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ROERICH AMERICAN EXPEDITION ATTACKED

AND HELD IN TIBETAN MOUNTAINS

Year of Complete Silence Broken by Cable from
Nicholas Roerich, World-renowned Artist Leading
Expedition--Tells of Cruelty by Tibetans--
Five Men Die and Ninety Caravan Animals Perish--
Expedition reaches Himalayas.

More than a year of complete silence on the part of the Roerich American Expedition, in Asia, was broken yesterday with the arrival of a cable recounting the news of the attack and detention of the Expedition in the Tibetan mountains resulting in the loss of five men and ninety pack caravan animals. The Cable dated May 16th from the heart of Asia reached the Roerich Museum, 310 Riverside Drive, which is one of the American institutions under whose auspices the Expedition has gone to Asia. The last previous cable from the Roerich American Expedition arrived in April 1927 when Professor Nicholas Roerich, the world-renowned artist who is leading the Expedition, informed the directors of the Roerich Museum that the Expedition was leaving Ulan Bator Khotso, Mongolia, headed for the Gobi.

The Cable as received is as follows:

ROERICH AMERICAN EXPEDITION AFTER MANY HARDSHIPS HAS REACHED HIMALAYAS
STOP THUS ENDED BIG CENTRAL ASIATIC EXPEDITION STOP MANY ARTISTIC
AND SCIENTIFIC RESULTS STOP ALREADY SENT SEVERAL SERIES PAINTINGS
TO NEW YORK STOP HOPE LAST SENDING FROM MONGOLIA SAFELY REACHED STOP
MANY OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING BUDDHISM STOP EXPEDITION STARTED IN 1924
FROM SIKKIM THROUGH PUBJAB KASHMIR LADAK KARAKORUM KHOTAN KASHGAR
KARASHAHR URUMCHI IRTYSH ALTAI MOUNTAINS OYROT REGION MONGOLIA
CENTRAL GOBI KANSU TSAIDAM TIBET STOP PEACEFUL AMERICAN FLAG ENCIRCLED
CENTRAL ASIA EVERYWHERE MOVEMENT EXPEDITION FROM KHOTAN ASSISTED BY
BRITISH CONSUL KASHGAR STOP ON TIBETAN TERRITORY HAVE BEEN ATTACKED
BY ARMED ROBBERS STOP SUPERIORITY OF OUR FIRE ARMS PREVENTED BLOOD-
SHED STOP IN SPITE OF TIBET PASSPORTS EXPEDITION FORCIBLY STOPPED

BY TIBETAN AUTHORITIES ON OCTOBER SIXTH TWO DAYS NORTH OF NAGCHU STOP WITH INHUMAN CRUELTY EXPEDITION HAS BEEN DETAINED FOR FIVE MONTHS ON ALTITUDE OF 15000 FEET IN SUMMER TENTS AMIDST SEVERE COLD ABOUT MINUS FORTY DEGREES CENTIGRADE STOP EXPEDITION SUFFERED FROM WANT OF FUEL AND FODDER STOP DURING STAY IN TIBET FIVE MEN MONGOLS BURIATS AND TIBETANS DIED AND NINETY CARAVAN ANIMALS PERISHED STOP BY ORDER OF AUTHORITIES ALL LETTERS AND WIRES ADDRESSED TO LHASA GOVERNMENT AMERICAN CONSUL CALCUTTA BRITISH AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN SEIZED STOP FORBIDDEN TO BUY FOOD STUFFS FROM POPULATION STOP MONEY AND MEDICINES CAME TO AN END STOP THE PRESENCE OF THREE WOMEN IN CARAVAN AND MEDICAL CERTIFICATE ABOUT HEART WEAKNESS NOT TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION STOP WITH GREAT DIFFICULTIES ON MARCH FOURTH EXPEDITION STARTED SOUTHWARDS STOP ALL NINE EUROPEAN MEMBERS EXPEDITION SAFE STOP COURAGEOUSLY BORE HARDSHIPS OF EXCEPTIONALLY SEVERE WINTER STOP MANY SCIENTIFIC RESULTS AFTER FOUR YEARS TRAVELS STOP MAY SIXTEENTH SIGNED NICHOLAS ROERICH.

Apparently from the cable the Roerich American Expedition began to experience difficulty on Tibetan territory. They were first attacked by armed robbers but the superiority of the fire arms of the Expedition prevented bloodshed.

Tibetan authorities, however, furnished the most cruel experience of the Expedition. In spite of its Tibetan passports, the Expedition was forcibly stopped by the Tibetan authorities on October sixth last, two days north of Nagchu. There, at a height of 15000 feet, in an unprecedented cold about forty degrees below centigrade, the authorities forcibly detained the Expedition for five months with inhuman cruelty.

Being equipped with only summer tents, the members of the Expedition suffered the most unbelievable extremity of cold. They lacked fuel and fodder. All attempts to communicate by letter and wire with the central Lhasan government, or the American Consulate at Calcutta and the British authorities were prevented and letters seized. They were forbidden to speak to passing caravans and forbidden to buy food stuffs from the population. Their money and medicines were exhausted, and as a result five of the men died. These were Mongols, Buriats, and Tibetans. Ninety of their caravan animals perished.

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The presence of three women in the caravan was not taken into consideration nor the medical certificate concerning the heart trouble of a member of the Expedition.

With terrific difficulties on March fourth, five months after they were seized the Expedition started southwards. According to the communication the nine European members of the Expedition are safe and courageously bore the hardships of the exceptionally severe winter.

According to the Cable, however, the Expedition has had tremendous results for Art and Science as well as vast possibility of research concerning Buddhism.

The Roerich American Expedition has sent back to America thus far more than 250 paintings by Nicholas Roerich, which have been housed in the permanent collections of the Roerich Museum, New York. In addition it has gathered and sent back vast artistic and scientific material regarding the cultures of the entire East.

Further details regarding the Expedition are being awaited by the Roerich Museum.
