The Political Philosophy of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama
Selected Speeches and Writings

Editor
A.A. Shiromany

Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre
New Delhi
The Political Philosophy of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama
Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung
and
The Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre

The Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung (FNSt) established in 1958 is a non-profit organisation for public benefit. It promotes the liberal principle of Freedom in Human Dignity in all sectors of society, both nationally as well as internationally, in developed as well as developing countries.

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Friedrich Naumann Stiftung in partnership with the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies has set up the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) with the purpose of strengthening the Tibetan diaspora in building a healthy democratic working ethos. The objective is to prepare 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. There is also the standing need to constantly remind the Tibetan diaspora of their national identity, culture and heritage and the global community of Tibet’s unique contribution to the world of thought and culture.

Established in 1994, the Centre has already reached a very representative section of Tibetans residing in India and Nepal, encouraging them to get actively involved in their new democratic institutions and helping their leadership to formulate a vision for the future. Moreover, the Centre has a sound back-up programme of publications to disseminate information to build up national and international public opinion for the fulfilment of a just cause.
Publisher’s Note

The Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre (TPPRC) is honoured to present The Political Philosophy of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama: Selected Speeches and Writings. This is the third volume in a series devoted to the speeches and writings of His Holiness, the spiritual and political leader of Tibet.

The first two volumes, The Spirit of Tibet: Universal Heritage and The Spirit of Tibet: Vision for Human Liberation, were published by the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre in 1995 and 1996. These two volumes contained the thoughts of His Holiness on a wide variety of topics ranging from meditation to environment and ecology; from the education of Tibetans to the democratisation of Tibet’s polity and Sino-Tibet relations.

In 1997, the TPPRC decided to devote a publication, solely to the political philosophy of His Holiness’ - a philosophy, which has formed the basis not only of his understanding and engagement with the Tibetan question but also with global issues. This philosophy has, for the last four decades, been an important guiding and inspirational force for Tibetans, and indeed for all freedom-loving and peace-loving people and nations of the world.

Most of the speeches in the present volume have been previously published in Tibetan Government publications and news bulletins. The speeches delivered by His Holiness at international gatherings, his interviews to the Press, and his statements on the Anniversary of the National Uprising Day on March 10 were available to us in English.
Publisher’s Note

However, most of his addresses to the exiled Tibetan community, particularly to the members of the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies were originally in Tibetan and have been translated into English. In order to avoid repetition and to present the essential thoughts of His Holiness, some of these presentations have been edited. In these addresses, His Holiness conveys his message of peace, non-violence, forgiveness and compassion, in a series of wide-ranging discussions on matters affecting the Tibetan people and the international community. His Holiness also speaks about the interdependence of nations around the world. His philosophy is founded on the concepts of individual, collective and universal responsibility and respect for all sentient beings.

In this volume, we have organised His Holiness’ speeches, writings and interviews in four main parts. Part I presents the speeches delivered by His Holiness during his world tours (covering more than 40 nations) including the United States of America, Australia, South Africa, Lithuania and Israel. In these gatherings of world leaders, parliamentarians, university students and human rights groups and environmental groups, His Holiness has consistently propounded his message of kindness, non-violence and compassion.

His Holiness’ Middle-way approach to the Tibetan question is a constructive and forward-looking proposal for the solution of the Tibetan issue. Despite the enormous suffering and disappointment faced by Tibetans, in his speeches His Holiness continues to call upon governments and nations to address the Tibetan political question in a spirit of reconciliation and healing.

Part I also contains His Holiness’ message to India and the Indian people, detailing the centuries-old religious and cultural relationship between India and Tibet. In a speech given in 1956, he recounts how learned scholars such as Pandit Lha Rigba Sengge, Acharya Shantirakshita, Padma Sambhava, Bimala Mitra, Jina Mitra, Ratna Budhi, etc. had taught the Tibetans Sanskrit grammar and literature, and how in the seventh
century, Thonmi Sambhota invented the Tibetan script, based on the Nagari and Sharda scripts of India. In his address to the overseas and other Chinese, he has consistently spoken of the need for the genuine understanding of each other’s concerns and his firm belief that through commitment to the values of non-violence, the Tibetans and the Chinese can in future live peacefully and harmoniously.

Part II presents the spontaneous and frank answers of His Holiness to questions posed by the world media. Here he clearly elucidates his commitment to non-violence, love and compassion, in the face of the continuing transfer of Chinese into Tibet, the degradation of Tibet’s environment and traditional economy, the nuclearisation and militarisation of Tibet and the violation of the fundamental rights of Tibetans in Tibet. The interviews are also a response to the then widespread media concern over the demonstrations that broke out in Lhasa in September 1987 and thereafter. In these interviews His Holiness also elaborates on his Five-Point Peace Plan and the Strasbourg Proposal.

In Part III His Holiness speaks from the heart to the Tibetan people about his reasons for choosing the non-violent path in our struggle to regain our country. We also get a detailed vision statement of His Holiness’ firm determination and will to democratise Tibet, and the role His Holiness continues to play in fostering a democratic system in the Tibetan community in exile. His conviction that it is the Tibetan people who must eventually decide the Tibetan question, underlines his commitment to democracy. Through his active counsel and his realistic and pragmatic approach, His Holiness continues to inspire and empower the Tibetans — embodying both the hope and the survival of the Tibetan people. He continues to be the principal force for the preservation of Tibetan culture and values, and has in recent years constantly spoken to the Tibetan people of the urgent need to preserve and promote the values of honesty, compassion, altruism, justice, equality, truth, human dignity and love.
Publisher’s Note

Part IV contains all the Statements His Holiness had made since 1961, to commemorate the Tibetan National Uprising Day on March 10. His annual messages on this occasion have been deeply inspiring and have mobilised the six million Tibetan people and the international community over the issue of Tibet. Through the March 10 messages, His Holiness stresses his commitment to finding a solution for the future of Tibet, keeping alive the Tibetans’ hope of returning to a free Tibet. His hope and determination to gain justice by following the principles of non-violence, compassion and love, continue to be a source of inspiration for the Tibetan people. These statements clearly bring out the events that have had an impact on the Tibetan movement — the destruction of Tibetan culture; the suffering of the Tibetan people; the violation of the fundamental rights of Tibetans. In addition, we see that a remarkable spirit of realism and pragmatism guides the policy of His Holiness’ and the Tibetan government-in-exile regarding the future of Tibet. The statements are also a reminder of the generosity of the people and governments of India, Nepal and other countries, who have for over thirty-eight years hosted over 130,000 Tibetan people. Included in the Addenda, are His Holiness’ new initiatives for the democratisation of the Tibetan community, as well as his statement during his recent visit to the United States of America.

The Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre hopes that this book will portray the contributions of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, not only as the leader who embodies and personifies the tragedy of Tibet, but also internationally recognised as a statesman of high moral repute. For instance, the Norwegian Nobel Committee stated in the citation, while awarding the 1989 Peace Prize to His Holiness “in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently opposed the use of violence . . . . . . and developed a philosophy of peace with a great reverence for all things living and upon the concept of universal responsibility embracing
all mankind as well as nature.” We also hope that through this volume, the reader will get a comprehensive and clear idea of the tragedy of Tibet.

The Chinese Government has unfortunately not responded to the numerous attempts His Holiness has made since 1979, to establish direct contacts with the Chinese leadership and reach a negotiated and peaceful settlement to the Tibetan question. Moreover, in the years since 1994, there has been an escalation of repression in Tibet — from the re-education campaigns in monasteries and nunneries, to the ban on the display of photographs of His Holiness. The transfer of Chinese settlers into Tibet is a real threat to the survival of the Tibetan nation — its culture and identity. The result of the demographic invasion has been the erosion of Tibetan culture, language, and values, which have been in existence for centuries. Coupled with this, the coercive ‘family planning’ policies of the Chinese point to a systematic effort to reduce the Tibetan population and relegate Tibetans to a minority in their own country.

On the occasion of the recent celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we renew our hope that a political and long-lasting settlement to the Tibetan issue can be found. The problem of Tibet is a political problem and must therefore have a political solution. And a just political solution in Tibet would have great geopolitical significance, not only for its immediate neighbours, but also for the rest of the world.

The Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre wishes to express its sincere thanks to Professor Rajni Kothari for writing the Foreword to this volume. We appreciate Mr. A.A. Shiromany’s efforts in the compilation of this very important and relevant publication. We also wish to place on record our gratitude to the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, particularly Herr H. von Welck and Ms. Rebon Banerjee, for their editorial assistance and valuable comments on the numerous drafts of this
Publisher’s Note

publication. I also deeply appreciate the dedication and the tireless effort that Mrs. Tsering Tsomo, Executive Director of the TPPRC has devoted to this publication.

Above all, we owe our most humble gratitude to His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama for his great understanding, vision and insight, and for leading the Tibetan people through this troubled and difficult period of our history.

To sum up: The political philosophy of His Holiness is deeply rooted in the Buddhist world-view of culture, which is based on reality, truth, and the principle of interdependence (of cause and effect). The philosophical combination of the ultimate essential ‘voidness’ of all phenomena, and of their outer existence in interdependent nature, leads to the principle of total non-violence under all circumstances. The idea of resisting violence and injustice through love and compassion arises from His Holiness’ deep sense of ‘universal responsibility’, something that is not merely a philosophical tenet but a practical method for ordinary people to put into practice the highest teachings of the Buddha, even when confronted by the most adverse circumstances. Thus, truth, non-violence and democracy emerge as cardinal principles of His Holiness’ ideal polity, while the tenet of ‘universal responsibility’ is a unique commentary upon, as well as a practical experiment of, the union in Mahayana philosophy of wisdom and method.

We dedicate this book to the continued courage, determination and sacrifice of the people of Tibet.

Sarnath, Varanasi
December 10, 1998

S. RINPOCHE
Chairman
Foreword

The decision to bring out a volume on the political philosophy of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama pleases me to no end. As the world we live in is fast moving into a period of extreme uncertainty and growing ambivalence, and as the 20th Century which was marked by a uncanny combination of scientific achievement and the realisation of “freedom” and “self-determination” by millions of people on the one hand and the outbreak of so much human suffering, violence and repression in national and international arena on the other, the time has come for not confining political philosophy to academic high towers and turn to the thinking and vision provided by men like Dalai Lama and Mahatma Gandhi, alongside of course the wisdom and deep experience that flow from the grassroots of diverse societies and civilizations. That the two are intimately related, that the vision and periodic calls for collective action proclaimed by the former flow from the felt needs and practical wisdom flowing from the latter, is powerfully portrayed in the collection of speeches and writings put together in this volume.

The other main reason why I feel excited about the publication of the political philosophy of His Holiness (glimpses of which were already there in the two volumes on “The Spirit of Tibet — Universal Heritage and Vision for Human Liberation”) is that in it we get an unusual synthesis of the life of the spirit and an engagement with the history and politics of our times. As His Holiness said at the time of receiving the Nobel Prize for Peace he is “a simple monk from Tibet” who had exposed the values of altruism, love, compassion and non-violence which were taught to
him by the Buddha, the great sages of Tibet and India and in recent decades Gandhi and his remarkable life of non-violent action undertaken in his struggles for freedom, peace and liberation of the oppressed peoples no matter where they were. Although unlike Gandhi who practised his religion by remaining part of the sentient world, the Dalai Lama continued to be a monk, we find him engaging himself in the political and social affairs of his motherland, Tibet, as well as in the larger struggles facing humanity in its search for a saner future. But both of them deeply believed in refusing to detach religion from politics and politics from religion. This is why, as we move into a period of growing ambivalence on the relationship between the spiritual and the material-cum-political realms of life, it has become necessary to turn to the teachings of men like Gandhi and the 14th Dalai Lama. Reading through this volume helps us grasp how His Holiness is carrying forward the torch lit by Gandhi the flame of which has since been getting dim.

Shri A.A. Shiromany, the Editor of this series of volumes, both through his thoughtful introductory summing up (both the more general and the shorter sectional ones) and the way he has laid out the enormous diversity of political, moral and intellectual interventions of His Holiness has been of great help in understanding this historic role of the latter. We find him involved simultaneously in two major endeavours: the struggle for liberating Tibet from colonisation and subjugation on the one hand and engagement in spreading his message of love and compassion based on a philosophy of altruism, of human rights, world peace and environment, and above all of non-violence and universal responsibility — the latter being his primary leitmotif — on the other. Whereas Gandhi moved from place to place in India and led a variety of movements in different parts of the country mobilising the conscience of the mass of the Indian people the Dalai Lama has been moving around large parts of the world mobilising the conscience of humanity as a whole. In a way, he has taken on a task that is more onerous than even Gandhi’s.
Compared to the British the Chinese have proved more brutal, more totalising in its colonial sweep, more callous vis-à-vis global public opinion. But the Dalai Lama has refused to be browbeaten by that. He has been engaged in a long drawn out mission of non-violent transformation that could well produce results in the longer run that may turn out to be more impressive than was the case with the Congress movement against the British. It is a mission aimed at keeping the torch of resistance alive while extending a hand of cooperation and conciliation to the Chinese leading to a series of peace plans — some of which have been found to be too moderate to many of his own followers — while at the same time trying to build public opinion round the world which has been growing continuously. Consistent with his belief in a non-violent struggle he has refused to invoke foreign interventions of an armed kind. For he knows that such a course can backfire and lose the sympathy of many, including above all in India on whose support in his overall mission he has counted a lot (despite its being cautious vis-a-vis the Chinese).

While the mission he has undertaken has oftentimes appeared like a venture full of risks with no clear end in sight (not even intermediate advances) it is without doubt an unprecedented undertaking in the history of nations and of mankind. The writings and speeches, exhortations and appeals for sanity, brought together in this volume reveal how daring an undertaking this mild-mannered, soft spoken prophet is engaged in. As far as I can visualise, it is bound to succeed and not necessarily too long from now. (There are already signs of the Chinese responding to the struggle he has been waging.)

In achieving this goal the 14th Dalai Lama’s larger and comprehensive political philosophy, normative commitments and espousals of diverse causes at so many levels of humanity’s march in history will also play a critical role. For he is turning out to be not just a prophet for the cause of freedom in his homeland but one given to a wide spectrum of values and visions. This will become clear to the readers
of this volume as they go through its contents, so well organised by Mr. Shiromany. It will make them conversant with not just the contemporary history of Tibet but also the thinking of a highly lucid pen and voice and a most inspiring mind and heart. I shall simply end by quoting from what can be called the vision of this man of peace, who never looses hope and always appears to be so optimistic:

The future of Tibet at the moment appears something like a dream. My wish of my idea, my vision, is that Tibet should be a zone of peace completely free from any weapon, any military hardware. I think in Tibet the nature and the environment are quite peaceful. The people are quite peaceful. That does not mean Tibetans never fight. Of course as human beings sometimes they quarrel among themselves, but generally speaking they are peaceful by nature. They are a peace-loving nation. So the concept of a zone of peace or sanctuary is very appropriate for Tibet. That is not only going to benefit Tibetan people but will also benefit China and India.

Noida, Uttar Pradesh        RAJNI KOTHARI
28th October, 1998
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Last but not the least, we are grateful to all friends and well wishers who have assisted us in making our venture a success.

Executive Director
1 Letter to Franklin D. Roosevelt

The Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
President of the United States of America
The White House, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
February 24, 1943

Dear Mr President:

We received with greatest gratification your letter and the tokens of goodwill (your autographed photo and an exquisite gold watch showing phases of the moon and the days of the week) through Envoys, Capt. I. Tolstoy and Lt. Brooke Dolan, who arrived here safely for the purpose of visiting the Pontificate and the city of Lhasa.

We are happy to learn that you and the people of the United States of America take great interest in our country and it is of special significance that the people of the United States of America, in association with twenty-seven other countries, are now engaged in a war for the preservation of freedom, which has been thrust upon them by nations bent on conquest and who are intent upon destroying freedom of thought, of religion, and of action everywhere.

Tibet also values her freedom and independence enjoyed from time immemorial and, being the great seat of the Buddhist Religion, I am endeavouring, in spite of my tender age, to uphold and propagate our religious precepts and thereby emulate the pious work of my predecessors. I earnestly hope and pray for a speedy termination of hostilities so that the nations of the world may enjoy a lasting and righteous peace, based on the principles of freedom and goodwill.

\[1\] This is one of the very first letters available to us. It was written when His Holiness the Dalai Lama was just eight years old and at a time when World War II was still raging. This also shows that the Dalai Lama was in touch with and directly writing to Heads of States like the President of the U.S.A.
As a token of my regard, I am sending herewith a scarf of honour, three Tibetan coins of the first precious metal [gold], my photo, and three handsewn thangka [religious scrolls], depicting the sextet blessed with long existence, the four dutiful brothers, and the eight lucky signs, all framed in blue brocade silk, etc.

Yours sincerely,

Dalai Lama of Tibet

(Seal of the Dalai Lama of Tibet)
New Delhi,
November 29, 1956

Mr. Chairman, distinguished Prime Minister, fellow delegates, and friends.

His Holiness the Panchen Lama and I are highly honoured by the opportunity to address this symposium before it concludes its deliberations this afternoon. We are indeed grateful to the government of India and the Working Committee for the Buddha Jayanti celebrations in India for their very kind invitation to visit India during the 2,500th Anniversary of the Buddha's Parinirvana and for the excellent programme of visits arranged for us.

As we are all interested in the development and spread of Dharma, I am sure you will be interested to know something of the evolution and development of Buddhism in Tibet.

In the early seventh century, during the reign of the Tibetan king Srongtsan Gampo, Thonmi Sambhota and many other Tibetan students were deputed to India to learn the literature of the Dharma. Having learned Sanskrit grammar and literature thoroughly from Pandit Lha Rigba Sengge and other scholars of Kashmir, these students returned to Tibet. Thonmi Sambhota invented the Tibetan script based on the Nagari and Sharda scripts of northern and central India respectively. They translated many books into Tibetan.

In the eighth century, during the reign of the Tibetan king Trisong Detsan, many great Indian scholars, like Acharya Shantirakshita, Padma Sambhava, Bimala Mitra, and Kamala Shila, were invited to Tibet. Many Tibetan students, such as Ishes Wangbo and Berochana, studied Sanskrit and translated numerous books on Mahayana and Vajrayana into Tibetan. Seven Tibetan men became bhikshus. The cultural and spiritual relations of India and Tibet have gone on increasing ever since.

1This is one of the first few speeches His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave during his visit to India in 1956.
In the ninth century, the Tibetan King Tri-Ralpachen invited scholars, such as Jina Mena, Surendra, Ratna Bodhi, and Bhodi Dhana Shila, who revived the old translations and rewrote them in a more standardized Tibetan language. During the reign of the cruel King Lang-darma, Buddhism declined to a low ebb, surviving only in remote Tibetan villages. But many great men, including notably Lachen Gonpa Rapsal, raised it again from its very foundations. Many Tibetan scholars, such as Rinchen Zangpo, Gyaltset Sengge, and Tsultrim Gyalwa of Nagtso, came to India. Having completed their studies at Nalanda and Vikramashila viharas, they invited many unrivaled Indian scholars, such as the great swami Dipamkarajnyana, Sakya Shri of Kashmir, and Mritijnyana to Tibet. In the course of time they translated all the teachings of the Buddha and the works of the Indian scholars into Tibetan. Thus the sun of Dharma began to shine in the dark land of Tibet.

In those days it was not as easy to travel from Tibet to India as it is today. One had to measure the long, hazardous route from Tibet to India via Nepal on foot, step by step. One had to face the dangers of wild animals and oppressive summer heat to such an extent that out of a hundred students only three or four could survive and return to their homes. It is because of their gallant efforts and sacrifices that we received the teaching of the Blessed One in our country, and they even spread to the adjacent countries.

It is unfortunate that after A.D. 1200 Buddhism began to decline in India. Monasteries and viharas were destroyed and religious books were no longer disseminated; consequently the number of followers also decreased.

As a result of the incessant struggle of its people, India achieved independence and has since made tremendous political, economic and social progress. Being equally generous towards all faiths, India has shown great love and reverence for Buddhism and has even adopted the Dharma Chakra and Ashoka Pillar for its national emblem. This year, with a view to commemorating the kindness shown by the Compassionate One, India is celebrating the 2500th Anniversary of His Mahaparinirvana on a scale worthy of her great tradition. India has invited many distinguished guests from Buddhist and non-Buddhist countries to these celebrations, and I
consider myself extremely fortunate in being able to attend them. We are convinced that such great deeds of India will not only strengthen our faith in the Dharma in the East, but will also go a long way in the propagation of the eternal truths in the West.

In one of the Sutras the Lord Buddha has predicted that after 2500 years of His Parinirvana the Dharma will flourish in the country of red-faced people. In the past, some of the Tibetan scholars had held that this prediction was meant for Tibet, but one scholar, Sakya Shri, has interpreted it otherwise. According to him, the prediction refers to Europe, where the Dharma may flourish hereafter, and signs of this can be observed already. If the Dharma spreads all over the world, it will undoubtedly yield good fruits for our future life; but even in our present existence, hatred, exploitation of one by another, and the ways and deeds of violence will disappear, and the time will come when all will live in friendship and love in a prosperous and happy world. I am glad to have an opportunity of expressing my humble appreciation of the efforts which many peace-loving great countries are making day and night towards the freedom of small countries and the elimination of aggression and war. I feel that our lives would be entirely aimless if the Dharma which was brought to our land by great scholars at such immense cost were allowed to decay. For my part, I shall make every effort within my power to keep the Dharma alive, and I shall be grateful for your help and advice in the task of strengthening the Dharma in making it everlasting.

Friends, I thank you once again for the privilege of addressing this distinguished Assembly, and I shall devote my prayers for the fulfillment of the cause and success of the efforts of all who have gathered here for this Symposium on Buddhism, as well as for the prosperity and happiness of all beings throughout the entire universe.
3 Letter to Secretary General, United Nations

New Delhi,
September 9, 1959

His Excellency Secretary General
United Nations
New York

Your Excellency,

Kindly refer to the proceedings of the General Committee of the United Nations General Assembly held on Friday, November 24, 1950, at which it was resolved that the consideration of E1-Salvador's complaint against the "invasion of Tibet by foreign forces" should be adjourned in order to give the parties the opportunity to arrive at a peaceful settlement. It is with the deepest regret that I am informing you that the act of aggression has been substantially extended with the result that practically the whole of Tibet is under the occupation of the Chinese forces. I and my government have made several appeals for a peaceful and friendly settlement, but so far these appeals have been completely ignored. Under these circumstances, and in view of the inhuman treatment and crimes against humanity and religion to which the people of Tibet are being subjected, I solicit immediate intervention of the United Nations and consideration by the General Committee on its own initiative of the Tibetan issue, which had been adjourned.

In this connection I and my government wish to emphasize that Tibet was a sovereign State at the time when her territorial integrity was violated by the Chinese armies in 1950. In support of this contention the government of Tibet urges the following:

First, no power of authority was exercised by the government of China in or over Tibet since the Declaration of Independence by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in 1912.
Second, the sovereign status of Tibet during this period finds conclusive evidence in the fact that the government of Tibet concluded as many as five international agreements immediately before and during these years.

Third, the government of Tibet takes its stand on the Anglo-Tibet Convention of 1914 which recognised the sovereign status of Tibet and accorded the same position to the Tibetan plenipotentiary as was given to the representatives of Great Britain and China. It is true that this convention imposed certain restrictions on the external sovereignty of Tibet, but these did not deprive her of her internal position. Moreover, these restrictions ceased to have any effect on the transfer of power in India.

Fourth, there is no valid and subsisting international agreement under which Tibet or any other power recognised Chinese suzerainty.

Fifth, the sovereign status of Tibet is equally evident from the fact that during the Second World War Tibet insisted on maintaining her neutrality and only allowed the transport of nonmilitary goods from India to China through Tibet. This position was accepted by the government of Great Britain and China.

Sixth, the sovereign status has also been recognised by other powers. In 1948 when the Trade Delegation from the government of Tibet visited India, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, the passport issued by the Tibetan government was accepted by the governments of these countries.

Your Excellency, I and my government also solicit immediate intervention of the United Nations on humanitarian grounds. Since their violation of the territorial integrity of Tibet, the Chinese forces have committed the following offences against the universally accepted laws of conduct:

First, they have dispossessed thousands of Tibetans of their properties, and deprived them of every source of livelihood, and thus driven them to death and desperation.

Second, men, women, and children have been pressed into labour gangs and made to work on military constructions without payment or on nominal payment.
Third, they have adopted cruel and inhuman measures for the purpose of sterilizing men and women with view to the total extermination of the Tibetan race.

Fourth, thousands of innocent people of Tibet have been brutally massacred.

Fifth, there have been many cases of murder of leading citizens of Tibet without any cause or justification.

Sixth, every attempt has been made to destroy our religion and culture. Thousands of monasteries have been razed to the ground and sacred images and articles of religion completely destroyed. Life and property are no longer safe, and Lhasa, the capital of the State, is now a dead city. The sufferings which my people are undergoing are beyond description, and it is imperatively necessary that this wanton and ruthless murder of my people should be immediately brought to an end. It is under these circumstances that I appeal to you and the United Nations in the confident hope that our appeal will receive the consideration it deserves.

The Dalai Lama

H.H. The Dalai Lama
4 Letter to Secretary General, United Nations

Swaragshram,
Dharamsala, Cantt
East Punjab, India
September 2, 1960

His Excellency
Dag Hammarskjöld
Secretary General of the United Nations,
New York.

Your Excellency,

Last year when I formally appealed to Your Excellency for the intervention of the United Nations on behalf of the people of Tibet, Your Excellency was kind enough to help my representatives with your inestimable advice and valuable support. I have, therefore, ventured to approach you once again in the name of the people of Tibet who are today groaning under an intolerable burden of terror and tyranny.

As Your Excellency is no doubt aware, the situation in Tibet has now become a grim tragedy. Hundreds of Tibetans have been arriving in India and Nepal to escape from merciless persecution and inhuman treatment. But there are thousands of others who find it impossible to seek asylum in the neighbouring countries and are, therefore, threatened with immediate death and destruction. I feel most strongly that something must be done immediately to save the lives of these innocent men, women, and children, and have accordingly sought the assistance and support of the governments of many member States of the United Nations. His Excellency the Prime Minister of the federation of Malaya, and the government of Thailand have generously responded to my appeal and have declared their intention to raise the Tibetan question at the next session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. It is in this
connection that I have ventured to approach Your Excellency once again. As on the last occasion, I trust Your Excellency will find it possible to use your good offices and influence in devising a practical solution to the tragic problem of Tibet. Your Excellency, I hope, will permit me to express my own feelings in the matter. I firmly believe that the only effective and speedy way in which the United Nations can help the unfortunate people of Tibet is by way of mediation, either through an ad hoc body appointed for the purpose by the General Assembly or through Your Excellency's good offices. This is what I feel, and have also expressed this view to His Excellency Tunku Abdul Rahman and His Excellency Marshal Sarit Thanarat. This however, is only a suggestion I am making for Your Excellency's consideration, and I would be most grateful if Your Excellency could see your way to favour me with your personal advice.

With assurances of my highest esteem and consideration.

I remain,

The Dalai Lama.
5 Letter to Secretary General, United Nations

Swaragshram,
Dharamsala, Cantt.
East Punjab, India
September 29, 1960

His Excellency
Dag Hammarskjold
Secretary-General,
United Nations,
New York, N.Y.

Your Excellency,

May I convey to the United Nations and to Your Excellency my warm appreciation of the great work which has been and is being done in Congo under the auspices of the U.N.

2. Kindly refer to my letter of September 9, 1959,\(^1\) circulated by you as Note No. 2033, and also to my letter to Your Excellency of September 2, 1960.\(^2\)

3. I am happy to learn that the Question of Tibet has been inscribed on the agenda of the U.N. Assembly for this year at the instance of Malaya and Thailand to whom I am deeply grateful. I do hope that all the peace loving countries will take heed of the voice of my people and provide for them a ray of light in the night of subjugation and oppression through which they are passing.

4. I am happy to note that in his speech in the Assembly on September 24, 1960, H.E.N. Khurshchev called for the freedom of all colonial peoples. Unfortunately my country has been

\(^{1,2}\) Vide pp. 6-10.
reduced to the status of a colonial country, and I hope that along with other countries the USSR will also raise its powerful voice in support of the restoration of freedom to my country.

5. Whatever the position of Tibet may have been prior to 1911-12 there was no vestige of Chinese authority in Tibet, but it is not necessary for me to examine the historical aspect of this question for the purposes of this appeal.

6. Whatever the position of Tibet may have been prior to 1911-12, in any event, from the day that the Thirteenth Dalai Lama proclaimed the independence of Tibet, after the invading Chinese armies had been driven out of Tibet, Tibet was not only independent de facto but de jure.

7. In 1913 the Tibetan government entered into a treaty with the government of Mongolia. This entreaty was entered into under the authority of Dalai Lama. By this treaty Tibet and Mongolia declared that they recognized each other as independent countries.

8. With a view to settle some outstanding questions, Tibet agreed to enter into tripartite discussions which commenced in 1913, at Simla, the parties to the discussion were the British government, Chinese government, and Tibetan government. The representative of each government being a plenipotentiary on behalf of his government. This appears clearly from the text of the Convention which was initialled by the representatives of all the parties.

9. This fact is also emphasized by the White Paper No. II issued by the government of India (page 38) entitled Notes, Memoranda, and Letters Exchanged between the governments of India and China, September- November, 1959. This has been further emphasized in the note of the government of India dated February 12, 1960 (pp. 94, 95) in the White Paper No. III issued by the government of India.

10. Although the text of the Convention was initialled by the representative of the Chinese government, the Chinese
government backed out and ultimately on the third of July, 1914, the signature on behalf of the Dalai Lama, in his capacity as the head of the Tibetan State, and the British plenipotentiary were appended. At the same time the plenipotentiaries of Great Britain and Tibet, in view of the refusal of the Chinese government, signed the following Declaration:

11. We the plenipotentiaries of Great Britain and Tibet, hereby record the following declaration to the effect that we acknowledge the annexed Convention as initialled to be binding on the governments of Great Britain and Tibet, and we agree that so long as the government of China withholds signature to the aforesaid Convention, she will be debarred from the enjoyment of all privileges accruing therefrom.

12. In token whereof we have signed and sealed this declaration, two copies in English and two in Tibetan.

13. Done at Simla this third day of July, A.D. 1914, corresponding with the Tibetan date—the tenth day of the fifth month of The Wood Tiger Year.

A. Henry McMahon,
British Plenipotentiary
(Seal of the British Plenipotentiary)
(Seal of the Dalai Lama)
(Seal of the Lonchen Shatra) (Signature of the Lonchen Shatra)
(Seal of the Drepung Monastery)
(Seal of the Sera Monastery)
(Seal of the Gaden Monastery)
(Seal of the National Assembly)

14. The Chinese government, never having adhered to the terms of the Convention, never became entitled to any of the advantages which they may have derived from the terms of the Convention.
15. In 1926 Tibet was represented at a Boundary Commission consisting of the representatives of Tibet, Tehri, and Great Britain which met at Nilang.

16. Between 1912 and 1950 there was not even a semblance of Chinese authority in Tibet. There was no Chinese mission in Tibet which arrived in 1934 to offer condolences on the death of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. This Mission was permitted to continue to stay in Tibet on the same footing as the missions from Nepal and from the government of India.

17. On numerous occasions after 1936 the officers of the Chinese mission to Lhasa used to travel via India to Tibet. On every occasion the Indian government granted or refused transit visas after consulting the wishes of the government of Tibet.

18. In 1949 even this mission was expelled from Tibet.

19. Tibet was not a party to the Sino-Japanese war, and even during the Second World War Tibet insisted on its position as a neutral and did not permit the transport of war material from India to China.

20. The Chinese claim that Tibetan delegates participated in the Constituent Assembly in 1946 and that they also sat in the Chinese National Assembly in 1948. This claim is absolutely false. Dzasak Khemey Sonam Wangdo, who was the leader of the Delegation which went to China says, “In 1946 the Tibetan government had sent a good will Mission headed by Dzasak Rongpel-Ihun, Thubten Samphel and myself Dzasak Khemey Sonam Wangdo with assistants to offer victorious greetings to Britain, America, and the Kuomintang government; we travelled via Calcutta to New Delhi, and offered the greetings to Britain and America through their Ambassadors; from there we went by air to Nanking and offered greetings. Due to illness and medical treatment we remained there for a few months. Then we toured several provinces and on our return to Nanking they were having their big assembly. We attended the assembly in order to study the behaviour of the Khamba and other Tibetan
emigrants who attended the assembly as pretended Tibetan representatives. But we did not recognize or sign the new constitutional law (Shenfa) which was then made."

As for 1948, our mission in Nanking, namely the Khandon Losum, also attended the Chinese Assembly as visitors but no special representative was deputed from Lhasa, and they similarly did not recognize or sign the resolutions of the assembly.

21. In 1947 after India became independent, in reply to a communication from the Tibetan government, the government of India replied as follows:

"The government of India would be glad to have an assurance that it is the intention of the Tibetan government to continue relations on the existing basis until new agreements are reached on matters that either party may wish to take up. This is the procedure adopted by all other countries with which India has inherited treaty relations from His Majesty's government."

22. Between 1912 and till the Seventeen-Point Agreement was signed on May 23, 1951, Tibet continued to conduct its foreign affairs without reference to any outside authority. Tibetan delegations in 1946 and in 1948 travelled extensively on Tibetan passports.

23. Mr. H.E. Richardson, who was in charge of the British and later Indian Mission at Lhasa, stated to the Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet, constituted by the International Commission of Jurists that, "the duties of the Officer in Charge of the British and later Indian Mission at Lhasa after 1936 were principally to conduct the diplomatic business of his government with the Tibetan government" (page 146 of the report entitled "Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic").

24. The foregoing facts should suffice to show that Tibet was completely independent. Since, however, doubts were raised last year regarding the status of my country, the following facts may be usefully stated:
25. Sir Eric Teichmann in Affairs of China wrote: "Since (1912) no vestige of Chinese authority has survived or reappeared in Lhasa-ruled Tibet. In more than twenty years he (the Thirteenth Dalai Lama) ruled as undisputed master of autonomous Tibet, preserving internal peace and order and maintaining close and intimate relations with the Indian government."

26. In 1928 Sir Charles Bell in The People of Tibet pointed out that Chinese authority in Tibet had ceased.

27. M. Amaury de Riencourt who was in Tibet in 1947, states, "Tibet ruled itself in all respects as an independent nation." He goes on to say that "government's writ ran everywhere."

28. Tsung Lien-shen and Shen Chi-liu who were both members of the Chinese Mission in Lhasa, say, "since 1911 Lhasa has to all practical purposes enjoyed full independence." In support of this they mention that Tibet had its own currency and customs, its own telegraph and postal service, and its own civil service different from that of China, and its own army.

29. In 1950 when the proposal of El Salvador to place the question of the invasion of Tibet on the agenda of the General Assembly was being considered, the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, the representative of India said his government had given careful study to the problems raised by the proposal of El Salvador to place the question of the invasion of Tibet by foreign forces on the General Assembly agenda. That was a matter of vital interest to both China and India. The Committee was aware that India, as a neighbour of both China and Tibet, with both of which it had friendly relations, was the country most interested in a settlement of the problem. That was why the Indian government was particularly anxious that it should be settled peacefully. (A/BUR/SR. 73, page 19)

30. The claim of the Chinese to suzerainty over Tibet is based on the 1907 Convention between Great Britain and Russia. It may be pointed out that Tibet was not a party to that Convention and was in no way bound by that Convention.
31. As the head of the Tibetan government I say that what happened on October 7, 1950, was a flagrant act of aggression on the part of China against my country.

32. The Tibetan government appealed to the United Nations for help. As a result of the defeat of the Tibetan army, and after the efforts of the Tibetan government to get the help of the United Nations had failed, we were compelled to send a delegation to Peking. The delegation was compelled to sign what is known as the Seventeen-Point Agreement on May 23, 1951.

33. The events since then and till my departure from Tibet in March, 1959, are too well known to require any detailed recounting. Even now refugees are coming into Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, and India practically every day. The number of the refugees is 43,500. From the accounts of these refugees, the oppression and wholesale terror, to which I referred in my letter to you last year and also this year, have in no way lessened.

34. In this connection may I draw the attention of the United Nations to the excellent reports on the question of Tibet published by the International Commission of Jurists. In the second report, the distinguished Committee that closely examined that question came to the conclusion, inter alia, that Chinese authorities had been guilty of genocide within the meaning of the Genocide Convention. I trust that the United Nations will carefully examine the facts on which this conclusion is based and will take appropriate action to deal with this matter. Genocide, even apart from the Genocide Convention, has been recognized as a crime against International Law.

35. As a result of a wholesale breach of all the important terms of the Seventeen-Point Agreement, the General Assembly (consisting of officials and public, mainly the public) repudiated that Agreement, as it was well entitled to do, and reasserted the independence of Tibet on March 10, 1959.
36. The fighting in Tibet against the occupiers and the oppressors is still going on. I appealed to the United Nations last year, and I am making this appeal again in the hope that the United Nations will take appropriate measures to get China to vacate its aggression. In my opinion, any measure short of this is not going to be of much help to my country where the Communist steamroller is every day crushing out the freedom of my people.

37. May I request Your Excellency to place this Appeal before the United Nations.

The Dalai Lama
6 China and the Future of Tibet

During the past few weeks I have visited many parts of the United States and spoken at universities, colleges and religious institutions and small centres of learning. I have also had the opportunity to address several organisations concerned with world affairs and foreign policy. In almost every situation I have taken the liberty to speak on love and compassion. I firmly believe that the promotion of these qualities contribute to modern society’s need for a balance against excessive material preoccupation.

I have spoken at length on these topics not simply as a Buddhist, but from a clear universal recognition that except for superficial differences all humans are in essence the same in that we all want happiness and do not want suffering and on this basis engage in various techniques to bring this about. Recognition of our fundamental aim and agreement is important.

The press, the general public and numerous individuals I have met have also indicated a keen interest in Tibet, the Tibetan people and their future. It is obvious that developments in China during the past few years have contributed to this interest and caused speculations of a quick end to my exile. Therefore, I think that I should express my thoughts on the subject and my views on what may possibly lie ahead.

One who is not politically motivated can easily understand that Tibet is a separate country different from China. This thought comes quite naturally because Tibet was and is in fact different from China—racially, culturally, linguistically, geographically and historically. No knowledgeable person would for a moment think that Tibetans are Chinese.

Patron-Priest Relationship

In the past there existed a special patron-priest relationship between China and Tibet; a relationship which was spiritual rather than temporal. In those times, the three countries, China, Mongolia and Tibet, were referred to as separate countries. You ask a Tibetan what his nationality is and his answer will be “Tibet.” Similarly, when people discuss something Tibetan, it is always in the sense of something that is different and distinct
from Japanese, Indian or Chinese. For example, when people talk about
Tibetan Buddhism, it is never implied that Chinese Buddhism represents
Tibetan Buddhism as well.

The word "China" is "Gya-nak" in Tibetan. Since the Tibetan word
"Gya-nak" refers to a foreign land, it implies Tibet to be separate from
China. The Chinese do not use this word. They use the vague term our
nation and motherland instead of China in their official documents and
publications in the Tibetan language. They explain to us that Tibet is not
a part of Gya-nak (China), but that it is a part of Chung Kuo (Middle
Kingdom), just as Gyanak (China) also is! However, Chinese who are not
politically oriented do not make this distinction for they refer to the Chinese
language as Chung Kuo Hau (language of the Middle Kingdom). But
politically motivated Chinese refer to it as Han Hua (language of Han) in
order to justify their stand that Tibet is an integral part of the Middle
Kingdom. Linguistic concoctions cannot hide the facts of life and history.

Because Tibet as well as Mongolia and East Turkestan are basically
and historically different from China, the Chinese have established various
autonomous administrative systems in these occupied areas. They also
use the language of these countries along with Chinese on their currency
notes. Also, in the case of Tibet, because it was independent until 1950,
the Chinese signed the 17 point Agreement with the Tibetan government.
No other Chinese-occupied nationality has any such agreement, pact or
treaty with China. Here again, the Chinese say that this is an "agreement"
and not a "treaty," giving the unsatisfactory explanation that "agreements"
are made only within a nation between the central and local governments.

It may be of interest that Sun Yat-sen, the father of the Chinese
republic, considered Tibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria as foreign countries.
Also Mao Tse-tung in the 1930s when he was carrying out his struggle
and not yet in power, supported Tibetan independence. Many years later,
in 1954 when I was in China, Mao told me that while we were poor and
backward, China would help us, but that after 20 years we (Tibetans)
would be able to help them (the Chinese). On another occasion he told
me that the Chinese personnel then stationed in Tibet would be withdrawn
when the Tibetans could manage by themselves.

Even after 30 years of occupation by the People's Republic of China
and in spite of China's world-wide propaganda projecting the picture of
Tibet as an inseparable and integral part of China — nobody says that
he has been to China when he has visited Tibet, or that the Chinese have taken to socialism when he means that the Tibetans have.

During these past three decades the Chinese have placed great emphasis on the unity of their nation and have boasted much achievement in that direction. Speeches on this have been made on numerous occasions at public meetings and official receptions. If we are to go by the number of times this theme has been stressed, the Chinese should have by now achieved a rock-like, unshakable unity. But this has not happened for it is an artificial unity that is being imposed unsuccessfully on different nationalities, Tibetans being one of them.

To claim that Tibet is a part of the Chinese nation is both distorted and hypocritical. The Chinese seem to realise this, and one hopes therefore that they will change their policy and accept the reality of a Tibetan nation. If the Chinese really want understanding and friendship, Tibetans, Mongolians and East Turkistanis should be treated according to their real circumstances and given their inalienable national rights and fundamental freedoms in their own home-lands.

The Chinese claim that they did not come to Tibet as imperialists or colonialists, but as "liberators". What sort of liberation is it that denies the people their birthright and the freedom to determine their own destiny themselves? Having deprived the Tibetan people of freedom, the Chinese talk about an imaginary "state of glorious happiness and progress" said to be existing in Tibet.

I am pointing out these facts not with any antagonism towards the Chinese. If one day all the countries of the world join together as one nation, I would welcome that, and Tibet would become a willing partner in such a movement. But as long as this does not happen, the six million Tibetans are entitled to all the rights that other free peoples have including the preservation of their separate, unique identity and way of life. As long as the six million Tibetans remain under foreign military occupation, they will continue to struggle for genuine national liberation and for legitimate rights in their own country.

A Clear Account

I think it is important that we as Tibetans present a clear and factual account of the Tibetan situation. This is particularly necessary now when the present Chinese leadership is reported to be following a more
moderate and more reasonable path. It remains to be seen whether Chinese leaders are prepared to recognise realities as they really exist, or whether they will continue to direct facts in order to draw conclusions that serve only China's interests.

I have always firmly believed that unless we act according to the real existing circumstances we can never achieve our true aspirations. To my great disappointment, ever since the invasion of Tibet by the People's Republic of China, owing both to a lack of understanding of the actual situation, and often because the truth was intentionally ignored by the Chinese, there have existed most unfriendly relations between Tibet and China. This is an unfortunate state of affairs between two countries who have been neighbours for centuries. The Chinese took advantage of the Tibetans whenever possible, and as a result the Tibetans have grown ever suspicious of them.

Unions or federations can take place only when there is mutual agreement and mutual benefits flow from such agreements. But they have to be disbanded or discontinued when it is realised that the people do not support them. The future of Tibet is not a matter of determination by the Chinese occupation force. Six million Tibetans obviously cannot be absorbed or integrated with China, and their identity cannot be destroyed.

Friendly relations between Tibet and China, which I dearly wish for, can be established only on the basis of equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit. I for one would gladly accept whatever destiny the six million people of Tibet choose for themselves in a climate of genuine freedom and peace. The free will of the Tibetan people is the only true basis for determining their destiny. Until it flourishes, there will be no peace in the hearts and minds of my people. With boundless faith in themselves and in the righteousness of their own cause they will wait for the day, which must come, when they can fully and freely enjoy their legitimate national rights and at the same time enjoy a relationship with China on a new basis of mutual benefit and respect.

The Wall Street Journal, 8-11-1979
7 Message to the People of India

November 2, 1984

This is a crucial period for India. I want to express a few things that are in my mind, as a follower of non-violence, as a follower of the ancient teachers of India and as a person who has in recent times lived and experienced the freedom in this country for 25 years. At such an extremely disturbed moment\(^1\) it is immensely important to think of the long-term consequences and act with the utmost calm.

This country is the home of many great saints and teachers of non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi, who is known throughout the world, had recently put the noble principles of non-violence into practice in politics. It is absolutely important that this country, which should be proud of these noble principles propounded by the sages of the past, must practice these in the present times. The democracy and the great amount of freedom that this country possesses should be treasured by everyone. I see danger of the image of the Indian greatness and dignity being tarnished if through minor differences in political views and religious faiths people begin to develop a sense of communalism. Therefore, at this time, as a follower of the great Indian teachers of the past and as a Buddhist monk I appeal to everyone with folded hands to look into the future with farsightedness and not fall into the pit of communalism.

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\(^1\)The reference is to the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984.
It is now more than 30 years since China forcibly occupied Tibet. In this period, our religion and culture have been destroyed. The people of Tibet have suffered tremendous physical and economic deprivation, and at least 1.3 million have died as a direct result of occupation. But never, even in the worst of times, did the Tibetans lose their distinct national identity. That is the threat we face today: The complete assimilation and absorption of our people by a vast sea of Chinese settlers streaming across our borders.

Early this century, the Manchus were a distinct race with their own culture and traditions. Today, only two to three million Manchurians are left in Manchuria, where 75 million Chinese have settled, in East Turkestan which the Chinese now call Sinkiang, the Chinese population has grown from 200,000 in 1949 to seven million, more than half of the total population of 13 million. In the wake of the Chinese colonization of Inner Mongolia, Chinese now outnumber the Mongols by 8.5 million to 2.5 million.

The area where I was born, the Kokonor region of northeastern Tibet, now already has a population of 2.5 million Chinese and only 700,000 Tibetans, according to a recent Chinese newspaper report. The Chinese claim to be giving special care and attention to the so called Tibetan Autonomous Region, which comprises only the western and central parts of Tibet, but they are sending large numbers of young Chinese colonists into the eastern and northeastern parts of our country.

Almost all of Tibet's great wealth especially the priceless religious statues, images, paintings and icons that adorned our thousands of monasteries and temples has been plundered and taken to China. Virtually all of the 5,700 monasteries and 500 temples of which we have records have been destroyed. Among our greatest losses are their irreplaceable ancient Sanskrit, Pali and Tibetan texts destroyed by the Chinese.

It is impossible even to begin to estimate the immense material loss that the Tibetans have suffered under the Chinese. Yet the Chinese have
the arrogance to boast that they have spent US$2.7 billion to develop Tibet over the last three decades. What they fail to mention is that this figure includes the tremendous expense of maintaining at least 250,000 Chinese troops and 1.7 million civilian personnel in our country. Anyway, this sum is only a fraction of what the Chinese have destroyed or taken out of Tibet.

By any social, moral, religious or legal standards, the theft of one individual’s belongings by another is strongly condemned. Surely, when such robbery is committed by one race against another, this must be a crime of immense magnitude.

I am pleased at the slight improvement of conditions that has taken place in Tibet since 1979. More food is available, a small degree of economic freedom has been reintroduced and the movement of people is less restricted. I am also encouraged to note that the Chinese leaders are more open-minded and moderate today than in the past. I hope that they will try to better understand the situation in Tibet and will adopt a policy that is both pragmatic and morally principled.

The fulfillment of the basic needs of food, shelter and clothing alone are not sufficient for human beings. Animals probably experience a sense of satisfaction when they are fed, sheltered and kindly treated, even if it is temporary. But in human society, freedom is a basic need, an inalienable right that can never be replaced by temporary improvements in food supplies and economic conditions.

We Tibetans are not against the Chinese people. All we demand is that which is rightfully ours. We believe that the Chinese too, have a right to happiness and prosperity, but not at the expense of another nation and people: China does not possess any right whatsoever to decide the fate of the Tibetan people.

Recently the Chinese have been taking some interest in the history of Tibet. This is good. Just as it is important that Chinese history is based on Chinese records, so also it is important that Tibetan history be based on Tibetan records. Not a single Tibetan record states that Tibet has at any time been a part of China.

There have certainly been periods in the past when the Mongols and the Manchus wielded some influence over Tibet. But is there a nation
in the world that has not at one time or another, been subjected to the influence of outside powers, whether military, political, cultural or religious? Stronger powers have, and still do at times, used their influence in an aggressive way to advance claims of sovereignty over weaker nations. But such claims have no basis and such actions cannot confer sovereignty.

It is my view that the issue of Tibet is not the concern of six million Tibetans alone. Because of Tibet's age-old ties with its neighbours and because of its strategic importance, what happens in and to Tibet has a direct and significant impact on the region and the world. The future of Tibet is therefore certainly not for the Chinese alone to decide as they please.

Throughout the history of mankind, solutions achieved through the use of force have inevitably been transitory. A solution can be genuine and lasting only if and when it is to the full satisfaction of the people concerned.

In the final analysis, it should be for the concerned people themselves, in this case the Tibetans, to decide what they want. I have always believed that human determination and any cause that is truly just will ultimately triumph.

The New York Times, 9-8-1985
The world is changing all the time. As it changes, we are constantly reminded of the interdependence of all nations and people. Developments that take place in one part of the world affect us wherever we may be. It is therefore logical that we should care and be concerned about the wellbeing and suffering of people and the environment they live in anywhere on the globe.

I appreciate the invitation you have extended to me to share some of my thoughts with you as a Tibetan and a Buddhist monk, because I believe human contact is the best way to increase mutual understanding.

My visit to Denmark is a cultural and religious one, as was my first visit here, in 1973. However, you have asked me to talk to you about present problems in Tibet and prospects for the future. Since there have been numerous reports in the press about Tibet recently, it may be useful for me personally to explain some aspects of the situation.

It is almost forty years since Tibet was invaded. Tibetans have suffered a great deal as a result of the Chinese occupation: 1.2 million Tibetans (over one sixth of Tibet’s population) have died and at least as many have been incarcerated. Almost everything of cultural, historic or religious value, including more than six thousand monasteries, was destroyed, mostly prior to China’s Cultural Revolution. Every expression of the Tibetans’ yearning for freedom has been brutally crushed.

In recent years positive changes have taken place in China and some improvements have also taken place in Tibet. Yet Tibetans are still deprived of their basic human rights, not to speak of democratic freedoms. In fact, today Tibetans are facing an unprecedented threat to their very existence as a people due to the massive influx of Chinese onto the Tibetan plateau. This population transfer is fast reducing Tibetans to a small and disenfranchized minority in their own country. Unless China reverses its policy, the world will lose a part of its human heritage. The rich and

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1This was addressed to the Society of Foreign Policy, Copenhagen, Denmark.
profound cultural and spiritual tradition of Tibet — and the Tibetan people will lose the hope of ever regaining the freedom they so cherish.

People everywhere long for peace and democracy, and Tibetans are no exception. The recent willingness of many world leaders to seek peaceful solutions to lingering disputes and to modify past hard-time stands in the interest of peace, has rightly earned them respect and praise. Hopes for peace in Afghanistan, Kampuchea, Angola, Western Sahara, and Nicaragua and the wind of democratic change in the Philippines, Korea, the Soviet Union and elsewhere, have also given us Tibetans renewed hope.

In September 1987, I proposed a Five Point Peace Plan\textsuperscript{2} for the restoration of peace and human rights in Tibet. The plan calls for:

1. Transformation of Tibet into a peace sanctuary;
2. Abandonment of China’s population transfer policy;
3. Respect for the Tibetan people’s fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms;
4. Restoration and protection of Tibet’s natural environment and the abandonment of China’s use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste; and
5. Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

This plan was well received by the international community. The Chinese, however, reacted with a renewed show of force in Tibet and the violent crushing of demonstrations and uprisings which took place throughout the past year. I appealed to the Tibetan people for calm and urged them not to resort to violence, even if Chinese forces used harsh and painful methods to silence them.

In an effort to seek an end to the suffering of the Tibetan people, and in the hope of preventing further violence in my country, I presented a new idea to the Chinese government last June, containing an elaboration of the Five Point Peace Plan. I announced this to members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg on June 15, 1988.\textsuperscript{3}

In it, I repeated my call for the transformation of the Tibetan plateau into a peace sanctuary, a place where human beings and nature could

\textsuperscript{2}Vide The Spirit of Tibet: Universal Heritage, pp. 159-62.

\textsuperscript{3}ibid. pp. 163-67.
live in harmony and peace; a demilitarized and neutral zone that would be used for the active promotion of peace and stability in Asia. I suggested that a regional peace conference be called to discuss the implementation of the idea.

I further proposed that the whole of Tibet should become a self-governing democratic political entity founded on law by agreement of the people for the common good and protection of themselves and their environment, in association with the People's Republic of China.

I did not address the question of Tibet's formal status, nor did I attempt to give a name to the association that could exist between the Tibetans and the Chinese, because I know that these are difficult issues to resolve at this stage, and raising them could hamper any progress that might otherwise be made. If we wish to move forward, I believe we must first try to reach agreement on the substance of a possible relationship between Tibet and China: explore how it could work in practice. Then, perhaps, we can attempt to resolve the question of the formal nature of the relationship and the relative status of both parties.

In the Strasbourg speech, I suggested a form of association by which Tibetans would once again govern themselves, under a democratic and constitutional form of government. China could maintain responsibilities in the field of foreign affairs. I even acknowledged that until the peace sanctuary was established, China might be permitted to maintain a restricted number of troops in Tibet, exclusively for defence purposes.

I was much encouraged by the positive response my idea has received in Asia, Europe and the United States. In India, for example, parliamentarians of all parties endorsed my peace plan and in the United States, the Congress last week passed a Concurrent Resolution supporting it.

The Chinese government has taken some time to respond to my statement. I am happy to say, however, that it has now accepted my invitation to negotiate. I had expressed the wish that negotiations should take place in a neutral venue; the Chinese government has agreed to appoint a senior official to negotiate at any place that we may choose.

I welcome the Chinese government's positive response and truly hope that this reflects a sincere desire on its part to discuss and resolve substantive issues, the most important of which I have mentioned in the Five Point Peace Plan and in the Strasbourg speech. It worries me, however,
that the Chinese have put conditions on both the substance and the form of the negotiations: they maintain that the Strasbourg idea cannot form the basis for discussion, and they do not want to accept the team of negotiators whom we have appointed.

If the Chinese are serious about negotiations, the substantive issues we Tibetans have raised must be discussed, and the Chinese government must accept to negotiate with representatives we appoint for this purpose.

For our part we are indeed sincere in our desire to reach a peaceful solution to the tragic situation in Tibet, and we wish to approach the negotiations in a spirit of conciliation and openness. We intend to present detailed suggestions on the lines we already proposed in Strasbourg, but we are also prepared to discuss reasonable proposals the Chinese government may wish to present.

Ultimately, it must be for the Tibetan people themselves to decide how and by whom they wish to be governed. The initial reaction of many Tibetans to my idea has been one of dismay. Based on past experience, most Tibetans do not believe that the Chinese have the intention to honour their commitments. Only complete independence, they hold, can restore and protect the Tibetan people's rights. It is my personal hope that a solution based on the Five Point Peace Plan and the Strasbourg statement could satisfy the most immediate need of the Tibetan people and also of the Chinese.

The Tibetan people are ready and willing to live in friendship with all their neighbours. The need for co-operation and association among peoples increases as our world becomes smaller and more interdependent. We are not averse to co-operation based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. What we are opposed to is colonialism and the oppression of one people by another.

I thank you for your attention and warm reception. It gives the Tibetan people courage and hope to know that there are people, like yourselves, who have not forgotten Tibet, and who care about the welfare of our people. The concern expressed by so many people everywhere, and also the expression of concern conveyed to the Chinese government by a number of governments, have already made a positive impact on Chinese policies in Tibet.

Your continued interest and support is essential to protect Tibetans from further harsh and excessive policies and to ensure that peace and justice is restored in Tibet.
10 True Meaning of Peace

San Jose, Costa Rica,
June 27, 1989

Since my arrival in Costa Rica, two days ago, I have had the opportunity to understand some of the achievements of the people of this country. I must say I am impressed by these and feel they can provide inspiration to others to follow the path of peace. Of course this country has problems, as do all countries. But in dealing with their problems, Costa Ricans have chosen the path of non-violence and democracy in ways that could serve as an example to many.

Costa Rica is indeed a good place to reflect on the true meaning of peace on account of the peaceful atmosphere prevailing here. I mentioned some of my thoughts on the subject yesterday at the opening of the conference. Today, I would like to elaborate somewhat on those views.

Our world is becoming ever more interdependent, yet as nations seek to fulfil the increasing needs and expectations of their often expanding populations, it is worthwhile to consider means for achieving and preserving world peace. Everyone wishes for comfort and happiness, but it is a mistake to feel that these can be gained by aggression and force. It is important that we employ peaceful means in achieving our aims and, this conference is valuable in providing an opportunity for all of us to meet and exchange our views and experiences.

The gathering here of distinguished individuals concerned with the true meaning of peace is an indication that peace is an essential condition of happiness. I speak to you today as a fellow human being, an inhabitant of the planet we are destined to share. I also speak to you as a simple Buddhist monk. The most important factor in maintaining peace within oneself, in the face of any difficulty, is one's mental attitude. If it is distorted by such feelings as anger, attachment or jealousy, then even the most comfortable environment will bring one no peace. On the other hand, if one's attitude is generally calm and gentle, then even a hostile environment will have little effect on one's own inner peace. Since the basic source of
peace and happiness is one's own mental attitude, it is worthwhile adopting means to develop it in a positive way.

It seems these days that although the intellect, the 'brain' aspect of human beings, has been developed and put to use, we have somehow neglected the development of a good heart, the humane feelings of love, compassion and kindness. This lack of good heart does not give us complete satisfaction although we may experience great material progress. Material development is necessary and beneficial for mankind, but it provides us mainly with physical comfort, not with mental peace. Such good human qualities as openness, kindness and respect for others can neither be bought with money nor can they be produced by machines. They can only be generated in the mind itself.

The question of real, lasting world peace concerns human beings, so basic human feelings are also at its root. Through inner peace, genuine world peace can be achieved. In this the importance of individual responsibility is quite clear; an atmosphere of peace must first be created within ourselves, then gradually expanding it to include our families, our communities and ultimately the whole planet.

In order to create inner peace, what is most important is the practice of compassion and love, understanding and respect for human beings. The most powerful obstacles to this are anger, hatred, fear and suspicion. So while people talk about disarmament in the world at large, some kind of an internal disarmament is also necessary. The question is whether we can reduce our negative thoughts and increase positive attitudes. If we examine our daily lives we can see whether there is any value in anger, for instance, and whether compassion and love are helpful or not. As a general example, we can observe that human beings are sociable by nature and tend to gather friends around them. Yet it is clear that people who are always angry in most cases not only have little peace, but also few dependable friends, whereas those who are calm by nature have more peace and more true friends, friends who stand by them through success and failure. Such friends are not acquired through anger, jealousy or greed, but through genuine love, compassion and openness. So, it is evident that hostile thoughts destroy peace and happiness, but kind-hearted thoughts create them.
Developing such attitudes as love and compassion, patience and understanding between human beings is not merely a source of personal happiness, but has become a condition for human survival. The world is becoming smaller and increasingly interdependent. Nations can no longer solve all their problems alone, they also need friends, for much depends on the interest, attitude and cooperation of other nations. Universal humanitarian approach to world problems seems the only sound basis for world peace. How can this be achieved? We can begin with the recognition that all beings cherish happiness and do not want suffering, that in general all beings’ desires are the same as our own. From this viewpoint it is both morally wrong and pragmatically unwise to pursue only one’s own happiness oblivious to the feelings and aspirations of other members of the same human family. The wiser course is to think of others, too, when pursuing our own aims. If we adopt a self-centred approach to life and exploit others for our own self-interest, we may gain temporary benefits, but in the long run we will not succeed in achieving even personal happiness, leave alone world peace.

The development of a kind heart and a sense of universal responsibility is for everyone regardless of race, religion or political affiliation, who considers himself or herself a member of the human family. When we look at things from a larger perspective, the fact that we all wish to gain happiness and avoid suffering, and keep in mind our own relative unimportance in relation to countless others, we can see the importance of sharing our good fortune and opportunities with others.

Such human qualities as morality, compassion, decency, and wisdom have been the foundation of all civilizations. But, they must be cultivated and sustained through systematic moral education in a conducive social environment so that a more humane world may emerge. If we can create these conditions there is hope for future generations. However, since present-day governments in general do not shoulder such moral responsibilities, humanitarian and religious leaders must strengthen existing civic, social, cultural, educational and religious organizations to revive human values. Only in doing so can we hope to create a more stable basis for world peace.
We are destined to share this planet together and as the world grows smaller, we need each other more than in the past. But, while we are trying to reduce the nuclear threat, defend human rights or preserve the natural environment, it is difficult to achieve a spirit of genuine cooperation as long as people remain indifferent to the feelings and happiness of others. What is required is a kind heart and a sense of community, which I call universal responsibility.

Many current problems can be traced to lack of concern for others, and so with a sense of universal responsibility they could be solved. The problems human society is facing in terms of economic development, the crisis of environmental destruction, the tensions between poor and rich nations and many geopolitical problems can be solved if we recognize each others’ fundamental humanity, respect each others’ rights, share each others’ problems and suffering, and then make a joint effort. We need to see others as people like ourselves, not as opponents or aliens. When they are in trouble it is important to respond with compassion, not to question the culture, ideology, faith, race, wealth or education of those we help. Instead of asking whether their country is an enemy or a friend we should think, “These are human beings who are suffering and who have a right to happiness equal to our own.”

There is little alternative, for if people in any part of the world are denied the happiness they desire and deserve they will naturally be dissatisfied and pose problems for the rich and the powerful. If unwanted social, political and cultural forms continue to be imposed upon unwilling people, the attainment of world peace will be doubtful.

The greatest single danger facing humankind, in fact all beings on our planet, is the threat of nuclear destruction. The danger is quite obvious, for how could anyone win a nuclear war which would leave no survivors? It is encouraging that at last world leaders have met and got to know each other as human beings and as a result concrete steps have actually been taken to reduce the great arsenals of nuclear weapons. This is a good beginning, but it must be continued and extended, so I appeal to the leaders of the nuclear powers, who hold the future of the world in their hands, the scientists and technicians who create these destructive weapons and to all people at large, who can exercise influence over
them, to continue to pursue the sensible policy of dismantling and destroying all nuclear weapons.

Like the nuclear threat, the damage being done to the natural environment and the atmosphere has the potential to affect all life on the planet. All living beings have a right to breathe clean air, drink fresh water and find food, as well as to be protected from the harmful effects of the depletion of ozone layer and other climatic changes. Similarly, the resources of the earth are not there merely to be exploited by the rich and the powerful at the expense of the poor and weak. Above all, do we not have an even greater responsibility to ensure that future generations may also enjoy such rights?

In order to resolve the various regional conflicts in different parts of the world, we need an approach that takes into account the interests of all relevant countries and peoples, large and small. Unless comprehensive solutions are formulated, that take into account the aspirations of the people most directly concerned, piecemeal solutions or merely expedient measures will only create new problems.

In this context I can only express my admiration for President Oscar Arias' efforts to bring about peace in Central America. His contribution has been a model for others to follow, for which he has deservedly been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

My own country, Tibet, has been undergoing a very difficult period since the Chinese invasion in 1949. In seeking to redress the problems of the six million Tibetan people, while acknowledging the requirements of our neighbours, I have proposed the conversion of Tibet into a zone of non-violence, a sanctuary in which humanity and nature can live in harmony. I have called for respect for human rights and democratic ideals, environmental protection and a halt to Chinese population transfer into Tibet.

It is my dream that Tibet should become a free haven where all people could come to seek the true meaning of peace within themselves, away from the tension and pressures of the rest of the world. Tibet could become a creative centre for the promotion of world peace.

Tibet's unique history and profound spiritual heritage render it ideally suited for fulfilling the role of a sanctuary of peace in the heart of Asia. It
would also be in keeping with Tibet's historical role as a peaceful Buddhist nation and a buffer region separating the continent's powers.

We Tibetans need the support and experience of the Costa Rican people and others who have successfully established oases of peace and conservation in the turbulent world. We also need the support of people like you who can help us to make this dream a reality.

Before concluding, I would like to comment briefly on the recent tragic events in China. I am deeply saddened by the outcome. Just as we had experienced in Tibet, peaceful demonstrations for more freedom and democracy were brutally suppressed by sheer force followed by a systematic crackdown on the demonstrators.¹ This is a great setback for China's attempts to move forward with the rest of the world, and is absolutely contrary to what many of us believe in. I pray for the people and nation of China.

Thank you.

¹The reference is to the Tiananmen Square massacre on June 4, 1989.
11 Speech on Human Rights and Responsibilities

In today's world there is a growing awareness among people everywhere of their fundamental rights as individuals and the recognition by many political leaders of the need to respond to popular demands. The establishment of regional human rights courts, such as The Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and various international human rights organizations by concerned people in different parts of the world, has greatly contributed to raising the awareness of the need to respect human rights. The work of this Court and of other institutions and organizations is also furthering the cause of peace.

Human rights and true peace — which is more than the absence of war — are closely linked. So long as human rights are violated there can be no foundation for peace. How can peace exist in a society where some members oppress their brothers and sisters and knowingly violate their fundamental human rights? How can peace grow where truth is not allowed to surface and speaking the truth is itself a crime?

Our world is becoming smaller and more interdependent, populations are growing rapidly and contacts among people and their governments are increasing. Given such a situation it is important to consider and reassess the position, rights and responsibilities of individuals, nations and peoples with respect to each other and to the planet as a whole.

I am addressing you today as a fellow inhabitant of this planet which we are destined to share. I speak to you also as a simple Buddhist monk, a believer in the values and power of love and compassion, which are the essence of my own faith. All human beings are essentially the same: we seek happiness and try to avoid suffering. Human beings, indeed all sentient beings, have the right to pursue happiness and peace. On the other hand, no one has the right to inflict pain and suffering on others. I believe that lack of understanding of the true nature of happiness is the

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1 This was delivered at Inter-American Court of Human Rights.
principal reason why people inflict suffering on others: it is the mistaken perception that causing pain may bring some form of happiness to ourselves. Perhaps in the short term we can gain some advantage at the expense of someone else, but this cannot bring about the happiness that comes with peace of mind and contentment.

True happiness comes not from a limited concern for one’s own well-being or that of those one feels close to, but from developing love and compassion for all sentient beings. The development of this attitude gives rise to a sense of openness and trust that provides the basis for peace.

When we demand the rights and freedoms we so cherish, we should be aware also of our responsibilities, in particular the responsibility not to harm others. If we accept that others have an equal right to peace and happiness as ourselves, have we not a responsibility to do what we can to help those in need and at least avoid harming them? Ignoring the suffering of our neighbours in order to enjoy our own freedom and good fortune in a better way is a rejection of such responsibilities. We need to develop a concern for the problems of others, whether they be individuals or entire peoples.

In today’s highly interdependent world, individuals and nations can no longer resolve many of their problems by themselves. We need one another. We must, therefore, strive to develop a sense of universal responsibility. There is a growing awareness of people’s responsibilities to each other and to the planet we share. I am encouraged by this. Even though so much suffering continues to be inflicted upon individuals and peoples in the name of ideology, religion, history or development, a new hope is emerging for the downtrodden. People everywhere are displaying a willingness to sacrifice their own well-being and, at times, even their lives for the rights and freedoms of their fellow human beings. The recent success of struggles for human rights and democracy in countries such as Poland, the Soviet Union, Pakistan, could not have taken place without the sympathy and support of concerned people throughout the world; people like yourselves, who feel a responsibility to help others. Tragically, in some countries popular movements for freedom and democracy are still being crushed with brute force.
We are currently witnessing a historical movement for the advancement of human rights and democratic freedoms in the world. This movement has such moral force, that even determined governments and armies will, in the long run, be incapable of suppressing it.

The growth of respect for human rights and democratic freedoms of individuals as well as increasing recognition of the rights of nations and peoples — regardless of their political status — fills many of us with courage and hope for the future. It is natural and just for nations and peoples to demand respect for their rights and freedoms and to struggle to end repression, racism, military occupation and various forms of colonialism and alien domination. Governments should actively support such demands which, if recognized, will eventually lead to a more just and stable world. Governments are often afraid of change. But change that promotes justice and happiness is in the long term interest of all.

