



NATIONAL UPRISING OF TIBET 2008



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Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre

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About the Publisher

Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) is a joint project of Tibetan Parliament in Exile (TPiE) and Friedrich-Naumann Foundation, public funded German institution, committed to liberal democratic ideals and engaged in strengthening pluralist development.

Established in 1994 and based in New Delhi, the centre has been actively engaged in preparing the Tibetans in exile for the assumption of responsibilities that would respond to their hopes and aspirations through a framework of legislative, executive and judicial institutions based on the concept of the Tibetan polity guided by Saddharma and with a view to generating human values and considerations based on man's free will, equality, justice and non-violence. It also focus on the standing need to constantly remind the Tibetan diaspora of their identity, culture and heritage and the global community of Tibet's unique contribution to the world of thought and culture. To analyse the situation of countries directly concerned with the identity of the Tibetan people, to examine developments in their socio-economic and political context and to bring matters of concern in the international arena to the notice of the TPiE is yet another objective of the centre.

Since its inception, it had published large number of publications to disseminate the information on various political aspects related to Tibet with a view to carry forward the global movement of the Tibetan people's non-violent struggle for justice, freedom, and democracy.

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Appeals & Statements of Tibetan Government-in-Exile



Press Release

March 14, 2008

I am deeply concerned over the situation that has been developing in Tibet following peaceful protests in many parts of Tibet, including Lhasa, in recent days. These protests are a manifestation of the deep-rooted resentment of the Tibetan people under the present governance.

As I have always said, unity and stability under brute force is at best a temporary solution. It is unrealistic to expect unity and stability under such a rule and would therefore not be conducive to finding a peaceful and lasting solution.

I therefore appeal to the Chinese leadership to stop using force and address the long-simmering resentment of the Tibetan people through dialogue with the Tibetan people. I also urge my fellow Tibetans not to resort to violence.

The Dalai Lama

An Appeal to the Chinese People

27 March, 2008

Today, I extend heartfelt greetings to my Chinese brothers and sisters around the world, particularly to those in the People's Republic of China. In the light of the recent developments in Tibet, I would like to share with you my thoughts concerning relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples, and make a personal appeal to all of you.

I am deeply saddened by the loss of life in the recent tragic events in Tibet. I am aware that some Chinese have also died. I feel for the victims and their families and pray for them. The recent unrest has clearly demonstrated the gravity of the situation in Tibet and the urgent need to seek a peaceful and mutually beneficial solution through dialogue. Even at this juncture I have expressed my willingness to the Chinese authorities to work together to bring about peace and stability.

Chinese brothers and sisters, I assure you I have no desire to seek Tibet's separation. Nor do I have any wish to drive a wedge between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples. On the contrary my commitment has always been to find a genuine solution to the problem of Tibet that ensures the long-term interests of both Chinese and Tibetans. My primary concern, as I have repeated time and again, is to ensure the survival of the Tibetan people's distinctive culture, language and identity. As a simple monk who strives to live his daily life according to Buddhist precepts, I assure you of the sincerity of my personal motivation.

I have appealed to the leadership of the PRC to clearly understand my position and work to resolve these problems by "seeking truth from facts". I urge the Chinese leadership to exercise wisdom and to initiate a meaningful dialogue with the Tibetan people. I also appeal to them to make sincere efforts to contribute to the stability and harmony of the PRC and avoid creating rifts between the nationalities. The state media's portrayal of the recent events in Tibet, using deceit and distorted images, could sow the seeds of racial tension with unpredictable long-term consequences. This is of grave concern to me. Similarly, despite my repeated support for the Beijing Olympics, the Chinese authorities, with the intention of creating a rift between the Chinese people and myself, the Chinese authorities assert that I am trying to sabotage the games. I am encouraged, however, that several Chinese intellectuals and scholars have also expressed their strong concern about the Chinese leadership's actions and the potential for adverse long-term consequences, particularly on relations among different nationalities.

Since ancient times, Tibetan and Chinese peoples have lived as neighbors. In the two thousand year old recorded history of our peoples, we have at times developed friendly relations, even entering into matrimonial alliances, while at others we fought each other. However, since Buddhism flourished in China first before it arrived in Tibet from India, we Tibetans have historically accorded the Chinese people the respect and affection due to elder Dharma brothers and sisters. This is something well known to members of the Chinese community living outside China, some of whom have attended my Buddhist lectures, as well as pilgrims from mainland China, whom I have had the privilege to meet. I take heart from these meetings and feel they may contribute to a better understanding between our two peoples.

The twentieth century witnessed enormous changes in many parts of the world and Tibet too was caught up in this turbulence. Soon after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the People's Liberation Army entered Tibet finally resulting in the 17-point Agreement concluded between China and Tibet in May 1951. When I was in Beijing in 1954/55, attending the National People's Congress, I had the opportunity to meet and develop a personal friendship with many senior leaders, including Chairman Mao himself. In fact, Chairman Mao gave me advice on numerous issues, as well as personal assurances with regard to the future of Tibet. Encouraged by these assurances, and inspired by the dedication of many of China's revolutionary leaders of the time, I returned to Tibet full of confidence and optimism. Some Tibetan members of the Chinese Communist Party also had such a hope. After my return to Lhasa, I made every possible effort to seek genuine regional autonomy for Tibet within the family of the People's Republic of China (PRC). I believed that this would best serve the long-term interests of both the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

Unfortunately, tensions, which began to escalate in Tibet from around 1956, eventually led to the peaceful uprising of March 10, 1959, in Lhasa and my eventual escape into exile. Although many positive developments have taken place in Tibet under the PRC's rule, these developments, as the previous Panchen Lama pointed out in January 1989, were overshadowed by immense suffering and extensive destruction. Tibetans were compelled to live in a state of constant fear, while the Chinese government remained suspicious of them. However, instead of cultivating enmity towards the Chinese leaders responsible for the ruthless suppression of

the Tibetan people, I prayed for them to become friends, which I expressed in the following lines in a prayer I composed in 1960, a year after I arrived in India: “May they attain the wisdom eye discerning right and wrong, And may they abide in the glory of friendship and love.” Many Tibetans, school children among them, recite these lines in their daily prayers.

In 1974, following serious discussions with my Kashag (cabinet), as well as the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the then Assembly of the Tibetan People’s Deputies, we decided to find a Middle Way that would seek not to separate Tibet from China, but would facilitate the peaceful development of Tibet. Although we had no contact at the time with the PRC - which was in the midst of the Cultural Revolution - we had already recognized that, sooner or later, we would have to resolve the question of Tibet through negotiations. We also acknowledged that, at least with regard to modernization and economic development, it would greatly benefit Tibet if it remained within the PRC. Although Tibet has a rich and ancient cultural heritage, it is materially undeveloped.

Situated on the roof of the world, Tibet is the source of many of Asia’s major rivers; therefore, protection of the environment on the Tibetan plateau is of supreme importance. Since our utmost concern is to safeguard Tibetan Buddhist culture - rooted as it is in the values of universal compassion - as well as the Tibetan language and the unique Tibetan identity, we have worked whole-heartedly towards achieving meaningful self-rule for all Tibetans. The PRC’s constitution provides the right for nationalities such as the Tibetans to do this.

In 1979, the then Chinese paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping assured my personal emissary that “except for the independence of Tibet, all other questions can be negotiated.” Since we had already formulated our approach to seeking a solution to the Tibetan issue within the constitution of the PRC, we found ourselves well placed to respond to this new opportunity. My representatives met many times with officials of the PRC. Since renewing our contacts in 2002, we have had six rounds of talks. However, on the fundamental issue, there has been no concrete result at all. Nevertheless, as I have declared many times, I remain firmly committed to the Middle Way approach and reiterate here my willingness to continue to pursue the process of dialogue.

This year, the Chinese people are proudly and eagerly awaiting the opening of the Olympic Games. I have, from the start, supported Beijing’s being awarded the opportunity to host the Games. My position remains unchanged. China has the world’s largest population, a long history and an extremely rich civilization. Today, due to her impressive economic progress, she is emerging as a great power. This is certainly to be welcomed. But China also needs to earn the respect and esteem of the global community through the establishment of an open and harmonious society based on the principles of transparency, freedom, and the rule of law. For example, to this day victims of the Tiananmen Square tragedy that adversely affected the lives of so many Chinese citizens have received neither just redress nor any official response. Similarly, when thousands of ordinary Chinese in rural areas suffer injustice at the hands of exploitative and corrupt local officials, their legitimate complaints are either ignored or met with aggression. I express these concerns both as a fellow human being and as someone who is prepared to consider himself a member of the large family that is the People’s Republic of China. In this respect, I appreciate and support President Hu Jintao’s policy of creating a “harmonious society”, but this can only arise on the basis of mutual trust and an atmosphere of freedom, including freedom of speech and the rule of law. I strongly believe that if these values are embraced, many important problems relating to minority nationalities can be resolved, such as the issue of Tibet, as well as Eastern Turkistan, and Inner Mongolia, where the native people now constitute only 20% of a total population of 24 million.

I had hoped President Hu Jintao's recent statement that the stability and safety of Tibet concerns the stability and safety of the country might herald the dawning of a new era for the resolution of the problem of Tibet. It is unfortunate that despite my sincere efforts not to separate Tibet from China, the leaders of the PRC continue to accuse me of being a 'separatist'. Similarly, when Tibetans in Lhasa and many other areas spontaneously protested to express their deep-rooted resentment, the Chinese authorities immediately accused me of having orchestrated their demonstrations. I have called for a thorough investigation by a respected body to look into this allegation.

Chinese brothers and sisters - wherever you may be - with deep concern I appeal to you to help dispel the misunderstandings between our two communities. Moreover, I appeal to you to help us find a peaceful, lasting solution to the problem of Tibet through dialogue in the spirit of understanding and accommodation.

With my prayers,

The Dalai Lama

Dalai Lama appeals for continued support to end crackdown in Tibet

April 2, 2008

An Appeal

I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the world leaders, Parliamentarians, NGOs and public who have expressed their concern over the recent deeply saddening and tragic events in Tibet. We are also grateful for their efforts in persuading the Chinese authorities to exercise restraint in dealing with the peaceful protesters, while at the same time calling for meaningful dialogue to resolve the issue.

I believe the recent demonstrations and protests are a manifestation of the deep-rooted resentment not only of the Tibetan people in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), but also in the outlying traditional Tibetan areas now incorporated into Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, where there exist substantial ethnic Tibetans.

According to reliable sources, the Chinese authorities have deployed large contingents of troops in these traditional Tibetan regions and have not only started to crack down heavily on the Tibetans allegedly involved in the unrest, but also sealed off the areas where protests have taken place.

I therefore appeal for your continued support in calling for an immediate end to the current crackdown, the release of all those who have been arrested and detained, and the provision of proper medical treatment. We are particularly concerned about the provision of adequate medical facilities, as there are reports of many injured Tibetans being afraid to go to Chinese-run hospitals and clinics.

I would also request you to encourage the sending of an independent international body, to investigate the unrest and its underlying causes, as well as allow the media and international medical teams to visit the affected areas. Their presence will not only instill a sense of reassurance in the Tibetan people, but will also exercise a restraining influence on the Chinese authorities

The Dalai Lama

Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to all Tibetans

5 April, 2008

While extending my warm greetings to all the Tibetans in Tibet, I would like to share some of my thoughts.

1. Since March 10 this year, we have witnessed protests and demonstrations in almost all parts of Tibet, even in a few cities in Mainland China by students, which are the outburst of long pent-up physical and mental anguish of the Tibetans and the feeling of deep resentment against the suppression of the rights of Tibetan people, lack of religious freedom and for trying to distort the truth at every occasion, such as saying that Tibetans look towards the Chinese Communist Party as the “Living Buddha”, is an ultra leftist statement and smacks of Han chauvinism. I am very much saddened and concerned by the use of arms to suppress the peaceful demonstrations of Tibetan people’s aspirations that have resulted in unrest in Tibet, causing many deaths, and much more casualties, detention, and injury. Such suppression and suffering are very unfortunate and tragic which will reduce any compassionate person to tears. I, however, feel helpless in the face of these tragic incidents.
2. I pray for all the Tibetans as well as Chinese who have lost their lives during the current crisis.
3. The recent protests all over Tibet have not only contradicted but also shattered the People Republic of China’s propaganda that except for a few “reactionaries”, the majority of Tibetans enjoy a prosperous and contented life. These protests have made it very clear that Tibetans in the three provinces of Tibet, U-tsang, Kham and Amdo, harbor the same aspirations and hopes. These protests have also conveyed to the world that the Tibet issue can no longer be neglected. These protests highlight the need to find a way to resolve the issue through “finding truth from facts”. The courage and determination of those Tibetans who have, for the greater interests of Tibetan people, demonstrated their deep anguish and hopes by risking everything is very commendable as the world community has acknowledged and supported the spirit of these Tibetans.
4. I deeply appreciate the acts of many Tibetan government employees and Communist Party cadres who have, without losing their Tibetan identity, shown grit and sense of what is right during the present crisis. In future, I would appeal to the Tibetan Party cadres and government employees not to look always for their personal benefit, but to work for safeguarding the larger interests of Tibet by reporting the real sentiments of the Tibetan people to their superiors in the Party and try to give unbiased guidance to the Tibetan people.
5. Presidents, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Nobel Laureates, Parliamentarians, and concerned citizens from every part of the world have been sending clear and strong messages to the Chinese leadership to stop the present ongoing harsh crackdown against the Tibetan people. They have all been encouraging the Chinese government to follow a path where a mutually beneficial solution could be reached. We should create an opportunity for their efforts to bring out positive results. I know you are being provoked at every level but it is important to stick to our non-violent practice.
6. The Chinese authorities have been making false allegations against myself and the Central Tibetan Administration for instigating and orchestrating the recent events in Tibet. These allegations are totally untrue. I have made repeated appeals for an independent and respected international body to conduct a thorough investigation into the matter. I am sure this independent body will uncover the truth. If the

People's Republic of China has any basis and proof of evidence to back their allegations, they need to disclose these to the world. Just making allegations is not enough.

7. For the future of Tibet, I have decided to find a solution within the framework of the People's Republic of China. Since 1974, I have sincerely remained steadfast to the mutually beneficial Middle-Way Approach. The whole world knows this. The Middle-Way Approach means that all Tibetans must be governed by similar administration that enjoys meaningful National Regional Autonomy and all the provisions in it, self-rule and full decision-making, except for matters concerning foreign relations and national defense. However, I have said it from the beginning that the Tibetans in Tibet have the right to make the final decision for the future of Tibet.
8. The hosting of the Olympic games this year is a matter of great pride to the 1.2 billion Chinese people. I have from the very beginning supported the holding of these Games in Beijing. My position on this remains unchanged. I feel the Tibetans should not cause any hindrance to the Games. It is the legitimate right of every Tibetan to struggle for their freedoms and rights. On the other hand, it will be futile and not helpful to anyone if we do something that will create hatred in the minds of the Chinese people. On the contrary, we need to foster trust and respect in our hearts in order to create a harmonious society, as this cannot be built on the basis of force and intimidation.
9. Our struggle is with a few in the leadership of the People's Republic of China and not with the Chinese people. Therefore we should never cause misunderstanding or do something that will hurt the Chinese people. Even during this difficult situation, many Chinese intellectuals, writers and lawyers in Mainland China and other parts of the world have sympathized and shown us their solidarity by issuing statements, writing articles and offering pledges of support that is overwhelming. I have recently issued an appeal to the Chinese people all over the world on 28th March, which I hope you will hear and read.
10. If the present situation in Tibet continues, I am very much concerned that the Chinese government will unleash more force and increase the suppression of Tibetan people. Because of my moral obligation and responsibility to the Tibetan people, I have repeatedly asked the concerned leadership of the PRC to immediately stop their suppression in all parts of Tibet and withdraw its armed police and troops. If this brings result, I would also advise the Tibetans to stop all the current protests
11. I want to urge my fellow Tibetans who live in freedom outside Tibet to be extra vigilant as they voice their feelings on the developments in Tibet. We should not engage in any action that could be even remotely interpreted as violent. Even under the most provocative of situations we must not allow our most precious and deeply held values to be compromised. I firmly believe that we will achieve success through our non-violent path. We must be wise to understand where the unprecedented affection and support for our cause stems from.
12. As Tibet is currently virtually closed and no international media is allowed there, I doubt my message will reach the Tibetans in Tibet. But I hope through media and by word of mouth, it will be passed on to the majority of you.
13. Finally, I want to reiterate and appeal once again to Tibetans to practice non-violence and not waver from this path, however serious the situation might be.

The Dalai Lama



Dalai Lama Prays For China Earthquake Victims

May 13, 2008

The Dalai Lama offered his condolences and prayers Tuesday for the victims of the massive earthquake that hit central China, killing some 12,000 people

I would like to extend my deep sympathy and heartfelt condolences to those families who have been directly affected by the strong earthquake," the Tibetan spiritual leader said in a statement. "I offer my prayers for those who have lost their lives and those injured."

The Dalai Lama has been vilified lately by Chinese authorities who blame him for the recent unrest in Tibet, which Beijing says were part of a campaign to split the Himalayan region from the rest of China.

The Dalai Lama has denied these charges, saying that despite China's harsh crackdown on the demonstrations that erupted in March; he still supports a solution of meaningful autonomy for the Tibetan people under China's rule, not independence.



The death toll from the China disaster rose to nearly 12,000 with thousands more missing a day after the powerful 7.9 magnitude quake struck Monday afternoon centered in Sichuan province.

The Tibetan parliament-in-exile held a special Buddhist prayer session at their headquarters in the northern Indian town of Dharamsala.



Message by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the Beijing Olympics

August 05, 2008

I would like to offer my greetings to the People's Republic of China, the organizers and the athletes participating in the forthcoming Olympic Games in Beijing.

Right from the time of China's application to hold the Olympic Games, I have supported China's right to host the Games. This is a moment of great pride to the 1.3 billion Chinese people. These Games should contribute to promoting the Olympic spirit of friendship, openness and peace.

I send my prayers and good wishes for the success of the event.

The Dalai Lama

Tibetan Parliament in Exile Press Statement

March 15, 2008

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile is deeply concerned with the recent reports emanating from all three regions of Tibet of random killings, injuries and arrests of thousands of Tibetans peacefully protesting against the Chinese policies. These protests began on March 10th on the occasion of the 49th Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day and continue as a consequence of violent crackdown by the repressive Chinese regime. We have unconfirmed reports that about hundred people have been killed and martial law imposed in Lhasa.

The recent protests clearly reflect the true sentiments of the Tibetan people inside Tibet and their yearning to be free from the repressive Chinese regime. Tibetans are sending out clear and strong signals that they are deeply discontented with the current policy of China. We express our solidarity and support to the Tibetan peacefully protesting inside Tibet. We would like to convey to the Chinese authorities that unity and stability cannot be brought under the barrels of guns and that earnest negotiation is the only way forward.

We thank the European union, the united states government and other governmental as well as non-governmental bodies for supporting the aspirations of the Tibetans people urging china to act with restraint when dealing with the Tibetan protests.

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile strongly urges the United Nations to send a representative immediately to intervene and investigate into the current urgent human rights violations inside Tibet.

The Tibetan Parliament in exile strongly condemns the use of force and violence against the peaceful protesters and urges the Chinese authorities to immediately end the brutal crackdown and restore normalcy in Tibet.

Issued by Tibetan Parliament

Place : Dharamsala



Statement of the Kashag

March 22, 2008

The Kashag would like to issue this statement to the Tibetans - both lay and ecclesiastical - living here in Dharamsala, and through all of you, to the larger Tibetan population in and outside Tibet.

Recognition of the situation inside Tibet

- 1) The recent peaceful uprising in Tibet is not only powerful, but also great and of historical significance. It symbolises the Tibetan people's indomitable courage and inner strength.
- 2) The uprising is not just confined to Lhasa and its neighbouring areas. It has spread to all regions where Tibetans reside, including the three traditional provinces of Tibet: U-tsang, Amdo and Kham. What does this indicate? Firstly, it clearly shows that all Tibetans have the same aspirations and are united under the great leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Secondly, it has brought before the world the reality inside Tibet by exposing the Chinese propaganda that "apart from the few upper strata followers of the reactionary Dalai, all Tibetans in Tibet are loyal to the ideology and polity of the People's Republic of China (PRC)" and that "Tibet has entered into a period of great stability, with its people being fully satisfied with the economic and social progress it has achieved".
- 3) It further shows that His Holiness' viewpoint that all Tibetans, including those living in the three traditional provinces of Tibet, should be brought under a single autonomous governance is in tune with the reality.
- 4) The leaders of the People's Republic of China have said that they will wage a "life and death" struggle against, or resolutely crush, the on-going demonstrations in Tibet. This statement has brought to the fore the internal matter that the Chinese leaders view the Tibetans as enemies, rather than being a part of the big family of the Chinese nation.
- 5) The recent heroic uprising, which has spread to virtually all parts of Tibet, is larger in scale than all the uprisings that have taken place during the past 49 years. Whether we look at it from the perspective of an international issue or a domestic issue, these demonstrations have brought our struggle to a point where a decision has to be made concerning the survival of the Tibetan people. Moreover the principal force behind these activities are the fourth generation Tibetans - those Tibetans who are born after the Chinese assumed rule over our country. These are a clear indication that our movement will continue for generations.
- 6) The recent incidents have made it amply clear how much determination and sincerity the Tibetan people have and the great sacrifices they made. While expressing our immense pride in and appreciation for this, the Kashag would like to state that it does not have the faintest doubt that their sacrifices will be etched on the annals of the Tibetan people in golden ink.

What the Central Tibetan Administration has done thus far

7) Needless to mention that the Tibetan exiles should recognise the great courage displayed by our brethren in Tibet and initiate solidarity actions, which will go a long way in promoting the short- and long-term benefits of the cause of the Tibetan people. Therefore a high-level committee has been set up under the leadership of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (TPiE), which has - instead of letting the Tibetans to carry out individual activities - tried to combine all the initiatives of the Tibetan Diasporic community to give it a collective force. This is, in the history of the Tibetan Diaspora, a new approach to deal with a crisis situation. We are hopeful that the Tibetan NGOs, autonomous bodies and welfare organisations, as well as the local people will all follow the direction of this committee.

8) Since the repression began in Tibet, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has continued to make his best efforts, despite his slight indisposition, to reach out to as many people as possible. As well as writing to many like-minded (political) world leaders, fellow Nobel laureates and other eminent persons, His Holiness has given frequent interviews to the media and appealed to the governments and peoples across the globe. In addition to this, His Holiness has advised us to recite the prayers of Dolma and Sher-nying, as well as the Tadrin mantra to avert the present crisis situation and to work towards the enhancement of the Tibetan people's collective merit. Moreover, His Holiness has graciously presided over the prayer congregation held at the main temple of the Thekchen Choeling monastery for the Tibetans in Tibet.

As for the Tibetan administration, we have been performing our duties properly by providing timely information to the governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as the Tibet support groups and requesting them for their support through the offices of Tibet abroad. Apart from expressing our heart-felt thanks to high-ranking leaders of many eastern and western countries, including the US and the EU countries; the United Nations Secretary General; political parties; social service organisations; Tibet support groups and the spiritual heads of various religious denominations for issuing their statements of support, the Kashag has also been emphatically urging them to continue to give their effective support to us until the eventual resolution of the issue of Tibet.

Appeal for future action

9) Currently, our urgent appeal to the international community comprises of the following main items:

- a) Stop immediately the repression taking place all over Tibet, as well as the killings and beatings accompanying it;
- b) Release immediately all those arrested and imprisoned during such instances of protest demonstrations;
- c) All those injured should be provided medical care. Lift the imposition of restrictions on all travellers who are held up in different places and adequate food supplies should be provided to them;
- d) An independent international fact-find delegation and impartial reporters should be allowed to go all over Tibet without any restriction.

To channel our collective energies to put forward these demands is the need of the hour.

10) The People's Republic of China (PRC) has planted a large number of spies within the Tibetan communities in and outside Tibet, who have been undertaking massive campaigns to drive a wedge between the Tibetan people, between the Tibetans and Chinese and between the Tibetans and the people of the respective host

countries they live in. Thus the other side is hoping to destroy the unity, or oneness, of the Tibetan people and the effectiveness of their movement. Being mindful of these mischievous lots, all Tibetans should exercise utmost caution.

The bases of the Tibetan exiles' movement are the respective host countries we live in. India, in particular, is the residence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the seat of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). Therefore whenever we initiate any activity big or small, we must be careful in seeing to it that our actions do not go against the laws of the respective host countries, or cause undue embarrassment and discomfort to the people living in these countries. Besides we must realise that it is our strength, rather than weakness, to keep the means we employ within the rubric of the principle of non-violence. Since the Chinese side has misrepresented the recent incidents as a clash between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples and between different religions, we should not be tardy in providing timely and proper responses to these misinformation.

11) Apart from undertaking political activities, all Tibetans should also make efforts from the religious side to enhance their collective merit by engaging themselves in good-karmic deeds. We should, in particular, follow the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama by reciting the prayers of Dolma, Sher-nying, Yig-drug and Gurui Thug-dam Ne-kul and dedicate the merits gained for the immediate ending of the repression in Tibet; for the rebirth of all those who have lost their lives in the "taming ground" of Avalokitesvara, the Snowland of Tibet and be able to serve the Tibetan people; for the speedy recovery of all those injured people; and for the eventual resolution of the Tibet issue so that the Tibetans in and outside Tibet can join together in a celebration of their reunion.

12) It is difficult to predict where the present crisis situation inside Tibet will lead to in the future. It is possible that we may have to initiate campaigns for a long time inside and outside Tibet. It is also possible that we may have to come out with a considerable number of relief activities. Therefore, as stated in the Kashag's appeal on the last birthday celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, all Tibetan exiles - be it rich or poor - should observe austerity as much as possible by shunning extravagance of any kind, including unbridled consumerism, and set aside a portion of their income for community activities.

13) Finally, an extremely important matter is that there is no greater prospects for the Tibetan people than what His Holiness has, relying on his profound wisdom, advised to us. In a crisis situation like this, we should be able to whole-heartedly follow the guidance provided by him. On the contrary, if we pretend to have a better approach than what His Holiness has already shown to us and thus undermine the unity of the small number of Tibetan exiles, then this will only make our enemies happy and disappoint our friends.

The Kashag is greatly disappointed by some of the recently initiated campaigns. Even though we hope that there is nothing wrong in the sincerity of those who initiated these campaigns, but the way they were conducted seems to indicate the organiser's deliberate attempts to bring bad name and difficulties to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This, we consider, is not at all helpful to the cause of Tibet.

Issued by the Kashag

Press statement by Kalon Tripa, Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, on the Situation in Tibet

April 18, 2008

Deteriorating situation in Tibet and fear of worse to come in days ahead

Since 10th March 2008, there have been widespread protests in all areas of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo, including in various cities of China where Tibetans live. These protests are the outburst of dissatisfaction and deep-rooted resentment perpetuated in the hearts of the Tibetan people for the last five decades by excessive repression and mishandling of peaceful protests by small number of monks and lay people in several places in and outside “TAR” on 10th March 2008.

10th March is a historic day for the Tibetan people. Every year there is some kind of peaceful demonstration, which does not continue beyond that day. But this year protests continued in the succeeding days due to unnecessary repressive measures and use of force.

If the objective of using force by the Chinese authorities is to maintain peace and order in Tibet, they could have achieved it within a day. But normalcy did not return even after more than five weeks and more protests and repressive measures are happening day after day. This arouses the suspicion about the intentions of the Chinese authorities. Among the many suspicious incidents, the following are conspicuous:

- a. On 14th March, unusual unrest was allowed in Lhasa for several hours without the authorities taking any preventive measures.
- b. Most of protesters involved in violent acts on that day were unfamiliar to the local people. In particular, there are cases where people have seen Chinese policemen in Tibetan dress and in monks’ robes taking the leading role during the protests.
- c. The Chinese authorities claim that they have found guns and bullets at some Tibetan monasteries. This claim is based on recovering some unserviceable country-made guns and swords, which were offered to the chambers of the protective deities (Gonkhang) of monasteries. And in some other cases, the military personnel themselves brought arms and ammunitions to monasteries. Later they claimed to have found these in the monasteries and blame the Tibetans for harbouring arms and ammunition in the monastic compounds.
- d. Chinese authorities also claim that Tibetan independence forces are planning to launch suicide attacks.
- e. They accuse some monks of exploding a bomb that damaged a building in Chamdo in east Tibet. The authorities are yet to produce any convincing evidence.
- f. Patriotic re-education campaign is re-launched and monasteries and households are ordered to fly the Chinese national flag on their buildings.
- g. Anti-Dalai Lama campaigns are being rigorously carried out everywhere. This hurts the sentiments of the Tibetan people most.

- h. The People's Republic of China (PRC) is carrying out a systematic and vigorous effort to create a rift between the Tibetans and the Chinese people. This is being done by a huge propaganda to fan nationalism and hatred of the "Dalai clique" amongst the Chinese people.

These acts do not help in restoring mental peace and social order in Tibet. On the contrary, these acts are considered highly provocative by the Tibetans because they hurt them the most. All these acts appear to be aimed to undermine the Tibetan people's tolerance and provoke them into violent retaliation. They also indicate that various agencies of the PRC have plans to carry out more bombing and other destructive activities and put the blame on the innocent Tibetans for such actions.

We are deeply concerned by the ongoing repressive action such as brutal beatings, torture, killings, deprivation of essential foods and drinking water, which lead to the starvation of concerned Tibetans. We are also very much concerned that such repressive action may continue for many more months to come.

Tibet is virtually sealed off and in a short period, the Chinese authorities will destroy all evidence by executing the innocent Tibetans. The international community must intervene immediately and persuade the PRC authorities to end these atrocious acts.

The vexed situation in Tibet has lingered because of the ultra leftist policies adopted by PRC authorities during the year 1957/58, which led to the popular uprising on 10th March 1959. Since then the Tibetans have suffered immensely. Over a million Tibetans perished and the situation remains troubled. These policies were recognised as wrong and reversed in Mainland China. But no change in policy has taken place for the Tibetan nationality. Even now, unless the basic policy of PRC towards the Tibetan nationality is changed, no amount of force can keep the Tibetan people under control.

The PRC leadership on one hand demand that His Holiness the Dalai Lama use his influence to restore normalcy in Tibet. On the other hand they have not created any space or channel to allow His Holiness the Dalai Lama to use his influence in Tibet. On the contrary, the Chinese leadership have stepped up their anti - Dalai Lama campaign throughout Tibet.

The PRC leadership refuse to find out the root cause of unrest in Tibet and make efforts to remove the cause. On the contrary they are aggravating the problem by various means. This is a clear indication that they do not want to have peace and stability in Tibet.

We, therefore, urgently appeal to the international community to take effective and immediate actions to prevent the PRC from indulging in such brutal acts against the Tibetan people and to stop their policy of systematic cultural genocide in Tibet.

**Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche
KALON TRIPA**

National Uprising of Tibet 2008

It began with a protest march towards the city centre by a group of Tibetan national flag-wielding monks of Drepung Monastery from the outskirts of the Tibetan capital Lhasa on 10 March 2008, the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan national uprising day, along with a couple of smaller protests within the city. Chinese troops crushed the protest midway and arrested 60 of the 300-600 monks who took part in it. Nevertheless, more protests were held by more number of Tibetans, especially monks, reportedly estimated by one source to number 2,000, of Sera monastery, over the following days. The Authorities responded by having the paramilitary People's Armed Police (PAP) lay siege to Drepung, Sera, Ganden and possibly other monasteries where protests took place in an overwhelming show of force by 13 March. The monks were placed under tight regimented supervision as they were subjected to tests of patriotism and loyalty to communist ruled China.

Nevertheless, on 14 March morning, monks of Ramoche Temple in the heart of Lhasa city gathered to stage yet another demonstration. As the PAP moved in to stop it, laypeople, whose numbers reportedly swelled to around a thousand, joined in on the monks' side. Escalating exchange of angry words soon gave way to a violent flare-up. Within hours, protests, most of them peaceful but very angry, engulfed the whole city and its surrounding areas. The Tibetan government-in-exile said the protesters numbered anywhere from 10,000 to 20,000. At a couple or so of places where the protest turned violent, Tibetans attacked government structures and properties which they perceived as symbols of Chinese control and takeover of their country: Chinese shops, school buildings, banks and police stations and vehicles, etc. It was not clear why the protests turned violent. There were reports that the violence was started by Chinese spies pretending to be members of the protesting crowds.

It was not long, however, before the Chinese sent in the troops and tanks, so that a sanguinary order was restored in the city by evening. In fact, by one account, the riot was sparked off when an armoured PAP vehicle was driven into a crowd, according to *The Daily Yomiuri* (Japan) 17 March, citing a Tibetan man who talked to it by telephone. Nevertheless, not only were there protests in at least two places in the city proper the following day but also in numerous other parts of Tibet's western half, demarcated and renamed under Chinese rule as Tibet Autonomous Region. They included known ones from rural counties of the Lhasa Municipal area as well as Shigatse and Chamdo prefectures. Nagchu Prefecture was already under severe armed restrictions as a result of previous disturbances. At least some of these protests must have been pretty large, for the website of *Tibet Daily* 19 March reported, for example, that 94 protesters had surrendered in Phenpo Lhundup County of Lhasa.

The protests in Lhasa and the surrounding areas were, however, only the beginning of what was to turn out to be an uprising encompassing most of the Tibetan Plateau. On 20 March *Canadatv.com* (CTV) showed a dramatic footage of mounted Tibetans cheering wildly and galloping in a crowd of about 1,000 men and women into an unnamed town in Gansu Province. One of the horsemen was carrying a large Tibetan national flag. Reaching the town, they attacked government buildings, and replaced the Chinese national flag in a school compound with a Tibetan one, even as a force of about 100 heavily armed soldiers used teargas to try to repel them. The Tibetans shouted slogans calling for independence. The CTV report said scenes like these were repeated throughout the Tibetan areas in that region. China's official *Xinhua* news agency said on 24

March that since 14 March, “beating, smashing, looting and arson” had occurred in the counties of Xiahe (Tibetan: Sangchu/Labrang), Maqu (Tibetan: Maqchu), Luqu (Tibetan: Luchu) and Jone (Tibetan: Chone) counties and Hezuo (Tibetan: Tsoe) city of Gannan (Tibetan: Kanlho) Prefecture in Gansu Province.

In the Tibetan areas annexed to the Chinese Sichuan Province, the largest of the protests took place in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) County for several days since 16 March and in Kandze (Karze, Chinese: Ganzi) County for a number of days since 18 March. Large-scale protests also took place in Barkham (Chinese: Ma’erkang), Kakhog (Marthang, Chinese: Huangyuan) and Dzoerge (Chinese: Ruo’ergai) Counties right from 10 March.

In Qinghai Province, protests were reported to have taken place in Tsolho (Chinese: Hainan), Malho (Huangnan), Yulshul (Chinese: Yushu), Golog (Chinese: Guoluo) and Tsoshar (Chinese: Haidong) Prefectures as well as Xining City from 16 March onwards.

The major protests involved hundreds to thousands of participants. Low-profile, peaceful protests in the form of silent group sit-ins, candlelight vigils, and displays of banners were also staged by Tibetan students in the university campuses in Beijing, Chengdu and Lanzhou.

Thus, within days of the Drepung monks’ 10 March rally, protests engulfed almost the whole of the Tibetan Plateau, spanning the three traditional Tibetan provinces of U-Tsang, Dotoe and Domey. They assumed the proportion of a Tibetan national uprising, characterised by the commonality of the protesters’ demands and actions. Demands for religious freedom, the Dalai Lama’s return and Tibet’s independence reverberated across the Tibetan regions. Display of Tibetan national flags was a common feature in all the demonstrations. And the pulling down by the protesters of Chinese national flags and replacing them with Tibetan ones at public spots remain one of the enduring images of the uprising.

While the general contour of the uprising’s spread is, thus, pretty obvious, given the large number of sporadic reports of protests that have emerged, the size and form of the protests, their numbers, and the extent of their repression’s brutality remain to be accounted for to any substantial degree. Perhaps they never will be, knowing as we do the extraordinary care China takes to secure what it calls its national secrets from being leaked out. An indication of this could be gauged from the fact that it still cannot even be estimated how many Chinese democracy protesters were killed or arrested or still remain in jail when the communist government sent in the tanks and troops on the Tiananmen Square in that fateful night of 3-4 June 1989.

In the case of Tibet, many of the uprising protests took place in remote countryside areas, which were little open or accessible to the outside world. Even from places near Lhasa the official Chinese media reported relatively large numbers of arrests even though no reports of major protests having taken place there had reached the outside world. Such has been the effectiveness of the Chinese clampdown on information and those who may spread it. Indeed, while initial unofficial reports about the 10 March 2008 protest march from Drepung Monastery put the number of monks involved at as few as 50-60 to as large as 600, China’s official *Xinhua* news agency reported, in another context, on Aug 30, that about 300 monks were involved.

The demonstrations all began peacefully and in most cases remained peaceful. In the few cases which turned violent, and from which China produced its propaganda videos about the protests, they were all provoked by the extremeness of the Chinese repression. Of course, there were also reports that Chinese agent provocateurs

were also responsible for provoking or starting the violence at many places to enable the authorities to put a speedy end to the protests and to justify the violent crackdown.

The largest of the demonstrations were staged at the main religious centres in the three provinces, where also the crackdowns were the most violent, resulting in fatalities whose seriousness and numbers remain captive to Chinese censorship and denial of access to information. They included Lhasa from 10 to 14 March, Sangchu (or Labrang, Chinese: Xiahe) with its Labrang Tashi Khyil Monastery in Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Prefecture of Gansu Province from 14 to 18 March, Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) County with its Kirti Monastery from 15 to 17 March as well as Karze (Chinese: Ganzi) County with its Lithang Monastery and several others in Sichuan Province, and Rebkong (Chinese: Tongren) County with its Rong Gonchen Monastery in Malho (Chinese: Huangnan) Prefecture of Qinghai Province.

By current estimates, there were at least 125 mass protests across the Tibetan Plateau since 10 March 2008, according to a report 6 August 2008 by the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), Washington, D.C. Within the Tibetan Plateau region, they took place in at least 52 county-level locations, according to a report 14 April 2008 by the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China (www.cecc.gov).

Background and Analysis

There were both long-term reasons and related immediate intense provocations that led to the Tibetan uprising of March 2008. Both were rooted in Beijing's obvious policy to effectuate a total integration of Tibet by sparing no resources for its development and modernization, including with a massive influx of Chinese settlers, while crushing all signs of opposition to Chinese rule or on any assertion of Tibetan identity. This was just an adaptation of Deng Xiaoping's policy to open up China and liberalize its economy while tolerating absolutely no opposition to the communist party rule. Obviously what has worked in China, so far, does not in Tibet, and the reason is pretty obvious.

While in the case of the Chinese, prioritising economic progress to ensure comfortable living conditions for the masses has generally worked well so far, the same assumption cannot hold true – as indeed it has not – in the case of Tibetans to whom the priority is the preservation of their identity even if that be, for practical reasons, under Chinese rule. This is very obvious from the fact that those involved in the March 2008 uprising raised no socio-economic grievances, but only matters related to the preservation of their identity, such as religious freedom, the Dalai Lama's return and, as the seemingly only precondition, even if futile, for their realization in the existing circumstances, independence.

Nothing makes this more clear than the commonality of the slogans raised by the protesters and the Tibetan national flags they carried and used to replace Chinese flags at public places. The attacks on the Chinese shops and government properties in the few riots that took place during the uprising were pointers to the Tibetan resentment against the influx of Chinese settlers and the government policy that actively acquiesced it. None of the attacked properties were robbed, as far as anyone knows, because the grievances the Tibetans wanted to express were not economic but political.

The immediate provocation for the uprising was China's inexplicable unleashing of a new, hyperactive vilification campaign against the Dalai Lama, whom the Tibetans not only look upon as their temporal leader but also their religious head embodying the *Chenresig* (*Avalokiteshvara*), the Buddha of Compassion and the protector

deity of Tibet. The anti-Dalai Lama campaign itself was launched with greatly enhanced severity in 1994 when even his pictures were banned from homes and all places of worship. That was not all. Amid a new wave of scurrilous media attacks on him, China brought into force on 1 September 2007 a new set of 14-Article regulations that outlawed all reincarnations of Tibetan Buddhism unless they are approved by the Chinese government. There was no doubt that the main purpose of this was to make clear China's position on the next reincarnation of the Dalai Lama.

To the Tibetans, China's most vituperative attacks against the Dalai Lama since the Cultural Revolution period (1966-76) also meant that Beijing was not at all interested in resolving the Tibet issue through dialogue, leaving them with not even a scant hope for the realization of their religious freedom and even a semblance of real self-governance.

These developments came on top of the emergence of alarming new threats against the Tibetan identity, beginning with the opening of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway on 1 July 2006 and China's pouring in of many more billions of yuan than ever before of development and modernization funds that turned out to be only designed, at least in effect, to create conditions for the resettlement of Chinese immigrants in Tibet. The spectre of being both overwhelmed and marginalized in their own ancient land came to hang heavy over the Tibetans as a very real, immediate prospect. The move to replace Tibetan cadres even at the township level with especially trained corps of Chinese officials and the severe disruption of the Tibetan nomadic and village lives through mass fixed settlement and re-housing projects made it clear that China was constantly evolving new moves to exercise ever more control and restriction on the Tibetan people.

Meanwhile the vilification campaign against the Dalai Lama assumed such shrill rhetoric in the days around the conferment on 17 October 2007 of the US Congressional Gold Medal on the Dalai Lama that an explosion of Tibetan anger against Chinese rule appeared to be all but inevitable. The opening ceremony of the annual horseracing festival on 1 August 2007 in Lithang County of Kandze Prefecture in Sichuan Province provided the first major occasion. It was the demands shouted by the nomadic village-head Runggye Adrak – who sparked the massive protest there at that time over several days – which reverberated across the Tibetan Plateau in March 2008. Meanwhile, in October 2007, the authorities tried to stop monks of Drepung Monastery from sprucing up the traditional Ganden Phodrang residence there of the Dalai Lamas, perceiving it to be part of preparations for celebrating the US Congressional Gold Medal for the exile Tibetan leader. When the monks resisted and protested against the move, many were arrested. The 10 March 2008 rally by the monks reportedly had calls for their release as one of their main demands.

The uprising may have taken both the leadership in Beijing and the outside world by surprise. And it certainly rekindled a sense of commonality of purpose and mission in the Tibetans across the three traditional Tibetan provinces as well as between those in exile and at home under the Chinese occupation rule. More than that, it revitalized the Tibetan struggle at a time when to many in the outside world as well as the Chinese leadership, and, dismayingly, even among Tibetans, the policy of development and modernization coupled with merciless repression seemed to be working well on Beijing's terms. Nevertheless, anyone who had been observing the developments in Tibet closely and paying proper attention to the Dalai Lama's all too frequently reiterated fears and warning about the erosion of the Tibetan national identity, which he said would lead to a cultural genocide in Tibet, would not have been surprised by the recent development.

China may have divided Tibet and its people geographically, ethnically, administratively, ideologically, even religiously, and in numerous other ways, but these have only succeeded in inculcating in Tibetans across the “Roof of the World” such sense of unity of purpose and identity as had probably not existed even before 1959. Indeed, the protests that occurred in and around Lhasa from 10 March to 14 March spread to other Tibetan regions with such spontaneity and similarity of actions and slogans as to bewilder Beijing into believing that it all must surely have been “premeditated, organized and instigated by the Dalai clique”.

China made repeated, very public pronouncements of promises to reveal evidences that the Dalai Lama and his alleged clique were fully responsible for the upheaval that swept the Tibetan Plateau. Said its Foreign Ministry Spokesman Qin Gang at a press conference in Beijing on 20 March, “I can assure you that as the investigations unfold, the competent authorities will release the evidence.” However, no credible evidences of any kind were ever released. Nevertheless, it would not have been wrong to encourage, even lead, people who had been oppressed so tragically for so long, with denial of their basic human rights and the freedom to preserve their identity and traditional way of life, to stand up and revolt. After all, what was the theory-of-state justification underlying the international community’s recent efforts to free and recognize the independence of Kosovo from Serbia? And the Tibetans, or, at least, their exile-based leadership, are not even seeking independence – only a semblance of real autonomy which China’s own constitution very explicitly guarantees.

PRC’s Response to the Uprising

The Chinese government responded to the protests in Lhasa with two tongues and one very brutal crackdown. On the one hand, it dismissed all claims about the protests being major and widespread, contending that only small riots involving few people occurred and they were quickly put down. “We didn’t enforce martial law there, and the situation in Tibet as a whole is good at present,” *The Hindu* newspaper (India) 16 March quoted Lhasa Mayor Doje Cezhug as saying. He blamed a “handful” of monks and lawless persons for the unrest. Likewise, China’s online Tibet news service *en.Tibet.cn* said 15 March, “The smallest group of people’s attempt to destroy Tibet’s stability and harmoniousness has no foundation and is doomed to fail.” The official reaction was the same in the case of the protests in other Tibetan areas. For example, *Xinhua* 22 quoted “living Buddha” Jamyang Losang Jigme Tubdain Qoigyi Nyima in Kanlho (Chinese: Gannan) Prefecture of Gansu Province and vice-president of the Tibetan Chapter of the Buddhist Association of China as saying, “It is only a very few people who were engaged in the sabotage activities. Most living Buddhas and lamas are patriotic.” Likewise, *Xinhua* had on 20 March quoted “living Buddha” Dewacang Jayangtudain Gyaincog, of Labrang Monastery in Kanlho as saying, “Crime of a very few people not only runs against China’s laws, but also violates the basic Buddhist principles.”

Given these claims, China maintained that no force was used against the protesters. At a regular press conference in Beijing on 20 March, China’s Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Qin Gang maintained that law-enforcement authorities had exercised tremendous restraint, that “they haven’t carried or used any lethal weapon”. He berated a foreign journalist for calling the protests an “uprising”.

And yet, China very ominously referred to the Tibetan protests as a threat to the sovereignty and stability of the whole of the People’s Republic of China, requiring special measures to be put down. At the 20 March press conference in Beijing, spokesman Qin maintained that the alleged riot “infringed upon national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity, and imperilled people’s lives and property.” Likewise, the party secretary of

TAR, Mr Zhang Qingli, said in a 19 March *Tibet Daily* editorial, “We are currently in an intensely bloody and fiery struggle with the Dalai Lama clique, a life or death struggle with the enemy.” He called for “full victory in this intense battle against separatism.” These are surely as close a description of an uprising as one can get. Indeed, when pointed out that the situation in Tibet was nothing short of the repression of an uprising, Qin said, “Given the circumstances in some areas, Chinese law-enforcement authorities have the right to take special measures in line with the law.”

The contention that only few Tibetans were involved and that the protests were nothing but riots were very obviously lies told as an effort to deny the depth and universality of the Tibetan anger and resentment against the Chinese occupation. The Chinese were, in reality, in no doubt that the uprising seriously exposed their lack of legitimacy in Tibet and sought to conceal and repress it through a number of propaganda rhetoric, policy control and violent repression measures. These were on top of the sealing off of the entire occupied country.

The reality was that after the protests started, China expelled all foreigners, especially media persons, from Tibet. As they were leaving, the expelled foreign journalists reported witnessing columns of trucks with enormous number of troops driving into the Tibetan areas where the uprising protests were taking place. The *Kanwa Daily News* (Canada), devoted to strategic news and analysis, reported on 21 March that elite ground forces of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) were used to crackdown on the protesters. “A substantial number of images show that the (hitherto never deployed) new T-90 armoured personnel carrier and T-92 wheeled armoured vehicles belonging to the elite ground forces appeared on the streets of Lhasa the same day the crackdown began. It said the traditional red star of the PLA painted on the armoured vehicles were covered with white cloths while the red stars painted on the steel helmets of the troops were erased to conceal the involvement of regular forces in the crackdown. *Radio Free Asia* 15 March quoted an eyewitness as saying, “there could be several hundred tanks and they were shooting into the crowds.”

The dichotomy between China’s anxiety to show that what happened in Lhasa on 14 March was only a minor incident that was easily dealt with and the reality of the seriousness of the situation was also shown by the fact that China made repeated promises to reopen the city by 1 May, only to postpone it till after the Beijing Olympic Games.

In an attempt to divert international attention away from these, China launched a propaganda war against the Dalai Lama and the so-called “Dalai clique”, as well as the western media which reported on the protests and the repression on the basis of the available eyewitness and other information. In his 19 March *Tibet Daily* editorial, Zhang wrote: “The Dalai Lama is a wolf wrapped in a robe, a monster with human face and animal’s heart.” This was after Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao had said on 18 March that the alleged riot in Lhasa was “organized, premeditated, masterminded and incited by the Dalai Lama clique”.

At the ground level, China took care to ensure that the expelled foreign reporters had no opportunity to witness what the troops were being brought in for. It later claimed that no troops or weapons were used. “We fired no gunshots,” *Xinhua* on 15 March quoted TAR governor Qiangba Puncog (Jampa Phuntsog) as saying, a claim repeated many times by both local and central Chinese leaders. He said the police used only sticks and persuasion to convince the “rioters” to return home. On the other hand, the few Tibetan eyewitnesses who managed to contact the outside world spoke of indiscriminate firings and of Tibetans falling dead all around, with their bodies being hauled into military trucks and taken away and disposed off in mass cremations.

In Lhasa, curfew was imposed by the evening of the 14 March and door-to-door raids of Tibetan homes carried out by the PAP and local police over the following days. A martial law-like situation prevailed, with thousands of Tibetans rounded up both from their homes and from the streets and held in mass temporary detention centres where they were kept on starvation diets with no provisions of clothing or bedding. Everyone with bullet or other wounds likely to have had been inflicted by police and PAP assaults were rounded up as protesters and detained without any kind of medical attention. Dead bodies were returned to families in some cases, without any kind of explanation; in other cases, only ashes claimed to be of their cremated bodies were delivered. All Tibetans without being registered residents in the city were expelled. At least a thousand Tibetans, mostly monks who had originally hailed from the Tibetan areas incorporated into Qinghai and Sichuan provinces but were studying in the big monasteries in Lhasa, were rounded up and transported by the Qinghai-Tibet Railway to Golmud for eventual delivery into the custody of their respective local religious and public security authorities. Large numbers of Tibetans, however, simply disappeared after they were taken into custody.

The troops who raided people's homes and monasteries acted with great rudeness and utter impunity, breaking down doors without bothering to knock on them, beating and taking away whomever they fancied for detention, and stealing or robbing money and whatever else of value they could lay their hands on. In particular, monasteries in eastern Tibet were reported to have lost religious objects of great inviolability and historical value to such acts of what could only be described as state-unleashed plunder and mayhem.

After the uprising was suppressed and in the run up to and during the Beijing Olympic Games (8-24 August), China implemented across the Tibetan Plateau a policy of repression unprecedented since the days of the Cultural Revolution (1966-76). The whole of undivided Tibet remained cut off from the outside world as the crackdown and repression continued. But the main focus of the Chinese ire in these measures were the centres of religious study whose monks and nuns were in most cases leaders and participants in the protests. A vicious campaign of patriotic education, which had already been underway before the uprising, was greatly intensified across the Tibetan Plateau. Those found unfit to remain in their monasteries and nunneries because of the authorities' doubts about their loyalty to the Communist Party of China and the government led by it were to be expelled, denied religious freedom and liable to further punishment through administrative measures or judicial trials. Under the renewed crackdown, religious studies, services and functions have been replaced by patriotic education study sessions.

Allegations of such gross violations of religious freedom and civil liberties may seem audacious propaganda rhetoric, but they are contained in clearly spelled out guidelines posted on Chinese government website in Tibetan language. They are as real as Beijing's 2007 regulations outlawing all reincarnations of Tibetan Buddhism unless approved by the atheist government. Although such campaigns tend to be time bound, there are no indications yet when all this will end.

China rejected all requests for independent investigation of the situation in Tibet to determine the real cause of the tragedy there, or for unsupervised visit by foreign media, diplomats and human rights representatives. Nevertheless, it kept pleading for belief, merely on its bald assurances, that the "riots" in Tibet, claimed to involve only few people, were organized by the Dalai Lama and the "Dalai clique" and that normality had already been restored. Even a request from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Louise Arbor, to visit Tibet to assess the situation there was rejected. The international community drew the right conclusion from the Chinese intransigence on these demands and kept up the pressure through media reports, leadership

criticism, parliamentary resolutions, calls for dialogue with the Dalai Lama, and a strong, continued global protests, including during the Olympic torch relay and the Olympics Games.

China hit back by calling the western media biased and especially targeted western journalists working in China by whipping up xenophobia among the Chinese citizens. Both Chinese and foreigners who questioned the government lies about Tibet were subjected to threats, coercion and ill-treatment from Chinese vigilantes encouraged by official provocations.

To sum up, China's reaction to the uprising in Tibet was not to re-examine its policies or even to try to understand and appreciate the grievance that had engendered it but to intensify the repression and carry out further development and modernization projects designed to ensure that the demography, economy and government of Tibet would be dominated by the Chinese, with the Tibetans rendered a disenfranchised minority in their own ancient land. Aware that such a policy of further provocation could only result in more protests, China is reported to have greatly strengthened military deployment and other repressive measures. In Kandze County of Sichuan province, formerly part of Tibet's Kham Province, there are more than 70,000 Chinese soldiers – far more than the troops sent to suppress the Tibetan rebellion in 1959, noted prominent Beijing-exiled Tibetan writer Woesser. Writing in *New Statesman* (UK) Jul 31, she said more than 10,000 soldiers had set up camp in Maqu (Machu) County of Gansu Province, formerly part of Tibet's Amdo Province, the same number as the local population.

Such repressions obviously do not behove a government regime claiming to ensure autonomy for Tibetans, respect the Tibetan people's cultural and religious rights, and to have liberated the Tibetan people from external imperialism and internal serfdom. In the existing state of affairs, such claims would seem to be just propaganda rhetoric designed to conceal rather than define China's real policy objectives in Tibet.

It was not surprising, therefore, that in terms of casualties China reported the death of only one Tibetan protester, whom it called an insurgent leader killed in an exchange of gunfire with a police team on 28 April in Darlag (Chinese: Dari) County of Golog Prefecture in Qinghai Province. On the other hand, it accused Tibetan protesters of being responsible for the deaths of 20 people, including one policeman in Lhasa and another one in Kandze on 24 April.

Regarding China's official figures with regard to the Tibet Autonomous Region, its *Xinhua* news agency reported on 9 April that a total of 953 Tibetans were detained, of whom 403 were formally arrested. A *Xinhua* report 18 April cited police as saying there were sufficient evidences to try 170 Tibetans, of whom 88 were still at large. The Chinese media gave no report of any total number of arrests and killings in other parts of Tibet; only sporadic figures of arrests from few particular protest incidents were reported.

Earlier, *Reuters*, citing *Tibet Daily* 4 April, cited the TAR's top law-and-order official Baima Chilin as saying over 1,000 Tibetans would face swift trials and harsh sentences before 1 May 2008. This was grossly at variance with the above suggestion that only 170 would be tried, including the 88 still at large. And as of 3 September 2008, only 42 Tibetans were officially reported to have had been tried in two batches on 29 April and 20-21 June 2008. Nevertheless, there have been unofficial reports of lengthy sentences having been given to other Tibetans both in the TAR and other Tibetan inhabited regions.

Reaction of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile

The Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-exile reacted to the tragedy that had enveloped Tibet with a series of conciliatory comments asking China to appreciate the gravity of the Tibetan people's deeply felt grievances over decades of its misrule, which they said had led to the uprising. The exile government and parliament also initiated campaign actions designed to highlight the Tibet issue in the light of the recent tragedy. The Dalai Lama issued a series of appeals to the Tibetan people in Tibet and those in exile, as well as to the Chinese people, the Chinese leadership, and the international community.

The Tibetan government-in-exile and Parliament-in-Exile set up on 18 March a "Tibet Crisis Committee" and launched a stoptibetcrisis.net website. The committee sought to monitor the crisis in Tibet and initiated campaign and awareness programmes designed to unify exile Tibetan protests and related actions and to garner international support for the resolution of the Tibet issue through dialogue.

On the same day, the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama issued a press statement, in which the exile Tibetan leader asked China to accept a thorough investigation by a respected body, which he said should include Chinese representatives, to look into its allegation that he had orchestrated the protests in Tibet. The statement called the uprising in Tibet "a spontaneous outburst of public resentment built up by years of repression in defiance of authorities that are oblivious to the sentiments of the local populace". It said the Chinese policy in Tibet, including the huge transfer into it of Chinese immigrants, was resulting in cultural genocide there. It reaffirmed the Dalai Lama's commitment to his Middle Way approach of pursuing a process of dialogue to find a mutually acceptable solution to the Tibet issue.

Regarding the violence that beset some of the protests in Tibet, the Dalai Lama repeatedly declared that he would resign if it would continue and result in bloodshed. However, he expressed helplessness to stop the violent Chinese crackdown, noting that Beijing was determined to deal with the uprising only with violent repression. He justified the Tibetan people's right to protest and said he would not stop them from doing so unless China stopped the suppression and withdrew its armed police and troops. He asked China to heed their own late leader Deng Xiaoping's dictum of "finding truth from fact" to determine the real cause of the uprising.

To the world leaders, Parliamentarians, NGOs and members of the global public, the Dalai Lama appealed for "continued support in calling for an immediate end to the current crackdown, the release of all those who have been arrested and detained, and the provision of proper medical treatment to the injured." He was especially concerned about the lack of adequate medical facilities, noting "reports of many injured Tibetans being afraid to go to Chinese-run hospitals and clinics."

To the people of China, the Dalai Lama said in an appeal dated 28 March that he had no desire to seek Tibet's separation or to drive a wedge between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples. He said his only concern was to ensure the survival of the Tibetan people's distinctive culture, language and identity. He said that instead of cultivating enmity towards their leaders responsible for the ruthless suppression of the Tibetan people, he prayed for them to become friends. He recalled China's late Paramount Leader Deng Xiaoping's assurance to his personal emissary in 1979 that "except for the independence of Tibet, all other questions can be negotiated." He said he considered himself "a member of the large family that is the People's Republic of

China” and expressed support for President Hu Jintao’s policy of creating a “harmonious society”, which he said could only arise on the basis of mutual trust and an atmosphere of freedom, including freedom of speech and the rule of law. He said a genuine solution to the problem of Tibet would ensure the long-term interests of both Chinese and Tibetans.

To the Tibetans both in Tibet and exile, he urged that the protest be kept peaceful, however serious the Chinese provocations may be, with the awareness that “our struggle is with a few in the leadership of the People’s Republic of China . . . not with the Chinese people.” He referred to the strong support the Tibet issue was receiving from many Chinese democracy activists, including through appeals to the Chinese leadership and articles in the global media.

The head of the Tibetan government-in-exile, the Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche rejected as an “absolutely baseless allegations” the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao claim that the unrest in Tibet was organized by “the Dalai clique”. Rather, he said, speaking to the media on 19 March, “It was a spontaneous reaction to a brutal handling of peaceful demonstrations led by Tibetans on 10 March – the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising in Lhasa in 1959.” He contended that had the Chinese refrained from using brute force and allowed the Tibetans to express their feelings peacefully, the situation would not have worsened. He called the crisis a “life and death situation” for Tibet and its people. The Kashag, the exile Tibetan cabinet, also urged the United Nations Human Rights Council on 17 March to “immediately send a fact-finding delegation to all the affected areas in Tibet to prevent further deteriorations of the critical situation.”

A Tibetan Solidarity Committee, set up jointly by the Tibetan government- and Parliament-in-Exile, launched on 6 April at Dharamsala a global movement of peaceful protests, including relay hunger-strikes, prayer services and candlelight vigils. The committee sought to consolidate the efforts of all the diverse groups within the Tibetan community in exile to carry out mass peaceful protests and other campaign actions in a sustained manner in the major cities across the world and in the Tibetan communities, led by members of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. Support garnered from national and local political leaders as well as prominent global figures in diverse fields in the host countries greatly raised the profile of the Tibet issue and contributed significantly to the success of the peaceful campaign actions.

In terms of casualties and victims, the exile Tibetan government rejected China’s contentions about the protest by saying that as of 31 July 2008, there had been 218 confirmed deaths of Tibetan civilians, 1,290 Tibetans injured and 6,705 Tibetans detained or arrested across the Tibetan Plateau in the Chinese crackdown. The actual figures in all these cases are considered much higher, with His Holiness the Dalai Lama telling the French newspaper *Le Monde*, in its 21 Aug edition, that 400 had been killed in the Lhasa area alone.

Global Reaction to the Uprising and Chinese crackdown

The Tibet issue received unprecedented governmental, parliamentary and public support from across the free world in the aftermath of the March 2008 uprising in Tibet and its brutal suppression by China. The international media refused to buy China’s patently false tale about the uprising protests being nothing but riots involving few hooligans. Beijing came under strong pressure to refrain from violence and to try to resolve the Tibet issue through talks with the Dalai Lama. The global public outrage was fully reflected in the Beijing Olympics torch relay, which became a nightmare for China. It was the first time an Olympic torch relay became a source of

shame and disgrace to the host country. Calls were made even for boycott of the Beijing Olympics, with many political leaders resolving not to attend it. Tibetans and supporters of the free Tibet movement targeted Chinese missions across the world, protesting, often with daring actions reflecting the depth of their outrage, against the violent repression in Tibet and the policies that had led to the uprising.

While political leaders across the free world were unequivocal in their condemnation of China's use of overwhelming force to crackdown on a generally peaceful uprising, the actions of some were particularly noteworthy. French President Nicolas Sarkozy who in normal times would not risk offending China by being critical of its Tibet policy made it absolutely plain that he would not attend the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics unless there was progress in talks between China and the Dalai Lama. That he eventually did attend the ceremony was altogether another matter. The fact was, pressure from him and his EU colleagues compelled China to hold the 2 May 2008 talks with envoys of the Dalai Lama.

Also, Japan, to whom talking about the human rights and political situation in Tibet is usually an absolute no-no area, directly confronted China with a number of comments. Its Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura asked China to ensure that the number of those killed and injured does not worsen any further, reported the *AFP* 16 March. Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda was explicit when talking to Chinese leaders that the Tibet issue was international and should be resolved accordingly. He welcomed China's decision to open dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives but said that it should be substantive enough "for the situation to improve and the international community's concerns to be dispelled," reported the *IPS* (Italy) 8 May.

Government and state leaders of the Czech Republic and Poland adhered to their position not to attend the Olympic Games, citing China's brutal crackdown in Tibet, while others such as the Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi also stayed back, the latter ostensibly because of the hot weather in Beijing. Only nine leaders of the EU's 27 countries attended the Olympics opening ceremony.

Olympic athletes also staged overt, symbolic and other forms of protests over the Tibet issue. Over 40 athletes for the Beijing Olympics were among the 127 global athletes who called on China's President Hu Jintao to seek a peaceful solution to the Tibet issue and improve the human rights situation there. More than 40 Olympic athletes downloaded a "Songs for Tibet" music album especially produced for the occasion and featuring 20 of the world's top musicians. The album was later censored in China but became top-selling rock download on iTunes across the world. Polish weightlifting silver medalist Mr Szymon Kolecki shave his head while competing as an expression of solidarity with the monks in Tibet. German fencer Imke Duplitzer boycotted the opening ceremony as protest against Chinese policies in Tibet and Darfur. Australian cyclist was one of the most vocal critics of China's Tibet policy. Over a third of Australia's Olympic team – 35 of the 100 polled – declared that they wanted China to withdraw from Tibet, reported *news.com.au* 28 July.

Prominent global figures such as the Noble peace laureates Desmond Tutu of South Africa and the former Czech President Vaclav Havel openly asked the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to let athletes know about the suppression of liberties in China; they also said athletes had a duty to speak out in line with their conscience. Town and cities in several countries flew the Tibetan flag during the Games to publicize their protest against Chinese policy in Tibet.

The Tibet issue totally overshadowed the publicity surrounding the Beijing Olympics since the crackdown on the Tibetan uprising took place. The Zurich-based Media Tenor International awarded the Tibet issue its Media Tenor Special Award for Agenda Setting. “An analysis of all news reports in 58 American, European, MiddleEast and Africa TV channels shows that Tibet managed to get their message across by surfing on the Olympic Games Media Agenda,” reported *Media Channel* (NY, US) Aug 7.

And while protests did not particularly mar the Games as such, it was the Tibet issue more than anything else which preoccupied China’s preparation for containing troubles ahead of them as well as dealing with it as the Olympics got underway. Indeed, apart from the sporting events, medal tallies and games records, it was the Tibet issue which dominated the global media coverage of the Beijing Olympics and China’s efforts to contain troubles.

Conclusion

The March 2008 uprising showed that Tibetans across the Tibetan Plateau and in exile had a shared sense of nationhood and commonality of identity and mission in the face of China attempts to destroy them by invasion and territorial dismemberment. It also contributed to inculcating and strengthening these further in them in a way that was unprecedented in recent Tibetan history. It showed that China’s efforts to divided the Tibetan people geographically, religiously, ideologically, and in numerous other direct and subtle ways had failed to work.

It also starkly exposed the lies, deceit and the use of brute force underlying the Chinese government’s claim of the existence of order and stability in Tibet, and of being the popularly accepted and legitimate sovereign authority over Tibet and its people. Indeed, everything that is so wrong with the Chinese government both as regards Tibet and China itself was seen through the prism of the Tibet issue.

It all showed that no matter how strong and developed China becomes economically, Tibet – along with a host of other human rights and democracy issues – will continue to remain its Achilles Heel as it continues its quest for status as a global superpower – a power that is not only feared but also respected. In fact, as China’s economy and concomitant position of influence grows, so also will the imperative on it to prove a responsible stakeholder in global affairs. Nothing will be more important in this regard than the legitimacy of the government that runs the Chinese state, whether as regards its own Chinese people or those such as Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongols and others over whom it claims the right of sovereign authority.

Protest in Tibet & Worldwide

Lhasa

March 10, 2008

Tibetan National Uprising Day

Peaceful demonstration by monks

The 49th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day, when up to 600 monks of Drepung monastery in the outskirts of Lhasa tried to march to Bharkor in the centre of the city. They wanted to demonstrate there for the release of fellow monks jailed in Oct 2007 for celebrating the US Congressional Gold Medal for the Dalai Lama. Police stopped them about mid-way in their 10-km march, prompting resistance from the monks who stood their ground, shouted slogans calling for Tibet's independence and tried to push ahead, resulting in scuffles and up to 60 of them being taken into custody.



On the same day, a group of seven monks from Sera Monastery staged a demonstration along the Bharkor, the circumambulation path around Tibet's holiest shrine, the Jokhang, carrying Tibetan national flags. As the monks began shouting slogans, laypeople joined them. But the police arrived too soon on the scene for the rally to gain momentum. The monks were severely beaten, the crowd ordered to disperse and all the shops and street vendors in the surrounding area made to close down. (*multiple source*)

March 11, 2008

Troops fired tear gas to disperse monks

About 2000 strong Chinese troop fired tear gas in order to disperse hundreds of monks from Sera Monastery who were calling for the release of their fellow monks and shouting pro-Tibet slogans. The

situation in Sera Monastery and Drepung Monastery are known to be very tense at the moment with People's Armed Police forces sealing off the monasteries thereby completely curbing the people's movement in and out of the area, including protesting laypeople from visiting these monasteries. The 15 peaceful protestors are confirmed to have been arrested and their whereabouts are unknown. And also the authorities of Lhasa City have recalled all the employees of various government departments who were on leave to return to work immediately and issued a restraint order banning taking leave. Restrictions were also imposed on the movement of students, including Tibet University students in Lhasa, with authorities increasing the vigilance personnel and keeping a record of student movements at the main entrance gate of the University. The west end of Beijing West Road was sealed off as well. (*tibet.net*)

March 12, 2008

Chutsang Nunnery tried march towards Barkor for peaceful demonstration

Tibetan Women's Uprising Day

Around On the morning of 12 March, coinciding with the Tibetan Women's Uprising Day, a hundred Tibetan nuns from Chutsang Nunnery in the west side of Lhasa marched towards Barkhor Street for a peaceful demonstration. However, they were blocked by Chinese People's Armed Police from moving forward and sent back to their nunnery. There are no reports of arrest or detention after the march from Tibet net. On 12 March 2008, the Chinese authorities ceased providing permits to journalists to enter Tibet and journalists and tourists in the city and surrounding areas began to be evacuated. Numerous websites were blocked, television broadcasts censored, and mobile phone and internet access reportedly blocked or restricted. Similarly, Gaden Monastery (about 50 Kms east of Lhasa City) remains sealed off and

surrounded by People's Armed Police since yesterday afternoon, following the protest by monks. (amnesty.org)

March 13, 2008

Monasteries sealed

Lhasa's three major monasteries of Sera, Drepung and Ganden had been locked down and surrounded by PAP troops, making life extremely difficult for the monks. Monks of Sera reportedly stopped attending their classes and went on hunger strike, demanding the lifting of the siege.

Two monks of Drepung monastery, both hailing from Kirti Monastery in Ngaba Prefecture of Sichuan Province, stabbed themselves on their hands, chests and wrists in acts of frustration and refused to be taken to hospital, though needing urgent medical attention. (tibetan review)



The local Foreign Bureau Office in Lhasa had issued a warning to NGO's (especially those with links to the outside world), telling them any information they give to foreigners regarding the protests in Tibet could result in strict legal action, including even the shutting down of the NGO. The NGO's have been specifically instructed by the Foreign Bureau office that the only contact they can have with foreigners is to assure them that the protests in Tibet will be stabilized very shortly. NGO's were also warned that if they were found sending information through e-mails/using the internet for disseminating information on the current Tibet situation, then strict action would be taken against them. Also, just a few days ago. (tibet.net)

March 14, 2008

Protest in Lhasa turns violent

The Tibetan protests in Lhasa had largely remained peaceful, with the protesters being mostly monks, until Mar 14. On that day, as PAP blocked a group of

about 100 monks of Ramoche Temple from taking out a rally, laypeople joined in and began pushing back the riot police.



Violence flared as their number grew around a thousand, with some of the protesters beginning to hurl rocks at the security forces. Not long thereafter, the protesters turned their anger on shops, market stalls and vehicles owned by Chinese people, as well as on Chinese government structures and properties. Leaving thick black smokes billowing all over Lhasa, many protesters ran through the streets, displaying traditional white scarves in their hands and shouting "Free Tibet".

The protests were reported to have taken place simultaneously at several locations in the city, with hundreds of protesters seen marching in several directions, including the Bharkor area. They kept on being joined by many more people, emboldened by the relative lack of police presence. Tibet.net Mar 14 cited reports as saying 10,000-20,000 Tibetans were involved in the Lhasa protests.

Lhasa was brought under control by evening. Eyewitnesses spoke of people being killed everywhere, though no estimates could be made. Many of the dead bodies were reportedly stashed in front of a Public Security Department office in Lhasa. (tibetan review)

March 15, 2008

Karma Kunsang in the east of Lhasa Nyangdren Roads in the north of Lhasa

Lhasa is still reeling under extremely tense situation since yesterday's demonstration involving over 200 people. The entire city is completely cut-off with the posting of



many new check-posts at all the entry points into the City. All the roads and shops remain closed, with heavy presence of armored military vehicles and additional contingent of People's Armed Police (PAP) sent into the city. However, certain parts of Lhasa, especially Karma Kusang in the east and Nyangdren Roads on the north side of Lhasa witnessed a pocket of protests this morning. *(TCHRD)*

Over 500 people have been arrested in Lhasa alone; however the numbers are expected to be astoundingly larger since all those arrested are being taken to prisons all over Tibet. And all media personnel (including foreign media) inside Tibet are being questioned and there are reports that their recorded materials (video footage, pictures) have been destroyed or confiscated. Hundreds of Tibetans are arbitrarily arrested in the ongoing house-by-house raid by Chinese security forces in Lhasa beginning from 15 March 2008. *(tibet.net)*

March 16, 2008

Armed police patrol streets of Lhasa

Over two days, military and police were working together on a large-scale search and arrest of Tibetans at gathering places. Every Tibetan home was searched and pictures of the Dalai Lama were ordered to be thrown on the floor and stepped on. Those who refused were beaten severely.



Compared to the occasional sound of gunfire during the day, more intense gunfire was heard at night over these two days. The killing and arrests all happened at night so nobody knows exactly how many Tibetans have been killed or wounded. *(Epoch Times)*

March 17, 2008

Military forces are still guarding every road

The curfew seems to have been lifted, but military forces are still guarding every road in the old town to check every passerby's ID. Residents in the Tibetan area are still under strict martial law.



James Miles, a BBC correspondent in Lhasa, said troops carrying automatic rifles were "letting off the occasional shot." He said people were scared to come out of their homes for fear of being hit by a bullet. *(Epoch Times)*

March 18, 2008

Arrests and detentions in Lhasa

Close to 1,000 Tibetans have been detained in two days of sweeps across Lhasa by paramilitary police. Sources in the city said that 600 people had been detained on Saturday and another 300 had been picked up on Sunday. *(Times Online)*



Tibetans without residency permits were taken away to unknown detention centres. *(Radio Free Asia)*

About 15 journalists from four television stations, two radio and one print media organizations from Hongkong were expelled from Lhasa under escort early yesterday. Digital photos and videos showing the situation in Lhasa were deleted. *(TVB news)*

March 19, 2008

Arbitrary arrests continue

“A Chinese sources with links to the security forces told the BBC that 600 monks had been flown over night on military planes from Lhasa to Chengde, the capital Sichuan.” (*BBC news*)

As of now, over 1000 Tibetan protestors had been arrested, hundreds had disappeared and the numbers are rising. The situation in all parts of Tibet remains under intense restriction. There have been many reports of ordinary Tibetan citizens reeling under a state sponsored crisis of intense shortage of food supplies, drinking water and other essential commodities to sustain life. Monasteries still sealed off in Lhasa. (*TCHRD*)



March 20, 2008

Elite People’s Liberation Army troops enter Lhasa

One hundred & sixty people had given themselves up to the police. But other sources reported seeing forceful detentions of Tibetans from the streets and homes. Many were seen shackled and left thrown on the ground until security personnel could collect them.

Drepung, Sera and Ganden had been under lockdown since 10 March, and are still surrounded by police in riot gear. Their water supply has been cut off and food is difficult to obtain.

Television channels in Lhasa released a list of 12 wanted Tibetans, including two monks.

Kanwa Defence Review reported: “Images show that the new T90 APCs and T92 wheeled armoured vehicles belonging to the



elite ground force units appeared on the streets of Lhasa in the same day of the crackdown. These equipments have never been deployed in China’s armed police before.” (*Xinhua*)

March 23, 2008

Ramoche monk dies from starvation as tight restrictions continue in Monasteries

As a result of being under tight security, Ramoche monks could not get food and water supplies. As a result, a monk named Lobsang Thokmey died in the evening. (*tibet.net*)

27 March

Staged events during foreign media visit backfires on China’s attempt to portray a calm and peaceful image of Lhasa

When a select group of foreign reporters (chosen by the Chinese Government) were brought to Tsuglagkhang (Jokhang) of a supervised tour, a group of monks suddenly disrupted the visitors. During the 15-minute outburst they screamed that there was no religious freedom in Tibet and H.H. the Dalai Lama was not to blame for inciting the demonstrations in Tibet. “Tibet is not free! Tibet is not free!” yelled one young Buddhist monk, who then started to cry.



(*tibet.net*)

29th March

New unrest in Lhasa despite security crackdown

A new protest occurred involving many Tibetans, possibly linked to an attempt by armed police to detain Tibetans in the Tibetan neighborhood around the Ramoche and Jokhang temples in central Lhasa. Tibetan shops in the area were closed down, and

armed police surrounded the areas around the Ramoche and Jokhang temples.

The incident occurred as a 15-member group of diplomats from countries including the USA, Japan, and Slovenia, were leaving Lhasa after a stage-managed and controlled visit at the invitation of the Chinese government. (*ICT*)

April 04, 2008

Tight restrictions for foreign students at Tibet University (Lhasa)

Foreign students of Tibet University studying Tibetan language were restricted from leaving their university campus. For over a week their mobile phones, internet and other devices were disconnected. (*tibet.net*)

April 07, 2008

Around 70 monks of Ramoche Temple detained in midnight raid, whereabouts still unknown

Around 70 monks of Ramoche Temple were detained by the People's Armed Police (PAP) and Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials during a midnight raid and taken away, leaving behind only a few monks.

“Tibet Autonomous Region” government Chairman, Qiangba Puncog, said at a press briefing of the State Council information office this morning, that police had detained 953 suspects involved in the ‘14 March violence’ in Lhasa. (*TCHRD*)

April 08, 2008

Tibetans being forced to return home from Lhasa Hospitals face shortage of beds

Around 40 Tibetans who were in Lhasa for reasons such as pilgrimage and business had been turned back to their hometowns in Gonjo (Ch: Gongjue) County, Chamdo Prefecture, “Tibet Autonomous Region.” However, non-registered Chinese residents were left untouched. (*multiple source*)

There is a severe shortage of beds in at least two public hospitals in Lhasa. due to the staggering number of Tibetans injured by policy beating and or shootings since the March 14 protests. (*tibet.net*)

April 10, 2008

Whereabouts of many monks arrested in April are unknown

Additional People's Armed Police (PAP) and work teams were deployed in Drepung monastery to conduct “patriotic re-education” in full intensity to the monks on April 10. However, this was met with a protest from the monks. As a result, many were arrested on April 11 and 12.

The mantras of china's patriotism education

I denounce the Dalai clique,

I will not keep any portraits of the Dalai Lama.

I have no desire to become a part of the Dalai clique.

I will not engage in any splittist activities.

The attempt to separate Nationalities of china will not succeed.

I owe loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party.

I acknowledge the gratitude of the Chinese Communist Party.

It was of course, not just a matter of repeating these. The work Team members had to be convinced of the commitment and sincerity of the Tibetans of these declarations through specific actions, such as sleeping on pictures of the Dalai Lama. (*tibet.net*)

April 12, 2008

Education” campaign continues at Tibet University, Lhasa

Despite official denials, about 100 students and the staff were involved in the Lhasa uprising. One senior staff was suspended while an “education” campaign

was strengthened. The campaign focused on condemning graduates of some 20 years back who are now working with the Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamshala. (*tibet.net*)

April 29, 2008

China jails 17 Tibetans in a “swift and quick” court proceeding

The court in session

Seventeen Tibetans were sentenced to three years to life imprisonment terms in connection with the Lhasa uprising. (*Xinhua*)



April 30, 2008

Lhasa-Military presence to increase in upcoming weeks; Public Security Personnel (Ch: Baoan) to loose jobs

After April 30, local Public Security Personnel, who were mostly Tibetans, in the Lhasa municipality will lose their jobs to newly deployed military personnel, it was reported to have been announced in an internal circular. (*tibet.net*)

May 07, 2008

A Tibetan doctor and her husband arrested for providing medical treatment to injured protestors and sharing protest information with outsiders

Retired Dr. Yangzom and her husband Shilok were arrested by Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) at around 10:00 PM. for providing medical treatment to people injured during the protests in Lhasa and nearby villages. Her husband was arrested for his alleged involvement in passing information to “separatists” in the outside world. (*tibet.net*)

May 20, 2008

Tibetan Girl shot dead while attempting to visit her brother’s monastery

A village girl, reportedly from Lhokha, seeking to visiting her brother inside the Tsuklakhang was shot dead by the People’s Armed Police (PAP) at about 12:00 noon around May 20. She had had argued with the PAP for refusing her permission to go inside.

(*multiple source*)

May 24, 2008

Three youths shouted pro-independence slogans

Pro-independence slogans were shouted by three Tibetan youths at Tromsik-khang market, in Lhasa, in the afternoon of 24 May. It resulted in a fight with Chinese forces while people near the scene dispersed. Sound of a gunshot or explosion was heard as the fight continued. All the shops near Barkhor Square were immediately closed down. Security check on every passer-by was tightened by PAP personnel.

(*tibet.net*)

May 26, 2008

Three monks of Ramoche temple arrested for allegedly sharing information with outsiders

Bhuchung, Damdul and another monk (born in Meldro) of Ramoche temple were again arrested for keeping in contact with outsiders through phone calls. They were earlier arrested together with many Ramoche monks on 7 April. (*tibet.net*)

June 01, 2008

A strong contingent of PAP deployed

Since June 1, Chinese authorities have tightened restrictions in Lhasa with the deployment of an additional strong contingent of PAP personnel. People of the surrounding counties are also not being allowed to travel to Lhasa by their respective authorities.

Recently on May 24 and also on June 2 & 3, some Tibetan people expressed their frustration at those



Tibetans (shop owners and street vendors) for resuming their businesses as reported earlier. Later, many posters were seen repeatedly pasted, mainly at Barkhor Square and other areas, conveying the message that people should neither visit the sacred shrines nor open up their shops, which if done then the Chinese government will show to the outside world stability has been restored. The possibility of staging more protests by people has led the Chinese authorities to tighten restrictions.

Tibetan people in Lhasa are neither visiting the sacred shrines nor going for lingkhor (big circumambulation of Potala Palace and surrounding temples) and continue to remain in their homes. Information received from official website of Tibetan central administration.

(multiple source)

June 15, 2008

Two months' ultimatum issued to the Tibetan Communist Party members and government employees to recall their children studying in exile schools

13 ethnic Tibetan Party members expelled in Lhasa

A new official regulation jointly prepared by the "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") Communist Party's Discipline Inspection Commission (Ch: Jie Wei) and "TAR" Government Discipline Committee (Ch: Jian cha ting) was officially announced yesterday, targeting Tibetan party members and government employees whose children are studying in the exiled educational institutions run by the "Dalai Clique", according to the latest information posted on the official website.

The regulation warned



Tibetan party members and government employees with dire consequences, including expulsion from Party and being fired from job, and will act according to the Party rules and policies, if they fail to recall their children studying in exile educational institutions run by the "Dalai Clique".

The announcement said the "Dalai Clique has over the years cited free scholarship, boarding and food facilities to the young children in order to entice them to leave Tibet for schools and monasteries in exile. The young who are the future seeds were targeted by the Dalai clique by enticing with facilities in the exile schools and monasteries in order to challenge the party and the government."

The announcement cited maintaining stability and opposing 'splittist' forces within the Party and "TAR" government employees as the reason for the regulation.

This was not the first time that such an ultimatum was issued. In 1994 a policy was instituted demanding that parents recall their children from India lest they be demoted or expelled from their jobs, and their children lose their rights to residence permits if they did not return to Tibet within a specified time. And many parents recalled their children studying in exile schools and many ended up terminating their education.

The new regulation aims to put the Tibetan employees and members through political litmus test of their ideological loyalty to the party and the government and to eliminates those with a history of separatist activities. The timing of the new regulation raises concern about the Chinese authorities intention towards managing Tibetan employees, party members and their children.

June 16, 2008

Tibet Leg of Beijing Olympic Torch Relay Postponed

Chinese officials have confirmed that the controversial Tibet leg of the 2008 Summer Olympics torch relay has been postponed.

Beijing Olympic officials previously announced a delay in the torch relay through Sichuan province after the area was hit by a powerful earthquake May 12. But now officials confirm additional changes in the route. No official reason has been given.

The flame originally was scheduled to travel to Tibet after the Chongqing relay, which is finishing Monday. Instead, the new schedule makes the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region the next stop, followed by Tibet and Qinghai.

Media reports say the Tibet leg also has been shortened and may be limited to the capital, Lhasa.

Some Tibetan exiles and human rights activists have called on China to cancel the Tibet relay.

After last month's earthquake, officials decided to postpone the Sichuan leg of the relay until August and skip the worst affected areas of the province.

Tibetans in Sichuan joined with Tibetan communities in nearby provinces in several weeks of demonstrations earlier this year. There are unconfirmed reports that scattered Tibetan protests continue.

The main torch relay already has visited Tibetan areas in Yunnan province. A separate relay took the flame to the top of Mount Everest on the Tibet-Nepal border. (*multiple source*)

June 20, 2008

Security Tight in Tibet Ahead of Olympic Torch Relay and tension are high as the olympic torch arrives in lhasa

Security is tight in Lhasa Friday as it readies to host the Olympic torch relay three months after violent anti-government protests rocked the remote city.

Foreign journalists who were allowed to travel to Lhasa to cover Saturday's relay say banners and billboards welcomed the Beijing Olympic Games, but note that police and security troops were visible throughout the city.

Tibet has been under tight security since mid-March when riots spread from Lhasa to other Tibetan regions of the country. Tibet is still closed to tourists and journalists despite a government pledge to allow more open media coverage in the run up to the Olympics.

The Associated Press says police stopped one of its cameramen from shooting street scenes today in Lhasa and forced him to erase footage of security arrangements. (*voanews.com*)

June 21, 2008

Olympic Torch Relay Held in Tibet

The Olympic torch relay was held in Lhasa under tight security. It began at the exiled Tibetan leader Dalai Lama's former summer palace, Norbulingka, and ended at the hilltop Potala Palace - the traditional seat of Tibetan rulers.

Handpicked spectators cheered runners as they carried the torch through the sealed-off city, while police and soldiers lined the relay route to prevent any unrest.



The torch run has been marred during its international tour by protests over China's policies in Tibet. In the Nepalese capital of Katmandu Saturday, hundreds of Tibetans protested outside a Chinese consular office to condemn the passage of the torch through Tibet.

Sharon Hom, director of the New York-based group Human Rights in China, called the Tibet relay "provocative," and said it could aggravate tensions in the region. (*voanews.com*)

Picture identities of visiting monk students of Sera Monastery arrested on March 10, 2008 from Barkhor Street, Lhasa, for their pro-Tibet protest.



Lobsang,
Age: 15,
Oenpo (dbun po)
Monastery



Tsultrim Palden,
Age: 20,
Oenpo (dbun po)
Monastery



Lobsang Ngodup,
Age: 29,
Oenpo (dbun po)
Monastery



Lobsher,
Age: 20,
Oenpo (dbun po)
Monastery



Phurdhen,
Age: 22,
Oenpo (dbun po)
Monastery



Lobsang Thukjey,
Age: 19,
Oenpo (dbun po)
Monastery



Lodo,
Age: 30,
Oenpo (dbun po)
Monastery



Thupdon,
Age: 24, Oenpo
(dbun po)
Monastery



Soepa,
Age: 30,
Mangay Monastery



Tsegjam,
Age: 22,
Ka She Monastery



Geleck Pelho,
Age: 32,
Lungkar Monastery



Tenpa Rigsang,
Age: 26,
Lungkar Monastery



Thupwang,
Age: 30,
Darthang
Monastery



Pema Garwang,
Age: 30,
Darthang
Monastery



Samten,
Age: 17,
Lungkar Monastery

Lhasa's Neighboring Areas

March 14, 2008

Monks of Ratoe Monastery staged a major peaceful protest

The monks of Ratoe Monastery staged a major peaceful protest on 14 March 2008 in Nyethang Township, Chushul County, Lhasa Municipality, "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR"). They were later joined by ordinary Tibetans as they marched for about two and half kilometers toward the Township government headquarters demanding "Freedom in Tibet", "Independence for Tibet" and "Long Live Dalai Lama". Later Chinese officials arrived at the Monastery and conducted intense political and "patriotic re-education" campaigns against what they described as inroads made by the "Dalai Clique and separatist forces" in the monastery. Monks were repeatedly pressed to surrender. *(multiple source)*

April 16, 2008

Hundreds of Chinese security forces consisting of Public Security Bureau (PSB) and People's Armed Police (PAP) surrounded the Ratoe Monastery

The troops surrounded the Monastery around 4.30 AM and soon raided the monks' residences. All photos of the Dalai Lama and mobile phones were confiscated. Fifty monks were eventually arrested for involvement in the 14 March 2008 protest and taken to the Chushul PSB Detention Centre. While 18 monks were eventually released, 32 were still being held there. Most were in their early twenties. One was 45-year-old Namkar, 45, who had earlier served two years in Drapchi Prison for involvement in the 1989 uprising in Lhasa. Another was 38-year-old Thupchok, a prominent Democratic Management Committee (DMC) of Ratoe Monastery. The monastery was still surrounded by around 90 monks. *(multiple source)*

March 15, 2008

Phenpo Lhundup Dzong

In Phenpo Lhundup Dzong (under Lhasa municipality) there was a protest by monks and laypeople.

Gaden Monastery (about 50 kms east of Lhasa) remains under extremely strict Chinese military presence. The number of military personnel is so high that they are running out of tent space for their personnel. *(tibet.net)*

Many Tibetans were killed during the harsh crackdown in Phenpo County on 15 March 2008. One of such confirmed information was Jinpa, a 23 years old Tibetan farmer shot dead by the Chinese security forces. He hailed from Jangkha Township, Phenpo Lhundup County, Lhasa City, "TAR". He died of bullet wounds on 15 March 2008 in Phenpo County during the protest. *(TCHRD)*

Tashi Lhunpo monastery (Shigatse) AND Toelung county

There was shooting inside the compounds of Tashi Lhunpo monastery (Shigatse) and at least 40 laypeople protesting behind the Tashi Lhunpo monasteries have been arrested as confirmed by one source.

One reliable source has confirmed that a military truck full of dead bodies was seen being carried away towards Toelung county (under Lhasa municipality). *(tibet.net)*

March 16, 2008

In Meldro Gungkar county, east of lhasa (lhasa Municipality)

In Meldro Gungkar County, east of Lhasa (Lhasa municipality) protests were held by the monks of Pangsa monastery. Some of the monks were arrested; however, they were released later due to pressure from the lay people. Some of the monks who

protested were able to run for safety towards a hill close. *(multiple source)*

March 17, 2008

Toelung County (Lhasa) - Massive Protest held

Around 3pm local time, seven monks from Dzingkha monastery who were dressed in plain clothes started a protest on their way to Dechen town. Police personnel from Dechen town were not able to stop the determined monks from protesting and additional police personnel were called in from the County. The local people joined the protests after the County police tried to stop the protestors. People's Armed Police was called in later from Lhasa after the protest grew in size and intensity. Around thirty of the protestors arrested were and treated very aggressively.

Names of three of the arrestees can be confirmed as follows:

- 1) Samdup (from Tashi Khangsar, Dechen town, Toelung County, Lhasa).
- 2) Lobsang (from Tashi Khangsar, Dechen town, Toelung County, Lhasa).
- 3) Tsering Dolkar (from Tashi Khangsar, Dechen town, Toelung County, Lhasa) *(ITCO)*

Pangsa Monastery and Meldro Gongkar County (about 70 km from Lhasa)

Today, thousands of protestors led by monks of Pangsa and other monasteries of Medro Gongkar County (above 70 km from Lhasa) held a massive protest. Seven People's Armed Police (PAP) trucks full of police personnel which arrived at the scene was not able to suppress the protest and more PAPs continue to be arrive at the scene. All schools, shops and offices in the area were shut down.

(multiple source)

March 28, 2008

Toelung Dechen (Ch: Duilongdeqing) County, Lhasa Municipality- Evidences being destroyed by the Chinese army

Chinese armed forces were trying to wipe out all evidences related to the recent protests in Tibet by burning the dead bodies of people killed since the March 14 protest. Around 83 corpses were burnt altogether in an electrical crematorium, which was built by the Chinese government a few years back in the Dhongkar Yabdha shang town in Toelung Dechen County under Lhasa Municipality. Eyewitnesses spoke of dead bodies being transported in army trucks to the site.

Following is the list of new names* we can confirm for people who have been killed since the March protests in Tibet.

1. Lobsang Tenzin

Age : 24 year
Place : Gongkar (Ch: Gongga) County, Lhoka Prefecture, "TAR" Resident of Lhasa
Father's Name: Phuntsok Gyaltzen(Late)
Profession: Tailor
Died due to being shot on upper body.

2. Gyaltzen Yarphel; Lobsang Tsering (name prior to becoming monk)

Age : 43
Place : Gaden Monastery
Fathers name: Tsering Bhakdo

3. Ngawang Sherab Migmar (name prior to becoming monk)

Age : 24
Place : Gaden Monastery
Fathers name: Tsering Bhakdo

(tibet.net)

April 01, 2008

Tibetan died of torture in Phenpo County

Dawa, a 31 year-old farmer from Dedrong Village, Jangkha Township, Phenpo Lhundup County, Lhasa City, died after being subjected to brutal torture by prison guards. He was arrested while participating in a peaceful protest in Phenpo County on 15 March 2008. The Chinese authorities imposed a fine of 1000 yuan (US \$ 125) on his family for causing destruction to public property and bringing damages to economy. *(multiple source)*

April 12, 2008

Many arrested for demonstration in Meldro Gungkar County

Numerous monks and laypeople were arrested while a nun committed suicide after many monks from Pangsa monastery in Tashi Gang township of Balab sub district, nuns from Choekhor (colloquially known as Choekhook) nunnery in sibook township and monks from Dhomo monastery staged a protest at Meldro Gungkar County. *(tibetan review)*

April 16, 2008

Chushul (Ch: Chushui) County, Lhasa municipality - Fifty monks arrested after PAP conducts raid at 4 am in the morning

Around 4 am , huge numbers of People's Armed Police (PAP) surrounded Ratoe monastery. Monks were summoned to the monastery courtyard while a raid was then conducted at their residences. Portraits of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, political books and materials and mobile phones belonging to 70 monks' were confiscated. The monastery's telephone was confiscated.

Fifty monks were arrested and taken to Chushul County prison. *(tibet.net)*

April 25, 2008

Lhundrup County, A nun in critical condition after being beaten for participating in peaceful protest

Around 20 people from the Gaden Choekhor town, arrested during the protests in March, were transferred to Lhasa on 25 April. A nun from Shar Bhumpa nunnery, from Gerpa family, Chugkha Jang village, Phenpo Lhundrup County, who had participated in the protests in March was severely beaten and injured and was admitted to the County Hospital. She was later discharged from hospital while still in critical condition. *(tibet.net)*

April 28, 2008

Shugseb Nunnery, Tselnashang, Chushul (Ch: Chushui) County, Lhasa municipality-19 nuns and 4 monks arrested and detained

Nineteen nuns, two named including Dangdug and Tsondue of Shugseb Nunnery, and four monks from the Gangri-Thoekar Monastery, located close to the nunnery, were arrested by the County police for organizing a peaceful protest in the region. They were being held in the Chushul County prison. This event was triggered by a previous incident around 10 March, when 19 nuns from the Shugseb Nunnery organized a peaceful protest march from their monastery to Nyen Thangla Chenmo. The nuns were arrested and being detained in the Chushul County prison.

Armed forces had imposed tight restrictions within the nunnery and the monastery. There are about 300 nuns in the Shugseb Nunnery and about 20 monks in the Thoekar Monastery. *(multiple source)*

May 04, 2008

Chamdo (Ch: Changdu) County, Kham (incorporated into Chamdo Prefecture, "TAR") - Tibetan man shot and killed after he resists arrest

Around 9 am, seven PSB officials arrived at the home of Akar Tashi (around 38/39 years of age) in Lathok Yuchu Township, Chamdo County to arrest him, which resulted in a scuffle. Akar Tashi was shot dead. He in turn stabbed one of the soldiers. Akar was allegedly involved in the recent Lhasa protests and also involved in other political activities in the past.

(multiple source)

May 19, 2008

Dingri County, Shigatse (Ch: Rigaze) Prefecture, U-Tsang ("TAR") - 12 monks from Shelkar Choede monastery arrested for refusing the "patriotic re-education"

Twelve monks, including Democratic Management Committee member Khenrab Tharchin, were arrested by County PSB from Shelkar Choede monastery, in Dingri County on May 19 for refusing the "patriotic re-education" being provided at the monastery. Strict restrictions were imposed on the monastery, which was sealed off while the monks' room were searched. Four of the arrested monks were held in the detention centre of Dingri County while 8 were taken to Shigatse Prefecture.

Another Democratic Management Committee member Lobsang Jinpa was arrested later for having links with the arrested monks and for refusing the patriotic re-education. He was earlier detained till the beginning of May for his alleged involvement in Lhasa protest of March 14, for which he was held there.

Monks of Shelkar Choede monastery had also protested many years back, including in 1993.

(tibet.net)

Tibetan areas in Sichuan

March 15, 2008

Fresh protests in Amdo Ngaba (Aba Prefecture of Sichuan Province)

300 monks from Amdo Tagtsang Lhamo Kirti monastery in Dzoge County (Ch: Zoige) and some 100 lay people staged demonstration in the local market. As the the leaders of Zoegey and Ngaba counties met at the monastery, monks started protesting. Two truckloads of troops surrounded the monastery. Ten monks were arrested. *(phayul.com)*

March 16, 2008

Protest by Amdo Ngaba Kirti monks

Thousands of monks erupted into spontaneous protest after their morning prayer session. They raised slogans calling for "Tibet independence," "return of the Dalai Lama" and "freedom for Tibet". Chinese troops soon



Photographic evidence of the bloody crackdown on peaceful protesting Tibetan at Ngaba County, Sichuan

burst into the Monastery, which housed around 2,800 monks, and lobbed tear gas on the protestors.

Almost 20 people, including 16-year-old student Lhundup Tso, were confirmed dead. The others identified were Tashi Wangchuk, Ghegyam, Norbu, Lotse, Ghepan Thalo, Ngudrup Tso, Atisha, Sangye, Tsezin and identities of others were not yet known.

(multiple source)

March 17, 2008

Around 40 middle school students arrested in Marthang County (Ch: Hongyuan xian), Ngaba (Ch: Aba) Prefecture

Around 40 Tibetan middle school students were severely beaten before being arrested at around 8:30 AM, following a demonstration in which around 100 students called for the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet. Following it around 700 students of the Marthang Nationality Middle School staged a protest outside Marthang County PSB office. *(TCHRD)*

March 18, 2008

Karze County and Sethar county in (Sichuan province) Protests Students protesters beaten (Marthang County)

There was a massive protest in front of Karze County government headquarters. Monasteries were completely blocked by troops since a few days ago to prevent the monks from taking part in the protests. Also Protest continues in Serthar and Dzoerge Counties. *(tibet.net)*

March 19, 2008

It looked like China was going to war

The first report on Sunday cited anonymous residents of Aba Town who said eight bodies had been left outside a major monastery. The bodies, all of them Tibetan, included a 15-year-old student who had been protesting against the Chinese. By Sunday night the

figure had grown to 10, A few hours later, reports said the number of dead had edged up to 16 and continued to rise.

We watched line after line of military vehicles thunder past us. We wondered whether they were the same convoys we had passed in the pre-dawn hours at the beginning of our journey.

By nightfall, when we were back on the road towards Chengdu, several dozen military convoys rolled past us, carrying even more soldiers, equipment, and supplies.

For a moment, as the headlights lumbered past our jeep, I thought it looked like China was going to war. And no one was going to be able to cover it.

(NBC channel)

March 20, 2008

Conducting door-to-door searches

In Ngaba, and Chinese police were conducting door-to-door searches of all Tibetan homes in the area. "Pictures of the Dalai Lama or any articles, objects, or documents that are politically sensitive in nature are being confiscated." *(Radio Free Asia)*

March 22, 2008

Protests in Chabcha County of Amdo [Hainan/Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture]

Monks of Atso monastery staged a protest, putting up Tibetan flags and gathering on the hilltop just behind the monastery to hold incense-burning prayer ceremony. They raised slogans like 'Freedom for Tibet!', 'Long Live the Dalai Lama!', and 'Release the Panchen Lama!' The monks then walked to the township centre, where they pulled down the Chinese flag from the government school and burned it. Then they returned to the monastery and continued their protest. Three trucks full of police then arrived, and the head of the police threatened the monks with 'serious consequences' if they continued their protest. He told them that 'with just one phone call, we can finish you.'

The monks shouted back that they can no longer bear Chinese repression and that they are ready to sacrifice their lives. The head lama and young Rinpoche of the monastery then calmed the monks down.

(Radio Free Asia)

March 24, 2008

One shot dead and another in critical condition in Drango protest at Drango County (Ch: Luhuo Xian), Kardze Prefecture

A Tibetan protester was shot dead and another left in critical condition following indiscriminate firing by the People's Armed Police on the protesting Tibetans in Drango County. The protest was led jointly by the monks of Chokri Monastery and nuns of Ngyoe-go Nunnery of Drawo Township, were townspeople joined it. Around 200 protestors headed towards the township government headquarters chanting slogans "long live the Dalai Lama", "Independence for Tibet" and "freedom for Tibet".

On the way the protesters clashed with People's Armed Police (PAP) and Public Security Bureau (PSB) troops, who started firing live ammunitions. It led to the death of at least one monk, named Kunga, while another one, named Tsewang Dhondup, 30, was left in critical condition. *(TCHRD)*

March 25, 2008

Trehor Draggio monastery [Ganzi/ Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture]

After a special prayer session organized for those who had been killed in the Chinese crackdown in the Kardze area, monks marched toward the county center where they shouted slogans calling for long-life for the Dalai Lama and demanding his return to Tibet, the release of the Panchen Lama, and religious freedom and human rights. Other Tibetans joined in. Armed police tried but failed to remove the monks who later marched back to the monastery and continued their protests. Shots were fired, but the

monks dodged the bullets by lying flat on the ground and declared that they would not respond with violence, though some of them damaged Chinese government vehicles on the way back. The PAP later surrounded the monastery. *(Radio Free Asia)*

Hundreds of Tibetans at Holkha Township in Tsigorthang County staged a peaceful march and later held a prayer session for those killed in the recent series of protests in Tibet. Three Tibetans were arrested. *(TCHRD)*

March 28, 2008

China arrest over 572 monks from Kirti Monastery in two-day raid

Over 572 monks of Ngaba Kirti Monastery were arrested by the Chinese People's Armed Police (PAP) and Public Security Bureau (PSB) following a two-day raid in monks' residence on 28 and 29 March 2008. All monks with modern communication gadgets such as mobile phones, cameras, computers or MP3 players were arrested.

Around 30 Tibetans arrested a few days earlier were paraded around the street of Ngaba County in a



military truck to intimidate common people from undertaking further protests.

The pictures of the Dalai Lama on display at the monastery prayer wheel hut which were ear pierced, torn, scrubbed or removed by the officials during the raid. *(TCHRD)*

March 29, 2008

Monks reject patriotic education at Shiwa Monastery, Nyarong

A Chinese government “Work team” arrived at Shiwa monastery, Ralang Township, Nyarong County, for “patriotic re-education” classes. During one particular class, monks shouted slogans such as “Free Tibet” and “His Holiness the Dalai Lama should be welcomed to Tibet. And monks rejected Patriotic re-education classes. As a result, around 200 military personnel arrived at the monastery to suppress the determined monks. There are around 160 monks at Shiwa monastery. (*tibet.net*)

March 30, 2008

Gomang and Ngamey monks of Ngaba arrested

Raids were carried out by PAP and PSB in every residence of Gomang Monastery in Ngaba County. At least twenty monks were arrested. Also, 20 monks of Ngamey Dongri Monastery (a branch of Ngaba Kirti Monastery) in Ngaba County were arrested by PAP and PSB officers. (*multiple source*)

Monks of Shiwa Lhathim monastery (in Raloong Township, Nyarong County) staged a protest march towards the County Governmental Headquarters. However, they were stopped and sent back by security forces who then surrounded the monastery. (*tibet.net*)

April 02, 2008

Nuns of Tawu County (Ch: Daifu Xian) hold prayer session for those killed in recent crackdown

Around 200 nuns of Ratroe Nunnery staged a peaceful procession to showcase solidarity with and pray for those who had lost their lives in the recent spate of protests across the Tibetan plateau. They marched towards the county headquarters chanting prayers dedicated to long life for the Dalai Lama and praise of Tara.

Security forced made the nuns to dispersed and return after offering prayers in front of the County government headquarters. (*TCHRD*)

A Chinese “work team” arrived at many monasteries, including Tongkor monastery in Tongkor Township. The teams launched a signature campaign to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama, calling him a “splittist”. The monk in charge of the monastery, Lobsang Jamyang, openly rejected the campaign. Others also protested.

