Tibet Facts 1

Major Allegations:
Key Facts on the Chinese Occupation

Selection of important events, dates, facts and figures

✧ China's invasion of Tibet by 35,000 troops in 1949 was an act of unprovoked aggression. There is no generally accepted legal basis for China's claim of sovereignty.

✧ China undertook, by the 1951 Agreement, not to interfere with Tibet's existing system of government and society, but never kept these promises in eastern Tibet and in 1959 reneged on the treaty altogether.

✧ China has renamed two out of Tibet's three provinces as parts of the Chinese provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan, and renamed the remaining province of U'Tsang as the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).

✧ There is no evidence to support China's claim that TAR is autonomous: all local legislation is subject to approval of the central government in Beijing; all local government is subject to the regional party, which in Tibet has never been run by a Tibetan. Some 20% of TAR Communist Party cadres are Chinese.

✧ The influx of Chinese nationals has destabilised the economy. Forced agricultural modernisations led to extensive crop failures and Tibet's first recorded famine.

✧ Reprisals for the 1959 National Uprising involved the elimination of 87,000 Tibetans by the Chinese count alone, according to a *Radio Lhasa* broadcast of 1 October 1960. Yet Tibetan exiles claim that 430,000 died during the Uprising and the subsequent 15 years of guerrilla warfare, which continued until the US withdrew support.

✧ Exile sources estimate that up to 260,000 people died in prisons and labour camps between 1950 and 1984.

✧ 100,000 Tibetans fled with the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual and temporal ruler, in 1959. Local reports state that up to four a day still try to escape across the borders into Nepal and India. The Nepalese authorities have been turning refugees over to the Chinese; at least 18 escapees were forcibly repatriated on 13 December 1991.

✧ Religious practice was forcibly suppressed until 1979, and up to 6,000 monasteries and shrines have been destroyed.

✧ The Indian Government reports that three nuclear missile sites, and an estimated 300,000 troops are stationed on Tibetan territory.

✧ The *International Commission of Jurists* concluded in its reports, 1959 and 1960, that there was a prima facie case of genocide committed by the Chinese upon the Tibetan nation. These reports deal with events before the Cultural Revolution.

✧ Chinese replaced Tibetan as the official language. Despite official pronouncements, there has been no practical change in this policy. Without an adequate command of Chinese, many Tibetans find it difficult to get work in the state sector.

✧ Secondary school children are taught all classes in Chinese. Although English is a requirement for most university courses, Tibetan school children cannot learn English unless they forfeit study of their own language. Many children are sent away to China for education. In 1992 there were 10,000 such children in China, cut off from their own cultural heritage.

✧ Resettlement of Chinese migrants has placed Tibetans in the minority in many areas, including Lhasa, causing chronic unemployment among Tibetans. In 1990, the Chinese admitted there were 44,000 Chinese in Lhasa and around 80,000 in the whole of the TAR. But independent observers believe the figure is in fact far higher.

✧ Up to 60 fully-laden timber trucks an hour are leaving Tibet on the two major roads to China, according to tourist film shot in September 1988, thus signalling deforestation and environmental damage, in contravention of UN *Resolution 1803 (XVII) 1962,* which establishes the right of peoples to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources.

✧ Unarmed demonstrators have been shot without warning by Chinese police on five occasions between 1987 and 1989. *Amnesty International* believes that "at least 200 civilians" were killed by the security forces during demonstrations in this period. There are also reports of detainees being summarily executed.

✧ Some 3,000 people are believed to have been detained for political offences since September 1987, many of them for writing letters, distributing leaflets or talking to foreigners about the Tibetans' right to independence.

✧ Detailed accounts show that the Chinese conducted a campaign of torture against Tibetan dissidents in prison

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from March 1989 to May 1990. However, torture is still regularly used against political detainees today. Such prisoners are held in sub-standard conditions, given insufficient food, forbidden to speak, frequently held incommunicado and denied proper medical treatment.

✧ The Chinese have refused to allow independent observers to attend so-called public trials. Prison sentences are regularly decided before the trial. Less than 2% of cases in China are won by the defence.

✧ All attempts to discuss Tibet are bedevilled by the Chinese redefinition of the country's borders since 1949. Here the term Tibet is used to refer to the three original provinces of U'Tsang, Kham and Amdo (sometimes called Greater Tibet). When the Chinese refer to Tibet they invariably mean the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) which includes only one province, U'Tsang (the TAR was formally inaugurated in 1965). In 1949 the other two provinces, Amdo and Kham, were renamed by the Chinese as parts of China proper and became the province of Qinghai and parts of Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan provinces.

Tibet Facts 2

Chinese Presence in Tibet: Population Transfer.

Survey of the impacts of mass immigration of Ethnic Chinese into Tibet.

Beijing's new policy of population transfer into Tibet threatens the very existence of Tibetan culture, religion and national identity. Mass immigration by Chinese settlers into Lhasa and other areas in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) has been exacerbated by economic reforms, especially since 1992. This transfer reduces the Tibetans to a minority in their own country, which in turn disenfranchises them from the future political process.

Population Transfer

A wave of resettlement became apparent in 1983, partly as a result of economic changes—i.e.: opportunities for profit following the opening up of Tibet for the tourist trade—and partly as a result of what seems to be government policy.

The goal is seen to be "to narrow as soon as possible the gap in economic development between Tibet and other areas of the nation" *('White Paper on Tibet' Sep 1992).* Chen Kuiyuan, a Chinese cadre appointed as leader of the Chinese Communist Party in Tibet in March 1992, has called on "inland Chinese to come and help open up Tibet." Subsidies and other incentives are given. Housing is being built for Chinese in many parts of Tibet, with shops as well, where they were not seen previously.

The recent influx of Chinese settlers is linked by most people to the economic reform drive initiated by Deng Xiaoping in the spring of 1992, and in fact the numbers of migrants in Lhasa do seem to have increased markedly after that date *(Tibet Information Network TIN, Tibetan Views of Immigration into Central Tibet 1992–93, 1993).* According to a senior Western diplomat who visited Lhasa in mid-1993, the Chinese people "now dominate new economic activity in Tibet."

If this process continues, it will complete what the Chinese army began over 40 years ago; the total occupation and domination of Tibet by the Chinese. The Dalai Lama has labelled this China's *'Final Solution'* towards his people.

Statistical evidence for this resettlement is incomplete but persuasive:

Population of Tibet

Tibetan exiles claim 7 5 million Chinese now live in Tibet alongside six million Tibetans. These figures are unconfirmed, but recent Chinese figures confirm the trend. In addition, it was estimated that in 1992 there were 40,000 troops throughout Tibet.

U'Tsang (Tibet Autonomous Region)

In 1952, Mao Zedong said: "There are hardly any Han (Chinese) in Tibet." On 25 September 1988, Mao Rubai, Vice-Chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), admitted that there were a million Chinese in the TAR, though he did not say how many were settlers, and probably did not intend to say it at all. Some 2.2 million Tibetans live in the TAR; it is the only region left in China where the Chinese are not in the majority *(Selected Works of Mao, Vol. 5; p.73; China Reconstructs, Sep 1987).*

The Chinese authorities consistently report low figures which often only refer to short-term settlers. In March 1993, they stated the Chinese population in the TAR was at an all time low of 66,000. The figures referred mainly to technicians, professionals and administrators staying on a temporary basis and, perhaps, some cadres/professionals *(TIN, Tibetan Views of Immigration into Central Tibet).*

Officially, Tibetans outnumber Chinese in Lhasa by 3:1, but many observers believe that the reverse is nearer the truth. Lhasa is important but not typical of Tibet. In 1992, the creation was announced of special economic zones near Lhasa and at Golmud. Preparations are being made for a large increase in population in Lhasa and for improved infrastructure. In a survey carried out in Lhasa in July 1993, on the southern Lingkor, a street parallel to the Barkhor, it was found that in one stretch of 50 shops, west of the sports stadium, 46 were owned or operated by Chinese traders *(TlN News Update 15/08/93).*

Until now the Chinese presence has been primarily urban, but it is being widened to rural *areas (TIN News Compilation, 02/10/92).* In Shigatse and most other towns in U'Tsang, there are now large Chinese conurbations dwarfing the old Tibetan quarters (China's Reforms of Tibet, Graham Clarke, 1987).

Amdo (Qinghai)

In 1953, there were estimated to be 100,000 Chinese in the province of Qinghai, most of which is made up of the Tibetan province of Amdo. In 1985, there were 2 5 million Chinese and 0 75 million Tibetans in Qinghai *(Chinese Statistical Yearbook 1985).* The resettlement process is evident to any visitor. For example, in 1985, out of 40 families in Takster, the Dalai Lama's home town, only eight were Tibetan. There were no Chinese households during his childhood (1930s).

Kham (Sichuan)

In the Mili and Ngapa regions of Kham, now annexed to

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Sichuan, the Chinese say there are about half a million Chinese to about a third of a million Tibetans. In the Khartze region, the Chinese population has doubled since 1955 while the Tibetan population has increased by only a quarter *(Radio Lhasa).*

The town of Chamdo has a Chinese population of about 95%, according to eyewitnesses. Some towns in Kham did not exist before the arrival of the Chinese in the 1950s. One such is Hongyuan, which has been built in the middle of vast grasslands previously inhabited only by nomads. There are allegations that fertile grazing land has been appropriated by new settlers, forcing Tibetans to higher and more difficult areas.

Unemployment

In Lhasa and other cities unemployment is a growing problem amongst Tibetans. According to a Tibetan interviewed by TIN in May 1992: "There are already 2,000 youths with basic qualifications who are unemployed, according to official data given by the mayor. l suspect that the real figure might be twice that or even more in Lhasa."

There are several reasons for this. Chinese language is the principal medium of teaching and Chinese is required for most jobs. This gives new settlers an immediate advantage, apart from any purely racial advantage they may have in dealings with the Chinese authorities who dispense most of the jobs, residence permits and trade privileges.

There is also systematic importation of workers as well as of technical experts and officials to work in the TAR. Each of China's 25 ethnically Chinese provinces was obliged to send a work team for a number of building projects. In 1984 alone, Radio Beijing reported 60,000 arriving "representing the vanguard groups to help in schools, hotels and construction."

In 1992, for what is believed to be the first time in the TAR, Chinese migrants were encouraged to settle in agricultural areas. Also, 15 mining projects have been announced in Tibet. The exploitation of Tibet's rich mineral endowment, said to comprise over 40% of such resources potentially available to China, is a cause of the recent acceleration of worker migration.

Incentives to Chinese immigrants include altitude allowance, remoteness bonus, tax concessions, fewer hours, longer holidays and greater market opportunities than in China. Professional and official wages are the highest in China and are made up of over 30% bonuses. Many Tibetans allege that officials refuse work and residence permits to migrating Tibetans but encourage Chinese to accept them or even work without them. This is particularly true of shopkeepers and tradesmen.

Resettlement Policy: A Chinese Tradition

Tibetans allege that many of the Chinese workers, often recently retired soldiers, are given jobs in Tibet for security reasons—to help control and infiltrate the local populace, and to take up arms if required. This security function of resettlement was explicit during China's mass settlement campaigns in Manchuria in the late-19th century, and in Xinjiang during the 1950s. Manchuria now has a population of 75 million Chinese to some three million Manchus; Inner Mongolia has about 8 5 million Chinese to two million Mongols and Xinjiang has seven million Chinese to about five million Uygurs. In the days when these countries were opened up to Chinese settlement—roughly 100, 70, and 40 years ago respectively—the policies of mass resettlement and assimilation were quite explicit, and even in the 1980s Chinese officials were still referring to the great opportunity the western regions held. for absorbing China's expanding population.

Such development is seen as natural in Chinese world views, both imperial and revolutionary. It is also regarded as necessary and beneficial to the "backward" peoples who could gain from assimilation with the Chinese. It is, however, contrary to international law, where that is applied to occupied territories, and would completely invalidate the question of self-determination, quite apart from its cultural and economic impact.

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Tibet Facts 3

Environmental Degradation, 1950–1995 :

Survey of environmental destruction on the Tibetan plateau.

Since the Chinese occupation, Tibet's fragile eco-system has become increasingly damaged Tibet's natural resources are being decimated, and scientists now believe that the environmental degradation of the Tibetan plateau may have a serious impact on both regional and global climatic patterns.

Exploitation of Tibet's Natural Resources: Deforestation

Until the 1950s, the Tibetans' agricultural methods were well suited to the fragile mountainous terrain. A small population lived chiefly off yak-herding and barley cultivation, leaving fields fallow for long periods to prevent leaching and erosion. Hunting and logging were controlled by taboos, particularly around the monasteries.

In 1950, the forested areas of eastern Tibet were annexed to China and renamed as parts of Sichuan and Yunnan. Tibet's forests became the PRC's second largest timber source, and an intense programme of clearance began. It is estimated that in 1950 forests covered 9% of Tibet, but that by 1985 the total area had been reduced to 5%. In Kham, between 1950 and 1985 forest cover was reduced from 30% to 18%—an estimated reduction of 40%. In U'Tsang and Amdo there was a 50% reduction. Roads continue to be built to make the forests accessible for logging. By 1985, 15% of U'Tsang's forests and 50–70% of those in Kham had been opened up by road.