I believe new initiatives are needed to improve existing human rights monitoring and enforcement mechanisms and to create new ones on an international and regional scale. What exists today is insufficient to deal with the persistent violations of human rights of individuals and entire peoples. Sometimes governments may find it difficult to support the establishment of such mechanisms, because they fear foreign interference in matters which they believe should fall within their own jurisdiction. The protection of fundamental human rights, including the most basic rights to life, freedom from arbitrary arrest or torture, right of peoples to survive as a people and to preserve their cultural identity, can never be considered the internal affair of any state. No government can claim discretionary authority to take away the inalienable rights of individuals and peoples.

We are at the dawn of an age in which extreme political concepts and dogmas may cease to dominate human affairs. We should use this historic opportunity to replace them by universal human and spiritual values, and to ensure that these values become the fibre of the global family which is emerging.

It is our collective and individual responsibility to protect and take care of the global family, to support its weaker members and to preserve and tend to the environment we share.
The Tibetan people wish to make our contribution and to fulfil our responsibilities. Although we are small in number, our way of life, our culture and spiritual tradition have helped us, even in the face of great hardship and suffering, to follow the path of peace and to find comfort in the pursuit of love and compassion.

Given the opportunity, the Tibetan people long to transform the high plateau which is our home into a true sanctuary of peace, where human beings and nature can co-exist in harmony and peace. I have proposed that the constitution of a new Tibet should guarantee all the rights provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We wish, in our own modest way, to promote the peace and human rights which all members of the global family seek.
12 Deciding Our Own Destiny

April 25, 1990

Brothers and sisters;

We are all one human family, and I believe that we have a universal responsibility to care for each other as human beings and for the planet as a whole. The facts that we come from different continents and are of a different race or speak a different language are only superficial. As human beings we are all part of one large family. I am therefore encouraged by your concern for the suffering and the aspirations of the Tibetan people and feel honoured by your invitation to address the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament.

The European Community itself is in one sense an example of what I mean by universal responsibility. Here, people have come together as a result of a greater sense of common responsibility and shared vision. I hope that one day all nations will be drawn together out of compassion for, and human understanding of, one another. For, on these depend the survival of the world.

Yesterday and today, you have heard testimonies concerning various forms of human rights violations in Tibet. These are but a part of the larger tragic story of the Tibetan people. Because China has closed Tibet to most foreigners, including and in particular journalists and members of human rights organizations, it is very difficult to obtain accurate information on the true conditions in different parts of Tibet. The little information that we do get is from those refugees who manage to flee Tibet and from a few foreign visitors allowed to enter Tibet.

The Tibetan people have suffered tremendously for the last forty years under China’s illegal occupation. Tibet was invaded and occupied by the Chinese People’s Liberation Army only a few years after World War II ended. Today, as we witness the changes in Eastern Europe, we should bear witness to the colonial yoke that surrounds Tibet, too.

Despite the unimaginable treatment meted out to the Tibetan people by the Chinese, I wish to reiterate my belief that the Tibetan issue can

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1This was addressed to the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, Brussels.
only be resolved through the development of mutual understanding and trust between the Tibetans and the Chinese. This, in turn, can be achieved only through open and honest discussions keeping in view the aspirations and interests of the six million Tibetans. It cannot be achieved through brutal repression and intimidation. Violence, in my opinion, only breeds hatred and more violence and cannot form the basis for a lasting solution.

As I am sure you are aware, I have consistently called for earnest negotiations between Tibetan and Chinese representatives. I have proposed this for the benefit of both the Tibetan and Chinese people and not out of concern for my own position or future.

Two and a half years ago, I proposed a Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet which I elaborated on during a visit to the European Parliament in 1988. Although the Chinese initially agreed to hold negotiations with my representatives at a place and time of my choosing, they have, for one reason or another, always evaded giving a direct response. We have yet to receive a constructive response from the Chinese.

Since June of last year, when the brave Chinese students and their supporters were massacred in Beijing in a manner which is all too familiar to us Tibetans, the hardened Chinese leadership has discontinued even the sporadic contact we had maintained with them. Today, instead of dialogue, there is increased repression in Tibet. The human rights of the Tibetan people are constantly being violated.

The Tibetan people surely have the right to be free and happy. And Tibet, which is culturally, racially, geographically and historically distinct from China, has the right to decide its own destiny, just as other colonized or victimized peoples do.

The vision we Tibetans have of a future Tibet is that of a peaceful plateau governed in a true democratic manner—where the chief executive, the government, and the parliament are elected by the people; where the rule of law, human rights and democratic freedoms are guaranteed in a constitution adopted by the people; and where the environment is protected and all forms of life respected. This region would eventually have to be demilitarized and denuclearized. A Tibetan zone of peace would benefit not only the Tibetan people, but would also be in the interest of regional peace and stability and of the environment which concerns all of us.

For us Tibetans, the study and practice of Buddhism is very important,
because we believe that it has real value in helping us to become better, more compassionate human beings, through the development of inner peace and respect for all forms of life. I further believe that Buddhist principles will enable us to contribute to world peace and the conservation of our planet's environment. However, it is not only the Buddhists who can make such a contribution. It is my conviction that followers of both, of any religion and no religion, can do the same. What is essential to us is that all people must be free to follow their own beliefs as they see fit.

Tibetans who have managed to escape from Tibet in the past decades have learned much from democracy. But even though Tibetans inside Tibet have been deprived of the opportunity to experience or learn about democracy under what the Chinese government calls the "dictatorship of the proletariat" they have developed a keen interest in democracy and long for the rights and freedoms people in other countries enjoy, and sometimes take for granted.

The changes that have taken place in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Africa have given us renewed hope and courage. If people long repressed can regain their freedom and create democratic and humane societies, why not the Tibetans? The democracy movement in China has also given us reason to be optimistic. If tomorrow's leaders of China truly believe in democracy, how can they fail to respect the Tibetan people's wishes? Imperialism and true democracy are incompatible, and most Chinese students whom I have recently met seem to understand that.

The Tibetan people have waged a non-violent struggle for many years. Throughout this time our determination has not weakened. As I have said, we remain willing and prepared to talk to the Chinese leadership, because I believe that dialogue is important.

As democratically elected leaders and representatives of the peoples of Europe, you can do much to help bring change to Tibet. Your public expressions of concern for the plight of the Tibetan people and support for their legitimate rights not only give us Tibetans renewed courage, but also remind China that the international community does care about the Tibetan people and that China cannot suppress or eliminate a country and people without being accountable to the international community.

To conclude, I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest, and the interest of the people you represent throughout the European community. Tashi Delek.
President, distinguished members of the University, brothers and sisters,

I am very happy to receive this honorary degree from the University. It is a great privilege for me and I am very happy to be with you here today. Normally I consider myself a rather lazy student, but over the years this lazy student has been receiving a lot of honorary degrees, so I feel very happy.

Now I will try to speak through my own broken English, but I am quite sure my broken English will spoil this solemn atmosphere. I consider myself as one human being of this planet. Essentially every human being is the same. By nature everyone wants happiness, does not want suffering, and everyone has every right to be happy. Also I feel human nature is gentle and compassionate. In spite of a lot of tragedy or human conflict, if we look closely at basic human nature, it is non-violent and compassionate. Therefore I am always trying to promote that nature, that human quality. I consider that is really the important thing which gives us hope, inner peace and inner strength. Therefore for an individual or a community or a nation or humanity as a whole, the good heart, the compassionate affectionate attitude is the basis for future success. So I give it top priority. Whenever I go to different places, I always consider the differences in culture or race or religion, different systems, are secondary, not important. Actually when we are born we are the same; different culture, ideology, religion, these come later. Therefore I always feel whenever I meet some new person, if I look at him superficially there are a lot of differences, but if we go a little deeper, we find we are the same. So I believe every individual human being has a responsibility to be concerned with or to work for better human beings and a better humanity.

The address delivered by His Holiness the Dalai Lama was translated by Thupten Jinpa.
Then being a Buddhist monk I am always trying to have closer relations between different religions, because religion is an instrument which solves human conflicts and tries to plant the seed of a good or compassionate heart.

Unfortunately sometimes religion also causes more problems, and suffering. Therefore dialogue between different religions is essential. I believe there is a possibility for them to come together, to work together for the betterment of humanity.

As a Tibetan, and as a Dalai Lama, it is one of my responsibilities to ensure the Tibetans' rights, to ensure Tibetan culture, and welfare of Tibetans. Today the theme of my talk is "Tibet: Past and Present". Everybody knows Tibet is considered as the Roof of the World. Several millions of years ago the Indian continent was separate, then eventually that gap disappeared and the two continents joined together. Tibet gained a very high altitude. As a result its geographical position or situation became very different; I think there is some reason why we call it the Roof of the World.

According to some people, there were human inhabitants in Tibet for more than twelve thousand years. Recently some of my friends have found some cave drawings in the western part of Tibet, in a new area which confirm this. According to some Chinese archeologists, I think some primitive civilization started 4 to 6,000 years ago. Due to the environment, Tibetans developed their own way of life and culture. Then since Buddhism came to Tibet, Tibetan culture was influenced by Buddhism. Besides Indian thought, Indian culture, also influenced it.

On the other hand King Songtsen Gampo, (7th century) married a princess of the Chinese Emperor as well as one Nepalese princess. So the Chinese cultural influence is also there. Also in ancient times, there was Buddhist contact which came to India sometimes through Nepal, sometimes through the Kashmir side, in western India. Later the Nepalese ancient culture was also there. Then the northern neighbour, Mongolia; of course Mongolians and Tibetans were almost like twin brothers or sisters. In Tibetan culture, specially in the matter of clothes has Mongolian influence. Sometimes I jokingly tell my friends, that we Tibetans adopted things quite cleverly; as far as spiritual matters are concerned India is the
best place, there are so many varieties, so we adopted Indian spirituality. Then as far as food is concerned the Chinese is the best. So we adopted some vegetables or certain other things from China. For centuries we have used Chinese names of vegetables. Regarding clothes, Mongolia being colder than Tibet, is more suitable. Therefore we adopted Mongolian clothes. Anyway, historically it seems it happened like that.

So Tibetans eventually created their own culture which now we call Tibetan Buddhism. Also in the medical science, according to some Tibetan scriptures, the Tibetan King invited some physicians from India, China and also, Persia [some modern scholars identify what the Tibetan historical literature refers to Tagsik as being Persian]. In any case, some doctors from there also joined local Tibetan doctors in an international medical conference which took place in the 8th century. I think at that time, that kind of thing was rare, wasn't it?

So you see in the fields of the Buddhist philosophy, medical science and astrology, the major influence is from India and China. So it was some kind of synthesis, that is what happened. Therefore you see now Tibet geographically, culturally, racially has its own separate identity.

I think many perhaps know that the Tibetan civilization — some people call it Shangrila, or some mystical land, and some say that in Tibet there are a lot of miracles or some magical things. That is not true, I think it is an exaggeration. Then some describe Tibet as really backward, as very dark and bad. That is also going a little bit too far. In reality Tibet, is something in-between. Tibet had a small population in such a vast area where the weather conditions were a bit too harsh. So under such circumstances we developed some kind of close feeling with one another, due to the environmental conditions. Also due to the Buddhist influence, we have developed an altruistic attitude. As Buddhists we always consider insects and small sentient beings are like human beings. We consider their life also is precious and we always take care of their life — although the majority of Tibetans are meat-eaters. You may see some contradiction in this but even butchers, when they kill animals, they recite some mantras and also they give to the animals some sacred pills. The actual method may be quite cruel, but at the same time they perform some prayers for them. So basically Tibetan society, is quite compassionate and peaceful.
by nature. Many foreigners who visit Tibet or India or Nepal, they often, get the impression that Tibetans are quite jovial and quite easy-going. If you see, Tibetan society, theoretically it was feudal, however if the society was so cruel and so backward, then it would have been evident on the faces of those Tibetans who were born and grew up in that society, but I feel that the faces of the generations which were born and grew up in that society, showed happiness. They are friendly and gentle. Unfortunately the Tibetans who were born and brought up under the present circumstances, their faces show those feelings to a lesser degree.

Then in the name of liberation a new situation developed. In the Tibetan mind the Chinese are something alien. Now you know there is no word in Tibetan which applies to both China and Tibet. In Tibetan through centuries we always call China as Gyanak, Tibet as Bo, India – Gyakar and Mongolia – Sokpo. There is no single word which applies to these places. By nature Tibetans considered the Chinese as foreigners even during the days of the Manchu Emperor as well as the Mongol Emperor, when they had quite substantial influence in Tibet. During this period the Tibetans always considered it the relationship of Patron and Priest, (Cho-yon) not subject and ruler.

No matter what kind of attitude the Chinese have, we certainly feel differently. Now that is the key or the basis of all this problem. During the last 40 years, in spite of the so called progress, developments such as building new roads, more hospitals and schools, there is a lot of destruction, immense human suffering and human sacrifice. Therefore I can say that the entire Tibetan population does not want to remain under the present Chinese occupation.

I can tell you something more about the present situation. Around 1950 the Chinese Liberation Army entered a certain part of Tibet. Even in 1949 they had entered, my birthplace, Amdo. Then in 1951 the 17 Point Agreement was signed under duress. During the next few years under most difficult circumstances we tried to develop some kind of understanding with the Chinese government. Then in 1954 I went to China as a head of the delegation of Tibet, to participate in the Chinese Congress of People’s Deputies. During that period I had a number of occasions to meet Chairman Mao and other dignitaries. I considered
Chairman Mao really a great revolutionary and great leader. When I talked with him, I used an interpreter, one Tibetan who knew Chinese and Marxist ideology very well. With his help the discussion with Chairman Mao reached great depths. At that time Chairman Mao told me Tibet is a backward country and you need our help. We will send Chinese civilians as well as military in order to help you. After 20 years when you become developed, then at that time, it will be your turn to help the Chinese. On one occasion he enquired, "Is there any Tibetan national flag?" I told him yes, then he said yes, "It is very important to keep one." Then on another occasion, not a private audience but rather with officials, on a long table, I sat on one side and with me there were my two Tutors and the members of the Cabinet of the Tibetan government. On the other side Chairman Mao and Lu Ciao Shee and some other dignitaries were there. In one corner of the long table there were General Fen Ying and General Chung Chin Mu who were stationed in Lhasa at that time. Chairman Mao turned his finger to the two Generals, then looked at me and said: "I sent these two Generals to Tibet in order to help you, in order to serve you. Whenever they do not follow your wish properly, let me know, I will withdraw them." At that time things looked really wonderful. Then I was 21 years and already had some knowledge about Western civilization. Dalai Lama means a Buddhist monk who is supposed to be a man of peace, but I was fond of looking at war books. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama had some war pictorial books about the first world war. I was very fond of looking at and reading them. I could not read English — I looked with amazement at these, the primitive tanks or motors and some primitive aeroplanes. These were very fascinating to me. Therefore due to that from my childhood I developed a scientific outlook. I felt along with the Chinese that we may develop Tibet as a modern community, a modern country, and also I had great attraction towards Marxism, especially the Marxism stressing internationalism. Of course according to the Marxist theory, his main concern was not how to make money, but rather how to distribute, how to utilise these things properly. I think in his economic theory there is some moral principle involved. Anyway, since then I call myself half Marxist and half Buddhist monk.
Then at that time quite a number of Tibetans, more modern minded Tibetans, including myself, were optimistic. Then I returned with great enthusiasm and trust towards Chairman Mao and the Communist Party. After I left Peking I visited my own birthplace in Amdo, and then Kham in eastern Tibet. The local situation was not all that beautiful; I asked them about their condition, and their living standard. They said they were very happy under the leadership of the Communist Party, but while they said these words there were tears in their eyes. Usually in my village whenever some guests came they usually brought a lot of variety of bread and other things. Specially my Mother was an expert in making different kinds of breads. During my visit nothing of that variety was brought. It was a clear indication that things were not quite so good. Then at the end of 1955 the open revolt started from the eastern part of Tibet. Then in 1956, 1957, 1958 things went from bad to worse. During this period I sent at least three letters to Chairman Mao. One I sent through official channel, and another through private channel. There was no reply. Then I got suspicious. When you meet him things really appeared beautiful and genuine, but when I actually needed help from him, there was no response. It was around 1956, 1957 that I understood the situation. One Chinese deputy Political Commissioner who was stationed in Lhasa, I think his name was probably Lu Lieu, he wrote a letter to Chairman Mao that due to economic situation and also because of local population's attitude, it was not advisable to station a large number of Chinese soldiers in Tibet. The result was that he was dismissed.

Then on another occasion, around 1958, one local Chinese official, wrote to the Party authority in Peking, that the situation had become tense and more and more prisoners were being taken in and they found it difficult to accommodate those prisoners. The reply was: "Don't worry, even if the entire Tibetan population became prisoner we can manage." This was serious, isn't it?

In 1956, I came to India for the Buddha Jayanti Celebrations and I told Pandit Nehru, how things were going from bad to worse and I felt it was no use returning to Tibet. "I can serve my people, my country better from India." During that period Prime Minister Chou En Lai and also the
Deputy Prime Minister, General Marshall Ho Holo, came to India and they deliberately met me separately and warned me. Particularly Ho told me, “There is saying in Chinese: if the Lion remains in the snow mountain it is a lion, if the lion comes to a village it becomes a dog.” Also Chou En Lai told me, he admitted in Tibet there was some crisis due to the Chinese style of reform, therefore Chairman Mao had decided to postpone the reforms for six years and even then if things were not all right, they could be postponed indefinitely — that is what Chou En Lai told me in Delhi. At the same time Pandit Nehru advised me that it was not advisable to stay back in India. “You should return to Tibet and carry on the struggle on the basis of the 17 Point Agreement.” That day Pandit Nehru came to see me with a copy of the 17 Point Agreement in his hand. He was reading it point by point and he advised me: “This point you should stress, on this point you can fight with the Chinese.”

So in early 1957 I returned to Tibet. In spite of the tension and discouragement, I tried my best to find some kind of understanding or at least to minimize the tension. Then in 1957 things became worse. The freedom fighters revolted openly. They had already spread out in central Tibet. In 1957 and 1958 things became still worse. In March 1959 things went out of control, there was no other way except to escape. Then I came to India. During the next twenty years there was no communication with the Chinese government.

Meanwhile in exile we concentrated mainly on our rehabilitation schemes, preservation of Tibetan identity, culture, including Buddhism and medicine, besides Tibetan cultural heritage. We made special efforts for proper education. I still remember very clearly around September 1959 we were trying to raise the Tibetan question at the UN. But Pandit Nehru was reluctant to support that and he told me, this would not be of much use. Then he told me the proper method of keeping the Tibetan issue alive was to give proper education to the younger people. In that respect the government of India was willing to bear all the financial responsibility.

So during the last 20 years, we have contributed for the Tibetan nation, mainly by the preservation of Tibetan identity, Tibetan culture and by imparting proper education. Right from the beginning we planned
for traditional as well as modern education. These two things had to go side by side. That was our policy regarding education. Then in 1978, there was an initiative from the Chinese government and we developed direct contact with P.R.C. government. In 1979 and 1980, I had the opportunity to send a delegation to Tibet as a fact finding mission and also I sent another delegation to Peking which was of an exploratory nature [to find grounds for a dialogue]. Anyway, from 1979 during the next 7 years I tried to establish some kind of dialogue with the Chinese government. In the beginning, they simply told me their only concern was my return. I think this was their way of talking. Is it something interesting to you? [Audience: Yes, and applause].

At the initial stage, the Chinese government told me that there was no such thing as a Tibetan problem, the Tibetan people enjoyed the maximum benefit under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese government. The only thing was the Dalai Lama's return. They were prepared to welcome the Dalai Lama to the Motherland in order to build a glorious socialism. They said, on my return, I would get all the previous privileges. More, so they would send some delegation to welcome me to the Motherland. Then I told them that the issue was that of the Tibetan people, six million Tibetan people, their rights and their culture. That was the main issue to be solved. There was no problem of my return. It would come about automatically. In the meantime, we made some suggestions about those points which I had made in my first proposal, the Five Point Peace Plan proposal, as well as the Strasbourg proposal. All these basic ideas were conveyed to the Chinese government already at different times. On one occasion, the Chinese government offered nine points for Taiwanese in order to have unification. Around that period, one of our delegation told the Chinese officials, that as far as our rights were concerned, we had more right because we were geographically, culturally, racially, linguistically, historically a different country. Although since Chinese occupation Tibet became part of China, but in reality, it was an occupied land. As far as Taiwan was concerned, they had the same culture, the same language, generally speaking, isn't it? The Chinese reply was quite simple: 'The Taiwanese had not yet been
liberated so they have more right to demand. You Tibetans are already liberated, so you cannot demand any rights." That was much too simple, isn't it?

If the majority of Tibetan people were really happy then I had no right to change things. I always consider myself as a free spokesman for the Tibetan people. If the people there are really happy I will do as they wish. Through my fact-finding delegation, as also through other channels I have received a lot of information. The Chinese government had put severe restrictions on people going there. Through these sources also I have received a clear picture about the Tibetans inside, and their mental state. I can say that the majority or 70-80% of people are against the Chinese rule. As human beings we have every right to be happy, just as the Chinese have that right. That right we cannot get through dialogue with the present Chinese government. For seven years I have tried and failed. There is no other alternative except to look to the world community for their help. Then in 1987 at Washington, some of my supporters and old friends told me that I should make some concrete proposal which they could easily support in concrete terms. So I made the Five Point Peace Plan proposal. The Chinese turned against me, saying that the Dalai Lama is trying to internationalise the Tibetan issue. Actually you see, who had done that? For seven years I tried my best to find some solution through dialogue with the Chinese government. The reply was so poor, so negative, what could I do? There was no alternative except to turn to the world community. At the same time, due to the Chinese open-door policy, more and more tourists visited Tibet. By the end of September and beginning of October 1987, some demonstrations took place while foreigners were present. Those demonstrations were actually taking place in Tibet for the last 40 years. For more than 25 years, specially during the Cultural Revolution of 1969, large-scale uprisings took place in many parts of Tibet, as a result of which thousands and thousands of people were killed. So you see, around 1983 we calculated on the basis of information received by us as to how many people were killed, how much destruction of the monasteries or temples had been caused. Since Chinese occupation till 1983, the people who died due to direct action of Chinese rule were 1.2 million. Out of that more that 400,000 were killed
through military action or in labour camps. Several hundred thousand
died due to starvation. Starvation, which, never took place in the past in
Tibetan history. Of course it could have happened to one or two individual
cases in some remote areas, but never on such a large-scale.

More than 6,000 monasteries and temples were destroyed. What
happened in 1987, was another tragedy making the situation so grave.
Fortunately at that time foreign tourists were there, who witnessed that.
The information immediately went outside Tibet. In the past though such
things happened in some remote areas in the countryside, the news was
received by us, in some cases after a few months, sometimes after a year.
Things are different when foreign tourists are there, the news immediately
goes outside. Even at that time the Chinese local authorities nervously
tried to hide the real situation. As a result, more and more Tibetans who
are working with the Chinese, and had respect for the Chinese officials,
civilian as well as military, changed their attitude and had no trust in the
Chinese.

Why did I make this Five Point Peace proposal? As I mentioned earlier,
historically from various viewpoints we Tibetans are a separate nation.
This is not the Dalai Lama's creation, but this is what history says. The
Chinese government however says: "Oh, the Dalai Lama is trying to distort
facts." They use the difficult word "splittist". I don't know its pronunciation.
My tongue is not able to pronounce that word! Yes, splittist. Anyway this
is not my creation, but history's creation. Also in a way it is the creation of
the Chinese. If the Chinese Communist Party had treated us as genuine
brothers and sisters, with sincere motivation, the situation would have
been definitely very different. But because of their own behaviour,
everybody knows they are really big liars. No matter how backward, we
are human beings, we have a human brain. Naturally, even small dogs
can distinguish between persons who are beating them and those who
are really feeding them. Even poor animals can judge that. So that is the
situation.

The most important historical fact is that the entire Tibetan population
wants complete independence. It is difficult to achieve it. Tibet is a
landlocked country and we need more help, more collaborators to develop
Tibet. If we look at human history, if there is mutual benefit, then two
separate communities can join hands and work together. If there is no mutual benefit, even one community can be divided. In all sincerity I offered this Five Point Peace proposal, in spite of the fact that I knew many Tibetans would be disappointed. I have made two proposals, one as I mentioned earlier in 1987, and another in 1988. The Chinese government rejected my proposals. Though they indicated willingness to discuss the proposals with me, at the same time they found some minor obstacle as an excuse. In April last year I made a suggestion to the Chinese government, through the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi, that I want to send a few people to Hong Kong to discuss with the Chinese government representative what the obstacle was. The Chinese government is only pretending that they are willing to discuss and resolve the minor points. Then in May and June the democratic movement took place in China proper. Then again there was no reply. Still we are having direct contact with the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi. That is the situation up to now. I still hope to have some kind of understanding with the Chinese.

As a result of a lot of positive changes on this planet, the rigid Communism is now collapsing everywhere. In China proper although the number may be still in a minority, but that minority is more educated and has more knowledge about the outside world. Those people though in minority, they are more influential people. The future of China is in their hands. These people are against the Chinese authorities and completely frustrated. The present die hard authority is not going to last, it is only a matter of time. In the next 5-10 years I think, things will change. The Chinese people are going to have more freedom, democracy, and there will be possibility to have a dialogue to discuss the Tibetan problem with them. We have no negative feelings towards the Chinese people or the Chinese country which is an ancient, civilised, and one of the most populated nations. It is far better to have genuine mutual respect, mutual understanding with them.

I am very optimistic. For 40 years Tibet is under Chinese occupation, in the next 10 years things will change. I am trying. At the same time we need the world community’s support. We are passing through a most difficult period and we have suffered a lot, please do help us. This is the
most crucial period for us. Another serious matter is the population transfer. If this continues for another 10-15 years, there is every danger that Tibetans will become insignificant in their own land. That is the real danger to the Tibetan nation, which has a unique culture.

The future Tibet at the moment appears something like a dream. My wish or my idea, my vision, is that Tibet should be a zone of peace, completely free from any weapon, any military hardware. I think in Tibet the nature and the environment are quite peaceful. The people are quite peaceful. That does not mean Tibetans never fight. Of course as human beings some times they quarrel among themselves, but generally speaking they are peaceful by nature. They are a peace-loving nation. So the concept of a zone of peace or sanctuary is very appropriate for Tibet. That is not only going to benefit Tibetan people but will also benefit China and India too. In order to keep a large number of soldiers which is expensive in such trying conditions, both countries need more money. Therefore once things become less tense and more stable, it will benefit both the countries. According to some visitors the situation at present is very tense and a lot of Chinese soldiers with weapons, and armoured cars are deployed there. Quite a number of people had an extraordinary experience in Tibet. Many people expressed their feeling, that even in such circumstances they feel that a genuinely peaceful Tibet can contribute to the service of humanity, specially those people who are frustrated in big cities like New York. They are always in a hurry for making money. If they are uncomfortable here let them go to Tibet, spend a few weeks there and relax. If there is a possibility of serving the interests of humanity, it is our responsibility, we will be only too happy to do so. So that is my dream.

That is the complete picture of past, present and future Tibet. Thank you.
14 The Future of Tibet

London, March 19, 1991

In this talk, I would like to concentrate on the problems facing Tibet today, to explore avenues to alleviate the suffering of my people and perhaps, most important, to put the Tibetan issue in a global context.

I will not deal with the past history of Tibet since the topic of my talk is “The Future of Tibet”, and also because I have spoken about it in some detail in my Strasbourg Proposal which I presented to the Members of the European Parliament in 1988. But as I said to some of my British friends on the day of my arrival here in Britain this time: Britain is the one Western nation that is most knowledgeable about the status of Tibet, particularly because of the association she has had with my country during the period of British India. And, therefore, in a way, she has special obligations and responsibilities to Tibet and the Tibetan people.

In Tibet today the situation remains as grim as ever. Despite an official announcement by the Chinese of lifting martial law on May 1, 1990, the measure is in name only. The unending cycle of repression, torture and summary executions continue as never before. Moreover, in spite of China's insistence that there is no restraint on religious freedom, it is interesting to note that several hundred monks and nuns were expelled from monasteries and nunneries in Tibet just before the so-called “lifting” of martial law. This visit to Lhasa of Jiang Zemin, the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, in July last year merely extended measures against the populace. His orders were that all political activities by Tibetans were to be suppressed immediately, with summary punishments, mostly torture and executions. The question of a trial, let alone defence for the accused, does not even arise.

In 1988, in an attempt to bring the Chinese towards a dialogue regarding the perilous situation in Tibet, I put forward the Strasbourg

1Speech at the Royal Institute of International Affairs.
Proposal. The proposal has elicited no response from the Chinese leadership, and, therefore, my commitment to the ideas in it has become ineffectual. For over thirty years now, the unending cycle of repression, compounded by the massive influx of Chinese into Tibet, endangering the survival of Tibetans, was the main impetus behind these proposals. I therefore, have no alternative but to consider myself free of any obligation to uphold Strasbourg.

I would like to bring before this house certain changes that have taken place in our administration in Dharamsala. Recently held elections to the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies have brought forward the democratization of my government. The Kashag or Cabinet will be appointed by the elected Tibetan Assembly, so that appointments no longer rest within the executive power of the Dalai Lama. These elections have reached out to Tibetans exiled in countries other than India alone. It is my hope that these changes will allow the people of Tibet to have a clear say in determining their own future.

I come now to my country’s long and varied association with Great Britain. I hope that I may be permitted to put before you certain ideas based on our mutual historical relationship. The Prime Minister, Mr. Major, has stated that “China has special responsibility for Tibet”. If she has, I would like to ask on what this responsibility is based? If it is on the Seventeen-point Agreement of 1951, signed under duress and with the military take-over of Tibet in full force, can it be considered valid? Furthermore, China’s repeated argument that Tibet has been part of “the motherland” from time immemorial cannot, therefore, be accepted as historically correct.

To explore our historical relationship still further, may I point out that though Mr. Major is correct in saying that no British government has had dealings with my government-in-exile, yet will he agree that Britain dealt with Tibet until the end of the empire in 1947 as an independent state, without the intermediary of the Chinese? And that at no time did the British government accept the “sovereignty” I repeat, “sovereignty”, of China over Tibet?

There is only one agreement where Tibet has been consigned to being the “Autonomous Region of China”, and that is the Sino-Indian treaty of 1954. Reality shows that we are not even autonomous, let alone in charge of our internal affairs. This particular phrase has crept into the
vocabulary of officialdom. Regrettfully, the world has not thought fit to challenge it. And this in spite of the United Nations General Assembly Resolutions of 1959, 1961, 1965 calling upon the fundamental human rights and freedoms, including the principle of self-determination of the Tibetan people to be respected by China.

I would also like to draw the audience's attention to the United Nations Conventions and Protocols to which China is a signatory. In these she agreed to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination; to all discrimination against women; to the convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide and the convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Finally, I refer to the General Assembly Resolution 545 (vi), where the right of self-determination of peoples includes permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources. Included in it is the right of non-self-governing territories to demand self-government, the popular wish being ascertained through a plebiscite held under the auspices of the United Nations.

The recent Gulf War and loss of human life saddened me greatly. But in the context of my speech today, I would like to concentrate on the pronouncements of President Bush, Mr Major and other world leaders to their commitment for self-determination and a new global order. Are we Tibetans any less entitled to a homeland than the Kuwaitis or the Palestinians? Although the world community has turned its attention correctly to this issue, it appears to have ignored the status of Tibet. Moreover, the British government has been uncompromising in its backing to the Baltic States in their efforts to break the colonialism that binds them to Russia. China is no less a colonial power, and the Tibetans seek the same status. If we are denied, could it be because we, and I, have always dealt peacefully and abjured violence?

Governments may, indeed, be cynical regarding people's suffering, they may put their commercial and strategic interests before anything else, but they yield to public opinion. I am therefore greatly encouraged by the growing support of the world community. I hope that since I am in Britain the people of this country will have wider recognition of the suffering of my people and uphold their legitimate right to be free.

As for the future of Tibet I envisage a country that is free, democratic and demilitarized. Without freedom and democracy one of the most
important human qualities — creativity — cannot be exercised to the fullest extent. The absence of this leads to inertia and stagnation. We have seen this so clearly in the so-called socialist countries. That is why we, too, have made earnest attempts to instill democracy in the Tibetan community ever since our exile. We have intensified our efforts in this direction during the past five years. I will not go into the details of how difficult this is in the context of our deeply religious and largely uneducated people. Nevertheless, we have taken a few important steps to further democracy amongst the Tibetans in exile.

Tibet in the future must also be demilitarized. It must be a zone of peace — at least as far as I am concerned. For war — violence in its worst form — causes the greatest amount of human suffering. And violence is against the Buddhist concept of compassion. Above all, I believe, it is against the basic nature of human beings. I have therefore not only spoken about peace and non-violence for all of humanity but have also made earnest and genuine attempts to put them in action in our struggle for freedom. I am naturally encouraged by the recognition that the Nobel Peace Committee has given to my attempts.

I am hopeful about the future. Not only about the fate of my country but also about the world in general. The recent war in the Gulf is an exception: I have my own ideas as to why it happened. But this is not the time to discuss it. In general, I believe, there is a change in the people's concept about war or violence being the ultimate solution or the means to a solution. Dramatic and successful people's movements in Asia, Latin America and particularly in the East European countries, are a clear indication that human society cannot be governed by dictatorial, authoritarian and oppressive regimes. That sooner or later, humanity's innate desire for freedom and democracy asserts itself and ultimately triumphs.

There are other encouraging signs. Today there is a growing understanding between science and religion, unlike in the past century. There is global concern about the need to maintain ecological balance. And there is genuine peace and an end to the Cold War as a result of the improvement in East-West relations. I am, therefore, optimistic and feel that as we enter the twenty-first century we can hope for a happier, more peaceful and harmonious world community.
15 Tibet was an Independent Country

April 3, 1991

As I visit Britain, Ireland and the United States only weeks after Iraq's occupation army was forced out of Kuwait, I am repeatedly asked whether we Tibetans hope for similar international action to liberate Tibet from 41 years of illegal occupation by China.

The similarity of the two situations is striking: a large, powerful country ruled by a ruthless dictator invades a smaller, weaker peaceful neighbour. Some of the claims made by Iraq to justify its illegal occupation were identical to those made by China: both claimed the right to "reunite" a neighbouring country to "the great motherland" on the basis of distorted imperial claims. Both aggressors inflicted tremendous suffering upon the people they attempted to conquer.

The principal difference is that in Tibet the suffering has lasted for more than 40 years. And that when Tibet was invaded, no multinational forces came to liberate it.

Tibet was an independent country before its occupation by China. It had its own government, now in exile; its own judicial and administrative systems; its small army, postal service, currency and taxation. Tibet maintained independent relations with other countries, especially those in the region, by whom it was recognized. There is no justification for claiming that Tibet was "part of China" as Peking claims today.

The Chinese Prevarication

Mao Tse-tung told me when I met him in Peking in 1954 that the Chinese had come to Tibet to help the Tibetans develop into a modern and prosperous country. He said the Chinese would leave after some 20 years once the task was completed. But the Chinese have done little to improve the life of Tibetans in 40 years. Instead, they have destroyed and plundered our culture and religious treasures and enslaved our people so that today Tibet is one of the poorest countries in Asia. Instead of leaving, as Mao had promised, millions of Chinese have been encouraged to relocate into Tibet.
Today the situation in Tibet remains as grim as ever. Despite an official announcement by the Chinese authorities of the lifting of martial law on May 1, 1990, Tibet remains in a state of de facto martial law. The unending cycle of repression, intimidation, torture and summary executions continues. Control on all aspects of Tibetan life has been tightened and several hundred monks and nuns have been taken from their monasteries and nunneries. The population transfer of Chinese into Tibet continues with alarming intensity, so that the whole country is being transformed into a Chinese area where Tibetans are becoming a powerless minority.

Given this sad and critical situation, in 1987 I announced some proposals to the Chinese leaders in an effort to seek a peaceful and negotiated solution to the questions of Tibet. I proposed a five-point peace plan during a visit to the US Congress, which I elaborated the next year in an address to members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. That proposal, though based on the right of Tibetans to freedom and independence and the restoration of the territorial integrity of the whole of Tibet, contained major concessions with respect to the conduct of foreign relations. I proposed that China could remain responsible for Tibet's foreign policy and retain a restricted number of military installations — solely for defensive purposes — until such a time as the whole of Tibet became a zone of peace. It was hoped that these concessions would provide China's leaders with a good opportunity to respond to my call for earnest negotiations on the future of Tibet. Many of my people criticized my proposal for being too conciliatory, but I felt that a serious effort had to be made to open talks.

China's response to my efforts has been disappointing. Despite broad international consensus that China should agree to the proposed negotiations and repeated representations to China's leaders to that effect by many governments and parliaments, Peking never responded positively and refused to come to the negotiating table.

As for the future of Tibet, the problem cannot be resolved in isolation. The world is becoming increasingly interdependent, and the question of Tibet must be viewed in the context of world events. Democratic popular movements throughout the world have forced totalitarian regimes and dictators out of power. In Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union has released
its satellites and they, in turn, have rejected the communist regimes imposed upon them. Our neighbours, Nepal and Mongolia, also have undergone major changes. The Chinese people's yearning for democracy and my own people's struggle for freedom will also ultimately cause change in Peking.

The international community has a responsibility to encourage such change. Britain, Ireland and the United States have a special responsibility with respect to Tibet because of their ties to my country.

Britain has had a long and varied association with Tibet dating back more than 100 years. In 1904, British armies even briefly invaded Tibet to persuade it to sign a treaty establishing trade relations between the two countries. Many historians believe this invasion created the paranoia in Peking which ultimately led to China's occupation of Tibet in 1949-50.

Britain's Prime Minister, John Major, has stated that "China has special responsibility for Tibet". On what is this alleged responsibility based, might I ask? Is it based in some ancient imperial claim? Surely, that could not be regarded as legitimate ground for annexation in this century. Or is it based on the so-called "Seventeen Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet," a treaty imposed upon my government in 1951, under extreme duress, after the defeat and near annihilation of the Tibetan army and the military occupation of nearly half the country by Chinese communist troops? The Tibetan government and I personally never voluntarily agreed to the terms of that treaty. Indeed, I denounced it when I first had the opportunity of doing so in freedom in India. Mr. Major is correct in saying that no British government has had official dealings with our government-in-exile. But will he deny that Britain maintained direct relations with the Tibetan government before our country was invaded and that British government rejected Chinese claims to sovereignty over Tibet? Did the British not conclude border treaties and trade agreements with Tibet and maintain a British mission in Lhasa independent of its diplomatic legation in Peking?

Ireland sponsored resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in the 1960s recognizing the Tibetan people's fundamental rights and calling for the implementation of Tibet's right to self-determination. These resolutions remain in force, but are yet to be implemented.
The US, for its part, encouraged and trained members of the Tibetan resistance, beginning in the mid-1950’s, to fight the Chinese occupation army. In 1971, when Washington decided to establish diplomatic relations with Peking, these freedom fighters were abandoned to their sad fate. The US has always been a source of inspiration and hope for the oppressed. For Tibetans also, this country has been a source of hope, particularly when the US called for the self-determination of Tibet in the 1950s and 1960s and voted in favour of the UN resolutions.

These three countries in particular, and the international community as a whole, have a special responsibility to uphold what they know to be true, in accordance with their declared commitment to the principle of self-determination, justice and freedom. We are not asking them to fight a war for the liberation of Tibet. All we ask is for them to speak the truth. We ask them not to distort history and to acknowledge — as they did in the past — that Tibet is an occupied country, a true statement for which Tibetans are being executed on the streets of Lhasa. We ask that the US, Britain, Ireland and other freedom-loving countries support our effort to secure the full implementation of the UN resolutions on Tibet. We ask that they call upon Peking to resolve the question of Tibet peacefully, through sincere and earnest negotiations with us Tibetans.

Democratic and Demilitarized

Are we Tibetans any less entitled to our own country than the Kuwaitis? Are we any less justified than the Baltic states in their efforts to break the colonialism that binds them to the Soviet Union? The West should try to maintain good relations with Peking but not at the expense of Tibet.

Tibet in the future must be both democratic and demilitarized. Without freedom and democracy, one of the most important human qualities — creativity — cannot be exercised to its fullest extent. That is why we have intensified our efforts to instill democratic values in the Tibetan community in exile during the past years. Likewise, Tibet must become a zone of ahimsa (a Sanskrit word meaning peace and non-violence), to restore peace and stability not only to Tibet, but to the entire region.

I am hopeful about the future — not only about the fate of my country but also about the world in general.
16 Address to the U.S. Congress

U.S. Capitol Rotunda,  
April 18, 1991

Mr. Speaker, Senator Mitchell, Representative Gephardt, Senator Dole and Representative Michel, Senators, Congressmen and other distinguished guests, and Brothers and Sisters:

When I was a small boy living in Tibet, President Roosevelt sent me a gift: a gold watch showing phases of the moon and the days of the week. I marvelled at the distant land which could make such a practical object so beautiful. But what truly inspired me were your ideals of freedom and democracy. I felt that your principles were identical to my own, the Buddhist beliefs in fundamental human rights — freedom, equality, tolerance and compassion for all.

Today, I am honoured to stand under this great dome and speak to you. I do so as a simple Buddhist monk: someone who tries to follow the Buddha's teaching of love and compassion, who believes, as you do, that all of us have the right to pursue happiness and avoid suffering. I always pray that good core of our human character — which cherishes truth, peace and freedom — will prevail.

Our generation has arrived at the threshold of a new era in human history: the birth of a global community. Modern communications, trade and international relations as well as the security and environmental dilemmas we all face make us increasingly interdependent. No one can live in isolation. Thus, whether we like it or not, our vast and diverse human family must finally learn to live together. Individually and collectively we must assume a greater sense of universal responsibility.

I also stand here as a free spokesperson for the people of Tibet.

In 1950, while your soldiers were fighting Communist Chinese troops in Korea, China invaded Tibet. Nine years later, in March, 1959 — during the suppression of a nation-wide revolt against Chinese occupation —

\(^{1}\)Vide pp. 1-2.
I was forced to flee to India. Eventually, many thousands of my compatriots followed me. Since then, Tibetan refugees have lived in exile. We were heartened in 1959, 1961 and 1965 by three United Nations Resolutions recognizing the Tibetan people's fundamental rights, including the right to self-determination. Your government supported and voted for these resolutions.

China, however, ignored the views of the world community. For almost three decades, Tibet was sealed from the outside world. In that time, as a result of China's efforts to remake our society, 1.2 million Tibetans — one fifth of the population — perished. More than 6,000 of our monasteries and temples were destroyed. Our natural resources were devoured. And in a few short decades the artistic, literary and scientific legacy of our ancient civilization was virtually erased.

In the face of this tragedy, we have tried to save our national identity. We have fought for our country's freedom peacefully. We have refused to adopt terrorism. We have adhered to our Buddhist faith in non-violence. And we have engaged in a vigorous democratic experiment in the exile community as a model for a future free Tibet.

Tibet today continues to suffer harsh oppression. The unending cycle of imprisonment, torture, and executions continues unabated. I am particularly concerned about China's long term policy of population transfer onto the Tibetan plateau.

Tibet is being colonized by waves of Chinese immigrants. We are becoming a minority in our own country. The new Chinese settlers have created an alternate society: a Chinese apartheid which, denying Tibetans equal social and economic status in our own land, threatens to finally overwhelm and absorb us. The immediate result has been a round of unrest and reprisal. In the face of this critical situation, I have made two proposals in recent years.

In September of 1987, here on Capitol Hill, I presented a Five Point Peace Plan. In it, I called for negotiations between Tibet and China, and spoke of my firm resolve that soon Tibet will once again become a Zone of Peace; a neutral, demilitarized sanctuary where humanity and nature live in harmony.

2 Vide Appendix I, II and III.
In June of 1988, at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, I elaborated on my call for negotiations, and made personal suggestions which would protect the territorial integrity of the whole of Tibet, as well as restore the Tibetan people’s right to govern themselves. I also suggested that China could contain overall responsibility for the conduct of Tibet’s foreign relations.

It has been almost three years since the Strasbourg Proposal. In that time, many Tibetans have expressed profound misgivings over my stand for being too conciliatory. Beijing did respond: but the response was negative. The Chinese government, it is clear, is unwilling to engage in meaningful dialogue. As recent events in China itself indicate, the Communist leadership refuses even to acknowledge the wishes of its own people. I regret that my sincere efforts to find a mutually beneficial solution have not produced meaningful dialogue. Nevertheless, I continue to believe in a negotiated solution. Many governments and parliaments, as well as the U.S. Congress, support this effort.

For the sake of the people of China as well as Tibet, a stronger stand is needed towards the government of the People’s Republic of China. The policy of ‘constructive engagement’, as a means to encourage moderation, can have no concrete effect unless the democracies of the world clearly stand by their principles. Linking bilateral relations to human rights and democracy is not merely a matter of appeasing one’s own conscience. It is a proven, peaceful and effective means to encourage genuine change. If the world truly hopes to see a reduction of tyranny in China, it must not appease China’s leaders.

Linking bilateral relations to respect for basic rights will significantly decrease the present regime’s readiness to resort to further violence, while increasing the strength of the moderate forces which still hope for a peaceful transition to a more open society. These efforts should be viewed not as an attempt to isolate China but as a helping hand to bring her into the mainstream of the world community.

In the future, I envision Tibet as an anchor of peace and stability at the heart of Asia: a Zone of non-violence where humanity and nature live in harmony. For hundreds of years the Tibetan plateau was a vital

\[\text{\footnotesize ibid. pp. 163-7}\]
buffer between Asia's great powers: Russia, China and India. Until Tibet is once more demilitarized and restored to its historical neutrality, there can be no firm foundation for peace in Asia. The first step is to recognize the truth of my country's status; that of a nation under foreign occupation.

Recently, the United States has led the international community in freeing a small country from a cruel occupation. I am happy for the people of Kuwait. Sadly, all small nations cannot expect similar support for their rights and freedoms. However, I believe that a "new world order" cannot truly emerge unless it is matched by a "new world freedom." Order without freedom is repression. Freedom without order is anarchy. We need both a new world order that prohibits aggression and a new world freedom that supports the liberty of individuals and nations.

I would like to conclude by recalling a recent and moving experience. On my last trip to the United States, I was taken to Independence Hall in Philadelphia. I was profoundly inspired to stand in the chamber from which your Declaration of Independence and Constitution came. I was then shown to the main floor before the Liberty Bell. My guide explained that two hundred years ago this bell pealed forth to proclaim liberty throughout your land. On examining it, however, I couldn't help noticing the crack in the bell. That crack, I feel, is a reminder to the American people who enjoy so much freedom, while people in other parts of the world, such as Tibet, have no freedom. The Liberty Bell is a reminder that you cannot be truly free until people everywhere are free. I believe that this reminder is alive, and that your great strength continues to come from your deep principles.

Finally, my main task here today is to thank you — the Congress of the United States — on behalf of six million Tibetans for your invaluable support in a critical time of our struggle. The Congressional bills and resolutions you have passed over the last five years have given the Tibetan people renewed hope.

I offer you my prayers and thanks, and I appeal to you to continue working for the cause of liberty.

Thank you.
17 Support Asia's Democratic Aspirations

Ancient Buddhist philosophy recognizes the inherent interdependence of everything that exists and teaches us that our actions resonate far beyond our immediate surroundings. Today, these precepts seem more relevant than ever in the world’s economy, as nation’s debate how their economies can better interact for the common good.

With leaders meeting this week in Seattle at the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, they have a great opportunity — and responsibility — to develop a new sense of interdependence and common goals. Our commonality must be built not only on modern economics but also on our ancient ties that predate the Silk road, the first trans-pacific trade, and a lively trade in Lhasa, my capital, which was a regional trading hub for inner Asia, including Tibet, China, India, Nepal, Mongolia and beyond. I believe that the summit leaders must work for an interdependence beneficial to all nations and peoples that transcends material needs to support Asia’s democratic aspirations.

First of all, we must recognize that interdependence in the Asian Pacific region must be based on policies that respect the right of individuals to develop themselves spiritually, socially, materially and culturally. The common bond between all peoples, regardless of race, nationality or culture, is the desire to be happy. Jobs and material goods do not bring happiness in themselves.

Asia’s emerging powerhouse is China, a country now caught in an outmoded political system that brings some material prosperity to its people but denies them very basic rights on a massive and tragic scale. This system cannot be the centrepiece for Asia’s communal economic take-off.

Asian Pacific countries need to nurture democratic systems in each other, but this does not mean that we have to look only at Western models of democracy. We in Asia have many examples of democratic mechanisms
in our histories at local and regional levels which we can build on.

We also need to help one another use our common resources wisely, and protect our environments from degradation that will adversely effect our future generations. The modern world now knows that nowhere is global interdependence more crucial than for environmental issues which transcend national boundaries. While environmental considerations are playing an important role in some regional trade debates, it seems that so far the Seattle meeting is not giving enough importance to environmental crises in Asia.

Tibet is now subsumed within China and for the first time in our 2,000 year history, Tibetans have no direct control over our country or our economy. I have a historical responsibility to the Tibetan people, and have been trying to encourage the people of China also to work to restore the harmonious Tibetan-Chinese relations that our peoples enjoyed for many centuries.

For many years, I have worked to initiate a dialogue with the Chinese government concerning Tibet, but so far, Beijing has not responded constructively. I now also appeal to all peoples in the Asian Pacific region, and especially to the Chinese people, because a better understanding of the Tibetan tragedy may affect Beijing's leadership which has stalled at every turn while my country's distinctive culture is being crushed. The Chinese people well know the humiliation of foreign domination. I, therefore, trust that they will realize that Tibet now also experiences foreign domination.

Governments must respect the right of peoples to live peacefully. People not only want economic progress, but also need moral, spiritual, and social prosperity. It seems to me that in this century, countries are increasingly focused on how much they export, and how big their gross national product is. It seems that each country is trying to get an advantage over the other. Individuals now want more and more material things, and they are represented by governments who seem to have lost their moral bearings.

During the APEC meeting, the summit leaders must look after material security, but they must not lose sight of our common long-term security,
which requires protecting the environment as well as allowing each individual to freely develop themselves.

The United States has a special responsibility to Tibet because it is China's largest trading partner and is thus massively contributing to the government that is repressing Tibet. The APEC process must not ignore the politics that allows people to be crushed so that countries can maximize their exports and create jobs. Regional cooperation in Asia has been lagging, and now threatens to be overwhelmed by China, an economic giant which could threaten stability throughout the Asian Pacific region. The Chinese people are ready for change. The question is whether and how peoples and governments in the region will help them.
Mr. President, Honourable Members of Parliament, Brothers and Sisters. Today is a very special day for me. I am very happy and very touched to be here with you. For a long time I have wanted to visit your country and convey to you the warm feelings of understanding and solidarity felt by the Tibetan people. I am happy to be able to do so now, and to share with you the celebration and joy arising from the recovery of your freedom.

I admire very much the strong determination of the Lithuanian people who have maintained the struggle for freedom during more than fifty years of occupation. Your efforts have set in motion a global awareness of the legitimate right of all peoples to self-determination.

I am especially impressed by the non-violent path you have chosen to follow. I am a firm believer in non-violence, on moral as well as practical grounds. Using violence against a strong power can be suicidal. For countries like ours the only hope for survival is to wage a non-violent struggle founded on justice, truth, and unwavering determination. You, the people of Lithuania, under the leadership of President Landsbergis, have set a new example for others, like my people, to be inspired by. You have strengthened our belief that non-violence is the correct path and renewed our hope that we too will one day regain our lost freedom through peaceful means.

Your role as an inspirational force has not ended with the success of your struggle for freedom. In truth, it has just begun. With the eyes of the world now focused on Lithuania, you have the rare and important opportunity to continue your exemplary work. You will face many challenges in coming years. During this critical period, fundamental principles must not be sacrificed on grounds of expediency. Of particular importance is your continuing commitment to the principles of self-determination and non-violence. Just as you steadfastly adhered to them...
in regaining your freedom, so you should rely on them in the future in relation of other peoples and countries, and in safeguarding your security.

There is a growing awareness in the international community of the danger posed by the heavy reliance on military strength and the trade in arms and weapons, including those of mass destruction. Total disarmament will be difficult but, I believe, necessary in the long run. Costa Rica, a small country in a strategic and very turbulent area, abolished its army in 1948. I am sure most people thought the situation could not last. Yet that country has maintained its integrity without an army for over forty years. Following Costa Rica's lead, your renewed commitment to non-violence could provide the needed impetus for global disarmament. A principled stand to defend your recently regained freedom without resorting to force would be truly inspiring.

From a purely practical perspective, it sometimes seems that by using violence a problem can be solved quite quickly. But if you succeed through violence at the expense of other's rights and welfare, you have not solved the problem, but only created the seeds for another. The principles of democracy, justice and equality should be applied equally in domestic as well as in international relations.

In order for there to be true stability and lasting peace throughout the world, violence must be eliminated. I have always believed this. In the Five Point Peace Plan which I proposed to China in 1987, and in more recent statements, I have emphasized that Tibet must be completely demilitarized and restored to its previous status as a zone of peace or of ahimsa. Elimination of violence is not as difficult a task as it may initially appear. Only a small proportion of the world's five billion people are engaged in acts of violence. The overwhelming majority are engaged in acts of loving, caring and sharing. It is thus my belief that in the human mind the dominant force is not violence, but, on the contrary, compassion and peacefulness.

As I mentioned earlier, I believe that while recognizing the importance to Lithuania of co-operating with other governments to ensure future political and economic security, the freedom to act in accordance with your own moral precepts must not be compromised for short-term gains. Remaining true to principles which have served you so well in the past,
especially for the side of truth, freedom and democracy, will provide a compelling example which will be followed by others.

In structuring needed economic reforms you will also encounter hardship, requiring sacrifices by all. Throughout these trying times, responsiveness to the needs of the individual, rather than adherence to abstract theory, should, I believe, guide your actions.

Religion can play an important role in developing a compassionate society based on mutual respect, tolerance and human well-being. I feel that all religions have essentially the same message, although their philosophical approach may be different. The essence of religion is love and compassion. In my own experience I have seen that the sincere practice of religion and its application in daily life produces similar attitudes in people, regardless of the religious doctrine they follow. Of course, sometimes religion has been used to create divisions and problems between people. That is very unfortunate and sad because I believe religion should do the opposite: it should develop harmony, compassion and understanding among people. The fact that there are differences should not create conflict. It is useful to have different religions so that people can practice the religion that best fits their mental disposition. What is important is that religious practitioners, especially religious leaders, should work in harmony with the common aim of converting the hearts of people to become good hearts.

I thank you for the warm welcome which I have received in this country by the government and the people. We are all the same human beings. Although we may look a little different externally, we have the same feelings inside. When I travel like this, I meet people like you, like my friend President Landsbergis, just as ordinary human beings meeting each other. I am just a simple monk, a simple human being. So when we meet we must develop a heart-to-heart communication. So here this time, I have a warm feeling of friendship, love and understanding between us. That is most important.

All people and things are interdependent. The world has become so small that no nation can solve its problems alone, in isolation from others. That is why I believe we must all cultivate a sense of universal responsibility, based on love and compassion for each other. We must recognize that
the suffering of one person or of one nation is the suffering of all humanity; that the happiness of one person or nation is the happiness of humanity. We must, therefore, develop a sense of responsibility for each other's condition. We must see that hurting someone else, or inflicting pain on other people, cannot bring happiness or peace of mind. Only the development of compassion and understanding for others can bring us the tranquillity and happiness that we all seek.

In my own case, the case of Tibet, we have tried to struggle for freedom without developing hatred for the Chinese who invaded and occupied our country. Like you we were fully independent at the time of our neighbour's aggression. We were forced to sign an agreement with the Chinese for the so-called 'peaceful liberation' of Tibet in 1951. We have remained under the illegal occupation of a military force of about half a million troops for the past forty years. One fifth of our population of six million died as a result of the occupation. We cannot free ourselves from this tyranny without the support of freedom-loving people outside Tibet. Your moral and political support are essential ingredients of our non-violent struggle. So we too are dependent on the conduct of others. In turn, our actions will affect the lives of others just as your newly regained freedom affects all of us.

So I am happy because your victory is a victory for truth, patience and, above all, human spirit and determination. It is, therefore, a victory for principles I believe in. It is a happiness the whole world should share in. At the same time, it makes me a little sad. I wish my people's suffering would also come to an end and that they too could celebrate such freedom in their own country today. But your success gives us hope that some day soon we too will celebrate. When we do, we invite you who have shown such friendship in our time of need to rejoice with us. Thank you.
Thank you very much. I sincerely appreciate your invitation to address the Council. It is an honour to be here.

We live in truly extraordinary times. The aspirations of peoples and nations for freedom and democracy, and the desire for self-determination, have resurfaced full of unexpected vigour and tenacity. The recent international trend, including events in Eastern Europe, and more recently, in the Soviet Union, are all examples of this phenomenon. It is clear, we have entered a new era.

I have just concluded an inspiring visit through Mongolia, the Baltic States and Bulgaria. Seeing millions of human beings experiencing the freedom that had been denied them for so many decades filled me with happiness. Their triumph is a compelling reminder that the transition from authoritarian rule to democracy can be made without invoking violence.

The October Revolution in 1917 was founded in violence and bloodshed; the August revolution of this year has supplanted it through a completely unarmed, popular movement. It is truly remarkable. It has clearly shown that regimes constructed and held together by the rule of force against the will of the people are untenable.

China now stands alone as the world's sole remaining communist empire. It is my fervent hope that she will voluntarily seek to join the community of nations in freedom and democracy. Because the world's collective security depends on bringing China into the 21st century as a responsible and productive member of the global family, it is our obligation to help achieve this end through peaceful means. Freedom and democracy will come to China. The international community must actively encourage China to make this transition as quickly, as smoothly, and as non-violently as possible. We should not allow a deterioration of the situation such as in Yugoslavia, where the world community's failure to recognize early
enough the seriousness of the problems contributed to the turmoil now consuming the region.

In the absence of any international pressure, the Chinese government’s response to developments such as those we have seen in the Soviet Union is likely to be more, rather than less, repression. Because of this, when the inevitable change occurs, there is every possibility that more violence and greater human suffering will result. The world has a responsibility to prevent this from happening.

I believe that the future of my own country, Tibet, has an important role to play in this process.

In 1987, I advanced a ‘Five Point Peace Plan’ as an overture to the Chinese to begin negotiations. The following year, I elaborated on this plan during a speech at the European Parliament in Strasbourg suggesting a form of association between Tibet and China. But Chinese leaders rejected the proposal and refused to enter into negotiations. Moreover, many Tibetans, in exile and in Tibet, were strongly opposed to the proposals which they felt contained unnecessary concessions to the Chinese. It is, therefore, clear that the Strasbourg Proposal can no longer serve any useful purpose.

The Chinese government’s refusal to reciprocate my efforts to start negotiations has increased the impatience of many Tibetans, especially young Tibetans inside Tibet, with the non-violent path we follow. Tension in my country is increasing as China encourages demographic aggression in Tibet, reducing Tibetans to a second class minority in our own country. The harsh repression and intimidation of Tibetans is increasingly polarizing the situation. I am extremely anxious that, in this explosive situation, violence may break out. I want to do what I can to prevent this.

As I announced in my speech at Yale University two days ago,¹ because of the urgency of the situation, I am considering a visit to Tibet. Such a visit would allow me, and I hope senior Chinese leaders, to see the situation in Tibet firsthand. It would also afford me the opportunity to communicate directly with my people and, as I have said, advise them not to abandon non-violence as the appropriate form of struggle. It would further provide a fresh opportunity to promote understanding and create a basis for a negotiated solution. I want to underscore the fact that my efforts now, as they have always been, are solely concerned with the

¹Vide The Spirit of Tibet: Universal Heritage, pp. 168-74
status of Tibet and the well-being of the six million Tibetan people. As I 
have also previously said, I will not play a role in the future government 
of Tibet.

I would now like to speak about my vision of the global community 
of the 21st century. Global demilitarization, no matter how long it takes, 
will one day be achieved. Recent announcements by both President George 
Bush and President Mikhail Gorbachev could eventually lead to a world 
without arms. Years ago when I began to speak of this dream, many 
people, including some friends, felt that such ideas were too naive and 
idealistic. Current developments indicate the possible realization of this 

hope.

To achieve it, the age old concept of neutrality must be updated to 
include a more profound dimension of non-violence. Zones of peace, 
established on a regional basis, can be the building blocks of a truly 
peaceful world. Eventually, the integrity of these areas can be guaranteed 
by the entire international community. At this level, it would perhaps be 
most appropriate to term such a nation a "Peace State;" a country whose 
tranquil, stabilizing influence in its region is deemed sufficiently vital to 
the international community that maintenance of its demilitarized status 
will be ensured by the United Nations.

Small nations, in particular, are ideally suited to assume this role. 
Concrete steps towards this end have already been taken. Costa Rica, 
for example, disbanded its army in 1948. More recently, during my trip 
to the Baltic States, I was inspired by discussions with members of the 
Lithuanian Defence Department when I learned of their policy of national 
defence based on non-violence.

In 1987 when I presented my "Five Point Peace Plan" on Capitol Hill, 
I proposed that Tibet must once again become a zone of non-violence or 
"Ahimsa;" a sanctuary for humanity and nature in which all weapons are 
banned. The restoration of Tibet's historic role as a buffer state between 
the two most populous nations on earth is vital for the future peace and 
security of the entire region. However, I also feel that the demilitarization 
of Tibet can play a broader role in the process of bringing peace to the 
entire world.

Given Tibet's centuries-long tradition of non-violence, it is my dream 
that, in the future, Tibet may contribute to the global community of nations 
in serving as a model for such a state.

Thank you.
During the past several months the war in Yugoslavia has caused much destruction and many deaths. The violence has affected innocent people as well. This is most unfortunate and extremely sad, particularly when the newfound freedom in Eastern Europe should be celebrated. This senseless war must stop. I appeal to all to help bring this senseless war to an end. Violence must be avoided at all costs. Through violence no solution can be genuine or lasting. I also appeal to humanitarian organisations to come forward in providing aid to the victims of this war.
I have been deeply saddened by the news of the recent bomb blasts in Bombay, Calcutta and some other cities, with enormous loss of life, the suffering of those who were injured and of the thousands of others whose lives have been disrupted. Yet amidst all this there was a ray of sunshine with the reports of how the citizens of these cities responded with humanity and compassion to help those who were affected and to restore normalcy quickly.

This reaffirmed my belief that despite the violence and inhumanity that man heaps on man there are, in fact, far more acts of altruism and compassion in the world. Without the love and caring we have each received we would not have survived. It begins from the love that our parents and family give us when we are born, at a time when we are so fragile and vulnerable. If we really think about it we will realize that our very survival, even today, depends upon the acts and kindness of so many people.

Yet each day when we are greeted with news of violence and confrontation, no matter where we are in the world, it seems that we have forgotten our basic human nature and the love and caring we are each capable of. We frequently feel helpless in the face of the growing mindless, faceless cruelty and exploitation that a few perpetuate on the many. I have been thinking for some time as to what we might be able to do about it. How can each of us begin to make a difference?

I believe that we must consciously develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. We must learn to work not just for our own individual self, family or nation, but for the benefit of all mankind. Universal responsibility is the best foundation both for our personal happiness and for world peace, the equitable use of our natural resources, and, through a concern for future generations, the proper care for the environment. My own ideas about this are still evolving but I would like to share my tentative ideas.
I believe whether we are rich or poor, educated or uneducated, belonging to any nation, religion or ideology, basically each of us is just a human being like everyone else. Like others, we desire happiness and do not want suffering. We all have an equal right to avoid suffering and pursue happiness.

Today’s world requires us to accept the oneness of humanity. In the past, isolated communities could afford to think of themselves as fundamentally separate from other communities. Some could even exist in total isolation. But nowadays, whatever happens in one region eventually affects many other areas. Within the context of our new interdependence, self-interest clearly lies in considering the interest of others.

Love and compassion are the ultimate source of human contentment. Our need for them lies at our very core. Yet, they are often omitted from many spheres of social interaction. Confined to family and home, their practice in public life is typically thought of as impractical, even naive. This is tragic. I believe that the practice of compassion is not a symptom of unrealistic idealism. It is the most effective and practical means to pursue one’s own interest as well as that of others.

Adopting an attitude of universal responsibility is, first, a matter of personal initiative. How we conduct ourselves in daily life is our real test, not what we say in abstract discussions. Still, certain fundamental views are basic to the cultivation of a sense of universal responsibility.

Love and compassion are the basis for harmony and growth. Let me first define what I mean by compassion. When you have compassion for a very poor person, you are showing sympathy. Because he or she is poor your compassion is based on altruism. On the other hand, love towards your wife, your husband, your children, or a close friend is usually based on attachment. When your attachment changes, your kindness also changes; it may even disappear. This is not true love. Real love is based not on attachment, but on altruism. In this case your compassion will remain a humane response to suffering as long as sentient beings continue to suffer.

Non-discrimination, spontaneous and unlimited compassion for all sentient beings, is obviously not the usual love that one has for friends or
family, which is alloyed with desire, attachment and ignorance. The kind of love we should advocate is this wider love that you can have even for someone who has done you harm; your enemy.

The rationale for compassion is that every one of us wants to avoid suffering and gain happiness. This, in turn, is based on the valid feeling of "I" which determines the universal desire for happiness. Indeed, all beings are born with similar desires and have an equal right to fulfil them. If I compare myself with others who are countless, I feel that others are more important because I am just one person whereas others are many. Further, if we believe in reincarnation, then we are born and reborn countless number of times and it is conceivable that each being has been our parent at one time or another. In this way all beings in the universe share a family relationship.

Whether one believes in religion or not, there is no one who does not appreciate love and compassion. Right from the moment of our birth, we are under the care and kindness of our parents; later in life, when facing the sufferings of disease and old age, we are again dependent on the kindness of others. If at the beginning and end of our lives we depend upon others' kindness, why then in the middle should we not act kindly towards others?

The development of a kind heart (a feeling of closeness for all human beings) does not necessarily involve conventional religious practice. It is for anyone who considers himself or herself, above all, a member of the human family. This is a powerful feeling that we should consciously develop and apply: instead, we often neglect it, particularly in our prime years when we experience a false sense of security.

When we take into account our relative unimportance as compared to countless others we can conclude that it is worthwhile to share our possessions and to kindle a feeling of brotherhood. When you train this sort of outlook, a true sense of compassion — a true sense of love and respect for others — becomes possible and individual happiness ceases to be a conscious self-seeking effort. It becomes an automatic and far superior by-product of the whole process of loving and serving.

A useful result of training ourselves to cultivate altruism is that it diminishes the magnitude of our own problems. When faced with a calm
and clear mind, problems can be successfully resolved. On the other hand, when our minds are filled with hate, selfishness, jealousy and anger, we lose our sense of judgement. To be happy oneself, one must help others and to do this a genuine feeling of compassion must be developed.

I do not believe in creating movements or organizations to promote an ideal. Doing so implies, that only one group of people have responsibility for achieving the goal, the rest are exempt. In the present circumstances no one can afford to assume that someone else will solve our problems. Each of us must take on his or her own share of universal responsibility. Positive changes cannot come quickly. We need an ongoing effort for determined application which can accomplish even the most difficult objectives.

When we transform ourselves it affects those whom we come in contact with in positive ways; they in turn influence others and so on. Each action that each of us takes makes a difference even though we cannot always obviously see or understand the consequences.

The Times of India, 11-4-1993
Speech On India's Role On Tibet

Dharamsala,
May 30, 1993

Today our friends from the sublime land of India, with whom the Snow Land of Tibet enjoys a teacher-pupil relationship, have come here out of a sense of responsibility to speak on and discuss the issue of Tibet. I am happy with this and would like to thank you all. Gangchen Kyishong in Dharamsala has become a special place where the headquarters of our government in-exile is located. Having come here, you will be able to observe this and feel its vibration. This meeting is perhaps a new experience in the last three decades.

You met yesterday as well as this morning, and discussed the question of Tibet. Likewise, you discussed the present position of our relationship with China, and also the direction towards which this relationship is headed. You also discussed the efforts we have been making towards this end. You have also discussed the steps we have been taking for the total democratization of Tibet when we become free. Therefore, there is nothing special that I can say.

The fact that you have come here for this particular purpose has filled my mind with genuine happiness. This is because there exists a very close cultural relationship between Tibet and India.