The 200 monks of Ba-Chodae monastery, Bathang County refused to sign a documents denouncing His Holiness the Dalai Lama for allegedly inciting the recent demonstrations in Tibet. Five monks, including abbot Jigme Dorjee and the Discipline master Yeshi, were arrested. (*tibet.net*)

April 03, 2008

Pictures of Tibetans shot dead by Chinese armed police

Pictures of Tibetans who died when Chinese armed forces shot live ammunition indiscriminately into a protesting crowd near Tongkhor Monastery in Kardze County on 3 April 2008. The protest broke out when monks of Tongkor Monastery (Ch: Donggu) in Zithang Township, Kardze County, Kardze “Tibet Autonomous Prefecture” (“TAP”), Sichuan Province, called for the release of two monks arrested for objecting to the Chinese ‘Patriotic Education’





April 12, 2008

Dartsedo (Ch: Kangding), Karze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture," Sichuan province - China has no plans to slow down "patriotic re-education" campaign

With many monasteries having rejected the patriotic education campaign, all County officials and monastery heads in Karze "TAP" were called for a meeting in Dartsedo (the location for Karze "TAP" Headquarters). The meeting was a failure and another one was scheduled. (*tibet.net*)



campaign in the monastery. At least 14 are known to have been shot dead on that day, as against eight previously reported. The bodies of the dead have not been returned to the families till date. (*TCHRD*)

May 05, 2008

A Tibetan woman succumbs to torture

Nechung, 38, a Tibetan woman in Ngaba County died after being subjected to brutal torture by Chinese prison guards. The mother of four was involved in peaceful protests on 16 and 17 March 2008 in Ngaba County. She was arrested on 18 March for allegedly being the first person to pull down the doorplate of the Township office. Her husband remained in hiding. (*TCHRD*)

April 05, 2008

Tawu (Ch: Daofu) County, Karze "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture,"-Sichuan Province - Massive Protest by monks and lay people.

Around a thousand monks and laypeople gathered at Nya-tso monastery for the annual Tor-kyak ritual (held to ward off evil forces). While they were on their prayer-march towards the Tawu County Government Headquarters, the laypeople were specifically blocked by the armed forces from moving ahead while the monks were let go. This led to a protest and shouting of slogans such as, "more human rights in Tibet" and "long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama."

Armed police opened fire, injuring many. Some who could not be treated at the County Hospital had to be rushed to a bigger hospital in China. (*tibet.net*)

May14-15, 2008

China arrests 55 nuns of Pang-ri Nunnery for protesting

Over 55 nuns in Kardze protested against the Chinese authorities. The protest was carried out by nuns of Pang Na Tashi Gepheling Nunnery situated in Su-ngo Township, Kardze County, (Ch: Ganzi) Kardze "TAP". The nuns were deeply hurt and angered by the high-handedness of the Chinese authorities' killing, torture and arrest peaceful Tibetan protesters in many parts of Tibet. Pang-ri Nunnery housed 80 nuns on regular days. (*TCHRD*)

May 18, 2008

China arrests a popular religious figure in Kardze County

Around 4.30 AM (Beijing Standard Time), the Chinese security forces had arrested Tulku Phurbu Tsering Rinpoche from his residence without stating any reason. He was a highly revered religious figure in Kardze County, “TAP”, and Sichuan Province.



Tulku Phurbu Tsering Rinpoche, much loved and revered for his religious vocation and for looking after the welfare of the local Tibetans in Kardze

County, was arrested, no reason being stated. Apparently he was arrested for his popularity with the local Tibetans. In the past, many of prominent Tibetan religious figures such as Khenpo Jigme, the founder of famed Sertha Buddhist Institute, Tulku Tenzin Delek, the founder of Kham Nalanda Monastery, who championed the welfare of Tibetan people and Bangri Rinpoche, the founder of Gyatso orphanage school in Lhasa were arrested under false and fabricated charges. *(multiple source)*

May 20, 2008

China arrests three nuns of Tehor Nyagay Nunnery in Kardz



Soe Choekyi
Lamna Village



Achoe from
Rida Village



Taga a.k.a Tashi
Yangtso from
Noekab Village,
Kardze County

Around 1:00 AM (Beijing Standard Time), three nuns — Achoe from Rida Village, Soe Choekyi from Lamna Village and Taga a.k.a Tashi Yangtso from Noekab Village – from the Nyagay Nunnery, marched

from Tehor Nyagay Nunnery towards Kardze County. The Nyagay Nunnery is very close to the famous Kardze Tehor Dargay Monastery.

They shouted slogans calling for “Freedom in Tibet”, “Dalai Lama should return to Tibet”, and “Immediate release of the political prisoners imprisoned by the Chinese authorities”. They were immediately detained by the County Security forces and taken away to unknown location. *(TCHRD)*

May 22, 2008

China arrests four nuns in Kardze protest

Around 6 PM (Beijing Standard Time), four Tibetan nuns of Nyimo Gaysey Nunnery in Tehor Kardze County had staged a peaceful protest at the County government headquarters, protesting against the recent crackdown of peaceful Tibetan protesters. They were immediately arrested and subjected to severe beatings and torture. The nuns had distributed loads of pamphlets in and around the County government headquarters calling for independence for Tibet and shouted slogans demanding “Long Live the Dalai Lama”, “The Dalai Lama to return to Tibet”, “Independence for Tibet” and “To release all political prisoners”. *(multiple source)*

May 23, 2008

China tortures and arrests two nuns of Dargay Hardu Nunnery for peaceful protest



Rinzin Wangdon,
Lharinyan Village



Jampa Lhamo
from Sadul

Two nuns of Dargay Hardu Nunnery, Ven. Jampa Lhamo, a 30-years-old from Sadul Village and Ven. Rinzin Wangdon, a 23-years-old from Lharinyan Village, Kardze County, staged a peaceful protest at the Kardze County Government headquarters and chanted slogans calling for the “Swift return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet”, “Long Live the Dalai Lama”, “Freedom for Tibet” and “Immediate release of all political prisoners”. They were soon detained and severely beaten. (*multiple source*)

May 28, 2008

China fires gunshot on peaceful protester in Kardze

Three nuns of Dragkar Nunnery in Kardze County staged a peaceful demonstration in Kardze County main market square. They chanted slogans calling for the “swift return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet”, “Long Live the Dalai Lama”, “Freedom for Tibet” and “Immediate release of all political prisoners”. They also distributed pamphlets calling for the “independence for Tibet”. They were held shortly after and taken away for questioning.

Another solo protest was staged by a 21-year-old female student, Rigden Lhamo of Tapontsang family from Lhakey Village, Thingkha Township, Kardze County, by unfurling the banned Tibetan national flag and shouted similar slogans at the county government headquarters. She was reportedly shot at with no further information. (*multiple source*)

June 01, 2008

Ngaba (Ch: Aba) County, Ngaba “TAP”, Amdo (incorporated into Chinese province of Sichuan) - Kirti monastery in danger of not having any monks

Monks of Kirti monastery started leaving their monastery for not being able to bear the severe restrictions and the patriotic education being imposed by the Chinese authorities. From the evening of June 2 till the morning of next day, all the monks, except

few senior monks above 70 years of age, have fled the monastery. (*tibet.net*)

June 06, 2008

Critically injures three monks in Kardze Protests

Three monks belonging to different monasteries in Drango County, staged a peaceful protest in front of the county government headquarters, calling for the “quick return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet” and “Freedom in Tibet”. All were severely beaten with electric prod, kicked and punch by the Chinese Security forces and needed urgent medical attention. Tsewang Dakpa in particular sustained multiple and severe injury from the torture that eyewitness recounted slight chances of his survival. (*TCHRD*)

June 08, 2008

China detains scores of nuns calling for the release of solo protester Tsering Tsomo, 27 years old nun of SamtenLing Nunnery

The Chinese security forces severely beat and then arrested Tsering Tsomo, 27-year-old nun of SamtenLing Nunnery in Drango County, following her act of defiance by staging a peaceful solo protest in the County by raising pro-Tibet slogans and distributing pamphlets calling for ‘the swift return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet’ and “freedom in Tibet”.

When the news reached her nunnery, more than 200 nuns staged a peaceful demonstration and headed towards the County headquarters. Security forces stopped them enroute, kicking and punching and even using electric prod and iron rod on the nuns. Scores were detained



and taken away in waiting military trucks to the County Detention Centre. (*multiple source*)

June 11, 2008

China detains at least three Tibetans for peaceful protest in Kardze, Tibet

At least three Tibetans were severely beaten and detained by the Chinese security forces for staging a peaceful protest, along with several others, in Kardze County, raising Pro-Tibet slogans and distributing pamphlets calling for “the swift return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet”, “freedom in Tibet”, “release of those arrested in recent protests” and “China quit Tibet” etc. (TCHRD)

June 21-22, 2008

Demonstrations in Kardze County

A Tibetan youth named Dragu of Khashul Village, Dado Township, Kardze County, was detained by the PAP as he had entered the main county market, calling for a free Tibet. He sported a white headband with the words “Bod Rangzen” (Free Tibet) written on it and with Tibetan flags painted on both of his cheeks.

On 22 June 2008, 24-year-old monk Tsering Phuntsok and 36-year-old monk Tashi Sherab, both of Khangmar Monastery in Kardze County, staged a peaceful demonstration in the County. In the afternoon of the same day, a 37-year-old monk named Sergha and 27-year-old monk, Yeshe Dargye, also of Khangmar Monastery staged further protest by distributing pamphlets and calling for free Tibet, and praying for the long life of the Dalai Lama and the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

After them on the same day another demonstration was staged by over 10 local Tibetans in the same County, led by an unidentified layman of Shillidha Village.

All the peaceful protesters whilst being brutally beaten were arrested by the Chinese armed forces. (multiple source)

Tibetan areas in Qinghai

March 09-10, 2008

Jyekundo, “TAP”

On 9 March, hundreds of banned portraits of the Dalai Lama were confiscated from a number of homes in Jyekundo, (Ch: Yushu/Jiegu) “TAP”, Qinghai Province during a midnight raid conducted by local Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials. Two families were reportedly fined 500 Yuan each for possessing the banned portraits. The next day, pamphlets calling for Tibet’s independence were seen pasted on the walls around the area. (TCHRD)

Ditsa Monastery and Lutsang Monastery, Mangra County, Tsolho “TAP”

Around 20 Chinese officials convened a meeting of monks at Ditsa Monastery, Bayan County, Tsoshar “TAP” (Ch: Haidong). However, around 70 monks walked out of the meeting carrying the portrait of the Dalai Lama and shouted pro-independence slogans. Later the monks proceeded towards a small hill behind the monastery to offer Sangsol Prayer; they were joined by onlookers, swelling the number to around 400. Open calls for solidarity with “the peace marcher from Dharamsala to Lhasa,” initiated by leading exiled Tibetan NGOs, were even reportedly raised by the monks.

Protest was also reported from Mangra County of Tsolho (Ch: Hainan) ‘Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture’ (“TAP”) on 10 March, involving about 150 monks of Lutsang Monastery and around 200 laypersons from the area. They converged outside the County Assembly Hall where a government sponsored show was going on, which was quickly discontinued. The protesters shouted slogans such as “Long live Dalai Lama” and “The Dalai Lama should return to Tibet”. (multiple source)

March 16, 2008

Fresh Protest broke out in Rebkong County (Ch: Tongren xian), Malho Prefecture (Ch: Huangnan) "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture



(Monks burn incense on a hill above the Rongwu Monastery at Tongren, in China's Qinghai province Sunday March 16, 2008)

Fresh protest broke out in Rong Gonchen Monastery. Around 300 monks of conducted incense-burning ritual on the hill just behind the monastery during the early hours of the day, praying for Long-Life for the Dalai Lama. When it ended, the monks started a peace march towards the county government headquarters located in the downtown market area, joined by laypeople. However, within minutes they were confronted and blocked by the security personnel. They surrounded the monastery and detained the monks there. Teargas shells were reportedly fired on the on the crowds to disperse them. (TCHRD)

March 17, 2008

Monks hold incense burning, call for return of Dalai Lama in Rebgong

Monks of Rongwu monastery in Rebgong made incense offerings while reciting prayers for the Dalai Lama and also called on the authorities to let the Dalai Lama return to Tibet, and to "hand back the Panchen Lama and his parents to the Tibetan people." But they were apparently deterred from taking the protest further by armed police who arrived on the scene. The same source said: "[Since earlier protests three weeks ago] the monks at Rongwu have been under



h e a v y supervision, with security personnel stationed in their rooms, w h o accompany them even to

go to the bathroom."

Later, work teams were sent to visit Tibetan families and compelled them to sign pledges not to protest, and more armed police were sent to Rebgong. (ICT)

T s a n g Monastery, Yulgan County (Malho, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Q i n g h a i Province) a protest by over



500 monks was held around 10AM this morning. Monks put up the Tibetan flag on the monastery rooftop and also carried the portrait of His Holiness the Dalai Lama while protesting peacefully. The People's Armed Police (PAP) has arrived to suppress the protestors however the protest continues. (tibet.net)

March 18, 2008

Gepa Sumdo County - Protest held Smoke appeared above the golden roofs of Rebkong

Defiant Tibetan monks burned incense today despite orders from Chinese police. Smoke appeared above the golden roofs of Rebkong monastery in a sign that they are determined to stand up for their beliefs. In fact, the conflict between Tibetans and the authorities began in Rebkong even before the protests in Lhasa. The subsequent demonstration, late last month, brought together the 470 monks of the monastery and more than 1,000 ordinary local people, before police fired tear gas to break up the crowd. (telegraph.co.uk)

March 21-27, 2008

Tibetans in Ponkor Township staged a peaceful protest in Darlag County

The Tibetan people from Ponkor Toema and Mema Townships in Darlag County staged a peaceful protest by pulling down a Chinese national flag and replacing it with the banned Tibetan national flag. The Chinese responded by dispatching five big and small military vehicles to Darlag County on 22 March 2008. While the military vehicles were entering the County, a group of 350 horsemen charged and blocked them while protesting against the authorities.

On 23 March 2008, the monks of Ponko Monastery and a local religious lama Gurlu intervened and pacified the escalating tension on both sides. On the same day, around 30 Chinese military vehicles came to Darlag County to quell the peaceful protesters.

On 24 March 2008, around 50 Tibetans from Ponkor Toema and Mema Township were arrested for taking part in peaceful protest. Later on 25 March 2008, 10 Tibetans and 40 other Tibetans were again arrested. In the backdrop of persistent arrest threats and intimidation by the Chinese security forces, around 400 Tibetans from Ponkor Toema and 100 Tibetans from Ponkor Mema Townships fled and sought hide outs on nearby mountain tops on 26 March 2008. In response, around 860 Chinese security forces surrounded the mountain from various sides. Days later the Chinese security forces were luring the hiding Tibetans to surrender by promising leniency in punishment. On 27 March 2008, two Tibetans surrendered, to be severely beaten and tortured.

Hundreds of Tibetans were arrested during the above incidents. (TCHRD)

March 22-23, 2008

Hundreds of Tibetans protested in Chentsa, Malho "TAP"

Around hundreds of Tibetans carried out a peaceful protest in Markhul-thang Township, which consisted of four villages, located in Chentsa County, Malho

"TAP". After carrying out a special religious ceremony for a bountiful harvest, several hundreds Tibetans staged a peaceful protest by proceeding to the County headquarter, chanting slogans. They carried a portrait each of the Dalai Lama and the missing eleventh Panchen Lama Gedun Choekyi Nyima. They also carried the banned Tibetan National flag while shouting "Long Live the Dalai Lama", "The Dalai Lama to return to Tibet", "Release the eleventh Panchen Lama Erdeni Gedun Choekyi Nyima" and "Freedom for Tibetan people". However, near the County Headquarters, prominent local religious leaders requested the peaceful protesters to turn away to avoid bloodshed and loss of human lives. The demonstrators were later sent back to their respective places. Hundreds of Chinese security forces waited at the County headquarter in full combat gears.

Many monks of Makur Namgyaling Monastery erupted into peaceful protest but were stopped by the Chinese security forces.

Around 800 Tibetans from Lha village, Nyarong Monastery, Lowa village and Meru village erupted into protest demonstrations. However the Chinese security forces stopped the peaceful Tibetan protesters when they were at a place called Lokog.

A large contingent of Chinese paramilitary troops from Siling (Ch: Xining) were sent to Chentsa County to quell the Tibetan protesters when the report last came in. (TCHRD)

March 25-27, 2008

Hundreds hold solidarity march at Holkha Town in Tsigorthang County (Xinghai Xian) Tsolho "TAP"

Hundreds of Tibetans, including monks, staged a peaceful solidarity march at the main market square of Holkha Township. They called for an immediate end to the brutal crackdown on the Tibetan protesters in Lhasa and series of Tibetan protests in other parts of Tibet. Many marchers carried traditional prayer wheels in their hands while reciting prayers (Mani Mantra); other held a huge banner which read in both

Tibetan and Chinese: Peace, Democracy. We mourn and pray (mani mantra) for our people who lost their lives. The march ended at the Holkha Township government headquarters where a sit-in protest and prayer recitation was held throughout the day.



On 26 March, over 600 Tibetans from nine villages under Holkha Township staged a day-long peaceful sit-in protest in front of Township government headquarters demanding immediate release of those arrested. The authorities also launched an early morning raid in the homes of Tibetan suspected to be the leaders in the previous day protest. At least three Tibetans including a female, were arrested from their homes. A PSB notice demanded surrender by those involved in the “illegal” 25 March protest.

On 27 March, hundreds of additional PAP and PSB officials in military trucks were flooded into the market place to check a further outburst of protest by Tibetans. *(multiple source)*

April 03, 2008

In solidarity, Tibetans march with prayers in Tsolho

Tibetans from all walks of life in Holkha Township, Tsigorhang County (Xinghai Xian) Tsolho “TAP” staged a peaceful solidarity march and later held a prayer session for those who had lost their lives in a series of protests in the area on 25 March. At the township government headquarters, three Tibetans were arrested. *(multiple source)*

April 17, 2008

Over hundred Tibetans arrested in Rebkong County (Ch: Tongren Xian), Malho (Ch: Huangnan) “Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture”

Twenty-two monks of Rong Gonchen Monastery staged a peaceful demonstration in Rebkong County market, calling for the release of three monks who had been arrested on 13 April for participating in a peace march on 16 March. All were arrested. When news of it reached the monastery, 80 monks marched to the County market and called for their release. Townspeople joined the monks and the group became large and very loud.



former chief of Rong Gonchen Monastery

When the situation became extremely tense, the monastery’s former chief, the 80-year-old Alak Khasutsang, tried to diffuse the tension between the demonstrators and the security forces. But the Chinese started to severely beat every one at the scene. Over 80 Tibetans, including monks, were arrested and taken away to the County Public Security Bureau Detention Centre. Alak Khasutsang was also beaten and severely injured. *(TCHRD)*

Geshe Tenzin Choephel, a resident of Xining City and teacher of Qinghai University for Nationalities

Around 6 PM scores of Chinese armed security forces raided monks’ residences at Rong Gonchen Monastery. The monks were ordered out onto the monastery’s courtyard where they were made to kneel down with hands behind their heads. The fully armed Chinese security forces seized all photos of the Dalai Lama found in the monks’ rooms. *(TCHRD)*



April 28, 2008

A Tibetan nomad shot dead in Amdo Golog

Armed Chinese security forces surrounded a nomadic hamlet in Ponkor Toema Township at the break of dawn, and fired live ammunition into it. Nomad Choetop, 22, was killed. The security forces took the dead body with them, so that no funeral rites could be performed.



(TCHRD) Choetop who was killed during the gun fire

June 20, 2008

Rebgong (Ch: Tongren) County, Malho (Ch: Huangnan) "TAP", Amdo (incorporated into Chinese province of Qinghai) - Group of monks arrested from Rongpo monastery

A group of monks, including Jigme Dawa, 40, who presides over the assembly of monks in Rongpo monastery in Rebgong County, were arrested by the county PSB. Jigme was earlier arrested on 18 April but released later on after the monastery's guaranteed his good conduct. Also, he had been jailed for one year in 1999 after a "patriotic re-education" drive.

(tibet.net)

July 26, 2008

Four Tibetans arrested for protesting against festival to greet Olympics

Four Tibetan youths in Nangchen County of Jyekundo (Ch: Yushu) "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP") in north eastern Qinghai province were arrested the PSBs for protesting against a local Summer Festival planned to be held at Drokshog Township by the Chinese to greet the upcoming Beijing Olympic Games. They had shouted slogans in the presence of a large number of local government officials and people at the site of the planned summer festival, saying, "this

is not the year to celebrate as Tibetans have suffered untold repression under the Chinese regime, rather it is time to mourn and offer prayers (for those died and imprisoned in recent protests across Tibet)," "we want freedom" and "the Dalai Lama should return to Tibet".

(TCHRD)

July 28, 2008

Residents of Drokshog Township wrote an appeal letter

Residents of Drokshog Township wrote an appeal letter to the County authorities, calling for the immediate release of the four Tibetans held the day before and vowed to continue to plead until this is not done. (multiple source)

Tibetan areas in Gansu

March 14, 2008

Gunshots fired as thousands of Tibetans hold fresh protest in Amdo Labrang Sangchu County, Kanlho "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP")



The Tibetan protests spread outside the Tibet Autonomous Region for the first time. It began with around 50 Labrang monks protesting by carrying the Tibetan national flag and shouting "Tibet Independence" slogans around 2:00pm. Some 600 more monks from the same monastery later joined the demonstration. The number later swelled up to few thousands when general public continued to join the procession of monks and the protest became more intensive.

Police fired live ammunitions in the air and started to beat the demonstrators when the procession reached Sangchu County Public Security Bureau headquarters. There the protesters shouted more loudly, seemingly out of control. The Chinese started shooting at the protesters, with the result that they scattered rapidly. *(multiple source)*

March 15, 2008

Protests in Amdo Labrang

Fresh demonstration erupted in the morning in Labrang. Thousands of people including monks from Labrang, who started it, staged a peaceful demonstration at the county government's headquarters. It started at a place known as Choeten Karpo (White Stupa) where people offered Sangsol Prayer (incense burning ritual). After the prayer session, people raised "pro-independence" and "Long live the Dalai Lama" slogans and headed towards the Sangchu County Government headquarters. The PAP fired teargas and live ammunition into the air to disperse the demonstrators. *(TCHRD)*

March 16, 2008

Protests in Machu (Ch: Maqu xian), Kanlho "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP")

About 1500 local Tibetans in Machu County staged a peaceful demonstration in the main city of the County. They raised slogans calling for the "Independence for Tibet", "Long Live the Dalai Lama" and other demands. Agitated protesters also burnt down one police vehicle. Additional large-scale contingents of PAP and PSB were brought in to crackdown on the protesters.



Around 250 Tibetans of Nyulra Township destroyed the doors of County government offices during the

protest. The protestors also took off the Chinese national flag and hoisted the banned Tibetan flag in its place. They later shouted pro-independence slogans. *(phayul.com)*

March 18, 2008

Hundreds protest in Amdo Bora Sangchu County (Ch: Xiahe Xian), Kanlho "Tibet Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP")

Hundreds of Tibetans in Amdo Bora staged a peaceful protest a major ritualistic observation day on which the local monks and laypeople observe an incense-burning ceremony. After the ceremony, there was a sudden eruption of protest, with people calling for more freedom in Tibet raising banned Tibetan national flags. The crowd marched to the Bora Primary and Middle School before heading towards the County government headquarters. At the schools they pulled down the Chinese flags and replaced them with Tibetan national flags. Three truckloads of People's Armed Police were brought in as the crowd headed towards the county government headquarter. They fired a number of teargas shells into the protesting crowd, which therefore dispersed. *(TCHRD)*

March 19, 2008

Hundreds of Tibetan nomads and farmers protest in Luchu County

Protesters storm a Chinese town in Luchu County; More than a thousand Tibetans came over the mountains on horse back and on foot into a remote



Chinese town not far from the Tibetan border. Their call for freedom from Chinese rule and the end of years of brutal oppression.

Protests like these are repeated through out the country Tibetans demanding their freedom and their own country. Attempt to storm a govt office is repelled by tear gas and about a hudred heavily armed soldiers hold up inside sending Tibetan men and women into panic and retreat. A man was bleeding after being beaten by Chinese soldiers.

The crowd then moved to a town school where they tore down the Chinese flag and replaced it with the Tibetan national flag. (CNN)

March 20, 2008

Fresh ultimatum issued in Gansu for Tibetans to surrender

The law enforcement authorities of Kanlho (Ch: Gannan) “Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture” (“TAP”) Intermediate People’s Court, Procuratorate, and Public Security Bureau issued a public notice or ultimatum, warning against staging of protests. The notice mentioned the recent protests in Sangchu (Ch: Xiahe), Luchu (Ch: Luqu), Machu (Ch: Maqu), Chone (Ch: Zhouni), Tewo (Ch: Diebu) Counties and in Hezuo city,

The notice warned “criminal” to surrender by midnight of 25 March. However, the actual arrest has already begun in house-to-house raid since 19 March.

Additional reinforcement of thousands of troops on foot, trucks and helicopters arrived in the Tibetan areas of Gansu and Sichuan Province were brought in as the government stepped up its hunt for protesters in the latest series of protests on the Tibetan plateau.

(TCHRD)

April 09, 2008

Protesting monks storm media tour in western China Tortured monk released in unstable mental condition

Around fifteen Tibetan monks today defiantly briefed a group of foreign media personnel on a government-

managed tour currently in Sangchu County (Ch: Xiahe) in Gansu Province. The monks revealed the

g r a v e situation in the area and also delivered a clear-cut message to the media



group, concerning human rights abuses by the authorities in the area. According to a report by Reuters today (Protesting monks storm media tour in western China, By Lucy Hornby), “They said eight monks were still being held by authorities, but did not specify if they were from Labrang or elsewhere...

(multiple source)

May 07-08, 2008

Situation extremely tense in Xiahe County, defiant monks in front of media tour disappears

Thousands of PAP and PSB officers (estimated around 5000) surrounded Labrang Monastery and carried a sudden raid in the monastery. Around 140 monks were arrested. The next day a large number of monks of the monastery protested calling for the release of the monks. Fearing more protests, all but 18 monks were released. However, the monks continued to call for the release of the remaining 18 monks, to which the authorities relented by releasing another 11 monks. But protest continued, calling for the release of the remaining seven monks, which the authorities flatly refused to.

Two monks, Thabkhey and Tsundue, who defiantly spoke out in front of the government managed media tour in Sangchu County on 7 April 2008 disappeared.

(multiple source)

Main Land China

March 16, 2008

In Lanzhou City, the capital of Gansu Province

About 500 Tibetan students in Northwest University for Nationalities held a sit-in at the campus sports ground. They also posted pamphlets around the campus describing the situation in Lhasa.



Tibetan students in Hezuo Teachers' College in Southern Gansu also held a demonstration and fiercely collided with the school's CCP committee. As of now, a large number of military police are patrolling and monitoring Southwestern University for Nationalities in Chengdu in fear of Tibetan students taking action.

Spokesperson Whitticase of London based "Free Tibet Campaign" stated that the CCP authorities have deployed a massive number of troops across the entire western region and have even sent paratroops into Tibet. (*Epoch Times*)

March 17, 2008

Tibetan students hold candle light vigil in Beijing

Large numbers of Tibetans are enrolled in schools, colleges and universities in China in a policy seen by



ultimately, culture. There were reports of candlelights

vigils and other forms of peaceful protest and solidarity actions in some of them "We feel so very sad because we are helpless. They have killed monks and common people-you must know this"

(*tibetan review*)

Students of Tibetan ancestry at schools in Beijing are required to submit written papers specifying their feelings for the Dalai Lama, providing details of their parents, giving details of their own identity card and a written statement guaranteeing not to take part in political activities. (*The Times*)

March 18, 2008

China blocks YouTube over Tibet riots

China's censors have tried to stem the flow of information from Tibet reaching the outside world and also block foreign news from their own citizens. The government blocked the YouTube video sharing site within China, to prevent viewers seeing images of the protests and the army's brutal response. Any internet search for a website containing references to Tibet had already been censored.

Internet cafes have been closed, so while the internet may not have been blocked altogether there is little public access.

Land line telephone and mobile phone services have also been disrupted by the authorities, while there are widespread fears of phone-tapping for those still able to make calls. People suspect that the Chinese government are listening to their phones, so they don't talk, they are afraid," Lhuboom added.

No foreigner has been allowed to enter Tibet since the middle of last week. As tourists flock to leave the region, there are fewer foreign witnesses to the unfolding repression. (*telegraph.co.uk*)

August 05, 2008

Two Men Supporting a Free Tibet Unfurled Banners near Beijing's National Stadium

Two men scaled 120-foot light posts near the national stadium in Beijing early Wednesday morning and unfurled banners pleading for a free Tibet, the latest in a string of incidents this week in China during the lead-up to the Olympic opening ceremonies Friday. One banner declared "One World One Dream Free Tibet" and was hung along with the Tibetan flag, and the second read, "Tibet will be free."

The two men, members of the group Students for a Free Tibet, climbed down and identification was checked but no handcuffs



were used. Authorities were polite and there was no rough behavior observed by ABC News.

Within 10 minutes of the banners' release, several firetrucks with extended ladders were used to remove them from the light posts.

One climber, who identified himself as Ian from Edinburgh, Scotland, told ABC News via mobile phone while climbing down that he hoped his "skills would be useful to call for a real difference."

He said he entered China with a group from the United Kingdom on a tourist visa.

"I'll probably get detained by the police and then ejected out of the country but I believe it's not anywhere near the risk or the fear that Tibetans are living under the occupation of the Chinese government,"

The peaceful banner incident close to the stadium, known as the "Bird's Nest," followed closely on the heels of two violent incidents in China during the last several days. (*ABC news*)

August 08, 2008

Tibet activists stage a symbolic protest in Beijing an hour before Olympic opening ceremony

Three Tibet supporters staged a symbolic protest near the entrance to the Olympic park and the Bird's Nest stadium in Beijing today, one hour before the Olympic opening ceremony began. The three displayed Tibetan national flags. Chinese security tackled them 40 seconds after the protest began. Jonathan Stribling-Uss, 27, and Kalaya'an Mendoza, 29, Americans, and Cesar Pablo Maxit, 32, an Argentine-American, were immediately and forcibly detained.



"These activists have delivered a message of solidarity with the Tibetan people, highlighting the grave situation in Tibet just moments before the



Beijing Olympics began," said Executive Director of Students for a Free Tibet. (*SFT*)

August 09, 2008

Tibet protest in Tiananmen Square as Olympics begin in Beijing

Tibet supporters held a dramatic protest in Tiananmen Square early this afternoon, calling for an end to the Chinese government's occupation of Tibet. Four of the activists, lying down and draped in Tibetan national flags, staged a mock die-in with the famous portrait of Mao in the background. A fifth activist spoke about their reason for protesting there today.

"The Chinese government is seeking to cover up its ugly occupation of Tibet with the bright lights of the Olympics," said Matt Whitticase, Press Officer of Free



Tibet Campaign. “Our action at Tiananmen Square today highlights the determination of Tibetans and people of conscience that no amount of repression from the Chinese government will extinguish the desire of Tibetans for freedom and to speak out against China’s worsening abuses in Tibet.” (SFT)

August 10, 2008

Tibetan woman and four supporters protest at Tiananmen Square



at 3:10pm Beijing time just outside the southern entrance of Tiananmen Square

Padma-Dolma Fielitz and another activist held the Tibetan national flag aloft. As Chinese security officials tried to wrest the flags away, Padma was seen being dragged across the ground. Shortly after, three other activists attempted to unveil a large banner before being removed by Chinese security officials. The banner read: “Tibetans are dying for freedom.” The protest lasted approximately five minutes. All five protesters were detained by the Chinese authorities and their present whereabouts and status are unknown.

Tibet activists, including a Tibetan woman from Germany, Padma-Dolma Fielitz, 21, staged a protest today (phayul.com)

August 13, 2008

Tibet activists hang banner, blockade Beijing’s ‘Chinese ethnic culture park’

The five were behind locked bicycles across the entrance to the park, which prominently features an exhibit of



Tibetan culture. They wore t-shirts reading “Free Tibet” and held a banner reading “Tibetans Are Dying for Freedom.” A sixth activist, a Tibetan-Japanese woman, made a statement about what they were doing and the situation on the ground in Tibet. Nearby, two other activists unfurled a banner over a pedestrian bridge, which read “Free Tibet

The two activists at the bridge were immediately detained by security officials. The six outside the park were detained after approximately five minutes.

(SFT)

August 15, 2008

Pro-Tibet activists hang banner outside Beijing CCTV headquarters

Tibet activists hung a banner in front of Chinese state television’s new headquarters early this morning. The activists dropped the banner, which read “Free Tibet”



in English and Chinese, over an Olympics billboard reading “Beijing 2008” at 5:45 am Beijing time. Chinese

security officials gathered quickly outside the China Central Television (CCTV) building, and after

approximately 30 minutes, detained the five protestors. The activists' whereabouts are currently unknown.

The Chinese government hoped to exploit the Olympics to bolster its image domestically and abroad and to extinguish any debate about human rights or its rule of Tibet. The demonstrations for freedom and human rights by tens of thousands of Tibetans that swept the Tibetan plateau in March and April were

intentionally misrepresented in CCTV's coverage in order to manipulate the Chinese population's view of the Chinese government's policies in Tibet. Selective images conveyed on CCTV and other state media outlets portrayed the protests as overwhelmingly violent and motivated by ethnic hatred when in fact the vast majority were peaceful and targeted at symbols of Chinese government control. (SFT)

South America



In Brazil

March 30, 2008

Tibetan supporters in collaboration with the Municipality of Sao Paulo City organized a big vigil the Ibirapuera Park in Sao Paulo City calling for respect of human rights in Tibet. More than 200 people participated in the vigil.



Peaceful Protest Rally in Sao Paulo, Brazil on March 30

Leblón in Rio de Janeiro City. Protestors, carrying Team Tibet Beijing Olympic symbol and placards calling to "Stop Cultural Genocide in Tibet", covered their mouth with black band to symbolize the brutal

On the same day, a group of 30 T i b e t supporters also held a peaceful vigil at the beach of

silencing of Tibetans in Tibet. The protest was initiated by two local intellectuals, a photographer, documentary film-maker and singer Leoni.

Earlier on March 28, a small group of Tibet supporters held a protest outside the Chinese Consulate in Sao Paulo City.

In Chile

March 31, 2008

Chilean Tibet supporters once again undertook a peaceful vigil out the Chinese Embassy in Santiago, as a part of the



Pro-Tibet Vigil outside the Chinese Embassy in Santiago, Chile

Global Action on Tibet. More than 100 people participated in the vigil carrying Tibetan flags and Free Tibet placards. Earlier on March 17, they also organized another vigil outside the Chinese Embassy in Santiago.

In Peru

April 03, 2008

Tibet supporters and members of Amnesty International and National Human Rights Council staged a peaceful vigil outside the Chinese Embassy in Lima, calling for Peace and dialogue in Tibet. Around 100 people participated in the vigil.



Vigil outside the Chinese Embassy in Lima, Peru, on April 3 calling for Dialogue for Peace and Justice in Tibet

In Argentina

April 11, 2008

While the Beijing Olympic Torch was carried out in the Argentinean Capital of Buenos Aires on April 11, around 50-60 Tibet supporters staged a peaceful protest carrying Tibetan flags and placards reading



Pro-Tibet protests during Buenos Aires (Argentina) leg of Beijing Olympic Torch Run on April 11

“Peace in Tibet” and “Dialogue with the Dalai Lama”. Jorge Carcavallo, a journalist friend of Tibet, unfurled a giant banner reading “Free Tibet” near the city’s iconic Obelisk. A couple of Tibet supporters from Uruguay and Chile also participated in the protest.

On the same day, Argentinean Nobel Peace Laureate

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel denounced the Beijing Olympic Torch as “Beijing 2008: The Olympic Death Torch” through a statement. In the statement, the Nobel Peace Laureate said: “Human Rights have no borders and today the consciousness of mankind goes further than ideologies or economical and political interests. The right of a nation for self-determination and sovereignty has to be demanded and denounced everywhere in the world because it affects the whole mankind”. He urged the people for solidarity with Tibet in order to find alternative ways that would help to knock down the wall of intolerance.

In Mexico

April 12, 2008

On April 2, more than 800 Tibetan supporters, wearing white T-shirts with the names of those Tibetans killed during the recent unrest in Tibet, protested in Mexico City at two different important spots.

Protesters demanded Chinese leaders to engage in dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama to grant meaningful autonomy for Tibet. In an emotional rally, the Mexico protesters sang Tibetan National Anthem and displayed various placards reading “no torch in Tibet”, “China lies, people dies”, “in Tibet you are killed if you fight for your basic rights”, “in Tibet you are dead if you ask for the return of the Dalai Lama” etc. The protests were widely covered by the local and national media.



800 Tibetan supporters protesting at Angel of Independence Square in Mexico City on April 12

On the same day, a small but similar vigil was also held in Monterey, an important industrial city of Mexico in the north. A group of supporters of Tibet unfurled Tibetan National Flags and displayed various

posters depicting atrocities committed by the Chinese authorities while cracking down the protests in Tibet. The members also educated the onlookers about the situation in Tibet. Pro-Tibet activities in Mexico are carried out by Mexican Tibet Support Group called “Pensando en Tibet” (Thinking About Tibet”).

Africa

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

In South Africa

South Africans walk the Gandhi March for Tibetan April 20, 2008

A March organiser here on Sunday to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi’s salt march in India during the British rule saw the South Africans expressing solidarity with the Tibetan cause while stressing on the non-violent means.



Gandhi Salt March in Durban Picture: THEMBINKOSI DWAYISA

Organiser by ‘Satyagraha’, the march had approximately 1500 people walking from the Gandhi settlement, where he once stayed,

to the Durban beach-front along with some members of the Tibetan community.

Ela Gandhi, grand-daughter of Mahatma Gandhi and one of the organisers said the march aimed to instill the non-violent ways of life that Gandhi had fought for. We support the cause of Tibet, Myanmar and Zimbabwe in a non-violent manner, Gandhi said at the event.

“Mahatma Gandhi has shown there’s another way of

dealing with conflict, dealing with differences of opinion through non-violence”, she said.

Participants in the 22-kilometre long march, which has been an annual affair here for the past four years, echoed the sentiments of the Tibetan cause while stressing on peaceful means of protest.

“We’re joining the march to make people aware there’s a problem in Tibet and we’d like to bring peace there. His holiness the Dalai Lama is asking people to create awareness but in a peaceful, non-violent way”, a participant in the march said.

“The whole Satyagraha movement, the way he (Gandhi) accomplished so many things with passive resistance really touched me and I thought I should be part of this as well”, another said.

Australia

The Epoch Times

In New Zealand

Tibetan Supporters Protest at Chinese Consulate in Auckland March 28, 2008

Bloody pictures showing the bodies of those shot and tortured in Tibet since March 14 crowded the street outside the Chinese Consulate in Auckland on Friday. More than 100 protesters stood holding banners and Tibetan flags demanding the Chinese regime end the violent crackdown against Tibetan people, and release all political prisoners. Standing opposite the protesters, were four male Chinese students waving the Chinese flag and at times, hiding their faces. They said the protesters were lying about what the Chinese Communist Party’s soldiers were doing in Tibet.

Amnesty International spokesperson Margaret Taylor addressed the young men over the speaker system,



Amnesty International's Margaret Taylor and Green Party MP Keith Locke (both centre) protest for Tibetans outside the Chinese Consulate in Auckland

asking them to learn more about the human rights abuses caused by the regime in China and abroad.

She said international

media were being barred from entering Tibet and the regime was also blocking the UN from assessing the situation.

Friends of Tibet national president Thuten Kesang said he believes the New Zealand public strongly support the Tibetan people. She said international media were being barred from entering Tibet and the regime was also blocking the UN from assessing the situation.

Green MP Keith Locke was appalled that the New Zealand government was entering a free trade agreement with China.

He said the government should instead demand the Chinese regime end all human rights abuses: "Clean up your act. Stop trampling on the rights of the Chinese people, stop trampling on the rights of the Tibetan people."

He said Chinese workers have no freedom of speech, could not join labour movements, and the environmental standards are appalling.

"It is a bit shameful that the Government are choosing this time, in a couple of weeks to sign a free trade agreement," he said.

The Global Peace and Justice Auckland and Unite Union will hold a protest march in Aotea Square from 12pm Saturday, April 5.

REUTERS

In Australia

Tibet protest as torch lands in Australia

April 23, 2008

Pro-Tibetan protesters beamed laser signs onto the Sydney Harbour Bridge on Wednesday reading "Don't Torch Tibet" and "China, talk to the Dalai Lama", as the Olympic torch arrived in Australia under tight security.

A group of Tibetans who were on a hunger strike continued their 70 km (43 miles) march to Canberra to



rally against the torch as it landed at an airforce base in the capital under security usually afforded visiting world leaders...

North America

The Epoch Times

In Canada

Tibet Protests Escalate as Authorities Conduct House-to-House Searches

March 19, 2008

Since civil unrest began in Tibet a week ago, free Tibet supporters in various cities around the world have held rallies, vigils and peace walks in solidarity with the Tibetan people.

Despite the damp weather, a crowd of about 50 turned out for a candlelight vigil at the Legislature in Victoria Sunday evening, organized by the Canada Tibet Committee and Students for a Free Tibet.



Free Tibet supporters hold a Tibetan flag at a candlelight vigil in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Flanked by a huge Tibetan Flag and protest signs, TC Tethong, a former minister in the Tibetan government in exile in India, told the crowd that

the situation in Tibet is very precarious, with the authorities currently carrying out house-to-house checks in order to root out protesters.

“House-to-house searches mean whether you’re innocent or whether you’re involved in this demonstration, they can just kick the door in and you can be arrested, locked up.”



In United States

**Tibetans protest in New York against Chinese crackdown
April 15, 2008**

Hundreds of Tibetan exiles and Buddhist monks held a rally in front of the United Nations building in New York on Tuesday demanding an independent investigation into the March protests in Tibet.

Protesters carried 140 coffins to the UN headquarters to represent the number of people allegedly killed during anti-Chinese protests in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. Beijing says only 19 people died and 623 were injured in the riots, many of them Han Chinese murdered by Tibetan separatists.

The unrest in Tibet started on March 10 when Buddhist monks held a demonstration to mark the 49th anniversary of a failed uprising against Chinese rule, which erupted into widespread protests on March 14.



China deployed troops to the region and allegedly brutally cracked down on protesters attracting international criticism for their handling of the riots.

Chinese authorities accused the Dalai Lama of organizing the violence, but Tibet’s spiritual leader has denied the claims.

The crackdown has led to worldwide protests by pro-Tibet activists, and groups critical of China’s regime.

Europe

Ibiblo.org

In Netherland

**Protest in Netherland
March 10, 2008**

In The Hague, about 400 protesters attempted to storm the Chinese consulate. They managed to take down the Chinese flag and replace it with the Tibetan flag.



In Czech

Czechs protest against violence in Tibet outside Chinese Embassy March 16, 2008

Several tens of people met outside the Chinese Embassy in Prague today to protest against the violent suppression of the uprising in Lhasa, Tibet, by the Chinese police and military forces.

Ceskenoviny.cz/news said, the demonstration, organised by the junior ruling Green Party (SZ) along with several human rights associations, was attended



The demonstration outside the Chinese Embassy in Prague, photo CTK

by Greens chairman and Deputy PM Martin Bursik and Greens deputies' head Katerina Jacques, as well as former interior minister Jan Ruml.

Participants carried Tibetan flags and banners with the slogans "Stop Violence in Tibet" and "Don't Make Tibet Red."

The spokesman for the Tibetan exile government announced today that about 80 people died in Friday's unrest in Lhasa and another 72 people were allegedly injured. The official Chinese sources speak about 10 victims.

The situation in Tibet has calmed down during the weekend, but less intense protests continue in other Chinese provinces and they allegedly also claimed lives.

The Czech Foreign Ministry has officially condemned the violence in Tibet.

"We condemn the violence committed on peaceful and unarmed demonstrators who only want to express their

opinion freely," the ministry says on its website.

Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg has also demanded that information on the events in Tibet be freely released and representatives of independent media be allowed to enter the area.

The Greens today wrote in a letter sent to the Chinese ambassador to Prague that "the Tibetans' protests express their natural will to freedom."

A concert in support of Tibet, in which Czech bands and a Tibetan musician perform, takes place in a rock club in Prague center tonight, within the March Festival for Tibet 2008, organized in Prague and in other Czech towns by civic associations.



In Belgium

Belgium Tibetans hang Tibetan National Flag in Chinese Embassy March 17, 2008

At 9 am, ten Tibetans managed to get inside the Chinese Embassy. Raising anti-China slogans they wrote FREE TIBET on the walls of the Chinese Embassy. Five of them were arrested and one was injured as he fell down while hanging the Tibetan National Flag.

Following this there was a demonstration in front of the High Court "Justice Palace" in Brussels at 11 am till 12:45 pm. Around 300 Tibetans and westerners gathered with Belgium MP and Friends of Tibet members to show their support for the Tibetan cause. A five-minute silence was observed to pay homage to the Tibetans who sacrificed their lives for the Tibetan cause

The demonstrators then started slogans for FREE TIBET, NO OLYMPICS IN CHINA UNTIL TIBET IS FREE, among others. Many foreigners joined the protest showing their support and encouragement.

After the demonstration around 150 Tibetans went to

the Chinese Embassy and demonstrated for nearly 3 hours. Arriving at the embassy the Tibetans went directly to the main gate. Breaking it open, two Tibetans went inside and pulled down the Chinese National Flag. The Tibetan National Flag was unfurled in its place in front of the Embassy ground.



Almost 40 policemen arrived soon after with police dogs. Five people were arrested at the moment and many were injured by the police dogs. The police then ordered the Tibetan protestors to quit the place after 4:30 pm but the Tibetans continued the demonstration till 5pm and demanded the release of the Tibetans who were arrested

The police conceded to the demand and promised to release the Tibetans but only after the protestors left the Chinese Embassy ground. Complying with the request of the police the protestors left. However, two Tibetans staying on unknowingly staged a 24-hour hunger strike. The arrested Tibetans were later released.



In Germany

Tibetans held in German protest - Summary March 17, 2008

Berlin - Some 25 Tibetans were taken into temporary custody following an antiChinese demonstration in the southern German city of Munich on Monday. Police were called in after some of the protesters tried to force their way into the Chinese consulate-general and

others spray-painted the walls with “Stop Killing in Tibet” and other slogans.



No one was hurt in the protest, called by exile Tibetan groups to draw attention to what they called the excessive use of force by Chinese security forces to stamp out anti-Chinese sentiment in Tibet.

The German Society for Threatened Peoples called on the country’s foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, to send a commission to Tibet to investigate the situation.

The organization accused the minister of giving the Chinese a free hand to carry out “ruthless persecution,” just months ahead of the Olympic Games in Beijing.

The German government is opposed to a boycott of the Olympics in protest at China’s response to the violence in Tibet, an official spokesman said Monday.

“A boycott would achieve nothing for the Tibetan people,” spokesman Thomas Steg said, adding that dialogue was the best means to improve the situation for Tibetans.

An unscientific poll by the commercial German news broadcaster n-tv Monday found 90 per cent of respondents in favour of a boycott.....



In Italy

LRF Italia Demonstrates Against Chinese Oppression in Tibet March 17, 2008

The Laogai Research Foundation Italia has been demonstrating against Chinese Communist oppression

and the massacres that have been taking place in Tibet over the last few days.



University of Varese

the Tibetan Community in Italy, the members of LRF Italia have taken part in a number of protests, including a sit-in in front of the Chinese Embassy on March 10th, followed in the afternoon by a march of hundreds of people from Piazza Navona to Piazza Venezia in the center of Rome.

Today, Monday the 17th, our members and associates are participating in a large protest in front of the Chinese Embassy at 18:30 CET. More marches and demonstrations will be held in other major cities like Milano and Torino over the next few days. Claudio Tecchio, national coordinator for the Campaign for Solidarity with the Tibetan People, said “We cannot leave our Tibetan brothers and sisters alone.... today we are all Tibetans! There are at least 24 laogai in Tibet, where Tibetans are being detained and subjected to torture and other abuses. Here are just a few of them:



In Norway

Pro-Tibet Protest in Oslo March 18, 2008

Despite most of the families being out of the city for Easter holidays, over 200 protestors including members of Tibetan community in Norway and friends of Tibet gathered in front of the Stortinget, the Norwegian Parliament Building today to protest against the heavy handed crackdown of the uprising in Lhasa

Together with other organisations, like the Campaign for Solidarity with the Tibetan People and

and other parts of Tibet. The protest, in solidarity with Tibetans inside Tibet, was organized by the Norwegian Tibet Committee and Amnesty International, Norway.

The gathering was first addressed by the Amnesty International general-secretary John Peder Egenæs and then by the head of the Norwegian Tibet Committee Ms. Chungdak Koren condemning the brutal rule of China over Tibet. Chinese embassy gate Representatives of some Norwegian political parties also expressed strong support and sympathy with the Tibetan people. After singing the Tibetan National Anthem, the protesters headed to the Chinese Embassy at Tungen Alley.



Some ethnic Uighur activists from East Turkistan (so-called Chinese province of Xinjian) also joined the protestors in front of the Chinese Embassy, holding flags of East Turkistan and anti-Chinese banners. ...

The Times

In Austria

Tibet protest erupts in Vienna March 20, 2008

Two hundred protestors staged a protest against China’s crackdown in Tibet outside the Chinese embassy in Vienna today and one demonstrator tore down the Chinese flag.

A Tibetan demonstrator, Tso Tashi Taoh, climbed onto the balcony of the embassy, ripped off the Chinese flag and waved a Tibetan one in its place for a few minutes before he was removed by embassy employees. The Chinese embassy could not be reached for comment.

The protest, organised by the environmental Green party, also included exiled Tibetans in Austria and representatives of the Save Tibet organisation.

Demonstrators waved signs saying “Free Tibet”, “Human Rights for Tibet” and “Red China, leave Tibet.”

An Olympic flag carried the words “Beijing torch burns Tibet,” in reference to China’s decision to go ahead with plans to carry the torch through the Himalayan region on its way to the Beijing Olympic Games. Anti-China protests led by Buddhist monks in the Tibetan capital escalated last week into riots that have spread to Chinese provinces with Tibetan-populations.



smso.net

In Iceland

Protests in Iceland by pro Tibetan-2008

In Reykjavík, Iceland police protected the Chinese Embassy as roughly forty protesters peacefully protested outside, chanting pro-Tibet slogans and waving flags. Numerous Tibetan refugees participated in the protest.

The steps leading up to the Chinese Embassy were covered in red paint by a protester, and three members of the political youth organisation Ungir Jafnaðarmenn attempted to deliver a letter of disapproval to the Chinese Embassy, which was closed prior to their arrival and surrounded by the police.

wyborcza.pl

In Ma³opolskie

Shows Solidarity with Tibet 2008

“On Friday, the day the Olympic Games open in Beijing, the provincial government of Malopolskie will display Tibetan flags. The Chinese have sent a sharp protest”

The flags will be displayed on all buildings administered by the Malopolskie provincial government, including in the centre of Cracow on the Teatr im. Slowackiego, Teatr Stu, and Opera Krakowska buildings, or in Zakopane on the Teatr im. Witkacego building. Also in less high-profile places, such as in the town of Wielkie Drogi on the building of the Zespół Placówek Edukacyjno-Opiekuńczo-Wychowawczych educational complex.

‘A total of 156 buildings across the province fly the flags. These will be schools, museums, theatres, hospitals, clinics, official buildings’, says Anna Rudzka at the Malopolskie Province Marshal’s Office. ‘The province authorities have spent close to PLN 10,000 to buy the flags’.

The decision on displaying Tibetan flags across the province was made by the provincial assembly on the last day of March, shortly following reports that the Buddhist monks’ peaceful protests in Tibet had been crushed by the Chinese military.

‘We want to remind those of the region’s inhabitants who will be following the Games in People’s Republic of China about the country’s human rights violations’, says Kazimierz Czekaj, Civic Platform (PO) councillor and the campaign’s initiator. ‘We want to make a clearer gesture than just passing a appeal protesting the situation in Tibet’, he adds.

The councillors wrote in a special resolution: ‘The use of force against Tibetans demanding their rights has already caused the death of hundreds of people, and

many more have been wounded, imprisoned or persecuted. My, the Poles, know what it means to right for freedom and human rights. We also know the importance of the international public opinion's solidarity, because we experienced it on numerous occasions during the time of Solidarity. That is why we cannot keep silent. We demand that the Chinese government immediately discontinues the reprisals in Tibet. We demand respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights'.

China's reaction was not long in coming. An official letter was sent to the Malopolskie provincial assembly by the Standing Committee of Jiangsu Province, with which Ma³opolskie four years ago signed a friendship and cooperation agreement. It read, 'A few rioters committed acts of violence, including scuffles, armed robberies, plunders and arsons, violating law and order and causing great damage to life and property. These are independence slogan-chanting thugs. It is not right to believe the version of the events presented by just one side, the clique of Dalai and a few press agencies'.

'It's a foregone conclusion that we'll fly the flags. We're just now sending them to all the units in our jurisdiction with the instructions that they should be displayed on the day of the Olympics' opening', says Łukasz Strutyński, secretary of the Malopolskie marshal.



In Hungary

**Hundreds protest over Tibet
March 27, 2008**

Several hundred protestors gathered outside the Chinese Embassy in Budapest last Thursday to register their anger over China's brutal crackdown on demonstrations in Tibet.

A crowd waving Tibetan flags looked on as a protestor dressed as a Chinese army officer – wearing in turns

a pig mask and a skull mask – pretended to beat several screaming Tibetans with a truncheon. The embassy was fenced off and protected by border guards. Two people, one Tibetan and one Hungarian, were arrested after throwing paint bombs and stones at the embassy, breaking a window, but the rest of the demonstration passed off peacefully.....



NYDAILYNEWS.COM

In Greece

**Greece hands over Olympic flag to China amidst pro-Tibet protests
March 30, 2008**

Chinese spectators cheered Sunday as Greece handed off the Olympic flame for its journey to Beijing and relay through 20 countries. But protesters brandishing Tibetan flags stole the limelight.

Some two dozen activists chanted "Save Tibet!" and unfurled a banner reading "Stop Genocide in Tibet" before police intervened, detaining 21 protesters outside the Panathenian Stadium. Most were later freed.

A police c o r d o n prevented the demonstrators f r o m disrupting the final leg of Greece's relay from the



Acropolis to the marble stadium, the venue of the first modern Olympics in 1896....

TIBETAN COMMUNITY IN IRELAND (TCI)

In Ireland

Dublin Peace March for Tibet March 31, 2008

To show solidarity with the Tibetans in Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and all Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan who are protesting against the Chinese rule in Tibet since March 10, 2008. The peace march started at about 12.30 pm from the Spire, Dublin with about 100 supporters of Tibet carrying Tibetan Flags, banners, posters calling for freedom and human rights in Tibet. The peace marchers on their way to St. Stephen's Green were joined by public on the way showing their support for the cause of Tibet. A brief stop was made at the EU Office to deliver a petition on Tibet to the EU Office.

Then peace march headed towards the Taoiseach Office where TCI and TSG-I submitted petition on Tibet to the representative from Taoiseach Office. When the peace march reached the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), St. Stephen's Green representatives of DFA were waiting to receive petition from TCI and TSG-I. During the brief meeting with the DFA representatives, it was announced that Minister for Foreign Affairs has decided to meet TCI and TSG-I the next morning. The peace marchers welcomed the announcement with a huge applause.

Later in the afternoon, a candle light vigil took place outside the St. Stephen's Green where more than 50



people joined to show their solidarity with Tibetan monks, nun, men, women and children

in whole of Tibet who are protesting against the Chinese rule in Tibet.



In Costa Rica

March 31, 2008

The Tibet supporters also held a peaceful rally outside the Chinese Embassy in San Jose. Around 100 protestors gathered initially at the Channel 7 Television Office and from there they marched to the Chinese Embassy carrying Tibetan Flags and placards calling for peace and dialogue in Tibet. The Costa Rican Tibetan Culture Association also brought out a one-page advertisement drawing attention on the situation in Tibet in "La Nacion", the biggest national daily of Costa Rica

In Uruguay

A lone active Tibet supporter, Aloma Sellanes, have been giving interviews with the local media about the situation inside Tibet and also organized talks to create awareness on Tibet among the local people.



In Spain

Solidarity demonstration in front of the Chinese Embassy in Madrid

April 01, 2008

Tibetans living in Barcelona left for Madrid, the capital city of Spain on the evening of the 28th to make a manifestation outside the Chinese embassy in solidarity with the recent happenings in Tibet. Organized by Tibet House Foundation and Tibetan community Barcelona along with Commite Apoyo al Tibet, Madrid (CAP), there were two full buses with Tibetan people and friends supporting the Tibet cause.

Tibetans in Barcelona have been carrying out events like candle light vigils, interviews and public explanation on recent news about Tibet.



They also led a strong demonstration outside the Chinese consulate where around 350 people took part. This time Tibet house and Tibetan community decided to organize it on a larger scale in front of the Chinese Embassy in Madrid.

Besides Barcelona, there were Tibetans and friends of Tibet from a few other cities like Valencia, Murcia, Leon, Alicante.

The people started shouting pro-Tibet slogans even before the end of the speech. 'Tibet libre, larga vida Dalai Lama (Long live the Dalai Lama), No Olympic until Tibet is free.' While the demonstrators were shouting slogans the Chinese people were taking photos and recording everything from inside. There was also a huge media turnout and they were covering the entire process and showing it live. Some Tibetans became so emotional that they fainted and had to be carried off.

Announcing that a candle light vigil led by women would be organized on the evening of 31st march from Casa del Tibet to the main Town Hall of Barcelona, Ven. Wangchen invited all women to join in and show their solidarity with the brave men and women who lost their lives for Tibet. This is not the end but just the beginning.

Aims and objectives of the manifestation:

1. To stop the killings in Tibet.
2. For China to start a meaningful dialogue with His Holiness.
3. Stop accusations against His Holiness without proof.

4. Release all protestors in Tibet.

5. UNO to send a special group to investigate in Tibet as soon as possible.



In Turkey

April 03, 2008

Police detained at least six Uighur Muslims on Thursday at an anti-China protest during the Olympic torch ceremony near one of Turkey's most famous tourist destinations.

The demonstrators were detained after they broke away from a larger group of protesters and shouted slogans just feet away from Tugba Karademir, a Turkish figure skater and Olympic athlete who had just started to run with the torch through the city.

About 200 Uighur Muslims had converged ahead of the ceremony near Istanbul's Blue Mosque and the domed Hagia Sofia church.

The Olympic flame is on a global tour before the summer games in Beijing. Activists have called for

protests following unrest in Tibet. There also have been reports of unrest by the Uighur minority in China's Xinjiang region. Uighurs are related to Turks, and Turkey is home to an Uighur community.



In United Kingdom

**Activists hang “Free Tibet” banner to protest Olympic torch arrival
April 05, 2008**

Tibet Activists call for “No Torch in Tibet”

Four Tibet independence activists were detained this morning after two activists abseiled off Westminster Bridge and unfurled a 74 square meter protest banner reading, “One World, One Dream: Free Tibet 2008,” mocking China’s Olympics slogan “One World, One Dream.”



The action took place on the eve of the controversial arrival of China’s Olympic torch relay in London, amidst

mounting pressure on the International Olympic Committee to remove all Tibetan areas from the relay route.

Over a thousand Tibetans and supporters are expected in the streets of London on Sunday to condemn China’s ongoing crackdown on freedom protests inside Tibet.



The action by Tibet activists comes as reports of violent crackdown by Chinese authorities on Tibetan

demonstrators emerge out of Tibet. Chinese paramilitary forces opened fire on a crowd of unarmed monks and laypeople in southeastern Tibet On April 3, killing at least 8 people.

“The Chinese government wants the British public to celebrate China at a moment when Tibetans are being gunned down by Chinese forces for doing nothing more than speaking out for freedom,” said Pema Yoko, National Coordinator of Students for a Free Tibet UK, a British born Tibetan and one of the activists detained.

“With Tibetans being rounded up, brutalized and killed, it is unconscionable for the International Olympic Committee to allow China to take the Olympic torch through Tibet,” she said.

Chinese authorities in Tibet have stated their intention to ensure stability during the torch relay ‘at all costs,’ which means increased militarization of Tibetan areas. According to the Chinese authorities’ own figures, thousands of people have been detained in recent weeks, with speedy show trials promised before May 1.



In France

**Olympic torch extinguished thrice in Paris
April 07, 2008**

Security officials were compelled to extinguish the Olympic torch three times and to bring in a bus to carry the torch as protests against China’s human rights record turned the torch relay through Paris into a chaotic



series of stops and starts. Officers tackled many protesters and carried off some of them. Some 3,000 officers were deployed on motorcycles, in jogging gear and using inline roller skates. Torchbearers were encircled by several hundred officers, some in riot police vehicles and on motorcycles, others on skates or on foot. Boats patrolled the Seine River that slices through the French capital, and a helicopter flew overhead.

In various locations throughout the city, activists angry about China’s human rights record and repression in Tibet, carried Tibetan flags and waved signs reading “the flame of shame.” Riot police squirted tear gas to break up a sit-in protest by about 300 pro-Tibet demonstrators who blocked the torch route.

Two-time French judo gold medalist David Douillet, one of the 80 torch-bearers, told RTL radio that he regretted the choice of China, “because it isn’t up to snuff on freedom of expression, on total liberty, and of course, on Olympic values.” French President Nicolas Sarkozy has left open the possibility of boycotting the Olympic opening ceremony in Beijing depending on how the situation evolves in Tibet.

The St. Petersburg Times

In Russia

City Activists Turn Out in Support of Tibet
May 06, 2008

The about 50 activists who came to support the people of Tibet and protest human rights violations in the region found themselves outnumbered by Chinese students who came to counter the rally in St. Petersburg on Saturday. However, the more than 100 Chinese people, with Chinese flags, pro-Beijing Olympics slogans, red carnations, and Chinese state symbols stuck to their faces, were sent away by the police who said their meeting was unsanctioned.”

The gathering featured activists from the St. Petersburg Friends of Tibet Society, presided by Margarita

Kozhevnikova. Apart from local participants, visitors from Kalmykia and Tuva, where Buddhism is the main religion, took part, as well as three Tibetans. Several members of the Yabloko Democratic Party took part in a rally. Alexander Gudimov, the deputy chairman of the local



branch of Youth Yabloko, the youth section of the democratic party, who was detained when he attempted to hold a solitary picket near the Chinese Consulate on the day when the Beijing Olympic flame relay passed through St. Petersburg the month before, also took part in the rally.

A second meeting planned to be held on Turgenev Ploshchad, near the Chinese Consulate later in the day was not allowed by the district administration.

MEYUL.COM

In Estonia

Flares billowing red smoke on Suur Munamägi signalled solidarity with Tibet in Estonia
May 17, 2008

Over a hundred people gathered at Suur Munamägi hill, the highest point in the Baltics, where a red smoke signal lit at the top of the viewing tower expressed solidarity with Tibet.

The event formed a part of an international ten-day campaign that commenced on May 11th, when mountaineers over the world-ignited red smoke torches on numerous mountaintops in protest against the violation of human rights and Chinese repression in Tibet. More than 150 summits were involved: in the Alps, Pyrenees, Norway, USA, Mexico, etc. At noon

the Tibet support flame was ignited at the foot of Suur Munamägi. Mr. Alar Sikk, the first Estonian to climb Mt. Everest, carried the torch up to the hill. On the summit in front of the tower the meeting began with a moment of silence commemorating the victims of the recent Sichuan earthquake as well as those who lost their lives in the protests and riots in Tibet.



Mr. Laur Järv (Estonian-Tibetan Cultural Society) described the current situation in Tibet after the

brutal clampdown of protests in March and conveyed thanks from Mr. Lodi Gyari (the Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama) for Estonian support. Then Mr. Valdur Lahtvee (Tibet support group in the Parliament of Estonia), Mr. Märt Läänemets (Estonian Institute of Buddhism), and Mr. Jüvä Sullõv (Võrumaa) delivered short speeches. One of the main ideas expressed was that due to similar recent history we can understand the situation of Tibet well, and also that when Tibet is free, the world will be free.

While Seto male voices were singing in front of the tower, a young Estonian mountaineer, accompanied by a member of the Tibetan cultural society, took the flame up to the tower where they ignited the red smoke signal. Those around the tower chanted together “Free Tibet!” successively in Estonian, Võro (South Estonian), Seto (South East Estonian), Latvian, Russian, English, Maltese, Polish, Tibetan, and Chinese. The resounding wish drove away the sudden gust of rain and soon the sun came out bright. The second half of the event began with a speech by Roy Strider (“Freedom for Tibet!” activist and “The Flowers of Romance” guitar player). A concert by the rock group “The Flowers of Romance” followed. The group will be also performing on May 25th, in Dharamsala at the Tibetan Olympics. After the event when participants headed back home an auspicious play of rainbows appeared, a good omen for the effort.



In Latvia

Union Latvia calls to boycott Chinese goods

May 20, 2008

Union Latvia calls to boycott Chinese goods for two weeks in protest against human rights violations in China and Tibet.

The union’s spokeswoman Ieva Apsite told BNS that the campaign “Don’t Buy Chinese Goods” will be held to inform Latvian residents that “by buying each good made in China they morally and financially support human rights violations in China and its intolerant politics against residents of this country as well as other nations and countries”.

The union urges stores, cafes, clubs to put stickers in their windows, saying “We Don’t Sell Chinese Goods”.

Apsite said that the boycott of Chinese products also relates to the inferior quality of these goods, which have caused serious concerns not only in the US and European markets, but also in China itself.

The campaign will start on June 2 and will last for two weeks.

The union said that music stores Randoms and Upe, club Melnais Kakis have already voiced their readiness to participate in the campaign, while other stores and cafes are still considering it.

Similar boycott campaigns have also been held in the US, Canada, the UK and France.

On March 14, hundreds of local residents, including Buddhist monks, went out on the streets of the Tibetan capital Lhasa to demonstrate against Beijing’s rule in Tibet. In the following days Tibetans staged more demonstrations that were violently quashed by Chinese authorities in what was the largest unrest in Tibet in about 20 years.

China occupied Tibet in 1951 and since has been frequently accused of attempting to eradicate the Tibetan culture by political and religious oppression as well as promoting Chinese migration to Tibet.

Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama had to leave Tibet in 1959 after unsuccessful uprising against the Chinese Communist regime. After the escape he formed Tibetan exile government in Dharamsala, India.



In Switzerland

Protesters in Swiss call for China to cancel Tibet leg of Olympic torch relay and allow international media access to Tibet

June 20, 2008

More than 250 Tibetans and supporters gathered in front of the Chinese Consulate in Zurich, Switzerland three days before the Olympic torch is scheduled to arrive in Lhasa, Tibet’s capital.

The rally, organized by the Tibetan Youth Association in Europe and supported by the Tibetan Community in Switzerland and Lichtenstein, the Swiss Tibetan Friendship Association, the National Olympic Committee Tibet and the Tibetan Women Association Switzerland, shed light on the IOC’s failure to hold the Beijing Olympics Committee for the Games (BOCOG) accountable to their promise to ensure unlimited media access to China and Tibet in the lead up to and during the Olympic Games. Since the Tibetan uprising in March, China has denied tourists and foreign journalists access to Tibet.

“As a young Tibetan I am outraged at China’s use of the Olympics and the Olympic Torch as a tool to legitimize its brutal occupation of Tibet. The torch is set to be paraded through the same streets where only weeks ago, thousands of Tibetans risked everything

for their freedom, said Tenzin Yeshe, spokesperson for the Tibetan Youth Association in Europe.

“The Olympic games should promote values of international understanding, peace and harmony; however, the International Olympic Committee has remained silent about China’s continued crackdown in Tibet” said Rigzin Gyaltag, a professional cyclist with Team Tibet. “It is difficult for me as an athlete to keep my faith in the Olympic movement when the IOC continues to ignore the suffering of the Tibetan people at the hand of the Chinese government.”

Prayers were held at the end of the rally, followed by the Tibetan Uprising Song and the Tibetan national anthem. Tibetan Youth Association in Europe announced they will continue to protest in the weeks to come and during the Beijing Games which are only 50 days away



Asia



In Nepal

**Tibetan activists in Nepal clashes
March 10, 2008**

More than 100 Tibetan activists were detained in Nepal on Monday after clashes with police broke out when hundreds of protesters tried to march to the Chinese embassy, an AFP reporter said. Police baton-charged the demonstrators after they had been pelted with

stones. At least two police and three protesters were injured, a reporter at the scene said. Around 4,000 Tibetans had gathered in Boudha, a Tibetan temple complex in Kathmandu, to mark the 49th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's escape to India after an abortive uprising in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa. Police tried to prevent around 500 people from leaving the enclave to protest outside the Chinese embassy when the clashes began. Police forced the group back after they had travelled around two kilometres (1.25

miles) from Boudha, the AFP reporter said. "Around 130 Tibetan protesters have been detained because they tried to block traffic on a main road," Ganga Panta, a senior local police officer told AFP. "They will probably be released by this evening," she said, adding there were 500 Tibetans protesting outside the police station for the release of those detained Monday afternoon. Many of the protesters in the

Tibetan flag-waving crowd wore T-shirts calling for a "Free Tibet" and chanted slogans.

A massive picture of Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, hung over the demonstrators, who included monks and nuns as well as men and women of all ages.



"Lots of people continue to be arrested in (the Tibetan capital) Lhasa. Lots of monasteries have been destroyed and a lot of monks and nuns imprisoned for life," Tashi Lama, a 35-year-old youth leader, told AFP. Around

Number of Tibetans every year make the dangerous crossing over the Himalayas from their Chinese-controlled home to Nepal. They then often move on to Dharamshala, the home of the Dalai Lama, in northern India.

Tibetans led by the Tibetan youth Congress carried out demonstrations of size and duration unprecedented in Nepal's capital Kathmandu, leading to hundreds being arrested on almost daily basis while the Tibetan solidarity Committee of the Tibetan parliament-in-exile staged relay hunger strikes and candlelight vigils from March to August 2008. The brutality of Nepal's crackdown, carried out under intense pressure from China, drew strong criticisms from both the international community and Nepal's own human rights groups.

TAIPEI TIMES

In Taiwan

Parade marks Tibetan uprising in Taiwan

March 10, 2008

"Free Tibet!" "Boycott the Beijing Olympics!": nearly 200 people — Tibetans and Taiwanese alike — shouted as they marched through streets in Taipei City to commemorate the 1959 Tibetan uprising against Chinese invasion.

"More than 100,000 [Tibetans] were killed during the 1959 uprising against Chinese rule," Chou Mei-li, president of Taiwan Friends of Tibet (TFOT), said as she explained the importance of the event before the demonstrators departed from Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall yesterday afternoon.

"Each year on this date, Tibetans worldwide and their supporters walk out of their homes to commemorate the day," she said. "We, the Taiwanese, certainly won't be absent from it."

The parade, organized by TFOT, the Taiwan-Tibet Exchange Foundation and the Taiwan Tibetan Welfare Association, began right after a simple memorial ceremony in which Tibetans in Taiwan sang the Tibetan national anthem and Tibetan monks chanted Buddhist chants.

The marchers held up placards that read “stop Chinese colonization in Tibet” and “free Tibet,” as well as photos of some Tibetan political prisoners.

“The youngest political prisoner in the world — the Panchen Lama,” the inscription above a picture of a child on a placard said.

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, born in 1989, was named the 11th Panchen Lama — the second-highest ranking monk in the Tibetan religion — by the Dalai Lama in 1995.

However, as soon as he was named the Panchen Lama, he disappeared and the Chinese government appointed its own Panchen Lama. The whereabouts of Gedhun are unknown to this day.

Another placard bore a picture of Rungyal Adrak, who openly advocated the Dalai Lama’s return to Tibet and demanded Gedhun’s release last August. As a result, he was arrested and sentenced to eight years in prison.

The procession ran into a Fuwa, the mascot of the Beijing Olympics, when they were approaching Taipei 101 Tower.

At the entrance of an exhibition hall to promote the exhibition, the exhibition organizer had someone dressed up as a Fuwa to promote the event.

As soon as the demonstrators spotted the Olympic mascot, some started to yell “Fuwa, get out” and “boycott the Beijing Olympics.” No further exchange continued as the exhibition staff quickly pulled the Fuwa inside. Not all participants support boycotting the Olympics.

Erinn Low, a Canadian who is studying Mandarin in Taiwan, said that athletes’ rights to fulfill their life-long dreams to take part in the Olympics should not be taken away, but added she supported the demonstration because it would raise public awareness on the Tibetan issue.

Having participated in the event in India several times, it was the first time that Dhundup Gyalpo, a Tibetan

student at Tamkang University, took part in the rally in Taiwan.

He was surprised at the turnout for the parade. “Even though there are only few Tibetans here, the support is huge,” Gyalpo said. “This just shows that the Tibetan issue is well alive.”



In India

Indian people condemn Chinese atrocity in Tibet March 19, 2008

Indian people flooded the Teen Murti Marg road, adjoining the Chinese Embassy building in New Delhi, in solidarity with the Tibetan people against the brutal crackdown on the peaceful demonstrators in the streets of Lhasa, Tibet.

The protest was led by large numbers of members from three prominent Hindu organizations like Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha, Hindu Rashtriya Sena and

Shree Ram Sena. On their rally towards the Chinese Embassy, they were barricaded at Chanakyapuri Police station, which is barely a kilometer away from the embassy. The protesters set People’s Republic of China’s flag on fire and tried to break the barricade in sheer anger against the authorities’ denial of permission to pass towards the embassy.

Indian activists burn Chinese flag in New Delhi to condemn China’s violent crackdown of peaceful Tibetan demonstrators in Tibet. Indian activists burn Chinese flag in New Delhi to condemn China’s violent crackdown of peaceful Tibetan demonstrators in Tibet. Later



the protesting groups submitted a joint memorandum to the Chinese Embassy,

United Nations Office, the President of India and Ministry of External Affairs expressing their solidarity with the people of Tibet. The memorandum demands Chinese leadership to stop using force and aggression “against the innocent people of Tibet”.

Tibetans, joined by local and national-level Indian support groups, staged demonstrations and other Tibet support activities in major cities and towns across India from March to August 2008.

THE KOREA TIMES

First in the Nation

In South Korea

**Pro-Tibet Protesters March to Chinese Embassy in Seoul
March 19, 2008**

A group of Tibetans and South Korean activists marched to the Chinese embassy in Seoul on Tuesday to protest China’s crackdown on anti-government protests in Tibet.

About 30 protesters, shouting “Don’t kill” and “Free Tibet” in the Tibetan language, called for South Korea to support the ongoing Tibetan uprising, as pro-Tibet protests were taking place at Chinese embassies in other parts of the world.

“We don’t know how many people are being killed in Tibet,” a Tibetan man who came to South Korea as a migrant worker said.

“What is portrayed in the international media are only Chinese materials being destroyed. A lot more people than reported by the Chinese authorities are being killed.”

Another Tibetan protester claimed that his nephew has been arrested by the Chinese forces and said China’s suppression of human rights in Tibet is the reason for the uprising.

China has exercised power over Tibet since 1950 when its troops invaded the region. China claims Tibet had been part of its territory for a long time before the invasion.

Chinese officials put the official death toll at 16 as of Tuesday, but pro-Tibet protesters say as many as 80 people were killed in the capital, Lhasa, last week.

Less than 20 Tibetans reside in South Korea, mostly on work visas, according to Jeon Yong-ju, a Korean activist. Leaving Tibet is strictly limited due to tough immigration laws, he said. The Tibetans were interviewed on the condition of anonymity.

A group of human rights organizations in Seoul, such as the Center for South Korea-Tibet Community and the Korean House for International Solidarity, called on China to come clean on its human rights record before it hosts the Olympics in August.

“Ahead of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Chinese government should present to the international community what its human rights policy is,” they said in a joint statement.

The rally at the Chinese embassy ended peacefully, without clashes with police. (Yonhap)



In Thailand

Thai Olympic torchbearer withdraws in protest over China’s crackdown in Tibet

March 23, 2008

One of Thailand’s torchbearers in the Olympics flame relay has withdrawn in protest over China’s recent crackdown on protesters in Tibet, a statement said on Sunday Narisa Chakrabongse - one of the country’s six torchbearers, all of whom are environmental activists - said in an open letter she



decided against taking part in the relay to “send a strong message to China that the world community could not accept its action’ The slaying of the Tibetans is an outright violation of human rights,”

Narisa wrote. “It happened two weeks before the Olympic torch bearer leaves Athens and five months before the Olympic Games. This reflects the Chinese government’s negligence of world sentiment.”

Tibetans and their supporters have protested in cities around the world against China, where the games will be staged.

Some fear the arrival of the Olympic torch - which arrives in Thailand in April en route to Beijing - could spark violent protests against China, while others are calling for heads of state, dignitaries and even corporate sponsors to boycott the Olympics, or at least the opening ceremony.

Anti-government protests started in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, on the March 10 anniversary of a failed uprising against Chinese rule and turned violent four days later, touching off demonstrations among Tibetans in three neighboring provinces.



In Israel

Israel supports Tibet

April 01, 2008

Israelis and Tibetans gathered for a peaceful demonstration, organized by the “Israeli Friends of the Tibetan People” on Monday, March 31 in front of the Chinese Embassy in Tel Aviv.

A few dozens of people, including Israelis and Tibetans, stood together in support of the Tibetan

struggle. They held Tibetan flags, pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and various signs calling for China to change its policies towards Tibet

Many passersby expressed sympathy with the aims of the demonstration and several joined in. Three of the demonstrators attempted to present a large bouquet of white lilies to the Chinese Embassy, while carrying a picture of the Dalai Lama, and the Tibetan flag.

When the security guards prevented them from delivering them, the demonstrators laid the flowers, down on the sidewalk in front of the Embassy. Among the signs carried by demonstrators were those which stated, “Save Tibet”, “Stop the Killing in Tibet”, “Open a Dialogue with the Dalai Lama”, and “Human Rights for Tibet.”

Ran Natanzon, of the Israeli Friends of the Tibetan People, called on the Chinese government to open a dialogue to solve the question of Tibet in a peaceful way.

He spoke to the media who were present about the importance of Israeli Jews taking a moral stance against the persecution of Tibetans in their own homeland. “It is especially important for us, as a people who have worked hard to preserve our culture in the face of persecution, to stand together with the Tibetan people.”

When the demonstration was over several Tibetans remained for hours in a silent vigil in front of the embassy.



In Phillipines

Filipino activists protest against violent crackdown in Tibet

April 04, 2008

Filipino democracy activists on Friday protested in the Philippine capital to denounce China’s violent crackdown against Tibetan protesters and to demand freedom for Tibet

Around 70 activists marched to the Chinese Embassy in Manila’s financial district of Makati City, carrying a symbolic torch labeled ‘torch of freedom for the Tibetans. ‘They denounced China’s restrictions on international media coverage of the protests and violence in Tibet, preventing the world to see the real story.

‘Numerous evidences have come out proving that Chinese police have dressed themselves up as monks and as ordinary Tibetans, held knives, robbed and set shops in Lhasa on fire,’ they said in a statement. Chinese authorities had blamed Tibetans for the violence that has left at least 140 killed.

More than 1,000 people, most of them monks and nuns, have also been jailed. The activists urged the



international community to ‘look intently into the incidents in Lhasa’ and support the Tibetan people’s struggle.

‘Stop the violence against the Tibetans,’ said Egoy Bans, a protest spokesman. ‘Let the Olympic torch light the way toward restoring freedoms to the Tibetans.

In Malaysia

Malaysian police detain protesters at Olympic torch run

April 21, 2008

The Olympic flame was carried through blistering sun, torrential rain and isolated protests in Malaysia on Monday, completing another segment of its global relay that has become a magnet for demonstrations against China.

A Japanese man, his sister and her 5-year-old son were heckled and roughed up by Chinese nationals when they unfurled a Tibetan flag before the start of the heavily guarded relay in Kuala Lumpur.

Police detained the Japanese but released them without charges after about six hours. The Chinese were not detained.

At one point in the relay, a Western man wearing a T-shirt reading “Beijing Torch Human Rights” rushed



Supporters of China grab a pro-Tibet banner unfurled by a Japanese man in Kuala Lumpur on Monday

forward shouting “Shame, shame, shame.” He was hustled away by police but not arrested. A British woman wearing a “Free Tibet” T-shirt and a foreign Buddhist monk were also detained and later released.

Criticism of China’s human rights record has turned the Olympic torch run ahead of the Aug. 8-24 Beijing Olympics into one of the most contentious in recent history.

Protests dogged the relay during its stops in Ancient Olympia, Greece, Paris, London and San Francisco, with demonstrators protesting China's crackdown on anti-government riots in Tibet.

Security concerns prompted authorities in Indonesia, Australia and Japan — the torch's upcoming stops — to change or shorten their routes.

About 1,000 police guarded the Kuala Lumpur route. The only serious incident in the 10-mile run occurred before it began and involved the Japanese family, whom hundreds of Chinese nationals confronted at Independence Square, the relay's start.

Some Chinese hit the Japanese with inflated plastic batons that were intended for banging together in noisy celebration. Some of the Chinese shouted "Taiwan and Tibet belong to China" during the melee, but no one was hurt.

The Chinese — many wearing red — carried their country's flag and waved banners that read: "The torch will spread around the world," and "No one can split China."

Police Chief Muhammad Sabtu Osman said the Japanese unfurled a Tibetan flag and a banner that read "Free Tibet" and were taken to a police station "only for documentation."

THE TIMES OF INDIA

In Indonesia

Indonesian police break up pro-Tibet protest April 22, 2008

Police swooped on pro-Tibet activists protesting outside the venue of the Olympic torch relay in Jakarta on Tuesday, detaining at least nine including a Dutch man.

The protesters were carrying banners reading 'No human rights, no Olympics' and chanting "A united

people will be invincible" when police moved in, dragging nine away for questioning.

The demonstration outside the national stadium came three hours ahead of the 2:00 pm (0700 GMT) start of the heavily restricted relay event which has been closed to the public amid Chinese anger at protests against its rights record.

Eight of those detained, including four members of the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation, were released after being questioned over their permits to protest.

The Dutch man was taken to Jakarta police headquarters, according to a member of his rights organisation.

Another two people wearing Chinese Muslim headgear were also taken by the police as they unfurled a banner reading "Chinese Muslims welcome Beijing Olympics". They were also quickly released.

The rights activists, wearing white T-shirts emblazoned with "Free Tibet", were unfazed by the arrests and chanted "peaceful action, peaceful action" in response to the police intervention. Security forces watched on for another 30 minutes until the demonstrators concluded their action.

"These arrests show that Indonesia is afraid of China's pressure," protest organiser Tri Agus said at the scene.

He asked why police failed to act to stop recent violence against a minority Muslim sect but pounced on peaceful rights activists.

"They made a problem of whether we had the permit to protest but the fact is we submitted our request," said



Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation member Gatot, who like many Indonesians uses only one name.

He said police had not been violent toward the demonstrators. Under Indonesian law, protest organisers have to notify police at least one day before their planned action. Sources.



In Japan

JAPAN: Zenkoji Temple Leads Pro-Tibet Protests

Apr 26, 2008

As Olympic torchbearer Senichi Hoshino started the Japanese leg of the relay in Nagano — home of the 1998 Winter Games — a prayer vigil began at the landmark Zenkoji Buddhist shrine in the city for those who had died in Tibet following the Mar.10 crackdown. The prayers at the 1,400-year-old temple and the refusal by monks to allow the shrine to be used as the starting point of the torch relay appeared to weigh more than the handful of people waving Tibetan flags.

Television images captured a pro-Tibetan protestor throwing himself at a torch bearer and who was quickly overpowered by waiting policemen and whisked away. There were other incidents of attempts to disrupt the torch relay, although none was serious enough to block it.

Ahead of the event, Japanese and Tibetan Buddhist monks banded together to support the human rights of the Tibetans. In a quiet ceremony in Tokyo on Wednesday, Japanese and Tibetan monks along with hundreds of residents chanted, prayed and burned



incense for the Tibetan victims. Shuei Kobayashi, Buddhist priest and co-chairman of Japan Committee

for Tibet “said it was important for people around the world to know about the suppression of the Tibetans and the real situation in their troubled province.

Japan was anxious to repair its uneasy ties with China and took care to maintain tight security for the flame as it passed through Nagano.



In Hong Kong

Hong Kong torch relay underway

May 02, 2008

Authorities deported seven human rights activists over the week fearing disruption of Friday’s relay. After the relay got underway, the crowd hurled abuses at a small group of about ten pro-Tibet supporters, forcing them to seek refuge in police vans. A mob of 30 jostled a dozen policemen surrounding Christina Chan a University student, also part of the group campaigning for human rights in Tibet and China. She was taken

away by the police after pro-China supporters threatened her. Chan had wrapped the



Tibetan national flag around her body and later began waving it before being out numbered by pro-China crowd. “This is the first Chinese city that the torch is coming to. We wanted to show that Chinese people can have rational discussions about Tibet”, she told AFP before being taken away for her own safety.

The Hong Kong leg was also seen as the last chance for major protests before the torch departs for mainland China after a stopover in Macau.

Statements, Appeals & Resolutions by Leaders & International NGO



UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour issued a statement March 14, 2008

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour issued a statement calling on the Chinese authorities to allow demonstrators to exercise their right to freedom of expression and assembly.

Ms. Arbour also called on the Chinese Government to “refrain from any excessive use of force while maintaining order, and to ensure those arrested are not ill-treated and are accorded due process in line with international standards.”

It has been reported that on 10 March, roughly 60 monks were arrested in Lhasa during a peaceful demonstration. The following day, Chinese police fired tear gas at some 600 monks who were demanding the release of the arrested monks. There have been further reports of violence today.



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urges restraint by authorities amid reported violence, deaths March 17, 2008

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that he is “increasingly concerned” about recent developments in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China, including reports of violence and loss of life, and urged restraint by the authorities there.

Speaking to reporters at UN Headquarters in New York, Mr. Ban called “on all concerned to avoid further confrontation and violence,” while stressing the importance of a peaceful resolution.

Asked if he sees a role for the UN to play, he responded: “We will continuously monitor the situation.”

The Secretary-General said he discussed the matter with the Chinese Ambassador Wang Guangya at their meeting this morning. “I expressed my concern and my views to the Chinese Government.”



Declaration by the EU Presidency on the situation in Tibet March 18, 2008

The EU is deeply concerned about the ongoing reports of unrest in Tibet and conveys its deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims. The EU is urgently seeking further clarification of the situation from the Chinese Government.

The EU calls for restraint on all sides. We urge the Chinese authorities to refrain from using force against those involved in unrest and calls on demonstrators to desist from violence.

The EU stresses the importance it attaches to the right of freedom of expression and peaceful protest. We call on Chinese authorities to respond to the demonstrations in accordance with internationally recognised democratic principles.

The EU firmly supports peaceful reconciliation between Chinese authorities and the Dalai Lama and his representatives. The EU urges the Chinese government to address the concerns of Tibetans with regard to issues of human rights.

The EU encourages both sides to enter into a substantive and constructive dialogue with a view to reach a sustainable solution acceptable to all that would fully respect the Tibetan culture, religion and identity.



India- India's Ministry of External Affairs released the following statement March 15, 2008

“We are distressed by reports of the unsettled situation and violence in Lhasa, and by the deaths of innocent people. We would hope that all those involved will work to improve the situation and remove the causes of such trouble in Tibet, which is an autonomous region of China, through dialogue and non-violent means.”

The statement was criticized by some opposition parties, who described them as an “inadequate response”. Conservative BJP party member and Senior Vice President of the Indian Olympic Association MP Vijay Kumar Malhotra said in the parliament “Over 100 innocent protesters have been massacred in Lhasa in the past one week by the Chinese security forces which are involved in ethnic cleansing ... this house should condemn the incidents.”



**Plassnik calls for “an end to violence in Tibet”
Foreign Minister highlights necessity of dialogue between Beijing and the Dalai Lama
March 16, 2008**

Following the numerous casualties during the recent violent conflicts in Tibet Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik today expressed “Austria’s deep concern over severe human rights violations in Tibet” and called for an “immediate end to violence and bloodshed”.

Plassnik appealed to the Chinese authorities to respect the right of free expression and “avoid any unreasonable use of force against the demonstrators”. The Foreign Minister called upon Beijing to take up direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama. “Such a dialogue could give rise to decisive stimuli for a peaceful coexistence between the people of Tibet. It is long overdue,” said Plassnik.

“Recent developments show the importance of further measures for the protection of Tibetan culture and religion. Together with its EU partners, Austria will continue to advocate such moves with conviction and urge Beijing to take them,” stated Plassnik.

The Foreign Minister reminded her audience that Austria had always been highly interested in a fruitful development and intensification of its relations with China. This aim remained an important objective of Austria’s foreign policy and the EU’s external policy as a whole. The EU attached great value to constructive “dialogue on an equal footing” with China, with human rights issues remaining a focus of such efforts.



**Michael D Higgins TD Statement - Spokesperson on Foreign Affairs, Ireland
March 16, 2008**

There is an urgent need for the international community to respond to the events unfolding in Lhasa and throughout Tibet over recent days.

It is clear that dozens have in fact been killed and many injured, with disagreement only as to numbers. The fact that the Dalai Lama is comparing the disturbances of recent days to the events of 1959 should be considered of the utmost significance.

When, as a member of the Oireachtas Foreign Affairs Committee, I visited Lhasa some years ago it was perfectly clear that the cultural suppression of the Tibetan people was part of the Chinese project of effectively colonising Tibet.

In all of his recent speeches, the Dalai Lama has stressed that it is the cultural and religious freedom of his people that is at the top of his agenda for negotiation. He has not sought political independence for Tibet. It is clear that the international community has not been able to influence China to the degree that it would accept the opening of talks on such a reasonable basis, demanding instead that all Tibetans declare that they are part of China as a precondition for any talks.

What is unfolding now in Tibet could lead to such a brutal crackdown as was witnessed in Burma. It is important that Ireland, the European Union and those members of International Community who have dealings with China urges it to return to the path of peaceful negotiations offered by Dalai Lama so that a bloodbath can be avoided.



Masahiko Komura, Japanese Foreign Minister
March 16, 2008

I would like to know clearly what the situation is and the facts behind what has happened.

I hope all parties involved will deal with this calmly and ensure that the number of those killed and injured does not worsen any further.



NZ deep concern at reports of violence in Tibet
March 17, 2008

Rt Hon Helen Clark - Prime Minister of New Zealand

“We want to see an end to the violence. New Zealand has long urged China to engage in meaningful dialogue with representatives of the Tibetan people as we think this is the best way to achieve a lasting resolution of problems in Tibet.”

New Zealand respects the right of people to protest peacefully. We urge the Chinese authorities to react carefully and proportionately to protest. “New Zealand has regular discussions with China on human rights matters, including on Tibet.

“The New Zealand government takes an ongoing interest in developments in Tibet and will continue to convey its views to the Chinese authorities.

“We will continue to monitor the situation and provide advice for New Zealanders in Tibet. We encourage New Zealanders to register or update their contact details with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade,”



**Lord Malloch Brown, Uk Foreign Office Minister
March 18, 2008**

With the Olympics ahead, they really will pay a terrible cost in international public opinion if they're seen to violently crack down on dissidents.

And I very much hope they will take that to heart, and they will find a way to talk this through, and start the dialogue which is long overdue in Tibet.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly condemns China's use of force to suppress Tibetan protestors and calls on the international community to collectively monitor the development of the situation.

March 19, 2008

China's armed forces occupied the Tibetan capital of Lhasa and cracked down on protesting Buddhist monks who launched a rally on the 49th anniversary of an uprising crushed by the Chinese People's Liberation Army. In response to the violent bloody clash, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) expresses grave concern and strongly condemns China's brutal suppression, a direct violation of democratic ideals and human rights.

MOFA stresses that China is trying to use the 2008 Olympic Games to promote an illusion of its "peaceful rise." In fact, China continues to increase the number of its missiles targeting democratic Taiwan and ignore the concerns of the entire international community as it suppresses the people of Tibet who merely pursue the fundamental human rights of freedom and democracy. The Chinese authorities even try to hide their brutality by censoring news coverage. However, it is obvious that China, a country that spurns democracy and stomps on human rights, has once again revealed its true ugly face.

MOFA urges all peace-loving countries of the international community to closely monitor the developments in Tibet and convince China to restrain itself and halt its use of force.



**Statement from Canadian Prime Minister Harper on the situation in Tibet
March 20, 2008**

"Canada shares the concerns about what is happening in Tibet. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama told me when I met him and as he has been saying recently, his message is one of non-violence and reconciliation and I join

him in that call. Canada calls upon China to fully respect human rights and peaceful protest. Canada also calls on China to show restraint in dealing with this situation.”



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs

**Hon Stephen Smith MP - Media Release from Australian Foreign Minister
March 20, 2008**

The Australian Government remains deeply concerned about Tibet and neighbouring areas and continues to monitor the situation closely.

The Government is particularly concerned by reports of violence extending into neighbouring provinces.

I reiterate calls for calm and restraint by all parties, and for the unrest to end quickly and without further casualties. It would be a tragedy for all sides if this situation were to deteriorate even further.

The Australian Government believes it is in China’s own interests to resolve the situation peacefully and constructively.

Dialogue is the way ahead. Constructive and meaningful talks must take place as a matter of priority.

The Australian Government has expressed our continuing concerns at the situation in Tibet directly to Chinese officials in Beijing and Canberra. This has been in addition to the public remarks made by myself and the Prime Minister.

I have instructed officials in Beijing to again speak with Chinese officials to urge restraint, and to seek further clarification of events in Lhasa and other Tibetan areas.

I urge the Chinese Government to respect the human rights of detainees.

The Australian Government has urged China to allow free access to Tibet and other affected areas so the international community and foreign media may gain an accurate understanding of what is occurring there.

The Australian Embassy has also submitted a request for diplomats to travel to Tibet.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is monitoring the safety and welfare of six Australians who we know are in Tibet.

The Department and the Embassy in Beijing have already assisted 16 Australians who have departed Tibet.

The Department’s travel advice continues to advise Australians to reconsider their need to travel to Lhasa and to exercise a high degree of caution in the rest of Tibet and in Tibetan areas of bordering provinces.



French President calls for end to violence in Tibet Issued By The Presidency Of The Republic March 24, 2008

President Sarkozy calls for restraint and an end to violence in Tibet through dialogue. He has sent a message to President Hu Jintao informing him of his deep distress following the recent tragic events. President Sarkozy wishes to see the dialogue that was started several years ago between the Chinese authorities and the Dalai Lama's representatives resume speedily and be taken further, so that all Tibetans feel able to live their cultural and spiritual identity to the full within the People's Republic of China.

President Sarkozy has expressed France's willingness to facilitate this resumption of dialogue in the context of the French-Chinese strategic partnership.



Ministry of External Relations - Situation in Tibet March 24, 2008

The Brazilian Government deplors the events in the Autonomous Region of Tibet which have led to the loss of human lives.

In recalling its traditional support to the territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China, the Brazilian Government expresses its steadfast expectation that self-containment be exercised, so as to make possible an enduring solution which promotes peace and understanding in the Autonomous Region of Tibet, with full respect to cultural and religious differences.



Statement by the Press Secretary March 26, 2008

President Bush called President Hu Jintao of China today. The President raised his concerns about the situation in Tibet and encouraged the Chinese government to engage in substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives and to allow access for journalists and diplomats. On Taiwan, the President said that this weekend's election provides a fresh opportunity for both sides to reach out and engage one another in peacefully resolving their differences.

The two Presidents also discussed North Korean denuclearization. President Bush expressed appreciation to President Hu for the important role China has played within the Six-Party framework. The two presidents pledged to continue to work closely with the other Six-Party partners in urging North Korea to deliver a complete and correct declaration of all its nuclear weapons programs, and nuclear proliferation activities and to complete the agreed disablement. On Burma, President Bush expressed his concern that the regime intends to hold a referendum that was drafted without input from democratic or ethnic minority groups. He discussed with President Hu the need for the Burmese leadership to make changes to the referendum process to make it free, fair, and credible to the Burmese people and the international community.



German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s statement on the Lhasa protests:

“The Germany Government is concerned about reports of unrest in Lhasa. We call on Chinese authorities to act with restraint and to deal with protestors peacefully. We urge the Chinese Government to allow peaceful expression of dissent.”

German Chancellor Angela Merkel “became the first world leader to decide not to attend the Olympics in Beijing,”



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia issued a statement

Colombia expresses its concern over recent violent events that have taken place in the People’s Republic of China in the Tibet Autonomous Region.

The Colombian Government is confident that necessary measures are taken to prevent the escalation of violence and to ensure the return to normalcy in this region.

Colombia hopes for the successful realization of the Summer Olympic Games in the People’s Republic of China in the current year, as they are independent of the events of Tibet.



Australian Prime Minister Speech in Chinese **Beijing University speech by Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd** **April 09, 2008**

A conversation with China's youth on the future

I begin by congratulating Beijing University which this year celebrates its 110th anniversary – making this university three years older than the Commonwealth of Australia. Beijing University is the most famous in China. And it has played an important part in modern Chinese history. In the early 20th century, when China was going through a period of rapid transformation, it was Beijing University that led movements for a new era in Chinese educational, cultural and political life.

Beijing University was at the centre of the May 4th Movement. The May 4th era - for I realise that it was a transformative decade from 1917 to 1927 - was one of crucial and lasting importance in the emergence of a modern China. Many famous figures in this period were active at your university. One thinks, for example, of Cai Yuanpei, Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi, Li Dazhao and Lu Xun.

This year, 2008, is the 90th anniversary of some key events of the May Fourth era: through his essays for the major magazine *New Youth* the writer and educator Hu Shi successfully advocated the use of modern vernacular Chinese in education and the media. This helped bring about a major change in the way that the young people of China expressed themselves to their compatriots.

Also the writer Lu Xun published the first, and justifiably famous, story in modern Chinese, *Diary of a Madman*.

I would also note that Lu Xun's design for the school crest of Beijing University is still in use.

Indeed, you, the students of Beijing University today, are heirs to a great tradition of intellectual engagement with your country.

Studying China

This is not the first time I have visited Beijing University. But it is the first time I have given a speech here. It is a great honour for me. And it is a great honour for me to address the students of this university because you are an important part of China's future.

I first started studying China and the Chinese language in 1976. It was a different China back then. Zhou Enlai had just died. Mao Zedong was still alive. And the Cultural Revolution had not concluded -indeed our Chinese language textbooks were still full of class struggle.

Some have asked me why I decided to study Chinese. I had grown up on a farm in rural Queensland where China seemed very remote. I remember as a teenager following closely the visit of Australia's Prime Minister

Gough Whitlam to China on television in 1973 after the Australia Labor Government recognised China in 1972.

I remember watching the footage of him meeting Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping escorting his party on a tour to the Great Wall. That visit inspired my interest in this extraordinary country. When I went to university I knew that I wanted to study China. I went to the Australian National University in Canberra. And for the next four years I studied Chinese language, Chinese history and Chinese literature together with Japanese and Korean history as well. I even studied Chinese calligraphy, but my calligraphy was ugly then – and it is even uglier now. Later I became a diplomat. Because I was a graduate in Chinese, the then Australian Government decided to send me to Sweden, where in those days I could barely find a decent Chinese restaurant.

I eventually made it to China in 1984 when I started work at the Australian Embassy. But I did not remain a diplomat. I wanted to enter politics. I was elected to Australia's Parliament in 1998 and after serving in parliament for nine years in opposition, my party won the general election last year and I had the honour of becoming 26th Prime Minister of Australia.

Australia and China

Some people think that Australia and China are new friends but in fact our history is already long. Chinese settlers came to Australia first in the nineteenth century. When gold was discovered in Victoria and Queensland in the 1850s, the first major group of Chinese migrants came to our shores. We now have over 600,000 people who claim Chinese ancestry. After English, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese) is the most widely spoken language in Australia.

The Chinese community has deep roots in Australia and is an important part of modern Australian society. It includes people like Dr John Yu, one of Australia's leading surgeons and Australian of the Year in 1996. And the young mathematician, Terrence Tao, who I met recently.

The flow of people has not all been in one direction. Some Australians – though a smaller number – have made China their home. George Morrison is one such person. Morrison first came to China in 1894. He lived here for 20 years. In Australia, he was known as “Chinese Morrison”. And here in Beijing, during the Republic of China, Wangfujing, home to George Morrison, was known as “Morrison Street”.

It is easy to see why people become fascinated with China. China has thousands of years of continuous recorded history, but it is a country of constant change. When I look at the China of 2008, I see a very different country to the one I studied in the late 1970s and the one I lived in during the mid 1980s.

China and the World

The changes in China since the 1970s have been remarkable. And the change in China has led to a profound evolution in the relationship between our two countries. China's policy change 30 years ago this year to “reform and open up” was the start of your country's re-connection with the world.

China's companies began trading with others. China's people began to travel. China's students began going overseas to study in greater numbers. The world began to see China, and the people of China began to see the world, in new ways.

This institution, Beijing University, through its teaching, research and search for knowledge has also had a profound influence on China's changes. Its graduates have made a big contribution to your country's engagement

with the world. To many people in China, these changes bring a better and richer life. People are able to make decisions about where they work how they live and set their own goals. They can build their own businesses. At the same time, there are still many problems in China – problems of poverty, problems of uneven development, problems of pollution, problems of broader human rights.

It is also important to recognise that China’s change is having a great impact not just on China, but also on the world. The scale and pace of China’s economic development and social transformation is unprecedented in human history. Never before have so many people been brought into the global economy in such a short period of time. Just look at some of the figures. China is now the world’s third-largest trading nation. Its exports are growing at over 30 per cent per year. GDP per capita has nearly doubled in the past five years. People in Australia and around the world recognise that China’s economic development is having a profound global impact.

They understand that China’s demand for resources is driving global growth. But China’s growth can also cause anxiety. Some people are concerned about their jobs moving to China. When people overseas are faced with big changes and uncertainties like these they get nervous.

We all need to appreciate these anxieties and their origins.

Today I would like to make a suggestion. I think that you – the young people of China, the generation that will see China’s full integration into global society, the global economy and the overall global order – have an important role to play in the life of the world. The global community looks forward to China fully participating in all the institutions of the global rules-based order, including in security, in the economy, in human rights, in the environment. And we look forward to China making active contributions to the enhancement of that order in the future. It is a necessary task of responsible global citizenship.

It is a big responsibility you have. You are the product of China today. And you are the representatives of China’s tomorrow. You will be the ones who define how the world sees China. “Harmony” was the dream and hope of that great Chinese thinker and activist Kang Youwei. The Hundred Days reform movement, like Beijing University, also marks its 110th anniversary this year. Kang proposed a Utopian world free of political boundaries. China has variously articulated its approach to development as one of “peaceful rise”, “peaceful development” or more recently that of a “harmonious world”.

In 2005 the then US Deputy Secretary of State Bob Zoellick spoke for his part of his concept that China would and could become a responsible global stakeholder. As I said last week in a speech to the Brookings Institution in Washington, it is worthwhile thinking about how to encourage a synthesis of these concepts of a “harmonious world” and the “responsible stakeholder”.

The idea of a “harmonious world” depends on China being a participant in the world order and, along with others, acting in accordance with the rules of that order. Failing this, “harmony” is impossible to achieve. “Responsible stakeholder” contains the same idea at its core – China working to maintain and develop the global and regional rules-based order.

This year, as China hosts the Olympics, the eyes of the world will be on you and the city of Beijing. It will be a chance for China to engage directly with the world, both on the sports field and on the streets of Beijing. Some have called for a boycott of the Beijing Olympics because of recent problems in Tibet. As I said in London on Sunday, I do not agree. I believe the Olympics are important for China’s continuing engagement with the world. Australia like most other countries recognises China’s sovereignty over Tibet.

But we also believe it is necessary to recognise there are significant human rights problem in Tibet. The current situation in Tibet is of concern to Australians. We recognise the need for all parties to avoid violence and find a solution through dialogue. As a long-standing friend of China I intend to have a straightforward discussion with China's leaders on this.

We wish to see the year 2008 as one of harmony, and celebration – not one of conflict and contention.

Harmony in the Natural Environment

Our shared future is not only one about harmony between nations and peoples. It is also about harmony with nature — the “Unity of Man and Nature” — a concept with ancient roots in Chinese thought. We all share responsibility for the future. One of the big future challenges for Australia and China is climate change.