Tourists have reported seeing up to 60 trucks per hour, loaded with mature timber, leaving Tibet on the roads to Chengdu and Golmud. Rivers have also been adapted for large-scale timber transportation. China's demand for timber cannot be satisfied by the forests within its borders, yet in March 1990, China announced that it would cut its timber imports (the second highest in the world) by 40% *(China Daily).* This will place an even greater burden on the remaining forests.

China's Record on Deforestation

The official Chinese figures for the 1980s, published by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), are 0% deforestation for the whole of the PRC and four million hectares reforested annually. Article 13 of China's 1979 Environmental Protection Law states: "Destroying forest to reclaim land and arbitrary cutting and felling are strictly forbidden. Tree planting should be vigorously carried out." However, 'Watershed Management in Mountain Regions of Southwest China', a report for ICIMOD (Li *Weihua & Zhang Mintao (eds), 1985),* states that in the area to the southeast of the Himalayan/Hengduan mountain ranges, where there has been extensive clearance: *"Restocking has not been undertaken "*

According to a report to the US-China Conference on Energy Resources and Environment (1982), China is losing 2.5 million hectares of forest cover per year. The total cover of good natural stands in China is put at 43 million hectares—one third of the official total. China's domestic consumption of wood is 800 m^3 a year, while only 200 m^3 are replanted *(China Daily, March 1989).* The report stated that replanting in the last 40 years averaged a survival rate of 1/7; other reports suggest the success rate is only 10%.

Clear felling has been reported in areas where extremes of temperature, heavy but irregular rainfall and steepness of slopes make replanting technically difficult. In most areas, there is no selective felling. Tourist film of Dawu and Riwoche shows that nearly all hillsides are clear felled and only mature logs collected; the rest are left to rot.

Since the end of collectivisation and the disbanding of the communes, forest ownership has been confused. Contracts, where they exist, are drawn up in written Chinese, which most Tibetan farmers do not understand *(S.D. Richardson).* Logging is supposed to be government-controlled, but in most cases Beijing has no influence on the local timber trade, which is often conducted by cadres responsible for agriculture. There is little or no policing of illegal logging.

Mining

Deposits of uranium in the hills around Lhasa are said to be the largest in the world. Tibet is also rich in gold, copper, zinc, lithium, and other minerals. Mining causes local pollution and population increase, bringing new roads and clearing forests for building and making pit props.

Wildlife

As late as the 1940s, travellers to Tibet reported seeing large herds of wild yak and antelope, herds of musk deer and kyang or wild ass, as well as white pheasant, eagle, Brahmani duck and crane. Himalayan brown bears, wolves, lynx and snow leopard were also a once-familiar sight.

Increase in the human population, reduction of forest habitat and a dramatic increase in hunting has reduced several species to critical levels. Endangered species, including musk deer, Thorold's deer and McNeill's deer, are hunted to supply China's huge pharmaceutical market. Pelts of the golden monkey and snow leopard are much in

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demand in the cities, despite China being a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

Agricultural Policy

During the Cultural Revolution, 80% of arable land was ploughed for wheat. Failure of harvests and the export of grain and meat to mainland China led to famines in the early-1960s. (China admitted for the first time in 1980 that food was being imported to Tibet). The influx of Chinese settlers has placed an intolerable burden on Tibet's natural resources, and forced Tibetan pastoralists westwards on to the high and arid plateau. This rapid population increase has led to an expansion of land under cultivation, particularly on the steep slopes bordering on mountain forests. However, population pressure is such that the area of cultivated land per capita has in fact decreased.

Due to new roads giving access to markets, and the Chinese reintroduction of the market economy in 1979, agricultural output in 1984 was three or four times 1959 levels. In parts of Sichuan, annexed from Tibet in 1950, timber quotas are set at three times the sustainable yield.

Nomadic yak herders have prospered from China's policies, and herds have increased by 25% since 1981 *(China's Reforms of Tibet, Clarke, 1987).* Yet other experts estimate an increase of 10 or 20 times from 1959 stocks.

Pastures are now overstocked by 17%, and desert areas exceed viable grassland by 30% *(The Poverty of Plenty, Wang & Bai, 1986).* Pasture is so over grazed that animals have starved: in Qinghai, the average weight of a sheep dropped from 20 kilos in 1949 to 16 kilos in 1989.

Soil Erosion and Climate Change

In eastern Tibet, characterised by heavy rainfall and extremes of temperature, once forest or grass cover is destroyed, erosion is rapid. The *ICIMOD Watershed Management Report (1985)* states: "steep slope cultivation and deforestation have strongly accelerated the process." According to the *Beijing Review (21/11/83)*, 14 million tons of topsoil is washed away daily in China. Hydro-electric dams and reservoirs on the Yangtse [Yangzi], designed to cope with levels of silt measured only a few years ago, are already inoperable.

Siltation has raised the river beds, increasing the risk of flooding: in Yunnan the incidence of floods has tripled in the past 40 years. Chen Chuanyou *(ICIMOD Report)* documents five "calamitous" floods in Sichuan since 1950. Acid rain has also been noted by visiting scientists in the early-1980s, said to be due to burning coal at high altitude without sufficient tree cover.

The Nuclear Issue

During the 1960s and 1970s, nuclear waste from the "Ninth Academy", China's primary nuclear weapons research and design facility sited on the Tibetan plateau in Haibei, was disposed of in a haphazard and unregulated way, posing enormous danger to those who lived nearby. Nuclear weapons are deployed in at least three sites on the Tibetan plateau and are believed to number "at least several dozen" *(Nuclear Tibet, International Campaign for Tibet, 1993).*

There have been detailed and persistent reports of injury and death as a result of living near uranium mines in Tibet. Between 1989 and 1992, "at least 35 of the approximately 500 people" living in one village close to such a mine died within hours of developing a fever, followed by a distinctive form of diarrhoea *(TIN News Update, 1992).*

Huge prison camps have been built next to nuclear missile sites on the Tibetan plateau, and there are reports that prisoners are used to excavate radioactive ore and forced to enter nuclear test sites to perform dangerous work. Sources say that Chinese officials are open to receiving shipments of nuclear waste from foreign countries in return for hard foreign currency. It is thought the arrival of such waste from Taiwan is "very likely" and would be stored in either Xinjiang Province or on the Tibetan Plateau (Nuclear Tibet, ICT, 1993).

China continues to test nuclear weapons and in 1995 detonated its 43rd nuclear device at Lap Nor in occupied Turkestan, just 200 hen north of the Tibetan border (now Xinjiang). This explosion was six times more powerful than the bomb which killed 140,000 people in Hiroshima and drew strong condemnation from around the world. This was China's sixth nuclear explosion since the rest of the world began the nuclear testing moratorium in 1992.

Tibet Facts 4

Religion:

Survey of Chinese suppression of Tibetan Buddhism and the torture of monks and nuns.

Visitors to Tibet often remark on the apparent freedom of religious practice. Prayer flags flutter on the tops of buildings, every home has an altar and Tibetans can openly show their devotion to Buddhism. But despite the apparent signs of religious freedom the Chinese Communist Party remains fundamentally hostile to religion. And as many monks and nuns will testify, voicing opposition to Chinese rule, no matter how peacefully, can result in torture and sometimes death.

Chinese Policy

Underlying Chinese Communist Party policy on religion is a commitment to the "natural withering away" of religion. The guidelines 'Concerning our Country's Basic Standpoint and Policy on Religious Questions' (1982) set out a "magnificent goal" for Party members: "an era when all the various religious expressions of the actual world finally disappear." The practice of religion in Tibet is subject to strict controls within carefully prescribed limits *(Defying the Dragon, Lawasia & Tibet Information Network TIN, March 1991).* It is these controls, promoted in two principal ways, which are destroying the richness of Tibetan Buddhism. which is an integral part of Tibetan society..

In the administration of monasteries, the Chinese authorities have attempted to destroy the relationship between monastic institutions and the community—a relationship which is central to Tibetan society. The idea of religion and nationhood is so connected that an erosion of Buddhism leads to an erosion of the Tibetans' sense of identity.

Although some rites of Tibetan Buddhism are tolerated, the philosophical foundation, formerly taught in monastic universities, is also under threat. There are severe restrictions on teaching and conducting initiations—both of which are vital for public access to religion.

Chinese policy on religion in Tibet over the last 30 years can be divided into five periods:

1950–59: Religion was officially endorsed in the 1954 Constitution, but religious activity was strictly controlled through state-run associations.

1959–66: China consolidated its hold on Tibet monasteries were targeted as the backbone of Tibetan society. By 1966, before the Cultural Revolution began, 80% of central Tibet's 2,700 monasteries had been destroyed. Only 6,900 monks and nuns remained, of the original 115,600 monks and 1,600 "living buddhas" *(TAR Vice-Chairman Buchung Tsering, 1987).* In 1960, the International Commission of Jurists found that: "acts of genocide had been committed in Tibet in an attempt to destroy the Tibetans as a religious group."

1966–77: During the Cultural Revolution, all religious activity was banned; religious institutions were razed; texts and sacred objects destroyed; monks and nuns imprisoned and tortured; many were killed. By 1978, only eight monasteries were left standing, and 970 monks and nuns remained in the TAR.

1977–86: In 1977, some religious activities were allowed. The Panchen Lama was released from detention in 1978 and in 1979 the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa was opened. Liberalisation policies were initiated by Hu Yaobang in 1980. Money was allocated for rebuilding monasteries and in 1986, the Monlam prayer festival was celebrated for the first time in 20 years. The period between 1983 and 1987 was one of rapid growth for monasteries and nunneries. Many were able to increase their size with little government interference. Garu Nunnery, for example, increased from 20 nuns in 1985 to about 130 in 1987.

The Institute for Studying Buddhism at Nechung was opened by the authorities in the early-1980s, but it is reported that there is a shortage of teachers, teaching is sub-standard and selection involves political screening.

1987–93: Demonstrations in 1987 resulted in a security crackdown on major monasteries. About half a dozen monks were expelled from major monasteries in the Lhasa region in October 1988 and more than 200 monks and nuns were expelled between December 1989 and April 1990. Unrest has been attributed by Party hardliners to laxity towards religious activities *(Tibet Daily, 07/08/89)* and what is being witnessed now is a conservative backlash from the Chinese authorities. These accusations have been accompanied by efforts to reassert central policies and limit the role of religious bodies. The government has also stepped up its attack on monks and nuns who have expressed, even peacefully, any political opposition to Chinese rule in Tibet. Large numbers of monks and nuns involved in peaceful protests have been detained without trial. Many have been released after four to nine months, but in most cases had been severely tortured. Others remain in jail.

Reports have been received of monks being sent to China for re-education. The authorities have also stepped up their political re-education campaigns at monastic institutions,

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especially since the unrest in Lhasa in May 1993. In July 1993, a work team moved into Garu Nunnery, a centre of pro-independence activity since 19 December 1987, as part of what unofficial sources in Lhasa believed to be a crackdown on Buddhist nuns *(TIN News Update, 20/07/93).*

Religion outside the Monasteries

Practitioners of religion cannot be Party members, which affects access to housing and employment as well as political influence *(Tibet Daily, 24/09/90).* Under Article 36 of the Constitution of the PRC (1982), religious ritual, festivals and meetings can be banned on grounds of disrupting social order. Religious education is banned from schools.

Administration of the Monasteries

✧ The head of the monastery is appointed by the Religious Affairs Bureau, a state-run body founded in 1952. The Chinese authorities appoint a Democratic Committee for Monastic Affairs within each monastery, which acts as a liaison group with the local government.

✧ Monks are examined for political correctness and trained under Party supervision. They must not have been involved in "unpatriotic" activities. The authorities also set up work teams to control the political education of monastic institutions while also encouraging monks and nuns, especially the younger ones, to spy on their colleagues *(TIN News Update, 17/08/90).*

✧ A document on religious policy in Ganze, formerly part of Kham, states that the ban on monks and nuns below the age of 18 has been ignored and should be re-enforced *(Strengthening National Unity and Preserving the Unity of the Motherland, Ganze Prefecture Propaganda Committee, 1990).*

✧ Discovery of new incarnations is controlled and in certain cases has been proscribed by the authorities. The search for the incarnation of the Panchen Lama is to be conducted along lines defined by the Constitution of the PRC.

✧ It is reported that in some monasteries, the financial arrangements are controlled by the Religious Affairs Bureau, and funds given to the monastery are required to be paid directly into a bank account administered solely by the RAB. According to witness reports, permission is usually required when a temple, or even a statue, is to be restored. Monasteries given state funds to be restored tend to be those on the tourist route. Tibetans claim that others have been built with private funds and donated labour. In rural areas reconstruction is discouraged.

Overseas Organisations

The Party Guidelines on religion state that no contact with overseas religious organisations is tolerated, rendering communication with Dharamsala unlawful. Showing devotion to the Dalai Lama can be construed as maintaining links with separatist organisations. This has been gradually relaxed since the lifting of martial law. Two monks were sentenced to five years imprisonment in September 1989, charged with spying for the Dalai Lama, and accused of starting riots under instructions from Dharamsala. *(Radio Lhasa, 23/08/89).* Four monks received sentences of up to 15 years each in November 1989.