We Tibetans look up to India with open hearts; the Tibetan way of life itself is inspired by the wise guidance from the sublime land of India. Secondly, even the plight of Tibet is related to that of India. The issue of Tibet is gaining increased international attention. It is only fitting that our friends from India, to whom we look up with open hearts, have taken this special responsibility. It has inspired in me a special feeling. During the last 34 years, India has been our second home. The government of India, the host state governments, and particularly the local Indian people, with

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1This was delivered at the workshop on Tibet organised by the Committee for Solidarity with Tibetan Liberation Movement attended by Indian politicians, journalists, academicians, defence analysts and others.
whom we have come into contact, have been very close to us and treated us as members of their family. We are not the only refugees. There are other refugees as well. But the kind attitude of our hosts make us feel as if we are in our own homeland. I think we should be very grateful for this.

At times, both international friends of Tibet and I feel that the government of India should give more active support to the Tibetan people’s national struggle. For example, during the crises in Tibet in 1988 and 1989, there were great international interest and anguish. However, there was no clear gesture from India. Similarly, Tibetans face problems when they organise demonstrations. At such times, I feel rather disappointed. But my belief, as I tell others, is like this. Our attitude towards the government of India should not be determined by one or two particular incidents. If we take account of the help the government of India has given us in various fields, we will have many reasons to feel grateful. This is what I always feel.

India and Tibet have unique relations. Even if we look at the past history, our culture and religion, which are renowned in the world for their richness, came from India. Similarly, our tradition of non-violence came from India.

Even today, the people in Tibet pin their hopes on us and look up to us because we have been able to establish a new community here, and retain our culture as well as religion. This has kept alive their determination. I always believe that the support for our cause is increasing, and we do need it. But, the most important factor is the Indian support. In the future also, when we regain our freedom, there will be no change in the centuries-old relations between Tibet and India.

Over the past three decades we have grown up under the auspices of the Indian government. To look at this from one point of view, loving parents create conditions for the proper growth and education of their children. When the child grows up, the parents make him capable of interacting with other people. At present, not enough has been done towards this end. So far there may have been certain areas in which the Indian government could help, but did not. Likewise, there may have been other areas where it wanted to help, but it was not realistically possible. Whether mistakes have been made or good things have been done, it is past.
Forty-two years have elapsed since China invaded Tibet. In the 1960s, many well-wishing friends of Tibet used to say with regret that the cause of Tibet was without hope. But today, these same friends say that there is great hope for Tibet now that strange changes are taking place in the world. The changes have not been precipitated by one or two individual countries. Speaking from the religious point of view, these changes have taken place because truth must triumph ultimately. Secondly, suppression and domination are inherently not suited to human nature. Therefore, they must end, sooner or later. Thus, the new development.

In a changed international climate, I feel it is time our Indian friends adopted a new method or strategy towards the issue of Tibet. That is why it is important for our friends who are gathered here and those in your respective areas with whom you will have discussions and consultations, to become more active.

I want to share with you my strong feelings and anxiety on some urgent matters in recent times. Recent scientific studies of archaeological findings have revealed that the Tibetans and Chinese have been two distinct peoples since the dawn of human civilization. There are clear evidences that the genesis of civilizations in China, Tibet and India are different. Based on this, the distinct existence of Tibetan race is clear. For example, in the seventh and eighth centuries, Tibet was a mighty kingdom in Central Asia.

China claims that Tibet became a part of its empire in the thirteenth century. However, Tibetan annals of different periods only show the existence of priest-patron relationship between Tibet and China. Even in the later centuries, when the Manchu emperors gained strong influence in Tibet, the relationship between the two nations was viewed only in terms of priest-patron relation and not in any other light. There are, moreover, no records to prove that any area under the administration of Tibetan government ever paid taxes to the Chinese government.

Therefore, historically, Tibet was a completely independent nation. Likewise, international legal experts contend that Tibet was a de facto independent nation before the Chinese invasion. This is all past history.

The present crisis, as I see it, is the danger of Tibet being converted into a veritable Chinese land. One of the key threats being faced by Tibet
is the transfer of Chinese settlers there. Even in terms of education, the main thrust is on the Chinese language. No doubt, Tibetan is being taught. But, the Tibetans who are good or extremely well-versed in Tibetan can only hope to be employed as teachers or in a limited number of departments related to the Tibetan culture. Unless one is conversant with Chinese, there is no hope for him of gaining employment in any other field. The Chinese language is the most important subject for passing examinations.

Even if one is extremely conversant in Tibetan, he cannot hope to pass examinations unless he has a good command of the Chinese language. There are many such conditions. Even an application to the government department must be written in Chinese.

More urgent is the fact that the very influx of massive Chinese immigrants creates natural conditions for Tibetans to think like the Chinese, use their language, and behave like them. For example, I had a discussion with one of the Tibetans who returned here after visiting his family in Tibet last year. When he visited Tibetan homes in Barkhor, Lhasa, he discovered that the younger members spoke Chinese among themselves. So much so that he wondered if these people were indeed Tibetans. Hoping that there might be some Tibetans among them, he spoke aloud to them. When they replied, he asked them why were they speaking Chinese. They said it was because the Chinese looked down upon them if they did not speak their language. Therefore, even when they spoke among themselves, they felt it necessary to use the Chinese language, they told him.

Now what this shows is that the influx of large number of Chinese makes the city Chinese, causing Tibetans to imbibe their language and habits. Thus, it is not a politically motivated lie when we say that the transfer of Chinese into Tibet is threatening the identity of Tibetan people. Rather, this is a real danger. From the economic point of view, if the Chinese people coming into Tibet are really professionals or skilled in their fields, or if they are capable of doing things the Tibetans cannot do, then there may be important reasons for them coming into Tibet. If they are able to do good work, it may be necessary to welcome them. But this has not been the case. So far, the Chinese people have come into Tibet
empty-handed and only made money there. In this way, they only collect the wealth of Tibet. Whatever little wealth there is in Tibet ends up in Chinese pockets.

Of course, Tibetans are also to blame to some extent. Tibetans owning vegetable gardens lease them out to Chinese settlers. Also, despite the availability of Tibetan tailors and carpenters, people employ Chinese for reasons of convenience. It is true that Tibetans also make mistakes. However, as stated earlier, Chinese come empty-handed and collect the wealth of Tibet. Thousands upon thousands of trucks ferry Chinese settlers into Tibet and go back laden with Tibet's mineral resources. According to Chinese documents, there are over 160 mineral resources in Tibet, some with high commercial value. This includes uranium. That is why apart from the suffering and the cultural erosion of the people, even the land is being denuded. Both the land and people of Tibet are suffering. If this continues for some more years, Tibetans will be reduced to a tiny minority in their own homeland. There is a real danger that the Tibetan culture and religion will be completely lost. In view of this, we now have an urgent task to preserve the Tibetan culture.

It is for this reason that I have established direct contact with the Chinese government and not asked for total independence. Tibet is a sovereign, independent country. Independence is our right. However in view of this critical situation, we have taken into consideration the interest of China also. To encourage mutual trust and benefit, I came up with the Five-Point Peace Plan and the Strasbourg Proposal. Unfortunately, they have yielded no positive results. If Tibet is completely sinicised, there will be big changes in Central Asia and around this region. In the 1950s, when the Chinese and Indians met, they used to say that they had never fought any war against each other. At that time, I used to think that there was no cause for wars between them since Tibet acted as a buffer state between them. This became very clear in 1962.

Although Tibet has come under China, in reality, it is a Tibetan homeland and has not yet been completely sinicised. That is why there is still an opportunity of Tibet becoming a buffer state. However, in the event of Tibet becoming totally sinicised, the opportunity will be completely lost. Then the whole of Asia will be faced with a new challenge.
Culturally speaking, world peace stems from mental peace. Whether one is spiritually aligned or not, mental peace is closely related to compassion. It is clear that Tibetan culture, which is closely related to Buddhism, the gift to us from the sublime land of India, has immense potential to generate peace and harmony.

In the past, you gave us the gift of Buddhism. We adapted it to suit our own needs and gave it to Mongolia, Kalmyk, Tuwa, Buryat, etc.

Likewise, the Himalayan regions in the north of India have cultures related to Tibetan Buddhism. Thus, a culture of peace is prevalent in large areas, albeit not inhabited by so large a population, in Asia. Over the past few years, this culture was eradicated in Mongol areas. But now the Mongols are showing fresh interest in their ancient culture, and efforts are underway to restore it. If such a culture is restored and preserved, a culture which grew from the seeds of the sublime land of India, it would mean not only the preservation of the Indian culture, but also foster peace and harmony in the minds of many people, including millions of young Chinese. I hope and feel that this is possible. Although great damage has already been done, there is still hope. However, if one continues to remain inactive and unconcerned, it will only cause regret after some years. Then there will be absolutely no hope left.

Therefore, it is necessary to save Tibet. But it is also necessary to be realistic. The essence of my idea so far has been to halt the transfer of Chinese population into Tibet and gradually convert the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace and non-violence. There is an urgent need for this. Indian and other leaders have shown interest in this idea. I hope this interest translates into something effective. Over the last decade, I have put hope in the Chinese government. Even now, I continue to hope for unconditional dialogues with the Chinese government. I am looking for a middle path which leads to mutual trust and benefit. I have not had any success so far. But I continue to remain committed to this idea.

What I have learned during the last 14 years is that our efforts will bear fruit only with the help of international support. My hope is that India will lead the international supporters of Tibet. The issue of Tibet is related to Indian national interest and is above party politics. I, therefore, hope and request all concerned to show interest in the issue of Tibet.
23 Human Rights and Universal Responsibility

Vienna, Austria
June 15, 1993

Our world is becoming smaller and ever more interdependent with the rapid growth in population and increasing contacts between people and governments. In this light, it is important to reassess the rights and responsibilities of individuals, peoples and nations in relation to each other and to the planet as a whole. This world conference of organisations and governments concerned about the rights and freedoms of people throughout the world reflects the appreciation of our interdependence.

No matter where we come from we are all basically the same human beings, having common human needs and concerns. We all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering regardless of our race, religion, sex or political status. Human beings, indeed all sentient beings, have the right to pursue happiness and live in peace and in freedom. As free human beings we can use our unique intelligence to try to understand ourselves and our world. But we are prevented from using our creative potential, we are deprived of one of the basic characteristics of a human being. It is very often the most gifted, dedicated and creative members of our society who become victims of human rights abuse. Thus, the political, social, cultural and economic development of society are obstructed by the violation of human rights and freedoms which are of immense importance both for the individuals affected and for the development of the society as a whole.

It is my belief that the lack of understanding of the true cause of happiness is the principal reason why people inflict suffering on others. Some people think that causing pain to others may lead to their own

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1This was addressed to Non-Governmental Organizations at the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna, Austria.
happiness or that their own happiness is of such importance that the
pain of others is of no significance. But this is clearly shortsighted. No
one truly benefits from causing harm to another being. Whatever
immediate advantage is gained at the expense of someone else is short-
lived. In the long run causing others misery and infringing upon their
peace and happiness creates anxiety, fear and suspicion for oneself.

The key to creating a better and more peaceful world is the
development of love and compassion for others. This naturally means
we must develop concern for our brothers and sisters who are less fortunate
than we are. In this respect, the non-governmental organisations have a
key role to play. You not only create awareness for the need to respect
the rights of all human beings, but also give the victims of human rights
violations hope for a better future.

When I travelled to Europe for the first time in 1973, I talked about
the increasing interdependence of the world and the need to develop a
sense of universal responsibility. We need to think in global terms because
the effects of one nation’s actions are felt far beyond its borders. The
acceptance of universally binding standards of human rights as laid down
in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International
Covenants of Human Rights is essential in today’s shrinking world. Respect
for fundamental human rights should not remain an ideal to be achieved
but a requisite foundation for every human society. When we demand
the rights and freedoms we so cherish we should also be aware of our
responsibilities. If we accept that others have an equal right to peace and
happiness as ourselves, do we not have a responsibility to help those in
need? Respect for fundamental human rights is as important to the people
of Africa and Asia as it is to those in Europe or the Americas. All human
beings, whatever their cultural or historical background, suffer when they
are intimidated, imprisoned or tortured. The question of human rights is
so fundamentally important that there should be no difference of views
on this. We must therefore insist on a global consensus not only on the
need to respect human rights worldwide, but more importantly, on the
definition of these rights.

Recently some Asian governments have contended that the standards
of human rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
are those advocated by the West and cannot be applied to Asia and other parts of the Third World because of differences in culture and differences in social and economic development. I do not share this view and I am convinced that the majority of Asian people do not support this view either, for it is the inherent nature of all human beings to yearn for freedom, equality and dignity, and they have an equal desire to achieve that. I do not see any contradiction between the need for economic development and the need for the respect of human rights.

The rich diversity of cultures and religions should help to strengthen the fundamental human rights in all communities. Because underlying this diversity are fundamental principles that bind us all as members of the same human family. Diversity and traditions can never justify the violations of human rights. Thus, discrimination of persons from a different race, of women, and of weaker sections of society may be traditional in some regions, but if they are inconsistent with universally recognised human rights, these forms of behaviour must change. The universal principles of equality of all human beings must take precedence.

It is mainly the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes who are opposed to the universality of human rights. It would be absolutely wrong to concede to their view. On the contrary, such regimes must be made to respect and conform to the universally accepted principles in the larger and long-term interests of their own peoples. The dramatic changes in the past few years clearly indicate that the triumph of human rights is inevitable.

There is a growing awareness of people's responsibilities to each other and to the planet we share. This is encouraging even though so much suffering continues to be inflicted based on chauvinism, race, religion, ideology and history. A new hope is emerging for the downtrodden, and people everywhere are displaying a willingness to champion and defend the rights and freedoms of their fellow human beings.

Brute force, no matter how strongly applied, can never subdue the basic human desire for freedom and dignity. It is not enough, as communist systems have assumed, merely to provide people with food, shelter and clothing. The deeper human nature needs to breathe the precious air of
liberty. However, some governments still consider the fundamental human
rights of its citizen an internal matter of the state. They do not accept that
the fate of a people in any country is the legitimate concern of the entire
human family and that claims to sovereignty are not a license to mistreat
one’s citizens. It is not only our right as members of the global human
family to protest when our brothers and sisters are being treated brutally,
but it is our duty to do whatever we can to help them.

Artificial barriers that have divided nations and peoples have fallen
in recent times. With the dismantling of the Berlin wall, the East-West
division which had polarised the whole world for decades has now come
to an end. We are experiencing a time filled with hope and expectation.
Yet there still remains a major gulf at the heart of the human family. By
this I am referring to the North-South divide. If we are serious in our
commitment to the fundamental principles of equality, principles which, I
believe, lie at the heart of the concept of human rights, economic disparity
can no longer be ignored. It is not enough merely to state that all human
beings must enjoy equal dignity. This must be translated into action. We
have a responsibility to find ways to achieve a more equitable distribution
of world’s resources.

We are witnessing a tremendous popular movement for the
advancement of human rights and democratic freedom in the world.
This movement must become an even more powerful moral force, so
that even the most obstructive governments and armies are incapable of
suppressing it. This conference is an occasion for all of us to reaffirm our
commitment to this goal. It is natural and just for nations, peoples and
individuals to demand respect for their rights and freedoms and to struggle
to end repression, racism, economic exploitation, military occupation,
and various forms of colonialism and alien domination. Governments
should actively support such demands instead of only paying lip service
to them.

As we approach the end of the twentieth century, we find that the
world is becoming one community. We are being drawn together by the
grave problems of over-population, dwindling natural resources, and an
environmental crisis that threatens the very foundation of our existence
on this planet. Human rights, environmental protection and great social
and economic equality, are all interrelated. I believe that to meet the challenges of our times, human beings will have to develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. Each of us must learn to work not just for ourselves, our own family or our nation, but for the benefit of all humankind. Universal responsibility is the key to human survival. It is the best foundation for world peace.

This need for cooperation can only strengthen humankind, because it helps us to recognise that the most secure foundation for a new world order is not simply broader political and economic alliances, but each individual's genuine practice of love and compassion. These qualities are the ultimate source of human happiness, and our need for them lies at the very core of our being. The practice of compassion is not idealistic, but the most effective way to pursue the best interest of others as well as our own. The more we become interdependent the more it is in our interest to pursue the well-being of others.

I believe that one of the principal factors that hinders us from fully appreciating our interdependence is our undue emphasis on material development. We have become so engrossed in its pursuit, that unknowingly, we have neglected the most basic qualities of compassion, caring and cooperation. When we do not know someone or do not feel connected to an individual or group, we tend to overlook their needs. Yet, the development of human society requires that people help each other.

I strongly believe that individuals can make a difference in society. Every individual has a responsibility to help move our global family in the right direction and we must assume that responsibility. As a Buddhist monk, I try to develop compassion within myself, not simply as a religious practice, but on human level as well. To encourage myself in this altruistic attitude, I sometimes find it helpful to imagine myself standing as a single individual on one side facing a huge gathering of all other human beings on the other side. Then I ask myself, "Whose interests are more important?" To me it is quite clear that however important I may feel I am, I am just one individual while others are infinite in number and importance.
24 Violence Breeds Violence

December 9/10, 1993

Sentient beings, including humans and animals, all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering. In that respect we are all the same. In fact, we have a right to seek happiness and avoid suffering. But in our search for happiness, we need to make wise decisions, in our own interest and in the interest of others.

Human life is especially precious. This is emphasized not only in Buddhism, but also in most other religions and philosophies. According to Buddhism, it is rare and difficult for a sentient being to be reincarnated as a human being, and the opportunity must be fully utilized for one’s own good and that of others on the long path to spiritual liberation.

In conducting our lives we often make misguided decisions which harm ourselves or others. We do this out of ignorance. We think that a certain behaviour will bring us happiness when in fact it brings us suffering. Feelings of selfishness, greed, hatred or pride sometimes lead us to harm others in the mistaken conviction that it will benefit ourselves and bring us some form of happiness. Actually, it brings suffering not only to the victim of our deeds but also to ourselves. It severely disturbs our own peace of mind and creates conditions for our own suffering.

Human beings need to live together and are dependent on each other in many essential ways. In human society we therefore need moral codes of behaviour in order to live in peace and harmony with one another. Religion and philosophy have a function to develop and explain these moral codes and to promote them. Political society also creates legal rules, sometimes based on moral ones and sometimes in violation of them. Thus, under the legal system of all countries, criminal behaviour is punished by the authorities.

1 This was addressed to the Congress of the International League for the Abolition of Death Penalty by the Year 2000, held at the European Parliament in Brussels.
What is deemed criminal can vary greatly from country to country. In some countries, for example, speaking out for human rights is considered criminal, whereas in other countries preventing free speech is a crime. The punishments for crimes are also very different but usually include various forms of imprisonment or hardship, financial penalties and, in a number of countries, physical pain. In some countries, crimes that the government considers very serious are punished with killing the person who committed the crime.

It is, of course, wrong to harm others and it is, of course, necessary to have rules that are legally enforceable to prevent crime and to protect potential victims. Punishment is a form of prevention, since it serves to warn other potential offenders not to commit crimes and it deters the person who committed the crime from committing it again. Thus, punishment serves an essential function. However, if punishment is inflicted primarily in order to satisfy feelings of hatred and revenge towards the offender by the victims or by society then it is not justified. Although such forms of punishment may serve an important psychological need for victims and others that justice is being done by the authorities, the infliction of pain on another person also serves to add to the suffering already done and does not increase the potential for happiness of anyone involved. Instead of revenge, it is the notion of forgiveness which should be encouraged and developed. This is stressed by most major religions and humanist philosophies.

The death penalty fulfils a preventive function but it is also very clearly a form of revenge. It is an especially severe form of punishment because it is, in one sense, final. The human life is ended and the person killed is not being given any opportunity to change, to restore the harm done or to compensate for it.

For Buddhists it is a sin to take a life of any sentient being even an insect. But to take the life of a human being, which provides such a precious opportunity for the being to develop, is a very serious act which will have serious karmic consequences for the person responsible. Killing offenders does not solve the problem of crime. Only the promotion of kindness and compassion, through education, and through establishment
of a sense of universal responsibility can, in the long run, improve the situation.

Today in many societies very little importance is placed on education, in entertainment and in social programmes on the development of these key values. In fact, if one takes television programming as an example, it is violence, including killing, which is given a high entertainment value. This is indicative of the mistaken approach that is being followed.

I believe human beings are not violent by nature. This is why human beings do not have sharp, long teeth for assaulting and killing. Human beings become violent in large part as a result of their environment and circumstances. Acceptance of violence as a means of reacting to violent and other crimes can have the opposite impact to what is intended. Killing offenders, however grave the crime they may have committed, may serve the short-term goal of removing a potential threat to others. But it does not serve the long-term and much more important goal of reducing crime and violence. In a number of countries people are killed for political "crimes" also. That is especially harmful in society. Capital punishment is not the solution to the problem of crime and in many cases capital punishment contributes to the notion that revenge and killing people is justified. As Mahatma Gandhi believed, violence breeds more violence, and capital punishment is a form of violence.

I urge everyone to seriously think of positive ways in which children and adults can be educated in the path of compassion, kindness and non-violence, that is, in the development of the good heart. Not much effort is being put into this avenue by society and yet, it is the only way forward.
25 Universal Responsibility and Global Environment

Israel,
March 22, 1994

As the twentieth century draws to a close, we find that the world has grown smaller. The world's people have become almost one community. Political and military alliances have created large multinational groups; industry and international trade have produced a global economy. Worldwide communications are eliminating ancient barriers of distance, language and race. We are also being drawn together by the grave problems we face: overpopulation, dwindling natural resources, and an environmental crisis that threatens our air, water, and trees, along with the vast number of beautiful life forms that are the very foundation of existence on this small planet we share.

I believe that to meet the challenge of our times, human beings will have to develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. Each of us must learn to work not just for his or her own self, family or nation, but for the benefit of all mankind. Universal responsibility is the real key to human survival. It is the best foundation for world peace, the equitable use of natural resources and, through concern for future generations, the proper care of the environment.

That is why it is so heartening to see such non-governmental organisations as yours. Your role in forging a better future is absolutely essential. I have come across many such organisations built by dedicated volunteers out of genuine concern to their fellow human beings. Such commitment represents the forefront of both social and environmental progress.

Whether we like it or not, we have all been born on this earth as part of one great family. Rich or poor, educated or uneducated, belong to one nation, religion, ideology or another, ultimately each of us is just

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1This was delivered at the Society for Protection of Nature. A similar speech, with some verbal variations, was made before the New York Lawyers' Alliance for World Security and the Council for Foreign Relations at New York City on April 27, 1994.
a human being like everyone else. We all desire happiness and do not want suffering. Furthermore, each of us has the same right to pursue happiness and avoid suffering. When you recognise that all beings are equal in this respect, you automatically feel empathy and closeness for them. Out of this, in turn, comes a genuine sense of universal responsibility — the wish to actively help others overcome their problems.

The need for a sense of universal responsibility is present in every aspect of modern life. Nowadays, significant events in one part of the world eventually affect the entire planet. Therefore, we have to treat each major local problem as a global concern from the moment it begins. We can no longer invoke the national, racial or ideological barriers that separate us without destructive repercussions. In the context of our new interdependence, considering the interest of others is clearly the best form of self-interest.

We need to appreciate interdependence in nature far more than we have in the past. Our ignorance of it is directly responsible for many of the problems we face. For instance, tapping the limited resources of our world — particularly those of the developing nations — simply to fuel consumerism, is disastrous. If it continues unchecked, eventually we will all suffer. We must respect the delicate balance of life and allow it to replenish itself.

Ignorance of interdependence has not only harmed the natural environment, but human society as well. Instead of caring for one another, we place most of our efforts for happiness in pursuing individual material consumption. We have become so engrossed in this pursuit that without knowing it, we have neglected to foster the most basic human needs of love, kindness and cooperation. However, since we are not solely material creatures, it is a mistake to seek fulfillment in external development alone.

To pursue growth properly, we need to renew our commitment to human values in many fields. Political life, of course, requires an ethical foundation, but science and religion, as well, should be pursued from a moral basis. Without it scientists cannot distinguish between beneficial technologies and those which are merely expedient. The environmental damage surrounding us is the most obvious result of this confusion. In the case of religion, it is particularly necessary.

The purpose of religion is not to construct beautiful buildings, but to cultivate positive human qualities such as tolerance, generosity and love.
Every world religion, no matter what its philosophical view, is founded first and foremost on the precept that we must reduce our selfishness and serve others. Unfortunately, sometimes in the name of religion, people cause more quarrels than they solve. Practitioners of different faiths should realise that each religious tradition has immense intrinsic value as a means for providing mental and spiritual health.

I have been extremely heartened to follow the recent developments in the search for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Laying down guns on both sides, and talking face-to-face is, in my opinion, the only way to resolve such disputes. We must learn to live together in a non-violent way that nurtures the freedom of all people.

There is a wonderful verse in the Bible about turning swords into ploughshares. It is a lovely image, a weapon transformed into a tool to serve basic human needs, symbolic of an attitude of inner and outer disarmament. In the spirit of this ancient message, I think it is important that we stress today the urgency of a policy that is long overdue — the demilitarisation of the entire planet. Demilitarisation would free great human resources for protection of the environment, relief of poverty, and sustainable human development.

I have always envisioned the future of my own country, Tibet, as founded on this basis. Tibet will be a neutral, demilitarised sanctuary where weapons are forbidden and the people live in harmony with nature. I have called this a Zone of Ahimsa or non-violence. This is not merely a dream — it is precisely the way Tibetans have tried to live for over a thousand years before our country was tragically invaded. In Tibet, wildlife was protected in accordance with Buddhist principles. We enacted decrees to protect the environment, but it was mainly protected by the beliefs which were installed in us as children.

I would like to conclude by stating that I feel optimistic about the future. There are a number of recent trends which show our potential for achieving a better world. The rapid changes in our attitude towards the earth are a source of hope. As recently as a decade ago, we thoughtlessly devoured the resources of the world as if there was no end to them. We failed to realise that unchecked consumerism was disastrous for both the environment and social welfare. Now, both individuals and governments are seeking a new ecological and economic order.
It is true to say that as late as the 1980s people believed that war was an inevitable condition of mankind. The notion prevailed that people with conflicting interests could only confront each other. This view has diminished. Today people all over the globe are more committed to peaceful co-existence, as is evident here in the Middle East. This is an astonishingly positive development.

After believing for centuries that human society could only be governed with rigid authoritarian discipline, people in all corners of the world have woken up to the virtues of democracy. Speaking from their hearts, they have shown that the desire for freedom and truth and democracy stems from the core of human nature. Recent events have proved that the simple expression of truth is an immense force in the human mind, and as a result, in the shaping of history.

One of the greatest lessons for all of us has been the peaceful change in Eastern Europe. In the past, oppressed people have always resorted to violence in their struggle to be free. Now, these peaceful revolutions, following in the footsteps of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, have given future generations a tremendous example of successful, non-violent change. When, in the future, the need arises to change society, our descendants can look back to 1989 as a paradigm for peaceful struggle: a real success story on an unprecedented scale, involving more than half a dozen nations and hundreds of millions of people.

Meanwhile, there has been a growth of awareness of human rights. Crude power can never subdue mankind’s basic desire for freedom, truth and democracy, which are our fundamental right. People simply don’t like a person or a system that bullies, cheats and lies. These activities are essentially opposed to the human spirit.

All these encouraging signs reflect a renewed appreciation of the benefits of basic human values. Because of the lessons we have begun, to learn, the next century will be friendlier, more harmonious, and less harmful. Compassion, the seeds of peace, will be able to flourish. At the same time, I believe that every individual has a responsibility to help guide our global family in the right direction. Good wishes alone are not enough, we each have to assume responsibility.

I hope and pray that in the days ahead, each of us will do all we can to see that the goal of creating a happier, more harmonious and healthier world is achieved.
Today, on the occasion of World Human Rights Day, I extend my sincere greetings to all those blessed with human rights as well as those who are deprived of these rights.

Over four decades have passed since the United Nations Organisation issued the 33 article Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This document has helped to promote human rights in many countries. Sadly, some countries continue to slumber in ignorance and suppress the human rights of their own citizens. We Tibetans are also oppressed and completely deprived of our human rights.

There is a tremendous discrepancy between the lofty official Chinese claims and the ground reality in Tibet. For example, the Chinese authorities have, recently, threatened to jeopardise the careers of the Tibetan Party cadres and those working in Chinese government departments unless they recall their children from schools in India. On the other hand, nothing is said about the tens of thousands of Chinese students sent to study in foreign countries. If the children of Tibet are deprived of the right to pursue their education according to their wishes, we can then imagine how the rights of our people can otherwise be disregarded.

However, the global improvement in education and awareness in the twentieth century has led to mounting opposition to any form of aggression and oppression. It is because of this that governments, religious organizations, Tibet support groups, human rights organizations, Amnesty International, the Red Cross, legal experts, governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as many eminent and concerned individuals, are stepping forward to help and support the Tibetan people. This support is not inspired by any bias in ideology. Rather, it is rooted in the rule of law and a sense that we are all human beings and, therefore, must enjoy equal human rights.
On behalf of the people of Tibet, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all and request you to re-double your efforts.

The truth of Tibet’s cause is becoming increasingly clear to many objective and educated Chinese living outside in free countries. In fact, many of them have expressed their deep concern for us and have asked us our forgiveness for the unjust actions of their government. This is the fruit of our just struggle, and I appreciate their courage in recognising this truth.

Among the Chinese and Muslims living in Tibet, there are many who are interested in and sympathetic to the cause of Tibetan freedom. They believe that the Tibetans in Tibet are being treated unjustly by the Chinese authorities. As Tibet regains its freedom, we should remember these people.

After the complete occupation of Tibet in 1959, the new sun of freedom and happiness shone over many colonised countries, and numerous new national entities came into existence. Nations and peoples who have suffered under alien domination know through their own experience that human beings will suffer and face hardships as long as they are deprived of freedom and the right to equality. I have great hope and confidence that these nations and peoples will extend greater support and help in alleviating the ongoing suffering and tragedy in Tibet.

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to enjoy human rights. This declaration does not discriminate on the basis of geography, the size of nations and populations, the power of nations, the political situations and the colour of a person's skin.

In the spirit of this universality, I pray that very soon the world becomes one large community where everyone lives in harmony, enjoying full human rights.
27 Foreword to Tibet: A Sourcebook

We have all been born into this increasingly interdependent world as part of one great human family. Whether people are beautiful and friendly or unattractive and disruptive, ultimately they are human beings. Like ourselves, they want happiness and do not want suffering. Furthermore, their right to overcome suffering and be happy is equal to our own. When we recognize that all beings are equal in both their desire for happiness and their right to obtain it, we automatically feel tolerance, empathy and affection for them.

As the end of the twentieth century approaches our world has become smaller and more interdependent. Within the context of this new interdependence, self-interest clearly lies in considering the interests of others. Each of us must learn to work not just for our own self, family or nation, but for the benefit of all mankind. The sole valid foundation for such universal responsibility is love and compassion. Love and compassion are the ultimate source of joy and happiness. Once we actually try to cultivate them, many other good qualities: forgiveness, tolerance, inner strength, and confidence to overcome fear and insecurity come forth naturally. These qualities are essential if we are to create a better, happier, more stable and civilised world.

The world today is undergoing major changes. There is a spirit of reconciliation and peace emerging in many troubled parts of the world, despite the continued outbreak of new conflicts. In the hope that positive changes would also come about in Tibet, we have long endeavoured to reach a peaceful solution of the crisis there. However, I have to state that little has changed for the good in our homeland and our people continue to suffer. The reality today is that Tibet remains an occupied country under colonial rule.

Over the past fifteen years, since the Chinese authorities expressed a willingness to negotiate, I have tried to cooperate with them in resolving

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1This was compiled and edited by Prof. Anand Kumar of the Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1995.
the problem of Tibet. When they made it a condition that anything could be discussed except Tibetan independence, we made such concessions hoping it would result in the opening of discussions. However, the Chinese authorities have rejected all our overtures. The reality is that they shy away from negotiation.

The true nature of the historical relationship between Tibet and China, India, Nepal, Mongolia, Bhutan and all our other neighbours may best be studied by historians, jurists and other experts. What is clear is that Tibet is a nation at the heart of Asia. It has over 2000 years of recorded history. For centuries, Tibet acted as a physical buffer ensuring peace in the region. At the same time our spiritual and cultural traditions, strongly influenced by Buddhism, have contributed to peace in our own land and that of our neighbours. Tibetan Buddhism had provided solace and inspiration to millions of people from the Himalayas to the steppes of Central Asia.

The Communist invasion of Tibet that began in September 1949 was uninvited and unprovoked. Nationwide resistance over the following decade culminated in the Tibetan National Uprising of 10th March 1959. The Chinese occupation forces' retaliation was of unspeakable ruthlessness. Over a million Tibetan lives have been lost as a direct result and unprecedented numbers have sought refuge in exile. Tibetans living in Tibet continue to live under dreadful conditions. Compared to the darkest periods of oppression, the years following the final Chinese takeover and the decade of the Cultural Revolution, they now enjoy a better standard of living. At least their stomachs are full, they have limited freedom of movement and superficial religious freedom. And yet, as the saying goes, human beings do not live by bread alone. They need mental freedom, a conducive atmosphere in which to exercise their creative talents, and, above all, personal responsibility, the ability to determine their own future. Unfortunately, these basic rights are absent in Chinese-occupied Tibet. Individuals are detained merely for reciting prayers or singing songs. This has been the fate of many young people, monks and nuns in particular.

One reason the Chinese authorities have totally failed in their occupation of Tibet is that they have not merely ignored but have tried to
eradicate the Tibetan identity. They have systematically attempted to eliminate the Tibetan language, culture and traditions. Even now that there has been some relaxation of this oppression they only encourage those aspects of the Tibetan identity that they can exploit. Far from giving Tibetans a respected equal place in a pluralistic China, they have not even accorded the Tibetan people basic human rights.

Nevertheless, in pursuit of our just struggle for freedom, there is no alternative to non-violence. I have always maintained that the use of force, particularly in our case, is suicidal. Moreover, as a Buddhist monk, my sense of responsibility for my people prevents me from sanctioning the use of violence. My people understand this. And although some Tibetans may wish to take some drastic action to draw attention to our cause or provoke the Chinese to respond, they are restrained by my insistence on peaceful means.

Tibet and India have long-standing spiritual connections. Down the centuries Tibetans have regarded India as a holy land, and despite the hardships involved, have visited its many sacred places. Indians likewise have made pilgrimages to Mansarovar and Mount Kailash. For those of us in exile, no other country has done as much to help us preserve our culture and educate our children. The support we have received is incalculable. But if our cause is to succeed, what we urgently need now is global support. In this connection I am confident that this work, Tibet: A Sourcebook, in presenting a collection of basic historical, cultural and political information will be invaluable in promoting a better understanding of the crisis that besets my land and my people. The editor, Dr. Anand Kumar, and Shri Mohan Singh, MP, convener of the All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet which has published it, deserve our gratitude. I pray that it may contribute to the Tibetan people's regaining freedom, peace and dignity in their own land.

May 12, 1995

The Dalai Lama
Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members of the Parliament,

It gives me great pleasure to address you today, at the opening of this hearing on the question of Tibet. This hearing comes at a crucial time. Since the lifting of martial law in May 1990, repression and political persecution have continued in Tibet and have lately reached a new peak. Observance of human rights in Tibet have, sadly, not improved. On the contrary, the Chinese government has intensified repression. This has been documented in reports from international human rights organizations. Last month, for example, Amnesty International published a report entitled "Persistent Human Rights Violations in Tibet." I am confident that other informed experts invited to this hearing will also corroborate these grim developments in Tibet.

Violations of human rights in Tibet have a distinct character. Such abuses are aimed at Tibetans as a people asserting their own identity and their wish to preserve it. Thus, human rights violations in Tibet are often the result of institutionalised racial and cultural discrimination. If the human rights situation in Tibet is to be improved, the issue of Tibet should be addressed on its own merits. It should be seen as distinct from the overall situation in China. Undoubtedly, the Chinese in China suffer from human rights abuses, but these abuses are of an entirely different nature.

In Tibet my people are being marginalised and discriminated against in the face of creeping sinicization. The destruction of cultural artifacts and traditions coupled with the mass influx of Chinese into Tibet amounts to cultural genocide. The very survival of the Tibetans as a distinct people is under constant threat. Similarly, the issue of environmental destruction

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1 His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressed the hearing on Tibet convened by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the German Bundestag (Parliament). A similar speech was delivered at Foreign Affairs Committee, Denmark, Copenhagen on May 13, 1996.
and contamination, which have serious ramifications beyond the Tibetan plateau, and economic development must be addressed specifically with regard to Tibet. These problems are also different from those faced in China.

It is encouraging to note the growing concern being shown about the human rights situation in Tibet by many governments and NGO's around the world. But human rights violations, environmental degradation and social unrest in Tibet are only the symptoms and consequences of a deeper problem. Fundamentally, the issue of Tibet is political. It is an issue of colonial rule: the oppression of Tibet by the People's Republic of China and resistance to that rule by the people of Tibet. This issue can be resolved only through negotiations and not, as China would have it, through force, intimidation, and population transfer.

This hearing is also significant because of the process of change that is taking place in China. It offers a historic opportunity for Germany and other members of the international community to reassess their policy towards China, in order both to influence and to respond to the changes that are taking place in that country. With regard to Tibet I am convinced that the next few years will be crucial in bringing about honest negotiations between us and the Chinese government. Such negotiations are the only way to promote a peaceful and comprehensive resolution of the Tibetan question.

It is undoubtedly in the interest of the Chinese people that the present totalitarian one-party state gives way to a democratic system in which fundamental human rights and freedoms are protected and promoted. The people of China have clearly manifested their desire for human rights, democracy and the rule of law in successive movements starting in 1979 with the 'Democracy Wall' and culminating in the great popular movement of the spring of 1989.

China needs human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These values are the foundation of a free and dynamic society. They are also the source of true peace and stability. A society upholding such values will offer far greater potential and security for trade and investment. A democratic China is thus also in the interest of the international community in general and of Asia in particular. Therefore, every effort should be
made not only to integrate China into the world economy, but also to encourage her to enter the mainstream of global democracy. Nevertheless, freedom and democracy in China can be brought about only by the Chinese themselves, not by anyone else. That is why the brave and dedicated members of the Chinese democracy movement deserve our encouragement and support.

Democracy in China will have important consequences for Tibet. Many of the leaders of the Chinese democracy movement recognise that Tibetans have been ill-treated by Beijing and believe that such injustices should be redressed. Many of them openly state that Tibetans should be granted the opportunity to express and implement their right to self-determination.

Although we hope that the flowering of democracy in China will bring freedom to us Tibetans, we must be aware that democracy alone will guarantee fair treatment of the people of Tibet. Therefore we need to prepare the political ground now to ensure that a more liberal, open and democratic China will negotiate a peaceful and just solution to the Tibetan problem.

In the final analysis it is for the Tibetan and the Chinese peoples themselves to find a just and peaceful solution to the Tibetan problem. Therefore, in our struggle for freedom and justice I have always tried to pursue a path of non-violence in order to ensure that a relationship based on mutual respect, friendship and genuine good neighbourliness can be sustained between our two peoples in the future. For centuries the Tibetan and Chinese peoples have lived side by side. In future, too, we will have no alternative but to live as neighbours. I have, therefore, always attached great importance to our relationship. In this spirit I have sought to reach out to our Chinese brothers and sisters in the United States, Europe, Asia and Australia.

Furthermore, in my efforts to seek a negotiated solution to our problem, I have refrained from asking for the complete independence of Tibet. Historically and according to international law Tibet is an independent country under Chinese occupation. However, over the past fifteen years I have adopted a middle-way approach of reconciliation and compromise in the pursuit of a peaceful and negotiated solution to
the Tibetan issue. While it is the overwhelming desire of the Tibetan people to regain their national independence, I have repeatedly and publicly stated that I am willing to enter into negotiations on the basis of an agenda that does not include independence. The continued occupation of Tibet poses an increasing threat to the very existence of a distinct Tibetan national and cultural identity. Therefore, I consider that my primary responsibility is to take whatever steps I must to save my people and their unique heritage from total annihilation.

Moreover, I believe that it is more important to look forward to the future than dwell in the past. Theoretically speaking it is not impossible that the six million Tibetans could benefit from joining the one billion Chinese of their own free will, if a relationship based on equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect could be established. But, if China wants Tibet to stay with her, it is up to China to create the necessary conditions. The reality today is that Tibet is an occupied country under colonial rule. This is the essential issue which must be addressed and resolved through negotiations.

Unfortunately, the Chinese government has yet to accept any of the proposals and initiatives we have made over the years and has yet to enter into any substantive negotiations with us. Meanwhile, it continues to flood Tibet with Chinese settlers, effectively reducing Tibetans to an insignificant minority in their own land. Some of my Western friends call this China's "Final Solution" to the Tibetan problem.

Tibet — an ancient nation with a unique culture and civilization — is disappearing fast. In endeavouring to protect my nation from this catastrophe, I have always sought to be guided by realism, moderation and patience. I have tried in every way I know to find some mutually acceptable solution in the spirit of reconciliation and compromise. However, it has now become clear that our efforts are not sufficient to bring the Chinese government to the negotiating table. This sad state of affairs compels me to appeal to your government and the international community for urgent intervention and action on behalf of my people.

In the first place, the true nature of China's rule over Tibet must be understood. China's leaders have for decades, even before the Communist revolution, propagated a false and self-serving version of the history of
Tibet and of Tibet-China relations. Tibet's historical independence and its rich cultural and spiritual traditions have been entirely distorted to justify China’s invasion, occupation and suppression of Tibet. The international community, and even the Chinese people, still do not fully comprehend the extent of the destruction, suffering and injustice experienced by the Tibetans under Chinese rule. Today the Chinese people, especially the intellectuals, closely follow what happens outside China. The Chinese authorities are no longer able to isolate the population from outside sources of information. It is therefore immensely important that governments and non-governmental organizations in democratic countries discuss, openly and honestly, all aspects of the Tibetan issue, from the historical relations between Tibet and China to the current violations of human rights.

Secondly, as China’s new leaders emerge, they must be made to realize that the question of Tibet will cause ever-increasing problems to China domestically and internationally, unless it is resolved to the satisfaction of both China and Tibet through earnest negotiations, in which all issues can be discussed with honesty and candour.

Thirdly, we need governments of democratic countries to continue and increase their pressure on the Chinese authorities to respect human rights in Tibet and to enter into serious negotiations with us. Such pressures should include public statements to that effect, since they will also be heard by the people throughout China. In this connection, I wish to draw your attention to a memorandum submitted by my cabinet to this Committee containing suggestions for an effective and practical approach to the Tibetan issue on the part of the international community.

Fourthly, in their contacts with leaders and members of the democratic movement in China and in exile, governments of democratic countries should make clear their expectation with regard to China’s future conduct towards Tibet. Now is the time for Chinese democrats to make commitment in this respect.

On our part, we Tibetans will continue our non-violent struggle for freedom. My people are calling for an intensification of the struggle, and I believe they will put this into effect. But we will resist the use of violence as an expression of desperation which many Tibetans feel. As long as I
lead our freedom struggle, there will be no deviation from the path of non-violence. However, my people need hope and encouragement. They will find this in the support of the international community, if they can see effective and concerted action on the issue of Tibet.

I remain committed to negotiations with China. I have made several proposals in this regard, which are contained in my Five Point Peace Plan (1987) and the proposal I made at the European Parliament in Strasbourg in 1988. These proposals were very well received internationally, and they can still form a rational basis for negotiations. But since China has chosen to reject them, I have stated, and I reiterate today, our willingness to start negotiations with China without any preconditions. I call upon all democratic countries of the world to intensify their support for this position. And I extend to China's present and future leaders an invitation to open negotiations as soon as possible in the interests of both the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.
Today, I am very happy to be here to meet with Chinese students and scholars. I have always attached great importance to personal contacts with Chinese scholars, students, journalists, democracy activists, Chinese Buddhists and others. Some Chinese nationals have also been coming to India to see me, and I always try to set aside some time to meet and talk to them.

For centuries the Tibetan and Chinese peoples have lived as neighbours; friendly for most of the period, but occasionally at war and in confrontation with each other. In the future, also, we have no other alternative but to live as neighbours. Therefore, I have always encouraged Tibetans in exile to meet with Chinese people, to make friends with them and to develop personal relationships with them. I make it a point to ask the Tibetans to understand the distinction between the Chinese people and Chinese government policy.

Particularly after the Tiananmen tragedy, with a large number of Chinese intellectuals and students coming into exile, an opportunity was provided to establish a dialogue with the Chinese people and to develop an understanding between the Tibetans and Chinese. It is not because we have a desire to explore and widen the rift between the Chinese people and their government. Rather, as we witnessed in the course of the Tiananmen movement, Chinese people are no less enthusiastic than any other peoples who yearn for freedom, democracy, equality and human rights. I was especially moved by the fact that those young people who grew up with the teachings of "power comes from the barrel of gun" were

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1His Holiness the Dalai Lama spoke to a group of Chinese students and scholars during his visit to the United States.
actually following a "non-violent" approach, an approach which is at the heart of my belief.

Of course, it is not easy for the Tibetans to be friendly and open-minded to the Chinese people, and not everyone was happy with me when I tried to encourage them to have contact with the Chinese people. It is also likely that our Chinese friends feel the same way when they try to interact with us "reactionary rebel bandits", "slave owners" and "separatists", as the Chinese government refers to us. Over the years, there has been significant progress in our mutual efforts to have closer interaction between our two communities. Now, Tibetans and Chinese in the US, Canada, Europe, Australia and Japan are getting more and more familiar with each other. Chinese human rights and democracy activists inside China, like Wei Jingsheng and others are urging their government to respect Tibetan people's basic human rights and their right to self-rule. Overseas Chinese scholars are discussing a constitution for a federal China which would include a confederation status for Tibet. Above all, the fact that we are meeting here under the joint sponsorship of the International Campaign for Tibet and 21st Century China Foundation and that you, our Chinese friends, have come to discuss this event is a clear indication that the increasing dialogue between the Tibetans and Chinese is having a very positive result. It vindicates my belief that in the absence of a Chinese government response, the person to person dialogue between the Tibetans and Chinese is laying a solid foundation for a better understanding of each other.

Based on my belief that the only way to achieve our goal is through dialogue and peaceful human contact, I have, over the last fifteen years, tried to engage with the Chinese government in serious negotiations on the future status of Tibet. Tibet has been an independent country for over a thousand years and I believe that the Tibetan people do have the right to choose independence. However, it is also a political reality that Tibet is now under Chinese rule. Therefore, in order to find a mutually acceptable solution, I have tried a "middle-way" approach to solve the problem. My approach is also in response to Mr. Deng Xiaoping's message that
"anything except independence can be discussed". Accordingly, over the last fifteen years, six official delegations were sent to China and Tibet, and my personal envoy visited China at least ten times. I also made several proposals to the Chinese government. These proposals were announced at prestigious international forums to show my seriousness and sincerity.

Unfortunately, the Chinese government's response to these proposals has been one of total rejection. I am referred to as a "splittist" who is trying to internationalize the Tibet issue. In fact, what I have been trying to do is merely to preserve Tibet's cultural and national identity and to find a fair solution to our problem, one which is mutually acceptable and beneficial to both Tibet and China.

The Chinese government's lack of respect for Tibet's culture, religion, and tradition; its denial of true autonomy for Tibet; its propaganda efforts to portray Tibet as the "most barbarous, most backward, the darkest" region in the world and its high-handed repression in Tibet have all contributed to the alienation of millions of Tibetans. The Chinese government's actions have aroused resentment among Tibetans who see it as chauvinistic and colonialistic. It is therefore fair to say that the Chinese government policy is splitting Tibet from China. Take the recent controversy over the announcement of the Panchen Lama's reincarnation as an example. The notion of "reincarnation" is alien and absurd to an atheistic communist government. On the other hand, it is the fundamental cornerstone of Tibetan Buddhism. Now a communist government is telling us whom to choose and who has the right to approve it. This illustrates total disrespect for the traditions and customs of the Tibetan people.

As far as "internationalizing the Tibetan issue" is concerned, Tibet became an international issue after China's invasion of Tibet and again after China crushed the 1959 Tibetan uprising, after which over a hundred thousand Tibetans fled Tibet and became refugees all over the world. Instead of trying to further internationalize the issue, I tried from 1978 to 1987 to resolve the issue by exclusively negotiating with the Chinese government without any international involvement. Unfortunately, my efforts were ignored by the Chinese government.
Over the last two years, China has set a pre-condition for negotiations which demands that I not only abandon Tibetan independence but also recognise that Tibet has historically always been a part of China. Our history shows, however, that Tibet was an independent country and was not a part of China. The Chinese government may have a different interpretation of history, but forcing us to recognise their interpretation is not going to lead us anywhere. Therefore, rather than focusing on history, I propose that we reserve our different interpretations of history and look to the future, as Mr. Deng Xiaoping used to say, "Look forward". History is not changeable, but the future can be changed.

Recently, there have been strains in US-China relations. I have no intention to take advantage of this. On the contrary, I would like to urge America to improve its relations with China. American leaders should hold talks with Chinese leaders and seek no isolation and containment of China. A strong and positive relationship between the US and China would not only benefit the two countries, it could also help solve the Tibet problem. I would also like to help the Chinese leadership to see that force and intimidation will not help improve China's image in the world. For example, the international community did not respond well to the recent Chinese over-reaction to Taiwanese President Li Tenghui's US visit or to Chinese missiles tests in the Taiwan strait.

Today, when the world is entering the 21st century, China is also at a critical juncture. It is rapidly becoming an economic as well as a political and military power. At the same time, Chinese society is undergoing profound changes. The Chinese leadership is facing a generation change. Freedom, democracy, equality, human rights will sooner or later be demanded by its people. A transformation from the current totalitarian regime into a more open, democratic one is inevitable, the only question is how and when, and whether it will be a smooth transition or a hard one.

A peace-loving, democratic, free China; a China with a sense of security built on good relationships with neighbouring countries, is in its own best interest, not to speak of the interest of Tibet, Asia and the world at large.
The future China, while in transition from a totalitarian state to a more open, democratic society, will inevitably have to face the Tibet problem. If the problem is solved properly, it would not only help China's own transition, it could also help bring Tibetans into alliance with China's democratization process. If the issue is not properly solved, China's own transition could be in jeopardy. Resorting to force to suppress a peaceful movement in Tibet would only play into the hands of antidemocratic elements in the Chinese society and strengthen their position, damaging China's own efforts to promote a smooth transition.

Also, continuing the current harsh policy in Tibet will not only not solve the problem, it will further complicate the situation and make it even harder to solve. It will also increase impatience among the Tibetans and increase the danger of violence. This is definitely not in the interest of Tibet or China.

For our part, we seek to solve the Tibet issue in a spirit of reconciliation, compromise and understanding. Solving of the Tibet problems needs a soft landing, not a hard crash.

Under any circumstance, the Tibetan movement must remain firmly committed to non-violent, peaceful means. We seek a sustainable relationship with China based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. We seek a long lasting good relationship with China. We seek no hostility towards China. If we choose to stay in one country, we should live together as true brothers and sisters. If we choose to be separate, we should become good neighbours. A long lasting good relationship with China should always be the top priority of Tibet.

When solving the Tibet problem, not only do we need to think about the fundamental interest of Tibet and the Tibetan people, we must also seriously take into consideration China's strategic concerns, economic interests and the Chinese people's national feelings. Chinese who are living and working in Tibet, their lives, property and their human rights will be protected. Eventually a peacefully workable arrangement concerning their status will be made. My proposal made in Strasbourg, France, 1988, outlined in principle these considerations.
China is a great country with over 5,000 years of civilization. Mankind has benefited enormously from this great civilization. China today is increasingly becoming a political, economic and military power. A world power which contributes to peace and safeguards human dignity will be greatly appreciated and admired by billions of people. A world power which respects the rights of small nations is a truly powerful nation. A fair and peaceful resolution of the Tibet problem will not only benefit Tibet and Tibetans, it will ultimately benefit China in the long run.

Finally, it is my strong belief and hope that however small a nation Tibet might be, we can still contribute to the peace and prosperity of China. Decades of communist rule and commercial activities in recent years, both driven by extreme materialism, be it communist or capitalist, are destroying much of China's spiritual and moral values. A huge spiritual and moral vacuum is thus being rapidly created in the Chinese society. In this situation, Tibetan Buddhist culture and philosophy would be able to serve millions of Chinese brothers and sisters in their search for moral and spiritual values. After all, traditionally Buddhism is not an alien philosophy to the Chinese people.
30 Keynote Address at Tibet Support Group Conference

Bonn,
June 14, 1996

Officials of the Friedrich-Naumann Stiftung, members of the parliament of Germany and other countries and friends and supporters of Tibet who have gathered here, I am very happy to see you all once again today at this big gathering. I would like to express my deep appreciation to your organisation Friedrich-Naumann Stiftung (FNS) and other concerned organizations and individuals.

We are passing through a very difficult period. Our task is very difficult; there are many obstacles. But these factors do not discourage us Tibetans because our goal is just and based on truth. We are not against the Chinese and we are not even against the Chinese leaders — they are also our human brothers and sisters. If they have a freedom to choose, they themselves may not indulge in such destructive activities because these activities or acts bring a bad name for them. I have compassion for them.

My immediate goal is to have a meaningful negotiation. I am quite sure that through negotiations we can find a mutually acceptable solution on the basis of my "middle way" approach. An appropriate solution is therefore necessary and this will be a victory for both the Tibetans and the Chinese. For the Tibetans, this will reduce the present atrocities and cultural genocide, and for the Chinese government, this will create a better image and also instil confidence in the hearts of six million Chinese in Hong Kong and more than twenty million Chinese in Taiwan. An appropriate or meaningful solution to the Tibetan issue is therefore necessary.

The Second International Tibet Support Group Conference was held in Germany for three days from June 14, 1996.
I do not consider our supporters, all of you who have gathered here, as pro-Tibet but rather as pro-justice. Therefore, if we Tibetans have bad motivation or indulge in wrongful acts you can withdraw your support. However, as long as we are committed in a sincere way with a compassionate motivation and a right kind of a goal, your support is very, very valuable. Since our goal is something very reasonable and beneficial for everyone, there is no reason to feel discouraged.

I would like to mention to you that right from 1959, when we first came into exile, we calculated that our struggle may take generations and we had prepared for that, with special care and emphasis on the upbringing of a new generation of Tibetans. Some Tibetans at that time, however, put forward the idea of temporarily settling all the Tibetan refugees along the border areas of the Himalaya so that we would be ready to return to Tibet at the first opportunity. But we (the responsible persons in the government-in-exile) decided to give priority to more permanent rehabilitation with facilities to enable all the Tibetans in-exile to live in homogenous communities and provide the younger ones with good education, modern as well as our own traditional education, so that even if the struggle takes generations, new generations could replace the older ones and take on the responsibility.

Today the generation of Tibetans who fought against the Chinese occupation in the early 1950s has gone, but the issue of Tibet is still very much sensitive to the Chinese government. Why? Because, a new generation of Tibetans who never saw the past Tibet have shouldered the responsibility of carrying on the struggle. Outside Tibet, both in the administration and parliament, more and more young people are coming up to take up the responsibility. Some Chinese think that the entire Tibetan struggle relies on one person, the Dalai Lama, and since the Dalai Lama is getting older, if he dies, the entire Tibetan struggle will collapse. This is absolutely wrong. Our supporters should also know this. I really appreciate those organisations and individuals who are helping Tibetans to raise the younger generation in-exile. I also applaud those organisations who extend their assistance in this field inside Tibet.

I was deeply touched by the speeches of the earlier speakers, because they all spoke with a strong human feeling, with a spirit of commitment.
and dedication. When a nation or an individual passes through good life with prosperity, naturally one gets many friends, whether true friends or not. But on the other hand, when a nation or an individual passes through a hard period, it is very difficult to find a good friend. But we Tibetans are fortunate. Despite our rough period and difficult situation, we have found many, many reliable friends, friends who are committed, loyal and steadfast. This I really value and cherish very much. We will never forget your support, although we have nothing to offer to you in return—nothing, just an empty hand. But, I can assure you that we have a good heart. As an individual, until my death, I will never forget your concern and sympathy. As a Buddhist, who believes in rebirth, I will not forget your support and help in the many coming years.

Despite the recent developments inside Tibet marked by increased repression and harsh conditions, including the difficulties of the young Panchen Lama, I have not changed my position. I am still very much committed to the "middle way" approach based on non-violence despite the fact that many younger people and also older ones inside as well as outside Tibet are losing patience. I can understand their feelings. But I strongly feel that non-violence is the only way and it is the right way. There will be no change in my commitment to non-violence till my death. There are plenty of reasons for that.

One encouraging aspect in our struggle is that because of our commitment to the non-violent path, many Chinese brothers and sisters, not only outside China but also those who are inside China and Tibet and who understand something about our struggle, express their sense of solidarity and appreciation. After all, I feel that the right kind of solution should be found by the Chinese and Tibetans and no one else. Therefore, the support from the Chinese brothers and sisters is valuable and important. But in the meantime, the support from the international community is very, very important. Once again, I would like to say that we need your support very much and I thank you for all you have done. I want to appeal to you all, please extend your support continuously until our goal is achieved.

In the recent time, the Chinese government has publicised several points to reject my proposal. First, they have accused me of still pursuing
a struggle for total independence of Tibet, that is, complete separation from China. Regarding this point, most of you are very well aware of my position. However, I would like to clarify here one point. Whenever I discuss the issue of Tibet, I mention that Tibet was a separate nation, geographically, linguistically, culturally, racially and historically. Because of these factors, Tibet today is an occupied country. This is a fact. I cannot change this fact. But this does not mean that I am seeking independence. I have always said that the past is past and many things change.

Look at the European states. Each member state is very much concerned about its own sovereignty, but because of economic necessity and also because of some other factors, they have now come together at a practical level, in spite of their reluctance. In Asia also, a similar situation is developing, particularly in the case of Tibet. Tibet is a landlocked country and materially backward. We need material development, though spiritually we are very well developed. Therefore, it is much more practical and beneficial if we join our big neighbour or brother. With this conviction, I am ready to work and live with the Chinese. I am seeking genuine self-rule. In the meantime, it is important that our supporters make clear the historical status of Tibet at every appropriate occasion and whenever an opportunity arises.

Some Tibetologists and specialists have suggested that Tibet's historical and political rights according to international law should be made widely known to the outside world. I think these are good suggestions. Although I have made clear that we should forget the past and look forward to creating a good and mutually acceptable future, unfortunately the Chinese government continuously insists that the Dalai Lama should make a categorical statement that Tibet has always been a part of China. How is that possible? I do feel that as a simple Buddhist monk, I cannot tell such a big lie. Therefore, if the Chinese government continues to insist that the Tibetans must accept that Tibet has always been a part of China, we and our supporters should also make efforts to clarify Tibet's political and historical status.

Secondly, the Chinese government accuses me of trying to internationalize the Tibet issue. In this regard, if we look at the past, it will become clear whether this is true or not. For example, although the
Seventeen-Point Agreement was signed under duress in 1951, we tried to solve the issue bilaterally. In 1954, I went to China and during that time I tried to develop a good relationship with the Chinese leadership, particularly with Chairman Mao. In 1956, when I visited India to take part in the Buddha Jayanti celebrations, many of my advisers urged me not to return to Tibet and instead to seek asylum in India. But I returned with a spirit of reconciliation and to find a solution through direct talks with our Chinese counterparts.

In 1959, the situation got worse and there was no alternative but to escape. Even then we never gave up our hope of finding a solution through direct dialogue with the Chinese. But the opportunity never came. Then, around 1973, we had serious discussions within our small circle of the Tibetan government-in-exile to determine what kind of proposals we should put forward if an opportunity came in the future to have direct talks with the Chinese government. At that time we decided to choose the “middle-way” approach. Therefore, in late 1978, when there was an indication from the Chinese government to have direct talks, I at once responded positively. In 1979, my elder brother Gyalo Dhondup, had a meeting with Deng Xiaoping. At that time Mr. Deng Xiaoping stated that except the question of independence, anything could be discussed. All the important points contained in my proposals were discussed and shared with the Chinese leaders from 1979 to 1986, but there was no response from the Chinese side. In the beginning, the Chinese government did not even acknowledge that there was a problem to be solved. So because of this lack of response from the Chinese side, I was compelled to publicly announce my Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet. This was the result of lack of response from the Chinese side and thus there was no other alternative except to seek support from the international community.

Thirdly, in my proposals, I have made it clear that the entire Tibetan population residing in different parts of Tibet, including those areas incorporated into various Chinese provinces, should constitute one entity. Some of the Chinese leaders feel that this is too ambitious and even some of our friends also feel that this is a concept of greater Tibet. This is not true. My main concern is the preservation of the Tibetan culture. All the people who are living in the Tibetan areas annexed to the Chinese
provinces share the same Tibetan culture and they all face the same problem or the threat of extinction of their culture. Therefore, how can I neglect their concern and plight? I have also to speak on behalf of these people. Hence, I always mention six million Tibetans. If my main goal or objective were to pursue total independence then I could adopt a position of claiming independence for those areas governed by the Tibetan government before 1950. But my main concern is the protection of Tibetan culture, because, as some speakers pointed it out here, the Tibetan culture has the potential to create a peaceful human society, a compassionate society at peace with nature and the environment.

The Tibetan culture is not only an ancient culture, but it is a culture which is very relevant to the 20th century and which has a potential to contribute something concrete for the next century. The Tibetan Buddhist culture is being shared by all the people living in the northern belt of the Himalayas, the people of Central Asia and also by many who are living in the Russian Federation. Besides, the Tibetan Buddhist culture can also help millions of young Chinese. Today, millions of young Chinese have lost their deeper human feeling and as a result of that there are scandals, corruption and other problems. The Tibetan Buddhist culture can contribute something to correct these unhealthy activities and attitude. It is, therefore, worthwhile to preserve it. Consequently, I cannot exclude those Tibetans living in the areas incorporated into the Chinese provinces and hence, I always mention that the entire Tibetan areas should constitute one political and administrative entity.

Fourthly, I want to emphasize that our ultimate goal is to turn Tibet into a zone of peace. Some of the Chinese leaders also treat this proposal as a hint for a complete separation. This is certainly not true. Sometime ago, when Gorbachev was the President of the then Soviet Union, he also suggested demilitarising the entire border area between China and the Soviet Union. This concept is absolutely necessary to reduce tension and conflict and, therefore, is a very living idea. In any case, to develop genuine friendship based on mutual trust between India and China, the two most populated nations on the earth, the demilitarisation of the Tibetan plateau and the Himalayan belt is absolutely essential in order to bring peace in that part of the world. Once Tibet becomes demilitarised and a
zone of peace, it can contribute greatly to good relations between India and China. Besides the demilitarisation of Tibet also is very important for the preservation of the environment.

Sometimes, when we say the Tibetan government-in-exile, the Chinese leaders treat this as something very negative and provocative. But, for the last three hundred years, the Dalai Lama — whether good or not, I do not know — became the head of the Tibetan government. So in 1959 when I escaped with a few cabinet ministers, the Tibetan government, which has a history of three hundred years, also came into exile. The exiled Tibetan government is not a new creation. Wherever the Dalai Lama resides, the Tibetan people consider that as the seat of the Tibetan government.

There is one big change. Immediately after coming into exile, we started the process of democratization of Tibetan society. I deliberately reduced my own power. Since we adopted the Charter of Tibetans in exile to guarantee democracy while we remain in exile as a refugee community, I had a new experience. Before the adoption of this new charter, whenever I had to take a decision because of my own nature, I consulted other people, including sometimes my sweeper, but the final decision was taken by me. Now since the adoption of this new charter, I have to always think what is the provision in the charter and what is the Speaker’s view on this. This is a new experience. I think this is the sign of democracy and a sign of pluralism. Also, in our small community in India, there are all sorts of criticisms and we appreciate this range of views. I always think this is a sign of strength. The last three decades have brought lots of changes — all for democratization.

Viewed from one aspect, the present century is the century of war, century of conflict and century of bloodshed and therefore, the next century, the 21st century, should be a century of dialogue. Conflicts and disagreements happen because of human intelligence and differences in human interests. If we really want no more mental conflicts then the entire humanity should be eliminated. Then there would be no more problems and also I think the other species and mammals will get total liberation from human beings. But that is not possible. Whether we like it or not, we have to exist.
By understanding this, we have to live with less conflicts and less bloodshed and in order to achieve this, it is important to follow non-violence and to have dialogue. Instead of using force, we should listen to other's views, ideas and opinions. Fortunately, as evident from the new developments in South Africa and the Middle East, a spirit of dialogue and non violence is shining. So, we too are experimenting with a new way of approach in solving human problems. Hence your support is not only for the six million Tibetans but also to create a new pattern or a new model for struggle. I think, if we fail in this, then it is a disaster. Conversely if our struggle through non-violence with a compassionate feeling succeeds we will be creating a new way to solve problems and conflicts and thereby serve the interests of the entire human community.

With this, I once again thank everyone and your organisation Friedrich Naumann Stiftung. Your organisation FNS stood firm on principles in the face of great pressure. If this kind of practice were to be carried out by more and more organizations, including governments, then many problems could be solved. But if we rely more and more on the use of force, I think human conflicts will increase.

So I would like to express my deep appreciation to you on behalf of myself as a Buddhist monk, on behalf of the six million Tibetans and also on behalf of all the ancient Tibetan kings, the last thirteen Dalai Lamas and other great Tibetans.

Thank you.
Brothers and Sisters,

I have had the great pleasure of meeting Archbishop Desmond Tutu on several occasions during recent times and thus had the opportunity of coming to know him. I am impressed by his dedication to justice, equality, and human dignity, and also by his friendliness, openness and jovial nature. I am, therefore, particularly honoured and happy to present the 11th Bishop Tutu Annual Peace Lecture at the invitation from the World Conference on Religion and Peace of South Africa.

I am also extremely happy to be here in South Africa, which has lately undergone changes that not long ago were only dreamed of. I would like to begin by expressing my great admiration for the way peoples of all backgrounds and leaders of all communities in South Africa have worked together to create an open democratic society. President Nelson Mandela, former Vice-President, De Klerk, and my friend, Bishop Tutu, have played crucial roles during these dramatic changes. President Mandela, who has shown magnanimity and wisdom in healing the wounds between the blacks and the whites and thus creating a united, democratic South Africa through peaceful means, deserves our unequivocal admiration and respect for his leadership.

We live in truly extraordinary times. The world has changed dramatically in the last few years. The aspirations of peoples and nations for freedom and democracy, and the desire for self-determination, have resurfaced full of unexpected vigour and tenacity. Seeing millions of human beings enjoying the freedom they were denied for so many decades fills me with happiness. Their triumph is a compelling reminder that the human desire for freedom will ultimately prevail no matter the length or the severity of any repression. And, most importantly, that the inevitable transition can be made without resorting to violence.
One of the major challenges we continue to face at the close of the twentieth century is the achievement of genuine lasting world peace. In the past, the effects of war were limited, but today our potential for destruction is beyond imagination. In many parts of the world local and regional conflicts remain, which is already causing misery to millions and has the potential to cause far-reaching global consequences.

Concerned groups and individuals everywhere have a responsibility to work for peace. We have an obligation to promote a new vision of society. One in which war has no place in resolving disputes among states, communities or individuals, but in which non-violence is the preeminent value in all human relations. Many of the world's problems and conflicts arise because we have lost sight of the basic humanity that binds us all together as a human family. We tend to forget that despite the diversity of race, religion, ideology and so forth, people are the same in their basic wish for peace and happiness.

The threat of nuclear destruction is still the greatest single danger facing all living beings on this planet. Besides this, other problems, whose effects are more gradual, are secondary. In the event of nuclear war no one will win, because no one will survive. Realizing this danger, steps are being taken to reduce nuclear weapons. This is a welcome sign. Nonetheless, in a volatile world, the risk remains as long as even a handful of these weapons continue to exist. The key to changing such policies is to increase awareness of the issue.

Unlike earthquakes, hurricanes or the eruption of volcanoes, and other natural phenomena over which we have no control, war can be avoided. Most of us have been conditioned to regard military combat as exciting and glamorous. We feel that war is acceptable. But war is neither glamorous nor attractive. It is monstrous. Its very nature is one of killing, destruction and suffering. War is like a fire in the human community whose fuel is living beings. We should all be horrified by it.

Although I am deeply opposed to war, I do not advocate appeasement. It is often necessary to take a strong stand to counter unjust aggression. However, war is violent and violence is unpredictable. Therefore, it is far better to avoid it if possible. The reality is that as long as adversaries do not trust each other, any number of factors can upset the balance of power. Lasting peace can be secured only on the basis of
genuine trust. Even if one nation or community dislikes another, they have no alternative but to live together. And under the circumstances it is much better to live together in peace and harmony.