Australia is committed to strong action domestically and internationally on climate change. Because we know that climate change is the great moral, economic and environmental challenge of our time – one that all nations have to work together to overcome. That's why climate change will be an important part of my discussions with the Chinese leadership this week. It is important that China play an increasingly prominent role on climate change. An effective global response to climate change will require the active participation of all major emitters.

I also believe it is important for China's own future. Unless we are successful, China will face increasing pressure on its water supplies, changing rainfall patterns and rising sea levels. A strong relationship, and a true friendship, are built on the ability to engage in direct, frank and ongoing dialogue about our fundamental interests and future vision. In the modern, globalised world, we are all connected; connected not only by politics and economics, but also in the air we breathe.

A true friend is one who can be a “zhengyou”, that is a partner who sees beyond immediate benefit to the broader and firm basis for continuing, profound and sincere friendship. In other words, a true friendship which “offers unflinching advice and counsels restraint” to engage in principled dialogue about matters of contention.

It is the kind of friendship that I know is treasured in China's political tradition. It is the kind of friendship that I also offer China today.



China USCIRF Condemns Chinese Government Crackdown on Tibetan Buddhist Monks

March 14, 2008

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom strongly condemns the Chinese government's recent crackdown on Tibetan Buddhist monks in the Tibetan regional capital Lhasa. In the past week, the Chinese government has brutally repressed Buddhist monks who were exercising their right to freedom of expression and religion by arresting dozens, sealing off monasteries, and once again demonstrating disregard for its international commitments to protect fundamental human rights, including religious freedom. The Commission calls on the U.S. government to seek immediate diplomatic access to the monasteries that have

been closed. In addition, the United States, with other members of the international community, should urge the Chinese leadership to allow the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, to visit his homeland. The Commission visited Lhasa and the Drepung and Sera monasteries during its August 2005 visit to China.

China continues to use the heavy hand of repression in Tibet, viewing Buddhism practiced outside government control as a security threat requiring arrest, detentions, and ‘patriotic education.’ The Chinese government should cease its policy of brutally violating the rights of so many Buddhists in Tibet,” said Michael Cromartie, Chair of the Commission. “The Commission urges the U.S. government to protest strongly the arrests and detention of Buddhist monks in Lhasa. With the Olympics coming, now is the time for the United States to insist that China strengthen human rights protections and adhere to international standards-not downgrade human rights in bilateral relations, a message that could be perceived in the State Department’s decision this year to remove China from its list of the 10 worst human rights abusers.”

On March 10, hundreds of monks demonstrated against religious restrictions at Drepung monastery, seeking to end the government-imposed requirement of “patriotic education,” which often requires monks to denounce the Dalai Lama. Such peaceful protests are protected actions under international human rights covenants, and they should not be met by force. The following day, hundreds of monks from the Sera monastery protested the latest crackdown and demanded the release of monks detained earlier for celebrating the awarding of the U.S. Congressional Medal of Freedom to the Dalai Lama. Dozens of monks from Sera monastery were arrested and their whereabouts remain unknown. Protests erupted at other monasteries and two monks at Drepung reportedly tried to commit suicide. Police and security forces sealed off monasteries in Lhasa to prevent additional demonstrations. In response to these measures, Tibetans have staged street protests in Lhasa, the largest demonstrations in Tibet since 1989. There have been reports of violence, looting, and at least two deaths. The Commission urges restraint and an immediate end to any violence that could further inflame tensions and become a pretext for a further crackdown. Religious freedom restrictions and abuses in Tibet have long been some of the worst in China. The quick show of force used over the last week is part of the Chinese government’s wider policy to discredit the Dalai Lama by accusing him of trying to disrupt the 2008 Olympic Games. China continues to pursue policies it believes will ensure a secure and stable environment for the Olympics. However, the government’s attempts to ensure “order” have served only to spur new activism by those seeking to expose the Chinese government’s failure to protect the rights and freedoms enshrined in China’s own constitution and guaranteed by international instruments.

The government has also moved aggressively against China’s growing number of human rights defenders. Earlier this month, lawyer Teng Biao was abducted from his home and taken to a police station. During his interrogation, Teng was ordered to stop criticizing China’s human rights record or face further detention. Teng is co-author of an essay published last fall that criticized China’s human rights violations ahead of the Olympics. The other author of the piece, Hu Jia, is currently on trial on charges of “subversion of state power.”

“China cannot hide its repression of religious and ethnic minorities and human rights defenders. With the Olympics approaching, the whole world is watching,” “The Commission has urged President Bush to raise these issues and seek to meet prisoners when he visits China this summer. Other world leaders should seek to do the same.”

In order to ensure that the Chinese government does not ramp up its repression of religious freedom and related human rights in the run-up to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, the Commission has urged the U.S.

Congress to · within funds appropriated for the security of U.S. citizens in Beijing during the 2008 Olympic Games, allocate sufficient resources to ensure that training and related information materials include content that:

- instructs security officials, Olympic spectators, and athletes regarding China’s commitments to uphold for all visitors certain internationally recognized human rights standards during the Olympic Games; and
 - informs U.S. citizens, participants, and spectators at the Olympic games of their rights protected under international law and identifies problem areas they may encounter with Chinese authorities, relating to the freedoms of expression, religion or belief, assembly, and association, including information on Chinese law and recent human rights practices of the Chinese government on these issues; and
- in order to promote a free and open environment, in concert with the principles of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the standards of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, designate appropriate funding to independent human rights organizations to monitor and report on human rights conditions during the summer games to ensure that the Chinese government is in compliance with relevant commitments made to the IOC to uphold human rights and international standards during the Summer Olympics.

The Commission on International Religious Freedom, a bipartisan, independent federal body, is mandated by Congress to monitor abuse of freedom of religion or belief and related human rights around the world and to make recommendations to the President, State Department and Congress on ways to address religious freedom concerns.



Statement by the Independent Federation of Chinese Students and Scholars (IFCSS) on the Tibet Issue

March 17, 2008

Since mid March, there has been a peaceful petition and demonstration by the monks and people of Tibet, which evolved into a bloody conflict between the Chinese Communist government and the Tibetans.

The IFCSS believes that

1. The Tibetan Buddhism is a treasure of human culture;
2. Tibetans have their rights to choose their religious beliefs and life style;
3. Tibetans should enjoy a high degree of autonomy;
4. The Tibetans’ religious beliefs and culture rights should receive respect and protection;
5. When the Tibetans’ rights of a high degree of autonomy and religious and cultural freedom are not respected and protected, they have the right to choose demonstrations to express their dissatisfaction.

The IFCSS strongly condemns the Chinese Communist government's indifference toward the Tibetans' request, and expresses its strongest protest over the Chinese government's violent suppression that followed. We ask the Chinese government to release those who have been detained; to open the foreign media to Tibet to report and interview, as well as permit international society to have an independent and fair investigation over this incident. Only an open China with human rights has the right to hold the Olympics.

Human right has a universal value. The IFCSS feels what the Tibetans feel. We solidly support Tibetans' long-time struggle by means of peace and non-violence. We wish that democracy and freedom shall be realized in China, including Tibet.



The Solidarity actions around the world in the support of present crisis in Tibet.

March 17, 2008

H. E. Ambassador Doru-Romulus Costea
President of the United Nations Human Rights Council
Palais des Nations
1211 GENEVA 10
(cc. Members of the Human Rights Council)

Sub: Appeal for a Special Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council on the Human Rights Situation in the People's Republic of China

Your Excellency,

The undersigned 65 Non-Governmental Organisations in the Asian region call upon the UN Human Rights Council to hold a Special Session on the current human rights situation in the People's Republic of China.

We welcome that the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on Friday expressed her concern on the Tibetan people's situation and urged "the Government of China to allow demonstrators to exercise their right to freedom of expression and assembly, to refrain from any excessive use of force while maintaining order, and to ensure those arrested are not ill-treated and are accorded due process in line with international standards."

Following her recommendations, we would like to appeal to Council members to address the ongoing gross human rights violations against Tibetans with regards to their right to life, freedom of expression and assembly, among others. We also urge the members to seriously look into the cases of violent crackdown on a series of peaceful demonstrations in the "Tibet Autonomous Region" and Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan provinces in China.

In this respect, we urge the High Commissioner to send a fact-finding mission equipped with full access to all the Tibetan areas where there had been extrajudicial or summary killings, arbitrary detention, and enforced disappearances since 10 March, when the current wave of demonstrations began. Judging from the information available to us regarding the scale of the ongoing human rights violations against the Tibetan people, including

the reported deaths of 80 Tibetans, it is imperative that the Human Rights Council as the principal human rights organ of the United Nations take urgent measures by convening a special session to address the current situation in China.

We are of the opinion that the current situation in Tibetan areas is very similar to Burma, where peaceful demonstrators were also attacked by the authorities, and on which

this Council took action in September 2007. We urge the Council to swiftly call upon the Chinese authorities to receive a joint mission of Special Procedures mandate-holders on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution and other relevant mandates such as the Special Rapporteur on Torture, the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression and the Special Representative of Secretary-General on Human Rights Defenders.

We remain at your disposal for any further information or consultation on this urgent matter.

Thank you very much for your attention to this appeal.

Yours sincerely,

Anselmo LEE (Executive Director)
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)

On behalf of

1. Ain O Salish Kendra
2. Alliance of Independent Journalist (AJI)
3. Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma (ALTSEAN-Burma)
4. ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus (AIPMC)
5. Association of Taiwan Indigenous Peoples' Policies (ATIPP)
6. Association of Taiwan Indigenous Peoples' College (ATIPC)
7. Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR)
8. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
9. Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Network (AITPN)
10. Banglar Manabdhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM)
11. Cambodian Human Rights and Development (ADHOC)
12. Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICHADE)
13. Centre for Organization Research and Education (CORE)
14. Center for Human Rights and Development (CHRD), Mongolia
15. Center for Social Action, Research, Training and Documentation (ADHIKAR)
16. Citizens' Council for Human Rights, Japan
17. Community Trust Fund (CTF)
18. Earth Peoples
19. Era Consumer
20. Forum for Democracy in Burma (FDB)
21. Foundation for Media Alternatives, Philippines
22. Friends' Association for Rural Reconstruction (FARR)
23. Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW)
24. Globe International

25. Human Rights and Justice (HAK Association)
26. Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)
27. Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB)
28. Indonesian Human Rights Monitor (IMPARSIAL)
29. Indonesian Human Rights Working Group (HRWG)
30. Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI)
31. Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Rights Foundation (PBHI)
32. Information Monitor (INFORM)
33. Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC)
34. International Center for Law in Development
35. International NGO Forum for Indonesian Development (INFID)
36. Justice System Monitoring Program (JSMP)
37. Korean House for International Solidarity (KHIS)
38. Lao Human Rights Council
39. Law and Society Trust (LST)
40. Legal Resources for Social Action (LRSA)
41. Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA)
42. National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), Pakistan
43. Non-Violence International Southeast Asia
44. Odhikar - Bangladesh
45. Paralegal Training and Service Center (PTSC)
46. Panglilingkod Batas Pangkapapatiran Foundation (PBPF)
47. Pax Romana ICMICA/MIIC - Asia Pacific
48. People's Empowerment for Strong Civil Society
49. People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD)
50. People's Watch- India
51. Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA)
52. PILIPINA Legal Resources Center
53. Resource Integration Center
54. Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)
55. Society for Threatened Peoples International
56. Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM)
57. Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP)
58. Taiwan Association for Human Rights (TAHR)
59. Taiwan Indigenous Peoples (NGOs) Alliance
60. Tanggol-Kalikasan
61. The Federation of the Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence (KONTRAS)
62. Think Center
63. Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)
64. Women's Welfare Society (WWS)
65. Yayasan Anak Merdeka Indonesia



A statement on situation in Tibet signed by six personalities associated with the Shared Concern Initiative (Prague)

March 21, 2008

Recent events in Tibet and the provinces that adjoin it are causes for deep concern almost everywhere. Indeed, the dispersal of a peaceful protest march organized by Tibetan monks, which led to a wave of unrest that was brutally suppressed by the Chinese military and police, has caused indignation all over the democratic world.

The reaction of the Chinese authorities to the Tibetan protests evokes echoes of the totalitarian practices that many of us remember from the days before communism in Central and Eastern Europe collapsed in 1989: harsh censorship of the domestic media, blackouts of reporting by foreign media from China, refusal of visas to foreign journalists, and blaming the unrest on the “Dalai Lama’s conspiratorial clique” and other unspecified dark forces supposedly manipulated from abroad. Indeed, the language used by some Chinese government representatives and the official Chinese media is a reminder of the worst of times during the Stalinist and Maoist eras. But the most dangerous development of this unfortunate situation is the current attempt to seal off Tibet from the rest of the world.

Even as we write, it is clear that China’s rulers are trying to reassure the world that peace, quiet, and “harmony” have again prevailed in Tibet. We all know this kind of peace from what has happened in the past in Burma, Cuba, Belarus, and a few other countries – it is called the peace of the graveyard.

Merely urging the Chinese government to exercise the “utmost restraint” in dealing with the Tibetan people, as governments around the world are doing, is far too weak a response. The international community, beginning with the United Nations and followed by the European Union, ASEAN, and other international organizations, as well as individual countries, should use every means possible to step up pressure on the Chinese government to

- allow foreign media, as well as international fact-finding missions, into Tibet and adjoining provinces in order to enable objective investigations of what has been happening;
- release all those who only peacefully exercised their internationally guaranteed human rights, and guarantee that no one is subjected to torture and unfair trials;
- enter into a meaningful dialogue with the representatives of the Tibetan people.

Unless these conditions are fulfilled, the International Olympic Committee should seriously reconsider whether holding this summer’s Olympic Games in a country that includes a peaceful graveyard remains a good idea.

1. Václav Havel

2. Yohei Sasakawa

3. Frederik Willem de Klerk

4. André Glucksmann

5. El Hassan Bin Talal

6. Karel Schwarzenberg



Joint Statement

On behalf of the 33 organisations, this statement was submitted by Ms. Pauliina Feodoroff, President of Saami Council, Finland at the end of the Seventh Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues which concluded on 2 May 2008 at the United Nations in New York

May 08, 2008

We, the undersigned representatives of indigenous peoples from around the world, in solidarity with the aspirations of the Tibetan people and His Holiness the Dalai Lama, express our deepest sorrow at the unmonitored events unfolding in the homeland of the Tibetan people also known as the “roof of the world.” As we too aspire to pursue the non-violent path to defend our fundamental and ancestral rights, we fully acknowledge the Tibetan people for their steadfast non-violent freedom struggle, now for almost 50 years

While we offer condolences to innocent civilians, including Chinese settlers and Tibetans who lost their lives on 14 March in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, in riots and the crackdown which followed, we still believe that the full circumstances of what actually transpired on that day without an independent verification, will unfortunately not reveal the whole truth

A set of disturbing photographs of Tibetans killed in the Ngapa Tibetan region, now widely available for the world to witness, remind us of many indigenous peoples in this world, who sacrificed their lives to defend their faith, language, culture, history, environment and unique identity. Arbitrary detentions and “surrenders” of Tibetans have already crossed over 4,000 according to official Chinese statements alone while many Tibetans are feared to have disappeared after arrests

Since 14 March, according to reports, including from Tibetan sources, more than 150 Tibetans have been killed as a direct result of China’s military crackdown on Tibetan demonstrations in the Tibet Autonomous Region and Tibetan areas in Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces. We therefore condemn in the strongest term the deployment of an on-going brutal crackdown of a “people’s war” unleashed by the Chinese authorities upon the Tibetan people who collectively expressed a massive Uprising unseen since 1959

We note that China conducted three separate controlled-visits by the media and foreign diplomats since the demonstrations erupted on the Tibetan Plateau from 10 March onwards. But we remain deeply concerned about the fate of the Tibetan monks who disputed China’s policies in front of the media visits to Lhasa on 28 March and to Lhabrang (Chinese: Xiahe) on 9 April

In this respect we fully agree with the recent statement by seven Special Procedure Mandate-holders of the UN Human Rights Council that such visits are no substitute to an independent assessment of the urgent situation confronted by the Tibetan people. We call upon the Chinese authorities to receive, without further delay, a joint Mission of all relevant UN human rights experts to ascertain the ground realities of the human rights situation faced by the Tibetan people. We also call on China to immediately receive the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on a fact-finding mission to all Tibetan areas where demonstrations were suppressed

As to the present situation, we have no hesitation to believe that sealing off adequate food, medical and other essential supplies to the many monasteries and nunneries is a collective punishment inflicted by China. We therefore call for the withdrawal of the “patriotic re-education sessions” by Communist cadres whereby monks and nuns are forced to confirm that the Dalai Lama “instigated” the present Tibetan Uprising or to denounce their spiritual leader. Like many in this world, we are equally disturbed by the never ending pronouncements of the Chinese leadership to defame the personality of the Dalai Lama, who the vast majority in this world, recognize as a person of high moral authority and a tireless messenger of peace, non-violence and human rights. We believe China and its people must understand that their questions on the sincerity of the Dalai Lama to reach out to the People’s Republic of China will not only strengthen the mistrust of Tibetans but will cast a huge doubt on China’s leadership hopes and its sense of responsibility, especially as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Like the Dalai Lama, we also believe the Chinese people fully deserve to host and cherish the Beijing Olympics. However, while holding such a global honour, China’s leader’s must acknowledge that the legitimate rights of Tibetans and Human Rights Defenders in China cannot be trampled by promoting Chinese nationalism. Such a scenario is now being created by the Chinese leadership among the Chinese nationals all over the world whereby the aspiration of the demonstrations in Tibet is labeled as anti-Chinese people. This kind of xenophobic message against the Tibetan people would really go against the whole spirit of the Olympic Games. We also believe that provoking the Tibetan people by running the Olympic Torch on their holy land would be another grave mistake.

Like many in this world, we fully support the growing calls for a negotiated settlement of the Sino-Tibetan conflict through result-oriented talks between the Chinese leadership and the Tibetan Government in Exile headed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We acknowledge that the Dalai Lama is not seeking the independence of Tibet but genuine self rule within the People’s Republic of China. We solemnly applaud the Dalai Lama for his steadfast Middle Way Approach to reach out to the Chinese leadership to end the long suffering of the Tibetan people.

The indigenous people of the world have recently benefitted from China’s wisdom and leadership which greatly contributed to the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. For this, we are forever grateful towards China. But furthermore, having first hand experience with China contributing to peaceful settlements between peoples on an international level, we are convinced that China will have the wisdom to find a peaceful agreement with the Tibetan People in line with Dalai Lama’s suggested Middle Way Approach, to the mutual benefit of Chinese and the Tibetan peoples.

As the suffering of the Tibetan people continues, we request our Elders to remember them in their prayers

1. Advocates for the Protection of Sacred Sites (U.S. - California)
2. AMAN (Indonesia)
3. Assembly of First Nations (Canada)
4. Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network (India)
5. Asocion Nacional Indijena Salvadore Anis (El Salvador)
6. Balochistan Peoples Party (Iran)
7. Bangsa Adat Alifuru (Maluku)

8. Buffalo Rider Dene nation (USA)
9. Center for Organization Research and Education (India)
10. Chin Human Rights Organization (Burma)
11. Eagle Clan Lokunu (Arawaki of Guyana)
12. Forest Peoples Programme (The United Kingdom)
13. Foundation for Research and Support of Indigenous Peoples of Crimea (Ukraine)
14. Hawaii Institute for Human Rights (The United States)
15. Huascar M. Cabanillas Habitat-Pro (Quechua Nation - Peru)
16. International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (Denmark)
17. Inuit Circumpolar Council (Canada, Greenland, the Russian Federation , the United States)
18. Kalahui Hawaii (the United States)
19. Mainyoiitu Pastrualist Intergrated Development Organisation (Africa)
20. Na Koa Ikaika (USA)
21. National Network of Indigenous Women (Nepal)
22. Netherland Center for Indigenous Peoples (NCIV) (Netherlands)
23. Organizacion de Los Pueblos Indigenas Amazonia Colombiana (Colombia)
24. Organizacion Wayuumunsurat (Colombia)
25. Panama Kuna - Cealp (Panama)
26. Quebec Native Women's Association (Canada)
27. The Saami Council (Finland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden)
28. The Saami Parliament (Norway)
29. Taino Nations of the Antilles (Puerro Rico, USA)
30. Tawaly Foundation (Libya)
31. Ubiratan de Souza Maia - Instituto Kame (Brazil)
32. Waikiki Hawaiian Civil Club (the United States)
33. Wana Instituto Indiguena Brasilio (Brazil)



Statements of International Non-governmental Organizations: June 11 2008

Human Rights Watch

SEBASTIEN GILLIOZ, of Human Rights Watch, said that this week the International Committee of the Red Cross called Somalia the worst tragedy of the past decade. Serious violations of international humanitarian law continued unabated..... Lastly HRW expresses its condolences to the victims of Sichuan earthquake. Since last addressing the Council about Chinese government use of excessive force in response to March protests in Tibet, we have seen dozen of Tibetan tried with no due process and denial of access to region by

the HC and SR. This council must remain seize of the rampant violation of Human rights for which Chinese government is responsible and has not addressed

Amnesty International

PETER SPLINTER, of Amnesty International said “Despite the harsh government crackdown since large scale unrest erupted in Tibetan areas of China on March 10 2008, protests, mostly peaceful, have continued unabated. Protest, crackdown, and arrests now follow each other in a relentless cycle, as individuals are arrested for protesting the detention of others before them. Security forces continue to use excessive force, occasionally lethal, to put down peaceful protests. Many detained persons remain unaccounted for. Others have been sentenced after unfair trials. The authorities have imposed a media blockade and virtually sealed off Tibetan areas. Those who provide information to foreigners suffer harsh retaliation. The outside world has only a partial picture of the situation.

Amnesty International fears that Tibetans in detention in the wake of the protests face beatings or other abuses. This Council must call on the Chinese authorities to show restraint in responding to protest, disclose the names, whereabouts and legal status of all detainees, and release anyone detained solely for peaceful protest.

International Commission of Jurist and Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions

LUKAS MACHON, of International Commission of Jurists, in a joint statement with Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, said that in its March session, they had urged the Council to press.....

In conclusion following the violent crackdown on peaceful protest in Tibet of March 2008, 30 peaceful protestors have been convicted and sentence to imprisonment in process short of fair trial guarantee. Special Procedures still must investigate the crackdown and Chinese authorities must revoke the conviction of prisoners of conscience and release those arbitrarily detain. Finally we call for political solution in order to guarantee right of Tibetan people.

Asian forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)

BIYOUN KIM, of Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum-Asia), FA would like to take this opportunity to remind you our joint appeal letter of 75 Asian NGOs dated on March 17 sent to you and members of the Council urging Human Rights Council to hold special session on human rights situation in Tibet and to send a fact finding mission with full access to all Tibetan areas where there have been extra-judicial killings and arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances since 10 March 2008. We also would like to put on record our great concern and disappointment that the Council has failed to respond to our appeal and the human rights situation in Tibet. During the current session of Human Rights Council, a group of Tibetan people and victims of human rights violations have been holding rally in front of the Palais des Nations everyday crying for their solidarity and action of international community to address the ongoing great hr violation in Tibet. However, to our regret it seems that their voice have still ignored by the Council. In this regards, we would like to accord with voices of the Tibetan people to the Council in this room. I quote

In view of the ongoing critical situation inside Tibet, we urge the Council and international community to the following urgent appeal:

1. To immdeidal send an independent international fact-finding mission into Tibet

2. To exert pressure on the PRC government to allow unfettered access to free press in Tibet
3. To urge govent of China to end the brutal killings in the whole of Tibet
4. To immediately release all imprisoned Tibetans
5. To provide immediate medical assistance to those injured Tibetans



American Anthropological Association Committee for Human Rights Statement Regarding the spring 2008 Protests in Tibet June 20, 2008

To the Government of the People's Republic of China:

On behalf of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), at present the largest professional organization of anthropologists in the world and composing 11,000 members, the Task Force on China and Tibet of the AAA's Committee for Human Rights would like to express its' deep concern about the ongoing set of factors motivating recent protests by the people of Tibet. This is based upon our discipline's long professional attention to the costs of political and economic development for the collective social and cultural wellbeing of the world's peoples. Given that the Peoples' Republic of China is a signator to the 1966 Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and given that the AAA's own Declaration on Anthropology and Human Rights emphasizes "the equal opportunity of all cultures, societies, and persons to realize this capacity in their cultural identities and social lives," we wish to draw your attention to the following concerns with respect to Tibet.

Point 1: The recent earthquake in Sichuan Province was not simply a Chinese tragedy, but also a Tibetan tragedy; the epicenter was just east of the large Tibetan area of Sichuan. The earthquake is tragic in many ways. Many people lost their lives, including the devastating deaths of many schoolchildren; homes and businesses were destroyed; and many communities were cut off from basic human necessities and life saving operations. In addition, however, the earthquake also perpetuated an information blackout in ethnic Tibetan communities which, just before the earthquake hit, were sites of continued clashes between Tibetans and government forces. In the wake of the earthquake, we no longer have clear information channels to these communities, and thus no longer know the degree of the continuing protests or repression in these areas. In the aftermath of the earthquake and its many tragedies, there is still a need to peacefully resolve the issues behind the current protests in Tibet, and thus these Tibetan protests must not be forgotten.

Point 2: The causes of protests across Tibetan regions of China are multifaceted. They are rooted in the troubled social and political history of China and Tibet, as well as more contemporary global and regional processes of "development." These causes include, but are not limited to the economic marginalization of Tibetans in the People's Republic of China (PRC), the rising costs of living, and rising levels of unemployment among Tibetans in urban areas. This reality persists despite Chinese government claims of increasing material prosperity in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). In terms of religion, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) interference into religious practice and policy as well as continued, unrelenting public critique of the Dalai Lama has fueled rather than quelled Han-Tibetan ethnic tensions. In addition, limited opportunities for education in Tibetan language and inadequate opportunities for socio-economic advancement for Tibetans within

contemporary Tibetan communities—and not just in mixed or Han-dominant communities—continue an historical legacy of “Han Chauvinism” toward Tibetans, one of the People’s Republic of China’s 55 minority nationalities (*minzu*). Finally, many Tibetans harbor resentment about the Chinese “peaceful liberation” of Tibet in the 1950s, as well as abiding experiences of frustration, despair, anger, and hopelessness, have fueled these historic moments of civil unrest. Many Tibetans involved in the 2008 protests across Tibetan terrain have expressed that they have “nothing left to lose.”

Point 3: The recent wave of protests in ethnically Tibetan areas, begun in Lhasa on March 14, are the largest protests that have occurred seen since the Tibetan Uprising of March 1959. However, unlike that historic uprising, these current protests cut across all segments of society (monks and nuns, laypeople, men and women, nomads, peasants, workers) and across *all ethnically Tibetan regions of the PRC*. Counter to official Chinese media representation, this civil unrest was not simply the work of “bad elements” in Lhasa, be they monks or laypeople. Indeed most of the protests have occurred outside the TAR, in Sichuan, Gansu, and Qinghai Province. This (1) reinforces the reality that there is truth to historical claims about the geographic boundaries of “Tibet” in both cultural and political terms, and (2) signals that Tibetan dissatisfaction with the Chinese government is more widespread and serious than has been acknowledged.

Given the above points, we, the AAA Committee for Human Rights, requests the following:

Request 1: We ask that the Chinese government end the use of force against Tibetans in China. In conjunction with this, we ask that the Chinese government end its continuing suppression of Tibetan opinion and release those Tibetans imprisoned for peacefully exercising their international rights to freedom of speech and assembly.

Request 2: We ask that the Chinese government acknowledge the level of discord in Tibet and begin work to ameliorate these conditions. Among other things, this should involve providing resources and opportunities for Tibetans to participate in decision-making processes aimed at addressing the issues underlying these recent protests.

Request 3: We ask that the Chinese government continue serious talks with representatives of the Dalai Lama, and that the government treat him with the courtesy and respect due to a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and recognized global leader.

Finally, we join with the many Chinese intellectuals who in their petition to the government concluded by expressing their hope that the Chinese and Tibetan people will do away with misunderstandings between them, and we call on the Chinese government to take the lead in fostering such peaceful relations.



Nancy Pelosi statement on Tibet March 12, 2008

Speaker Nancy Pelosi released the following statement today in response to reports that Chinese police forces have arrested, detained and fired tear gas on hundreds of Tibetan Buddhist monks peacefully protesting near the Tibetan capital of Lhasa. There have also been reports of sightings

of People’s Liberation Army troop transport vehicles traveling to Drepung monastery and reports of gunshots and beatings from inside the monastery.

“The violent response by Chinese police forces to peaceful protesters in Tibet is disgraceful. It must be met with strong condemnation by the United States government and the international community. The Chinese government should immediately provide information on the welfare and whereabouts of the detained Buddhist monks and facilitate access by international human rights monitors and journalists to Tibetan areas.

“We know from the State Department’s Country Reports on Human Rights that the human rights situation in China and Tibet continues to worsen and the repression of religious freedom has increased. There is disturbing new evidence of a pre-Olympic crackdown on religious leaders, journalists and lawyers in recent months. The Olympic Games in Beijing this summer should provide an opportunity for more free expression, not less. I call upon the Bush Administration to publicly condemn the attacks in the strongest possible terms and consider issuing a travel warning to Tibet because of concerns that tourists could be caught in the violence.

“It is long past time for Beijing to make progress on a solution that respects the human rights of every Tibetan. The plight of the people of Tibet is a challenge to the conscience of the world and the United States must be prepared to confront the Chinese government when they violate the human rights of their people.”



**Statement of Senator Barack Obama
March 14, 2008**

“I am deeply disturbed by reports of a crackdown and arrests ordered by Chinese authorities in the wake of peaceful protests by Tibetan Buddhist monks. I condemn the use of violence to put down peaceful protests, and call on the Chinese government to respect the basic human rights of the people of Tibet, and to account for the whereabouts of detained Buddhist monks.

These events come on the 49th anniversary of the exile of the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, the Dalai Lama. They demonstrate the continuing frustration of the Tibetan people at the way in which Beijing has ruled Tibet. There has been an informal dialogue between Chinese leaders and the Dalai Lama’s representatives over the past six years. It is good that they have been talking, but China has thus far shown no flexibility on the substance of those discussions. Indeed, it has delayed in scheduling the latest round, despite the willingness of the Tibetans to continue dialogue.

If Tibetans are to live in harmony with the rest of China’s people, their religion and culture must be respected and protected. Tibet should enjoy genuine and meaningful autonomy. The Dalai Lama should be invited to visit China, as part of a process leading to his return.

This is the year of the Beijing Olympics. It represents an opportunity for China to show the world what it has accomplished in the last several decades. Those accomplishments have been extraordinary and China's people have a right to be proud of them, but the events in Tibet these last few days unfortunately show a different face of China. Now is the time for Beijing to take steps that would change the image people have of China later this year by changing the reality of how they treat Tibet and Tibetans. Now is the time to respect the human rights and religious freedom of the people of Tibet.”



Statement by Secretary Condoleezza Rice
March 15, 2008

I am deeply saddened to learn that the turmoil that erupted yesterday in Lhasa following what began as peaceful protests has resulted in the loss of lives, and I am concerned that the violence appears to be continuing. I also am concerned by reports of a sharply increased police and military presence in and around Lhasa. We call on the Chinese government to exercise restraint in dealing with these protests, and we strongly urge all sides to refrain from violence.

President Bush has consistently encouraged the Chinese Government to engage in substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama directly and through his representatives so that long-standing issues with regard to Tibet may be resolved. We urge China to respect the fundamental and universally recognized right of all of its citizens to peacefully express their political and religious views, and we call on China to release monks and others who have been detained solely for the peaceful expression of their views. We also urge China to address policies in Tibetan areas that have created tensions due to their impact on Tibetan religion, culture, and livelihoods.



Statement From Hillary Clinton
March 15, 2008

“I am deeply concerned about the violent clashes that have erupted in Lhasa, Tibet. Based on the limited information available, there is an urgent need for all parties, and in particular the Chinese security forces, to exercise restraint, to demonstrate respect for human rights and to protect civilians from danger. I call on the Chinese government to prevent further escalation of this conflict and to urgently pursue resolution through peaceful means.

“I co-sponsored the Fourteenth Dalai Lama Congressional Gold Medal Act and co-sponsored the Tibetan Policy Act of 2001, supporting a dialogue between the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama. I

have personally met with the Dalai Lama. I asked President Jiang Zemin to explain China's repression of the Tibetans and their religion during his 1997 state visit to the United States. More than 10 years later, Chinese repression in Tibet continues. This week, Tibetan monks have sent a message to the world that their aspirations for religious liberty remain as strong as ever.

"Upholding freedom and human rights in Tibet will happen through negotiation, and with a commitment on all sides to seeking constructive solutions for the benefit, above all, of the Tibetan people."



Statement By John McCain On Tibet
March 18, 2008

"The unfolding tragedy in Tibet should draw the attention of the entire world. I deplore the violent crackdown by Chinese authorities and the continuing oppression in Tibet of those merely wishing to practice their faith and preserve their culture and heritage. I have listened carefully to the Dalai Lama and am convinced he is a man of peace who reflects the hopes and aspirations of Tibetans. I urge the government of the People's Republic of China to address the root causes of unrest in Tibet by opening a genuine dialogue with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama. Reports of shutting down You Tube and confiscation of SIM cards are disturbing and reports of multiple deaths are far more so, especially in a year when China is preparing to host the Olympic Games. I urge the Chinese authorities to ensure peaceful protest is not met with violence, to release monks and others detained for peacefully expressing their views and to allow full outside access to Tibet.



Statement By Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi Mp
President Of The Inkatha Freedom Party
March 18, 2008

We have watched with concern the events unfolding in Tibet and neighbouring regions in recent days.

We appeal for cooler tempers to prevail. It is relevant to note that the Dharamsala Tibetan government-in-exile today no longer seeks

fully-fledged independence, but is prepared to hold negotiations on genuine self-government and the demilitarisation and transformation of Tibet into a zone of Ahimsa (peace and no violence). His Holiness the Dalai Lama has spoken to me about cultural autonomy.

I encourage Tibet and China to resolve these outstanding issues around the negotiating table forthwith.

A lasting solution must be for Tibet to find a home in a broad definition of China united by cultural diversity, language and propelled by a giant economic powerhouse.

Economic liberation nearly always precedes democracy and freedom. I sincerely hope this development will soon replicate in China. I remain optimistic that the Sino-Tibetan debate can be resolved amicably and satisfactorily to all parties.

We encourage China to adhere to international standards of human rights and to recognise Tibet's unique cultural and religious identity. This, we believe, is in Beijing's long-term interests as much as Dharamsala's.

We say this because we wish China well too as she prepares for this year's Olympic Games and in recognition of the global role that the new China plays in the twenty-first century. It would be a catastrophe if the troubling incidents in Tibet were to intensify and blight the Games and China's prestige.

We similarly continue to encourage Tibet to engage with Beijing and to ensure that they also benefit from the country's strong economic growth.

INTERNATIONAL
Herald Tribune
THE GLOBAL EDITION OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

Pope Benedict XVI appeals for dialogue in Tibet
March 19, 2008

Pope Benedict XVI on Wednesday appealed for dialogue and tolerance between Chinese and Tibetans, expressing "sadness and pain" over the violence in Tibet.

During his weekly audience at the Vatican, the pope admonished that "with violence you don't solve problems but only make them worse" and prayed for a peaceful resolution after last week's protests. The unrest marked the biggest challenge in almost two decades to Chinese rule.

"My heart ... feels sadness and pain for the suffering of so many people," Benedict told a crowd of faithful, praying that God will "give everyone the courage to choose the path of dialogue and tolerance."

It was the first time that Benedict addressed the unrest in Tibet since violence erupted in the Chinese region last week. Anti-government riots in the capital, Lhasa, resulted in a crackdown by Chinese authorities and the unrest spread into neighboring provinces with large Tibetan populations.

The Washington Post

Statement on Tibet and China by Desmond Tutu
March 25, 2008

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Mpilo Tutu was awarded the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution to the cause of racial justice in South Africa. He served as the first black African archbishop of Cape Town from 1986 to 1996 in South Africa.

I wish to express my solidarity with the people of Tibet during this critical time in their history. To my dear friend His Holiness the Dalai Lama let me say: I stand with you. You define non-violence and compassion and goodness. I was in an Easter retreat when the recent tragic events unfolded in Tibet. I learned that China has

stated you caused violence. Clearly China does not know you, but they should. I call on China's government to know His Holiness the Dalai Lama, as so many have come to know, during these long decades years in exile. Listen to His Holiness' pleas for restraint and calm and no further violence against this civilian population of monastics and lay people.

I urge China to enter into a substantive and meaningful dialogue with this man of peace, the Dalai Lama. China is uniquely positioned to impact and affect our world. Certainly the leaders of China know this or they would not have bid for the Olympics. Killing, imprisonment and torture are not a sport: the innocents must be released and given free and fair trials.

I urge my esteemed friend Louise Arbour, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit Tibet and be given access to assess, and report to the international community, the events which led to this international outcry for justice. The High Commissioner should be allowed to travel with journalists, and other observers, who may speak truth to power and level the playing field so that, indeed, this episode — these decades of struggle — may attain a peaceful resolution. This will help not only Tibet. It will help China.

And China, poised to receive the world during the forthcoming Olympic Games needs to make sure the eyes of the world will see that China has changed, that China is willing to be a responsible partner in international global affairs. Finally, China must stop naming, blaming and verbally abusing one whose life has been devoted to non-violence, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, a Nobel peace laureate.



Ela Gandhi, ex-ANC MP & granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi
April 02, 2008

“I believe that the people of Tibet have suffered for a very long time and I think it is time now for both parties, the people of Tibet and China to sit together and negotiate a powerful settlement. Negotiations and a peaceful settlement are the only way in which people can solve their problems and bring to an end to conflict and unhappiness.

We have seen this in many parts of the world, including South Africa, where the people of South Africa have been able to attain a peaceful settlement and in the US with the civil rights movement, where they were able to attain a peaceful solution to their problems.

So I believe that in Tibet it is very possible to attain a peaceful solution.

This is what His Holiness the Dalai Lama would like to see and we urge the Chinese Government to come to the table.”



India's Former Defence Minister urges to take up full autonomy for Tibet May 29, 2008

Mr George Fernandes has asked New Delhi to take the initiative and join other countries which are concerned about the situation in Tibet, and raise the issue of granting full autonomy status to that troubled region in the United Nations. In an article for the socialist journal *The Other Side*, Fernandes described the present anti-China protests in Tibet and in other parts of the world as an issue that needed to be addressed seriously in the international fora, but added that institutions like the United Nations would probably be severely handicapped in being able to do anything in the matter. He called for a worldwide boycott of this years Olympic Games in Beijing and added that that Indian should also start a movement to boycott the sale of Chinese goods in Indian markets.



European Parliament resolution on Tibet April 10, 2008

Having regard to its earlier resolutions on China and on Tibet, in particular on:

- a) the dialogue between the Chinese government and envoys of the dalai lama (15th February 2007)
- b) the EU-China Summit and the EU/China human rights dialogue (13 December 2007)
- c) EU-China relations (7 September 2006)
- d) the functioning of the human rights dialogues and consultations on human rights with third countries (6 September 2007)

Having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

- A. Whereas the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan national uprising against the Chinese administration led to major demonstrations by Tibetan monks and nuns and ordinary Tibetan citizens protesting against Chinese repression,
- B. Whereas, according to the Chinese authorities, 20 people died in the protests; whereas, according to other sources, more than 140 Tibetans died in those clashes, and dozens of others have been arrested,
- C. Whereas a state of emergency has been declared by the Chinese Government, and shops and temples have been closed in Lhasa, as well as in other cities, with hundreds of armed police officers and army troops moved to Tibet from the rest of China,
- D. Whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama has called this Chinese over-reaction ‘cultural genocide’, and has at the same time urged Tibetans ‘to practice non-violence and not waver from this path, however serious the situation might be’⁽⁵⁾ whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama has not demanded Tibetan independence but has instead proposed a middle way of genuine cultural and political autonomy and religious freedom, thereby expressing a view that is supported by the European Parliament,
- E. Whereas only peaceful means and sincere dialogue can lead to a lasting settlement,
- F. Whereas, save for an official international press trip organised by the Chinese Government, the international press has been denied access to the region of Tibet to report on the events, and all journalists have been expelled; whereas the aforementioned international press trip was heavily controlled and the participating journalists were denied unrestricted access to the Tibetan people,
- G. Whereas the Chinese Government appears to be blocking foreign websites inside China and censoring foreign television broadcasts about the situation in Tibet,

- H. Convinced that the Beijing Olympic Games represent an extraordinary opportunity for China to open itself up to the world and vice versa, and to demonstrate that it can honour its undertakings as regards the promotion of fundamental rights for all Chinese people, without distinction,
- I. Whereas the EU-China human rights dialogue established in 2000 has failed to achieve the expected results,
1. Firmly condemns the brutal repression visited by the Chinese security forces on Tibetan demonstrators and all acts of violence from whichever source that have taken place in the streets of Lhasa and elsewhere in Tibet, and expresses its sincere condolences to the families of the victims;
 2. Calls on the Chinese Government to guarantee adequate medical care for injured Tibetans and legal assistance for arrested Tibetans; appeals to the authorities to present an account of their detainees, to treat them in accordance with international human rights law and, under all circumstances, to refrain from torture; calls for the immediate release of all those who protested peacefully exercising their legitimate right to freedom of expression;
 3. Criticises the often discriminatory treatment of non-Han Chinese ethnic minorities; calls on China to honour its commitments to human and minority rights and the rule of law; urges China not to misuse the 2008 Olympic Games by arresting dissidents, journalists and human rights activists in order to prevent demonstrations and reports which the authorities view as embarrassing to them; calls, in this regard, for the immediate release of Hu Jia, a prominent human rights activist, sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison on subversion charges;
 4. Calls for an open and independent inquiry, under the auspices of the United Nations, into the recent riots and repression in Tibet; urges the Chinese authorities to issue a standing invitation to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other UN bodies to visit Tibet;
 5. Welcomes the fact that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has called on the Tibetan people to protest non-violently and has rejected calls for Tibetan independence and instead proposed the middle way of genuine cultural and political autonomy and religious freedom; reaffirms its attachment to China's territorial integrity;
 6. Calls on the Chinese authorities to open up Tibet to the media and diplomats, in particular EU representatives; urges the Chinese authorities to immediately stop censoring and blocking news and information websites based abroad; calls for the release of all journalists, internet users and cyber-dissidents detained in China for exercising their right to information;
 7. Is concerned about the increasing economic marginalisation of the Tibetan people in Tibet, who are faced with a rising number of Chinese migrant workers coming into Tibet and taking Tibetan jobs and Tibetan land; points to the gross discrimination in the education system, in which Tibetan children learn their native language as a second language;
 8. Calls on China to respect its own public commitments to human rights and minority rights, democracy and the rule of law announced during the International Olympic Committee (IOC) decision to allow China to organise the Games;
 9. Urges China to ratify without any further delay and in any case before the Olympic Games the

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UN, 1966); calls on Beijing to establish a moratorium on the death penalty, as called for by UN General Assembly resolution 62/149 of 18 December 2007 on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty;

10. Regrets that the six sessions of talks between the Chinese authorities and His Holiness the Dalai Lama have failed to achieve results, and calls for a constructive dialogue to be opened without preconditions, with a view to reaching a comprehensive political agreement, including a sustainable solution with regard to the cultural and political autonomy of Tibet and religious freedom and true minority rights for the Tibetan people in other neighbouring Chinese provinces;
11. Calls on the Council, and in particular the Presidency, closely to monitor developments, and to ensure that the EU adopts a consistent common position and that decisions taken on the basis thereof are duly implemented, and considers that EU diplomatic representatives in Beijing should take the initiative of visiting the region in order to report back to the Council about the current situation;
12. Reiterates, in this regard, its call on the Council to appoint a special envoy for Tibetan issues in order to facilitate the dialogue between the parties and closely follow the negotiations once they are resumed;
13. Endorses the statement by His Holiness the Dalai Lama that the Olympic Games are a great opportunity for freedom for all the Chinese people;
14. Calls on the EU Presidency-in-Office to strive to find a common EU position with regard to the attendance of the Heads of Government and of State and the EU High Representative at the Olympic Games opening ceremony, with the option of non-attendance in the event that there is no resumption of dialogue between the Chinese authorities and His Holiness the Dalai Lama;
15. Urges the People's Republic of China to stop scrutinising and judging Olympic athletes on the basis of their political views and threatening to ban them from the Olympic Games if they dissent from the Chinese Government's official position;
16. Looks forward to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit to the European Parliament to address the plenary session scheduled for late 2008, and calls on its Conference of Presidents to explore the possibility of an earlier visit;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the governments and parliaments of the applicant countries, the President and Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China, the President of the Chinese People's National Congress, the International Olympic Committee and His Holiness the Dalai Lama



Speaker Pelosi introduces resolution on Tibet

April 03, 2008

Members of India Congressional Delegation Introduce Resolution in Support of Tibet

Calling on the Government of the People's Republic of China to end its crackdown in Tibet and enter into a substantive dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama to find a negotiated solution that respects the distinctive language, culture, religious identity, and fundamental freedoms of all Tibetans, and for other purposes. Whereas March 10, 2008, marked the 49th anniversary of a historic uprising against Chinese rule over the Tibetan people, which forced His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, to escape into exile in India;

Whereas Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns in and around Lhasa were blocked by Chinese authorities from staging peaceful demonstrations on this anniversary date and were met with excessive force by the Chinese authorities;

Whereas protests by Tibetans spread inside the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas of China;

Whereas the accumulated grievances of almost six decades of cultural, religious, economic, and linguistic repression of the Tibetan people by the Government of the People's Republic of China has resulted in resentments which are at the root of the Tibetan protests;

Whereas resentment of the Chinese Government by the Tibetan people has increased sharply since 2005 as a result of Chinese policies, laws, and regulations that have reduced economic opportunity for Tibetans and severely eroded the ability of Tibetans to preserve their distinctive language, culture, and religious identity;

Whereas the response by the Chinese Government to the Tibetan protests was disproportionate and extreme, reportedly resulting in the deaths of hundreds and the detention of thousands of Tibetans;

Whereas there have been reports that some Tibetans engaged in rioting that may have resulted in the destruction of government and private property, as well as the deaths of civilians;

Whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama has used his leadership to promote democracy, freedom, and peace for the Tibetan people through a negotiated settlement of the Tibet issue, based on autonomy within the context of China;

Whereas six rounds of dialogue between representatives of the Dalai Lama and Chinese officials have not resulted in meaningful progress;

Whereas the Chinese Government has rebuffed calls by the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and world leaders to respond positively to the Dalai Lama's willingness to be personally involved in discussions with Chinese leaders on the future of Tibet;

Whereas the Chinese Government has denigrated the Dalai Lama, labeling him as "a splittist" and "a wolf in monk's robes", thereby further alienating Tibetans who consider the Dalai Lama their spiritual leader;

Whereas the Dalai Lama was recognized for his contribution to world peace when he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989;

Whereas the United States Congress, in recognition of the Dalai Lama's outstanding moral and religious leadership and his advocacy of nonviolence, awarded him with the Congressional Gold Medal on October 17, 2007;

Whereas the Chinese Government has failed to honor its commitment to improve the human rights situation in China as a condition for Beijing being selected as the site for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games;

Whereas the Chinese Government has impeded the access of international journalists to Tibetan areas of China and distorted reports of events surrounding the Tibetan protests, thereby violating the commitment it made that "there will be no restrictions on media reporting and movement of journalists up to and including the Olympic Games";

Whereas for many years, the Chinese Government has restricted the ability of foreign journalists and foreign government officials, including United States Government officials, to freely travel in Tibetan areas of China, thereby curtailing access to information on the situation in Tibetan areas;

Whereas the Chinese Government's use of propaganda during the protests to demonize Tibetans and incite ethnic nationalism is exacerbating ethnic tensions and is counterproductive to resolving the situation;

Whereas the United States Department of State included the People's Republic of China among the group of countries described as "the most systematic violators of human rights" in the introduction of the 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and in previous Human Rights Reports, but did not do so in the 2007 Human Rights Report, despite no evidence of significant improvements in the human rights situation in China in the past year; and

Whereas it is the policy of the United States "to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people to safeguard their distinct identity" and "to support economic development, cultural preservation, health care, and education and environmental sustainability for Tibetans inside Tibet", in accordance with the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (22 U.S.C. 6901 note): Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States House of Representatives—

- (1) calls on the Government of the People's Republic of China to end its crackdown on nonviolent Tibetan protestors and its continuing cultural, religious, economic, and linguistic repression inside Tibet;
- (2) calls on the Chinese Government to begin a results-based dialogue, without preconditions, directly with His Holiness the Dalai Lama to address the legitimate grievances of the Tibetan people and provide for a long-term solution that respects the human rights and dignity of every Tibetan;
- (3) calls on the Chinese Government to allow independent international monitors and journalists, free and unfettered access to the Tibet Autonomous Region and all other Tibetan areas of China for the purpose of monitoring and documenting events surrounding the Tibetan protests and to verify that individuals injured receive adequate medical care;
- (4) calls on the Chinese Government to immediately release all Tibetans who are imprisoned for nonviolently expressing opposition to Chinese Government policies in Tibet;

- (5) calls on the United States Department of State to publicly issue a statement reconsidering its decision not to include the People's Republic of China among the group of countries described as "the world's most systematic human rights violators" in the introduction of the 2007 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices; and
- (6) calls on the United States Department of State to fully implement the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (22 U.S.C. 6901 note), including the stipulation that the Secretary of State "seek to establish an office in Lhasa, Tibet to monitor political, economic and cultural developments in Tibet", and also to provide consular protection and citizen services in emergencies, and further urges that the agreement to permit China to open further diplomatic missions in the United States should be contingent upon the establishment of a United States Government office in Lhasa.



US Resolution Condemns China's Human Rights Abuse in Tibet August 01, 2008

Expressing concerns over the fate of Tibetans still languishing in prisons, the US House of Representatives approved a resolution on Wednesday urging the Chinese government to enter into direct negotiations with His Holiness the Dalai Lama over the future of Tibet.

The speaker of the US House, said: "The dialogue between the Chinese government and representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama has gone nowhere. Thousands of peaceful Tibetans still languish in prisons in the aftermath of the protests that began in March." In exchange for the privilege of hosting the Olympic Games, the Chinese government made commitments on freedom of the press, human rights and the environment, Pelosi said, but the commitments have been violated repeatedly and blatantly. Following the Chinese government's clampdown on peaceful Tibetan protestors across many areas in Tibet from 10 March, US Speaker Nancy Pelosi (R) meets His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Dharamshala to express sympathy and support for Tibetan people, during her visit to India, on 21 March.

Speaker strongly condemned the Chinese government for its suppression of peaceful protestors in Tibet and human rights violation of its own people in China. "Chinese authorities have stepped up so-called 'patriotic education' campaigns that require Tibetan Buddhists, regardless of their true thoughts, to publicly denounce the Dalai Lama."

The local communist government in Karze (Ch: Ganzi) County, Karze "TAP", Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan), has ordered sweeping purge of Tibetan monasteries. Under this draconian regulation, senior monks and reincarnate lamas will be subjected to "patriotic education" and failing to carry out the orders will be "stripped of their post and imprisoned". Monks, who refuse to change their thinking in line with official demands, will be expelled and jailed. "Religious activities will be halted" in those monasteries where a substantial percentage of monks involved in this year's peaceful protests- a figure ranging from ten to 30 per cent.

The house resolution urged China to end human rights abuses, honour its commitments for freedom of the press and freedom of movement ahead of the Olympics.



Tibet issue echoes in Parliament Special Correspondent

The happenings in Tibet figured in Parliament on Monday, when members of the National Democratic Alliance walked out of the Lok Sabha protesting “violation of human rights” in that country.

Raising the matter during zero hour, Vijay Kumar Malhotra (BJP) described the Lhasa incidents as “ethnic genocide” and wanted the government to condemn the happenings. He said Tibet, besides being a neighbour, shared cultural ties with India.

Responding to the members’ concern, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee expressed distress over the “unsettled situation and violence” in Tibet and wanted the causes of trouble in the autonomous region of China resolved through dialogue and non-violent means.

Ramjilal Suman (Samajwadi Party) said India should join the global community in ending “human rights violation in Tibet.” B. Mahtab of the Biju Janata Dal said India should stand up against any kind of “ethnic cleansing.”

Raising the issue in the Rajya Sabha, Yashwant Sinha (BJP) said everybody wanted good relations with China but it did not mean surrendering India’s national interest.

“India should not remain a mute spectator to what was going on there,” he said, demanding that the government make a statement.

Talking to reporters outside Parliament, Mr. Malhotra too said the government should make a statement and India should join the global community and the United Nations in condemning the incidents.

Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi told reporters that the party “expresses its concern about the violence and unsettled situation in the entire region and the deaths of innocent persons.”

There was “the dire necessity to take recourse by non-violent means to bring peace and security in that autonomous region.”

He hoped that a stabler situation would prevail there at the earliest.

George Fernandes of the Janata Dal (United) expressed disappointment that Parliament had not even attempted to pass a resolution to condemn the developments.

He called upon fellow MPs to stand up for Tibetans.



Australian Senate passes motion on Tibet May 15, 2008

Australian Greens Leader Senator Bob Brown and Vice Chairman of All Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet on 15 May, moved the following motion on Tibet in the Senate.

All the political Parties - Labor, Liberal, Greens, Nationals, Democrats and Family First - passed the motion without any dissent. The motion welcomed the informal talks between the two envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Chinese representatives and the agreement to hold further formal talks.

It encouraged both parties to work sincerely towards peaceful and mutually agreeable resolution on the Tibet issue.

It also praised Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's stand taken on Tibet during his recent visit to Beijing, which calls for a constructive dialogue on Tibet. It calls on the Government to "support and monitor progress.

The full text of the motion is as below:

That the Senate:

- a) notes:
 - (i) the continuing human rights concerns in Tibet,
 - (ii) the continuing restrictions on entry to Tibetan areas for journalists, international observers, non-government agencies and foreign diplomats;
- b) Welcomes the informal talks between the Chinese Government and representatives of the 14th Dalai Lama on 4th and 5th of May in Shenzhen, China and the agreement to hold a further round of the China-Tibet dialogue;
- c) encourages both parties to work sincerely towards a peaceful and mutually agreeable resolution of the China-Tibet issue;
- d) welcomes the Prime Minister's forthright statements during his recent trip to China, both in public and in private with the Chinese Premier and President, on the need for constructive dialogue;
- e) appreciates the Prime Minister's commitment to being a 'zhengyou or 'true friend' to the Chinese leadership and his willingness to raise challenging issues including Tibet;
- f) requests the Government to actively support and monitor progress of the China-Tibet dialogue and offer its support to help bring about a positive outcome.



House Approves Resolution on China's Crackdown in Tibet April 9, 2008

Rep. Levin, Chair of China Commission, Spoke on House Floor in Support of Resolution

The House of Representatives today voted to approve House Resolution 1077, "Calling Upon Chinese Government to End Crackdown in Tibet and Begin Substantive Dialogue with the Dalai Lama," by a vote of 413-1. The resolution calls on China to end its crackdown in Tibet; enter into a substantive dialogue directly with the Dalai Lama; allow independent monitors, journalists and medical personnel into Tibet; and release all Tibetans who were arrested for non-violently expressing their political views.

Congressman Sander Levin, Chair of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (more information on the CECC follows), spoke on the House floor in support of the resolution. Following are Rep. Levin's remarks, as prepared for delivery:"

Chinese law includes protections for the distinctive culture, language and identity of ethnic minority citizens. China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law guarantees ethnic minorities the 'right to administer their internal affairs.' More specifically, the term 'regional ethnic autonomy,' as the law itself defines it, 'reflects the state's full respect for... ethnic minorities' right to administer their internal affairs.' Madame Speaker, China in recent weeks has reflected anything but "the state's full respect" of ethnic minority rights, nor of basic human rights standards recognized in both Chinese and international law."

Let us be absolutely clear: Tibetan protests continue not because China is hosting the Olympics. Tibetan protests continue not as a result of foreign influence. Tibetan protests began and continue for one reason: in spite of what the Chinese government has written in its laws, in practice it has created an ethnic autonomy system that denies fundamental rights to ethnic minorities. This could not be more clear than it has become in the last several weeks, and the time for change is now."

Protest activity has included instances of rioting resulting in destruction of property and death of Tibetans and non-Tibetans alike. This is unacceptable in any context. Most protest activity, however, while at times disorderly, has been non-violent. The Chinese government's reaction, however, has revealed a level of hostility toward Tibetans not seen in decades, and has heightened fears for the Tibetan people."

The Chinese government would do well to consider a number of concrete steps to address the current crisis. I would ask, Madame Speaker, that a list of such steps, prepared by the staff of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, be submitted for the record."

I would urge all my colleagues and the general public to take full advantage of the Commission's analysis not only of events in Tibetan areas, but across China. We cannot let recent events distract us from abuses of law and fundamental rights of the Uighur people of China's Xinjiang province and other areas of China, and of the Han Chinese themselves. The Commission monitors and reports on human rights and rule of law developments

in China on an ongoing basis, and I encourage all frequently to visit the Commission’s website—www.cecc.gov—to subscribe to the on line newsletter, and use the Commission’s work to remain up-to-date on developments in China.

“Finally, the resolution of Tibetan grievances can occur only with direct talks between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama. Moreover, as China plays an increasingly important role in the international community, other countries will appropriately assess China’s fulfillment of the commitments it has made in both Chinese and international law, including legal and constitutional commitments to ethnic minorities. The international spotlight will remain long after the closing ceremonies of the Olympic Summer Games. We hope that the Chinese government will welcome such attention with a full commitment to openness, and to the implementation of basic human rights.”



The Global Greens Passed a Resolution Supporting Tibet May 06, 2008

The Second Global Greens Congress, which concluded on the 4th May 2008 in Sao Paulo, Brazil, passed a resolution strongly condemning China’s brutal repression of the Tibetan demonstrators in Tibet and also expressed a serious concern about its policy of assimilation for Tibet as well as other minorities like the Ugyhurs.

The four day conference was attended by more than a thousand delegates of Green Parties and Global Young Greens from 80 countries. Prominent delegates to the Congress include the Brazilian Green Party leader Jose Luiz de Franca Penna, Australian Green Party leader Senator Bob Brown, Canadian Green Party leader Elizabeth May, German Green Party leader Reinhard Buetikofer, Member of the European Intergroup of Tibet Milan Horacek, Italian Green Party leader Angelo Bonelli, New Zealand Green Party leader Keith Locke, French Green Party leader Denis Baupin, Belgium Green Party leader Senator Isabelle Durant and President of Sweden-based Green Think Tank Per Gahrton.

The Global Greens’ resolution on Tibet, sponsored by German, French and Taiwanese Green Parties, calls for an independent international inquiry into the tragic events in Tibet and urges the Chinese authorities to grant foreign reporters full access to Tibet and the bordering regions.

While regretting that the past six rounds of talks between the Beijing and Dharamsala remained inconclusive, the resolution supported His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s call for a resumption of serious negotiations between the two sides with a view of achieving a full and genuine political, cultural and spiritual autonomy for Tibet within China.

The resolution also welcomed the Beijing’s recent announcement of its willingness to resume a dialogue with the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and stressed “the need for a real talk between both sides to enter into a substantive and constructive dialogue with a view to reach a sustainable solution acceptable to all that would fully respect Tibetan culture, religion and identity”.

The resolution also called on the Chinese authorities “to invite the Dalai Lama to the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games as a sign of goodwill”.

At the concluding ceremony of the Global Greens Congress, the TGIE's Liaison Officer, Tsewang Phuntso, was invited to present His Holiness the Dalai Lama's views on the current crisis and his plans for achieving a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Tibet question.

In his presentation, Tsewang Phuntso shared with the delegates the development in Tibet since March 10 of this year and the current plight of the people inside Tibet. He urged the leaders of the Global Greens to press for immediate remedies for the suffering of the Tibetan people.

On the overall issue of Tibet, Phuntso informed the delegates that the position of His Holiness the Dalai Lama remains unchanged, whether it is his commitment to the Middle-Way approach, commitment to non-violence, or his commitment to a policy of engagement with China to resolve the issue of Tibet.

Tibet resolution was among the FIVE DECLARATIONS—a joint Green climate crisis action plan for the next decade, the statement on how best to protect biodiversity, a declaration on the future of the Global Greens and a Green Charter for big cities, and the declaration of “21 points for the 21st Century”—THREE RESOLUTIONS—call for the immediate release of Former Colombian Presidential Candidate and Colombian Green Party leader Ingrid Betancourt, call for the ban of nuclear sites on the East Asian Coasts, and on Tibet—passed by the Congress.

Resolution tabled and adopted in “33rd Sarvadharm Sadbhav Sammelan” at Constitution Club, New Delhi

May 12, 2008

All the Dharmacharyas and learned eminent religious figures from different faiths present in this “Sarvadharm Sadbhav Sammelan” conference organized under the joint banner of Akhil Bhartiya Sant Ekta Andolan Parishad and Guru Goraksh Nath Manav Kalyan Sansthan propose and adopt following resolutions;

1. This conference pays a tribute to late Sushri Nirmala Deshpandey ji and offers a title of “*Sant*” before her name.
2. To protect all the religions, religious places and religious leaders
3. To protect all the pilgrim and prayer sites, and places of worship
4. Efforts shall be made for world peace and humanity
5. To guard and protect mother and motherland of everyone
6. We strongly condemn the ongoing extensive and systematic denunciation of any world religious figure including His Holiness the Dalai Lama.
7. All the powerful nations of this world must respect the religion, motherland and freedom of every individual person. In order to create tension free and harmonious human society in this world, the existing trend of bullying smaller nations and illegal occupation of nation such as Tibet must be relinquished.
8. This conference demands the ongoing genocide in Tibet must be stopped immediately and UN Human Rights Council must inspect the state of innocent peaceful protesters who are killed and injured in Tibet. We also call for the immediate release of all the imprisoned monks and nuns.

9. Efforts shall be also made to protect and promote the Indian culture, Sanskrit and regional languages. For the world peace, humanity and respect for all the religions, this kind of conference will be held far and wide.

This conference unanimously adopts above nine resolutions.

Organizer (Religious Leaders Present Gaddinashin)

“Mahant Kailash Nath Hathyogi”

Delhi Journalists Association

April 7, 2008

RESOLUTION

This gathering of journalist, express its deep anguish over unfortunate situation developing inside Chinese occupied Tibet as result of brutal force used by Chinese armed forces against public expression of opinion by unarmed Tibetan demonstrators

We also express our concern over the undemocratic manner in which the Chinese authorities have put an iron blanket over development inside Tibet by expelling all foreigners from Tibet and denying free access to international media and civil society groups to have an independent and fair assessment of the prevailing situation inside Tibet. Unfortunately, this tendency of putting strong controls over flow of information to and from Tibet has been in practiced since 1951 when china forcibly occupied Tibet.

As members of the media community of a free and democratic world, we note it with a sense of shock that the international Olympic Committee has meekly given in to pressure from Chinese authorities and allowed them to apply such restrictions on the international media regarding coverage of Beijing Olympics

Which are only practiced in totalitarian and non-democratic regimes. To point out one such restriction, live TV coverage of Beijing Olympic Games by any international media group will have to undergo a mandatory eight minute loop delay for monitoring by Chinese political and security before the signals are aired the free world.

In lights of these points, this gathering has resolved to make following appeals and demands to concerned authorities:

1. We call upon the Chinese authorities to remove all restrictions on the entry of international media and civil society groups in to all regions of Tibet and allow them free access to concerned group in to all regions of Tibet and allow them free access to concerned group and individuals for fair assessment of current situation in Tibet. We also appeal to all government and various agencies of United Nations to persuade to Chinese regime to take this step.
2. As all National Olympic committees from around the world start their two-day meeting in Beijing from and then subsequently meet with the IOC's Executive Board on April 10th, we call upon them to ensure that international media is not subjected to totalitarian and undemocratic controls by the Chinese regime.
3. We sincerely believe that as the supreme religious leader and exiled head of state of occupied Tibet, His Holiness The Dalai Lama is the leader true representative of Tibetan people. Hence we call upon all

democratic government and agencies of United Nations to persuade the Chinese leadership to initiate a meaningful and substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama in order to find a mutually acceptable and peaceful solution to Tibetan problem.



PEN to China: Let Free Press Tell True Story in Tibet **March 17, 2008**

Writers from Canada, the United States, and China joined today in denouncing “suffocating restrictions” on the press and on the flow of information from Tibet, where a week of protests and repression has reportedly resulted in as many as 100 deaths in Lhasa and other Tibetan cities. Warning that news blackouts, communications interruptions and censorship remove a critical deterrent to human rights abuses and increase suspicions of official wrongdoing, the representatives of PEN Canada, PEN American Center, and the Independent Chinese PEN Center demanded the Chinese government provide immediate and unfettered access to the Tibet Autonomous Region and all traditionally Tibetan areas in Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan provinces to international journalists; restore phone and Internet access; and end all domestic censorship of international news feeds and Internet reports from Tibet.

The Chinese government has long prevented international journalists from reporting freely from Tibet. For instance, CNN reports its crews have been allowed into the region only twice in the past 10 years and never without tight controls on conversations and interviews. No international journalists have been allowed to enter or report from Tibet since Buddhist monks staged peaceful demonstrations last week to protest continuing restrictions on religious and cultural activities in Tibet, and there have been reports of significant interruptions of telephone and Internet service in Lhasa and other Tibetan areas since then, impeding the flow of first-hand reports and other information as violence spread and the number of deaths rose. Meanwhile, satellite broadcasts focusing on events in Tibet this past week have reportedly been jammed in Beijing and other Chinese cities, and entire news sites such as the LA Times and The Guardian have been shut down, leaving China’s citizens in the dark about the unfolding tragedy.

“This is reminding us of what happened both in Lhasa in March and in Beijing in June 19 years ago,” recalled Dr. Yu Zhang, Secretary-general of Independent Chinese PEN Center. “As the truth of bloody Lhasa event in 1989 was little known beyond the region due to the governmental restrictions on the press, Chinese people could prepare nothing to prevent the similar bloodshed from being reproduced in Beijing and elsewhere in China a few months later. It is unforgivable to allow history to repeat itself when the whole world is now watching Beijing for its promise of the press freedom and openness once more.”

“‘One World, One Dream’ is the motto of the Beijing Olympics,” noted Nelofer Pazira, president of PEN Canada. “But it seems that Tibetans are not included in that dream, as the denial of their human rights and now this violent crushing of these protests indicate. And the rest of the world is not being allowed to know that.”

“The Chinese government pledged to the world that there will be no restrictions on media reporting and movement of journalists up to and including the Olympic Games—a pledge that’s completely undermined by its conduct in Tibet,” said Francine Prose, President of PEN American Center. “Even with the limited information

emanating from Tibet, it is clear the Chinese government has responded aggressively to what apparently began as peaceful demonstrations. The Chinese government's suffocating restrictions on news reporting only fuel suspicions that its actions go beyond what is necessary to protect public safety and amount to another violent crackdown on free expression and dissent."

PEN American Center, PEN Canada, and the Independent Chinese PEN Center are among the 145 worldwide centers of International PEN, an organization that works to promote friendship and intellectual co-operation among writers everywhere, to fight for freedom of expression, and represent the conscience of world literature. On December 10, 2007, the centers launched We Are Ready for Freedom of Expression, an Olympic countdown campaign to protest China's imprisonment of at least 38 writers and journalists, including three Tibetans, and to seek an end to internet censorship and other restrictions on the freedom to write in that country.



WAN Protests Against Press Crackdown in Tibet March 24, 2008

The World Association of Newspapers and World Editors Forum have protested to Chinese President Hu Jintao against the crackdown on coverage of events in Tibet and the banning of foreign media, in violation of international agreements, Chinese law and China's Olympic promises.

In a letter to President Hu, the Paris-based WAN and WEF cited China's pledges that foreign media would have "complete freedom to report when they come to China", and that "in the preparation for the Games, we will be open in every aspect to the rest of the country and the whole world." China's Olympic Committee made the pledges in its successful bid to host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.

The letter asked Mr Hu to uphold these pledges, as well as new regulations introduced last year to allow greater freedom of movement and access for foreign journalists. It called on him to end censorship of the disturbances in Tibet and respect the right of domestic and foreign media to gather and disseminate information.

Since the disturbances erupted on 12 March, authorities have refused to grant foreign correspondents permits to enter Tibet and at least 25 journalists have been expelled. Journalists have been prevented from working freely and more than 40 serious violations of the rights of foreign journalists have been reported. Foreign television broadcasts within China have been cut, internet news sites have been inaccessible, radio broadcasts have been jammed, and Chinese video sharing platforms have had all news of the violent events deleted.

The Paris-based WAN, the global organisation for the newspaper industry, defends and promotes press freedom and the professional and business interests of newspapers world-wide. Representing 18,000 newspapers, its membership includes 77 national newspaper associations, newspaper companies and individual newspaper executives in 102 countries, 12 news agencies and 11 regional and world-wide press groups.

Public Figures on Tibet



Todd vows Games Protest over 'Abhorrent' actions

"Double Olympic gold medallist Mark Todd atop NZB Gandalf. Todd says he would peacefully protest China's actions in Tibet if he was selected for the Beijing Games"

March 18, 2008

The move would fly in the face of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC), both of which say that Olympians should refrain from political protests during the Games.

A New Zealand Tibetan community leader yesterday called on Kiwi Olympians to "make a moral stand" by seeking information on Chinese rule in Tibet and either boycotting the Games or protesting during the August Olympics.

As some repeated calls for athletes to stay away from the Olympics, Todd, who is attempting a competitive equestrian comeback at 51, said it would be better to attend the Games but "voice your opinion".



"I think you could probably do more while you were there in a peaceful sort of protest," he said.

Asked if he would consider carrying out such a protest, the five-time Olympic medallist said: "Absolutely. I think athletes in general would be obliged to do something like that." Todd wanted more information on the situation in Tibet but said the events of recent days had left him uneasy.



Norwegian rider Thor Hushovd prepared to boycott Beijing Olympics Opening in Tibet Protest

March 28, 2008

Norwegian cyclist Thor Hushovd is reportedly prepared to boycott the opening ceremony at the Beijing Olympics to protest China's crackdown in Tibet.

“We athletes don’t have any special responsibility to react to what is happening in China,” Hushovd said in Friday’s edition of Norwegian newspaper,

“But we can exercise influence by dropping the opening ceremony in Beijing. That would be a protest, and I could join it.”

However, Hushovd added that would be “a long way from there to boycotting the entire Olympics.”

The 30-year-old Hushovd, who rides for French team Credit Agricole, said he has been following the crackdown in the media and is disturbed by reports of violence and repression.



Norwegian rider Thor Hushovd

The Epoch Times

India Soccer Captain Spurns Olympic Torch

Apr 01, 2008

Indian soccer captain Bhaichung Bhutia has refused to carry the Olympic torch this month in protest against China’s response to the recent unrest in Tibet, an Olympic official said on Tuesday. The player has informed the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) that he will not be part of the relay in India’s capital New Delhi.

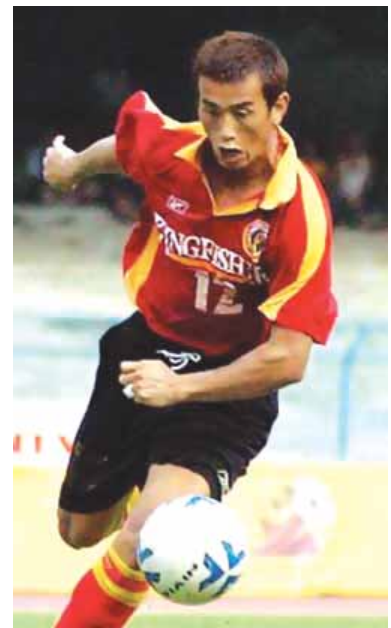
Bhutia, a Buddhist, comes from the northeastern state of Sikkim bordering China, which has a significant Buddhist minority population.

“I sympathise with the Tibetan cause. I have many friends in Sikkim who follow Buddhism,” Bhutia told The Times of India. “This is my way of standing by the people of Tibet and their struggle.”

What is happening in Tibet is not right and in my own small way I felt I should show my solidarity.”

India, which hosts Tibetan leader the Dalai Lama and his government-in-exile, has seen a wave of protests since China’s crackdown on anti-government demonstrations in Tibet last month.

Indian authorities have assured China about security arrangements during the torch relay after Tibetan protesters stormed the Chinese embassy in New Delhi last month.



The New York Times

Olympic Torchbearer from Bronx in Tibet Protest

April 10, 2008

A New Yorker bearing the Olympic torch staged a rogue anti-China protest Wednesday even as cops took extreme measures to thwart demonstrators in San Francisco.

As she ran with the flame, Majora Carter, 41, a South Bronx environmental activist, whipped out a small Tibetan flag to condemn China's human rights abuses in the Himalayan province.

Carter, who hid the flag in her sleeve, was quickly hustled off the route by surprised police who seized the torch.

"I was expressing my right as an American citizen using freedom of speech in support of people who don't have it," Carter said. "It just became really clear to me what was going on in Tibet and I wanted to do something." Carter said a Chinese paramilitary squad escorting the torch pounced and turned her over to cops, who pushed her into the crowd.

"Apparently, I'm not part of the Olympic torch-bearing entourage anymore," Carter quipped.

Carter's maverick move was the most successful act of defiance in the cat-and-mouse game cops played with the thousands railing against China's crackdown on dissidents in Tibet and its unwillingness to denounce genocide in Darfur.



Majora Carter of the South Bronx

MEYUL.COM

Fraser says China has 'No Respect' for Human Rights

April 10th 2008

Olympic great Dawn Fraser has announced she will boycott the upcoming Beijing Olympics out of disgust for China's human rights records.

Yesterday announced she would be boycotting the Olympics, and today revealed the reasons behind her planned absence.

News Limited newspapers reported that Fraser was to boycott the games over the Chinese discrimination



against some of their people, and a divide between the games and politics. “The Chinese people didn’t recognise the disabled athletes,” she said. “Athletes got spat on by people on the street while they were there.”

Fraser said that China should be brought to account for its treatment of people across its country and around the world.

The Beijing Olympics now appear tainted by global protest action against their hosts, who have promised more force against those who try to disrupt the games.

Olympic officials overnight said they would show “no mercy” to those seeking to disrupt the games, or the torch relay - particularly as it made its way through politically sensitive Tibet.



MotoGP Riders Consider Protest over Tibet

April 11, 2008

MotoGP riders are considering a protest at the Chinese Grand Prix in May over the security crackdown in Tibet.

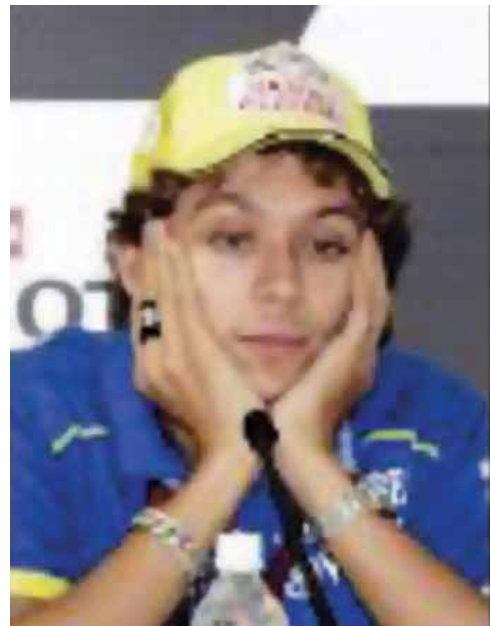
Former world champion Valentino Rossi of Italy said the riders would meet to decide if they should protest at the next Grand Prix in Shanghai on May 4.

“The entire world is with Tibet,” the Yamaha rider said. “But we need to be careful, or else they will arrest all of us.”

China’s treatment of political protesters in Tibet has caused alarm across the world with the Olympic torch relay being hit by demonstrations in London, Paris and San Francisco.

Some politicians have also talked of boycotting the opening ceremony of August’s Beijing Olympics. Suzuki’s Loris Capirossi said the riders were considering some form of demonstration.

“I am 100 percent behind Tibet. We know that to demonstrate against the Chinese regime is dangerous but we will see if we can do something,” Capirossi told reporters ahead of Sunday’s Portuguese Grand Prix at Estoril.



Olympic Judo Champion to Boycott Beijing Opening Ceremony

April 15, 2008

Olympic judo champion Yvonne Boenisch plans to boycott the opening ceremony at the Beijing Games.

“I want to send a signal and I will not take part in the opening ceremony,”

Boenisch said she would also wear a wrist band in protest over China’s crackdown in Tibet, but ruled out skipping the games themselves.

“For every athlete taking part in the games is the biggest thing. If there were a boycott, thousands of dreams would be ruined,” she said.

German Olympic officials have pledged to send a team to China Boenisch became the first German woman to win a judo gold medal at the 2004 Olympics in Athens.



DailyIndia.com

Now, Ajay Jadeja bats for Tibetans

April 15, 2008

Former cricketer Ajay Jadeja has backed Tibetans in their peaceful protests against China. “Tibetans have been forced over the years. They have been suppressed. They have not been aggressive and violent, that’s why I support them,” Jadeja said N Govindacharya, a rightwing ideologue called for creating a worldwide opinion against China.” Geographically, culturally, spiritually they have different traits. So in this situation, first it should be considered that Tibet is not part of China and secondly the demographic change that is required in respect of Tibet, there is a need to create a worldwide opinion on that,” said Govindacharya. Tibetans wants the Chinese Government to initiate a dialogue with the Tibetan-in-exile government and spiritual leader the Dalai Lama to reach a feasible and mutually acceptable conclusion regarding Tibet’s autonomy.

They maintain that the protests that began on March 10, the Tibetan uprising day, will continue till a solution is reached.



China accused followers of the Dalai Lama of “masterminding” the uprising, which shatters its carefully cultivated image of national harmony in the build-up to the Beijing Olympic Games.



Tibet flag flies from North Pole

April 15, 2008

A Norwegian polar explorer said he had flown the Tibetan flag on the North Pole to highlight the issue of human rights in the Chinese-ruled Himalayan region. In a satellite telephone call on Monday, Inge Solheim said he had flown the flag hoping to inspire governments dealing with China as well as ordinary people to support Tibetan rights. A photo taken on Sunday and sent by e-mail showed him standing on a block of snow holding the flag with gloved hands against a cloudless sky.

“The symbolism is great because the Chinese have gone to great lengths to get the Olympic flame to Mount Everest, to the top of the world they say,” he said. “But that’s not the top of the world. The North Pole is the top of the world and the Tibetan cause should be on the top of our minds.”

Solheim is on his eighth trip to the North Pole and is the founder of Borderland, a company that takes visitors to the pole. He was walking back from the pole as the guide of three, another Norwegian, an Indian and an Iranian...



Norwegian polar explorer Inge Solheim with a Tibetan flag



French soccer coach suggests TV boycott of Games

April 20, 2008

France’s soccer coach Raymond Domenech has said that he will not be watching the Olympic Games in Beijing and urged fellow citizens to do likewise. Given the acknowledgement that it’s a scandal in the light of human rights in China, turning off the TV would be a brave gesture and an act of civil duty, he was reported to have told the Le Monde daily in an interview. “That way, instead of criticizing others, you do something and you take responsibility for it,” he was quoted as saying.



Maradona on Tibet

5 May 2008

Argentina legend Diego Maradona has spoken on two subjects that probably couldn't be further apart, namely Ronaldo's dalliances with women/men of little virtue and the uprising against the Chinese government in Tibet.....

Moving on to more serious issues, Maradona spoke in support of the political uprising in Tibet, suggesting that he may forego any links with the Beijing Olympics later this year.

"The Chinese are wrong and I will probably not even cover the Olympics for television, yet alone go there," he affirmed.

"For me, Tibet is a very serious subject, especially the lack of diplomatic relations."



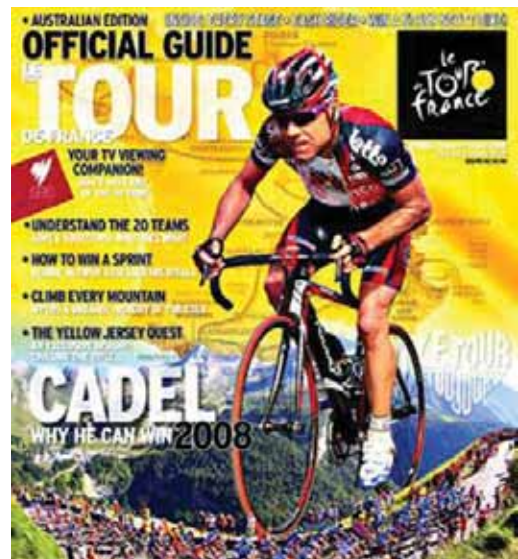
Evans gears up for a free Tibet tour

June 13, 2008

The cycling star Cadel Evans has stepped up his support for Tibet by creating a fund-raising scheme that could put him under scrutiny from the Chinese Government at the Olympic games in Beijing. Evans is poised to start selling specially made T-shirts emblazoned with "Free Tibet" to raise funds for the organization behind the cause.

The outspoken cyclist will try to become the first Australian to win the three-week Tour de France starting on July 5. He already has the Free Tibet organisation link on his website, has approved the use of a photo of him wearing a "Free Tibet" T-shirt on the Australian edition of the official Tour de France guide and he sponsors a Tibetan child.

Evans has worn the specially designed undershirts emblazoned with "Free Tibet" under his Silence-Lotto team jersey during



races this season, but it was not until the Liege-Bastogne-Liege one-day classic in Belgium on April 27 that his stand earned attention. The controversial T-shirt came to light after Evans unzipped his trade team jersey to relieve the heat while ascending one of the many steep Ardennes climbs in the Belgian race in which he placed seventh.

Since then Evans has joined forces with his Belgian team’s sponsor, to produce the same T-shirts with a view to them being put on sale shortly to raise funds and awareness of the matter through sales.” It is something we are working on behind the scenes,” Evans said. “It is a nice way to try and bring awareness to an issue that I feel is important in the world.”



A Jordanian Climber Takes Tibetan National Flag to the Summit of Mt. Everest

4th June 2008

After months of heavy security and climbing restriction on Mt.Everest by both the Chinese and Nepalese Government to allow safe passage for the Olympic torch to the summit, a 37 year old Jordanian climber Mostafa Salameh became the first man of his country to summit the 8848 meter peak on 25th May 2008 at south Ridge on Nepalese side.

Where he took a Tibetan National Flag and fluttered it on top of the world doing all Tibetans proud. He wrote “Free Tibet” and “Free Palestine” on the bottom of the flag.



Polish Silver Medalist Kolecki’s Tibet protest

August 19, 2008

Szymon Kolecki, 26, Polish weightlifter who finished second in the men’s 94 kg at the Olympics made a strong statement when he shaved his head as a mark of solidarity with Tibetan monks just before the competition.

“This haircut is from this morning. I can’t directly say why I did it. It’s connected with certain things that the Olympic Charter forbids. But I will say that it’s symbolic,”

Kolecki, a member of the Polish team for the 2008 Olympic Games has been very outspoken about China’s policies. “I am outraged by what’s going on in Tibet. When I read about it, I can hardly believe I’ll compete in a country that bloodily suppresses street protests and persecutes people who don’t agree with the party. I can’t believe the Chinese have launched an immense operation to block Lhasa”, he said after the events unfolded in Tibet.



Earlier in March, a week after the Lhasa unrest where Chinese troops subdued peaceful protestors he said, “Unless the Chinese regime becomes more moderate, I’ll compete with my head shaved in a gesture of solidarity with the Tibetan monks”.

True to his word, a bald Kolecki took center stage on Sunday bagging the silver medal in his category.

Other Sportsmen

South African athlete Roland Schoeman

“South African Athlete-Roland Schoeman (world 50-meter butterfly champion who said the IOC “should stand up and say, ‘the way these people (Tibetans are being treated is not acceptable.’)”)”



Poland athlete Monika Pyrek

“Polish Games participant Monika Pyrek: “The best solution is boycott of the Opening ceremony. It is not a sport event, but if the stadium is empty, everyone will know what is the matter.””



German athlete- Christian Obergfoell

“German athlete- Christian Obergfoell (Javelin thrower who stated, “I had been asking myself the whole time why they gave the Olympic Games to China,” “After Tibet, my feeling will not be any better.””



French pole vaulter Romain Mesnil

“French pole vaulter Romain Mesnil wants athletes at the Beijing Olympics to wear green ribbons in support of human rights in China after the clampdown on protests in Tibet. Mesnil, the silver medalist at last year’s world championships in Japan, is the president of the French athletes’ union”



French swimming champion Alain Bernard

French swimming champion Alain Bernard, fresh from his two world records – and two gold medals - from the European Swimming Championships, said a political boycott of the opening ceremony would send an important message.



Belgian athlete-Kim Gevaert

Belgian athlete-Kim Gevaert (Olympic sprinter who expressed her discontent with the hosting country of the Olympic Games. “Organising the Games in a country that violates Human Rights, at first sight this cannot be and should not allowed to be.”)



Belgian athlete-Sébastien Godefroid

Belgian athlete-Sébastien Godefroid (Olympic sailor who stated “People who have been there already, have found the human rights not always being respected in an optimal way. I am convinced that the China reserved for the Olympic Games is a totally different country then the China we are not shown. Until now, Rogge has always pointed at China’s promises to improve, but the practice doesn’t equal the theory... It would be a good thing if Rogge had the courage to make an effort.”



David Kay - former Team Canada rower

David Kay is a former Team Canada rower who is cycling across Canada to raise money and awareness of Tibet. He held a brief press conference at the Human Rights Memorial on Elgin Street before heading off toward Perth and eventually Victoria.



Bjork's Tibet cry set off complaints online

March 5th 2008

Bjork, the Icelandic singer, has caused controversy in China by seeming to end a concert in Shanghai with an appeal for Tibetan independence.

The singer, who has a track record of supporting political causes, ended her concert by singing her song "Declare Independence" as an encore. Before its final rallying cry of "Raise your flag!" she intoned "Tibet, Tibet" repeatedly.

The song, originally written in support of independence movements in Greenland and the Faroe Islands, includes lyrics such as: "Declare independence! Don't let them do that to you!"

The singer spoke and sang in English, and the Chinese who made up half the audience may not have understood her. Tibet is known as Xizang in Mandarin. There seemed to be no reaction at the time but condemnation was swift on China's hyperactive and often nationalistic Internet bulletin boards and blogs.....



Canadian singer k.d. Lang will protest for Tibetans today: here she tells why

April 24, 2008

WHAT we are seeing now in Tibet is just the tip of the iceberg. I do not think my generation really even knows the extent of what has happened to the Tibetan people. It is like a Band-Aid that has been ripped off to reveal that the wound is still raw.

It is unfortunate the Olympic Games are being impacted by this situation, but it presents a rare opportunity to bring focus to the heart-breaking situation of the Tibetan and Chinese people who have suffered serious human rights abuses. Oppression should be stopped.

Authorities have taken Tibetans and Chinese citizens from their monasteries and homes and held them in locations without the knowledge of their families. These authorities should be held accountable.

The genuine popular aspirations of the Tibetan people — for freedom to practice their religion and to preserve



their culture — should be protected and fulfilled. An open dialogue with the Dalai Lama, without pre-conditions, should be established. International agencies and journalists should have access to Tibet. Agencies like the Red Cross or Doctors without Borders should be allowed entry so that they can provide proper medical assistance to those who have suffered.

The Tibetan culture is part of our global heritage. Its original personality and purity needs to be kept intact. I urge the world community to focus their efforts to protect the Tibetan culture, so that it can continue to be a source of inspiration for the rest of the world.



Radiohead stage Tibet protest

May 7th, 2008

British rockers Radiohead used the opening concert of their world tour to protest against

China's human rights record in Tibet - by decorating the stage with Tibetan flags.

The 'Creep' hit makers played the first date of their tour at the Cruzan Amphitheatre in Florida on Monday, and used the opportunity to express their support for the people of Tibet. Radiohead have long been known for publicising their political beliefs, more recently campaigning on behalf of the environment - urging other artists to make their tours more Planet-friendly.



Michael Stipe - Stipe Joins Free Tibet Campaign

July 21, 2008

R.E.M. rocker MICHAEL STIPE and British actors JEREMY IRONS have voiced their support for Tibetan independence by appearing in a poster campaign on behalf of the Free Tibet organization. The stars are among a host of celebrities who have taken part in the T for Tibet initiative, which features them making a 'T' sign with their hands in the photographs.

And Anne Holmes, the Acting Director of Free Tibet Campaign, and hopes the hand gesture will catch on ahead of the summer (08) Olympics in Beijing, China.

She says, "We are confident the campaign and the T hand signal will go global quickly. Now all we need are some brave athletes who are willing to show they care about human rights by making the T sign in Beijing."



Sting and other top stars sing for Tibet

July 22, 2008

Sting, Dave Matthews and a host of other music stars have added their voices to the pro-Tibet movement on a potentially sensitive album for China ahead of the Beijing Olympics, promoters said. Other artists involved in the project, entitled: "Songs for Tibet", include Moby, Alanis Morissette, John Mayer and Suzanne Vega, the International Campaign for Tibet said in a press release received here Tuesday.



"This album will focus people's attention on the importance of Tibet, the gifts of its culture, and the crisis the Tibetan people are facing today," said one of the album's organisers, Michael Wohl. The album is due for global release on iTunes on August 5, three days before the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics. It will then be available through other outlets the following week, the statement said.

Wohl, from the Art of Peace Foundation, said the timing of the release was deliberate. "We wanted to express our support for the Tibetan people and their message of peace through music, a fundamental means of expression, at a time when the eyes of the world are on China," he said.

Many groups critical of China's rule of Tibet are seeking to use the Olympics to highlight their concerns and express their support for the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama.

Hindustan Times

I will stand by Tibetan cause: actor Kelly Dorji

Kelly Dorji's presence at a Tibetan world-peace rally last week surprised many, but the actor with a Tibetan connection is unperturbed and says he will always support the cause. "To begin with, I did it for aunt Gawa, Danny Denzongpa's wife. She's my father's cousin. But I'd have attended anyway. It was to pray for world peace. I fully and strongly support the Tibetan issue, though I am not a political person,"



"I've heard all the recent protesters are going to be executed on May 1. China thrives on public executions of protesters to make an example of them. Before they protest too loud, kill them."

I'm not in favour of any form of government, but I favour the middle path because I'm a Buddhist. And that's exactly what the Dalai Lama is advocating.

“The lovely thing about attending the peace rally in Mumbai last week was that there were people of all nationalities. Through prayer and perseverance something good is bound to happen in Tibet. I may have a voice, but whether it's Richard Gere or me supporting the Tibetan cause, I feel every voice counts. Tibet isn't asking for complete independence from China. All they want is autonomy, the right to run their own country. Tibet is a non-belligerent nation. They're a fine example of a peace-loving people being bullied into a corner.



British actress Joanna Lumley to join huge London demonstrations in support of Tibet

April 6th 2008

“The Olympic Charter defines the Olympic ideals as: ‘respect for Universal ethical fundamental principles’. Despite being the host for the 2008 Games, the Chinese government has shown clear contempt for such values in its recent brutal crackdown in Tibet. The IOC must therefore break its silence on China's human rights record and defend its own Charter's values. The best place to start would be by insisting that the Olympic Torch is not allowed into Tibet. China's parading the torch triumphantly in front of a cowed and repressed Tibetan population would be an abhorrent sight for anyone concerned with true Olympic values.”

The demonstrations have been organised by a coalition of London-based

Tibet groups determined to protest at the way the Chinese government has hijacked the Olympic Torch for its own propaganda purposes.



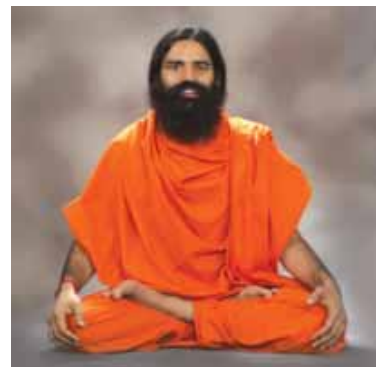
MEYUL.COM

Indian Yoga-Guru Swamy Ramdev speaks for Tibet

April 10, 2008

Yoga-Guru Ramdev today called for boycotting the Olympic torch in the country. Addressing reporters where, Baba Ramdev who arrived for a six-day Yoga-camp, said the country should boycott the Olympic torch. He said that it is unfortunate that India is not doing its moral duty of standing by with the Tibetan people.

Ramdev said that in the past India has committed a historic mistake by recognising Tibet as the part of China. He said that it is high time India gives atleast its moral support to the Tibetan people in their fight. Earlier a red carpet welcome was given to Ramdev when he arrived in the temple city this afternoon.



China is the biggest threat to India: Farooq Abdullah

May 11, 2008

Former J&K Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah has termed China as the “biggest threat” to India and cited movement of Chinese nuclear submarines near the country, captured by satellite cameras, as “indicative of the threat”.

“China is the biggest threat to India and we should be very careful about that country. India’s leadership should not ignore China from the security point of view,” Abdullah, who is also leader of the National Conference (NC), said at an interactive session here last evening. China’s “threat” is also evident from its claim over Arunachal Pradesh, he said and expressed concern over the recent incidents in Tibet.

When China annexed Tibet, the then government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru, had “maintained silence” over the issue, and as a result of which Tibet, “a buffer zone, was forcibly occupied by China”, he claimed during the session organised by the J&K forum for peace and reconciliation on the theme various concern of J&K state in the emerging scenario in South Asia.



rediff NEWS

Boycott Beijing Olympics: RSS chief

April 12, 2008

All democratic countries including India should stay away from the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics, beginning in August, in order to protest the violent incidents in Tibet, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief K S Sudarshan said on Friday.

Sudarshan criticized the Indian government for continuing dialogue with China despite the violent incidents in Tibet. “All democratic countries including India should boycott the Olympics ceremony and the games,” said Sudarshan.

The RSS chief was speaking at a function organised by the Tibetan Solidarity Committee, seeking support for the cause of the people of Tibet. “India should boycott the opening ceremony of Olympics and the event in order to protest against the atrocities being carried out against the Tibetan people by China,” International Secretary of Vishwa Hindu Parishad Ashok Singhal said.



“The Indian government has abstained from its duty and should have ensured that a delegation was sent to Tibet to investigate the violence over there,” He also promised full support to the Dalai Lama and to the Tibetan people in their fight for autonomy. Hundreds of monks and Tibetans-in-exile also attended the rally, where they raised a demand for contingent of free media to be sent to Tibet and autonomy for the region.



26 Nobel Laureates Condemn China's Crackdown on Tibetans

March 21, 2008

Twenty-six Nobel Laureates have deplored and condemned China's violent crackdown on Tibetan protestors and urged Chinese authorities to exercise restraint.

In a joint statement made public on March 20, 2008, the Laureates also protested against China's campaign to vilify the Dalai Lama, a fellow Nobel Laureate.

Following is the full text and the names of the Laureates who signed it.

We, the undersigned Nobel Laureates, deplore and condemn the Chinese government's violent crackdown on Tibetan protestors. We urge the Chinese authorities to exercise restraint in dealing with these unarmed, peaceful demonstrators.

We protest the unwarranted campaign waged by the Chinese government against our fellow Nobel Laureate, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Contrary to the repeated claims of Chinese authorities, the Dalai Lama does not seek separation from China, but religious and cultural autonomy. This autonomy is fundamental to the preservation of the ancient Tibetan heritage.

We call upon the Chinese government to resume talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives as soon as possible in order to achieve a peaceful and mutually beneficial solution to the Tibetan issue.

Alexei Abrikosov, Nobel Prize, Physics (2003)

Peter Agre, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2003)

Baruj Benacerraf, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1980)

Günter Blobel, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1999)

Arvid Carlsson, Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000)

John Coetzee, Nobel Prize, Literature (2003)

Paul J. Crutzen, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1995)

Clive W.J. Granger, Nobel Prize, Economics (2003)

Paul Greengard, Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000)

Avram Hershko, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2004)

Roald Hoffman, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1981)

John Hume, Nobel Prize, Peace (1998)
Brian D. Josephson, Nobel Prize, Physics (1973)
Eric R. Kandel, Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000)
Roger Kornberg, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2006)
Finn E. Kydland, Nobel Prize, Economics (2004)
Erwin Neher, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1991)
John C. Polanyi, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1986)
H. David Politzer, Nobel Prize, Physics (2004)
Richard J. Roberts, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1993)
Phillip A. Sharp, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1993)
Jens C. Skou, Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1997)
Wole Soyinka, Nobel Prize, Literature (1986)
Elie Wiesel, Nobel Prize, Peace (1986)
Torsten N. Wiesel, Nobel Prize, Medicine (1981)
Betty Williams, Nobel Prize, Peace (1976)



Nobel laureates urge peaceful end to violence in Tibet

**AN OPEN LETTER TO HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT HU JINTAO
March 20, 2008**

His Excellency Hu Jintao
President, People's Republic of China
Beijing

Dear President Hu,

We six women Nobel Peace Laureates are deeply concerned and dismayed by your government's violent crackdown on recent protests in Tibet. We are writing in solidarity with our fellow Nobel Laureate, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, whose commitment to nonviolent struggle on behalf of the Tibetan people is unwavering and unquestionable. In these difficult days, we stand with him, and with the thousands of Tibetans who have peacefully demonstrated to express their legitimate concerns. We have received reports of widespread violence, and threats of mass arrests and severe punishment by the Tibet Autonomous Region High People's Court. We urge you to exercise restraint in dealing with the protests in Tibet, Beijing and elsewhere in the country. We call

on you to engage in meaningful dialogue with the men and women of Tibet to address their legitimate concerns and genuine grievances. The Dalai Lama has called for an independent United Nations team to visit Tibet and assess the current situation on the ground. We urge you to allow entry of such a group, and to fully cooperate to enable a thorough investigation. We also urge you to allow full access and entry to China by foreign journalists. Your government was granted the right to host the Olympic Games after it vowed to adhere to the Olympic charter and improve its human rights record. Governments of the world and the International Olympic Committee argued that granting the 2008 Games to China would help open up the country and improve China's human rights record. Your government's response to the Tibet uprising, the reported crackdown on dissidents within China in the lead up to the Games, and China's continued economic, political and military support for the brutal regimes in Sudan and Burma, contradict this vision of amore open and responsible China. In this context, we hope your Government will change course immediately, act responsibly, and show accountability and transparency in its treatment of the Tibetan people. While the world is watching, while the Tibetan people are rising for their freedom, we hope you will walk the path set by His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, and reject the use of violence. Sincerely, Dr. Shirin Ebadi, 2003 Nobel Peace Laureate Professor Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Corrigan Maguire, 1976 Nobel Peace Laureate Rigoberta Menchu Tum, 1992 Nobel Peace Laureate Betty Williams, 1976 Nobel Peace Laureate Professor Jody Williams, 1997 Nobel Peace Laureate.



International Tibet Scholars Call on China to Stop Using Force Against Tibetans

A group of leading professors, researchers and specialists of Tibetan studies from around the world call on Hu Jintao to end the use of force against Tibetans in China and to recognise rights to freedom of speech and opinion.

April 22, 2008

Dear Mr. President,

The world has witnessed an outbreak of protests across the Tibetan plateau, followed in most instances by a harsh, violent repression. In the majority of cases these protests have been peaceful. The result has been an unknown number of arrests and the loss of numerous lives, which have been overwhelmingly Tibetan. This has understandably triggered widespread concern and anguish across the globe. As scholars engaged in Tibetan studies, we are especially disturbed by what has been happening. The civilisation we study is not simply a subject of academic enquiry: it is the heritage and fabric of a living people and one of the world's great cultural legacies. We express our deep sorrow at the horrible deaths of the innocent, including Chinese as well as Tibetans. Life has been altered for the worse in places with which we are well acquainted; tragedy has entered the lives of a people we know well. At the time this statement is being written, continued arrests and shootings are being reported even of those involved in peaceful protest, the accused are being subjected to summary

justice without due process and basic rights, and countless others are being forced to repeat political slogans and denunciations of their religious leader.

Silence in the face of what is happening in Tibet is no longer an option. At this moment the suppression of political dissent appears to be the primary goal of authorities across all the Tibetan areas within China, which have been isolated from the rest of China and the outside world. But such actions will not eliminate the underlying sense of grievance to which Tibetans are giving voice. As scholars we have a vested interest in freedom of expression. The violation of that basic freedom and the criminalisation of those sentiments that the Chinese government finds difficult to hear are counterproductive. They will contribute to instability and tension, not lessen them.

It cannot be that the problem lies in the refusal of Tibetans to live within restrictions on speech and expression that none of us would accept in our own lives. It is not a question of what Tibetans are saying: it is a question of how they are being heard and answered. The attribution of the current unrest to the Dalai Lama represents a reluctance on the part of the Chinese government to acknowledge and engage with policy failures that are surely the true cause of popular discontent. The government's continuing demonisation of the Dalai Lama, which falls far below any standard of discourse accepted by the international community, serves only to fuel Tibetan anger and alienation.

A situation has been created which can only meet with the strongest protest from those of us who have dedicated our professional lives to understanding Tibet's past and its present; its culture and its society. Indeed, the situation has generated widespread shock among peoples inside and outside China as well, and we write in full sympathy with the twelve-point petition submitted by a group of Chinese writers and intellectuals on 22 March (see "Chinese intellectuals and Tibet: a letter" [15 April 2008]).

Therefore, we call for an immediate end to the use of force against Tibetans within China. We call for an end to the suppression of Tibetan opinion, whatever form that suppression takes. And we call for the clear recognition that Tibetans, together with all citizens of China, are entitled to the full rights to free speech and expression guaranteed by international agreements and accepted human-rights norms

Signatures:

Jean-Luc Achard (*Centre National de La Recherche Scientifique, Paris*)

Agata Bareja-Starzyńska (*Warsaw University*)

Robert Barnett (*Columbia University*)

Christopher Beckwith (*Indiana University*)

Yael Bentor (*Hebrew University, Jerusalem*)

Henk Blezer (*Leiden University*)

Anne-Marie Blondeau (*École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris*)

Benjamin Bogin (*Georgetown University*)

Jens Braarvig (*University of Oslo*)

Katia Buffetrille (*École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris*)

José Ignacio Cabezón (*University of California, Santa Barbara*)

Cathy Cantwell (*University of Oxford*)

Bryan J Cuevas (*Florida State University*)

Jacob Dalton (Yale University)
Ronald Davidson (Fairfield University)
Karl Debreczeny (independent scholar)
Andreas Doctor (Kathmandu University)
Thierry Dodin (Bonn University)
Brandon Dotson (School of Oriental and African Studies, London)
Georges Dreyfus (Williams College)
Douglas S Duckworth (University of North Carolina)
John Dunne (Emory University)
Johan Elverskog (Southern Methodist University)
Elena De Rossi Filibeck (University of Rome)
Carla Gianotti (independent scholar)
Maria Gruber (University of Applied Arts, Vienna)
Janet Gyatso (Harvard University)
Paul Harrison (Stanford University)
Lauran Hartley (Columbia University)
Mireille Helffer (*Centre National de La Recherche Scientifique*, Paris)
Isabelle Henrion-Dourcy (Université Laval, Québec)
Toni Huber (Humboldt University , Berlin)
Ishihama Yumiko (Waseda University)
David Jackson (Rubin Museum of Art, New York)
Sarah Jacoby (Columbia University)
Marc des Jardins (Concordia University)
Matthew T. Kapstein (University of Chicago; *École pratique des Hautes Études*, Paris)
György Kara (Indiana University)
Samten Karmay (*Centre National de La Recherche Scientifique*, Paris)
P Christiaan Klieger (Oakland Museum, California)
Deborah Klimburg-Salter (University of Vienna)
Leonard van der Kuijp (Harvard University)
Per Kvaerne (University of Oslo)
Erberto Lo Bue (University of Bologna)
Donald S Lopez (University of Michigan)
Christian Luczanits (University of Vienna)
Sara McClintock (Emory University)
Carole McGranahan (University of Colorado)
Ariane Macdonald-Spanien (*École pratique des Hautes Études*, Paris)
William Magee (Dharma Drum Buddhist College, Taiwan)

Lara Maconi (*Institut Nationale des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris*)
Dan Martin (Hebrew University, Jerusalem)
Rob Mayer (University of Oxford)
Fernand Meyer (*École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris*)
Eric D Mortensen (Guilford College)
Paul Nietupski (John Carroll University)
Giacomella Orofino (*Università degli Studi di Napoli, L'Orientale*)
Ulrich Pagel (School of Oriental and African Studies, London)
Andrew Quintman (Princeton University)
Françoise Robin (*Institut Nationale des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris*)
Ulrike Roesler (University of Freiburg)
Geoffrey Samuel (Cardiff University)
Kurtis Schaeffer (University of Virginia)
Cristina Scherrer-Schaub (University of Lausanne)
Peter Schwieger (Bonn University)
Tsering Shakya (University of British Columbia)
Nicolas Sihle (University of Virginia)
Elliot Sperling (Indiana University)
Heather Stoddard (*Institut Nationale des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris*)
Robert Thurman (Columbia University)
Takeuchi Tsuguhito (Kobe City University of Foreign Studies)
Gray Tuttle (Columbia University)
Emily Yeh (University of Colorado)
Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim (University College, London)
Michael Zimmermann (University of Hamburg)

franz alt
SONNENSEITE.COM

Leading Chinese Intellectuals Ask China to Rethink Tibet Policy

March 22, 2008

Leading Chinese intellectuals and writers released a petition today that appeared on several websites in Chinese, entitled 'Twelve Suggestions for Dealing with the Tibetan Situation'. It is a significant indication that Chinese voices are being raised in China in response to the way Beijing has handled the protests that began on March 10. An English translation is published below.

