

Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama **10 March 1971**

On the 10th of March 1959, the Tibetan people's uprising in Lhasa was crushed brutally by the Red Chinese Army. So why do we commemorate this day — a day of defeat when thousands of our people died and when Communist China proved her utter ruthlessness and her total disregard for human values? It may sound paradoxical of me to say that we not only dedicate this day to those who died for the cause of Tibet, but that we also celebrate this day as a day of victory. For it was on this day that the failure of the oppressive system of Red China in Tibet became apparent and that the Chinese in their frustration to cover up their deficiencies had to use violence to promulgate what is essentially the reverse to Communist ideals; colonialism. On the other hand, for us it was no defeat. Rather, it was a proof of the Tibetan courage and their determination never to live under alien rule.

A thousand more uprisings may take place and a thousand times the Chinese may crush them, but they will never be able to break the spirit of liberty that resides in each one of us. My people will carry on the struggle till we see Tibet once again in its rightful place among the independent nations of this world. What more proof can I have of my words than the recent reports coming out of Tibet. Determined opposition against the Red Chinese resulted in the public shooting of 58 Tibetans around the month of February in 1970; while those executed behind closed doors and in prisons remain unknown. In July the same year, Radio Lhasa announced the successful suppression of an armed revolt. No other details were given. Later reports said that revolt was widespread in south-western Tibet inflicting more than 1,000 casualties on the Chinese army. 124 Tibetans were executed when the revolt was crushed. Three months later the Chinese unearthed a secret Tibetan resistance group in Lhasa called the 'Organization for the struggle of Tibet's Independence'. The Chinese executed nine of its members and sentenced the others to 20-30 years of imprisonment. All this has been happening despite the fact that the Chinese are now using tactics that would make their atrocities committed a few years ago pale by comparison. I cannot describe in mere words the hunger, the misery and the death that my people face in our country today.

In spite of the fact that we Tibetans have to oppose Communist China I can never bring myself to hate her people. I believe that Tibet will be free only when its people become strong, and hatred is no strength. It is a weakness. The Lord Buddha was not being religious, in the popular sense of the term, when He said that hatred does not cease by hatred. Rather he was being practical. Any achievement attained through hatred can neither be lasting nor binding. It would only be inviting trouble sooner or later. And as for my people at this critical period, hatred would just be an extra mental burden. Moreover, how can we hate a race who do not know what they are doing? How can we hate the millions of Chinese whose very minds are regulated by their leaders? And how can we even hate those leaders who have themselves in the past been so persecuted and have suffered so much for their nation and for what they believe to be right. I do not believe in hatred, but I do believe, as I have always done, that one day truth and justice will triumph.

I believe in this even though I know that millions march in the Chinese army. She now even possesses mighty nuclear weapons that make her feared by the most powerful nations of this world. But history is unpredictable. Many great empires whose glory knew no bounds have crumbled and passed away. And although never in her history has China been so powerful as she is today, yet there is a weakness in this colossus. Her very foundations are based on fear. Like primitive beings, each person in China lives perpetually in fear of retribution for the slightest mistake from his new 'God'. Can such an institution hope to remain? I say no. Nearly every totalitarian regime in history had this in common — they never lasted long. Eventually China has to give way or break. And though tyrants and despots may continue to strut about in the world, truth and justice will ultimately triumph, and as ours is a just cause, I say with confidence that the time will come when my people will fling away the yoke of Communist China's oppression and rise up to build a new Tibetan Nation.

In conclusion I take this opportunity to thank again all the countries and individuals who are continuing to give us moral and material support in our hour of need.

The Dalai Lama
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