War breaks out when human beings give in to their disturbing emotions, particularly greed, anger and hatred. Under the sway of negative emotions we become blind. The best part of our brain, its rationality, is eclipsed, giving rise to immensely destructive behaviour. Nevertheless, I do not believe that human beings are intrinsically aggressive. On the contrary, it is human nature to be constructive, gentle and compassionate. Compassion, patience and reason are the most powerful antidotes to anger. These are the qualities to cultivate if we wish to establish genuine world peace.

Our ultimate goal should be the demilitarization of the entire planet, but to begin with some kind of inner disarmament is necessary. The key to genuine world peace is inner peace and the foundation of that is a sense of understanding and respect for each other as human beings, based on compassion and love. Some may dismiss love and compassion as impractical and unrealistic, but I believe their practice is the true source of success. Compassion is, by nature, peaceful and gentle, but is also very powerful. It is a sign of true inner strength. To achieve it we do not need to become religious, nor do we need any ideology. All that is necessary is for us to develop our basic human qualities.

The true expression of compassion is non-violence. Non-violence does not mean the mere absence of violence. It is something more constructive and fuller than that. Some people seem to think that compassion is just a passive emotional response instead of a rational stimulus to action. To experience genuine compassion is to develop a feeling of closeness to others combined with a sense of responsibility for their welfare.

Although violence is still rife, the trend of world opinion is to recognize that the future lies in non-violence. Today, there is a growing global awareness of the meaning of non-violence, but its application is not restricted merely to human beings. It also has to do with ecology, the environment and our relations with all the other living beings with whom we share the planet. Non-violence can be applied in our day-to-day lives
whatever our position or vocation. It is even relevant to medical procedures, education systems, legal procedures and so forth.

Our planet is blessed with vast natural treasures. If we use them wisely, every human being will be able to live a healthy, prosperous and dignified existence. Naturally, global peace cannot occur all at once. All of us, every member of the world community, has a moral responsibility to help in averting the immense suffering which results from war and civil strife.

Recent world changes have taught us many great lessons. One is the value of truth. People do not like to be bullied, cheated or lied to by either an individual or a system. Such acts are contrary to the essential human spirit. Truth is the best guarantor and the real foundation of freedom and democracy. It does not matter whether you are weak or strong or whether your cause has many or few adherents, truth will ultimately prevail.

If we accept that others have a right to peace and happiness equal to our own, do we not have responsibility to help those in need? The aspiration for democracy and respect for fundamental human rights is as important to the people of Africa and Asia as it is to those in Europe or the Americas. But of course it is just those people who are deprived of their human rights who are least able to speak up for themselves. The responsibility, therefore, rests with those of us who enjoy such freedoms.

It is often the most gifted, dedicated and creative members of society who are the targets of human rights abuse. As a result, the political, social, cultural and economic developments of a society are obstructed by violations of human rights. Therefore, the protection of these rights and freedoms and the promotion of democracy are of immense importance both for the individuals affected and for the development of society as a whole.

Some governments have contended that the standards of human rights laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are those advocated by the West and do not apply to other parts of the world because of differences in culture and social and economic development. I do not share this view and I am convinced that the majority of ordinary people do not support it either. Moreover, I do not see any contradiction
between the need for economic development and the need to respect human rights. The right to free speech and association are vital in promoting a country's economic development.

The rich diversity of cultures and religions should help to strengthen the fundamental human rights in all communities. Underlying this diversity are fundamental human principles that bind all of us as members of the same human family. Maintaining old traditions can never justify the violations of human rights. It may be the custom to discriminate against people of different race, against women, and against weaker sections of society, but as this is inconsistent with universally recognized human rights, these forms of behaviour should change. The universal principles of equality of all human beings must take precedence.

In recent times artificial barriers that have divided nations and peoples have fallen, greatly improving the prospects for peace. With the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, the East-West division which had polarized the whole world for decades has now come to an end. Yet there still remains a major gulf at the heart of the human family — the North-South divide. If we are serious in our commitment to the fundamental principles of equality, which I believe lie at the heart of the concept of human rights, today's economic disparity can no longer be ignored. It is not enough to merely state that all human beings enjoy equal dignity. This must be translated into action.

Another important issue with a bearing on future peace is over-population. From the Buddhist point of view, the life of every sentient being is precious. But today, we are facing a situation where the growing number of people poses a threat to the survival of humanity. Therefore, I personally feel we need to be pragmatic and adopt birth control measures in order to ensure the quality of life today in the southern countries, and protect the quality of life for future generations.

Also, resolving the environmental crisis is not just a question of ethics but a question of our own survival. The natural environment is very important not only for those of us alive now but also for future generations. If we exploit it in extreme ways, even though we may get money or other benefits from it now, in the long run we ourselves and future generations will suffer. When the environment changes, climatic conditions also
change. When they change dramatically, the economy and many other things change as well. Even our physical health can be greatly affected.

Poverty, overpopulation and the destruction of the environment are problems that we have to address together. No single community or nation can expect to solve them on its own. This indicates how small and interdependent our world has become. In ancient times, each village was more or less self-sufficient and independent. There was neither the need nor the expectation of cooperation with others outside the village. You survived by doing everything yourself. The situation now has completely changed. It has become old fashioned and outdated to think only in terms of my nation or my country, let alone my village.

Lastly, I believe that the major religions have an important role to play in the promotion of world peace. In my modest way I have always strived to bring about closer understanding and greater cooperation between various religious traditions of the world. It is my conviction that despite great differences in the field of philosophy and metaphysics there are sufficient common grounds between major spiritual traditions which bind them together. All these traditions converge on many of the important ethical principles: the importance of love, compassion, tolerance and forgiveness. With this spirit, I participate sincerely in interfaith services, prayers and dialogues.

In the present circumstances, no one can afford to assume that someone else will solve our problems. Every individual has a responsibility to help guide our global family in the right direction and we must each assume that responsibility. Living in peace in an interdependent world is not only about rights, but also about responsibility and participation. Since periods of great change such as the present one come so rarely in human history, it is up to each of us to use our time well to help create a happier, more peaceful and an environmentally-friendly world.

Whenever we pursue noble goals, obstacles and difficulties are bound to occur. As human beings, we may lose hope. But as there is nothing to be gained from discouragement, our determination must be very firm. According to my own little experience, we transform ourselves and make a difference. Therefore, if we all were to spend a few minutes every day, thinking about these things and trying to develop a sense of universal responsibility, eventually they will become part of our lives.
It gives me great pleasure to address you today on the current situation in Tibet and on my vision for my country. I thank the organizers for arranging this opportunity.

Today, the freedom struggle of the Tibetan people is at a crucial stage. In recent times the Chinese government has hardened its policies, increased repression in Tibet and resorted to bullying tactics in addressing the problems of Tibet. Observance of human rights in Tibet has, sadly, not improved. On the contrary, repression and political persecution have lately reached a new peak in Tibet.

In Tibet our people are being marginalised and discriminated against in the face of creeping sinicization. The destruction of cultural artifacts and traditions coupled with the mass influx of Chinese into Tibet amounts to cultural genocide. The very survival of the Tibetans as a distinct people is under constant threat.

Human rights violations, environmental degradation and social unrest in Tibet are only the symptoms and consequences of a deeper problem. Fundamentally the issue of Tibet is political. It is an issue of colonial rule: the oppression of Tibet by the People’s Republic of China and resistance to that rule by the people of Tibet. This issue can be resolved only through negotiations and not, as China would have it, through force, intimidation and population transfer.

It is my belief that the next few years will be crucial. Negotiations are the only way to promote a peaceful and comprehensive resolution of the Tibetan question. The present situation also offers an historic opportunity for the members of the international community to reassess their policy towards China, in order both to influence and to respond to the changes that are taking place in that country. Whether the coming change in China brings new life and new hope for Tibet and whether China herself
emerges as a reliable, peaceful and constructive member of the international community depends to a large degree on the extent to which the international community itself adopts responsible policies towards China. I have always drawn attention to the need to bring Beijing into the mainstream of world democracy and have spoken against any idea of isolating and containing China. To attempt to do so would be morally incorrect and politically impractical. Instead, I have always counselled a policy of responsible and principled engagement with the Chinese leadership.

It is my strong conviction that a change for the better is coming. China is at a critical juncture: its society is undergoing profound changes and the country's leadership is facing the transition to a new generation. It is obvious too that the Tiananmen massacre has failed to silence the call for freedom, democracy and human rights in China. Moreover, Taiwan's historic first direct presidential elections this year are certain to have an immense political and psychological impact on the aspirations of the Chinese people. A transformation from the current totalitarian regime in Beijing into one which is more open, responsive and liberal is thus inevitable.

Ultimately, it is for the Tibetan and the Chinese peoples themselves to find a just and peaceful resolution to the Tibetan problem. Therefore in our struggle for freedom and justice, I have always tired to pursue a path of non-violence in order to ensure that a relationship based on mutual respect, friendship and genuine good neighbourliness can be sustained between our two peoples in the future. For centuries the Tibetan and the Chinese peoples have lived side by side. In the future, too, we will have no alternative but to live as neighbours. I have, therefore, always attached great importance to our relationship. In this spirit I have sought to reach out to our Chinese brothers and sisters in the West as well as in Asia.

Despite the absence of positive and conciliatory gestures from the Chinese government to my initiatives for negotiations, I have always encouraged Tibetans to develop personal relationships with Chinese. I make it a point to ask the Tibetans to distinguish between the Chinese people and the policies of the totalitarian government in Beijing. I am
thus happy to observe that there has been significant progress in our efforts to foster closer interaction amongst the people of our two communities, mainly between exiled Tibetans and Chinese living abroad. Moreover, human rights activists and democrats within China, people like the brave Wei Jingsheng, are urging their leaders to respect the basic human rights of the Tibetan people and pledging their support for our right to self-rule. Chinese scholars outside China are discussing a constitution for a federated China which envisages a confederal status for Tibet. These are most encouraging and inspiring developments. I am, therefore, very pleased that the people-to-people dialogue between the Tibetans and Chinese is fostering a better understanding of our mutual concerns and interests.

I believe that it is more important to look forward to the future than to dwell in the past. Theoretically speaking it is not impossible that the six million Tibetans could benefit from joining the one billion Chinese of their own free will, if a relationship based on equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect could be established. If China wants Tibet to stay with her, it is up to China to create the necessary conditions. Based on my belief in non-violence and in dialogue, I have consistently tried to engage the Chinese government in serious negotiations concerning the future of the Tibetan people. Unfortunately the Chinese government's response to my many overtures has been consistently negative.

The Tibet issue will neither go away of its own accord, nor can it be wished away. As the past has clearly shown, neither intimidation, nor coercion of the Tibetan people can force a solution. Sooner or later, the leadership in Beijing will have to face this fact. Actually, the Tibet problem represents an opportunity for China. If it were solved properly through negotiation, not only would it be helpful in creating a political atmosphere conducive to the smooth transition of China into a new era but also China's image throughout the world would be greatly enhanced. A properly negotiated settlement would furthermore have a strong, positive impact on the peoples of both Hong Kong and Taiwan and will do much to improve Sino-Indian relations by inspiring genuine trust and confidence. Moreover, if our Buddhist culture can flourish once again in Tibet, we are confident of being able to make a significant contribution to millions of
our Chinese brothers and sisters by sharing with them those spiritual and moral values which are so clearly lacking in China today.

We seek to resolve the issue of Tibet in a spirit of reconciliation, compromise and understanding. I remain committed to negotiations with China. In order to find a mutually acceptable solution, I have adopted a "middle-way" approach. This is also in response to, and within the framework of, Mr. Deng Xiaoping's stated assurance that "anything except independence can be discussed and resolved." I have formulated the basic ideas of the "middle-way" approach in my formal proposals, the Five Point Peace Plan (1987) and the Strasbourg Proposal in 1988. I regret very much that Mr. Deng Xiaoping has not been able to translate his assurance into reality. However, I am hopeful that his successors will see the wisdom of resolving our problem peacefully through negotiations. These proposals were very well received internationally, and they can still form a rational basis for negotiations. My framework for negotiations does not call for the independence of Tibet. What I am striving for is genuine self-government for Tibet. Today I wish to reiterate our willingness to start negotiations with China any time, without any preconditions.

We Tibetans will continue our non-violent struggle for freedom. My people are calling for an intensification of the struggle, and I believe they will put this into effect. But we will resist the use of violence as an expression of the desperation which many Tibetans feel. As long as I lead our freedom struggle, there will be no deviation from the path of non-violence.

Concerning my vision for Tibet, I have proposed that the whole of Tibet, including the eastern provinces of Kham and Amdo be transformed into a zone of "Ahimsa" a Hindi term used to mean a state of peace and non-violence.

For over a thousand years we Tibetans have adhered to spiritual and environmental values in order to maintain the delicate balance of life across the high plateau on which we live. Inspired by the Buddha's message of compassion and non-violence and protected by our mountains, we sought to respect every form of life and to abandon war as an instrument of national policy.

The establishment of such a peace zone would be in keeping with Tibet's historical role as a peaceful and neutral Buddhist nation and buffer
state separating the continent’s great powers. My country’s unique history and profound spiritual heritage render it ideally suited for fulfilling the role of a sanctuary of peace at the heart of Asia. This would require the withdrawal of Chinese troops and military installations from the country, which would enable India also to withdraw troops and military installations from the Himalayan regions bordering Tibet. The establishment of Tibet as a zone of peace would be achieved under an international agreement which would satisfy China’s legitimate security needs and build trust among the Tibetan, Indian, Chinese and other peoples of the region. This is in everyone’s best interest, particularly that of China and India as it would enhance their security while reducing the economic burden of maintaining high troop concentrations on the disputed Himalayan border.

Moreover, it is my hope that Tibet be transformed into our planet’s largest natural preserve and that there be strict laws to protect wildlife and plant life. The exploration of natural resources should be carefully regulated. The manufacture, testing and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and other armaments must be prohibited, as well as the use of nuclear power and other technologies which produce hazardous waste.

Furthermore, I believe that in the future, Tibet should have a multi-party system of parliament. The government of Tibet should be comprised of legislative, executive and judiciary bodies, with a clear separation of power between them and each independent of the other and vested with equal powers and authority. The government of Tibet should be founded on a constitution or basic law. The basic law should provide for a democratic system of government entrusted with the task of ensuring economic equality, social justice and the protection of the environment. As individual freedom is the real source and potential of any society’s development, the government of Tibet should seek to ensure this freedom by full adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I have officially stated that I will not occupy any position in the future government of Tibet. I have important reasons for this decision. Future Tibet must have a fully democratic system of government. It is, therefore, my ambition to establish a sound and fully democratic government in the remaining span of my active life. We need to activate the collective potential of our people and not rely on one individual. It is quite obvious
that as long as I head the government, many Tibetans are complacent on matters of national interest because of their trust and reverence for me. Moreover, it is realistic to expect considerable difficulties at the initial stage when a democratic government assumes the responsibility of running the country. In such cases, I think, I will be in a better position to serve the people as an individual outside the government. I can be called on to offer advice on or mediate in disputes which could not be overcome by the existing political mechanism.

It is my hope and my fervent prayer that the day will come soon when Tibet need no longer be an occupied land, oppressed by force, unproductive and scarred by suffering. The Tibetan people are committed to making the roof of the world a free haven where humanity and nature live in harmonious balance and a creative and non-violent model for resolution of conflicts afflicting many areas throughout the world.
Honourable Members of the Parliament and dear friends,

In June 1988 I presented at this distinguished place a framework for negotiations between us Tibetans and the Chinese government. Inspired by the spirit of your Union I formally and publicly stated my willingness to enter into negotiations with the government of the People's Republic of China on an agenda that does not call for the separation and independence of Tibet. I appealed to the Chinese leadership to realize that political union, peaceful co-existence and genuine cooperation can only come about voluntarily, when there is satisfactory benefit to all parties concerned. I stated that the European Union is a clear example to this. On the other hand, I also pointed out that even one country or community can break into two or more entities when there is a lack of trust or benefit and when force is used as the principal means of rule. Since the presentation of my Strasbourg proposal the issue of Tibet has received much international attention and concern. Especially, the European Parliament has continued to take keen interest in the situation of Tibet and adopted a number of resolutions expressing its grave concern about the violations of human rights in Tibet. Reflecting the increasing concern of the European Parliament the EU has been raising the issue of the violations of human rights in Tibet at successive sessions of the UN Commission on Human Rights and has expressed its concerns at the UN General Assemblies. On a more practical and humanitarian level the EU has engaged in providing financial assistance to Tibetan refugees and to developmental projects inside Tibet.

Equally encouraging and helpful is the European Union's appreciation and its consistent stand that there is a need to find a peaceful solution to the issue of Tibet through negotiations. The effects of the growing
international concerns about Tibet are visible. The Chinese government has been forced to enter into a dialogue on human rights. It has published a white paper on human rights and "ownership" of Tibet. It has also permitted numerous Western government delegations to visit Tibet.

On behalf of six million Tibetans, I take this opportunity to thank the members of the Parliament, the Commission and the member countries for their continued sympathy and support. As a free spokesman for my people I appeal to you to intensify your efforts to help facilitate an early and peaceful resolution of our issue through negotiations. There is an urgent need to make real progress in bringing about a peace process to the issue of Tibet. The lack of any progress in resolving the political issue is increasing the real danger of violent conflicts breaking out in Tibet. I, therefore, appeal to you to give priority to the issue of Tibet as the current Chair of the Council of Ministers, the Irish Foreign Minister, has promised to do.

I have tried in every way I know to find some mutually acceptable solution. However, it has now become clear that our efforts alone are not sufficient to bring the Chinese government to the negotiating table. I am, therefore, left with no other choice but to appeal to the international community for urgent intervention and action on behalf of my people.

Today, the freedom struggle of the Tibetan people is at a crucial stage. In recent times the Chinese government has hardened its policies, increased repression in Tibet and resorted to bullying tactics in addressing the issue of Tibet. Observance of human rights in Tibet has, sadly, not improved. On the contrary repression and political persecution have lately reached a new peak in Tibet.

Violations of human rights in Tibet have a distinct character. Such abuses are aimed at Tibetans as a people, from asserting their own identity and their wish to preserve it. Thus, human rights violations in Tibet are often the result of institutionalized racial and cultural discrimination. If the human rights situation in Tibet is to be improved, the issue of Tibet should be addressed on its own merits.

In Tibet our people are being marginalised and discriminated against in the face of creeping sinicization. The undermining and destruction of cultural and religious institutions and traditions coupled with the mass
influx of Chinese into Tibet amounts to cultural genocide. The very survival of the Tibetans as a distinct people is under constant threat. Similarly, the issues of environmental destruction which have serious ramifications beyond the Tibetan plateau, and indiscriminate economic development must be addressed specifically with regard to Tibet.

Human rights violations, environmental degradation and social unrest in Tibet are only the symptoms and consequences of a deeper problem.

Fundamentally, the issue of Tibet is political. It is an issue of colonial rule: the oppression of Tibet by the People's Republic of China and resistance to that rule by the people of Tibet. This issue can be resolved only through negotiations and not, as China would have it, through force, intimidation, and population transfer.

I am convinced that the next few years will be crucial in bringing about honest negotiations between us and the Chinese government. The present situation offers a historic opportunity for the members of the international community to reassess their policy towards China, in order both to influence and to respond to the changes that are taking place in that country. Whether the coming changes in China bring new life and new hope for Tibet and whether China herself emerges as a reliable, peaceful and constructive member of the international community depends to a large degree on the extent to which the international community itself adopts responsible policies towards China. I have always drawn attention to the need to bring Beijing into the mainstream of world democracy and have spoken against any idea of isolating and containing China. To attempt to do so would be morally incorrect and politically impractical. Instead, I have always counselled a policy of responsible and principled engagement with the Chinese leadership.

China is at a critical juncture: its society is undergoing profound changes and the country's leadership is facing the transition to a new generation. It is obvious too that the Tiananmen massacre has failed to silence the call for freedom, democracy and human rights in China. Moreover, Taiwan's historic first direct presidential elections earlier this year are certain to have an immense political and psychological impact on the aspirations of the Chinese people. A transformation from the
current totalitarian regime in Beijing into one which is more open, responsive and liberal is thus inevitable.

China needs human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These values are the foundation of a free and dynamic society. They are also the source of true peace and stability. A society upholding such values will offer far greater potential and security for trade and investment. A democratic China is thus also in the interest of the international community in general and of Asia in particular. Therefore, every effort should be made not only to integrate China into the world economy, but also to encourage her to enter the mainstream of global democracy. Nevertheless, freedom and democracy in China can be brought about only by the Chinese themselves and not by anyone else. This is why the brave and dedicated members of the Chinese democracy movement deserve our encouragement and support. The people of China have clearly manifested their desire for human rights, democracy and the rule of law in successive movements starting in 1979 with the "Democracy Wall" and culminating in the great popular movement of the spring of 1989.

A growing number in the Chinese democracy movement recognize that Tibetans have been ill-treated by Beijing and believe that such injustice should be redressed. Like the brave Wei Jingsheng, they openly state that Tibetans should be granted the opportunity to express and implement their right to self-determination. Just last month two Chinese dissidents in China appealed to the Chinese government to grant Tibetans the right of self-determination and to enter into negotiations with me. A similar petition signed by 54 Shanghai citizens was submitted to the Chinese government in March 1994. Chinese scholars outside China are discussing a constitution for a federated China which envisages a confederal status for Tibet. These are most encouraging and inspiring developments. I am, therefore, very pleased that despite the absence of positive gestures from the Chinese government to my initiatives for negotiations, the people-to-people dialogue between the Tibetans and Chinese is fostering a better understanding of our mutual concerns and interests.

In the final analysis it is for the Tibetan and the Chinese people themselves to find a just and peaceful resolution to the Tibetan problem. Therefore, in our struggle for freedom and justice I have always tried to
pursue a path of non-violence in order to ensure that a relationship based on mutual respect, friendship and genuine good neighbourliness can be sustained between our two peoples in the future. For centuries the Tibetan and the Chinese peoples have lived side by side. In the future, too, we will have no alternative but to live as neighbours. I have, therefore, always attached great importance to our relationship. In this spirit I have sought to reach out to our Chinese brothers and sisters.

Historically and according to international law Tibet is an independent country under illegal Chinese occupation. However, over the past seventeen years, since we established direct contact with the Beijing authorities in 1979, I have adopted a "middle-way" approach of reconciliation and compromise. While it is the overwhelming desire of the Tibetan people to regain their national independence, I have repeatedly and publicly stated that I am willing to enter into negotiations on the basis of an agenda that does not include independence. The continued occupation of Tibet poses an increasing threat to the very existence of a distinct Tibetan national and cultural identity. Therefore, I consider that my primary responsibility is to take whatever steps I must to save my people and their unique cultural heritage from total annihilation.

I believe that it is more important to look forward to the future than to dwell in the past. Theoretically speaking it is not impossible that the six million Tibetans could benefit from joining the one billion Chinese of their own free will, if a relationship based on equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect could be established. If China wants Tibet to stay with her, it is up to China to create the necessary conditions. But, the reality today is that Tibet is an occupied country under colonial rule. This is the essential issue which must be addressed and resolved through negotiations.

Unfortunately, the Chinese government has yet to accept any of the proposals and initiatives we have made over the years and has yet to enter into any substantive negotiations with us. We Tibetans will continue our non-violent struggle for freedom. My people are calling for an intensification of the struggle, and I believe they will put this into effect. But we will resist the use of violence as an expression of the desperation
which many Tibetans feel. As long as I lead our freedom struggle, there will be no deviation from the path of non-violence.

I remain committed to negotiations with China. In order to find a mutually acceptable solution. I have adopted a “middle-way” approach. This is also in response to and within the framework of Mr. Deng Xiaoping’s stated assurance that "anything except independence can be discussed and resolved". I have formulated the basic ideas of the “middle-way” approach in my formal proposals, the Five Point Peace Plan in 1987 and the Strasbourg Proposal in 1988. I regret very much that Mr. Deng Xiaoping has not been able to translate his assurance into reality. However, I am hopeful that his successors will see the wisdom of resolving our problem peacefully through negotiations. What I am striving for is genuine self-government for Tibet. Today, I wish to reiterate our willingness to start negotiations with China any time, anywhere without any preconditions.
34 Statement on the Death of Deng Xiaoping

February 20, 1997

The demise of Mr. Deng Xiaoping is a great loss for China. I had known him personally when I visited China in 1954. Mr. Deng Xiaoping was a man of few words. He was a revolutionary and a great leader of China with an exceptional courage, perseverance, capability and leadership ability. Even in a large country that has a lot of problems there will certainly be some successes and some benefits. But as Mr. Deng was the leader of the Communist Party's totalitarian system, even if he personally wanted to do some good, the system itself dictates what to do. So it is inevitable that many mistakes were made. Mr. Deng endeavoured only to reform China economically and not politically and morally. This failure led to the tragedy of Tiananmen Square, the absence of a democratic political system and the rule of law.

Mr. Deng Xiaoping played a more prominent role in the Tibetan policy than any other leader in post-revolutionary China. Mr. Deng was personally involved in all of the major campaigns in Tibet — beginning with the occupation of Tibet in 1949-50 to the policies of the current days. Following Mr. Deng Xiaoping's statement in 1979, that apart from the question of total independence of Tibet all other issues could be discussed and resolved, I was hopeful that the issue of Tibet would be resolved during his lifetime. Encouraged by the overall changes in China and the new pragmatic attitude towards the issue of Tibet, I have, since then, consistently and sincerely made attempts to engage the Chinese government in earnest negotiations over the future of Tibet. Sadly, the Chinese government has not responded positively to my proposals and initiatives over the past 18 years for a negotiated resolution of our problem within the framework stated by Mr. Deng Xiaoping. On my part as soon as we receive a positive indication from Beijing I am ready to enter into negotiations any time and anywhere without preconditions.
I very much regret that serious negotiations on the issue of Tibet could not take place during Mr. Deng’s lifetime. The absence of Mr. Deng provides new opportunities and challenges for both the Tibetans and the Chinese. I hope the Chinese leadership will realise the wisdom of resolving the issue of Tibet through negotiations in a spirit of reconciliation and compromise. True stability must be based on mutual trust, consent and benefit for all concerned, not on the use of force.
The massacre of June 4, 1989 at Tiananmen Square was one of the significant turning points in the history of modern China. This tragic outcome of a peaceful movement made the world focus its attention not only on the Chinese people’s inherent desire for democracy and human rights but also on the totalitarian Chinese government’s intolerance of any open display of people’s yearning for freedom.

Today as our Chinese brothers and sisters commemorate the anniversary of the June 4 massacre, I wish to pay my respects to those who died for freedom, democracy and human rights in your great nation. I pray also for those of your compatriots who are imprisoned because of their courageous advocacy of these universal and inherent human values, and for the success of your democratic movement.

I still consider the Tiananmen Square tragedy as only a temporary set-back for the Chinese democratic movement. Brute force, no matter how strongly applied, can never subdue the basic human desire for freedom. People do not like to be bullied, cheated or lied to by either an individual or a system.

As a believer in non-violence, peace and freedom, I have from the beginning supported the non-violent democratic movement in China. Despite the brutality of the Tiananmen Square massacre and the continued suppression of activities related to human rights, I pray that the Chinese democratic movement will always remain non-violent, for that is the human approach to solving problems.

China is presently in transition to a new era. The absence of Mr. Deng Xiaoping provides new opportunities and challenges for the Chinese

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1This was read out at the rallies organised by International Campaign for Tibet at Washington D.C. and New York.
authors. On this anniversary of the June 4 massacre at Tiananmen Square, I appeal to the leadership in China to act with wisdom, in a spirit of tolerance, reconciliation, and compromise, to bring an end to the suffering of the Chinese people and those under their rule, including the Tibetans. The fate of China is crucial to peace, freedom, and security in Asia and the world, and is of great concern to the international community. I therefore appeal to the freedom-loving people of the world to support the movement for freedom and democracy in China.
36 Address at the III World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet

It is my great pleasure to address this gathering of distinguished parliamentarians. I know that some of you have come from very far to discuss the issues affecting Tibet and how best to promote a peaceful resolution of the situation in my country. The people of Tibet are always encouraged by the support shown by parliaments around the world, and on behalf of the Tibetan people, I want to thank each of you for joining us here today.

I would like to particularly thank the Co-Chairman of the Congressional Host Committee, Congressman Benjamin Gilman, who has been committed to the Tibetan people for many years, for hosting this Convention here in Washington, D.C. I would also like to thank the Tibetan Parliament, the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies, which is co-hosting this Convention.

Because we are honoured to hold this convention in the great hall of the U.S. Congress, I would also like to express the sincere gratitude of all the Tibetan people to the U.S. Congress for its leadership on the issue of Tibet. From its historic resolution of 1991 declaring Tibet to be an occupied country, to the annual provision of humanitarian assistance to Tibetan refugees, to the establishment of the Tibetan language Voice of America programme and Radio Free Asia, the Congress has been at the forefront of international efforts to put pressure on the Chinese government to change its policies towards Tibet.

It has now been 48 years since the Chinese government first occupied my country. During this period the Tibetan people have endured great hardships and they continue to be denied their basic freedoms which we...
in the free world take for granted, such as freedom of speech, of association and of religion.

I am deeply concerned for the well-being of my people. In recent years, the local Chinese authorities in Tibet have dropped all pretence of respecting Tibet's unique cultural and religious traditions and is now engaged in a systematic effort to destroy all that remains Tibetan in Tibet through a host of repressive regulations and practices. This, coupled with the continuing influx of Chinese settlers who now outnumber Tibetans, has caused my people to become more marginalised in every sphere of life.

The situation inside Tibet brings me tremendous sorrow and my most urgent objective has always been to end the suffering of the Tibetan people. My top priority is to protect and save the Tibetan people's cultural identity. Accordingly, I have tried to adopt a pragmatic approach to find a negotiated solution which is mutually agreeable to the Tibetan and Chinese people. At the same time, I have counselled my people to pursue a path of non-violence even though I understand their frustrations at the lack of any positive developments. My hope is that the Chinese leadership will appreciate the importance of a peaceful settlement of the Tibetan situation, for no matter what the outcome, the Tibetan and Chinese people will have to live side by side. That is why the many proposals I have put forward over the years to peacefully resolve the situation in Tibet have been made in the spirit of reconciliation and compromise.

It is my belief that in order to have constructive negotiations we should concentrate on the future, and let history be history. Of course, as I have said consistently, Tibet was not a part of China before 1949. Even Chinese leaders such as the Republic's founder, Sun Yat Sen and Mao Tse-Tung acknowledged that Tibetans were a distinct nation, not only culturally, ethnically, linguistically, geographically, but also politically. Thus Mao talked of China's 'foreign debt' to Tibet.

Let us leave the past aside and agree to start negotiations, without preconditions, about the future. For it is the future of our people that is at stake.

In 1979 Mr. Deng Xiaoping stated that "everything except independence can be discussed and resolved." I responded positively to
this statement. I have categorically stated that I am not insisting on independence for Tibet and my proposal is for genuine self-rule for the Tibetan people.

In fact it was ten years ago that I announced my Five Point Peace Plan here in the Congress of the United States. In that plan I laid out my thoughts on a possible solution to the Tibetan situation and expressed my willingness to take into consideration the legitimate needs of China. The plan called for Tibet to be transformed into a Zone of Ahimsa or non-violence and for the Chinese government to abandon its population transfer of Chinese settlers into Tibet; to respect the Tibetan people’s fundamental human rights; to restore and protect Tibet’s environment; and to begin earnest negotiations on the issue of Tibet.

The Chinese leadership did not respond positively to this proposal and instead indicated that it was not specific enough. Therefore, in 1988 at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, I came out with a detailed framework for a negotiated solution. In recent years I have made further overtures by reiterating my interest in negotiations time and again, each time expressing a willingness not to raise the issue of independence.

I had sincerely hoped that Mr. Deng Xiaoping would be able to find a solution to the situation in Tibet during his lifetime. In many ways he was a great leader who brought new prosperity to the Chinese people. But he seemed unable to follow through with his promise to enter into substantive negotiations on the issue of Tibet.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to tell the new leadership in China that I remain ready to enter into honest negotiations so that we can end the turmoil in Tibet. This is not just a critical issue for the Tibetan people, but it is also in the long term good of China. Peace and stability of the region depends on a solution to the Tibetan situation because Tibet occupies a strategic location in Asia and has historically played a role in maintaining peace in Central and South Asia. I am hopeful that a forward looking and sincere leadership will emerge in Beijing who will understand the benefit of peacefully resolving the situation in Tibet.

At this critical juncture in Chinese history, the international community should encourage China to develop to its full potential by supporting the democratic forces in China. In order to do so the leaders of the world
should have the farsighted wisdom to point out China's weaknesses to enable it to become a fully respected and equal member of the international community. Economic and democratic developments should be addressed jointly, as they are intricately linked.

It is my sincere belief that it would be unproductive to isolate China. Therefore, I have always called for a policy of engagement with China. But at the same time, the international community should be proactive in its dedication to the principles of human rights and democracy that the free men and women everywhere hold so dear. As we are here in Washington, I would also add that because of America's moral and economic leadership around the world, the U.S. has a crucial role to play in encouraging China to develop in the right direction.

An important development currently underway which deserves serious attention of the international community is Hong Kong's impending reversion to Chinese rule. There are tremendous similarities between the system of 'one country, two systems' China has agreed to uphold Hong Kong and the system of rule that the Chinese leadership imposed on Tibet shortly after the occupation of Tibet began. Even the details are hauntingly similar, right down to the establishment of a Preparatory Committee which in Tibet, gradually became the de facto government of Tibet, even though I remained the titular head.

I hope that the international community will learn from the bitter experience we were forced to endure during that painful period in Tibet's history. I also hope that China will honour the wishes of the people of Hong Kong, as they failed to do in Tibet. It is certainly true that the Chinese government will gain invaluable experience during the process of Hong Kong's reversion to Chinese rule that could provide them with a new perspective.

The Chinese leadership should see that the U.S. and international support for Tibet or for Hong Kong is not 'anti-Chinese'. Rather, it represents an outpouring of concern for the suffering of the Tibetan people and an appreciation for our just cause. This gathering today of parliamentarians from around the world is an example of this support. Clearly those of you here today do not hold any ill will towards China.
You have come here because of your genuine concern for Tibet and China.

In recent years an increasing number of Chinese individuals, some still living in China, have expressed sympathy for the plight of the Tibetan people. I believe this is because they are gradually becoming aware that there is more to the issue of Tibet than Chinese propaganda would suggest. I am a strong believer in the strength of power of human relationships and have taken the opportunity to interact as much as possible with my Chinese brothers and sisters. These meetings have enabled us to understand our mutual concerns and interests and I believe they are the key to a resolution on Tibet.

My recent visit to Taiwan illustrates this growing understanding and concern by Chinese speaking people for the culture of Tibet. I believe that in the long run this will help establish mutual understanding and respect between the Chinese and Tibetan people. During my visit I was greatly impressed by the openness and frankness with which the Taiwanese people were able to discuss issues which concerned them. The democratic developments in Taiwan can certainly become a model for China where the people continue to be denied a role in the political decision making process.

In closing, I would like to thank the representatives from around the world who are gathered here today for your outstanding efforts on behalf of the Tibetan people. The Tibetan people's cultural and religious identity is slowly disappearing in the face of China's continued repression in Tibet. We cannot succeed in our efforts to save the Tibetan culture without your support. Thank you.
Interview to "N.B.C."1

August 19, 1987

Are the authorities in Beijing working out possible terms of your return to Tibet?

No. Nothing in particular. We still have direct contact with the Chinese government. We want to keep this direct contact. It seems the Chinese also want to keep this direct contact.

Can you describe under what circumstances you would return to Tibet or to China?

The main concern is freedom — liberty. Since the Chinese came to Tibet the people have suffered beyond words. And the destruction is immense. So those things are improving and the overall attitude of the Chinese is becoming more moderate, more reasonable. This is very good. Still, I feel, the time is not yet ripe. At this moment, things are still moving, changing and they are not sound and stable. So I feel that this is not the time for a decision, but a time to keep close contact and to exchange views.

The Chinese say that you may come back but only if you live in Beijing and occupy a ceremonial religious position. Would that ever be acceptable to you?

This is a minor issue. My concern is Tibet as a whole, six million Tibetan people and Tibetan culture. I am not concerned about my own status or where I live and what kind of job I do.

There is more religious freedom now in Tibet. Monasteries are being rebuilt and re-opened. Young monks are going to the monasteries for studies. Do you find that encouraging?

Yes, of course. Good, good sign. But, frankly speaking, it is still very superficial. Tibetan Buddhism, as you may know, needs a lot of study

1Tom Brokaw interviewed His Holiness for a one hour documentary at Dharamsala, for the National Broadcasting Corporation of America.
and without proper study or knowledge, it is very difficult to practice it. And it seems that our Chinese friends think that carrying prayer-wheels or mere prostrations or things like that are sufficient for Buddhist practice. This is not the case. Previously thousands of monks used to study and this opportunity has not come.

And the Chinese make more argument that there is more economic freedom now in Tibet for the peasants. When you were there, it was a feudal society and the peasants worked as serfs. Don't you think they have a fair point when they say that?

Yes and no. Yes, in one way. In the past in Tibet, the over-all structure was backward and we needed new things. Even without the Chinese, we had to change. Since the Chinese came, changes or reforms were handled by the Chinese, irrespective of the real situation or the local people's attitude. That is the main reason why today economic conditions in many fields are in disarray.

The basic thing is that before the Chinese came, Tibet was one nation, despite being materially backward, the people, generally speaking, were quite happy. That nation, due to Buddhism, over the centuries remained peace-loving. One indication is that those Tibetans who were born and who grew up in that so-called backward society, on their face there was always an expression of joy. Today people who grew up under the so-called liberation have less joy on their face. Isn't it?

What happens if China and India were able to reach accommodation on their old differences? Would that diminish the chances of you ever being able to return to Tibet, ever going back to an independent state? Does that worry you?

Not much. It is not easy. If it is for short-term, temporary gain then it is a different matter. For the long-term policy and for mutual benefit, for both India and China, Tibetan issue is involved. Unless there is a satisfactory solution for Tibet, Sino-Indian relations will remain half positive, half negative.

Are you disappointed when world powers like the U.S. do not raise the Tibetan issue with China more directly?

Yes, sometimes. It depends on many factors.
You have a well-deserved reputation as a very wise and yet a very practical man. Turning to your practical side for a moment, can you ever foresee the Chinese giving up Tibet now that they have it, since it is very important to them, militarily, as a source of minerals, as a place to put their workers in?

I think here we need more public opinion or world pressure. Of course, I feel one factor in this respect on the part of the Chinese is ignorance — lack of knowledge about Tibetan history, about the Tibetan people's mental attitude, and about what really happened after the Chinese invasion or occupation. In many cases, there are clear indications that the Chinese created a myth about Tibet which did not accord with the reality of Tibet and they believed that they "liberated" Tibet from their own myth of "misery and darkness."

When we talk about Chinese history or Chinese culture, we have to rely on Chinese literature and Chinese writings. Similarly, regarding Tibetan history and Tibetan culture, the most important number one source is Tibetan. Isn't it?

Among the other things that the Chinese are saying is that the Panchen Lama, whom they are putting up in front more, they are saying that the Panchen Lama is as important as you are as a religious leader of the Tibetan people. Do you agree with that?

Of course. We always regard the Panchen Lama as a freedom fighter. Now, you see, around 1963, 1964, he really demonstrated and showed what was his real feeling. And as a result, he went through a very difficult period—torture, for example. Despite his different speeches very deep down we, everyone, feel that he is a Tibetan national hero.

You are not disappointed in the Panchen Lama?

No. I can clearly see and understand that under particular circumstances, he had to act as he did, despite being against his own deep wish. Now for example, I myself spent nine years with the Chinese. During that period the same situation happened. In some cases, I had to make speeches which were actually against my own wish. So that was under force and pressure.
You are a reincarnated lama. Do you think that when that sad moment comes, when you die, there will be another lama reincarnated in Tibet?

I don't think so as long as the Chinese occupy Tibet. The Dalai Lama will definitely be born in a free atmosphere.

So if there is no reincarnated Dalai Lama after you have gone, is this long and historic line to come to an end?

That depends on actual circumstances when that happens. If the Tibetan people and culture need another Dalai Lama, then the next Dalai Lama will come.

When I was in Tibet, there were more and more Chinese, speaking Chinese, writing Chinese and not practising the Buddhist religion. If the current pace of immigration continues, pretty soon in Tibet there will be more Chinese than Tibetans. Does that worry you?

Yes, very much. That is the real danger. Some people feel that this is China's "final solution" to the issue of Tibet.

Is this what you feel also?

Hmm. Give me another few years. At the moment I am seriously watching the situation. In any case, more and more Chinese are coming. In my birthplace, the Chinese outnumber the Tibetans. The local Tibetan population is 700,000 and the Chinese population is 2.5 million. If this situation prevails in the whole of Tibet, this is a real tragedy. It will not only be a tragedy for us, it will be a tragedy for the world. It will be a world-wide loss of an ancient culture.
Interview to "World Press"

October 7, 1987

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: Since you have shown a keen interest in seeing me, I want to express my thanks. Since certain things are happening, many newspapers and radio (stations) are taking a keen interest and showing concern. For example today, despite the long distance and the difficulties in reaching here, you came here to display your enthusiasm. So I really want to express my thanks.

As Tibetans in this difficult period, to see the outside world showing deep sympathy and great concern gives us inspiration. So I want to thank you on behalf of myself and on behalf of those six million Tibetans who are still under a difficult situation. Then, actually, after this, there is nothing particular for me to say. So if you have any questions, we can discuss.

I think your associates here today have been saying that in view of the recent demonstrations, protests in Lhasa mark the turning point in political and social changes in the country. Do you agree that this is the turning point in the country's situation?

I think that the 1959 March 10 event was the turning point. The recent event is the continuation of that. This is what I feel. After all, despite more lenient policy, more openness — it has been very good for the last few years — it is not at all satisfactory. After all, under colonial rule it is difficult to feel complete satisfaction or ease. When some new power is in people's heads it causes difficulties and problems. So this event is an indication of that. I feel like that.

But do you feel it to be a major indication of resentment against Chinese rule?

Yes. But I feel this is just an indication or a spark. The main problem or the main fire is still there. It is something like a symptom of a disease.

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1This was held in response to widespread media concern over an outbreak of demonstrations against Chinese rule during the previous week in Lhasa.
Basically, things are difficult. My major concern is that on the surface things are changing for the better; regarding food, there is now no starvation and more respect for Tibetan culture, encouragement to use Tibetan language and also, to a certain extent, more religious freedom. While these positive, comparatively good things are taking place, the Chinese are converting the whole of Tibet into a military base. This is something which we are very concerned about.

For example, in the north-eastern area of Tibet called Amdo — I come from that area — according to some information the Chinese have established quite a number of military factories, including one nuclear weapons factory. Recently I met some foreigners who are concerned with ecology and wild animals, and who had the opportunity to visit these places. These foreigners visited northern parts of Tibet where there is no human habitation but where previously there used to be a lot of wild animals. However, according to them, these areas have now been turned into nuclear waste dumping areas. These are causing major concerns. This is not only causing problems for the Tibetans but also to the neighbouring states.

There is another thing. It is the transfer of Chinese population into Tibet for settlement. In recent years, according to Tibetans going to their birthplace from India and Nepal, and also according to Tibetans coming from Tibet with Chinese permission, fertile land is being occupied by new Chinese farmers and the native Tibetans are being pushed to hilly areas with their animals. Previously in Tibet there were no Chinese nomads with yaks. The yak is a special animal to Tibet. But today you can find Chinese nomads with yaks in Tibet. So, if the present situation remains as it is, then within a short period Tibetans will become a minority in their own land. If this happens, even from the point of view of geo-politics, big changes will happen. For the Tibetan people, this will be the real end. Some of my friends describe this situation as China's "final solution" for Tibet. In this respect, on many occasions I appealed to the world community that the whole world has a moral responsibility to protect Tibetan culture which is quite sophisticated, quite rich, and with a long history.
You said violence cannot be a solution. What political solution can you make?

I still believe that violence is not the proper way. Especially in our case, violence is suicidal. My idea or my suggestion is that demonstrations should not be accompanied by physical violence. I know that we cannot copy in its entirety what the Indian people did to free themselves from British rule. The two situations are entirely different. I know that the situation in India during the British raj was different, I know that British imperialists were bad. However, in India under British rule, there was an independent judicial system and there was freedom. But today, in our case, it is entirely different. Still I believe the non-violent method is the best.

When you find allies who will help you in your cause, what will they do?

Things are not easy. Actually everyone who knows the nature of the Tibetan problem has strong feelings and deep sympathy. Yet this is related to a big nation — China. So everybody tries to avoid. The situation is so delicate that despite their sympathy, people avoid. But this time many people are showing deep interest and concern. Of course, there is no reason to expect much immediately. But in the long run it will be helpful.

The situation of the Tibetan refugees was not a major concern or world issue until we had this trouble in Tibet last week. Would you endorse, or call for, further demonstrations in Tibet as a means of continuing to maintain the world’s attention?

I think as long as the problem remains there, these kind of things will happen.

The Chinese authorities have blamed you for the recent happenings. Have you any comment on this?

That does not matter. That is not much of a problem. When I heard it for the first time, I felt happy to become a scapegoat. During the Cultural Revolution there was immense destruction and at that time they praised themselves for achieving a lot. But later on they admitted the destruction. Then everything was blamed on The Gang of Four. So this time it is because of destruction, a feeling of sorrow, because of discontent and suffering, these things spontaneously happened. But I think obviously for China it is difficult to admit these things. So they found one person to blame.
Why do you think all of these things are happening in Lhasa now? What was the trigger that all of a sudden all these events began occurring in September and October of 1987? Was it because of your trip to the United States? Have conditions become so bad?

One factor it seems is my recent visit to the United States. And as for the other factors, I myself need more time to analyze and we need more information. At the moment the information from the spot is the letter from the forty-five foreigners. That is the first one. So still, we need more time and more information. At the moment I don't know.

What exactly is your stand now?

At the moment my basic stand or idea is — in the past Tibet was a separate country from China. I want to make this fact clear. Then regarding the future, my stand is open. There are many options. This is what I feel.

During my recent visit to the United States, I made a five-point peace proposal. Tibet should be a place of non-violence, a demilitarized zone, a land of peace. Actually this idea is quite similar to what the Nepalese government has expressed and one which was also supported by the Chinese government. If the government of the People's Republic of China really want mutual understanding between the Tibetans and Chinese, then the first positive attitude must come from the Chinese side. After all, we are the losers or the victims. In order to develop good human feelings, they (the Chinese) should reduce fear, they should reduce military forces. That is most important for us.

Secondly, since a large number of Chinese soldiers and different kinds of weapons remain in that area, they cause problems for this country (India) and for the whole region. And since India and China are the most populous countries, good relations between the two countries are essential for world peace and regional stability. In order to reduce tension, lessening the army or reducing the soldiers is very important. The next step is to stop the large number of Chinese who are being transferred to Tibet.

Third is the human rights violations which should not take place. As a Tibetan, and as a human being, we have every right to human dignity and human rights. Basic freedom. Then also in my mind, in recent years in the Soviet Union or in some other Eastern European countries, the West responds immediately to human rights violations in these countries.
That eventually has great impact on the Russian people, such as the physicist Sakharov and other Russian dissidents. When the western or outside world shows more concern, and raises more voice for them, they get more courage to lead certain activities.

On the other hand, till very recently in the case of China, there was hardly any voice. People remained very silent. In order to develop China proper, even the Chinese leaders are trying their best to modernize and to catch up with the twenty-first century.

For the long-term development of a country, its economy and culture, the most important thing is the full utilization of human creativity. In order to do that the intellectuals, people who have a long-term view of things, people who think about basic human rights — these people's voice is the crucial factor. Ultimately, these people will contribute immensely for the benefit of the country as a whole. In the Tibetan case also, more voice and more concern shown is very helpful. So I mentioned the human rights violations.

Fourth is about ecology. So far a large number of forests have already been destroyed in Tibet. As a result even the local weather conditions have changed to an extent.

The fifth point from my side is still open. We have direct contact with the government of the People's Republic of China. Actually the Chinese government, as well as our side, want to keep this direct contact.

At this moment there are two most crucial points. They are the continuing Chinese population transfer and the building up of more military bases. These two points are of immediate concern.

Are you in favour of civil disobedience in Tibet?
Yes. I think that is the proper way. The expression of deep sorrow through non-violence is the correct way.

Moreover, I always regard myself as a free spokesman. I do not feel that I have a sort of authority over the six million Tibetan people. I do not want that kind of attitude. I myself try my best to serve as much as I can. If the people in Tibet want to do something this way that is their right. If they want to do things that way, that is their right.
Have you brought a new era in Tibet through your speech in Washington?

No. Actually four out of the five points I have already expressed on many occasions. But the atmosphere there was very friendly, very favourable, very supportive and also some of my friends wanted concrete proposals. So I thought that this might be the appropriate time and therefore expressed in a formal way the five-point proposal. I do not think therefore it is a new era.

Your Holiness, you said that you have an open mind, open options and you are talking about a new five-point proposal. Does that mean that you are willing to move away from your basic demand that China should vacate Tibet completely and that you can go there? Or do you mean by that creating a sort of peace that it is your way of reaching half-way to China? Is that what you are saying?

I have made my five-point proposal clear. As for the basic future political status of Tibet, that needs more time to think. It is too early to say definitely. So this time, as I mentioned earlier, my stand is open.

Furthermore, very often in the past I have expressed that I am a person who believes is the oneness of humanity. I believe that ultimately we will reach a stage when national boundaries become secondary and when there is more concern about humanity. That is our wish.

In human history, the boundaries are always changing. One community with the same race, under certain circumstances gets divided. Then there are certain communities which under certain circumstances get united. Such human processes were there in the past, and will be there in the future.

My main concern is the six million Tibetan people. They have their own way of life. Their own cultural heritage. Everybody says that the Tibetans, despite difficulties, are jovial. Because of this people are attracted towards the Tibetans. For example, in the last few days those tourists in Tibet who had no special responsibility or who had no need to care about the Tibetans, but whose hearts as human beings went to the side of truth, those forty-five foreigners acted as the Dalai Lama's representatives by highlighting the grim situation there.

So my main concern is the six million Tibetan people's rights and their maximum benefits. There are many possibilities of some kind of special relations with China. If the real situation becomes such that we
the six million have no gain by remaining a part of China, then we have every right to be separate. In case we get more rights by remaining with the Chinese people, then it is all right. So at this moment my position is open. There are many possibilities. The basic thing is that we can't sacrifice our rights.

Your Holiness, during the last few years several delegations of yours have gone to China for the process of reconciliation. Where does this process rest and what is the current status of your relationship with the government of China?

That is also peculiar in nature. But basically we still have direct links. And I want to keep this direct contact. And eventually I think it will be helpful. One basic factor for causing this more than thirty years of problems is the lack of knowledge on the part of Chinese about Tibetan culture, Tibetan history, Tibetan mentality. They simply created their own mental image of Tibet. Though "seeking truth from facts" is good, first all the facts must be correct. Then only seeking truth from facts will be good.

My personal feeling is that the motivation of many Chinese is good but, because of lack of knowledge, they tend to handle problems wrongly. Instead of helping to develop mutual trust and understanding, their handling of problems tends to create mistrust.

Are we to understand that this delegation policy will continue?

Yes.

You advocated non-violence and civil disobedience. Now what if Tibetan demonstrators in Lhasa have been attacked by Chinese police? Do you advocate them to retaliate?

No.

Since China has accused you of being behind the recent uprisings in Lhasa, do you think your chances of returning to China are slim?

I don't think so. Things change easily.

You have been in India for about thirty years in exile and have undergone the experience of a great tragedy. Do you still believe that this terrible gap which is vital could be bridged by time alone, or would you resort to some other intense pressure from the United Nations despite the veto from China?

I think now the situation is changing. One reason is that the world's
destructive power is becoming immense and unthinkable. This creates a sort of new hope or atmosphere. Everybody is trying to minimize tension. So as a result relations between the United States and the Soviet Union are improving. And also Sino-Soviet relations are improving.

Another factor is that the Chinese are putting their energy into developing their economy and education, for which they are really concerned. In order to develop these, China needs foreign investment and help. Therefore the Chinese government is very much concerned about its international image. They may not admit it, but the outside world’s opinion makes a great impact on their mind. So things are changing for the better.

In the last fifteen to seventeen years we see a change in American policy. Earlier they were much in favour of Tibet. In the early ’70, when there was an American-Chinese honeymoon, they started to become indifferent to Tibet. Now again, when Russia and China are getting closer to each other, we find that they are having new interest in Tibet and perhaps that was the reason why they, for the first time, allowed you to speak openly and even politically though you had been there many times before. Should we read this as a change in American policy in regard to Tibet?

Since the ’70s American friends, because of many meetings, became aware of the reality of the situation. Genuine friendship also developed. The other, and more important, factor is the availability of more information today as compared to the past.

In the past when we said something many people took it as complaints from the refugees against those perpetrating the atrocities. But since in the recent past, many foreigners have visited Tibet and some stayed there for months, visiting different places, they remain as witnesses.

How much destruction was caused, and what are the feelings among the Tibetans today, have become clearer through correct information from unbiased persons. So my American friends got more enthused and they want to do something. But this is absolutely apart from the American government. Government is something different.

Many of us are confused by some of the statements you have made regarding Tibet’s political relationship with China. Most of us have been under the impression that your goal and the goal of the people we have met here is complete independence of Tibet from China. However, you have in some statements said
that Tibet needs to be separate but at the same time you are also saying you are open and that, if it is beneficial to the Tibetan people, you would support Tibet to be a part of China. I would like to know whether you have changed your position vis-à-vis Tibet's independence from China or is it still the same? Do you believe that Tibet should be independent from China? Yes or no?

I think my position still remains the same. In the last few years, I have always expressed the importance of happiness. That idea is still relevant today. In the past Tibet was a separate country. History is history and fact is fact. Nobody can change that. Therefore, I think it is very important for China to know what kind of history and what kind of relationship was there between Tibet and China. There were occasions when there was Manchu influence, when there was Mongol influence. But there was no Chinese influence in Tibet. Even during those periods of eastern emperors' influence there, even then the basic nature was that of Tibet, Mongolia and China as separate countries, so this is the fact.

Now for the future, my basic beliefs depend on many factors. We have every right to say that we want independence. That is our right. It belongs to us. In the meantime we need to be realistic. Also there are other possibilities. This is not the nineteenth century. This is the twentieth century. Now things are changing. For example, India, this huge republic is something new. Before it consisted of small rajas. But under some kind of mutual benefit they got united. That is also possible.

And also the Dalai Lama, whether as a leader or not, I have responsibility. I have to think of and listen to the Tibetan people's wishes, the Tibetan people's desire. In the meantime, I have to deal with the government of the People's Republic of China. So under such circumstances I have to make it clear that the past is a fact. But the future is still open.

Once the five-point proposals are approved, then you might be prepared to shift your position? Is that what you are saying?

No further comments.
But it is not clear. We want to know exactly because the Tibetan people are clearly demanding complete independence but you are keeping your options open. So you still support the demand for complete independence which the people are demanding for? And they are demonstrating for in Lhasa.

With different words and from different directions, you are trying to know something. But my position is also the same. Frankly speaking, as a person who has responsibility for six million people's welfare and their culture, and also responsibility to deal with the government of the People's Republic of China, I do not want to discourage determination because so far direct contact with China has not taken any concrete shape. But also, in the meantime, I do not want to stop my direct contact with the Chinese government. Therefore the best answer is "open". My options are "open".

Your Holiness, you say that you favour the demonstrations now going on in Lhasa. Do you also encourage them? You have the world press here. What you say will go back to Lhasa. Do you want the demonstrations to continue?

Yes, whether we call it demonstration or any other name, anyway, the feeling of discontentment is there. Practically every Tibetan who comes from Tibet to see me here, as soon as we meet everybody cries. And also many foreigners who visited Tibet in the last few years, they noticed that when the Chinese were present, Tibetans became suspicious. As soon as the Chinese go away, they show different expression. That is the real thing, the reality.

Therefore, I feel and think that it is very important even for the Chinese leaders to know that things are not satisfactory in Tibet and six million native Tibetans are not happy. So it needs further change or further consideration. In order to do that, people inside Tibet must express their deep feeling in a proper manner. Otherwise, the Chinese might feel that the trouble-maker is the Dalai Lama. The Chinese may feel that all the wrongs are done by the Dalai Lama and the six million Tibetans are otherwise happy under the Chinese communist leadership. This is not the case. If that its the real case then I am just one single Tibetan monk. No problem.
3 Interview to "Trenta Giorni"

Dharamsala,  
August 18, 1988  

Your Holiness, is your Strasbourg speech an acceptance of Chinese sovereignty in exchange for self-rule?  

My idea is that Tibet is historically a separate country from China. Nobody can change this fact. Now at present Tibet is occupied by China. During this period of occupation, there has been a lot of destruction and damage. Of course there has been some development in fields such as education. But if you compare this with the destruction and the damage the Chinese have committed, there is no comparison. That is why the majority of the Tibetan people, including those Tibetans working with the Chinese, do not want to remain under the Chinese. But then at the same time, it is very difficult for the Chinese to give independence to Tibet. Nobody can expel Chinese forces from Tibet. That is the reality.  

Now in the world there is a lot of change taking place. The Soviet Union, East European countries and even China are undergoing many positive changes. Under these circumstances, we thought it might be good to explore some sort of middle way. So from our side, if our proposal materializes and we are satisfied, we will be a part of the People's Republic of China. That is our idea.  

You are a religious as well as political leader. Have you made this statement as a political leader in the sense that you are willing to accept Chinese sovereignty if these conditions are met?  

Yes, this is a political statement. But in it I have mentioned very clearly that this is my thought or idea as the free spokesman of the Tibetan people and that the ultimate decision remains in the hands of the Tibetan people. As a person with some responsibility, that is the only way to find some sort of satisfactory solution. Otherwise, at the moment, there are many Chinese settlers being transferred into Tibet. It is a massive

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1Three months after the Strasbourg Proposal was outlined, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was interviewed by Biswajit Chaudhary of the Catholic journal, Trenta Giorni.
population transfer. It is demographic aggression that is taking place very seriously.

Why do you say that the Chinese leadership is more pragmatic and open? Do you think that they are more open to dialogue on the Tibetan question?

Compared with the previous period, there have been a lot of changes. Changes are still going on. Previously, you could hardly hear about any Chinese dissident. Now, you begin to hear about some Chinese who criticize and who have become dissidents. At the moment, it seems the Soviet Union and China are competing with one another. This competition, I think, is going in a good direction. It is worthwhile for both of them to compete with each other. I feel more changes will come. This is my assessment.

What is your reaction to Gorbachev's liberalization regarding the Church?

Yes, of course, this is very positive and good. About two months ago one Chinese said that he agreed that China was more advanced than the Soviet Union as far as liberalization in the economic field was concerned. But now under the leadership of Gorbachev, the Soviet Union has undergone liberalization not only in the economic field, but also in the political system. There is more boldness, determination and courage in changing the political system. Now I begin to wonder what next step the Chinese are going to take. Also, some of my friends who recently visited some parts of the Soviet Union said there was much change regarding religious practice and freedom. Even during my last visit to the Soviet Union in 1986, I already noticed some changes compared to my previous visit in 1979.

I am quite sure that basic human nature will always remain. No power can smash or suppress that. In the long run, it is impossible to do so. Human beings as a whole, when faced with some problems that are out of their control, turn to religion as their hope. With this hope there develops some kind of determination. Without that, when human beings face some tragedies, there is no determination; that is the end, the real failure. That is human nature. Now you see many more communist countries becoming more humane. That is very good provided there is less tension in the world and less hostility towards them.
What was the immediate cause for you to make the Strasbourg statement?

So many people have suffered in Tibet. Since last year, so many people have been arrested, beaten, tortured and killed. When we see all this terror and suppression, we cannot just stand there and do nothing. Also, due to the world-wide attention that Tibet is receiving, I thought it might be good to make clear this idea. In the five-point peace proposal I made in Washington, I made it clear in the fifth point that we want to carry out a dialogue with the Chinese government. This idea was the middle way or the middle path. Since the '70s we had this kind of idea. We discussed the different options and one of these was like this.

The Tibetan Youth Congress says that any more concessions, given the history of Chinese response, will not be of any use. What is your reaction to that?

Of course, they have every right to express their own views. As I mentioned in my statement, there will be many Tibetans disappointed with my idea. They claim that Tibet has every right to be independent. There is every reason for it. But then, just insisting on it will not bring forth any solution.

One of your ideas is to keep Tibet completely nuclear free. Do you think the Chinese would really accept something like that?

For the time being it is very difficult for them to agree. But then it is important to make clear certain points of long-term interest. In the long term, I think a Tibet completely free of nuclear weapons and waste — something like a zone of peace or a land of non-violence — will be very important for China itself, India and all other neighbouring states. In order to develop genuine good friendship, Tibet should be nuclear free and made a buffer state so that peace will be there.

Both India and China want to develop rapidly in the economic, educational and other fields. But spending so much money on their military is a hindrance. I feel that once Tibet becomes a zone of peace, it will be a great benefit and will also develop mutual respect between China and Tibet. So, in the long term, this is a very important point.

I think it is very difficult for the Chinese to understand this. They are too suspicious. Any movement that takes place immediately arouses their suspicion. They say they will be against whatever the Dalai Lama says,
whether it is complete independence, semi-independence or hidden independence. As far as my own thought is concerned, the Chinese can continue to carry out their responsibility in the field of foreign affairs. That means we accept remaining as part of the People's Republic of China. Even then they still keep suspecting.

Are Tibetans totally against living in the Communist system?
I think, now, almost all Tibetans are not only against Communism but also have no interest in it. In the '60s and '70s and even in the '50s, there were some people who were very much attracted towards Communism. Some Tibetan Communists even joined the Chinese Communist party as early as 1930. Some of them were good friends of mine and we used to have long discussions. They were real atheists but at the same time were dismissed from various Chinese offices and some were even put into prison. Now even among the Chinese themselves, the people have lost respect for the Communist party. This is happening everywhere.

After so many years in exile, what do you feel about home?
As a Buddhist monk, there is a saying, 'any place is your home'. Also, this country has long historical links with Tibet. At present, the government of India, as well as the people of India, are very sympathetic whether they express it outwardly or not. We get full freedom here and enjoy it. As the Dalai Lama, the people of Tibet have so much trust in me and are hoping for something from me. So I have a responsibility. Whatever I can do from outside Tibet as a free spokesman I will do. The people of Tibet appreciate me being outside Tibet. In a way, becoming a refugee has given us a new opportunity to meet different cultures and different faiths. If we had remained inside Tibet, we would not have had this opportunity. If I had continued to be in Tibet, I think I would have been very conservative.
Did the Pope express concern for religious freedom in Tibet?

Our main issue of discussion was the special value religion has in society, where people are more concerned about consumerism. Because of his background and my background, there are many similarities. He comes from Poland, a communist country with a lot of religious persecution and its rigid system. And through these many years he survived, he determined his own belief. So we are similar, aren’t we?

China’s recent suspension of martial law was one reason the Bush administration renewed its most-favored-nation trade status. Was that justified?

This is quite complicated. I would like to say that this is America’s business. However, I feel that if the administration really thinks that things in Beijing — or the situation in Tibet — are normal, if they look at the lifting of martial law as a sign of improvement, then that is wrong. Actually, in Beijing itself, or in Lhasa, the situation is very tense.

Martial law has also been lifted in Tibet.

In Tibet, lifting of martial law just means changing the uniform. The military uniform has changed to a police uniform, and in some cases the military uniform has changed to plain clothes. In reality, it’s the same. So if the administration is convinced that things have now improved, then that conviction is wrong. They should not be deceived.

People neglect the importance of truth, and that’s a sad thing. In the long run I think this is the key source of the world’s problems.

How are you getting information from Tibet now, since the Chinese have restricted travel and have outlawed public gatherings?

Some Tibetans still escape from Tibet. It’s a grave situation. On the 18th (of May) two political prisoners were publicly executed. Then in April,
just before martial law was lifted, according to my information, the Chinese expelled nuns and monks from monasteries in and around Lhasa. Then the Chinese started to recruit young Tibetans into the Chinese Army. So, as in Beijing, it’s compulsory for a university student to take some military training.

How many Chinese soldiers are in Tibet now?

Last December they decided to increase the army in Tibet. Already the army stationed there has about 300,000 Chinese soldiers — in so-called autonomous Tibet. The Chinese government has decided to send even more soldiers.

What’s your reaction to the recent Chinese announcement extending their policies regarding birth control to Tibet?

A. This is not new. In official documents they say in the so-called areas of minorities it is not necessary to follow birth control, the one-child policy. Those are just empty words on paper. In reality, birth-control restrictions have been the same as in China proper. In rural Tibet, where the nomads are living, (sterilization) surgery has been performed on 14, 15-year-old girls. That means no child, not a question of even one child. Now in India, we have witnesses who underwent forced abortion. This policy was always there. Only now it’s been officially stated.

Under what conditions would you return to Tibet?

If the majority of Tibetans indicated to me that the time has come to return to Tibet, then I would return. Of course some old people there say that before they die they want to see the Dalai Lama, but the majority realize that I’m still out of Chinese hands. If I were in Chinese hands, like the Panchen Lama was, then Tibet would suffer. Either I would remain a complete puppet or suffer house arrest. Both things are not pleasant to me as a human being. I want freedom. And with my freedom I can serve my nation better.

Do you think the Panchen Lama was too accommodating to the Chinese?

Under the most difficult circumstances, he tried his best to serve Tibetans. Obviously he couldn’t serve in the political field or (campaign)
for Tibetan basic rights. He did his best for the preservation of Tibetan culture and language. In his last statement he said there has been some progress since the Chinese communists came to Tibet, but that the positive things didn't compare to the destruction they caused. This statement is like a correction of all his previous statements in which he praised Chinese Communist rule.

There is a talk about young Tibetans who are more interested in Michael Jackson than in the Dalai Lama, and that there are some Tibetans who don't espouse your non-violent stance.

Yes, of course, that's normal. That is his or her right. No problem. Generally, it's not appropriate to talk about oneself, but I think I'm quite popular.

Do you think Tiananmen Square was the end of the democracy movement or the beginning?

I think both. The Tiananmen Square massacre opened many Chinese eyes to the real nature of the government. And like the Tibetan case, the more repressive measures are taken, the more negative feeling develops. That's human nature.
You have been trying and fighting for the independent status of Tibet for the last thirty years and so far no country has either recognized or supported your struggle as was done in the case of apartheid. Does it mean that you were not able to convince the world community about the righteousness of your struggle?

Firstly, Tibet is independent from China both geographically and culturally. Tibet's civilization is totally different from China and it is as old as that of the Chinese. I met a Chinese archaeologist in America in 1979. He did some archaeological excavations in Tibet also. He said that though the Chinese official line is that Tibetan civilization is an off-shoot or branch of Chinese civilization, the fact is Tibetan civilization has grown independently and differently from that of China. According to some archaeological finds in Tibet, it is proved that the Tibetan civilization is around 6,000 to 8,000 years old.

Then, around 1912, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama obtained complete independence for Tibet from China and till Communists came to power in China, Tibet remained de facto independent. After the Chinese Communists came to power, because of the circumstances that existed then, we were compelled to enter into an agreement with them: like local government and Central government. Such an agreement never took place anywhere else. But we were compelled to enter into such an agreement.

Then in 1959 things became difficult and we escaped. During the first twenty years when we were refugees, we tried to gain our rights and we tried to inform the world outside about what happened in Tibet. In 1979, we got in direct contact with the Chinese government.

My main policy or thinking is that we should get into some kind of understanding or compromise. That is the goal. Compromise means both sides will have to give some concessions to each other. I, therefore,
stress the importance of happiness and the importance of such a concession for the mutual benefit of the Tibetan people. In 1987, I made public my thinking and complete plan — the Five Point Peace Plan. In 1988, I made another proposal which was more clear about what kind of status Tibet should have. The basic thing is that I do not stress or ask the Chinese government for complete separation from China. So that is the situation.

In the outside world, most of the media accepted that Tibet was invaded by China. On a government level, Tibet was occupied by China in 1949-50 legally or illegally and became a part of China. China is a very big, important and populated country. Therefore, all governments, including India, try to avoid antagonizing China. At the people's level generally they consider Tibet as an independent country. And wherever I went, newspapers have reported my visit and that the Chinese invaded Tibet.