The letter, demonstrating great courage among its 29 signatories, strongly urges the Chinese government to “stop the violent suppression” in Tibet, and appeals to the Tibetan people likewise not to engage in violent activities. It also urges the Chinese government to end the propaganda and news blockade, saying: “The one-sided propaganda of the official Chinese media is having the effect of stirring up inter-ethnic animosity and aggravating an already tense situation. This is extremely detrimental to the long-term goal of safeguarding national unity.”

The signatories include Chinese writers Wang Lixiong, Liu Xiaobo and Yu Jie, Professor Ding Zilin, of the pressure group Tiananmen Mothers, as well as other scholars, and several lawyers and artists.

The petition states that the language used by the Chinese government to describe the Dalai Lama is not “in keeping with the situation, nor is it beneficial to the Chinese government’s image,”, saying: “As the Chinese government is committed to integrating into the international community, we maintain that it should display a style of governing that conforms to the standards of modern civilization.”

The leading intellectuals point out that the demonstrations in the late 1980s which led to the imposition of martial law in March 1989, presided over by China’s top leader Hu Jintao, were limited to Lhasa, while the protests of the past 10 days have spread across Tibet. The writers says: “This deterioration indicates that there are serious mistakes in the work that has been done with regard to Tibet. The relevant government departments must conscientiously reflect upon this matter, examine their failures, and fundamentally change the failed nationality policies.”

The letter urges dialogue between Chinese leaders and the Dalai Lama, so as to “eliminate animosity and bring about national reconciliation”, and appeals for calm and reflection among Chinese people in China.

March 22, 2008

Twelve Suggestions for Dealing with the Tibetan Situation by Some Chinese Intellectuals

1. At present the one-sided propaganda of the official Chinese media is having the effect of stirring up inter-ethnic animosity and aggravating an already tense situation. This is extremely detrimental to the long-term goal of safeguarding national unity. We call for such propaganda to be stopped.
2. We support the Dalai Lama’s appeal for peace, and hope that the ethnic conflict can be dealt with according to the principles of goodwill, peace, and non-violence. We condemn any violent act against innocent people, strongly urge the Chinese government to stop the violent suppression, and appeal to the Tibetan people likewise not to engage in violent activities.
3. The Chinese government claims that “there is sufficient evidence to prove this incident was organized, premeditated, and meticulously orchestrated by the Dalai clique.” We hope that the government will show proof of this. In order to change the international community’s negative view and distrustful attitude, we also suggest that the government invite the United Nation’s Commission on Human Rights to carry out an independent investigation of the evidence, the course of the incident, the number of casualties, etc.
4. In our opinion, such Cultural-Revolution-like language as “the Dalai Lama is a jackal in Buddhist monk’s robes and an evil spirit with a human face and the heart of a beast” used by the Chinese Communist Party leadership in the Tibet Autonomous Region is of no help in easing the situation, nor is it beneficial to the

Chinese government's image. As the Chinese government is committed to integrating into the international community, we maintain that it should display a style of governing that conforms to the standards of modern civilization.

5. We note that on the very day when the violence erupted in Lhasa (March 14), the leaders of the Tibet Autonomous Region declared that "there is sufficient evidence to prove this incident was organized, premeditated, and meticulously orchestrated by the Dalai clique." This shows that the authorities in Tibet knew in advance that the riot would occur, yet did nothing effective to prevent the incident from happening or escalating. If there was a dereliction of duty, a serious investigation must be carried out to determine this and deal with it accordingly.

6. If in the end it cannot be proved that this was an organized, premeditated, and meticulously orchestrated event but was instead a "popular revolt" triggered by events, then the authorities should pursue those responsible for inciting the popular revolt and concocting false information to deceive the Central Government and the people; they should also seriously reflect on what can be learned from this event so as to avoid taking the same course in the future.

7. We strongly demand that the authorities not subject every Tibetan to political investigation or revenge. The trials of those who have been arrested must be carried out according to judicial procedures that are open, just, and transparent so as to ensure that all parties are satisfied.

8. We urge the Chinese government to allow credible national and international media to go into Tibetan areas to conduct independent interviews and news reports. In our view, the current news blockade cannot gain credit with the Chinese people or the international community, and is harmful to the credibility of the Chinese government. If the government grasps the true situation, it need not fear challenges. Only by adopting an open attitude can we turn around the international community's distrust of our government.

9. We appeal to the Chinese people and overseas Chinese to be calm and tolerant, and to reflect deeply on what is happening. Adopting a posture of aggressive nationalism will only invite antipathy from the international community and harm China's international image.

10. The disturbances in Tibet in the 1980s were limited to Lhasa, whereas this time they have spread to many Tibetan areas. This deterioration indicates that there are serious mistakes in the work that has been done with regard to Tibet. The relevant government departments must conscientiously reflect upon this matter, examine their failures, and fundamentally change the failed nationality policies.

11. In order to prevent similar incidents from happening in future, the government must abide by the freedom of religious belief and the freedom of speech explicitly enshrined in the Chinese Constitution, thereby allowing the Tibetan people fully to express their grievances and hopes, and permitting citizens of all nationalities freely to criticize and make suggestions regarding the government's nationality policies.

12. We hold that we must eliminate animosity and bring about national reconciliation, not continue to increase divisions between nationalities. A country that wishes to avoid the partition of its territory must first avoid divisions among its nationalities. Therefore, we appeal to the leaders of our country to hold direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama. We hope that the Chinese and Tibetan people will do away with the misunderstandings between them, develop their interactions with each other, and achieve unity. Government departments as much as popular organizations and religious figures should make great efforts toward this goal.

Signatures:

Wang Lixiong (Beijing, Writer)
Liu Xiaobo (Beijing, Freelance Writer)
Zhang Zuhua (Beijing, scholar of constitutionalism)
Sha Yexin (Shanghai, writer, Chinese Muslim)
Yu Haocheng (Beijing, jurist)
Ding Zilin (Beijing, professor)
Jiang Peikun (Beijing, professor)
Yu Jie (Beijing, writer)
Sun Wenguang (Shangdong, professor)
Ran Yunfei (Sichuan, editor, Tujia nationality)
Pu Zhiqiang (Beijing, lawyer)
Teng Biao (Beijing, lawyer and scholar)
Liao Yiwu (Sichuan, writer)
Wang Qisheng (Beijing, scholar)
Zhang Xianling (Beijing, engineer)

Xu Jue (Beijing, research fellow)
Li Jun (Gansu, photographer)
Gao Yu (Beijing, journalist)
Wang Debang (Beijing, freelance writer)
Zhao Dagong (Shenzhen, freelance writer)
Jiang Danwen (Shanghai, writer)
Liu Yi (Gansu, painter)
Xu Hui (Beijing, writer)
Wang Tiancheng (Beijing, scholar)
Wen kejian (Hangzhou, freelance)
Li Hai (Beijing, freelance writer)
Tian Yongde (Inner Mongolia, folk human rights activists)
Zan Aizong (Hangzhou, journalist)
Liu Yiming (Hubei, freelance writer)



SPORTS FOR PEACE

Athletes Appeal to Hu in letter for peaceful Tibet solution

(Several signatories of the letter were high-profile medal hopes in the Games, which begin Friday, such as Croatian high jumper Blanka Vlasic and 110m hurdles world record holder Dayron Robles of Cuba. also include American 400m runner DeeDee Trotter and Panamanian long-jumper Irving Saladino)

Dear Mr. President Hu,

We all hope that the Olympic Summer Games in China will be a great success and that the Olympic ideals will come to life.

That is why we are asking you:

- to enable a peaceful solution for the issue of Tibet and other conflicts in your country with respect to fundamental principles of human rights.

- to protect freedom of expression, freedom of religion and freedom of opinion in your country, including Tibet.
- to ensure that human rights defenders are no longer intimidated or imprisoned.
- to stop the death penalty.

China is the focus of worldwide attention. Your decision on these issues will determine the success of the Olympic Games and the image the world will have of China in the future.

We are asking you to respect human rights in China in order to achieve lasting peace and reconciliation.

Bisher unterzeichnet haben / So far signed by: Gifty Addy (100 m), Virgilijus Alekna, (Discus Throw), Mohamed Salman Al-Khuwalidi, (Long Jump), Tatyana Andrianova (800 m), Youssef Baba (1500 m), Björn Bach (Canoeing), Viola Bauer (Cross-country skiing), Yvonne Bönisch (Judo), Kathrin Boron (Rowing), Joel Brown (100 m Hurdles), James Carter (400 m Hurdles), Nesta Carter (100 m), Ricardo Chambers (400 m), Doris Chepkwemoi Changeywo (5000 m), Abraham Chepkirwok (800 m), Helke Claasen (Beachvolleyball), Kim Collins (100 m), Fábio Gomes Da Silva (Pole Vault), Vincent Defrasne (Biathlon), Ruan De Vries (110 m Hurdles), Sergiy Demidyuk (110 m Hurdles), Antonietta Di Martino (High Jump), Steffen Driesen (Swimming), Imke Duplitzer (Fencing), Danny Ecker (Pole Vault), Florence Ekpo-Umoh (400 m), Omar Ahmed El Ghazaly (Discus Throw), Susi Erdmann (Bobsledding), Debbie Ferguson-McKenzie (200 m), David Fiegen (800 m), Adrian Findlay (400 m Hurdles), Marcel Fischer (Fencing), Nicole Forrester (High Jump), Brigitte Foster-Hylton (100 m Hurdles), Michael Frater (100 m), Tiki Gelana (5000 m), Martina Glagow (Biathlon), Emma Green (High Jump), Michael Greis (Biathlon), Michael Groß (Swimming), Ehsan Hadadi (Discus Throw), Robert Harting (Discus Throw), Dagmar Hase (Swimming), Mike Hazle (Javelin Throw), Claudia Heill (Judo), Jakub Holusa (800 m), Chaunte Howard (High Jump), Muriel Hurtis-Houairi (200 m), Florian Huth (Beachvolleyball), Abdalaati Iguidi (1500 m), Alhaji Jeng (Pole Vault), Janeth Jepkosgei (800 m), Lolo Jones (100 m Hurdles), Christian Kaczmarek (Long Jump), Britta Kamrau (Swimming), Sebastian Keiner (800 m), Gary Kikaya (400 m), Philemon Kipkorir Kimutai (1500 m), Robert Sigei Kipngetch (5000 m), Bernard Kipyego (5000 m), Svetlana Klyuka (800 m), Sebastian Köber (Boxing), Justus Koech (800 m), Micah Kogo (5000 m), Daniel Kipchirchir Komen (1500 m), Joseph Kosgei (5000 m), Yuliya Krevsun (800 m), Jens Kruppa (Swimming), Clemens Kruse (Sailing), Amine Laalou (800 m), Brigitta Langerholc (800 m), Robert Lathouwers (800 m), Heike Lätzsch (Hockey), Maximilian Levy (Cycling), Christoph Lohse (1500 m), Maksym Mazuryk (Pole Vault), LaShawn Merritt (400 m), Romain Mesnil (Pole Vault), Godfrey Khotso Mokoena (Long Jump), Grace Kwamboka Momanyi (5000 m), Steve Mullings (100 m), Ulrike Nasse-Meyfarth (High Jump), Lars Nieberg (Show Jumper), Carolin Nytra (100 m Hurdles), Philes Ongori (5000 m), Sven Ottke (Boxing), Miguel Pate (Long Jump), Tetyana Petlyuk (800 m), Barbara Petrahn (400 m), Dwight Phillips (Long Jump), Liliana Popescu (800 m), Christian Reif (Long Jump), Alexander Resch (Bobsledding), Geoffrey Kipkoech Rono (1500 m), Silke Rottenberg (Soccer), Irving Saladino (Long Jump), Ulla Salzgeber (Dressage Rider), Thomas Schmidt (Kayak), Kjell Schneider (Beachvolleyball), Heide Schüller (100 m Hurdles), Christian Schwarzer (Handball), Melanie Seeger (Racewalking), Christoph Sieber (Sailing), Kenia Sinclair (800 m), Boniface Kiprotich Songok (5000 m), Richard Spiegelburg (Pole Vault), Kerron Stewart (200 m), Alexander Straub (Pole Vault), Angelo Taylor (400 m Hurdles), Stev Theloke (Swimming), Carlo Thränhardt (High Jump), Stefan Ulm (Canoeing), L. J. Van Zyl (400 m Hurdles), Sandra Völker (Swimming), Stephan Volkert (Rowing), Peggy Waleska (Rowing), Simone Weiler (Swimming), Kellie Wells (100 m Hurdles), Mulugeta Wendimu (1500 m), Johan Wissmann (400 m), Mark Zabel (Canoeing)



US Senators Call on Secretary Rice to Press for Release of Tibetan Prisoners

(U.S. Senators have added to the Congressional concern about the situation in Tibet by asking Secretary Rice to press for the release of Tibetan protestors, including Jamyang Kyi)

Following is full text of the letter.

May 21, 2008

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
Dear Secretary Rice,

We are writing you today to express our concern over China's recent detention of hundreds of peaceful Tibetan protestors.

As you are aware, on March 10, 2008, Buddhist monks and ethnic Tibetans began to demonstrate against Chinese authorities in Lhasa. Clashes between protesters and Government forces turned violent, and spread to other ethnic Tibetan areas of China.

These protests were primarily motivated by Tibetan resentment against more than a half century of Chinese rule, as well as China's ongoing repression of Tibetan ethnic, cultural, and political rights. The near-total media blackout enforced by China prevented the press from accurately reporting the situation and prevented the international community from ensuring the basic human rights of Tibetans.

The case of Ms. Jamyang Kyi is a textbook example of China's use of detention to intimidate peaceful activists. Ms. Kyi is an announcer at a television station in the Chinese province of Qinghai, which borders the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR).

Much of Ms. Kyi's professional career has focused on the rights of women in Tibet. Among other achievements, she is the composer of several well-received albums comprising both mixes of pop and traditional Tibetan music. Ms. Kyi toured the United States in 2006, where she spent time as a guest lecturer at Columbia University, discussing the themes encapsulated in her work. In both her journalism and music, however, Ms. Kyi was cautious to steer clear of content which could be construed as challenging Beijing's control over Tibet.

Following the March 10 demonstrations, she and many other Tibetans were swept up in mass arrests throughout the region by Chinese security forces. Ms. Kyi was arrested by security officials while she was leaving her office on April 1, and taken to an undisclosed location on April 4 or 5. China, however, steadfastly refused to

officially confirm her detention, or inform her husband of her whereabouts. She was released several weeks later, early in May; however, reports indicate she is currently awaiting trial and possibly under house arrest.

The case of Ms. Kyi is not unique. Thus far, the Chinese government has acknowledged more than 4,000 people were detained after the recent unrest in Tibet, including hundreds of monks and nuns. We fear the true number of detainees and missing persons may never be known. China has now begun trials of the arrested. What little information we have about these trials paints a disturbing picture. Human Rights Watch, for example, has noted the use of “secret evidence” by the authorities when persecuting the demonstrators.

We request that you urge the Chinese government to allow independent access to the detainees arrested during the recent crackdown on ethnic Tibetans, and push Beijing to conduct free and open trials of the accused. We believe that those who commit violence should be brought to justice; however, the United States must not allow religious and political dissent to be criminalized because it is uncomfortable to those in power. We also ask that you keep us informed of the progress made toward ensuring transparent trials for those arrested during the recent crackdown.

We appreciate your attention to our request.

Sincerely,

Gordon H. Smith, John F. Kerry, Russell D. Feingold (United States Senate)



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA
ACTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. HOPE FOR HUMANITY.

An open letter to the President of the People's Republic of China

July 09, 2008

Hu Jintao
President of the People's Republic of China
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie, Xichengqu, Beijingshi 100017
People's Republic of China

1 July 2008

Your Excellency

With one month remaining until the much-anticipated start of the XXIX Olympiad in Beijing, I ask you to take five steps toward the “development of human rights” pledged by the Beijing Olympics Bid Committee in 2001. Over the last year Amnesty International has collected hundreds of thousands of voices from around the world echoing this call. I join them in urging you to take this historic opportunity to act.

Amnesty International recognizes the Chinese government's efforts to address some longstanding human rights concerns. I am particularly encouraged by the apparent progress made in reducing the use of the death penalty through the Supreme Peoples Court review process. I also appreciate recent statements by a number of Chinese officials, including Chief Justice Xiao Yang, that China is following the global trend towards abolishing the death penalty. Amnesty International also welcomes the news that 1,157 people held in connection with the protests in Tibetan-populated areas of China last March have been released. The official commitment to "full media freedom" and regulations for foreign journalists represents another step towards realising greater freedom of expression for journalists.

These developments notwithstanding, the preparation for the Olympics has actually had a negative impact in some areas of human rights. Official persecution of human rights activists continues, particularly those making connections between ongoing human rights violations and China's hosting of the Olympics, including Ye Guozhu, Hu Jia and Yang Chunlin who are serving prison sentences solely for having expressed their views peacefully. The "clean-up" of Beijing through the extended use of Re-education Through Labour is a worrying development, particularly as it ignores domestic calls for reform of this arbitrary system of detention.

Amnesty International calls on you to grasp the opportunity of the Olympic Games to implement the following five recommendations—supported by many inside and outside China—before the Games begin:

Release all prisoners of conscience - including Ye Guozhu, Hu Jia, Yang Chunlin and any others detained in connection with the hosting of the Olympics solely for expressing their views peacefully;

Prevent the police from arbitrarily detaining petitioners, human rights activists and others as part of a pre-Olympics "clean-up";

Publish full national statistics on the death penalty, commit to a reduction in the number of capital crimes – especially those for non-violent offences – and introduce a moratorium on executions in line with UN General Assembly resolution 62/149 adopted on 18 December 2007;

Allow full access and freedom of reporting for both Chinese and international journalists in all parts of China in line with promises of "complete media freedom" in the run-up to the Games;

Account for all those killed or detained in the wake of the March 2008 protests in Tibet, particularly 116 people officially acknowledged to still be in custody, and ensure that those detained for their involvement in peaceful protests are released and that others receive a fair trial.

I believe that delivering on these five points will go a long way towards the Games being remembered not only for positive achievements on the sports field but in the field of human rights as well.

Yours sincerely

Irene Khan (Secretary General)



A Letter to His Holiness from a Chinese

August 22 2008

Revered Dalai Lama:

I have to tell you that my impression of you in my childhood and youth was that you were a flayer of human skin, a demon who picked flesh from human bones. From this point alone, you have probably guessed that I am Han Chinese. Indeed, I grew up within the Communist education system. But in 1997, I chanced upon an opportunity to travel to Tibet. That was the first time I (secretly) saw your photograph, your kind and compassionate visage, and it made me doubt the Communists' propaganda.

At the Festival of the Bodhisattva of Good Fortune that year, I went early to the Zulakang temple where the Bodhisattva's covering had already been removed, and in the light as soon as I saw her face, the sound of a voice rose behind me. It was the mournful yet excited sound of an elderly voice. There before the Songsten Gampo hall, she sang while she poured wine into a goblet in front of the statue. Men, women and even the children all around immediately joined in the singing, and when the police turned up, their voices rang ever more brightly... "They're praising the Dalai Lama," a monk quietly told me.

That day, I moved out of my hotel and into the former home of a merchant on the Barkhor. Prior to 1959, the mistress of this family used to wear clothes most days worth 30,000 to 40,000 renminbi, but now all she had left was two sets of clothes. The home left to her by her ancestors had been demolished. The new home seemed to be worth more, but it was less than half the size of the old one and there was no running water and the communal toilets were constantly blocked, sending their unbearable stench right out into the Barkhor street. This woman had no complaint about being plundered by the Communists, but there was something she was constantly saying, very quietly - I could only ever see her lips moving. I thought she was reciting the mantra, "Wish for a better life to come." But one day, when there were only the two of us and she saw there was no one there outside, she said she was reciting a long-life prayer for you.

In April 1999 I went to Tibet for the second time where I lived in the home of farmers in Rizhika village in Jiru township, Zalang county in Rikaze prefecture. There was no running water there and no electricity. At dawn each day, the family traipsed to the river to carry water and in the evenings even the small children sat around the weak oil lamp twisting wool. Selling felt was pretty much the only means of livelihood the villagers had. Our food was very simple, with potatoes for two meals a day (aside from gruel for breakfast) being a luxury. But there in the home, in the place where the most light came in, was a picture of you in an exquisite frame draped all over with long white khada.

Later, I chose to work in Tibet. As an editor and journalist I had the opportunity to meet with some Tibetans who worked in Chinese Communist Party offices, and with my own eyes saw how in the most secret places in their homes they have photographs of you and yak butter lamps that had never been lit.

You are not the enemy of the Tibetan people, you are the father of the Tibetan people; you are the source of the Tibetan people's compassion and happiness. You are Yeshe Norbu, the Tibetan people's wish-fulfilling

jewel; you are Kundun, who forever will appear before all Tibetans whenever they call you; and you are Gyalwa Rinpoche, higher than all kings and the most precious of treasures. And evidently, the Communist authorities did not liberate Tibet, they robbed Tibet; they did not sow happiness, they created suffering.

Listening to your lecture at Madison in Wisconsin, I was filled with emotion. An ocean of Buddhist wisdom of the greatest depth and by degree ever more complex was systematically expounded by you until it miraculously became like rain, nourishing and vitalizing your listeners; you did your utmost to answer every everyone's questions, embracing the smallest shred of individual pain and suffering; and even when someone asked a question about China-Tibet relations, with limitless patience and concern you emphasized the excellence of the Chinese nation, and encouraged friendly exchange between the Chinese and Tibetan peoples. And the Communists' evil, their scheming, their corruption and dictatorship, when compared to your compassion, your transparency, your honesty and democracy - all shall undergo the test of time.

In March of this year, the Communists' cruel 50-year colonial rule of Tibet gave rise to peaceful, non-violent protests at more than 100 locations throughout all Tibetan areas. The tragedy is that not only have the Communist leaders failed to reflect upon or adjust their policies in Tibet as a result, but condescendingly they actually dictated to you that there were the "four do not supports" as preconditions to dialog, making the white-hot Tibet question a problem for you personally. Their intention is to smother and even kill off the Tibet question, and Tibet has now become an enormous prison. It's said that in Lhasa, one in three people is a plain-clothed police officer. The military has gone into even the most remote village and all telephone calls from the outside (especially foreign calls) are closely monitored...

Tibet's culture is profound and extensive, ancient and progressive, and I long ago saw the beauty of its traditions in the Tibetan people: devotion, kindness, gratitude, benevolence; and what has China's 5000-year culture left the Han people? Naturally, not all of it has been exquisite, and the Chinese authorities have used those dregs in gruesome details to enslave and shackle the Tibetan people with "traditions of unique benefit to all mankind!" In the twenty-first century when people leap over their countries' fences in a common pursuit of freedom, democracy and human rights, and respect for the singularity of their ethnic culture, it is precisely such colonial behavior as this that the world rejects as a thing of filth. There are more and more deep-thinking and incisive intellectuals in China who are starting to see through the Communists, publicly expressing their own independent views on the Tibet question, demanding an end to totalitarian rule, the implementation of freedom of expression and freedom of the media, withdrawing the accusations against you of being a "splittist of the Motherland", and demanding "a resolution of the Tibet problem by means of respect, tolerance, consultation and dialog."

In the almost 30 years of reform and opening up, the trend has led China towards becoming a "great nation". In actual fact, it's no more than "As China enters the international mainstream, it is hitching a ride towards globalization." The loss of morality has permeated into even China's most remote villages, and evil and dissipation have become the fashion. Hosting the Olympics under circumstances such as these inevitably runs counter to the Olympic spirit. The superficial prosperity cannot conceal the void within. The need to reform bad governance is a fact that has been placed before every Chinese person. If the Communist leaders continue to be arrogant and imperious on the question of Tibet and coerce and trample upon the Tibetan people, and deceive and mislead the Chinese masses, and if they continue to deny your irreplaceable value towards peace in the world and your unrivaled spiritual contributions, and adhere to the inhuman logic of "power grows from the barrel of a gun," their days will come to a sudden end one not too distant dawn. There is no doubt you will return to your land! When you are reunited with the suffering Tibetan people, please extend the warm light of your benevolence to care upon the heavy sins of China's vast land.

May the ship of your compassion for ever be among us!

From a Han who sympathizes with the suffering of the Tibetan people, and who has limitless respect for you:

Zhu Rui. (*Ms Zhu Rui is a Han writer. She has published several novels, poems, and essays, with most of her works related to Tibet.*)

rediff NEWS

Only the Dalai Lama can unite China

**Comrade Wen Jiabao, Premier,
State Council of the People's Republic of China
Beijing, China**

Dear Mr Premier,
Greetings!

You may think that it is presumptuous on my part to send a letter to the premier of one of the most powerful nations of the world, but I was born in the country which invented Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. I hope you will not misinterpret my gesture.

One of the reasons why I have decided to write to you is because you have served under two party general secretaries (Comrade Hu Yaobang and Comrade Zhao Ziyang) for whom I have a lot of respect.

On May 19, 1989, as a director of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee, you walked down with Comrade Zhao Ziyang to meet the youth striking at Tiananmen Square. On that day, your mentor is supposed to have told the students: 'I have to ask you to think carefully about the future.' It is said that he assured them that all issues could be dealt with in a proper manner.

You will remember that one of the recriminations of the students was that their protest had been considered by the party as 'turmoil' and not as a patriotic movement. For the youth on the Square, it made a considerable difference; that it was their motivations which were being questioned.

The remarks of Comrade Zhao as well as the recent events in Tibet made me to write to you. Do you not agree that the time has come to 'think carefully about the future' and look deeply into the true nature of the Tibetan 'protest'?

During your press conference at the end of the last National People's Congress in Beijing in March, you stated that you had 'ample facts and plenty of evidence to prove that the recent riot in Lhasa was organised, premeditated, masterminded and incited by the Dalai Lama clique.' You personally attacked the Dalai Lama: 'The constant claims made by the Dalai clique that they pursue no independence but peaceful dialogue are nothing but lies.'

I believe that these are wrong views. First, you have not subsequently presented any proof of the Dalai Lama's involvement in the unrest; second, I think that you are mistaken about the Dalai Lama's own motivation.

When you said: 'On March 14, violence involving beating, smashing property, looting and arson broke out in

Lhasa, which was aimed to undermine the upcoming Beijing Olympics ,’ you seemed to equate the deep resentment expressed by the Tibetan people to ‘turmoil.’

I was sad when I saw that you yourself used these infamous words: ‘I would like to ask, from the appalling incidents in Lhasa to similar turmoil in other parts of China... don’t these conducts have nothing to do with the Dalai Lama?’

Like the students in Tiananmen, the Dalai Lama today does not want to split China, but make it a nation where everyone lives in harmony. To use this very pejorative term of ‘turmoil’ when people have no other recourse but to take to the streets to demonstrate their deep-seated resentment is incorrect.

Look at it from the Tibetan point of view (or for that matters from the millions of Chinese who every year take to the streets — I understand than in one year alone, more than 100,000 protests occurred in China), most of these demonstrations are due to wrong policies of the central or more often of the local government.

Don’t you agree?

You said that your government is ‘fully capable of maintaining stability and order in Tibet,’ but it is not the point. The question is: can your government generate respect and contentment in all? Is that not the true role of any government?

If you and President Hu are really serious about building a harmonious society, you should look at certain facts. Do not commit the mistake of the Elders who decided to send tanks to massacre the students on Tiananmen in June 1989. It did not solve any genuine problem.

Outsiders believe that the Great Han Chauvinism has never been eradicated from China. They are comforted in their opinion, when you declare: ‘The door of dialogue still remained open to the Dalai Lama so long as he gives up his position for Tibet independence.’

After six rounds of talks (between 2002 and 2007) with your United Front Department officials, the Dalai Lama’s Representatives have repeatedly conveyed the Tibetan position.

In fact, I was told that for the first time during these talks, your people carefully listened (without agreeing) to the Tibetan administration stand. When you are perfectly aware that the Dalai Lama does not seek ‘independence’ (but only a ‘meaningful autonomy’) why are you repeating what you said to *The Washington Post* in 2003: ‘We have taken note of the recent remarks by the Dalai Lama but we still need to watch very carefully what he really does.’

More importantly for the future, you said: ‘Since the peaceful liberation of and especially the democratic reforms in Tibet, the region has moved forward and become more developed.’

Yes, it is true that Tibet has become ‘more developed’, but unfortunately no democratic reforms have ever been implemented. Over the years, the status and role of the ‘nationalities’ has been sidelined and ignored by the central government with the result that deeper and deeper resentment has taken root on the Tibetan plateau.

Chairman Mao had an interesting conversation with Anastas Mikoyan on February 6, 1949 in Moscow. One of the topics discussed was the status of ‘national minorities’. Chairman Mao said: ‘Once we finish the Civil War and resolve internal political questions inside the country and when the Tibetans feel that we do not threaten them with aggression and treat them equally, then we will solve the subsequent fate of this region.’

With regard to Tibet we must be careful and patient, taking into account the complex regional mix there and the power of Lamaism.’

You may also know that in 1955, Chairman Mao once advised the Dalai Lama to fly the Tibetan national flag on the guest house where the Tibetan leader was staying in Beijing. Mao even said ‘In the future the Communist Party of China could also let Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia have their own flags.’ It was a confirmation that Mao was contemplating ‘adopting the Soviet Union’s model, at least for the three large minority nationalities’ remembered Phuntsok Wangyal, Mao’s translator and the first Tibetan Communist.

In 1980, you were still posted in Gansu, but you must have heard of the historic visit of the Central Committee’s Working Group on Tibet to Lhasa. This was the first working group formed after Comrade Hu Yaobang became the general secretary of the CCP. The Group was presided by Comrade Hu (Comrade Wan Li, then member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, was also a member).

They symbolically reached the Tibetan capital on the occasion of the 39th anniversary of the signature of the ‘Seventeen Points for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet’. In 1951, this was supposed to become ‘the governing principle in Tibetan work and policy.’ Though the Agreement gave a large autonomy to the Tibetans, it was never honestly implemented by the Central Government. If Comrade Hu chose this date to arrive in the Tibetan capital, it was probably because he wanted to reiterate the promises of autonomy made to the Tibetan people in 1951.

The visit tended to prove that the central government was ready to settle matters through consultation with the local people. It also showed that the Politburo was keen to get a new start and ‘restore the harmonious atmosphere of cooperation which had prevailed in the early 1950s’ as a Chinese commentator had put it.

As he arrived, Comrade Hu immediately made his stand clear; he told Phagpala, a senior Tibetan official ‘Comrade Phagpala, what is tomorrow?’

I am sure that you have not forgotten that during a party organised to celebrate the 1951 Agreement, Comrade Hu gave a powerful political speech to some 5,000 cadres in Lhasa. The motto was ‘Strive to build a united, prosperous and civilised new Tibet’. In the speech Cd Hu listed a few tasks for Tibet:

To exercise nationality autonomy in the region fully — that is to say, to let Tibetans really be the masters of their own lives. A commitment by the central government to relieve and reduce burdens of the people...

To make efforts to develop Tibetan science, culture and education, and to prepare for the establishing of the University of Tibet. To implement the policy on minority nationality cadres correctly, to strengthen the unity between the Han and Tibetan cadres, and to transfer a large quantity of Chinese cadres who had worked in Tibet for many years back to the interior.

Mr Premier, don’t you think that this could be a base to start negotiating with the Dalai Lama?

You will also recall the healthy debate on nationalities between the head of the United Front Department, Li Weihai (who wrote a 10,000 character report) and Phuntsok Wangyal’s 25,000 character reply. Wangyal’s point was: ‘In socialist States, the majority nationality does not (*or should not*) oppress the minority nationalities. All should be equal... Nationality unity, therefore, requires not suppression but new policies that provide real equality [between nationalities].’

Wangyal says in his biography that his views were validated by Comrade Hu Yaobang and Comrade Zhao Ziyang in 1984.

My appeal to you, Mr Premier is that you should personally meet the Dalai Lama like Chairman Mao used to meet him in the fifties. You should discuss threadbare all issues related to Tibet and the People's Republic of China. According to me, it is the only way to come out of the impasse and 'think about the future.'

After all, the Tibetan question has been sullyng the image of People's Republic for more than 50 years now. The time has come to find a durable solution agreeable to all. I believe it is possible to have a win-win outcome.

The Dalai Lama is a good man, a sincere leader. Do you think that you will be able to find a better interlocutor to bring about a radical change in the relations between Hans and Tibetans?

In fact, I would go one step further: The Dalai Lama is today the only leader who can unite China. If you are able to find a satisfactory solution with him, he is the only person who can convince the Tibetans to work for a harmonious society. This in turn, will be an example for all nationalities.

I do hope, Mr Premier that you will understand my presumptuousness in writing to you. I feel that there is a golden opportunity for China to satisfactorily settle this long-pending issue.

Please meet with the Dalai Lama, it will bring more good to China's image than 1000 Olympic Games.

Yours sincerely

Claude Arpi

PS: I am told that your wife is a practicing Buddhist, I am sure that she will enjoy meeting the Dalai Lama and exchanging views on the Buddha Dharma with him.



Canadian MPs & Senators urge China to resolve Tibet issue

June 13, 2008

102 Canadian Parliamentarians from all parties and both Houses wrote to Chinese President Hu Jintao June 6. Writing "in the spirit of friendship and respect," the MPs and senators urged that negotiations with the Dalai Lama "begin in earnest with a firm commitment to reach a settlement within a reasonable timeframe."

According to Senator Consiglio Di Nino, Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Tibet, "His Holiness the Dalai Lama has remained steadfast in his commitment to reach out to China's leadership in a spirit of compromise even in the face of continuing repression in his homeland."

"In this Olympic year, we urge Hu Jintao to embrace the unifying spirit of the Games by reaching out to Tibetans with an open mind to bring this longstanding dispute to an honourable resolution," said Di Nino.

Canada's Parliament has actively taken up the Tibetan issue in recent years. All parties supported motions granting the Dalai Lama honorary citizenship (2006) and a motion calling for an autonomous Tibet within a sovereign China (Feb 15, 2007). In 2007, the Dalai Lama met with the Prime Minister, the Governor General, leaders of the all the opposition parties, and a large number of parliamentarians. Members of the PFT met with the Dalai Lama in April 2008 and delivered messages of support from all party leaders.

The Parliamentary Friends of Tibet (PFT) is an all-party group of Members of Parliament and Senators. PFT has become the voice for Canadian support for Tibet in Parliament. The group and its members actively encourage greater respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms for the Tibetan people. They support His Holiness the Dalai Lama's non-violent conflict resolution efforts to achieve genuine autonomy for Tibetans through negotiations with China.

June 6, 2008

President Hu Jintao

President of the People's Republic of China

Office of the President

Beijing

People's Republic of China

Dear President Hu:

In the spirit of friendship and respect, we offer our cooperation in finding a solution to the longstanding Tibetan dispute.

It seems to us an honorable resolution is attainable. Your government is seeking assurances that Tibet will be an integral part of a sovereign China. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has accepted this as a condition for declaring the Tibetan Plateau a genuinely autonomous region where Tibetans can speak their language, practice their religion and cherish their culture.

Mr. President, while encouraged by your government's renewal of contact with the Dalai Lama's representatives, we strongly urge that negotiations begin in earnest with a firm commitment to reach a settlement within a reasonable timeframe. What is now required is trust and goodwill from each side to craft an agreement that achieves both China's objectives and the Tibetan people's aspirations.

We respectfully offer whatever assistance we may be able to provide to bring this dispute to a successful conclusion.

Sincerely,

Mr. Mike Allen, M.P., Mr. Harold Albrecht, M.P.

Mr. Rob Anders, M.P., Mr. David Anderson, M.P.

Sen. Raynell Andreychuk, Mr. Charlie Angus, M.P.

Mr. Alex Atamanenko, M.P., Mr. Larry Bagnell, M.P.

Ms. Vivian Barbot, M.P., Ms. Colleen Beaumier, M.P.

Mr. James Bezan, M.P., M. Bernard Bigras, M.P.

Sen. Michel Biron, Mr. Ken Boshcoff, M.P.

M. Robert Bouchard, M.P., Mme. Diane Bourgeois, M.P.

Sen. Bert Brown, Mr. Patrick Brown, M.P.

Mr. Gord Brown, M.P., M. Serge Cardin, M.P.

Ms. Chris Charlton, M.P., Sen. Joan Cook

Sen. Jane Cordy, Mr. Irwin Cotler, M.P.

M. Paul Crête, M.P., Ms. Jean Crowder, M.P.

Mr. Roy Cullen, M.P., Ms. Libby Davies, M.P.

Mme. Nicole Demers, M.P., Mme. Johanne Deschamps, M.P.
 Mr. Paul Dewar, M.P., Dr. Ruby Dhalla, M.P.
 M. Gilles Duceppe, M.P., Sen. Consiglio Di Nino
 Sen. Lillian Dyck, Mr. Wayne Easter, M.P.
 Mme. Meili Faille, M.P., Sen. Joan Fraser
 Mme. Carole Freeman, M.P., Mme. Christiane Gagnon, M.P.
 Ms. Cheryl Gallant, M.P., Mr. John Godfrey, M.P.
 Mr. Yvon Godin, M.P., Sen. Yoine Goldstein
 Mr. Gary Goodyear, M.P., Mrs. Nina Grewal, M.P.
 M. Michel Guimond, M.P., Sen. Mobina Jaffer
 Ms. Marlene Jennings, M.P., Mr. Randy Kamp, M.P.
 M. Jean-Yves Laforest, M.P., M. Mario Laframboise, M.P.
 Mme. Francine Lalonde, M.P., Mr. Jack Layton, M.P.
 M. Yves Lessard, M.P., M. Yvon Lévesque, M.P.
 Dr. Keith Martin, M.P., Mr. Pat Martin, M.P.
 Mr. Tony Martin, M.P., Ms. Alexa McDonough, M.P.
 Mr. John McKay, M.P., M. Serge Ménard, M.P.
 Ms. Maria Minna, M.P., Mme. Maria Mourani, M.P.
 Sen. Jim Munson, Ms. Peggy Nash, M.P.

M. Pierre Paquette, M.P., Sen. Lucie Pépin
 M. Gilles-A. Perron, M.P., Mr. Pierre Poilievre, M.P.
 M. Louis Plamondon, M.P., Ms. Penny Priddy, M.P.
 Mr. Geoff Regan, M.P., Mr. Scott Reid, M.P.
 Sen. Nancy Ruth, Mr. Michael Savage, M.P.
 Ms. Denise Savoie, M.P., Mr. Bill Siksay, M.P.
 Ms. Judy Sgro, M.P., Mrs. Carol Skelton, M.P.
 Sen. Mira Spivak, Mr. Lloyd St. Amand, M.P.
 M. Thierry St-Cyr, M.P., Mr. Brent St. Denis, M.P.
 Mme. Caroline St-Hilaire, M.P.,
 Mr. Paul Steckle, M.P.
 Mr. Peter Stoffer, M.P., Mr. David Sweet, M.P.
 Sen. Pierrette Ringuette, Sen. Jean-Claude Rivest
 Mr. Todd Russell, M.P., Mr. Andrew Telegdi, M.P.
 Mme. Ève-Mary Thאי Thi Lac, M.P.,
 Mr. David Tilson, M.P.
 Mme. Louise Thibault, M.P., Mr. Alan Tonks, M.P.
 Mr. Maurice Vellacott, M.P., M. Robert Vincent, M.P.
 Mr. Tom Wappel, M.P.,
 Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis, M.P.
 Mr. Bryon Wilfert, MP.



April 02, 2008

SENATORS BOXER, BROWN AND SNOWE LEAD BIPARTISAN GROUP OF 27 SENATORS IN CALLING ON CHINA TO RESOLVE CRISIS IN TIBET, MEET DIRECTLY WITH THE DALAI LAMA

(Full text of the letter follows)

The Honorable President Hu Jintao
 People’s Republic of China
 Dear President Hu:

We write today to respectfully urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to take all necessary steps to bring about a peaceful resolution to the current crisis in Tibet and to respect the human rights of the Tibetan people.

First and foremost, we ask that the Chinese government remove its restrictions on the media and communications,

and allow independent monitors and the foreign press unfettered access to the region. We believe that lack of reliable information is only fueling uncertainty, causing resentment and discord on both sides of the issue. Increased transparency will be an important factor in resolving the conflict and is the best assurance against further escalation of the violence. Such transparency should include disclosing the names and whereabouts of any Tibetans, including Tibetan monks, who were detained in the wake of recent events. It is particularly critical that the world be given an accurate picture of the number of individuals detained, injured, and killed since the crisis began.

We also ask that the government release those detained for peaceful protest and demonstrate respect for the internationally recognized right to peaceful assembly and expression of political opinion

Finally, we ask that the government move quickly, and at the highest level, to meet directly with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and engage in substantive dialogue to restore stability and bring genuine autonomy to the region. The Dalai Lama's respected stature in the international community and deep bond with the Tibetan people make him key to achieving a negotiated solution to the Tibet issue and to peacefully implementing any agreement that is reached.

The protests seem to reflect long-simmering Tibetan resentment toward Chinese policies and laws that have failed to respect the basic rights of the people of Tibet. They also appear to reflect Tibetans' belief that the six years of dialogue conducted to date—without the direct participation of the Dalai Lama—has been too slow and unyielding of results. For stability to last, the underlying causes of the public protests must be addressed, and policies that address the interest of both the Tibetan people *and* the Chinese government must be considered.

In any such dialogue, it is vitally important that the Chinese set forth a timeline and framework for evaluation of substantive progress. An expedient resolution of the Tibet question through official negotiations that include measurable results favors both the Tibetan people and the Chinese government. Again, we urge you to do everything possible to bring about a peaceful resolution to this crisis. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China would be best served by expeditiously resolving this issue in a manner that reflects international norms and respect for human rights

We look forward to continued dialogue on this matter and others that are important to the US-China bilateral relationship.

Thank you for your consideration of this most important request.

Sincerely,

Barbara Boxer, Sherrod Brown, Olympia J. Snowe, Joseph R. Biden, Jr,
Bernard Sanders, Charles E. Schumernard, Barbara A. Mikulski
Tom Harkin, Robert Menendez, Christopher J. Dodd ,
Jon Kyl, Tom Coburn, Max Baucus, Russell D. Feingold
James M. Inhofe, Larry E. Craig, Ron Wyden, Sheldon Whitehouse,
Robert C. Byrd, John E. Sununu, Gordon H. Smith, Dick Durbin,
Sam Brownback, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Tester, Dianne Feinstein,
Mark Pryor

Barack Obama

July 24, 2008

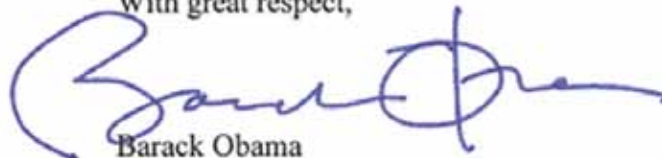
Your Holiness,

I regret that our respective travel schedules will prevent us from meeting during your visit to the United States this month, but I wanted to take the opportunity to reassure you of my highest respect and support for you, your mission and your people at this critical time. I hope that this letter and your meeting with Senator McCain will make clear that American attention to and backing for the people of Tibet is widespread and transcends the divisions of our political contest in this important election year.

I was heartened to read of the continuing dialogue between your representatives and the government of the People's Republic of China. Although progress is likely to be slow, and the travails of the people of Tibet will continue, I am hopeful that the process of dialogue and negotiation will bring positive results if both sides demonstrate good intentions and mutual respect. I remain optimistic that this process will continue beyond the Beijing Olympics, and pledge that I will continue to support it. The right to practice their religious beliefs without punishment or obstruction is one that should be accorded the people of Tibet, and I will continue to encourage the Chinese government to put aside its suspicions and act in accordance with its own constitution.

I will continue to support you and the rights of Tibetans. People of all faiths can admire what you are doing and what you stand for, and I look forward to meeting you at another time.

With great respect,



Barack Obama



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Obama Encourages President to Urge Tibet Resolution

March 28, 2008

Dear Mr. President:

The situation in Tibet is deeply disturbing, and requires that all of us, regardless of party, do what we can to try to influence it for the better. I understand that you discussed the subject on Wednesday with President Hu Jintao. The United States has many issues for which China's cooperation is important, including denuclearization of North Korea, ending Iran's nuclear program, stopping the genocide in Darfur, confronting repression in Burma, and combating global warming. However, it is important that we give high priority to the plight of Tibetans and make clear to President Hu that the way in which China treats all Chinese citizens, including Tibetans, profoundly affects how China is viewed in the United States and throughout the international community.

Resolution of differences between the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama is the key to progress in Tibet. The Dalai Lama, as you have said, is "a good man." He is revered by virtually all Tibetans, and his absence from his homeland creates an incurable wound in the heart of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibet's unique cultural and religious heritage cannot be preserved if he is demonized and kept at arm's length. He has accepted Beijing's precondition for a solution, namely recognition that Tibet is part of China, and has clearly stated that he is seeking religious, cultural and linguistic protection and autonomy for the Tibetan people, not independence. More recently, he indicated his belief that despite recent events, the Chinese people deserve to host the Olympics this summer.

I hope you made clear to President Hu the American view about the importance of the following: a negotiation with the Dalai Lama about his return to Tibet; guarantees of religious freedom for the Tibetan people; protection of Tibetan culture and language; and the exercise of genuine autonomy for Tibet. That is the path to the stability and harmony that the Chinese leaders say they are seeking in Tibet.

In addition to your personal intervention with President Hu, there are other steps I hope you will take to highlight our concern. I support your call for the foreign press and diplomatic personnel to have free access to Lhasa and other Tibetan cities and villages to ensure that repression and human rights violations cannot escape the world's notice. Beijing has committed to the International Olympic Committee to allow foreign journalists free access to cover stories throughout China, including Tibet. We should hold them to that commitment. The U.S. and our democratic allies and friends should also urge the UN Human Rights Council to send an investigatory team to Tibet. China should be encouraged to allow the International Committee for the Red Cross to visit prisons in Tibet to ensure that detainees are not held under inhumane conditions, tortured, or mistreated.

Like you, I want to take steps that increase the chance of a negotiated solution between Beijing and the Dalai Lama, and that have the best chance of improving the lives of ordinary Tibetans. Therefore, I support your effort to aggressively use your relationship with President Hu to achieve these goals. Should it appear, however, that the Chinese are taking private diplomacy as a license for inaction or continued repression, I would urge you to speak out forcefully and publicly to disabuse them of the notion that they can thus escape international censure.

Despite the high emotions of the present time, I hope you can persuade the Chinese leadership that in this the year of the Beijing Olympics they have a unique opportunity to make dramatic progress in resolving the Tibet issue. Chinese leaders have it within their power to achieve that worthy goal if they take steps to change the situation in Tibet for the better and by reaching an accommodation with the Dalai Lama. Progress in Tibet would profoundly affect the world's perception of China as it prepares to host the Olympic Games in August.

Sincerely,

Barack Obama

United States Senator

Articles by Indian Intellectuals

Tibetan Uprising: China's Responses

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Chairman of Centre for East Asian Studies, SIS, JNU

“Looking at Tibet, I sometimes feel ashamed to be a Han.... In a civilized world in the 21st Century, when something incredible happens in a certain area but many people around us (including Tibetans) yell out about a crackdown and mass killing, should we seriously reflect on ourselves: Why?”

- Blog post by a student of Central Universities of Nationalities, Beijing at China Digital Times April 7, 2008

“I strongly demand that our People's Armed Police warriors cast off their mental burdens, and at the first opportunity take resolute measures to knock the bravado out of these scoundrels, remove the evil from the people, and preserve a stable social environment in Tibet.”

- A BBS participant's posting on “Strong Nation Forum” bulletin board on Chinese official newspaper People's Daily website

The above two quotes from the popular Chinese blog sites indicate to the mainstream Chinese responses to the Tibetan uprising in March- April 2008. To recall, on the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising against the Chinese rule, nearly 100 Tibetan youth marched from Tsuklakhang monastery at Dharamshala in a protest march to “go home” to Tibet. Simultaneously, nearly 1,000 Tibetans in Nepal demonstrated in Kathmandu. However, a few months ago plans to organize such march were made by five Tibetan youth organizations in January 2008 with the intention to demonstrate against the Olympics torch that is expected to traverse nearly 20 cities in five continents. Interestingly, Tibetans wish to conduct their own Tibetan Olympics in May 15-25, 2008 at Dharmashala with the torch passing from Ancient Olympia on March 10 (nearly two weeks before the official Chinese Olympics torch start) through ten cities and five continents. Although these marches were aborted by the Indian police, the Tibetan wild fire spread to other areas of the world.

In Tibet itself 300 monks reportedly marched from outside Lhasa to the city, even though the latter were protesting against the arrest of monks by the Chinese authorities after the Dalai Lama was awarded a golden medal by the United States Congress in October 2007. Interestingly, one of the main demands of the Tibetans in Tibet is not related to Olympics but to oppose the Chinese government's plan to relocate nearly 3 million Han Chinese and Muslims in Lhasa and the deteriorating unemployment situation for the Tibetans in Tibet. Rising unemployment among the Tibetans, despite the Chinese government showcasing Tibet as a favourable business destination, is also mentioned frequently as one of the main grievances of those who have participated in the Tibetan uprising in Tibet and traditional areas of Tibet, viz., Amdo and Kham areas now integrated with Qinghai, Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces in 1965.

Initial official estimates of the Tibetan uprising mentioned about a few hundred demonstrators, created unrest in Lhasa on March 14. However, a fortnight after the riots broke out in Tibet/Greater Tibet, the estimates of

people involved swelled into thousands and the geographical spread extensive in nature. It is not only in Lhasa and other towns of Tibet but also in most of the Tibetan populated areas of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces, the Tibetan uprising spread like wildfire.

In Lhasa, where the initial protests were reported in the “March 14 (so-called “3.14”) incident” several hundred demonstrators participated in the uprising. According to Qiangba Puncog, chairman of the Tibet regional government, protestors set fire to more than 300 locations, including homes and 214 shops, while smashing and burning 56 vehicles. The initial estimates of losses amounted to nearly \$14 million affecting 469 businesses out of 5,600 in main roads of Lhasa alone. The losses do not include tourism (with Tibet attracting 4 million visitors in 2007 of which 365,000 were foreign tourists) and other sectors of the economy. By April 2nd week, an official re-estimate of losses put the figure at about \$40 million in Lhasa uprising. Again, according to Qiangba on April 11, the number of those detained in the last one month swelled to 953 people, of whom 403 were formally arrested, while the Tibetan government-in-exile put the figure of those killed in Chinese firings alone at more than 150.

In Gannan Prefecture of Gansu province in the northwest of Tibet, official estimates on April 8 put the figure of those detained at 4,332 and those surrendered at 2,204 (of which were 519 monks), indicating to the mass nature of the uprising rather than a “handful” of people. According to the acting head of Gannan, Ma Shengwu, the Tibetan demonstrators in Gannan “caused direct economic losses of 230 million yuan, destroyed and burned 4,279 houses of various types, destroyed and burned 74 vehicles, destroyed 622 power supplying facilities, 590 water supplying facilities, and 278 heat supplying facilities.”

In Maqu County in the same Gannan prefecture, to cite another example, which has a population of 46,000 people, 261 private businesses were burnt on the March 16 uprising. Incidentally, the Police Headquarter Command Post in the county was the first target of the demonstrators. The total economic losses were estimated at about \$15 million, which was about the county government’s half-year fiscal income in 2006.

At Hezuo County in the same prefecture, hundreds of horse-riding demonstrators went a step further- they removed the Chinese flag and hoisted Tibetan flag on local government offices. The videos of this incident at Hezuo were widely viewed across the world, although blocked in the Chinese websites and other media.

In another area, where Tibetan land was integrated in 1965 with adjoining Sichuan Province, Tibetan unrest has been reported on a relatively extensive scale in the number of incidents and the number of people participating as well as geographical dispersion. Aba County in this province witnessed fierce struggles between Tibetans and Chinese officials and troops. The map on Tibetan protests in Tibet from www.savetibet.org provides a graphic description of the extent of the spread of the movement in China.

Chinese Responses

The March 14 uprising in Lhasa and other places has alarmed China. The Chinese authorities passed orders for March 17 as the deadline for the protestors to surrender. While several thousands of arrests were reportedly made by the authorities, no martial law was imposed (as was in the 1989 period). However, the ground situation, according to eye witness accounts, is much the same as the imposition of martial law. This is difficult to corroborate as China had clamped down on any objective reporting from Tibet. The Chinese authorities at the central, regional and local levels have followed a comprehensive strategy to counter the Tibetan uprising. It included pitching all the resources at the hands of the state- including the political, media, military and paramilitary assets.

Press coverage was restricted, specifically to the foreign correspondents. While official publicity machinery responded to the Tibetan uprising in rather harsh terms by dishing out the government's perspective that these protests are all "orchestrated and masterminded by the Dalai clique" and "Tibet independent forces", no major or neutral observers were allowed to visit Tibet or adjoining areas of unrest. This is in violation of the spirit of regulations issued in 2007 that gave overseas journalists the right to interview all consenting organisations and individuals without government approval. Indeed, two dozen journalists were turned away from covering events in Tibet. For instance, Mek Yinting, general secretary of the Hong Kong Journalists' Association, was forced to leave Tibet, as with other nearly 10 Hong Kong journalists. There was, however, one select group of foreign diplomats' delegation which was shepherded into Lhasa. The Foreign Correspondents Club of China, indeed, on March 17, demanded access to cover Tibet, but this was, predictably, not forthcoming. The Club issued a statement, nevertheless, which stated: "The interference in reporting activities is not in keeping with the temporary Olympic period reporting regulations, and is especially not in keeping with the international community's expectations of an Olympic host nation." To recall, during SARS crisis in 2003, the Chinese government, likewise, went into a huddle and under-reported the extent of the spread of the SARS in different regions of the country. This led to enormous losses for the Chinese people as well as tourism and aviation sectors.

Apart from the above handicap in objectively analyzing the actual situation in Tibet, the official Chinese propaganda nationally and at the regional Tibet/Greater Tibet levels indicated to the widespread influence of the Tibetan uprising. A critical examination and in-between-lines-reading of the Chinese official reports, news bulletins, radio broadcasts, TV relays, reports about official meetings and deployment of troops, etc indicate that while Lhasa and other adjoining regions witnessed widespread unrest among Tibetans, within a gap of nearly four days, the wildfire spread to the interior of Tibet and Greater Tibet. In the latter region, the movement further intensified and appears to be hardly with any extensive links to the movement outside in the world.

Leadership

Although the entire party, state, military and paramilitary has been pressed by China to overcome Tibetan resistance, a few party officials and institutions stand out specifically in China's response during these events. Also, five decades of Chinese rule in Tibet contributed to the emergence of pro-Chinese Communist Party section within the Tibetans. This section has been co-opted into the decision-making process in Tibet, although high-level posts are still in the hands of Han-ethnic persons. These sections of Tibetan cadres are also pitched to be in the forefront of resistance against the Dalai Lama and Tibetans living abroad. These sections of the Tibetans are much to lose (as with the Han leaders) if Tibetan conflagration goes beyond China's hand. Mutual symbiosis between the two then is the emerging glue and acts as a powerful force at the disposal of the Chinese government. Thus, when the Chinese government stated, in the aftermath of the March 14th incident, that it would wage a "people's war" against the independent forces in Tibet, the "people" here are those who are co-opted by the Chinese system in Tibet.

Central Leadership

At the head of the leadership is Hu Jintao who served as Party secretary in Tibet in late 1980s and whose rule here triggered the 1989 Tibetan uprising. Hu made very few public statements on this occasion, however, although he is reported to be concerned about the current uprising. On April 12, Hu, in a meeting with Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, stated: "Our conflict with the Dalai clique is not an ethnic problem, not a religious problem, nor a human rights problem. It is a problem of either preserving national unity or splitting the motherland."

Another high-ranking standing committee member of the Politburo of the Communist Party, Zhou Yongkang, who is also the internal security minister, said on April 10: “At present our goal is to ensure the security of hosting of the Beijing Olympics. We must deeply recognise the serious situation we are facing in upholding social stability. We must strike hard at every kind of criminal and illegal activity, deepen work on infiltrating and implementing order in chaotic areas and on prominent issues of public order. Stability is an important task and is our number one responsibility. “

Regional responses of the Chinese leadership, not surprisingly, are similar to the above central leadership’s views. Wang Lequan, a politburo member and in-charge of Xinjiang and broadly ethnic issues, has been in news of late. Since China codified its “3 evils” [viz., opposing separatism, extremism and splittism- the last one reserved generally for the Tibetan activists], Wang’s role increased, although he was replaced as party secretary of Xinjiang. Wang told the China Central Broadcasting on March 10, “No matter what nationality, no matter who it is, wreckers, separatists and terrorists will be smashed by us. There’s no doubt about that.” After the conclusion of the First Session of the 11th National People’s Congress on 18 March, Wang Lequan stated: “the struggle for or against national division is a long-term, complex, and arduous struggle and calls for efforts to maintain a situation of high pressure toward the ‘Three Forces.’”

Chinese leadership in Tibet

Zhang Qingli, a Han national from Shandong Province and the Party Secretary in Tibet, is considered to be the most powerful person in the region, with experience of handling Xinjiang till 2005. Like Wang Lequan, Zhang belonged to the Communist Youth League, a faction in the party headed by the current Chinese president Hu Jintao who also served as Tibet party Secretary in the 1980s when in 1989 Lhasa riots broke out. On 15 March, a day after the Lhasa uprising, Zhang criticised the protests as part of an “elaborately planned” plot by the “Dalai [Lama] clique” to “separate the motherland and sabotage the Beijing Olympic Games”. On the same day, the Tibet party committee held an emergency (enlarged) standing committee meeting to “make overall arrangements to crack down on the violent crime activities and puncture the arrogance of the hostile forces.”

These formulations were echoed by none less than the Prime Minister of China two days later. Premier Wen Jiabao dubbed the unrest a “meticulously planned” and “premeditated” incident “incited by the Dalai clique” to “sabotage the Olympic Games”. On March 19, after four days of widespread Tibetan protests in Lhasa and other places, Zhang in an editorial in the official *Tibet Daily* said:

We are currently in an intensely bloody and fiery struggle with the Dalai Lama clique, a life or death struggle with the enemy. . . . As long as we... remain of one heart, turn the masses into a walled city and work together to attack the enemy, [and] then we can safeguard social stability and achieve a full victory in this intense battle against separatism. The Dalai Lama is a wolf wrapped in a robe, a monster with human face and animal’s heart.

As a part of the propaganda war, in the same paper, appeared an article on March 26 by a commentator by the title “The Dalai: Sinner of a Thousand Generations Who Destroys the Unity Among Ethnic Groups”, denouncing “the Dalai Clique” for the current uprising in Tibet. This propaganda war reminds one of the similar tactics that the Chinese media uses to vilify those the party cannot stomach. For instance, in the 1990s, similar statements were used by the Chinese press to criticise Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten for his efforts to introduce liberal democratic institutions in the former British colony.

During and in the aftermath of the Tibetan uprising, Zhang is heading the 110 command post to curb Tibetan unrest. This is not surprising as previous party secretaries of Tibet as well controlled the military and paramilitary forces against Tibetans before. For instance, former party chief of Tibet Wu Jinghua who died of illness on October 19 last year also served as the political commissar and Party chief of the Tibet Military District. He belonged to the ethnic group of Yi, is a native of Mianning County of Sichuan Province.

A series of meetings and discussions after the March 14th uprising, as mentioned in the official bulletins, indicate to the concerted measures of the Chinese leadership in Tibet in overcoming the resistance of Tibetans. To what extent these have led to scuttling the Tibetan uprising is not clear though. Nevertheless, on March 18, the Tibet party committee met to convey “the spirit of the relevant central instructions and make schedules for the region’s work of maintaining stability”. As rescue efforts were initiated, on March 19, the Tibet Party Committee convened an enlarged meeting with all concerned cadres and officials “to conduct overall planning on maintaining stability”. One result of this meeting was to hold a teleconference with concerned agencies in Tibet urging them to launch a “people’s war against national division and for stability”. Another “enlarged standing committee” meeting took place on March 21- this time “to convey the spirit of the Central Authorities’ relevant instructions, listen to the reports on social stability and the restoration of normal order, and make arrangements for the work of safeguarding stability”. Participants include Zhang Qingli, Si Ta, deputy head of the Central United Front Work Department, Zhang Xinfeng, vice minister of Public Security, Huo Yi, deputy commander of People’s Armed Police Force (PAPF), Lu Dengming, deputy commander of the Chengdu Military Region, and other leaders. On the same day, Zhang met Qiangba Puncog, deputy secretary of the regional party committee and chairman of the regional government, political commissar Yu Linxiang and Huo Yi. On April 4 another standing committee meeting took place with Zhang, Qiangba, Legqog and others. This meeting considered the situation “still very grim and called for continued vigilance against the Dalai clique”. On April 8, Zhang met Chen Weiming, director of Public Security Ministry’s Frontier Guard Administrative Bureau, in Lhasa to further control the region’s peripheries, specifically as news spread about possible disruption of the march of Olympics torch in India and the Chinese plans to take the flame to the Mount Everest. Previously, in October 2007, Chinese officials, concerned about the protests of Tibetans and foreigners near the Mount Everest in the last one year and their potential challenge to the Olympics torch in May 2008, conveyed to the mountaineers that the need to follow new regulations aimed at curb such protests. These new regulations include limiting the numbers of different nationalities in each team; procure travel documents in advance, etc.

Zhang and others initiated a policy of sending work teams regularly to different parts of Tibet and other affected regions, as is the usual practice in the history of the Chinese communist party. In addition, in order to further divide the Tibetan community, leaders of Tibetan origin were also pitched against “the Dalai clique.” Work teams of party and security forces were dispatched to the affected areas in Tibet and other regions. From March 20-23, the political commissar of the PAPF Yu Linxiang visited PAPF troops in Tibet and instructed them to follow Party orders. Simultaneously, State Councilor and Minister of Public Security Meng Jianzhu led a central work team to inspect Tibet from 23 to 24 March. During March 20-26, another team composed of Qinghai provincial leaders, including provincial party secretary Qiang Wei, deputy secretary Luo Huining, and Governor Song Xiuyan, visited troops seeking local logistics support to the battling troops. Sichuan party standing committee member Zhong Mian inspected Garze Tibetan prefecture to take measures to counter the uprising. During March 28-31, Tibet party standing committee member Basang Dunzhu inspected work related to stability and border management in Kangmar, Yadong, and Gamba counties in Xigaze Prefecture of Tibet. He called for “resolute measures” to curb the uprising in these areas. On April 3, Basang was quoted by the local press as attending a Yadong County border control meeting and urging greater efforts to oppose

the Dalai Lama. From March 31 to April 1, Hao Peng, vice chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Government, conducted inspection tour on border management work in Yadong and Gangba. Another party leader Jin Shubo, visited Nagchu region to inspect work on upholding stability. Likewise, another party leader Wu Yingjie inspected Lhokha prefecture where he instructed on "stability maintenance work". Jin Shubo was sent to inspect Nagchu area for the same purpose, while Baima Caiwang, vice chairman of the Tibet government, visited PAPF and police units in Chamdo. Another standing committee member of Tibet party Wu Yingjie visited Cona County in Shannan prefecture, where he urged "concerted efforts between the party, government, military and police against the Dalai clique". Another affected province Gansu, likewise, took measures to curb the Tibetan uprising. On March 24, Gansu provincial party secretary Lu Hao and Governor Xu Shousheng met in Lanzhou with Li Qingyin, deputy commissar of PAPF to curb unrest in Gannan. The Gansu province party secretary Lu Hao suggested that while stability has resumed "maintaining social stability is still an arduous task. The fight against the Dalai clique is long term."

The party secretary of Sichuan, Liu Qibao, said on March 16, in the backdrop of the Aba county uprising, that there is a "need to oppose the splittist and sabotage activities carried out by the Dalai Lama clique and smash the plots of the "Tibet Independence" splittist forces". The party committee here activated on March 24 "the pre-scheme of the province for emergency control of sudden public incidents, form the Aba stability maintenance and emergency control frontline headquarters, and adopt measures to stabilize the situation".

Pitching Tibetans against Tibetans

On March 20, the party Organization Department of Tibet issued an emergency circular, calling on grassroots party organizations and cadres to critique the Dalai Lama. Taking a cue from this the most pungent all criticism against the Dalai Lama was forthcoming from Tibetan party cadres. Qiangba Puncog, chairman of the Tibet regional government. Speaking from Beijing at a press meet, Qiangba argued that the protests were "organized" and "premeditated" by the Dalai Lama. Qiangba was seen in most media coverage as a spokesperson critiquing the Tibetan uprising.

Another veteran cadre, Ragdi, former vice-chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, at a meeting of the Counselling Committee on Development of the Tibet Autonomous Region at Beijing said that the Chinese "should be fully aware of the long-term, tough and complicated struggle against it. With the support from across the nation, the Tibet regional government is capable of maintaining the social stability and legal order to protect the fundamental interests of people of all ethnic groups in Tibet". He, however, argued that "A riot would have occurred in Tibet sooner or later, if not in Lhasa."

The Lhasa Mayor Doje Cezhug is a Tibetan. He is also director of the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Regional People's Congress. He was seen, in the aftermath of the protests in the capital city, involved in disbursing relief measures to those whose properties were destroyed. Critiquing the Dalai Lama, he said on March 17: "Should the Dalai separatists group not spoil [the stability in Tibet], Tibet would be in its best period of development in history. Nowadays, Tibetan people have been living a modern life while enjoying the development of traditional Tibetan culture."

Roping in "patriotic" religious personages

To counter the Dalai Lama and puncture his argument on religious and cultural autonomy, religious leaders within Tibet were also mobilized in this contest over legitimacy in Tibet. The statements elicited from the religious leaders within Tibet are, in general, in sync with the official Chinese discourse. The United Front

Work Department in the last several decades in China was tasked to work with religious and other personalities to counter those that the party opposes. For instance, the Chinese-appointed 11th Panchen Lama, Gyaincain Norbu, said that the violence in Lhasa ran counter to Buddhist tenets. Lhadar Ngawang Daindzin, vice president of the Tibet Autonomous Region branch of the Buddhist Association of China said on March 17 that last five decades of development in Tibet is “earth-shaking” that the Tibetans enjoy freedom and democracy, with significant improvement in the lives of Tibetans. He called for punishing those who are involved in breaking law and order in Tibet. Another monk, Tubdian Targyai, at Jangtse Dratsang at the Gandan Monastery, suggested that the Tibetan monasteries and other religious intuitions are protected by the Chinese government, including the re-institution of Geshe Lharampa academic degree examination system. He criticized the “disruptive” activities of the Dalai Lama and stated that these are not conducive to “stability and development” of the region. Another monk, Zhikongqiongchang Luosangqiangba critiqued the “destructive activities [which] were single-handedly orchestrated by the Dalai clique”. On March 27, the United Front Work Department of Sichuan party held a forum of Buddhist personages on “safeguarding the stability of the areas inhabited by the people of the Zang [Tibetan] nationality in the province to inform the attendees of the stability situation in the areas.” Chen Guangzhi, vice chairman of this committee said on the occasion that the forum attendees should “safeguard the religious order and social stability with concrete actions and make more contributions in safeguarding province’s social and political stability and building a well-off society in all-round way.” Political education campaign is generally prescribed by the Chinese state for the Buddhist monks to wean them away from the influence of the Dalai Lama. On April 5, for instance, the official Tibet Daily carried Tibet deputy party leader Hao Peng’s views on “reinforcing patriotic education”. Hao was cited at Tashilumpo monastery in Xigaze, the seat of the Panchen Lama as “Guide the monks so that they continue to foster the tradition of love of religion, love of the country and to hold high the banner of patriotic progress. Especially reinforce education of young monks about the legal system so that they become patriots who love religion and observe discipline and law”. However, this move appeared to have boomeranged as monks joined the protestors in large numbers in Sichuan, Tibet and Qinghai.

Another section which came to the rescue of the Chinese state is those in academics in Tibet –although most of them are considered to be party members or aspiring for such positions. Cering Doje, deputy director of the religion research institute of the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences, pointed out the Tibetan rioters “seemed to have lost basic humanity, and there was no mercy at all”. The head of this institute, Cering Gyaibo said: “At this critical time, we need to cherish ethnic solidarity and muster courage to protect territorial integrity and ethnic harmony”. Basang Wangdu, a council member of the International Society of Tibetology, likewise was critical of the Dalai Lama.

Yet another measure China undertook was to allow outpouring of protests by the Han nationals on the Tibetans. While only a few Tibetan views were allowed to be circulated (and removed quickly) on the popular internet portals such as Sina.com, Muzi.com, etc, Han-nationals diatribe against Tibetans increased. This reminds one of the official patronage and support to similar outburst in the internet against the Japanese bid for UN Security Council membership a few years ago or the anti-US protests in the aftermath of the Chinese Embassy bombing in Belgrade in 1999. On Sina.com alone, for instance, nearly 27,000 anti-Tibetan messages were allowed, while blocking YouTube and others which carried videos of the Tibetan uprising.

Military Response

We mentioned above how the party apparatus in Tibet and adjoining provinces had worked in tandem to tackle the Tibetan uprising. The units of the PAPF, militia and the military troops were mobilised to bring the

situation under control. However, the Tibetan protests are unabated. The Chinese military and para-military today control vast swathes of the Chinese territory, specifically in the backward interior regions where restive ethnic minorities inhabit. This is also true of Tibet. To control protests in Tibet, China has set up a command centre at the Tibet Office in Sichuan at Wuhou District in Chengdu. Reinforcement of troops came from the Chengdu Military Region which reportedly raised the threat levels by shifting to “first-degree alert” status-indicating to the severity of the situation. Within Chengdu, surveillance has been strengthened with nearly 600 police staff pressed into service to block roads and traffic for searches. Eyewitness accounts in Lhasa after March 14th incident and subsequently indicated that, although denied in official accounts, tanks, armoured personnel carriers (of WMZ 553 type) and troops were deployed in Tibet and other regions where unrest is mounting. According to an eye witness account 40 trucks of soldiers and 36 tanks marched into Lhasa on March 15 alone, while swelling to about 200 military vehicles the next day. Some other accounts indicated to the deployment of nearly two divisions (about 40,000) of troops in Tibet. In addition, the PAPF contingents have been pressed to quell unrest. The PAPF and the People’s Liberation Army forces began house-to-house searches in Lhasa and other places to isolate those who have been active in the protests. They reportedly cordoned off main streets and several buses of riot police were parked along the roads. Checking of passersby was mounted by officers, some with sub-machine guns, who patrolled the area on foot or cruised in cars and motorcycles. The three largest monasteries in Lhasa, including Sera and Drepung were surrounded by the troops as well to control the monks.

China had deployed about 180,000 troops in Chengdu Military region and 200,000 troops in Lanzhou Military Region. In addition, PAPF and militia persons are available for the Chinese government to curb Tibetan unrest. There are an estimated 2 Divisions of paramilitary forces (in addition to one regiment) and one independent Division (in addition to 6 independent regiments) of PAPF forces in Tibet. Some estimates put this figure at about 600,000. A series of changes in the last decade indicated to a churning process in the military control of Tibet. Chengdu Military Region has operational jurisdiction over four military districts, viz., Sichuan Province, Tibet, Guizhou and Yunnan regions and six military sub-districts, viz., Lhasa, Ngaou, Nyingqi, Qamdo, Shannan and Xigaze. The Lanzhou Military region in Gansu Province has operational jurisdiction in Gansu, Qinghai, Xinjiang regions. In the recent past it had conducted several counter-terrorism exercises in the region.

In China, the military and party apparatuses are closely linked for a long time. The military and para-military are represented in the Party congresses. 16th party congress Central Committee members from the military who were replaced at the 17th Party Congress in October 2007 include those from Chengdu and Lanzhou as well. These include Lanzhou Military Region Commander Li Qianyuan and Chengdu Military Region Commander Wang Jianmin, Political Commissar Yang Deqing, and Deputy Commander and concurrently Tibet Military District Commander Meng Jinxi. Retirement age is considered to have contributed to their replacement. The new members of the 17th central committee include Chengdu Military Region Commander Li Shiming and Political Commissar Zhang Haiyang and Lanzhou Military Region Political Commissar Li Changcai. However, most significant, in the backdrop of the campaign against “3 evils” is the entry into the latest central committee of Tibet Military District Commander Dong Guishan and Xinjiang Military District Political Commissar Tian Xiusi.

Several other changes in the military composition were noticed in Tibet and adjoining areas in the recent period. In a reshuffle in January 2008, the Chengdu Military Region Political Department Deputy Director Tian Yigong was shifted and appointed as Deputy Political Commissar of Guangzhou Military Region, while

Guangzhou MR Deputy Chief of Staff Li Zuocheng has been promoted to Deputy Commander of Chengdu Military Region. Maj. Gen. Zhao Zongqi, Commander of Chengdu Military Region's subordinate 13th Group Army, has been sent as Chief of Staff of another Military Region, Jinan. Maj. Gen. Zhao Zongqi was born in 1955, and joined the service in 1970. He has served as Chief of Staff of Tibet Military District. In 2004 he was promoted to Commander of the 14th Group Army, stationed in Chongqing. Just last year he was transferred to be Commander of the 13th Group Army in Yunnan. However, for Yang Jigui, commander of a mountain brigade of the Tibet Military District and a deputy of the NPC at Beijing, it was a different story. Yang was among the first batch of all-army "excellent commanding officers" in 2006. He conducted training in the Yarlung Zangpo [upstream of Brahmaputra River] recently.

Changes in the PAPF leadership in Tibet are also significant. In late 2006 PAPF Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Huo Yi was transferred to the office of PAPF deputy commander. Major General Wang Jianping, former deputy chief of staff, has been promoted to the office of PAPF chief of staff. Wang served as chief of the Tibet PAPF section in 1996 — at the time, the youngest deputy army official in the PAPF. He was promoted to the rank of major general in 1997 and became the youngest major general in the PAPF. Dai Hongsheng, chief of the Sichuan PAPF section, has been appointed deputy PAPF chief of staff.

Units of the military and the PAPF stationed in Tibet have granted 13 ethnic Tibetan officers the rank of major general and lieutenant general. Over the past four decades, hundreds of Tibetans serving in military and PAPF units in Tibet have become leading officers at regiment or higher levels, according to military sources. As mentioned above, a number of Tibetan officers have also become government leaders at the county level and above. Incentives to the Tibetans in the military are one of the ways of keeping the flock intact. For instance, recently, Jiangyong Xirao, a decorated Tibetan battalion deputy commander of the Tibet military district, was praised by the Tibetan authorities for setting a good example as a model soldier and a loyal party member.

Conclusions

China's response to the Tibetan uprising in the last one month has been harsh and appears to be following the previous policy of "strike hard" to snuff out any dissent for its rule in Tibet and other portions of the country. As indicated by events in Lhasa and other places, this policy is likely to be continued further in the run-up to the Olympics in August and after. However, given the widespread response of the Tibetans within Tibet and outside and the groundswell of support from different governments and civil society groups in the world, the whole issue appears to be a foreign policy failure in the making for China. A majority of the foreign policy establishment of China appears to be now geared towards curbing the negative fallout from the Tibet protests. China did make frantic efforts in reaching out to different "allies and friends" in the aftermath of March 14. However explicit support to Beijing came from only a few countries such as Russia, Pakistan, Iran, Venezuela, Latvia, Malaysia, Singapore and others, while several countries have expressed reservations on Beijing's handling of Tibet. If the effort of bidding and conducting Olympics is to showcase China's rise to the world, popular indictments at the global and Tibetan levels unnerved Beijing. For so long Tibet is considered to be the minimalist foreign policy position for China, while Olympics indicated to its bidding for the global legitimacy for its policies.

In the initial official rhetoric, the Chinese government critiqued the Dalai Lama as the one who had "organized, premeditated, masterminded and instigated" uprising in the capital city of Tibet, Lhasa on March 14. However, after the Tibetan movement spread to other parts of China, specifically in traditional Tibetan areas such as Amdo (Qinghai Province) and Kham (now integrated into Sichuan province), and to other parts of the globe

(such as in the protests against the Olympics torch at London, Paris, San Francisco, New Delhi, Tokyo and other places), the official criticism is now directed against Tibet Youth Congress, instead of targeting the Dalai Lama alone. On April 10, for instance, the official Chinese news agency Xinhua, carried reports suggesting that Tibet Youth Congress “is no different from Al-Qaida, Chechnyan armed terrorists, “East Turkistan’ separatists and any other terrorist organization”. This political line appears to be intensified by the Chinese government in the run-up to the Olympics and after in order to drive a cleavage in the Tibetan community, i.e., pitching TYC against the Dalai Lama, much as china pitted Tibetans against Tibetans within Tibet.

China appears to be also changing its tactics in the current imbroglio. Unlike in the 1959 and 1989 uprisings, in the current case, the Chinese leadership appears to be pitching Han-nationals against Tibetans. Packaging the Olympics as a part of the national rejuvenation and glory and any efforts to block such sport events as politicization or even efforts to deny China its due place in the world, the leadership is mobilizing Han nationals against Tibetan “sabotage”, thus deflecting the global attention on the central Tibetan issue of identity and autonomy.

Differences in the Chinese leadership are likely to become more explicit in the coming months in terms of handling the Tibet issue. While Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao and Li Keqiang are considered to be in league in the nine-member Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Communist Party along with another member Zhou Yongkang the internal security minister in overall-charge, including Tibet, all eyes will be on the rising star of the party Xi Jinping for his views on the subject. Xi, who was named as the vice president of China recently, had indicated during his tenure in Fujian Province that reform and opening up is essential for China and that he is favourably disposed towards commercial contacts. Post Olympics situation is likely to usher in acute debates within the communist party. Although the bottom line of the party is to retain Tibet in China, methods to resolve the perennial Tibetan unrest could intensify internal political debates in the party.

As a reflection of the above, internal changes in Tibet have already commenced. Although official rhetoric of China continued to be critical of “the Dalai clique” for instigating violence in Lhasa, quietly internal changes commenced in Tibet - indicating to the central government reprisals on Tibetan officials. After nearly a fortnight of the March 14 incident in Lhasa, the Chinese government sacked Danzeng Langjie, director of Tibet’s Ethnic Minority and Religious Affairs Commission. He was replaced by Luosang Jiumei, vice secretary of the Communist Party committee of Lhasa since 2004.



The cry of freedom

Bankruptcy of China’s Tibet policy
by **B.G. Verghese**

March 27, 2008

RUMBLINGS in Tibet over the high-handedness of the Chinese authorities in paying little heed to popular grievances have spilt over into the streets not merely in Lhasa but even beyond the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region to Kham and Amdo resulting in spirited demonstrations, clashes and several deaths. Troops and armoured vehicles have been called out to subdue unarmed but defiant monks and youths. The protests were timed to coincide with the 49th anniversary of the 1959 uprising that forced the Dalai Lama to flee and seek

refuge in India. The causes remain the same: Beijing's reluctance to concede autonomy and cultural freedom to the Tibetan people despite solemn promises.

The authorities obviously hope to pacify and sanitise Tibet behind a cloak of censorship, keeping away prying eyes while silencing dissident voices. Modern technology, however, makes this a difficult task. Moreover, such a policy must, as always, adversely affect the credibility of whatever version Beijing tries to sell the world with the expected ideological gloss about having frustrated the alleged machinations of the Dalai Lama and his henchmen who have long been in league with Imperialist forces to "split" and undermine a resurgent China.

The Dalai Lama has been straining to bring the Tibet issue to an honourable and just resolution with genuine internal autonomy and guarantees for Tibetan cultural rights in regard to religion, language and the region's ecology. He himself has said he would like to retire as an ordinary monk, with governance being left to a leadership responsible to a freely elected assembly, and with external affairs and defence left to Beijing to manage. Despite several rounds of dialogue, the Beijing seems adamant about continuing with a coercive policy of forcing demographic and cultural change as a means of tilting the balance increasingly in its favour. It has thus far regrettably never been able to see the tremendous advantage of changing tack and using Tibet as a bridge rather than as a bastion in the exercise of regional and even global power that reveals unsatiated hegemonistic tendencies.

The Dalai Lama has appealed against resort to violent protest. But the Chinese seem bent on a crackdown that will only add to the bloodshed and bitterness. The bankruptcy of China's Tibet policy has once again been exposed at the very time that Beijing is readying to showcase its undoubted achievements and prowess to the world on the occasion of the forthcoming Olympic Games. The Games were founded to bring people together to compete in sport and the arts of peace in order to build friendship. But a country at war with itself is not going to be able to sell technology and growth as absolute values. The current unrest clearly disproves oft-repeated official claims that the Tibetans are happy and contented and only a handful of trouble makers are out to disturb the peace.

The Indian Government and people have been restrained in their support of the Tibetan cause even as they host the Dalai Lama and his administration in exile in Dharamsala. But there is no mistaking where the nation's sympathies lie. India's ties with Tibet go long back in time and a Tibetan delegation was present at the Asian Relations Conference in March 1947 in Delhi along with representatives of the then Government of China. Delhi abandoned all subsisting extra-territorial rights in Tibet formally in 1954, having accepted Chinese sovereignty over it some years earlier on the basis of declarations of "national regional autonomy" incorporated in the 17-Point Agreement of May 17, 1951 between Tibetan representatives and the new People's Republic of China.

Beijing's hope that, at worst, Tibet will submit after the passing of the Dalai Lama and that time is on its side is misplaced. The freedom movement is more likely to become more radicalised and demanding and there are already straws in the wind that suggest that a new Dalai Lama incarnate will be found among "free Tibetan people". Indeed, it is China that might well discover that the aspirations unleashed by deregulation and economic growth will increasingly seek a more open and democratic political and cultural dispensation. The faultlines are already there and could deepen and widen quite dramatically.

Intolerance is not only evident in China. In Iran, where the conservatives have again been returned to power in the latest elections, there is legislation on the anvil to amend its penal law to deal with "apostasy, heresy and witchcraft" which is aimed at even more stringent persecution of the long-suffering Bahais than hitherto.

But why turn to Iran or China or the West, where too multiculturalism and liberal values are under serious threat in Iraq, Afghanistan and within the domestic jurisdictions of the Great Powers that pretentiously set the rules. There has been a marked rise of intolerance in India too against which the Supreme Court has inveighed. Majority and minority communalism are equally dangerous. So is regional chauvinism, the arrogance of power and syndicated crime that largely flourishes, as most recently seen in Goa, because powerful men and interests are behind it.

NEWSWEEK

Why India Must Stand Up to China

Sumit Ganguly

March 18, 2008

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(Cracking down on its own Tibetan minority is no way for a major democracy to act.)

India's response to the harsh Chinese crackdown on legitimate Tibetan protests in Lhasa and elsewhere has been dispiriting. In parliament the seasoned politician and foreign minister Pranab Mukherjee could only express distress at the plight of the hapless Tibetans. Worse still, Indian security forces swooped down on nonviolent Tibetan protestors at Dharamsala, the principal refuge of the Tibetan diaspora, and incarcerated them for 14 days using India's preventive detention laws, a colonial relic.

India does itself a disservice by not standing up to China over its treatment of Tibet. If India wishes to be considered a great power, it needs to display a greater degree of independence and not kowtow to Beijing. With rapid economic growth, a substantial military establishment and robust political institutions, India should stop behaving in a subservient fashion and forthrightly stand up and defend certain inalienable rights of the Tibetan minority in its midst—rights that should obtain in any humane and democratic state.

New Delhi's reluctance to challenge China over Tibet goes back to Beijing's brutal repression of the Khampa revolt 50 years ago, when the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal head of the Tibetans, fled to India. Although China sharply reproved India for providing refuge to the Dalai Lama, India stood its ground. Shortly thereafter, following a breakdown of negotiations over a disputed border, China attacked and defeated India in October 1962. Even though India's army has since been modernized and prepared for mountain warfare, the memory of this rout still haunts Indian military planners and policymakers. That's why, when the Chinese army periodically crosses the border, India responds with anodyne criticism. And why India has been willing to publicly and abjectly reassure China that the Tibetan exiles will not be allowed to engage in any meaningful political activity. Appeasement might not be a bad policy if it actually succeeded in keeping Beijing satisfied, but it doesn't. There is not a shred of evidence that it has ever moderated Chinese behavior. Whenever Tibetan exiles have engaged in minor protests, Beijing has sternly rebuked India for allowing them to engage in political activities. Faced with Beijing's continued expressions of discontent, New Delhi has rarely missed an opportunity to genuflect before the Middle Kingdom. The Tibetan crackdown is only the latest example.

This humiliating deference undermines India's national interests as a rising Asian power and corrodes its credentials as a liberal democracy. If China can so easily cow Indian policymakers, then India's claims to great power status in Asia, let alone beyond, appear utterly hollow. It shows that Indian policymakers have been, to use a term from the cold war era, Finlandized—constrained by a foreign power. Some policy options cannot even be considered for fear of offending China. India, for example, has had little to say about China's penetration of much of Burma and its ongoing quest for military bases in that country. India has also exercised great caution in pursuing any significant commercial ties with Taiwan for fear of incurring the wrath of the mainland. What does it say about India as a democracy if the authorities harass law-abiding Tibetans who are only engaging in peaceful protests? Such actions are fundamentally contrary to the principles of a liberal democracy that enshrines the right of public political dissent.

It is all but certain that the heavy hand of the Chinese state will successfully crush the demonstrations that have swept across much of Tibet. China is well aware that the great powers will issue some predictable communiqués demanding an end to repression and calling for political dialogue. They are most unlikely to bolster these pious sentiments with any viable actions that would prove costly to the regime in Beijing, such as the imposition of sanctions or the boycott of Chinese goods. India has long, albeit fitfully, sought to uphold human rights both at home and abroad. Today, when it has aspirations of regional and global leadership, it needs to demonstrate the self-confidence to condemn China's repression of its Tibetan minority and to provide comfort to the Tibetan diaspora. Any policy that falls short of these steps amounts to an abetment of China's abject treatment of a disenfranchised minority. If India's political leadership wishes to be seen as the exemplars of a major democratic state with global aspirations, at a minimum it should grant the Tibetans the right to peaceful protest. It should also consider deferring the mostly desultory border talks, which have, in any case, moved at a glacial pace.

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Tibet uprising and its implications for national security

G. PARTHASARATHY

March 20, 2008

Former High Commissioner to Pakistan

In September 1987, the Dalai Lama proposed a demilitarised and denuclearised Tibet, while realistically recognising that independence for Tibet is no longer an option and that the most that the people of Tibet can aspire for is genuine autonomy, within a united China, says G. PARTHASARATHY

When the Chinese People's Liberation Army occupied Tibet in 1950, the Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Patel, wrote to Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru on November 7, 1950 saying: "The Chinese Government has tried to delude us by professions of peaceful intentions. My own feeling is that at a crucial period they managed to install into our Ambassador (academic K. M. Panicker) a false sense of confidence in their so-called desire to settle the Tibetan problem by peaceful means."

Sardar Patel added: “(Throughout history) the Himalayas have been regarded as an impenetrable barrier for any threat from the North. We had a friendly Tibet which gave us no trouble...Chinese ambitions in this respect not only cover the Himalayan slopes on our side, but also include the important part of Assam... Chinese irredentism and communist imperialism are different from the expansionism or imperialism of the western powers, which makes it ten times more dangerous. In the guise of ideological expansion lie concealed racial, national and historical claims”.

The 1959 uprising

China’s guise in concealing “racial, national and historic claims” soon manifested itself after the 1950 occupation of Tibet. The Tibetans were compelled to sign a 17-Point Agreement affirming Chinese Sovereignty over Tibet on May 23, 1951. This agreement contained explicit Chinese assurances that the Central Authorities would not alter the existing political system in Tibet.

The Chinese also pledged that they would not alter the established political status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama, with Tibetan officials continuing to hold office.

Finally, the Chinese pledged to protect the freedom of religious beliefs and the income of monasteries and promote the development of the Tibetan language and culture. The Chinese violated all these assurances and Tibetan anger and frustration resulted in a full-fledged uprising in 1959, which led to the Dalai Lama and thousands of his followers fleeing to India.

Chinese Sovereignty over Tibet

India also paid a very heavy price for disregarding Sardar Patel’s warnings on Chinese intentions. By 1954, Chinese incursions into Indian Territory began along the UP-Tibet border, just after India signed the infamous Border Trade Agreement between “The Tibet Region of China and India,” on April 29, 1954, which conceded Chinese Sovereignty over Tibet.

China’s occupation of Tibet was thus sanctified, without securing any assurance on the border issue from China.

The Agreement also led to the handing over of Indian properties, the withdrawal of Indian military escorts and the handing over of telephone, telegraph and communications equipment and facilities in Tibet, to China.

When Prime Minister Nehru took up the wrong depiction of borders on Chinese maps with the smooth and suave Chou en Lai in October 1954, he was assured that the maps in question “were really reproductions of old ‘pre-liberation’ maps and that he (Chou) had not time to review them”.

Nehru was also assured in 1956 that though Chou found the term “McMahon Line” repugnant, China would recognise this border with both Burma and India. Chou, however, had no more intention of fulfilling these assurances any more than he had of fulfilling Chinese commitments of May 23, 1951, to the Tibetans.

Genuine autonomy within a united China

The Chinese describe the Dalai Lama to be a “splittist,” determined to secede from China. The reality is somewhat different. In September 1987, the Dalai Lama proposed a demilitarised and denuclearised Tibet, while realistically recognising that independence for Tibet is no longer an option and that the most that the people of Tibet can aspire for is genuine autonomy, within a united China. In his address on the 49th Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day on March 10, 2008 the Dalai Lama said: “Since 2002, my envoys have

conducted six rounds of talks with concerned officials of the People's Republic of China to discuss relevant issues. These discussions have helped to clear away some of their doubts and enabled us to explain our aspirations to them. However, on the fundamental issue there has been no concrete result at all. And during the past few years, Tibet has witnessed increased repression and brutality. In spite of these unfortunate developments, my stand and determination to pursue the Middle-Way policy and dialogue with the Chinese Government remain unchanged”.

Tibet has since witnessed yet another uprising, which has been crushed by the People's Liberation Army of China. China evidently believes that use of brute force and a massive settlement of Han Chinese, reducing Tibetans to a minority in their own homeland, coupled with its status as a permanent member of the Security Council, gives it the right to do as it pleases in Tibet.

Chinese 'sensitivities'

While addressing the EU Parliament in November 2003, India's former Ambassador to Bhutan, Dalip Mehta has alluded to the continuous weakening of India's position on Tibet. Referring to the assertion in the Joint Declaration signed during Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to China that the “Tibetan Autonomous Region of China is part of the territory of China, Mehta noted that by referring exclusively to the “Tibetan Autonomous Region”, India had further damaged the Tibetan cause, as Amdo and Kham, regarded by Tibetans as part of Tibet, were excluded, and by implication their absorption into neighbouring provinces of China accepted.

Sensing India's weakness, China has only upped the ante and stepped up its rhetoric that the whole of Arunachal Pradesh is a part of China, as it has historically been a part of “South Tibet”. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in turn, was deterred from visiting Tawang during his recent visit to Arunachal Pradesh, quite evidently because of Chinese “sensitivities”. The Chinese, however, responded with an unprecedented protest on the Prime Minister's visit to the State. Sardar Patel's observations about Chinese ambitions are proving prophetic.

New Delhi's statement on the recent repression unleashed by China in Tibet is welcome. The Government has forthrightly stated that India was “distressed by reports of the unsettled situation and violence in Lhasa and by the deaths of innocent people”. The time has come for India to state that while it regards Tibet as an autonomous region of China, it hopes that China will abide by the assurances it gave in the 17-point agreement it signed with representatives of the Dalai Lama on May 23, 1951.

India has to take an independent position on this issue and not be seen as a western cat's paw. American policies on China swing like a pendulum and India has periodically been at the receiving end of Sino-American collusion during the Nixon, Carter and Clinton Presidencies. India will have to learn that the Chinese only respect others when they have national power and display a resoluteness to exercise it in the pursuit of legitimate national interests.

Racial discrimination

An astute observer of developments in Tibet observed that Tibet is the least autonomous of all of China's autonomous regions. The international community cannot ignore the elements of racial discrimination involved in the manner in which Han Chinese entities such as Hong Kong are granted extensive autonomy, while Tibetans are reduced to a minority and their traditional institutions dismantled, in their homeland. Moreover, if China can propose a policy of one China, two systems in Han Chinese-dominated entities such as Hong Kong and Taiwan, why can it not offer the Tibetans a similar deal?

THE TIMES OF INDIA

From Taslima to Tibet, India proves chicken

Jug Suraiya

March 21, 2008

Instead of the peacock, India should adopt the chicken as its national bird. Apart from the fowl being the dish of choice, at least in the northern part of the country, our official response to various situations - ranging from the Taslima Nasreen controversy to the protests in Tibet - can best be described as chicken-hearted

Forced into exile from her native Bangladesh by religious fanatics who didn't like her feminist writings, Taslima sought sanctuary in Kolkata in whose Bangla milieu she felt creatively comfortable. However, after street riots instigated by local goons disguised as religious zealots caused the Marxist state government to decide that minority-appeasing discretion was the better part of secular valour, the writer was bundled out of the city and taken first to an undisclosed hideaway in Rajasthan and later to Delhi, where she was kept in virtual isolation.

Made to apologise for her 'anti-Islamic' views, she was warned by no less than the information and broadcasting minister - supposedly the custodian of the fundamental right to freedom of expression as spelt out in the Constitution - that she should not say or do anything that might hurt the religious sensibilities of any group. (Should the I&B ministry be renamed the ministry of intimidation and browbeating?)

Finally, Taslima has sought sanctuary in distant Scandinavia, saying: "A person who couldn't be scared by fundamentalists has been defeated by cold-blooded state terrorism inflicted by the Indian government. My terrible experience has shattered all my notions about a secular, democratic India."

Why did Taslima - yet another personification of freedom of expression — have to quit India? Because when push comes to communal shove, for all its professions to the contrary, India is too chicken to stick to its principles of liberalism and democracy and allows mob rule to subvert the rule of law. In the case of the Chinese crackdown in Tibet, India's official response has been so politically correct, not to mention politically chicken, that it has earned praise from no less than the Chinese premier, Wen Jiabao (who might have made special mention of the Indian Left whose non-response might be summed up as 'Tibet who?').

Despite China's continuing claims on Arunachal, and despite its proven nuclear proliferation to Pakistan, New Delhi walks on eggshells where Tibet is concerned and seems vaguely embarrassed by the Dalai Lama's presence on Indian soil. Why? Because then, maybe, China will support India's admission to the UN Security Council. Or at least stop using Pakistan as a foil against us. Or sell us cheap *pichkaris* for Holi. Or something.

The truth is that we are just too chicken to take on the big demons - Chinese totalitarianism, religious fundamentalism - but make do with assailing minor imps of the perverse. For instance, Fiona Mackeown, mother of the murdered Scarlett Keeling, has been strictured for having left her 15-year-old daughter alone in Goa. What an unnatural, monstrous mother. How unlike the caring, sharing mothers of the suitably named Mother India, where female foeticide and infanticide are as common as the common cold. Or take the case of health minister Ramadoss who is so busy fighting the evils of tobacco and liquor - by putting 'gory' pictures on tobacco products, and banning surrogate liquor ads - that he has no time to address the much larger ills that plague our practically non-existent public health system.

Can't move mountains? Find convenient molehills, turn them into mountains, and then move them. That seems to be the recipe. Not just for the health minister but for the entire sorry mess which might aptly be called Indian chicken curry.

When China dominates

S.P. Seth

March 22, 2008

World may face strife, turbulence

CHINA seems to be everywhere these days. Apart from Japan, which is seeking to counter it with the US alliance, China's political and economic pre-eminence in Asia-Pacific is now well-established.

True, the US is still the dominant military power regionally and globally. But the Asia-Pacific region is quietly adjusting itself to China's new and rising status.

China is not only looming large in its Asian neighborhood; it is also establishing its presence in Africa, the Middle-East, Central Asia, South Asia and South America, hunting for resources (oil, gas and raw materials) to fuel its economy, selling its wares, making investments and accumulating political capital.

It has indeed emerged as the United States' biggest foreign lender, buying its treasury bonds and securities with its more than one trillion worth of foreign currency reserves (and rising) amassed, in large part, from the US growing trade deficit.

In other words, it is lending a good part of what it earns from its US exports back to the United States, thus enabling its consumers to continue buying Chinese goods.

China is now in a position to bring down the mighty US dollar by shifting its dollar holdings into other currencies, and create panic in international markets.

In practice, it might not do this for fear of losing heavily on its dollar assets. There is no way it can dispose of its dollar assets quickly enough to escape heavy losses.

Besides, a significant depreciation of the US dollar will affect China's exports to the US market by making them dearer. But that is another story.

The point is that China's rise is a great challenge for the world, especially the United States, as the former has ambitions to overtake it as the world's only superpower.

With the US mired in Iraq and elsewhere, China has used its time and resources well to expand its political and economic clout, even right into the US backyard in southern America.

One would hope that the US is aware of China's rearguard action. But being already over-stretched, it is keen to maximise the area of political cooperation on Iran, North Korea and elsewhere.

Washington is, therefore, inclined to overstate the mutuality of interests, and underplay differences and concerns from China. But this situation is unlikely to last as China becomes even more ambitious and the US starts to clearly see the danger.

China believes it can carve out a new role with new strategies to overcome strife and conflict, both internally and externally. In a Foreign Affairs article, Zheng Bijian called these strategies as China's "three transcendences".

The first strategy, as he puts it, “is to transcend the old model of industrialisation and to advance a new one...based on technology, economic efficiency, low consumption of natural resources...low environmental pollution, and the optimal allocation of human resources...”

Going by the state of China’s environmental degradation, this strategy is apparently not working. The second strategy “is to transcend the traditional ways for great powers to emerge (like Germany and Japan in the past) as well as the Cold War mentality....”

China, on the other hand, “will transcend ideological differences to strive for peace, development and cooperation with all countries of the world.”

However, if the grab for South China Sea islands (Spratly islands, for instance) is any indication, China is behaving no different from the ways of the old powers (Germany and Japan) by seeking to use a mix of coercive strategies to have its way. The only difference is that China has been relatively successful so far in not having to use military means.

But as its power grows and it faces resistance to its coercive diplomacy, China will be as ruthless in pushing its way (even including the projection and use of power) as the old powers. Which is already happening with Taiwan, with hundreds of Chinese missiles targeted in that direction.

The third strategy, according to Zheng, “is to transcend outmoded models of social control and to construct a harmonious socialist society.”

Again, going by the reports of recurring unrest in different parts of China, the so-called harmonious society is either sheer propaganda or sheer delusion, which is even more disturbing.

Therefore, all these claims that China has somehow found the Holy Grail of peaceful rise and development are fanciful—to say the least. In other words, China’s rise is bound to cause turbulence and strife in the years to come, with the US seeking to hold its position as the reigning superpower.

There is, however, a view that China can be accommodated peacefully in the world order, because the existing system has been kind to it as evidenced by its economic growth and growing political status. Therefore, it will have no reason to subvert or sabotage it.

But with China’s growing ambitions, it is unlikely to be satisfied with incremental benefits accruing to it from a system that was devised by others to maintain and sustain their supremacy. Beijing will like to put its own stamp and to maximise its own goals and ambitions of global supremacy.

In a recent Foreign Affairs article, Professor G. John Ikenberry argues: “The United States cannot thwart China’s rise, but it can help ensure that China’s power is exercised within the rules and institutions that the United States and its (European) partners have crafted over the last century...”

This is based on two implicit assumptions. First, China will continue to see the existing international order as largely to its advantage. Second, if it doesn’t and seek its radical transformation, it will find the US-European order strong enough, by virtue of its combined power, to deter China from challenging it.

If China manages to remain stable and continues to grow (a big if, considering its multiple problems), it will also have the potential to play power politics with the global system, including between the US and Europe.

The idea that China will play its role within an existing international order crafted and controlled by dominant Western powers seems a bit overdrawn, if not an outright case of wishful thinking.

It would make more sense to treat China realistically as a new power keen to reshape the global order by putting itself in the centre. As its power grows, this is the direction China will take.

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Why is India doing China's dirty job?

T V R Shenoy

March 24, 2008

Readers know that I am no fan of the Congress, but let me give credit where credit is due? - New Delhi handled the recent crisis in Myanmar perfectly?

Had the boos and hisses of the 'human rights' lobby carried the day, where would we have been today? The military would still be ruling the roost in Yangon and the monks would still be silenced; the sole difference would be that India would no longer have access to Myanmar's natural resources nor to its aid against secessionists in India's own northeast.

To put it bluntly, a foreign policy run exclusively on 'morality' is a castle made of cards. The sole 'morality' I would recognise is to see how, if at all, it benefits India. So, kudos to External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee who held the fort for those few troubled weeks.

Sadly, that same sense of realism is missing today. I refer to the ongoing Tibetan crisis and the enforced exile of Taslima Nasreen, events that are linked at some level. Both enshrine the principle of surrendering without a thought of how it might affect India in the long run.

Jawaharlal Nehru's short-sightedness ensured that Communist China won control of the Tibetan plateau without India making any move to protect its interests. The stupidity of this was recognised even at that early date; Sardar Patel sent a letter warning Nehru that India would pay a price for welcoming a foreign power to its eastern border. (Sadly, the Sardar was already on his deathbed by then; he would pass away within weeks of that missive.)

There is no way at this late date to protect the freedom of Tibet, the great Pandit Nehru certainly ensured that! But does that mean that we have to crush the Tibetans within India to save the Chinese a little embarrassment? Why should Delhi do Beijing's dirty work?

China is no friend of India's, it never was and never shall be. We may not be enemies today, we are certainly competitors. China is still in illegal occupation of thousands of square miles of Indian territory, including a small slice of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir that was negotiated away by Islamabad.

Why then is the Indian foreign-policy establishment so reluctant to confront reality? Why should the authorities in Delhi send its police to batter Tibetans who want to protest outside the Chinese embassy? Why should Delhi be so uneasy when the issue of Taiwan comes up? Is there any reason why we should be so afraid to 'embarrass' China? If so, can anyone think of a single occasion in living memory when China tried to aid India?

The enforced expulsion of Taslima Nasreen is yet another instance of utterly senseless policy making. What was the issue at stake here, that a bunch of hitherto unknown people should dictate to the Indian government? Has anybody thought of the long-term consequences of this stupidity?

There is a long history to both these instances of cravenness; they stem both from the United Progressive Alliance regime's desire to placate the Left and, historically, the legacy of Nehru.

Please remember that Taslima Nasreen was living quietly in Kolkata for about a decade. But a General Election is in the air, the Left Front has been shaken by Nandigram and Singur, and Muslims make up roughly a quarter of the electorate in West Bengal. So should we really be surprised that some obscure elements raked up the issue of her sanctuary so successfully that ten years of peaceful existence were wiped out in mere days?

Let us also grant that this pandering to Muslim extremism is well in keeping with the Nehruvian tradition. It was after all India's first prime minister who indignantly responded that he was more worried about 'Hindu communalism' when asked to respond to the rising tide of Muslim separatism within ten years of Independence. (How anyone who had lived through Partition could come up with that response is something I still can't comprehend!)