Religion and Superstition

Under Article 99 of the Chinese Criminal Law, heavy penalties can be exacted for the use of "feudal superstition and superstitious sects" to "carry on counter-revolutionary activities." The distinction between superstition and religion is left unclear, and the ban on superstition can be applied to religious practices.

A campaign launched in 1989 to eliminate the "six evils" including "using feudal and superstitious beliefs to swindle and harm people", is liable to be used to facilitate the arrest of religious figures considered to be leading political dissent.

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Tibet Facts 5

Administration of Justice: Abuse of Human Rights.

Survey of the Chinese criminal justice system and the widespread use of torture.

The nature of the Chinese administration of Tibet is colonialist—by repression of the people for the exploitation of resources. One area where this is largely evident is in the administration of justice where the entire Party, government and judicial structure in Tibet has been mobilised to eradicate the independence movement.

Policy of Merciless Repression

Almost all aspects of political unrest in Tibet can be traced back to one underlying theme: the desire of Tibetans for independence and the return of the Dalai Lama from exile. By the early-1980s, the independence movement was not a great threat for the Chinese Government, but it was enough to worry the authorities. The entire Party, government and judicial structure in Tibet has been directed at eradicating the independence movement. Consequently, this has encouraged officials in the prison judicial system to treat Tibetan nationalists as beyond the protection of even the most basic legal safeguards set out in China's criminal legislation *(Defying the Dragon: China and Human Rights in Tibet, Lawasia & Tibet Information Network March 1991; p.54).*

In China the rule of law is subordinate to the stability of the state. In Tibet the law of the People's Republic of China is used for the prevention of the "splitting of the motherland". Non-violent opposition to the occupation of the Chinese is met with charges of "counterrevolution" and the offender categorised as an enemy of the people. Chinese authorities regard that anyone arrested for nationalist activities does not deserve to be protected by the law, essentially because they have forfeited their right to be considered part of "the people" *(Defying the Dragon; p.31).*

There are no effective official channels through which detainees or a representative can make complaints. If a friend or relative does, they are likely to be brought under suspicion as an independence sympathiser. Furthermore, the Public Security Bureau, which is responsible for the welfare of political prisoners in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), plays a major. frontline role in breaking up demonstrations, monitoring and arresting suspects and conducting investigations.

Thousands of Tibetans are in custody for political reasons. Accurate figures, however, are impossible to determine due to the reluctance of the Chinese Government to provide any information and their insistence that political prisoners are only criminals. Further confusion is created by the system of administrative detention which allows for long periods of detention under "forced labour" without the need for trial. Since August 1989, the names of at least 27 Tibetans sentenced to up to three years "re-education through labour" have been publicly announced. Reports from Tibet, however, suggest that at least 60 Tibetans may have been given such sentences in Lhasa since August 1989 *(Defying the Dragon; p. 36).*

Tibetans only have recourse through international law and by contacting human rights groups. There is evidence that China has responded to international pressure, but, in general, China continues to breach its obligations under the Convention Against Torture. China has also failed to observe in Tibet prohibitions against torture written out in its own domestic legislation.

Crimes of Counter-Revolution

All talk of Tibetan independence threatens the unity of the "motherland". It is regarded as counter-revolutionary, and since 1951 has in many cases been a capital offence *(Tears of Blood: A Cry for Tibet, Mary Craig, 1992; p.234).* Counter-revolution is defined in Article 90 of the PRC Chinese Criminal Law as acts "committed with the goal of overthrowing the political power of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system." Many counter-revolutionary offences carry the death penalty *(Defying the Dragon; p.39).*

Seemingly minor acts of non-violent protest are met with the "iron fist". Tibetans who openly express political dissent to Western tourists, or who collect information about conditions in Tibet and try to forward it to the Tibetan Government-in-Exile or Western human rights groups are particularly at risk.

In 1987, Yulu Dawa Tsering was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for spreading "counter-revolutionary" propaganda. His crime was to have a conversation with a Western tourist. He had said: "May Tibet be released from the mouth of the wolf", and he hoped for a peaceful achievement of Tibetan independence *(Defying the Dragon; p. 40).*

Wang Langjie was sentenced to an unspecified term of imprisonment in January 1990 for "wandering about the environs of Beijing East Road... yelling 'Tibetan independence' and other 'reactionary slogans"' *('China holds public "counter-revolutionary" trial in Tibet: Reuters, 04/02/90, quoting Tibet Daily, 24/01/90).* Tibetan tour guide Gendun Rinchen and Lobsang Yonten, a former monk, were arrested in May 1993. They had been

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monitoring human rights and Rinchen planned to deliver a human rights report to a visiting delegation of European diplomats. The Chinese authorities have accused them of "stealing state secrets". This is an extremely serious "counter-revolutionary" crime which could incur the death penalty.

Trial Proceedings

Tibetans suspected of opposing policies of the PRC in Tibet have been held as political prisoners and prisoners of conscience for lengthy periods, some for decades. The charges against these people are often unknown and many dissidents, especially before 1987, were sentenced or executed without trial. Between October 1987 and July 1989 only about a dozen Tibetan political prisoners were known to have been formally charged with criminal offences and tried by a court. The Chinese authorities, however, started to bring to trial scores of Tibetan political prisoners, the exact numbers are not clear, after a new policy was instigated in August 1989 *(Defying the Dragon; p.34).* According to Article 125 of the PRC Constitution, "the accused has the right of defence". However, there is no known case of a Tibetan receiving legal assistance prior to, or during, the hearing. It seems that normal judicial procedures have been abridged. The Chinese criminal justice system in Tibet also has no presumption of innocence. There is no known case of a Tibetan defendant accused of political crimes being acquitted *(Defying the Dragon; p.35).*

The PRC Criminal Procedure Law states that all trials be public, except those dealing with state secrets, private individual matters or minors *(Articles 8 and 11, PRC Criminal Procedural Law).* In reality, however, most trials in Tibet are held in secret or before a specially selected audience *(Defying the Dragon; p.34).* It is very difficult to obtain first-hand accounts of political trials in Tibet. However, there is one recorded eyewitness report of a public trial of two monks from Ngarong Monastery, held in Rigong, March 1990. They were detained in Autumn 1989 after unfurling a Tibetan national flag in the street. Neither of the accused was represented. Nor were they given the chance to defend themselves. The monks were sentenced to one, and one and a half years imprisonment respectively, for counter-revolutionary crimes *(Defying the Dragon; p. 35).*

The average term of imprisonment since the trials began in 1989 seems to be six and a half years. There have been prison sentences of up to 19 years handed down to Tibetans found guilty of counter-revolutionary offences. There is growing speculation that Tibetan political prisoners have been executed. However, it is unclear whether any Tibetans have been executed since autumn 1987 because of their political activities *(Defying the Dragon; p. 36).*

Life in Prison

There is overwhelming evidence that torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment are a routine part of detention in police stations, detention centres, labour camps and prisons in Tibet. First-hand reports from released prisoners describe the use of electric batons applied to the torso, mouth, soles of feet and genitals; the use of lighted cigarettes to inflict burns; the use of truncheons or rifle butts for beatings; the use of dogs to bite detainees; and the use of manacles and chains to restrain prisoners for long periods. They also describe the practice of making people stand outside for several days at a time—sometimes on blocks of ice. Reports of juveniles being tortured and Tibetans dying in prison as a result of torture and other mistreatment have also been received *(Defying the Dragon; pp.47–53).*

Conditions in prison are often very poor. Released prisoners interviewed have stated that the food is insufficient and of such poor quality that it causes diarrhoea and other digestive disorders. Many former prisoners have described a rule prohibiting inmates from speaking to each other. Reports consistently suggest that medical care in the prisons is inadequate, limited to very basic first aid for what are sometimes serious injuries or illnesses (Defying the Dragon; pp.51–52).

For case studies see:

'People's Republic of China: Persistent Human Rights Violations in Tibet' Amnesty International, May 1995;

'People's Republic of China: Repression in Tibet, 1987–1992' Amnesty International, May 1992;

'Defying the Dragon'; and TIN Bulletins.

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Tibet Facts 6

‘Laogai’ Labour Reform System in Tibet.

Discussion of the use of Laogai camps and forced prison labour in Tibet.

Laogai, or “reform through labour”, is a central feature of the Chinese prison system. In Tibet, thousands of people are detained in laogai camps because of their peaceful resistance to the Chinese occupation, are denied their freedom, and subjected to “thought reform”. Brutal violence is widespread inside the laogai, especially in Tibet, and many prisoners have died here—in exile in what can rightly be called “China’s Siberia”.

Laogai Labour Reform System

The laogai labour reform system is a vast network of 4,0006,000 prison camps stretching across the People’s Republic of China, holding an estimated 16–20 million prisoners. In terms of scope, cruelty, and the number of people imprisoned, the laogai equal the concentration camps of Nazi Germany or the gulags of the Soviet Union. They are unique, however, in their use of “thought reform”. Inmates in the laogai are not only forced to perform hard labour to atone for their crimes. They are also required to abandon their “incorrect” beliefs and attitudes and conform to the standards set by the Communist Party.

The laogai began to appear in China from 1949, and within five years were placed under firm government regulation: “The reform through labour of counter-revolutionaries and other criminals carried out by labour reform organisations should completely integrate punishment and thought reform, serving the purposes of both production and political education” (Laodong Gaizao Tiaoli [Labour Reform Regulations], September 1954).

From their beginning then, the nature and aim of the laogai has been twofold:

1. Hard labour for anything up to 12 hours each day, both as a form of punishment and as a contribution to the economic growth of the state.

2. Thought reform, through study sessions and endless indoctrination, ultimately requiring the prisoner to surrender his very identity in order to demonstrate his submission to the Communist Party.

This second feature is of particular significance in Tibet. Some 5–10% of current laogai inmates are officially described as “counter-revolutionaries”, those “whose purpose is to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system, and to endanger the People’s Republic of China” (Criminal Code of the People’s Republic of China, Collected Public Security Regulations 1950–79, 1980). In practice, this means political dissidents who have been detained for their criticism of or opposition to the communist regime. Resistance to the Chinese occupation of Tibet, in any shape or form, is regarded as a “counter-revolutionary” offence.

Note: The secrecy which surrounds the laogai makes it all but impossible to obtain accurate data. Most of the figures given here are from the Laogai Research Foundation (run by Harry Wu in the United States).

Permanent Detention

One of the most chilling features of the laogai system is “forced job placement” (jiuye), a practice governing the release of prisoners who have completed their sentences. In cases where a particular inmate is homeless, deemed to have no prospect of employment, or has been detained in a sparsely inhabited region, he may be forced to remain and continue working in the laogai. Those who have completed their terms but shown no evidence of “genuine reform” are also liable to job placement.

On the whim of the Chinese authorities, then, people who have been imprisoned for their beliefs and convictions, forced to suffer great physical hardship and what can only be described as severe mental torture, may still be held in a detention centre even after their prison terms have expired. Perhaps as many as 8–10 million inmates of the laogai today are victims of this “forced job placement” held in a form of permanent internal exile.

Economic Significance of the Laogai

Since the founding of the People’s Republic of China, one of the functions of the laogai has been to provide free prison labour for large-scale infrastructure projects (eg: “national economic reconstruction” during the 1950s). Prisoners from the laogai were used in road and railway construction, mining works, land reclamation and massive irrigation programmes, especially in the more “backward” regions of the PRC, such as Xinjiang and Tibet.

During the 1960s, the laogai began to expand into all areas of industrial and agricultural production. A laogai is more than just a prison camp, and most have two identities: one as a detention centre and one as a commercial enterprise. Qinghai Province No. l Labour Reform Camp in Xining, for example, is also known as the Qinghu Machine Tool Factory, and Qinghai Province No. l Prison sometimes goes by the name of Gandu Farm.

Under the recent economic modernisation policies of Deng Xiaoping, the laogai have become independent commercial enterprises, responsible for their “own financing, production, sales and cost accounting” (Harry Wu, Laogai: The Chinese Gulag, 1992; p.10). Camps are now expected to make a profit for the state, and this has

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driven some camp managers to seek joint ventures with foreign companies. In 1989, the Swedish car manufacturer Volvo received an offer from a Chinese representative that the laogai could "provide large numbers of criminals, who have received already basic technical training, as very cheap labour" (from Stephen Mosher, *Made in the Chinese Laogai*, 1990; p.13).

Exile in 'China's Siberia'

When in 1949 the Chinese incorporated the Tibetan region of Amdo into the "motherland", renaming it Qinghai Province, this cold and remote plateau was made ready to receive millions of laogai prisoners. There are now 28 recorded laogai farms and factories spread across northern Qinghai, including Haomen Farm, with an area of 30 square kilometres, the huge Tanggemu Farm (Tangkarmo), which is 70km across, and at least five or six major camps in the town of Xining—a virtual "laogai city".

Tanggemu Farm (Tangkarmo), otherwise Qinghai Province No.13 Labour Reform Camp, is a vast prison-farm complex in Gonghe County. The exact number of inmates is difficult to determine; estimates have ranged from 5,000 up to 20,000. Most prisoners in Tangkarmo are engaged in agricultural production: growing rape-seed, vegetables and highland barley.

Qinghai was also marked out to receive prisoners under forced job placement. Many dissidents sent here were not allowed to return to their homes, and instead their families were "encouraged" to resettle with them. Between 20–30% of the provincial population is now made up of laogai inmates alone, not including their families. Delingha Farm, no-longer classed as a prison, holds around 80,000 people.