The world scene has been that any mass movement was successful only when the leader of such a movement was present on the spot and guided the masses in the right direction. With you in exile, how effective have you been in providing the movement proper direction for its success; how reliable is the feedback you got from Tibet and how truly were your guidelines communicated to the masses in Tibet?

In 1950, I escaped from Lhasa to the Indo-Tibetan border inside Tibet. When the Seventeen-point Agreement was signed, I returned to Lhasa with a Chinese representative. In 1956, I came to India for Buddha Jayanti celebrations. Then I tried to stay in India and not to return to Tibet. My Indian friends, specially Pt. Nehru, advised me that it is better to return to Tibet and struggle within Tibet. I exactly followed this advice and returned to Tibet and tried my best to save my country and my people from within Tibet. But the situation became worse in Tibet in 1959 and there was no possibility to help the Tibetan people. Now, after thirty-one years, today the situation is better about Tibet — better prospects for Tibet because we are not in Chinese hands. Had I remained in Chinese hands, Tibet almost would have gone. I, therefore, feel quite clear that my decision to leave Tibet and live in India, a free country, is very right and it has really shown better results.

The Indian freedom movement and the Tibetan case have their similarities and differences. British imperialists had an independent
judiciary system and there was complete freedom-of-speech. Mahatma Gandhi and others could go to people — the masses — freely and control the mass movement. But in communist countries it is impossible — specially in the case of China. If there was a possibility of carrying on a freedom movement within our country, I would have no hesitation to carry on that way, but then there was no such possibility; see Panchen Lama, a very brave and determined person. Because of his early statement he spent nine years in prison and on a few occasions he faced danger to his life, and the UNO saved his life two or three times.

During the first twenty years of our stay here, it was quite difficult to communicate with Tibet. But we were able to somehow manage. During the last ten years, because of movement of people with Chinese permission, communication with Tibet is very good. I regret to say that the older generation in Tibet prefers that I should return to Tibet without considering the other implications. But those who are politically conscious, especially the younger people, though they are eager to see me as early as possible, realizing the present circumstances think that I should not return.

As of today there are about one and a half lakh of Tibetan refugees in India. So far in history, the problem of refugees was solved only by means of war, e.g., Bangladesh War. How do you wish the Tibetan refugee problem should be solved?

As I mentioned earlier, my aim is to try to have some compromise. So, therefore, I feel there is possibility to find some solution. For the last ten years, although the Chinese government was reluctant, still they kept contact with me. Even after martial law was imposed in Lhasa, from my side, we also kept regular contact with the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi. The Chinese government, from time to time, have given me indications that they are willing to have dialogue but concrete ideas never came up. My proposals get rejected. Things are changing quite rapidly. Especially in Russia, most leading East European countries are now becoming free and democratic. Today, I understand from BBC that there are a lot of disturbances in Albania. In the case of China, I believe that there will be changes in the next five to ten years; of course, I cannot say with a hundred percent surety. But such a change is the only way I believe.

I am against war or violence. Especially in our case, violence is the wrong method. In the case of India, there were cries to solve the Kashmir
problem in the beginning through some kind of violence or some sort of military action. You see, a proper solution could not be achieved till now. I feel that in this case, there was never a genuine dialogue and therefore the problem still exists. I, therefore, entirely believe in non-violence.

My own people inside Tibet as well as outside, especially younger people, criticize my stand of non-violent methods. But I believe this is the proper way; violence is against human nature — it is inhuman.

You just mentioned that you do not want complete freedom from China. What do you mean by that?

As mentioned in my proposal about Tibet, a fiscal relationship an association with China, something similar to a federation

Like the Russian system?

No. What they have is a unique system. Anyway, we want complete freedom except for Defence and External Affairs. Except these two, all other responsibilities should be carried out by Tibetans.

After armed revolution in mainland China, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, the Chinese Communist Party came to power in 1949. You were exiled from Tibet in the year 1959. It means you should have had a clear indication of things to come much before 1959. What did you do to oppose such an onslaught on independent Tibet?

Before the Chinese Communists came to power, and during their armed struggle, the communists in Tibet went to China. They came to Tibet again along with the Chinese army during the Chinese invasion of Tibet. Even among those few, some went to China because of internal conflicts — like a conflict between two chieftains, one chieftain went to China. Otherwise, the entire Tibetan nation was against the Chinese. For example in the Seventeen-point Agreement that was entered into, there is a clause which mentions that when Tibetans ask for any reforms, even then they (the Chinese) will consider and discuss with the local authorities about the reforms. The Chinese government expected that the so-called "liberal" local people now in Chinese territory would take some benefit and initiatives for reforms. But in the case of Tibet it never happened. So the reforms came from above. The Chinese cadres did reforms according to their own experiences in China proper but the case of Tibet is different.
The Chinese Communist Party came to power in 1949. So during that period of their struggle and liberation, you were in Tibet. Can you tell what steps you took to see that the Chinese Communists did not take similar, or near-similar, action in Tibet as they had in China?

We formed a Reform Committee to carry out proper reforms. There were two aspects — one aim was to carry out reforms and the second was that Tibet needed some reforms and if we ourselves carried out those reforms according to our own conditions and circumstances, there would be no need for Chinese reforms. That was one method. When the Chinese saw our activities, they deliberately stopped them because if the Tibetan people had accepted our reforms, the Chinese reforms would have had no place in Tibet. That deliberate stoppage by the Chinese caused emotional problems in Tibet. This was around 1952.

In 1947, just before India got independence, there was a conference, I think Peace of Asia or something like that in which Mahatma Gandhi was also there. Tibet sent its delegation and China was also there. The Chinese delegation came back to China and made a protest because we put up our national flag. At the time, I had no responsibility but the Tibetan government was aiming to put a stop to such Chinese activities.

Then in 1950, when China invaded Tibet, we raised the issue in the U.N. but the Indian representative advised us that we should have direct negotiations with the Chinese government and we signed the Seventeen-point Agreement. In the meantime the Tibetan government tried to send delegations to India, Nepal, USA, UK and other counties. At that time the Chinese army was on the borders and fighting was going on. So we had to stop. Anyway, this is past history.

What do you think is the reaction of the students agitation in Beijing against the CPC and what is its impact on Tibet vis-à-vis the CPC?

As a result of the students’ agitation, the Chinese Communist Party has taken a hard line. They fear that unless a hard line is taken, the agitation may crop up in several places including Tibet. Of course, this is a temporary phenomenon. In the long run democracy and freedom will come in China and that will be the real opportunity to discuss the future of Tibet.
What do you think about perestroika? And how will it affect the Chinese Communist policy? In case you think that the Chinese policy would change to capital rights for citizens, do you think communist policies in China would come to an end? And if so, do you think it would benefit your movement for independent Tibet?

As I mentioned earlier, perestroika I think is a very good thing — very wonderful thing. Actually, Gorbachev, I think, is a man of the century. With Marxism and Marxist ideology there was too rigid a system in Russia. Now perestroika/glasnost are happening. As a result, there is a big change in East European countries that has taken place and also its implications reach everywhere to the entire group. It is really a very good thing. Now, in China, as I mentioned earlier, within five to ten years, I am quite sure things will change and that will not only benefit the people of China but also the people of Tibet — and India also.

You mentioned that there will be big changes in China within five to ten years. Is it based on some facts or is it your guess.

Many wise students have the same opinion. Now the Chinese case is not like East European countries. They are quite independent from Moscow and at the same time the Chinese masses, peasants — especially in rural areas — are not much concerned about other things; their main concern is their village life. Then, those educated students have better knowledge and better information about the outside world and they have better realization and understanding of their rights. Although they are crushed for the time being, they will come up with more strength. You see, communism in East European countries is collapsing. So, therefore, things will change but it will take some time — maybe five to ten years is appropriate. In the Soviet case, since 1970, although they are mature communists, still they have a leadership crisis. That always happened there. In the Chinese case also, after Mao, and during his own time there was Lin Piao and in his period he was the most reactionary person. And now, at the moment, between Prime Minister Li Peng and the Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin, there are rumours at the top about differences. So it has happened always — what is the problem?

In India it is different — it is a free country and if there is some illness you can shout. Newspapers always have sufficient material. In China's case all grievances never come out. They keep accumulating for years
and decades and decades and when something happens they blast. That disease is not here — that is the advantage.

There have been allegations that the Chinese are making a military base of Tibet, they are treating Tibet as a dumping ground for nuclear waste, etc., and that the Chinese are being settled in Tibet in a planned manner to gain numerical control over the territory. Your comments please.

It is quite certain — quite reliable information — that near Kokonor lake there are quite a number of military factories and among them one factory produces nuclear weapons. This, you see, is inside Tibet and not in the so-called Autonomous Tibet; in the north-east part of Tibet in Amdo province, which is my home. In some areas of the northern plateau the Chinese have put so many restrictions that even a Chinese truck driver cannot enter certain gates and the driver has to be changed. So, you see, there are so many restrictions. Word goes around that some deformed animals were found in that region.

So, therefore, we are suspicious that Chinese are dumping nuclear waste here. Still we don’t have a hundred percent information. This is the situation.

Will it affect the environment of Tibet and India?

Yes. As I mentioned earlier, some deformed animals were found. There is another thing — deforestation. Lots of forests are cut with utter disregard to its effect on nature and environment. As a result there are more floods and the climate is also changing. So this really is a serious matter. In some areas Chinese are doing mining work and putting up large factories without proper planning. This also damaged the environment. Therefore one of the points in my Five Point Peace Plan is environment. Things are very serious. Moreover, Tibet is at a very high altitude and is a dry area. Therefore it needs more time to restore forests once they are damaged and also it is more difficult to restore. Therefore, it is very much a concern and a serious matter.

Now the Chinese are very eager and concerned about energy. So, at every possible site they see, they try to build some hydro-electric project. In Yamdrok Lake they are constructing another hydro-electric project. When the Tibetans complained, the Chinese disregarded them and have already started work. So like that Chinese disregard the environmental effects. It is dangerous to divert the course of the Brahmaputra by such
acts. If such things happen, Bangladesh, India and others will be tremendously affected. So that is really a dangerous thing. For instance, nature's balance in the Tibet area is disturbed. It affects not only Tibet but the neighbouring states also.

Now, Chinese mass population transfer — demographic aggression — this is a very serious matter. According to one Chinese newspaper published in 1980 the statistics given about my home town area — Amdo area — the Tibetan population was seven lakhs (700,000) and the Chinese population was 35 lakhs (3,500,000). In the so-called Autonomous Tibet, the Chinese population is around two million according to Chinese statistics. The Chinese population, we believe, is more than two million. A few days back I met some people who came recently from Tibet and looked quite reliable. According to one of them, the Chinese army — that person himself was in the PLA and the information he gave is very new — in the so-called Autonomous Tibet alone is seven lakhs. In that case for every two Tibetans there is one Chinese soldier. This shows how sensitive Chinese are towards Tibet.

Chinese information says that the masses in Tibet are loyal and happy under the Chinese Communist government and only a handful of reactionaries are creating problems. If it is true, there is no need to put such a large number of Chinese soldiers in Tibet. So it is really indicated that the entire Tibetan population is against the Chinese. Our Indian friends, I think, have not taken much notice of this population transfer. If the present situation continues, in another ten to fifteen years the entire Tibet valley will be Chinese land. The situation is completely changed. So far Tibet is politically a part of China but in reality it is an occupied land. So, for Chinese it is a hostile land. This really is a serious matter not only for Tibet, but for the neighbouring states also.

While there were attacks on Tibetan religious beliefs and traditions by the Communists of China, Tibetans left that place and spread across the world. How do you think that the age-old traditions and customs of Tibet can be preserved in such a situation?

So far in India, with complimentary help of various concerned State governments as well as the people, after thirty years we are quite well established with our own community, with our own unique culture and heritage. In a way the exiled Tibetans don't feel that they may get assimilated with local inhabitants. At the same time it is okay, because
today most of the Indian community have a very good opinion towards Tibetan settlers. In Karnataka, in Orissa, in Madhya Pradesh — everywhere, generally, they have a very good opinion. So, we are quite well preserved. And then, because of India's freedom, India is secular. It's marvellous. In other parts of the world — in Europe and America — generally speaking, wherever the Tibetans have settled, they still kept their own identity and culture although with very, many difficulties.

But what about in occupied Tibet?  
It is complicated. Because of China's very negative attitude towards Tibetan culture and the Tibetan nation, it is only there on paper. But internally the Tibetan relationship is powerful. Even though people don't know much about Tibetan culture they respect it, they love it, they have devotion to our culture. If there is criticism, who will stop it? The younger generation may stop it. Some Buddhist study was carried out all over Lhasa and then in bigger monasteries of Tibet. But for the last few years it is non-existent. But in some monasteries it is still there but to attend it you need Chinese permission. Once you attend the monastery, you have to spend most of the time in manual labour and will not have sufficient time for study. And always the problem is to find a learned and qualified teacher. Almost all of them have gone. In the late 1950s most of those learned scholars were imprisoned and eliminated and only few remain now; they are old. And here, it's much better now in India trying to learn about Buddhism; a purified form of Tibetan culture will be found in India and not in Tibet.

You have been here in India for around the last thirty-one years. What is the impact of your presence on Buddhism in India? Has it improved?
Personally, you see, I have close relations with Buddhists in the Himalayas as well as South India with the new Buddhist follower, Dr. Ambedkar. I have a close relationship with these people; from time to time and occasionally I visit their places and discuss some of their problems. Of course, the people generally — the Indian people, the Hindus — have considered Buddhism as a part of their religion and they don't take special notice of it.
Last March, in your address marking the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Tibetan uprising, you noted with dismay that your offers to talk have failed to elicit any positive reaction from the Chinese. Has your approach been an error?

I don't consider it was a mistake. No. One of the main purposes of my proposal is to start meaningful negotiations with the Chinese government or to bring China to the negotiating table. That, so far, has failed. Another objective is to reduce Chinese population transfer into Tibet. That also failed.

However, for the past fourteen years, my approach has raised more interest on the international level and made it easier for foreign governments to support the Tibet issue. And then, in the eyes of ordinary Chinese people — I mean intellectuals and students — in their eyes, my approach is very reasonable and suitable.

But what can you do now?

I'm waiting to see how much effect will be caused by international pressure on the Chinese government. So if, you see, that also fails — doesn't produce a result — then I am going to ask the Tibetan people, outside [Tibet] as well as inside. The people outside I can ask openly in a referendum. Inside, through visitors, we can communicate. I can collect their views.

Now, I would like to give them some few options. One option: My approach for the past fourteen years. Another option is what critics say about my approach. They say we should stand firm on independence.

Speaking of choice, the United States has to decide about China's most-favoured nation status by June 3. As you know, last year President Bill Clinton made this renewal conditional on Beijing achieving progress in certain human rights issues. This was given to John-Thor Dahlburg, Bureau chief in New Delhi.
rights categories, including safeguarding of Tibet's culture and religion. Do you think the United States should continue MFN for China?

The decision taken by the President last year was perfect. This year, I have no particular suggestion. However, I do feel it is very important to take a decision according to the wishes of the Chinese — those Chinese who are really carrying out the struggle for democracy and freedom.

So Chinese advocates for democracy should decide an issue that also concerns your homeland?

I feel the Tibet issue is very much linked with the overall Chinese policy or situation. So long as the hard-line or authoritarian system remains there (in Beijing), frankly speaking, there is not much chance for change.

It has been five years since the suppression of China's "democracy spring". Reports from China now say apathy and the desire to grow rich seem to be replacing political consciousness. Who are you pinning your hopes on?

Usually, I make three categories among the Chinese. The top category is the leadership and the Communist Party. Their main concern is keeping power in their hands.

The second group I consider the most important. That is the intellectuals and the thinkers and the students. These people in the last several years have really carried out a life-and-death struggle for democracy and freedom. This group is the force which ultimately will bring democracy in China. No one else. No outsider, not the United States, nobody can bring democracy to China, except these people.

Then third, the Chinese masses. Their main concern is their daily livelihood. They may not be concerned about democracy, which is not very relevant in their day-to-day life.

I think the entire future of China, particularly this region of the planet, is very much linked to (the second group's) spirit and their work. So if their spirit diminishes, that will be a disaster.

What of the argument that imposing economic sanctions on China is counter-productive because more two-way trade will foster greater democracy?

More economic prosperity ultimately affects political liberalization. That is logical. But in the meantime, there is a risk that the people in the second category get the impression that the outside world doesn't care.
about their struggle, that the outside world is content with the authoritarian regime in China.

The outside world is very much concerned about Russian authoritarianism, but Chinese authoritarianism seems to be OK. If that kind of impression develops among the Chinese democratic movement, I think it will be very, very harmful. If they feel more pressure in the economic field is more useful, more effective, in order to bring democracy in China and isolate these communist leaders in the public eye, then (the approach) should be tougher.

Once their spirit gets stronger, the democratic movement becomes stronger and political leaders will be compelled to carry out more liberalization. Liberalize China more, and I am a hundred percent sure we can have true discussion and find a proper solution to the Tibetan problem. There's no doubt. After all, I am not insisting on complete separation from China.

And what of your critics who say you aren't hard-line enough?

Quite often they say, "The Chinese know only force". It's not a generational matter. There are many, many elder Tibetans who think violence is the ultimate answer, too. Sometimes, perhaps, I think among the younger generation there is more attraction toward Yasser Arafat or the Moujahedeen in Afghanistan. They often tell me, "Oh, look at them. Through violence, there is more publicity, more support from the outside world."

And your reply?

First, my fundamental belief is that human nature lies in gentleness. Human nature is compassionate, is affectionate. Therefore, through violence, you may solve one problem. But you sow the seeds for another.

Then, there's our case. Tibetan and Chinese have to live side by side in the future. In the past, we lived like that. So in order to live in a friendly, peaceful and neighbourly way, while we are carrying out this freedom struggle, we must pursue non-violence, so that our struggle will not affect our long, long friendship.

Lastly, I ask the hotheads, let them visualize this. If we follow violent methods, a few hundred guns will not be effective. At least we need
several thousand, at least a few thousand — around 100,000. Now, from where will we get those weapons? Is there some country willing to supply us with them?

But are Tibetans benefiting from China’s economic liberalization?

A few years ago, one European who had spent some time in Tibet and knew something about economic theory told me, “In Tibet, there is certainly an economy, but it belongs to the Chinese, not the Tibetans.”

Now, because of the Chinese population increasing, local people find even small manual jobs difficult to get. One part of the blame belongs to the Tibetans themselves. They cannot work as hard as Chinese people — as tailors or carpenters. Even a Tibetan-style painting is now painted by some Chinese! The ordinary Tibetan finds it easier to ask a Chinese rather than a Tibetan. It’s less costly, and you get the results quicker!

So you see, this gives an opportunity to the Chinese settler. Now that there is competition under the more liberal economic system, in many cases, the Tibetans cannot compete with the Chinese.

You mentioned the influx of Chinese. Is it continuing?

In the name of more development now the Chinese are demolishing the old part of Lhasa. According to our information, in 1959, old Lhasa was three-square kilometres in size. Now it’s become smaller: one-square kilometre. Only that.

A few years ago, according to our calculations, the Tibetan population (of Lhasa) was about 50,000, and the Chinese population around 100,000. Now, the mayor has stated the total population at 4000,000. The Tibetan population is 100,000, maximum.

Time is running out. In fact, I think the Chinese leaders are thinking exactly on these lines. To the outside world, they have stated they are open to dialogue with the Dalai Lama. But whenever we approach them there’s no response.

The latest policy is to completely suppress (the Tibetans), and in the meantime to increase the Chinese population, so that in a few years time, the Tibetans become insignificant in their own land. Some of my friends call this the “final solution” of Tibet.
So Tibet is doomed?

I do believe that the international situation is now changing, and particularly, as I mentioned earlier, that there are democratic forces in China proper. So actually, the present Chinese government, the authoritarian regime, is in a state of transition. So I'm quite hopeful.

You are somewhat of an expert on reincarnation. The Chinese leadership is of a certain age. On July 6, you turn fifty nine. How do you see the future?

In the Chinese case, it's very difficult to predict. Even the Chinese themselves do not know what will happen. So I think they are very, very anxious about what will come after Deng Xiaoping. In the Tibetan case, I don't know. While I'm alive, I'll do my best. After my death, then other people, the new generation, will manage.

So there will be no Fifteenth Dalai Lama? What's to stop Beijing or Tibetan communists from announcing that you have been reincarnated as a member of the Chinese Communist Party?

If something happened today to me or my life were to cease, if the Tibetan people want another reincarnation or want another Dalai Lama, then certainly my reincarnation, my rebirth will take place among Tibetans. And not among Chinese! Because the real purpose of reincarnation is continuing the previous life's work.

That means while we are outside (Tibet), if I pass away, then certainly if the Tibetan people want another reincarnation, they will find it among Tibetans, and not in Chinese hands.

But if death takes place at the time when we have already returned to Tibet, and there is some kind of freedom there, I have officially stated that the Tibetan people should decide whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not. If people feel there's not much relevance about this institution, then it will automatically cease. That's no problem.
After all of the changes in China, are you today more optimistic or less optimistic?

More optimistic. First, I think the Communist totalitarian systems from the Cold War have changed very much. (The only ones left are) in Asia, and Cuba to some extent. Since the mid-1980s, it has been clearly demonstrated that Chinese people want democracy. At the same time, for the ruling regime the whole issue of democracy and democratic movements remains so very sensitive. They feel that even a tiny opening could lead to a flood.

In the case of Tibet, more and more Chinese people are showing their sympathy and concern. A few years ago, some Tibetan students studying at Harvard University said that they came into contact with visiting scholars from China who were there. These scholars were all very, very critical of Chinese policy. The struggle is good for neither China nor Tibet. My main aim is to start to bring China to the negotiating table — (but) I feel our Chinese brothers and sisters, particularly the officials, use only two organs — their eyes and their mouth, but never this (points to his ear). They are just lecturing us; they never listen to our viewpoint.

Attention in this country has been drawn to persecution of Chinese Christians — those who are not part of officially approved churches. Do you have a sense of identification with them, and do you have any contact with them?

I have no contact with Chinese Christians. We certainly have a concern about their right of religious freedom. Muslims in China, except for those of a different ethnic group, I think, have better relations with the Communists. But Christianity and Buddhism are both very restricted.

You have done a remarkable job in maintaining your love for other human beings, your willingness to forgive the murders of over a million of the Tibetan people, and yet you remain optimistic, caring and kind. What advice would you

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1This was also reproduced in “The Pioneer”, 19-6-1997.
give to people in Los Angeles when they are offended by one of their neighbours?

Despite some atrocities that take place, looking from the wider perspective — whether we like it or not — we have to live side by side with our Chinese neighbours. It is always possible to live happily.

But (that is true) anywhere. If your neighbour creates some trouble, you should look at it from a wider angle: "I have to live with this neighbour." For instance, if an incident is a source of major friction between neighbours, it is wise on your part to go and meet your neighbour and get it out in the open. Clear the air rather than keeping it inside. If you or your neighbour move away as a result, you may find the new neighbour is worse!

The American Buddhist Congress (has discussed) a consensus statement on basic beliefs apart from ethnic and sectarian varieties of Buddhism. Many hope an American Buddhism can develop down the line. Do you think this effort has much chance of success?

Buddhism started from India and went to many different regions. There is Chinese Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism and so on, so American Buddhism, I think, is a possibility. If there is going to be emergence of what could be called American Buddhism, it will probably arise in an evolutionary process, naturally. It cannot be defined or dictated.

All Buddhists, for instance, accept basic Buddhist teachings such as the Four Noble Truths. Often the problem in this great diversity the impression is that there is fundamental difference. That may have more to do with the different styles of teaching. Although I cannot claim to have knowledge of the entire dimensions of Buddhist thought, I try to give the overall picture in my presentations. Sometimes I, too, find certain kinds of Buddhist teaching unrecognizable.

What about people who say they are both Buddhist and Christian?

Initially, it is possible for one individual to be both Buddhist and Christian in the sense that one obtains nourishment from the teachings of these masters. But as you go deeper in religious life, then I think it is difficult.

In Tibetan Buddhism, for example, it is very difficult to accept the concept of creator. Of course, God in the sense of infinite love and God's
presence everywhere, that's OK. The Buddhist can accept that God of ultimate reality or infinite compassion. But if all our existence depends on the creator, it is difficult to accept that idea.

It's been reported that as a young man you enjoyed John Wayne movies and, to the dismay of your mentor, you liked "Mash" episodes. What have you learned in recent years from Hollywood and from supporters such as Richard Gere?

Some individuals in the Hollywood community take an interest in Tibet and Buddhism. Harrison Ford really feels concerned about Tibet. I consider him a good supporter. Also, Richard Gere is starting sincere practice of Buddhist dharma. I appreciate when these people explain the circumstances of Tibet. Their words can reach more people, and that is very good.

Walt Disney Co. said last November that they were going ahead with plans to distribute a film about you being directed by Martin Scorsese — despite any displeasure from China. What is your role, if any, in the movie?

Apart from what I told my story to the screenwriter in the initial stage of writing, I have no control. Of course, I admire the firm stand taken by Disney on the film. And also I think I will be very happy if the Chinese protest it — that will mean more publicity.

What effect do you think the peaceful changes in Hong Kong might have on China's view of Tibet?

I feel the Chinese leaders may learn the importance of freedom once they gain control there. Once they give more liberty without much risk — they may adopt that experience to other problems. The next few months are very crucial.
8 Interview to "The Independent"

Dharamsala,
June 1, 1994

What did you discuss with Clinton during your last visit to America?
I have visited America more than ten times and from the very first time my aim was to promote the value of human compassion and harmony in the pluralistic society. I also consider those visits educational, especially in terms of meeting several scientists from whom I learnt a lot, mainly in the fields of cosmology, neurobiology, subatomic physics and psychology. In these four fields there are many commonalities between Buddhist concepts and scientific explanations. The recent visit was also along those lines. I had dialogues on these issues in four different universities in the US.

Then, on the last day of the visit in Washington, my trip took a political turn. I met my old friends among the Senators and Congressmen and, finally, President Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore. It was the second time I met both of them. Al Gore has as keen an interest in ecology as myself, so we have developed a close relationship over the years. Both of them took a keen interest in Tibet, Tibetan culture, violations of human rights and so on.

Did you talk about the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to China?
No.

What is your reaction to China's being accepted as an MFN?
This issue had been raised during discussion with senators and congressmen. I had said that the Tibetan issue and Chinese democracy are inter-related. Democracy in China is essential for world peace. Therefore the world community has a moral responsibility to encourage

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1Namrata Sharma of The Independent, Kathmandu, interviewed His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala
every movement for Chinese democracy. The MFN strategy falls within this context.

I feel that it is now very necessary to know the opinion of Chinese freedom fighters, in accordance with which such policies should be followed. I find that, among the Chinese, there are three categories — in the first category fall those communists and leaders whose first concern is power. During the ’50s and early ’60s, communist parties had some legitimacy in ruling China, because they unified it and established a strong central government. They had an objective, and a plan to achieve it, but their clarity of ideology no longer exists. In fact, their only aim now is power.

The second category is the intellectuals, students and thinkers. These are the main people. Thirdly, there are the masses, the common people. For these people the main concern is their day-to-day lives, in which democracy may not be the main concern. Obviously the second category of people are the ones who will ultimately bring democracy to China, so their spirit and determination must be sustained. If the outside world gives them the wrong signals, demoralising them, it will be a disaster, not only for China but for the whole world.

Clinton must have considered various options before taking this step. He has clearly mentioned giving importance to human rights violations in Tibet. Both economic and human rights issues are supposed to bring happiness to the people.

How hopeful are you of achieving your cause peacefully, especially as the number of Chinese are increasing every day in Tibet?

If you look into Tibet, things do look hopeless. As you rightly mentioned, the Chinese population is increasing every day. In Lhasa, till sometime back, according to our information, the population of Tibetans was around 50,000 whereas the Chinese population was about 100,000. Recently the Mayor of Lhasa city mentioned a population of 400,000. The Tibetan population cannot have gone from 50,000 to more than 100,000 in a few years in the normal course, which means the remaining 300,000 are Chinese.

Till two years ago, in the western part of Tibet there were very few Chinese, but now they are increasing slowly. According to my information, for every Tibetan there is at least one or two security personnel in the
Lhasa area. The situation is similar in all other major cities. If this process continues Tibet will soon be like Inner Mongolia. There the native population is about three million, whereas the Chinese population is about 18 million.

The stealing of antiques and the general crime rate are increasing day by day. All these factors indicate the situation to be hopeless but, on the other hand, totalitarianism is being wiped out in other parts of the world. All communists are changing their policies.

The Tiananmen Square movement indicates how strong the pro-democracy feeling is within China. It has not been crushed. China is changing, and I don't think totalitarianism will remain long there. Then again, the Tibetan movement is also very strong. Almost all the Tibetans are against the Chinese, particularly the younger generation. Internationally also, awareness for the Tibetan cause is increasing. So, viewed in this light, I am hopeful.

Another point is that these days support from the Chinese community is also increasing. So I am certain we will achieve our cause — that too, peacefully. I believe that violence is against human nature. Anything achieved through violence usually creates negative effects. I thus don't consider anything gained through violence to be lasting.

In our case, whether we like it or not, we have to live side by side with the Chinese. So, in order to have peaceful co-existence, we must stick to non-violence.

How soon do you plan to go back to Tibet?

The Chinese government actually asked me to return to the motherland, as they refer to Tibet. In 1980-81, they made a formal proposal for my return to Tibet, but I wrote back immediately saying that, unless the basic issues regarding six million Tibetans' rights and welfare were discussed, there was no sense in my returning. One group of Tibetans sent me a written request asking me to return but another group, mainly the younger and more sensible people, felt I could do more from outside.

In 1956, I came to India and, on the government of India's, especially Pandit Nehru's advice returned to Tibet to implement a seventeen-point agreement. I went back but had to return after two years. We have thus learnt that, unless there is freedom, there is no sense of my going there to initiate dialogues. They want me to cease my government-in-Exile in
order to end the internationalisation of the Tibetan issue, but I will return only when some meaningful agreement is reached. Since last August, there has been no communication with the Chinese.

*Is the demilitarization of Tibet possible?*

It is very possible. In my five-point-peace proposal, I have mentioned that eventually Tibet must be a Zone of Peace. Firstly, a genuine way of solving the Tibetan issue has to be found between China and Tibet. Once that happens, Sino-Indo relations will be better, and so will Nepal-Bhutan relations. Then only may there arise a real possibility of demilitarising, not only Tibet and China but the whole Himalayan region.

_Have the visits of your elder brother Dhondup to China helped in any way?_

My brother Dhondup has visited China twelve times as my personal emissary, the last visit being in 1983. Six other delegations have also visited them, but there has been no response. They never listen to us. To reach a point of compromise, both sides have to listen.

_What about the young Tibetan Turks who want to achieve freedom through violence?_

I will resign if any violence takes place. First of all where will they get the weapons? Even if they get them, how will they transfer the weapons into Tibet? Finally even if half a million Tibetans took up arms against the Chinese, it would be suicidal. A large portion of our support is because of our non-violence.

_Do you have any message for the Tibetans in Nepal?_

I always consider Nepalis our twin brothers and sisters. Our Emperor Songtsen Gampo had a Nepali wife, so I sometimes joke that, as the Chinese try to justify that Tibet is part of China because in the seventh century a Tibetan king married some Chinese princess, Nepal may also say Tibet is a part of Nepal.

Traditionally also we have many similarities. Tibetan refugees have been living in your country for thirty to thirty-five years now. They are prospering and are very happy, for which I am grateful.

Now I have a message for our twin brothers and sisters. While progressing in modern education, we must maintain our traditional values and cultures too. For Tibetans settled in Nepal: you must be law-abiding refugees.
New Delhi,  
June 20, 1994

Has the extension of Most Favoured Nation status to China come as a setback to the Tibetan cause?

That would depend on how things develop in the future. When US President Clinton announced the delinking of trade and human rights, he made a commitment to ensuring human rights in Tibet and to the preservation of Tibetan culture. I believe if there is enough political will, and if pressure is put on China through other fora like the UN Human Rights Commission, it could be effective. Much depends on how much pressure the US and Europe can put.

Do you favour linking human rights with trade? Do you think it was a mistake to have linked the Tibetan issue to MFN?

I believe economics and human rights are interlinked. I believe politics, religion and morality are inseparable. Chemical weapons and neutron bombs, for instance, are great scientific achievements in themselves but without human values they can bring suffering.

Human rights are universal although Asian countries have a different view, but I hope that’s not the people’s view. When China did not heed world appeals on human rights, there was no alternative but to apply economic pressure. The US should have put economic pressure on China.

Last year, when I went to Washington, I expressed this view. Again, when I went to Washington this year in April, I emphasized the importance of the Chinese democratic movement not just for China but for the world and particularly for Asia where many countries fear Chinese expansionism.

I told the US that as the champion of liberty and human rights it should not do anything to send wrong signals to the democratic movement.

1Shortly after America extended unconditional Most Favoured Nation status to China, Neerja Chowdhury interviewed His Holiness the Dalai Lama.
in China. I would support whatever they (Chinese intellectuals and thinkers fighting for the democratization of China) say on extending MFN to China. Do you think I am being cunning or sincere? (laughs)

So you are disappointed with the US?

Not necessarily disappointed. I understand how difficult it is, American economic interest is huge. But I am waiting and watching.

What makes you think that President Clinton cannot go back on his commitment to human rights in Tibet. After all, he went back on his words uttered earlier when he had criticized his predecessor Bush for “coddling Communist Chinese”?

It is very difficult to say. If he supplements the withdrawal on the economic front with pressure on other fronts, it may be effective. If that also fails, it will not only be sad for us but also harmful for his own credibility. Already, he is under attack.

While the US is a powerful nation, it is also dependent on others, particularly the European community, and I met important European leaders recently in Brussels and found in them a spirit of support. America’s attitude also depends on India.

Are you still contemplating shifting your headquarters from Dharamsala after the recent trouble there?

That is a closed chapter. What happened was almost a blessing in disguise. For the representatives of the various communities who came to see me afterwards, it was clear that ninety-nine percent of the local people sympathized with us.

Do you still feel welcome in India?

We have to look at the whole situation in a wider perspective. While the government of India says that Tibet is a part of China and there are attempts to revive Hindi-Chini bhai bhai sentiment, it is also true that for the last thirty-five years Tibetan children have been getting education in India. Today, Tibetans in India are refugees but they also have their culture intact. That would not have been possible without India’s help.
Do you feel that the government of India should do more?

That I do feel. When the massacre took place in Tibet in 1987-88 and martial law was imposed and the entire world was shouting and expressing concern, India was silent.

I would describe India's policy towards China as overcautious. Good Sino-Indian relations are very important and I also welcome them. However, Tibet should also be involved in the improvement of these relations. While we want to solve the Tibet issue through direct talks with China, Tibet can be a zone of peace and a buffer state between India and China, irrespective of its status.

Tibet's interest is India's interest and India's interest is Tibet's. The government of India should know how much support we are getting from the outside world, and it should not lag behind. There is still some hope for Tibet because a democratic movement is still alive in China and the present Chinese leadership is in a transition period. It is a very critical time for Tibet but it is not too late.

You have often spoken of the middle way which Buddhism believes in. Do you think that it is possible to synthesize the interests of China, India and US, which are players on the Tibetan issue, with the aspirations of the Tibetan people and come up with something that is acceptable to all?

I think so. Historically, Tibet was an independent nation. The middle way that I have been talking about is that the six million Tibetan people can remain with the 1,000 million Chinese without seceding.

But the present Chinese arrangement in Tibet and the so-called autonomous region they are talking about is meaningless. It is difficult to preserve Tibetan culture with Tibet divided in five parts. I'm totally against this arrangement.

Do you think you can ever go back to Tibet?

Oh! Yes. In a few years we'll go back.
10 Interview to "Associated Press"

Dharamsala,
January 31, 1995

Your Holiness, how much difference would a new leader in China make for Tibet?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama: I do not expect much from the present regime. The present leadership like Jiang Zemin, Li Peng and few others, I think, will carry on with the existing policy. They will deliberately try to show that the old policy is continuing. However, I think in the long run there is a great possibility for change, change for the better. This is my feeling.

You don't foresee a big change in China? You just foresee maintenance of what has been going on before?

Yes, according to some expert there is a possibility of disintegration or collapse, total collapse. If this happens, then there is real danger of bloodshed. On account of China's population, a lot of people will suffer if violence erupts. So I prefer change without total collapse. Some kind of evolutionary change.

What will be your message to the new leader in China, whenever he comes, and what do you think will happen to China?

My message will be the same. Please think more openly, more realistically and let us try to find a mutually agreeable solution.

Can we focus on Deng Xiaoping? What is your appraisal of what he has done, specially with reference to Tibet?

In the early eighties, from 1979 to 80, 81, I think Deng Xiaoping and other leaders like Hu Yaobang really gave us great hope. I really hoped then that we could find a mutually agreeable solution. But then that hope faded away a little bit.
So do you respect them? Would you, with reference to Tibet, feel sorry to see Deng Xiaoping replaced?

Difficult to say. I know Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang personally. Especially, I had met Deng Xiaoping on a number of occasions. As I mentioned before, I felt while these leaders were alive, we may be able to find some solution. In fact, I thought it may be better and easier to develop some understanding with them. Once mutual understanding develops, gradually mutual trust is built up. Then these problems can be solved easily. After all, some of my goals: development, more economic development, rise in living standards, etc., are same as that of the Chinese leadership. I have often conveyed to the Chinese government that theoretically the six million Tibetans may get greater benefit if we remain with the People's Republic of China, with our big brother. After all, Tibet is a landlocked country. We need lot of work for material development. In these fields, if Chinese treat us an equal and sincerely respect our culture and our way of life, then I personally felt it may be wise to remain with the Chinese.

If Deng Xiaoping were to die soon, then, from an outsider’s point of view, the legacy he has left in Tibet is not a very happy one for sure.

Yes. If he passes away at this moment, then one problem remains to be solved. It is sad. I am sure that he himself is wishing to solve this problem during his lifetime.

So what was stopping him?

There are many factors. One, perhaps their suspicion. Then, their ignorance. They do not know what is Tibetan culture, what is Tibetan history and the true nature of relationship between China and Tibet. Ignorance is a major factor. Perhaps, from our side we may have committed some mistakes. I don't know. But as far as my motivation is concerned, when I went to China in 1954-55, I met most of the leaders. I particularly developed a close relationship with Chairman Mao. At that time I really admired Communist ideology, its aims. Sometimes, I still describe myself as half Marxist, half Buddhist.
If Deng Xiaoping did die over the next few days, can you sum up your feelings towards the man?

No doubt a great leader, a great revolutionary. Also a very able person; a person who can act decisively and quickly according to circumstances, no matter whether his motivation was sincere or not. It is very difficult to judge the motivation. As a human being, Deng Xiaoping, whom sometimes I call my old friend, is a great person if we disregard the suffering meted out to other people.

Can you disregard the suffering of the other people, specially in Tibet?

No, certainly not. On account of this, after 15 years of attempt at negotiation, we have not achieved much. Personally, I have respect for Deng Xiaoping and some other leaders. But then, the suffering is a problem. We have to find ways and means in spite of our respect towards that person.

Is the human rights situation in Tibet getting better?

I think in certain aspects there is some improvement; e.g., the movement within Tibet and less harassment to ordinary people. But in certain other aspects, the situation is worsening. There is much more tightening up.

What is getting tight?

Every individual movement is being closely watched, particularly in bigger towns like Lhasa and Shigatse. Since two years, not just political activists, but those Tibetan writers, teachers, etc., who are really dedicating themselves towards the study of Tibetan culture, are being carefully watched by the Chinese. A year ago many of them were arrested. More restrictions are being placed on them; their writings are being monitored. Again, in another aspect of human rights, intentionally or unintentionally, some kind of cultural genocide is taking place. Also, key persons in every department are being replaced by Chinese.

Who is being replaced?

Some time ago, they encouraged more Tibetans to take these positions. Since a year or two ago, this is changing. The key positions are only for Chinese. In the military, usually when the Chinese army recruited
new persons they make it a point to see that their residential permits remain at their original place. After three years of service in the army they must return to their original place. Since last year, there is a new policy by which those recruited for service in Tibet can carry their residential permits with them so that after three years of service they can remain in Tibet. This automatically increases the Chinese population in Tibet. These are new developments which are very serious.

You said in the beginning that there are some improvements regarding movement within Tibet, and less harassment for the average person, but you are now saying the movement is actually restricted. Is it better or worse?

Small businessmen can move without restrictions. Previously their movements were also restricted. It is very difficult to generalise the situation. Compared to 20 years ago, the situation is some what better now. But in some other fields things are much worse.

With the advent of a new leader in China, if Deng Xiaoping doesn’t die in the next few months, are you more hopeful for the Tibetan situation?

I am quite sure the Chinese leadership will eventually have to act according to the reality of the situation. Even if they take into consideration the interest of China only they will have to follow a more realistic policy. Simply thinking about power alone cannot work. They have to adopt more openness, more flexibility. Otherwise, they cannot solve the problems being faced by China itself. Once openness and flexibility and a more realistic method is adopted in China proper, then that will become their overall policy. Consequently, it is certain that the Tibetan problem will be found more easier to solve.
11 Interview to "The Times of India"

August 18, 1996

You have been campaigning for an independent Tibet since 1959. Can I ask you to look back and comment on the direction and progress of the Tibetan freedom movement?

You see, our definition of freedom is not independence. What we want is some kind of a genuine autonomy or self-rule. At the same time it is very important to know that when the Chinese invasion took place, Tibet was an independent nation. This is a historical truth.

Even the International Commission of Jurists, which prepared two reports on Tibet in the 1960s, said that at the time of the Chinese invasion, Tibet was a de facto independent nation. But since our arrival in India, the basic principle has been to try to compromise and negotiate with the Chinese to get some kind of freedom with genuine self-rule.

In your recent visit to the US and Europe you repeated the points of the Strasbourg Peace Proposals. What is the need for calling for talks when there is no response coming from the Chinese? Shouldn't you demand complete independence for Tibet now?

Although the last few years have been more or less a failure, it does not mean that we have no hope. As soon as some proposal comes from the Chinese side, I am ready to negotiate anywhere, anytime without any preconditions. As far as complete independence is concerned, you see, Tibet was historically an independent nation. So we have the other option, but I think it is not the right time. And if Tibet being a landlocked and materially backward nation, joins a big nation we will get greater benefits. So with this belief, I am content with genuine self-rule. At the same time, it is my duty to save the Tibetan nation which is facing the danger of extinction. We need an urgent solution to save Tibet. That's my fundamental way of approach.
Then why do you keep appealing to the international community to put pressure on China?

I appeal to the international community to persuade China to start talks with us. And the response has been quite encouraging. Many parliaments and governments, publicly as well as behind the scenes, are urging China to talk with the Dalai Lama, to negotiate with us.

Do you see the same kind of support in India, the host country? Don't you think India should have done more?

We have a deep spiritual relationship with India. When in the past, Tibet was a free nation, the Indian border was the safest. But after its occupation by the Chinese, the picture changed completely. Today China is growing as an economic power and the population of Chinese settlers in Tibet is increasing. This, I think, is a new threat to this country.

But your proposal to declare Tibet a ‘Land of Peace’ has failed to evoke a positive response even from the government of India. Isn’t that discouraging?

In my kind of peace plan, there is the concept of self-rule, autonomy for Tibet. And the government of India in recent years has always described Tibet as an autonomous region of People’s Republic of China. This, I think, goes very well with my effort to seek genuine self-rule for Tibet. I don’t think it’s publicly stated but they do not consider Tibet as a part of China.

Recently the Chinese government tried to undermine your authority by installing its own Panchen Lama and asking monasteries to remove your photos. Do you think, in such an atmosphere, a meaningful dialogue with China is possible?

In the immediate future, I think, no. The Chinese policy regarding Tibet is part of its overall policy, which today has become more hardened towards Hong Kong, Taiwan, US and its own minorities. It seems to me that they just want to show to the outside world and to their own people that their’s is a big country and no one can bully them. So they are taking a tough stand but I am sure that they know that this policy will not work. So, they have to adopt more constructive policy towards us to reduce this problem. The only way and the only option is negotiation.

Secondly, no matter how hard they tried to isolate my influence in Tibet, it’s difficult to eradicate the Dalai Lama’s position.

Interview to ‘The Times of India’
You have good support among the Western media, parliaments and people but when it comes to brass tacks, like imposing sanctions, the governments always back out? Isn't that a cause for concern?

I have always been against isolating China. I have always said China must be brought into the global mainstream. I also say that the idea of containing China is politically difficult and morally wrong. China is a country of 1.2 billion people. Their right is of course very important. Putting pressure is not nice as it leads to confrontation. China has a great potential as a market and therefore the West is sensitive about relations with China.
12 Lhasa Uprising

What is the significance of March 10 to the Tibetans?

It is the Tibetan Independence Day; the culmination of a nine year long story of demonstrations and protests.

Your flight took place more than a decade after the Red Star rose over China. Were there sufficient indications during this period of the Chinese evil intentions?

About the end of 1955, a revolt broke out in Eastern Tibet. I have dealt with this in detail in my book My Land and My People. What ultimately became clear was that my staying on in Tibet was going to be of no benefit to the Tibetans. We stayed with the Chinese for 9 years and had hoped that the worst thing would not come about and some benefit would accrue. But ultimately it became very clear that this was not going to be the case. That is why we fled. Actually we had no intention of fleeing Tibet or of coming to India, but we wanted to go to Southern Tibet and establish a temporary headquarters there. We hoped that by doing this perhaps some new negotiations (with the Chinese) could be held but the situation didn't permit that. I think I left Lhasa on March 17 and on the March 19 or early on the 20th the Chinese bombarded the Norbulingka (the summer palace).

Were you convinced that the Chinese meant harm to your person before your flight from Lhasa?

They bombarded Norbulingka first. That is the place where I was staying before I left. Around March 14 or 15, Mr. Ngapo sent me a letter and asked me to mark the place on the map where I was living in Norbulingka. Now it is very difficult to say whether it was for a good purpose or bad. The shelling started at 1 p.m. and I had left for Potala secretly around nine in the evening. Later, the shelling began at Potala also.

1The source has “18” which is a slip.
2The source has morning, vide The Spirit of Tibet: Universal Heritage, p. XIII.
Had the Chinese any means of knowing that you had left Lhasa?

They didn’t know at that time. About a year later we got clear indications that they didn’t know about my flight. The Chinese, it is learnt, washed the faces of the bald-headed monks after the shelling at Norbulingka to find out if I was among the killed. This was done on the very evening of the shelling.

If there was an indication of Chinese intentions of taking over Tibet, were no attempts made to contact world powers?

In 1950 we appealed to the UN and were trying to send delegations to the USA, Britain, Nepal and India, but our delegation had only reached Delhi when they were asked not to come. Once this happened, the Chinese had a free hand. We could not appeal outside. We were forced to sign an agreement and were supposed to be happily united to the “motherland”.

Could you have got America interested in the cause of Tibet because of its anti-Communist stance, which sent it to Vietnam, at that time?

That was impossible due to our geographical situation. Americans use lots of sea power, not land power. They could only use the air.

And you had no air bases?

If somebody were willing to use them, we could have built them. Seriously speaking, it was difficult, considering our geographical situation. If from 1912 to 1949 we had been able to establish ourselves not only at home but (through some diplomatic relations) with the outside world, it would have been very good. It was our own fault. Besides, India had just achieved independence in 1947. She was still not strong enough at that time. It sounds selfish to say so, but if the British were in India at that time or if India had attained independence much earlier, the picture would have been different.

Did you tell Mr. Nehru on your visit to India, a year earlier than your flight about the difficulties in Tibet? And if so, what was his response?

Yes, I told him everything. He said that we should be cautious and it would be better to go back to Tibet. That was his advice and I think he was right.
Probably Mr. Nehru didn't believe that the Chinese would become so ruthless. Yes, that perhaps is correct.

Perhaps Mr. Nehru thought that he could influence the Chinese to do something about it due to our good relations with them at the time? Yes, that is also possible.

What were the guarantees in the well-known 17 point formula with the Chinese to safeguard against their breaking its clauses?
It depended entirely on their mercy.

And when they allegedly did break them, they were trying to take advantage of your young age. Could you have reacted differently had you been older? I don't feel that it would have made any difference. I don't think so.

How is it that the Panchen Lama toed a different line at that crucial period of Tibetan history to become a Chinese stooge.
The relations with the Panchen Lama were not very good at that time. It was sheer misunderstanding, unnecessary and unreasonable. Even if the situation had not been otherwise, the overall Tibetan situation would not have changed. Around 1950, the situation was quite different. Had I been older and if by that time I had several years of power over Tibet and had the Panchen Lama been in Tibet itself and his relations with our government had been good, the situation might have been favourable. In fact, the whole of the eastern section of Tibet with the same Tibetan culture, the same people, the same language would have allied itself with us if the Central government had been in my hands even though politically they were under the influence of the Chinese.

Had they always been leaning towards the Chinese?
They were not completely leaning but it was all because of the adverse attitude of the central government towards them that the people were discouraged. All this is very complicated.

What is Panchen Lama's position now?
No news, no information.
You have been advocating a plebiscite in Tibet under U.N. auspices. How has the free world reacted to it?

Nobody seems to advocate anything in this matter. Nobody has disagreed with the suggestion. They are sympathetic, but they cannot do anything about it.

Any reaction from China?

It seems that the Chinese are changing their policy in Tibet. Perhaps it may have some connection with our advocacy of a plebiscite.

It is learnt that the Chinese rulers have thrown a minor bait to Tibetans in Tibet in the form of what they call “four freedoms”. What could be the purpose or motive behind them?

It is difficult to say, but practically speaking, if it is beneficial to the Tibetans for even one day or two, even that would be good. No one can predict how long these freedoms are going to continue and what the Chinese motive is behind them.

In a recent interview with a foreign journalist you expressed the view that you would be willing to remain a partly religious leader in the future. Don't you think that it would snap the only unifying link among the faction-ridden Tibetan community?

It is my feeling that the holding of such a position could be more beneficial to the Tibetan people in the long run. I feel that politics is something temporary. The philosophical field or study is much deeper and in this I have the requisite qualifications to serve the Tibetan people. In political and other fields there are many young Tibetans who can shoulder the work. By concentrating wholly on Buddhist philosophy I may be able to render wider and better service to my people. What the Tibetans need is a change in their basic attitude toward life, some effort is needed to change the overall atmosphere, something that will affect them for many centuries. And it is in this field that I would like to devote my energies. It doesn't mean that I would give up the Tibetan cause, but in my opinion the other thing is much deeper and important. From a certain point of view, it is also very difficult.
Since you are the sole unifying force among the Tibetans, would it not be detrimental to the Tibetan cause of freedom if you relinquish your political office?

Don't worry about that right now. That is how I think. Also that is something for the future.

There is an undertone of a slight improvement in the Sino-Indian relations though nothing concrete has come about. Won't your celebration of March 10 have an adverse effect on it?

March 10 anniversary is purely a Tibetan affair. It has nothing to do with Sino-Indian relations. I feel that would be good if Sino-Indian relations improve. That will help Tibet also.

Some people feel that Sino-Indian relations worsened because of the political asylum granted to you, your government and the Tibetan people. How do you feel about it?

The Chinese use this as a tool but this is not the only cause for hindering Sino-Indian relations. If the Chinese have a serious intention of having better relations with India, they can easily ignore the Tibetan question. But at the moment, just because they are not genuinely interested, they are using this as a pretext.

With improvement of relations between China and America, couldn't an attempt be made, through the good offices of America itself, to end the stalemate on Tibet? Do you plan to take advantage of the situation?

It is not possible to say anything at this time. It is even very difficult to say definitely what shape Sino-American relations are taking. After a year or two we might get a clearer picture.

Are you satisfied with the efforts made by the government of India for Tibetan independence?

Here the views differ. The government of India's policy is that Tibet is part of China. We are struggling for complete independence. This is entirely different. The government of India is very sympathetic. If Tibet does regain independence, India would be very happy. But right now, practically, there is not much they can do. There is no point in making empty promises.
Your government-in-exile used to have an active Foreign Section. Since your government-in-exile has not been recognised by any country in the world, including those small countries which championed your cause in the United Nations, what function is this Foreign Office fulfilling? Is it meant to have some dialogue with China or KMT?

We have no dialogue with China. The Foreign Office of the Tibetan government-in-exile works for the Tibetans only.

Guerrilla fighting by Tibetans against the Chinese will be of little avail unless supplemented by external help. Do you expect any big power at some future date to help Tibetan guerrillas, like the Indian government which came to the help of Mukti Bahini in East Bengal?

It is very difficult to organise inside Tibet itself any guerrilla fighting with the Chinese. It is impracticable, impossible. The only fighting which is possible is moral fighting, a sort of moral resistance which is very important and which is there. In fact, if this continues the Chinese will have some realisation one day and a new picture may emerge in Tibet. I'm sure of it.

Are you recommending the Gandhian method of non-violence and moral resistance in Tibet?

I'm making this comment from a practical point of view. When Gandhi was practising passive resistance in India, the situation was, of course, quite different from that of Tibet even as the Vietnam situation is quite different. In any case, we are very weak and the aggressor is very powerful.

Some of your intelligentsia have recently criticised the government of India: for example, Dawa T. Norbu editor of “Tibetan Review” in his article titled “Delhi refuses to deviate into sense” (December, 72 issue). Does it not reflect the policy of your government-in-exile?

This has no connection with us. He has expressed his own view and there are a number of Tibetans who have sharply criticised some of the statements recently made by Mr. Swaran Singh, the External Affairs Minister. As far as we are concerned, we are responsible and we do not subscribe to his views. The policy of the government of India is not new for us. It was always there as I mentioned earlier. They are sympathetic towards the independence of Tibet on the one hand and at the same time there is nothing they can do. How did they act in the case of
Bangladesh? Different parties were shouting for the recognition of the government of Bangladesh in exile in the beginning. The government of India did not do so. When the situation was ripe for it, they did it and also sent their army to help. This was a very practical policy. Similarly in the case of Tibet, if a practical situation like that emerges, the government of India will definitely help and also support and recognise the Tibetan government-in-exile. Right now they can't do anything. The day Tibet regains her independence, Delhi will be the first to welcome it.

What message would you like to give to the Tibetans for the March 10 anniversary this year?

Not to be discouraged. Historically also we are right. The most important thing is that practically speaking, Tibetans are not benefiting from the Chinese occupation. Our struggle is reasonable, justified and worthwhile. Hence, the Tibetan people should not feel discouraged.
13 Tibet: Today and Tomorrow

How do you receive information from within Tibet?
We receive information mainly through foreigners and also Tibetans who return from Tibet. In October, 1987, the foreign tourists and journalists gave good publicity to our cause. I myself was a bit touched because the foreigners have no special obligation to us, yet as human beings with human feelings (when they saw the actual situation) their hearts jumped out toward the poor, helpless Tibetans. They acted almost as if they were Tibetan supporters. I think it greatly helped to publicize the Tibetan issue more widely. The very nature of the Tibetan struggle seems to have become clearer.

How close are the Tibetans to losing their culture permanently?
If the present trend in Tibet continues for another ten years, I think things will become very dangerous. For example, in some places, like my birth area, the Chinese population is already 2.5 million compared to the Tibetan native population of 700,000.

Talking of inside Tibet, has there been any change in the social relationship between the Chinese and the Tibetans?
As far as we know, the relationship has become worse. When the Chinese first came to Tibet, when we were there, there was no clear feeling of racial discrimination. Today, as a result of events, wherever there are Tibetans and Chinese, in schools, offices, prisons there is some kind of barrier. The Chinese believe the Tibetans are not trustworthy. The Tibetans believe the Chinese are different from them.

Are things getting better or worse right now?
Things are improving. That is a good sign. The Tibetan problem is very complicated. It involves history, culture, Buddhism, human rights and many other factors.

It sounds as if things are getting worse, not better?
That is right. That is why I said it is very complicated. In the previous
years, the open destruction of the Tibetan culture took place, people were restricted from travelling, and due to this, thousands died of starvation. Comparing this with the present situation, today, there is no starvation; there are more cultural activities, more freedom of movement and more freedom in the economic field. These things have improved. In the meantime, new and different dangers are arising. They are becoming more serious.

So the Tibetans are facing a racial problem in their own homeland?

Yes, that is right. The official Chinese documents are very beautiful but not so beautiful in real life (laughter).

What are the conditions in Tibet today which require you to make more political activities than in previous years?

One is that Tibet is being used more for military purposes. Previously, it was a land of peace that provided a feeling of security for neighbouring states. Now, the picture has changed completely. This is a serious matter. There is also a link between the peace in that region and world peace in general. Another serious matter is that more and more Chinese are settling in Tibet. Within a short period, there is every danger that Tibet will be a country where the majority of the people are Chinese. It is like the Manchurians who lived in the early part of this century. They had their own culture, but it has completely disappeared now. This could occur in our country too. I feel that the protection of one of the world’s most ancient culture is not only the responsibility of the Tibetans alone, but also the responsibility of the world community. Unfortunately, in the political sphere, there is not much place for moral issues. Basically, the Tibetan issue is a moral issue. Another issue is the human rights violations in Tibet as well as in China proper. There are many cases of human rights violations taking place. Yet, unfortunately, the Western world remains silent. If a small case of human rights violation occurs in a country like the Soviet Union, the Western world would immediately voice its concern. If we look carefully at past experiences, world opinion makes a great impact on those people who are working for human rights as well as for freedom of thought and speech, such as Sakharov, dissidents, victims of human rights. Now in the Chinese case, if there were more concern or public opinion, it would help to encourage these people in their activities.
and their fight for more freedom and human rights. It would find it more difficult to suppress well-known persons. Gorbachev's new policy of glasnost or openness is interdependent on this. World opinion makes a difference and eventually is very helpful for the community in that country. The more public opinion there is, the more it will help China as a country.

Is there more religious freedom for Tibetans in Tibet today?
Superficially, yes. The people are making prostrations, going around the temples and reciting prayers. At a deeper level, the opportunity to carry out proper Buddhist study does not exist because the Chinese are putting all types of restrictions on it. Regarding the Buddhist religious life, we feel Buddhism is endangered. Buddhism is actually quite sophisticated and rich, and the Chinese are shaping it into a blind faith.

What about the monks who preach religion in the monasteries in Tibet? Are they entirely free in spite of the Chinese occupation?
No. It seems the Chinese themselves do not understand Buddhism. They might feel that the religion is just making prostrations, taking the prayer wheel and rosary and just reciting Om Mani Padme Hum. Actually, from a Buddhist point of view, these are just minor things. The main aim is to make one's mind into a new shape or to try to change the basic mental attitude towards objects, especially towards our fellow human beings. Now, in order to do this, you need a great deal of mental practice and study. Without knowing the deeper philosophical explanations, it is rather difficult to change one's attitude. Secondly, their basic aim is to eliminate all kinds of faith except Marxism. There are many restrictions on the propagation of religion. Therefore, there are only a few who can really teach. All the learned teachers have more or less disappeared. The few learned teachers left fear or do not know what will happen if they explain Buddhism at this moment. The learning process is inadequate right now. This is a pity. If the present situation remains, there is every danger that the religion of Buddhism will become a religion of blind faith. Fortunately, outside Tibet, not only Tibetans, but quite a number of Westerners know about Buddhism. I think that they are much better informed than those inside the monasteries in Tibet (Laughter). Some Tibetans and even some foreigners, without understanding actual Buddhist practice and significance, simply use Buddhist rituals as a method to
make money. They read or perform some rituals and, their main motivation is not sincere, but simply to try to get donations or other things. It is a pity. In some cases, it seems there are people who aim for their own benefit and use the Dharma. This, I think, we have to take seriously.

Is Beijing making any effort to restore and rebuild the destroyed monasteries and temples?

Yes, the Chinese are doing repair work that was actually initiated by the local Tibetan people. When these people took the initiative and started the work, then the Chinese government came to help them. No substantial help, but only some material help. Mainly, I think the Chinese want to have some credit. The number of monasteries destroyed in Tibet according to our information is more than 6000. Now, here you must understand the differences. When we say Tibet, it includes the entire three provinces of Tibet. The population of Tibet is about six million and there are about six thousand monasteries. When the Chinese say Tibet, they only mean the Central and parts of Western Tibet which is the so-called Tibetan Autonomous Region. Here the population of Tibet is about two million and the number of monasteries destroyed is about 1500. The Chinese have divided Tibet into six parts: the Autonomous Region, then a few autonomous districts and autonomous counties. So, when we say Tibet, we mean the entire three provinces of Tibet.

We know of some prison camps and forced labour camps in Tibet, especially in Amdo. Are Tibetans still sent to these camps and how many Tibetans do you think are prisoners at the moment?

That is difficult to say. These are top secrets of the Chinese. So nobody knows. There are indications that there are political prisoners. Even in the last few years and last few months, there are cases where people were charged on the pretext of being criminals, but actually (the arrests) are aimed at politically-minded people, for example, the late Lobsang Wangchuk, an old learned monk. I personally appealed to the Chinese government to release him. He was an old and learned person and if the Chinese did not want him, they could expel him. They said that he was a criminal. The only criminal offence of these people is that they love the Tibetan culture, the people and the country. That is their only crime. It is very sad.
Do you think the institutions like UNESCO and the Red Cross, if present in Tibet, would be able to work on a long term basis for the return of a free Tibet?

Yes, I think so. The people who are working on the spot can make big differences. In some cases, it takes courageous people to say what is right and what is wrong.

Beijing claims to have given Tibetan people modernisation, guarantee of food supply, education and health service. Is this claim correct? Is the Chinese programme really in the interest of the Tibetan people or do they suppress your people by enforcing the change in the culture?

This is a very complicated question. Communications, housing and many facilities are improving. Also, education and health care are improving. Now, the problem lies between the Central government plan and the actual implementation. There is a big gap between the two. Even at the Central government level, there is a big gap between their statements and their motivation. Things are improving according to their documents which are very beautiful and nice. But in reality, things are not as they seem. Recently, I met an American who visited Tibet several times. His conclusion was that in Tibet there was economic development, yet that economic development benefitted the Chinese and not the Tibetans. I think this is very true. Today, there is more housing, more factories and many other facilities, but these are mainly occupied or being used by the Chinese. Even in Lhasa, most of the new houses or buildings are occupied by the Chinese, and the Tibetans remain in the old part of Lhasa which the Chinese say is dirty and smelly (laughter). The Chinese government spends some money on subsidised goods which they send to Lhasa. When these things reach Lhasa, the best of these goods are first sold to the Chinese. Some Chinese, in order to buy these goods, purposely come to Lhasa and then they bring the items to their own houses. This is the reality. The Tibetans remain poor. Regarding education, the Chinese government have on paper a special allocation for higher studies at the University level in China for a certain number of Tibetan students. In reality, the Chinese officers who remain in Tibet send their own children to these universities and thus, the allocation goes to the Chinese instead of the Tibetans. In some cases, young Chinese who cannot go to university come to Tibet and then, they are selected because of their relatives who are stationed in Tibet. Hence, their name is put on the list. These kinds of things are happening. It is very complicated.
Are there Tibetans who can join Tibetan universities or English language courses? Or, do they separate them?

Now, this is quite complicated. On paper, the Chinese lay emphasis on learning more about Tibetans and having respect for the Tibetan culture. All of the educational institutions and facilities are supposed to be open to the Tibetans. In reality, it seems that in many cases, this is not what happens. One Tibetan who was actually involved in educational planning in Lhasa wrote a clear account from which you can see that these grievances are not simply fabricated by our government but are complaints from Tibetans working with the Chinese in Tibet.

China has opened Tibet to tourists. They earn enormous amounts from tourism and this money goes to Beijing. Do you and the Tibetan people feel betrayed by this? And the second question, do foreign tourists endanger your own culture?

To answer the first question, yes. Naturally, Tibetans feel sad. Regarding the second question in a sense, more Western tourists are very helpful for publicity and telling the outside world what the real situation is in Tibet. Take for example, the 1987 disturbances. If there had not been any foreign tourists, the Chinese would have kept quiet. Since there were foreigners and since they had already sent out messages, the Chinese government was compelled to speak out. Otherwise, they would have simply hidden the disturbances.

So is that the advantage of having foreigners there?

Yes. In many European countries as well as in America, many people are taking interest in Tibet and showing sympathy towards the Tibetans. One factor was due to the recent increase in tourists who visited Tibet and who saw the actual situation. Before, when we said something negative about the Chinese, people might have been skeptical. Now, foreigners have visited Tibet and seen the destruction, the ruined monasteries and the state of unhappiness of the Tibetans. This has had a great impact on people. So in this way it is useful. Then of course, there is Western fashion and Western disco which may be introduced eventually in Tibet, but that is all right (laughter).

What is your opinion of tourism in Tibet?

It is useful in the present situation because through tourists, particularly those who have travelled to many places in Tibet, we get a
much better picture of Tibet. I also think that Tibetans who live inside Tibet feel happy when they see foreigners, especially foreigners who take a keen interest in Tibetan culture and Tibetan people.

So it would be more useful if individual tourists would go to Tibet without groups led by the Chinese?

Even if they go in groups, if they are acquainted with the Tibetan situation, it would be a different question. Before going to Tibet, if they have some sort of information and knowledge, it would benefit them individually because with some knowledge, they gain deeper understanding and knowledge when they see different things.

This is true about the big towns like Lhasa, Shigatse and Gyantse, but what about the smaller villages where foreign tourists do not go?

There are some tourists who somehow manage to reach these villages. It is very important to see those places which are officially not prepared. Unfortunately, the Chinese are experts in making artificial preparations. Comparing the condition of the countryside with that of the bigger towns, there are a lot of differences. The tourists who go to Tibet do not want to see the Chinese, but want to see the Tibetans. The Chinese use the Tibetan culture, Tibetan temples, arts and also monks as show-pieces and tourists attractions. Now, under this situation, because of superficial development under superficial progress, a large number of Chinese settlers, disguised as technicians or labourers, come and settle in Tibet. In some places in Tibet, the fertile lands are occupied by Chinese farmers. Previously, there were no such things as Chinese nomads with yaks, but today some places have Chinese nomads. Now, already in Tibet, the Chinese population is increasing in number; they are becoming a majority. I strongly feel that the preservation of the Tibetan culture is not only the Tibetan people's responsibility, but that of the world community too. We all have a responsibility to preserve a rich and ancient world culture.

What are your terms for visiting Tibet or even returning to it?

In early 1983, I expressed my desire to visit Tibet in response to the Chinese invitation. At that time, I made clear the sort of conditions for my visit. I want complete freedom of movement, freedom of speech and also freedom of meeting whoever I wanted. Another important condition was
that after my departure, the people with whom I had met should not get into any kind of trouble.

And that was not accepted by Beijing?

No. At that time in September, 1983, on the pretext of criminal charges, many people, including politically-minded people, were arrested and many were publicly executed and so, my visit was postponed. At the moment, I do not see any necessity to go to Tibet. In the future, the atmosphere must be very positive. At the moment, there is no such atmosphere. It will take time. I always prefer freedom. I feel that the human creative nature is the most important thing. Without freedom, this human quality cannot function properly. India may be poor and there might be many difficulties and silly complications, but after all, there is freedom here. The very purpose we left Tibet and spent our time outside Tibet is for this very basic right of the Tibetan people. Until now, despite some positive changes in the recent years in Tibet, the basic situation has still remained very grave and complicated. As long as this situation remains, there is no question of my return. I can serve Tibet much more effectively from outside Tibet. Except for a few people in Tibet who want to see me before they die, the rest of the people who think more deeply and politically do not want me to return to Tibet at this moment. They believe that I should instead remain outside Tibet and carry on the Tibetan struggle. The Chinese want to show that all the people are happy in Tibet since the Chinese arrival. The Chinese think that I am the only problem left.

What type of government are you willing to establish in Tibet if you are allowed to go back?

No doubt a democratic government. Since 1963, we have had a draft constitution for Tibet. Since then, even as refugees, we have tried to practice the essence of democracy. In the future, we will have the choice. Even in the constitution, I have mentioned that the democratic idea is very similar to the Buddhist idea. Especially in the system of monkhood which is very democratic. In this system, every action of the monks should be one led by collective leadership. There should not be any single monk with authority. But we Tibetans due to reincarnations and lamas, have been spoiled a bit with our own rules and systems (laughter). Actually,
that is not good. After we came to this country as refugees, I have tried to
tell the people, especially the monks, that this tradition is very important.