The Communist Party of India-Marxist has also, traditionally, had a hard time in criticising China. Its leaders wriggle miserably when asked outright if they condemn the Chinese invasion of 1962, so let us not be amazed that they can't bring themselves to disown Beijing's brutality in Tibet today.

It is utter bilge to spout away about 'non-interference' in the affairs of neighbouring nations. Didn't the CPI-M actively interfere just last year in Nepal, loudly shouting about 'atrocities' by the Royal Nepal Army, then procuring a place for its Marxist comrades at the Cabinet table in Kathmandu?

Did India benefit from having a bunch of unreformed Maoists in power in Nepal? Didn't it increase the danger of Naxalites finding sanctuary across the border?

All these Himalayan idiocies too find echoes in the Nehru era. Nehru swallowed Chinese claims to Tibet without a murmur. Anyone who actually bothers to study history knows that Chinese sovereignty over Tibet was a fiction.

The conceit of Chinese 'control' over Tibetan affairs dates back to Francis Younghusband's (external link) expedition to Lhasa, one of Lord Curzon's little ideas. When the then Dalai Lama fled before Younghusband reached the capital, an agreement was reached under the imprimatur of the Chinese envoy in Tibet—a bit like the British High Commissioner making decisions concerning India in the Indian prime minister's absence.

Angry Tibetans thought so little of the Chinese claims that they tore down the banners announcing the deal from the walls of Lhasa.

Nehru might have claimed that he was bringing a fresh view to Indian foreign policy, in reality he did little more than swallow a few lies concocted by Curzon's men. (Lies so blatant that even the then British government in London was embarrassed by the whole tawdry affair!)

I have absolutely no problem with India's conducting business with the generals in Myanmar because that is how India's interests were best served. But how does India benefit from cracking Tibetan skulls outside the Chinese embassy, and how does it benefit from pandering to extremists by exiling Taslima Nasreen?

A legacy of Nehruvian folly has combined with the electoral needs of the Left Front to unnerve the UPA regime. When will the bill for these acts of cowardice come due? Or don't the ministers in the Manmohan Singh government care any longer?



Can Tibet Mend China?

Rajinder Puri

To write off the Tibet unrest would be premature. There is much that could follow the uprising in Lhasa..

March 24, 2008 President Hu Jintao needs to read carefully the writing on the wall

Defenceless Tibet is given no chance of forcing mighty China to relent. But David vanquished Goliath. David was armed with a slingshot. What weapon does Tibet have? It is the pressure of international opinion. Do not dismiss it for being inconsequential. It will be difficult for China aspiring to superpower status to ignore it. And the recent events in Lhasa may not signify the end of the story. They may herald a protracted struggle for democracy in China that could spiral far beyond the Tibetan issue. Consider some facts.

Beijing and the Dalai Lama have met and talked six times without reaching agreement. The Dalai Lama has repeatedly said that he wants autonomy. He has not demanded independence. Beijing has repeatedly asserted that the Dalai Lama is trying to split China. It is like a dialogue of the deaf. According to one source, agreement has been elusive because the Dalai Lama seeks ratification of any agreement by an international body. His bitter experience of China's going back on its word impels him to do this. Beijing will not countenance it. However, there is now a glimmer of hope.

Beijing's clampdown on the Tibetan unrest has been inexplicably harsh. Beijing's man in Tibet, Zhang Quingli, is a rigid hardliner. Under him the state media in Tibet has described the unrest as a "life and death struggle" between China and the Dalai Lama's followers. China's state-controlled media has called the Dalai Lama a "wolf in monk's robes". The reason for such hysteria is that the prestige of President Hu Jintao is involved. He was the author of China's hard-line Tibet policy. That policy is not succeeding. But its continuation is considered necessary in order to protect President Hu's reputation.

That may explain why Premier Wen Jiabao uncharacteristically lashed out at the Dalai Lama for spreading "deceitful lies". Premier Wen had to propitiate his boss President Hu. Having done that, he came to substantive policy. In a telephone conversation he told British Prime Minister Gordon Brown that he was prepared to have talks with the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama reciprocated by expressing willingness to hold talks in Beijing – which he had ruled out earlier. For form's sake, Wen continued to criticize the Tibetan leader. But the real climb-down was unmistakable. Prime Minister Brown's silent pressure seemed to work. Why? Because of economic compulsions. But the People's Daily in Beijing subsequently advocated that the Tibetan uprising be ruthlessly crushed. This may not only abort the dialogue with Dalai Lama, it may also signal the start of a power struggle in China. What other explanation is there for the official party newspaper rubbishing the Chinese Premier's assurance to the British PM? Now how will Wen Jiabao react?

The US economic slump has long term crippling effects no less for China than for the US itself. Chinese exports to the US are the lifeline of its economy. As purchasing power in America shrinks, so will import of goods from China. Beijing must arrange alternative export markets. Europe is the obvious choice. But will Europe cooperate? That is where British Prime Minister Brown comes in.

China Business Weekly quoted William Pedder, chief executive of UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), saying: “The United Kingdom is the second-largest outward investor in the world, and is the gateway to the world’s biggest single market – Europe. . . . That is what you need when you want to find a place in Europe, because we have a long tradition of doing business with all other European nations. We expect to see more Chinese companies as they understand the potential of selling direct into Europe.”

While China itself is a top destination for foreign direct investment, the UK is inviting companies from the Middle Kingdom to make direct investment in British equities. Right now that is a much more attractive destination for China’s foreign exchange surplus than US Treasury securities. Initially Britain was hesitant to allow huge influx of Chinese direct investment because of security concerns. Once Prime Minister Brown cleared that hurdle, China was hooked. Little wonder that Brown’s call for restraint and dialogue worked with Wen Jiabao.

However, even if Wen Jiabao prevails and an acceptable compromise with the Dalai Lama is achieved before the Olympic Games, it may not end Beijing’s troubles. The Tibetan unrest could exert the domino effect theory in China. Commentators and Chinese authorities are focusing mostly on Taiwan. It is likely that trouble may erupt from a different direction.

On March 7th Chinese security frustrated a terrorist attempt on an airline flight. It was a crude attempt by a Uighur woman from Xingjian. The woman’s husband who had put her up was from Central Asia and had already fled China. He had carried a Pakistani passport and was most likely an Al Qaeda member based in Pakistan. This reinforces this scribe’s conjecture, written earlier, that under Ayman-al-Zawahiri the Al Qaeda has changed its cozy relationship with China, indicated by the agreement between Mullah Omar and the PLA in 2001, to one of outright hostility. Chinese arms for Iran’s Shia militants were cited as reason for this change of attitude in the Taliban and Sunni dominated Al Qaeda. The 2001 agreement between China and pro-Al Qaeda Taliban was based on Osama bin Laden’s assurance not to foment trouble in Xingjian. The murder of several Chinese based in Pakistan, lauded by Islamabad’s Lal Masjid clerics, shattered that accord. Cannot more trouble now be expected on the Xingjian front? Especially since Al Qaeda and Taliban are far more geared for violence than are Tibetan protesters?

Arguably, autonomy and democratic self-rule for Tibet and Xingjian would help China defuse the crisis. But even that may not end China’s problem. There is a silent mass of people within China that seeks much more freedom in this information era. Proof of that was provided by the Falun Gong, which was devoted solely to cultural affairs. The huge crowds that the Falun Gong mobilized so alarmed the Chinese communists that the movement was banned. Will not the sparks from Tibet ignite this movement to erupt before the Olympic Games? One has to wait and watch.

To be great China needs to uphold Tibet culture

Manoj Joshi

March 26, 2008

After being overwhelmed by the People's Liberation Army in 1950, the Tibetans have broken out in open revolt thrice—in 1959, 1989 and now in 2008. Considering the herculean efforts that have been made by China to control the Tibetans, this is remarkable, and ought to serve as a warning of sorts to Beijing. The Chinese have played a cynical game in Tibet. They claimed that they entered it to liberate its people from serfdom and to protect its special status, but in fact they split Tibet into several provinces and what we call Tibet today comprises just half its traditional territory. Despite professing atheism, the Chinese have blatantly interfered in the religious practices of Tibet, including taking decisions on who is an incarnate lama.

No country in the world supports an independent Tibet. Yet, among the people in democratic countries, Chinese sovereignty over Tibet is only reluctantly conceded. Most Indians, barring the Communists, believe that Tibet is a colonial possession of China, held down by the force of the People's Liberation Army. The reality is, of course, partly true though more complex.

Suzerainty

Though the Lama rulers of Tibet accepted Chinese authority over their country, they were not vassals in the sense that Korea and Vietnam were. Indeed, the Tibetans emphasise that neither the 5th Dalai Lama in 1652 nor the 13th in 1908 performed the ceremony of kowtow when they met the Chinese emperor. On the other hand, it is clear that the Tibetans accepted what the British called "suzerainty", a loose kind of Chinese overlordship with considerable autonomy. But between 1911 and 1951, Tibet was completely independent.

When the Communists took control of China in October 1949, one of the first items on their agenda was to assert Chinese control over Tibet. As in the case of the erstwhile Soviet Union, Mao Zedong's declaration that there would be self-determination for the minorities in the People's Republic turned out to be a cynical exercise in deception. The Chinese Communist Party insisted that the territorial limits of China were the same as those of the Qing dynasty that was overthrown in 1911. It is not as though the Tibetans welcomed the Chinese as liberators. Despite the enormous difference between the Chinese and Tibetan forces, the latter resisted the Chinese onslaught and only after some 30 major and minor battles did the Tibetans sue for peace. A 17-point agreement was signed that allowed for Tibet "national regional autonomy" and helped retain its political and cultural structures. However, the increasing pressure by the Chinese, as well as perhaps some American instigation, led to a revolt that brought the "one country two systems" effort to an end. In 1965 the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) was constituted, but two years later, Tibetan culture and autonomy were devastated by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Since the late 1970s the Chinese have sought to promote the economic development of Tibet and opened it up to the outside world. This has been manifested by the growth of tourism, as well as the infrastructure in terms of a new railway and several new highways and other development projects.

Sovereignty

The ongoing Tibetan uprising is, or ought to be, a matter of great concern to India. Just a glance at the map will

show why this large region, with which we share a 4,056-km border, is of such strategic importance for our country. Many of our principal rivers rise there, and since 1951 this historically undefended area of India has come under the administrative control and military occupation of China.

This development was resisted by India from the very outset. Advised by the British, India did not contest China's decision to "liberate" Tibet. It deluded itself that it was merely recognising Chinese "suzerainty", even while upholding its autonomy. However, when "suzerainty" turned out to be nothing but old-fashioned "sovereignty", and that too, of the colonial variety, New Delhi could do little. In 1954, it tamely signed away all its special diplomatic privileges to the "Tibet Autonomous Region of China". This was but the beginning of a phase that led to a humiliating defeat of the Indian army at the hands of the People's Liberation Army in 1962 on the borderlands of Tibet.

So, today, India has had to reconcile itself to the situation in Tibet. Indeed, at almost every turn it has had to go out of its way to reassure China that it recognises its sovereignty over Tibet. This is how the last joint declaration during the visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee to China in June 2003 reads: "The Indian side recognises that the Tibet Autonomous Region is part of the territory of the People's Republic of China and reiterates that it does not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India.

The Chinese side expresses its appreciation for the Indian position and reiterates that it is firmly opposed to any attempt and action aimed at splitting China and bringing about 'independence of Tibet'."

And this is how the April 2005 Joint Statement during the visit of Chinese premier Wen Jiabao reads: "The Indian side reiterated that it recognised the Tibet Autonomous Region as part of the territory of the People's Republic of China and that it did not allow Tibetans to engage in anti-China political activities in India."

All this is presumably seen by Beijing as expiation by India for its initial insistence that the Chinese respect Tibetan autonomy under their "suzerainty", and for giving shelter to the Dalai Lama.

The Chinese are now playing a waiting game in Tibet, hoping that the passing of the 14th Dalai Lama, currently 73, will enable them to put in place a puppet. This is the procedure they have followed in the case of the Panchen Lama, the second great Lama of Tibet. The two Lamas are supposed to help determine each other's reincarnation. When the previous Panchen Lama, who was a Chinese prisoner, passed away, the search committee headed by Chadrel Rimpoche found Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as his reincarnation and this was announced by the Dalai Lama. But the Chinese imprisoned Chadrel and got another search committee to come up with another name. No one is sure where Nyima is, and the substitute Panchen Lama has been installed in his place. It is this crass interference in Tibetan cultural and religious traditions that raise questions about China's motives in Tibet.

Identity

Yet if the experience of the world is anything to go by, Chinese actions will not help in curbing Tibetans's desire to assert their cultural and religious identity. This is the lesson from the current uprising that has spread not just across TAR, but Gansu, Sichuan and other areas that are part of traditional Tibet.

India cannot turn the clock back on Tibet and undo the policy track it adopted in 1950. But what it can, and should do, is to insist that China not use the cover of national sovereignty to deny Tibetans their human rights, which most importantly include the right to practise and uphold their culture. At the same time, New Delhi must make it clear to the Tibetans and the world community, that such a goal cannot be achieved through

militancy. In fact militant confrontation only aids the Chinese to split the Dalai Lama from the younger generation of Tibetans. The Dalai Lama has taken a most reasonable position on negotiations with China and publicly opposed a boycott of the Olympics. Tibetan rights will not be obtained by humiliating Beijing, but by persuading it that in today's world, great nations are identified by the rights enjoyed by their minorities. No matter what the CPC theorists may be telling the old men in Zhongnanhai, there simply will never be anything called "democracy with Chinese characteristics."

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Tibet: Resuming dialogue is the only option

Ram Madhav

March 24, 2008

"The writer is a national executive member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh"

China reacted predictably. It insisted that the Buddhist monks in Lhasa and elsewhere had indulged in arson and violence. It reiterated its resolve to 'crush' the voices of independence. It accused His Holiness the Dalai Lama of masterminding the uprising and described him as a 'wolf'. The Communist Party of Tibet called him a 'jackal in ochre robes'.

China's predicament is quite obvious. Unlike on earlier occasions — whether it was the Tiananmen Square massacre or the Tibetan uprisings in the late '80s — today technology has become a big bane for it. Despite its best efforts to gag the media, jam satellite transmissions and launch a propaganda offensive, it couldn't really suppress the details of the happenings from reaching the outside world.

Dharamshala, which apparently has some channels of communication still open with the gadget-savvy monks and other Tibetans in Tibet and elsewhere, has valid reasons to believe that the Chinese government is indulging in genocide. Even His Holiness had claimed that 70-80 Tibetan demonstrators were killed in the crackdown by the Chinese security forces. Samdong Rimpoche, the highly revered prime minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile, too expressed his serious concern over what he termed as the 'cultural genocide' launched by China in Tibet.

All this happened so suddenly and swiftly that even the so-called Sinologists and Tibet experts were caught completely unawares. The uprising of Tibetans on the occasion of the 59th Anniversary of the last battle for saving Tibet thus brought the question of Tibet's future onto the centre-stage again.

While the Chinese government is fuming at the rising demand for Tibetan independence not only within the occupied Tibetan territory but all over the Western world, certain individual and national players are looking at this crisis as an excellent opportunity to further embarrass, if not put pressure on, the Chinese by way of boycott of the Olympics scheduled to take place in a few months from now in Beijing. They also see an opportunity for them to meddle in the troubled waters with demands like UN-sponsored lawyers and jurists in Lhasa etc.

As it happens always, in this melee the core issue for which His Holiness and the government in exile are fighting is totally left by the wayside.

I was in Lhasa towards the end of last year. No doubt Lhasa is a well-developed city today — with good roads, flashy cars, upmarket malls and omnipresent advanced electronic gadgets. But keen observers don't miss the fact that while the city has everything that other developed cities in China boast of, the only thing conspicuous by its absence is Tibetanism, the essential persona of Tibetan identity.

Tibetans are no doubt there, but largely as pullers of rickshaws and push-carts, doing small-time businesses or petty jobs. There is a glaring demographic division — which some rightly prefer to call as invasion by the Hans — that has left the Tibetans at the lower rung, both numerically as well as in terms of development.

More importantly, they find themselves far removed from their spiritual and temporal leadership.

What is of paramount importance for the survival of Tibetanism in Tibet is the return of His Holiness and his followers to the Potala Palace. No one knows its significance more than His Holiness himself. That is the reason why he and his government-in-exile are prepared for the autonomy offered, albeit half-heartedly, by the Chinese.

There were several rounds of talks between the leaders of the government-in-exile and the Chinese government that led to agreement on several points. Yet the stalemate continues, especially on two crucial issues.

One is the demographic and geographic question. China, after annexing Tibet in 1959, divided it into 6 different regions. What is today described by China as the Autonomous Region of Tibet is just one of those 6 regions. All the 6 regions are inhabited by a good number of Tibetans. In fact the recent uprisings were witnessed in almost all these regions. His Holiness wants unification of Tibet which is vehemently opposed by the Chinese.

The second issue on which stalemate continues is about what should be the history taught to the Tibetans in their schools and monasteries. Tibetans want freedom to teach their history as how they look at it. But the Chinese want it the way they manufacture and propagate it. In fact the Chinese version of Tibetan history has been showcased in museums across the Tibetan region, including Lhasa.

What is most unfortunate is the breakdown of the talks some time in 2006 after which China never showed any interest to resume them.

It is a razor-edge walk for His Holiness and his men. A section of the exiles is vociferously opposed to the very idea of autonomy. Anything short of total independence is not acceptable to them. Many in India and elsewhere who have been ardent supporters of the Tibetan cause too feel let down by the acquiescence of His Holiness for autonomy.

However, none can deny the fact that His Holiness is the right man to decide on such matters. In a conflict between urgent and important, it is his wisdom coupled with experience that would guide the Tibetan struggle. As one of the senior leaders in the government-in-exile put it succinctly 'The fire of independence can never be doused.'

The recent violence has provided justification for China to vilify and in the event further delay the process of reconciliation set off by His Holiness. But it can't escape the responsibility for the violence, as it is essentially an outcome of the breakdown of dialogue.

News trickling down from Lhasa of the crackdown by the Chinese forces is disturbing and will certainly not help in finding a solution to this problem. China should realise that this time round the uprisings are quite

widespread, clearly indicating that the displeasure over and opposition to its stranglehold over Tibetans is becoming bolder and shriller.

It is not in its interest to use its Cultural Revolution-style responses against popular revolutions. Brutal oppression, military action, media gagging etc might have paid off in the previous century. But they will only harm Chinese interests if pursued in this age and time also. Ominous signs are visible already, with Chinese intellectuals — perhaps for the first time after the dreaded Cultural Revolution experience — openly raising their voice and questioning the stand taken by their own government.

Their language betrayed clear defiance, which would certainly rattle the Chinese leadership. It is time the Chinese started responding differently. It should positively receive the offer of resumption of talks by His Holiness.

India has maintained the position that the Tibet question is China's internal matter. With 150,000 Tibetan citizens living in exile on its soil, many of whom shuttle between India and Tibet frequently, India nevertheless has a role in the resolution of this issue. Also, with Tibet under its control China has become India's Himalayan neighbour.

Violent struggles in the Himalayan region are a matter of concern for our national interests. Whether it is Burma or Nepal or Tibet, these violent struggles have the potential to allow certain Western powers to gain strategic foothold. This may, in the short term, help in containing and pinning down China. But it cannot be overlooked that India's strategic interests lie in keeping the Himalayan region free from any influence of outside powers.

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Revolt in Tibet: Implications for India

B Raman

March 17, 2008

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The Government of India has adopted a two-pronged policy in relation to the outbreak of a revolt in Lhasa in protest against the continued occupation of Tibet by China and the violation of human rights by the Chinese.

India has prevented Tibetan refugees in India from indulging in activities which might result in acts of violence or disruption directed against Chinese nationals and interests in India and in dramatic acts such as their professed intention of crossing the border into Tibet, which could lead to an undesirable escalation of cross-border tensions. At the same time, it has expressed its distress over the situation in Tibet and called for a dialogue so that the Tibetans don't feel the need to take to acts of violence in their desperation. A spokesman of the ministry of external affairs said on March 15: "We would hope that all those involved will work to improve the situation and remove the causes of such trouble in Tibet, which is an autonomous region of China, through dialogue and non-violent means."

This is the right approach — expressing our moral support to the Tibetans in accordance with our national interests without identifying ourselves with the attempts of anti-China activists in the West, particularly the US, to exploit the continued alienation of the Tibetans and their desperation to create embarrassment for China before and during the Olympic Games. This is done in the hope of achieving their own foreign policy goals in matters such as greater Chinese pressure on North Korea on the nuclear issue and on the military junta in Myanmar for restoration of democracy and the release of Aung San Suu Kyi.

There are two issues involved here — the aspirations of the Tibetans, and using the Tibetans to needle China and create difficulties for it in organising the Olympic Games and making a success of it. While supporting the aspirations of the Tibetans in a sophisticated manner, we should not identify ourselves with the attempts of anti-China activists to sabotage the Olympic Games. We should do whatever we can to help China in making a success of the Olympic Games. If India is seen as discreetly helping the efforts of the anti-China activists in their anti-Beijing Olympics, we will hurt the national pride of over a billion Chinese. This is not in our national interest.

Indira Gandhi disapproved the attempts of the West to exploit the Afghanistan issue to embarrass and humiliate the erstwhile USSR as the host of the 1980 Olympics by organising a boycott of the Moscow Games. A similar attempt is now on to exploit the Tibetan issue to embarrass and humiliate China as the host of the forthcoming Olympics by organising, if possible, a boycott of the Beijing Olympics or at least a disruption of it. India should strongly oppose this and should advise the Dalai Lama too not to let the Tibetans be used by anti-China activists in the US to target the Beijing Olympics. These activists had waged a fierce campaign against the award of the Olympics to Beijing. Having failed in their attempts, they are now trying to sabotage the Games.

Our aim should be not to embarrass and humiliate China, but to persuade it to change its policy on Tibet and enter into a dialogue with the Dalai Lama on mutually agreed terms. India should play the role of a facilitator of such a dialogue. India has done well in expressing openly its distress over the turn of events in Tibet and in expressing its interest in a dialogue and not a street confrontation between the Chinese and the Tibetans. It could consider one more step at this important point in the history of the Tibetan issue — removing all? Informal restrictions on official and social interactions with the Dalai Lama and his advisers.

Though not openly admitted, such informal restrictions exist. We saw it at the end of last year, when the cabinet secretary reportedly advised ministers not to attend a public reception for the Dalai Lama to felicitate him on the award of the Congressional Medal of Honour in the US. Greater interaction between the prime minister and the Dalai Lama in the form of exchange of courtesy calls, meetings for discussions etc should be considered.

Till now, our policy has been to make a clear distinction between the religious and political dimensions of our stand with regard to the Dalai Lama. We have been saying that the courtesies and honour extended to the Dalai Lama and Tibetan refugees is because of his stature as a highly respected Buddhist leader in the land where Buddhism was born, but it has no political significance and does not imply our tacit support for his political views.

We should now make it clear that we consider the Dalai Lama is also an important political figure in the eyes of the Tibetans and hence, his political views have to be considered in determining our policy on Tibet.

Expressing our moral support to the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans, without damaging our relations with the

Chinese leadership and people — that should be the objective of our policy. The Tibetan issue has defied a solution for over 50 years. It will be wrong and unwise to think that it can be solved now — or at least a beginning made in that direction — by exploiting the Chinese eagerness to make a success of the Beijing Olympics.

There are many landmines in the path of policy-making and implementation. As we fine-tune our policy and push it forward gradually, there could be misperceptions and misinterpretations in China with not only negative impact on our relations, but also with renewed tensions across the border, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh. We are likely to see a reversion to the period between the 1960s and the 1980s when the Chinese military was in the driving seat of policy-making on Tibet. It was during that period that we saw the military confrontation of 1962 and the subsequent tensions in Sino-Indian relations.

The confidence of the Chinese political leadership that they have pacified Tibet and its people once and for all has been badly shaken. The current revolt shows there has been no emotional integration between the Tibetans and the Han settlers in Tibet. The fear of the masses would once again distort the Chinese military mindset in Tibet. They will not admit that their policies towards the Tibetan people are responsible for the revolt. Instead, they would see with greater conviction than in the past that the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan refugees in India are the source of all their problems in Tibet. The temptation to divert international attention away from Tibet to Arunachal Pradesh and Dharamsala by engaging in military moves in the Arunachal Pradesh area would be strong.

The conventional wisdom holds that the Chinese are so eager to make a success of the Olympics that they would not make any negative moves. This could be so, if the situation in Tibet calms down without any more escalation. But if the revolt further deteriorates and if the Chinese find themselves facing a situation where the choice is between saving their hold on Tibet and saving the Olympics, they would not hesitate to give priority to the suppression of the Tibetans. Their behaviour with relation to Arunachal Pradesh could become unpredictable.

Renewed cross-border military tensions — even Chinese incursions of a major nature — in Arunachal Pradesh after the Olympics is a possibility to be factored into in our scenario-buiding and policy-making exercise.

Our presence in Arunachal Pradesh should be further strengthened and the various infrastructure projects recently announced by the prime minister during his visit to the area should be pushed through vigorously.



Cherish the Tibetan People

Siddiq Wahid

March 28, 2008

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There is an old Ladakhi saying, kor chag, mi sos: “The cup broke, and nourished the soul”. The Tibetan cup cracked almost sixty years ago, and broke when His Holiness the Dalai Lama fled to India forty-nine years ago. One of the most remarkable features of the Tibetan exile (of both, those who fled the Chinese occupation

and of those who could not) has been the way in which they have cultivated the dharma and adapted their culture; not merely to survive but to give the world a glimpse of the results of an exilic life based on metaphysical truth. Over the last twenty years, as the so-called “new world order” has taken wing, we have repeatedly heard of how Tibet has become a lost cause because economic giant China has proven its resilience in the corridors of international power. The latest Tibetan cry from the heart, all over the world, has disproved this cynical prediction

To be sure, Tibetans to some extent have become “prisoners of Shangrila”, as has been sharply shown by Donald Lopez in his book of that title some ten years ago. It is an approach that cultivates an image of Tibetans as a universally timid and powerless lot who are fated to disappear unless the world comes to their rescue. History and politics are much more complex and the latest events have shown that the Tibetans are far from powerless. As Lopez implies, this “Shangrila” image of the Tibetan hurts more than helps their cause; it is an orientalist argument that distorts history and in so doing weakens the struggle. An echo of this line of reasoning is still to be found in the arguments of sympathetic but fuzzy-headed liberals, the Hollywood brigade and politics of expedience.

In the last sixty years there have been a crop of splendid scholars (led by, amongst others, the late great Dawa Norbu of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Melvyn Goldstein of Case Western Reserve University and Tsering Shakya of the School of Oriental and African Studies) who have not hesitated to show, although in differently nuanced ways, that we must admit to and examine Tibet’s internally heterogeneous modern political discourse and its political mistakes since the early 20th century. Each of them has sought to set the historical record straight thereby, in the long run, strengthening the argument for a free Tibet.

It is this latter approach to the Tibetan case that needs to be adopted by the Tibetans and their sympathizers if the Tibetan struggle is to gain momentum, the Tibetans are allowed to reclaim their freedom, their redoubtable dharma-defined culture and their country. Nostalgic romanticism, in other words, is no match for looking at political truth straight in the face, no matter how formidable the adversary. South Africa, tiny East Timor and Kosovo are but some very recent examples of this simple fact of political reality.

Over the last ten years, I have been ‘fortunate’ to visit Tibet five times. Only the most subjective of minds can deny that Tibet, despite being so removed from the center of power, has been a beneficiary of China’s economic boom. The physical infrastructure in Tibet is more advanced and more widespread than anywhere in Southasia; the roads, the power supply and the communications systems are admirable progress. Similarly, the entire desolate stretch of alluvial fans between Gyantse and Shigaste, which used to be a trans-Himalayan desert plateau, is filled with lush green fields of barley and wheat that are watered by well-planned irrigation systems; and the markets of Lhasa, Shigatse and Gyantse are filled with department stores that are stocked with global goods. Yet the Tibetan people today have risen up as one, to say that none of it is enough. An elderly relative of mine, who lived in Lhasa before he made his escape in the late 1950s, made the same observation after visiting Tibet in the late 1990s. He tellingly added, “But nothing tastes quite the same.” Why is that so?

The Tibetan uprising of 2008 cannot be understood in the context of the simplistic paradigm of violence and non-violence in the Gandhian sense, as a friend and acute observer of political events, Maj-General (retired) Vinod Saigal, recently put it in a private communication. It is a *cri de Coeur*, a cry from the heart, that says, our stomachs may be full, we may have excellent roads and we may witness all the other benefits of that secular faith (I use the word advisedly) called “progress”, but our spirits must be free and we must be allowed to determine our future without fearing that our way of life will become extinct by the assertion of a brutal

hegemonic homogeneity; for that, we are willing to be beaten, to be tortured and to die. It is a cry that will be recognized by all today who are coerced into accepting the argument of the inevitability of that uniquely post 20th century mutation of the ideology of faith in progress and the abandonment of the cry of the body to be in tune with its spirit; to be able to recognize itself.

The brutality of the government of People's Republic of China, when it comes to its policies in Tibet, Xinjiang and even parts of its mainland, must be seen not just in the profane certitude of its policy pronouncements, its bamboo-curtained interpretation of events and its muscular nationalism, although these are bad enough, but in the context of its cynical calculations. This has been to take advantage of the expedient-prone cautiousness of U.S., South Asian and European policies towards it, its own demographic dominance and its ubiquitous economic spread. It is this that is that has caused the Tibetans to strike where it counts for the Chinese-state: their sensitivity to being embarrassed, to lose face, in a year of the Olympics during which China hopes to show-case its economic progress and its regional military might. Cherish the Tibetans for their courage and their capacity for upaya, "skill in means."

The Dalai Lama, in his wisdom, has pronounced that the Olympics must not be damaged. We can attribute this wisdom in part to his concern for the lives and limbs of Tibetans in Tibet and his identification with compassion incarnate, being as he is the embodiment of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. In part we can also attribute it to his political wisdom in keeping the door open for dialogue. But what option do the ordinary Tibetans have? Especially in the face of the vicious personal attacks on the person of the Dalai Lama and the continued disingenuousness with which they have rejected huge concessions he has made to the Chinese State over the years. The Tibetans are doing what any peoples who are threatened with cultural extinction will do: they are saying, "thus far and no further."

Elliot Sperling, in a recent opinion piece published in the Times of India (March 17th, 2008), has faulted the Dalai Lama for his "political naiveté and desperation" which has resulted in "ratchet[ing] down" his position "from Tibetan independence, to real autonomy to simple cultural rights." This is the argument of a political historian, looking at events from a perspective sympathetic to Tibetans but unable to identify with the real danger: a long term arrangement that regains territory but compromises a worldview. The Dalai Lama's approach has served to expose this intent of the Government of the PRC. Its complete disregard for his reconciliatory line of attack has shown how confident it is in its disregard for the truth. The Dalai Lama's method, in fact, is a measure of how confident he is of the strength of Buddhism to survive, even in China, if the latter guarantees real freedom to the Tibetans to practice their religion. As a Buddhist monk he cannot deny change, but he is confident enough to ask that the Tibetan people be allowed to dictate its nature and pace. The truth is that China is unwilling to do this. In the face of China's turning a deaf ear to the truth, the only way the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans can fight back is to continue to tell the truth again and again to China and the world at large. As Chinua Achebe has said, "Telling the truth is the only way, in the long run, to get listened to."

Cherish the Tibetan people, for they show the way to all who fight the uphill battle against today's politics and ideologies of hegemonic homogeneity, everywhere.

On history's plateau

Inder Malhotra

March 24, 2008

Writer is a Delhi-based political commentator

(It is astonishing that Beijing has denounced the Dalai Lama in such intemperate language)

Despite China's earlier assurance to British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, there no longer seems any possibility of Beijing entering into negotiations any time soon with the Dalai Lama for a peaceful settlement of the Tibet issue that, as recent rioting and violent protests show, remains a tinderbox. Beijing's brutal suppression of the protests may have doused the situation but it does not necessarily solve even China's immediate problem of ensuring the smooth conduct of the Olympics, on which it has invested not just \$3 billion but also its entire prestige as a superpower in waiting, leave alone the long-term goal of ensuring peace in the discontented minority province.

It is therefore both astonishing and shocking that Beijing should have denounced, indeed maligned, the Dalai Lama in most intemperate language. It continues to accuse him of being the "mastermind" of the violent upheaval while the reality is that his adherence to non-violence is sincere and unshakeable. He went so far as to declare that he would resign if the agitation "spun out of control". Not for nothing did Prime Minister Manmohan Singh call him the "embodiment of peace".

Repeatedly and unambiguously the Dalai Lama has stated that he wants "genuine autonomy" for Tibet, not independence. But Chinese leaders go on calling him a separatist. One of them has even described him as a "wolf in a monk's clothing".

Obviously, it is not mere arrogance of power that is motivating Beijing. It has good reasons to believe that its power — military, economic and soft — is having its effect. The Dalai Lama's angry followers in India, still planning a march to the China border, have apparently been encouraged by the Speaker of the US House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi's meeting with the Dalai Lama and her appeal to the "world conscience" over Tibet. But what is all this worth, when President George W. Bush's spokesperson reaffirms that he would attend the Olympics at Beijing? In any case, the economic and political stakes of the United States and the West in China are too complex to allow for the kind of boycott that was enforced at the time of the Moscow Olympics in 1980 because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Moreover, many — not in China alone — are asking whether China's action in Tibet is different from that of the US in Iraq.

All things considered, this country's reaction to the developments in Tibet has been unexceptionable. Like most other countries, it expressed its "distress" and — as it has done in the case of other chronic and painful conflicts such as the one in Palestine — appealed to both sides to solve the problem through peaceful dialogue. Come to think of it, the statement of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is mild by comparison. Yet the UPA government has drawn criticism — especially from the principal opposition party, the BJP, as well as others — that in relation to China's "unacceptable repression" in Tibet it has been "weak-kneed" and "chicken hearted". Even before the eruption in Lhasa, the government here was being charged with being "slurred" and

“stilted” in replying to China’s aggressively asserted claims on Arunachal Pradesh, particularly the Tawang tract. This is a result partly of the inflamed polarisation of the Indian polity and partly of the complexity and delicacy of the country’s Tibet policy, right from the days of Jawaharlal Nehru, that has often been under fire, not always without reason.

Historically, Tibet had only a tributary relationship with the Chinese empire that never directly ruled it. On the other hand, not a single country had ever recognised Tibet to be sovereign. Ironically, it was Britain, then ruling India, which pushed Tibet into the Chinese orbit out of fear of Russia’s imperial designs. After the Younghusband Expedition to Lhasa (1904), British India on the one hand and Tibet and China on the other signed the Shimla Convention of 1914 that delineated the MacMahon Line.

After Indian independence and the Chinese Revolution, which were roughly simultaneous, things were bound to change — and change they did. India’s initial reaction to the march of the People’s Liberation Army into Lhasa was sharp. China responded even more acrimoniously and refused to countenance any “interference” in its internal affairs. No country in the world contested China’s claim. The British who had started the whole thing were the first to wash their hands of Tibet. They were worrying about Hong Kong! In the circumstances, India accepted the inevitable but insisted that Tibet’s autonomy be protected. The Chinese readily concurred and even signed an agreement with the young Dalai Lama in 1953, which they cynically reneged on.

In accepting the Chinese assurance on Tibetan autonomy, Nehru rejected the advice of Sardar Patel and Rajagopalachari (then Union minister without portfolio) for a “clean break” with China, and ignored a “vague hint” by the American ambassador, Loy Henderson, that the State Department would be “glad to help, if asked”. Those who continue to curse Nehru for “not resisting” the Chinese occupation of Tibet are talking nonsense. India did not have the power to do so, and was itself under heavy pressure at the UN over Kashmir where an uneasy cease-fire was in its early stages.

Nehru’s cardinal mistake, of course, was the 1954 agreement on the Tibet region of China, accepting Chinese sovereignty over “autonomous Tibet” without any quid pro quo in terms of Chinese acceptance of this country’s “long-settled”, “long-established” border. This story of Nehru falling between the two stools of trusting and distrusting China and the Chinese successfully fooling the Indian side is much too complex and convoluted. In this, the role of then Indian ambassador to China, K.M. Panikkar, was not just disastrous but diabolical.

Almost all countries have accepted Tibet to be part of China. Under the circumstances, everyone has to walk a tightrope balancing one’s support to the cause of Tibetan autonomy and one’s relationship with China

The Tibetan uprising of 1959, the Dalai Lama’s flight and the grant of asylum to him in this country inevitably worsened India-China relations. The brief but brutal 1962 war followed. The rest, as they say, is history.

So many ways to Tibet

Dibyesh Anand

March 25, 2008

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Chinese officials criticise the Dalai Lama as an anti-motherland conspiratorial politician, 'a wolf in monk's robes', while many Tibetan exiles are exasperated with the failure of his 'middle way' (appealing for genuine autonomy within China). His 'strategy' has been one that is neither anti-China nor anti-Chinese. He seeks to make a moral appeal to the conscience of the Chinese people and government.

Nevertheless, his constant assurances and watering down of demands has failed to win him anything but distrust and opprobrium from China. The 1.3 billion plus Chinese people do not even know what he stands for except that he is a 'splittist'. That 'the Dalai clique fans separatism' is a commonsense even among non-Communist Chinese people for their knowledge of him is filtered through a censored media. While Han Chinese often exoticise and sometimes appreciate Tibetan Buddhism and culture, they are not even aware of the Dalai Lama's compromises and appeals to their conscience.

So how can non-violence really work as a political strategy to gain genuine autonomy within China? One can ascribe the Dalai Lama's hope for and reliance on a change of heart inside China to four things. One, pragmatism, since a violent Tibetan national struggle would be suicidal, go against Tibetan cultural identity, and is unlikely to find widespread support among Tibetans inside China. Two, Buddhism interpreted in a universalist and compassionate manner. We should note that Buddhism does not necessarily lead to pacifism and we can look to Sinhalese chauvinism as a good example of how Buddhists may have no compunction in dehumanising their enemies. Three, a personal philosophy that is resolutely anti-violence and focuses on humanity. Those who criticise the Dalai Lama for weakening the Tibetan cause should realise that the very fact that 'Free Tibet' attracts more sympathetic attention globally than say 'Free Kurds' or 'Free Uyghuristan' is a direct result of his popularity as an apostle of peace. Four, his ideas of politics have been shaped significantly by an admiration for Gandhi. We may recall that when the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, the committee chairman said that this was 'in part a tribute to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi'.

The Tibetan leader's anxieties about violence and insistence that his people should protest Chinese state atrocities but not hate the Chinese people, is very Gandhian. The Dalai Lama's threat to resign from his political role (for he cannot resign as the Dalai Lama) and appeal to 'both sides' to stop the violence reminds one of Gandhi's insistence on ending the non-cooperation movement in 1922 after the violence at Chauri Chaura. One cannot expect the Dalai Lama to opportunistically strike the iron when it is hot, to make it really unpleasant for the Chinese by adopting a harder stance in the run-up to Olympics. The pathological China-bashers (and there are many in India and the west) will jump onto the bandwagon of 'Free Tibet' only to embarrass China. But what is the point of morality if it is based solely on the calculus of cost and benefit? The Dalai Lama's moral leadership is untarnished.

How about his political leadership at this time of crisis? The Tibetan government in exile of which he is the leader has shown itself to be uncreative and bankrupt when it comes to finding a way forward. Appeals to the international community, a euphemism for western states (since the non-western ones remain concerned only with their own backyard), do not work beyond a point, since power and not fraternity is what marks this 'community'.

In any case, the Gandhian analogy is not really relevant. Gandhi's insistence on non-violence as moral as well as political force — his argument was that mass mobilisation is only possible if the nationalist movement steers clear of violence — worked in a different context. Had Gandhi solely appealed to the British sense of justice and morality, we would not even be knowing who he was.

Non-violence works as a strategy only when it can mobilise people. Gandhi lived among the people he mobilised. The British were numerically minuscule vis-à-vis Indians in the country and Indians were never seen as part of British national identity. Demographically, the parallel does not hold in the case of China and Tibet. The Tibetans are part of Chinese nationalism. The Dalai Lama's exile offers him no means to influence the majority of Tibetans living inside Tibet except through his own symbolism.

Diasporic Tibetans know that this symbolism imposes its own limitations on the options available to them to shape their political present. They cannot wait until the XIVth Dalai Lama's demise to think of an alternative future (for there is someone else waiting for him to go away too). If they so decide after democratic discussions, they relieve him of the burden of leading Tibetans politically. He can provide moral and spiritual guidance to those who look up to him. Maybe he can then convince China to let him go to Tibet.

A dynamic and radicalised exile leadership without the Dalai Lama will provide greater clarity but will it be able to overcome four main obstacles? One, intolerance of their activities by India and Nepal. Two, drying up of sympathy and attention given to Tibetans in the west. Three, divisions among Tibetans on various issues. Four, China's overwhelming authority.

And what if 'Free Tibet' for many inside China's Tibet means something very different from their diasporic counterparts? What if most Tibetans inside Tibet have neither the appetite nor the desire to really free Tibet from China? What if they are reconciled to being part of China so long as religious freedom is allowed? So long as they get to worship the Dalai Lama!



To tame China, boycott Game

Ashok Mehta

March 31, 2008

When China invaded Tibet in 1950, it was not a strong power, but the world was forced to ignore the invasion because India under Jawaharlal Nehru acquiesced to Beijing's smash and grab policy. The result was that an independent, peaceful and friendly country was destroyed.

The Chinese gave solemn promises that the autonomy of Tibet and its unique culture would be protected, but

then promises are made to be broken. We know that the Chinese have never honoured their pledge. When all hope was lost, the peaceful Tibetans took to arms, but the rebellion failed and the Chinese inflicted horrendous atrocities on them.

Today, the Tibetans have again risen in revolt. Should we again turn a blind eye — just as we have been doing for the last 49 years? Or should we tell China that enough is enough? Today, China is very strong, militarily and economically. Therefore, military intervention is out of question. But the world can hit China where it hurts most, that also without using military force. After all, victories which are achieved without fighting a battle are the most spectacular.

The Olympic Games, just round the corner, are going to be China's showpiece. This is an important opportunity for us because Beijing has a lot at stake. Therefore, as a first step, India should call upon all democratic countries that China should be told that if it does not grant Tibet full autonomy, dismantle the Han Chinese settlements and withdraw its military from Lhasa, the Olympics will be boycotted. It is possible that China may agree and Tibet's autonomy should then get international sanction under the auspices of the UN. If China does not agree, then the world should boycott Chinese goods.

We should seize this opportunity with both hands. I do hope that democratic and freedom loving political parties — of course the Communists are excluded — will join hands to convince the world that these steps are required if Tibet and its unique culture are to be saved. India, which has always taken the high moral ground, cannot stand aside and watch the genocide in Tibet. To the West, particularly the US, I say that this is a much better cause than Kosovo.

Hindustan Times

Tête-à-tête with Tibet

Sanjoy Hazarika

March 31, 2008

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Politicians have such convenient memories. The other day, on a major news channel, a spokesman of the Congress declared that India had no business to interfere in the internal affairs of another country by taking a position on human rights abuse and the brutal crackdown in Tibet.

He forgot, very conveniently, that between 1966-1976, the People's Republic of China armed, nourished, trained and supported no less than three major armed insurgencies in North-east India: first the Nagas, whose Th. Muivah was received by Zhou en-lai; Laldenga of the Mizos was also received by Zhou and top Chinese leaders, while the People's Liberation Army of Manipur got its training in urban guerrilla warfare in Lhasa and elsewhere in Tibet.

That wasn't interference in our internal affairs? Ah, but one perhaps should not fault the Congress functionary, one should fault his age: perhaps he is too young to remember any of this recent history.

We also forget too easily that all Chinese maps show Arunachal Pradesh as a part of China. According to the

Chinese, their border in India's North-east begins with Assam. That remains at the core of China's border dispute with India. That is the 90,000 sq. km they seek, forget about Aksai Chin.

The government, Congress and CPI(M) also forget with unblushing regularity that the Chinese Ambassador to India has repeatedly abused his protected status as a diplomat and declared Arunachal Pradesh to be a part of China. He did this before the visit of Hu Jintao; was he summoned to the Foreign Office and told off? Was an official letter of protest handed to the Chinese Foreign Office? No.

There is the Chinese determination on Arunachal. So, now face them down in negotiations; Arunachal is ours and will remain so. Are the Chinese prepared to physically seek to resolve the issue? I doubt. The Indian Prime Minister or President should go to Tawang, which at the core of the dispute, to cement this point; it is where the Dalai Lama came during his flight from Lhasa in 1959.

We should have the gumption to speak out instead of following a policy of gobbledy gook.

Because of our soft position on Tibet, the Chinese think they can get away — and are — with the murder of a race they can never conquer. In addition, they are abusing one of the world's great spiritual leaders, and one of its finest human beings. Our government lacks the courage to stand up, not having learned from its experience of the saffron protests in Myanmar last winter, where its non-interference made it stand out like a sore thumb.

The Chinese have patted us on the back for the way we have handled the Tibetan protests. Of course, the Indian government did the right thing by protecting the Chinese embassy. That is acceptable; what is not acceptable is the effort to intimidate them into silence by declaring they have no business to 'indulge' in political activities. This is rubbish.

The presence of the Dalai Lama and the 120,000 Tibetans-in-exile in India is a political statement. We give them a place to stay, opportunity to protect their threatened culture and practise their endangered faith. They do business and conduct spiritual teachings. All residents of India, the government of this country needs to be reminded, enjoy equal human rights as any citizen here, according to the Supreme Court.

One basic human right is the right to mobilise politically and speak out on any issue. Unlike China, India is a democracy — we honour those who noisily air their differences, even take up arms because of their gripe with the State, but we seek to embrace dialogue — although we do not do it very well.

What is also often forgotten when we talk of China is that there is an underside to economic success: labour disputes have surged ever since pro-capitalist measures came into place, rising from 19,098 cases in 1994 to 314,000 in 2005. So, all is not well in the Middle Kingdom.

The Chinese classicisms of double-speak is seen in their remarks on the Dalai Lama: "he should look within" (he does that as a spiritual leader constantly every day). But of course in their eyes, Beijing has done no wrong and, therefore, does not need to conduct similar introspection.

China has failed to understand that 50 years of repression and oppression of the Tibetans has exploded into absolute hatred of the Han Chinese; it has now spilled into other provinces where Tibetans live. Such visceral hatred is rare among the Tibetans, a normally gentle people. As a result, this Great Power bristling with nuclear missiles, a huge bank balance with which it is influencing the world from South-east Asia to Africa, now is scurrying to save face, with tens of thousands of heavily-armed troops. Can a nation that is running scared of unarmed protesters be called a 'Super Power'?

The Dalai Lama is a man of erudition and grace, apart from his depth as a human being and a spiritual leader. If there was any one person today who exemplifies humility, resilience and commands universal respect – apart from Nelson Mandela — surely it is Tenzing Gyatso, the leader of the Tibetan people.

Chinese meddling in the North-east may have physically stopped after the re-establishment of ambassadorial representation in 1976. But, has it? How many here know that Muivah's top arms procurer lived until the 1990s at Kunming, Yunnan, with his family? That official Chinese weapons turn up with alarming regularity with the armed groups in the North-east – of course, it is a business and the Chinese are good businessmen.

So, let the Dalai Lama have his say; the Tibetans will speak and march, let them march to the borders. We can stop them there. But let the Chinese watch freedom ring in India as we honour a great man and his people in their struggle for a land they may never see.

If the Chinese talk to the Dalai Lama, they are not doing him any service. He is doing them an honour; he has given up the dream of independence but speaks of true autonomy. But even that is not acceptable to the Chinese; they want him and 'his clique, his splittist' supporters to vanish from the face of the earth. Yet his influence is overwhelming: in every Buddhist temple I visited during a journey through Tibet, there is always a high chair which no abbot or Rinpoche will sit on — it is for the Dalai Lama, when he returns.

They are making the same mistake of the Taliban by blasting the great Buddhist statues at Bamiyan. That by throwing such force against a symbol they are betraying their own weakness and acknowledging the overwhelming power of the other.

The Chinese do not know how to conduct a dialogue with those who disagree with them; they only know how to suppress, despite the smart superficial veneer of sophistication. The Chinese State, by example, shows that it goes by Mao's dictum: 'Power flows from the barrel of a gun'.

Therefore, with the Beijing Olympics looming, China stands to gain more by conducting a dialogue with the Dalai Lama instead of relying on brute force. It is better to open a dialogue and, with that one gesture, disarm the world and take a step toward reconciliation and peace.

The Dalai Lama has shown that true power flows from the depth of the human heart.

ASIAN AFFAIRS

Need for India's policy revisit

Abanti Bhattacharya

April 2008

The present Tibetan unrest provides an ideal opportunity to India to revisit its policy of appeasing the Chinese

Ongoing protests in Tibet, coinciding with the commemoration of the 49th anniversary of the 1959 March Uprising, were not unexpected, given that China is only a few months away from the Beijing Olympics. But what makes the Tibetan protests, the biggest in twenty years, quite startling is that they could be organised under the repressive communist regime with its well-established coercive mechanisms to curb resistance, or what it calls anti-China activities. This suggests that the Tibet issue is not dead despite every Chinese effort at

reducing it to a matter of an internal dissent. The protests indeed indicate the failure of China's economic policy in Tibet, which has focused primarily on creating prosperity in order to mitigate separatism. More importantly, the protests expose the political vulnerability of China despite its growing economic power and military might.

While the hosting of the 29th Olympics in Beijing provided an opportune moment for the Tibetans to rise against the repressive Communist regime, various repressive measures adopted under Hu Jintao's leadership particularly in 2006-7 provided the immediate background to the Tibetan unrest. First, in a major diplomatic move the People's Republic of China (PRC) passed a law on reincarnation in July 2007 and asserted its right to manage and select all reincarnate lamas of Tibetan Buddhism. This legislation has infuriated the Tibetans and has gravely hurt their religious sentiment since this would allow China to choose its own Dalai Lama after the present one. Second, the failure of the sixth round of talks in June 2007 has created general disillusionment among the Tibetans and raised questions on China's intentions. The Chinese side is demanding that before negotiations can begin the Dalai Lama should first recognise Tibet as being 'historically' part of China. To this, the Dalai Lama's stated position is that being a Buddhist monk he can not lie and that history should be kept aside in the negotiations. The talks have thus stalled and the Tibetans view that Beijing's strategy is simply geared to deflect international pressure and criticism while also biding for time and wait till the Dalai Lama's demise. Upon his death, the Chinese believe, the Tibetan movement would fizzle out. Third, the inauguration of the Qinghai Tibet Railway (QTR) in July 2006 was seen by the Dalai Lama as a Chinese plot to 'liberate' Tibet a second time. The QTR project is central to China's Great Western Development Policy, which aims at greater economic development of its underdeveloped western areas populated by ethnic minorities. This policy is also commensurate with greater 'Hanisation' of China's West. The construction of the QTR is primarily predicated on developing strategic and defence structures in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and the Tibetans claim that it has no direct positive benefits for the 85 per cent rural population of Tibet. There are apprehensions that the QTR would speed up Han migration into the TAR and marginalise the local Tibetans.

Among the long-term causes of the Tibetan unrest are factors such as acute human rights violation in Tibet, large-scale transfer of Han population in the TAR sidelining the traditional dominance of the Tibetan population, ethnic Han Chinese holding positions of real power and making key decisions in Tibet, and finally, the ill-effects of the Western Development Strategy that exacerbated economic polarisation between the urban and the rural sectors.

While all these reasons lie at the root of the current unrest, the present moment is also regarded as crucial for the Tibetans and as a last chance to fight for their cause and bring international pressure on China.

The hosting of the Olympics is looked upon as China's formal arrival as a great power and as an event that heralds its potential emergence as a superpower in the years to come. Consequently, the Chinese government has been well prepared to confront any untoward developments that could tarnish its image as a responsible global power. Accordingly, the Chinese government has undertaken acute repressive measures to quell the unrest, made scores of arrests and sent in more troops to Lhasa and neighbouring provinces of Yunnan and Qinghai where the unrest has spread.

The present repressive policy is rooted in Mao Zedong's policy on Tibet. The 17-Point Peace Agreement, which promised the Tibetans the right of exercising national regional autonomy and guaranteed that the existing political system in Tibet would not be altered, was flagrantly disrespected in the subsequent period. The denial

of self-determination and adoption of regional autonomy in Tibet became the means to promote Han hegemonism and Han expansionism in non-Han regions. Subsequent governments were no longer interested in promoting real autonomy of the TAR; instead they have unleashed the so-called 'cultural security' policy whereby China's minority policy is no longer based on the idea of preserving minority cultures but on 'refashioning' them. This, in effect, means annihilation of Tibetan culture and identity. China's present strategy is based on a carrot-and-stick policy to handle the Tibet issue — combining repressive and economic measures as a step to mitigate separatism — and finally reducing the Tibetans to be a nonentity in their own land.

India has reacted to the Tibetan unrest as merely a matter of 'distress' for the Indian government. The government's official position is squarely that Tibet is an internal affair of China and any comment on the present unrest would be deemed as interference by Beijing. A report by the Press Trust of India (PTI) on 23 March suggests that India has assured China that its position on the Tibet issue is 'clear and consistent' and that it 'would not change in the future'. The Indian position on Tibet is based on its traditional opposition to separatist movements and opposition to foreign intervention to mitigate such movements.

However, India's current policy on Tibet is flawed. Given the intractable border dispute and given the large presence of Tibetan refugees in India, how could Tibet be an internal issue? Tibet, in fact, has grave security implications for India as the Tibetan issue is entangled with the India–China border dispute.

India's Tibet policy till 2003 was based on recognising Tibet as part of China. By repeatedly reiterating over the years that Tibet is a part of China, India diluted its leverage not only in shoring up the Tibetan cause but also in its border negotiations with China. The government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee made a serious blunder in its Tibet policy by stating that the 'Tibetan Autonomous Region of China is part of the territory of China'. This had two critical implications for India's security. One, it excluded the Inner Tibet (Amdo and Kham) from the geographical notion of Tibet and sought to recognise the Inner Tibet (Sichuan, Yunnan and Qinghai provinces) as Chinese land. Two, more ominously, the TAR according to the Chinese definition represents the Outer Tibet. The Outer Tibet in Chinese understanding includes Arunachal Pradesh, as historically the Outer Tibet has been part of Tibet; and thereby China claims Arunachal as its 'southern state'.

Clearly, China is tackling its Tibet problem at two levels. One, it is involving the Dalai Lama's representatives in fruitless talks on the resolution of the Tibetan problem, while also disparaging him as a 'splittist' who aims to disintegrate China. Two, while arm-twisting India on the border dispute by raising the Tawang district issue, at the same time it is mesmerising the Indian leadership with rhetoric on India-China joint leadership in bringing about an Asian renaissance. In fact, however, the border issue is the core issue between India and China and no substantial improvement in their relations is possible without its resolution despite deepening trade ties. China has become India's largest trade partner in recent times with two-way trade crossing \$38 billion, an increase of 56 per cent over the past year. But Indian exports to China largely comprise raw materials like iron ore while the Indian market is being flooded with Chinese-manufactured goods. The situation is reminiscent of the British Raj when India's raw material was drained out in lieu of cheaper British-manufactured goods.

Therefore, India needs to revise its Tibet policy. The present policy of appeasing the Chinese would not help. China does not miss out a single instance when it could rebuke India, the last being the instance of showing displeasure on Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Arunachal Pradesh in February 2008. India's conciliatory policy toward China is thus faulty and needs serious revision. The present Tibetan unrest provides an ideal opportunity to India to revisit its Tibet policy.

Hindustan Times

Peace practitioner

Abhishek Singhvi

April 01, 2008

MP, Congress National Spokesperson, and senior Advocate

Recently, for the first time, I met the Dalai Lama. To be correct, it was the first one-on-one meeting, with only my wife accompanying me. Our earlier meetings — mostly at conferences or functions — never went beyond a casual exchange of pleasantries. At my wife's initiative, we requested an appointment and despite his busy schedule, it was cleared in 48 hours.

We were 15 minutes early for the appointment and the Dalai Lama's representative, Mr Tshering, met us on the seventh floor of Hotel Ashok. Tshering turned out to be an extremely polite person and an efficient manager and soon we started chatting. According to Tshering, the Chinese were already a majority in Tibet, approximately seven million out of the total population of 12 million. He feared that very soon, the Chinese would outnumber the Tibetans 2:1 in their own homeland. He explained how Buddhism had travelled from India to China and then again from India to Tibet.

After some time, we were ushered into the Dalai Lama's room. The first thing that struck me was a child-like simplicity in his eyes, in the way he listened and spoke. Everything he said and did came from the heart. There was no premeditated strategy, no glib talk, no posturing and no flamboyance. Ours was a private visit with no agenda, we only wanted to be blessed by his noble presence.

I told him that even Gandhiji had said that non-violence might not always be a virtue. Even non-violence, rarely, might have to give way for a higher public cause. Gandhiji, I added, practised non-violence against the British, who could be considered relatively benevolent oppressors and imperialists. Would Gandhiji, I asked the Dalai Lama, have advocated the same steadfast adherence to non-violence, as was being practised by the Dalai Lama, in the face of a more aggressive oppressor like the Chinese?

The Dalai Lama listened intently and, with a benevolent smile, said that the true test of steadfastness to the principle comes in the face of the greatest provocation. He believed that no other path was possible. He added that for him, violation of human dignity, whether of the Chinese or of the Tibetans, was equally reprehensible and that is why he had specifically mentioned the Tiananmen Square massacre in his statements.

He said he was also concerned that the tiny Tibetan community would end up with massive casualties if they confronted the infinitely larger Chinese army. What really worried him was the Chinese influx into Tibet, particularly ahead of the Beijing Olympics. He feels that probably a million more Chinese would permanently move into Tibet. He was fearful of the impact of this on Tibetan culture, language, dress, habit and so on. He added that Tibetans always looked up to India as their guru because this was the land of the Buddha. He added that there was a natural affinity, a spontaneous empathy and a special emotional bonding between India and Tibet, which India sometimes forgot or ignored.

As he autographed two books for us, I saw how calligraphic his writing was: neat, precise and beautifully-formed. His English was heavily accented but adequate. Sometimes his secretary helped out with appropriate English words after the Dalai Lama used its Tibetan original. He explained how the Tibetan alphabet resembled

— phonetically at least — the Hindi ka, kha, ga etc. He explained how the uprising in Tibet was spontaneous and a reaction to the increasing Chinese presence in the region.

Why did he agree early on to Chinese sovereignty over Tibet and only asserted the right to an autonomous region? I did not get a detailed or satisfactory answer to my question. He suggested that the Chinese control of the region was a fait accompli and he had to ensure the safety, security and survival of the tiny number of Tibetan people against a billion Chinese. Without him saying so, I got the feeling that he had no other option.

It was evident the Dalai Lama's soul is steeped in spirituality and austerity is a way of life for him. His entire being radiates benevolence, compassion and equilibrium. In that sense, he truly exemplifies Buddha's teachings and way of life. To be always in sync, in harmony and never to take or allow his followers to take extreme positions is his sincere conviction and continuous effort. Sometimes onlookers feel frustrated with his steadfast insistence on non-violence and even deem his stand counterproductive given the nature of the adversary. But the Dalai Lama believes and practises Gandhian non-violence and Buddhist equanimity. He is truly a unique apostle of peace in an era of strife and hegemony.



India walking diplomatic tightrope on Tibet

Rajeev Sharma

March 25, 2008

India is engaged in a diplomatic tightrope walk vis a vis China ever since large-scale protests erupted in Tibet on March 10, the 49th anniversary of Tibetan uprising that led to fleeing of the Dalai Lama to India.

Diplomatic observers point to numerous reasons for India's guarded response that elicited a mild reproach from the Dalai Lama when he said India was "overcautious" with regard to Tibet. These reasons range from political to economic to strategic.

The fact that Sino-India bilateral trade is set to reach the \$ 50 billion mark soon is an important demonstrator of the fast normalisation of ties between two giant neighbours that went fought a war in 1962.

But it alone is not enough for India to take a hard position on Tibet. India would not like to indulge in a bit of diplomatic sabre rattling with China at a time when the Indo-US nuclear deal is journeying through a sensitive patch and New Delhi would need Beijing's support whenever the deal goes before the Nuclear Suppliers Group for an India-specific waiver.

This partly explains that though India spoke its mind on the Tibet issue at least thrice in past ten days, a rarity, New Delhi's response was not full-blooded.

The Indian government took steps to stop the peace marchers and arrested about 100 persons. In response to the troubles in Lhasa the ministry of external affairs said: "We are distressed by reports of the unsettled situation and violence in Lhasa and by the deaths of innocent people. We would hope that all those involved will work to improve the situation and remove the causes of such trouble in Tibet, which is an autonomous region of China, through dialogue and non-violent means."

But despite expressing its distress, the Indian government made an effort to placate the Chinese authorities by reiterating that Tibet is an autonomous region of China. This has been stated by India on many occasions, including at joint declarations following most high-level visits. Restating it at this time indicates a desire to mollify even as it is forced to take note of the events in Lhasa.

Though New Delhi is hyper sensitive to Beijing's feelings, the Chinese authorities have no such regard to Indian sensitivities. Prime Minister's visit to Arunachal Pradesh evoked a statement of protest from a Chinese official on the grounds that Beijing claimed Arunachal as a part of China. In the recent past, Chinese officials have been more assertive in their public statements over territorial claims and disputed territory, especially in Arunachal Pradesh.

On the march of other groups of Tibetan activists, the external affairs ministry issued another statement: "Like our other guests, Tibetan refugees, while they are in India, are expected to refrain from political activities and those activities that affect our relations with other friendly countries."

The next big thing on the Tibet issue is Beijing's grand plans to take the Olympic torch up to Mount Everest. Nepal has been pressured to close down the Nepal route to Mount Everest. For the Chinese government the passage of the torch through Tibet and up the mountain is an assertion of its stance that Tibet is a part of China.

China has closed down the Tibet route to Mount Everest for mountaineers this season and persuaded Nepal to close its route between May 1 and 10, when the Olympic torch is to be taken up Mount Everest. Pro-Tibet demonstrations have taken place in Kathmandu after the violence in Lhasa.



China's virtual war on Tibet

B. Raman

April 01, 2008

There has been a mushrooming of Han-run blogs and chat rooms to counter the Western version of the developments in Tibet. While these sites have been hitting hard at the Dalai Lama and his Western supporters, they aren't quite critical of India's role in the uprising

The Chinese Ministry of Public Security, which is responsible for internal intelligence and security and oversees the administration of Tibet, Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia, is reported to have issued instructions to the Chinese Embassies in countries having a large number of Tibetan refugees to mobilise the local Han residents to counter the anti-Beijing propaganda and activities of the Tibetan refugees and to prevent any attempt by the refugees to disrupt the passage of the Olympic torch through different countries. They have been advised to counter them through the Internet as well as on the ground.

These instructions have come on the eve of the planned observance of March 31, 2008, as a "Day of Action" by the Tibetan diaspora. On this day, the Tibetan Youth Congress proposes to hand over to the Chinese Embassies in important countries a petition calling for Tibetan independence, which has been signed by more than one million people - Tibetans as well as foreigners - all over the world. The petition was circulated and the signatures obtained through the Internet.

The Chinese have been concerned over the effective manner in which the TYC and Tibetan exile groups supporting it have been using the Internet to keep in touch with each other, to propagate the cause of Tibetan freedom, to carry on propaganda against Beijing and to call for a boycott of the Beijing Olympics. Despite the Chinese clamp-down on the use of the Internet and mobile telephones in Tibet, Sichuan, Qinghai and Gansu, the TYC office-bearers abroad and the leaders of the Uprising Movement, formed by the TYC inside the Tibetan-inhabited areas of China, continue to exchange communications with each other and keep the world informed of what has been going on inside Tibet.

Thanks to the Internet and the mobile telephones and the ingenuity of the Tibetan youth, the Chinese have failed to impose a total iron curtain around the Tibetan-inhabited areas, though a partial iron curtain, which is 75 per cent effective, functions. Even young Tibetan monks in Tibet and other provinces have become adept in the use of the Internet.

The Han diaspora abroad has been advised to copycat the Tibetan use of the Internet in order to widely disseminate the Chinese version of the developments in Tibet since March 10. There has been a mushrooming of Han-run blogs and chat rooms in the last one week to counter the Western version of the developments. A visit to some of these sites indicates that while they have been hitting hard at the Dalai Lama and his so-called clique and at Western media and Governments, they are avoiding any criticism of India. They are also avoiding blaming India for the activities of the Dalai Lama and the TYC.

The Chinese authorities have been avoiding taking cognisance of the TYC and giving it a locus standi in the Tibetan issue. Instead, they continue to blame what they call the 'Dalai clique', which includes His Holiness himself, his set-up in Dharamsala, the TYC and other Tibetan non-governmental organisations agitating on the issue of the Tibetan rights.

The Chinese do not want to give the impression that they are doubting the sincerity of the Government of India when it says that it continues to regard Tibet as an integral part of China and is opposed to any anti-China activities from its territory. While accusing the Western countries of following double-standards with regard to the use of force to deal with internal disturbances, they have been avoiding projecting the uprising in the Tibetan-inhabited areas as engineered by the West. They have been recalling the ruthless manner in which President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, as the Interior Minister in 2005, put down the riots by the Muslim migrants in France and describing his present expression of concern over the Chinese use of force against the Tibetans as hypocrisy.

While continuing to make arrests of the suspected participants in the uprising and those who could pose a threat during the passage of the Olympic flame through Tibet, they have at the same time mounted a campaign to re-assure the Western Governments and investors that the situation in Tibet is not as bad as projected by the Western media and has returned to normal. Their exercise to take teams of foreign journalists and diplomats to Lhasa to see the situation for themselves proved an embarrassment.

When the journalists were visiting a monastery in Lhasa, a group of monks shouted anti-Chinese and pro-Dalai Lama slogans. The diplomats have expressed their dissatisfaction over the way the Chinese sought to exercise strict control over their movements in Lhasa and did not allow them to freely interact with the local population.

The Chinese have been surprised that despite the significant prosperity of the Tibetans as a result of the undoubted economic progress, there is a high level of discontent against the Government and support for the

Dalai Lama. They attribute this to the failure of the local officials to realise the importance of “patriotic education” of the Tibetan youth. The importance of “patriotic re-education” was the running theme of the remarks made by Mr Meng Jianzhu, the Minister for Public Security, during his interactions with local officials when he visited Lhasa on March 23 and 24, . His visit has been followed by the beginning of what appears to be a purge of local officials, who are seen as responsible for failing to anticipate the disturbances and prevent them.

The Tibet Daily announced on March 30 that Mr Danzeng Langjie, Director of Tibet’s Ethnic Minority and Religious Affairs Commission, has been “removed” from his post and replaced by Mr Luosang Jumei, who was the Vice-Secretary of the Communist Party committee of Lhasa since 2004. Both are ethnic Tibetans.

The Chinese Foreign Office is also reported to be unhappy with the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi for failing to monitor the activities of the Dalai Lama’s set-up and the TYC and forewarn the Government in Beijing of their plans to create incidents before the passage of the Olympic flame through Tibet. The purge may eventually affect the staff of the Embassy too.

Social Cause

Take a call

G. Parthasarathy

April 4, 2008

Former Indian ambassador to Pakistan

China has broken all promises made to Tibet in 1951 and India must respond to that.

China’s President Hu Jintao does not believe in half measures when it comes to cracking down on any manifestation of Tibetans asserting their national identity or protecting their distinct spiritual and cultural heritage.

As the Chinese Communist Party’s commissar in Tibet in 1989, Hu ordered a massive crackdown on protesters, in which over 600 Tibetans were gunned down.

This crackdown followed concerns voiced by virtually every Chinese leader who met prime minister Rajiv Gandhi during his visit to China in December 1988, requiring him to repeatedly acknowledge that Tibet is an ‘autonomous region of China’.

The aim was to clearly let the Tibetans know that even India, which had opened its doors to Tibetan refugees and the Dalai Lama when they fled Chinese persecution in 1959, would no longer welcome Tibetans. President Hu Jintao is replaying in 2008 the vicious crackdown he enacted in 1989.

In a letter to prime minister Nehru on November 7, 1950, just after the Chinese invaded Tibet, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel warned: “We have to consider the new situation that faces us as a result of the disappearance of Tibet as we knew it and the expansion of China almost up to our gates. Throughout history we have seldom been worried about our northeast frontier.

The Himalayas have been regarded as an impenetrable barrier... Chinese ambitions in this respect not only cover our Himalayan slopes on our side but also include the important part of Assam.”

Sadly, Patel did not live long enough to see that his warnings were not taken seriously and a gullible Indian leadership soon found the Chinese encroaching across the border in Ladakh, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh.

As China's economic and military strength has grown, it has become more strident, laying claim to Arunachal Pradesh, intruding into Bhutan and using the excuse of developments in Tibet to deploy armed personnel in Nepal. New Delhi responds with servility to the indignity of its ambassador being summoned by the Chinese after midnight, by arranging an unprecedented meeting for China's ambassador with home minister Shivraj Patil.

In Tibet, the Chinese have launched a severe crackdown on Tibetan protests with over 300 Tibetans reportedly killed in Tibet, Sichuan, Giansu and Qinghai. In response, Prakash Karat theorises that what the Chinese are doing in Tibet is akin to what we are doing in Jammu and Kashmir and Nagaland.

Nothing can be further from the truth. People in Jammu and Kashmir enjoy the same political rights and the same degree of autonomy as people in other parts of India. In China, Han Chinese entities like Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan enjoy — or are promised — substantial autonomy and even different political systems from the rest of China.

In Tibet, the Chinese government signed a 17 Point Agreement with the Dalai Lama in 1951, in which they guaranteed full freedom of religious beliefs. They promised not to alter the existing political system and to respect the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama and the sanctity and authority of monasteries in Tibet.

The Tibetans were also promised full respect for their language and spiritual heritage. It was only when these rights were trampled upon by China's Communist rulers that the Dalai Lama had to flee his motherland.

In subsequent years, the Chinese have systematically sought to reduce the Tibetans to a minority in their homeland by bringing in Han Chinese settlers.

Tibetans today face the virtual extinction of their culture, spiritual heritage and way of life. An American diplomat said: "What the Chinese are doing to the Tibetans in the 21st century is no different from what the settlers did to the Red Indians in America in the 19th century".

China is misleading the world, alleging that the Dalai Lama is seeking independence, whereas he is asking for nothing more than the sort of autonomy that Beijing accords to its Han Chinese brethren in places like Hong Kong.

But whether it is in dealing with the Muslim Uighurs in Xingjian or Buddhist Tibetans, China follows a policy of repression and denial of autonomy. As an astute British writer noted, China practices "apartheid Chinese style" with its non-Han peoples.

India obviously cannot endorse any call for Tibetan independence. India does, however, have the right to say that since the Dalai Lama was forced to flee to India because China did not respect the terms of the 17 Point Agreement it signed with his representatives in 1951, India expects China to negotiate the return of the Dalai Lama and his followers to their homeland in freedom and dignity, respecting the terms of the 1951 Agreement.

Hindustan Times

A time to stand up

Karan Thapar

April 05, 2008

My congratulations to Bhaichung Bhutia. In India it's not just unusual; it's extremely rare, for public figures to speak out in support of controversial issues. In fact, when that issue happens to be political they resort to self-denying silence. And no issue could be more controversial than Tibet. This is why Bhutia deserves applause for identifying with the cause he supports.

In contrast, I'm surprised, actually dismayed, by Aamir Khan's self-serving and dubious position. No one can force him to speak out for Tibet and he has, in fact, every right to carry the Olympic torch if that's what he wants to do. But to claim that he will run "with a prayer in my heart for the people of Tibet" is not just facetious but two-faced.

It's no secret that China is exploiting the Olympics for political acceptance. If the Olympic torch passes peacefully through all the countries it will enter Beijing and claim that Tibetan protests have failed. That's why they've threatened to withdraw the torch if India can't guarantee its security. So if Aamir wants to support Tibet, at the very least his T-shirt should proclaim the fact. Tibet needs vocal, outspoken support not secret, silent prayers.

I suspect Aamir is trying to have it both ways and that's hardly honest. Actually it might have been better if he had kept quiet. After all he doesn't have to explain himself, leave aside justify his position.

But let's widen this discussion. The claim that sports and politics should not mix has never been the Indian position and, at critical moments, not that of the West either. For decades India spurned sporting contacts with apartheid South Africa. This may have seemed the morally right thing to do but it was the conscious and deliberate politicisation of sport. So too the West's boycott of the Moscow Olympics and Russia's attempt to do the same at Los Angeles. So, now, to argue the opposite in the case of Beijing is, at the very least, to reverse earlier principles.

In this case I would say that this is an issue for each individual to decide as he or she wants. Actually I would applaud those who support China and stand up and say so just as much as Bhaichung Bhutia. It's the same courage of conviction in either case. What's needed is a clear stand.

Where, therefore, does that leave the Indian government's position? Pranab Mukherjee claims the Dalai Lama is "a respected guest in India" but warns him against actions or statements "that can adversely affect relations between India and China". Frankly this diminishes India — as a democracy, as a nation and as a civilisation. The India I would be proud of would respect the right of every Tibetan refugee to peacefully and lawfully protest. And it's just too bad if Beijing doesn't like it. The India I'm embarrassed by asks Tibetans to live in New Delhi or Dharamsala on what are, in effect, China's conditions. Pranab Mukherjee's statement has not only shrunk the government, he's made all of us feel small. Worse, it's illegal.

George Fernandes tells me that in 1991 he petitioned the Supreme Court on the right of Tibetan refugees in India to protest against China. In the case which he argued himself, the Supreme Court upheld their right to do

so. According to The Times of India (14th December, 1991) this is what the Court said: “The government cannot prevent people from staging peaceful demonstrations. Justice Sawant observed that shouting slogans, burning photos and squatting were not violent ways of demonstration.” I’ve also spoken to Justice Sawant. He says Pranab Mukherjee’s position is a violation of the Supreme Court’s judgement.

Of course, China wasn’t a super power in 1991. Today it is. But so what? Principles don’t bend before power — or do they? Is that the real message from Pranab Mukherjee?

Last month when China praised India’s handling of Tibetan refugees I felt embarrassed. Now they’ll shower praise on us for silencing the Dalai Lama. It will make me cringe.

I wonder how Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi will feel.



Tibet a tale of mice and men

Premen Addy

April 12, 2008

External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee is the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time. Faced with the lurid spectacle of a Muslim rabble in Kolkata demanding the expulsion from India of Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen, he made a chivalrous call in the dead of night at the safe house in which she was quartered and ‘persuaded’ her to leave the country for more welcoming shores.

He has now issued a brazen warning to the Dalai Lama to stop making statements on Indian soil that were likely to offend Tibet’s Han Chinese overlords in Beijing. What do they know of India, who only India know? Is the GDP the only thing that makes an Indian walk tall? Has fear of China reduced Indian freedoms, values and traditions of hospitality, to a pitchblende of shaming casuistry and cowardice, diminishing India and the Indian people?

Hearing Mr Mukherjee few would believe that it is the murderous apparatus of the Han Chinese imperium that has been gunning down unarmed Tibetan monks by the score on the streets of Lhasa and in cities in the adjoining Tibetan-populated provinces of Sichuan, Gangsu and Xinghai. The taking of innocent lives has provoked no response from the Indian Minister whose. Why not empower him to lead a tributary mission to the Forbidden City and kowtow to the rulers of the Middle Kingdom? They might in their generosity even accept India as an autonomous region of the Celestial Empire.

Most Governments, West and East, have little to boast about in their dealings with China, the allure of the Chinese marketplace having anaesthetised their souls. The Anglo-American great and good (mostly Right-wing), reborn Marco Polos all, have gushed in season and out on the economic miracle that is China, the superpower of Napoleonic prophecy. The stable Oriental despotism of inebriated Occidental fantasy is illusion at war with reality.

Three notable Chinese scholars of the Chinese Communist state, now resident in the US, are refreshingly

sceptical: Yasheng Huang, Minxin Pei and Gordan Chang have written extensively on China's economy and described and analysed in detail Beijing's "socialism with Chinese characteristics". Some of what they say would fit in well with a rendition of England's 18th century South Sea Bubble and Engels' History of the English Working Class in 1844.

Although Deng Xiaoping arrogantly called China's invasion of Vietnam in early 1979 a replication of the lesson taught to India in 1962, it was Beijing in the end which had more to learn than teach, as Gen Giap wryly remarked. Vietnam had earlier humbled the American superpower. No one is suggesting surely that China's military strength has ever equalled that of the United States.

When Vietnam fought America, the Soviet Union held the ring. When India fought Pakistan, and America and China made threatening noises on Islamabad's behalf, the Soviet presence neutered the threat. The possibility of a widening conflict is deterrent enough. Besides, India itself is not without means to inflict unacceptable damage on any potential aggressor. Sleep well, comrades of the Indian Press.

The timidity of Governments on Tibet has been subsumed by the rage of the streets in world capitals. The mayhem engulfing the relay of the Olympic torch in London reached its denouement in Paris, showing that Tibet is now a charged metaphor that transcends political and linguistic frontiers. Paris 1789 has been joined by Paris 2008: Globalisation has fulfilled its role and bridged the centuries.

The romance of pan-Asianism bred the Indian fairytale of China's reciprocal goodwill and friendship, notwithstanding Chinese nationalism's antecedents in the sterner school of imperial restoration. It was MN Roy who, way back in 1922, dismissed India's pan-Asian dream as no more than the ineffectual vapourings of "proud intellectuals with inferiority complexes."

Rabindranath Tagore's prescient lecture, with its sparse title, Nationalism, was appreciated neither in Japan, where it was first delivered in the aftermath of World War I, nor subsequently understood or absorbed by Chinese audiences when the poet visited China. Japanese and Chinese nationalists alike, barring a small minority, saw him as a representative of a broken civilisation.

Yet India's enduring belief in the grand illusion of a new civilisational alignment would brook no denial. The philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in 1943 visited Chungking, China's wartime capital, in the company of India's Agent-General, KPS Menon, where he gave a speech on the Buddha. Menon's despatch, describing this surreal event, was masterly in its presentation, humour and insight.

Radhakrishnan, he said, spoke as if he were addressing his fellow dons at All Souls College in Oxford. At the end of his spellbinding oration, Radhakrishnan asked a Chinese listener what he thought of the concept of 'Dharma', little realising that the man, Chen Li-fu, understood little English and, as a leader of the underworld, had even less interest in the subject. But he was a generous donor to Kuomintang party funds and was a trusted associate of Chiang Kai-shek!

Menon suggested that India would be better served discussing practicalities with China - an exchange of agricultural specialists, for example - instead of indulging in high falutin' exercises that failed to resonate with Chinese leaders.

Hindi-Chini bhai bhai was of this absurdist vintage. Mao Tse-tung appealed to Jawaharlal Nehru for medical help during the Japanese occupation of China. The response was the Kotnis Mission and it brought a warm letter of thanks. Yet, less than a decade later, a Chinese Communist publication, World Culture, described

Nehru as “a rebel against the movement for national independence, a blackguard who undermines the progress of the people’s liberation movement, a loyal slave of imperialism”. Mao took a dim view of India and Indian culture, as he made clear in a conversation with Richard Nixon and Mr Henry Kissinger. He likened India to a cow, the lowest form of animal in Chinese mythology.

However, India possessed no copyright on poor judgement. Consider the New York Times editor, Harrison Salisbury’s “Dissenting Introduction” (for the paper’s edition) to the Soviet journalist Victor Louis’s title The Coming Decline of the Chinese Empire, a spirited defence of whose sanctity was a triumph of realpolitik over good sense.

To Sardar Vallabhbhai belongs the last word. He got it right with his warning that, with China’s occupation of Tibet, India would have two frontiers to protect instead of one against Pakistan.

The Telegraph

calcutta, india

The Tibetan Dilemma

Kanwal Sibal

April 23, 2008

The author is former foreign secretary of India

India should not be embarrassed by China’s embarrassment

Apart from China itself, the Tibetan question concerns no other country more than it does India. It is at the root of our problems with China. The dilemmas and confusion that have marked our policy towards China over decades affect our response even today to the ongoing Tibetan unrest. If we support it in some way, we earn China’s ire and invite a hardening of China’s position on the border issue. If we do not, we assist China in further tightening its grip on Tibet, and still face China’s claims on our land as an extension of its occupation of Tibet. Should we act in our interest or end up by acting in China’s interest?

For others, Tibet is essentially a humanitarian question, one of protecting the identity of a distinctive cultural, religious and linguistic ethnic group threatened by repressive Chinese policies. Even during the height of the West’s ideological confrontation with communism, the liberation of Tibet from Chinese rule was not on the agenda. The West showed little interest, too, in the humanitarian plight of the Tibetans until fairly recently. Far more attention has been paid to the issue of human rights in China at large, and to the plight of prominent political dissidents there, than to the condition of the hapless Tibetans. Weighing in Western calculations would have been the consideration that supporting human rights in China was only charge-sheeting the Chinese political system, not undermining the country’s territorial integrity, which support to the Tibetan cause could imply.

The Chinese have succeeded brilliantly in extracting political support from the rest of the world, including India, for their territorial integrity. Witness the way in which, in communiqué after communiqué, foreign leaders endorse the One China policy and take a position on Taiwan’s status. While Chinese authoritarianism is decried, there is general readiness to spurn Taiwanese democracy by denying it any political future outside China.

There is a lesson for India in this. Besides the fact that by making claims on Arunachal Pradesh, the Chinese show scant regard for India's integrity, long-standing Western support for some change of *status quo* in Jammu and Kashmir in Pakistan's favour shows how little attached the West has been to the idea of India's territorial integrity. India's practice of democracy has not politically shielded it from pressure to accord self-determination to a section of its population. Western governments do not seem to think, however, that the principle of self-determination need apply to the disaffected populations of China. India's geography can be rearranged, not China's.

For long years, the Dalai Lama has ploughed his furrow with great composure and dignity. He has played his role remarkably well, impressing others with his humility and grace. In a world full of violence, he has continued to preach and practise his message of non-violence. His profile and his acceptance as Tibet's spiritual leader have steadily risen internationally, without, however, getting translated into any serious political pressure on China regarding Tibet. His spiritualism and sincerity have had limited success in a hardened world where violence is justified by the weak to obtain rights and by the strong to enforce them.

From the start, no country has backed the cause of Tibetan independence. Even the Dalai Lama's plea for genuine autonomy within the ambit of Chinese sovereignty has not found open Western backing. The Chinese, of course, have summarily rejected it. Six rounds of talks between his representatives and the Chinese have yielded little result. The Dalai Lama has made all the possible concessions he could, and that too in advance. He has accepted China's sovereignty over Tibet; he only seeks the autonomy to which China is legally committed; he has abjured violence.

The Chinese are not interested in negotiating with him; they wish to humiliate him. They want him to falsify history by conceding that Tibet was historically an integral part of China. He must acknowledge that for Taiwan too. It is clear that once he is forced to lose dignity, he loses the will to be forceful in negotiations. There is an instructive difference in the way a democratic country like India negotiates with its adversaries and the way China does. The contemptuous attitude of China contrasts with the basic civility with which India deals with opponents. Such contempt denotes a lack of willingness to compromise. Our moderate language reflects moderation in policies. The abusive vocabulary used by the Chinese leadership to describe the Dalai Lama is a disquieting insight into its mind, which remains unmellowed by China's remarkable economic success. The world cannot ignore the gap between China's anachronistic political language and its economic modernization, and what this contradiction bodes for the future.

Tibet, for India, is a vital strategic issue, affecting us politically and militarily. Our territorial integrity is threatened by China's claims based on purported Chinese historical sovereignty over Tibet. Unresolved differences over Tibet have put our foreign policy under strain. The biggest strategic blow inflicted by China on us has been the transfer of nuclear and missile technologies to Pakistan, thereby permanently endangering our security from within our region. The expansion of our political dialogue and economic ties with China, as well as points of convergence on some international issues, should not mislead us about the underlying reality of our problems with China.

We have all along ceded too much ground to China on Tibet. We gave asylum to the Dalai Lama, but on the understanding that he would not engage in political activity on Indian soil. The unpretentiousness of his approach towards China is in some measure on account of the host country, India, distancing itself from him politically. What meaning would he have drawn from our joint documents with China reiterating our position on putting political curbs on him and the Chinese lauding us for it? He would have concluded that his political agenda

must be adjusted to Indian interests and sensitivities about China, and that his demands must be pitched at the minimum. But the Chinese do not recognize that we have, in effect, helped them consolidate their position in Tibet by keeping the Dalai Lama in check. They continue to lay claim to Arunachal Pradesh and fuel our distrust of their intentions.

Tibet is currently in turmoil. The issue has caught international attention in ways it has not before. The Olympic torch relay has been disrupted in many cities. The Olympic spirit sits ill with Chinese repressive policies in Tibet. True, many countries have internal problems and Western policies in various parts of the world argue for less sanctimoniousness about China. But such countries allow debate and dissent, unbridled criticism of government policies and anti-government rallies. What sets China apart is the throttling of all dissent within the country and manipulation of information in the absence of a free press.

We ought not to submit ourselves to Chinese pressure on the right of the Tibetans to stage peaceful demonstrations in India. If large-scale demonstrations can be allowed elsewhere, their suppression here would send the terrible message that we protect Chinese interests more than we do our own with regard to Tibet. We should not be embarrassed by China's embarrassment on the Tibetan question, which is at the root of our own problems with that country.



Tibet — quest for spiritual autonomy

T C A Rangachari

April 03, 2008

TIBET is in the headlines again. The riots since March 14 — the largest in two decades — and the declaration of a 'People's War' by the central government have served to remind the world that despite the investments made by China to build material progress in the region, including building — in an engineering marvel and a tribute to human endurance — a railway line to Lhasa, Tibet remains a live issue, domestically and in China's relations with India.

The protests that led to the riots began following the arrest of Buddhist monks marching to mark the 49th anniversary of the uprising that led the Dalai Lama to leave Tibet for India. Tibetans complain that they have been reduced to a minority status with millions of ethnic Hans being settled in the region; that Tibetan culture is being diluted, even destroyed; and, that investments only benefit the Hans. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has expressed deep concern and called for an end to the violence and asked China to "address the long-simmering resentment of the Tibetan people through dialogue."

The world has reacted with dismay but cautiously. The US urged China to 'respect' Tibetan culture and called for a dialogue with the Dalai Lama. Premier Wen Jiabao, with an eye on global opinion, has told UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown that China was prepared to enter into a dialogue with the Dalai Lama provided he does not seek total independence for Tibet and renounces violence — conditions that the Dalai Lama has met long ago.

There has, indeed, been an ongoing dialogue between the Chinese and the representatives of the Dalai Lama for some time now. But there has been little to show by way of progress. The Chinese say that the Tibetan demand the restoration of the 'Greater' Tibet is a major obstacle. They cannot concede it because that would mean taking away territories from other neighbouring provinces; undoing the settlement of the Hans in the region is also impossible to concede. Are these the real stumbling blocks? Or is it, as the Tibetans feel, a problem of unwillingness to accept ethnic and cultural diversity and practice tolerance towards spiritual values?

The Chinese fears of 'splittism' and attempts to break up China may have had some basis when China was a fledgling state and weak. Nearly six decades after the establishment of the PRC, China is, today, on the way to becoming an economic superpower and even evokes fears in the developed world of becoming so dominant as to pose a security threat. It is a permanent member of the UN Security Council with the power to veto any decision that it finds unacceptable. Are China's fears about Tibet breaking away or others succeeding in such a venture still justified? Is China's prestige in the world enhanced by periodic outbreaks of Tibetan anguish or by accommodating it? Is waiting out the Dalai Lama's lifetime the best guarantee of a solution or making a mutually acceptable settlement during his lifetime?

China seems to be laying to rest its fears about India in this context. Even as Wen Jiabao said that "the Tibet issue is a very sensitive one in our relations with India," he has also said that China "appreciated" the position and steps taken by the Indian government in handling the issue. Such an assessment could be helpful in the bilateral context provided this sense of reassurance is lasting and will inform the general approach of China towards India. If so, there might even be a role for India in facilitating a successful outcome of the dialogue between the Chinese and the Tibetans.

There is one other aspect that deserves attention — the domestic implications. India is host to a quarter of a million or more Tibetans. Over the last five decades, a large number have been born in India. It is not clear if even the Home Ministry has a total count of those who have taken up Indian citizenship — something they are entitled to do under Indian laws. This issue needs to be addressed because it has economic and political relevance. Where Indian citizens are involved in demonstrations, protest marches and the like are we answerable to China even if the cause is Tibet? Do the Chinese have a *locus standi* in how they are dealt with by the Indian authorities on Indian soil? Is it lawful to impose the same restrictions on Indian nationals of Tibetan origin as on Tibetans?

So long as Tibet remained silent, even if sullen, these questions did not need to be asked. But the recent upsurge compels not only their being asked but for answers to be sought.



Tibet and us

Tridip Suhrud

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In times when religious politics is viewed with suspicion, the struggles in Burma and Tibet are important. They provide us with radically different possibilities of a politics imbued with deep religiosity

In different ways, Burma, Taslima Nasreen and now Tibet and the Dalai Lama. The apathy of the government of India and all the major Indian political parties to these crises has been most unnerving. Burma and Tibet are not just political crises. Both movements are led by individuals who represent the possibility of moral politics in our times. Aung San Su Kyi and the Dalai Lama represent the power of non-violence. They represent the increasing frayed hope that self-suffering can be transformative. They represent the struggle of soul force against brute force. And not surprisingly both draw sustenance from Buddhism. Buddhism, in our times, as in the times of Babasaheb Ambedkar, and even earlier, represented the possibility of a religion that not only ennobles the soul, but also paves the way for transformative social and political action.

We live in times when religious politics is viewed with suspicion. It is credited with creating and fostering intolerance within and without. It is a source of violence and bigotry. It is indicative of closures rather than an invitation to a dialogue. This kind of religious politics invites responses that are equally intolerant, both from the nation-states and other religious groups. It seeks to meet one kind of fundamentalism with a similar kind of bigotry.

In a world which has come to judge religious interventions in politics and civil society as something inherently undesirable, Burma and Tibet provide us with a different opportunity. Both these movements are led by monks and monasteries. The haunting images of monks in their saffron robes, walking out of their age-old monasteries, marching in prayerful silence in defiance of the military dictators of Burma are still fresh in our minds. These monks were performing not only a political duty, they were fulfilling a religious duty. They were asserting that a life of religion is not that of ascetic contemplation and withdrawal only. The ascetic duty demands that they fight for truth, not only in abstract theological debates, but in life, in the streets and by-lanes of cities. The assertion of truth requires them to make sacrifice.

The monks who marched out in Burma knew that it was their religious duty to lead a society and show a way out of crisis. The struggles in Burma and Tibet, though led by monks, seek establishment of modern, liberal, tolerant, open democracies. Neither of the groups seeks a theocratic state or a closed society. They are modern in their political aspirations.

These struggles are important for us. They are important not just because they represent the rights of peoples for self-determination. Or that they represent an aspiration that is just and legitimate. Far more significantly, they provide us with radically different possibilities of politics imbued with deep religiosity. They show that religion can be both transformative and liberating.

For this reason alone, the response that was expected from India and the world community was not purely political, but ethical and moral. But the Indian state and the political parties failed to recognise this aspect of the struggle. We failed. We failed to support and sustain the movements even as legitimate political movements. India, which is plagued by divisive and intolerant religious politics, by violence that seeks justification in and through religion, has a lot to learn from these struggles. The struggles are an object lesson in the kind of spiritual politics that Gandhi struggled with.

What could be the reasons for the failure of the Indian political establishment? The weakening and withering of the Indian state is quite evident. It is clear that we have no clear notion of national interest. It has been increasingly apparent that we as a state have given up the hope and faith that a Tagore, a Gandhi and even a Nehru had — that we would be a moral force in world politics and that independent India was necessary so that we could fulfill this historic responsibility. Trade relations, flows of foreign capital and our new-found

friendship with China and the control of the commissars on the foreign policy have guided some of our responses.

But there is perhaps a deeper reason for this failure. It does not stem from our assessment of realities of world politics. It, in fact, stems from India's deep and historic unease with Buddhism. As in the past, so in the present, we are suspicious of the transformative potential of Buddhism, as a religion and as a philosophy of society. We would like to banish it once again. Our social and political reality does not allow us to banish the neo-Buddhism of Babasaheb. But our silence over Burma and apathy towards the Dalai Lama and his struggle indicates the desire to once again banish the religiosity that they represent from our consciousness.



Tibet: India's image at stake

Air Marshal R.S. Bedi (retd)

April 12, 2008

TIBETAN uprising came as a bolt from the blue. China was taken by surprise totally. They were busy with putting up the Olympic show that would surpass any thing seen in the past. Their reputation and pretensions of smooth assimilation of Tibet into China got a rude shock.

Tibetan's long list of grievances has been multiplying ever since the Chinese took over their homeland in 1951. The Chinese have resorted to cultural genocide, suppression of faith, religion and language and mass induction of ethnic Chinese into Tibet with a view to making the indigenous Tibetans as a minority in their own land.

Some countries have in some ways tried to express their concern to the Chinese to go easy and humanely in checkmating the Tibetan uprising. However, none had the courage of the type displayed by them during the uprising by the monks in Myanmar.

China is not only ruthless in suppressing opposition but also overbearing and aggressive diplomatically. It brooks no interference in its internal affairs. China was uninhibited in warning the US when its 10-member delegation led by Congress speaker Nancy Pelosi met with the Indian Prime Minister and later Dalai Lama on March 21. Calling the crisis in Tibet as "a challenge to the conscience of the world", she added "If freedom loving people all over the world do not speak out against the Chinese repression in Tibet, we will have lost all moral right to speak for human rights."

It even urged the Chinese to allow independent monitors. This was not taken kindly by the Chinese. The Chinese ambassador in India promptly warned that if any country or organisation or a person says any thing in respect of happenings in Tibet, it would be tantamount to interference in the internal affairs of China.

India's response to Tibetan's woes and their human rights violations has been over cautious and in fact timid: certainly not in keeping with its professed global aspirations. All India could say in Parliament was that it was distressed.

To please the Chinese who wanted India to take firm action against the protesting Tibetans, Indian police swooped down on peaceful processionists and detained them under preventive detention laws. And yet

China literally rebuked India for allowing Tibetans to indulge in political activities on Indian soil. Indian policymakers must not get cowed down by Chinese arrogance of power. Tibetan Diaspora must be helped to the extent possible under the circumstances.

Right from Nehru's time, India has for some inexplicable reason followed a policy of appeasement towards China. Acceptance of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet in 1954 and declaring it so ritually during every Indian VIP's visit to China and theirs to India (only exception being Dr Manmohan Singh's recent visit), weak-kneed response to Chinese occupation of large chunks of Indian territories, particularly in Aksai Chin (where "not even a blade of grass grows"), defensive political responses to repeated border violations by the Chinese and our Prime Minister's recent visit to Arunachal Pradesh by skipping Twang are just a few more significant examples of Indian proclivity to appease China, even at the cost of our dignity and self respect.

Unfortunately, the 1962 debacle has conditioned our mind so much that even after 46 years, we find it difficult to come out from that defeatist mindset when faced with China.

By kowtowing to China and showing undue deference to them, India's credibility as an emerging global power is at stake. It must rise above this and act with a certain degree of confidence and independence in its own national interest. Otherwise it will land up corroding its own credibility in the eyes of other nations. India must overcome that nagging fear of offending China. Even our reaction to China's forward march in encircling India from north to south and east to west has been rather mute to say the least. We have perhaps never expressed our concern publicly, leave apart displeasure at China's ingress into India's area of influence.

Really speaking, Tibet is no more a Chinese issue. It has international connotations, for what happens there has immediate worldwide repercussions. The US has been involved in Tibet right from the beginning. There is a strong Tibetan lobby in America who supports their cause. International response has been rather mute. China will soon overcome this uprising with ever-increasing repressive measures as they have always done in the past. And it will soon fall off the international radar.

Whilst the US will resort to severe indictment of China, it will not allow its relations to suffer in any way. They will remain friends despite the posturing, for they will not like to mess up their trade and economic relations in any way.

Tibet Today, Taiwan Tomorrow?

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The latest Taiwanese presidential elections, characterized by a high voter turnout of 76 per cent, brought the opposition Kuomintang Nationalist Party (KMT) back to power in Taiwan. The KMT candidate Ma Ying-jeou won by 58 per cent of the votes against the 42 per cent obtained by the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) candidate, Frank Hsieh. Taiwanese voters were more concerned with corruption scandals during eight years of DPP rule under Chen Shui-bian. Both the DPP and KMT sponsored referendum proposals on UN membership were defeated. In January 2008, the KMT had won the Taiwanese parliamentary elections with three-fourths of the parliamentary seats. Former president Lee Teng-hui of KMT had supported DPP's Hsieh anticipating that KMT will control both the presidency and the legislature if Hsieh lost, creating a dangerous imbalance of power.

Recent Chinese repression in Tibet forced even Ma Ying-jeou to call for boycott of Beijing Olympics. Earlier he had called for a peace treaty with China and a three point program for closer ties. DPP and Hsieh had used the last few days of campaigning to highlight Taiwanese outrage over China's brutal repression in Tibet. Hsieh had warned that similar Chinese repression could be anticipated in Taiwan in case the proposed process of reunification goes ahead. Turmoil in Tibet touched the Taiwanese citizens but it did not alter the outcome of the election. In a sense Tibet demonstrated to Taiwanese voters what "peaceful reunification with the mainland" would mean in case the KMT were to sign a peace treaty with the PRC.

In 1996, China had lobbed missiles across the Taiwan Strait prior to Taiwanese elections. This time, premier Wen Jiabao had threatened the Taiwanese voters against passing the referendum to join UN warning of dire consequences. Two US aircraft carriers had positioned themselves in the Taiwan Strait to prevent the repeat of 1996 Chinese behavior. Outgoing President Chen Shui-bian had restricted Taiwanese investment in China during his eight year rule in order to reduce the island's dependence on its giant and expansionist neighbor. Ma has proposed a more conciliatory policy with China compared to Hsieh who accepted the DPP's Taiwanese independence platform. Although both the US and China have cautiously welcomed Ma's election, next four years would continue to be tricky for the China-Taiwan relationship with possible freezing of the status quo. Ma wishes to open up more people to people linkages across Taiwan Strait while not agreeing for reunification. He wants to lower fiscal barriers to Taiwanese investment on the mainland China and would start direct air and maritime services with the mainland. Ma is also interested in expanding the China-Taiwan high-tech collaboration. Taiwanese businessmen already have invested US\$100 billion in China. It is unlikely that in current charged atmosphere with suspicion about China's intentions being heightened, there will be a peace treaty signed in the next 2-3 years. There is a remote possibility of fiscal disinvestment in view of changed perception of China resulting from the Chinese repression of Tibetan protestors. The cross-Straits ties would be further strained if Ma carries his threat of boycott of the Beijing Olympics.

In the hypothetical scenario that Taiwanese disinvestment of US\$100 billion from China does become a reality India needs to exploit that opportunity for investments into its physical infra-structure that needs approximately US\$300 billion of new capital. Though India does not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan, it does have commercial relations. Indo-Taiwanese economic relationship needs to be strengthened as Taiwan is an Asian democracy with the rule of common law and a respect for human rights. Taiwan currently has a foreign exchange reserves worth US\$277 billion. Taiwan has toyed with the idea of starting a Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF). There is no existing security threat to India from Taiwan and hence SWF capital from Taiwan should be acceptable without the risk of industrial espionage, theft of trade secrets or potential loss of intellectual property rights.

India's private sector needs to explore ways as to how Taiwanese capital could be tapped in joint Indo-Taiwanese business ventures. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, and Wipro could explore joint-ventures between Indian High-tech sector and the Taiwanese hardware companies. Indian tourism sector can get a tremendous boost if we can promote the Buddhism Tourism Circuit to the cash-surplus Taiwanese besides the Japanese tourists. Indian civil society and Indian business community need to leverage the "soft power" of India and her civilizational assets in forging strong people to people as well as economic, and mercantile relationships with Taiwan.

If China can accept FDI from Taiwan, so should India. If India can attract flow of "clean" capital without "geopolitical" strings attached, it will be welcomed by Taiwan which currently has surplus of it. It will be a win-win game for both India and Taiwan as Taiwan will get a good and trust-worthy economic partner with rule of law in lieu of China, should Taiwanese businessman decide to disinvest from China. As they say, the only business of the business is to do business. Taiwan is a ripe candidate for doing business with.

The world cannot be blind to Tibet's tears

Sudheendra Kulkarni

April 2008

One of the most pleasing sights in the bazaars of Indian cities and towns is that of Tibetans selling their wares, usually woolens or other creations of their honest and hard-working hands. Tibetans live quiet lives, proudly preserving their community identity, zealously adhering to their customs, and remaining deeply devoted to their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama. They scrupulously respect the local social milieu in which they live — be it Manali in Himachal Pradesh or Mundagod in north Karnataka, where they have established a wonderful township — and are in turn respected by the locals. It is rare to find a Tibetan involved in any criminal activity.

Every time I see a Tibetan on the street, I feel proud of my country that it has continued its tradition, since time immemorial, of providing shelter to any immigrant community that suffered religious persecution in its own land. India does not treat such refugees as aliens, nor does it force them to give up their culture and customs. In this sense, India is unique in the world, and this uniqueness must be safeguarded and cherished. Indeed, in the case of Tibetans, it is a matter of honour for us that His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the greatest living exponent of the Buddha's ideals of universal peace brotherhood and compassion, has made India his home.

It is, therefore, shocking that the China's communist rulers have targeted such a proud and peace-loving community for a violent crackdown in Lhasa, and, furthermore, resorted to the most offensive language to malign the Dalai Lama. They have called His Holiness a "serial liar" and accused him of "pretending to be a peaceful, angel-type of figure" while instigating violent protests in Lhasa. One cannot expect them or China's government-controlled media to admit that Tibetans may have a genuine reason to protest.

The reason, however, is loud and clear: systematic marginalisation of Tibetans in their own homeland, denial of religious freedom, consistent and persistent human rights violations and, worst of all, what the Dalai Lama has called the "cultural genocide" of his people.

The issue here is not whether Tibet is a part of China or not. India has acknowledged, and this was explicitly stated by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee during his visit to China in 2003, that "the Tibet Autonomous Region is an integral part of the People's Republic of China". Therefore, if any Indian condemns the Chinese communists' brutality in Tibet, it is not to be interpreted as questioning our government's "One China" policy. The real issue is: whether or not India's civil society, political parties and government have a duty to express concern over China's repressive measures in Tibet and to show our solidarity with our Tibetan brethren in their hour of suffering.

There are two parties in India — Congress and the CPM — which, instead of expressing concern, have chosen the path of cowardice. Congress leaders have been discouraged from meeting the Dalai Lama. To the best of my knowledge, Sonia Gandhi has never called on His Holiness. (I do know that she never bothered to even reply to any of the letters written by Taslima Nasreen.)

As far as the leaders of the CPM are concerned, they have covered themselves with ignominy with their silence over — nay, justification of — the Chinese government's repressive measures in Tibet. Here is their

ludicrous poser: “How can we condemn the incidents in Tibet? How would India react if any other nation were to raise the issue of what is happening in Kashmir?” Only those who consider India’s stand on Kashmir to be inherently insupportable, and are also blind to the Pakistan-aided and jihad-inspired campaign of cross-border terrorism in India, can see a parallel between the situations in Kashmir and Tibet.

It goes without saying that India must seek friendly and cooperative ties with China. However, we must beware of those who believe that friendly ties with our northern neighbour are possible only by keeping quiet over all its acts of bullying — be it the question of its repression in Tibet or its frequent upping of ante in Arunachal Pradesh.

China has every reason to feel proud of showcasing its greatness during the forthcoming Olympic Games in Beijing. But it too must know that its greatness is sullied by its unacceptable behavior in Tibet. India should work with the rest of the world community in urging the Chinese authorities to open meaningful talks with the Dalai Lama. The latter, on his part, has repeatedly stated that he is not seeking Tibet’s secession from China. Now it is China’s responsibility to ensure, by working constructively with His Holiness, that Tibetans can live with honour, dignity and genuine autonomy in their ancestral homeland

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Tibet is not China’s ‘internal affair’

Bhaskar Roy

Retired recently as a senior government official with decades of national and international experience, is an expert on international relations and Indian strategic interests.