The aim of this policy was to build up the population of the region, enabling more rapid economic development and therefore bringing material benefits. The actual result has been to increase the proportion of ethnic Chinese in northeast Tibet to such an extent that they have come to outnumber the indigenous population. The laogai have, therefore, played some part in a trend towards the westward migration of the Chinese into Tibet.

Laogai Camps in Tibet

The laogai are less extensive in U'Tsang (the Tibet Autonomous Region) than in Amdo, with only 15 camps documented. Some 60–70% of the inmates here are ethnic Tibetan, most of whom have been imprisoned for their belief in Tibetan independence, although religious observance and possession of literature written by the Dalai Lama can also lead to the laogai.

There seems to be more of an emphasis on punishment than reform inside the Tibetan laogai. Survivors have claimed that Tibetan prisoners are often allocated more dangerous or menial tasks, while Chinese inmates are given skilled and semi-skilled jobs to do. Cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and torture are also widespread in Tibetan laogai: there are numerous case studies of men and women who have been humiliated, beaten, and tortured with electric batons. (For further details see People's Republic of China: Repression in Tibet 1987–92, Defying the Dragon, and TIN News Updates.)

Laogai camps in Tibet include Xigaze [Shigatse] Prison, Garza Prison and the infamous Drapchi Prison (where almost 2,000 monks were held after the 1959 National Uprising—1,400 died from starvation over the following two years), and the Sangyip prison complex in Lhasa (containing around five separate detention facilities).

Recent Developments

In recent years the commercial aspect of the laogai has assumed great importance, due to the enthusiasm of the Chinese to offer the produce of the camps for foreign export. Since laogai (and forced job placement) production amounts to slave labour, some countries have looked into enforcing legislation banning the import of laogai produce. In February 1994, for example, the European Parliament proposed a total ban on the sale of laogai goods within the European Union.

Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms have also had an impact on conditions inside the laogai. A broadcast on Tibet TV in late-January (monitored by the BBC) revealed that 90 prisoners in the Tibet Autonomous Region No. l Reform Through Labour Camp had had their sentences reduced as a reward not only for "conscientiously following prison rules" and "truly repenting during their sentences", but also for bringing "considerable economic wealth to the prison and the state."

Given their obvious importance to the Chinese domestic economy, and their growing contribution to export trade (worth at least several hundred million US dollars a year), there is now a pressing need for concerted international action to expose, document and ultimately close down this pernicious system.

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Tibet Facts 7

Tibet and the PRC

Discussion of attempts to bring about a negotiated solution to the Tibetan question.

To date, Beijing has argued that Tibetan independence is not open to discussion. The Dalai Lama has complied with this demand, offering instead numerous initiatives for a political solution which does not ask for full independence. The situation has now reached a stalemate, following Beijing's marked reluctance to enter any serious negotiations.

Overview

For the past 14 years, the Dalai Lama has constantly strived for a political solution to the Tibet-China problem which is beneficial to both sides. Not only has he declared a willingness to enter into negotiations, but he has proposed a series of initiatives which lie within the framework for negotiations as stated by Deng Xiaoping in 1979: that "except for the independence of Tibet, all other questions can be negotiated." The Dalai Lama has continually adopted a middle-way approach, deliberately avoiding the independence issue in the hope that this "would create an atmosphere of mutual trust and exert a restraining influence on the repressive Chinese policies in Tibet."

The Chinese, for their part, have constantly moved the goal posts, often refusing to meet with the Dalai Lama or his representatives after initial agreement. Official Chinese statements are aimed at confusing the real issues and delaying any substantial negotiation on the problem. They base their discussions on frequent requests that the Dalai Lama should "return to the motherland", where they have offered him an honorific post in the Chinese Government, and, since April 1988, the right to reside in Lhasa instead of Beijing. The Dalai Lama argues that China's attempts to reduce the question of Tibet to a discussion of his own personal status dodge the real issue: "the survival of the six million Tibetan people along with the protection of our distinct culture, identity and civilisation."

In September 1993, the Dalai Lama published a set of private letters written by him to the Chinese authorities, revealing his increasing frustration at the marked reluctance of Beijing to enter into serious negotiations on the future of Tibet. Frustration has led to disillusion. In his March 10th Statement of 1994, which marked the 35th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising, the Dalai Lama said: "I must now recognise that my approach has failed to produce any progress either for substantive negotiations or in contributing to the overall improvement of the situation in Tibet." He added that he was aware that a "growing number of Tibetans, both inside as well as outside Tibet, have been disheartened" by his conciliatory stand and his decision not to demand complete independence for Tibet.

According to the Dalai Lama, he has "left no stone unturned" in his attempts to reach an understanding with the Chinese. He announced that Tibetans would have to place their hopes in international support, but said: "If this fails, then I will no longer be able to pursue this policy [of conciliation] with a clear conscience. I feel strongly that it would then be my responsibility, as I have stated many times in the past, to consult my people on the future course of our freedom struggle."

Tibetan View

The Dalai Lama has made it clear that negotiations must centre around ways to end China's population transfer policy; respect for the fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms of the Tibetans; the demilitarisation and de-nuclearisation of Tibet; the restoration of control to the Tibetan people of all matters affecting their own affairs; and the protection of the environment. He has also emphasised that negotiations must comprise the whole of Tibet, not just the area which China calls the "Tibet Autonomous Region". On the Tibetan side, the Dalai Lama has produced five major documents:

✧ Draft Constitution (1963) proposing a fully democratic system based on Western models for a future independent Tibet, with the Dalai Lama's role subject to a parliament elected by universal franchise.

✧ Five-Point Peace Plan (Washington, 21 September 1987) which added demands for demilitarisation, environmental protection, reuniting the three original regions of Tibet, and an end to mass Chinese immigration into Tibet.

✧ Strasbourg Proposal (European Parliament, 15 June 1988 though withdrawn on 3 September 1991) which ceded to the Chinese control of foreign affairs and defence if they gave complete control of internal affairs to the Tibetans and accepted the result of a referendum.

✧ Yale Address (Yale University, 9 October 1991) proposing the Dalai Lama visit Tibet to ascertain the situation for himself and to persuade the Tibetan people not to abandon non-violence as the appropriate form of struggle.

✧ Draft Constitution for the Future Tibet (Dharamsala, February 1992) outlining proposals for the transition from a Chinese-occupied Tibet to a free and democratic Tibet.

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The Chinese View

The Chinese claim Tibet has never been an independent state, and that no government of any country in the world has ever recognised Tibet as such. They continue to insist that they will not talk with members of the Government-in-Exile, and that the issue of Tibet is an "internal Chinese affair". The Chinese have also gone to elaborate lengths to prevent or discourage any other government from meeting the Dalai Lama during his travels abroad, hinting that lucrative commercial deals and, in Britain's case, negotiations with Hong Kong, would be jeopardised.

In Tibet, China has threatened and imposed "severe measures", "resolute blows" and "merciless repression" for those who "make trouble in Tibet" (Sep/Oct 1988) and has accused the exiled "Dalai Clique" of instigating all protests in Tibet. Enshrined in China's domestic law are two major documents concerning Tibet:

✧ Seventeen-Point Agreement (Beijing, 23 May 1951) which promised not to "alter the existing political system in Tibet" and that "in makers relating to various reforms in Tibet there would be no compulsion on the part of the central authorities." This treaty, signed by Tibetan officials in the face of an invading army, was abrogated by them after the 1959 Uprising in Lhasa, which followed allegations that the Chinese had breached the agreement in large areas of Kham, which they had renamed Sichuan and thus exempted from the treaty.

✧ Law on Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities (1984) which updated similar provisions in the Common Programme (1949) and the Constitution of the PRC (1954) to allow local control over "economics, culture, and construction" as long as it was "under the guidance of the state plans." It aimed to correct the "excesses" of the Cultural Revolution by increasing the number of Tibetan cadres, repeating guarantees of freedom of religious practice, and permitting the use of Tibetan in schools.
In the five years after 1979, when this law and other "flexible measures" were implemented, the Chinese allowed five fact-finding missions representing the Dalai Lama to visit Tibet, but ended this arrangement in 1984 by demanding that the Tibetans travel on Chinese travel documents.

International View

Foreign governments have been willing to question China over its human rights abuses in Tibet. This was reflected in a series of UN Resolutions in the early-1960s. Although the PRO was not part of the UN at that time, and has since argued that it is not therefore bound by these resolutions, it is important that they exist. Since being awarded the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, the Dalai Lama has also gained international recognition. He has met the premiers of many countries, including Britain and the United States. The meetings are usually excused as having a religious agenda, but for them to be held at all is still a great step forward.

However, successive Western governments have refused to really address the question of Tibet's status or to discuss the issue of Tibetan independence. Although parliaments worldwide have pressed for negotiations between the Chinese authorities and the Tibetan people without preconditions, they have not given the Dalai Lama any substantial political backing. For example, the British Government has called for China to enter into open negotiations with Tibet, while still issuing statements that independence for Tibet is an unrealistic option.

Australia Tibet Council view

International pressure has an important part to play in forcing China to come to the negotiating table, and also gives the Tibetans the political muscle to make their demands during negotiations. Otherwise, Beijing might force the Tibetans to accept a notional agreement promising an end to some symptoms of the occupation—improving human rights abuse and environmental damage—without giving the Tibetans real political control. Although there have been advances, respect for human rights and protection of the environment will always be fragile while China has colonial desires in Tibet.

Despite concern by foreign countries about human rights abuses in Tibet, pressure on China is soft. The reluctance of Western powers to address the issue of Tibetan independence may mask an attempt by them to pressurise the Dalai Lama into accepting any token offers, which would serve their own economic interests. Already by some estimates, China is the world's third largest economy, and its projected growth alone over the next decade will equal Europe's current annual output. In some commercial circles it is predicted that China will be the biggest economic player in the history of mankind. For instance, repeated attempts to get a UN High Commission condemnation of human rights abuses in Tibet have failed after China has managed to use economic strength to nullify the motion.

Non-governmental organisations and inter-national pressure groups like the Australia Tibet Council ensure that the Tibetan issue remains prominent. In this context their roles are vital. This is best summed up in the Foreign Affairs Select Committee's 1994 report on relations between Britain and China: "The world will not allow the issue of Tibet to be ignored. The Chinese Government may find that the advantages to China of their policies in Tibet may be outweighed by the trouble those policies cause to China's international relations generally."

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Tibet Facts 8

Education. 1950–1953:

Discussion of anti-Tibetan discrimination in the education system of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).

Education of Chinese children in Tibet is far superior to that available to Tibetans. Tibetan language and culture are treated as a handicap, and few Tibetans graduate to secondary school. Those that do face little choice of employment unless they speak fluent Chinese. Official Chinese figures show that children of Chinese immigrants in Tibet make up 3 7% of the child population, yet they occupy 35% of the places in secondary schools. According to sources in Lhasa, the real figure is closer to 60%. The system also perpetuates racial discrimination and is explicitly geared to destroying political dissent.

Transportation to China

The Chinese have, in the last 30 years, built over 1,000 schools, but standards are much lower than in China, and many rural areas have no schools at all. Many children are sent away to China for education. In 1992, there were 10,000 such children in China. While they receive a better education than they would in Tibet, many of these children return to Tibet after seven years, speaking only Chinese.

Primary Education

The Chinese admit that only 54 4% of school-aged children in the Tibet Autonomous Region go to school (Beijing Review, 1990). After reforms in the 1980s, Tibetan language became the teaching medium in primary schools. However, Chinese language is the medium of teaching in secondary schools. Tibetan children who get into secondary school are at a serious disadvantage compared to their Chinese classmates, who receive all their education in the same language.

Secondary Education

According to the 1982 official Chinese census (Zhongguo 1982 nian renkou pucha ziliao, 1985; pp.240), only 5% of Tibetan children in the TAR continue their education beyond primary school. Of those children who do continue, only one third complete the six years of secondary school. Tibet has an average of 2,122 and 3,850 per 100,000 people for senior and junior middle school education respectively. This is well below the Chinese national averages of 8,039 and 23,344 (Tibet Information Network TIN, 1990).Excepting the children of Tibetan officials, Tibetans and Chinese are segregated at school. Chinese classes get better teachers and better facilities. According to official Chinese statistics, of 1,700 teachers working in secondary schools in the TAR in 1986, only 37 8% were Tibetan.

Because of the language difficulties, Tibetan classes drop behind and are unable to finish the syllabus. In exams, not only are they competing against children who are using their mother tongue, they are also being confronted with topics which they have never been properly taught. An examination allowance of 20 points, given to Tibetan children to make up for the language handicap, is presented as a magnanimous gesture towards Tibetan students because they are alleged to be less intelligent than Chinese.

Tertiary Education

At tertiary level, Tibetans are generally channelled into the field of Tibetan studies. This is the only area where serious academic research by Tibetans is flourishing, although this too is often hampered by the need to adhere to the official view of Tibetan history.