If and when you go back to Tibet what happens to the Chinese who are
born in Tibet?

Just as those Russians who have settled down in Estonia and have
fully integrated themselves to the Estonian way of life, the Chinese who
were born in Tibet, have settled in Tibet should respect the Tibetan way
of life, including the Tibetan culture. The Chinese could very well live in
Tibet. Those who are not happy may return to their own land. For centuries
there were Nepalese, Muslims and even Chinese in Tibet who had lived
in perfect harmony, as they were able to adopt the Tibetan way of life. In
fact some of these Muslims speak Lhasa dialect better than I do. There
was no problem in the past and I do not foresee any difficulty even in the
future.

If I am a Chinese born in Tibet and I realise that the Chinese should not
have mistreated the Tibetans and should not have put people to settle there. But
that is their situation and I have my own culture and do not want to go?

It depends on the number. If there is a small population, then like
any other country you can have a China town. If the Chinese outnumber
the Tibetans, as is the case now, then it is going to be a difficult situation.
Nevertheless, we will have to find some kind of solution.

What is the solution?

Through persuasion. Basically Tibetan culture is different. If the
Chinese population is larger than that of the natives, then the number of
Chinese will have to be reduced. In other words, some kind of new
rehabilitation settlement programmes may have to be set up.

Do you believe you will return to Lhasa one day?

I believe so. I am not very concerned about my own return. I am
more concerned about my own usefulness. The value of human life is
serving other people, helping other people as much as you can, so
therefore I am really concerned about my own usefulness. So from that
point of view, if the situation changes inside Tibet, I would be very glad to
return. But as I feel I can be of more use outside Tibet, I prefer to stay
outside. As a Buddhist monk I am mentally already isolated, cut off from
my village in north-eastern Tibet which has now more or less become a Chinese village.

You say the Chinese are using Tibet for nuclear production and nuclear wastes?

Yes, there is one factory in north-eastern Tibet, near Kokonor lake. According to few Tibetans who happened to be in that area, a Tibetan who held a rank in the Chinese administration visited the area and mysteriously died some time later. Such things happen. The dumping of nuclear waste is only our suspicion. There are reasons for our suspicions. The Chinese have to take their own nuclear waste but they also take some other countries' waste. Naturally these wastes will not be dumped in Shanghai or Peking or other places that are heavily populated. The ideal locale are those remote places between East Turkestan and Tibet, the Lop Nor area where the Chinese have already conducted nuclear experiments. That is our guess. Now some sheep in that area are giving birth to malformed babies, may be due to radiation.

Do you think the death of the Panchen Lama will bring a change in the Chinese attitude towards the Tibetans, or your leadership?

I don't think so. The Panchen Lama, during the last ten years of his life acted according to the Chinese wishes. The most important point is that there was no other choice for him but to obey the Chinese. The Chinese are still there, so there is not much change. But for us, of course, we lost a freedom fighter, a fine freedom fighter. It is very sad. Even under such difficult circumstances, the Panchen Lama's last statement said that if you compare the benefits the Tibetans have gained from the Chinese in the last 30 years with damage and harm it has brought, there has been much more destruction and harm.
What prompted the Tibetan people to seek exile in India?

We have a special relation with India. Generally speaking, I think our relation with this country is much more stronger than our relation with China. So India has more reasons to claim that Tibet belongs to India. Culturally, we are much closer to India. In 1959, when we escaped from Tibet, there was no other place for us to reach. At that time, India not only gave us help in providing shelter, but also gave us tremendous help in preserving our culture. When we compare ourselves to other refugees, we are quite well established in this country and have become quite successful over the last three decades.

You have now been in exile for almost three decades. In what way has being in exile affected you, and have you reconciled yourself to being exiled for your own lifetime?

I am a very happy man. I enjoy my way of life these days. It is very fine. In general, I think of myself as belonging everywhere. I try to contribute wherever I can and to use my time as meaningfully as possible.

What do you feel is the correct balance between majority decision and your particular right as the Dalai Lama to choose what is best for your people?

They work together. Though there are some complaints, it is all right. Criticism is a healthy sign. Without complaints, like the Chinese — no criticism from the mouth, but criticism in the heart — it is not good. Open, outspoken criticism is very good. Generally, in the past we have managed quite well. There are deputies who are elected by the people. The final approval of them is mine. The People’s Deputies, who are elected in exile, only have authority from those in exile. The Dalai Lama, however, is somebody who can represent all six million Tibetans. So you see, my approval of them is beneficial. It gives weight or authority to them. Also, the overall situation is such that we are not living in our own country. It is a very peculiar circumstance. Under these conditions, we must take every
precaution. Now in most cases, if there are several candidates, I approve those who have the highest votes. Suppose, however, there is a person who I feel cannot correctly handle the responsibility, I then have the authority to choose someone else. So far, I think this system has worked very well. It, itself, has gone through several changes. Now, besides, the actual participation of the People’s Deputies in the working of the government, the process of electing them — voting itself — is training for our people. How to select; how to vote. Sometimes the people become very confused (laughter). This is important though. In the future, we must head this way. Because this is new to the Tibetans, they mark the wrong name; they don't know whom to choose (laughter); and so on, but it is very important to learn.

Do you think it is better for the Tibetan people to live with freedom in Nepal and India or to live in Tibet with Chinese and out of Tibetan culture?

I think that as far as the Tibetan culture is concerned, it is unfortunate that the true Tibetan culture is now available only outside Tibet and not inside Tibet. About the question of freedom, I think for every human being the most precious thing is freedom and liberty. With freedom, all the good qualities and abilities can be utilised. Without freedom, human beings have to remain as animals and they just have to get some food and some land for shelter and sleep (laughter). It is something like a half human being and not a full human being. The human being with his very special brain can indulge in many different activities. Unfortunately, sometimes these might be destructive activities, but at the same time possessing the creative nature. I think the creative nature is one of the most important good qualities of a human being. For this, freedom is inseparable.

The Tibetan refugees, in an overpopulated and poor country like India, have been one of the few success stories in this age of displaced people. To what do you owe this success?

We have had a very long historical link with India. More importantly the spiritual heritage has made the relationship very deep between Tibet and India. What I usually call heart to heart. Since 1959, when we arrived as refugees, the government of India has contributed generously for our
rehabilitation. And then, we have our secretariat and various organisations which form a framework for administering the refugee centres and projects which relate to the Tibetans. Wherever there are Tibetans, whether in India, Switzerland, England, America and so on, we try to maintain our identity and cultural heritage.

The Tibetan refugees in India seem so happy when you look at them. What is their secret?

I don't know. You can't find anything yet there is something. I believe one factor is our tradition which is based on a realization of the importance of human life or human right. Tibetan people regard life, any life, as something very sacred, something holy and important, so even when a small insect is killed, we immediately respond with some feeling of compassion. We are usually happy and good hearted among our whole community. Of course, there is some occasional fighting and even killing. But generally, there is harmony and good feeling, mainly due to the teaching of Mahayana Buddhism which places great emphasis on the importance of kindness, tolerance, love and compassion.

How do you think the culture of Tibet was preserved so effectively in exile when almost all of it in Tibet was disappearing under the Chinese?

I think there are a few factors to this. There has been so much destruction in Tibet, and the Chinese think of Tibetan culture as something inferior. I think the people realize that Tibetan culture is something useful for people facing problems and difficult situations. Also, more and more Westerners who have interest in the Tibetan culture come to study it. This has had an impact on the Tibetan youths. The Dalai Lama's institution is also helpful; the Dalai Lama is someone who people can look to.

Do you find it difficult. We always make a distinction. One part of the culture is out of date and is no longer of use. Another part of culture is something beneficial for your day to day life. It has a special significance to the Tibetan people. That second part, we can preserve. For many years, we have remained as Tibetans. The Tibetan people, especially the younger generations, have changed a great deal in some cases, they are even like Westerners. It is a way of life. At the same time, they have kept
their Tibetan identity quite strong. Until now it has been like that. After a few generations, I do not know what will happen.

Is there any effect on the Tibetans in exile on account of the majority of the Tibetan teachers of religion going to the West?

I do not think so. Of course, regarding the individual teachers, some may spend more time in the West and thus not have enough time to be in India. I think, however, in the overall picture, the various monasteries in India and Nepal are doing quite well, so there is no indication of any harm at this time.

How do you run your government-in-exile and what financial support do you have to run it?

One source of money is a collection from our people in exile. It is a voluntary contribution. Another source is from individual organisations, especially in the field of education, preservation of Tibetan culture and health. Of course, there is also the government of India which spends a great deal of money for our rehabilitation and education. Another source is the offerings made by different people to me.

Do you have a system for the financial donations that come in from around the world to assist the Tibetans?

Yes, we have an organisation here in Dharamsala and each settlement has a society or association which in most cases is registered. There is generally no misuse of funds, though occasionally, some small amount might have been misused. Many long-time workers of various voluntary agencies return to India and see the different Tibetan projects and organisations and they realise that Tibetans offer the best example of refugee financial planning. The results can be seen clearly, so they feel very happy.
15 Relations with China

Why do you think the Chinese invaded your country?

China, as our eastern neighbour, has had relations with Tibet for almost 2000 years. In the early days, Tibet was a very powerful nation. Many times it invaded certain parts of China. Then, when Tibet became weak, the Chinese became stronger, and the position was reversed. In the spiritual field, we had strong ties. During the period that the Mongols were emperors of China, the spiritual relations were genuine. During the Manchu dynasty, again there were spiritual ties. On one occasion, the Machu emperor genuinely wanted to receive the Dalai Lama as a high lama. But some Chinese advised the emperor not to receive him. This shows that despite some genuine spiritual feelings, there was some kind of political thinking or chauvinism. In the Chinese records, they have deliberately tried to show more influence. Because of this, they regard Tibet as a subject of their emperor.

The Tibetan records are different. In certain Tibetan Buddhist scriptures, there is mention of some very important sacred places of the world. In the south, we believe there is a special place of Avalokiteshvara. In the east, there is a place of Manjushri. In the west, there is a place of Ogyen. In the north, there is Shambala. Now, there is a place in China, a sacred place that was regarded for centuries as a sacred place of Manjushri. There is a belief that the emperor in that place is the reincarnation of Manjushri, who showed respect to Buddhism. The Tibetans had respect for the Chinese emperor. The reason was spiritual. But there was another reason that was sad and unfortunate. Whenever a small nation experiences internal fighting one side always tries to get support from a bigger neighbour. Thus, due to internal fighting in Tibet, one Tibetan side tried to get support from the Chinese emperor.

During the fifth Dalai Lama’s time, I think it was quite evident that we were a separate sovereign nation with no problems. The sixth Dalai Lama was spiritually pre-eminent, but politically, he was weak and disinterested. He could not follow the fifth Dalai Lama’s path. This was a great failure. So, then the Chinese influence increased. During this time,
the Tibetans showed a great deal of respect to the Chinese. But even during these times, the Tibetans never regarded Tibet as a part of China. All the documents were very clear that China, Mongolia and Tibet were all separate countries. Because the Chinese emperor was powerful and influential, the small nations accepted the Chinese power or influence. You cannot use the previous invasion as evidence that Tibet belongs to China. In the Tibetan mind, regardless of who was in power, whether it was the Manchus, the Mongols or the Chinese, the east of Tibet was simply referred to as China. In the Tibetan mind, India and China were treated the same; two separate countries.

There is another important reason. I am not criticising them, but, if you look at the history of the Chinese, they are always expanding. That is their nature. Before the Chinese communists took power; during the Kuo-mintang time, it seems that the Kuo-mintang on some occasions attempted to invade Tibet, but they did not succeed. When the Chinese Communists came to power, the whole of China was united, and thus they had enough power to invade Tibet. If you look objectively, there is a clear sign that the two are separate countries. In the Chinese Communist case, they had a very strong belief that the whole working class of the world should unite and destroy the imperialists or the capitalists. Therefore, when the Chinese reached Lhasa, one Chinese general explained that the liberation of Tibet was not only for the Tibetans, but for the neighbouring nations as well. They also believed in the power of the gun. So Tibet was strategically important to them. I think that these are the reasons.

In your opinion what are the most important interests of the Chinese in Tibet — economic, strategic or both?

I think both. Militarily, Tibet is an important place; it is strategically important, also economically. Although the Chinese proudly say that they spend a large amount of money in Tibet in order to develop it, you can look at it from the other side. There are many places where there are different kinds of minerals and it is obvious that large areas of forest and their timber have been destroyed. I think there is a large interest in the mineral resources found in Tibet. In some cases, the Chinese keep their findings secret.
The Chinese say that they liberated Tibet of slavery and feudalism. Is this the truth?

The old Tibet was backward in its technological and social systems. Nobody denies this. If, however, you look at the faces of those Tibetans who were born and grew up in that society, you can easily notice their genuine smile. When compared with our communities, the Tibetans are generally quite peaceful and warm-hearted. If they were really as cruel as the Chinese claim, then I think the people who were born and who grew up under those circumstances would be different. The people living at that time were happier and calmer than the people in this new situation. At that time, unfortunately, there were people who were used by their landlords. Now, the whole Tibetan nation has become a slave. That is the main point isn’t it (laughter)? The Chinese have come up with some very silly excuses, like saying that the majority of the Tibetan people were suffering from syphilis, so they came to liberate them. That is one of their reasons (laughter).

What do you feel about the atrocities committed by the Chinese people against the Tibetans?

It is very sad. Ultimately, the Chinese themselves have lost a great deal. If the Chinese follow a more positive, constructive path, rather than the negative, destructive path that they have been following for the last 40 years, things would be different. What the Chinese have created is mutual misery. We Tibetans suffer a great deal and face misery under the Chinese. At the same time, the Chinese themselves find it very difficult to stay there (in Tibet).

Does the fate of Tibet have in itself a message to the world?

I think since the tragedy of Tibet in 1959, many Tibetan Buddhist practitioners and lamas have escaped from Tibet, and as a result we have a new opportunity to have closer contacts with faiths such as Christianity, Judaism and of course different Indian religions. Through this contact, we have a good opportunity to learn different traditions. In a similar way, they have new ideas and new experiences from our religion. So there is mutual benefit. Also, as Buddhists, we consider it very important to study the facts and realities. Buddha himself said that it is important to investigate and experiment rather than to accept without reason. That is the basic Buddhist attitude. Therefore, in recent years, we have had a
closer contact with scientists in different fields. In certain fields of study, there are certain relations between the two. Discussion brings mutual benefits. That is one benefit of becoming a refugee.

Would you agree that the resettlement of a large number of Chinese in Tibet is China's "final solution" for your country?

It seems like it. For the last forty years, they have adopted various methods. In the 1950s, they used a certain method. Then, in the 60s and 70s they adopted a very cruel and harsh method. Now in the 80s, they follow another method. Yet despite all these methods, they cannot buy the Tibetan mind or heart. The Tibetans still remain Tibetans. The Chinese want to have some kind of genuine loyalty from the Tibetans, but that has never developed. I think their last alternative is to make the Tibetan people a minority in their own homeland, and thus, the Tibetan voice would be ineffective.

Is forced sterilization of Tibetan women and men a part of China's genocide in Tibet?

At one time, this was quite obviously happening. Recently, documents on birth control policy stated that it was carried out only on the Chinese and not on the minorities. In reality, the same thing is happening to the minorities — the one child-one family policy. In one way, the Chinese say the Tibetans need a larger population and more man-power to develop Tibet economically. At the same time, the Chinese implement birth control for the Tibetans. This also is a clear indication that they want to bring more Chinese into Tibet. There have also been some incidents where sterilisation or abortion had been forced, but we don't have clear evidence.

In the event that China is allowed to complete its "final solution" in Tibet, what do you see for the future of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism? Will what is perhaps the most spiritually advanced civilization on earth disappear completely?

Oh yes, probably only what is found in the books will remain. That is the real danger. Once Tibet as a nation completely disappears or becomes insignificant, then the Tibetan culture, the people and the Buddhism that we practice will be in great danger, even though there are more than five hundred centres in the world teaching Tibetan Buddhism. If the Tibetan nation completely disappears, I really don't know how much we can preserve. It is a danger for one of the important Dharmas.
remains as Tibet, including the Tibetan culture and Buddha Dharma, it eventually may help the Chinese nation in the spiritual field. The Chinese destroyed their old structure and philosophy, yet they failed to introduce anything new. Marxism has its good points and yet it still does not have the full answer for human life and problems. So definitely, the Chinese community needs another different ideology or philosophy. Buddhism could perhaps become an important contribution to the Chinese mind. There is not doubt about that.

What are your present contacts with the Chinese government?

Peculiar (laughter). The Chinese want to keep direct contact with us and we also feel the same. Tibet is occupied by them so we have to deal with them. Yet their understanding is very unsatisfactory. One factor is due to their ignorance of Tibetan history, and of the real desire of the Tibetan people and so on. They do not know. Leaving aside the Tibetan problem, they do not even know issues and problems. There are many Chinese who are frustrated, particularly among the younger and educated ones. This shows that they do not know what is going on in the young people's mind. Sometimes power becomes an obstacle to knowing the real situation. That is happening in China. Now, even in the Soviet Union under the leadership of Gorbachev, it seems there is more understanding about the real situation besides the nice reports on paper.

You also mentioned that there was a certain change in Chinese policy, a more liberal approach. Hu Yaobang publicly apologised for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution and promised the Tibetans more dignity. Were these just empty words?

I think it was in 1981 that Hu admitted these past mistakes and apologised for them. Then he decided that 85% of the Chinese should be withdrawn from Tibet. Actually, I think he then remained in office for only a few months. Then he himself was dismissed.

In 1981, there were plans to open a Tibetan office in Peking. Why was it not opened?

In 1981, we had more hope since we had direct contact with the Chinese and since they were receptive at the beginning. Then in 1983, I stated that I might make a short visit to Tibet in 1985. Then in the autumn of 1983, the Chinese arrested and put into prison a large number of
politically minded Tibetans on the pretext of striking down on criminals. At that time, they planned to kill several of those prisoners, but fortunately because the world opinion voiced its protest to the Chinese, these public executions could not be carried out. But later, they secretly carried them out. Then, I planned to send a delegation to Tibet to prepare for my visit, but that could not materialise. Then in 1985, my visit was postponed indefinitely. We still have direct contact with the Chinese, but there is not much of a two-way channel. That is the problem.

What is your reaction to the Chinese invitation to visit China?

(Laughter) I have cherished liberty and considered it very important. India despite being a poor country, has liberty and freedom. For the last 30 years, I have been in this country and have been a bit spoiled and a little greedy for liberty and freedom. The basic reason why we left our country and spent 30 years in this country was basically for the right of the Tibetan people and the cause of Tibet. Unfortunately, the Chinese are trying to hide the real issue and show the world that there is no problem except for the Dalai Lama. As far as the Dalai Lama is concerned, he is always welcome back. They are deliberately showing this kind of attitude. If the Tibetan people in Tibet were really satisfied and happy, then most of the Tibetan refugees, including myself would definitely return. If the basic situation remains the same, there is no question of returning.

If you go to China for a visit, what would you discuss?

That is the key point (laughter). My stand until now is that I want to make clear that Tibet is a separate country from China. But the future is open and there are different options. Regarding options, there is still a lot to be worked out, so I do not feel that I should reveal too much at this moment. At the moment, my position is that I do not want to break my links with the Chinese government, and at the same time I cannot discuss certain things that may discourage the Tibetan will and determination. I am thinking that eventually some sort of referendum among the Tibetans should be carried out. Then try to get some suggestions and thoughts of what the Tibetans really feel. I also want to get as many views of the Tibetans inside of Tibet as possible. At the same time, I do not want people to blindly follow my choice. I want to know the people’s real feelings. I do not want to impose my will on the people. In 1963, I drew
up a draft Constitution and made it very clear that the power of the Dalai Lama can be changed with a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly. So now I really want to listen to the people's ideas. I prefer to make a number of options which I feel are possible, and then to present them to the Tibetan people and listening to their wishes. It is my responsibility to explain the possibilities and the difficulties. This is my plan. In the near future, I think things will become clearer.

In case half the Tibetan people want independence and the other half do not want independence, then what would you say?

I think more discussions will be useful. I think the majority of the Tibetans want complete independence, may be about 90%. But then we also have to think of the reality. Sometimes though you want something, in reality it may not be practical. So we will see. If it is fifty, then I think a more thorough discussion will be needed.

What is a possible solution?

The Tibetan people want complete independence, but the Chinese will never accept that. As the free spokesman, I have every right to make suggestions. My idea is that it is worthwhile to find some middle way. One important aspect being equal rights.

How quickly do you think you can move in some positive way?

I think we might soon finalise some more detailed proposals and then we will see. I am not sure.

Most of the Tibetans believe that freedom will come one of these days, but the Western world, particularly the media, thinks it is time that you enter into some sort of dialogue with the Chinese and sort out the matter once and for all. Now what is going to be your stand?

A dialogue is very important and very necessary. It is the fifth point in my Five Point Peace Proposal.

So if the dialogue is short of total freedom and some sort of arrangement is all the Chinese are willing to give, would you accept that?

Yes, I think we have to work it out in principle. We want a dialogue. We want to discuss and see if there is a possibility or an option for a compromise.
Do you feel that the Tibetans can eventually return to their homes with honour and dignity?

That is difficult to say. Things are not easy. We need more patience and more determination.

Would you like to say something about Deng Xiaoping’s observation that China respects religion, beliefs and customs and habits of Tibetan people and that they enjoy freedom of religion?

Generally out of ignorance they themselves feel they offer religious freedom. But Buddhism is as ancient as Indian philosophy, and one needs to study a lot in quiet settings for long periods of time to really study Buddhism. That is why even many of India’s saints spend many years in the mountains. But in the eyes of the Chinese, Buddhism is a blind faith. They feel that simply reciting some mantras, making rounds of temples, making prostrations, carrying a prayer wheel and rosary are sufficient to practice religion. So superficially there is religious freedom. But the Chinese simply have no idea of the need to have a proper teacher, the need to study in depth and practice seriously in proper settings. Their basic policy regarding religion in Tibet is that since the majority of Tibetans are devout Buddhists, they will superficially allow religious freedom — which is only a stop-gap arrangement. Last year (1988) a leading Chinese leader Qiao Shi, even made a clear statement to this effect.

Did China help Tibet in overcoming financial difficulties in the fields of education and culture?

This is rather complicated. Yes more schools, clinics, buildings, new roads, more economic development projects, etc., have been built and there is no doubt that some progress is being made in these fields. But one must recognise who the beneficiaries are. Although there is economic development in Tibet, the chief beneficiaries are Chinese and not Tibetans. For instance, in any new factory or enterprise, the majority of the employees are Chinese, and even the manual labourers are Chinese. The schools, where Tibetan is being taught as a special language, are exclusively for Tibetan students. And of those who are sent to China for higher education, most of the students selected are Chinese. In some cases some of the Chinese students supposedly selected from Tibet are from China itself but have managed to get admission through the quota allotted for students from Tibet as they have relatives in Tibet. When the Chinese bring articles
like blankets, flasks, bicycles, etc., into Tibet, the Chinese are given first priority as these are sold at much higher rates in China. If this is the case these articles could be sold to the Chinese in China itself instead of unnecessarily having to pay for their transportation to Tibet.

The Chinese have opened some health clinics. However, there is widespread discrimination. These facilities exist only in the big cities like Lhasa and Shigatse. But in the remote places facilities remain as they were before 1959. Other facilities like electricity exist only in areas where Chinese are settled. Lhasa itself is divided into two parts namely old Lhasa, where there are no basic facilities like proper drinking water, medical facilities and electricity and new Lhasa, where better facilities are provided to the Chinese or Tibetans who work for the Chinese.

Do you think the Chinese leadership sincerely wants to solve the Tibetan problem?

I think so. The Tibetan issue is a very sensitive one for the Chinese, and as time passes they seem to be becoming more aware of the problem. In a way they have realised the sensitivity of the issue and want to solve it. But they are not clear how to go about it.

What is the alternative if the Chinese say they can't talk to the Tibetan exiles, to Your Holiness?

There are not many alternatives. Sensible Chinese have to realise there is a problem. At least they admit there is some kind of negative feeling between Chinese and Tibetans. In other words there is a big wound. Every sensible Chinese, as well as Tibetan, needs to realise this and see that it is worthwhile to heal the wound, certainly not with more bloodsheds, but by talks and friendly discussion. That is the only way.
16 Relations with the World

How do you feel about the Western countries and their attitude towards Tibet?

Compared to the issues of South Africa, the Middle East and the other trouble spots of the world, Tibet is very much neglected. After the 1987 and 1988 happenings in Tibet we were quite surprised at the amount of world attention and sympathy shown to us.

Does it surprise you that the governments of countries pay very little attention to Tibet and why?

It is not surprising. It is understandable. Now, it has been almost 40 years since China invaded Tibet and despite the sympathy of people, it is very difficult to do something. First of all, Tibet is already occupied by China. Secondly, the issue of Tibet has become an old issue. Thirdly, China has become a very important country for economic reasons as well as geo-political reasons. Therefore, the neglect shown by other countries to Tibet is something quite understandable. Another unfortunate reason is that in business and politics, there is very little place for moral justice and moral principles. That is why we see more and more suffering in the world. It is a practical thing. We can't blame all those countries who have to make closer relationships with China, but among the people there is a clearer understanding about Tibetan history, culture, and current affairs. There are an increasing number of people who are getting to know about these things. That is also one of our moral strengths. Ultimately, the main factor will be our people's will and determination. Until now, as far as this is concerned, it has been very strong. Even those young and old Tibetans who do not have much religious faith, have very strong nationalistic feelings. I think that I can even say that 90 to 95 per cent of the Tibetans who work with the Chinese in civilian and military matters, have very strong Tibetan nationalistic feelings deep down.

Do you think that Occidental nations are preoccupied with China and that they cannot be against China on the issue of Tibet?

I think the more knowledge there is about the actual situation in
Tibet, the more that public opinion can grow. It may not necessarily help us against the Chinese, but unreasonableness is anyway harmful to China. I feel that the Chinese did not know Tibetan history, Tibetan culture, Tibetan mentality and they were completely ignorant. Due to this, I think they sincerely felt that they came to Tibet as liberators thinking that Tibet was very backward, very cruel and very barbarous. They came to help the stupid Tibetans who never showed them gratefulness. I think the Chinese really felt this way due to their ignorance and not necessarily due to their bad motivation. I think one of the main factors was their lack of understanding. So, if there is more world opinion and expression, it can have an impact on the Chinese mind. Of course, the Chinese will never admit it. Even consciously they may not admit it, but I feel that unconsciously there is some impact on them. It is very important to express it as a right thing. Right is right, wrong is wrong. This is very important.

How can the Tibetan people and the Occidental nations struggle against this imperialism?

That is not easy. I feel things are getting better now. I think we will be better in the future because of the entire world situation. If you look at the Soviet Union and the other Eastern European nations and China, as time goes by, things are becoming more reasonable and open. I think this is a sign of hope, provided that the world is less tense and less hostile, and there is a genuine harmonious feeling. I think then things will improve more. In the Chinese case, many things have changed. This is encouraging. Especially, during the 13th session of the National People's Congress, the younger people have now come up. If these younger people put more emphasis on reasoning and understanding and less emphasis on force or bullying, then things will improve. In our case, I feel things will definitely improve for us.

Could you suggest how common citizens of the world, West and East, can best help Tibet and its people in their desperate situation?

More public opinion and show of concern. If possible, at the governmental level there should be more awareness and also in the business field. In the long run, this will be very effective and helpful. Temporarily, the Chinese may react in a different way and may never accept or admit anything, but in the long run I think there will be a
tremendous effect on their minds. In a way, this is the only thing that you can do to help Tibet, and through this, help China also (laughter).

Have you received any crucial help for the Tibetan cause in the Western world?

Yes, the Western media, major newspapers, some individuals and some politicians expressed their sympathy with us. We were even surprised that so much sympathy was shown towards the Tibetans after the October, 1987 protest.

Many people worldwide now believe that the United States is the only nation with the power and courage to help China end its genocide in Tibet by withholding favoured-nation trading status, computer and military technology and multi-business partnerships. This would slow China’s drive towards modernisation and their limited market economy. What are your thoughts on this non-violent approach?

I have the firm belief that Western nations, especially the United States, highly regard human dignity and self-respect and should take more notice about basic human values and rights. I think this is very important. If a country is to have some development, the individuals who have some sort of creative ability must be utilised fully. Without this, the country cannot develop properly. Thus, for China to develop, the Chinese who have this creative ability should be set free instead of being suppressed. The outside world's moral support and concern is highly necessary for the emergence of Chinese who have this ability. In the long run it will be very helpful for the development of the Chinese.

Have you ever considered equating the situation in Tibet with that of Afghanistan?

Of course, there are some similarities with the Afghanistan situation as well as the Palestinian situation, but in our case it is very difficult. Our greedy Eastern neighbour is very powerful and we are only six million people. The advantage in our case is that all six million Tibetan people remain as one. We do not fight among ourselves like the Afghans or the Palestinians. In our case, it is very clear-cut case, the Chinese and the Tibetans.

Have the Taiwanese made you an offer of support?

It was a strange offer. They said that they would support our struggle
against the Chinese Communists, but if we are for complete separation from China, then they would not support us.

The Taiwanese also made an offer about arms?
I think even in 1957, 1958, 1959 up to 1963 some CIA involvement through Taiwan was there, but not at the time of Uprising (of 1959).

Do you foresee getting a United Nations seat as the PLO have done?
If you speak in terms of rights, I think we have every right. But then at present, I think it is very difficult and complicated.

China is slowly and carefully opening up her society, allowing more personal freedom to her people. Do you think this process will continue or is it just a momentary development that will be stopped once Peking feels that democratization threatens its own system?
I think this change or this new phenomena runs through all the Communist countries; from China and to Vietnam. I think this process will go on continuously. I hope this is possible as long as the Western attitude is less hostile and the world situation is less tense. The Communist countries should be left alone to feel some kind of ease. Then, these kind of positive changes will be possible. It is a very positive thing.

Do you think with the recent liberalization in China, that the Chinese might have to start opening their country and start dealing with the West?
This is very difficult to say. Historically, the Chinese case is very unpredictable, particularly in the last few months things have become very uncertain. This is not the time to make decisions, but to watch carefully and study the situation. Frankly speaking, over the next five to ten years the situation may not become stable. Then after that, the emergence of a new generation with the more knowledge about the outside world will appear. Then things will become more stable and more predictable. All these things are related with what the Buddhists call interdependence. What happens to China will depend largely on what happens in the Soviet Union, and that itself will depend on its relations with the Western countries, specially, America. Therefore, it is extremely important that the world as a whole is less tense and more humanised. Regarding international politics and relations, more trust and less suspicion. We need more frank and forward discussions without threatening and antagonising each other.
Mr. Gorbachev seems to be receiving criticism from the hard-liners in the government because of his ‘glasnost’ policy. Do you think he will succeed?

As I mentioned before, the outside world must have a more friendly attitude and the overall situation must be less tense. More tourist exchanges should take place. Once people realise what the economic, cultural, and educational conditions are, there is bound to be a change. Every nation wants to develop. There is no doubt about that. Whether you are a Communist or a capitalist it does not matter. Every one wants to develop more and more. Now, in order to develop rapidly, the key factor is the creative human nature which must be fully utilised. If there is too much rigidity, there will be a great obstacle. Eventually, a tight system has to become less rigid. Otherwise, there will be no progress.

In this connection, the world seems to leap a step forward towards international security. The Reagan-Gorbachev summits were a consequence. Do you have great hopes in the future? Will there be peace in the world?

Yes, I am always optimistic. Personal contact is very necessary. I always feel this. Through personal contact, mutual trust can develop. It will help to create some kind of real peaceful atmosphere. That is important.

South Africa is another complicated issue now facing severe criticism for its apartheid politics. What in your opinion would be the best step for South Africa to take? What are your views on apartheid politics?

Basically, the problem should be dealt within a human approach. That is, to recognise everyone as a member of the human family. Discrimination on colour, race, and so on is out of date. In certain periods in the past, some countries were practising this and some are even practising now. With the coming of the end of the 20th century, the world itself is becoming one nation, one community dependent on another. That is my basic belief.

On the other side, human rights violations are increasing worldwide, even in Buddhist countries, which is contrary to the teachings of Lord Buddha. How do you comment on that?

I do not know the direct connections. Usually I make a distinction with the so-called fanatics. If one pursues one's religion very sincerely and genuinely, then I feel that every religion has no possibility of creating fanatics. Those people who are narrow-minded utilise religion to exploit
their fanatical ideas. Regarding human rights violations, the atmosphere is not healthy. The world atmosphere is very complicated and unhealthy. That is why individuals consider life valueless and destroy their own life. It is very sad.

Do you think there is a difference in the definition of human rights violations between Western and Eastern countries? Is there any difference due to customs? When you remember Cambodia, Vietnam and what happened there and now these countries are blaming the Palestinians and South Africans of human rights violations. Do you see any difference in judging human rights violations?

I don't know. If you divide it between Eastern and Western, then it is very difficult to say. Regarding Cambodia, it is not only Eastern, but I think it is due to very narrow-minded Communists. For example, during the British colonial rule in India, the rulers were the British who were capitalists. Now in the Tibetan case, the colonial rule is by the Communists. One of the differences between the two was that in the British colonial rule, there was at least an independent judicial system. Though the Indians were suppressed, it was comparatively mild. Gandhi and all the other freedom fighters could argue with the aggressor and approach them through the judicial system. Now in Communist countries, it is not possible because everything is in the party's hand. So there are many differences. I think atrocities in South Africa are very bad, but because the country is organised, there is tight control. Also, in Cambodia the Khmer Rouge was very organised and thus there was a massacre and it became terrible.

What is your reaction to West German Chancellor Kohl's statement in China that Tibet is a part of China?

I think if someone asks Mr. Kohl for his private or personal opinion, then there might just be a different opinion (laughter). Because Mr. Kohl and his government has to deal with China, they must be realistic. At present, Tibet may be part of China by a lie (laughter).

Which aspect of the Western world do you think can make positive contributions to the world?

One thing that really impresses me about the Western nature is the creative nature of its people. For example, when I give some sort of lecture or teaching, practically all the Westerners have a tape recorder and take notes. Now Easterners are personally very friendly and devoted, yet when I explain something they do not care much. They just stay for
my blessings. Sometimes, I tell Westerners jokingly, that this creative nature is the secret of their development.

What do you think Westerners who do not want to become Buddhists could learn from Buddhism and Tibetans?

There are two categories: (i) Technique of meditation from Buddhism which is very useful in sharpening one's mind; increase love, compassion and forgiveness; (ii) for people who have no faith — which could be further categorised into (a) people merely enjoy life, and (b) non-believers, (c) people who are invariably unhappy, mentally disturbed, agitated and feel insecure. By learning certain techniques from Buddhism these problems could be alleviated. Besides, by adopting Buddhist practices one can learn a lot to increase tolerance and increase friendliness. Further, scientists in the fields of nuclear physics, neuro-biology, psychology and cosmology and Western medical scientists can get new ideas from Tibetan Buddhism.

Over the years what have you learnt from Westerners?

One is the exchange of ideas with the various scientists but not about computers though. Secondly, I appreciate the creative nature which is very good. This is one of the reasons why the Western world is so much ahead materially.

Do you believe the world is returning to democracy and peace?

Yes. In the past a lot of bloodshed took place. Now there is more genuine desire for peace. At one time people believed through organisation, through tight controls we can build some kind of a new society, but failed, isn't it? Now they have to accept the basic human desire, I think for human rights.

Do you see the lessening of tension between the USA and the USSR as part of this?

Right, of course, relations between the East and the West and also between the Soviet Union and China. Now you see North Korea and South Korea, everywhere, I feel there is a very positive way of thinking; people are compelled to think. Now people are concerned about the environment and also ecology. These things are very positive, I think. In the Chinese case also, compared to 15 years back they are much changed now.
17 Relations with India

How are your relations with India, whose stand on Tibet has been clear since 1959?

Very good, except in political matters where India regards Tibet as being a part of China. We have had very good relations with India and in fact, we will always feel very grateful to India. Despite the Indian government's own difficulties, they look after the Tibetans very well. With India's help and sympathy, we were able to establish a refugee community with our own rich culture and religion. We were able to keep our Tibetan identity intact. These things have been kept quite well for the past 30 years.

India granted you political asylum in 1959 on the condition that you would not indulge in any political activities during your stay in India. What are your views on that?

Yes, since 1959, we have had a sort of clear understanding about that. Here in India, the Tibetans are refugees, myself included. On top of that, we were guests of the Indian government and they do not want us to create any embarrassments. Now, for the last 30 years we have followed this policy. Of course, on some special occasions or some important or desperate situations, the Indian government did not want us to bring up the Tibetan issue in the United Nations. Despite the Indian government's rejection, we finally raised the Tibetan issue. We were able to find some sponsors and the issue was discussed in the United Nations which was then followed by the passing of three resolutions in the United Nations. After the resolutions were passed in the United Nations, I was keen to see what Nehru's reaction would be to what we had done. When we did meet, he was absolutely normal and his friendly attitude and sympathetic understanding remained the same. This was another experience of the running of democracy in India. I realised that this was freedom. It was very nice.
Most of the Tibetans see the Indian stand of Tibet being a part of China as an extension of what Nehru said in 1959 or later. Do you agree with this view?

Privately, many Indian officials and leaders admit this as their past mistake. But the formal Indian government policy is very complicated. This is the mistake of many Indians, including the higher officials.

Did you point out this mistake and the feeling of the Tibetans to Nehru when he took the stand in 1959 or later?

Yes. My first meeting with Prime Minister Nehru was in 1954 at Beijing. That is when he took the stand of Tibet being a part of China.

He took the stand in 1954?

Yes. The trade agreement was the official document that accepted this. So officially, they accepted this when they signed the trade agreement with China. There was even some talk at that time that the Indian government wanted to put the words 'autonomous region' of China rather than the worlds 'part' of China, but that did not materialise. So when we met Nehru, it had already been done.

Did you protest?

Actually, when the Chinese army started to march into Tibet, we sent a delegation. I was in Yatung at that time in 1951. We appealed to the Indian government. The appeal was to Sardar Patel. He made certain statements that were very far-sighted.

Do you think it was a mistake on your part to accept a conditional political asylum in India?

Yes. At that time there was only India where we could seek political asylum. I also feel that this country is very unique and a most important country for us.

In what sense?

In the past, the Tibetan civilization was very much based on Buddhism. On account of this, Tibetan culture was influenced by Indian culture. Culturally speaking, we regard ourselves as sons of this country. We regard the Indian nation as our guru. Despite many difficulties, the Tibetans visited India and its many sacred lands. At the same time, Indians visited
many sacred places in Tibet like Mansarovar and Mount Kailash. There were very close links between the two countries, not because of political or economic reasons, but because of spiritual reasons. Another example is the Tibetan language. The Tibetan alphabet is derived from the Indian script of Sanskrit. Some of the letters on the Ashoka pillar we can also read. Of course, when you look at the two scripts, they are completely different from each other, but we copied and learned everything from this country. This was the past situation. In the present situation, we Tibetans remain as one of the largest refugee community in this country. Regarding the preservation of our culture and our education, I think it is quite clear that no other country could have given us as much as India has. Then looking at the future, Tibet has a long border with India, so this country will be very important to us and at the same time, Tibet will be important to India. The problem of Tibet is the problem of India too.

Are you satisfied with the kind of arrangements and the progress that you have made looking after the Tibetans in India or would you like to do more?

Under the existing circumstances, I think what we have achieved is very good.

Would you like to do something more for the Tibetans?

If you ask someone for his wishes or desires, then there is no limit to one’s wishes or desires. I think within limitations, we did achieve the best.

You have said that if Tibet is free, it would be beneficial for India. Can you comment on that?

Once Tibet is a free country or as I have proposed in my peace-proposal, a zone of peace or a land of ahimsa where there are no military establishments, then India can withdraw most of her forces stationed on the whole northern border and save a lot of money. Then India can fatten the budget of her five-year plans. It would create a very peaceful border and would help to generate peace in the region and also world peace in general. At present, the Tibetans inside Tibet are very hostile to the Chinese there. This is beneficial to India. One day if Tibet becomes a land of the Chinese, not only would it be the end of Tibet, but it would also then be a permanent threat to India. The whole picture would change.
What are your propositions for solving the Tibetan problem? What do you propose?

I made a proposal which consists of five points. I think this is the first step and it creates a genuine positive atmosphere. I feel the immediate Chinese reaction will be very negative, but in the long run I think it will be beneficial. My basic stand is that I want to make it clear that Tibet is a separate country. For the future, my stand is open. In the last few years, the Chinese have been changing rapidly. Though not for certain, the over-all picture is changing and becoming more reasonable and more humanised. Still, they have not reached where they should be.

Do you expect something to develop out of your five-point peace proposal?

Actually, we are trying to find some sort of a middle way. The Tibetan people have expressed already that they do not want to remain under the Chinese domination and that they want independence as it is their right. They want a separate country. At the same time, the Chinese have already occupied Tibet and it is very difficult for them to leave. Therefore, under these circumstances, it would be worthwhile to think of some middle path. Theoretically, I think it would be possible. On many occasions, I have said that the human boundary is always changing. Under certain circumstances, I explained that two nations can be combined under one nation. Under other circumstances, the same community can be divided. The essential factor is that the concerned people get the maximum benefit. So, theoretically, we Tibetans who number six million may get more benefit if we join the thousand million Chinese, rather than become an independent country. It is possible. I am concerned about the real benefits for the people of Tibet. So far as a result of the Chinese domination, we have suffered. If this situation remains, the only solution for us is to separate. We Tibetans have every right to be happy just as the Chinese have every right to be happy. Since we have remained under the Chinese occupation, we have suffered a lot of destruction. So, the only logical solution is that we have to gain our own right, our own independence.
In your five-point proposal, you mentioned the transformation of the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace. Can you elaborate on that?

I proposed that the whole of Tibet, including the Eastern provinces of Kham and Amdo, be transferred into a zone of Ahimsa, a Hindi term used to mean a state of peace and non-violence. The establishment of such a peace zone would be in keeping with Tibet's historical role as a peaceful and neutral Buddhist nation and buffer state separating Asia's great powers. It would also be in keeping with Nepal's proposal to proclaim Nepal a peace zone and with China's declared support for such a proclamation. The peace zone proposed by Nepal would have a much greater impact if it were to include Tibet and neighbouring areas.

The establishment of a peace zone in Tibet would require a withdrawal of Chinese troops and military installations from Tibet which would enable India also to withdraw troops and military installations from the Himalayan regions bordering Tibet. This would be achieved under an international agreement which would satisfy China's legitimate security needs and build trust among the Tibetan, Indian, Chinese and other peoples of the region. This is in everyone's best interest, particularly that of China and India, as it would enhance their security, while reducing the economic burden of their maintaining high troop concentrations on the disputed Himalayan border.

Historically, relations between China and India were never strained. It was only when the Chinese army marched into Tibet, creating for the first time, a common border, that tensions arose between these two powers, ultimately leading to the 1962 war. Since then, numerous dangerous incidents have continued to occur. A restoration of good relations between the world's two most populous countries would be greatly facilitated if they were separated — as they were throughout history — by a large and friendly buffer region.

To improve relations between the Tibetan and the Chinese people, the first requirement is the creation of trust. After the holocaust of the last decades in which over one million Tibetans — one sixth of the population — lost their lives and at least as many lingered in prison camps because of their religious beliefs and love of freedom, only a withdrawal of Chinese troops could start a genuine process of reconciliation. The vast occupation force in Tibet is a daily reminder to the Tibetans of the oppression and suffering they have all experienced. A troop withdrawal would be an
essential signal that in future a meaningful relationship might be established with the Chinese, based on friendship and trust.

You have talked about the abandonment of China's population transfer policy which threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people. Can you comment on that?

The population transfer of Chinese into Tibetan must be stopped. The government in Peking pursues the transfer in order to force a 'final solution' to the Tibetan problem by reducing the Tibetan population in Tibet to an insignificant and disenfranchised minority.

The massive transfer of Chinese civilians into Tibet threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a distinct people. In the eastern parts of our country, the Chinese now greatly outnumber the Tibetans. In Amdo province where I was born, for example, there are, according to Chinese statistics, 2.5 million Chinese and only 700,000 Tibetans. Even in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, Chinese government sources now confirm that Chinese outnumber Tibetans.

The Chinese transfer policy is not new. It has been applied systematically to other areas before. Earlier in this century Manchus were a distinct race with their own culture and traditions. Today only two to three million Manchus are left in Manchuria, where 75 million Chinese have settled. In Eastern Turkestan, which the Chinese now call Sinkiang, the Chinese population has grown from 200,000 in 1949 to seven million, more than half of the total population of 13 million. In the wake of the Chinese colonisation of Inner Mongolia, Chinese number 8.56 million, Mongols 2.5 million.

Today in the whole of Tibet 7.5 million Chinese settlers have already been sent, outnumbering the Tibetan population of six million. In central and western Tibet, now referred to by the Chinese as the Tibet Autonomous Region, Chinese sources admit the 1.9 million Tibetans already constitute a minority of the region's population. These numbers do not take into account the estimated 300,000 to 500,000 troops in Tibet — 250,000 of them in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region.

For the Tibetans to survive as a people, it is imperative that the population transfer be stopped, and that the Chinese settlers return to China. Otherwise, the Tibetans will soon be no more than a tourist attraction and a relic of the noble past.
Can you comment on your third point in the proposal which states respect for the Tibetan people’s fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms?

Fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms must be respected in Tibet. The Tibetan people must once again be free to develop culturally, intellectually, economically and spiritually, and to exercise basic democratic freedoms.

Human rights violations in Tibet are among the most serious in the world. Discrimination is practiced in Tibet under a policy of apartheid which the Chinese call “segregation and assimilation”. Tibetans are, at best, second class citizens in their own country. Deprived of all basic democratic rights and freedoms, they exist under a colonial administration in which all real power is wielded by Chinese officials of the Communist Party and the army.

Although the Chinese government allows Tibetans to rebuild some Buddhist monasteries and to worship in them, it still forbids serious study and teaching of religion. Only a small number of people, approved by the Communist Party, are permitted to join the monasteries.

While Tibetans in exile exercise their democratic rights under a constitution promulgated by me in 1963, thousands of our countrymen suffer in prisons and labour camps in Tibet for their religious or political convictions.

Another point you have mentioned is the restoration and protection of Tibet’s natural environment and the abandonment of China’s use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste. Could you comment?

Serious efforts must be made to restore the natural environment in Tibet. Tibet should not be used for the production of nuclear weapons and the dumping of nuclear waste.

Tibetans have a great respect for all forms of life. This inherent feeling is enhanced by the Buddhist faith, which prohibits the harming of all sentient beings, whether human or animal. Prior to the Chinese invasion, Tibet was an unspoiled wilderness sanctuary in a unique natural environment. Sadly, in the past decades the wildlife and the forests of Tibet have been almost totally destroyed by the Chinese. The effects on Tibet’s delicate environment have been devastating. What little has been left in Tibet must be protected, and efforts must be made to restore the environment to its balanced state.
China uses Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and may also have started dumping nuclear waste in Tibet. Not only does China plan to dispose of its own nuclear waste, but also that of other countries, who have already agreed to pay Peking to dispose of their toxic materials.

The dangers this presents are obvious. Not only present generations, but future generations are threatened by China's lack of concern for Tibet's unique and delicate environment.

In your last point you have mentioned negotiations on the future status of Tibet and the relationship between the Tibetan and the Chinese peoples should be started in earnest. Can you comment on this?

We wish to approach this subject in a reasonable and realistic way, in a spirit of frankness and conciliation, and with the idea of finding a solution that is in the long-term interest of all: the Tibetans, the Chinese and all other peoples concerned. The Tibetans and Chinese are distinct people, each with their own country, history, culture, language and way of life. Differences among people must be recognised and respected. They need not, however, form obstacles to genuine co-operation where this is in the mutual benefit of both peoples. It is my sincere belief that if the concerned partners were to meet and discuss their future with an open mind and a sincere desire to find a satisfactory and just solution, a breakthrough could be achieved. We must all exert ourselves to be reasonable and wise, and to meet in a spirit of frankness and understanding.

What are your hopes for your five-point peace proposal?

This is for a long-term benefit. Right now there is no doubt that the Chinese government will react very negatively. In the long run, it is important to make clear certain ideas for the mutual benefit of the Tibetans, the Chinese, the Indians, the Nepalese, and all the other neighbouring states. About the timing, since things have become more serious in Tibet and since I found a more favourable atmosphere on Capitol Hill, I expressed this peace plan.
What are your thoughts on violence?

I think that every action has a positive and negative reaction. A person has to judge what is more effective. Some young Tibetans blame me for being too passive and mild. They say that because other refugees like the Palestinians or the Afghans follow violence, there is more sympathy and world support for their cause. But I feel that violence is not good. People might be attracted to something more because of violence, but as a basic human being, one will not admire violence deep down. People don't like situations where people are killed, beaten or tortured. The basic human instinct will disagree with violence. Therefore, it is important to pay more attention to those activities which are non-violent. They involve reason, respect for human life, human compassion and human understanding. In our case, violence will be suicidal. My suggestion or idea is that demonstrations without physical violence will be better.

Is your philosophy of non-violence something you decided on because of Gandhi's methodology or is it something of your own evolution in the Tibetan way or is it because of the Indian government?

The Buddha Shakyamuni taught non-violence. Mahavir, the Jain teacher, also taught non-violence. Many other Indian masters also taught non-violence or Ahimsa. In the modern era, during the 20th century, Mahatma Gandhi implemented this new and noble idea in politics.

Do you think it will be difficult for the young Tibetans, who are not properly educated in Buddhist ideology and have been educated by the Chinese, to understand the essence of religious heritage and the importance on non-violence?

That is right. What you say is true. It is more difficult for them to understand the values of Buddhism and non-violence, while at the same time, understand the situation that is very tense and very desperate. If the Chinese use suppressive measures, the natural instinct will be to react likewise, by throwing stones or those kind of things.

Will non-violence win back Tibet's independence?

Now this is very delicate question. Generally, I always believe that
through non-violence you will get some sort of limited result. Through violence, it may result in something, but it often creates another problem. About the question of the independence of Tibet, my basic stand is that I want to make clear that Tibet is a separate country from China culturally, geographically and historically. For the future my stand is open. Generally, as Buddhists, we believe in non-violence. Personally, I very much admire Mahatma Gandhi's way of thinking, Ahimsa or non-violence. In our case, violence is more or less suicidal. It is not at all practical. Through non-violence, it may take us more time; more patience and more determination and the achievement may be small, but it is real. But it may take some more time.

What would you feel if the younger Tibetans become more radical?
That is my main worry. The younger Tibetans in and outside Tibet are less patient and some of the younger Tibetans outside Tibet criticise me for being too mild. Of course that is understandable. They are very patriotic and have little patience. They want things immediately. Also, the younger Tibetans talk about the Palestinians and the Afghan resistance fighters. This is not good, it is dangerous. I always tell them that violence in our case is not good. Still this feeling of violent action is growing. So I will keep my own faith in non-violence.

If the Tibetan youth took the non-violent way, all you would say is that violence is not good?
Yes, because I have full conviction in non-violence. I have my own belief. Even if ten thousand Tibetan youths outside Tibet along with a few hundred thousand youths in Tibet take up arms, it will still be very difficult. The Chinese can easily crush us. Even guerrilla warfare is very difficult. I think since we left Tibet in 1959, things in China are always going up and down. Now things are changing and are becoming more humanised. If the Chinese use their human understanding, then a mutual understanding can develop. Then for mutual benefit, I think we can develop some sort of compromise which will be mutually beneficial. We will see.

What would you say to the young people who view violence as the only method to get the Chinese to negotiate with you?
There is some logic there. But I feel that violence is still not right. I
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told some Tibetans in a speech that if we follow the militant way, the Chinese can easily send 60 million Chinese against us six million Tibetans. If the Chinese really want to disregard the Tibetans completely, they could easily do it through violence. Their excuse would be self-defence. For every single Tibetan, there would be 10 or more Chinese. Then it would be finished. Under these circumstances, we have to consider the basic Buddhist doctrine and the motivation and the result is important. If the motivation is proper, then the result will be good. It will benefit the majority.

If the Chinese pour more and more settlers into Tibet and it looks as though the Tibetans are going to be dissolved as a race, would there be a justification in reacting to this violently or is it so impracticable that it does not come up as a question and that it would never be possible?

If such a situation develops, then I think, because I am a monk I will resign. I would let somebody else take that decision.

So you would resign?
It would be better. That is the only way. Someone else should then take the final decision. I am a monk who always tells people the importance of compassion, kindness and patience, and who is already passed fifty. I always follow my own belief no matter how much people insist on the other way (laughter).

Do the youths really come in and argue with you?
Yes, it is a healthy sign. On a few occasions, youths who are a little militant come and argue with me, but I remain stubborn. They start crying (laughter). They love the Dalai Lama, but the Dalai Lama does not agree with their viewpoint, so they finally end up crying.

What do you feel about civil disobedience?
My main thought is that some sort of expression of civil disobedience is good. I feel that it is important for Tibetans to express their resentment against the Chinese because the Chinese are deliberately trying to ignore and hide the basic issue. They try to show the world and the Tibetans in Tibet that the main problem is the Dalai Lama and that is why they have made the five points for the Dalai Lama's return. My focus is on the six million Tibetans and their problems, their rights, their culture and so on. Therefore, I feel that the Tibetan people should show their resentment to
the Chinese because the Chinese never seem to accept the problem that exists in Tibet. Expressions such as prayers, hunger-strikes, demonstrations without violence are meaningful.

Violent resistance gets world press and non-violence usually doesn't. Does that make non-violence less effective?

Yes, unfortunately, this seems to be true. The world attitude is taking a more serious interest in violence and ignores or neglects other ways of freedom-fighting. I think this is very wrong. It is almost like self-destruction because human beings do not like killing people, torturing people, or other things of that sort. At the same time, because of this, if someone is killed or some people are killed by terrorists, then people pay more attention. This indirectly encourages people who are involved in such activities. I told some Tibetans that it is our responsibility as world citizens to fight for our freedom through non-violence. Genuine non-violence is something like an experiment on this planet. If we succeed, it gains new meaning. Also, non-violence through human understanding and human love is something very new and very unique. If this experiment succeeds, it can be applied to other problems of the world. As Tibetans, we have to realise this special kind of responsibility. On the other hand, I think it will be worthwhile for the world community to realise this thing even if they don't have sympathy for the Tibetans. It is an experiment and a unique fight.

Do you think there will be a time when you accept or condone violence?

No, I don't think that I will ever accept violence. First of all, as a Buddhist monk, I think that violence is not good. Secondly, I believe firmly and strongly in the Gandhian way of non-violence. Thirdly in our case, violence is not our strength. Our strength is truth, justice, reason and human understanding. If we Tibetans use this strength then I think we can talk with the Chinese. If not in this generation, then in the next.

Do you think it impossible to win through violence?

Yes, it is impossible. In the early part of this century, even in the middle, some people believed that the ultimate decision must come through war. But now that kind of thinking is gone. Many people genuinely desire peace now. So it seems some kind of a different human experiment is taking place.
20 Messages

What message do you have for humanity?

I always speak of the importance to cultivate and practice love, kindness, compassion, and tolerance. This is because all sentient beings including animals appreciate compassion and love. Even according to modern scientists, when a child is conceived in the mother's womb, the mother should not get angry as it will affect the child in her womb. After the child is born, the mother's touch is something very important for the child. So love and compassion play very important roles for humanity. Also we must each lead a way of life with self-awareness and compassion, to do as much as we can. Then whatever happens, we will have no regrets. We have brought ourselves into great difficulties through selfishness. We should turn this around and consider others to be more important. Beings such as animals of all kinds have no chance to understand this fact, whereas we are humans who have gained this fine life where such things can be understood. We have some intelligence and with that we can understand the value of cherishing ourselves. We now need to implement this, to put it into real practice, not just to leave it at understanding. We should think, “If I don't achieve this now, when could I possibly achieve it?”

Do you have a message for Tibetans?

As human beings, as human brothers and sisters, everyone wants happiness and not suffering. Now one of the secrets to obtain mental peace is within ourselves. The compassionate attitude, loving kindness and forgiveness are ideal things and are the real source of inner satisfaction. For this, there is no need to incur great expenses. For the Tibetans who are scattered in more than 30 different countries in the world, it is important to remember that every Tibetan is acting like an ambassador. The Tibetan nation is passing through a very difficult time, a crucial period and the important thing for every Tibetan is to realise the situation and do as much as he can.
Do you have any message for Peking?

I hope they will try to understand the real situation in Tibet and, based on that understanding, adopt a policy that is pragmatic and morally principled. It is my belief that in human society it is not sufficient just to satisfy the basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing. Freedom is essential and basic. For the Tibetan people, freedom is an inalienable right. It is good that the Chinese have recently been taking more interest in the history of Tibet. The history of nation is naturally based on historical records and nowhere is there a single record that states that Tibet has at any time been a part of China. There have been periods when the Mongols and the Manchus had some influence over Tibet but then, where is there a nation which has not experienced such influences be it military, religious, cultural or through the marital relations of its rulers? Such influences and acts of aggression have been used in the past, as well as in the present, by stronger powers to claim sovereignty over weaker nations. The Tibetan people have never agreed voluntarily to become a part of China. I call on unbiased and impartial scholars of international law to give their opinion on this aspect of the Sino-Tibetan relationship. China has the right to its own happiness and prosperity, but not at the expense of another nation or people.

Do you have any message to give to the people of India?

We Tibetans as refugees will always feel grateful to the people of India, not only for giving help and shelter to this generation, but for many generations we Tibetans have received light and wisdom from this country. So, we will always feel indebted. From a cultural viewpoint, we are the followers of the Indian culture. Culturally, we Tibetans belong to India rather than to China (laughter). When I first came to India for the Buddha Jayanti in 1956, things were very peaceful and calm. Even after 1959, when I came to India as a refugee, things were still as a sacred land. Now, we sometimes feel very sad that the atmosphere is becoming more tense and the land of peace, the land of such a variety of human thought and richness and human thinking, especially the non-violence theory produced by this country, is changing. If you lose these values, it is a pity.
Do you have any other advice for the people of India?

When I go to different places and meet different people, I am more and more convinced that India really needs some kind of movement in the rural areas. A small number of people with a good education and who are well-to-do, like those in the big cities may not be so effective. I think you need some kind of rural revolution or movement. I think there should be some changes in these rural areas.

What kind of changes do you mean?

It seems the people in these villages have a lack of determination and initiative. They are simply contented with their daily routine life and just remain like that. I think it remained like this for a thousand years. You should break out of this. You need more courage. One person may be very poor in the economic and educational sense, but as long as the human determination is there, if you are determined to do something, you can go forward. I think this is very important.
1 Address to the 16th National Assembly

Dharamsala,
May 6, 1989

I would like to speak on one point today. In this world in order to enable the society to develop, all its members have to assume responsibilities and make their contributions. If we do not make collective contributions then there will be no developments. On account of differences in the capability of individuals, initiatives may come only from a few persons and not from the entire population. But all members need to make a common effort and only then will the society develop, including in the fields of culture, religion, economy, etc. It is very important to make collective efforts. In order to encourage collective efforts it is necessary to have collective responsibilities. In order to bring about collective responsibilities there has to be common benefits and rights. If there is benefit there will be responsibility. Therefore, here comes what is called democracy. Democracy as a political term is a recent phenomenon. However, concerning the basic mental attitude, Buddhism in general, and Mahayana tradition in particular, embraces democracy. Therefore, a person who has an understanding of Buddhist tenets will have a clear perception of what is called democracy and will be familiar with it when he thinks in terms of development of the society.

Secondly, on the Tibetan issue, in our arguments with the Chinese on the true issue of Tibet, when they are unable to reply directly to us on the matter they wash their hands by referring to the old Tibetan society as one that was extremely backward, extremely uncivilized, etc. Due to these accusations, too, our democracy assumes much importance. Even before we could overcome our confusion upon becoming refugees, we framed a Constitution in 1961. However, this was not something new that we thought of only upon arrival in India. Even while in Tibet I discussed the
issue with our officials like Lhandhing Khenchen Ngawang Dakpa. Prior to that we had set up a reforms committee. Be that as it may, the thought that it is important to keep up with the times and change accordingly had occurred to us even at that time.

Having become refugees, and specially as we have to respond to Chinese challenges on international platforms, we should not hold on to the old tradition, like a dog holding onto a bone. Rather, even if we are not able to give satisfactory verbal explanations, we should depict through our actions (when we want). Therefore, after we framed the main features of our Constitution we circulated it among the Tibetan community. People from many of the Tibetan settlements expressed their discomfort and inability to accept this by saying that "it will not do if the Dalai Lama's prerogatives are affected". However, unless the majority have the right to alter the powers of the leader, which is the main feature of democracy, democratic identity will be lost. As this clause formed an essential feature of democracy it was retained.

Since then over 28 years have passed during which I have thought of having a review of the draft constitution by having a wide range of discussions, and making necessary amendments. During this period there have been lots of changes in the situation: e.g., in 1969 I mentioned in my March 10 statement\(^1\) that it would depend on the wishes of the majority of the Tibetan people what the position of the Dalai Lama would be in future. A decision would be taken on the wishes of people of Tibet. Then recently, in my address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg\(^2\), I mentioned my decision not to lead the future elected democratic government in Tibet. Thus, what is contained in the draft constitution, as well as many other things, have changed as a result of official statements made under changing circumstances.

Also, in real terms too, I suggested a few years back that it would be good if we had a person between the Dalai Lama and the Kashag, no matter whether you call him Prime Minister or something else. As there was no particular person suitable for the job, and also because there was difficulty in carrying out the suggestion, the matter remained

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\(^1\)Vide p. 373.

unimplemented. Again, a few years back I had mentioned that it would be good if the Kashag assumed more responsibilities so that it would not matter whether the Dalai Lama was there or not. We are attempting to implement this. The main objective of all these is to have genuine democracy.

Now, as our saying "a farmer should imitate his neighbours" goes, when we look at the USSR, China, Poland and Hungary (the latter two countries are slightly more progressive), there are talks of allowing political parties to come into being. Hungary is the most changed communist country followed by Poland. Be that as it may, as mentioned earlier, in those countries practising centralised democracy, if the respective governments are not to the people's satisfaction there will not be economic development. Much as they dislike doing so, they pay lip service to democracy because democracy is what is required to fulfil the wishes of the people. On the people's part too, in order to attain democracy and freedom they try to benefit from all areas. However, if we look at the source of the disorder then it will be seen that the communist party is unwilling to let go its centralised authority. Thus when the root is not changed, whatever democracy they try to implement will be like patching up a bad tree and will not be pure. Thus drawbacks can be seen easily.

When we look at ourselves, we find that we Tibetans have been attempting sincerely for democracy. However, we have not achieved satisfactory and beneficial results so far. When we try to find out why this has been so, we find that unless there is a change in the indisputable leadership of the Dalai Lama, our attempts at democracy will be like I mentioned about the communist countries. Although it is not forced by me, nor people do it out of fear, they respect me like "the king respected by many" mentioned in the scriptures. However, unless there is a change in the leadership of the Dalai Lama, even if we try to have democracy separately it will be something like putting a new patch on an unstable old tree.

Our constitution for the future Tibet details the powers and status of the Dalai Lama. Also, as mentioned earlier, our official statements have depicted clearly the status of the Dalai Lama. Now we have to see that we do not have to base them on the leadership of the Dalai Lama. Instead,
the leader should be elected according to democratic norms. We have examples in the American system where the president is elected or the Indian and British systems where the prime minister is chosen by the elected political party. In brief, I think, we have to make changes so that being the Dalai Lama does not automatically make the individual the spiritual and temporal head.

As mentioned earlier, leave alone the situation in future Tibet, even during our period in exile our present administrative structure is not sound. On the one hand, everyone has united voluntarily, sincerely respecting the leadership of the Dalai Lama. Even though there may be sectarian and provincial arguments at the individual level, everyone eulogises the Dalai Lama. Personally, I am grateful; everyone listens to me. However, we have gone on like this for 30 years. I am now in my mid-fifties. When I reach the age of eighty or ninety I will be an old Bhikshu. At that time I will not be of any use. I will be of use till I am between sixty and seventy, i.e., for another 20 years. After that the Dalai Lama will be a useless individual. Therefore, if within the next 20 years we are able to return to our country, that would be excellent. Even if we are unable to return to our country, and have to continue in exile, I think we should think of making our administration stable irrespective of the presence of the Dalai Lama. Those with responsibility should shoulder it, those giving directions should do so, and those implementing the task should do so to ensure that we have a smooth procedure.

As long as I live I will be doing my best. Irrespective of the name Dalai Lama as the spiritual and temporal head, as everyone desires me to, I will be performing sincerely whatever is possible. Therefore, everything will be organised during the lifetime of the Dalai Lama. When the day comes when the Dalai Lama is no longer there, as total preparations have been made during his lifetime, it will be stable. Under the present circumstances, if something suddenly happens to the Dalai Lama it seems that we will not know what to do and there is every danger of committing a blunder. It is dangerous to put the entire responsibility on one individual. I think we now have to really ponder on this.

The current session of the National Assembly should set up a committee to look into the entire issue based on the draft democratic
constitution. The committee should study the official speeches made in the recent past and see what are the good points and the bad points of our efforts for the last 30 years in India in attempting to have democracy in true terms. The committee should see how far, as per the Tibetan experience we will be able to achieve? In addition, the committee should consult eminent Indian experts on law or politics, as well as foreign experts who have sympathy for us Tibetans, and get their suggestions. Discuss and also organise special discussion sessions. There is no hurry, it could go on for one or two years. After researching and reviewing fully the committee should come out with its findings which should be circulated among the Tibetan community in India and other free countries. The findings could also be sent into Tibet through different ways so that we will have the reaction of all the Tibetan people. Thereafter, there could be a meeting which could discuss the amendments needed in the democratic constitution. The meeting could also lay clear administrative guideline for the period in which we will be in exile. If these meetings are held then I think we will not have any cause for regrets.

You should keep this in mind. I don't have anything else in particular to say. I thank everyone.

What I have said is not something inauspicious. As we have to face the reality, I felt that it might be good if we thought along these lines. I need not repeat. It is not that I am withdrawing from my responsibilities or have become discouraged. So far, I have done everything possible and will continue to do so. Although it is not possible to do much, I will try my best. Tashi Delek. Thukje Che.
Dharamsala,
May 11, 1990

I am glad that we have been able to hold this congress. I have three
points to make today. First, as I have always emphasised, there is a need
to further democratise our system. We have endeavoured to have
experience in the working of our democracy during the last 31 years. In
the 1960's, I drafted a democratic constitution (for future Tibet). However,
dramatic changes have taken place in different parts of the world during
the last few years. In the case of our Tibetan issue, we have reached a
stage where we have a hope for a happy end. I, therefore, feel that this
draft constitution needs to be revised so that we can have a total
democratic set-up.

However, as I have mentioned earlier, it is difficult for one or two of
our people to do the job immediately. Everywhere in the world, there is a
tradition of seeking the advice of experts and then undertaking the task.
Therefore, I would like to appoint some Tibetans to take primary
responsibility on this. They should consult Indian and foreign experts and
then come up with a draft constitution in which will be enshrined those
values which go to make a truly democratic system. If possible, this draft
constitution must be ready by 1992. Then we can invite opinions from
the exiled Tibetans, and also, as far as possible, from the people in Tibet,
and adopt this draft constitution for the time being. The final decision will
be made on the auspicious day when the Tibetans in exile and those in
Tibet meet. I am thus thinking of setting up a committee to undertake this
task.

Then, during the last 31 years, we have made all efforts to implement
in exile the draft constitution which was promulgated long time back.
However, since this document, meant for implementation in an exile
situation, was made in the form of a constitution of an independent country,
its total implementation was not possible.
We have to see that during our period in exile, democracy is fully practiced. We have had discussions on this before. We have discussed during the time when Kundeling (a former member of the Tibetan cabinet) and others were there about having an association registered, because our present situation in India is not stable.

Such an association, we thought, may bring stability. A draft bye-law for such an association was even prepared. Whatever the case may be, we have been thinking on these lines earlier. Now, I was thinking that during the period we stay as refugees we should have a guideline, call it constitution or anything else, which will make our Administration a truly democratic one.

I have decided to make such a guideline. If possible, it should be ready around the Tibetan Democracy Day in 1991. There is a need to change the functions and composition of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, I hope the next Assembly will be elected around 10 March 1991. If this is done, the Assembly will scrutinise the draft bye-law prepared for our exiled Administration. The next Assembly will perhaps be a legislative body.