Talking to Tibetan delegates at the recently concluded first session of the 11th National People’s Congress (NPC) in Beijing, President Hu Jintao cautioned “the stability in Tibet concerns the stability of the country, and the safety in Tibet concerns the safety of the country”.

Hu Jintao also urged the deputies from Tibet to look after the welfare of the Tibetans, improve work related to religious and ethnic groups, and maintain “social harmony” and stability in the region.

In the context of China’s usual response to a perceived threat, Hu Jintao was restrained. But his message was sharp and clear: no opposition will be tolerated.

The Tibetan demonstrations in the run up to the Beijing Olympic games this August was not unexpected. But, perhaps, Beijing underestimated the scale of it. The Tibetan diaspora has long been calling for the boycott of the Beijing Olympics. Obviously, they did not expect that the games would be boycotted by any country, unlike the Moscow Olympics of 1980. What they really wanted was to highlight the issue of Tibetan situation on a wide scale and specifically draw international attention to human rights violations in Tibet, the Sinicisation of Tibet, and the “genocide” of Tibetan history and culture

Independence for Tibet has now gone beyond realistic expectations, despite the abundance of proof that mainland China gradually through political machinations and military power, usurped the country Tibet once was.

That is the main reason that the 14th Dalai Lama abandoned in the mid-1980s the struggle for independence and opted for “real autonomy.”

The main backer for Tibet’s independence, the US, also changed tracks in the 1970s and 1980s following the normalisation of diplomatic relations between Washington and Beijing. Late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping’s “reform and opening up” policy in 1978-79 opened up a market which the world could hardly ignore. In return, these friends of the Tibetan people and the Dalai Lama diluted support for them.

Taking all this into consideration, the demand for “independence” was brought down to “autonomy”.

But while the “independence” script has been wiped off the slate, much else remains to be addressed by the Chinese, the Tibetans and the international community.

Both the pro-independence Tibetans and the Chinese government are going through extended difficult times. For the two, time is of essence. The protests that started in the Tibetan capital Lhasa on and around March 10, 2008 can be described as unprecedented since the 1959 uprising against the Chinese occupation, which eventually forced the Dalai Lama to flee to India with a group of his followers.

Then followed the exodus of Tibetan refugees from Tibet mainly to India. The Chinese crackdown of the Tibetans in 1959 was far stronger than what is being seen now. The Chinese security forces are still restraining themselves because of the upcoming Olympic games and the scrutiny of the international community.

In 1959, China was a closed country. Today, it is greatly interwoven with the world, at least economically. Nevertheless, Beijing is most likely to stifle the Tibetans in Tibet through overwhelming force. Interdependence brings compromise. But when its perceived interests are infringed upon, Beijing does not pull its punches.

The reason why the Tibetans are becoming anxious and restive is that unless something is done, they feel they would be obliterated in the Tibet Autonomous Region (AR) and the Tibetan autonomous prefectures in neighbouring provinces of China.

Over the years there have been increasing influx of Han settlers in Tibet, mainly in Lhasa. Tibetan businesses are being taken over by Han traders, who get special incentives from the government to settle in Tibet.

Education is getting increasingly Sinicised, with Chinese language pushing out the Tibetan language. Without Chinese language there are no jobs to be had. Tibetans do not rise to high positions in government jobs even in Tibet. Even those who enter government services are required to denounce the Dalai Lama and swear total allegiance to the Chinese government.

Tibetans should not have any quarrel with swearing their commitment to the Chinese government. This prevails in most countries in the world. But denouncing the Dalai Lama is another issue altogether.

The Chinese must, and do, understand that the Dalai Lama is not only the undisputed spiritual mentor of millions of Tibetans, but he lives in their breath and soul. Swayed by their own propaganda, the leaders in Beijing may think that they have won over a large number of Tibetans. But that is hardly the reality. Tibetan officials and deputies secretly worship the Dalai Lama in the confines of their homes.

China claims that its Constitution allows freedom of religion. This is far from true in reality. Practice of religion is strictly controlled by the state and the Party. Practice of religion, that is prayers, can be done in designated places. No one can preach religion. It is against the law.

Prohibition against even keeping a photograph of the Dalai Lama gives lie to the Chinese claim of freedom of religion. To the Tibetans, the Dalai Lama is Living God. The Chinese seen him politically as a separatist or “splittist”.

The Chinese authorities generally feel that after the death of the current Dalai Lama, the Tibetan problem would gradually fade away. From 2002 till now, the Dalai Lama’s delegation held six rounds of talks with the Chinese authorities on the issue of autonomy to Tibet and Tibetan areas outside the Autonomous Region. This shows the second compromise by the Dalai Lama. The original Tibet, known as the Greater Tibet, was sliced by the Chinese and amalgamated with neighbouring states like Gansu and Sichuan. The Dalai Lama does not claim Greater Tibet any longer.

But the talks did not yield any results. Suddenly, from around 2005, the Chinese authorities reverted to the hardline position, especially after the posting of the new Tibet Autonomous Region Party chairman Zhang Qinling. Zhang comes from the Communist Youth League (CYL), President Hu Jintao’s main constituency. He was supposed have subdued the Tibetans.

The Chinese have now accused the Dalai Lama of fomenting the riots in Lhasa. The Chinese fix a target and launch a relentless propaganda against him or her. India’s first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, still remains a favourite whipping boy of the Chinese official media on the Sino-Indian border issue.

The Dalai Lama is similarly targeted as “evil”, a man whose sole aim is break up China. In the 1980s, the Dalai Lama was projected as a “serpent,” and the official propaganda called for “crushing the serpent’s head.”

But the Chinese may be missing the woods for the trees. The Dalai Lama is the sobering factor of the Tibet issue. No one, not even the Chinese authorities, can deny that the Tibet issue is real and may be snowballing.

With the Chinese army and security personnel coming down heavily in Lhasa after the deadline for surrender to the so-called miscreants ended on Sunday-Monday midnight, the Dalai Lama put up his hands. He could not control the Tibetan-monks, nuns, laymen any longer.

For quite a few years now the Tibetan diaspora, especially the youth, have expressing disillusionment with the Dalai Lama’s “middle path” approach. They found that there was concession from one side only and the Tibetan people and culture was gradually being decimated by the Chinese.

The Tibetan youth have just formed a new organisation, the “Tibet Youth Uprising”. What this organisation would do or not do is not the issue, It only shows disenchantment of the Tibetan diaspora with the Dalai Lama’s approach of conceding to the Chinese step by step. This, however, does not mean these Tibetans are resorting to militancy.

The Chinese should take note of these developments. They can squash this uprising in Lhasa with the force of massive armed power. But they cannot ensure that they will be able to permanently do away with this problem.

On the other hand, the Chinese leaders have a problem. They naturally want that the Beijing Olympics in August goes through without untoward incidents. This is the Chinese Communist Party’s biggest show of pride, prestige, development and power. It is also a political issue internally.

The Committee for preparing for the Olympics was headed by Hu Jintao. He is the President, the Party Chief and Head of the Military. He has just handed over this responsibility at the NPC Session to Xi Jinping, his selected successor. This shows how important is the success of the Olympics to the Chinese leadership.

How the game is conducted will have profound impact on the careers of both these men.

India, meanwhile, is caught in a difficult situation. It has the largest population of Tibetan refugees, and of course, the Dalai Lama. Groups of Tibetans are trying to march into Tibet from India. At the same time, the Chinese have not exactly decorated themselves with honour while dealing with the Tibetans.

Forced to take a stand, New Delhi diplomatically called for dialogue and peace. The Chinese pressure is mounting on the Indian government to restrain the Tibetans and close the borders to Tibet. There was no need for this. India's policy is not to involve itself in Tibetan politics, and this has been demonstrated adequately.

Premier Wan Jiabao's open message of March 18, 2008 to the government of India on the Tibetan demonstrators in India was decisively stern, and appropriately rejected by the people of India. Wen told a press conference in Beijing that he hoped that the government of India would follow agreements between the two countries and "handle the issue in a correct way".

China's way of dealing "correctly" with peaceful demonstrators is to kill them. No one has forgotten the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident.

India's "correct" way is to deal with protestors with utmost restraint and humanely. China's Premier must note the difference in dealing with such issues between China and the rest of the democratic world.

Whether China admits it or not, the Tibetan issue has never been, and still isn't, an internal affair of China, simply because they are trying to bury a live civilization.



Tibet is down but not out

Dina Nath Mishra

At least for five millennia, Tibet had been part of ancient Hindu tradition which began with Mahabharat. The name Tibet is derived from Trivishtappa, which means heaven. Mahabharat calls it Uttarkuru. Sanskrit literature contains innumerable linkages with the Tibetan way of life. It has never been a part of China. It was a buffer State between two great cultures: Chinese and Indian. According to Vaman Puran, it was Manas Lake, where Matsya *avatar* took place.

The present crisis in Tibet is not a small one. Tibetans have been fighting for independence for 49 years. It was led by Buddhist monks and was peaceful. The exercise of crushing the fight with brutal force by Chinese expansionists is being described by them as 'combating the rebellion' wherein according to Western news agencies more than 80 persons have been killed and more than 72 peaceful demonstrators injured. An unspecified number of Buddhist monks have been arrested.

To hide these facts, China has stopped entry of foreign tourists, including journalists, into Tibet and jammed all electronic communication channels. Many countries, but not India, have condemned these brutal acts of China.

Chinese expansionism knows no limits. In its book *A History of China* published recently by the Chinese Government, Chinese territories seized by Imperialists in 1814 and 1919 shown in the map, include Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim and over 50,000 sq miles of territory in Ladakh and NEFA. It also includes independent countries, like Burma, Malaya, Thailand, North and South Vietnam, Cambodia and big chunks of the territories of Soviet Siberia, Mongolia and Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kergizea and Tajikistan.

All these are the so called lost territories of China which they are determined to get back. No rational mind can explain this hankering of modern-day China but it does explain what they have done in Tibet. After coming to power, within a year, Mao invaded Tibet on October 7, 1950 to “liberate” the people of Tibet and complete its unification with China.

Tibet relied on India, but Nehru was on his mission of buying peace. In a matter of a few months, the Chinese completed their task. Twelve lakh Tibetans were killed, 6000 monasteries, religious and cultural institutions destroyed.

In 1951 China signed a treaty with Tibet formalising the conquest. It meant evaporation of the buffer State between India and China. The Chinese have constructed a well-knit transport system along the Indian border. In the treaty, Tibet agreed to station troops on the borders touching India, Pakistan and Burma. Now more than five lakh troops are stationed here.

The border disputes between China and India figured prominently in their recent talks. Arunachal Pradesh, particularly, is China’s target. Why has all this happened? Solely, because of the naivety of Nehru who handled foreign affairs also.

Contrast it with the wisdom of Sardar Patel. In his letter dated November 11, 1950, Patel wrote to Nehru: “The tragedy of it is that the Tibetans put faith in us; they chose to be guided by us; and we have been unable to get them out of the meshes of Chinese diplomacy or Chinese malevolence. The expansion from the North and North-East, therefore, becomes both communist and imperialist.

“While our western north-western threat to security is still as prominent as before, a new threat has developed from the North and North-East. Thus, for the first time, after centuries, India’s defence has to concentrate itself on two fronts simultaneously. Our defence measures have so far been based on the calculations of superiority over Pakistan. In our calculations we shall now have to reckon with Communist China in the North and in the North-East, a Communist China which has definite ambitions and aims and which does not, in any way, seem friendly disposed towards us.”

What happened afterwards, we all know. The debacle of *Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai* in NEFA and even last week’s China’s claim to the territory of Arunachal Pradesh is there for all to see.

If Tibet is suffering. India must share the blame for the simpleton approach of Nehru. Not only was Patel against Nehru’s meek policy towards China but leaders like Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Prof NG Ranga, Minoo Masani and others warned Panditji against China’s expansionist designs. Dr Mookerjee, in fact, proved prophetic when he said, “it is a fact that the boundary between India and Tibet is yet to be defined. China will do everything necessary to claim Indian territory, as per its maps.”

Remember, India’s first war of Independence, too, was called a rebellion. During the course of history, geography changes. The British Empire wilted. Who knows? Tomorrow an independent Tibet may become a reality.

After all, Israel is a reality today.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

China's Tall Claim

Brahma Chellaney

May, 2008

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As a triumphal symbol of its rule over Tibet, China is taking the Olympic torch through the “Roof of the World” to Mt Everest, which straddles the Tibetan-Nepalese border.

That publicity stunt will only infuse more politics into the Games already tainted by the manner China's pressure helped turn the just-concluded international torch relay into a stage-managed, security exercise everywhere to pander to its sense of self-esteem at the cost of the Olympic spirit of openness.

Taking the torch to the tallest mountain is Beijing's way of reinforcing its tall claim on Tibet. The blunt fact is that the only occasions in history when Tibet was clearly part of China was under non-Han dynasties — that is, when China itself had been conquered by outsiders: the Mongol Yuan dynasty, from 1279 to 1368, and the Manchu Qing dynasty, from 1644 to 1912.

What Beijing today asserts are regions “integral” to its territorial integrity are really imperial spoils of earlier foreign dynastic rule in China. Yet, revisionist history under communist rule has helped indoctrinate Chinese to think of the Yang and Qing empires as Han. When a dynasty was indeed ethnically Han, such as Ming (founded between the Yang and Qing empires), Tibet had scant connection to Chinese rulers.

Today, to prevent any demonstrators sneaking in from the Nepalese side and spoiling its triumphalism atop the 8,848-metre Everest, China has pressured a politically adrift Nepal to police entry routes to the peak and deploy troops up to the 6,500-metre Camp II. Having eliminated the outer buffer with India by annexing Tibet, China is now set to expand its leverage over the inner buffer, Nepal, where the Maoists will lead the next government following elections marred by large-scale intimidation. Beijing's plan to take the torch to Tibet is nothing but provocative. After all, the Chinese crackdown in Tibet continues, Tibetan monasteries remain sealed off, hundreds of monks and nuns are in jail, and the vast plateau is still closed to foreigners.

In fact, China specially constructed a 108-kilometre blacktop road to Everest to take the torch to the summit, unmindful of the environmental impact of such activities in pristine areas. China's large hydro projects in Tibet — the source of all of Asia's major rivers except the Ganges — and its reckless exploitation of the plateau's vast mineral resources already threaten the region's fragile ecosystem, with Chinese officials admitting average temperatures are rising faster in Tibet than in rest of China.

Yet, such is the Olympics' politicisation that Beijing has extended the torch relay in Tibet into June. After ascending Everest in the coming days, the torch is to travel to Lhasa on June 19.

The torch's three-month route within China, as compared to just a five-week run through the rest of the world, shows that for the Chinese Communist Party, the Olympics are an occasion not only to showcase national achievements under its rule, but also to help win popular legitimacy for its political monopoly.

To some extent, the Olympics have always been political, with politics more about national power and pride. But until this year, politics had not cast such a big shadow since the Soviet-bloc nations boycotted the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics in reprisal to the US-led boycott of the 1980 Moscow Games.

As if the relay becoming the most divisive in history is not enough, China is stoking more controversy through the torch's Everest climb and Tibet run.

Yet, while continuing brutal repression in Tibet, it has made the Olympics' success such a prestige issue that it has offered to meet the Dalai Lama's "private representative". Blending hardline actions with ostensible concessions has been Chinese strategy for long. Even as it was readying to invade India in 1962, China was suggesting conciliation. Today, while stepping up cross-border incursions and encouraging India-bashing by its official organs, with a recent China Institute of International Strategic Studies commentary saying an "arrogant India" wants to be taught another 1962-style lesson, Beijing offers more meaningless talks with New Delhi.

Clearly, China has appropriated the Olympic torch for its own political agenda. It never tires from lecturing to the world not to interfere in its internal affairs. Still, during the international relay, it kept interfering in the affairs of other states, wanting to be kept in the loop on the local security arrangements and insisting that pro-Tibet demonstrations not be allowed.

It even helped script some counter-demonstrations by young Chinese along the international route. Now a pressured Nepal has been forced to restrict expeditions to Everest in the busiest mountaineering season and station soldiers with authority to open fire as "a last resort". All this is to ensure that not a single protester or Tibetan flag greets the torch on Everest.

All autocrats tend to do things that ultimately boomerang. Who would have thought two months ago that Tibet would come to the centre of world attention? A relay carrying the theme, "Journey of Harmony", has helped bring host China under international scrutiny.

The autocracy's troubles indeed may only be beginning. This year could prove a watershed. Just as the 1936 Berlin Olympics set the stage for Nazi Germany's collapse, the Beijing Games could end up as a spur to radical change in China. Those who see Tibet as a lost cause forget that history has a way of wreaking vengeance on artificially created empires.

THE ASIAN AGE

It is still not too late for China

Kuldip Nayar

May 23, 2008

They burn candles all night and sit in the open in Dharamsala to pray. They are Tibetans who are concerned about the safety of their brethren in Lhasa and the places around. Hundreds have been killed and Chinese tanks have rolled over habitations and fields. Those in Tibet have not given up their demand for independence, with the Dalai Lama if possible, or without him if necessary. But their eyes are fixed on New Delhi as are those of nations all over the world. Some 60 years ago, India's first envoy to China, K.M. Panikkar, suggested to the then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, that he make efforts to establish Tibet as an independent country. China was then in the midst of civil war. When Nehru made the suggestion, China lost no time in taking over Tibet militarily. Still Nehru felt that India, while recognising China's suzerainty over Tibet, had the right to express an interest in the maintenance of Tibetan autonomy. Yet he wrote to his finance minister, John Matthai at that time: "The result of all this is that we may have the Chinese or Tibetan Communists right up on our Assam, Bhutan and Sikkim border." How prophetic Nehru has turned out to be.

I wish he had pursued the matter further, at least to ensure autonomy for Tibet. But he was pacified when China said it would solve the problem “by peaceful and friendly means”. In the official reply, New Delhi used by mistake words such as “Chinese sovereignty” instead of “suzerainty”. India realised its mistake and asked its ambassador, Panikkar, to rectify it. He never did, pro-China as he was. Even if India had not used the word “sovereignty”, the Chinese attitude would have been no different. It considered Tibet an integral part of its territory and “resolved the problem with a military occupation.” That remains China’s policy even today. It neither wants any discussion on the subject, nor any rapprochement, however loud the international community may be behind the demand.

Therefore, the manner in which Beijing has crushed the various uprisings should not come as a surprise. China knows of no other way. Any dissent is a challenge to its authority and it must suppress it with force. Not long ago, it shot hundreds of students dead at Tiananmen Square in Beijing. They were not questioning the regime but were trying to establish the right of dissent in a state cast in the authoritarian mould.

The uprising at Lhasa and the protests at Dharamsala are evidence to show how China’s occupation of Tibet for more than five decades has not snuffed out the flame of liberty burning within the hearts of its people. It proves once again that Beijing, with all its military strength, has not been able to weaken the cultural and ethnic identity that the Tibetans cherish while living in China or elsewhere. Military methods can suppress a nation for the time being but can never kill the urge to rule itself. Freedom is their birthright, the Tibetans say. What Nehru said at the time of China’s takeover of Tibet still holds good: peaceful and friendly means. It is still not too late for China to make up with the Tibetans provided it is willing to recognise their entity. The Dalai Lama, criticised by Beijing for the recent protests, is the best friend it has because even now, when scores of people have been killed in Lhasa and in other parts of Tibet, he has not called for a boycott of the Olympic Games at Beijing this August. He has, in fact, denounced violence and has given an ultimatum to his followers to stop if they want him to stay their leader. The Dalai Lama has made it once again clear that the Tibetans do not want separation but autonomy. Beijing can continue to have control over foreign affairs and defence. New Delhi would probably give its right arm if the Kashmiris were to accept the formula the Dalai Lama had advocated for Tibet — that is, autonomy within the country. But Beijing is different in its thinking. It believes in holding all powers and not sharing them with the provinces. How can it treat Tibet differently when it considers it an integral part of the country? China has to accept the principle of autonomy, of decentralising power. The Dalai Lama has chided India correctly for being overcautious. Even during Nehru’s period, when China began occupying Indian territory, New Delhi was quiet, or at best polite, in expressing protest. It was wrong but understandable then because India did not want to distract its attention from the nascent progress it was making after emerging from 150 years of slavery. But what stops it now in at least ventilating its unhappiness? Words like “feeling distressed” do not mean much. Nor do they give comfort to the Tibetans in Dharamsala or elsewhere. Buddhism, which the Tibetans follow, is part of the rich culture that India possesses. Nalanda University near Patna, once a centre of Buddhism, is being revived to re-establish links with a religion that was born in India. But of what use is it when New Delhi is afraid to say anything that may even indirectly annoy China. Herding the protesters in police vans in Delhi and Dharamsala and removing them physically was not a pleasant scene to watch on television. New Delhi may feel satisfied that Beijing has patted it on its back for stopping the Tibetans from their long march to Lhasa, but the government should realise that it has let down freedom-loving people. Lack of moral support for Tibetans is not the only example of India faltering when it comes to speaking out.

On the individual level, the government has behaved worse than a coward in the case of Taslima Nasreen. Here is a Bangladeshi writer who took refuge in India because she considered it a country where she would

not be harassed for her creative writing, however critical. Although she withdrew from her recent book the passages which were considered objectionable and sought to apologise, the government of India confined her to a room which had windows and doors, but no outside contact. Her poignant remark on leaving Delhi was that India was not the secular and democratic country she had cherished. She has left India. So may the Dalai Lama, one day, because of New Delhi's attitude. He is in India because it is the nearest place to Tibet, where he hopes to return one day. He and the Tibetans living in India and wanting a rapprochement with Beijing are a challenge to India's policies and the independent stand a country like ours should take. Let us not fail them again and again.

Hindustan Times

Lhasa, in translation

Barkha Dutt

May 28, 2008

Managing Editor, NDTV 24x7

Nineteen years ago, when I was still at school, there used to be a photograph plastered across my bedroom wall, where it shared sizeable space with other emblems of teenage angst. At the time it was perhaps the world's single-most recognisable image: a slightly built young man about to be crushed under the might of a giant tank, refusing to move, staring the might of an entire Nation State in the eye.

The 'Tank Man' — as the unknown rebel came to be known globally — was an icon for my generation. The fact that no one knew who he was only multiplied his magnificent courage in our minds. Whether or not you knew your Mao from your Deng, Tiananmen Square became a universal theme song for rebellion, inspiring elegies and ballads from Leonard Cohen and Joan Baez, among others.

But like much else in life, it didn't take long for the romanticised idealism of youth to be jolted into cynical adulthood.

The protests of 1989 failed to evolve into a coherent ideology for change, the rebel leadership combusted from self-destruction and economic reforms catapulted China into political stardom. It was clear that the anger in the aftermath of the massacre at Tiananmen Square had been more sound than fury.

Even the Google boys, who inspired us into believing that a great idea could change the world, succumbed to the mundane compulsions of the market. In mainland China, if you're 'googling' the internet for details of the Tiananmen killings or 'independence' for Taiwan or Tibet, you won't find anything but a list of rules and regulations.

Google agreed to censor itself and became a complicit partner in the erasure of history. An episode of the Simpsons (owned ironically by the Murdoch media empire that caved into every major media restriction demanded by the Chinese government) summed it up the best. As the holidaying Simpson family strolls through Tiananmen Square, they stop at a plaque reading, "On this spot, in 1989, nothing happened."

Today, nearly two decades later, as we applaud the dimple-faced Dalai Lama's gentle pragmatism and are shamed into guilt by the helpless tears of red-robed monks, I can't help feeling a horrible and cynical sense of déjà vu. Yes, op-ed writers and 'thinking' actors have been passionately outspoken about the Tibet cause. And yes, an otherwise impassive regime in Beijing seems momentarily on the defensive.

Yet, one can't help thinking that history will spin once more in a cycle of liberal rage and paramount indifference. We are sentimental (and simultaneously ignorant) about Tibet just as we were about the Tiananmen struggle back in the 90s. We respond with empathy to the Tibetan search for identity, not because we necessarily understand the complex political history that drives the movement, but almost entirely because of the benign grace of its leadership.

In fact, scarred by partition and bruised by violence in Kashmir and the North-east, Indians are by and large notoriously unsympathetic to separatist causes anywhere in the world. The middle-class Indian is scarily enamoured of the idea of a mighty Nation State that rules with an iron fist.

Take away the twinkling eyes, soothing spirituality and chuckling irreverence of the Dalai Lama, and his measured calls for non-violence, and ask yourself, would you still care about Tibet if he were not at the helm? Or would you be obsessing instead about Chinese goods flooding the Indian market and swallowing domestic companies in tsunami-like waves? Last month, when the Prime Minister was in China, crafting the theatrics of a changing relationship, Tibet wasn't even loud enough to be a stage whisper. But I don't remember any of us being especially upset. Instead, there was relief that the dragon could be a friendly animal too.

The truth is, that while there is much hand-wringing and chest-beating about Tibet, trapped in our own our dysfunctional love and loathing for China, we are uncertain about how to respond — sometimes cautious, sometimes impulsive and, sadly, often indifferent.

Diplomacy though cannot afford to be maudlin or unpredictable. It is by definition much more strategic and self-serving.

Step back then and stack up the varied responses of the world to the current crisis. You may lose count of the number of hypocrisies that have come to haunt the China-Tibet debate.

There's America — lofty in its criticism, supposedly generous about how the Olympic Games must 'go on', furiously calculating trade volumes with one hand and how to contain Beijing with the other. Democracy isn't Washington's favourite word when it comes to oil-rich Saudi Arabia or a pliant Pakistan. But it's thrown about as a selective philosophical principle when needed. There's France and its playboy President who is asking for a boycott of the Olympics, but leads a country that has simultaneously been trying to persuade the European Parliament to lift an arms sale embargo against China.

Closer home, the socially liberal communists — so quick to condemn 'State brutalities' and human rights violations within India — haven't just been silent, but they've actually termed Tibet an 'internal matter' for their ideological compatriots to tackle on their own terms. Then there's the BJP — filled with well-meaning rage at the government's effete lack of intervention, but stubbornly blind to the parallels the people of Kashmir may draw from the Tibet struggle.

And finally, there's the Congress, unable or unwilling to respond coherently. Till the churlish midnight missive was delivered to our Ambassador in China, the government actually seemed a trifle pleased to receive a pat on the back from its northern neighbour on how it had 'handled' the protests. The Indian government prides itself on the hardball it has played with the world's superpowers on demanding a seat for itself at the global high table. But we are too timid and tentative to even allow a meeting between the Dalai Lama and the Vice-President.

And then, of course, there is the rest of us — captivated by the poignant photo-opportunity of the Present, till we turn the page and forget all about a tragedy called Tibet.

Walking on the Razor's Edge: Indian Policy towards Tibet

Srikanth Kondapalli

through e-mail

Tibetan unrest in Tibet and elsewhere in the last couple of weeks, following the observation of 49th anniversary of Tibetan uprising over Chinese rule, has brought into sharp focus Indian role as it became home to the Government-in-Exile and more than 2,00,000 Tibetan refugees with nearly 6,000 refugees trickling into India every year. In addition, Indian policy is also conditioned by the successive governments' efforts to normalize relations with China, soured after both fought a war on the border dispute in 1962, which is partly linked to the Tibetan issue.

While India expressed its “distress” over the events in Tibet and called for restraint on the part of both the Chinese authorities and agitating Tibetans and resolution of the dispute through peaceful means, such measured Indian response is conditioned by several considerations.

Firstly, following the signing of *Panch Sheel* principles with China in 1954, India recognized, albeit obliquely, that Tibet is a part of China. For the then Nehru's government, devoid of the military might of the British Empire, this policy seemed to be pragmatic and cost-effective specifically as Communist China came to power with the “barrel of the gun” and came closer to Indian peripheries in military postures. While some speculated about a possible reciprocity from the Chinese government of recognizing Indian-held border areas, such Indian hopes were dashed subsequently with the Chinese state pushing its effective reach in Tibet till both clashed in 1962.

Secondly, as the Tibetans expressed their displeasure of the Chinese rule through successive migrations, Indian policy changed to include insistence on the word “autonomy” in its dealings with China. That is, India insisted, from Rajiv Gandhi's times, that unless and until genuine autonomy prevails in Tibet, the refugees could not get back. While this has become leverage to India and an embarrassment to the image of China, new dynamics emerged. Initially, Chinese changed position on Kashmir issue appealed to India. However, another factor, the Tibetans living in India, provided for a re-thinking. With high literacy rates, entrepreneurial skills and relatively modest value systems, the Tibetan émigré in India is increasingly seen as an asset to the rise of India.

Thirdly, as the unresolved border dispute with China is inter-twined with the Tibetan issue and as India refused so far to repatriate Tibetans to Chinese frontier guards (as Nepal does), permanent peace between the two countries is becoming a chimera.

Under these mixed circumstances, India needs to articulate its policy at two levels. Firstly, in conjunction with inclusive and faster infrastructure development projects and industrialization in the border areas and deployment of credible conventional and strategic platforms, India needs to secure its periphery. Secondly, India needs to push for effective talks between the Tibetans and the Chinese authorities for lasting solution to the Tibetan issue, if need be in a mediatory role. For, an unresolved and festering Tibetan issue could jeopardize not only the peripheral security of the country but also drag two rising countries in Asia into mutually destructive scenarios.

TIME

The Dalai Lama's Dilemma

Madhur Singh

March 2008

Who'd want to be the Dalai Lama? Bearing the burden of an entire people's frustration, anger and despair over half a century can't be easy at the best of times for their exiled spiritual leader. But since the anti-Chinese demonstrations began in and outside Tibet on March 10, the Dalai Lama has found himself confronting a swelling tide of opposition and defiance from within his community. So, on the one hand, he has to contend with Beijing calling him the mastermind of the violent protests in Lhasa, and to walk a diplomatic tightrope with the Indian authorities that host his government-in-exile but value their relationship with China; on the other hand he has to try and rein in the more violent and provocative elements among Tibetans whose actions, he fears, will damage his people's cause.

Top of Form

For a brief moment on Tuesday, the usually unflappable Dalai Lama let his frustration show, when he told reporters in Dharamsala, "If things are getting out of control, then the option is to completely resign, completely resign!" he said, waving his arms for emphasis. He said he would meet on Wednesday with Tibetan marchers trying to cross the border from India and tell them to stop, as they are "making things difficult for the Indian government". He added, "What's the use of some clash with Chinese soldiers on the border?"

The Dalai Lama's comments came as a dampener for organizers of the Tibetan People's Uprising Movement, who had been hoping that if the Dalai Lama could not lend his support to the march, he would at least refrain from opposing it. Four of the five organizations involved in the movement oppose the Dalai Lama's "middle path" approach of seeking dialogue with the Chinese leadership in search of a "genuine" autonomy for Tibet. They want direct action to seek independence from China, and they want to it now, while the world is watching China as it prepares to host the Olympic Games this summer.

Earlier on Monday, march organizers had reacted with stunned disbelief to an announcement by Prime Minister Samdhong Rinpoche of the Tibetan government-in-exile that it would form a committee to coordinate all the protests within India. Some were peeved that the government was trying to steal their show, while others worried it would leave the protests hamstrung. "As a youth movement, we can protest in various ways," said Tsering Choedup, one of the coordinators of the march, "but if the government comes in, bureaucracy and diplomacy will take over." Once the Tibetan government-in-exile was in charge, those marching to Tibet in defiance of an Indian government ban would have to stop, while further protests outside Chinese embassies would also be ruled out.

Before the intervention of the Dalai Lama, India-based Tibetan activists believed they had the momentum. "The scale of the uprising, its spread, is wider than 1959," Tenzin Tsundue, a charismatic Tibetan writer-activist, told TIME from Indian police detention in Jwalamukhi. "We've achieved in three days what we were hoping to achieve in three months." Tsundue had been among the first batch of 101 marchers held on Thursday by Indian authorities. Organizers were also hoping the protests within Tibet and China would gather steam.

“Much as we are sad for our brothers and sisters in Tibet, we want the protests to continue,” said B. Tsering, president of the Tibetan Women’s Association. But since the passing of the Chinese deadline for the protestors to surrender at midnight Monday, the organizers of the protests in India have been treading a thin line between hope and despair — protests seem to have calmed down in Tibet and China, but every news of new protests and arrests brings a tiny blip of hope. They’re far from ready to give up the protest altogether. Asked if they’d stop the march if asked to do so by the Dalai Lama, Tsewang Rigzin, president of the Tibetan Youth Congress, answered with an emphatic: “No.” The schism within Tibetan ranks is set to widen.

Articles by International Intellectuals

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10 positive things about the recent events in Tibet

Claude Arpi

April, 2008

An event, which may look negative at first sight, can also trigger positive collaterals. We have listed 10 encouraging aspects of the recent unrest in Tibet and the subsequent Chinese muscled clampdown.

1. Increased awareness about Tibet

Perhaps one of the most positive aspects of the recent events in Lhasa and other parts of Tibet has been the tremendous increase in awareness about the Tibetan issue in India and abroad.

The Tibet question was buried on November 24, 1950, when the Indian representative to the United Nations told his colleagues that India would directly take up the question of the invasion of Tibet with the Chinese Communist authorities. It would be solved amicably, he said.

Nothing was done, though a few weeks later Nehru declared in Parliament. 'Since Tibet is not the same as China, it should ultimately be the wishes of the people of Tibet that should prevail and not any legal or constitutional arguments.'

But he had already written in a secret note, 'We can not save Tibet.'

During the following years, not only did Delhi continue to remain silent, but in 1954, it signed the Panchsheel Agreement (or 'Agreement between The Republic of India and The People's Republic of China on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India'). For the first time in history, India accepted China's claim that Tibet was part of China.

Today everyone in India and around the world can see that the 'wishes of the people' in Tibet have been completely crushed, while the fate of Tibet remains crucial for India's security. More awareness about the issue is therefore most welcome.

2. Shift from Pakistan-centric politics

Another positive fall-out is that the Indian establishment (politicians, bureaucrats, intelligence agencies, think-tanks and the army) are slowly losing their perennial obsession with our Western neighbour.

Since Independence, India has had only one enemy, Pakistan. Apart from the periodical declarations of George Fernandes or Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's letter to President Clinton: 'We have an overt nuclear weapon state on our borders, a state which committed armed aggression against India in 1962,' the deciders in Delhi have lived and acted with an Islamabad fixation.

Army exercises such as the recent Brazier Chariots are another sign of this Pakistan-centric attitude.

The intensive coverage of the Tibetan riots and the hundreds of in-depth analysis may bring a new awareness and a paradigm shift in the strategic scenario in Asia.

3. Phenomenal Intelligence failure

It was good news (for India at least) to discover that China is no better at collecting intelligence! Indian spies must have felt rotten about the Kargil episode as they were not able to detect the Pakistani infiltrations in time. But it was nothing compared to the colossal failure of the Chinese spies on the Roof of the World who did not see anything brewing, not only in Lhasa, but also in the other two traditional provinces of Tibet, Kham and Amdo.

Already between 1979 and 1982, when the first fact-finding delegations sent by the Dalai Lama visited different parts of Tibet, the party cadre had thought that the Tibetan leaders' envoys would be received with stones and insults. To their great stupefaction, the delegations were triumphantly welcomed by the local population.

It is strange that the intelligence services of the People's Republic of China are unable to catch the mood of the people! Soon heads will probably roll. Already Danzeng Langjie, a top official and director of Tibet's Ethnic Minority and Religious Affairs Commission has been 'removed' from his post, but how can anything change as long as the intelligence inputs are based on ideology and not on facts? China has a big problem here.

4. China has shown another face

During the last few weeks, Beijing has shown another face. One of the main objectives of Hu Jintao's government had been to project the Peaceful Rise of China. Beijing has invested hundreds of millions of dollars to polish and project its new image. The culmination was to be the Olympics Games, aimed at showing a strong, powerful, harmonious and stable China.

China watchers knew that behind the 'peaceful' show, the tiger (not a paper one) was dozing; ready to jump on its prey should the time come. The megalomaniac investment in the defence sector was an indication of what the tiger China is up to.

The immediate and brutal repression on the Roof of the World as well as the cutting of the telecom lines in Tibet or the censoring of internet all over China has shown the totalitarian face of the regime. And we don't even have information on what has happened in Xinjiang.

5. Strategic importance of the Tibetan plateau

There has been a tendency to forget the geostrategic importance of the Tibetan plateau. The first train reached Lhasa in July 2006. In 2007 alone, 3.8 million Chinese used the railway line to 'visit' Tibet. Before the riots, very few in India were ready to look at the demographic changes on the plateau and its consequences for India's security. Also, who cared for the fact that all the major rivers of Asia had their source in Tibet and that the flow of these rivers could be diverted to arid regions of China?

The present focus on Tibet is bound to trigger more research into the importance of the plateau as a geostrategic and environmental link between India and China. It will be realised that it is impossible to solve an issue such as the border dispute with China until and unless the Tibetan issue is solved to the satisfaction of all. This is good!

6. Definition of Tibet

The Dalai Lama has been insisting that Tibet consists of the three provinces of U-Tsang (Central Tibet), Kham and Amdo.

Today different parts of Amdo are administratively attached to the provinces of Qinghai, Gansu & Sichuan, while most of Kham is incorporated into the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and Qinghai.

Central and Western Tibet, together with western Kham, is today known as the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). It represents less than half of pre-1950 Tibet. When the Chinese government speaks about Tibet, it only refers to the TAR.

The riots have shown that traditional Tibet remains only one entity as far as discontent and demonstrations are concerned. The unrest occurred equally in the three different provinces. Awareness of this historic fact is encouraging.

7. Opening a debate within the Chinese Communist Party

Another positive aspect! The Chinese Communist Party does not know the meaning of Glasnost, 'this policy of maximal publicity, openness, and transparency in the activities of all government institutions in the Soviet Union, together with freedom of information, introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev.'

However, the Tibet events may force a serious debate among the Chinese apparatchiks. The web site, Intelligence Online, speaks of 'A War Room to Keep Down Tibet' and adds, 'Formed last week by President Hu Jintao to prevent uprisings in Tibet and neighboring provinces, the 'special working group on Tibet' has a second objective: to counter conservative elements in government and the Chinese Communist Party who feel that too much flexibility in the run-up to the Olympic Games could trigger unrest that would undermine the status of the one-party state.'

Whether the above report is true or not, an in-depth debate has probably started within the Politburo. It is a healthy (though not spontaneous) outcome.

8. Sleepless nights

One can hope that many world leaders will spend sleepless nights in the weeks and months to come. It will give them time to eventually rethink their respective policies. One can mention President Hu Jintao and his comrades of the Politburo's standing committee who will face the music before (and after) the Olympics. If the Games becomes a propaganda failure (they already are), their nights might even be longer.

In India, the prime minister (a regular member of the sleepless nights club), his foreign minister (let us hope that Taslima will also haunt him) and others in South Block will have to constantly walk on a tightrope between the pressures coming from Beijing and political decency. (Needless of course to mention the Indian Ambassador to Beijing who will probably be called again in the dark of Beijing night to meet Chinese officials.)

Nicolas Sarkozy, the President of France who assumes the EU presidency on July 1, will probably have to spend some nights pondering how to give a moral and ethical lead to his 26 EU colleagues.

Unfortunately, the Dalai Lama also will not sleep well (though I believe he prays for the Chinese during his nights). He will have to find the balance between his restive youth and his Buddhist precepts.

9. Olympics in their true context

We often forget that an Olympic year is always a special year for humanity. In reviving the ancient tradition of the Olympic Games, Baron Pierre de Coubertin's first and foremost objective was to 'build men' and not merely exhibit sporting prowess. The argument that the Olympics are purely a sports event is historically and ethically wrong.

For Coubertin, Olympic was a religion which would 'adhere to an ideal of superior life and aspire for perfection.' He spoke of a quadrennial Human Spring. If events in Tibet could trigger a rediscovery of this 'religion of humanity' across the world, it would be a boon.

10. The Games

In 2001, the IOC's President, Jacques Rogge told the Press: 'We are convinced that the Olympic Games will improve human rights in China.' Well, he certainly did not have the present scenario in mind; he probably thought that it would be (good) business as usual.

Since then, the wretched of the earth have stood up and invited themselves to the Great Game.

The French Baron selected this beautiful creed: 'The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.'

Let us pray that it resounds again and again in Beijing and the Flame of the Human Spirit will shine forth in the months to come.

Economist.com

A colonial uprising

March 19 2008

The Dalai Lama is China's best hope of winning Tibetan acceptance

GEORGE ORWELL would have understood Chinese attitudes to Tibet. In "1984" he coined the term "doublethink", or the ability to believe contradictory things. Thus Chinese leaders profess to believe both that traditional Tibetan culture is repugnant, full of superstition and cruelty, and that Tibet is an "inalienable part of China". They also claim that the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual leader, is becoming irrelevant, yet insist he managed to foment the latest outpouring of anti-Chinese resentment seen in Tibet.

The Dalai Lama is a constant irritant in China's efforts to achieve full international respectability. His stature and access to world leaders keep the issue of Tibet alive, though no country recognizes his government-in-exile. And, as Chinese leaders must grudgingly acknowledge, he retains the loyalty of many Tibetans. In 2005 conservationists, alarmed at the threat to endangered wildlife posed by a Tibetan fad for wearing tiger and other skins, asked the Dalai Lama to denounce the practice. He did, and Tibetans lit bonfires of the pelts.

So China persists in seeing the Dalai Lama as the embodiment of its "Tibet problem". In fact, he offers the only

plausible solution to it. China's strategy for dealing with him is to wait for his death, and install a pliable successor. Last year it even passed an edict giving the government a role in approving new incarnations of such "living Buddha's". But this strategy is doomed. No successor will command such veneration. And so none will be as persuasive an advocate of non-violence and of a "middle way" for Tibet, short of the full independence many Tibetans believe is their birthright.

The fury, arson, vandalism and bloodshed seen in Lhasa in recent days were not instigated by the Dalai Lama. They erupted in spite of his frequent calls for restraint, and were in part a consequence of China's refusal to engage in more than desultory talks with his representatives. It could be far worse: to their great credit, Tibetan nationalists have hardly ever resorted to terrorist tactics, though exiled activists point out that the railway that opened in 2006 linking Tibet and China offers an obvious target.

Serious talks with the Dalai Lama, and the possibility of his returning home for the first time since fleeing to exile in India after an uprising in 1959, might help assuage Tibetan anger. It would also help vindicate those who argued that the staging of the Olympic games in Beijing would make China less repressive. It would give China the chance, belatedly, to honour the promise of autonomy it gave Tibet in 1951, in an agreement foisted on the young Dalai Lama. It would boost its image around the world, and even in Taiwan, which might become less averse to the idea of Chinese sovereignty.

A boot in the face

Yet China shows no sign of being swayed by these arguments. Rather it seems intent on using the Olympics to flaunt its control of Tibet, as the flame is paraded in Lhasa. As elsewhere in China, it hopes that economic advance will soften calls for political freedom. And as in other areas where ethnic minorities have been restive—Inner Mongolia and, especially, Xinjiang—it hopes immigration by the majority Han Chinese will swamp nationalist sentiment. Unless and until that happens, there is always sheer force. That has been used this time with more discretion than in the past. But it is nevertheless the means China seems to have chosen to rule Tibet. As in Orwell's dystopia, its picture of the future seems to be of a boot stamping on a human face, for ever. It need not be that way.

TIME

A Monk's Struggle

Pico Iyer

March 19, 2008

"Since China wants to join the world community," the 14th Dalai Lama said as I was traveling across Japan with him for a week last November, "the world community has a real responsibility to bring China into the mainstream." The whole world stands to gain, he pointed out, from a peaceful and unified China—not least the 6 million Tibetans in China and Chinese-occupied Tibet. "But," he added, "genuine harmony must come from the heart. It cannot come from the barrel of a gun."

I thought of those measured and forgiving words—the Dalai Lama still prays for his "Chinese brothers and sisters" every morning and urges Tibetans to learn Chinese so they can talk with their new rulers, not fight with them—as reports trickled out of Tibet of freedom demonstrations that have led to some of the bloodiest

confrontations in the region since similar protests preceded a brutal crackdown in the late 1980s. The violence has left 99 people dead, according to Tibetan exile groups; the Chinese government says 13 “innocents” were killed in the riots. Soon after monks began demonstrating in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa, Chinese forces moved to contain the marchers, but the disturbances spread to other Tibetan cities, and their causes clearly remain unresolved. Working out how best to avoid further embarrassment as they prepare for the start of the Olympic-torch relay on March 25 will be a tricky challenge for China’s rulers. As a diplomat told TIME, “They need to get this under control, but to do so without a lot of brutality.”

How the crisis unfolds will be determined not just in Beijing but also by the words and actions of a man who protects his people from afar, in his exile home in the northern-India hill station of Dharamsala. As a Buddhist monk, the Dalai Lama speaks unstintingly on behalf of all people’s rights to basic freedoms of speech and thought—though as a Buddhist monk, he also holds staunchly to the view that violence can never solve a problem deep down. If the bloodshed gets out of control, he said in recent days, he will step down as political leader—a symbolic act, really, since he would continue to be the head of the Tibetans and the democracy he has set up in exile already has an elected Prime Minister. In China meanwhile, Tibetans are still liable to imprisonment for years just for carrying a picture of their exiled leader (who by Tibetan custom is regarded as the incarnation of a god, the god of compassion). Some have been shot while walking across the mountains to visit cousins or children in exile.

As soon as you start talking to the Dalai Lama, as I have been doing for 33 years, you notice that his favorite adjectives are *logical* and *realistic* and the verbs he returns to are *investigate*, *analyze* and *explore*. The Buddha was a “scientist,” he said the last time I saw him, which means that a true Buddhist should follow the course of reason (recalling, perhaps, that anger most harms the person who feels it). Contact and communication are the methods he always stresses—to this day, he encourages every possibility for dialogue with China and in places even urges Tibetans to study Buddhism under Chinese leaders whom he knows to be capable.

This determination to be completely empirical—as if he were a doctor of the mind pledged to examine things only as they are, to come up with a clear diagnosis and then to suggest a practical response—is one of the things that have made the current Dalai Lama such a startling and tonic figure on the world stage. There are few monks in any tradition who speak so rarely about faith while rejecting anything that has been disproved by scientific inquiry; on his desk at home, he keeps a plastic model of the brain with detachable parts so that he can take it apart, put it together again and see how it works. And there are even fewer political leaders who work from the selfless positions and long-term vision of a monk (and doctor of philosophy). It’s easy to forget that the Dalai Lama is by now the most seasoned ruler on the planet, having led his people for 68 years—longer than Queen Elizabeth II, King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand or even Fidel Castro.

This all has deep and wide implications for a world that seems as religiously polarized now as it has ever been. Always stressing that the Buddha’s own words should be thrown out if they are shown by scientific inquiry to be flawed, the Dalai Lama is the rare religious figure who tells people not to get needlessly confused or distracted by religion (“Even without a religion, we can become a good human being”). No believer in absolute truth—he eagerly seeks out Catholics, neuroscientists, even regular travelers to Tibet who can instruct him—he is also the rare Tibetan who will suggest that old Tibet may have contributed in part to its current predicament, the rare Buddhist to tell foreigners not to take up Buddhism but to study within their own traditions, where their roots are deepest.

As the world prepares for the Olympic Games in Beijing this August—and as Tibetans (and those in other occupied areas across China, like Xinjiang) inevitably use the world’s attention to broadcast their suffering—a farmer’s son born in a stone-and-mud house in a 20-home village in one of the world’s least materially

developed countries has, rather remarkably, become one of the leading spokesmen for a new global vision in which we look past divisions of nation, race and religion and try to address our shared problems at the source. Acts of terrorism, he said when I saw him in November, usually arise from some cause deep in the past and will not go away until the root problem is addressed. He could as easily have been talking about the demonstrations of discontent being staged in his homeland nearly a half-century since he saw it last.

The Scientist

I have been visiting the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala regularly since 1974 and have been listening to him speak to psychologists, non-Buddhist priests and philosophers—from Harvard to Hiroshima and Zurich to Malibu—since 1979. I'm not a Buddhist myself, only a typically skeptical journalist whose father, a professional philosopher, happened to meet the Dalai Lama in 1960, the year after he went into exile. But having spent time watching wars and revolutions everywhere from Sri Lanka to Beirut, I've grown intrigued by the quietly revolutionary ideas that the Dalai Lama has put into play. China and Tibet will long be geographic neighbors, he implies, so for Tibetans to think of the Chinese as their enemies—or vice versa—is to say they will long be surrounded by enemies. Better by far to expunge the notion of “enmities” that the mind has created.

Among fellow Buddhists, the Dalai Lama delivers complex, analytical talks and wrestles with doctrinal issues within a philosophy that can be just as divided as anything in Christianity or Islam, but he has decided after analytical research that when he finds himself out in the wider world talking to large audiences of people with no interest in Buddhism, the most practical course is just to offer, as a doctor would, simple, everyday principles that anyone, regardless of religion (or lack of same), might find helpful. Since material wealth cannot help us if we're heartbroken, he often says, and yet those who are strong within can survive even material hardship (as many monks in Tibet have had tragic occasion to prove), it makes more sense to concentrate on our inner, not our outer, resources. We in the privileged world spend so much time strengthening and working on our bodies, perhaps we could also use some time training what lies beneath them, at the source of our well-being: the mind.

His own people, inevitably, have not always been able to live according to these lucid precepts, and if you walk along the crowded, gritty streets of Dharamsala, you find as many Tibetans looking to the West for salvation as you find Westerners looking to Tibet. Melancholy signs in the Tibetan government-in-exile compound say Tibetan Torture Survivors' Program and Voice Of Tibet (Voice For The Voiceless), and many young Tibetans feel they have spent all their lives dreaming of a country they've never seen. In Tibet, meanwhile, I remember—visiting in 1990, when the shadow of martial law hung over the capital—seeing soldiers on the rooftops of the low buildings around the central Jokhang Temple and tanks stationed just outside the city limits.

Yet the larger sense of identity being proposed by the Dalai Lama—and many others from every tradition—has special relevance today because, as the Tibetan leader likes to say, we are living in a “new reality” in which “the concept of ‘we’ and ‘they’ is gone.” And if the terrorist attacks and wars of the new millennium have made some people on every continent wary and skeptical of religion, they have also made them ache, more palpably than ever, for precisely the sense of moral guidance and solace that religions traditionally provide.

Exile and Opportunity

What could be called a global movement on behalf of post identity thinking seems one of the brightest hopes of our new world order and one often advanced by such close friends and admirers of the Dalai Lama as Vaclav Havel and Desmond Tutu. Yet what has made the Dalai Lama's example particularly striking—and what was perhaps partly responsible for his receiving the 1989 Nobel Prize for Peace—is that he has had to

live these principles and put them to the test during almost every hour of his 72 years. He came to the throne in Lhasa, after all, when he was only 4 years old, and he was receiving envoys from F.D.R. with intricate questions about the transportation of military supplies across Tibet during World War II when he was just 7. He was 11 when violent fighting broke out around him in Lhasa, and by the time he was 15—an age when most of us are stumbling through high school—he was the full-time political leader of his people, having to negotiate against Mao Zedong. After he fled Tibet at age 23, when Chinese pressure on Lhasa seemed certain to provoke widespread violence, he had to remake an entire ancient culture in exile.

The result of all this is that he is as rigorous and detailed a realist as you could hope to meet. His life has never allowed him the luxury of talking abstractly or wishfully from a mountaintop. He follows the news more closely than many journalists do and cheerfully confessed to me more than a decade ago that he is “addicted” to the bbc World Service broadcast every morning. When he speaks around the world, one of his favorite lines is “Dream—nothing!” or some other expression to stress that instead of looking outside ourselves for help or inspiration, we should act right now because “responsibility for our future lies on our own shoulders.”

This makes for a novel way of practicing the art of politics—one inspired, you could say, by the prince called the Buddha more than by the one described by Machiavelli. The central principle of Buddhism is the idea of interdependence—the notion that all sentient beings are linked together in a network that was classically known as Indra’s Net. Thus, calling Chinese individuals your enemy and Tibetans your friend, the Dalai Lama might suggest, is as crazy as calling your right eye your ally and your left your adversary; you usually need both to function well, and all parts of the world body depend on all other parts. “Before,” I heard him say last November, “destruction of your enemy was victory for your side.” But in our globalized world, where ecology enforces our sense of mutual dependence, “destruction of your enemy is destruction of yourself.”

The other essential idea of Buddhism (more accurately called a science of mind than a religion) is that we can change our world by changing how we choose to look at the world. “There is nothing either good or bad,” as Hamlet said, “but thinking makes it so.” For most of us, for example, exile means disruption and loss. But the Dalai Lama has decided that exile is his reality and therefore should be taken as opportunity. Almost as soon as he left Tibet in 1959, he started to draw up a new democratic constitution for Tibetans, allowing for the possibility of impeaching the Dalai Lama. He threw out much that he regarded as outdated or needlessly ritualistic in the Tibetan system while gradually bringing in reforms so that women are now allowed to study for doctoral degrees and become abbots (which they could not do in old Tibet) and science is part of the monastic curriculum. Tibetan children in exile take their lessons in Tibetan until they are 10 or so—to make sure they are strongly rooted in their own tradition—and then in English ever after (so as to be connected to the modern world).

This has made the Tibetan exile community one of the success stories among refugee groups in recent decades. But no less important, perhaps, it has offered a possibility to many others on a planet where there are, by some counts, as many as 33 million official and unofficial refugees. By showing how Tibet can exist internally, in spirit and imagination, even if it is barely visible on the map, the Dalai Lama has been suggesting to Palestinians, Kurds and Uighurs that they can maintain a cultural community even if they have lost their territory. Communities can be linked not by common soil so much as by common ground, a common foundation.

Challenging China

Yet even as the Dalai Lama has managed to make all these breakthroughs in the exile world, in Tibet itself he has made little visible progress over the past 50 years. Every Tibetan I’ve met remains immovably devoted to him. And yet, as he said to me 12 years ago, “in spite of my open approach of maximum concessions, the

Chinese position becomes even harder and harder.” The violence that broke out recently was a harrowing reminder of the fact that 98% of Tibetans have no access to their leader and are denied the most basic of freedoms. And in return for talking of interdependence and the need to stop even thinking in terms of enemies, the Dalai Lama is known in Beijing as a “splittist” and the “enemy of the Tibetan people.”

Indeed, his very determination to speak for openness and a long-term vision has sometimes brought him critics on every side. Some conservative Tibetan clerics believe he has been too radical in jettisoning old Tibetan customs, while some Western Buddhists, graduates of the revolutions of the '60s, wish he did not speak out against divorce or sexual license. True to his Buddhist precepts, he has not called for Tibetan independence from China for more than 20 years; he seeks only autonomy, whereby China could control Tibetans' defense and foreign affairs so long as Tibetans have sovereignty over everything else. But more and more Tibetans in exile ask how they can sit by and practice nonviolence while their homes and families are being wiped out by the Chinese occupation. “Why is he thinking of the future and not the present, the past?” asks an outspoken Tibetan in Dharamsala who once fought with the cia-trained guerrillas violently resisting the Chinese. “I want freedom in this world, not *from* this world.”

In July 2006 Chinese authorities intensified what the Dalai Lama calls “demographic aggression” by launching a high-speed train linking Lhasa to Beijing and other Chinese cities, thus allowing 6,000 more Han Chinese to flood into the Tibetan capital every day. Lhasa, sometimes known as an “abode of the gods,” has turned from the small traditional settlement I first saw in 1985 into an Eastern Las Vegas, with a population of 300,000 (two out of every three of them Chinese). On the main streets alone, by one Western scholar's count, there are 238 dance halls and karaoke parlors and 658 brothels, and the Potala Palace—for centuries a symbol of a culture whose people were ruled by a monk and home to nine Dalai Lamas—is now mockingly surrounded by an amusement park.

Yet the Dalai Lama, true to his thinking, points out that the Beijing-Lhasa train is neither good nor bad. “It is a form of progress, of material development,” I heard him say four months ago, adding that Tibetans understand that for their material well-being, it is of benefit to be part of the People's Republic. The only important thing, he pointed out, was how its rulers use the train and whether they deploy it for compassionate purposes or not.

It can almost seem, in considering Tibet, as if two different visions of freedom are colliding. For Buddhists, liberation traditionally means freedom from ignorance and so from the suffering it brings. For Chinese pledged to material development, freedom simply means liberation from the past, from religion and from backwardness. According to the Dalai Lama, at the sixth and most recent round of regular talks between Chinese officials and a delegation of Tibetans, the Chinese said, “There is no Tibet issue. Everything in Tibet is very smooth.” To which the exiled Tibetans said, “If things are really as good as you say they are, then why don't you let us come and see the reality?”

The Long Road

The central question surrounding Tibet, of course, is what will happen when the current Dalai Lama dies. In preparation for that event, the man has been stressing for years that the function of any Dalai Lama is only to fulfill the work of the previous Dalai Lama; therefore, any young child selected by Chinese authorities and declared to be the 15th Dalai Lama, a Beijing puppet, will not be the true “Dalai Lama of Tibetan hearts.” As practical and flexible as ever and holding to the Buddhist ideas of impermanence and nonattachment, he told me as far back as 1996, “At a certain stage, the Dalai Lama institution will disappear. But that does not mean that Tibetan Buddhist culture will cease. No!” Most Tibetans, however, cannot abide the thought of a future without their traditional leader.

The deeper issue, as the Dalai Lama always stresses, is that names and forms are unimportant so long as something more fundamental is sustained. The Buddha's job—and therefore that of his most prominent contemporary student—was not just to be clear-sighted and compassionate but also to show how compassionate and clear-sighted any one of us can be. In that regard, it hardly matters whether the terms *Dalai Lama* or *Buddhism* or even *Tibet* continue to exist. As it is, thanks to the exodus of Tibetans in the past half-century, Tibetan culture and Buddhism have become part of the global neighborhood. Whereas there were all of two Tibetan Buddhist centers in the West in 1968, there are now more than 40 in New York City alone. In Taiwan, there are more than 200. More French people call themselves Buddhist than Protestant or Jew.

Perhaps most significant, some of the people most eagerly drawn to Tibetan tradition and Buddhism are, in fact, citizens of China, who have been denied any religious sustenance for more than 50 years. The last time I visited Lhasa, in 2002, I saw more and more Chinese individuals going to the Jokhang Temple at the center of town as pilgrims, seeking out Tibetan lamas for instruction, even trying to learn Tibetan, the same language that is all but banned for Tibetans. When I traveled across Japan with the Dalai Lama last November, I saw dozens of Chinese people clustering around him, sobbing and asking for his blessing and, 30 minutes later, saw another group of Chinese, much more poised and sophisticated, eager to talk to him about their plans for democracy in the mainland.

“If 30 years from now, Tibet is 6 million Tibetans and 10 million Chinese Buddhists,” the Tibetan leader said to me five years ago, “then maybe something will be O.K.” As the world looks toward Beijing and its glittering coming-out party this August, and the Chinese government prepares to unveil all the fruits of its recent remarkable economic achievements, oppressed citizens in Tibet and elsewhere will no doubt use the same opportunity to remind the world of what has been lost in terms of freedom and humanity in the rush for those achievements. The calm scientist in monk robes, however, with his habit of looking at the deeper causes beneath every surface, will surely keep noting that the only revolution that lasts and that can truly help us toward a better world is the one that begins inside.

TIME

Analysis: Old ways in Tibet are losing power over young

Jeremy Page

March 19, 2008

The unrest in Tibet is the biggest challenge to Chinese rule in almost 20 years but also the most serious test of the Dalai Lama's authority to date as he struggles to keep his followers on the path of non-violence.

That much was made clear yesterday when the Tibetan spiritual leader threatened to “resign” if the violence escalated, insisting that independence was “out of the question” and urging his people to live “side by side” with the Chinese.

His threat was a clear attempt to reassert his authority over the world's six million Tibetans, 300,000 of whom live in exile, and to prove his credibility to a Chinese Government that regards him as a mendacious separatist.

His pacifist message will win him kudos around the world - and further photo opportunities with Western leaders, Hollywood stars and Buddhist converts. The problem is that it is alienating many young Tibetans, both inside his Himalayan homeland, where they resent an influx of ethnic Chinese, and outside, where they feel increasingly rootless and disillusioned.

While they respect the Nobel Peace laureate for his non-violent creed as a monk, they point to the success of independence struggles in East Timor and Kosovo, which were both recognised as sovereign states by the international community after using force against their occupiers.

The vast majority of Tibetans still revere the Dalai Lama as their religious leader and do not question his supremacy over the Panchen Lama and the Karmapa Lama, the second and third in the Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy. But the more conciliatory he sounds towards China, the more they question his role as a political leader - which threatens a tradition that dates back to a young shepherd's appointment as the first Dalai Lama in the late 14th century.

Although it is theologically impossible for him to resign - as he is the reincarnation of his predecessor - the threat drew attention to a question at the core of the current crisis: what happens after he dies or steps down?

Still sprightly at 72, the Dalai Lama has floated several ideas - most recently suggesting that there be a referendum among the world's 11-12 million Tibetan Buddhists on whether he should be reincarnated.

If the vote was in favour, he said that he might appoint a reincarnation while he was still alive, instead of being reborn as a small boy after his death.

He has also introduced limited democratic reforms, holding the first elections in 2001 for the post of Prime Minister, who now heads the government-in-exile, technically. But the Dalai Lama remains the pre-eminent political figurehead of a movement whose *raison d'être* is not to govern but to preserve Tibetan culture as it was before communist Chinese troops entered Tibet in 1950.

And, as a result, he is increasingly out of touch with the several generations of Tibetans who have grown up either in Chinese-occupied Tibet, or between India, Nepal and the West. The most likely consequence of his departure will therefore be that, without a unifying figurehead, the Tibetan movement will fragment into regional and political groupings.

And, to judge by the current crisis, the radical wing will emerge as the more vocal and more appealing to disaffected young Tibetans on both sides of the border. That should be a worry not just for the Dalai Lama, but for China's leaders too.

Slate.com

Live From Lhasa

Anne Applebaum

March 17, 2008

Anne Applebaum is a Washington Post and Slate columnist

Shaky cell-phone videos from Tibet foretell doom for the Chinese empire.

Cell-phone photographs and videos from Tibet, blurry and amateur, are circulating on the Internet. Some

show clouds of tear gas; others burning buildings and shops; still others purple-robed monks, riot police, and confusion. Watching them, it is impossible not to remember the cell-phone videos and photographs sent out from burning Rangoon only six months ago. Last year Burma, this year Tibet. Next year, will YouTube feature shops burning in Xinjiang, home of China's Uighur minority? Or riot police rounding up refugees along the Chinese-North Korean border?

That covert cell phones have become the most important means of transmitting news from certain parts of East Asia is no accident. Lhasa, Rangoon, Xinjiang, and North Korea: All of these places are, directly or indirectly, dominated by the same media-shy, publicity-sensitive Chinese regime. Though we don't usually think of it this way, China is, in fact, a vast, anachronistic, territorial empire, within which one dominant ethnic group, the Han Chinese, rules over a host of reluctant "captive nations." To keep the peace, the Chinese use methods not so different from those once used by Austro-Hungary or czarist Russia: political manipulation, secret police repression, and military force.

But, then, modern China bears many surprising resemblances to the empires of the past in other ways, too. Like its Soviet imperial predecessor, for example, China encompasses both an "inner" empire, of which Tibet and Xinjiang are the most prominent components, and an "outer" empire, consisting most notably of its Burmese and North Korean clients. Like its French and British predecessors, the Chinese empire must wrestle constantly with nations whose languages, religions, and customs differ sharply from its own and whose behavior is, therefore, unpredictable. And like all its predecessors, the Chinese imperial class cares deeply about the pacification of the imperial periphery, more so than one might think.

For proof that this is so, look no further than the biography of Hu Jintao the current Chinese president—and also the former Communist Party boss of Tibet. In 1988 and 1989, at the time of the last major riots, Hu was responsible both for the brutal repression of dissident Tibetan monks and dissidents and for what the Dalai Lama has subsequently called China's policy of "cultural genocide": the importation of thousands of ethnic Han Chinese into Tibet's cities in order to dilute and eventually outbreed the ethnic Tibetan population.

Clearly, the repression of Tibet matters enormously to the members of China's ruling clique, or they would not have promoted Hu, its mastermind, so far. The pacification of Tibet must also be considered a major political and propaganda success, or it would not have been copied by the Chinese-backed Burmese regime last year and repeated by the Chinese themselves in Tibet last week. Tibet is to China what Algeria once was to France, what India once was to imperial Britain, what Poland was to czarist Russia: the most unreliable, the most intransigent, and at the same time the most symbolically significant province of the empire.

Keep that in mind, over the next few days and months, as China tries once again to belittle Tibet, to explain away a nationalist uprising as a bit of vandalism. The last week's riots began as a religious protest: Tibet's monks were demonstrating against laws that, among other things, require them to renounce the Dalai Lama. The monks' marches then escalated into generalized, unplanned, anti-Chinese violence, culminating in attacks on Han Chinese shops and businesses, among them—as you can see on the cell-phone videos—the Lhasa branch of the Bank of China.

However the official version evolves, in other words, make no mistake about it: This was not merely vandalism, it could not have been solely organized by outsiders, it was not only about the Olympics, and it was not the work of a tiny minority. It was a significant political event, proof that the Tibetans still identify themselves as Tibetan, not Chinese. As such, it must have significant reverberations in Beijing. The war in Algeria brought down the French Fourth Republic. The dissident movements on its periphery helped weaken the Soviet

Union. Right now, I'd wager that Hu Jintao's Tibet policy is causing a lot of consternation among his colleagues.

And if they aren't worried, they should be. After all, the history of the last two centuries is filled with tales of strong, stable empires brought down by their subjects, undermined by their client states, overwhelmed by the national aspirations of small, subordinate countries. Why should the 21st century be any different? Watching the tear gas roll over the streets of Lhasa yesterday on a blurry, cell-phone video, I couldn't help but wonder when—maybe not in this decade, this generation, or even this century—Tibet and its monks will have their revenge.



Tibet: revolt with memories

Gabriel Lafitte

March 18, 2008

The Tibetan revolt of March 2008, like those of 1959 and 1987, will be crushed by the overwhelming might of the Chinese military. No match could be more unequal: maroon-clad nuns and monks versus the machinery of oppression of the global rising power. In recent months, fast-response mobile tactical squads whose sole purpose is to quell the people have been overtly rehearsing on the streets of Tibetan towns for just what they are now doing.

What is the point of revolt if it is almost certainly suicidal?

This uprising has many uniquely Tibetan characteristics. At street level, a favourite item seized from Chinese shops was toilet-rolls - hardly the usual target of looters. Not that Tibetans, over millennia, have felt much need for the paper rolls, or even for the basics of the Chinese cuisine such as soy sauce. What the Tibetans did with the loo paper was to hurl it over power lines, instantly making Lhasa, and other Tibetan towns, Tibetan again. Right across the 25% of China that is ethnically and culturally Tibetan, the unrolled toilet paper looks like wind horses, the white silken *khadag* [or *kata*] scarf with which Tibetans greet and bless each other. As all Tibetans know, they carry their message on the wind: victory to the gods That is what this revolt is about: making Tibet Tibetan once more. The white scarves also protected Tibetan shopkeepers from attack as the streets filled, for a short and costly moment of freedom, with Tibetans smashing the businesses of immigrant Chinese traders.

Even in the most intoxicating moment of reclaiming the streets no Tibetan could have forgotten the ever-present security cameras, and the network of informers penetrating deeply into urban Tibetans' private lives. No Tibetan could have been unmindful that the full repressive power of a modernised, high-tech tyranny would hunt them down, and show no mercy. All Tibetans know of former friends who, on release from prison and torture, now shun old acquaintances because they are under such intense pressure by their torturers to regularly name names of those who privately voice thoughts that do not conform to the party line. These informers live in fear of being hauled in again, for further torture, and of betraying their friends.

That is what makes this revolt uniquely Tibetan. It is no accident that from the outset the protests were led by those who have already renounced all ties to kin, dedicating their lives to serve all of humanity, unconditionally.

The nuns and monks of Tibet have taken vows to work for the liberation of all sentient beings from all sources of suffering - in the mind and in the external world. From the Dalai Lama through to the newest novice, they train in meditation to cut attachment to existence, to the existence of me ahead of all others.

They know they will die, and are ready for it. Just as in the great Tibetan revolts of two and five decades ago, many will die in secret prison cells, after torture. When the world is no longer watching, or able to see, Tibetans who risked all so as to focus the world - in this Olympic year - on China's shame, will die.

Tibet's bedrock

What do Tibetans find so objectionable about today's China? Why is it that Tibetans and Chinese, neighbours for thousands of years, cannot get on?

Media coverage focuses on immediate causes, but there is a deeper story. The experience of working with Tibetans for thirty years, and of seeing Chinese development projects in Tibet for myself (as well as of having been briefly imprisoned for it), I can share what my Tibetan friends tell me. Contemporary Chinese capitalist modernity is as problematic for Tibetans as past state violence and repression. China today pours money - overwhelmingly state money - into Tibet: into railways, highways, tourist infrastructure and a top-heavy administrative elite. Glass towers, shopping-malls, enormous brothels masquerading as discos, towering offices, now dominate urban Tibetan skylines which only twenty years ago were a sacred landscape of prayer flags, temples and meditation.

On the face of it, that's progress. If Lhasa now looks like any Chinese boomtown, that's just the price of modernity - or so many outsiders say. But Tibetans find themselves excluded from the material benefits of modernity, watching powerlessly as gangs of non-Tibetan immigrants take over even the unskilled jobs on construction sites and in driving taxis. Tibetans remain poor, socially excluded, on the margins of a state-funded construction boom that reduces them to a minority meant to smile for the tourist cameras as they try to focus on their spiritual pilgrimage. The holy city of Lhasa, and all the big monasteries where the protests began, have been swamped by mass Chinese tourism, poking lenses into the most private devotions of those on the path to enlightenment.

The new railway to Lhasa, less than two years in operation, accelerated the tourism boom, the brothels and discos, and the marginalisation of Tibetans. Most Tibetans live in a countryside as big as western Europe, with their herds of yak, sheep and goats, eking an existence on land rigidly allocated decades ago by Chinese bureaucrats who refuse to re-divide land as families grow and new families form. Poverty among Tibetans is endemic, even as statistics averaged for entire provinces, bundling urban boom and rural neglect, proclaim rising standards of living.

The latest threat to Tibetan ways of life comes wrapped in an ideology of environmentalism. In the name of protecting the Tibetan upper reaches of China's great rivers - both the Yangtze and the Yellow - thousands of Tibetan nomads are being forced off their land, and resettled in miserable new towns in the middle of nowhere. Instantly, their livelihoods and intimate knowledge of the land and sustainable management, are useless - but they are seldom given training in new skills or even compensation beyond a grain survival ration.

Now the nomads, in a huge and rapidly expanding area, are ecological refugees, on the mistaken assumption that they are ignorantly and carelessly to blame for degradation of a vast grassland second in size only to Australia's pastoral inland. The nomads, compulsorily voiceless, not allowed to form any NGOs of their own,

have no opportunity to show how deeply they care for the land, having sustained its productivity and its wildlife over millennia. China's urban-based party elite regards nomads as stupid, uneducated, unscientific, greedy and destructive - everything China is trying to get away from. There is no partnership between authority and those on the land, because they are utterly different in national community, background, experience and worldview.

This is the bedrock of the revolt. The Chinese authorities hold rural Tibetans in contempt, while urban educated Tibetans are viewed with suspicion, their exclusive loyalty to China and the party forever tested by extreme "patriotic education" campaigns that make it compulsory to denounce the most revered lamas.

China's time-warp

To be a Tibetan in Tibet can be compared with being black in Mississippi in the 1950s. Travel within Tibet, migration from country to city, number of livestock permitted, number of children permitted - all are rigidly and oppressively controlled by an invasive bureaucracy. Meanwhile healthcare and education, strictly on a capitalist user-pays basis, are concentrated in urban areas. Only if you have the money upfront, and connections, do you even get in the door of a hospital.

The monks and nuns, who devote their lives to clarifying and purifying the mind, draw inspiration from the example of their teachers, and the teachers of their teachers, the highest of all being the Dalai Lama. China's party leaders - including Hu Jintao (elected president for a further five-year term on 15 March), who imposed martial law the last time Tibet revolted - never seem to learn that insisting on monks trampling or spitting on an image of the Dalai Lama is only going to deepen Tibetan alienation.

The China the world glimpses briefly today is a China that has not, in Tibet, changed as much as everyone would hope. Tibet under Chinese rule is stuck in a time-warp - of Marxist anti-religion propaganda, mass campaigns of denunciation and thought reform. China's policies in Tibet are deeply contradictory and self-defeating. China wants Tibetans to embrace and love the motherland and the party, but the punitive insistence on stability always undermines the uneven, often exclusionary, progress towards development.

China needs to be told by its friends that an empire cannot be made into a nation by force. (Australia, as a close friend and now with a prime minister fluent in Chinese, is uniquely placed to remind the isolated and fearful party leaders that they can gain much by listening to the message of the rioters: give us a break. Australia could also teach China much about land management and care, about rural communities and government working as partners to repair long-term damage, and about discovering the hard way how to respect and reconcile with indigenous peoples.)

As the Dalai Lama has always said: Tibetans and Chinese have had good relations in the past, and can have again - but only if there is mutual respect for fellow human beings who differ in their sources of happiness.

Tibetan monks and nuns are now dying, usually with equanimity and no hatred, in order to maintain that difference.

TIME

Crush Tibet: China's only path

Rosemary Righter

March 18, 2008

Associate editor of The Times

The Dalai Lama's spiritual power terrifies Beijing. Might, not persuasion, is its only response

The rails carrying China's showcase high-altitude train to Tibet began sinking into melting permafrost within months of its triumphant opening two years ago. This was no mere technical setback for a pioneering engineering feat; for Beijing, it was essential for the Qinghai-Lhasa railway to function perfectly because it was above all things a political project. Conceived a century ago by Sun Yat-sen, the father of the revolution, the point of finally realising his near-impossible and hugely expensive dream was to set the final seal on China's benevolent "embrace" of Tibet.

That official narrative of unity and harmony between China and Tibet, exposed to the world as a sham as anti-Chinese resentment boils over in Tibetan monasteries and towns far across western China, is vitally important to Beijing for two reasons.

The first is that China has never really been able to control Tibet. China's rulers have always felt the need to do so because Tibet's vast expanses command China's western flank and its borders with India, and also because of the huge influence of Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia and throughout the northern border regions beyond the Great Wall.

Tibet has been a thorn in China's side ever since the Tang dynasty, when the two fought for two centuries before concluding, in 821, a treaty that, invoking the heavenly bodies, established "a great era when Tibetans shall be happy in Tibet and Chinese shall be happy in China".

That has never quite been the case. When the last imperial dynasty collapsed in 1911, Tibet swiftly declared independence. One of Mao's first acts after 1949 was to beat Tibet into line.

The second reason why Beijing needs Tibet to be convincingly pacified is ideological. For many people, China has become an easier and freer place to live over the past 20 years, but it remains the case that the Communist Party cannot tolerate any belief system that even implicitly challenges its monopoly over "right thinking".

This is, if anything, even more true today than it was, because with the demise of Maoism and, now, the jettisoning of Marxist-Leninism, the party lacks a belief system of its own to buttress its legitimacy. Hence the party's pathological persecution of the eccentric but harmless Falun Gong religious sect. Hence its increasingly harsh control of religious practice in Tibet, where Zhang Qingli, the Tibet Party Secretary sent there two years ago by President Hu Jintao, declared on his arrival a "fight to the death struggle" against the Dalai Lama.

The Chinese are paranoid about the Dalai Lama for essentially the same reasons that the rest of the world respects him: as the humbly persuasive spiritual leader of a leading world religion whose lack of temporal power diminishes in no way the loyalty and love he commands. He is the main reason why China's methods

of ethnic colonisation, fairly effective with other minorities, have failed in Tibet. Not only is Tibetan culture too far removed from Chinese for assimilation to be feasible; it revolves around religious loyalties that the State cannot reach.

Because the Dalai Lama is at the centre of these loyalties, Beijing considers him a dangerously subversive political agitator. They are appalled that he only has to make an address far away in India and his people obey; as when he advised Tibetans to stop wearing fur to save wild animals from extinction, and people rushed out to join public fur burnings. Two years ago rumours that he was returning swept Qinghai province and overnight thousands headed for the great monastery at Kumbum to greet him. To Beijing, this confirms what a danger he is.

The Dalai Lama talks about the Tibet problem in terms of “the identity of a people”. On this, if nothing else, Beijing agrees. It can end resistance in Tibet only by destroying Tibetan identity. It is deliberately swamping the population with Han Chinese and other immigrants, imposing “patriotic education” and Chinese-language qualifications for jobs, and stifling - other than as tourist exhibits - Tibet’s customs. The Dalai Lama seeks for Tibetans the autonomy to which they are lawfully entitled as an “autonomous region” of China. But that would up-end Beijing’s strategy. That is why China’s leaders accuse him of inciting Tibetans to challenge, they say, the “stability of the State”.

The first tumbrils rolled through Lhasa yesterday, hours before the deadline for “criminals” to turn themselves in or be hunted down, parading handcuffed prisoners with their heads forced down by soldiers. Troops are fanning out through the neighbouring provinces of Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai. Foreigners are being bundled out of Lhasa. But Beijing will not keep the crackdown entirely secret. This is not only because it cannot - news has mobile wings in today’s China - but because smashing dissent in Tibet would warn off the many other dissidents - farmers, migrants, the flotsam of unemployed - tempted to try their Olympics-year luck.

Inside China, cracking heads in Tibet has up to now been pretty risk-free; few Chinese, shamefully, have much sympathy for Tibetans. Outside China, China’s leaders are gambling that foreign protests will subside, as they have over Burma, in time to avert Olympic boycotts. Have they guessed wrong? I remember Sir Percy Cradock, then Margaret Thatcher’s foreign policy adviser, sitting in Downing Street complacently murmuring “when the dust has settled” when it was fresh blood, not dust, they were scraping off the walls around Tianamen Square. To say “nothing must wreck the Olympics” after this would be much the same thing.

TIME

Tibet: try the Hong Kong solution

Malcom Rifkind

March 21, 2008

Malcolm Rifkind, MP, was Foreign Secretary, 1995-97

China invented the idea of two systems in one country. It worked brilliantly. It can again

It is easy to get depressed about the trauma of Tibet and the suppression of Tibetan cultural and political aspirations. It is, after all, almost half a century since the Dalai Lama fled his country. He has never been able

to return and recent events make it highly unlikely that he will in the foreseeable future.

Over that half century the Soviet Union has collapsed into 15 independent states, apartheid has been defeated in South Africa, colonial empires have disappeared, and the United States could be about to elect its first black president. But Tibet and the Tibetans remain under the iron hand of Beijing, denied not just self-government but also the free expression of their unique cultural and religious identity.

Pessimism about the future may seem inevitable but it need not be. A solution is already available that would not only meet Tibetan aspirations but would do so in a way that should be acceptable to China.

China is the country that invented the concept of two systems in one country. It did so in order to absorb Hong Kong back into the motherland without killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. It was the inspiration of Deng Xiaoping and it has been brilliantly successful.

Instead of insisting that the Hong Kong Chinese had to accept a communist economic system combined with political uniformity, the people of Hong Kong have been able to continue to live as a Western, capitalist enclave within the Chinese body politic.

Although there are clear limits to its freedom and democratic rights, Hong Kong enjoys real autonomy, a functioning rule of law and a liberal press and media that have no equivalent in most of China. Similar freedoms have been conceded to the former Portuguese colony of Macao. Nor is there any doubt that the Chinese Government would be delighted to conclude a similar arrangement with the Taiwanese if the latter could be persuaded to accept reunification with mainland China in the years to come.

If China is, therefore, able to live with genuine autonomy and cultural freedom in Hong Kong and Macao, and if it would be only too happy to concede it to Taiwan, why can a similar offer not be made to the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people? The answer is that, until now, the Chinese have not considered it to be necessary. They have assumed that they could make the Dalai Lama a non-person, gradually forgotten by his fellow Tibetans. They have hoped that a substantial and growing migration of Han Chinese into Tibet would transform the demographic composition of the territory and make the Tibetans an ethnic minority in their own land.

China now has to acknowledge that these objectives have totally failed. Far from marginalising the Dalai Lama, they have seen him transformed into an Asian Nelson Mandela, fêted around the world and revered by his people as a symbol as well as a leader.

Young Tibetans have become radicalised as people do in the modern world wherever the denial of freedom is seen as being combined with foreign occupation. Tibet looks likely to become a cause célèbre for protest movements around the world and public opinion in the West wants their leaders to do what they can to help the Tibetan cause.

An autonomous, self-governing Tibet within China should not be that difficult for the Chinese to accept. The Dalai Lama has made it clear that he is not seeking independence and, while that will disappoint many of his followers, the vast majority would accept his authority and be delighted and relieved if some genuine self-government was to be introduced.

The Chinese, for their part, would find that their reputation in the world as a whole was transformed. At present they appear, and behave, as if they were the world's last colonial empire. The internet and the mobile phone have made it impossible for them to seal off

Tibet from the outside world. Increased repression or political and cultural reform are the only choices left available to them and the price they would pay if they opt for repression will be high and will grow. We should not be naive. Whatever the price, the Chinese would be willing to pay it if they saw Tibet breaking away from China and becoming a separate state. That will not be even a distant possibility unless and until China itself embraces democratic reform.

But a Tibetan province with cultural freedom and a significant degree of political autonomy would be no more than is already enjoyed by Hong Kong and Macao. It would be a Chinese solution to a Chinese problem and all the better for it.

The Chinese are planning that the Olympic torch should, in the run-up to the Olympic Games, be carried through Tibet on its way to Beijing. In current circumstances that would constitute a shameful betrayal of the Olympic ideal. But if the Chinese Government means what it says when it offers a dialogue with the Dalai Lama in exchange for a renunciation of independence and violence, there could be a transformation in the current poisonous atmosphere.

A serious offer of political and cultural reform would not only delight the Tibetans and impress the world, it would also make the Beijing Olympics a unique opportunity to welcome the new China to its rightful place in the pantheon of nations.



The spirituality of Tibet is a lesson to China – and to us

Dr Alexander Studholme

March 23, 2008

Dr Alexander Studholme lectures on Indian religions in the Divinity Faculty, Cambridge University

Defying Dawkins and Mao, religion won't die out. Those in the confused majority should take note

In 1955, the Dalai Lama travelled to Peking to meet Chairman Mao. Until their very last encounter, the young Tibetan leader – then just 19 years old – remained optimistic about a future alliance between his country and communist China. The Dalai Lama took notes as the Great Helmsman advised him on the value of progressive education and modern communication systems. But, then, Mao drew him closer. “Religion is poison,” he breathed, “Firstly it reduces the population, because monks and nuns must stay celibate, and secondly it neglects material progress.”

In his autobiography, *Freedom in Exile*, the Dalai Lama recorded his reaction. “I felt a violent burning sensation all over my face and I was suddenly very afraid,” he wrote. On further reflection, though, this fear turned into confusion and even amazement that someone as intelligent as Mao could have misjudged him so badly. Though apparently able to engage with the Dalai Lama as political leader of Tibet, it was as if Mao had completely ignored his role as spiritual leader of his people, finding it impossible to believe that his religious

role could be anything other than a façade or convention. “He surely could not have failed to notice that every day I spent at least four hours in prayer and meditation,” the Dalai Lama added.

This attitude towards religion – combining visceral hostility and blank incomprehension – still informs Chinese communist attitudes towards Tibet, and contributes to the poor relations between the two peoples. The Tibetans’ current grievances can be immediately linked to the experience of being overrun by recent waves of Han Chinese migrants, who are disproportionately the beneficiaries of government subsidies and jobs: Tibetans are becoming a poor minority in some parts of their own country. But the Tibetans’ anger is also a release of 50 years of terrible oppression, of being denied the freedom to express their cultural beliefs and practices. And for Tibetans, culture is Buddhist culture.

Relations between China and Tibet involve a clash of two world-views that could hardly be less alike: atheist materialism and Vajrayana Buddhism. Beijing never tires of pointing out that it has brought great material benefit to Tibet. Yet it cannot simultaneously compute the data that Tibetans wish to continue their religious way of life: that they are genuinely happy to set aside a part of their income as an offering to the Buddha, that they enjoy dedicating their labour to building temples and monasteries, and that they still accept reincarnated lamas as figures of authority. Everything in their communist DNA tells the Chinese that the experience of having better roads and houses should automatically lead to the realisation that such practices are “backward” or “superstitious” and will quickly be left behind. Yet, unaccountably, the Tibetans continue to maintain these traditions.

In a series of lectures delivered in 1919, the Austrian philosopher and visionary Rudolf Steiner identified one of the dominant powers of the modern age as Ahriman, a Zoroastrian spirit, who is concerned only with an appreciation of the empirical world, the world of the five senses. Left to his own devices, he leads human beings away from their spiritual side, so that they become heartless and diminished, one-dimensional machines. “Ahriman,” Steiner explained, “is the power that makes man dry, prosaic, philistine – ossifies him and brings him to the superstition of materialism.”

Nevertheless, Ahriman also has his good side: he is responsible for intellectual advancement and technological progress. No one can deny that the Chinese, in many respects, have been extraordinarily successful in developing their country.

It would be grotesque to tar the “new atheists” of our own culture with the worst excesses of the Chinese Communist Party: Dawkins, Hitchens, Amis et al do not torture teenage nuns with electric batons as the Chinese do. Yet, albeit in a much less extreme way, they too have the obvious characteristics of disciples of Ahriman: the instinctive loathing of religion and the grim certainty of their materialist view of reality. Dawkins is a gifted scientist; Hitchens and Amis are witty satirists of the folly and wickedness of religious extremism. But, unable to relax the fixation of their point of view, they conclude erroneously that their theory is sufficient to describe and explain all the unfathomable complexity of life, that all aspects of religion are worthy only of their easy scorn.

A balance is required. For Steiner, it was the “Christ Impulse” that would restore the world to equilibrium: the appearance of Gorbachev at Assisi seems eerily demonstrative of precisely that. And Gorbachev’s conversion may also be a sign that there might possibly be some in the Chinese leadership who are prepared to countenance the Dalai Lama’s dream of autonomous government within China and a Buddhist renaissance in Tibet. Since the eighth century, the Tibetans have been the custodians of the most complete version of the Buddhist canon, combining the psychological pragmatism of the teachings of the historical Buddha, the devotionism, idealist

philosophy and compassionate ethic of the Mahayana school and the esoteric practices of the Vajrayana, or tantric tradition. We would do well to take seriously the Tibetans' claim that their culture has the potential to "serve humanity".

Our own society appears desperately confused about religion. It is all too easy to be browbeaten by the "new atheists". But, there is surely nothing wrong with simply admitting that we are confused: such a position is refreshingly honest, open-minded and humorous.

On Easter Day, there is even, perhaps, room for that familiar, much maligned figure: the occasional churchgoer. For there is nothing inherently ridiculous about the desire to connect with the ancient spiritual pulse of this island. It is understandable to be reluctant to leave behind an innate sense (or hope) that the return of life brought by spring is a thing of joy and that it is good to celebrate these vague, inchoate feelings by exchanging chocolate eggs with our loved ones.

altnet.org

Free Countries Must Defy Chinese Blackmail and Greet the Dalai Lama

Timothy Garton Ash

March 25, 2008,

Last week, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown promised to meet the Dalai Lama when he comes to Britain in May. So should all other leaders of free countries, whenever the opportunity arises. Anything less would shame us all. And it wouldn't help China either.

We face at least three difficulties in reacting to the unfolding tragedy of the Tibetans. We don't know enough about what's really going on, because the Chinese authorities are determined to prevent us finding out by expelling journalists, ratcheting up their customary censorship of the Internet, and telling lies. We feel impotent to prevent the horror unfolding. And we have to balance our deep sympathy with the Tibetans against our interest in a benign evolution of China. Appeasement of Beijing for short-term political and commercial gains is contemptible; trying to ensure that anything we do to help the Tibetans won't hinder the evolution of China is not. It's statecraft — and moral, too.

Here's the good reason for not reacting to the repression of Buddhist monks in Tibet as we did to the repression of Buddhist monks in Burma. No, we shouldn't impose economic sanctions on the whole of China, as we do on Burma. Nor should we boycott the Beijing Olympics. There is too much at stake. The French foreign minister Bernard Kouchner has suggested that if the repression in China worsens — not only in Tibet, but also with the persecution of Chinese dissidents such as Hu Jia — European leaders might not participate in the opening ceremony of the Olympics. A threat worth making, perhaps, though it won't get far with his fellow EU foreign ministers when they meet next week.

It may be worth calling for United Nations observers to be sent in to Tibet, though China will doubtless veto that. As important is to insist that the Chinese authorities keep the promise they have made — and are now breaking — to allow foreign journalists free movement around the whole of China in the runup to the Olympics. (If they don't let reporters go to Tibet, this can only mean that Tibet is not part of China.)

Yet we know, in our hearts, that none of this will prevent them clamping down, with armed force — the knock on the door at 4am, and all the familiar apparatus of a police state. As it is, Tibetans are arrested simply for possessing an image of the Dalai Lama. And there's the rub: the exiled 72-year-old spiritual and political leader of the Tibetans remains the only visible key to a peaceful solution. On all the anecdotal evidence from travelers in these parts, he still holds the love and loyalty of the majority of his people. At the same time, he offers to China's leaders a negotiated path to Hong Kong-style autonomy for Tibet, short of full independence. If they made a rational calculation of their own long-term interest, down this path they would tread.

But they don't. With the doublethink characteristic of repressive regimes, China's communist leaders say he is an irrelevance, a feudal relic; and yet they talk about him obsessively. They routinely denounce him as a "splittist", that is, one who wishes to split Tibet from the motherland by pursuing independence. This week we had the otherwise sober Chinese premier Wen Jiabao ranting about the "incident" in Tibet being "organised, premeditated, masterminded and incited by the Dalai clique". This, he said, proved that "the claims made by the Dalai clique that they pursue not independence but peaceful dialogue are nothing but lies."

A throwback to the worst Stalinist demagogy, this statement is not merely at odds with, but the diametric opposite of, the truth, making black out of white. The Dalai Lama keeps repeating that he does not seek full independence. There is no human being in the world today who is more publicly, consistently and unequivocally committed to the path of non-violence. In accepting the Nobel peace prize in 1989, he mentioned "the man who founded the modern tradition of nonviolent action for change, Mahatma Gandhi" even before his own long-suffering Tibetan people. This week, he threatened to resign as political leader of the Tibetan government in exile if his followers resorted to violence. There is not a shred of evidence that he instigated the rising in Tibet. On the contrary, the fact that popular anger has boiled over into street protest — including, it seems, some violence against innocent Han Chinese and local Muslims — suggests that at least some Tibetans are becoming fed up with the course of non-violence on which he has kept them for so long.

So China's leaders misread, or at least misrepresent, the Dalai Lama's intentions. (How much is genuine incomprehension and how much deliberate lying is an interesting question.) Probably they also underestimate his power. As Stalin asked, "How many divisions has the Pope?", so they may ask, "How many divisions has the Dalai Lama?" If so, they are being just as

shortsighted as Stalin was. Like Pope John Paul II, the 14th Dalai Lama possesses, in the affection not just of his own people but of millions across the world, one of the purest forms of soft power.

We, for our part, tend to underestimate the political importance of symbolic acts, such as meeting an exiled or dissident leader. Self-styled realists deride this as tokenism, thereby demonstrating their own lack of realism. For anyone who has experienced a repressive regime — be it South Africa under apartheid, Czechoslovakia under Soviet-type communism, or Burma under the generals today — knows just how important to the oppressed people are those acts of symbolic recognition, whether of a Nelson Mandela, a Vaclav Havel or an Aung San Suu Kyi. It's no accident that the website of the Tibetan government in exile lovingly lists all the "World Leaders His Holiness the Dalai Lama has met", including in recent years the prime ministers of Canada, Australia, Hungary and Belgium, the president of the United States, and the German chancellor, Angela Merkel.

The Chinese authorities know these meetings matter too; otherwise they wouldn't expend so much effort trying to prevent them. Yesterday they declared themselves "seriously concerned" by Brown's decision. They are the real "splittists" here, trying to divide and rule between free countries competing for their economic

favours. I have no doubt that this — not any broader moral or strategic concern — was the reason the British prime minister hesitated before committing, under pressure, to meet the Tibetan leader. So one thing EU foreign ministers definitely should agree in their informal meeting next week is that all European heads of government will receive the Dalai Lama, as a matter of course, whenever he comes calling. And the same should go for every other free country.

In establishing this principle, we would send three messages to Beijing: that democracies are not so easily divided; that the Dalai Lama truly represents — dare I say, incarnates — the path of non-violence and negotiation; and that we do wish to engage fully with a modernizing China and celebrate a wonderful Olympics this summer, but not over the dead bodies of Buddhist monks.

The Washington Post

China Needs the Dalai Lama

Robert Thurman

March 26, 2008

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We are at a moment of great significance for humanity, at the beginning of this new century, which could be either a horrendous time of natural and man-made mega-disasters or the greatest century yet of environmental restoration and peaceful global community. Of all world leaders at this time, the Dalai Lama most convincingly provides spiritual, intellectual, and ethical leadership, exemplifying and elucidating the most reasonable path to peace and happiness. This is the secret of his worldwide popularity. His person and teaching really do matter, to the Tibetans, to the Chinese, and to all of us and our future generations.

If there ever was a social and political movement based on faith, on spirituality, it is the 50-year campaign of the Dalai Lama for the freedom of his people, and the present spontaneous uprising of the Tibetan people who want to be free to restore their spiritual life, in the closer presence of their spiritual and political leader. These acts of truth—the Dalai Lama’s long insistence on nonviolence and dialogue in responding to the genocidal acts of one of the world’s largest military powers, and the Tibetan people’s resistance in the face of overwhelming odds—may yet produce miraculous results, as one of the world’s greatest “lost causes” becomes a possible success.

The promise of the present moment has been precipitated first by the innovative leaders of China, gingerly stepping out into the glare of world publicity and opinion by hosting the Olympic Games and second, just now, by the brave people of Tibet stepping out on their own past the plans of their leader and, against great odds, standing up for the truth of their existence as Tibetans. Risking their very lives, they protest the total destruction of their culture, environment, and way of life. They have done this in the spirit of nonviolent resistance, although decades of bitterness and the extremity of their present situation did cause some of them to lose sight of this foundational principle of their struggle and commit some acts of violence. They stood up to the firing of armed Chinese troops, they raised their flag of freedom, and they remain standing in spite of the massive loss of life and liberty they knew would come.

The Dalai Lama didn’t ask them to sacrifice themselves in this way. He tells them he will resign if they commit more violent acts, even exceptionally, and he agonizes over the vengeance the hard-line authorities can be

expected to exact. At the same time, he and the rest of the world stands in awe of the extraordinary depth of faith being exhibited by his brave people, an echo of similar courageous acts witnessed in the last century during the Civil Rights struggles in the U.S. and South Africa.

The opportunity the Chinese leaders now have is nothing less than earth-shaking. For sixty years they have sought to dominate and control, in the futile effort to transform Tibet and its Tibetans into China and Chinese, a project the Dalai Lama has called cultural genocide. They have clearly failed. The “Dalai Lama clique” they blame and vow to destroy turns out to be all Tibetans. They now have the chance to look carefully at the facts, seek the truth, and accept that failure by trying something new. They have unnecessarily been trying to make an enemy of their best friend in all the world, the Dalai Lama, not only believed by Buddhists to be the incarnation of the god of compassion but beloved by people of all religions and humanisms as an inspiring thinker, teacher, and spiritual example – the Nobel Laureate, the living Gandhi, and the apostle of nonviolence, intelligent dialogue, and unbending hope. He has all along continued to offer them the open hand of friendship, aiming to find a solution that will be satisfying for China as well as for Tibet. It’s time, now, for President Hu Jintao to reach out and welcome his help.



Tibet: the West can use the Olympics as a weapon against Beijing

Michael Portillo

March 27, 2008

Ex-British Cabinet Minister

Adolf Hitler’s glee at exploiting the 1936 Berlin Olympics as a showcase for Nazism turned to fury when the black American athlete Jesse Owens won four gold medals. The Chinese leadership must by now be wondering whether staging the Games in Beijing will bring the regime more accolades than brickbats. Be careful what you wish for, as Confucius probably said.

In defence of the Olympic movement, Berlin had been selected before the Nazis came to power. No such excuse covers the decision to award the coveted prize to Beijing. In 1989 the Chinese government crushed the peaceful protests in Tiananmen Square as the world looked on in horror. China still secured the Olympics and a propaganda triumph and has looked forward to showing off to the world.

The authorities must have reflected that other governments are rarely brave enough to boycott the Olympics. The Berlin Games proceeded even though the Nazis had by then implemented the infamous Nuremberg laws that deprived German Jews of basic human rights.

Admittedly the Americans led a boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics because Soviet troops had stormed Afghanistan (Russian invasion bad, American invasion good). China knew that, short of marching into neighbouring territory, nothing it did would put its show at risk.

All the indicators suggested that China would be given a soft ride. When President Jiang Zemin visited Tony

Blair in 1999 the Metropolitan police treated pro-Tibet demonstrators roughly. Double-decker buses were used to shield the protest from Jiang's sensitive eyes. As Washington became embroiled in the scandals of Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay and extraordinary rendition, not to mention the tremendous loss of civilian life in Iraq and Afghanistan, Premier Wen Jiabao, the prime minister, must have been confident that America would avoid dialogue on human rights.

In any case we are all in awe of China's economic power. When Gordon Brown toured there last month, he talked of business opportunities. Prime ministers loathe being asked to raise human rights issues that threaten to interrupt the smiles, handshakes and toasts by which the success of visits are measured. Brown probably limited himself to the vaguest urging of reform.

China's economic sway is such that it has undermined US foreign policy with impunity. America aims to use its muscle to shape a world that embraces western values. In developing countries it insists that governments respect the rule of law and reduce corruption as a condition for trade and aid. China, on the other hand, has extended the hand of friendship to gruesome regimes (including Sudan's). Beijing's requirement for natural resources is its only consideration. Maybe it has enjoyed thwarting America's attempts to export its liberal values.

So China had every reason to expect a trouble-free Olympics that would show its best face to the world. In Berlin the anti-Jewish notices were taken down in the weeks preceding the Games. In Beijing the use of cars has been restricted to reduce air pollution.

In the modern world governments are not the only players. Steven Spielberg, the film director, withdrew as artistic adviser to the Games' ceremonies, remarking that his conscience did not allow him to continue while "unspeakable crimes" were being committed in Darfur.

His decision has transformed the situation. In that moment the Beijing Olympics flipped from being an opportunity for the Chinese government and became a threat. China's deep concern that the Games should be a success provides those who oppose its policies with a narrow window of opportunity. It delivers leverage both to domestic dissidents and to the outside world, unparalleled since Tiananmen.

With the news blackout imposed by China on the country's interior we cannot know whether the Tibetan protests are opportunistically linked to the forthcoming Games. But the Olympics are a political factor and the situation is dynamic. The eyes of the world are turned disapprovingly on Chinese policies.

"If freedom-loving people throughout the world do not speak out against China and the Chinese in Tibet, we have lost all moral authority to speak out on human rights," declared Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, before cheering crowds of Tibetans in northern India, where she had gone to meet the Dalai Lama. Such outbursts had not featured in China's "script" for the Olympics.

Our prime minister, discovering the courage of others' convictions, has said that he, too, would like to meet the Tibetan spiritual leader. David Cameron has congratulated him, so we have a new consensus. We have moved a long way since Blair claimed to have too many requests for meetings to find time to receive the Dalai Lama during his 2004 visit to Britain.

China failed to understand that politicians in democracies cannot predict what positions they will take. Spielberg's démarche has changed everything for them. In a few weeks they have moved from avoiding anything that might offend Beijing to scrambling to be seen as pro-Tibetan. It scarcely matters whether the riots in Lhasa

were, at least in part, brutal and racist, nor that such violence is in defiance of the Dalai Lama's strictures and undermines his authority. The Tibet bandwagon is rolling and every democratic politician clamours for a place on board.

As western politicians are exposed as being powerless to avert economic downturn and as Iraq and Afghanistan smoulder on, heaping opprobrium on China offers an agreeable opportunity to divert attention from the politicians' other woes.

The genie is out of the bottle and there is no predicting where this may end. All our politicians say that boycotting the Olympics is not on the cards. But that is for now. If the situation in Tibet deteriorates, pressure will grow to use the Olympics as a weapon against Beijing. If China continues to thwart western journalists in their attempts to report dissent, the hostility of the world's media can be guaranteed. However, if it allows events to be reported, the protesters will seize their chance.

Anyway, there is much that can be done short of a total boycott. The Olympic torch is to embark on a world tour, providing the occasion for Tibet and Darfur protests around the world. When it arrives in London, I predict that the 2,000 police being mobilised that day will go easy on the demonstrators and no buses will block our view of them. Sir Trevor McDonald, scheduled to be a torch bearer, will surely face insistent calls to withdraw.

Mia Farrow, the actress, will front the protest when the torch passes through San Francisco. Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton must then consider how to garner support from those demonstrations in America's most populous and perhaps most liberal state.

The unprecedented grandiosity of the torch's itinerary must have looked great on the drawing board. In practice, Beijing has secured a rolling programme of anti-Chinese protest circling the globe.

If celebrity torch bearers are forced to pull out one by one, China will suffer daily public relations disasters. Nor does its recruitment of Spielberg, a spectacular coup at the time, look such a brilliant move now.

The ceremonies on which he was advising will provide the next focus. They can be shunned without disrupting the sporting events which supposedly are the point of the Olympics. Indeed, once the politicians have aligned themselves with Tibet and Darfur, what justification could they offer for allowing the regime to bask in global adulation?

When China bid for the Olympics it judged correctly that democratic politicians are pusillanimous. Given their hunger for Chinese contracts they would not let massacre in Darfur or torture in Tibet disrupt a good party. But Beijing failed to see that western statesmen are even more craven towards their celebrities and media.

Beijing's other mistake was being too anxious for the Games to be a success. A man who wants something too much makes himself vulnerable. Surely Confucius said something of the sort.

The Washington Post

Fallout from Tibet Is Test for China's Rulers

Edward Cody

March 27, 2008

The riots in Tibet two weeks ago have turned into a major challenge to China's leaders, whose decision to use military force and restrict media access has cast a shadow over hopes for an unblemished Olympics this summer. The uprising in the remote Himalayan region lasted for barely more than a day. But it generated a worldwide swell of concern.

Now, the Games — intended to be a festive coming-out party for modern China — could become a dramatic reminder that the Communist Party still relies on Leninist police tactics and Orwellian censorship to enforce its monopoly on power. “This is exactly what the party leaders didn't want,” said Li Datong, a senior magazine editor who was fired in 2006 after an essay in his publication challenged the party's official history. “This has become a real headache for them.” The fallout from Tibet has not subsided.

In Ancient Olympia on Monday, pro-Tibet demonstrators disrupted a ceremony to light the Olympic torch. On Tuesday, French President Nicolas Sarkozy suggested there might be a boycott of the Games' opening ceremony. And on Thursday, as Chinese authorities led foreign reporters on a tour of region in an effort to demonstrate that it had been tamed, a group of monks confronted the journalists, shouting that they were being denied religious freedom.

Criticisms of China on human rights issues have long been rife among foreign activists and some governments, analysts noted, but the Tibet crisis raised their global prominence just as the Olympic Games provided a ready forum to push the message. The protesters who disrupted the torch ceremony in Greece, for instance, got attention on a level that they could not have dreamed of before the riots in Tibet on March 14. “The leadership could be riding a real tiger with the Tibet issue, in terms of foreign opinion,” said David L. Shambaugh, director of the China policy program at George Washington University and author of a new book on the Chinese Communist Party. “Various and sundry nongovernmental human rights activists smell blood, and they will all be using Tibet to press their causes as well. This will place unprecedented external pressure on the regime, at least in terms of public relations.”