In Tibet the average number of people with a university occupation is 574 per 100,000 compared to the national Chinese average of 1,422 per 100,000 (TIN, 1990). At Tibet University, only 44% of the pupils are Tibetan. Lower entrance marks are required compared to other universities in the PRC. Consequently, less qualified Chinese, who are not residents of the TAR, go to Tibet to study, reducing the number of places available for Tibetans. The science and mathematics departments are almost entirely Chinese. Opportunities for Tibetans to-study overseas are also limited. Only 166 people from the Tibet Autonomous Region are registered as working or studying abroad (TIN News Supplement, 20/02/91). All teaching is done in Chinese except in Tibetan Language, Tibetan Art and Tibetan Medicine departments. Despite official statements to the contrary, Chinese language continues to be the teaching medium in schools. In July 1988, Dorje Tsering, then chairman of the TAR Government, said: “When we speak of using Tibetan language in education, we are accused of wanting to split the motherland.”

The Chinese Statistical Yearbook (1986) states that only 27 3% of university teachers in TAR are Tibetan. The recruitment of teachers from Central China creates several problems:

✧ Given the low prestige of working in Tibet, many of the Chinese teachers have few or any qualifications, but still earn significantly more than Tibetan teachers.

✧ There is a serious lack of continuity as teachers come and go. Between 1986 and 1988, the Head of English at Tibet University changed four times.

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Education and Politics

Before 1950, Tibet had an extensive education system—mainly religious in content and run chiefly through the monasteries, although there were also a number of secular schools. Religious teaching is forbidden now, except in the monasteries where it is severely restricted. Teaching of Marxist ideology is paramount at every level of education. Emphasis is placed on the historic unity of Tibet with China and the alleged "evils" of the old society. In December 1989, after the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, nine armed soldiers were installed at the entrances to universities, and no student was allowed in or out for 12 days. After this period, students had to do two weeks' military training and two weeks' political re-education.

Propaganda drives to increase political control and content of school education in Tibet have intensified in the last few years. According to a local Lhasa television report in July 1990, the local Party Secretary, Hu Jintao, in an unusually open comment, appeared to give a clear indication that party control even in schools depends on the use of "repressive security and police work."

The slightest display of nationalism among schoolchildren leads to severe penalties. Six pupils from No. l Middle School in Lhasa were arrested in 1989 for making a copy of the Tibetan national flag and for pasting up pro-independence leaflets. Three of the students were sent to Drapchi Prison (one

died, allegedly from ill-treatment) and another was sentenced to an indefinite term of "re-education" at a juvenile detention centre. In 1990, another student from the same school was reportedly arrested for giving a Tibetan nationalist flag to a monk. She received a three-year term of re-education through labour and is now held in Gutsa, a detention centre which is notorious for the use of torture.

Discrimination

The structural imbalance in the education system contributes to serious unemployment among Tibetans. Tibetans have greater difficulty in getting a job in state work units where, despite official pronouncements, the working language is still Chinese. If they get work outside the state system, they will receive lower rations of basic foods and only very limited access to commodities such as electric cooking facilities and bicycles.

In addition there is a serious illiteracy problem in the TAR. The 1982 Chinese census showed that of the Tibetan population of 3.2 million, 78.3% were illiterate or semi-literate. The average percentage of population in China who are illiterate or semiliterate is 15 88%.

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The Quality Baby: Birth Control Policies in Tibet:

Discussion of population policies an allegations of forced &abortion.

The abuse of Tibetan women goes beyond torture and ill-treatment into the sensitive area of birth control. Not only do they face numerous pressures from the Chinese authorities to limit the number of their children, possibly to one, but there is growing evidence that women are being forced to have abortions and sterilisations.

Birth Control Policy

The PRC introduced stringent birth control measures in central China in the 1970s, setting itself the target of keeping the population under 1.2 billion until the year 2000. The method used to achieve this endeavour was the "one family, one child" policy. Officially this policy covers only "nationalities" in China with over 10 million members. Tibet, with a population of 4 5 million, is regarded as a "minority nationality" and is therefore, in theory, exempt from the provisions of family planning legislation. In practice, however, voluntary birth control has been actively promoted in Tibetan towns since the early-1980s *(Tibet Information Network [TIN] Survey of Birth Control Policies in Tibet; March 1994; p. l).* According to the report, the Chinese Government "encourages" the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) to comply with the official Chinese birth planning policy, promoting it through work units and birth control clinics.

Since the late-1980s in the TAR and since the mid-1980s in eastern Tibet, the authorities have progressively extended the range and impact of birth control policies *(1994 TlN Survey; p.4).* An article in China's Population News described the relaxation of family planning on account of "ethnic customs" as an "absolutely untenable proposition". Almost immediately, birth control in Tibet was tightened, imposing on the Tibetans a punitive family planning programme which included reports of abortions and sterilisations and even, allegedly, infanticide *(Tears of Blood: A Cry for Tibet, Mary Craig, 1992; p.308).*

Birth control policy was already in force in towns in the TAR in 1985, or three years earlier by some accounts. This was at a time when Beijing claimed such regulations did not apply to minority non-Chinese citizens. The statement was phrased, however, so as not to include Tibetans living outside the TAR, who have certainly been subject to birth controls since around 1982 *(1994 TIN Survey; p.3).* In Ganze, a Tibetan Prefecture within Sichuan Province, the birth control regulations show that Tibetan farmers and nomads there had been limited by law since at least 1989, and probably earlier, to a maximum of three children.

The May 1992 TAR Birth Control Regulations stated that Tibetans in towns are allowed only two children as long as the mother is at least 22 when she has the first child, and 25 when she has the second. The regulations, which were much more severe than the 1985 guidelines and implied the use of force, also extend birth control to Tibetans living in the countryside; the 1985 document only applied to town dwellers. The 1992 regulations state that Tibetans in the TAR who live "in the heart" of the countryside are encouraged not to have more than three children *(TIN News Compilation Mar-Sep 1992, 1992; pp.22–23).* In China's White Paper on Tibet, the Chinese Government said that the two-child policy had been in force in towns in the TAR since 1984 *(1994 TIN Survey; p.3).* Sterilisation was also compulsory in certain situations.

Abortion and Sterilisation

Abortion appears to be the major from of contraception in Tibet. This is largely due to a lack of contraceptive technology in Tibet and to the authorities, who have stated a preference for the "combined method", a term which is believed to mean combining abortion with contraception *(1994 TIN Survey; p.17*). For urban women, there are strong incentives to have only one child, and then abort any others or get sterilised. Women who comply receive bonuses which include an initial payment of 50 yuan followed by five yuan every month. Other incentives include priority for goods, job promotions, and free medical treatment for the child until they are 18 *(Determination; Tibetan Women and the Struggle for an Independent Tibet, Carol Devine, 1993; p.* 70). Women who don't comply with the law face fines, demotion and loss of bonuses Given these alternatives, women appear to have little choice about abortion.

There are frequent first-hand accounts by refugees of abortions being carried out. Tashi Drolma, whose own second child was forcibly aborted, was one of four Tibetan doctors at an Amdo hospital, all of whom left their jobs in obstetrics in protest against the inhumanity of the birth control policies. A refugee from a village near Shigatse told the Dalai Lama that a Chinese doctor had admired to her that in order to fulfil his quota of abortions he was forced to kill the newborn *(Craig; p.309).*

By 1990, 3% of the 600,000 Tibetan women of child-bearing age in the TAR had "volunteered for sterilisation operations"; most if not all of these lived in towns. It is unlikely, however,that all these sterilisations were voluntary *(1994 TIN Survey; p.19).* While the law does not specifically demand abortions or the use of surgical

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controls, the effect of the law in practice, with its use of fines and other punishments, is that many women may feel forced to accept abortions and sterilisations There have also been allegations of physical force. According to second-hand reports, teams have been sent out to countryside areas for abrupt one-off sterilisation and abortion campaigns from as early as 1986. These birth control "blitzes", during which between 30 and 50 sterilisations a day were carried out, appear to be the sources of reports of violence *(1994 TIN Survey; p.2).* A report in The Guardian in 1989, claimed birth control teams were given financial incentives to perform as many sterilisations as possible. Many independent witnesses support this claim, describing how women—girls of 13 and 14, allegedly—were dragged off, screaming, by the truckload *(Craig, p.309).*

The extent to which physical force has been used is unclear. Human rights groups come to different conclusions about charges of coercive birth control policies in Tibet. A Campaign, Free Tibet report *(Children of Despair)* claims that the Chinese operate "a genocidal birth control policy" in virtually the whole of Tibet. The 1994 TIN survey argues, however, that the evidence available is not conclusive and does not support the "very serious claim" of coercion. There are few first-hand accounts of forced abortions and sterilisations from women, and so far the extent to which violence, if any, was used in these birth control "blitzes" remains unknown. While the Chinese Government does appear to pressure both Tibetan and Chinese women to have abortions and sterilisations it is not clear to what extent local authorities act on directives from Beijing, or whether certain authorities create their own population policies.

Fines and Punishment

The birth control regulations imposed on Tibetans not only affect parents but the children themselves. Aside from complex regulations which control how many children Tibetans can have, there are a series of fines and punishments for couples who break the rules and have an unauthorised child.

Ordinary Tibetans are allowed two children, employees of the state only one. In China's White Paper on Tibet, fines and punishments for urban Tibetans who exceeded the birth control quota were extended to all Tibetan residents of towns, whether or not they were government employees. In the May 1992 TAR Birth Control Regulations, an urban Tibetan couple who have an unauthorised child are fined at least 500 yuan—about three months income for a government employee, or a year's income for a farmer. The fine is 300 yuan if one of the couple does not have a "stable profession". Neither of the couple are then eligible for promotion, wage rises or bonuses for two years. The fine for a second illegal Tibetan child is 1,000 yuan for an employed couple, or 600 yuan for couples with no "stable profession". Families outside the state system who exceed the two-child threshold have to pay heavily. Fines can be as high as 8,000 yuan, about 10 or 15 times the average rural income, for an unauthorised child *(1994 TlN Survey; pp.19–20).*

Under the regulations, children can be denied residence, food rations and, in some circumstances, are ineligible for school. Tashi Drolma, a doctor who worked in Amdo, explained that when her mother's cousin, a nomad who already had the statutory two children, had a third child, the penalty did not stop at a huge fine. "When he [the child] is six, he will be barred from receiving an education and will not be given a food ration card. The family will have to share their own rations with him, and in addition pay 500 yuan a year as a penalty tax" *(Craig; p.245).*

Tibetans do get a better deal than the Chinese. The Chinese working and living in Tibet are normally allowed only one child. The fines are also much higher—3,000 yuan for the first unauthorised child, 5,000 yuan for the second. Administrative punishments such as bans on promotion and cuts in salary are also greater, and there is compulsory sterilisation. However, the gap may not be as large as it first appears. Chinese employees in Tibet earn more than Tibetans because of government subsidies. There are also reports that suggest the Chinese have greater access to officials who can be encouraged to interpret favourably the complex rules *(1994 TlN Survey; pp.19–20).*

Ideology of Birth Control: Eugenics

Underpinning China's birth control policy is an ideological conviction that national minorities are "racially inferior". Since 1988 its controversial eugenics plan to raise 'population quality' has been particularly directed at national minorities, which includes the Tibetans. The presentation of the Draft National Law on Eugenics in December 1993, combined with the unsubstantiated announcement of high numbers of mentally defective Tibetans, indicates China's strong intention to apply eugenic controls on Tibetans in the future. It is also likely that there will be more and more limits on the number of children. In a ministerial statement the minorities were identified as one of the groups responsible for the "inferior quality births" which China aims to stop. This new law, if implemented, is likely to lead to stricter and possibly more discriminatory birth control regulations in Tibet *(1994 TIN Survey; pp.3–4).*

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Role of Women in the Protest Movement

Discussion of the actions of nuns and laywomen in demonstrations against the occupation.

Tibetan women—and especially nuns—are key activists in a unique freedom struggle which follows the Buddhist principles of non-violence and compassion. Although nuns appear to be spearheading the pro-independence movement, laywomen have and continue to play, an important role.

The First Freedom Fighters

While women were very active in the resistance movement before 1959, it was in the tense month of March that women visibly organised political action as a distinct group. In the aftermath of the March 10th Uprising, an estimated 3,000 women met publicly at Drebu Lingka, the ground below the Potala Palace, on 12 March 1959. Dolma, the journal of the Tibetan Women's Association, described this historic gathering as the day "that the women of Tibet revolted against the illegal and forcible occupation of their country by the People's Republic of China" *('Tibetan Women's Uprising Day Dolma, Summer 1991).* Lobsang Choney, a nun who was present at the Women's Uprising, said that more than just the wives of high Tibetan of officials came out: "What happened during the Lhasa Uprising was a spontaneous movement of ordinary women including nuns." *(Philippa Russell & Sonam Lhamo Singeri, The Tibetan Women's Uprising, 1992; p.51)* Tibetan women gathered once again at Drebu Lingka on 18 March, this time for an even larger show of solidarity, with at least 5,000 women participating. The following morning the Chinese crackdown began.

