SAVING SHANGRI-LA

This is Takshang, the Tiger's Nest Monastery in the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan. It is as close a place to the Shangri-La of James Hilton's 1933 classic "Lost Horizon" as you'll find on earth today. I took this picture in 1990.

About three-quarters the size of West Virginia, wedged between China (more accurately: Chinese-Occupied Tibet) and India, the crest of the Himalayas (highest peak: Kula Kangri at 24,773ft.) forming the northern border and steamy jungles the south, Bhutan is known as the Land of the Thunder Dragon. It is almost a mystical experience to drive and trek across Bhutan, to visit its temples and *dzongs* (castles), to come over the top of a pass and see a village in the valley below surrounded by brilliant green rice fields, the homes with bright red roofs as they are covered with peppers drying in the sun.

Bhutanese culture is a unique mix of the ancient Himalyan animism called Bon and Tibetan Lama Buddhism. All Bhutanese men wear a distinctive robe called a *gho*, while women wear a female version called a *kira*. There are few people on our planet more peaceful and gentle than the Bhutanese. They love their country and wish above all for it and their culture to be preserved. They are thus at a loss to comprehend a vicious international campaign to destroy it.

Nepal lies to the west of Bhutan. Between them lies the former Kingdom of Sikkim. Focus on the

word “former.” Sikkim had been an independent state under the Namgyal Monarchy since 1642. There was a torrent of world-wide publicity when, following in the footsteps of Grace Kelly’s marriage to Prince Ranier of Monaco in 1956, New York socialite Hope Cooke married the incoming King or *Chogyal* of Sikkim, Palden Thondup Namgyal, in 1963.

The people of Sikkim, the Lepchas, adored their King and his American Queen. The fairy tale lasted twelve years. The Lepchas were Lama Buddhist with a distinct Sikkimese culture. For several years, Nepalese immigrants from overcrowded Nepal had been illegally settling in Sikkim, and by the early seventies, the Lepchas found they were a minority in their own country.

The Nepalese were Hindus, and they began agitating for “protection” from Hindu India. With that excuse, Indian Prime Minister Indira Ghandi ordered her army to invade Sikkim and take it over in 1975. The King and Queen fled to America, and India proceeded to annex Sikkim, incorporating it as India’s 22nd state (Indian textbooks lie when they say the Sikkimese “voted” to “merge” Sikkim with India - the country was militarily seized). Today the same fate seems decreed for Bhutan.

Just as with Sikkim, Nepalese illegal immigrants have been flooding into Bhutan for decades. In the 1980s, a Marxist terrorist group, the Bhutan Peoples Party, was formed by Nepalese illegals and began a series of ambushes, bombings, and kidnappings - all the while lauded by the press in Nepal and India as “freedom fighters.” The Royal Bhutan Army managed to suppress them - so they went the political route, morphing themselves into the Bhutan Peoples Forum for Human Rights.

The leader of these terrorists-turned-human rights advocates, Teknath Rizal, is in Washington this week proclaiming the plight of Nepali “refugees” who were “forced to leave Bhutan because of their lack of citizenship certificates.” He is being treated as a celebrity by Amnesty International, which loudly denounces the “brutal” government of Bhutan for refusing to commit cultural suicide through the “repatriation” of the Nepali illegals.

The sometimes conservative newspaper in town, the Washington Times, published a propaganda piece on Rizal posing as a news article, written by Chitra Tiwari, a Nepalese sympathizer of the “Maoist” Communist terrorists in Nepal (“Ethnic Nepalis Forced Out of Bhutan,” December 18, 2004).

This, as you can see by now, is not some irrelevant tempest in a Himalayan teapot. It is about the right of countries from Italy to the Netherlands to England to the United States to preserve their cultures and protect themselves from overwhelming floods of illegal immigrants. Of all of these countries, only Bhutan has the courage to straight-out evict them - and in consequence is suffering world condemnation.

Every country threatened by alien invasion is a precious Shangri-la to its legitimate citizens. If the

Dutch amd English and Italians wish to preserve theirs, they must summon the courage of Bhutan. If we wish to preserve the Shangri-La that is America, we must summon the courage of Bhutan.

Without such courage, we have no hope of ejecting the illegal invasion from our country. Without such courage, Old Europe will never rid itself of Moslem illegals and continue its fatal march to becoming Eurabia. It may be too late for Europe, but it is not too late for us. I am calling on my friends in the Asia International Relations Committee of Congress to support Bhutan, and to see the connection between the survival of Bhutan's culture and ours. Once the 109th Congress convenes a month from now, I'll be giving you an update on how the committee is reconfigured so that you might do the same.

For it is this hidden Himalyan Kingdom of Bhutan that is providing the lesson we need for our own preservation from illegal invasion.