As party chief, President Hu Jintao has the most to lose if the shine comes off the Olympics, along with his protege Zhang Qingli, party secretary for Tibet. But Hu's likely successor, Xi Jinping, also has been thrust into the biggest test of his career. Elevated to the Politburo's elite Standing Committee and dubbed Hu's dauphin in October, Xi was assigned last month to provide overall supervision of the Olympic preparations being run day-to-day by Liu Qi, the Beijing party secretary.

Another newcomer to the Standing Committee, Zhou Yongkang, also has encountered what amounts to a baptism of fire. Formerly the public security minister, in October he became the party's senior official in charge of security. Li Changchun, a veteran Standing Committee member, has played a key role as well, assigned to run the party's propaganda apparatus. Curiously, he left for a visit to Mauritania and other Arab countries as the public relations crisis raged.

With Tibet unrest having seized the public's imagination abroad, the Chinese government already has lost its battle to keep politics out of the Olympics, said Li, the editor. He said the government should brace itself for an onslaught of protests over Tibet, Darfur, human rights and other causes before and during the Games, both in China and outside." It's over," he said. "The Olympic Games have already been kidnapped by the Tibet issue." The issue has become so huge, it has been mentioned in the race for the White House, he added: "Even Hillary's talking about it."

The party's security apparatus — the Public Security Bureau, the People's Armed Police and the People's Liberation Army — have blanketed Tibet and other Tibetan-inhabited parts of China over the last two weeks. Chinese officials have voiced confidence that the vast deployment can smother what remains of Tibetan unrest in the days and weeks to come. Given experience, there was no reason to doubt their word. But there is little they can do to apply similar pressure against protesters promising to disrupt the Olympic torch relay at its stops abroad. Even in China, where authorities have vowed the relay will go on as planned, cracking down hard on foreign protesters — in view of legions of television cameras — would make a mockery of China's Olympics motto, "One World One Dream." Plans to carry the torch to the top of Mount Everest and display it on a run into Lhasa have become particularly difficult to execute without restricting access in a way certain to draw howls from foreign groups.

Already, Olympic officials in Beijing, fearing protests, have refused to reveal the route of the Olympic torch as it moves Monday from its arrival at the airport to Tiananmen Square for a ceremony marking the launch of its world travels.

Despite pledges to allow open reporting during the Olympics, Chinese officials have reacted to the uproar over Tibet mainly by restricting journalists and, in language reminiscent of another era, questioning the motives of critics. Qin Gang, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, said Tuesday that the protesters in Greece were "shameful" and should be feeling "remorse" for their actions. By blocking access for foreign reporters and enforcing strict censorship in Chinese media, the government has to a large degree restricted the news about continued unrest in Tibet and Tibetan regions of Sichuan, Yunnan, Qinghai and Gansu provinces. China's controlled press has stressed a return to normality; Wednesday's People's Daily showed Tibetan women practicing tai chi moves in the shadow of the iconic Potala Palace in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital.

Although tough in its attempt to suppress information, the government's initial response on the ground was unusually cautious. At the first explosion of violence March 14, police faded back, leaving the streets open for marauding Tibetans who set fire to shops and attacked Han Chinese businessmen. Only the next day did People's Armed Police restore control of central Lhasa. Li suggested the Olympics were in officials' minds that day, leading them to order restraint. But other analysts attributed the soft response to confusion and to party secretary Zhang's presence in Beijing for the annual meeting of the Chinese legislature. In any case, Chinese officials have been incensed by appeals from human rights groups denouncing a crackdown.

Hu, the party leader and president has dealt with these problems before. He was party secretary in Tibet during similar disturbances in 1989 that were put down by the imposition of martial law and dispatch of PLA troops into streets and villages. Historical accounts say dozens of Tibetans were killed and hundreds arrested. The party leadership, under Deng Xiaoping, decided in 1989 that putting down the Tiananmen and Tibetan protests was worth suffering opprobrium abroad. But the difference now is that China wanted — and still ardently wants — to play a different role at the Beijing Olympics. The role, that of a modern country embracing the world has already been compromised by the unrest in Tibet and the way the world is viewing the government's

reaction, the analysts said. Shambaugh, at George Washington University, characterized the government's attempt so far to manage its image in the aftermath of the violence as "heavy-handed" — resorting to vilification of the Dalai Lama and questioning the motives of foreign critics." The government is not particularly adept at public diplomacy, as they define it as 'external propaganda' and pursue it as such," he said.

But a Beijing-based scholar and political analyst said some party factions do not care much about China's image abroad, even in this Olympic year, provided the party is seen to be firmly in control. "A lot of these guys in a crisis go into the default mode, and that is: Crack down," he said on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive subject.



The U.N.'s Hypocrisy in Tibet

Joseph A. Klein

March 28, 2008

Author of Global Deception: The UN's Stealth Assault on America's Freedom

It's a storyline tailor-made to arouse the United Nations' ire. Troops move in to occupy the land of an indigenous population; civilians have been murdered and imprisoned *en masse*; local residents have been displaced to make way for settlements by outsiders sent by the occupying power. And, indeed, were Israel the main culprit in this scenario, one may be certain that the U.N. would waste no time condemning its conduct.

But China, it appears, is held to a different standard. Thus, in just in the last few days, the world's premier human-right organization has looked on, mostly in silence, as dozens of Tibetan demonstrators have been reportedly killed and many more have been languishing in jail cells, with the less fortunate subjected to torture at the hands of the occupying Chinese. In the face of such atrocities, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour have issued only the mildest of criticisms and sidestepped calls for an international investigation.

Some of this, to be sure, is China's doing. China has blocked the Security Council and Human Rights Council from taking up the current crisis in Tibet. That has been easy, considering that its permanent, veto-bearing seat on the Security Council and its membership in the Human Rights Council. China also has used its clout to demonize the Dalai Lama and to make him a *persona non grata* at the U.N.

But ultimately it is the U.N. that bears the blame for allowing China to get away, sometimes literally, with murder — a dereliction all the more noteworthy considering the near-constant attention that the UN has given to the Palestinians' self-inflicted plight. And in contrast to the Palestinians, whose history so often is distorted by the U.N. for political purposes, the Tibetans are the clear victims in the current conflict.

The history of that conflict is well-known. The Chinese occupation of Tibet predated the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by nearly two decades. With the Chinese invasion in 1951, the Tibetans lost their homeland and religious freedoms. Although the Chinese invasion violated international law, the Chinese suffered no repercussions from the UN or from any other international body.

On the other hand, the Palestinians could have been living in their own internationally recognized state since 1948, when the United Nations recommended the creation of Palestinian and Jewish states co-existing side by side. The Jews living in Israel accepted the UN proposal and declared independence within the borders demarcated by the international body. The Palestinians refused the offer.

Instead, they thought Israel would be crushed in a matter of days as the neighboring Arab countries violated international law and invaded Israel right after it declared its independence. The Palestinians made the wrong choice. They lived in the West Bank and Gaza under Jordanian and Egyptian control respectively for nearly twenty years. Israel finally did occupy the West Bank and Gaza as defensive buffers against more Arab invasions, after winning the territories and Jerusalem in the 1967 Six Day War.

If the Palestinians' claim to victim status is tenuous at best, the Tibetans' case is more straightforward. According to various estimates, up to 1.2 million Tibetans have died due to the Chinese occupation. By contrast, the U.N.'s own estimates conclude that, as of 2006, the post-1967 rate of avoidable mortality in the Palestinian territories is at most 300,000. But as the UN General Assembly came under the sway of the Islamists and their allies, including China, Israel became the UN's singular villain. Despite the far graver harm that China was inflicting on the Tibetan people, China's brutal occupation of Tibet received little notice.

This glaring double standard continues today. The UN harshly condemns Israel for its settlements in the Palestinian territories, failing to give Israel even the slightest credit for removing Israeli settlers from Gaza when that territory was turned over to the Palestinians in 2005. But the remaining Israeli settlements in the West Bank pale in comparison with the vast Han Chinese migration into Tibet that the Chinese government has been actively pushing for years.

Consider the numbers. In 2006, there was a total Israeli West Bank settlement population of 267,163. This is about one tenth of the number of Palestinians living in the West Bank. On the other hand, the migration of Han Chinese into Tibetan lands has inundated Tibet with millions of Chinese settlers seeking to turn the Tibetans into a minority within their own homeland. Thus, in the cities of Tibet, where the best jobs are available, the Han migrants outnumber the Tibetans about three to one. When one counts the rural areas in Tibet's autonomous regions — Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan — the Chinese population still exceeds the indigenous Tibetan population by nearly two million people.

In concert with the Han migration, the Chinese have engaged in systematic religious persecution of the Tibetan Buddhists. As part of their "patriotic re-education campaign" in Tibet, Chinese government officials have forced Tibetan monks to condemn the Dalai Lama and his "splittist group;" to accept that Tibet is an inalienable part of China; and to submit to Beijing's selected puppet as the real Panchen Lama of Tibet. Those monks who resisted have been murdered, repeatedly tortured to extract confessions, or expelled. Monasteries have been closed or destroyed altogether. The Chinese authorities continue to dictate "patriotic education" activities for monks and nuns on a regular basis at monasteries and nunneries.

By contrast, the Palestinians have not been forced to give up their religious autonomy while living under Israeli occupation. Despite all of the sermons of hate and incitement to violence being preached daily in the Palestinian mosques, the Israelis have not denied the Palestinians their freedom of worship. There has been no attempt by Israel to interfere with the Muslims' practice of their own religion or to replace even their incendiary religious leaders with any hand-picked puppets of Israel's choosing.

Instead, the Palestinians were given political autonomy as a stepping stone to their own state. Time and again,

Palestinian leaders squandered opportunities to achieve independent statehood since the start of the occupation. Palestinian terrorists instead have visited suffering upon their own people as a result of their unrelenting campaign of violence against innocent Israeli civilians aimed at destroying the Jewish state, which have prompted Israeli reprisals. The Tibetans, on the other hand, represent no threat to China's own continued existence that in any way justifies the Chinese government's brutal treatment of innocent civilians. There are no Tibetan terrorists killing Chinese women and children with suicide bombs or rockets.

The Dalai Lama – hardly a terrorist leader in the image of the typical Hamas militant – has repeatedly assured the Chinese government that he is not leading a fight for political independence. All he wants is for Tibetans to be left in peace to practice their own religion as they see fit. The Chinese response is to accuse the exiled Dalai Lama of being responsible for the current crisis by inciting from afar violent riots amongst his followers. (This charge is about as ludicrous as Osama bin Laden's most recent taped accusation that the Pope is launching a "new Crusade" against Muslims.) The agitation for a free Tibet that Chinese police have encountered in the streets is an understandable reaction to China's refusal to afford Tibetans any liberties at all.

Shortly before the most recent crack-down in Tibet, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, a non-governmental organization that has special consultative status at the United Nations, submitted a statement to the UN Secretary General describing how the government maintains tight controls on religious practices and places of worship in Tibetan areas. The UN ignored these findings, but it is worth reciting some of the details here, as they demonstrate the cultural genocide that the Dalai Lama has rightly condemned and which form the backdrop of the demonstrations that have broken out in recent days. There is nothing comparable in Israel's administration of the Palestinian occupied territories:

"Repression of freedom of religion by the Chinese government is not limited to the Tibetan Buddhist monastic community. It also extends to secular Tibetan society... Despite government claims that Tibetans enjoy complete freedom to practice their religion, religious ceremonies and activities continue to be restricted in Tibet. For several years now, the Chinese authorities prevented ordinary Tibetans from participating in public religious observances..."

"Instead of guaranteeing the freedom of religious belief as claimed, the TAR 2006 Measures [‘Tibet Autonomous Region Implementing Measures for the ‘Regulation on Religious Affairs’] enforce compliance with government regulations and policies with respect to religious organizations, religious personnel, and religious citizens. In particular, it provides officials with the legal backing to intensify restrictions and subjects religious organizations, personnel, and citizens to state control and repression."

"For instance, authorities can initiate punishments for ‘illegal activities such as those that harm national security or public security,’ a catch-all phrase that can include expressions of religious devotion to the Dalai Lama, or for sharing, viewing, and listening to any type of recorded media about him."

Executions, torture, arbitrary arrests, and lengthy detention of Tibetans for peacefully expressing their political or religious views have occurred all too regularly at the hands of the Chinese occupiers. What has happened to the Tibetan demonstrators in the last few days is a continuation of this tragic pattern of abuse.

To minimize exposure of its misdeeds, China has taken the route that is so familiar in closed dictatorships, such as censoring Internet services and blocking foreign journalists from reporting what is actually going on. The organization *Reporters Without Borders* notes that the last foreign journalists were expelled from Tibet on March 20th and that Chinese security forces have blocked foreign press access to Tibetan areas in other

provinces. *Reporters Without Borders* also obtained a copy of China's official Internet Surveillance Bureau bulletin warning Internet users "that it is forbidden to post news about Tibetan events. From today, the Internet Surveillance Bureau will carry out filtering and censorship. . . anyone infringing this ban will have their I.P. address sent to the police who will take the necessary steps."

The U.N.'s disparate approach toward Israel and China is a lesson in hypocrisy. Israel is the constant target of vitriol from the UN Human Rights Council on which China sits along with other serial human rights violators. Indeed, while China has gotten away with regularly breaching the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, which is supposed to protect Tibetan civilians living under Chinese occupation from being deliberately targeted for violence, Israel is regularly accused by U.N. bodies of violating this same Convention whenever it tries to contain Palestinian terrorism against Israeli citizens. China also has escaped any reproach for its repeated violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which recognize that freedom of religion is a basic human right.

Most tellingly, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ("OHCHR") did not mention Tibet even once in its Human Rights Program for Asia-Pacific (2008-2009). It had only this to say concerning China's human rights record: "OHCHR will also continue its technical cooperation program with China and work in close partnership with the UN Country Team, particularly as the 2008 Olympics create further impetus to reform."

This silence speaks volumes. For the U.N.'s morally challenged establishment, it is more preferable to enable the phony façade of progress that China intends to display at this summer's Olympic Games than to speak out against its slaughter, torture and imprisonment of hundreds of innocent Tibetans. It is much easier — and more politically correct — to make Israel the UN's favorite punching bag.



Tibet's history, China's power

George Fitzherbert

March 28, 2008

Scholar of Tibet at Oxford University

The growth of a pan-Tibetan identity underlies the current wave of protest against Chinese rule in Tibet, says George Fitzherbert.

The Chinese public's frustration at the western media's apparent anti-Chinese bias with regard to the reporting of the recent unrest in Tibet is understandable. The Lhasa riots of 14 March 2008 claimed several innocent Chinese lives and the destruction of many properties and businesses. But the Chinese public should not be blinded from an understanding of the wellsprings of the protest.

Whenever there is any domestic turmoil in China, the government's instinctive response is always to lay the

blame on external anti-Chinese influences “meddling in China’s internal affairs”. Yet it is very clear that the Dalai Lama has played no direct role in instigating the current wave of riots and demonstrations across the Tibetan plateau. It is, rather, the Chinese government’s refusal to respect Tibetan aspirations with regard to the return of their leader that is one root cause of the present unrest.

A historic moment

What has given this outbreak of protest such a violent and ethnically antagonistic dimension is that in many parts of the Tibetan plateau - which are undergoing rapid economic development - Tibetans are rapidly and reluctantly becoming a minority in their own ancestral homelands, in much the same way as Mongolians have already become an almost negligible minority in the equally “autonomous” Chinese province of Inner Mongolia. The central government is well aware that once outnumbered by Chinese immigrants, Tibetan nationalism will become, of necessity, an unviable anachronism, and the Tibetans will be forced to accept the status that the Chinese have always assigned to them - as inalienable members of the “big family” of the Chinese motherland.

Tibetans themselves are also acutely aware that in-migration to their lands and the establishment of Chinese economic concerns pose the greatest threats to the continuance of their culture, and these are therefore the primary targets of the protests. Despite rising levels of material livelihood, Tibetans across the plateau are experiencing a sense of colonial disenfranchisement and an increasing distance from their once-sacred and animate environment, which in traditional culture imbued life with value and meaning.

The fact that spontaneous protests have erupted across the Tibetan plateau, from Lhasa to the borderlands of Amdo and Kham (in Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai provinces) marks the belated coming-of-age of a pan-Tibetan nationalism. In the past there was no Tibetan name, aside from *khawachen gi yul* (the “land of snows”) to describe the entire Tibetan cultural world. The Tibetan name from which the name “Tibet” is derived, *Bod* (pronounced *pö*) referred only to the central Tibetan provinces of U and Tsang, while excluding the more populous Tibetan cultural and linguistic regions of Kham and Amdo, whose loose governance was traditionally divided between many independent and semi-independent statelets and principalities, which were somewhat culturally and socially integrated with central Tibet through the system of federative monasticism.

Indeed, it was the coming of the Chinese communist regime that unwittingly fostered a sense of pan-Tibetan identity - a reaction both to the encounter with “the other” in the form of the Han and Hui (Muslim) Chinese, and to the implementation of the CCP’s nationalities policy, based on the Soviet model, in which Tibetans of all regional shades are classified, quite correctly, as a single Tibetan nationality (*minzu* - these days more often translated in Chinese government documents as “ethnic group”). As a result, around 50% of the landmass of Sichuan province, over 80% of Qinghai and a sizeable portion of Gansu province are organised into so called Tibetan autonomous prefectures and counties; and it is these areas that have seen sustained protest and unrest since mid-March 2008.

The spectacle of Tibetans in far-eastern Amdo raising the Tibetan national flag (as caught on Canadian television), is a historic moment in the evolution of the Tibetan national consciousness - for the Tibetan “national” flag was in fact introduced during the reign of the thirteenth Dalai Lama (1895-1933) as the standard of the then nascent Tibetan army, an army which never had sway over these distant portions of the Tibetan world. In fact the forces of the central Tibetan government were viewed with considerable suspicion and antipathy in parts of eastern Tibet during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It would appear that Tibetans are now ready for the concept of a greater Tibet, which has not found political expression since the period of the Tibetan empire, between the 7th and 9th centuries.

The political prospect

The aspiration for the political unity of the Tibetan areas within China is, however, extremely threatening to the Chinese state. An early advocate of such an administrative unification of the Tibetan areas was the veteran communist Tibetan from Kham, Bapa Phuntso Wangye, who was instrumental in the accession of Tibet to China in 1951. Expelled from Tibet for his agitations under the old regime, Bapa Phuntso Wangye led the People's Liberation Army forces into Tibet in 1950-51; he was a key player in winning over the captured commander-in-chief of the Tibetan forces, Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, who was later to become the most high-profile Tibetan legitimator of Chinese rule in Tibet; he was then the key intermediary between the Chinese government and the Tibetan delegation which signed the seventeen-point agreement in Beijing in 1951 which enshrined a now conveniently forgotten one-country two-systems settlement for Tibet; and he also served as the chief interpreter during the Dalai Lama's six-month tour of China in 1954-55, when the young Lama was so impressed with Mao Tse Tung and the Chinese communists that he even asked to be admitted to the Chinese Communist Party.

Despite his historic role in these momentous events in Tibet's history and its accession to communist China, however, it was Bapa Phuntso Wangye's aspiration for the unity of the Tibetan linguistic and cultural areas within China that was his undoing. In 1958 he was arrested, charged with the crime of "local nationalism", and kept in solitary confinement for eighteen years (longer, even, than Nelson Mandela).

The current Tibetan protests are unlikely to result in anything more than the temporary reimposition of military rule, further controls over Tibetan religion and a further intensification of the Sinification of the Tibetan plateau. However the resentment and simmering discontent among Tibetans will not abate. In blaming the current unrest in Tibet on the so-called "Dalai clique", the Chinese government is ensuring that the frustration and political alienation of Tibetans will continue. For there are very few Tibetans, throughout the Tibetan cultural world, who would not want to be associated with their exiled spiritual leader. If there was any political willingness on the part of the Chinese, the Tibetan problem could be solved. But demonising the Dalai Lama and refusing to compromise an inch on Tibetan aspirations, the Chinese will inevitably exacerbate the already fractious ethnic relations in this vast area of western China.

guardian.co.uk

Tampering with Tibet

Martin Jacques is visiting research fellow at the Asia research centre, London School of Economics

The Beijing Olympics are a huge occasion for China. Ever since the opium wars, the country has experienced what it describes as a "century of humiliation". Extraordinarily, the handover of Hong Kong in 1997 was its first major foreign policy success since the early 19th century.

Western countries are thoroughly accustomed to being the centre of global attention, which they have come to regard as their natural birthright. Not so China. It was thwarted in its attempt to hold the 2000 Olympics, which, as a result of American-led pressure, was awarded to Sydney. For China, therefore, the 2008 Olympics assume a huge importance as its first opportunity to command the global stage. The fact that the games also

coincide with China's emergence as a global power only serves to enhance their significance. These Olympics, not surprisingly, have been long in the planning, with nothing left to chance. But the global spotlight not only provides the Chinese government with an opportunity to show its wares to the world: it also offers those with a grievance against the government to do exactly the same. The fact that the games symbolically mark China's global 'coming out' only serves to make them even more of a target for opposition causes.

The unrest in Tibet, then, is hardly unexpected. It would appear to have been sparked by a march of Buddhist monks to coincide with the 49th anniversary of China's military intervention in the autonomous region. With significant numbers dead — reports vary from the official Chinese version of 10 to as many as 100 or more — this is exactly the kind of event that the Chinese authorities have been dreading.

The other main attack on China in recent months has been for its policy on Darfur. Whatever the criticisms on this score, and whatever the future may hold, Chinese policy in Africa is certainly no worse than that of the West, and, historically speaking, is hugely better than the latter's miserable legacy. Tibet, on the other hand, raises much more troubling issues for China's standing in the world and how it is perceived by others.

The question is not whether Tibet should be independent but the extent of the autonomy that it is allowed. Tibet has been firmly ensconced as part of the Chinese empire since the Qing dynasty's military intervention in Tibet in the early 18th century. The Qing was responsible for a huge westward expansion of Chinese territory, adding lands populated by peoples, albeit relatively small in number, who had no natural affinity with the Chinese. One of the unique features of China is that, notwithstanding the fact that it has a population of 1.3 billion, around 92 per cent regard themselves as Han Chinese. This is quite different from the world's other most populous countries such as India, the US and Indonesia, which are ethnically diverse. China, of course, was once the same, but because it is at least two millennia old, it has experienced a remarkably long period of assimilation, melding and mixing.

The result is that China has little conception of difference. The Chinese think of themselves as one race. Their historical experience is one of slow and steady assimilation and absorption, with population settlement often a crucial instrument in pacification. In this light, the Han Chinese migration to Tibet and Xinjiang province in northwest China is nothing new: on the contrary it has been an age-old characteristic of Chinese expansion (a large majority of those who now live in Mongolia and Manchuria, for instance, are Han).

Tibet and Xinjiang, however, are distinguished by two important differences from other Chinese regions and provinces. First, in both cases their populations are ethnically very distinct from the Han Chinese. And second, their effective incorporation into China is relatively recent (though still more than two centuries ago). What is clear from the demonstrations and clashes in Lhasa and elsewhere is that the traditional Chinese policies of absorption have singularly failed to suppress the Tibetan sense of identity and desire for autonomy. Even though Tibetans have experienced major improvements in their living standards, this has not diminished their desire for religious and cultural freedom. It would seem, furthermore, that the huge wave of Han Chinese settlement has only served to heighten their sense of resentment and fear of loss.

Tibet and Xinjiang aside, it is unlikely that China will face anything like this kind of unrest in the next few months leading up to the Olympics. But events in Tibet have served to expose the achilles heel of modern China: its inability to recognise and respect ethnic difference within its own borders. As it emerges as a major global player in a world characterised by exactly such ethnic diversity, this seems destined to cast China in a rather more negative light, not least in the developing world.

The West and Beijing must share shame over the Tibet crisis

Simon Tisdall

March, 2008

China's anger and embarrassment over the Tibet protests is keenly felt and will not be easily assuaged. Its sense of betrayal is as striking as its inability to comprehend the cause of it. But Beijing's shame is widely shared. The unrest has confronted Western governments with inconvenient truths for which they plainly have no answers.

In the short term the hosts of the Beijing Olympics know they must act cautiously as the world watches, its running shoes in hand. Having been forced belatedly to acknowledge the scale of the trouble, Beijing cannot afford an even wider, more brutal public crackdown, its instinctive reaction to similar situations in the past.

State retaliation in the weeks and months ahead is likely to be stealthy and silent. For those who dared to make a stand, vengeance will come by night, in an unmarked car or an unheralded knock on the door.

This is typically how China deals with dissent, as Hu Jia (á•sO), a prominent human rights activist who went on trial for subversion on Tuesday, could testify.

Yet in blaming the Dalai Lama and his "clique" for organizing a conspiracy of sabotage, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao («n¶[ö]) missed the mark. Tibet's exiled spiritual leader has long promoted an autonomous accommodation with, not independence from, China. It is younger generations of Tibetans, inside and outside the country, who increasingly call the shots and pursue more robust tactics.

An editorial in the Communist Party mouthpiece the *Tibet Daily* appeared to acknowledge this shift — while revealing the true extent of Chinese fury.

'LAWLESS ELEMENTS'

"These lawless elements have insulted, beaten, and wounded duty personnel, shouted reactionary slogans, stormed vital departments, and gone to all lengths in beating, smashing, looting, and burning," it said. "Their atrocities are appalling and too horrible to look at and their frenzy is inhuman. Their atrocities of various kinds teach and alert us to the fact that this is a life-and-death struggle between the enemy and ourselves."

This official "us versus them" view implies there will be no quick end to the disturbances or the retaliation. Horrific photographs of 13 people allegedly killed at Kirtii monastery in Aba (Ngawa) town, Sichuan Province, by Chinese security forces and released on Tuesday by the Free Tibet campaign will meanwhile stoke opposition fires.

The next flashpoint could be Beijing's plan to relay the Olympic torch through Lhasa and other ethnic Tibetan areas on its journey from Greece to Beijing.

Another so-called Chinese "renegade province," Taiwan, has already refused to take part. Tibet was not given a choice.

The broader prospect now, unnerving for a Chinese leadership that has staked so much on a showpiece, self-validating Games, is of trouble continuing right through until August.

This is a worrying prospect for Western leaders, too. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has said that he will meet the Dalai Lama when he visits Britain in May. If so, it will enrage Beijing, even more than German Chancellor Angela Merkel's recent meeting with the Tibetan leader.

All Brown's commercial and business networking during his China trip earlier this year could be undone.

Earlier, British Foreign Secretary David Miliband tied himself up in knots when asked about a possible meeting, refusing to say whether the government would welcome it while insisting that the issue would be dealt with "in a very straightforward and appropriate way." It's a safe bet that London hopes the Dalai Lama won't come after all.

Brown's decision to attend the Olympics opening ceremony, not normally an essential requirement despite the expected presence of US President George W. Bush, is also beginning to look like a big potential embarrassment. Steven Spielberg and Mia Farrow, attacking China over Darfur, triggered the first round of pre-Olympic, anti-Beijing media frenzy.

ROUND TWO

Tibet is round two. There are more bouts, and many more similar issues, in the pipeline, waiting to trip up an accident-prone prime minister.

European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pottering on Tuesday urged politicians to reconsider going to Beijing if violence and repression in Tibet continued. Such calls are likely to become more voluble.

Nearly all Western governments have found themselves in the same leaky boat this week, calling meekly for more information, restraint and dialogue in Tibet and knowing their advice will be ignored. All insist that a boycott of the Games is not contemplated. All worry too much about the Chinese government's economic power and not enough about its basic political illegitimacy.

All now face a growing body of international and domestic public opinion that is increasingly questioning what has been dubbed their pre-Olympics "three monkeys policy." See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil could have worked in 1904, when a power-grabbing British expeditionary force butchered thousands of Tibetans without a second thought.

But in the present-day interconnected, globalized world that Brown and Miliband talk about and China perforce inhabits, that dog won't hunt.

The New York Times

Two Realities of Tibet

Robert Barnett

March, 2008

Director of the Modern Tibetan Studies Program at Columbia University and the author, most recently, of "Lhasa: Streets with Memories"

Two sets of images have already come to dominate outsiders' understanding of this month's events in Tibet, where a pro-independence movement has seen some 40 protests of greater intensity and extent than in some four decades.

One image is the video footage of Tibetan rioters savagely beating Chinese migrants in Lhasa on March 14, when 16 people are said to have been killed or burned to death by the mobs. These scenes, shown repeatedly on CNN and other networks (not always with clear indications that the Chinese government supplied them), are immensely troubling, and challenge any remaining Western image of the pacific, spiritual Tibetan. The other image is conveyed by a series of photographs showing Tibetans shot dead in pro-independence protests in Ngaba, far to the east of Lhasa, reportedly by riot police. The blood-streaked and bullet-ridden bodies, too gruesome to show in public media, have been posted on the Web.

The video footage of the Lhasa riots – hardly representative, since no attacks on Chinese civilians have been reported in any of the 40 other protests – are in one view taken as a sign that economic marginalization has seeded envy of the commercial success of Chinese migrants in Tibet and hardened into ethnic hatred. A similar school, strongly held by Chinese leaders, accuses the exile Tibetan leadership of inciting the unrest, seeking to undermine China's Olympic Games to be held there this summer.

For others, the Ngaba photographs are emblematic of the resistance of oppressed Tibetans to Chinese domination. Terms like uprising or intifada are used, and the deaths are seen as the inevitable price of the fight for freedom.

Neither view is wrong, though they are barely compatible. If the polarizing images are to bring outsiders closer to understanding what is happening in Tibet and why, we need to recognize the historical basis for both interpretations.

China takes a statist position: that, to modernize, all cultures need to give up something of their distinct identities, and all states limit citizens' rights when they threaten national interests. The British had a similar view when they invaded Tibet in 1903-4, arguing that Tibet was outdated theocracy with a corrupt religion that would be brought to its senses by a taste of modern military efficiency. When Mao Zedong sent his army to integrate Tibet into the new People's Republic in 1950, it was said that a weak Tibet needed liberating from Western imperialists. Nine years later, when a failed uprising against Chinese rule led the Dalai Lama to flee with 80,000 other Tibetans to India, the Chinese said Tibetans needed to be liberated from feudal oppression. In the 1980s, the explanation changed to one in which China offered social and economic development to free Tibetans from material backwardness. In all such views, Tibet and Tibetans are seen as something incomplete and in need of fulfillment from an outside source, whether a civilization, a state or the forces of modernization.

Claims this week that Tibetan protesters were stirred up by the exiled Dalai Lama, reflect a historical view of people not as thinking individuals with concerns, but as captives of a powerful ideology, be it religion, feudal bondage, traditional customs or inefficient economic practices like nomadic herding.

Thus the fact that Tibetan monks arranged a protest to coincide with a similar event in India is seen as evidence that they were controlled by exile groups in India. The protesters' calculation that the security forces would be reluctant to shoot them in the run-up to the summer Olympics is seen as a political conspiracy rather than an intelligent wish to remain alive.

On the Tibetan side, the events are seen in terms of national identity — a distinct population and culture, with features shared by all its members, a sense of common purpose and a broad agreement about the story of its past. The historical high points are the eighth century, when Tibet was a major empire; the year 1642 when the fifth Dalai Lama began to form Tibet into a single nation; the declaration of independence in 1913 by the 13th Dalai Lama, and the 1959 uprising against Chinese rule. In this record, outsiders have taken something away from what was otherwise whole. China has deprived the nation of its culture, the Tibetan people have been denied freedom, their language has been whittled away, and their economic resources have been appropriated by others.

Will new views result from what has happened in Tibet this month? Few people will continue to see Tibetans as figments of spiritual fantasies, or simply as victims of oppression or as subjects for our sympathy. We are more likely to see them now as complex, passionate figures making very political and sometimes brutal decisions in the difficult effort to become again the authors of their own destinies.

No one of good will is likely not to feel for those Chinese who are pained deeply by the images of horrific ethnic violence, even if they and their leaders had been warned of explosive tensions many times, sympathy that will be squandered if executions and summary justice ensues. In either case, the deaths on both sides show that Tibet is after all a deeply serious issue, resolvable only through political means, one in which we all will need to develop more complex views needed to understand the new realities created by Tibetan protesters inside Tibet.



How to think about Tibet

Donald S Lopez Jr

March 31, 2008

A greater understanding of Tibet's turmoil and possible future can be found in the experience of a small country in northwest Europe.

Think about Tibet as Latvia, with very tall mountains. Latvia was once the westernmost Soviet republic, although it had little in common with Russia. The language, the religion, the literature, the food, the society were all quite different. Latvia had been oriented to the west and to Europe over much of its long history. Yet Latvia came under Russian control during the 19th century. After the Russian revolution of 1917, it gained

independence in 1921, only to fall to Stalin in 1940. After fifty years of Soviet domination, the Soviet Union collapsed and Latvia regained its independence in 1991.

Most Tibetans have never heard of Latvia. But the parallels are striking. Today, the “Tibet Autonomous Region” (TAR) is the southwestern province of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC); the Chinese word for Tibet is Xizang, “western treasury.” Although linguists today speak of “Sino-Tibetan” linguistics, the relation of Chinese to Tibetan is tenuous. Tibet received its Buddhism from India long after the establishment of Buddhism in China; indeed, beginning in the 8th century, Tibet looked to India rather than China for its literary and religious culture, even modelling its alphabet on an Indian script. Tibetans eat roasted barley moistened with the infamous “yak butter tea”, something the Chinese palette finds unappetising. Yet, during the 18th century, much of Tibet’s foreign affairs were overseen by the Chinese court. With the fall of the Qing, Tibet became an independent state, a status it maintained from 1913-51. Since 1951, Tibet has been part of the Peoples Republic of China. What is today called the “Tibet Autonomous Region” (TAR) represents only a portion of the Tibetan cultural domain. The remaining areas were incorporated into Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu, and Qinghai provinces of the PRC.

On 10 March 1959, a rumour circulated in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa that the Chinese troops occupying the city intended to do harm to the Dalai Lama. A large mob gathered and surrounded his summer palace in order to prevent the Chinese from coming in or the Dalai Lama from going out. On 17 March, the Chinese shelled the palace; the Dalai Lama escaped that night, disguised as a Tibetan soldier, and made his way to exile in India. He has not returned.

A potent anniversary

10 March is celebrated as “Tibetan national uprising day” by the Tibetan exile community and supporters of the Tibetan cause around the world. It is not publicly observed in Tibet. However, on 10 March 2008, about one hundred monks from Drepung monastery (prior to the Chinese invasion the largest monastery in the world, with over 10,000 monks) began walking the five miles into Lhasa to protest the detention of monks after the Dalai Lama received the Congressional gold medal in the United States in October 2007. They were stopped by Chinese security forces, and some of the monks were beaten. Monks have always been accorded respect in Tibetan society; since the Chinese takeover of Tibet, to be a monk is to be a patriot, the red robes and shaved head marking a certain defiance of the avowedly atheist Chinese state. Tibetan lay people are protective of Tibetan monks; it was when Chinese cadres tried to collective the lands of Buddhist monasteries in eastern Tibet in 1950 that the first bloodshed occurred between Chinese communists and Tibetans. The People’s Liberation Army followed soon thereafter.

10 March 2009 will be the fiftieth anniversary of the uprising. But the monks of Drepung knew that 10 March 2008 would be the last 10 March before the Beijing Olympics. They dared to use the occasion to draw attention to the plight of Tibet, where since 2006 a high-altitude railroad has brought thousands of Chinese workers and Chinese tourists into Lhasa, where in 2007 the Chinese government declared that henceforth it would approve the recognition of all incarnate lamas (which would include the Dalai Lama). The monks knew what was at stake. Monks and nuns had been on the frontlines of riots in 1987 and 1989, which resulted in arrest, torture, and long prison sentences for hundreds. Among the Chinese security forces deployed in response were cameramen, capturing the faces of all those who marched in protest for future use (see Gabriel Lafitte, “Tibet: revolt with memories” [18 March 2008]).

A wheel turns

And so Tibet has erupted in violence. News reports have announced, “Tibetan protests spread to Chinese provinces”. But to Tibetans, the regions of Sichuan and Gansu and Qinghai where protests, and violence, have occurred are not Chinese provinces; they are Tibetan. Chinese policies in those areas have generally been more liberal than in the Tibet Autonomous Region, making the rapid spread of the protests beyond the TAR all the more significant, indicating the level of frustration that has seethed for ethnic Tibetans across a vast region that was once called “Tibet”.

Tibet has a violent history. Tibetan soldiers defeated the armies of the Chinese emperor and captured his capital in 763. The fifth Dalai Lama took the throne of Tibet in 1642 with the assistance of Mongol troops. When the current Dalai Lama instructed the Tibetan guerrillas who had long hounded the Chinese to give up the fight, some committed suicide. This Dalai Lama has urged Tibetans not to resort to violence against the Chinese, explaining that a deer cannot fight a tiger. He knows the suffering that has resulted from resistance in the past (see Tubten Khétsun, *Memories of Life in Lhasa Under Chinese Rule* [Columbia University Press, 2008]).

Is there anything to do but wait? Latvia regained its independence with the collapse of the Soviet Union. It would seem that Tibet could only regain its independence with the collapse of the Peoples Republic of China. In Buddhism, time is measured not in centuries, but in cycles of creation, abiding, destruction, and vacuity, then creation again.

TIME

Tackling Tibet

Thomas Laird

Since 2002, a little-known academic ritual has taken place each year at Harvard University. Academics of every stripe, from historians to constitutional lawyers, gather to discuss Tibet’s past, present and future. Uniquely, these intellectual debates have brought together Chinese and exiled Tibetan scholars. In the real world, the simplest facts about Tibet are so divisive that dialogue is impossible. Chinese speak of the 1950 peaceful liberation of the Chinese province of Tibet, and of its subsequent modernization; Tibetans speak of the invasion of an independent nation, and the suppression of its religious and cultural traditions. The polite rules established at Harvard, however, at least allow the two sides to exchange views. In fact, a senior Chinese scholar attending the first Harvard event met with the Dalai Lama’s envoy. That secret meeting birthed the official Sino-Tibetan dialogue between the Dalai Lama’s representatives and the Chinese government, which still takes place annually in Beijing.

The most recent Harvard Tibet conference, late last year, occurred amid a hurricane of news events. The Dalai Lama met the leaders of Germany, the U.S. and Canada in quick succession. Headlines trumpeted Beijing’s angry response. In Tibet, 4,000 armed police confronted monks at Lhasa’s venerated Drepung Monastery when they tried to celebrate the Dalai Lama being awarded the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal. Then the Chinese government announced that it must certify all new reincarnations of Tibetan Buddhism’s top clerics, signaling its firm intention to select and control the next Dalai Lama when the current 14th Dalai Lama

passes away. He, in turn, announced that he was considering the idea that he might select his successor before he died. At the Harvard conference, you could see these news events landing like mortars amid the polite dialogue. The scholars carried on, reflexively, trying to peel away each other's assumptions, looking for any sliver of space where a beachhead of shared meaning might be established.

Can reconciliation ever be achieved? Beijing first needs to give Tibetans, in exile and in Tibet, at least a hint of mutuality in their relationship. China could start by listening to Tibetans like Phuntso Wangye. He founded the first Communist Party in Tibet in 1940, which he merged with the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, and then helped lead Chinese troops into Tibet in 1951. Mao Zedong trusted Wangye so implicitly that he selected him as the translator for his 1954-55 meetings with the Dalai Lama. Today, the 85-year-old Wangye lives in Beijing. He believes that those Tibetan leaders collaborating with Beijing are misleading the Chinese leadership by claiming the Dalai Lama no longer has much sway over Tibetans. Wangye has urged Beijing to invite the Dalai Lama to China. Only the Dalai Lama has the standing among Tibetans to convince them to give up their hope for independence (it's self-deceiving to think such feelings do not exist). The Dalai Lama has clearly indicated that he wants to negotiate meaningful autonomy, not independence, for Tibet. Yet the hawks in Beijing refuse to deal with him; they believe China can solve its Dalai Lama problem by letting the current one die in exile. However, history proves no power has ever successfully imposed a fake Dalai Lama on the Tibetan people.

Harvard's professor emeritus Ezra F. Vogel — who has enjoyed good relations with many of China's leaders, past and present — chaired several sessions during the Tibet conference. Beijing might want to consider Vogel's opinion regarding the 15th Dalai Lama: "If the Dalai Lama passes away without agreement with China, then you could have someone Beijing selects, who would not be acceptable to Tibetans. Then China could be in for a long-term problem, like Russia has in Chechnya."

Today's sporadic Sino-Tibetan dialogue continues not because China wants to use it to reach some accommodation with the Dalai Lama, but because China does not want to be blamed for ending it. Yet Beijing needs to engage the Dalai Lama because only he has the legitimacy among Tibetans to negotiate, and sell, genuine autonomy to the Tibetans. Inviting the Dalai Lama to China would do more to burnish the country's international image in this Olympic year than any other single step. When the Dalai Lama departs the scene, things will become harder, not easier, for China to deal with Tibet.



Olympics of shame

Ramin Jahanbegloo

professor at the University of Toronto

The refusal to participate in the Beijing Olympics in protest at China's repressive policies in Tibet is an ethical imperative, says Ramin Jahanbegloo

"Holding an Olympic Games means evoking history", affirmed Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the

modern Olympic games. The Olympic games scheduled for Beijing on 8-24 August 2008 certainly evokes the name “Tibet”, including its cinnamon-robed Buddhist monks and a peace-loving and non-violent Dalai Lama seeking freedom for his repressed people. However, the Chinese authorities have a totally different view; they regard Tibet as a historical part of China and consider the Dalai Lama and his followers as obscurantist reactionaries opposed to the economic and social progress that the Chinese government has brought to a backward culture since it established control in 1950.

The official Chinese version of recent history is that, after Chinese troops imposed rule from Beijing fifty-eight years ago, the Dalai Lama led a violent uprising with the help of the CIA. The subversion campaign failed, and the Dalai Lama was forced in 1959 to flee to India, where he has lived in exile for half a century. So for Beijing officials, the Dalai Lama is less a devout non-violent Buddhist than a secessionist rebel. The authorities in Beijing attribute all protests by Buddhist monks and other Tibetans to a conspiracy mounted by the Dalai Lama from his exile headquarters in Dharamsala, India

But today, after the crackdown on Tibetan protestors in Lhasa - amid the most tumultuous events in the region since 1987 - Beijing is being closely scrutinised and broadly condemned by the international community, particularly since the Olympics are around the corner (see Wenran Jiang, “Tibetan protest, Chinese lens” [7 April 2008]). Now China is worried that protests in Tibet may draw the world’s attention to Tibet and away from the Olympic games. The Tibetan issue is now on the minds of all people across the world.

A higher aspiration

It is true that in theory, the Olympic Games are meant to be about sport rather than politics, but the promotion of the Olympic spirit includes upholding ethics in sport and encouraging respect for human rights. The continuing evidence of persecution and human-rights abuses by the Chinese government in Tibet cannot be reconciled with the Olympic spirit set out in Article 1 of the Olympic charter, which seeks “respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.”

The choice of Beijing to host the 2008 Olympic games, without concerns about the human-rights situation in China, already transgresses the ethics of a tournament based on “the spirit of humanism, fraternity and respect for individuals which inspires the Olympic ideal” and which requires “the governments of countries that are to host the Olympic Games to undertake that their countries will scrupulously respect the fundamental principles of the Olympic Charter” (see the International Olympic Committee’s code of ethics).

It is time now for nations planning to attend the Beijing Olympics to address the Tibetan problem and encourage the Chinese government to honour its Olympic pledges to improve human rights in China. The Olympic games may be a sporting event; nonetheless the event involves international norms and shared ethical values which are the foundation of global ethics. Disillusionment with the Olympic games mirrors the disenchantment with the perceived ethical values of the international community.

Thus, to revitalise the credibility of the Olympic Games requires a reconceptualisation of the games as a platform for building a framework of global ethical values to counterbalance current naked economic and political priorities. In making the Olympic charter relevant to the 21st century, and in making the Olympics more than just a spectacle of sport and commerce, there is a strong case for the games to include an ethical imperative of encouraging, promoting and educating human rights.

The Olympic charter and the Olympic code of ethics explicitly refer to the concept of human rights; they speak of the “preservation of human dignity”, the “harmonious development of man”, “respect for fundamental

universal ethical principles” and “dignity of the individual”. The Chinese government’s record on universally defined human-rights standards such as the death penalty, torture, freedom of expression and repression in Tibet stand in clear contrast to these principles should not be forgotten that the goal of “Olympism” is everywhere to place sport at the service of the moral development of man, with a view to encouraging the establishment of a non-violent society concerned with the preservations of human dignity. It is, therefore, time to begin shaming China - demanding that if the Beijing government is going to host this premier international event, they must become responsible and accountable international partners.

The right to say “no”

The Chinese leadership must understand that if they refuse to respect human rights in Tibet, then they will face an extremely vigorous, unrelenting, and omnipresent campaign followed by the boycott of the Olympic games to shame them over this refusal. Such boycotts have a long history. In 1976, twenty-five African countries boycotted the Olympics held in Montreal due to the participation of New Zealand (which at the time still had close ties to the South African apartheid regime). In 1980, the United States led a boycott against the Olympics held in Moscow, in protest against the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan (the US was joined by Japan, Taiwan, West Germany, Canada and sixty-one other nations).

So far, no significant state has turned talk of a boycott of the Beijing games into a firm commitment to do so. However, many people around the world would support their governments if they did call for one. In 1936, the totalitarian nature of the Adolf Hitler regime was already evident to those who allowed Berlin to host the Olympics in what became a Nazi propaganda showcase; Avery Brundage, then president of the United States Olympic committee (later of the International Olympic Committee as a whole), responded with scepticism to reports of concentration camps in Germany, and scorned what he regarded as rumours spread by Jewish groups.

Today, citizens around the world know - as many did not know in 1936 - what is happening behind the scenes in Tibet, and what has happened during the last six repressive decades. It is time for all the world’s leading public figures to make their dissentient voices heard on behalf of those in Tibet who are denied this selfsame basic right of speaking out in protest. It is time to say “no” to the Olympics of shame.



Tibet: questions of revolt

Robert Barnett

April 04, 2008

Research Scholar and Adjunct Professor, Program Coordinator in Modern Tibetan Studies

The charred bodies and pulped faces of Chinese migrants murdered during the riots in Lhasa on 14 March 2008 are likely to become a new and terrible image of Tibet. Just as those Tibetans who have died in ethnic violence or at the hands of the security forces, those killed in the latest **struggle** over Tibet’s future died what should have been unnecessary deaths.

The desperation of Tibetans living on the Tibetan plateau has been documented for several decades by scholars and journalists, as well as in repeated appeals by exiles and their leader, the Dalai Lama. Major grievances include

- * elaborate restrictions on religion
- * an undisguised encouragement of Chinese migration to Tibetan towns
- * the ban on criticism of most Communist Party policies
- * the imposition of ethnic Chinese leaders to run the region
- * the forced settlement of 100,000 nomads without prospect of future livelihood
- * the obligatory moving of 250,000 farmers in 2006 from their villages to new houses along major roads, often largely at their own expense.

Underpinning all of this is the deeper issue of Tibetans' continuing recollection of themselves as a separate nation that has been forcibly annexed.

China has shown some flexibility and good intentions. In 2002 Beijing began, with impressive initiative, a dialogue process with the Dalai Lama after twenty years of little contact. In 2003, Hu Jintao - reconfirmed as China's president for another five-year term on 15 March 2008, as the Tibet protests exploded - called for development policies based on ultra-rapid GDP growth to be replaced by a focus on developing human resources. He began to refer to the positive role of religion in a "harmonious society", especially in reference to Buddhism.

But these important policy signals were not applied in Tibetan areas. Little effort was made to justify these renewed restrictions, some of which did not apply to ethnic Chinese in Tibet or exist in inland China. The Dalai Lama's call in 2005 on exiles to stop protesting against Chinese leaders was not matched by confidence-building measures from Beijing. By 2006, the talks with exiles had slowed down to the point of virtual non-existence, waiting for any sign of commitment from the Chinese side.

A shadow world

In Lhasa, there was nothing subtle about the hardening of policy. In May 2006, Hu Jintao appointed Zhang Qingli as the new party secretary for the Tibet Autonomous Region. Zhang spearheaded an intensification of the anti-Dalai Lama campaign first imposed on Tibetans ten years earlier. He will be remembered for such choice remarks as "the Central Party Committee is the real Buddha for Tibetans" (though he did at least deny that he was himself a Buddha); for stepping up the semi-secret ban on students and government employees engaging in any form of religious practice (a ban that is illegal under Chinese law); and for pushing through the construction of the first railway line in Tibet without introducing policies to address Tibetans' fears - since proved correct - that it would accelerate Chinese migration to the region.

Today, Tibetans exist in a shadow world, where criticism of Chinese policies can rarely be spoken for fear of political and professional suicide, or worse. No one who has lived in Tibet and speaks Tibetan will have been unaware that Tibetans were hiding deep and unexpressed discontent and fear. Random people would approach me in Lhasa alleyways, sometimes weeping, whispering and begging me to tell the world that the Chinese were denying them freedom, or some such phrase. The only surprise is that after twenty years they dared to take to the streets in such numbers (see *Lhasa: Streets with Memories* [Columbia University Press, 2006]).

All sides have made mistakes. The west has depicted Tibetans as likeable victims, rather than as agents with coherent political agendas that needed urgent answers. The Dalai Lama has been accused by the Chinese of sending mixed signals about his promise to give up independence. The Chinese side has failed to listen to the warnings of their own advisers, let alone those opinions offered by Tibetans and outsiders.

It is Beijing that chose in 1950 to become the power-holder in Tibet, and it is Beijing that now has to face the most questions. When the riots broke out on the morning of 14 March, why did leaders fail for several hours to send in riot squads to hold the city centre, thus allowing the protestors to turn on Chinese migrants rather than their earlier target, the police? Why were no concessions made to keep the dialogue process alive? Why was migration not restricted before the railway was opened? Why were Tibet officials not stopped from illegal bans on religion?

As China's response to the protests has shown signs of resembling a witch-hunt rather than an investigation - with little distinction between the thousands of legitimate protestors and the few murderous rioters - the larger question remains: who was responsible in Beijing for refusing to listen to Tibetans' deeply held complaints? Were China's leaders really unaware of what every tourist knew to be the deep unhappiness and repression of the populace?

Serious answers to these questions will require a bitter swallowing of pride by China's leaders and the admission of terrible failures. There is some ground for hope. In 2007, for example, Phuntsog Wanggyal, a former Tibetan official now based in Beijing, called openly on President Hu to negotiate with the Dalai Lama; the same appeal is voiced by some Chinese writers today.

If China's leaders can rein in the impulse for excessive retribution and listen to the urgent needs expressed, however viciously, by protestors and rioters across Tibet, perhaps those tragic deaths will not have been totally in vain.

TIME

China's Olympic Shame

Simon Elegant

April 10, 2008

Why didn't they see this coming? Despite more than seven years' worth of meticulous, down-to-the-last-detail planning that has gone into the Beijing Olympics, China's leaders have seemingly been caught off guard by the most predictable of challenges: discontent in Tibet and international condemnation of Beijing's record of repression. The extent of their surprise can be gauged by their reaction—a brutal crackdown on dissent at home and a deaf ear to criticism from abroad—which is more reminiscent of the heavy-handed communist regime of old than the modern, moderate Beijing that the Olympics are meant to showcase

China's response to the mid-March riots in Tibet has galvanized its critics around the world, who intend to use the run-up to the Olympics as a showcase of their own. The Olympic-torch relay has been hounded at practically every step—in London, Paris and San Francisco—by pro-Tibet activists. In the French capital, security officials were obliged to turn off the flame on several occasions to protect it from protesters. Even before it arrived in the U.S. on April 8, activists unfurled FREE TIBET banners from the cables of the Golden

Gate Bridge. On April 9, San Francisco police were forced to shorten the relay in the city, citing security concerns. Beijing vowed to proceed with the relay unchanged, but more protests are expected in the 15 places the torch will visit before returning to Chinese soil on May 4.

So far, Chinese authorities have responded to the clamor by further tightening the clamps on domestic dissent. On April 3, prominent human-rights activist Hu Jia received a 3 1/2-year prison sentence on charges of inciting subversion of state power. Hu's conviction, apparently stemming from articles he wrote and interviews he gave linking the Olympics with human rights in China, was the latest in what rights advocates in China say is a string of detentions of activists all over the country. Beijing is also applying pressure on China's huge online population of some 230 million, which is often cited as the country's most powerful force for greater openness. Thousands of websites have been shuttered, and government control and blocking of sites outside China have intensified in recent months. As Irene Khan, secretary-general of Amnesty International, put it in a report released April 1, despite assurances by both the International Olympic Committee and Chinese officials that restraint would be exercised, "the crackdown ... has deepened, not lessened, because of the Olympics."

The question is, Why? Given the international scrutiny of Beijing's actions, the hard line has left many observers puzzled. The wiser course would seem to be a more measured response: to practice better crowd control, manage the media better, try negotiation instead of knee-jerk repression. But China's rulers have shown little such dexterity. Some of the reasons are straightforward. The Communist Party is deeply secretive and highly bureaucratic, and its members are steeped in a long-standing culture of self-preservation. "Part of the head-in-sand problem has to do with entrenched bureaucratic interests," says China expert Perry Link of Princeton University. Officials who have devoted most of their careers to defending authoritarian rule "can't stop chanting that mantra without puzzlement over what to say instead and without a bit of panic about their own rice bowls and even, almost, their own identities," Link says.

Leaders like President Hu Jintao are of a generation that received a Soviet-style education in the 1950s. "They don't have the knowledge or imagination to make better decisions," Link says. They operate under a system of collective decision-making that constrains the state's ability to be flexible in the face of new challenges. "Like the bureaucrats beneath them," Link says, top officials "are frightened about their own positions and don't want to be seen as making 'mistakes,' especially mistakes of softness." This insecurity underlies the central government's heavy-handed tactics and rhetoric, even though repression reduces the country's stature in the global community. "When the rest of the world looks at China, they see this increasingly powerful and confident country," says Wenran Jiang, director of the China Institute at the University of Alberta. "But when the Chinese leadership looks at the country, they see the exact opposite: weaknesses everywhere, rising inflation and civil unrest, environmental disasters and corruption. So the overall mentality of the central authorities is very insecure and nervous." In the case of Tibet, Chinese leaders are now trapped by their own words, which have fueled nationalist sentiments among ordinary Chinese, who believe that Tibet is Chinese territory. Any appearance of compromise by Beijing would likely be intolerable to the public.

China's problems are not confined to Tibet. There have also been rumblings in the far-western Xinjiang province, populated largely by the Uighur Muslim minority group. Protests by hundreds of Uighurs over religious issues were reported by rights groups in late March. The Chinese press has meanwhile reported several recent clashes with separatist rebels in the province, and in early March the press reported that a Uighur woman had attempted to bring down a domestic passenger jet with a homemade bomb. Add to that widespread discontent over issues such as corruption and rapidly worsening inflation (the price of pork has gone up two-thirds in the past year), and you have the makings of a perfect storm.

It's a storm that threatens to blow in just when everyone's watching—and deciding whether to participate in—China's Olympics. The Prime Minister of Poland has already indicated he will boycott the opening ceremony because of events in Tibet; French President Nicolas Sarkozy has said he wouldn't rule out a similar move.

The authorities will no doubt make it virtually impossible for journalists to enter Tibet in the months leading up to the Olympics. But it remains unclear exactly how they intend to deal with the estimated 30,000 foreign reporters expected to witness the event, all of them eager to take advantage of Beijing's regulations specifying that they can interview any Chinese people who agree to talk. "They still don't have any idea what is going to hit them," a senior Western academic with close ties to the upper echelons of the Beijing establishment said months before the Tibet eruption, "or how bad they will look to the outside world." They're already starting to find out

The Washington Post

Our Tibet Protests Won't Work

Fareed Zakaria

April 14, 2008

Editor of Newsweek International, columnist

Public humiliation does not work nearly as well on the regime in Beijing as private pressure. At first glance, China's recent crackdown in Tibet looks like a familiar storyline: a dictatorship represses its people. And of course that's part of the reality — as it often is in China. But on this issue, the communist regime is not in opposition to its people. The vast majority of Chinese have little sympathy for the Tibetan cause. To the extent that we can gauge public opinion in China and among its diaspora, ordinary Chinese are, if anything, critical of the Beijing government for being too easy on the Tibetans. The real struggle here is between a nationalist majority and an ethnic and religious minority looking to secure its rights.

In these circumstances, a boycott of the Olympics would have precisely the opposite effect that is intended. The regime in Beijing would become only more defensive and stubborn. The Chinese people would rally around the flag and see the West as trying to humiliate China in its first international moment of glory. (There are many suspicions that the United States cannot abide the prospect of a rising China.) For most Chinese, the Games are about the world's giving China respect, rather than bolstering the Communist Party's legitimacy.

For leaders to boycott the Games' opening ceremonies alone is an odd idea. Is the president of the United States supposed to travel to Beijing to attend the women's water-polo finals instead? (Britain's Gordon Brown, for instance, has said he'll attend the closing, but not the opening ceremonies.) Picking who will go to which event is trying to have it both ways, voting for the boycott before you vote against it. Some want to punish China for its association with the Sudanese government, which is perpetrating atrocities in Darfur. But to boycott Beijing's Games because it buys oil from Sudan carries the notion of responsibility too far. After all, the United States has much closer ties to Saudi Arabia, a medieval monarchy that has funded Islamic terror. Should the world boycott America for this relationship?

China's attitude toward Tibet is wrong and cruel, but, alas, not that unusual. Other nations, especially developing countries, have taken tough stands against what they perceive as separatist forces. A flourishing democracy like India has often responded to such movements by imposing martial law and suspending political and civil

rights. The Turks for many decades crushed all Kurdish pleas for linguistic and ethnic autonomy. The democratically elected Russian government of Boris Yeltsin responded brutally to Chechen demands. Under Yeltsin and his successor, Vladimir Putin, also elected, the Russian Army killed about 75,000 civilians in Chechnya, and leveled its capital. These actions were enthusiastically supported within Russia. It is particularly strange to see countries that launched no boycotts while Chechnya was being destroyed — and indeed welcomed Russia into the G8 — now so outraged about the persecution of minorities. (In comparison, estimates are that over the past 20 years, China has jailed several hundred people in Tibet.)

On this issue, the Bush administration has so far followed a wiser course, forgoing the grandstanding taking place in Europe and on the campaign trail. It has been urging the Chinese government quietly but firmly to engage in serious discussions with the Dalai Lama. Diplomacy can be scoffed at, but every multinational business that has had success in persuading the Chinese government to change course will testify that public humiliation does not work nearly as well on the regime as private pressure.

Negotiating with the Dalai Lama is in Beijing's interest as well. It faces a restive population that lives in about 13 percent of the land area of China. Many Tibetans want independence. But the Dalai Lama has repeatedly said that he does not seek independence, only cultural autonomy. Even last week he rejected any boycott of the Olympics and urged his followers to engage in no violent protests whatsoever. If there were ever a leader of a separatist group whom one could negotiate with, he's it. And once the 72-year-old Dalai Lama passes from the scene, Beijing might have to deal with a far more unpredictable and radical Tibetan movement.

So why doesn't the Chinese regime see this? Beijing has a particular problem. Now that communism is dead, the Communist Party sees its legitimacy as linked to its role in promoting and defending Chinese nationalism. It is especially clumsy when it comes to such issues. Clever technocrats though they are, China's communist leaders — mostly engineers — have not had to refine their political skills as they have their economic touch. In the past they have stoked anti-Japanese and anti-American outbursts, only to panic that things were getting out of control and then reverse course. They fear that compromising over Tibet would set a precedent for the unraveling of the Chinese nation. China has grown and shrunk in size over the centuries, and its dynasties have often been judged by their success in preserving the country's geography.

In fact, in almost all cases — Turkey, India — granting autonomy to groups that press for it has in the end produced a more stable and peaceful national climate. But that is a lesson the Chinese government will have to learn for itself; it is unlikely to take instruction from outsiders. Its handling of the protests in Tibet is disgraceful. But humiliating the entire country over it would make matters worse.

The New York Times

The Dalai Lama's Realism

Pico Iyer

April 14, 2008

The situation in Tibet cannot be resolved until and unless the future of Chinese individuals is resolved, too; the majority of the citizens of Lhasa, after all, are already Han Chinese. And one of the Tibetans in exile who knows China most intimately, and over more than half a century, is the Dalai Lama, who has been working

with the Beijing leadership since the early days of Communist rule, 58 years ago, and who traveled for a year across China, against his people's wishes, in 1954, meeting Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping

The fact that so much of the world is rising up in support of the Tibetans, and their rightful need for freedom, is clearly a wonderful thing, and this may be the one moment when China needs and seeks the approval of the larger world, and therefore might be moved to be more accommodating. But the fact remains that the Middle Kingdom, with its great tradition of pride and not taking advice from outsiders, will only respond with more violence if confronted too violently, and a delicate touch is needed if more suffering is not to descend on Tibetan and Chinese citizens who have suffered too much already. As the Dalai Lama has been saying for a long time, the important thing right now is not to focus only on right now, but on what happens after the Games are over, when the world is looking elsewhere (at Iraq, at the U.S. presidential election, at our many other problems), and China is free to execute its policies behind a curtain and with maximum ruthlessness

That is part of what moves him to urge the world to speak out on behalf of Tibet, but not lash out at the Chinese; to call passionately for the restoration of Tibet's basic rights to freedom of speech and thought, but not to denigrate the Chinese in the process (in part because so many Chinese individuals live and suffer under similar restrictions). All the world feels, acutely, the completely understandable human frustration and sorrow of the Tibetan people, after five decades and more of oppression; but impatience always backfires, and throwing a stone through your neighbor's window will only lead to more ill-will and possibly decades of unwanted and unanticipated consequences — especially if, as in the case of China and Tibet, you are likely to be living next to one another for many more years to come

It is disingenuous for the Chinese leadership to claim the Olympics is just a sporting occasion (I know, as one who has covered five Olympiads for Time magazine); the Games are a chance for China to show off its stunning recent accomplishments to the world, as Japan did in 1964 and South Korea in 1988. But if it opens its doors truly to the world, it cannot expect the world to look past all that is so egregious and inexcusable in the Chinese government's denial of basic freedoms to its people. The world needs China, and China needs the world, as the Dalai Lama said when I traveled across Japan with him five months ago; freezing China out might only prompt it to create demons in its head instead of the humans who are waiting to talk to it.

But tolerance does not mean accepting what is clearly wrong, as he always stresses, and if China indeed seeks the world's friendship, that means frank and trusting criticism and suggestions as well as mere approval. The world can be expected to listen, but not to kowtow to a China that has not shown itself hitherto very eager to listen to the world. At the same time, though, it is folly for the Tibetans to put their hopes on gestures and protests alone, when they are outnumbered by 200 to 1, and facing a neighbor who is so easily offended. The greatest asset Tibet has is a leader who speaks always for dialogue and friendship, who also happens to be the most seasoned ruler on the planet (head of his people for 67 years) and the most realistic and pragmatic political leader I have encountered in my 26 years of covering the world as a journalist. The Dalai Lama's difficult life has never allowed him to entertain wishfulness or abstraction; he is an empiricist who works in and with the circumstances of the moment. China must be reminded of its larger responsibilities, but without excessive force; and those who despair might think of the Dalai Lama's friend and champion Vaclav Havel, one day in prison and eight weeks later unanimously chosen president of Czechoslovakia, or his friend and colleague Desmond Tutu, one day waking up in a land of apartheid, where for 62 years he had never been allowed to vote, and the next morning in a free (but still troubled) South Africa. "Until the last moment," as the Tibetan leader always says, "anything is possible."

China's Crackdown on Tibet Divides Europe

Shada Islam

April 14, 2008

Senior program executive at the European Policy Centre

Europe can't decide if human rights trump trade in relations with Asian giant

Restricting trade is often a tool for governments that want to show their commitment to human rights. But Europe is divided over the relative importance of human rights versus economic growth or the value of trade in promoting those rights. On one hand, trade with China helps to lift millions out of poverty and benefits European consumers. However, China's suppression of human rights, as dramatically shown in recent events in Tibetan-inhabited parts of China, is hard to swallow. China's record on human rights is also deeply unpopular with European citizens. "As a result, the EU message on China – and to China – is often confused," explains journalist Shada Islam. Mixed signals can be dangerous, inspiring protesters to risk their lives while convincing China that the EU is not serious on human rights. Moreover, European governments' inability to speak with one voice on China, Islam points out, will diminish the EU clout. – Yale Global

European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso's three-day visit to Beijing, starting April 24, was planned months ago to spotlight European Union hopes of upgrading political and business ties with China. However, the talks will now be dominated by EU concern over Beijing's crackdown in Tibet and Chinese anger at the bloc's plans to invite the Dalai Lama to a European Parliament session.

Barroso, accompanied by seven top aides including EU trade chief Peter Mandelson and monetary affairs Commissioner Joaquin Almunia, must tread carefully. The EU may be united in urging Beijing to respect Tibetans' human rights and hold "constructive" discussions with the Dalai Lama, but the 27-nation bloc is deeply divided on overall policy towards China, including demands that government leaders boycott the Olympics opening ceremony in August.

The EU's inability to forge a united stance on dealing with Asia's most powerful economy is undermining its reputation elsewhere in the region. Coming close on the heels of an EU-wide rift on Kosovo, where Europe is split on recognizing the independence of the former Serb territory, and differences on deploying troops in the volatile southern regions of Afghanistan, disarray over China dents the bloc's hopes of becoming a more powerful – and credible – global actor.

EU divisions over China are not new. Unlike the US which has traditionally viewed China as a competitor, EU governments have never quite made up their minds over whether China is a rival or partner. EU officials insist that the bloc's "fundamental approach to China must remain one of engagement and partnership" but European governments have long struggled to reconcile their desire for lucrative business deals in China with ongoing public concern over the country's human-rights record.

As a result, the EU message on China – and to China – is often confused. Officials in Brussels, for instance, have a longstanding human-rights dialogue with Beijing and while they also criticize China on the issue, French,

German and British leaders sweep these concerns aside to clinch multibillion euro contracts in China. Routine resolutions by the European Parliament condemning Chinese policies in Tibet, Burma and Darfur go hand in hand with expanding EU-China trade relations and European Commission assertions that China is a “responsible” international actor.

EU trade chief Mandelson in recent months has both berated Beijing as an “out of control juggernaut” on trade and recognized that cheap imports from China have helped keep inflation at bay while China’s integration in the European production chain has boosted EU competitiveness.

Recent events in Tibet risk making the already-difficult EU balancing act even trickier. For one, EU divisions over the Olympics will be embarrassingly visible if some European leaders stay away from the Games while others attend. Second, the EU mood on China is souring overall, with many Europeans frustrated at Beijing’s focus on opening of high-level strategic economic dialogue with the US and, in contrast, its failure to respond to EU calls for more trade restraint and changes in monetary policy.

Certainly, European public opinion is turning distinctly anti-China. The Olympic torch relay through Europe in early April sparked protests in Olympia, London and Paris, with protesters condemning China’s occupation of Tibet, oppressive media censorship, the jailing of dissidents and human rights activists, Darfur and other causes.

The European Parliament has called on EU leaders to boycott the inaugural ceremonies. Former student revolutionary Daniel Cohn-Bendit, leader of the parliament’s Green group, compared the Beijing Games with those hosted by Nazi Germany in 1936.

In addition, European Parliament President Hans-Gert Poettering, a close ally of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, has invited the Dalai Lama to address the assembly while French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner has suggested the Tibetan spiritual leader should attend a meeting of EU foreign ministers. No dates have been set for either of these encounters, but China has reacted angrily, accusing the EU of meddling in its internal affairs. Several European politicians plan not to attend the Olympics opening ceremony. Leaders from former communist Eastern Europe, who generally take a tough line on China – and Russia – are spearheading the drive to avoid the August 8 festivities. Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Czech President Vaclav Klaus have said they will not attend the Olympics.

Significantly, Germany’s Merkel and Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier have declined to take part in the opening ceremonies while French President Nicolas Sarkozy has not made up his mind yet. Britain’s Gordon Brown will only attend the closing ceremonies and fulfill ceremonial duties, given that London will host the 2012 Summer Olympics.

Germany’s stance on China is especially confused. The EU’s largest economy relies heavily on exports to China – worth 27.5 billion euros last year – but members of the ruling grand coalition of Social Democrats and Christian Democrats are at odds over how to deal with Beijing. Merkel has taken a tougher line on Beijing than her social democratic predecessor Gerhard Schroeder. Her decision to meet the Dalai Lama in her office last September cast a chill in German-China relations. Aides say the chancellor has not spoken with Prime Minister Wen Jiabao in several months.

Germany’s social democrat Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, however, is trying hard to mend fences with Beijing and has held two meetings with Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi, making it clear he opposes a boycott of the Games. German business leaders press for a thaw in Berlin-Beijing ties, but Berlin also recently

suspended talks with China on climate change and renewable energy because of events in Tibet. As such, rebuilding trust between the two countries will not be easy.

While Germany blows hot and cold on China, the voice of pro-free trade EU states like Britain and the Netherlands is drowned out by southern European nations, including Italy, which worry about rising trade competition from China, and eastern EU newcomers, which add their weight to Nordic concerns over human rights.

EU officials complain that China's lukewarm response so far to key EU demands, including Mandelson's repeated warnings that the rapid rise in China's trade surplus with the EU – which grew by 21 percent last year to reach a record 159.2 billion euros, or US\$251 billion – is not making their task of fighting protectionism any easier.

China must provide the EU with “a good news story” on trade and human rights, they say, to prove that engagement and constructive dialogue are worth the effort. As such, Brussels is hoping to launch a so-called “high-level mechanism” on trade at the meeting in Beijing to discuss issues like improved protection of intel EU Monetary Affairs Commissioner Almunia, meanwhile, wants Beijing to stop focusing on the yuan's exchange rate with the dollar and also allow its currency to appreciate faster against an ever-stronger euro. In addition, the EU has complained about China's neglect of governance standards in pursuit of energy resources in Africa while several EU governments, heeding US warnings about the rise in China's military budget, have indefinitely shelved plans to lift an EU arms embargo against Beijing.

European governments' inability to speak with one voice on China diminishes the EU's clout. The EU says it demands that Beijing talk to the Dalai Lama are prompted by real concern that discontent in Tibet could spread to other provinces and a longstanding European belief that a more open society, with better protection of human rights and the rights of minorities, is in China's interest. But China is unlikely to pay heed to advice, however wise and well-intentioned, delivered by a divided and weak Europe.

tibetnews.com

The Way Forward in Tibet

Paula J. Dobriansky

April 21, 2008

When I meet with the Dalai Lama today, I fully expect him to reaffirm his strong commitment to engaging Chinese officials in dialogue. President Bush has repeatedly expressed his own steadfast support for dialogue between the Dalai Lama and China's leadership. Meaningful dialogue presents the only viable way forward.

In March, demonstrations in Lhasa that began peacefully escalated into violence and quickly spread to other Tibetan areas of China. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has expressed deep concern regarding these events, has called on all sides to refrain from violence, and has strongly urged China to exercise restraint in dealing with the protesters and to respect the fundamental right of all people to peacefully express their religious and political views. Underlying these tragic events is China's long-standing repression of religious, cultural and other freedoms for the Tibetan people, repression that has been extensively documented in State Department human rights reports and elsewhere. Since 1949, the cycle of protests followed by crackdowns has repeated itself several times, but the end result has always been the same: Control is restored but only temporarily, while the underlying causes of Tibetan grievances remain unaddressed.

The recent protests are a manifestation of lingering frustration at a lack of progress in addressing Tibetans' concerns. These ethnic clashes have resulted in fatalities of Tibetans and Han Chinese and in widespread arrests. The best way for China's leaders to address Tibetan concerns is to engage in dialogue with the Dalai Lama, who has advocated a "middle way" that embraces autonomy for Tibet within China and rejects seeking independence. The Dalai Lama is the only person with the influence and credibility to persuade Tibetans to eschew violence and accept a genuine autonomy within China that would also preserve Tibetan culture and identity.

The U.S. government believes there is a basis for dialogue between the Dalai Lama and China's leadership. The Dalai Lama has met the preconditions for dialogue called for by China: He does not advocate independence for Tibet; he does not engage in or advocate separatist activities; and he recognizes that Tibet is part of China. The Dalai Lama has publicly come out strongly against the violence that erupted recently in Lhasa and other areas. He even took the extraordinary step of offering his resignation if necessary to convince all parties of his nonviolent approach to reaching resolution. And he has indicated his support for holding the Olympic Games in Beijing. The United States has honored the Dalai Lama as a man of peace and a lifelong advocate of nonviolence by awarding him the Congressional Gold Medal last October. When the Chinese government uses harsh rhetoric against the Dalai Lama, or steps up "patriotic education campaigns" that include forced denunciations of the Dalai Lama, it serves only to further enflame tensions. Some in China, however, have taken a stand against such tactics. In an unprecedented move, prominent Chinese intellectuals are circulating a petition that calls on the Chinese government to end its "one-sided" propaganda campaign and initiate direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama.

Since 2002, the Dalai Lama's representatives have conducted six rounds of talks with Chinese officials, in a major departure from the previous 20 years of no engagement. These discussions, while substantive, have not yet produced concrete results. If continued in good faith, this dialogue could build trust and provide the long-term basis for political and economic stability in Tibet. As Secretary Rice has noted, while Beijing has missed opportunities to engage the Dalai Lama directly, there is still hope, and it is not too late to do so.

In addition to engaging in meaningful dialogue, China should immediately cease the repressive measures directed at Tibetans seeking to practice their religion and preserve their cultural identity, and should release those detained for peacefully protesting or expressing their views. Although the Chinese government recently arranged official trips to Lhasa for journalists and diplomats, we continue to call for unfettered access for all media and foreign diplomats into Tibetan areas. We hope that the current generation of Chinese leaders — who have shown that they can pursue enlightened economic policies and who aspire to make China a respected global and regional stakeholder — recognize that the resumption of a serious and direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama offers the best hope for resolving long-standing problems and achieving worthy goals in Tibet.

haleakalatimes.com

Today we are all Tibetans

Brandon Wilson

April 22, 2008

I was astounded and sickened by an article the Maui News ran on April 6, 2008, addressing recent events in the unraveling crisis in Tibet.

For those who aren't aware by now, Communist Chinese Army forces and police recently clamped down on what began as a peaceful demonstration by monks marking the 49th anniversary of the Tibet National Uprising in Lhasa. This peaceful protest in the Himalayan capital swiftly escalated into widespread riots after police fired live ammunition into the crowd. It was a brutal crackdown reminiscent of the atrocities of Tiananmen Square, complete with tanks and troop carriers. CNN reports 140 protestors were killed at the hands of the army, with nearly 1,000 arrested.

Those events have snowballed into worldwide demonstrations against the oppressive occupation of Tibet by China for fifty years. Truth be told, it's hardly an image the world's emerging superpower, China, likes to convey, especially while it's trotting the Olympic torch around the world on a "Journey of Harmony" not unlike Hitler first did in the days preceding World War II.

Besides the reporter's blind eye to what is visually documented on Lhasa's streets, I especially take exception to their way of equating the construction of a road, a railroad, or a few high-rise buildings or schools to progress and a better life for Tibetans.

To suppose that the Tibetan people are better off today because of their invasion and near-extirmination is colonialist at best. At its worst, it reeks of 18th and 19th century imperialism. One can well imagine politicians and industrialists spouting the same twaddle in 1860s America as Native Americans were either rounded up onto reservations or exterminated. Sure, they could boast they'd brought them the railroad, schools, and a new religion, along with haircuts and high button collars. All it cost the indigenous people was their land, their culture, their lives... their freedom.

Today the same thing is happening in Tibet. When the Communists invaded in 1950, they killed over 1.2 million Tibetans. They destroyed over 6,000 Buddhist temples. Over the past fifty years, there have been massive resettlement programs. Hundreds of thousands of Han Chinese have moved into Tibet, set up businesses and intermarried. In exchange, they receive the best jobs, exclusion from the one-child policy and preferential treatment in China if and when they return.

The touted completion of the railroad from Beijing to Lhasa has only accelerated Tibet's annihilation. The former annual invasion of a hundred thousand tourists has recently increased to several million. Old Lhasa, the capital my wife and I once knew, has been ravaged and replaced by strip clubs, karaoke bars, pool halls and brothels. A garish park featuring a Chinese fighter plane now surrounds the Potala Palace, one of the world's architectural gems and traditional home to the Dalai Lamas.

Should the Tibetans be grateful?

At school, lessons are taught in Chinese – not Tibetan. The currency is Chinese. The best jobs go to the Chinese or Chinese-speakers. Traditional Tibetan clothing and food is being replaced with Chinese goods. Many villages have loudspeakers that broadcast music and news from China several times a day. The remaining temples have been turned into museums, while the atheistic Chinese decide who may even join monastic life. Their ranks now decimated, a would-be monk has to profess love of the Communist Party.

Today, even as you read this, over a hundred monks and nuns suffer torture and imprisonment in the worst conditions imaginable: most are there for small infractions such as having a picture of the Dalai Lama or singing songs of freedom.

Is this progress?

The Panchen Lama, second in the hierarchy of Tibetan Buddhism, was kidnapped as a six-year-old boy ten years ago and hasn't been seen since. He remains the world's youngest political prisoner. Shortly after his disappearance, the Communists had the excuse, as well as the audacity, to appoint their own Panchen Lama, a task normally reserved for the Dalai Lama.

The invasion and rape of Tibet has been highly successful while much of the world looks the other way. Today the Tibetan people are a minority in their own country and most are not permitted to legally leave its borders – although thousands risk their lives every year, escaping each winter in severe conditions, to walk over the high Himalayas to India.

Yet this is just a brief summary of the many injustices they suffer. These conditions are not imaginary or fabricated. Their misery is very real and has been documented by the Red Cross, Amnesty International, the UN, International Campaign for Tibet, and human rights groups worldwide.

My problem is not with the Chinese people, as many of them are just as oppressed. It is with the Communist Chinese government, the five percent who control the country.

As someone who personally has walked across Tibet and stayed each night with peasant families or former monks, I have seen much of this with my own eyes. I have heard the conditions and despair whispered around their fires over a cup of yak butter tea. What is happening today is nothing less than what the Nobel Peace Prize winning Dalai Lama called “cultural genocide.”

So, I must ask, “Is this progress? Should the Tibetan people be truly grateful the Communists have ‘liberated’ them?” Or perhaps I should ask, “Isn't fifty years too long to suffer – even while the Dalai Lama repeatedly calls for tolerance, patience and a middle path of nonviolence?”

No, the western world has been all too silent. For a while the U.S. aided Tibetans with smuggled arms through the CIA, until Nixon took office and went courting Chinese business. Since then, especially after Clinton granted China “most favored nation” trade status – worth billions of dollars – our dollars have spoken louder than words. Our stores have been flooded with their cheap exports. Meanwhile, our workers have lost their jobs. Then, by selling the Communist Chinese party billions of dollars of treasury bonds, we have made the world's largest violator of human rights our friendly banker.

But there is still hope – and the time has never been better. The world's eyes are upon China. Call or email Congress to insist the Communist Chinese sit down to negotiate autonomy for Tibet with the Dalai Lama. This is a simple act they have resisted for over a decade. Pressure President Bush to personally boycott the Olympic ceremonies, as other conscientious world leaders plan to do. (One might think he'd have better things to do these days anyway.) Pressure China to cancel the Olympic torch relay across Tibet, as it will only result in more violence and death. Demand that the Panchen Lama be released. Pray for peace.

Finally, I would hope the enlightened people of Hawaii and especially native Hawaiian people would be sympathetic to the Tibetan cause. After all, these islands know all too well the problems wrought by the ill-conceived notion of “manifest destiny.” Let us not wish the same fate on any other sovereign nation.

Today, we are all Tibetans. And no man is free – until all men are free.

The Washington Post

The Question of Tibet

Jayshree Bajoria

Staff Writer, Council on Foreign Relations

April 2008

Introduction

The recent anti-government clashes in Tibet and other regions in China demonstrate the depth of historical disagreement over the territory. Tensions between China and Tibet have persisted since People's Republic of China was founded in 1949. China says Tibet has been a part of China for many centuries now, a claim refuted by many Tibetans. Chinese authorities use this claim to support their sovereignty over the territory while proponents of the Tibetan independence point to periods in Tibetan history when it enjoyed self-rule. Meanwhile, Chinese government policies in Tibet have fed the conflict. These include restrictions on cultural and religious freedoms of Tibetans, attempts to change the demographics of the region through migration of ethnic Chinese, and an unwillingness to open dialogue with Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama. Experts believe the dispute over Tibet will persist as long as China refuses to speak to the Dalai Lama, who has been in exile in neighboring India since 1959. China, however, has sought to bypass the 73-year-old Dalai Lama and concentrated instead on efforts to control the process that will determine his successor.

Unresolved Political Status

The contemporary dispute over Tibet is rooted in religious and political disputes starting in the thirteenth century. China claims that Tibet has been an inalienable part of China since the thirteenth century under the Yuan dynasty. Tibetan nationalists and their supporters counter that the Chinese Empire at that time was either a Mongol (in Chinese, Yuan) empire or a Manchu (Qing) one, which happened to include China too, and that Tibet was a protectorate, wherein Tibetans offered spiritual guidance to emperors in return for political protection. When British attempts to open relations with Tibet culminated in the 1903-04 invasion and conquest of Lhasa, Qing-ruled China, which considered Tibet politically subordinate, countered with attempts to increase control over Tibet's administration. But in 1913, a year after the Qing dynasty collapsed, Tibet declared independence and all Chinese officials and residents in Lhasa were expelled by the Tibetan government. Tibet thenceforth functioned as a de facto independent nation until the Chinese army invaded its eastern borders in 1950.

But even during this period, Tibet's international status remained unsettled. China continued to claim it as sovereign territory. Western countries, including Britain and the United States, did not recognize Tibet as fully independent. After founding the People's Republic of China in 1949, the new communist government in China sought reunification with Tibet and decided to invade it in 1950. A year later, in 1951, the Dalai Lama's representatives signed a seventeen-point agreement with Beijing, granting China sovereignty over Tibet for the first time. The agreement stated that the central authorities "will not alter the existing political system in Tibet" or "the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama." While the Chinese government points to this document to prove Tibet is part of Chinese territory, proponents of Tibetan independence say Tibet was coerced into signing this document and surrendering its sovereignty.

Experts also point to the years from 1913 to 1950, a time when Tibet behaved like a de facto independent

state, to argue that Tibet was not always part of China. But China blames the British influence at the time for provoking the idea of Tibetan independence and refuses to be bound by any treaties signed between Tibet and Britain during that period. This includes the 1914 Simla convention where the British recognized Tibet as an autonomous area under the suzerainty of China.

The political status question is also complicated by uncertainty about what constitutes Tibet's borders. The Chinese only accept the term Tibet for the western and central areas, the area which is now called the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). This area was directly ruled by the Lhasa government when the Chinese invaded in 1950. But Tibetan exiles have been demanding a Greater Tibet which includes political Tibet in modern times (TAR) as well as ethnic Tibetan areas east of TAR, most of which Tibet had lost in the eighteenth century. These areas, earlier known as Amdo and Kham, are now scattered among parts of Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Qinghai, Yunnan and Gansu. The March 2008 anti-government protests, which started in Lhasa, soon spread among the ethnic Tibetan areas in these provinces.

Experts say there is no document in which the Tibetan people or their government explicitly recognizes Chinese sovereignty before the invasion of 1950. But Robert Barnett a Tibet specialist at Columbia University, says the importance of this argument lies not in its role in the legal debate, but in what it indicates in terms of the political realities on the ground. "The fact is that most Tibetans seem to have experienced themselves and their land as distinct from China," he says.

Conflict with China

Since China's invasion, Barnett says, "China's policies towards the Tibetans can perhaps best be described as a mix of brutality and concession." The first Tibetan uprising of 1959 resulted in the flight of the Dalai Lama and about 80,000 Tibetans. During these years thousands of Tibetans were allegedly executed, imprisoned, or starved to death in prison camps. So far no Chinese official has publicly acknowledged these atrocities. This period also included a policy of induced national famines that resulted from tenets of the so-called Great Leap Forward, when Beijing set up communes in agricultural and pastoral areas. The Cultural Revolution, the next phase of Mao's revolutionary politics, followed in 1966 and continued in effect until 1979 in Tibet. During these years, all religious activities were prohibited and the monastic system in Tibet was dismantled. The campaign included an attempt to eradicate the ethnic minority's culture and distinctive identity as a people.

Deng Xiaoping's rise to power in China in 1978 brought forth a new initiative to resolve the Tibet question. Besides reaching out to the Dalai Lama in exile in India, the Chinese authorities also initiated a more conciliatory ethnic and economic development policy. Tibetans were encouraged to revitalize their culture and religion. Infrastructure was developed to help Tibet grow. But pro-independence protests in Tibet that started in 1987 led to the declaration of martial law in the region in 1989. After martial law was lifted in May 1990, Chinese authorities adopted a more hard-line policy with stricter security measures, curtailing religious and cultural freedoms. At the same time, a program of rapid economic development was adopted which included much resented incentives encouraging an influx of non-Tibetans, mostly Han Chinese, into Tibet. This, Beijing hopes, will result in a new generation of Tibetans who will be less influenced by religion and consider being part of China in their interest, wrote Tibet expert Melvyn C. Goldstein in *Foreign Affairs* in 1998. "Even if such an orientation does not develop, the new policy will so radically change the demographic composition of Tibet and the nature of the economy that Beijing's control over Tibet will not be weakened."

Government-in-exile in India

When the Dalai Lama sought exile in Dharamsala in northern India in 1959, India arguably became a key player in the conflict. India now is home to about 120,000 Tibetans, the world's largest Tibetan community outside of Tibet. But since 1952, India has always regarded Tibet as an integral part of China and does not encourage overt criticism of China by Tibetans in exile. Sumit Ganguly, a professor of political science at Indiana University, is openly critical of the Indian policy. "If India is indeed a liberal democracy," he says, "it must be willing to speak out about gross Chinese human rights violations."

Ganguly believes India's administration can exert pressure on China by allowing Indian Tibetans to demonstrate peacefully without interference, and by treating the Dalai Lama as a head of state instead of a spiritual leader. But there are many Indian analysts who believe otherwise. "There is interest on both sides, very deep interest, to see that what is happening is not allowed to upset the apple cart — the present momentum of India-China relations" says Mira Sinha Bhattacharjee, former director of the Institute of Chinese Studies in New Delhi. Relations between India and China, long fraught with resentments including a short border war in 1962, recently have warmed. China became India's biggest trading partner in 2007. The two countries have also seen a thaw in diplomatic relations.

The United States and the West

Experts say U.S. policy has done little to help resolve the Tibet issue. According to A. Tom Grunfeld, a professor of history at Empire State College, Washington's policy is inherently contradictory. "While officially recognizing Tibet as part of China," he writes, "the U.S. Congress and White House unofficially encourage the campaign for independence."

Goldstein writes Washington has been opportunistic in its dealings (PDF) with Tibet. During the Cold War in the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) covertly funded and armed Tibetan guerilla forces to fight against communist China. But even during this period of covert support, Washington's official position on Tibet did not change. It continued to recognize it as a part of China. CIA's covert funding stopped in 1971 as U.S. interest in Tibet waned due to warmer relations with China. But pressure from the Tibet lobby complicated the policy environment, argues Grunfeld. In the 1980s, Tibetans in exile launched a new strategic initiative with an aim to secure increased political support from the United States and the West to exert pressure on China.

An important element in this new strategy was visits and speeches by the Dalai Lama in the West. In September 1987, the Dalai Lama spoke before the Congressional Human Rights Caucus in Washington. The following June, he made another important address at the European Parliament in Strasbourg. For the first time publicly, he laid out a willingness to accept something less than independence for Tibet. Calling for genuine autonomy for Tibet within the framework of China, the Dalai Lama proposed that Tibet have full control over its domestic affairs but that China could remain responsible for Tibet's defense and foreign affairs. He reiterated this "middle-way approach" in a 2001 address to the European parliament. The Tibet issue has also won popular sympathy in the west including interest of Hollywood actors like Richard Gere who actively lobby for the Tibetan cause. But the success of the international campaign for Tibet has bolstered hard-liners within the Chinese government, experts say, thereby worsening conditions for the Tibetan people.

A Difficult Solution

Tibet is very important to China's sense of nationhood, says CFR's China expert Adam Segal "There is a fear that if Tibet gets independence, Uighurs and Taiwan will want independence." Segal notes that Chinese authorities have frequently suggested that they are just waiting for the Dalai Lama to die, expecting Tibetan nationalism to disappear after his death, but says this may be a miscalculation. "I think the more radical Tibetans would direct the movement for independence after Dalai Lama's death."

Experts agree that unless there is political reform within China, the resolution of the Tibetan question remains bleak. "The historical question was never unsolvable," says Barnett. "It would not have been a problem necessarily if China had been able to develop policies for Tibet that were acceptable to most Tibetans."



Tibet's Legal Right to Autonomy

Paul Harris

May 2008

Barrister in Hong Kong and founding chairman of the Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor. This essay is adapted from an article originally commissioned and approved by the magazine of the Hong Kong Law Society, and then rejected as too sensitive after an extraordinary meeting of the society's editorial board.

The Chinese government claims Tibet as an "inalienable" part of its territory, and anyone who questions this is subject to vitriolic attacks by the official Chinese media. If they are themselves Chinese and live in China, they are "splittists" and liable to be imprisoned. Those from outside China are "anti-China" and "interfering in China's internal affairs."

However, to the Tibetans and most people in the world outside China who are familiar with Tibet's situation, this is an international problem crying out for a mediated solution. Therefore one must start with how international law might support Tibetans' rights to self-determination.

Nobody disputes that the Tibetans are a distinct people with their own language and culture, who form a large majority of the population of Tibet. Moreover, Tibet is controlled by the Chinese government by means of military occupation for the benefit of the Chinese state. Tibet is a country "under foreign military occupation, and its people are subject to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation" within the meaning of the United Nations Resolutions on Colonial Peoples and on Friendly Relations. The severity of the repression the Tibetans have undergone, combined with the threadbare nature of China's territorial claim to Tibet, mean that if the universal right of peoples to self-determination has any meaning, it must extend to Tibet.

Self-determination

By the time the U.N. was set up after World War II, it was generally recognized that peoples had the right of

self-determination. Article 1.2 of the United Nations Charter states that the purposes of the United Nations include the development of friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of self-determination of peoples. It can therefore be said that all states which have become members of the U.N. by ratifying the United Nations Charter—including China—have accepted the principle of respect for the self-determination of peoples.

The United Nations Charter was followed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The rights in the Universal Declaration were elaborated in two more detailed international covenants which, unlike the Declaration itself, are treaties intended to have legal force. Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states: “All peoples have the right to self determination. By virtue of that right they may freely determine their political status.” The ICCPR has been ratified by 161 of 192 United Nations member countries. Five other countries, including China, have signed but not ratified. A nation which is a signatory of a international treaty, such as the ICCPR, is obliged under international law to “refrain from acts which would defeat the purpose and object of the treaty.” China is therefore bound, both by its adherence to United Nations Charter and by its signature of the ICCPR, to respect the principle of self-determination of peoples.

However, there was no consensus about what the right to self-determination meant when it was included in the ICCPR. Western countries were generally reluctant to include it, but felt obliged to do so in response to the aspirations of recently independent countries to end European colonialism in those places where it still existed.

Since the ICCPR came into effect in 1976 there has been widespread concern that if the right to self determination in Article 1 is applied literally, it would lead to the break-up of many existing states. This applies particularly to Africa, whose national boundaries are mostly colonial-era constructs, but also to numerous other states with ethnic minority populations who form a majority in particular regions. A consensus emerged that the right to self-determination for the purposes of ICCPR Article 1 applies only to entire populations living in independent states, entire populations of territories yet to receive independence and territories under foreign military occupation.

This is a restrictive definition which excludes numerous groups who would in ordinary language be regarded as “peoples.” It gives no encouragement to some peoples with a long history of struggle for independence, such as the Kurds.

China’s present control over Tibet dates from 1950 when the People’s Liberation Army invaded Tibet and defeated the Tibetan Army at Chamdo. China claims that Tibet was already part of China when it invaded, based on a claim to sovereignty over Tibet by the Qing imperial dynasty dating from the 18th century. More recently China has claimed that its rule over Tibet can be traced to the rule of Tibet by the Mongols—known in China as the Yuan dynasty.

There are at least three major historical difficulties with China’s claim. Firstly, it is doubtful whether the relationship between the Qing and the Yuan on the one hand, and Tibetans on the other, was really one of sovereign and subjects. The Kangxi Emperor occupied Tibet in 1720. After his death in 1722 this occupation continued under his successor the Yongzheng Emperor until 1728, and there were further Chinese invasions in 1750 and 1792. However, after the end of the occupation in 1728, and after each of the later invasions, the Chinese armies withdrew and Tibet had virtually complete independence in practice.

Secondly, neither dynasty made Tibet a part of metropolitan China. If it was a political relationship at all, it was

one of dependency—what today we call a colonial relationship. It is therefore a basis for concluding that Tibet is a colony and so entitled to self-determination.

Thirdly, and most importantly, there was no relationship—either similar to that between Tibet and the Qing dynasty, or similar to the modern concept of sovereignty—between Tibet and the Chinese Republic, which succeeded the Qing dynasty in 1911. In 1912 the 13th Dalai Lama made a formal declaration of Tibetan independence. Although the Chinese Republic responded by laying claim to Tibet, it never exercised any control over it, save for certain far eastern regions where there had always been an ill-defined borderland. Tibet was entirely independent of foreign control between 1911 and 1950.

Even if China's historical claim was much stronger than it is, this would not provide a justification for invasion of an independent country. Most countries were at one time under alien rule. In 1911 Ireland was under British rule, as it had been for centuries, Finland was ruled by Russia and Korea was ruled by Japan. The setting up of the United Nations was expressly intended to prevent the kind of aggressive wars, based on spurious or doubtful claims to historical rule or cultural identity, pursued by both Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan.

China has frequently attempted to justify its invasion on the basis that Tibetan society was feudal and backward, and that China therefore brought liberation to the Tibetan peasantry from feudal domination. Scholars agree that the pre-1950 Tibetan regime was backward. One aspect of its backwardness was its failure to appoint ambassadors to other countries or to apply to join the United Nations until invasion by China was imminent. However this failure was not due to lack of independence but due to the absence of a clear sense of the need for a modern state to maintain relations with other states.

At the risk of stating the obvious, the fact that a country is backward cannot justify invading it. Backwardness was often advanced as a justification for 19th century colonialism, what Rudyard Kipling called “The White Man's burden” when he encouraged the United States to colonize the Philippines. The fact that China relies on the “backwardness” argument to support its occupation of Tibet is a further indication of a classic colonial occupation.

One month after China invaded Tibet on Oct. 7, 1950, the Tibetan government appealed for help to the U.N. No assistance was forthcoming, and Tibetan forces were easily overwhelmed by the Chinese, with the bulk of the Tibetan Army surrendering at Chamdo. After the surrender the Chinese Government embarked on what would now be called a “charm offensive” in Tibet. Tibetans were given money by People's Liberation Army representatives, and encouraged to accept Chinese occupation on the understanding that their traditional way of life would be unchanged and that Tibet would enjoy a high degree of autonomy.

In 1951, China and representatives of the Dalai Lama signed the “17 point agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet.” It provides that “the Tibetan people have the right of exercising national regional autonomy under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government” (Article 3); that “the Central People's Government will not alter the existing political system in Tibet” (Article 4), and “will not alter the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama” (Article 4).

These autonomy provisions were never observed. The Chinese Communist Party rules Tibet, as it rules China, through a centralized party organization, whereby each organ of government is shadowed by an organ of the party. These party organs are accountable only to the Chinese Communist Party headquarters in Beijing. In Tibet the new Chinese authorities insisted on taking all important decisions and interfered on an

increasing scale with the daily life of Tibetans. In response to the harshness of Chinese rule, the Tibetans rose in revolt in 1958. The revolt was easily crushed by China, and in 1959 the 14th Dalai Lama and some 80,000 other Tibetans fled into exile in India.

The severity of Chinese repression in Tibet since that date is well-documented. There is severe repression of Tibetan Buddhism, which in 1997 was labeled as a “foreign culture.” Virtually all classes in secondary and higher education are taught in Chinese, not Tibetan, resulting in a high drop-out rate among Tibetans. Urban development has generally benefited Chinese immigrants, large numbers of whom have moved to Tibet and now comprise about 12% of the population. Tibetans are routinely detained for long periods without charge or sentenced to long prison sentences for peacefully advocating independence or maintaining links with the Dalai Lama. Torture and ill-treatment in detention is widespread. Freedom of expression is severely restricted. Peaceful political demonstrations are invariably broken up and their participants arrested. Tibetan culture is treated as inferior to Chinese culture, and most key posts in the government and the economy are held by Chinese. Those few Tibetans who are able to enter Chinese government service do so at the cost of alienation from their own people and culture. Tibet’s environment and natural resources are ruthlessly exploited in the interests of China. Overall the situation bears marked similarities in all these respects to the situation of Algeria under the French or of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan under Soviet Russian rule.

Tibet’s status has been given renewed topicality by the recent independence of Kosovo. The recognition of Kosovo would seem to extend the right of self-determination beyond the traditional colonial or foreign occupation situation. Kosovo was never a colony, and the Serbian Army had withdrawn long before the independence issue was determined. The only coherent legal basis for recognizing the exercise of self-determination by the Kosovo people in the form of an independent state is that, prior to that independence and while under Serbian rule, the Kosovar Albanians were subject to “alien subjugation, domination and exploitation.”

If Kosovo has a right to self-determination, the right of Tibet is infinitely stronger. The catalogue of gross oppression, the second class citizen status of Tibetans under Chinese rule, and the identity of Tibet as a country are all much clearer than in Kosovo’s case.

Autonomy and independence

Self-determination need not mean independence. In many situations, autonomy within a larger nation state offers the best of both worlds, combining the benefits of being part of a large state in terms of defense, foreign relations and economic opportunity, with preservation of local laws, customs and culture from outside interference. Hong Kong is a good example.

The Dalai Lama has repeatedly said that he favors autonomy for Tibet within China, provided that it is meaningful autonomy. Such is his authority with the Tibetan people that they would probably support autonomy in any referendum in which he expressed support for it. However unless there is a change in Chinese government thinking, real autonomy does not appear to be on offer. This is shown by the continuing aggressive denunciation and misrepresentation of the Dalai Lama by Chinese official spokespersons.

Unless real autonomy is offered, self-determination in Tibet is bound to mean independence. China may hold down the Tibetans by force for a long time, but, as the example of Ukraine and Russia shows, even hundreds of years of repression is unlikely to extinguish the longing for self-determination among what are, incontrovertibly, a people.

Newsweek

Tibet through Chinese Eyes

Kishore Mahbubani

May 05, 2008

Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore and the author of "The New Asian Hemisphere"

The recent crisis over the Olympic torch and Tibet represent an epic clash: not just between Tibetans and Beijing, but between a self-congratulatory Western worldview and the very different vision of a billion-plus Chinese. Until Western leaders start trying to understand the Chinese perspective, friction is likely to grow, and the victims will include the Tibetans themselves—the very people Western leaders say they want to protect.

According to the current U.S. and European narrative, the popular protests in Tibet and elsewhere were entirely justified. The demonstrators pushed a moral cause: to free the poor Tibetans from an oppressive communist government. And the European leaders who decided to boycott the Olympics' opening ceremonies, like Germany's Angela Merkel, deserved nothing but praise for their courageous stance.

The Chinese view could not be more different. Before describing it, however, it is vital to dispel a major Western misconception. Many Americans and Europeans think that China's furious reaction to the protests—a reaction that has now inspired a massive boycott of Western goods and businesses in China—has been the result of media manipulation and information control by Beijing. If only the Chinese public had access to real facts, Westerners think, their attitudes would be different. This is a huge mistake. The reality is that some of the strongest anger toward the West at the moment is coming from liberal Western-educated Chinese intellectuals who have access to accurate information. China today enjoys the most competent governance it's ever had, and its elites are intelligent, well educated and sophisticated—the exact opposite of the “goons and thugs” described by CNN's Jack Cafferty.

The Chinese are so angry because virtually all of them believe that the Western protests have had little to do with human rights, Tibet or Darfur. Instead, the Chinese think, the West's real motivation is to deny China the triumph it deserves for its enormous successes. According to this view, Westerners cannot stomach the thought that China is poised to hold the best Olympics ever. Such a spectacle would vividly demonstrate how power has shifted from West to East. This would be intolerable, and thus Americans and Europeans are dead set on finding some way to disrupt the Games—and if Tibet or Darfur won't suffice, they'll find some other method. As several Western-educated Chinese friends have whispered to me, “Kishore, this is pure racism. The West cannot bear the thought of China's succeeding.”

Chinese skepticism about the Western commitment to human rights is well founded. Indeed, there is something ironic about those who have committed genocide against American Indians or Australian Aborigines now castigating China on Tibet. Furthermore, Guantánamo—which Amnesty International has described as “the

gulag of our times”—plus Abu Ghraib and European complicity in Washington’s extraordinary rendition program have badly damaged the West’s credibility and legitimacy.

Most Chinese also believe that Tibetans have received special treatment from Beijing. After the disastrous Cultural Revolution, in which all Chinese suffered, Deng Xiaoping adopted a more pragmatic approach to the region. Ruined religious sites were repaired, monasteries were reopened, new monks were allowed to join orders and the Tibetan language was permitted to be used more extensively than before. Chinese leaders believe that China has exercised sovereignty over Tibet for 700 years now, ever since the Yuan dynasty—one reason the “Free Tibet” slogan angers them so much. Then there’s the recent territorial disintegration of the Soviet Union and memories of how the West seized Chinese territory in the 19th century: still more reasons why Chinese suspicions run deep

What really frustrates Beijing is the West’s apparent lack of comprehension of China’s aims for the Olympics. In 2005, World Bank head Robert Zoellick called on China to become a “responsible stakeholder.” The Beijing Olympics were meant to symbolize China’s willingness to do just that, and the Chinese expected their efforts to be welcomed enthusiastically. But now most Western leaders seem intent on slamming the door in Beijing’s face instead. The tragedy is that this will only stoke angry Chinese nationalism, which has already begun to surface. A fire-breathing Chinese dragon will clamp down on Tibet even harder than the current government has, which would serve no one’s interests. The West’s failure to recognize this fact demonstrates a serious failure of long-term strategic thinking.

If Europe’s leaders really want to show political courage, they should attend the Olympics’ opening ceremonies. Doing so would encourage China to open up further and engage the world. Over time, this will liberalize Chinese society and even lead to greater political and cultural autonomy for the Tibetans. So far, only one major Western leader has shown the requisite courage and foresight: George W. Bush. It is hoped numerous leaders from other continents will join him in Beijing. When that happens, it will only underscore Europe’s growing irrelevance: a tragedy that Europeans are bringing upon themselves.

YALE GLOBAL ONLINE

China’s hard-line policy towards Tibet creates more problems than it solves. Beijing’s recent crackdown on Tibetan protesters has attracted condemnation from around the world, but did nothing to address the underlying problems in Tibet itself. If Beijing is serious about securing Tibet’s long-term future as part of China, it needs to put aside its past enmity towards the Dalai Lama – and Michael Davis, law professor at Chinese University of Hong Kong, offers a strategy for China to pursue. Only by acknowledging that the human-rights issue cannot be separated from the country’s unity and negotiating with the Dalai Lama will Beijing achieve the goal that both Beijing and the Dalai Lama claim to share: an autonomous Tibet that remains part of China while retaining its own Tibetan identity. – YaleGlobal

For Talks to Succeed, China Must Admit to a Tibet Problem

Michael C. Davis

May 16, 2008

Professor of law at Chinese University of Hong Kong. For further analysis of this issue see Michael C. Davis, "Establishing a Workable Autonomy in Tibet, Human Rights Quarterly

China should view the Dalai Lama as a partner, not an opponent

HONG KONG: Under the glare of the Beijing Olympics, China's failed policies in Tibet have moved to the front pages of newspapers worldwide. Under international pressure Chinese officials resumed their dialogue with the representatives of the Dalai Lama on May 4. The parties agreed to continue the ongoing dialogue that began in 2002 and included six rounds of meetings. Chinese officials emphasized that they'll approach these renewed meetings with "great patience and sincerity." Chinese officials have long promised that anything can be discussed if the Dalai Lama stops seeking independence, which the Dalai Lama has repeatedly said is not his goal. The talks can succeed if China proves its promised sincerity by first acknowledging that there is a Tibet issue and the Dalai Lama's representatives are the best interlocutors to resolve it.