One of the outstanding leaders of the resistance was the daring Pamo Kusang. Having played a traditional role as a minor officials wife before the Uprising, she inspired many women with her both her bold words and determined appearance. She was immediately imprisoned, but even within the prison walls Pamo Kusang managed to assert her convictions. She formed the organization Thu Wang Ku along with other prisoners, and in 1970 they began an anti-Chinese demonstration. Pamo was later executed, and became a legendary martyr for Tibetans *(Carol Devine, Determination: Tibetan Women and the Struggle for an Independent Tibet, 1993; p.21).*

Tibetans also revere nuns for their leadership in uprisings. Chong-kso Jetsun-ma Rinpoche is well-known for her religious accomplishments and her "courage as a freedom fighter." She was killed for opposing Chinese rule in 1959 *(Devine; p.21).* In a second large-scale rebellion in 1969, a nun from Nyemu County emerged as a freedom fighter. Thinley Chodon (also known as Nyemu Ani) was said to have killed many Chinese through the vast guerrilla movement she set up. She was executed in 1969. Soon afterwards the Chinese stepped up their persecution of nuns and the destruction of nunneries *(manna Harnevik, The Role of Nuns in Contemporary Tibet, 1990; p.5).*

Nuns in the Resistance

The role of the nun in Tibetan society has changed dramatically during the 40 years of Chinese occupation. Their unique position enables them to fight for Tibet's freedom. Knowing they may be arrested and tortured during their protests, and knowing they do not have children who would suffer as a result of their imprisonment or death, they are willing to be leaders in the independence movement *(Devine; p.18).*

Most of the demonstrations in Lhasa are initiated by nuns although they face automatic arrest. Nuns took part in 15 of some 25 incidents reported between September 1987 and September 1989, and almost entirely staged 13 of them *(Tibet Information Network, TIN News Update, 21/02/92).* According to a TIN report in July 1993, in the previous six years 49 of the 120 known pro-independence protests in Lhasa (40%) had been led by nuns *(TIN News Compilation 1992–1993, 1993; p.44).*

Between 1980 and 1987, nunneries and monasteries grew significantly in number and size. Since then, however, the Chinese crackdown on resistance to the occupation has become increasingly centred on nunneries. Nuns are seen as powerful political enemies by the Chinese authorities, who have tried to weaken the nunneries and their spiritual teaching by imposing strict rules, planting informers and "workers", devising schemes of political re-education and expelling nuns. Work teams of Chinese officials have been holding regular indoctrination sessions and refusing to allow nuns convicted of political offenses to return to their worship *(TlN News Update, 21/02/92).*

Multiple arrests of nuns are recorded each year, particularly during religious festivals, and seemingly minor acts of nonviolent protest are met with the "iron fist".

In October 1993, 14 nuns from Gari Nunnery received sentences of up to seven years for allegedly being involved in demonstrations the previous year. Another 14 nuns in Lhasa's notorious Drapchi Prison had their sentences doubled or tripled because each sang a pro-independence song in their prison cell in June 1993. The 14, including one woman whose sentence was increased from nine to 17 years, were serving terms of "reform through labour".

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Such reports run contrary to recent statements by the Chinese authorities about the leniency with which Tibetan prisoners are treated *(TlN News Update, 20/02/94).*

Latest figures show that 77% (362) of political prisoners in Tibet are clergy, of whom just over 30% (113) are nuns. Nearly a third (27%) of the 467 political prisoners in Tibet are women *(TIN News 24/09/93).* These prisoners include three 15-year old girls, all novice nuns, who were taken after arrest to Gutsa Detention Centre. There has been no news of their whereabouts since *(TIN News Compilation 1992.1993, 1993; pp.47–49).*

Although nuns appear to be the most active female dissidents, it is believed that laywomen take part in protests more often than gets reported. Due to the different security structures surrounding lay people, there is far less material on them. During the demonstrations of 1987, laywomen played a major role, being the first to venture forward from the crowd to damage property or throw stones at the police *(TIN News Update, 17/11/89).* Several nuns have also testified that lay people helped them during demonstrations in Lhasa.

Torture and Ill-treatment of Women

First- and second-hand reports by Tibetan women reveal that torture is a common response to non-violent protests. Human rights groups and the press, both national and international, also provide strikingly consistent accounts of political actions by Tibetan nuns and laywomen, and the subsequent punishments meted out to them *(Devine; p.47).*

Sexual assault is a particular form of torture used to punish, humiliate and coerce women. Torturers force electric batons into Tibetan women's mouths or vaginas, set dogs on them, strip them naked before interrogation and beat them with clubs *(Women in the Front Line: Human Rights Violations Against Women, Amnesty International, 1991; p.30).* Although women are the main targets of severe sexual abuse, there have been an increasing number of reports of men who have been sexually assaulted.

The Tibetan Women's Association in Dharamsala collects the testimonies of women who have been tortured for taking part in demonstrations. Statements from these women confirm the abuses described by human rights groups. They also report the laceration of nipples—sexual torture that has not been documented by other human rights organisations, but that was reported in an article which appeared in *The Independent* in February 1994. Dawa Hansum, a nun who is still in Gutsa, one of Tibet's most notorious prisons, after taking part in a 1989 pro-independence demonstration, had one of her nipples severed with scissors. The TWA also reports rape, drugging and other abuses of Tibetan women by Chinese army personnel *(Devine; p.53).* Amnesty International has no reports of rape of Tibetan women by guards, but a report published in May 1992 described the testimony of a Buddhist nun from Shungsep who was "raped with electric cattle prods" *(China: Repression in Tibet, 1987–1992; p.41).*

In Drapchi, where 10% of the 300 or more prisoners are women, Prison Governor Yin Xingwen claims "women prisoners are given special care." Reports of recent beatings of women prisoners, however, refute his claims *(Devine;* p.66). The revelations of four nuns, who escaped to India in

February 1994 to tell of tortures and beatings in Chinese prisons in Tibet, also cast doubt on China's willingness to cease its human rights abuses *(The Independent, 12/02/94).* Two of the nuns, Ngawang Kyizom, 22, and Tenzin Choekyi, 24, said they were shocked repeatedly with an electric cattle prod applied to their breasts, thighs and tongues. During interrogation, Choekyi also had her thumbs tied diagonally behind her back in a torture known as the "flying aeroplane", and was suspended from the ceiling and beaten.

Status of Tibetan Women

There are many conflicting images of the status of women in Tibetan society. While earlier accounts claim Tibetan women had equal rights with men and enjoyed a higher status than women in neighbouring countries like India and Burma, recent feminist thought suggests they were relegated to an inferior position in society. To discover which is true, we have to understand Tibetan society as a whole and look at the role of women in the pro-independence movement.

Namgyal Phal, who leads the Tibetan Women's Association in Zurich, Switzerland, believes Tibetan women have equal rights with men. In contrast Yangdol Panglung, who grew up in Switzerland and now lives in the United States, believes the women who say "there is no discrimination between men and women in Tibet" enjoy a status where either religion or aristocracy cover their gender. Panglung, however, points out that women's struggles in Tibet are part of a nationalist movement, not a women's liberation movement *(Devine; p.25).*

Although views on the status and roles of Tibetan women vary enormously, there is a common thread: that Tibetan women suffer immeasurably under Chinese rule. Despite this, they are still unwilling to let the Chinese authorities treat Tibet as part of the Chinese "motherland".

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British Relations With Tibet:

Discussion of the official British position on Tibet and the issue of independence.

While current British foreign policy on Tibet includes pressing the Chinese Government on human rights abuses, overall Britain takes a soft approach due to considerations such as the future of Hong Kong and the strong desire for profitable trade with China. The British Government refuses to address the question of Tibet's status or to discuss the issue of Tibetan independence, claiming this is "not a realistic option"; an expedient approach based on realpolitik rather than one of principle or consistency.

Current British Position

The current British position on Tibet is described in a policy statement of January 1994, which begins: "Successive British Governments have consistently regarded Tibet as autonomous, although we recognise the special position of the Chinese there" ('Government Policy on Tibet', a Statement from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Jan 1994). The statement continues: "Independence for Tibet is not a realistic option. Tibet has never been internationally recognised as an independent state, and no state regards Tibet as independent" ('Government Policy on Tibet').

In fact, Britain did officially regard Tibet as being de facto independent for much of the first half of the 20th century—from a Tibetan declaration of independence in 1912 until the Chinese invasion and occupation of 1949–50. British representatives were stationed in Tibet from 1904 to 1947 to liaise with the Tibetan Government.

The Government now believes there is a pressing need for dialogue without preconditions between the Chinese authorities and the Tibetan people. (To date, Beijing has argued that Tibetan independence is not open to discussion.) However, Britain has done little to encourage the Chinese to come to the negotiating table, beyond "reminding" them of the British position. Furthermore, pressing for talks without preconditions while at the same time declaring "independence is not a realistic option" is surely self-defeating.

The Government does not feel that the Dalai Lama has a political role, and his visits to Britain are held to have been purely of a "private and religious" nature. Moreover, the British authorities have declared they "have no formal dealings with the Dalai Lama's self proclaimed Government-in-Exile, which is not recognised by any government." (`Government Policy on Tibet').

Tibet Support Group UK believes that the current British position on Tibet not only contains contradictions which weaken the possible impact and effectiveness of British pressure, but also refutes and redefines the nature of Britain's historical relations with Tibet. TSG UK therefore recommends that the British Government:

✧ Confirm its past recognition of Tibet as being a de facto independent state.

✧ Agree that it is for the Tibetan people to decide whether or not independence for Tibet is a "realistic option".

✧ Begin formal and open relations with the democratically elected Tibetan Government-in-Exile.

Relations up to 1950

When the British ruled India, their interest in Tibet was to exclude the influence of any other state that might disturb India's Himalayan frontier, while becoming involved in Tibet as little as possible themselves. The ways of pursuing these objectives varied at different times.

In the 19th century, Britain accepted the myth that Tibet was in a vague way part of the Chinese Empire, since this might help to exclude Russian influence. The Tibetans also used the myth to help them exclude influences from India that might threaten their culture and perhaps their integrity. In fact, China's influence in Tibet, which for a short time at the end of the 18th century was effective, vanished during the 19th century. In the 1880s and 1890s, British attempts to settle minor issues of trade and frontier alignment by treaties with China proved infructous, because the Tibetans would not recognise these treaties. Lord Curzon, as Viceroy of India, therefore tried to establish direct contact with the 13th Dalai Lama, who most unwisely refused to receive his correspondence. This deadlock became serious when Curzon believed unreliable information suggesting that Russia had obtained some influence in Lhasa. So the British Government reluctantly approved a small military expedition under Francis Younghusband, which fought its way to Lhasa in 1904.

This inauspicious start in fact established good relations with Tibet, which were subsequently maintained. The Lhasa Convention of 1904 settled many outstanding issues. But a new Liberal Government in London went full circle in 1906, influenced partly by dislike of Curzon's imperialism and partly by moves then afoot, prompted by fear of Germany, for the formation of an entente between France, Britain and Russia. The Lhasa Convention was re-negotiated with China in 1906, and in 1907 an Anglo-Russian agreement, covering Persia and Afghanistan as well as Tibet, provided that both parties would deal with Tibet only through China.

In the vacuum thus created, the Chinese invaded Tibet in 1906, and the Dalai Lama fled to India in 1910. The Chinese then started to infiltrate into Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and the tribal areas to the north of Assam. This set

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alarm bells ringing in Simla and London: what seemed to be needed was a buffer state against China as well as Russia. This was achieved when the Chinese emperor was deposed in 1911, thus breaking the personal link between the Dalai Lama and the Manchu Dynasty; when the Chinese troops in Tibet mutinied and were evacuated through India; and when the Dalai Lama, back in Lhasa, declared Tibet's independence in 1912.

At a conference in Simla in 1914, British, Chinese and Tibetan representatives negotiated the Simla Convention, providing for Tibetan autonomy with Chinese suzerainty, and a complicated and unsatisfactory arrangement about the Sino-Tibetan boundary. The Chinese withheld acceptance of this convention. They were accordingly told that Britain and Tibet would regard it as binding between themselves but that China would have no rights under it. In addition, agreements were concluded at Simla between Britain and Tibet (the Chinese being neither consulted nor informed) on trade and a definition of the frontier between India and Tibet in the tribal territory to the north of Assam (the MacMahon Line).

These arrangements were in breach of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, and a release to cover them was sought from Russia. This difficulty disappeared when, in 1917, the Communist Government in Russia repudiated all the international engagements of the tsars, and when, in 1921, the 1907 Treaty was cancelled by agreement.

From 1910 onwards, the British Government treated Tibet as a de facto independent state with which treaty relations existed. From 1921 onwards, they were periodically represented by a diplomatic officer at Lhasa, and were permanently so represented from the early-1930s. In 1920, after a futile attempt to settle Tibetan issues with China, Curzon, then Foreign Secretary, told the Chinese Government that since 1912 Britain had treated Tibet as de facto independent, and would continue to do so. Britain was, however, ready to recognise China's suzerainty over Tibet, provided that China accepted Tibet's autonomy. This the Chinese never did, and so the offer to recognise China's suzerainty remained contingent. Nor did the British regard the concept of suzerainty as limiting Tibet's ability to conduct her own external relations, or as more

than a sop for saving China's face. The Tibetans never accepted the idea of suzerainty after China rejected the Simla Convention.

In 1943, the Chinese foreign minister asked Anthony Eden how Britain regarded the status of Tibet, and was given an answer similar to Curzon's statement of 1921: that the British Government "had always been prepared to recognise Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, but only on the understanding that Tibet is regarded as autonomous" (Memorandum from Sir Anthony Eden to the Chinese foreign minister, T.V. Soong, 05/08/43, FO371/93001).

