

Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama **10th March 1981**

Today marks the twenty-second anniversary of the Tibetan people's struggle for their rights of national freedom, something to be commemorated not only by our own but also by future generations. Recognizing the nature and prospective of our struggle, we must on this occasion reinforce the strength of our courage and determination.

During the past twenty odd years, the large masses of Tibetans left in Tibet have been subjected to sufferings of death, hunger and exploitation which defies description; while those who were able to flee were forced to become exiled from their homeland and to live in foreign countries. We Tibetans of the present generations have had to experience tremendous miseries and tribulations unparalleled in our entire past history. Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact that because of these very factors there will definitely be a realization of positive effects in the long-run. No matter how great negative trends such as hypocrisy, deception and arrogant aggression become in the world today, nevertheless as truth and justice always prevail, the true cause of our Tibet is becoming ever more clear to the world. Therefore, with conviction and never becoming discouraged, we should hold firm to our courage and dedication as in the past.

Although Tibet was not advanced in terms of scientific, technological or material progress, yet it is a nation rich in culture and having a history of more than two thousand years. By the power of this rich cultural heritage, the Tibetans are naturally a happy and well adjusted people, thus forming a distinct society in the family of man. These are qualities praised and regarded as worthy of emulation by sensible people the world over. Until the conditions ripen for all the people in this world to become one great united fraternal family, each society should have the right to preserve and develop its unique traditional heritage and culture along with modern science and technology. Therefore, at present, one of our principal concerns in the struggle for the right of six million people of Tibet should be the vigilant preservation and continuation of all those excellent aspects of our distinct cultural heritage that are of value to our society, without letting them decline. This is most important.

The Chinese policy towards Tibet in the past has been like the Tibetan proverb, "Before your eyes they show you brown sugar, but in your mouth they give you sealing wax." While outwardly spreading courageous exaggerations which are clear, sweet-sounding, impressive and seemingly convincing, but which falsify the facts, they in actual practice have only been subjecting the Tibetans to torture and oppression. In the face of that, the Tibetans had justified cause to strive to free themselves from the bondage of their sufferings, because all people have the right to free themselves from their own suffering. If in actual fact the distinctly Tibetan way of life were being kept fully intact and the people were happier now than under the former conditions, then there would be no point to argue.

In recent times the Chinese have realised that their past self defeating policies of deception, exaggeration and empty propaganda have been of more harm than benefit and

have now adopted a new policy of "seeking truth from facts" and are trying to implement what they preach. Their admission of their past mistakes, without trying to cover them up, is praiseworthy. However, since the thirty odd years of actual experience the Tibetan people have had under the domination of the Chinese has not been a short time, it is definitely going to take some time to develop confidence and conviction in a new lenient line. This is a natural way of thinking of sensible people.

Finally, anger cannot be vanquished by anger, and past history has disappeared into the past. What is more relevant is that in the future there actually must be real peace and happiness through developing a friendly and meaningful relation between China and Tibet. For this to be realised, it is important for both sides to work hard to have tolerant understanding and be open-minded.

With prayers for the peace, happiness and welfare of all.

The Dalai Lama
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