Regarding the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, so far, I had the ultimate authority of selecting its members. Although elected by the people, the final selections were done by me. This practice has to change. From now on, the people's decision will be final. I feel that the Dalai Lama should have no role here. The future Assembly will be entrusted with the power of appointing the Kalons. The present Assembly, which has come up through the old procedure, stands dissolved from today. Let us immediately begin the work for the election of the next Assembly. Being a legislative organ, the next Assembly will discuss the bye-law and take appropriate decisions.

The present meeting should decide the election procedure. As suggested by people's opinions collected so far, the number of the Tibetan People's Deputies must be increased. However, all the Deputies need not stay in Dharamsala. A few working committee members can stay here and the rest must function in different Tibetan communities. But they can all meet in Dharamsala from time to time to discuss important matters.

The present meeting should also discuss if it is useful to have two
houses, upper and lower, of the Assembly as suggested in some of the opinions. Otherwise, we may divide the assembly into two groups. We may, for example, divide it in the ratio of one-thirds or two-thirds. And the composition of one group may remain the same as now, which takes into consideration not the exile population but the reality in Tibet: equal representation from all the three provinces of Tibet, plus representation from the four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and the Bon faith.

The other group may consist of one deputy for each 500 people in exile or one for over 1,000 people. Although the Assembly may be one house, it may be internally divided into these two groups. I would like the current meeting to discuss this point.

Earlier there used to be one woman deputy elected to the Assembly. However, lately we have not been able to reserve any seat for women. Now that we are going to expand the composition of the Assembly, I would like you all to consider having some women representatives in the future Assembly. Since the current Assembly is dissolved today, you may discuss if it is necessary to have some people to continue the work of the Assembly till the next Assembly comes up. Since March 10, 1991 is only some months away, it may not make much difference. However, you may probably like to think about some other alternatives.

In Tibet we had a tribunal. Likewise, we will have to make provisions for a judiciary system in our constitution for future Tibet. Needless to say, the judiciary has to be an independent and impartial body as is the case in other democratic countries. But while in exile we have to give it an appropriate name in deference to Indian law.

It is up to you to decide on the name. For all practical purposes, it should have the power to settle our internal disputes and look into people’s grievance against, for example, the Council for Home Affairs or the Council for Tibetan Education. Earlier they were looked into by either the Kashag or the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies, or by a committee especially formed for a particular case. But from now onwards, there should be a special department to deal with such matters. If a poor, humble individual feels that he has not had a fair deal from the Kashag, he should be able to approach an independent and impartial authority to seek justice. Give it whatever name you think fit.
As far as the question of the prime minister is concerned, most of the collected opinion expressed the need for such a post. However, there is no consensus on whether the prime minister should be appointed or elected. Most things are like this. When one talks about something, it sounds good and practical. But in reality, everything depends on human beings. In the past, we talked about this. For many years, we said that there is a need for someone between the Dalai Lama and the Kashag. But we could not find a suitable person. This problem remains even now. Therefore, I think that it is better to shelve this idea for the time being.

For the moment, it may be better if one of the Kalons is made a Chief Kalon. Now seniority should not be the criterion for this post. Rather, it is better to hold timely elections. The voting for this post may be conducted within the Kashag, or by a slightly larger electorate. Whatever the case may be, one Kalon must be elected to the post of Chief Kalon for a term of one year. The voting for this must be conducted once every year. And if a particular Chief Kalon is capable, he may be re-elected for subsequent terms. When the bye-law is made, the Chief Kalon may be vested with sufficient power. In practice, the Chief Kalon will be the virtual prime minister. We will follow this system for the time being and gradually see how it works. Regarding the appointment of prime minister by me, although the Dalai Lama may be considered as the prime minister or the president, yet he has not come up through election. The election of a prime minister is not very convenient at this stage.

Whether we can find models in other countries or not, the election of our Kalons should be done through methods that are appropriate to our reality.

All the present Kalons submitted their resignation on May 9 and their term in office has been terminated in accordance with our old system. Thus we have brought to an end the term of the Dalai Lama-appointed Kalons.

As soon as the election of the Tibetan People's Deputies is completed, the new Assembly will have to elect new Kalons. However, as we have got no Assembly now, the next Kalons must be elected by this meeting. I think it is good to fix the number of Kalons at seven. In the past, we have had a varied number of Kalons. But our efforts have been to appoint Kalons
from all the three provinces of Tibet, irrespective of creed or sex. This point must be kept in mind. It makes no difference whether the new Kalons are elected from those who have already resigned or from elsewhere.

Let us first divide this meeting into sub-groups and hold preliminary elections in all these groups. Since we need seven Kalons, we can nominate 21 candidates with the highest number of votes in all these groups. This done, we can hold a joint meeting and elect seven Kalons from the list of the 21. Now only those candidates with 70 percent or more votes should be declared elected. Suppose if only four or five candidates manage to win the required number of votes, we should have another voting to elect the remaining three or two Kalons.

If the remaining candidates fail to get the 70 percent even after the second voting, then we can decide only on the four or five Kalons. Normally when we elect the members of the Assembly, the first few get overwhelming majorities and some get very few votes. And since we need a certain number of deputies, some candidates with very few votes have to be declared winners. This does not make for a good system. Therefore, it is necessary to fix some sort of qualifying point.

Now that the Kalons will be elected, there will be corollary changes in the recruitment of staff members. The situation of the National Working Committee will also undergo changes. We will get the opportunity to discuss this later.

I will formulate my ideas on the new constitution and discuss it in a meeting attended by exiled Tibetans. Everyone is welcome to express his or her opinion on this matter. Of course, the finalisation of this constitution will be done when the exiled Tibetans are reunited with our brethrens in Tibet.

We must have a simple and precise bye-law for our exile Administration. When we say that we are trying our best to implement our old constitution as far as possible, it becomes rather ambiguous. If we have a clear-cut democratic bye-law during our exile life, it will not only be easy for us to explain our system to our own people and to foreigners, but will also make our work easier. Together with this, we will
have some sort of judiciary or an independent committee which can act as a watch-dog on the Tibetan Administration.

The other thing to discuss is the new Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies: expanding its size; improving the electoral system; whether there should be upper and lower houses in the Assembly, or upper and lower Assemblies, or only one Assembly with two groups of deputies; should it be divided into two halves of equal size or in the ratio of one-thirds or two-thirds. Since the future Assembly will have a very important role to play, it is necessary to discuss this properly.

In short instead of a prime minister, we will decide on the election of a Chief Kalon from within the Kashag. For this you may discuss on how many more voters should there be in addition to the Kalons. The Assembly of Tibetan Deputies will elect the future Kalons. For the time being the new Kalons must be elected by this meeting. The Dalai Lama's seal of approval and selection is not needed. Only make sure that the election system and the vote percentage are discussed and finalised properly. It is good to decide on a strict method right from the beginning.

Lately, I have been emphasising the importance of democracy not because I have no interest in working for the Tibetans or because I am losing my determination. I have been telling both our own people and the foreigners that I will continue to work for our cause until our issue is resolved. Once our issue is resolved, I will stay outside the Tibetan government. This is my right and seems better for Tibet's long-term interest. As long as we are in exile, I will continue to serve the Tibetan community and will readily contribute my services whenever we are faced with heavy odds. Irrespective of whether I hold a post or not in an independent Tibet, I will continue to enjoy the respect of every Tibetan till I die. Therefore, I will be always available whenever the need arises. In case, we are faced with problems which can be solved only by the Dalai Lama, I will be there. I will do whatever is possible. But it is important that people are able to act on their own through democratic processes without relying on the Dalai Lama. Therefore, I will ask you all not to worry. Tashi Delek.
3  Speech at Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies

Dharamsala,
May 29, 1991

Last year, we introduced important reforms in our administrative set-up by which we not only increased the number of the assembly members but also did away with the system which required the members to receive my approval before they could be declared elected. You, the present assembly members, have come up through an election in which the voters demonstrated unprecedented interest and zeal.

As we have often been saying, we are a generation born during the most trying and crucial period in our history. From the darker side, it would seem that we must have accumulated very bad karma in our previous lives to have been born during such a difficult time. On the other hand, we have been presented with a singular opportunity to develop and use our potential. It is only during hard times that we human beings get the opportunity to use, and thus develop, our intelligence and capabilities. People born without difficulties do not get this opportunity.

In Buddhism also, when we cite the special characteristics of the Buddha Sakyamuni, we make reference to his having chosen to be born in our aeon when the Buddha's task of bringing enlightenment to the world is made all the more difficult as the human beings of this aeon are imbued with more negative qualities.

During the last forty years of Chinese rule in Tibet, Tibetans both in and outside Tibet have demonstrated unflinching courage and potential. In the 1960s many non-Tibetans, who were genuinely concerned with our cause, suggested to me that the cause of Tibet was a dead one and that there was no hope for us. Now, 30 years later, we see the resuscitation

\footnote{This was spoken by His Holiness the Dalai Lama after the swearing-in ceremony at the first session of the 11th Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies held at Kashag Hall, Dharamsala.}
of Tibet's cause. This is not wishful talk by Tibetans alone. It is a phenomenon noticed by outsiders who are taking interest in our cause. That is why, as I often say, although the Chinese have managed to swallow Tibet, they have not been able to digest it. And this is the fruit of our courage and determination.

Although the Tibetans outside Tibet have been reduced to the status of refugees, we have the freedom to exercise our rights. Our brethren in Tibet, despite being in their own country, do not even have the right to life. They can lose their lives even for small things like "wrong" facial or verbal expressions. Therefore, those of us in exile, apart from striving for our livelihood, have the responsibility to contemplate and plan for a future Tibet. Of course, as I say often, the people are the ultimate masters and therefore should have the final say in deciding our future destiny. However, because of our singularly rich experience, derived both from within our community as well as from our exposure to the modern world, we in exile are in a unique position to do this.

When we first came into exile in 1959, we decided that the future Tibet would move with the times while retaining the virtues of our traditional value system. We decided that, although we would borrow the attributes of the modern world, we would retain our own good traits, which are appreciated even by the outsiders. With this in mind, we made efforts towards the democratization of our community through measures like the election of the members of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies. We decided that the democratic reforms thus introduced should be documented in writing so that in future there would be clear-cut guidelines and a basis for further thinking and improvement. We started working on this in 1961 and promulgated a draft democratic constitution in 1963. Of course, the ultimate decision as to whether to adopt, amend or reject this constitution is left in the hands of the Tibetan people when we are united in Tibet in future.

Over the years in our exile life, we have tried through various means to achieve a model of true democracy for future Tibet. The familiarity of all Tibetan exiles with the word "democracy" is indicative of this. Although the Chinese have dubbed our national struggle as one aimed at reviving the old society, the steps taken by us so far prove their accusation wrong
to all those who are aware of our situation. Therefore our efforts at democratization have had a very strong impact in Tibet also.

More recently, it has been observed that it is not conducive to the effective working of democracy if all the power is vested in one individual. Therefore, the 1963 constitution had a clause which authorised the elected members of the assembly to change the power of the Dalai Lama by a two-thirds majority. This is one of the chief attributes of democracy. However, with the passage of time, it was felt that this constitution must be amended in order to provide for further democratization. As for the Dalai Lama, as I stated clearly in my official 10 March statement in 1969, it is up to the people to decide whether to retain the institution of the Dalai Lama or not. Personally, I have been telling many people that the question whether the institution of the Dalai Lama will stay in future or not should be decided by the Tibetans themselves in view of the changing needs of the times.

Although we had been trying to follow democratic norms as far as possible, we felt that, due to various internal and external factors, it was necessary to further democratise our society. Therefore, we had this special meeting last year where we said that we would revise the constitution that was promulgated in 1963 and form a committee for this purpose. As a part of this, the previous cabinet ministers resigned and the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies was dissolved.

We have had various suggestions and discussions on the need for the office of prime minister. However, since we are living in India and have to take many external factors into consideration, there are problems in creating this office immediately. For the moment, therefore, we have to be satisfied with the Kashag Office, which has been in existence for the last 32 years. However, the members of the Kashag will be elected by the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies.

Now, the main task of the committee is to draft a constitution for future Tibet. No doubt, we did have some sort of a democratic constitution which we have tried to follow so far. But since that constitution was drafted for a free country, we could not implement it faithfully in our exiled setting. Therefore, we thought that apart from the constitution for future Tibet, we should have some sort of documented guidelines according to which
the exiled Administration would function. Since this document takes into account the reality of our exiled situation, it will be possible for us to follow it faithfully. Therefore, it has been decided that the committee will also prepare a charter for the exiled community. As for the new constitution, there are certain provisions which come into our minds immediately. Democratic, no doubt. For numerous reasons, I have made up my mind that I will not be the head of, or play any role in, the government when Tibet becomes free. The future head of the Tibetan government must be someone popularly elected by the people. Such a step, as I have been saying repeatedly, has many advantages and will enable us to become a true and complete democracy. This means the new constitution will be a big change from the 1963 one as far as the power and the responsibility of the Dalai Lama are concerned.

Now the ideological basis of the new constitution. When the outsiders looked at Tibet, they saw a land that was peaceful and environmentally clean. They also observed that the people born and brought up in this environment were naturally peaceful, gentle, loving, caring and patient — with faces that were happy. These are good characteristics, not because we are Tibetans, but because as human beings people everywhere make efforts to cultivate these qualities. Therefore, if these qualities come naturally to us Tibetans, we should really cherish them. The future Tibet, therefore, should be a zone of peace. We keep on saying "all sentient beings" all the time. But we should try to translate this utterance into action and for this it is important that we constitutionally make Tibet a zone of peace. This will benefit not only our own people, but our neighbours as well. Since Tibet's two neighbours, China and India, are powerful and the two most populous nations on this earth, any benefit accrued to them will have its positive fallout for the whole world. As a means to achieving this, we should make non-violence our official policy. We Tibetans cannot expect to achieve anything through military might. In the international arena, also, there are lots of changes taking place regarding this matter, especially since the Gulf War, many people have been compelled to look at this matter from a new perspective.

Now, when we try to become a complete democracy, the present election system becomes a bit of a problem. We have used the word
"secularism" in our draft charter. Experts interpret this word differently. But in our Charter the word is defined in Tibetan as remey (it roughly means that the state will not discriminate among different religions). However, non-violence and peace, as I said earlier, are the essence of religion. What I normally think is that the concept of re-birth and a future life, and so on, as we have in Buddhism, may not be acceptable to all religions. However, I feel that all religions do believe in the innate goodness of human beings and that different religions exist to develop and strengthen this quality. Therefore, if our constitution is based on this principle, it, for all practical purposes, incorporates the essence of all religions, whether we give it the name of religion or not. However, if we use the word religion, we will be narrowing the scope of this constitution. On the contrary, if we use the phrase "natural and innate spiritual qualities of human beings", it will embrace the whole of humanity. Therefore, from this point of view also, it will ensure the dovetailing of spiritual and secular values.

As opposed to other democracies, our democracy will have non-violence and peace at its roots. Which means we will have a government based on, as we often say, the combination of spiritual and temporal values. When we see this word "secularism" in any constitution, it sounds very appropriate and good. In our case, also, it is something which we should seriously consider. But some people take secularism to mean the absence of religion. This definition goes against our tradition and the present reality of our situation. Even now, in Tibet, many people have been sacrificing their lives in the struggle for freedom of Tibet which, in their minds, is associated with the Buddhist Dharma. As for me, also, if I am working for the Tibetan cause, it is with the conviction that I am struggling not only for political freedom, but also for the freedom related to the Buddhist Dharma. This makes me feel that as a monk of the Sakyamuni Buddha, I am accumulating good karma. So, although we may understand this word secularism differently, we will have time to discuss it in detail.

Let us now come to economic policy. Generally speaking, as Mahayana Buddhists, we talk in terms of all sentient beings, meaning we will not discriminate between animals and human beings and that we
will take upon ourselves the responsibility for bringing happiness to, and alleviating the sufferings of, all sentient beings.

From this point of view, China and many communist countries claim to be socialist, but when we try to analyse how much the producers actually benefit from this system, many disquieting questions come into our minds. But socialism, as generally understood in the world, if really practicable, is closer to Buddhism than other economic systems. But when one looks at the reality of today’s world, one realises that individual motivation is greater when the person sees the fruits of his effort coming directly to him. But when he is asked to do something for the whole community, he seems to lack the required motivation. Therefore, we see that wherever there is more individual incentive the progress is greater, be it in economy, culture, science or technology. Therefore, the future economic system, I personally feel, should be a mixed economic system — wherein we should incorporate the good features of both the systems. I am not a legal expert, nor an economist. But these are the points we can discuss gradually.

The points I have mentioned so far are to be the inspiration behind the constitution which we are drafting for the future Tibet. The document prepared for the interim period of exile is also based on these principles as our exile life should be an educational experience for the implementation of the future constitution. The Constitution Redrafting Committee has been working on it and taking suggestions, as far as possible, from all Tibetans, and incorporating useful points put forward by anyone. As I said earlier, the present Assembly, the Eleventh Assembly of the Tibetan People’s Deputies, has emerged under a new system. The present Assembly is a legislative organ as well. Therefore, you should discuss, and debate the charter thoroughly. You may also consider the suggestions that have come in from various quarters. These are available for consultation. It will be good if you can examine the charter before finalising it. However, if there are some clauses which you think are far too important for you alone to decide, then we can call for a referendum, as the charter has made this provision also. Since this document was made by human beings, we can change or amend it. Actually this document is based on the statement I made in last year’s meeting and the ensuing discussions held at the meeting. However, if you think that
there are certain points in it which need to be amended, then you, as the assembly members, have the full authority to do so. It would not do to say, "although I do see some drawbacks in the charter, I would not say anything about it since it has already been finalised."

In short, our efforts so far have been directed towards achieving progress. But in view of our critical position, we should be making even greater and more effective efforts. In order to achieve greater success, we must make sure that each and every individual shares the responsibility and makes a contribution towards the common cause. If each and every Tibetan makes his or her own contribution, there will definitely be a concomitant development of society. It should not be assumed that Tibetan national cause is the responsibility of the Dalai Lama alone. This kind of attitude will breed national inertia. The efforts made so far to achieve true democracy are aimed only at making our developmental efforts more effective.

Secondly, we have come a long way in establishing the truth about our cause and now the time has come when we can more or less determine how much longer it will take to accomplish this work. If we can now state unequivocally how we shall proceed in future, we will be able to muster greater international support for our cause. No doubt, the support for our cause is very much there and it keeps increasing with the passage of time. However, if we can clearly document the future course of our actions, it will give clear directions to our supporters in their efforts to continue supporting our cause. Not only in Tibet, but in China also, many people are demonstrating a new interest in, and concern for, our issue. From this point of view also, it is going to give a fillip to our cause.

The guidelines for our future direction should not be just a beautiful showpiece, but something which we are seriously going to implement.

Now, so long as we are in exile, I think it is better for the Dalai Lama to continue to take his responsibility. But the constitution of future Tibet should not give any role to the Dalai Lama. Even in exile, our society should be as democratic as possible.

Regarding the Sino-Tibetan relationship, it has now reached a new phase. Since 1970 we have had direct contact with China. Based on this I made some proposals recently. However, China has refused to respond
to my proposals. On the other hand, there have been some misgivings expressed by many Tibetans. There have been opinions that my proposal gave away too many concessions to China. I made that with the hope of finding a solution to the Tibetan problem. It was aimed at the urgent need to put an end to Chinese demographic aggression in Tibet and the unlimited repression which our people continue to suffer in Tibet. However, the proposal has not succeeded in doing this. Therefore, as I said in my March 10 statement this year, if China did not respond positively, I would not consider myself bound by the concessions made in the Strasbourg statement. This means there is now no existing agenda for future Sino-Tibetan negotiations: the table is empty. So Tibetans, or the foreign friends of Tibet, should note that the solution to the Tibetan problems must come only through non-violence and human contact. There is no other course. With the Assembly of the Tibetan People's Deputies at its core, we will have time to think and discuss this matter also.

As for the members of the Assembly, although you have come up through an election conducted on the basis of regions and religious schools, you must take the interests of the whole of Tibet into consideration and not just the narrow interests of your own region or religious school. Because once you are elected, you become members of the Assembly of Tibetan people as a whole. What happens sometimes is that, when there is the work to be done for the national cause, we have to search for people or associations. But when it comes to narrow parochial interests, they seem to go out of their way to approach us and fight for them. Therefore, what we must aim at is the common cause of our society. If society as a whole is well-off, every individual or association within it will naturally gain from it. They will naturally be happy. However, if society as a whole collapses, then where can we turn to fight for our rights? The very fact that we have somewhere to go to fight for our rights is because we have a common organisation. Therefore, so long as you sit on an assembly seat, you should never forget that you are the representative of every Tibetan. If you can work with this attitude, then the purpose is served. This, I think, is important.
4 Guidelines on Future Tibet's Constitution

Introduction

Although it is difficult to predict the future, all human beings who wish to achieve happiness and avoid suffering must plan for the future. As a result of the Chinese occupation, Tibetans in Tibet are deprived of their basic human rights; this tragic situation cannot be permitted to continue for long.

Tibet has a recorded history of over 2,000 years and according to archaeological findings, a civilization dating back over 4,000 years. In terms of geographical features of the country, as well as in terms of race, culture, language, dress and customs, Tibet is a unique nation.

Under Tibet's Kings and the Dalai Lamas, we had a political system that was firmly rooted in our spiritual values. As a result, peace and happiness prevailed in Tibet.

However, by the middle of this century, Chinese occupation forces marched into Tibet through its eastern border regions of Kham and Amdo. Soon after, the Chinese intensified their military repression in Tibet, driving our political situation to a crisis point. In the face of this I had no alternative, but to comply with my people's request to assume full responsibilities as the head of state of Tibet, although I was then only 16.

In the hope of winning peace and happiness for my people, I tried for years to establish an amicable relationship with the powerful and authoritarian Chinese officials. Also, I set out to reform the unsavoury aspects of our social system. With the view to introducing democracy, a committee consisting some 50 members was constituted. On the recommendation of this committee, some social welfare reforms were implemented, but my efforts towards introducing further reforms failed as the Chinese had by then converted Tibet into their colony.

As soon as the Chinese army had gained full control of Tibet, they shed their initial semblance of discipline and politeness to become ever
more demanding and repressive. Brutal forces were used to suppress the Tibetan resistance — first in Kham and Amdo, and finally in the whole of Tibet by March 1959.

As a result, I was compelled to seek refuge in India in order to continue our struggle for the cause of Tibet. Among my initiatives in exile were to see to it that the Tibetan refugees, who were arriving in India in thousands, were given proper education and rehabilitation facilities. I also set out to continue my earlier plans to democratise Tibetan society.

In 1960 the first representative form of government, through the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (the Tibetan legislative body), was introduced in India. Since then we have had eleven such Assemblies. In 1961, I promulgated a Constitution for the Future Tibet, based on the principles of modern democracy. In general, this constitution received overwhelming support from the Tibetans. The Tibetans, however, strongly opposed the provision, which stipulated that if circumstances demanded, the power of the Dalai Lama could be taken away according to the Constitution. Therefore, this provision had be revised.

In 1963 an even more comprehensive draft constitution was announced. In an attempt to democratise the exile Tibetan Administration, the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies was entrusted with the authority to abolish the traditional bi-polar system of appointing monk and lay officials to each position. The Assembly also annulled all the hereditary titles and prerogatives granted to small groups of people under the old system. In its place, new guidelines were introduced by which government officials would be appointed in a democratic fashion.

The 1963 draft constitution also permitted a Council of Regents to assume the powers of the Dalai Lama under specific circumstance if that was seen to be in the highest interest of the nation. In deference to the wishes of the people, as I stated earlier, and circumstances prevailing at that time, the constitution gave the ultimate authority of the government to the Dalai Lama. Naturally, I was not satisfied with this clause — I felt this constitution fell far short of my conception of a genuine democracy.

Therefore, in my speech of the March 10 anniversary in 1969, I declared that the day Tibet regained its independence, the people must decide for themselves what kind of system of government they wanted. I
also stated that it was not certain whether the system of government with
the Dalai Lama as the supreme head would continue or not.

About three decades have passed since the draft constitution of 1963
was promulgated. During those years, the world has changed dramatically
and people throughout the world have begun to value democratic rights
more than ever before. They have realised that democracy is the
foundation for the free expression of human thoughts and potentials.
Therefore, Tibet also must change when it becomes independent.

With regard to the question of Tibet, although it is an international
issue, the Chinese leadership has failed to respond positively to my
overtures made to them in 1987 and 1988. This is unfortunate, because
I undertook these two initiatives in a sincere and timely effort to find a
peaceful solution to the issue of Tibet.

The issue of Tibet is not merely a question of the survival of a people
with their own distinct history and culture, it also has direct bearing on
the fate of this world and Asian peace, and particularly upon the
relationship between the world's two most populous nations, India and
China. At stake is also the serious question of human rights, as enshrined
in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and
the world body's effort to put an end to the era of colonialism and
expansionism. Even the Chinese people themselves are opposed to the
Chinese system of governance and are demanding changes.

Chinese dissidents in exile have come to realise and accept the reality
that Tibet and China are two completely separate entities. They have
also come to recognise the fact that the Tibetans have the right to
independence and self-determination, since they find no justification in
the Peking leadership's claim that Tibet is a part of China.

Globally speaking, the values of democracy, freedom and justice
are being appreciated and accepted more widely everywhere, especially
in Eastern European countries where the totalitarian system, labelled
centralised democracy, is giving way to a true and free democracy. The
peoples of these nations who have lived under such oppressive regimes
are now gaining freedom and independence.

Similarly, the Tibetan Administration and population in exile, and
more especially the Tibetans in Tibet, are striving hard for our freedom.
For over 40 years, our brethren in Tibet have lived under an oppressive and tyrannical regime, completely deprived of basic human rights. Naturally, 99 percent of them — be they young, old, cadres, officials — are deeply resentful of the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

Despite the tremendous risks involved, many young people in Tibet have chosen to sacrifice their personal interests to demonstrate against Chinese rule in Tibet. Today there is much better understanding of the Tibetan issue in the world and this has heightened international interest in, and support for, our cause. In the light of this, the Chinese leadership will have no alternative but to abandon its rigid policy and come to the negotiating table to find a peaceful solution to the question of Tibet. It will not be long before the Chinese find themselves compelled to leave Tibet.

When this joyful occasion comes, the time when the Tibetans in Tibet and those in exile are re-united in a free Tibet, the present totalitarian system, dubbed as centralised democracy, will have to give way to true democracy under which the people of all the three provinces of Tibet, namely U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo, can enjoy the freedom of thought, expression, and movement. My hope is that Tibet will then be a zone of peace where environmental protection becomes the official policy. I also hope that Tibetan democracy will derive its inspiration from the Buddhist principles of compassion, justice and equality.

Apart from being a multi-party system of parliament, the future Tibetan political system, I hope, will have three organs of government, namely legislature, executive and judiciary, with a clear separation of powers between them, each independent of the other and vested with equal powers and authority. As I have always said, Tibet belongs to the Tibetans, and especially to those who are in Tibet. Therefore, the Tibetans in Tibet shall bear the main responsibility in future Tibet's democratic government. Moreover, Tibetan officials presently serving the government of Chinese-occupied Tibet shall have even greater responsibility as they have more experience in running the affairs of the state. It is important that such Tibetan officials eschew all feelings of uncertainty and doubt. Instead, they should make efforts to strengthen their determination for the task of improving the quality of the future administration of Tibet and
also re-dedicate themselves to the cause of Tibetan freedom.

Of course, some Tibetans, egged on by the Chinese, have said and done detrimental things. They have done this either due to ignorance or out of fear. Therefore, I see that no purpose will be served by seeking vengeance for their past deeds. What is vitally important is to strive unitedly for a happy future.

Personally, I have made up my mind that I will not play any role in the future government of Tibet, let alone seek the Dalai Lama’s traditional political position in the government.

There are important reasons why I have made this decision. There is no doubt that the Tibetans, both in and outside Tibet, have great hope in, and reverence for me. From my side too, I am determined to do whatever I can for the well-being of my people. The fact that I am in a position to do this is due to my karma and prayers over past lives. However, in the future I will not hold any official position in the government. I will most likely become some sort of public figure who may be called on to offer advice or resolve some particularly significant and difficult problems which could not be overcome by the existing government or political mechanisms. I think I will be in a better position to serve the people as an individual outside the government.

Moreover, if Tibet is to survive as an equal member of the modern international community, it should reflect the collective potential of all its citizens, and not rely on one individual. This means the people must be actively involved in charting their own political and social destiny.

It is, therefore, in the interests of the Tibetan people, both long and short term, that I have come to this decision, and not because I am losing interest in my responsibilities. There is no need to worry on this count.

Once Tibet regains its freedom and the Chinese forces are withdrawn from Tibet, there will be a transitional period before the adoption of its constitution. During this period the existing Administration in Tibet with all its Tibetan functionaries, will be retained to look after the affairs of state, such as health, economy, education, culture, and transport and communications. During this time Tibetan officials presently working under the Chinese should be ready to assume full responsibilities.
The interim government will be headed by a president, who will assume all the political powers presently held by me. By that time the present Tibetan Administration in exile will be considered dissolved. Although no one will be entitled to special privileges by virtue of their positions in the Tibetan Administration in exile, I hope the officials of the exile Administration will willingly accept whatever responsibilities are entrusted to them in view of their qualifications, experience and abilities.

The principal responsibility of the transitional government will be to form a Constituent Assembly with representatives from all parts of Tibet. The Constituent Assembly, in turn, will prepare Tibet's new constitution on the basis of various drafts prepared in exile, which will be adopted only with the assent of the interim President. Then, in accordance with the constitution, the interim President will appoint an election commission, which will conduct the elections of the new government.

Provisional order during the transitional period

The time period between the withdrawal of Chinese forces from Tibet and the formation of a new Tibetan government, elected in accordance with the democratic constitution, shall be referred to as the "transitional period."

1. Since we must have an interim President to head the government during the transitional period, the following procedures will be followed to appoint him or her:

   (a) I shall constitute a small committee of leaders from Cholka-Sum, or the three provinces of Tibet. This committee, in consultation with the officials of various departments throughout Tibet, will summon an emergency meeting of the deputies representing administrative division no smaller than a district. The meeting, in turn, will elect not more than seven candidates, from whom I shall appoint one as the President.

   (b) In the event of this meeting failing to elect the candidates, I shall directly appoint the interim President.

2. The interim President, whether appointed directly or from the elected candidates, will take the oath of office in my presence.
3. Upon taking the oath of office, the interim President will be vested with all the powers and responsibilities of government hitherto entrusted to me.

4. The interim President will form a Constituent Assembly within one year of its formation. The Constituent Assembly will finalise the new Constitution of Tibet, after studying the draft proposals.

5. The interim President will appoint the Chairperson and other members of the Election Commission. In accordance with the newly-adopted constitution, the Election Commission will conduct the election of members of the Tibetan legislative bodies, their chairpersons, as well as the President and the Prime Minister.

6. The entire process, from the date of adoption of the Constitution to the election of legislative members and the President and the formation of the government, should not exceed two years.

7. The Constituent Assembly of Tibet shall comprise not less than 250 representatives elected from cities, towns, regions, districts, etc.

8. The first task of the Constituent Assembly will be to establish the rules on the basis of which it will conduct its proceedings.

9. The Constituent Assembly will be deemed to have ceased to exist as soon as the new Parliament is sworn in.

10. Likewise, the interim President, and the Election Commission appointed by him, will relinquish their positions as soon as the new Assembly is sworn in. From then on, the business of a representative form of government will begin in accordance with the Constitution.

The preparation of comprehensive draft constitutions for several alternative models of democracy is underway at the moment. However, the Constituent Assembly, comprising representatives from all regions of Tibet, will have a final say in deciding which form of constitution should be adopted. What I have done here is to give a preliminary picture of what to expect in future Tibet's democratic set-up.

Principal features of the constitution

Salient features: The Constitution of Tibet shall be the supreme law and source of all political powers in Tibet.
Nature of polity: The Tibetan polity should be founded on spiritual values and must uphold the interests of Tibet, its neighbouring countries and the world at large. Based on the principles of Ahimsa, and aimed at making Tibet a zone of peace, it should uphold ideals of freedom, social welfare, democracy, cooperation and environmental protection.


Renunciation of Violence and Use of Military Force: Tibet shall be a zone of peace based upon the principles of non-violence, compassion and protection of the natural environment. Tibet will remain non-aligned in the international communities and will not resort to war for any reason.

Fundamental Rights: All Tibetan citizens shall be equal before the law. They are entitled to equal rights without discrimination on grounds of sex, race, language, religion, social origin, etc.

Other Fundamental Rights: All Tibetan citizens shall have the right to life, liberty, property and the right to freedom of speech and expression, to form associations, to publish and disseminate information and ideas, and the rights to be gainfully employed, whether in the government or any institution or department under its authority.

Right to Vote and Hold Public Office: All citizens of Tibet, men or women, shall have the right to hold public office and to vote in accordance with the law.

Ownership of land: For the benefit of the people and for their habitation, the lands within the territory of Tibet shall be distributed appropriately according to the nature of the land. The distribution of lands will be for the purpose of residence, farming, buildings, factories, business and other private occupational purposes. Land not privately owned will remain with the state.

The Economic System: Avoiding the two extremes of capitalism and socialism, Tibet will formulate a special economic system to suit its own need. The taxation system of Tibet will be based on income criteria.

Education and Culture: Since education is instrumental in the development of good human beings and ensuring social progress, special
attention will be paid to formulate a sound educational policy. All assistance will be given to schools, universities, institutes for science, technology and other professional trainings.

Public Health: A public health care system shall be established in order to provide adequate medical and health care facilities to the people.

Legislative Power: The legislative power of the Tibetan government shall be vested in the two chambers, namely the House of Regions and the House of People. Bills passed by them must receive President's assent before becoming law. The House of People will be the highest law-making body. It shall consist of representatives directly elected by the citizens from all constituencies, which will be demarcated in accordance with population distribution. The House of Regions will consist of members elected by the assemblies at regional level. A limited number of members (the number to be specified in the Constitution) in this House will be nominated by the President.

Executive Power:

(a) If the parliamentary system of government is adopted, there shall be a President and a Vice-President elected by members of the two national level Houses and regional assemblies.

(b) The executive power of the government, under the parliamentary system, will rest with the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers formed by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister must be from a party or any group constituting the majority of members present in the House of People. Failing this, entire members of the House of people will elect the Prime Minister.

Judicial Power: For the purpose of interpreting and upholding constitution, as well as for ensuring impartial adjudication of cases involving the state or individuals, there shall be a judicial organ which is independent of the other two organs, legislative and executive, of the government. There shall be a Supreme Court, which is the highest judicial and appellate court of justice.

Regions: The Tibetan National Assembly shall decide on the demarcation of Tibet's regions after taking into account the regional economic, geographical, demographic, and transport and communications features. In each region, there should be an assembly
consisting of members elected by the people of the particular region. This assembly will be the regional legislative organ.

Also, every region will have a Governor appointed by the President, and a Cabinet headed by a Chief Regional Minister, who in turn, is elected by the regional assembly. All the judicial power in the region shall be vested in a regional High Court.

In view of the local needs, the regional assemblies can pass laws and regulations affecting their respective regions. Except for some very important matters, the regional assemblies will have the authority to make decision governing their respective areas of jurisdiction.

This is an example of one model of parliamentary system. There are various other models of parliamentary or non-parliamentary democracies. A draft constitution based on each of these models is being prepared in consultation with legal experts so that the future Constituent Assembly can choose the one that is seen to be most suitable to Tibet. It is not for me to make this decision.

Amendment: The democratic constitution of free Tibet may be reviewed and amended in accordance with the provisions as set forth in the Constitution.

Conclusion

Known as the Roof of the World, Tibet is in the heartland of Asia between India and China. The people of Tibet are by nature honest, gentle and kind.

Future Tibet shall be a peace-loving nation, adhering to the principle of Ahimsa. It shall have a democratic system of government committed to preserving a clean, healthy and beautiful environment. Tibet shall be a completely demilitarised nation.

Although technological advancement has brought material prosperity to today’s world, it has also resulted in the loss of respect for human beings. Human beings have also lost much of their freedom, so much so that they have become the slaves of machines. While a privileged few live in an island of plenty, the vast majority have to go without even the most basic necessities of life.
In order to prevent this kind of economic disparity, a more preferable economic course needs to be charted for future, free Tibet. Although we will go for a free economy, our economic policy will be aimed at serving the interest of the nation and general masses. We will make efforts to ensure that all the citizens are able to get the basic necessities of life.

In our international policy, Tibet will not align itself with the policy and ideology of any other nation. It will remain neutral in the true sense of the word. Tibet will maintain harmonious relations with its neighbours, based on equal footing and for mutual benefits. It will renounce hostility and promote friendly relationship with all nations.

I hope all sincere and right-thinking Tibetans will strive with a sense of pride and joy to attain the goals I have stated in the foregoing lines.
Today, it is for the first time that we are all meeting in this new House of the Parliament. You have been meeting continuously for many days. I thank and greet all of you. The main thing that I want to say to you today is that it is now nearly 33 years since we became refugees due to political reasons. During this period, we spent most of the time in solving the problems that arose due to our temporary condition as refugees, in educating our youngsters so that they could be of service in Tibet in the future and in the monasteries, in studying mainly the core Buddhist canons and other faculties of Tibetan knowledge in order to preserve them.

At the same time, keeping in view the type of system that we should have after Tibet regains its freedom, we formulated a future draft constitution from the nineteen sixties. We fully believed that at some time we would regain our freedom and be able to rule our own country by ourselves. But it is difficult to guess when that time would be.

Of late, many changes are taking place. Of the many general changes, the most important is that in Tibet, amongst the general masses, although a change of generation is taking place, but the feeling of Tibetan and the extra spirit for the common good and courage for one's own race is surprising. From the side of the Tibetans in exile also, although there will be variations in the degree of clarity and strength of feeling for the common cause but everyone as a whole has the unerasable feeling still that one is a Tibetan and that the Chinese used force on us. Upon the fulfillment of many external and internal conditions, we can now conjecture that within a few years the time of reunion of the Tibetans in and outside Tibet will come. This is not only to speak from our hopes as Tibetans but quite a few people who profess to be China experts share the same view. Especially, among the Chinese themselves, many people who have recently fled from China also have identical views. Therefore within five or at the

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1This was the second session of the eleventh A.T.P.D.
most ten years, everyone is hoping that a drastic change will take place. When we can visualize a future Tibet, it is very important that we should make preparations and think accordingly. If we think from one side, the struggle for freedom is a difficult task and everyone knows this from our experience so far. After gaining freedom, in our own country when we will have to do our own work by ourselves and when the responsibility will be in our own hands, then perhaps it is possible that the task may prove to be more difficult and the difficulties may come in different forms. On the dark side, we cannot rule out a situation where we may kill each other. So far, the division between the Chinese and the Tibetans is very clear. In future, if we are not able to function properly and due to it if inner divisions arise, the problems will be immense and it is possible that an unbearable situation may arise. Therefore, it has become expedient to think very carefully as to how we should go about in future when we regain our freedom. Secondly, both among Tibetans here as well as those living in Tibet, there is a set of people who have a simplistic idea that the day the Chinese quit Tibet, we would have achieved everything. That is not so. From the time we gain freedom, we will have no one to blame for shirking our responsibility. The whole responsibility will be fully on ourselves and so it becomes very important. As everyone knows, since the previous draft constitution was made thirty years ago, many things have undergone changes. Now that it has become practical to take a holistic view and redraft or amend the constitution, I set up a committee to draft a fully democratic constitution.

I deem it important to have a precise document for future guidance. This work was started a few months ago but it could not be fully completed. Previously, the idea was to have it completed and present the same to the full house today. Since it is incomplete and not very definite, I thought that there is no need to hurry and we can discuss the contents or the gist of the ideas of that document.

As soon as we gain our freedom and Tibetans both in and outside Tibet become reunited, I shall set up an interim government. Its head will either be a person elected by a special body of representatives or I shall vest the responsibility on a worthy person. To such a person I shall hand over the historical powers of the Dalai Lama. I have often said in the past that when Tibet becomes free, I shall not take the political responsibilities and as any or every Tibetan, shall live as an ordinary
Buddhist monk. That statement was not given off hand but with a firm
determination to implement it. So I thought to put it clearly in that
document. As and when I hand over all my powers to that person,
simultaneously the institution of the government-in-exile will automatically
come to an end.

The first responsibility of the interim government shall be to form a
Constituent Assembly where representatives from all the localities of the
three united provinces shall be present and along with it, many related
responsibilities will come up. These shall be started and executed
immediately. The Constituent Assembly shall pass the constitution of
Tibet and based on that Constitution, a new system of government will
emerge. These tasks shall be completed within a period of two years. Till
the new government is formed the present Chinese made system of various
departments of education, health, economy, etc., where they have
appointed a number of staff shall continue. These people have gained
some experience. They are also familiar with the system. Although, they
were paid by the Chinese and worked in offices as posted by them, but
not less than 99% of them remained true Tibetans mentally. As they had
remained honestly pure Tibetans, they will continue to shoulder the
responsibilities. There may be a few exceptions but that is a different
matter.

As and when the constitution of Tibet is passed, a new Tibetan
government shall accordingly be established. Then a time to change the
system will come. Those of us working in the government-in-exile will
have no special privileges with the winding up of the organisation. But
any work assigned according to one's qualification and experience can
be taken up.

The changes that may be made in the present Chinese formulated
departments by the new government (formed as per the Constitution
passed by the Constituent Assembly set up by the interim government)
will be known only at that time. Till then, it would be more stable and
organised to continue with the present set-up and also let the existing
staff carry on with their responsibilities.

We should make it clear that this would be the general system because
it is possible that some of the people who are now working in Tibet may
be concerned about what may happen to the staff when changes will
ultimately take place. I think some of them are worried. Therefore instead
of only my speech, if a document comes out in the name of the Dalai Lama, then it would be clear in everybody's mind and things would be better organised. Thus I thought of bringing out such a document. In the world in general also, I thought that if we can state precisely that this would be the system when we regain our freedom, then it would be clear in everybody's mind and convenient to act accordingly.

Now whether a detailed constitution can be made ready from here or not, I plan at least to prepare a brief document in the form of my suggestions which can form the basis of a proposal or a draft to be passed by the future Constituent Assembly. But that would be only my suggestion and I cannot and do not wish to say that that should be passed. In that proposed draft, just as I had said in the Five Point Peace Plan, the fundamental principle is to make Tibet a Zone of Peace and Non-Violence. From my personal point of view, to make Tibet a zone of peace and non-violence will not only benefit the Tibetan people but will be good for all the neighbouring countries and will show a noble example to the whole world which is very important. I wish to dedicate my life for this. Whatever the name but till I die, I will work hard for this. Acting in accordance with this, some people talk of an economic system or policy based on the Buddhist ideology. I don't understand it very well. Basically I don't know much about economics. Whatever it may be, our ideology on economic policy must be based on compassion. In this, there is a problem of implementing the socialist system although regarding the aims and objectives, there are good points also. Anyway, we should not be foolish enough to insist on a system that is impractical or useless. In the capitalist system there is scope for real progress due to personal initiative for individual benefit. So I think it would be good if we can take the advantageous points from both the systems. Regarding the system of government, it would be the "Parliamentary System" whereby the political party which gets the majority in the House would form the government. On secularism, personally I think that it is quite appropriate but many outside people and the Tibetan people as a whole - both in and outside Tibet - prefer the dual policy of both the religious and the temporal and thus it is so enshrined in our Charter also. Judging by the actual conditions, the dual policy seems to be more advantageous and truer to the wishes of the people.
Speech at Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies

Dharamsala,
July 28, 1993

The Chairman, the Vice-chairman, the members of A.T.P.D. and the Cabinet ministers,

This time, as the Assembly session coincided with my stay here, I thought of attending it for a short while. Yesterday, at the opening ceremony, there would have been the official formalities in which I would have nothing special to contribute. I myself did not wish to come. It was therefore decided that I would come down on the second or the third day, once the meeting gets underway. Firstly, I shall speak of some of the recent happenings in brief, and then for the next thirty or forty minutes, I shall sit here and watch your deliberations. In the past also, during the Annual Meetings, I used to sit for a while. I feel good when I personally see the discussions and deliberations. What specific issue are you presently discussing? (Chairman, A.T.P.D. responds to the question.)

More than thirty-four years have passed since we have been living in exile. During this period, besides setting up settlements on an emergency basis and imparting education to thousands of children, we had undertaken a number of ventures. At the same time, from almost the very beginning of our exile, we had planned on transforming future Tibet into a real, perfect system of freedom and democracy. With this aim in view, when it came to putting it into practice, we had to make a lot of efforts by introducing gradual changes as it was a new task for us. In recent times, with the introduction of the Charter of the Tibetans-in-exile, we have been able to make quite a good progress in the practice of democracy. The Assembly has been expanded and its working has greatly improved. It has been some time since the Assembly entered into a new phase and during this time, all of you did your level best. I extend my thanks.

1 This was the fifth session of the eleventh A.T.P.D.
There is a new development now. When we visit the settlements, I speak to the people about the Charter. The Cabinet also, in its speeches, often mention the Assembly. That is because the officers in the government cannot take arbitrary decisions. Regardless of the quality, there is a parliament duly elected from amongst the Tibetans-in-exile which has to be taken into consideration. Since we have to adhere to its powers, it shows that the nature of our democracy is becoming stronger. I think it is very good. As for myself, when I was quite young, it was in my nature not only to consult the concerned people but also ordinary persons and acquaintances, and when I first came to Lhasa, I used to ask for suggestions even from the house cleaners that I knew. By nature, from my childhood, I had a tendency to consult other people. However, in the past, after the discussions when all was said and done, it was alright for me to take the final decision. But now, after the introduction of the Charter, when I have to take a decision, I have to first consult and see whether it would be in accordance with the provisions of the Charter or not. That necessitates for a second thought. It is very good. It is a sign of progress. All of you have taken your responsibilities seriously and worked diligently. I thank you for it.

In future also, for the complete practice of democracy, it is important to gain experience. For example, in Tibet, for a full implementation of democracy including the conduct of elections it is perhaps possible that it will take some time. Before the Chinese occupation, there was no such experience, and after their occupation, except to go by the communist totalitarian system, there was no opportunity at all for democracy. People had to live under sheer fear and according to the whims and fancies of those above, they had to speak. Thus there was neither the freedom of speech nor the freedom of thought. Therefore in future Tibet, we will definitely face difficulties in the implementation of democracy and there will be the need to gain gradual experience. In comparison, we in exile who have been living in free countries for the last thirty-four years are firstly ourselves enjoying the freedom of expression. Secondly we have had first-hand experience of various free and democratic systems of the world. In future when freedom will dawn, although this institution will not continue to shoulder responsibilities and wield power, but the experience that we have gained will be highly crucial in introducing them to the people in Tibet. Whatever we have implemented so far has been
temporary under an exiled set-up. However, I have always believed that in the long run, this would be a factor for fulfilling a very important duty in introducing a modern system of political administration in future Tibet.

Another point that I have time and again urged whenever the Deputies meet together, and about which I always speak at the swearing-in ceremonies is that once one becomes a member of the Assembly, it is very important that one acts as a common representative of all the people. Whatever may be the origins but once elected to the House, one must become a common representative of the six million Tibetan people and function in accordance with the oath of office. Otherwise, sometimes, although it may be from the spirit of the common good or benefit, but such a spirit can be expansive or narrow and if it is not backed by intelligence, it can become parochial which in turn may hinder a Deputy from discharging the duties of office properly. In the past also, there have been some such cases and presently too this needs to be kept firmly in mind. Sometimes such instances create some bad impressions outside. As I have always been stressing in the past to be careful about it, I wanted to repeat the same once again today also. Whatever may be one’s original constituency of either the religions or the provincial denominations but once one becomes a member of the House, one must serve the overall cause of Tibet and think from a higher plane. If one’s goal is prejudiced or too narrow, his/her commitment eventually becomes devalued. This I feel is not good. I feel it is important to realise this.

Considerable time has elapsed since I first came to the Assembly. Between then and now many changes have taken place and all of them have been in the form of progressive developments. In some cases things have been beyond our power. Primarily, because the use of force does not conform to human nature, it is but natural for truth to surface, and therefore, surprising changes have taken place (in the world). At the same time, in the case of Tibet also interest has grown gradually and many of the reasons of change have been and are for the good of our cause. I have said this a few times in the past and I want to reiterate it again here today. When we think from one side, it is worthy to be proud of because we have had such good opportunities and favourable conditions. However, on the other hand, we have as yet not won our freedom. We are only striving for it and the occasion of enjoying its fruits has not come. We have to still traverse a difficult and delicate path.
What sudden obstacles we may have to face we don’t know. Therefore it is very important for all of us to be careful so that no laxity occurs from any side. At present, all favourable conditions are with us. But if we are unable to take advantage of these conditions for producing effective results and waste the golden opportunity through laxity, it will be an irreparable loss. The recent developments make us proud and happy. At the same time, our responsibilities also increase. The opportunities are ripe. People from various places in the world are watching us. Their ears are keenly tuned towards us. They want to know what the Tibetans are doing, what they themselves need to do to support us and what they can do for Tibet. Their attention is focused towards us. At such a time, if our discussions are inadequate, if the level of our intelligence and thinking is not up to the mark, and if we are unable to perform our tasks punctually, then, after some time, boredom will set in and their attention will vanish. If such a situation comes to pass, it will be a great blunder! Therefore along with the good opportunities, we must also increase the sense of responsibility. All of us should develop a sense of taking a risk without wasting even a moment of this good opportunity. It is important to realize that this is vitally urgent and accordingly everyone must be very careful.

There is another point that I want to mention. It is necessary that the Assembly should keep a check from the Cabinet downwards, in fact it should be from myself and downwards. So it is for you to directly remind and deal with them. However, it is important that all necessary actions including corrective measures should be taken up actively without fear or favour.

Regarding our relations with China, on the whole, no changes are being made in the policy of the last 14 years. It is being continued. But from the actual experience of the 14 years, we have learnt that as a means to solve our problem, it is not enough to deal with the Chinese government directly. Besides continuing unchanged with the policy of dealing directly with the Chinese government without any preconditions, we should, at the same time, make all our efforts to gain support to our just cause from the outside world. The Chinese Communists object to this but whether they put any objections or not, in reality, it is clear that without pressure from the outside world, no tangible results will come out of the talks with the Chinese. So, from the Chinese point of view, although it would seem to be contradictory to say that we want to have talks with
them while at the same time internationalising the Tibetan issue, but we have been compelled to do so. It is their own making. During the last 14 years, if the Chinese had responded to our contacts sincerely by making all-out efforts to arrive at a solution and come out with a certain proposal deserving our consideration, it would have been unnecessary for us to appeal for help from outside. But, however much the Chinese may try to explain to others, in the case of the Tibetans, since they have continued to suppress our people to the limit as a matter of habit, we were left with no option but to appeal to the outside world. And this is not something that we cannot explain to the Chinese. It was according to the demand of the situation, that we were compelled to appeal to the world outside. This has been our approach so far and I plan to pursue the same path. At the same time it is to be noted that Gyalo Dhondup and his companion are about to return from China before the end of this session. We may be able to take stock of the situation. If this happens, we will think accordingly. As of now, I cannot be specific.

Sooner or later, considered from all sides, it can almost be presumed that, the communist totalitarian system will have no chance of survival. Thus within a few years, great changes can definitely be expected. Another point is regarding the method of our discussions which I feel should be held in different ways. Sometimes it can be open and public while at others, it would be an internal discussion without publicity. Then the topics could be speculative in nature. For example, we have our China policy of the past 14 years based on the reality of the situation. But if that situation undergoes a change in a certain way, then what could be our approach. Such things should be discussed. If suppose democratic changes take place in China internally with the initiative taken by the Communist regime itself and things become more relaxed; the outer structure of the Chinese government does not undergo any change and it's powers may also perhaps remain the same but there could be more freedom. If that happens, there will not be any killings and bloodshed amongst the Chinese themselves. Everything may proceed in a stable way. On the whole, that is good. So if that happens, we may have to continue with the present policy. Or can you give any new suggestions? What new methods could be adopted?

Another example can be that the Chinese communist party continues with the same hard-line approach. Amongst the intellectuals and the students who are struggling for more freedom, the opposition is there
already. On top of that, among the military personnel also there are those who have sympathy and support for the free democracy movement. We got such definite information about two years ago. This was told to me clearly by a knowledgeable person who had escaped from China. In recent times, a number of heads in the military were transferred and frequent reshufflings were done. Judging from these many changes in leadership, the internal situation and the outside information seem to prove each other. So perhaps, in China, the Communists may continue with the hardline stance. Accordingly, those who are in the free democracy movement may show their opposition. In such a situation, if there is a great upheaval, what should we do? Similarly, what other situations could arise due to different changes and according to each situation, what should be our approach? What ideas can we come up with? Such discussions could be carried out – the actual situation may not be the same as speculated – but there is no harm in discussing. But if we don’t discuss them at all, and afterwards, if such a situation actually arises, it would not be good to be taken by surprise and not to know what to do at once. Some may think that this is just like a dream. But the more we discuss, raise doubts and try to dispel them, the clearer it would be in everybody’s minds and there would be the advantage of being surer and more systematic. So such discussions will definitely be helpful.

We Tibetans have considerable contacts with various foreign countries. Some of these are being maintained in my name. The different departmental offices have also contacts relating to their work. Then the ministers travel abroad and make contacts. The Deputies also do the same. These contacts need to be further expanded. For instance, contacts through the Tibetan Youth Congress and the Tibetan Women’s Association are also there. Still we should explore how individual contacts could be made. These relationships firstly bring the Tibetans as a whole into contact and help the overall Tibetan cause. Secondly, they help to project that the Tibetans-in-exile have a parliament which has the qualifications of a democratic institution. The promotion of the parliament is not merely for the sake of name. So, as these contacts have many advantages, it is important to still expand them throughout the world. In short, we should deliberate upon ways of further strengthening these outside contacts.

Our relations with Taiwan recently underwent a change. Under the present conditions, within Taiwan itself freedom movement is gaining
ground. After the recent changes in a number of communist countries throughout the world, people in Taiwan have also become more confident. With that confidence, democracy has strengthened, which is to our advantage. Due to that advantage, our relations with them have reached a new stage. Basically, it is only the beginning. Judging from our experiences of the last few months, it may be that due to the on-going changes in Taiwan, our cause too may benefit. In Taiwan too perhaps there is a thinking that since Tibetans have a good impression in the world, a close relationship with us may be beneficial. So when there is an occasion for us to benefit them, to the extent possible, it is a good opportunity. With this opportunity, when we have made a beginning, we may face minor obstacles and disagreements. However, if we can find a proper way on the major front, I think it would be expedient to ignore the minor ones and proceed in a diplomatic way. After one or two years of fostering this relationship if there are no positive outcomes, then it is a different matter. Otherwise I feel that under the present conditions we should try to find a way out, with great care and intelligence. Discussions regarding the details will come gradually.

Another point is regarding the interaction between people in and outside Tibet which is already quite considerable. During the last more than a decade, under the new phase of travel to and from Tibet, many have gone there and many have come here also. Such people have had a good opportunity but many of those who visit Tibet are able to tell or listen to only the small matters of their immediate vicinity and only a few people, it seems, manage to describe clearly the overall Tibetan situation from a larger perspective. This is definitely a drawback. For example, yesterday I met a man. He had been to his home-town and described the situation here. People there had told him that although there had been many visitors like him, no one had described things as he had done. We have the Chushi Gangdruk Association among the Khampas and the Do-med people have their own Do-med Association. As U-Tsang and Ngari also have their Associations, they should take the responsibility. For example recently we have brought out some new documents like the White Book. If the public takes more interest in these documents and understands them, and if such a person goes to Tibet, the effect will be much more. On the other hand if a person does not take any interest in them, a good opportunity is wasted, and this happens
many a times. Our public should be motivated regularly in such a way so that in their very senses a feeling for the common Tibetan cause is aroused. We have to drive ourselves to think about Tibet every day and even dream about it while engaging in one’s vocational activities. Only then will our interest be aroused. Otherwise, an advice at the time of leaving for Tibet will not remain in their memory and they may forget. A number of people reach many areas of Tibet without our having to incur any extra expenditure. Once there, although they do not have the means to talk to the people publicly, they have the opportunity through various direct or indirect ways to explain the truth of the Tibetan affairs as clearly as possible. This opportunity should not be neglected. Also, we who are outside, should exert our efforts on promoting education and health facilities in Tibet either through aid from others or directly from our own resources. There is a tremendous mental bond between people in and outside Tibet, this relationship should be further strengthened in practical terms through private or public means. This is highly important.

Another important matter is about our tradition of the nobility of character in Tibetan society which some people say is today slowly degrading. This is like the very foundation of our existence. We Tibetans are taught by Buddhism, and Mahayana Buddhism in particular, to be kind and compassionate and from that our society has naturally developed an ingrained tendency of nobility. Tibetans when compared with other cultures and communities are found to be more noble, peaceful and patient. Here we are not talking only of education and knowledge. It has to do with one’s daily way of life and thinking. In short, it is related to the character of the body, mind and speech. If these so called ‘three does’ do not possess a natural tradition of morality, there cannot be the nobility of character. If it is not there, one may have the ability to describe Tibetan culture verbally, but in practice Tibetan tradition will be missing in that person. Suppose, from my own side, I have a hope that when Tibet becomes free, it will be a zone of peace where the Tibetans will be happy and the others will appreciate. Sometimes I jokingly tell people that when Tibet will gain freedom, it will become a public holiday resort for the whole world! In the big cities where the environment is polluted, physical ailments abound. Due to the various mental tensions, there are emotional problems. In Tibet, besides the land being clean, the natural good moral character will produce a noble feeling which together will
give the holiday-makers peace of mind. And for those who are interested, specialized trainings can be given just as the ancient Indian Yogic system is today widely practiced in the world for a healthy body. We can also do likewise. If Tibet becomes a zone of peace, it will not only benefit the six million Tibetans, but has the potential and the ideal conditions to contribute to the mental peace and physical health of the world as a whole. So I feel that if the Tibetan culture of nobility of character which is linked to Tibetan Buddhism can be preserved and promoted, it will benefit not only the six million Tibetan people but even the animals and the insects including the ants which exist in Tibet. This will further extend not only to the areas of the Himalayan range, inner and outer Mongolia, Tuva, Kalmykia, etc., but the minds of millions of the Chinese themselves can be greatly benefited by us.

There is nothing much to be surprised about an expert who can describe what Tibetan culture is. But if the noble Tibetan tradition of sound moral character slowly degrades, and is lost, what will happen to the hard work put in so far? That is a cause for serious concern to me. Amongst those newly arrived from Tibet, although their spirit for the common cause and Tibetan nationalism are surprising and superb but whether it may be due to the example set by the Chinese or the outside effect of living under the pressure of an emergency situation or the result of gradual moral debasement, there have been cases of some of them stabbing people at the slightest provocation. Therefore some of them say that except for the Chinese domination now, when Tibet becomes free one day, internal killings may continue unabated. I tell them that such a thing will never happen but recently I have come to have some doubts in my mind. Some of the new arrivals from Tibet have good spirits and although sincere are characterised by rough exteriors. In exile, some of the school teachers and people in the settlements have told me that the traditional Tibetan noble character may slowly degrade into extinction. They say that with the change of generation, somehow, there seems to be a degeneration. This is very risky. As I have said before, if such a thing happens, there will be no fruits of the hard labour that we have put in, and I feel concerned. The foundation of our stand is that our struggle for freedom is not the same as the freedom struggle of other people. A freedom struggle aroused by the passions of jealousy, hatred and prejudice is also a freedom struggle but different
from the way we are carrying on our movement. Our struggle for freedom is motivated by non-violence, love and compassion based on the spirit for the good of all. Such a freedom is mutually beneficial and whether it becomes so or not depends upon the Tibetan nature of the noble moral character. On the other hand, if one is driven by the raw, poisonous passions of desire, hatred and ignorance, even a freedom movement is nothing to be marvelled at. This is the crux and soul of our very being. So we have to think whether such a degeneration is taking place or not and if so, on what basis.

Previously, it was tried that learned Lamas and Geshes should give religious preachings to the children emphasizing moral education. But sometimes those preachings became routine affairs, uninteresting and incompatible with the realities of everyday life. It was not enough. The most important thing is that the nobility of moral character should be so instilled in the minds of the school children from such a young age that it becomes a natural part of their behaviour. Moral character cannot be taught by mere words and therefore the teachers should not only teach lessons but introduce the nature of a noble character through the example of their own behaviour and expressions of body, mind and speech. Though the responsible officers and people will see to it but if time permits it is important to examine urgently how lapses of degeneration of moral character take place in our schools and why. If we fail to pay proper attention from the beginning it becomes very late when the lapses become too obvious to be manageable. That will be a big blunder. Therefore I always speak about this at every forum.

In the world, we are making out the Tibetan issue to be an urgent one. It is not a false propaganda. The situation is really urgent. But as we appeal to others, it is more important that we in exile project the urgency by carrying out various movements. We should show more vigorously how we are concerned and losing our sleep over the critical situation in Tibet. Otherwise, as we publicize and make strong appeals, if someone were to examine areas in which we show our anxiety and finds out that we are doing nothing special and living normally, it would be construed that the actual situation is not so serious as made out by us. At worst they may think that we are lying. So, as we appeal for help from others, we should be able to convince them of the seriousness of the situation by showing our own concern through various activities.
The next point may or may not have a relevance here but these days a number of monks and nuns come out of Tibet. If under special circumstances there, someone was imprisoned by the Chinese or thrown out of job or was in danger of being charged, we should welcome hundreds or even thousands of them. Otherwise, there are cases where just on the spur of the moment, someone decides to come to India to enter into a monastery and study the scriptures but in actual practice that person does not possess the ability to carry on the studies till the end. In Kham areas and in some villages in Central Tibet, I am told that the number of women are more and the male population is comparatively much less. In some places, houses have been abandoned by its members. This is dangerous. It is important that in Tibet, even a single Tibetan should remain there to keep possession of the land. Our population is already depleted and if people in large numbers come here and in Tibet also, many of them become monks and nuns, I feel concerned that it may be harmful in the long run. Secondly, for the practice of religion, basically, there is no difference between the lay people and the monks and nuns. An initiated person who upholds the vows purely can practice religion with greater effectiveness as everything is more convenient for a lone being. That is why Lord Buddha himself renounced home and hearth to become a monk. It is the perfect way. However, when it comes to a large number of monks and nuns who are not perfect in quality, we need to think whether they become assets or banes of Lord Buddha. When I talk of such things in Tibetan society, some people opine that the Dalai Lama should not speak on such matters. I understand their feelings. These are subjects which are not convenient to be raised in public as they seem to be highly controversial. But they need to be thought over and given due consideration. Therefore in our refugee society, some of the monks, especially the older ones become initiated for the sole pursuit of nirvana but I wonder whether many of the younger ones are like that. They may think that admission into a monastery takes care of livelihood and some sort of education is also gained. For them actually we have the facilities of the Central Tibetan Schools of the government of India and the schools under our Education Department. There are a few private schools also. It may be beneficial to educate them in such schools. We need to think about these issues.
I came here today with the intention of visiting the assembly for a short while as I wished to discuss some matters of minor importance. Actually these are matters already well known to everybody. During the past over 35 years we have been working for the restoration of freedom which is our historical right. One part of this work has been to gain experience of real democracy and to implement it gradually. As the role of parliament is most important for this, I came here for a while today with the intention of sharing some of my thoughts with some new deputies who are present here. During the years gone by, there certainly have been a number of achievements. I have visited various places on the globe and I found that those people who are familiar with the Tibetan situation consider the Tibetan refugees to be different from the various other refugee groups on the earth in that we are united in our cause due to our organisational set up.

It is evident that even the Chinese government cannot ignore the Tibetans' situation and the power of our unity. It shows that due to our organisational set up in exile we are able to serve the general cause of Tibet and it clearly shows how much this is benefiting us. It is something that we can be proud of.

Secondly, our general cause of Tibet is related with pacifism which is based on the Buddhist teachings. Under these circumstances the Tibetan refugees are contributing to some extent towards the development of mental peace and happiness on this earth. Because of this the number of people sympathetic towards Tibetans, our religion and culture is growing. Those who become interested in the Tibetan religion and culture, gradually take interest in the struggle for independence of Tibet. Due to this, the
number of those explaining the Tibetan situation to the public in the world is increasing and the number of those having sympathy and concern for Tibet is growing.

When there is sympathy and strong support for the Tibetan cause among the general public, the views of most of the people will also be sympathetic towards us. It is evident that most of them are able to comprehend the righteousness of our cause. Due to this the parliaments of many countries have passed resolutions on Tibet and the matter has been taken up for discussions. This also influences the governments of those countries. There certainly have been definite achievements of our organisational set up in exile. The united efforts of us all have made it possible. Therefore, I thank those people and the deputies of the Tibetan parliament who have assembled here today and the ministers affiliated to the administration who have been serving the general cause of Tibet sincerely according to their abilities.

As for the future, as I have been explaining to people, the situation in Tibet seems hopeless. However, considering the perspective of the general world situation there is much hope for the Tibetan cause and it is very important that we continue to make our best efforts. Therefore, I request all of you to take up responsibility and make concerted effort.

As far as the administrative and parliamentary affairs are concerned, in my opinion it is necessary to pay more attention to bring about efficiency in our activities and the actual implementation of the changes needed on the basis of work done and experience gained up to now. Although in our administrative units the work is basically done sincerely, it is as I have always been saying: the Tibetan character is such that unless some urgency demands immediate action, they will easily procrastinate in a somewhat irresponsible manner. Therefore, it is not at all proper for us to remain contented with our lot, thinking that everything is very well. Much more still remains to be done to intensify our efforts. It is very important to make improvements based on careful planning.

This working session is for making a selection of deputies from the various localities and the manner of their election. Based on the analysis of the experiences gained up to now and the various advantages and disadvantages, isn't it necessary to discuss further what additions,
alterations and changes have to be brought in and so on? Likewise, there will be minor changes in the way the ministers are nominated, based on actual experience. There has been a certain method of implementation which has been followed up to now. It will certainly be necessary, either during this assembly or later, to consider what would be the most efficient way of democratic implementation of decisions. I think it is good to discuss these matters and pay attention to the necessary changes to be made. This is the first thing I wanted to talk about relating to general matters.

Then, secondly, on the method of solving the Tibetan question. Actually, everybody knows about this very well. However, I thought that I should relate one matter to all Tibetan people's deputies. It is as I said in my previous 10th March (Tibetan Uprising Day) speech the reason for what I have said is that during the past 15 years we have relied upon various approaches and as such we do not regret what we have done. We did what was possible. The main objective for our actions has been the urgency of the situation in Tibet. It has now become even more urgent to apply measures to prevent the serious possibility of the land of Tibet turning into the land of China. Therefore, solving this problem has become the primary objective and efforts have been made to solve the Tibetan question through the Middle Path approach. On the other hand, not a single occasion has presented itself for discussing in detail with the government of China on what would be a better approach for solving the Tibetan question. I recognise this as a defeat or a failure.

There has not been any success in preventing the primary problem of population transfer of Chinese into Tibet. The Chinese are continually arriving there, their control is growing tighter and the environment is degenerating. Not only that, the worst is that before the previous Tibetan New Year some new arrivals from Tibet told me that the situation in Tibet is worsening and under such circumstances the position of the organisation headed by the Dalai Lama is getting much weaker. It seems that some people are losing hope as they think it important to hold direct negotiations with the Chinese government which has not been achieved. I heard that some people are thinking like this. When I heard this, I thought this was very serious. The important responsibility of the Tibetans in exile is to do
everything possible so that the matchless courage of Tibetans living in Tibet does not diminish. Really, it will be very bad if the courage or will-power of the Tibetans inside Tibet should breakdown.

Based on these matters are the views which have given rise to the Middle Path approach during the last 14 years. I welcome them. The more ideas we have, the more analytical our thoughts will become. When there are ideas, reasons are bound to be there. There are also reasons for the policies or approach I have been following. When there is a sound reason based on actual experience, it becomes easy for those calling themselves "China experts" and for those nations having trade relations with China, to give us their support. This being so, it definitely helps us gain world support. Under such circumstance I see my stand as well-founded and I also believe in that. From year to year the number of our supporters is increasing in the world. However, because there has not been any let up in the danger of destruction and degradation in Tibet, especially because of the Chinese influence in the minds of some Tibetans, I am myself starting to have some doubts on the matter.