In the same year, the British Embassy in Washington wrote to the US Government, stating: "The Government of India has always held that Tibet is a separate country in the full enjoyment of local autonomy, entitled to exchange diplomatic representatives with other powers. The relationship between Tibet and China is not a matter that can be decided unilaterally by China, but one on which Tibet is entitled to negotiate, and on which she can, if necessary, count on the diplomatic support of the British Government along the lines shown above."

With the transfer of power to the two new dominions of India and Pakistan, Britain's direct political concern with Tibet ended, along with the cessation of her responsibility for the defence of India. One might, however, expect any British Government to be concerned on general historical grounds at China's military seizure of Tibet in 1950, and her brutal treatment of the Tibetan people for four decades.

‘ Note: Written by Sir Algemon Rumbold, President of the Tibet Society of the UK 1977–1988, for TSG UK.

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Tibet and China: Historical Relations

Survey of historical relations between and China (7th–20th centuries)

The distortion of history for political ends is a feature common to almost all international disputes. This is especially true in the case of relations between China and Tibet. Modern Chinese historians have regularly tried to prove that Tibet has historically been a part of China. The following examination of a selection of historical periods and incidents is an attempt to explode some of the myths surrounding this issue.

Relations between the Tibetan Kings and the Chinese Tang Dynasty (7th–9th centuries)

The first recorded contacts between Tibetans and Chinese took place in the 7th century, following the unification of Tibet under King Songtsen Gampo and the establishment of the Chinese Tang Dynasty. Two incidents are regularly mentioned during discussion of this period: the marriage of a Chinese princess to Songtsen Gampo in 641, and a peace pledge signed between the two countries in 821.

The Chinese claim that through this marriage and a series of meetings and alliances, the Tibetans and Chinese "cemented political and kinship ties of unity and formed close economic and cultural relations, laying a solid foundation for the ultimate founding of a unified nation" *Tibet: Its Ownership and Human Rights Situation, China White Paper, 1992; p.3).*

In fact, these incidents show that at this time Tibet and China were independent states of equal strength. The marriage alliance of 641 was sought by the Chinese after Tibetan armies had captured towns in Sichuan province *(Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa, Tibet: A Political History, 1967; p.26).* The treaty of 821, despite its familial language (the so-called "uncle-nephew" relationship), actually defined relations between two "fully sovereign states" *(Josef Kolmas, Tibet and lmperial China, 1967; p.11).*

Tibet and China under the Mongols: The Yuan Dynasty (13th–14th centuries)

During the early-13th century, Genghis Khan united the nomadic tribes of north Asia into a powerful Mongol confederation, which soon grew into a continent-spanning empire. Both Tibet and China fell under the control of this empire: the Tibetans after peaceful submission in 1244–47, and the Chinese following the defeat of the Jin Dynasty in northern China (1234) and the subsequent Mongol conquest of the southern Song Dynasty (1235-79).

Chinese historians now claim that Tibet was thus "officially incorporated into the territory of China's Yuan Dynasty" *(China White Paper; p. 3).* They then go on to argue, somewhat inexplicably, that "this unification of the whole nation conformed to the advance of history and the desire of all nationalities" *(Wang Furen & Suo Wenqing, Highlights of Tibetan History, 1984; p.57).*

That Tibet and China both came under the political influence of the Mongols far from indicates unification of the two countries, though. Northern Burma, North Vietnam, Korea and large areas of Siberia were likewise all part of the vast Mongol Empire, yet none are claimed by Beijing today. Tibetan monks in fact enjoyed some dominance in religious. affairs, after "Lamaist" Buddhism was made the official religion of the Mongol Empire.

The Emergence of the Dalai Lamas and the Chinese Ming Dynasty (15th–17th centuries)

By the 15th century, political authority in Tibet had passed into the hands of contending religious hegemonies, which were eventually replaced by a system of rule under the Dalai Lamas. In China, the native Ming Dynasty overthrew the Mongols, and then concentrated much of its attention on economic expansion and maritime exploration.

One of the most incredible arguments from the Chinese side is that the Ming Dynasty somehow inherited a territorial claim to Tibet from the Mongols. But there is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that Tibet was subordinate to China at this stage. Communication did continue between the Ming emperors and Tibetan lames, but there is some contention about its level and significance. Again, during this period both Tibet and China existed as separate and fully sovereign states.

Tibet under the Influence of the Manchus: The Qing Dynasty (18th–19th centuries)

In 1644, Manchu armies captured Beijing and established the Qing Dynasty. During their expansion into southern China, local resistance was crushed with brutal violence. In Tibet, the 5th Dalai Lama therefore sought to establish peaceful relations with this emerging Manchu power, and was subsequently invited to Beijing in 1652.

Over the course of the next 50 years, the Manchus were able to exploit differences between rival groups within the Tibetan Government, and so established some degree of influence in Lhasa: Manchu officials, 'ambans' were stationed there from 1728 until the fall of the dynasty in 1911. There is, however, much disagreement over the actual extent of their power. Chinese claims that the ambans enjoyed "equal standing with the Dalai Lama and

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the Bainqen Erdeni [Panchen Lama]" *(China White Paper; p.8)* seem somewhat exaggerated, and even during a period of Manchu expansion under the Qianlong Emperor (1736–95), they were instructed "not to interfere in the internal policies of Tibet and to refrain from exploitation" *(Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa; p.148).*

Tibet did fall under some form of Manchu "protection" at this time—subordinate in name to a government in Beijing; and the region of Amdo was placed under direct military control after an anti-Manchu uprising in 1724. But this government and occupation, just like that of the Mongols, was not an ethnic Chinese one, and suggestions that Tibet became an integral part of a "Chinese" empire during this period are wholly indefensible.

Tibet Subject to 'Western Aggression': The Simla Convention (1914)

By the end of the 19th century Tibet had acquired massive strategic importance for Britain and Russia, as both were in the process of expanding their imperial "spheres of influence" in Central Asia. After a series of trade missions and then military expeditions (such as the Younghusband expedition of 1904, which exposed the weakness of the Manchu hold over Tibet), the British were able to gain an advantage, and so convened a tripartite conference to discuss Tibet's status at Simla in 1914.

The Tibetans arrived at the conference with written evidence proving the historical independence of Tibet. The Chinese delegation simply argued that Tibet's subjugation by the Mongols and the Manchus proved it had become an integral part of China, and should therefore now be ruled as part of the new Republic of China from Beijing.

Negotiations were difficult, and the solution eventually put forward recognised Chinese "suzerainty" over Tibet, but guaranteed the autonomy of western Tibet, and provided for complete Tibetan control over internal affairs. The Chinese representative at the conference initialled the agreement, but did not proceed to a full signature under pressure from Beijing. Britain and Tibet then declared that they would abide by the provisions of the agreement, while China would be unable to enjoy any of the privileges contained within.

The Chinese now claim that their failure to sign the agreement left it "null and void", and argue that "the Simla Conference has gone down in the annals as an ignominious deed by British imperialism" *(Wang & Suo; p.153)*. The legal status of the Simla Convention is still open to debate, but its true significance lies in its recognition of Tibet as an independent nation with which binding agreements could be negotiated (eg: the Lhasa Treaty of 1904). Throughout the Nationalist (Guomindang) period, no Chinese government was able to exert any influence over Tibet.

Communist Invasion (1949–59)

The invasion of Tibet by troops from the People's Liberation Army in 1949–50 is described in official Chinese histories as a "peaceful liberation". A Seventeen-Point Agreement was signed between the Communist Government and Tibetan officials in May 1951, which apparently "enjoyed the . approval and support of the people from every ethnic group in Tibet" *(China White Paper; p. 14).*

In fact, discrimination and the suppression of traditional practices in eastern Tibet drove hundreds of Tibetans up into the mountains to conduct guerrilla warfare, while thousands more fled west to Lhasa to escape Chinese persecution. In March 1959, growing Tibetan resistance exploded in an uprising against the Chinese occupation. The 14th Dalai Lama fled into exile in northern India, and the subsequent Chinese crackdown in Tibet was brutal. Even the Chinese figures record 87,000 deaths in the National Uprising and its aftermath; Tibetan sources suggest as many as 430,000 were killed in the Uprising and subsequent years of guerrilla warfare.

Conclusion

Over the course of their historical relations, Tibet and China passed through periods of strength and dominance and times of weakness and division. Both were able to threaten or influence their neighbours on occasion. But East Asian perceptions of international relations were fluid enough that countries could be subordinate to a neighbour, even for considerable periods of time, without losing their sense of independence. This was especially true in cases where a nation was able to maintain a distinct identity.

Many modern Chinese historians have claimed that those countries which fell under the imperial influence of various Chinese dynasties somehow became integral parts of China. This is a misleading argument, based solely upon a doctrinaire misinterpretation of historical facts. Tibet has always maintained a distinct cultural, religious, linguistic and ethnic identity, and this is proof enough to support its claims to independence.

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Tibet Facts 13

China's Nuclear Activities in Tibet:

Tibet holds the world's most important known uranium reserves. These have been mined in the past without concern for nearby villages. Chinese authorities have offered Western companies facilities to dump waste in Tibet. As road and rail routes improve, nuclear waste could follow. Three nuclear missile sites have now been located on the Tibetan plateau and more are likely as China upgrades its nuclear weapons capability.

Uranium Mines in Tibet

According to a report published by the Tibetan Government in Exile, the Chinese have discovered some 200 uranium deposits by 1990. *(Tibetan Environment and Development issues 1992, Dept. Of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama, Dharamsala, India.).* The area around Lhasa contains possibly the world's largest deposits of uranium. *(Richard Pascoe, " Uranium rich Tibet still awaits steam ; " South China Morning Post; 24 Aug. 1982 .)*

The largest Chinese uranium mine appears to be the Gya Terseda mine in Tuwe (or Thebe) district, Gannan Tibetan Autonomous prefecture, Gansu Province. The Tibetan Govemment report says the processing of the uranium occurs near the town of Tuwe, which is 86 kilometres from the mine site. The report went on to say that 2000 Chinese are employed in the mine, but no Tibetans. Another report *(Nuclear Tibet Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Waste on the Tibetan plateau, International Campaign for Tibet – (ICT), Washington, 1993)* claimed that most of the miners were ex-P.L.A. soldiers. The report also claimed that during the Cultural Revolution approximately 40 Tibetans worked at a dump site inside the mountain processing refuse. The refuse consisted of old electrical equipment, clothes and "thousands of boxes filled with dead white rats." Of the 40 Tibetans who worked in the dumping process, 5 were alive at the time the ICT report was produced.

In 1991 the Director of Operations at the Gya Terseda mine was given a Part commendation for the mining operation. there are reportedly 9 uranium mines in Da Qaidam county in north west Qinghai province. Mines in Ngapa (Sichuan province) and Gannan prefecture (Gansu province) were opened in the 1960s and have operated ever since.

Effects of Mining on the population

Uranium mining has been linked to illnesses among local people. Illnesses can be caused by exposure to heavy metals and radon gas or from drinking water contaminated by mine tailings. The Tibet Information Network reported in September 1992 that the inhabitants of Guru village in the township of Chongtsa, a day's drive from Ngaba, Sichuan province, have reported illnesses from 1980. The forest near the village started to dry up and it became harder to get plants to grow.

The victims died within a few hours of developing a fever, followed by a distinctive form of diarrhoea. At least 35 people out of the village population of 500 are said to have died between 1989 and 1992.

There have been several reports of local opposition to uranium mining. In 1989 miners were brought in to dig up the hill behind the Trachen-Ma temple in the town of Riwoche in the Kham (now in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)). When the villagers' protest to the authorities were ignored, they set fire to 3 surveyors' jeeps. Chinese troops then occupied the town and rounded up villagers for interrogation. *(John Ackerly "Mining Tibet's Sacred Sites, " Greenpeace magazine, March April 1990: and Nuclear Tibet, p.33.)*

Nuclear Dumping In Tibet

The Chinese authorities have consistently denied dumping nuclear waste in Tibet. However the Chinese have offered nuclear waste disposal facilities to Western companies. In 1984, the China Nuclear Industry Corporation offered Westem countries nuclear waste disposal facilities at US$1500 per kg. The reports suggested that around 4000 tonnes of such waste would be sent to China by the end of the 20th century. Following widespread controversy, nothing was heard about the execution of this plan. *(Tibet Environment and Development Issues 1992, p.60 also Washington Post 18 Feb. /984.)* In 1987 negotiations took place for a plan for West German assistance in China's nuclear program in return for China storing spent nuclear fuel. Pressure from the German Green Party lead to the Chinese and German governments denying that the plan was implemented. Whether nuclear waste will go to Tibet in the future is uncertain. For now, the lack of transport infrastructure in Tibet prevents easy dumping. As ICT points out, it is unlikely that nuclear waste from China or abroad would be disposed of far from the railway line that leads west into Amdo. But as well as improving Tibet's road China is embarking on a huge rail project to link Tibet with the rest of the Chinese network. Certainly, Tibet has already been offered as a dumping ground for non-nuclear industrial waste from the West. In 1992 Baltimore arranged, with the permission of the TAR government, for several million tonnes of sewage sludge to be stored in Tibet. *(Greenpeace, Waste Trade Update Vol.4, Iss. 1*

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March 1991.)

