by the Convention, genocide is only punishable by the courts of the state in which it has been committed.

All one can say of this Report is that it brings forward a certain amount of evidence to suggest that Chinese conduct in that part of its territory known as Tibet is not that which would be expected of a "civilised" state and appears to be contrary to the principles which have been postulated in the non-binding Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, from the Chinese point of view, the irrelevant Genocide Convention.

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