The depth of Tibetan anger about Chinese policies, expressed during March demonstrations, shocked the world. Tibetans who took to the streets faced certain Chinese crackdown. The world was disappointed by the toxic Chinese official reaction and by the rather nationalistic popular demonstrations that followed the Olympic torch around the world. High Officials labeled the Nobel Peace Laureate Dalai Lama a "wolf in monk's robes," a "serial liar" and a "slave owner." Is sincerity likely in the face of this continuing vilification?

For the Chinese, hosting the Olympics symbolizes China's emergence on the world stage as a responsible great power, and indeed, people expect a high standard of behavior from an Olympic host. While the Tibet issue is generally seen as posing a serious challenge to Beijing, it can also offer an opportunity for China to prove its sincerity and responsible behavior. China has historically set up obstacles to successful dialogue on Tibet, yet can now take steps to demonstrate its sincerity.

First, China should accept at face value the Dalai Lama's repeated statements that he does not seek independence. A protracted discussion about the "true intentions" of this highly respected Tibetan leader serves no purpose. Both sides have long conceded that Tibet should remain part of China and that it should be autonomous. The Dalai Lama has proposed "genuine autonomy" under what he calls the "middle way" approach. The Chinese side has not offered a response through six years of protracted discussions.

Second, China should drop its attacks on traditional Tibetan governance. The Chinese side has long accused the Dalai Lama of formerly running a feudal theocracy, as if this is what awaits an autonomous Tibet. Surely China was equally feudal before the founding of the People's Republic of China. But these accusations are irrelevant since the Dalai Lama proposes to step down from any temporal role and to establish democracy, human rights and the rule of law under his "middle way" approach.

Third, in these discussions China should avoid its oft-stated historical title claim. Chinese officials are fond of arguing that Tibet has for centuries been "an inseparable part of China" as a strategy to deny that there is a Tibet issue. If independence is off the table and the goal is autonomy, this claim is irrelevant. Even if such

history were taken seriously, it is not clear it would work in China's favor. China's claim of 700 years of imperial patronage offers little that would justify a modern state's claims to territory. Of more relevance to autonomy, China never directly governed Tibet until the PRC took over in the 1950s. It is uncontested that through these long centuries Tibet remained largely Tibetan. Chinese census data reports that the Tibet Autonomous Region, the largest Tibetan area, is still 92 percent inhabited by ethnic Tibetans today.

Fourth, China should accept that the Tibet issue is one of human rights rather than insist that the only issue is national unity. A superficial examination of reality refutes this claim. In the heady days after the Chinese revolution, the Chinese failed to live up to their obligations, imposing repressive radical leftist policies. China's former party leader, Hu Yaobang acknowledged this in the 1980s and apologized. Human-rights violations continue, and the Dalai Lama recently asked China to end repressive policies, release prisoners, open Tibet up to the media and stop the "patriotic reeducation" campaign which denigrates traditional Tibetan culture.

Fifth, China should avoid using its own constitution as an obstacle to settlement. On its face, the Chinese constitution allows greater flexibility than Chinese officials concede. The Chinese Constitution allows for two forms of autonomy, including the type of national minority autonomy now applied to Tibetan areas and the more substantial autonomy reflected in the creation of special administrative regions, as now applies in Hong Kong. The former, applied nationwide to implement Communist Party control in designated minority areas, offers little genuine autonomy and does not seem to allow the level of autonomy proposed under the "middle way" approach. Chinese officials have argued that the Hong Kong model cannot be applied in Tibet because Tibet has not involved the regaining of sovereignty and has already undergone democratic and socialist reform. Tibetan efforts to push forward their genuine autonomy model under either approach have proven futile. Even a superficial look at Tibetan history refutes the claim that sovereignty has never been an issue and that Tibet has always been an inseparable part of China. The failure of democratic and socialist reform in Tibet and nationwide is equally obvious.

Sixth, China should stop viewing genuine autonomy as "splittist." Officially the country has 55 national minorities. Would other minorities demand the same treatment or would Tibetans use autonomy as a platform for independence? That Tibetans have long been considered distinctive among these groups is evident in the 1951 "17-point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet," the only agreement of its kind entered with a so-called national minority. Practically, only one other minority in China poses such risk – the Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang. Because of assimilation or location, other minorities are not likely to seek independence. A peaceful and fair Tibetan settlement, in fact, would offer a positive example for the Uighurs.

Seventh, China should abandon the constant suspicion of foreign interference. China is too big and powerful a nation to wallow in this victim mentality. In an age of ethnic wars and terror, the treatment of a domestic indigenous minority is increasingly a matter of international concern. With the September 2007 passage of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, standards for the autonomy of indigenous ethnic groups have become more concrete. While China claims not to have any indigenous peoples, these standards may still provide a useful guideline. Tibetans are clearly distinctive as to their land, history, language, culture, religion, customs and traditions.

Eighth, China should simply enter into negotiations with the Tibetan side over the boundary of an autonomous Tibet. Historically dividing Tibet into 13 areas, China has objected to the Tibetan request that all contiguous Tibetan-populated areas be united into one autonomous Tibet. Tibetans argue that since they are not seeking independence this should not be a problem. Compromise that considers current ethnic distribution and the protection of Tibetan culture should be possible.

The suggested actions offer a yardstick by which China can prove its sincerity and win the confidence of the Tibetan people and the world. The Dalai Lama is the rare negotiating partner with the capability to win over even the more skeptical segment of the Tibetan community. China should take advantage of this opportunity.

‘GORKHAPATRA DAILY’

People in Nepal should support Tibet

Ang Dawa Sherpa

May 18, 2008

Elected Legislature, CPM, Nepal. She is also the section editor of the regional language of the newspaper.

We, the people of Himalayan region of Nepal such as Sherpa, Tamang, Lhopa, Yolmo, Manang, Dolpo, Lemi, Mukumpa, Gyasumdo, Tsumpa etc and Tibetans share a common religion, culture, spiritual teacher, costumes, habits, language, ultimate wish for enlightenment and seeking refuge in the same three gems. Although geographically and politically we are citizens of different countries but we all belong to the same Bhotia race and no body can separate us.

It is a human nature that whenever your neighbor is in trouble, especially when they belong to the same religion and culture, we have to extend all possible help. We have generally seen that even animals, if attacked by a different kind, collectively resists by shouting, by biting, by crying and by all means in order to try to release from the enemy. We are supposed to be better than animals.

Today we have seen and heard about the situation in Tibet. I cannot say whether people who voluntarily pretend not to see and hear are being bribed/ paid or not. But if they blindly choose to jump down the cliff in full sense, I have nothing to say.

We all must know very clearly that the Tibetans are not demanding independence. They are not demanding the boycott of Olympic. Clearly, they are demanding equal rights as a nationality, freedom of religion, freedom to promote Buddhism, repair of old monasteries and building new monasteries, freedom to join monasteries for the spread of Buddhism. In short, what our Buddhist brothers and sisters are demanding are freedom of religion and culture. We have seen that how in Lhasa they are brutally suppressed for demanding these basic human rights.

Survival of Tibetan Buddhism will depend on the survival of rich cultural heritage of Tibet. It is absolutely necessary to strive for the preservation of this rich cultural heritage of Tibet, which is based on Buddhist philosophy, if we are aspiring for peace and stability in China, Tibet, India, our country Nepal and the world. This does not mean that we love a particular country and support and that we hate another country and protest. This is related to our own country's peace and security.

According to international laws, people have the right to protest peacefully for basic human rights. It is unfortunate that in Tibet peaceful protesters have been gunned down, brutally suppressed, movements restricted causing difficulty to earn their livelihood, monasteries locked and thousand of monks and nuns arrested and beaten brutally. This is a real emergency situation.

Therefore, we all Nepali Buddhist citizens of Himalayan region must stand in solidarity with the Tibetans in their difficult times. It is our social responsibility to help our neighbor when in difficulty. Although we may not

be able to help physically and financially, yet even expression of our concerns and our solidarity will contribute towards relieving some pain and suffering.

I would like to say further that recently our Nepali police have been arresting revered Buddhist monks, nuns and people with similar faces from Soyambhu, Boudha and Jwalakhel areas in the name of stopping Tibetan protesters. Even the people of Himalayan region of this country are subjected to this lawlessness act of the Nepali police which is causing immense harassments to earn their daily livelihood. The police proudly and easily announce that they have instructions from the government. Such statements are causing great harm to the image of Nepal internationally. It is time that we must express our concerns seriously.

We do understand that once a protester reaches the venue there must be a prescribed law in dealing with them according to the nature of protest. However, if the police continue to arrest monks and nuns randomly while walking on the streets then an unprecedented sectarian violence like in India and many parts of world may erupt in our country. In such eventuality the concerned authorities in the government including the police will be held fully responsible.

Finally, I sum up by asking this vital question to all the Nepali citizens of Himalayan region who shares the same religion and culture with Tibetans, Isn't this time that we all stand up with the Tibetans in solidarity?

May Buddha and Buddhasatvas give us the wisdom and the courage to distinguish between good and evil and promote the positive virtues of cause and action? May there be peace and stability in Nepal the birthplace of Buddha and the world.



Heart of the matter

Laurence Brahm

June 05, 2008

This article is reproduced from South China Morning Post. The writer is a political economist, author, filmmaker and founder of Shambhala.

In Chinese, the word “crisis”, weiji, is made up of two characters: wei (meaning “danger”) and ji (meaning “opportunity”). So, in each crisis, one simultaneously faces both danger and opportunity. China faces a crisis over Tibet; its fundamental policies towards this region and its people are being called into question. This has also accentuated the sharp juxtaposition between Chinese pragmatic, dialectic materialism and Tibetan idealistic, abstract spirituality. While these two opposite world views may clash, there is no reason for them to be in conflict. Actually, both are needed.

The Tibetan crisis has brought both danger and opportunity. As with all things in China, one extreme must give way to another before a “middle” way can be reached. For all its hypergrowth, China now faces its worst crises since the commencement of its reforms: open and violent ethnic conflict; deadly children’s epidemics; Olympic protests; and the worst earthquake in a generation. What may be next?

Meanwhile, the Dalai Lama is sitting in Dharamsala waiting for China to signal a breakthrough. That is precisely

what China needs at this time - the world's most prominent morally persuasive leader, the Dalai Lama, to give it a spiritual lift in this sensitive and difficult Olympic year.

Breaking the ice, Beijing did invite the Dalai Lama to send a personal envoy for talks and, on May 4, his envoys, Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltzen, met two Chinese vice-ministers in Shenzhen. Both sides agreed to disagree on many circumstances and events. But it is better to disagree than not talk at all. Then, on May 9, Lodi Gyari gave a press conference in Dharamsala, outlining some ideas: open Tibet to journalists and tourists to restore economic normality, and stop criticising, moreover demonising, the Dalai Lama. From this we can see an emerging road map of what needs to be done by both sides. If Beijing can loosen its tight security grip over the Tibetan regions, people will feel more relaxed, tourism will revive business fortunes, and income will return.

Moreover, if it can stop criticising the Dalai Lama as part of its “patriotic education”, China can begin winning the hearts and minds of Tibetans. In turn, if the Dalai Lama can use his influence to tone down global protests before the Beijing Olympics, he will be giving the Chinese government the support it so badly craves. Surprisingly, on May 22, foreign journalists reiterated the Dalai Lama's recent statement in London that he would be willing to attend the Olympic opening ceremony in Beijing if China issued an invitation.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman responded: “If the Dalai Lama wants to do something meaningful for the motherland and the Olympics, then he must take practical action.” That was followed by a list of rhetorical, separatist accusations. Regardless, this was still quite a new tone.

The Sichuan earthquake struck a region that is home to many ethnic groups, notably Han and Tibetans. It is a propitious time for the Dalai Lama to once again publicly offer prayers to all. While he has already prayed for those killed and left devastated by the quake, his message of compassion was not heard by Beijing. If the meaning of his sincerity was understood in Beijing, that might change the atmosphere.

If China can respond with even a cordial meeting between President Hu Jintao and the Dalai Lama, this would give China more face than any gold medals its athletes could win, while giving hope to Tibetans and the world. It would change history. The entire environment would improve, paving the way for a more grounded policy rethink. Yes, Tibet needs the economic means that China can provide - specifically education, medical facilities and equal opportunities.

China, in turn, needs what its own policies of material hypergrowth have failed to deliver - spirituality and a new-age national ideology. The Olympics can stir nationalism, but it cannot deliver either of those.

Articles by Chinese Intellectuals

INTERNATIONAL
Herald Tribune
THE GLOBAL EDITION OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

No time to close our eyes

Wei Jingsheng

March 17, 2008

A prominent Chinese dissident who spent 18 years in Chinese prisons, now lives in exile in Washington

If there has been any lesson in all my years as an activist for democracy and human rights in China, it is that only international pressure coupled with internal pressure will yield solid results.

Now, as what the Dalai Lama has called “cultural genocide” goes on in Tibet, it is wholly unacceptable that the International Olympic Committee refuses to take a stand against the Beijing government crackdown.

Far more than Steven Spielberg, who quit his advisory role for the Olympic celebration because of the Chinese government’s unwillingness to pressure the Sudan government over the genocide in Darfur, the Olympic committee has a special obligation to act.

Improvements in China’s human rights were a quid pro quo for granting the games to Beijing. So how can the committee proceed as if nothing has happened when blood is flowing in the streets of Lhasa?

If the committee does not act to put pressure on Beijing, as would be consistent with its obligations, it risks this Olympics being remembered the way the 1936 Games in Berlin were.

Already, the “spirit of the Olympics” in Beijing has become associated with genocide by two of the world’s top spiritual and cultural leaders. Indeed, if the IOC and the rest of the world community does not pressure Beijing to stop the crackdown and improve human rights now, a boycott of the games will be seen as widely justified.

The Tibetans have long chafed under the oppression of the Chinese Communist Party. In 1959, when the Dalai Lama fled to exile in India, the protest of the Tibetans was harshly suppressed in a crackdown that lasted more than a year. Almost a million Tibetans reportedly lost their lives.

In 1989, the current Chinese party leader, Hu Jintao, then in his capacity as a provincial leader, suppressed yet another revolt in Lhasa by bringing in the military to kill people in the streets.

And, of course, the whole world knows about Tiananmen Square in that same year. Clearly, without human rights and the rule of law, neither Tibetans nor the majority Han Chinese are safe from persecution at the whim of the Communist authorities.

The old lies and propaganda don't work anymore. In the past, many Han Chinese didn't know about the sufferings of the Tibetans. Now thanks to travel, tourism, cell phones and the Internet, the majority Han understand that the Tibetan struggle against tyranny is the same as their own.

Of course, the Chinese authorities have expressed their willingness to resolve the Tibetan issue through negotiation. But, just as with the case of Darfur, there is no sincerity behind this peaceful face unless international pressure is brought to bear.

The IOC's unwillingness to pressure Beijing at this moment is tragic because these Olympics are a turning point in modern Chinese history.

By acting as host to the Olympics, the Communist Party's rulers have turned their palace into a global glass house. They can no longer show the smiling face of the "peaceful rise" of China to the world and the stern face of brutal suppression at home.

The Olympics will force China to show its true face. Only international pressure, by the IOC and others, will make sure it is the face we all want to see.

China Digital Times

Tibet: Her Pain, My Shame

Tang Danhong

March 26, 2008

Poet and documentary filmmaker from Chengdu, Sichuan. She has made several documentaries in and about Tibet since the 1990s. She wrote the following essay this week and published it on her own blog (hosted outside of China), partially translated by CDT:

For more than a decade, I have frequently entered Tibet and often stayed there for a long time, traveling or working. I have met all kinds of Tibetans, from youngsters on the streets, folk artists, herders on the grasslands, voodoo doctors in mountain villages, to ordinary cadres in state agencies, street vendors in Lhasa, monks and cleaners in monasteries, artists and writers... Among those Tibetans I have met, some frankly told me that Tibet was a small country several decades ago, with its own government, religious leader, currency and military; some stay silent, with a sense of helplessness, and avoid talking with me, a Han Chinese, afraid this is an awkward subject. Some think that no matter what happened, it is an historical fact that Chinese and Tibetans had a long history of exchanges with each other, and the relationship must be carefully maintained by both sides. Some were angered by the railway project, and by those roads named "Beijing Road," "Jiangsu Road," "Sichuan-Tibet road," but others accept them happily. Some say that you (Han Chinese) invest millions in Tibet but you also got what you wanted and even more; some say you invest in the development but you also destroy, and what you destroy is exactly what we treasure.... What I want to say here is that no matter how different these people are, they have one thing in common: They have their own view of history, and a profound religious belief.

For anyone who has been to Tibet, he/she should sense such a religious belief among Tibetans. As the matter of fact, many are shocked by it. Such attitude has carried on throughout their history, and is expressed in their

daily lives. This is a very different value, especially compared with those Han Chinese who have no beliefs, and now worship the cult of money. This religious belief is what Tibetans care about the most. They project this belief onto the Dalai Lama as a religious persona.

For anyone who has been to Tibet, it should not be strange to see the “common Tibetan scene”: Is there any Tibetan who does not worship him (the Dalai Lama)? Is there any Tibetan unwilling to hang up his photo in his own shrine? (These photos are smuggled back in from abroad, secretly copied and enlarged, not like those Mao portraits printed by the government that we Han Chinese once had to hang up.) Is there any Tibetan who wants to verbally disrespect the Dalai Lama? Is there a Tibetan who does not want to see him? Is there any Tibetan who does not want to present Hada [white welcoming scarf] to him?

Other than those voices that the rulers want to hear, have we ever heard the Tibetans’ full, real voices? Those Han Chinese who have been in Tibet, now matter if one is a high official, government cadre, tourist or businessman, have we all heard their real voices, which are silenced, but are still echoing everywhere?

Is this the real reason that all monasteries in Tibet are forbidden from hanging up the Dalai Lama’s picture? Is this the reason that all work units have officials to check in every household and to punish those who hang up his picture? Is this the reason that the government has people to stop those believers on the pilgrimage path on every religious celebration day? Is this the reason for the policy barring government employees from having their children study in Dharamsala; otherwise, they will be fired and their house will be taken away? Is this the reason that at all sensitive time, government officials will hold meetings in monasteries, to force monks to promise to “support the Party’s leadership” and “Have no relations with the Dalai splitist cliques”? Is this the reason we refuse to negotiate, and constantly use dehumanizing language to humiliate him? After all, isn’t this the very reason to reinforce the “common Tibetan scene,” making this symbol of nationality more holy?

Why can’t we sit down with the Dalai Lama who has abandoned calls for “independence” and now advocates a “middle way,” and negotiate with him with sincerity, to achieve “stability” and “unity” through him?

Because the power difference of the two sides is too big. We are too many people, too powerful: Other than guns and money, and cultural destruction and spiritual rape, we do not know other ways to achieve “harmony.”

This group of people who believe in Buddhism because they believe in cause and effect and transmigration of souls, oppose anger and hatred, developed a philosophy that Han nationalists will never be able to understand. Several Tibetan monk friends, just the “troublemaker monk” type that are in the monasteries explained to me their view on “independence”: “actually, we may well have been ethnic Han in a previous incarnation, and in our next incarnation we might well become ethnic Han. And some ethnic Han in a previous life may well have been Tibetan or may become Tibetan in their next life. Foreigners or Chinese, men or women, lovers and enemies, the souls of the world transmigrate without end. As the wheel turns, states arise and die, so what need is there for independence?” This kind of religion, this kind of believer, can one ever think that they would be easy to control? Yet there is a paradox here: if one wants them to give up the desire for independence, then one must respect and protect their religion.

Not long ago, I read some posts by some radical Tibetans on an online forum about Tibet. These posts were roughly saying: “We do not believe in Buddhism, we do not believe in karma. But we have not forgotten that we are Tibetan. We have not forgotten our homeland. Now we believe the philosophy of you Han Chinese: Power comes out of the barrel of a gun! Why did you Han Chinese come to Tibet? Tibet belongs to Tibetans. Get out of Tibet!”

Of course behind those posts, there are an overwhelming number of posts from Han “patriots.” Almost without exception, those replies are full of words such as “Kill them!” “Wipe them out!” “Wash them with blood!” “Dalai is a liar!” — those “passions” of the worshippers of violence that we are all so familiar with.

When I read these posts, I feel so sad. So this is karma.

In the last week, after I put down the phone which cannot reach anyone on the the other end, when I face the information black hole caused by internet blockage, even I believe what Xinhua has said — strangely I do believe this part: There were Tibetans who set fire to shops and killed those poor innocent Han Chinese who were just there to make a living. And I still feel extremely sad. Since when were such seeds planted? During the gunshots of 1959? During the massive destruction during the Cultural Revolution? During the crackdown in 1989? During the time we put their Panchen Lama under house arrest and replaced him with our own puppet? During those countless political meetings and confessions in the monasteries? Or during the time when a seventeen-year-old nun was shot on the magnificent snowy mountain, just because she wanted to see the Dalai Lama?

Or during numerous moments which seem trivial but which make me ashamed: I was ashamed when I saw Tibetans buy live fish from Han fish sellers on the street and put them back in the Lhasa river; I was ashamed when I saw more and more Han beggars on the streets of Lhasa—even beggars know it is easier to beg in Tibet than in Han areas; I felt ashamed when I saw those ugly scars from mines on the sacred mountains in the morning sunlight; I felt ashamed when I heard the Han Chinese elite complain that the Chinese government has invested so many millions of yuan, that economic policy favors Tibetans, and that the GDP has grown so fast, so, “What else do these Tibetans want?”

Why can’t you understand that people have different values? While you believe in brainwashing, the power of a gun and of money, there is a spiritual belief that has been in their minds for thousands of years and cannot be washed away. When you claim yourselves as “saviors of Tibetans from slavery society,” I am ashamed for your arrogance and your delusions. When military police with their guns pass by me in the streets of Lhasa, and each time I am there I can see row upon row of military bases... yes, I, a Han Chinese, feel ashamed.

.....

What makes me feel most ashamed is the “patriotic majority”: You people are the decedents of Qinshi Huangdi who knows only conquering by killing; you are the chauvinists who rule the weak by force; you are those cowards who hide behind guns and call for shooting the victims; you suffer from Stockholm Syndrome; you are the blood-thirsty crazies of an “advanced” culture of Slow slicing and Castration. You are the sick minds waving the “patriotic” flag. I look down on you. If you are Han Chinese, I am ashamed to be one of you.

Lhasa is on fire, and there are gunshots in Tibetan areas in Sichuan and Qinghai. Even I believe this — actually, I do believe this part of the facts. In those “patriotic” posts which shout “Kill them!” “Wipe them out!” “Wash them with blood!” “Dalai is a liar!” I saw the mirror image of those Tibetan radicals. Let me say that you people (“patriotic youth”) are Han chauvinists who destroy thousands of years of friendship between Han and Tibetan people; you are the main contributors to the hatred between ethnic groups. You people do not really “highly support” the authority; rather, you people are in effect “highly supporting” “Tibetan independence.”

Tibet is disappearing. The spirit which makes her beautiful and peaceful is disappearing. She is becoming us, becoming what she does not want to become. What other choice does she have when facing the anxiety of

being alienated? To hold onto her tradition and culture, and revive her ancient civilization? Or to commit suicidal acts which will only add to Han nationalists' bloody, shameful glory?

Yes, I love Tibet. I am a Han Chinese who loves Tibet, regardless of whether she is a nation or a province, as long as she is so voluntarily. Personally, I would like to have them (Tibetans) belong to the same big family with me. I embrace relationships which come self-selected and on equal footing, not controlled or forced, both between peoples and nations. I have no interest in feeling "powerful," to make others fear you and be forced to obey you, both between people and between nations, because what's behind such a "feeling" is truly disgusting. I have left her (Tibet) several years ago, and missing her has become part of my daily life. I long to go back to Tibet, as a welcomed Han Chinese, to enjoy a real friendship as equal neighbor or a family member.

ljworld.com

Lawrence resident sees Tibetan divide on Olympics

Ling-Lung Chen

March 30, 2008

A fellow of the Citizen Journalism Academy, co-sponsored by The World Company and Kansas University's William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications. She is working with the Tibetan teachers in Dharamsala, India, the home of the exiled Dalai Lama, where she has witnessed demonstrations and candlelight vigils.

Freedom is the common goal for all Tibetans. But a free Tibet may not be, at least not in the short term.

Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people and Nobel laureate, believes that full autonomy, not independence, is the only realistic, peaceful solution for the Tibet issue. Not all Tibetans agree with him. In spite of their unshakable respect and affection for him, they openly express their own views. It is democracy in action.

Whether to boycott the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games is another divisive issue among Tibetans around the globe. This month, as demonstrators continue to pour into the streets or go on hunger strike in Dharamsala, New Delhi, London and elsewhere around the world to protest against Chinese brutality in Tibet, the debate over this issue intensifies.

The Dalai Lama maintains that China should host the Olympic Games. He stands firm on this position even after Wen Jiabao, the premier of the People's Republic of China, called him a liar and accused him of being the "criminal mastermind of recent unrest in Lhasa."

Elliot Sperling of Indiana University and some other analysts have concluded that the Dalai Lama is politically naive. Is he, as some have claimed, committing political suicide? Is the Chinese government playing him like a piano?

Why does the Dalai Lama support the Beijing Olympics? Or rather, with the Dalai Lama being the Dalai Lama, we should ask: How could he NOT support the Beijing Olympics?

Tibetans believe that the Dalai Lama is the manifestation of Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion. It is called “great compassion” because it is not limited to any particular individual or group of people. It applies equally to all living beings, without exception, Mao Zedong included. Mao was probably the greatest enemy of Tibetans and Tibetan culture. It was under Mao that more than 6,000 monasteries in Tibet were destroyed. It was under Mao that thousands of Tibetan monks and nuns were killed. Furthermore, it was also under Mao that as many as 3 million Chinese died in the violence in the Cultural Revolution (1965-1975). Boycotting the 2008 Olympics would be a direct and powerful statement against Chinese brutality and violations of human rights in Tibet and elsewhere.

On March 24, three days after Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House, and her Congressional delegation left McLeod Ganj in Northern India, the Dalai Lama was asked by reporters again in New Delhi about his position on the Beijing Olympics. Despite mounting pressures, he did not alter his position. “There are 1 billion Chinese!” he exclaimed. He holds that he cannot punish 1 billion innocent Chinese for the actions of their government. Moreover, the 2008 Games has become a fervent nationalistic issue for the Chinese people.

The politics of the Tibet issue will go on long after the Olympics have ended. Even if the international community boycotts the Beijing Olympics, as a result, will the Tibet situation really improve or will it become even more confrontational? Will the boycott become another propaganda tool for the PRC government to wage another “People’s War” against Tibetans in the Post-Olympic period of history?

However, activists believe that if they don’t bring the Tibet issue to the world stage of the Beijing Olympic Games, the flame of hope for “Free Tibet” or a “free Tibet” will diminish. It is a life and death battle.

The Dalai Lama cannot give up on humanity. The Olympics dilemma for the Tibetans is, in fact, a dilemma for all humanity. China wants both the Olympics Games and a Tibet under its control. Tibet wants both freedom and compassion.

China remains firm that the Olympic torch will pass through Tibet and up Mount Everest as planned, in spite of disruptions during the lighting ceremony in Greece on March 24. The image of a black flag depicting the five Olympic rings as handcuffs unfurled next to Liu Qi, president of the Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee, was seen, just for a few fleeting seconds, on TV screens across the world. This mere fact suggests that Tibetans and supporters of “Free Tibet” and/or a “free Tibet,” will not give up, at least not easily. As Beijing begins to countdown on the 2008 Games, so do Tibetan activists around the globe. There are still some 130 more days to go until it opens in Beijing on Aug. 8. The Olympic dilemma will continue to unfold right in front of our eyes. Where do you stand?

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

The Cry of Tibet

By Wang Lixiong

March 31, 2008

A Beijing-based writer, was the organizer of the recent 12-point statement on Tibet by 30 Chinese intellectuals

The recent troubles in Tibet are a replay of events that happened two decades ago. On Oct. 1, 1987, Buddhist monks were demonstrating peacefully at the Barkor — the famous market street around the central

cathedral in Lhasa — when police began beating and arresting them. To ordinary Tibetans, who view monks as “treasures,” the sight was intolerable — not only in itself, but because it stimulated unpleasant memories that Tibetan Buddhists had been harboring for years.

A few angry young men then began throwing stones at the Barkor police station. More and more joined, and then they set fires, overturned cars and began shouting “Independence for Tibet!” This is almost exactly what we saw in Lhasa two weeks ago.

The fundamental cause of these recurrent events is a painful dilemma that lives inside the minds of Tibetan monks. When the Chinese government demands that they denounce their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, monks are forced to choose between obeying, which violates their deepest spiritual convictions, and resisting, which can lead to loss of government registry and physical expulsion from monasteries.

From time to time monks have used peaceful demonstrations to express their anguish. When they have done this, an insecure Chinese government, bent on “annihilating unstable elements” in the “emergent stage,” has reacted with violent repression. This, in turn, triggers violence from Tibetans.

In recent decades, the Chinese government’s policy for pacifying Tibet has been to combine the allure of economic development on the one hand with the threat of force on the other. Experience has shown that this approach does not work.

The most efficient route to peace in Tibet is through the Dalai Lama, whose return to Tibet would immediately alleviate a number of problems. Much of the current ill will, after all, is a direct result of the Chinese government’s verbal attacks on the Dalai Lama, who, for Tibetan monks, has an incomparably lofty status. To demand that monks denounce him is about as practical as asking that they vilify their own parents.

It should be no surprise that beatings of monks and closings of monasteries naturally stimulate civil unrest, or that civil unrest, spawned in this way, can turn violent.

Why aren’t these simple truths more obvious? Phuntsog Wanggyal, a Tibetan now retired in Beijing who for years was a leading Communist official in Tibet, has observed that a doctrine of “anti-splittism” has taken root among Chinese government officials who deal with religion and minority affairs, both in central offices in Beijing and in Tibet. Having invested their careers in anti-splittism, these people cannot admit that the idea is mistaken without losing face and, they fear, losing their own power and position as well.

Their ready-made tag for everything that goes wrong is “hostile foreign forces” — an enemy that justifies any kind of harsh or unreasoning repression. When repeated endlessly, anti-splittism, although originally vacuous, does take on a kind of solidity. Careers are made in it, and challenging it becomes impossible.

I am a supporter of the Dalai Lama’s “middle way,” meaning autonomy for Tibet in all matters except foreign affairs and national defense. This arrangement eventually would have to mean that Tibetan people select their own leaders — and that would be a major change from the way things are now. Tibet is called an “autonomous region,” but in fact its officials are all named by Beijing, and are all tightly focused on their own personal interests and the interests of the Communist Party. Tibetans can clearly see the difference between this kind of government and self-rule, and there is no way that they will support bogus autonomy.

It follows — even if this is a tall order — that the ultimate solution to the Tibet problem must be democratization of the Chinese political system itself. True autonomy cannot come any other way.

It is time for the Chinese government to take stock of why its long-term strategy in Tibet has not worked, and to try something else. The old problems remain, and they are sure to continue, perhaps in places like the “Uighur Autonomous Region” of Xinjiang, if a more sensible approach is not attempted.



Tibetan unrest, Chinese lens

Wenran Jiang

April 07, 2008

An associate professor of political science at the University of Alberta, Canada, and acting director of the China Institute (CIUA)

An emerging cybernationalism connecting Chinese people at home and abroad is an important force in shaping perceptions of the Tibetan and anti-Olympic protests, says Wenran Jiang.

Since riots and unrest broke out in March 2008 in Tibet and the surrounding provinces, emotions have been running high on all sides. On one side, critics of the Chinese government charge that what happened was the result of a resistance movement by the Tibetan people against Beijing’s longstanding repressive policies in the region. They call for international attention to the Tibetan situation, organise protests along the routes of the global torch-relay leading up to the Beijing Olympic Games (as in London on 6 April), and push for a boycott of the 8-24 August event.

On the other side, the authorities in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) claim that the Dalai Lama and his separatist forces masterminded this unrest, which turned into violent rampages, looting, burning and killing of innocent civilians. Beijing insists that law and order be restored and rioters be punished; it will not tolerate further violence, and has indicated it will do whatever is necessary to fight Tibetan independence, even at the cost of damaging its reputation as Olympic host.

It is not surprising that such a bitter confrontation has extended beyond China’s borders. Tibetans in exile took to the streets in India and Nepal. In major European and north American cities, well coordinated demonstrations have been staged in front of Chinese embassies and consulates as the unrest was spreading in Tibet and neighbouring provinces.

For their part, many in the Chinese diaspora have exhibited a strong sense of nationalism that opposes any Tibetan independence movement and resents any form of boycott of the Beijing Olympics. What is surprising, however, is the very high level of mobilisation of Chinese public opinion (including in the blogosphere) that is not as much a response to Beijing’s rallying calls for national unity as it is a strong reaction to what many Chinese perceive as the one-sided reporting of the Tibetan unrest by the western press. Chinese people everywhere want their side of the Tibet story told.

In 1989, Chinese people all over the world, including scholars and students from the mainland, protested against the government crackdown on students in Tiananmen Square. This time, by contrast, Chinese people

- in European and Canadian cities, for example - have taken to the streets in support of Beijing.

While many overseas Chinese believe that Beijing's extremely harsh and hostile words against the Dalai Lama are neither effective nor well received by the western public, they still see western news media as being excessively anti-China. (Many noted errors in the reporting, including the mislabelling of photos of Indian and Nepalese police confronting demonstrating monks as Chinese soldiers cracking down in Tibet.)

They have fed their observations back to Chinese cyberspace instantly, in a process that is part of an emerging synergy of cybernationalism connecting many Chinese at home and abroad.

A Chinese lens

But what has propelled this strident nationalism? Why has the disdain for Tibet independence and its ambitions become so highly charged and emotional? Hasn't the Chinese Communist Party simply been using nationalism as a tool of legitimacy for staying in power? Aren't most Chinese brainwashed since childhood?

Three points can be made in response to these questions. First, there is an overwhelming sense among the Han Chinese (the country's predominant ethnic group) that Tibet has been part of China for centuries. True, Chinese control over Tibet was weakened when China was invaded by western powers in the 19th and 20th centuries. But the Han have not forgotten the earlier ties. In addition, Central Intelligence Agency-funded Tibetan covert operations against China in most of the cold-war years are well documented, the memory of which stirs further resentment.

As such, historical memory ensures that in the minds of the Han, any perceived attempts to separate Tibet from China will be linked with the humiliation the Chinese suffered at the hands of western and Japanese imperialism. So, to most Chinese, a potential boycott of the Beijing Olympics is viewed as a denial of China's moment in restoring its respectable position in the world.

Second, many Chinese deeply believe to this day that the People's Republic of China has lifted Tibet's people out of a medieval serfdom that was degrading to the majority of Tibetans, especially women.

The attitude, felt particularly by communist and socialist idealists, is not unlike that felt some years ago by many in north America who saw the spread of their European culture as bringing civilisation to the native people. Just as aboriginal children were put in boarding schools and forced to learn English, many Chinese thought they were giving emancipation to an oppressed people under the name of socialism and progress.

While not denying Chinese policy failures in Tibet over the years, many reacted angrily to the recent charge that they were committing "cultural genocide" in Tibet. They argue that what China did in Tibet is generous in contrast to how native Indians were treated in North America over 400 years.

Third, many Han Chinese also think Tibetans should appreciate the tremendously high level of financial and other support that has been poured into their region, both from the central government, in the form of subsidies, and from the market adventurers who have invested heavily in the area in recent years. To the Han, such economic development is seen as eliminating poverty and bringing prosperity to the ordinary people of Tibet, as in the rest of China.

That's why the shocking images of angry young Tibetans violently attacking Han Chinese and other non-Tibetans made Chinese people recoil in indignation. (Even though they might note that while the gap between the rich and poor in the rest of China is mostly a distribution issue, the division line between the haves and have-nots appears to be drawn along ethnic lines in Tibet.)

Taken together, these historically-conditioned perceptions will continue to shape events. A failure to understand the deep-rooted emotions on both sides will both hinder potential solutions to the complex issues involved, and may risk generating further divisions.

The Epoch Times

Survival or Death of the Tibetan Race

Chen Weijian

April 14, 2008

The recent protests in Tibet and the resulting bloody suppression by the communist regime once again present the world with the survival or death of the Tibetan race.

The massacre happening this time is not accidental. There are historical and practical reasons.

The historical reason was Tibet's resistance against the despotic rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in March 1959. The CCP military announced the liberation of Tibet on October 21, 1951. However, on March 21, 1959, the Tibetans finally realized that the communist Chinese entering Tibet this second time were different from the Chinese entering Tibet in the past. They not only wanted to rule Tibet in name, but also wanted to rule Tibet in reality—reforming Tibet in the communist way with blood and violence. Resentment or resistance would be met with killing. Thus, all regions in Tibet spontaneously formed uprisings against the CCP.

When the Tibetans learned that the CCP invited the Dalai Lama to watch a show alone in a CCP military camp, they feared that the Dalai Lama might be kidnapped. So they organized themselves and surrounded the Norbu Lingka (the summer residence of the Dalai Lama) to prevent the CCP from taking the Dalai Lama away. Afterwards, the Dalai Lama had to flee his home, because the CCP's artillery was targeting Norbu Lingka.

Soon thereafter, the CCP completely unveiled its pretense of “peacefully liberating Tibet and allowing Tibetan autonomy.” It started an oppression and massacre unprecedented in Tibetan history, which killed nearly one million Tibetans.

After the massacre, the Tibetan government-in-exile led by the Dalai Lama, was established in Dharamsala, India. The Dalai Lama started a democratic reform of the government-in-exile, organized by monks and nobles. Dharamsala established the first National Assembly on September 2, 1960. It started a democratic system of directly electing the premier of the government by all citizens in 2001.

Meanwhile, the government also built temples, Buddhist colleges, Tibetan language schools, and a Tibetan medical hospital to preserve Tibetan religions and culture.

Tibet Under CCP Rule

After the CCP takeover, it almost destroyed Tibetan culture, their system of combining politics and religion, and Tibet's plantation economy in the name of socialist transformation. The CCP established a so-called Tibet

Autonomous Region, under the absolute rule of the CCP, and the People's commune-economy. At the end of the Cultural Revolution, Tibet was raped and razed. The Tibetan religion and culture were recovered to some degree after the Culture Revolution, but it was under the tight control of the CCP. The so-called "Establishing a New Tibet" is aimed to thoroughly change Tibet.

Destroying the Spirit

The most painful issue for Tibetans is the destruction of their faith. Statistics recorded that Tibet had 2,711 temples and 114,103 monks and nuns before 1959. Six years later, only 553 temples and 6,913 monks and nuns existed. After the catastrophe of Cultural Revolution, only 80 plus temples and about 7,000 monks and nuns were left.

While the CCP is destroying temples, it also carries out the physical and spiritual destruction of monks. It forces them to participate in political study, to betray and expose one another, to insult the Dalai Lama, and even forces monks and nuns to have sex. Disgruntled monks are jailed. The numbers of monks who have been imprisoned or killed are countless. For monks who believe in reincarnation, the CCP's destruction of their spirits is far more unbearable than that of their bodies.

The writer of *Fire Under the Snow*, Paden Gyatso, said, "What I suffered most in the 33-year prison term was not hunger, being shackled, being viciously beaten, and undergoing electric shocks, but the torture of betraying and exposing others. The CCP wanted us to show our loyalty to it, so it asked everyone to report others. It forces people to sue and even frame their friends a great deal. I feared most the meetings for denouncing. If I lie, I will harm others; if I don't lie, I'll harm myself. Once one starts to harm one person, he'll go on harming another 100 people. Although being beaten is awful, the wounds can heal. However, once one loses his spirit, he will lose it forever."

Of course, the most difficult thing to accept for the monks is that the CCP forced them to slander and desecrate pictures of the Dalai Lama, who is respected as a living Buddha for Tibetans, especially for monks. For them, it is already the greatest crime to disrespect him, not to mention the desecration of the Dalai Lama.

Slandering the Dalai Lama means going to hell for them. Therefore, except for a very small number, monks will not do what the CCP asks them to do, regardless of the promised benefits provided to them since they believe in reincarnation.

In Tibet, a true monk will be classified as a political criminal by the CCP, and will either be chased out of the temple or put in jail. Thus, those Tibetan monks who are still in the temples either have betrayed their consciences or painfully suffered from their loss of conscience and committed crimes. These monks eventually kill themselves as those in the recent protests.

Chinese Modernization

Under the CCP's policy of building a new Tibet, the central government directly invested 50.441 billion yuan (approximately \$7 billion) in Tibet from 1994 to 2004. Zhu Weiquan, vice minister of the United Front Work Department, said that in the "15th National Development Project" the central government's project investment, financial subsidies, and aid from all nations to Tibet was more than 72.2 billion yuan (approximately \$10.5 billion).

After the Third Tibet Issue Working Meeting, there are 62 national projects and 716 items for Tibet. However,

most of them are not what the Tibetans need. The support from Hunan Province, for example, was a 12-meter-high statue of Mao Zedong. This does not support Tibet, but is a great insult for the Tibetans.

Another instance is that one of the 10 great construction projects in Tibet was a stadium, but the Tibetans do not use it. There are still some other development projects, such as golf courses, which have nothing to do with the Tibetans. These tall Western style buildings are not compatible with Tibet's traditional culture. They have changed Tibet's original architectural style.

Presently, the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, is a city quite like other cities in China. There are many modern buildings. On the streets of Lhasa, it's hard to take a picture limited to only Tibetan-style buildings.

While building modern buildings in Tibet, the CCP sends many Chinese to Tibet under the name of developing Tibet, which changes the ethnic population of Tibet. According to an estimate by the Tibetan government-in-exile, about 7.5 million Chinese immigrants have moved to Tibet, in addition to the police and army stationed in Tibet. Therefore, presently, the population of Chinese exceeds that of the Tibetan people.

Moreover, the population growth of Tibetans remains a major problem for the Tibetan race. Many Tibetans are monks and nuns, so the Tibetan population cannot grow. Under such a special cultural background, it should not carry out the one-child policy of birth control as in China.

Although the CCP allows them to have a two-child policy on the surface, in reality, it enforces the one-child policy in Tibet as in China. With the development of the economy, more and more Chinese enter Tibet to make a living. According to the Tibet Autonomous Region Government, about 50,000 people immigrate to Tibet every year.

After the Qinghai-Tibet Railway was launched, more Chinese entered Tibet to find jobs. And there are many tourists. According to the estimate from the tourism sector, about 2.5 million people will travel in Tibet every year after the launching of the railway. The number of tourists is almost equal to the population of Tibet.

Communist Party Culture Assimilation

Since the CCP has ruled Tibet, although Chinese-Tibetan bilingual education was initially implemented in school (Tibetan ceased to be used in school during the Cultural Revolution), since 1997, in name of facilitating Tibetans' future life and work, Chinese was made the main language in schools. The remaining Tibetan curriculum has been primarily Chinese culture and communist party culture related, such as the contribution of Princess Wencheng (a Chinese princess who married Gongtsen Gampo of Tibet in 635) to Tibet and Jiang Zemin's "Three Represents" (communist ideology), and other such material.

Chinese has been used in higher-education classes because the Tibetan language does not lend itself to modern technology. In area of TV, broadcasts, newspapers, magazines, and others, Chinese is also the main language while Tibetan is secondary. Tibetan has been only started to be used in TV programs since 1999, and is limited to 12 hours daily.

In summary, in real life Tibetans are unable to find work without knowing Chinese. All businesses and state enterprises in Tibet require the Chinese language. Tibetan employees have to be able to speak Chinese to communicate with others. In the Lhasa protest this time, many participating Tibetans are ones who are unable to find work. The unemployment rate in Tibet is as high as 40 percent. In such a reality, many Tibetans only learn Chinese and not Tibetan at all.

When large numbers of Chinese rushed into Tibet, Chinese customs were brought into Tibet and affected Tibetan culture. The Tibetans also started smoking and drinking, wearing fashionable clothes, going to karaoke, pursuing a modern lifestyle, and frequenting brothels, which became numerous in Lhasa. Even more ridiculous is that erotic fashion shows have been conducted in front of the Potala Palace.

Even the peaceful Buddha sect is unable to avoid the wave of worldly customs. Regardless of how splendid the restored temples are, they are temples in name only, and function as tourist sites. They have become the CCP's cash cows that require expensive entry fees. The famous Jokhang Monastery used to be a place for Tibetans to worship Buddha, and many Tibetans traveled far kowtowing and kneeling all the way to Lhasa, but they could not enter the temple because of the high ticket prices.

Ecological Devastation

The CCP's construction in Tibet is actually ruining Tibet. While destroying Tibetan culture, it has also caused a major calamity to Tibet's ecology. The Tibet's Government-in-exile researchers have discovered that the CCP's exploitation of Tibet's rich mining resources and the large emigration of Chinese have caused the vulnerable Tibetan ecological system to go out of balance.

Half of the more than 4,000 lakes in Tibet have dried up. The water level of the famous Anto Lake Qinghai is continuously declining, the Huang carp in Qinghai have died in large number, prairies became deserts, large forests were cut down, all causing serious damage to Tibet's ecological environment.

According to the statistics from 1955 to 1985, the timber shipped inland from the Aba Tibetan autonomous prefecture alone can, if laid out end to end, circle the globe 13 times.

Mining has also led to serious destruction of the environment. Since working the Nima county gold mine, 47,025 acres of high quality pasture was destroyed, and the mining vehicles have destroyed 25,500 acres of pasture. In a recent CCP report, the potential value of iron ore in Golmud City alone may be as much as 4.7 billion Yuan (about \$670 million). Mining will begin in 2008, and the estimated annual production will reach five million tons.

Since the Qinghai-Tibet railway opened, the CCP will further expand the mining of Tibet's natural resources, further damaging the ecology. Although the CCP has provided much aid to Tibet in recent years, it also has taken a lot of Tibetan resources and destroyed a lot of Tibet's way of life. It is impossible to quantify the damage it has caused.

The Sacrilege of the Holy Land, People, Nationality, Culture and Gods

The destruction of nature is not just a problem of the way of life to Tibetans, but it is a problem damaging its soul. To a Tibetan, all things have souls and a myriad of things have gods. Land, water, grass, and forest all are gods, and these gods have all protected Tibetans. Once humans destroy the land, water, grass, and forest, people lose the protection of these gods and suffer disasters.

This kind of God of Nature thinking is a very important part of Tibetan culture. Therefore, regardless of how much economic gain is had, to Tibetans who value the next life more than the present world, it portends a disaster of being extinguished by heaven. It is just like the disaster of digging up an ancestral grave to Chinese people.

Tibet has already been changed beyond recognition by the CCP. Tibet, as a culture and a way of life, is

comprehensively vanishing. Tibetan monks are the foundation of Tibetan culture. The public may not have a strong sense about the fading of the nation, but to the foundation of this culture, it is worse than death.

When monks are required to recite the scriptures under the “new discipline” to be loyal to the CCP and to oppose the Dalai Lama, as Buddhists, it is as if they have already died. After Sinicizing the education in Tibet, there is no reciting of scripture in temples anymore. When being used as scenic sites selling high-priced tickets for a huge profit, temples are no longer holy lands for salvation. When Tibet’s sacred mountains were exploited, Tibet lost the gods’ protection. Therefore, to a Tibetan monk, Tibet has come to the moment of life and death.

If there is no revolt, no struggle, Tibet will to vanish. Then, the Tibet that has high-rises is no longer their Tibet—the Tibet that has music and songs night after night and wanton luxurious living is not their Tibet. The Tibet that has rumbling trains is not their Tibet. The Tibet that has Chinese-speaking schools, TV, and radio stations is even more so not their Tibet.

Tibet’s nationality is unique in that all its people believe in Buddhism. They have a unique way of life. The world is changing. Tibet is changing, too. Just like the change of Dharamsala, it has changed from a society of a combined government and religion to a democratic society. But this is by their choice, a choice of progress.

The change that has happened in Tibet is not by the Tibetans’ own choice. It is a choice imposed upon them by the CCP. This change is a kind of massacre, a massacre of a nationality and a culture. If the CCP does not collapse, Tibet, as a culture, will disappear.

The Dalai Lama witnessed everything that has happened in Tibet under the tyranny of the CCP. He said with tears in his aged eyes that Tibet, as a unique culture, was going to vanish within 15 years. To a nationality, the vanishing of its culture is equivalent to death.

In today’s Tibet, it is no longer a question of how much human rights or how much culture can be preserved, but a question of life and death of a race. As a weak nationality, regardless how much its strength of compassion, regardless how strong its tenacious spirit, under the suppression of the cruelest despotic political power and the great-nation chauvinism instigated by the CCP, they are incapable of saving themselves.

No Hope Without Global Action

To enable Tibet to survive, they must rely on the international society’s conscience and justice and to rely on international society’s strong economic strength to force the CCP to launch peace talks with the Dalai Lama and to provide Tibet a unique autonomous status—only then, can Tibet be saved.

If the international community is concerned only with their own interests and does not care about the survival of a nationality, does not care about the vanishing of a compassionate Buddhist nationality from the world, does not care about the wisdom, compassion, and happiness brought to the world by the Dalai Lama, Tibet as a culture will vanish from this world forever.

To Tibet’s monks and people, the CCP is truly too powerful, and resistance is futile. To them, if they do not explode in silence, they are going to die in silence. Although today’s Tibetan protest is another desperate attempt that has no hope of success, it announces to the world that at a time when the Tibetan nationality is dying under the tyranny of the CCP, this nationality has not died silently, but its people have resisted with their flesh and blood. They yelled with their bloody weeping voices to the world!

History will remember these brave warriors’ fighting for the existence of their nationality, and will also remember

their desperation before the death of a nationality. During the life and death of Tibet's nationality, as a Chinese who carries this blame, we have no alternative but to fight the CCP tyranny side by side with Tibetans.

At the conclusion of this article, we pray for Heaven's mercy, not to allow Tibet, as a nationality to die under the despotic CCP regime.

The Washington Post

Caught in the Middle, Called a Traitor

Grace Wang

April 20, 2008

A freshman at Duke University. Scott Savitt, a visiting scholar in Duke's Chinese media studies program, assisted in writing this article

I study languages — Italian, French and German. And this summer — now that it looks as though I won't be able to go home to China — I'll take up Arabic. My goal is to master 10 languages, in addition to Chinese and English, by the time I'm 30.

I want to do this because I believe that language is the bridge to understanding. Take China and Tibet. If more Chinese learned the Tibetan language, and if Tibetans learned more about China, I'm convinced that our two peoples would understand one another better and we could overcome the current crisis between us peacefully. I feel that even more strongly after what happened here at Duke University a little more than a week ago.

Trying to mediate between Chinese and pro-Tibetan campus protesters, I was caught in the middle and vilified and threatened by the Chinese. After the protest, the intimidation continued online, and I began receiving threatening phone calls. Then it got worse — my parents in China were also threatened and forced to go into hiding. And I became persona non grata in my native country.

It has been a frightening and unsettling experience. But I'm determined to speak out, even in the face of threats and abuse. If I stay silent, then the same thing will happen to someone else someday.

So here's my story.

When I first arrived at Duke last August, I was afraid I wouldn't like it. It's in the small town of Durham, N.C., and I'm from Qingdao, a city of 4.3 million. But I eventually adjusted, and now I really love it. It's a diverse environment, with people from all over the world. Over Christmas break, all the American students went home, but that's too expensive for students from China. Since the dorms and the dining halls were closed, I was housed off-campus with four Tibetan classmates for more than three weeks.

I had never really met or talked to a Tibetan before, even though we're from the same country. Every day we cooked together, ate together, played chess and cards. And of course, we talked about our different experiences growing up on opposite sides of the People's Republic of China. It was eye-opening for me.

I'd long been interested in Tibet and had a romantic vision of the Land of Snows, but I'd never been there. Now I learned that the Tibetans have a different way of seeing the world. My classmates were Buddhist and had a strong faith, which inspired me to reflect on my own views about the meaning of life. I had been a

materialist, as all Chinese are taught to be, but now I could see that there's something more, that there's a spiritual side to life.

We talked a lot in those three weeks, and of course we spoke in Chinese. The Tibetan language isn't the language of instruction in the better secondary schools there and is in danger of disappearing. Tibetans must be educated in Mandarin Chinese to succeed in our extremely capitalistic culture. This made me sad, and made me want to learn their language as they had learned mine.

I was reminded of all this on the evening of April 9. As I left the cafeteria planning to head to the library to study, I saw people holding Tibetan and Chinese flags facing each other in the middle of the quad. I hadn't heard anything about a protest, so I was curious and went to have a look. I knew people in both groups, and I went back and forth between them, asking their views. It seemed silly to me that they were standing apart, not talking to each other. I know that this is often due to a language barrier, as many Chinese here are scientists and engineers and aren't confident of their English.

I thought I'd try to get the two groups together and initiate some dialogue, try to get everybody thinking from a broader perspective. That's what Lao Tzu, Sun Tzu and Confucius remind us to do. And I'd learned from my dad early on that disagreement is nothing to be afraid of. Unfortunately, there's a strong Chinese view nowadays that critical thinking and dissidence create problems, so everyone should just keep quiet and maintain harmony.

A lot has been made of the fact that I wrote the words "Free Tibet" on the back of the American organizer of the protest, who was someone I knew. But I did this at his request, and only after making him promise that he would talk to the Chinese group. I never dreamed how the Chinese would seize on this innocent action. The leaders of the two groups did at one point try to communicate, but the attempt wasn't very successful.

The Chinese protesters thought that, being Chinese, I should be on their side. The participants on the Tibet side were mostly Americans, who really don't have a good understanding of how complex the situation is. Truthfully, both sides were being quite closed-minded and refusing to consider the other's perspective. I thought I could help try to turn a shouting match into an exchange of ideas. So I stood in the middle and urged both sides to come together in peace and mutual respect. I believe that they have a lot in common and many more similarities than differences.

But the Chinese protesters — who were much more numerous, maybe 100 or more — got increasingly emotional and vocal and wouldn't let the other side speak. They pushed the small Tibetan group of just a dozen or so up against the Duke Chapel doors, yelling "Liars, liars, liars!" This upset me. It was so aggressive, and all Chinese know the moral injunction: Junzi dongkou, bu dongshou (The wise person uses his tongue, not his fists).

I was scared. But I believed that I had to try to promote mutual understanding. I went back and forth between the two groups, mostly talking to the Chinese in our language. I kept urging everyone to calm down, but it only seemed to make them angrier. Some young men in the Chinese group — those we call fen qing (angry youth) — started yelling and cursing at me.

What a lot of people don't know is that there were many on the Chinese side who supported me and were saying, "Let her talk." But they were drowned out by the loud minority who had really lost their cool.

Some people on the Chinese side started to insult me for speaking English and told me to speak Chinese only.

But the Americans didn't understand Chinese. It's strange to me that some Chinese seem to feel as though not speaking English is expressing a kind of national pride. But language is a tool, a way of thinking and communicating.

At the height of the protest, a group of Chinese men surrounded me, pointed at me and, referring to the young woman who led the 1989 student democracy protests in Tiananmen Square, said, "Remember Chai Ling? All Chinese want to burn her in oil, and you look like her." They said that I had mental problems and that I would go to hell. They asked me where I was from and what school I had attended. I told them. I had nothing to hide. But then it started to feel as though an angry mob was about to attack me. Finally, I left the protest with a police escort.

Back in my dorm room, I logged onto the Duke Chinese Students and Scholars Association (DCSSA) Web site and listserv to see what people were saying. Qian Fangzhou, an officer of DCSSA, was gloating, "We really showed them our colors!"

I posted a letter in response, explaining that I don't support Tibetan independence, as some accused me of, but that I do support Tibetan freedom, as well as Chinese freedom. All people should be free and have their basic rights protected, just as the Chinese constitution says. I hoped that the letter would spark some substantive discussion. But people just criticized and ridiculed me more.

The next morning, a storm was raging online. Photographs of me had been posted on the Internet with the words "Traitor to her country!" printed across my forehead. Then I saw something really alarming: Both my parents' citizen ID numbers had been posted. I was shocked, because this information could only have come from the Chinese police.

I saw detailed directions to my parents' home in China, accompanied by calls for people to go there and teach "this shameless dog" a lesson. It was then that I realized how serious this had become. My phone rang with callers making threats against my life. It was ironic: What I had tried so hard to prevent was precisely what had come to pass. And I was the target.

I talked to my mom the next morning, and she said that she and my dad were going into hiding because they were getting death threats, too. She told me that I shouldn't call them. Since then, short e-mail messages have been our only communication. The other day, I saw photos of our apartment online; a bucket of feces had been emptied on the doorstep. More recently I've heard that the windows have been smashed and obscene posters have been hung on the door. Also, I've been told that after convening an assembly to condemn me, my high school revoked my diploma and has reinforced patriotic education.

I understand why people are so emotional and angry; the events in Tibet have been tragic. But this crucifying of me is unacceptable. I believe that individual Chinese know this. It's when they fire each other up and act like a mob that things get so dangerous.

Now, Duke is providing me with police protection, and the attacks in Chinese cyberspace continue. But contrary to my detractors' expectations, I haven't shriveled up and slunk away. Instead, I've responded by publicizing this shameful incident, both to protect my parents and to get people to reflect on their behavior. I'm no longer afraid, and I'm determined to exercise my right to free speech.

Because language is the bridge to understanding.

China Digital Times

First Time I Feel Ashamed to be Han, and Lucky to Not Be a Party Member

April 22, 2008

The following blog post was signed as written by "a student from the Central University of Nationalities". Translated by CDT:

I've wanted to write something for a while in the wake of the latest developments in Tibetan regions. But after seeing press reports by media outlets from home and abroad, I don't know whom to believe in. I lost my judgment. I tried to start writing, but then couldn't continue because my feelings are too complex. This afternoon, I talked to a colleague again about this issue and the conversation escalated into a fight.

The colleague finally used a very "Chinese Communist" style to stop me from "venting angry words." Faced with irrationality, I zipped my mouth. I've worked with a variety of people, but I didn't imagine that there are people who have been brainwashed so much, and I started to realize this issue isn't a small matter! The key is, a lot of Han and some ethnic Tibetans with vested interests have become blind to the blue sky, white clouds, green mountains and water. Amidst the long history and mystical culture of Tibet, their brains are only thinking about how to commercialize these things. They don't know that many aspects of the Tibetan way of life, religion and custom, culture and values are gradually being dismantled. Neither do they know that the dignity of Tibetans is shedding tears, and many Tibetans are struggling... Looking at Tibet, I sometimes feel ashamed to be a Han. Since first coming to Tibet in 2006 I often think about these issues: What on earth does Tibet need, how should it develop and who does it need to lead that development? I have no power to resist anything, nor do I have the intention to resist, after all our motherland is slowly making progress and our party is gradually inching toward democracy. As an ethnic university graduate and a Han who now works in the Tibetan region, these topics have surrounded me every day of my working life. In a civilized world in the 21st Century, when something incredible happens in a certain area but many people around us (including Tibetans) yell out about a crackdown and mass killing, should we seriously reflect on ourselves: Why? I have picked an article by an alumni [of the Central University of Nationalities] below. As a member of the Chinese nation, no matter which ethnicity, we, the future of the country, shall rethink the whole issue! Those Who Throw Out Angry Rhetoric Please Apologize to Tibetan Compatriots What I write has no intention to be separatist or to damage ethnic solidarity.

I love my motherland, love my people and love all my compatriots. I only hope that in this huge family, we can truly love one another, understand and tolerate one another, and truly live a harmonious life. We always mistakenly believe that whatever we do is progressive, but we are repeatedly committing mistakes. While walking on the streets of Lhasa, I always have a subconscious sad feeling. In a sacred place like Lhasa, I can not find where I belong, and I've lost my direction. Jiangsu Road, Beijing Road, so on and so forth, these names pop up in front of my eyes. Roads named in Tibetan are few in number, and the city makes one feel like being in a mainland town. Children beggars swarm around me and when I see their aspiring eyes and the joy of getting some money, my heart bleeds, and language becomes pale. Occasionally, made-up ladies cozy up and wave toward me, wanting to say something but I understand they are not just saying hello to me. The whole sacred city is filled with aid construction. I am not saying this is not good, and Tibetan people very much

appreciate the help from other ethnic groups and the care from the central government. But those Hunan-aided and Shandong-financed post boards stand up high on the top of buildings, fearing that not enough people will recognize their generosity. But this philanthropic advertising is overstretched. Every ethnicity has its dignity, so imagine, will this hurt the feelings of the Tibetans? And the assistance buildings are not constructed based on Tibetan culture and ideas, but wild shapes and structures. Will Tibetans like these houses? Nowadays, there are so many prostitutes on the boulevards and small lanes; they number at least in the thousands. There was once a women's movement that put out a slogan that says "Sichuan women get out, husbands return home." Imagine how many people are engaged in prostitution! We cannot blame the Tibetan ethnicity, these are imports from the mainland. And their influence is so deep that it's unimaginable. Those colorful women fill the streets wide and narrow and beam their seductive eyes around the crowds, which is for sure a blasphemy on Lhasa's image. Still, we have no regret and, instead, have turned the sacred town into a setting of indulgence and satiating lust. Some even say that Tibetans are dark-colored and dirty. Yes, Tibetans are dark-skinned, but they have a red heart and pure belief. Look at us who believe ourselves to be light-colored.

We feel proud about our faces being covered with chemical compounds. Tibetans are not dirty, and their hearts are pure and kind. We always stress the importance of Mandarin. Indeed Chinese is important and it's our national official language. But in Lhasa and many Tibetan ethnic regions, there is a popular saying that goes, "Tibetan is a formality but Mandarin is the rice bowl." That's exactly as I see it—Many Tibetan students' work hard on Mandarin for their future, and, as a result, many forget their own language. Of course there are a lot of reasons for this, for example some schools don't have Tibetan language curriculum at all, and classes of mainland students are not allowed to speak Tibetan, etc. Language is the root of an ethnic group and to a great extent is a symbol that distinguishes one race from another. Without a language, an ethnic culture will also die along with it. On the other hand how many Han people understand Tibetan language and script? Which makes us feel deeply ashamed and sorry.

There are so many Tibetans who can fluently speak Mandarin. I don't know whether I should be happy or sad about this, but I feel there's a serious lack of understanding between the two ethnic groups. Han people have their own holidays and customs, so do the Tibetans. In Lhasa, along with more contact with other ethnic groups, many Tibetans started to celebrate Han holidays, such as dragon boat festival and tomb sweeping festival, etc. But few spend Tibetan holidays with Tibetans. Some say Han culture is so tolerant and so influential. But do you truly understand the Tibetan holidays? When some people talk about sky burial, they associate it with cruelty and horror. But have you ever thought about that when a dead body is incinerated it perishes and when it gets buried it becomes part of the soil, while heavenly burial benefits other animals and alleviates their hunger, thus protecting them. What a noble burial and selfless funeral is this. But it is regarded as barbarian, primitive, cruel. So when you talk about this please read up a little and understand more about it!

Many still stubbornly believe that rice is the best staple food. But when told that Tibetans eat Tsangba [roasted barley], their facial expression reflects shock, contempt, dismissal. It's ridiculous and stupid and ignorant because tsangba is actually a pure and unpolluted natural food. All these examples are beyond reason but they happen around us. Some only know that there are Tibetans in Tibet, but don't know that there are Tibetans in other provinces. Some only know there's a Lhasa in Tibet but don't know any other place there. But they still randomly say outrageous things about Tibet. Let's also talk about those cadres who assisted the development of Tibet. Were/are they really coming to help Tibet?

So many of them have returned to their home bases for promotions after a short stint in Tibet. I heard about a friend's uncle, who stayed in Tibet for less than four years and took 800,000 Yuan back to the mainland. There are many stories like this, going back home from Tibet to skyrocket in their career or buy villas, so on and so forth. Did they come to Tibet to work for the good of Tibetans? How much contribution did they make to Tibet? Where did the money go after the state earmarked it for Tibet? I don't even want to imagine, the more I think about it the more frightful it gets. Let me also talk about the inner land (*neidi*) classes for Tibetans. I don't know about other ethnic groups' *neidi* classes but I know quite a bit about the Tibetan ones. Everything they study is written in Mandarin and the history they learn is also Han history. What about Tibetan history?

As a Tibetan who doesn't know his/her own history, is he/she still a Tibetan? Of course there is reason for this but shall we consider their racial feelings and ethnic belonging? Many years later, many kids have made tremendous progress in Mandarin but their Tibetan level is still elementary. Let me also talk a bit about March 14. China's coverage of it has been indeed thorough and detailed. But some issues have been haunting me still. For instance, in the news, a lot of information was "according to reliable sources/materials." I don't know how reliable these pieces of information are. Where on earth are the sources? Why not tell us, the public? Videos on March 14 shown on the Internet are truly saddening. No matter which ethnic group, it's heart-wrenching. But let's look at the comments and our netizens, who speak about killing or exterminating in every sentence. Why are we so extremist? Why so partial? How about let's try not to preemptively judge certain people without getting the whole story?

No ethnic group is composed of all good people. Why not say things like that? Shall we also reflect upon our own behavior and our own mistakes? To kill all Tibetans, isn't it a little irresponsible? We did make efforts to develop solidarity and the growth of Han and Tibetan cultures. But we ignore the feelings and belief of Tibetan compatriots. We did give, but we didn't do it sincerely enough and not perfectly enough. Not only shall we give in terms of material, but also spiritual, support. We shall offer our help with an equal and caring attitude, not just to do cosmetic work.

Think about it: China has run Tibet for so many years and now we have this situation over there, there are so many things we should reflect on about ourselves. We cannot always think that we are always right and we are the best. For those who randomly say outrageous things, please apologize to our kind Tibetan compatriots. Only mutual understanding and trust can build up our truly harmonious society...



China remains a land of torture and repression

Shao Jiang

May 01, 2008

As the Olympic torch heads up Everest on the next phase of its troubled journey next week, it is almost certain to attract more protests as it gets closer to Tibet.

But peaceful demonstrations must go ahead: what's becoming clear is that the real opportunity to protest against the Chinese government's treatment of its people will be from outside the country. The authorities are gradually strangling dissent within China to ensure that the Games in August go off without any embarrassing protests.

The crackdown on human rights activists in China has intensified in the last nine months. It has never been easy for people to speak out about issues like political freedom, the death penalty, HIV/AIDS, land grabs, or the environment – I know this from personal experience – but if anything, things are getting worse.

Back in 1989 in Beijing I helped organise the pro-democracy protests in Tiananmen Square. We held public discussions around sensitive political issues. After the Tiananmen massacre, I was arrested and held in prison for 18 months, followed by repeated harassment and detention. But I was still one of the lucky ones.

Many of the participants were killed – their relatives built the network called the “Tiananmen Mothers”. Many are still in prison, among whom is Hu Shigen, a lecturer at Beijing Language Institute, who was sentenced to 20 years in prison in 1992 for commemoration of 4 June victims. I escaped in 1997 and now live in the UK, where I’m free to protest at China’s human rights record; a right I exercised, peacefully, when the Olympic torch came to London.

But the situation for those I left behind is quite different. An Amnesty report earlier this month spelled it out: “Much of the current wave of repression is occurring not in spite of the Olympics, but actually because of the Olympics”. Dissenters are targeted and silenced. Anyone making direct connections between human rights abuses and China’s hosting of the Olympics is treated particularly harshly.

Ye Guozhu is serving a four-year sentence after he applied for permission to hold a demonstration about forced evictions in Beijing. He has reportedly been tortured with electro-shock batons in prison. Wang Ling, his associate, had also campaigned publicly after she lost her property as a result of Olympic construction. She was recently thrown into a “Re-education through Labour” camp for 15 months, where conditions are notoriously harsh. We got a clear hint as to what conditions will be like during the Games when the Ministry of Public Security held a press conference in November 2007 to lay down the law about public protests. Anyone wishing to hold assemblies, parades and demonstrations during the Olympics, they announced, would have to comply with the law – including an obligation to apply for permission in advance. As Ye Guozhu’s case shows, such permission is almost never granted. And the consequences for those who try to protest peacefully can be dire.

In March this year, Yang Chunlin was sentenced to five years in prison for “inciting subversion” following his “We don’t want the Olympics; we want human rights” campaign, which was meant to defend peasant rights from land seizures by developers and officials. It’s reported that he was tortured in police detention: for seven days in August and September 2007, his arms and legs were stretched and chained to the four corners of an iron bed so that he couldn’t move. He was forced to eat, drink and defecate in that position. On 3 April, human rights activist Hu Jia was sentenced to three and a half years in prison for “inciting subversion of state power” when he spoke up for imprisoned civil rights lawyers. Earlier this year more activists were detained or put under surveillance and there were broad police sweeps of petitioners, vagrants, beggars and other “undesirables” in Beijing, ahead of the National People’s Congress. The Party likes its big events to go smoothly; no one is going to be allowed to get in the way. And there is no bigger event than the Beijing Olympics.

Recent events in Tibet highlighted the situation yet more clearly. The crackdown on the peaceful protests of 10 March and what followed – violence from the police and the army, mass arrests, “wanted lists” of protesters posted online – showed that the authorities’ attitude to peaceful demonstrators hasn’t moved on much in 19 years. But they have learned to keep the media away.

Amnesty releases the first of four online animated films today, highlighting the crackdown on peaceful protests in China and asking people here to join its “Human Rights For China” campaign. Campaigning techniques have moved on considerably from our 1989 protest camp. Sadly the attitude of the Chinese authorities to peaceful protest has barely moved an inch.



China's soft-power failure

Li Datong

May 19, 2008

Beijing's triumphal Olympics year is turning tense, with the Tibetan and torch-relay protests now followed by the Sichuan earthquake. The Chinese government's response betrays a deficit in the way the country is ruled, says Li Datong.

The Chinese government Chinese soil, the media war has abated.

The Chinese government's fury is easily understood - the protests were a total humiliation for China. This is the biggest blow to the country's image for twenty years. The only comparable setback came after the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989. Then, China's reputation suffered almost irreversible damage in the face of international condemnation and sanctions from the United States and Europe.

But at least the government was prepared for the consequences of its post-Tiananmen repression. Chinese leaders were ready to make the sacrifice necessary in order to hold onto power. Deng Xiaoping knew that sanctions against such a large country as China could not go on indefinitely, and that China could ride out the storm. Deng also understood the importance of repairing China's image, and as early as 1990 put forward the plan for China to apply to host the Olympics.

The Chinese government never expected such embarrassment over the torch relay. Over twenty years, the influence of Tiananmen has been diluted, and to international amazement, China's rapid economic development has made it one of the world's largest economies. Every major country has been affected by China's development. After its unsuccessful bid to host the 2000 Olympics, China was favourite to be awarded the 2008 games, and emerged victorious. As a country of over a billion people, a member of the United Nations Security Council and of the World Trade Organisation, China had no less right to be awarded the games than had the Korean military regime in 1988.

Also, China's size means that it will be unlikely to slip into debt due to the Olympics, unlike Greece. In terms of hard facts and figures, China was definitely one of the best-qualified countries to host the games. The Chinese government was full of confidence, and in principle the torch relay was an idea that would be welcomed by the rest of the world. But things did not go according to plan.

The claim of right

What the Chinese government didn't realise was that “soft power”, rather than hard power, has become key.

Soft power stems from a country's human-rights situation. It depends on the progress a country has made in maintaining universal values, and trust in the country from the international community. However much the claim is made that the Olympics are and must be separate from politics, there is at least a political minimum that countries have to achieve to qualify as hosts. It would be hard, for example, to imagine the games being awarded to South Africa under apartheid.

To be fair, China's human-rights situation has improved since 1989. The situation now is the best it has been since 1949, and this is why the Chinese government feels that it has been treated so unjustly. "Why does no one talk about our achievements?" the government wonders. The answer lies in the rule of law and institutions. The increasing freedom and improving human rights of the Chinese people lack any substantial legal or systemic foundation. The government's overarching concern is still to keep the ruling party in power. Unrestrained government power can be relaxed and contracted at will. That is to say, the progress China has made is not necessarily a one-way street. When things are good, progress can be allowed, but at the first sign of trouble the one-party totalitarian system automatically reverts to type. It is at these times that the government's obtuseness and crudeness shocks the world. For example, as the preparation for the Olympics began in earnest, at a time when the whole world was looking at China's human-rights record, the government locked up Hu Jia - a fragile young man who has done nothing but publish some articles on the internet - on charges of "subverting the state".

Questioned on this by foreign media, the normally eloquent Chinese premier Wen Jiabao could only respond that China "is a country with the rule of law". In light of the fact that freedom of speech is protected by the Chinese constitution, this answer seems both weak and ridiculous. Why the government acts so idiotically is beyond comprehension.

The call of Tibet

The recent Tibetan troubles could also have been handled differently. If a few people want to come out of the temples and protest, what is the problem? If the route and time are arranged in accordance with the law, and the people conduct their march, shout their slogans and then go home, why should this cause trouble? The more people are repressed, the more they want to rebel, and the consequence is chaos.

A country ruled by law should guarantee its citizens' right to protest. In those circumstances, if citizens break the law, they should be stopped without hesitation. But China has things the wrong way around. The lawful right to protest of a number of monks was crudely taken away, and then when trouble started there was no timely intervention due to fears over international opinion. This allowed the riots to get out of control and resulted in loss of life and damage to property.

This theme is exemplified in other respects. There was a lack of information and preparation on the Tibet issue before the violence broke out, and then after the events the government went into its conditioned response of shutting out foreign journalists, before bringing them back in on organised tours. The government first blamed anything and everything on the Dalai Lama, and then - after coming under international pressure - announced that it would enter into talks with him. All of this demonstrates both the government's passivity and the stupidity ingrained in the totalitarian system.

Whereas some Chinese have been stirred to nationalist emotions by the problems with the torch relay, the Chinese government is in shock. It needs time to digest the facts. It needs to ask itself: in the eyes of the world, why are a few people shouting "free Tibet" more persuasive than the hundreds of billions of *yuan* that the

government has invested in Tibet? Why does the western public put more trust in information from the media than from the Chinese government? Why is an increasingly powerful China seen as a threat rather than a force for peace?

The bond of law

The tragedy in Sichuan has made headlines across the world. An intense effort of search and rescue is underway in very difficult terrain. The Chinese government is acutely aware of the need to perform this task efficiently. But now that it is more exposed than ever to the scrutiny of its own people as well as foreign media, the mechanisms of control and persuasion it is used to operating by are newly vulnerable. The problem of trust is just below - and occasionally emerges above - the surface. The tensions between hard and soft power are on display.

So when will the Chinese government finally wise up? The answer is simple - when it does things by the law. When it unconditionally guarantees the rights of citizens set down in the constitution, and cracks down on those who break the law. The Chinese government needs to understand that in response to the western media, an independent and free Chinese press would be much more credible than a government spokesperson. The truth lies not in one voice, but slowly becomes apparent amidst a diverse range of voices. An understanding of this underlies the effective deployment of soft power.

Whatever happens, the Beijing Olympics will provide many lessons for the Chinese leadership. If they still have the ability to learn, China's leaders will be able to turn this would-be triumphal year's early humiliation into a force for change.

CHINA NEWS CLUB



The Way to Resolve the Tibet Issue

Zhang Boshu

May 17, 2008

Ever since March, the issue of Tibet and the Olympics have been stirred up together, drawing the attention of the entire world. Short sighted politicians in our own country have been pleased that their petty schemes to stir up nationalist sentiment have been so successful. This not only manipulates domestic opinion but also uses so-called "mainstream public opinion" to stand oppose the criticisms coming from international society. On the other hand, this serves to push for the consolidation of the situation in Tibet in the hope of getting through the Olympics peacefully. They did not realize that the Tibet issue has already become a major factor affecting China's future. Solving the Tibet issue will take courage and great wisdom. Petty scheming could run Tibet and ruin China.

How did the Tibet issue arise?

The Tibet issue is first of all a human rights issue.

Although the authorities are not willing to admit it, I want to say it plainly. This problem that plagues the leadership of the Communist Party, if we look at its origin, was created by the Chinese Communist Party itself as the ruler of China.

We don't have to look too far back in history. Whether in fact from the Yuan Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty the relationship between the Tibet government and Beijing was one of relatives or of equals is a matter of dispute among academics. For now, we don't need to pay any attention to controversy. What is most important is that from 1912 onwards, Tibet was for a long period in a de facto "state of independence". That situation continued until 1951 when the Tibet local government signed an agreement with the Beijing central government — the "Seventeen Point Agreement on the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet". The document was moderate and constructive. The agreement stressed that Tibet is part of China but also recognized that Tibet's current system would not change and that the Dalai Lama's position would not change. We can call that the earliest version of "One Country, Two Systems" in contemporary China.

In 1954, the 19 year-old Dalai Lama and 16-year old Panchen Lama both went to Beijing to take part in the First National People's Congress, attending as honored guests of Mao Zedong. They were appointed respectively as the Vice Chair of the NPC and the Vice Chair of the National People's Consultative Congress. Tibet's future seemed bright. Problems began to appear in 1955. Mao Zedong's utopian socialist social transformation began to accelerate that year. Ripples spread from the Chinese interior to Changdu and the Tibetan areas of Sichuan, Yunnan, Qinghai, and Gansu Provinces. In these areas, which were not bound by the 17 Point Agreement, "democratic reform" broke out on a spectacular scale. Radical local Communist Party leaders sought to carry out "democratic reform" and "socialist transformation" simultaneously so as "to make spectacular progress in just one step". They struck hard against the masters of the serfs and their "representatives", confiscating the lands and property of monasteries and forcing collectivization, slandering the religious beliefs of Tibetan people, and forcing upper class people, lamas and monks to "reform their thinking".

The result was that they stirred up dissatisfaction and resistance among the Tibetan people. During 1956 - 1958, armed conflicts in the Tibetan areas grew larger and larger in scale. When one died out another arose but were soon were put down by campaigns by the PLA to put down rebellion and wipe out rebels. Ten of thousands of Kham and Amdo region Tibetans fled across the Jinsha River into Tibet. This sowed the seeds for the 1959 Lhasa "rebellion". These historical circumstances led to the "rebellion" and indeed were a necessary condition for that event to occur.

There is no need to go into detail about what happened after that. The victorious "suppression of the rebellion" at Lhasa showed that the central government had achieved absolute control of all the Tibetan areas including Tibet itself. It also marked the rapid move of Tibet towards "socialism". Chinese of my age grew up hearing songs like "The Red Sun is rising about the snowy mountains" and seeing movies like "Serfs". In those days we really believed that under the leadership of the Communist Party "the serfs have been liberated" and were living happy lives. Later, after reading a lot of historical materials, I learned that there were many untruths in the propaganda.

The dictatorship system of the Communist Party, the arrogance and ignorance of leaders, and the extreme leftist policies pursued by them in the Tibetan areas brought terrible disasters to both the religious and lay people of Tibet. In 1962, the Panchen Lama, who was ranked as a "national leader" wrote a letter to Premier Zhou Enlai expressing his deep sorrow at what he had seen and heard of the suffering of the Tibetan people. Since the Panchen Lama was certainly not opposed to the leadership of the Communist Party, and was loyally and faithfully reporting to the Party the actual situation in the Tibetan areas, this letter called the "70,000 Character Document" can be seen as a document that accurately reflects the difficult situation of the Tibetan people during those years. I might as well quote from it here:

–On “class struggle” in the Tibetan areas:

“In most or in many areas, the cadres didn’t care if the campaign was planned or carried out well. They were intent on making a spectacular display that would strike terror in people. They didn’t care if they attacked the right people. The objective was to do the campaign on a big scale and achieve numerical targets.” They attacked many people whom they shouldn’t have attacked. Often “those who were the objects of struggle meetings had not done anything particularly bad or committed serious errors. So they had to make up many false and serious accusations. They exaggerated at will, turning truth and falsehood upside down.” Many innocent people were forced to flee abroad against their will. Those who stayed behind lived in terror.”

– On the lives of the people in the Tibetan areas:

“Because of the rise in the agricultural areas of the five unhealthy tendencies [Tr. Note: post Great Leap Forward Party critique of GLF excesses - (wu feng)- over-egalitarianism, the common practice of exaggeration, confused orders, too many compulsory orders, and special privileges. End note] and excessively tight controls on grain, and the standards for the amount of grain the people could retain was set too low, a severe grain shortage resulted, ...and many households had no grain. In some areas some people even starved to death. “ In Tibet, there had never been a shortage of grain like that, especially since Buddhism permeated the society, everyone rich and poor, had the custom of helping the poor and giving alms. People could easily support themselves as a beggar, so we never of anyone ever having starved to death.”

– Implementation of “dictatorship”

resulted in the improper deaths of many prisoners: After the “suppression of the rebellion”, the proportion of prisoners in the Tibetan population reached several percent, something completely unprecedented. “ In 1959, Chairman Mao set forth a policy that since the population of Tibet was small, people shouldn’t be killed or at most only a few people should be killed. But in fact, just the opposite happened. Except for the somewhat better treatment of imprisoned members of the upper classes, most people who were locked up in prison endured very bad conditions. The prison wardens didn’t care about the lives or health of the prisoners. They often verbally abused and savagely beat prisoners. Moreover, wardens deliberately moved prisoners back and forth between very warm and cold places so that the prisoners could not adapt and their clothes were always unsuitable. Their clothes could not keep them warm, their mattresses were not waterproof, and the wind and rain entered their cells. They never got enough to eat, living in miserable conditions yet they still had to get up early to do work. The hardest work was always given to these people. Their became worn out physically, often came down with diseases. As a result of no rest and inadequate medical care, many prisoners died who they should not have.

–On religion and nationalities issues:

“Under the so-called “elimination of superstition”, the first priority was opposing religion. The second priority was destroying images of the Buddha, Buddhist scriptures, and stupas.” When they demanded that monks and nuns return to secular lives, they “first in all the temples and monasteries, under the pretext of “study” and “mobilization”, they brought all the monks and nuns together into a large hall or room, and made them study nervously day and night, forcing them to criticize each other in order to create a big wave of sharp struggles and attacks. People who openly express their belief in religion were given labels such as a superstitious element or someone who doesn’t like the revolution. They were constantly attacked without rhyme or reason. Even worse, in some places they made the lamas stand on one side and nuns and lay religious women stand

on the other. They were then forced to choose each other in marriage. In Tibet, there were originally over 2500 temples. After “democratic reform” there were only 70 left. Originally there were 110,000 monks and nuns. Ten thousand fled abroad, leaving 100,000 behind. After “democratic reform” there were only 7000 monks and nuns left. What especially cannot be condoned is that in some areas there was deliberate desecration and insults to religion such as the Buddhist Canon used for compost. Many paintings of the Buddha and scriptures were used to make shoes or other objects. There is absolutely no reason for this. Because there were many insane things done that even a lunatic wouldn’t do, people in all classes of Tibetan society were deeply shaken. Their emotions were in chaos and they became exceedingly sad and shed tears. They said “Our land has been made into a dark place.” quoting a Tibetan proverb that means “a place without religion”.

Alas, when I read these characters, my own heart bleeds and my face burns.

Most of these problems also existed in the Chinese interior as well. But they were more serious in Tibet. They were more extreme and more widespread there. No matter how well-meaning or noble the initial motivation of those in power was to use their social ideals to transform Tibetan society was, what its shocking results are all crimes. These are crimes that resulted from ignorance, arrogance, rage and violence.

Under these circumstances, the over 100,000 Tibetans who fled to India and other foreign countries called upon the entire world to support the human rights of Tibetans. Therefore the Tibet issue became a symbolic issue for the entire world. What can be surprising about that? Moreover, this was going on during the Cold War and so in the minds of western people, Tibet became a focal point in the game of competing national interests in which China, the Soviet Union, India, the United States and other countries were engaged.

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency did in fact provide funding, technical and other support to Tibetans in exile. That was part of the effort of the United States to contain the “spread of communism”. Chinese can of course curse the damn Americans for plotting to “split China” without revealing their real intentions. But on the other hand, if the Communist Party had not done so many stupid things in Tibet and forced Tibetans to flee into exile, what would other people have been able to say? What pretext could they have to butt in? I haven’t even mentioned the Cultural Revolution. That “historically unprecedented” “revolution” because it was even redder and even further left, it was even more extreme and more cruel. Of course it created even greater disasters for the Tibetan people. I won’t discuss them here.

Enlightened Communist Party Leaders Once Reflected on the “Leftist” Misfortunes that Brought Disaster to Tibet

Objectively speaking, there has been no shortage of enlightened people within the Chinese Communist Party leadership. At different times and in different positions they have opposed leftist work methods in Tibet. However, under these historical circumstances, they could achieve only limited results.

Xi Zhongxun, from northwestern China, was a Vice Premier and Secretary General of the State Council in the 1960s. He was responsible for contact with the Panchen. He made a very complete report to the State Council about the how the “Seventy Thousand Character Document” came to be written by the Panchen and so was charged with “accommodating and not interfering with the Panchen. The Tenth session of the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party dismissed Xi Zhongxun and, in addition to the major crime of “using a novel to attack the Communist Party” was also charged with “accommodating and not interfering with the Panchen.”

Another dismissed, high level Communist Party official was Li Weihan, who was an old communist who had been head of the United Front Department since 1947. During April and May 1962, at a Nationalities Work

Conference held in Beijing, some of the nationalities religious figures offered some sharp criticisms. Li Weihuan remained calmly and honestly said that he welcomed criticism from everyone. He praised the talk of the Tibetan Buddhist Lama Xijiashenzhi [romanization of Chinese name], saying that he was “open and above board, with a heart as clear as a mirror” and stands as symbol of “patriotism in the area of national minorities religious affairs”. Li Weihuan’s action was later severely criticized by Mao Zedong who said that “The United Front Department is neglecting the class struggle and is being capitulationist.”

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, many issues in Tibetan affairs were neglected. Nationalities policy and the relationship between the Han nationality and the Tibetan nationality needed to be adjusted and the lives of Tibetans needed to be improved. In May 1980, just after Hu Yaobang had become General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, Hu and Wan Li flew to Tibet for an inspection visit. On the plane, Hu said to the accompanying Xinhua News Agency journalists “In our policies in the national minority areas, we must always seek truth from facts, and adjust measures to suit local conditions so as to fully respect the autonomy the Tibetans have to govern their minority area themselves. That is the crux of all the Tibet issues.” On May 29, in the work report that Hu Yaobang presented at the meeting with the cadres of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, he stressed that the development of Tibetan must resolve “six big issues”.

The first is, under the unified leadership of the center, fully implement the autonomy rights in the nationalities areas. “Any document, order or regulation which is not suitable for the conditions of Tibet should not be implemented.” “You should according to your own characteristics, draft specific decrees, laws and regulations, and rules to protect the special interests of your own nationality.”

The second is “Under the present difficult conditions of Tibet, you should carry out a policy of recuperation and rebuilding and considerably reduce the burden on the people.” “We have decided that within several years required purchases by Tibetans will be abolished.”

Third, “Tibet should implement special flexible policies to promote the development of production.”

Fourthly, “Devote the resources that the state is providing to Tibet to the development of agriculture and herding and the daily necessities most needed by Tibetan people.”

Fifth, “With the condition that the socialist road be followed, develop science, technology and education in Tibet.”

Hu Yaobang especially stressed, “Looking down on Tibetan history, language and art is totally wrong. . . Loving the minority people is not a matter of empty words. Their social customs and habits must be respected. Respect their language, respect their history, respect their culture. If you don’t do that you are only speaking empty words.”

Finally, Tibetan cadres should manage Tibet. Within two years, Tibetans should make up two-thirds or more of the cadres in Tibet. “We have been here for thirty years. We have completed our historical mission.” “Today there are 300,000 ethnic Han, including military, in Tibet. How can that ever do?” The above can be summarized in six characters “cut taxes, open up, and withdraw personnel”. These were the “emergency measures” energetically promoted by Hu Yaobang to resolve the Tibet issue. These views, strong criticisms of social evils, were enthusiastically welcomed in the Tibetan areas. Of course because of historical conditions, the enlightened leaders of the Chinese Communist Party were unable to discuss and consider institutional perspectives on the problems that occurred in Tibet. Hu Yaobang in his May 29th speech said that we should not look back on the past but rather “unify ourselves and look to the future”.

This reflects Hu Yaobang's experience and resourcefulness and the frustrations of a generation of reformers in the Chinese Communist Party. After all, the many of the tragedies in contemporary Tibetan history are directly linked to the Communist Party system and the social policies that the Party carried out. This is all a result of these policies. If we do not reflect upon the origins of the Tibet issue, then we will not be able to resolve it.

New Symptoms Arose in the Tibet Issue during the Years of Reform

With opening and reform, especially since the early 1990s and the turn of the new century, the Chinese economy has grown very quickly. The central government has also certainly invested a lot of capital in Tibet and devised a series of special preferential policies and measures to accelerate the development of Tibet. There have been direct state investment construction projects, Chinese central government financial subsidies, and support for projects from partners around the country for the modernization and construction of Tibet. The overall economic level of Tibet improved considerably as a result. However the political structure remained the same as before with the Party exercising control over political, economic, cultural, and religious affairs just as before. An autonomous region in name, but in actual fact, autonomy was in the same lamentable state as before. The core of the Tibet issue has not been truly solved, and under the new social conditions a variety of new problems have arisen.

The market economy has become the economy controlled by influential people. It is that way in the Chinese interior, and it is that way in Tibet. The blending of the system of Party dictatorship and the policy of opening up created a new privileged stratum that includes Han and as well as Tibetans who have positions in Party and government institutions and cultural institutions. Faced with swarms of merchants coming from the Chinese interior, many ordinary Tibetans in Lhasa and other areas fell discriminated against and marginalized.

Even worse is the all encompassing control of religious affairs. On the surface, religious life in Tibet has already been restored. The state spent great sums repairing damage and protecting symbolic Buddhist structures, the temples are filled with burning incense. The Buddhist Canon will never again be used for compost. But this is just the surface of things. There is a deeper reality that is hidden behind these things as if beneath a mask.

The independent scholar Wang Lixiong, who has done much research, including many research trips to Tibet. His conclusion: in Tibet there is no true religious freedom. On one hand, the government strictly controls the registration of religious activities in the temples, limits religious personnel to a certain "authorized personnel complement", and forbids ties between temples. Religious activities outside the temples are forbidden. On the other hand, spontaneous religious activities outside government control are rigorously suppressed so that they will not have any influence.

In the Kang region of [Tr. note: ethnographic] Tibet, not far from the county seat of Sela County, is the mountain valley of Larong with its Wuming Buddhist Institute. When founded in 1980, there were only 30 or so people at the Institute. At the end of the 1990s, there were nearly 10,000 Tibetan and Han monks there. This worried the Chinese government. The authorities ordered that reduce the number of its personnel from the authorized number of 4000 nuns to just 400 and 4000 monks to just 1000. All the 1000 Han who had come to study Buddhism were forced to leave. This requirement was rejected by the Living Buddha who ran the Institute because to make a monk return to secular life involves a serious violation of vows. The government took action, sending people to destroy the housing of the monks. On July 10, 2001 during the height of the destruction of monastic housing, 1700 monastic cells were destroyed in a single day. "I have heard people describe that scene, the sounds of houses being destroyed, the dust rising up everywhere, on one side one thousand nuns crying, as if the world itself were shaking. In the area around the Wuming Buddhist Academy were many nuns in groups in the countryside hiding out to avoid pursuit by the government. "

An even more deadly consequence of the strict control of religion have been breaks in the transmission of Tibetan Buddhism. Traditional Tibetan religion has an internal control mechanism. For example, although there is a reincarnation system for the Dalai Lama and the Panchen, but in the Geluga School, eminent monks and heads of monasteries have a set term of office. They are chosen from among the most learned lamas. The winners in the competition can become the head of the Ganden Monastery — that is a natural teacher for the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. This system has continued for several hundred years without a break, thereby ensuring the authenticity in the transmission of the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism from generation to generation and ensuring as well the excellent character of eminent monks. But since 1959 this continuous process has been interrupted. From the 1980s to the present, although on the surface religious activities have been renewed, it has become hard to find a trace of the very core of the religion — the pious beliefs of eminent monks, deep research into Buddhism and teaching aimed at enlightening all sentient beings.

The governing authorities operate a “reverse elimination” selection system among the leaders of the monks. “Any monk leader who insists on religious principles, refuses to be a tool of the authorities, will be subject to pressure and purging or even sentenced to prison as a warning to other clergy. Any monk with a relatively high traditional rank who keeps silent, doesn’t cause trouble is a candidate for recruitment by the United Front Department. He will be given rewards but a club will be always beready to intimidate them. Any monk willing to be personal advancement first, who is opportunistic, gives up religious principles, and willing to be a tool of the government will be given all sorts of advantages, membership in the National People’s Congress, the National People’s Consultative Congress or even higher government positions. The green light will be given for their activities, resources will be provided so that they will be a model who can draw in other leaders among the monks.” In sum, therefore, although the Chinese Communists boast of religious freedom but their religious policy is aimed at the destruction of Buddhism, no less than it was in the days of Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong wanted to completely extirpate Buddhism. In Tibetan history there were eras when Buddhism was extirpated yet Buddhism still continued because the religion lived in the hearts of believers and so could not be destroyed by an external force.

Today the Communist Party religious policy aims at the degeneration of the monk stratum of Tibetan society. “This is a mortal danger to Buddhism.”

As a consequence of all this, although Tibet has made considerable economic progress over the past thirty years and the lives of ordinary Tibetans have improved, but Tibetans are still dissatisfied and “events” occur over and over in the Tibetan regions. The Tibetan issue is still “an issue” that is the focus of constant international attention. Ever since that have occurred since March are just new developments in the course of this ongoing transformation.

Demonizing the Dalai Lama is Extremely Stupid

After the “hitting, smashing, stealing and burning” event of March 14, the Chinese government immediately announced that this was instigated by the “Dalai Clique”. When in April there was interference with the transmission of the torch, the authorities again asserted that the “Dalai Clique” had instigated “Tibet independence elements”, with the aim of destroying the Olympic Games, in order to further the cause of “Tibet independence”.

The “human rights issue” was substituted for the “independence issue” to serve the needs of people in authority. This is easy to see. But in their effort put the blame on the head of the Dalai Lama, we can see how preposterous the traditional political logic of the Chinese communists is. This also reveals that the rulers lack a long term strategic vision and political wisdom.

The Dalai Lama is the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism. He is also one of the most famous political figures in the world. The year the Dalai Lama fled Tibet he was 24 years old. In half a century of exile, this ethnic Tibetan sage has blended the essence of Buddhism, magnanimity, liberal democracy and other universal values of contemporary civilization. Already in 1987, the Dalai Lama proposed the “Five Point Peace Proposal” which includes the suggestion that Tibet become a “peace zone”, that “China end its policy of moving settlers into Tibet”, “respect for the human rights and democratic rights of the Tibetan people”, “Restore and protect Tibet’s natural environment”, and “hold sincere talks about the future status of Tibet and the relationship between the Tibetan people and the Chinese people”.

In 1988, the Dalai Lama also made the “Strasbourg Proposal” in 1988, which proposed that “Tibet should become a self-ruled democratic political entity in union with the People’s Republic of China, in which “the Chinese government would be responsible for Tibet’s external affairs, but Tibet could establish offices overseas for the religious and cultural aspects of foreign relations” etc.

During the last seven years, the Dalai Lama has at many times and in many places stated clearly that he does not seek Tibet independence, only real autonomy for Tibet. On the methods and ways of achieving this he strongly calls for a peaceful “middle way”, which would involve honest dialog with the central government and negotiations to resolve issues. Ever since 2002, the Dalai Lama’s special envoy has met with representatives of the United Front Department in Beijing six times in order to explain to the ruling Communist Party rulers the “middle way position” but have not gotten any response to the proposal.

The rigid stance of the Chinese Communist Party is very easy to understand from their political tradition: the institutional arrangements for Tibet have already been decided. So what is there to talk about? Accepting the so-called “autonomy” of the Dalai Lama would shake the foundations of the party- state, so there can be no yielding on this point. Therefore, “talks” are for the Communist side just a perfunctory exercise and only done for show, and so of course there can be no concrete results from them. Yet these delays cause more and more difficulties for the Dalai Lama since he has to explain things to both the Tibetan exiles and to believers within Tibet.

There are many different organizations and groups among the Tibetans in exile with different political positions. There are radical ones like the “Tibet Youth Congress” which has attracted a lot of attention lately. It’s political position is very different from the Dalai Lama’s “Middle Way”. The Tibet Youth Congress was founded in 1970 mostly by second and third generation Tibet exiles. Membership is now several tens of thousands with organizations in 40 countries. At the outset the Tibet Youth Congress stood for non-violence, but is has changed its position over the past several years.

The Dalai Lama has stated clearly that he opposes any scheme or action involving the use of violence. He said that if such an act should occur, he may have to “resign” to show his true position. Several days ago, the Dalai Lama during an interview with Asia Week [Yazhou Zhoukan] said that he believes that giving up the Middle Way of giving up efforts to achieve Tibet independence and seeking a high degree of autonomy is still the mainstream view of Tibetans in exile as well as the mainstream view of people in the Tibetan areas. As for the Tibet Youth Congress, the Dalai Lama said that he can only admonish the Tibet Youth Congress not to take the radical road. However, he has no way to order the Tibet Youth Congress to shut up.

Beijing may not completely trust the statements of the Dalai Lama because overcoming political enmity built up over a long time will take time and face-to-face “communication”. However, indiscriminately demonizing the other side, charging that the Dalai Lama is the commander in the “Tibet independence camp” and should

certainly be punished by the entire nation, and reviled by everyone, can only put the Dalai Lama in a difficult situation (while he is trying to put pressure on radical forces among Tibetans) and put the Chinese communists into a political dead end (frozen into the rigid face of the dictator), giving up the freedom of maneuver needed in political negotiations. Isn't this an extremely stupid way to behave?!

Yet, in the final analysis, this is the obstinate and stubborn traditional political logic that haunts the Communist Party. According to this logic, there can be no equal negotiating partners. There can only be enemies locked in a life and death struggle. Even worse is how the rulers are haunted by their own logic of interests — for according to this logic, Tibet “autonomy” is intolerable. It would be a fundamental threat to the party-state, and a threat to a large group that benefits from this system. Considered in terms of these two logics, the demonization of the Dalai Lama becomes easy to understand. But where is justice? What are the prospects for the great family of the peoples of China? Considering the puerile and shallow “patriotism” and “nationalism” shown in the recent turbulent tide of meticulously planned and instigated demonstrations in both China and abroad by the new “Boxers”, as well as the very deep problems facing the country, one is left with a bitter and confused taste in one's mouth and troubled deep into sleepless nights.

The Solution to the Tibet issue Should be Sought Within a Constitutional Framework

The Tibet issue is first of all a human rights issue. But it is not only a human rights issue. Abuses of human rights are an “effect”, not a “cause”. An irrational system of political dictatorship is what caused the “Tibet issue.”

Didn't the Communist Party initially seek to help the Tibetan people and the million “liberated serfs”? I believe that this is true. Yet the history of the world is full of examples of evil deeds done with good intentions. During the late Qing, the court made great reforms in Tibetan affairs and promoted reforms in order to prevent the great powers from continuing to encroach upon Tibet. In 1907, Zhang Yintang gave to the Qing Court “Twenty-four proposals for the governance of Tibet”. During 1905 - 1911, in the the provinces of Sichuan and Kang, a reform to “change from indirect control through local chiefs to direct control by the central government”. The purpose in addition to consolidating Qing rule was to transform social traditions for the “good of” ordinary Tibetans. However, these “reforms” were strongly resisted by Tibetan people. Half a century later the Communist Party did the same thing in the Tibetan areas, albeit more systematically and with more determination. The result was larger scale harm to the people, religion and culture of the Tibetan areas.

In fact, history has already shown that China's 20th century communist revolution was a mistake. It was a big wrong turn during a century of social transformation. It not only brought misfortune to the Han nationality, it also brought misfortune to the minority peoples. Today, people are thinking deeply about that history. Things that are past cannot be called back. But we should remember the lessons of history, and look at the issues of today and tomorrow with a scientific attitude. This is the responsibility of the present generation.

Respect for the fundamental rights of citizens, and respect for the distinctive cultures and traditions must be implemented in a constitutional political system. This is the basic path for solving the Tibet issue.

Recently Taiwan successfully changed the ruling party for the second time. This shows the superiority of the democratic system of government. It also demonstrates the necessity and urgency of changing the political system on the Chinese mainland. Clearly, the party dictatorship system of the Chinese Communist Party cannot accommodate unification between Taiwan and the mainland, just as it cannot accommodate true autonomy for Tibet. Only by dissolving the present system and creating a constitutional democratic system in

accordance with the universal values and principles of modern civilization can the day come when Taiwan finally returns to the motherland, Tibet achieves true autonomy, and Han and Tibetans get along with each other in harmony.

From the beginning of the 1960s, the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamasala, India started to experiment at building a system of democratic government. In his Strasbourg Proposal, the Dalai Lama said that “The Tibetan government should be composed of an independent administration and legislature chosen by the vote of all citizens and a court system.” The Dalai Lama even proposed changing the Tibetan form of government that combines politics and religion. He didn’t worry if he might become the “last Dalai Lama” in Tibetan history. 10 Tibetans have already made preparations for a democratic political system. Shouldn’t the central government in Beijing make similar preparations?

Certainly for the Chinese Communist decision-makers who know hold power, changing the present system and creating a new institutional framework would take a great deal of courage and wisdom. This would not be just for Tibet or for Taiwan; it would be for all the 1.3 billion citizens of the People’s Republic of China. To be honest, even after China has established a constitutional form of government, finding the reasonable sharing of jurisdiction between the central government and the nationalities areas will not be easy.

I once wrote an article entitled “Two Track Republican System: A Proposal for the Reform of the Chinese System of Constitutional Government”. In this article I pointed out that it is an uncontested fact that the “division of powers” and “autonomy” strengthen the rights consciousness of citizens and increases their participation in public affairs (in the nationalities areas, autonomy also helps preserve the cultural traditions of nationalities and protects their special interests). Yet there is another aspect to this problem, that is the tendency of interests to expand and the “logic of collective interests”. The latter will certainly create some “problems of the commons” which will have to be solved by the intervention of a public power at a higher level that is above local interests, especially intervention by the central government.

Returning to the present, there is still a chance for the central government to solve the Tibet issue. That can be done by conducting genuine negotiations with the Dalai Lama. Recently Beijing has already said that it is willing to resume contact. That is good. Even if it is just a pose, it is positive. Everyone hopes that the talks can produce genuine results so as to create a harmonious bridge between the Han and Tibetan peoples while the Dalai Lama is still alive. If this issue is not handled well, then “splitting” might become a real and present danger.

As a Chinese citizen, I naturally don’t want to see Tibet split off from the household of our motherland. We should believe that the trend of human civilization is towards unifying rather than towards splitting. Unity is helpful for solving many of the problems that humanity is faced with. As a Chinese proverb goes, the melon that is grabbed roughly cannot be sweet — unity needs to be a voluntary unity based upon a community of interests. Forced compliance cannot produce good results. This simple truth can also be applied to politics.



Jung Chang (the author of the award-winning book, "Wild Swans - Three Daughters of China" and "Mao - The Unknown Story")

"I was deeply impressed by his joke against himself, his honesty, and his unusual approach to his own status as a great spiritual leader of the world. He is the opposite of someone who maintains a mysterious exterior, which after all is a much easier way to be a spiritual leader. He opens himself up, talks with a common touch and a sense of humour, and punctures his own myth all the time", Adding, "He has achieved the almost unachievable as a religious leader. The world sees him, understands him, and respects him - and worships him. Many people say that if the world were to become one community, His Holiness would surely be the best candidate to be its head."



Wang Lixiong (Chinese writer and author)

"Dalai Lama is the key to the issue of Tibet. If china would talk with the Dalai Lama and they were able to settle the issues that concern all Tibetans, then the central government would at last be able, with single stroke, achieve a tremendous success"



Wei Jingsheng (Chinese human rights activist)

"Wherever human rights are endangered, the speakers for the local authorities have a common tune: it is an internal affair, do not intervene. But you know the truth: human rights issues are never an isolated, local or internal affair".