The Ninth Academy

Rather than imported waste being dumped in Tibet, it is more likely, so far nuclear contamination of the Tibetan plateau has resulted from China's own nuclear activities and in particular the "Ninth Academy." The Ninth Academy or "Northwest Nuclear Weapons Research and Design Academy" is adjacent to the town of Haiyen in the Haibei Tibetan Autonomous prefecture, Qinghai province. The facility, near the shores of Lake Kokonor, was constructed in the early 1960s under the jurisdiction of the Ninth Bureau, "the most secret organization in China's entire nuclear programme." *(Nuclear Tibet, p.6.)* The facility was partially opened in 1963 and fully operational by 1967. The construction of the Ninth Academy infrastructure probably involved the use of prison labour. *(John Ackerly in China Rights Forum, Spring 1993 Issue.)*

The Ninth Academy was responsible for designing all of China's nuclear bombs through the mid 1970s. In this capacity it served as a research centre for detonation development, radio chemistry and many other nuclear weapons-related activities. This huge facility was until recently mentioned even in Chinese publications. It is not known how much radioactive material was involved at the Ninth Academy site. The academy is larger than almost any other developed area in Qinghai, covering at least 50 square miles. Of the 40,000 residents in Haiyen county in 1989, 16,000 were classified as "non-agricultural." *Nuclear Tibet, p.* 13.) ICT believes that the nuclear functions may have been removed from Haiyen during the 1980s. This view is supported by a report in July 1994 that the Academy had opened to local tourists and overseas Chinese. *(Agence France Presse 4/7/94.)* On the 15th May 1995, the Xinhua News Agency announced that the facility had been closed and handed over to the local government from the military.

Although the nature and quantity of the radioactive waste generated by the Ninth Academy is still unknown, the ICT report (op.cit) claimed that during the 1960s and 1970s, nuclear waste from the facility was "disposed of in a roughshod and haphazard manner." There have been unconfirmed reports that the facility operated a small research reactor that would have produced high level nuclear waste. The height of the plant's chimneys—600 feet—may suggest a need to widely disperse dangerous gases. There is a series of natural aquifers underneath and around the Ninth Academy. As underground water supplies in Qinghai have been rapidly diminishing, any radioactive contamination of the aquifers would have become even more concentrated. Dr. Tashi Dolma working in a hospital in Chabcha, directly south of the Ninth Academy, reported treating the children of Tibetan nomad families whose sheep grazed near the Ninth Academy. The children developed a cancer that caused their white blood cell count to rise uncontrollably. 7 children aged between 7 and 14 died in this way during the 5 years she was a the hospital. One educated Tibetan told ICT researchers in September 1992 that meat from farm animals in the valley surrounding the Ninth Academy was banned from shops by the local authorities.

Nuclear Tests on Tibet's Borders

All of China's openly-documented nuclear tests have been carried out at the northwest of Tibet at Lop Nor in Xinjiang province. These tests have been linked to increases in cancer and birth defects, but no medical investigations have been carried out. *(World Tibet News 8/10/94.)*

Missiles in Tibet

According to ICT, the first nuclear weapon was brought onto the Tibetan plateau in 1971 and stationed in the Qaidam Basin, north Amdo. Several writers have claimed that nuclear missiles are stationed at Nagchuka 150 miles north of Lhasa (see for example *Tibet: Behind the Ice Curtain, Tanya Kewley,* 1990.) However, there is little evidence to support this view and, as ICT point out, Nagchuka is only accessible by a very long and poorly maintained road from Golmud.

In March 1994 the Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC), a US environmental group, issued a report that confirmed the existence of 3 nuclear missile deployment sites in Qinghai province. (It was the NRDC that was invited to monitor adherence by the then USSR to test bans during the Gorbachev era.) The 3 sites, Da Qaidam, Xiao Qaidam and Delingha, house Dong Fieng Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), with a range of 7000 kms. There are large prison labour camps adjacent to these 3 sites. (NRDC) The report also says that Golmud, in the north of the TAR, is possibly a bomber dispersal base.

China maintains an arsenal of 450 nuclear weapons according to the NRDC report, and is currently modernising its nuclear capability. A study by the London based International Institute for Strategic Studies concluded by 2010 China will have between 50 and 70 ICBMs in mobile launchers and hardened silos as opposed to 14 now. Meanwhile Chian continues its nuclear testing program in defiance of an international moratorium.

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International Parliamentary Action on Tibet

Selection of Major Resolutions on Tibet Passed by Governments and Parliaments worldwide.

In recent years, parliaments and governments around the world have begun to take action on behalf of Tibet. A representative selection of some of the major resolutions and motions that have been passed is given below. (Statements on Tibet from the British Government and the US Senate and Congress are included in separate TSG Information Sheets.)

European Parliament (Strasbourg)

14 October 1987

A resolution was passed urging the Chinese Government to respect the rights of the Tibetan people to religious and cultural freedom, and suggesting that the Dalai Lama's Five-Point Peace Plan could provide the basis for a settlement of the Tibetan issue.

l 5 March 1989

A resolution was passed deploring the loss of life in recent disturbances in Lhasa, condemning the subsequent violent repression, and calling for the lifting of martial law. The European Parliament urged the Chinese Government to hold discussions with the Dalai Lama on the future of Tibet, and called on Beijing to respect the autonomous status of Tibet as defined within the framework of the Chinese Constitution.

April 1990

The Sub-Committee for Human Rights of the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament held a hearing on Tibet which was addressed by the Dalai Lama. At a meeting following the hearing, the decision was made to appoint a special rapporteur.

July 1991

A Resolution from the Political Affairs Committee condemned human rights violations in Tibet and called for the release of political prisoners, an end to torture, executions and intimidation, the cessation of environmental degradation, an immediate reversal of the policy of population transfer, an end to discrimination against Tibetans in health and education, and constructive dialogue between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government.

February 1992

A resolution was passed calling for the release of those people detained for practising religion or peacefully **advocating the** establishment of democratic rights, and expressing concern at prison conditions.

16 November 1992

A resolution was passed calling for the immediate release of all Tibetan political prisoners. The Chinese Government was also urged to allow the Red Cross to visit prisons and communicate with prisoners.

15 December 1992

A resolution was passed condemning human rights violations in Tibet, and demanding the release of all political prisoners. It called for an immediate end to environmental degradation, economic exploitation, discrimination against Tibetans, and Chinese immigration into Tibet. The European Parliament expressed regret that the Dalai Lama's efforts to bring about negotiations had come to nothing, and urged the resumption of talks. between the Tibetan Government-in-Exile and Beijing. A request was made that the granting of aid to China be conditional on the observance of human rights and freedoms, and that EC-funded projects in Tibet should serve the needs of the Tibetan community.

24 June 1993

A resolution was passed deploring the brutal suppression of recent demonstrations in Lhasa, and calling for the immediate release of all prisoners not charged with an internationally recognised crime (these included Gendun Rinchen, Lobsang Yonten and Damchoe Pemo). The European Parliament regretted that the Dalai Lama's planned address to the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna was cancelled after Chinese pressure.

16 September 1993

A resolution passed without a vote called on the Chinese authorities to release all those detained for exercising their right to freedom of expression. The European Parliament declared its support for the "courageous activities" of Gendun Rinchen, and suggested that the Olympic Games should not be held in Beijing in the year 2000 unless progress were made in ensuring respect for human rights.

28 October 1993

On the eve of sending a delegation to Beijing, the European Parliament passed a resolution declaring that its relations with China would only be normalised if Beijing provided information about political prisoners in China and Tibet.

European Community

4 March 1992

Member States of the EC submitted a Resolution to the UN Commission on Human Rights voicing their grave concern at continuing reports of human rights violations in Tibet, and calling on the Chinese Government to take measures to ensure the full observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Tibetan people.

16–23 May 1993

A delegation of ambassadors from EC Member States to Tibet requested information about Gendun Rinchen and Lobsang Yonten, who were arrested for trying to contact them, and asked to see them in prison. After its week-long visit, the delegation issued a joint declaration which stated

that relations between the Chinese and Tibetans in Tibet were poor; that official figures claiming just 3% of the population of Tibet were ethnic Chinese were understated; that the use of Chinese in official documents was a barrier to the advancement of Tibetans; that schooling in Tibetan was not always available and mat there was a large rate of non-attendance among Tibetans; and that although religious activity was not suppressed and the renovation of religious sites was very much in evidence, there were considerable doubts as to whether religion received the freedom of action and funding at an organisational level needed to achieve its full potential as a fundamental part of the Tibetan culture.

Note: Damchoe Pemo was reported to have been released in November 1993, although this has not yet been confirmed. Gendun Rinchen and Lobsang Yonten were both released in January 1994.

Council of Europe

5 October 1988

In written declaration no. 173 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, 13 members appealed to the Chinese Government "to promote the peace process in Tibet, respecting the human rights of the Tibetan people, [their] culture and civilisation."

German Bundestag

15 October 1987

The Bundestag unanimously passed a resolution calling for the Chinese authorities to respect human rights in Tibet, to respond to the Dalai Lama's attempts to achieve constructive dialogue, to take steps to preserve Tibetan

culture and religion, and to release all political prisoners. The resolution also urged the West German Government to provide aid for Tibetan refugees, and to grant scholarships for Tibetans to study in German schools and Universities.

November 1990

The Bundestag unanimously passed a resolution calling on the German Government to raise the subject of the human rights situation in Tibet at the United Nations, urging the Chinese Government to lift martial law in Tibet, and supporting efforts to send an independent international commission to investigate Tibet's human rights situation.

Italian Parliament

12 April 1989

The Commission of Foreign Affairs approved a motion urging the Italian Government to make enquiries into the current situation in Tibet, to undertake action to put an end to human rights violations and environmental damage, and to come to a peaceful resolution of the Tibetan problem, while at the same time safeguarding Chinese foreign policy and defence interests.

Lithuanian Parliament

27 February 1992

Deputies of the Lithuanian Supreme Council established a Tibetan Parliamentary Support Group, and Members of Parliament signed a statement acknowledging His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-Exile as the true representatives of the nation of Tibet.

Indian Lok Sabha

23 August 1988

A memorandum signed by 212 MPs, including one government minister, was presented to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, "fully supporting the Dalai Lama's Five-Point Peace Plan, which is an historic step towards resolving the important question of Tibet, alleviating the suffering of the Tibetan people and relieving regional tensions."

Parliamentary Groups for Tibet

There are now All-Party Parliamentary Groups for Tibet registered in the following countries: Australia, Britain, France, Italy, Ireland, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Lithuania.

Australian Parliamentary Action on Tibet

Selection of Resolutions on Tibet Passed by the Australian Parliament

9 March 1989

Ninety-five Members of Parliament signed a petition marking the 30th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising, and called for human rights to be respected and for the People's Republic of China to respond constructively to the Dalai Lama's proposals for discussions.

6 December 1990

The Senate unanimously passed a resolution calling on the Chinese Government to recognize the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Tibetan people, and to enter into negotiations with the Dalai Lama. The Senate also called on the Australian Government to continue making representations to China on allegations of human rights abuse in Tibet.

10 November 1994

The Senate unanimously passed the following resolution timed to coincide with the visit of Chinese leader Qiao Shi, and proposed by Australian Democrats Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, Senator Vicki Bourne.

The Senate:

(a) notes that, during the week beginning 6 November 1994, the Chairman of China's National People's Congress, Mr Qiao Shi, is on an official State visit to Australia;

(b) recognizes that during the 1989 pro-democracy protests, Mr Qiao Shi served as head of China's security services;

(c) expresses its concern that the human rights situation in Tibet appears to have deteriorated and that the Tibetan people continue to be denied their fundamental human rights and freedom;

(d) endorses the representations made by the Australian Government and by members of this Parliament to the People's Republic of China on human rights abuses in Tibet;

(e) urges the Chinese Government to recognize the fundamental human rights and freedom of the Tibetan people and to enter into genuine dialogue, without preconditions, with His Holiness the Dalai Lama with a view to achieving a long-term solution in Tibet;

(f) calls on Australian Government Ministers to continue raising issues of human rights and the situation in Tibet in their discussions with representatives of the Chinese Government and to ensure that they understand the depth of the Australian community's feelings about these matters; and

(g) requests from the Chinese Government a commitment that it will not deny visas to exiled Tibetan women from any part of the world who wish to attend the United Nations World Conference on Women which is due to be held in Beijing in 1995.

14 November 1994

The Senate unanimously passed the following resolution similarly timed to coincide with the visit of Chinese leader Qiao Shi, and proposed by Senator Margaret Reid:

The Senate:

(a) calls for the immediate release of the Gari Fourteen, a group of Buddhist nuns from Gari nunnery, who are detained within the Chinese prison system in Tibet;

(b) notes reports that these young nuns and other Tibetan political prisoners are subjected to routine torture, are used as forced labour and have limited access to medical treatment;

(c) acknowledges that whilst it is alleged that twelve of the nuns were arrested for taking part in a pro-independence rally on 14 June 1993, there are no witnesses to a rally that day, and no evidence exists that it ever occurred; and

(d) calls on the leaders of the People's Republic of China to comply with both the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the Convention Against Torture.

[See *A TC News* December 1994, p. 3]

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