Even if the primary objective of solving the emergency could not be achieved, there still exists the essential need for carrying on the struggle for a long-term solution. Even if there is no immediate benefit in the present crisis, if time is wasted in not applying ourselves to the long-term benefits, it will be a loss. In the mean while I have received a lot of support to the approach I have been applying until now. It has been successful. On the other hand I have met with new difficulties and have not been able to accomplish my objective. This being so, I have been consistently saying that the ultimate decision should be made by the people themselves. After they have been consulted, the decision has to be taken on the basis of the majority opinion. Policies have to be implemented according to that decision. Whatever be the result, good or bad, happiness or misery, there will be no regret. From my own personal viewpoint, we should all think according to democratic principles. In my view, there will be no regret on a matter which has been decided on the basis of consultation. It will pose no difficulties to ask us living in exile for our opinions and compare them, but it will not be possible to gather the opinions openly in Tibet. However, it will be possible to gather opinions
to some extent from most of the significant regions. It will take some time. If a decision based on such measures is taken, there should be no need for regret.

In my previous 10th March speech I made an appeal as follows: "Up to now I have persisted in my efforts. As an ultimate approach I now make an appeal for the starting of international level negotiations between Tibet and China and for international pressure on and exhortations to China for doing so." Lastly, the reason for what I said in my 10th March address was because I thought of consulting the people and establishing my approach and my stand.

Now immediately it is not possible to fix a specific time. In a definite time-span, the opinions of the people should be gathered. As for the manner of doing so, the various approaches should be clearly explained to the people. Each and every person should comprehend the advantages and disadvantages in each approach and the problems they pose. They should be able to discuss and compare them, and then there should be enough time — some months, half year or a year — for public discussions. Then, having a proper understanding of the matter or by following the views of others, by thoroughly comprehending the situation, the approach to be relied upon should be decided by a referendum. This is my idea of taking a decision based on a referendum. Even the specific time cannot be determined now, when the course of action is outlined like that, you should think on that and consider what kind of other methods exist by thinking constantly and not during the sessions alone.

Anyway, the situation in Tibet has become very urgent. If, as a result of this discussion and sharing the ideas with others you could bring about a new approach different from the one we have been relying upon, I will welcome it. In case any Tibetan, especially the Tibetan people's deputies or any friend of Tibet can suggest an approach which can be applied for solving the present urgent situation, I will welcome it. Really, the actual situation is getting very serious.

Then, last year there was a minor incident in Dharamsala. It is possible that those of you coming from far-away places do not know clearly what happened. However, the final result arising out of it was favourable. The local people paid new attention to the amount of benefits
arising from Tibetan refugees staying here. It also helped the Tibetans to remember the kindness of the locals, and especially to realise that when one is not in one's own country wherever one stays one will meet with some difficulties. Anyway, it was very good that a bad incident turned out as favourable as it did.

Another minor matter: In the meantime under the name of the Four Rivers Six Ranges Organisation (Chushi Gangdrug) a document was signed with some representatives of the Tibetan and Mongolian Affairs Commission of Taiwan, which has caused some problems. It has always been my wish to develop good relations with Taiwan. The reason for this is that the basic method for solving the question of Tibet is to find a way based on negotiations between China and Tibet. Other than this, it is not possible to bring out any solution based on discussions with others.

In order that our question could be solved by mutual discussions with China, it is important to make the Chinese comprehend the real situation of the Tibetans. The main way the Chinese people could be made to understand our situation is to explain it to those Chinese living in free countries, especially in Taiwan. The understanding they have gained will gradually percolate to China and create an awareness there about the Tibetan situation. The most effective means to create awareness about the real situation of Tibetans among the Chinese is through the Chinese themselves and therefore it is important to foster good relations with them. Therefore I consider it important to develop cordial relations with Chinese living in free countries.

Under this policy, and as the freedom of speech and a change towards democracy are taking place in Taiwan these days, both the government of Taiwan and many of her people do have a great interest in developing relations with Tibetans. I have myself for many years wished that an amicable relation could be developed between us and Taiwan. However, I had hoped that we could develop good relations on the basis of our rights. Recently some people went to Taiwan and started a new movement for developing good relations or re-establishing the relations as there were none for a while. This has not been at all satisfactory. In brief, for many years past, we have had a lot of difficulties due to contacts with the Tibetan and Mongolian Affairs Commission in Taiwan. As there
have been these kinds of problems, we have not been able to create good relations with Taiwan at present, even though we have made well-grounded efforts in this direction. At a time when we have not been able to establish good relations, and when something is created under the name of an important group in the Tibetan society, it is generally improper to develop contacts with a foreign nation and sign a document.

Especially, during this period when the Tibetan government is trying to develop good relations with Taiwan, there are some difficulties which had existed even before. If the firm policies maintained by the Tibetan government are silently disregarded by the Tibetans, it will not prove very effective. If all the people act according to the stand maintained by the government, its policies will bring more result. The worst thing is that those people who observe the government policies do not go to Taiwan, and those going and staying there are craving for money and material things, or in spite of being aware of the government's policies, disregard them, or do not understand the true cause of Tibet. Anyway, they are showing a somewhat vague appreciation. If somebody who is able to explain and comment on the stand of the Tibetan government after first having comprehended it, could go to Taiwan, this could bring something worthwhile.

When relations with Taiwan have for some time remained somewhat strained and then this kind of situation is created under the name of an important Tibetan organisation, it causes special difficulties with regard to the present circumstances and becomes a big obstacle. Moreover, during the past many years some activities under the name of the Four Rivers Six Ranges Organisation have not always been according to our views. The other day when three people from that organisation met me, I explained this clearly to them. The situation being like this, according to my personal viewpoint, it is as I have often been saying: We are all known to each other and familiar for many years. We are close friends. However, when this kind of mistake is made, it is important to avoid faulty courses of action which take place occasionally. This is related to our main cause.

Basically, out of the three, Dotoe is an important province. In the past, there were innumerable people of that province, who, for the sake
of religious and secular affairs kept to their commitments and experienced difficulties. The Buddhist doctrine holds a special position in the Tibetan religion and culture. In brief, as for those persons from the Sakya, Gelugs, Kagyud, Nyingma and Bönpo traditions who hold, protect and propagate the Buddhist teachings and practice, a large number of people from that province have for long served the cause of the religion. Even now, in most of the centres in exile belonging to the Sakya, Gelug, Nyingma and Bönpo traditions, most ex-abbots are from the province of Dotoe. This is really important.

When engaging in activities under this kind of significant name, apart from the long-term effects, even insiders will start having doubts concerning the appropriateness of the actions undertaken. It would be very dangerous if the people of Dotoe would become disappointed and lost faith. In the past it has happened that a minor cause had resulted in giving rise to many prejudices. When prejudices and doubts have developed in the people’s minds, whatever activities are undertaken, they will be of somewhat vague nature and there will be meaningless internal strife. It has become fundamental to our cause that the three provinces keep firmly to the commitment of integrity and unity. Due to activities opposed to this, a small cause can slowly bring forth the internal degeneration of the commitment which is a very frightening matter.

The Tibetan government in exile which is headed by me has, during the past over 35 years, always considered as its main cause and fundamental policy, “the long cherished goal of the glory of freedom of the entire Tibet”. However, it seems that some individuals are harbouring doubts about this state of affairs. But there is no need for me to swear on it. Sincerely, the fortunes of us all depend on the fortunes of the three provinces. I think that during the past over 35 years there was no need to bring any changes to this principle and policy. There has not been any talk suggesting any changes to be brought in. I have not even dreamt about it. However, there are some Tibetans amongst us who are concerned about this matter. The reason for it is something very unfortunate. It is because some of the activities have not been carried out properly. Therefore, irrespective of this problem, from now on these kinds of difficulties should not arise and our commitment to the three provinces
should remain unabated. It is very important that we do not engage in senseless talk motivated by meaningless prejudices and doubts, but should maintain the purity of our commitment. Therefore, based on the painful experience of the past, I hope that this problem will be cleared and that the disease will not occur again and again. This has a connection with the two chairmen, the Cabinet Ministry (Kashag) and also sometimes with working committees.

To sum up, in order to decide about this matter, the Cabinet Ministry and the Tibetan People's Assembly have gathered the opinions of people of Dotoe concerning this matter. Almost 99 per cent have given the same kind of response. I am very happy about that. It is also something which should actually be so. The sincere efforts that we have been making should be able to win the confidence of the majority of the general public and it seems that this has been successful to some extent. I am extremely happy about this. Holding the opinion of the majority of people and our fundamental policies as basis, the current matter will be in the course of time decided by the Cabinet Ministry and the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies. It will be an honest governmental decision and it is quite possible that some individuals will not agree with it. However, it will surely be supported by the majority. If we can manage to proceed directly it will be very good. In this critical period for the survival of the land of Tibet, its three provinces, the field of activities of Avalokiteshvara, and the six million Tibetans, it is very unfortunate that meaningless doubts should arise due to baseless internal prejudice. It is very important that this does not happen in future.

The immediate and long-term policies of the Tibetan government which we have established even without having enough potential for that, have to be supported and implemented by the people of the three provinces. When referring to the Tibetan government, it should not be something which one cannot trust as an object of criticism and contempt. When the Chinese have relations with us, if a family member of the Dalai Lama goes there they will immediately develop good relations with him. If a representative of the Tibetan government or an official of the Tibetan government goes there they cannot take the risk. If the Chinese tell somebody who considers the exile government as crucial, that some
among the Tibetans speak derogatively about the Tibetan government, it is very unfortunate. Therefore, considering especially the organisation of Dotoe amongst the many groups and societies here, it will of course be all right to have varying opinions on the course of activities to be followed in future. I welcome that with pleasure. However, there should be no doubts and prejudices on the fundamental aims. It is very important to get rid of them. Now we should take care that such difficulties do not arise again.

I wish to add the following to this. When this kind of situation occurs, our first reaction to it has been motivated by our sincere concern for our common cause of Tibet and our fundamental policies. It is not because of personal ill-feelings. For instance, the Cabinet Ministers and the Chairman of the Tibetan People’s Assembly, who are present here, they have nothing to do with their personal likes or dislikes. However, when there is some agitation related to the matter, sometimes there is a possibility of some personal feelings having crept in. In case it were so, it will prove harmful instead of being beneficial. Therefore, the public should become calm about the matter. Recently some people also had arguments and fights amongst themselves. I am very sad that such a thing should have happened. There is nothing beneficial in it. It will bring more harm than benefit. Therefore, as I have just explained about our fundamental cause, it is necessary that an organisation bearing the name of one of the great provinces can serve the common cause in accordance with its name and be successful in the implementation of its activities. It has to avoid controversies. It has to support the fundamental cause. After the Cabinet Ministry and the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies have taken a decision on it and established it, all should support it. Anyway, it is very important that such difficulties do not repeat themselves in the future. Together with that it is not good to engage in activities based on personal ill-feelings. Work should be done very honestly in all sincerity towards the common cause and without personal consideration. If one allows one’s own personal likes and dislikes to influence one’s work, it will become somewhat deceitful. It is not good at all. Together with that the public has to remain peaceful. Otherwise, even if one is motivated by a beneficial intention, if it turns out: “emotional,” it will result in turmoil, and will do
more harm than benefit. That would be no good at all. If we act as fools, it won't have any meaning at all. We are speaking here about decisions concerning our fundamental cause, and not about something silly. Therefore, all of us should think from the point of view of what is important and should do so openly.

To sum up, the organisation of the government in exile represents all Tibetans. It is very important that it should implement its decisions. That is one important point. What else is there to say? The talks have turned towards Taiwan and that is an important subject as I have already explained. The relations with Taiwan have become very important. We have been discussing this question for the last one year. It will be a loss for us if we stay without any good relations in Taiwan. However, in order that the relation should develop into a good one, we should act sincerely and our activities should be clean and above board. This is my hope and opinion. Of course, there will be discussions on this topic in future also. My best wishes to everybody. Thank you.
Today is the first day of the session. I greet all of you. These sessions enable each and every person to vent new ideas, to point out a number of pros and cons and at the same time gain a lot of experience. Since experience helps to continue further progress in future, I commend all of you. I hope the session will be a success.

I have nothing special to tell you. Regarding relations with China, there has been no recent changes. It is static. With regard to the Kuomintang government also, it is the same as before. No new changes have cropped up. So I have nothing much to add. Repeating old statements is not necessary.

Regarding the overall Tibetan issue, awareness is increasing more and more in the outside world and especially amongst the Chinese more and more people recognise that it is a justified and rightful struggle of the Tibetan people. Such people are there not only among the Chinese outside, but within the Chinese mainland also. This is of real importance. Thus the show of support from outside is becoming stronger. And most important of all is the spirit and courage of our people within Tibet which is the foundation of our strength. Inside Tibet, in various places of the three provinces (cholkas), awareness about our activities is growing. Due to this, in various places, resentment against the Chinese government is growing stronger and stronger. In this way, from one side, the basis of our hope is gaining in strength. But, on the other, as the Chinese are implementing a temporary policy, for the short term gain of subjugating our people, they are perpetrating wrongs blindly, out of desperation having exhausted all other means. There is a situation of emergency of extremely violent persecution. Therefore, on one hand, our hopes are becoming brighter but on the other, in Tibet, there is an emergency. The time at

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1 This was the eighth session of the eleventh A.T.P.D.
present due to these two factors, is clearly very delicate. Thus, it is very important that not even a day or a moment should be wasted or neglected. So, as members of the Parliament you should set an example although you have been exploring every means for our cause still you should look for new ways and means. Empty words will not do. It is important that realistic and practical suggestions and new ideas should come up.

In the same way, although the Kashag administration and the various offices under it are working hard, still, we are at such a juncture, when it is like having almost reached the top of the hill, if we slide back and roll downwards, it will be a big blunder. During the past nearly 36 years, all of us have had problems. There were slips and mistakes. But on the whole, we have been making progress. Now that we have reached a stage when the truth is about to prevail, it is particularly important that we pay full attention and press harder. Inefficiency may be a part of our Tibetan character. It may be due to modesty or because of diffidence, occasionally there may be some negligence. Sometime due to ignorance things may go wrong. It is not due to a lack of the spirit for the common goal. But in actual practice, there are instances when things do not happen exactly as desired. This is quite possible. Therefore it is important that we must be extra careful and vigilant. This is one point I wanted to tell you.

Another point is — I usually tell this when I meet the foreigners — I want to tell you what experience and benefit I have gained after coming into exile. In Tibet due to certain customs and traditions which one had to follow, sometimes, one had to be serious and grim. Now, after coming into exile, under hardships one has to act according to the reality. The era of acting on one's whim and fancy is over. Therefore many of my ideas and behaviour seem to be certainly coming nearer to the reality. I therefore, tell them that this is what I am experiencing. Whether it is a meeting of the Parliament or of some departments, we know we are in exile. When the common Tibetan cause is facing such heavy odds, when we are facing death, we cannot afford to while away time by acting on our whim and fancy. We have to be realistic and see how problems arise and how to overcome them. This cannot be done simply by being diplomatic and sweet. There in Tibet, the people are dying daily. Here, if we take things easy, it will simply not do. Therefore, we should always realise the reality and we should be pragmatic. Whether it is to set things right or point out the pros and cons, firstly there should not be any
diffidence or negligence or laziness in public interest. Secondly, it is most important that one should be straightforward. Generally, there is progress from year to year. Although it happens in any society, and we Tibetans are not an exception, but some times we tend to neglect the important things while on minor matters, when one has to take sides on communal lines, people become quite alert. On major issues people become lethargic and think that someone else or another person will deal with it. But this is quite to the contrary. Actually, one may sleep over small issues. On major matters, one must be fully alert and have an eagle's eye out of its nest. At such a delicate time like this, it is important that we should be vigilant and not waste even a single minute in relaxation.

Now the second point. So many years have passed since we arrived in exile. According to the reports about conditions in the schools, one hears that first of all, slight degeneration has crept in the children's behaviours and their character. In the society also, there seems to be a slight increase in immorality. While, the character of the people in the settlements has shown slightly greater nobility, people in places like Dharamsala which have greater business activity, the morality in their nature is somewhat less. Some people have had this impression and they reported it to me. There is a change in the trend of the society. They cannot be entirely blamed. The kind of people with whom one has to live has its effect. In the same way, whether it is among the staff or members of Parliament, the surroundings gradually have an effect on a number of people. For example, in the society there seems to be a liking for western music, dances and lifestyle. Though these things are not very important, but if they slowly change our character and behaviour then it will be dangerous.

Personally, the reason why I am participating in the movement of the Tibetan freedom struggle is that as a follower of Lord Buddha and being a simple Buddhist monk, I believe that Tibetan freedom is linked to the institution of Buddhism. It is linked to Tibetan culture. Tibetan culture and traditions which are rooted in compassion come from Buddhist philosophy. So as the saying goes, "Dirty or not, it is father's cup", it does not come merely from my partiality to something Tibetan. In reality, pragmatically, Tibetan culture which is linked to Buddhism benefits the people. Not only Buddhists but even atheists are benefited by it and not only men but this culture can bestow happiness on all the sentient beings.
Therefore when the protection of such a culture is linked to the institution of Buddhism, I feel that as a monk, I have taken up this task which leads to my path to Bodhisattvahood. So when I think of myself, I feel that my life has become meaningful. I did not get the chance to go in retreat and practice meditation. When I was in my thirties, I had a great desire to meditate. Whenever I saw the biographies of Khedup Norsang Gyatso and Jetsun Milarepa, I used to be deeply moved. Whether I would have proved capable or not, I don't know but my thoughts were like that. At one time, I had even told some people that I would be going for a three year meditational retreat. The wish was there, but thinking from another angle, the achievement of our common task is related to the Buddhist institution. Since it is related to altruism, if my motivation is correct, it is the same thing as practising religion. I have been having these thoughts for a long time. So I feel that my work for the realisation of the common Tibetan cause is not for the sake of political freedom alone. It is much more than freedom. It is, I feel, linked to the basic happiness not only of the human beings but of all sentient beings. Therefore, one of our most important goals is to strive for the benefit of all mankind through Tibetan culture. In reality, as we are under the Chinese, the condition of Tibetan culture is in a poor state. It is as clear as a writing on the wall. Thus our goal is not only political freedom and autonomy. Therefore in order that each of us should achieve such a goal, it is not enough only to deliver a correct speech or pass a resolution. What is needed is to attune our everyday behaviour and the character of our body, mind and speech to the goal at hand.

As I have said just now, right from the behaviour of our children in schools to that of public figures in the society, our Tibetan character should not be degraded. Merely posing to be efficient or daring will not do. For instance, in India, there are many decent people but there are rouges also who are cunning, who suppress others, tell lies and cheat and exaggerate things. In the same way, regarding many world leaders and politicians, generally people say out of habit that politics is dirty. Slowly if such a thinking infects us, it will be very bad and dangerous for us. There are many good things which we can learn from the well-to do and developed countries of the world for our work. We try to follow them also. We should pick up the good points, and learn from their examples. But there is no one in the world from whom we can follow the example of
the nobility of character which is rooted in compassion and altruism. This is a noble example from our forefathers which we should recognise and preserve for our own sakes. In this, other people look to us to set an example and not vice versa. In many areas, we are backward. So we look upto the progressive ones, admire and learn from them. That is necessary. If we claim to be good from every side, it will be vain pride. It is wrong. It will only lead us downwards as had already happened in the past. It will surely happen in the future. But at the same time, if we get carried away completely by outside influences and become infatuated by them, and gradually, if we become habituated of their negative characteristics, that will not be good at all. So we should be very careful and every Tibetan must pay attention to this.

Today, in this Parliament, there may not be a direct bearing on this, but at the same time, this can lay the foundation. As I have always maintained, if human nature is rooted in compassion, altruism and the spirit for the cause of the good of all, then whatever one does, it will have meaning; it will have life. But if the opposite prevails, then even if one is learned or educated or efficient, it will be like a god descending to the level of a demigod. Therefore in our society, the wrongs and mistakes that are committed, specially by those who are led astray by money and material is because they lack the spirit of the common good. Our very existence and the basis of being alive should be for morality and kind heartedness. Of all the thousands and thousands of living beings in this world, the human beings are the worst of the species. Animals like tigers and panthers seem bad because they exist on blood and flesh. But they only try to satisfy their hunger. Otherwise they do not create unnecessary havoc or oppression. But how are we behaving — we who call ourselves human beings? Not only for one's stomach and clothes, but we misuse our brain for creating disruptions everywhere. There is no one, other than man, in this world who indulges in such misdeeds to such an extent and who cause so much trouble. Inversely, if one has altruism based on compassion, all the ideas and actions of the busy man could be diverted to benefit and help others. Actually, the very existence of the world depends on altruism. For us Tibetans, this is an inheritance from our forefathers and a unique gift which we must recognise and preserve. To preserve it, it is not enough to lavish or write appropriately about it. From the time one gets up in the morning till one goes to sleep at night, it should be
ingrained in one's character, one's body, mind and speech. Whether we are in the executive or the legislature, all our actions should be benefit-oriented. I say this only in the passing. Please keep it in your minds.

If altruism and the spirit of the common good are not there, efficiency, capability or courage will be of no use at all. The spirit of common good is the root to be kept in the mind and practiced. It is also good if you can call upon others to do so. Among the staff also, if one is straightforward and honest, there will be no rift. Among the members also, there will be no discord. But if one is cunning and uses sweet words which do not match the actual intentions, and if one commits such a volte-face, even the animals will not trust him. How then can the clever man be made to trust any one with such contradictory actions?

Thus it is very important to be sincere. Many people and our own Tibetans call upon other countries and people to recognise our government-in-exile. It is reasonable too. But the people can lose faith in the exiled government if the actions of key people like the Parliamentarians or some amongst you indulge in volte-face, double cross and double talk. Then the whole value will be lost, the respect of the staff will be lost. As the Dalai Lama, historically, I have a great reputation. But if I indulge in cunning and volte-face, who will trust me, although it is not for other people's trust that I am sincere? As a follower of Lord Buddha, even in my dreams, I always feel that as worthless as I may be, I should never be a disgrace to the kind Lord. So from my side, if I am not sincere, who will believe me? Who will have consideration for me? Similarly, the foundation of the body of our exiled government is laid by the Parliament and the administrative departments. These two form the body-frame of our government-in-exile. If in this frame, the people who have the responsibility are not sincere and trustworthy, what will happen? How can we then ask other people to recognise our exiled government? So everyone should be careful.

From the overall situation, I am not at all worried. During the last 36 years, despite voices of concern, we have stepped forward. The proof of this progress can be gauged from the Chinese reaction. But there are still a number of unwanted things in us. Although they are minor matters but quite a few of them come up. In these matters also, everyone has to be careful. This is all. Tashi Delek!
May 14, 1995

Today is a special occasion to announce the confirmation of the All-seeing Panchen Lama’s reincarnation. I would like to tell you all that the time has come for the new incarnation to start his work while the situation is critical. It is due to the fruit of spiritual commitment — speaking from the broader perspective, over many aeons, or, from a narrower perspective a long time — that the Panchen Lama has come to serve the cause of the Buddha Dharma, or more practically, the spiritual heritage of the snow land of Tibet and its people. Secondly, from the story of Father and Son Aryas, it becomes clear that the Father Arya and the Son have had a special relationship ever since the time of Choegyal Kunchok Bhang.

In order that such commitment (of the Panchen Lama) comes to fruition without any obstruction from outside, we are praying here today.

Speaking from another angle, the Dalai Lama is gradually becoming old. Generally speaking, from the point of view of age, the new incarnation of the Panchen Lama becomes somebody who has to continue my work. Since the Panchen Lama has a special concern to continue my responsibilities, he is important from every point of view. Therefore, I request everyone to pray for his long life and success.

In the document there is a brief explanation of how the reincarnation has been confirmed. As well as making spiritual offerings, we made efforts to send a religious delegation from here when the Panchen Lama passed away. We confirmed the names of the delegation members and contacted the Chinese government. The delegation was to be headed by the Choeje of Jangtse College at Gaden Monastery as this matter relates to him. However, the delegation could not go. At that time, I hoped they would be able to conduct all the religious rites, including making offerings at

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1His Holiness the Dalai Lama announced the discovery of the Eleventh Panchen Lama to selected Tibetan audience at Thekchen Choeling, his residence in Dharamsala. The tulku is Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, born on April 25, 1989 at Lhari in the Nagchu region of Central Tibet.
the tomb of the Panchen Lama, and then make a detour to Lhamo Lhatso (the sacred lake of visions, near Lhasa) for investigation purposes.

Subsequently, when it was time to search for the reincarnation, I made efforts to send a small committee to Tibet. I contacted the Chinese government for this purpose, but to no avail. I did this as the present incarnation has a very crucial role to play. There are several political reasons which make him crucial. Also, one cannot rule out the possibility of an unauthentic reincarnation. That is why I hoped to identify the reincarnation, first by investigating all the prospective candidates in exile and every part of Tibet, then by shortlisting the names of the more hopeful candidates. Then we would have rotated the dough balls [the names of the candidates are rolled into balls of dough] at a gathering attended by important persons from exile, from Tibet, and from Tashilhunpo Monastery. However, since this depended on external co-operation, we could not conduct the search in this manner.

What, then, was the alternative? There were quite a number of hopeful candidates in the central and border areas of Tibet. Outside Tibet, also, there were candidates in Ladakh, Dharamsala, etc. But it was difficult to make decisions without receiving full information about all the candidates. Moreover, we had to make sure that no candidate with auspicious signs was left out. Therefore, it took a long time. Also, when we checked whether it was the right time to confirm the reincarnation, we had signs indicating that the confirmation should wait until the dawn of the following year.

We collected the names received from various sources at different points in time. We had the names and details of about twenty boys. We had the details of all these boys, of some we also had photographs. We had rough descriptions of auspicious signs concerning these boys. It then became apparent that no additional names were going to come. There were signs that the time had come to confirm the reincarnation. Therefore, I made this decision.

Coming to the process of making the final decision, I did a mo (divination) to find out if the reincarnation was among the candidates whose names had been submitted. The divination was affirmative. After selecting the more likely candidates, I threw the divination dice while
pronouncing the young child's name. I did it three times, as is my usual practice. The divinations showed extremely good indications.

My initial hope of all of us meeting together did not materialise as this had to be kept extremely secret. However, I did not rely solely on dice divination. I also rolled the dough balls while uttering the child's name. The dough (with the reincarnation's name hidden in it) emerged as if jumping out on its own. Not relying on the first draw, I marked this particular dough ball and made another rotation. The same ball came out. I was now convinced that this was the authentic reincarnation. So I made the decision.

This being a very difficult time, my concentration wavers. However, historically and in my personal case, when the Panchen Thupten Choekyi Nyima recognised the reincarnation of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, he took a special interest in me, a child born in Amdo, the land of Tsongkhapa (founder of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism). This was told to me by the late Lord Chamberlain. Therefore, there is a special personal relationship between me and the Panchen Lama.

Whatever the case may be, the people of Tibet have placed their hope in me to take the final decision regarding the Panchen Lama's reincarnation. This is the case not only with Tashilhunpo, but also with people from different parts of Tibet.

The late Panchen Lama had a very difficult life. He was born in Amdo. Later in his life he visited Amdo several times. He also visited Kham. Therefore, there were numerous relationships resulting from his travels and deeds in those areas. There was great concern in some areas regarding the Panchen Lama's reincarnation. People told me that I should make the decision regarding the reincarnation. It is for these reasons that I made the final selection. As stated earlier, efforts must be made to ensure that the young incarnation has a long and successful life.
This is the last session of this Parliament's tenure. During this period, all have put their best efforts. We may have faced some difficulties — that is natural everywhere. But on major issues I must say it has been very good. Therefore, I want to thank all of you. Rinpoche worked very hard due to which everything went on very well. I wish to especially thank the Chairman.

I want to say this: We gather in this house and call it Parliament and you are its members, having been elected by popular vote. You have been elected by the Tibetans living in exile. We have the Cabinet to handle the administration. It has come to be called the Tibetan government-in-exile. We do not have our own country. We are living in exile as refugees at the moment. Under such exiled conditions, the purpose of doggedly establishing a Parliament, a Cabinet and a government-in-exile is not only for the sake of the over 100,000 Tibetans in exile.

Although the various settlements, schools, religious institutions, and many other exiled affairs certainly benefit from the establishment of the Tibetan government — we have responsibilities to serve them. But our chief objective is to restore the freedom of our lost country, and before that our immediate responsibility is to solve the urgent deteriorating conditions inside Tibet. Therefore, all of you assembled in this hall should always mainly think about the freedom of Tibet, the overall Tibetan affairs and the welfare of the six million Tibetans. The Kashag executive has to think mainly of the welfare of the six million Tibetans all the time. Sometimes of the 24 hours — we spend most of our time thinking about the problems of the few Tibetans in exile. If we use most of our time on such problems, it would be a waste and very sad. Among our few exiles, sometimes silly problems arise. On the basis of a small internal problem, people create more problems in the name of the overall cause of Tibet.

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1This was the tenth session of the eleventh A.T.P.D.
going to the extent of taking sides. This is sad and not at all good. So it is important that everyone in this House and all those in Gangchen Kyishong should recognise our basic responsibilities towards the fulfillment of those fundamental duties. One should think and make every effort in this direction.

Sometimes I feel there are persons amongst us who think that the government-in-exile or the Tibetan government is almost equal to the government of India. Although we are refugees, under very difficult conditions, we have established a government chiefly because of the extra motivation, support and spirit of the Tibetan masses. Otherwise we have neither the right nor the powers of a government. There is also a set of people who take the example of those who have their own country and the powers of implementation when talking of our democracy, which is also incongruous. For example, those who have their own country, have the powers to establish war councils during wartime. In the same way, during emergencies, they have appropriate procedures. Our case should not be taken at par with an independent country fighting with another nation. Having become refugees, we do not even have a handful of land to call it our country. Secondly, while in another country, our bid to regain the freedom of Tibet is neither for the benefit of the Tibetan refugees only nor is it because of a temporary disagreement in our political ideology. Our struggle is for the cause of a whole race of people. The Tibetan race may either perish or survive. Normally, the benefit of thousands of millions of people is more important than that of only six million - and in that context, the six million Tibetans are in a minority. But the six million Tibetans are related to the Buddhist culture, and in today's world, there are many unbiased people who are interested, appreciate and praise Tibetan culture. This culture is beneficial not only for the Tibetans but for the peoples of Asia. Speaking from a broader perspective, it has the power and potential to benefit, to a certain extent, the whole world. Thus, this culture being related to the Tibetan freedom struggle, our work is a mission which is in accordance with the tenets of our religion and is therefore justified and important. Under such circumstances, the responsibility of the freedom struggle is a paramount task. Without the selfish aim of victory for self and defeat for the other, if this task is performed with pure motivation, it can earn great merit. Therefore, if all of us here
can, in future, devote ourselves to the cause of the survival of our race and culture, it has great power and potential to benefit on a wide scale. So it is our bounden duty to try to safeguard our race and culture which are on the verge of extinction. Sometimes, I feel concerned that we seem to spend a lot of time on petty matters without realising the importance of the bigger issues. In all our day to day activities if we can think from the bigger plane, then the small matters can pester us a bit but will not seem to be life-threatening. It is therefore meaningless to argue about the petty matters without thinking of the bigger stakes. Anyhow, I think there is good support for the true cause of Tibet.

Another point is that in the overall world, since we became refugees, the Tibetan issue of our rightful struggle, from one side, has become old. Furthermore, economically, our issue is not so directly related to the world. China, on the other hand, is a country which due to its resources of support, power, etc., even the big nations of the world treat it with caution and attention. We are challenging that country. Under such circumstances, the number of people supporting our rightful cause out of real concern, is increasing. That is our good fortune. Of course, half the credit must go to our people inside Tibet who have been steadfast in their stand. Secondly, it is also due to the disgraceful act of the Chinese themselves that although they hope for great fame, but in practice, they lay their own labour to waste.

Anyhow, I think there is great support for the true cause of Tibet. For example, from a political point of view, it is difficult for people to recognise the Tibetan government-in-exile. However, independent journalists and in many Parliamentary resolutions such as in the resolutions of the European Parliament, they clearly recognise the Tibetan government-in-exile. These are matters of great progress for the Tibetan cause.

Simultaneously, there has been an increased interest in the Tibetan issue among the Chinese people. Many Chinese say that the Tibetans should be supported sincerely. This is tremendously precious. We can ultimately resolve the problems between Tibet and China only through direct relations with the Chinese. Otherwise, with the help of other powers, we cannot oust the Chinese from Tibet. For mutual benefit, we can definitely solve the problems through dialogue with the Chinese. Keeping this as our aim, it is extremely important for us to strive to get the support
of the Chinese people. Until now, to some extent, we have had relations with them. However, it is very important that we continue to maintain and build this relationship.

Similarly, there are many Tibetan government officials, parliamentarians, youth and women representatives who move around the globe and meet with the international community. For example: last year, some Tibetan women went to Beijing to attend the United Nations Fourth World Conference on women and were able to make meaningful representation. Such activities are being carried out from all sides. Until now, these activities have led to some positive results. Still it is very crucial for us to put in our wholehearted efforts.

Recently the Chinese have adopted hard-line policies not only on the Tibetan issue but also against the people of Taiwan, for those working for a democratic set up in Hong Kong, and towards the British and Americans. Under these policies they have also been hard on the Tibetans. Among them is the recent rigid stand they have taken on the issue of the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama. However, I am not that concerned about this issue.

When more and more educated Chinese are sincerely supporting the Tibetan issue, the rigid policies adopted by the present Chinese political leaders is only for a short while and I don't think will last forever. Secondly, the reason for their harsh policies is because of their tension and doubts due to the crisis emanating from the critical health conditions of Deng Xiaoping. Under such circumstances they have made rigid policies, which I believe cannot last forever. Due to the recent Chinese rigidity and the matter of Panchen Rinpoche, there is no need to think anew or to be cowed down.

On my part there are no changes to my Five Point Peace Plan or the Strasbourg Proposal. If there is some positive gesture from the Chinese, then from our side, we will follow the Middle Path to strive for a long-lasting and mutually beneficial solution. If there is some indication from the Chinese, then from our side we will immediately prepare to discuss matters with them. There is no change on this issue.

However, since our struggle is the struggle of the entire race of the Tibetan people, it becomes an issue to be strived for from generation to generation. Therefore in late 1960 or 1970s, thinking that it was not
stable as it was, we thought of registering the exiled government with the government of India and made the documents to that effect. Even from that time, we had been thinking of our stability. So, today when recognition to the exiled government is coming from the outside impartial and politically unproblematic quarters, our government-in-exile becomes all the more important. In the eyes of the Chinese as well as those supporting us, if they can see that the exiled government is stable and that it can shoulder the responsibility of the freedom struggle — and further, if they can see that therefore it does not matter whether the Dalai Lama as a single individual is alive or not — that is important.

These days some Chinese say that the Dalai Lama is over 60 years old and as he becomes aged, Tibetans would be left with nothing. These statements by the Chinese are foolish. The Tibetans have the ability to work hard over many generations. The urgent situation in Tibet these days is that there is excessive migration of Chinese into Tibet. But from our side, since we are struggling for the rights of the Tibetans as a race, we should continue our responsibilities as a public institution and the nature of the exiled governmental institution should be made apparent. In actual fact, the Dalai Lama, whether from the historical perspective or the karmic or on the strength of the prayers, is connected with the Tibetan people. I have already worked and have firmly decided to serve the cause of the Tibetan Buddhist institution, polity and all Tibetan living beings till death. In this, there is no change. There is a close connection between the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people and it has beneficial as well as alarming aspects. But it is important to demonstrate the stable nature of the exiled governmental institution.

The other day in New York, didn't the people undergoing Hunger Strike unto Death, also called for the recognition of the Tibetan government-in-exile? Therefore, we are urging people to support us by even sacrificing our lives. Before requesting others to support us, it is important for our own people to first of all respect and give due recognition to our own government-in-exile. We must all strive and shoulder responsibilities in maintaining the dignity and powers of our government. Sometimes the Administration and the Parliament have blamed each other in shouldering small responsibilities. This is not worthwhile and is meaningless. To see that the public institution is stable and secure is the
responsibility of each and every Tibetan. It is for the common cause of Tibet. It is not proper to merely cast one’s own responsibilities on someone else. The masses will have to bear all the losses. It will not be a situation where one individual gains while the other looses. It is important that we all collectively shoulder the responsibilities, just as we do when an epidemic spreads.

It is useless and frivolous to blame each other. To sum up, the most important thing is to make firm and stable the institution of the Tibetan government-in-exile. It is not good if you make a move only when the Dalai Lama speaks, and when he does not say anything, there are no moves or initiatives for change. I call this as “the await order” ism. It is not good to wait only for my orders without taking any self initiative.

Lately there has been some improvement. The Kalons and Secretaries of the various departments have undertaken their responsibilities and are doing very well. Still, it is very important for all to take full responsibilities of the Tibetan government. From my side, for example, in major matters like the relationship between China and Tibet — since I have the designation — it has a direct relationship with me. Similarly, to represent the Tibetans worldwide, it might somewhat help to use my name. For example, if the Chairman of the Assembly goes somewhere, he will not receive the same kind of treatment. If the Chief Kalon goes, he will also not receive the same response. Such matters will have to be dealt with by me. Other than that, all internal affairs including administrative matters should be settled without me. If you can take full responsibilities for all internal matters in your hands, it will present the true picture of the Tibetan government-in-exile. In the eyes of the Chinese also, they will be able to see that without the Dalai Lama, things can be carried out securely. It will also be very beneficial to reaffirm the recognition from the outside world for our government.

Personally, as I am now over 60 years of age, it is natural to be subjected to the wear and tear of aging. Therefore, with regard to the vitally important issues, I, as the Dalai Lama, must and shall deal with those matters. Otherwise, the more responsibilities you can shoulder, the more relaxed will I feel. Secondly, according to the norms of democracy, if the public themselves show their resilience and if the institutions can take over the full responsibilities, the more advantages there will be. To
speak from a darker side, there is what is called religion and the bond of faith or devotion. I have a story to tell about this relationship. During the reign of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, he baptised many thousands of monks but hardly gave them any religious teachings. During the Great Monlam Festival, he only gave the teachings of the Jataka tales. Other than that, he never gave any other teachings. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama used to say, "Since I take many political responsibilities that require frequent interventions which may or may not be liked by people, it would therefore not be good if the relations between the lama and the disciples become too strong. Therefore I do not give too many religious teachings." When he stayed in Mongolia, he gave many teachings to the clergy and gave many religious sermons to the common Mongolian people. Similarly, before the Revolution, he used to preach to the Mongolians who visited Lhasa. He however did not give sermons to the Tibetans because he saw an objection in it — it is not good to breach the bonds of devotion of the lama after having received teachings from him.

Until now I have given more time to religious matters. I personally feel more comfortable if I work on religious matters. Neither have I the experience, nor do I know much about world political matters. Especially, when there are circumstances where I have to deal with crafty people, in such situations I easily get deceived. Such situations may also arise in future — and I may not know and I may also not be able to cope with it. That is why, until now, I have served and contributed to the religious aspects. This I hope to do until my last breath. When Tibet regains freedom, I will leave my political responsibilities. At that time, if I can physically sustain, I will try my best to reach all the three provinces of Tibet. When we return to Tibet, if I get a helicopter, I wish to go to all the places and meet the Tibetan people — meet with the old folks of the community and make everyone happy. This I wish to do, not only for Tibetans, but for the people in China, India and all those countries around the world with whom I have maintained relations. I wish to help them until my last breath. I neither get discouraged nor tired by such hopes — I feel happy. Other than that, I do not know about political matters.

In future, when Tibet regains freedom, I have already declared that I shall give up politics. While in exile, I am compelled to take my political responsibilities. As I have mentioned earlier, regarding the major matters, I have but to take the responsibility.
But on small matters, such as those which are related to Parliament, they should be resolved by the Parliamentarians and the administrative related matters by the Cabinet. Each department should take its own responsibility. Until now you all have shouldered a lot of responsibilities. In future, if any problem arises, do not think that the Dalai Lama will resolve the problem. If any problem arises, it has to be ultimately solved by yourselves. Do not think that you can put it on the Dalai Lama — please bear this in mind. Everyone should unitedly shoulder the responsibility in order to prevent the problem from arising in the first place. The words may be unpleasant, but it should make no difference with the death of the Dalai Lama and consider that he is already no more — and accordingly carry out your responsibilities to the full. If you think that in case of problems, the Dalai Lama is there to solve them, it creates laxity and is not good.

In future, there will be a time, when I will no longer be with you. At that time, if there is no one who can resolve the problems then it is no use. When I am alive, it is good if you can shoulder all the responsibilities. The future strategies have been discussed and are being finalised, so discuss them openly. I cannot tell you to do this and that in detail — I do not know also. On the major issues, it is to be done as I have already told you before. Please keep this in your minds.

In short, if the overall Tibetan cause becomes strong we can continue to struggle for our rights as we have been doing till now and maintain our dignity. If the main structure crumbles, then we would be left with nothing to fight for our rights and democratic freedom. Everything will crumble together. This is for our own cause and is not for the benefit of one or two individuals. If Tibet regains freedom and becomes prosperous then it will benefit us. If the exiled establishment is stable, it benefits all of us. If public affairs are not well managed, are disorderly and if our actions cause embarrassment to the extent that people from all sides blame the Tibetan people and the government at Dharamsala, this will be the loss to all of us, and not of a few individuals only.

Therefore as everyone has been putting in their best efforts, I wish to reiterate that you continue to do so. Anyway, whether you listen or not is up to you. It is my responsibility to tell you. Thank you. Tashi Delek!
11. Speech at Swearing in Ceremony

Dharamsala,
June 1, 1996

Today, to the rest of the members of the present Parliament and on the occasion of the swearing in of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, I wish "Tashi Delek" to all of you.

Basically, we are living as exiles but during the past over thirty-seven years our achievements have definitely not been few. From them the practical change to democracy is one of our biggest achievements. It is not mere mouthing of words but our parliamentarians who have been duly elected by the people, have actual power. Secondly, of late, among the masses also, there has not only been a realisation of their obligations towards the election of the Deputies, but considering its importance, awareness and responsibility has increased which I think is a good sign. The quality of our Parliament is also improving from session to session. With experience, one becomes familiar, and by that, the proceedings are also gaining in standard. During the term of the previous Parliament, everyone worked hard. Mainly Samdhong Rinpoche put utmost effort. Now, during this Parliament also, quite a few of you have been re-elected and quite a number of new ones have come. Specially, many women are there. I think, it is very good. Certainly, it is worth being proud of. Secondly, many youngsters have also come and this is also to be proud of. Our task is the struggle for the cause of a race of people. Therefore, as the older generation passes away, it is but natural that the younger generation should continue to shoulder the responsibilities one after another. So, the present correct line up and the systematic stage that is prevailing is something we can be proud of. It is very good. Therefore, all of you during this term, have the right conditions to be more methodical and achieve better results than before. You have the opportunity. So I wish

\[1\] His Holiness the Dalai Lama spoke to the members of Parliament and the Kashag on the occasion of the swearing in ceremony of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the twelfth Tibetan Parliament- in-exile at Thekchen Choeling.
and pray for the best for all of you. At the same time, I urge you to do your best.

We are political exiles. Therefore, on top of overcoming the problems of being exiled and securing our rights, we have the duty to achieve the highly important common cause of Tibet. Most of all, as the Tibetans remaining in Tibet are staring towards us with hope, we are bound by a great duty. To fulfil that duty it is a stupendous task because our adversary in the struggle for Tibetan freedom is a very powerful nation, a country in the world which is closely guarded, and one has to be wary of it. Since we have to struggle with it, we are doubtful of our ability, but our struggle is reasonable, and it is a rightful one. We are trying to fulfil this duty not because we want to win and defeat the other. Thus, if the task is rightful and reasonable, it is not a question of who is more or less powerful. If it is unreasonable and unjust, then it can be decided only through might because there is no scope for reasoning and justification. But our struggle here being reasonable and just, we are striving to achieve well-being and happiness for the Tibetans as well as the Chinese not because of a raw sense of greed wherein we want to be on the top and dominate the other. So the claim that since we have truth on our side, it must have some power is not just out of faith.

It is now past forty-five or forty-six years since the Chinese occupied Tibet. It is about thirty-eight years since we became exiles. From our side, the Tibetan issue is an issue which happened over forty years ago and as nearly thirty-eight years have passed since the emergency of 1959, it has become quite old. As a number of new happenings occur in the world, naturally, the old ones are forgotten. Secondly, in some countries where oil is produced, it leaves no choice for the powerful nations but to involve themselves due to the economic consideration. Or where there is struggle for power, there it becomes convenient to be involved in such a struggle. It becomes easy for those who want to help. Although our case is not like that and despite many obstacles we have faced, Tibet is receiving more and more attention every year. Not only that, from the Chinese side also, although one may be a neutral person, it is natural that he has the racial inclination and feeling for his country. Even then, among the Chinese today, the number of people paying attention to Tibet is increasing and they are supporting the Tibetans. They believe that Tibetans are justified,
that the Chinese government's policy on Tibet so far was full of mistakes, and there are now a number of people who recognise that it has not been perfect. There are sure signs that we have truth on our side and its power is gradually becoming more apparent.

If we glance at the situation in Tibet, whether it is the Chinese government policy, the simple fact is that nowadays they are very repressive and hard. Similarly, outside, when we travel from one place to another, the Chinese embassies try very hard to create obstacles. Why are they doing that? Against the powerful Chinese government, when we Tibetans are able to create a bit of unpleasantness, they exploit every power to oppose us. Actually it does not make much of a difference. The most important thing is that if the Tibetans in Tibet remain faithful to the Chinese, there is no reason for the Chinese government to be harsh on a few Tibetans outside. But inside Tibet, there is so much repression and torture that the Chinese, for fear of disgrace to the world, try always to hide the pitiable situation in order to avoid the foul smell coming out. They are forced to do something against their will because we are able to exert some pressure. Therefore our rightful work has a definite influence and that influence is becoming more and more clear. At is in our proverb, "when Buddha appeared, the devotee had become old". There are very few Tibetans and too many Chinese. Under such a situation, there is the danger that before Tibet regains its old status, the great deliverance may come sooner. Otherwise we may rest assured and work with hope and trust. Therefore, it is important that everyone must make efforts as before, so that truth can be placed on the highest pedestal it deserves. Here we are struggling for truth and reason and not victory for self and defeat to the other. This should be our basic ideology and character in our day to day work and when we are holding discussions. We should uphold such an ideology and character.

It will be no good at all if such ideology and character are discarded. As Tibetans, whether we have a responsibility or not, or whoever it may be, we are striving for truth. Therefore, I take it to be very important that each Tibetan must sincerely conform one's lifestyle to the principle that we are striving for. We are following the path of non-violence. Our struggle is motivated by compassion. For future Tibet, with a minimum of a comprehensive self rule and from that, gradually, in a good
atmosphere free of suspicion, we are hoping to make Tibet a zone of peace. Such is our aim.

Non-violence does not mean the mere renunciation of arms. It is not enough that externally there are no weapons, but internally, within our thoughts, there should be the feeling of compassion. If a person is full of hatred, presumptuousness and with harmful intentions, without external arms, he will use even a stone. Therefore the real meaning of non-violence is that mentally there should be no violence within. Its identity is the compassionate thought. So, all of us Tibetans, when we are striving with conviction to achieve such a major aim, it is important that in our day to day life there should be compassion in our hearts and we should lead our life accordingly. If there is this feeling of compassion, there will be respect for others. If there is respect for others, we will obey the law of karma without jealousy, automatically, we will be very honest. Therefore, in our daily lives, all of us must act with the nobility of character and it is important that this should be inbuilt in our behaviour as a way of life. If we don't pay attention to this, slowly, although there are good qualities in it and if we can pick up the good points, but in today's fast world, people's hearts may be attracted too much by it. In the past, due to our isolation from the world, we certainly lagged behind in many things. We have to make up for those deficiencies but at the same time, we should not err from the beginning in our judgment while selecting the positive points so that the base jealousies of the fast world can be avoided. This I think is important.

Therefore, the members of our Parliament have been elected with a hope because in the present Tibetan society, they know more, they have influence, and their mental faculties are better. Since these are the better ones among the exiled population like the cream in the milk, the noble Tibetan characteristics that I emphasised on just now, should be present in them — the reason being that they have to be the model of our society. For example, in my own case, when I talk of the need of compassion for other people, I do not think that it is only for talking to others and that I myself don't need it. I get up around 3.30 in the morning. From that time onwards, I consider compassion as my very life, holding it dear and sacred, and trying to practice it. Similarly, in your case also, in your daily lives, in order to become noble and virtuous, you must try very hard. Our
people have elected you by putting their hope and reposing their faith in you. Such persons should not only provide political leadership, but must invent an all pervasive condition of both the modern and the traditional values so that our real future aim whereby 'the self is in a state of bliss and others admire it' can be achieved. Without the dual presence of the modern and the traditional, there is no way that the state of bliss and admiration for self and others respectively, can be attained. Therefore, when the ocean of our society has been elected to provide such leadership, verbal descriptions are not enough. But with the force of character of one's body, mind and speech, one should be able to instill it in the people and themselves become models for them. When we talk of attracting peoples' minds, mere words will not be enough. Except for a fool, a thinking person cannot be won over by mere words because he or she will examine them. Anyone can use sweet words. Even the great sinners of the nether world know such words. But in actual practice, if the everyday character of ones' body, mind and speech become inseparable from nobility, and that too not just for one or two weeks, months and years but till one's last breath, then, as has been said that 'fire is known from smoke and stream from its sound', such a person, though he may not be fluent in speech, will be admired, respected and become a model for others because that person is good and worthy of respect. If that happens, we would achieve the aim of our freedom struggle. The goal of our freedom struggle, as I said just now, is not only that we may be reunited with our people left behind in our country. Our goal is to achieve, through both modern and traditional means, a society rich with people of virtuous nobility. That is our aim. That is what we hope for.

What we are therefore saying is that under the Chinese, such a condition cannot be achieved. It is not that we don't like the Chinese. By living under the Chinese, if it can enable us to achieve genuine happiness and prosperity, there is no problem. But that is not possible. For the Chinese to grant us such a wholesome condition, the virtues must be first present in them. As is said in our scriptures, 'the sweet smell of sandalwood, being first present in itself, it can then spread that noble aroma to the others nearby'. The noble aroma has to be present in the self first before it can be spread to the others and if the Chinese do not have that capacity, it is not possible for them to give it to us. Since the special noble character
that we possess cannot be given to us by the Chinese, we have valid reasons when we say that we want self-rule. I am not talking only of Tibetan history. History is history. The future is important. We have evolved these conditions actually to benefit the Chinese also, and bring happiness to the Tibetans, and not only that but to set a noble example to the world. We have the capability. What we are demanding is an opportunity to do these things. Therefore, in the case of others — and when I say others I do not mean anybody — there is a class of people who are satisfied merely with the victory of the self and defeat of the other. We are not like that. As I mentioned just now, since we are holding a responsibility to achieve nobility and remove the negativity in the human society, it should be present in oneself before setting an example to others. If it is not present in oneself, one cannot show the example to others. So those of you who are in the Parliament should also see to it that these qualities are present in you in the first instance. The great Je Tsongkhapa Rinpoche in his 'Stages of the Path', after preaching about the ways of following the teacher, says, 'those who want to have a guru should know all these qualities and seek one who has all of them present. Those who want to have a student, should also see to it that one is in possession of these qualities.' In the same way, being elected with hope as giants among the pygmies in the society, if one has the intention to instruct and lead, it is important that the nobility of character should be present in oneself and then only you can provide leadership. Otherwise, if the person elected by the people with expectations disgraces himself/herself from the top by indulging in petty jealousies, partiality and communalism, and deprives the people of a model, this will be sad and shameful. Therefore, it is important to keep this in the mind.

Inside Tibet, since the Chinese are in control, whether it is about education or character, the responsibility is with them. Here in exile, although we are only small in number, but regarding education or instructions and practice in the varying religious institutions for the sake of reviving Buddhism or among the office staff, many young people are coming forward. Regarding these things, although the Chinese do not mention directly, but in fact, seeing that they are lagging behind, they say that they should compete with Dharamsala, that by competing with Dharamsala, they should not lag behind. So, although exiled Tibetans
are only a few in number in the world, but whether it is about education of the children or the Buddhist religious instructions and practice in the monasteries, these have become our foundation. In the same way, if we compare our democratic system with the Tibet under the Chinese control, we have not lagged behind at all. We can be proud of these things in the world. The present Chinese action is a policy of desperation. It is very clear that this will not help in solving the problems in future. May it be Taiwan or Hong Kong or Tibet, the present Chinese policy is to suppress the people only temporarily and it is intended to show to the world that China is a powerful nation which does not intend to be wary of anybody. They themselves know that this will neither solve nor help to solve the problems. Thus, as the present situation will not only continue to prevail but there is the risk of it becoming still worse. Sooner or later, gradually, the Chinese will also come to think on pragmatic lines. At the international level too, calls to this effect are being made internally to the Chinese. Therefore, sooner or later, we will surely get the chance to talk. If that day comes, then, we will be able to prove what is good and what is bad at the world stage. If we can be really qualitative and do well, on that day, we will be able to talk to them without being double faced. The Chinese live under dubious tactics. Even with their arms, power and influence they cannot assert themselves, and when we talk to them face to face, our strength will definitely come out. So we should consider this to be important because this is the power, this is the weapon by which we can oppose the other side. One should not think that when we talk about the nobility of character, it is merely a dogma. It is something that the Dalai Lama talks about. It is an error if one thinks that nobility is good but the need of the moment is to challenge the Chinese. If our intention is to challenge the Chinese with swords and guns, then what we are doing at present is not the right way. But if we want to challenge them by logical reasoning, then what I have talked about just now, these should be present in ourselves. This is important.

While saying that I have not much to speak about, I have already talked a lot. Now I shall speak no more. All of you, kindly keep in mind what I have spoken so far and try to do your level best. Thank you. Tashi Delek!
Today, to the chairman, the members of the parliament, the ministers of the administration who have just taken their oaths and the secretaries of departments who have assembled here, I wish to convey my auspicious wishes with the words "Tashi Delek" to all of you: to the deputies of the 12th Assembly of the Tibetan Peoples Deputies and also to the old and new ministers of the administration who have assembled here.

From one point of view, our situation is that of the people separated from our own country who have wandered to a foreign country under the name of refugees. Especially, the conditions in our own country are very difficult. There is the danger of total destruction of one of the oldest historical civilizations on earth, its uniquely profound religion and culture which is not only of benefit to us Tibetans, but has the potential of benefiting the neighbouring countries also. Generally speaking, ours is a race and culture which has the potential to benefit the whole of humankind. As the Chinese government was recently engaged in many ruthless actions inside Tibet, it seems somewhat inappropriate that we should exchange here auspicious greetings with the words "Tashi Delek".

However, from another viewpoint, even under these difficult circumstances, the courage of the Tibetans has not diminished. It is not a question of power but of truth. We believe that the truth will finally be victorious. Moreover, we are continuing in our efforts and presently have come to a stage when our courage and ability to carry on the struggle is increasing from year to year. Our activities have to be developed further. Along with that, there are also many internal and external conditions which have presently arisen.

As for the external conditions, on this earth there are many who are interested in the Tibetan problem. The Tibetan cause is based on truth,

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1This was the first session of the twelfth A.T.P.D.
and Tibet was a sovereign power which was overcome by an invasion. The fact that the Tibetans are really struggling for freedom relying on the path of non-violence is considered as an exemplary model in this world. Therefore, the number of those who are taking interest in our plight and supporting us is growing.

As for the internal conditions of Tibetans, there are many youths who have matured enough and there are others who have acquired a modern education to some extent. Since there have been more occasions for observing the conditions here and abroad, more experience has been gained. It is certain that the potential of the Tibetans to accomplish things has improved. Therefore, from the point of both external and internal conditions there exists much hope for us. In order to manifest our determination and courage, we have established a Parliament-in-exile and an exile government here in a free country. Moreover, since they are becoming more effective from year to year, there is in fact justification in conveying auspicious greetings with the words 'Tashi Delek'.

Therefore, to some extent we are in a position of estimating the seriousness of the occasion. As I have repeatedly pointed out prior to 1959 and 1960, the Tibetan cause was not something on which one could place one's hopes. Even many friends said that was the end of Tibet. These days significant changes are taking place. The situation has improved to such an extent that it can be said that there is every hope due to these changes. Therefore, I request you all to be absolutely careful about what was said the other day when the two chairmen took their oaths. Many of the new members of the parliament are young. Also there are many women. While we are sincerely struggling for our cause, our conduct being based on love and compassion, it is gratifying to note that one after another new generations are continually replacing the old ones. This gives me hope and satisfaction.

From the positive viewpoint, as I have been saying, we are nearing the solution of our cause. There is still no change in my hope that in about two-three years there will certainly be a change. As for the seriousness of the situation in Tibet, I see it like it says in a proverb: "The flame of the butter lamp about to extinguish is the brightest." The situation there is going from bad to worse. I have no doubt in the soundness of realising our hopes.
Secondly, on the negative side, even though our struggle is taking a long time, it is not for the sake of the Dalai Lama. It is not also a question of the old government connected with the Dalai Lama. It is for the general cause of Tibet as a whole. If it were for the benefit of one generation, or a small group of individuals, there would certainly be the danger that its supporters and those taking interest in it would vanish and a change would take place. However, even if one generation is passing away, it is necessary that our struggle should be continued by the new generation.

The photographs of the successive ministers over the past 37 years are displayed near the gate of the Cabinet Ministry, and the photographs of the parliament members are being exhibited at the entrance of this building. By looking at them, it can be seen that one generation is giving way to another. However, the activities related to our struggle are growing more and more powerful, instead of becoming weaker. That is really great.

The first thing, while bringing up our youth during the past 30 years, we took particular care and interest in their education. We tried our best and made efforts in this direction inspite of the difficulties faced in the almost overwhelming task. As a result our accomplishments are becoming visible. Therefore, the representatives of the new generation have taken up the challenge and are clearly showing signs of making tremendous efforts towards the success of our true cause. I like that very much. I thank you for this. Today there is nothing more to say on this point.

On the basis of experience gained up to now, it is essential to further develop our basic democratic system, even though we have become temporary exiles and are staying in another country. Even if the Tibetans in Tibet and in exile were able to reunite in the future, our actual main objective will be to proceed in accordance with a free democratic system. This is also in accordance with the Buddhist teachings. It is difficult that the whole world would agree with something or that there would not arise any discussions relating to a certain matter. Anyway, the democratic system seems the best.

What is important is, when we speak about the benefit to a country, it means the benefit to its people. In fact it will prove really beneficial only when those serving the common cause act in the interest of the people and are interested in them. We are definitely persisting in proceeding
along the democratic path. Therefore, we have the parliament and the
administration with its separate departments.

As for the general cause of Tibet and especially, the fact that we
have become refugees and the situation has become serious, basically —
the fundamental cause of Tibet and the goal to be achieved are the
same — even if there are differences regarding various responsibilities
of the parliament and the various departments of the administration. I
consider it important that we all become united in our efforts and sincerely
work together for achieving our basic cause. We all have basically a
common cause in our minds even while being assigned to different
departments. When comparing the general and specific, it is sometimes
possible that the specific would appear as more important. Therefore, in
short, when we say: "Our work did not succeed due to the administration,"
it is placing the general in focus, and by doing so precious time will be
lost. But time won't wait. It will be a great loss, if we waste our time in
such activities. Therefore, it is very important that we cooperate with each
other in our efforts.

Everybody has been assigned specified responsibilities for examining
various matters, especially to remove them if there are any faults: On the
one hand our Tibetan character is such that we consider it important to
avoid unpleasant and harsh words. Although that custom is good, yet
when we are discussing some matter thoroughly from all angles, if we
show a superficial and pretentious attitude, while feeling uncomfortable
because we have not spoken out clearly, that is no good either. It does
not do any good not to express our viewpoint in order to maintain good
behaviour. Therefore, for the sake of the common cause, we should not
hesitate to remove any wrongs. In essence, one would be motivated by
the thought of common good and the intention should be to benefit the
cause. Even if it becomes necessary to criticise in order to correct faults,
the criticism should be carried out with sincere intentions and there should
be no ill-feelings or intentions to harm the cause. If one hesitates to do so
and keeps dilly-dallying, time will be wasted. Normally we have been
able to clarify most of the matters between ourselves. It is important that
we continue to do so.

The improvement of good qualities and removing the wrongs is for
the general benefit and not for cleaning up of various departments or for
blaming others. If that happens, it would be very unfortunate. It is important that everybody while cooperating with each other, should consider those matters which are of real significance.

Some of the members of the parliament are permanently staying here, but most of you are residing in your own areas and share the responsibilities and concern here while the parliament is in session. Not only that, when you are staying in your respective areas you should continue to work day and night with that concern which you had when the parliament was in session. You will then be able to relate honestly, either during the parliament assemblies, or to the related officers or to the Cabinet Ministry whatever opinions the people of your area have, like for instance those cases in which it appears that officers have accepted bribes or where it seems that some officials have not properly discharged their responsibilities.

You have to discuss directly and honestly, without any bias, with the concerned persons, the mistakes they may have committed in the past. As for carrying out further improvements you, as a representative of a certain area, not leaving that task to the welfare officers of the settlements, should openly express your views on practical matters and faults and whatever suggestions you have either during the parliament session or discuss them directly with the concerned officials. In brief, if you are engaged in your work in a responsible manner, be it during the parliament session or while staying in various localities, it is essential that you should be able to provide explanations that "the situation is like this or it is not like that" when the basic ideas and actions of the Tibetan government are not understood by the public, or when some persons cause unrest and spread baseless exaggerated rumours in the society. I am referring mainly to the members of the parliament but these observations are equally applicable to the Cabinet Ministry and the administration.

These days there are a large number of people in the world who are taking interest in us and showing sympathetic concern. Particularly in Europe, the public opinion for the Tibetan problem is gaining force. We Tibetans also have strong ties with them. A large number of people are taking interest in and supporting the Tibetan cause in Europe, and also in America. Estimating them as our potential, it is very good. When those people taking interest in and wishing to understand the Tibetan situation
ask "What kind of help do you need," it hardly seems necessary to say that "We need this" or "Please consider this." I think that we are not able to make proper use of the occasion. Probably the information about the actual position provided to them is not sufficient. Therefore, when such an occasion arises when they take so much interest and ask "We wish to help you. What do you need?," in my opinion we should be able to provide them with more constructive answers and not simply thank them. Sometimes, it is difficult but it is necessary to pay special attention to this aspect in spite of difficulties. I think our creative capacity needs to be improved.

As we are gaining experience from year to year the democratic way of functioning of our parliament is improving. Still, our basic conduct and view remain the same. We have a potential and the confidence to benefit the world. It is possible I myself may be appraising my own opinion on the higher side, and it is likely that we may be overvaluing our own religion and culture. Anyway, many impartial people can see the viewpoint and good conduct of Buddhism as something which can certainly benefit mankind and the environment. The policies of the officials of the administration in their respective areas, and the parliament, do possess this basic view and good conduct. Our way of thinking is influenced by the heritage we have inherited from our ancestors and which has been handed down to us over generations. It has its own uniqueness which has not been borrowed from outside.

To sum up, as far as the parliament and the administration are concerned, when there are occasional difficulties it is not proper to think that it will be sufficient only to overcome them. Together with that, we should think creatively on a wider perspective and in accordance with that prepare plans for implementing our ideas. I think it will be good if this could be accomplished. This is what I wished to say today. There remains nothing else to say.

As it was discussed previously, our cause is well-founded and true in essence. Recognising its nature, we are carrying on our struggle on the strength of the power of truth. Therefore, it is important that we carry on our struggle on the basis of truth alone. Each individual must have complete faith in the truthfulness of the cause. My best wishes to everybody.
Today, I have nothing new to tell you. I am very glad that except for one, all the other deputies are present here. Among the institutions of our exiled set up, we consider this Parliament as one of the most important. From the Dalai Lama downwards, when everybody holds this body in esteem and honour and when members are not present in strength, then an impression may be formed that the members themselves are not serious about their responsibilities and underestimate its importance. Therefore today when you have gathered in good number, I am very happy. It shows that as per the esteem shown by others, you all have taken your responsibilities seriously. Thank you!

The purpose of meeting here is to evaluate what we have done so far and discuss the pros and cons and at the same time think seriously on what we can do in the future, and try our level best to come out with suggestions. This is important. Sometimes members may think that because the Dalai Lama is already there to lead, he will do the work and they may bank on him and thinking that he would shoulder the responsibility, they may become lax. From my side, I may put my faith and hope in the Parliament thinking that it will come out with new ideas and directives and if between the two, there is an unbridged gap, there is a possibility of failure on our part and we may become lax. Therefore I ask everybody to do his best.

As everyone knows, we have come upon such a precarious time as this. On one hand, the situation inside Tibet is deteriorating from bad to worse. Some say that in some places the situation is almost like the days during the Cultural Revolution. But on the other, according to my view,
the actions of the Chinese government seem to indicate a policy of desperation. It is not becoming of a great nation that can contribute a great deal to this world, which has a long history and in whom people can repose their faith. It seems to be the policy of a coward or a visionless person who thinks only of the moment and whiles away the time from day to day. Therefore, it is almost clear that the present policy cannot remain constant. The way the Chinese are acting in Tibet, not only in Tibet in their attitude towards Hong Kong and Taiwan as also on East Turkistan or Xinjiang is one of repression. In reality, this will not only not solve the existing problems but it will create more dissent in the minds of people and although it may bring about temporary peace and calm for one or two years, ultimately it will take generations and become a factor to escalate the problems. I firmly believe that sooner or later a change will definitely take place. So from our side, there is no need to change our stand of Middle path. This is what I feel.

The overall conditions are such that one feels sad but, from another angle, there is certainly great hope. Therefore at such a delicate moment, I exhort all of you to think very seriously.

Personally, I have always been telling you that the Tibetan cultural heritage of noble human behaviour, which is derived from the Buddhist philosophy, is of great importance. I would like to repeat it again today. Anybody can find ways and means to tackle their day to day tasks. Now, the basic aim of the Tibetan issue is so important that efforts to find ways and means to realise it cannot be confined only to political freedom. Our aim is not merely that we do not depend upon others in doing what we like. Our aim is to preserve a noble Tibetan tradition which has been ingrained in us for thousands of years, and today many impartial people in the world find it praiseworthy. This noble tradition is useful not only to ourselves, but it can definitely benefit the whole world. In this world, in materially developed countries people are anxious to have mental peace, we have a means to provide peace in the form of our noble tradition. And if we can preserve this well, it will benefit not only the six million Tibetan people, the Tibetan environment, but millions of sentient beings in this Himalayan range and every human race as well as animals. However, if we are dependent on others as at present, and those on
whom we are dependent look down upon Tibetan religion and culture with mockery and contempt and consider it useless, then it is impossible to preserve and promote that beneficial Tibetan tradition and philosophy. Under these circumstances, the minimum necessary requirement is a proper self-rule, and we have got to strive to achieve it.

Only yesterday I had a talk with an American whom I have known for a long time. He has had relations with Tibetans for about ten years and during these ten years, he said that the Tibetan nature seemed to have become degraded. People seem to be greedy for money and to get it, they tell lies or use force and trickery, etc., so that things seem to have become worse. Among Tibetans also some people have told me likewise. So this is important and vital. Yesterday I had talks with some new arrivals from Tibet as well as with the Tibetan Women's Association. I told them that this thing which is of practical benefit to ourselves and of which we can be proud in the world, if it is lost, then our whole effort so far would come to naught. This noble Tibetan tradition of great value which is beneficial for human society as also for individual families, if it is lost, then even if a time comes when Tibetans in and outside Tibet can be reunited, there will be no joy. After returning back, through pretence, deceit, envy and false show to one another if the society is made up of people who bully and suspect each other, it makes no difference whether we attain freedom or not. Although we will be free from the checks and controls of another nation but if it becomes a society where peoples minds are motivated by base jealousy there will be nothing to be happy about. So, although we cannot pass a resolution and decide here in the Parliament, but if we can hold this philosophy which is valuable and important in each member's mind and thus think and speak when we are in session, and outside, in the Tibetan society during the twenty-four hours, months and years, if we can somehow introduce this attitude in every way, uphold it; and as our older generation passes away, it is important that we instill this in the minds of our younger generation and make it ingrained in them. Why did we set up separate Tibetan settlements in exile? Why did we set up separate Tibetan schools? There are certain small countries in this world who usually strive only for political freedom, but I have considered from the beginning that our struggle is different.
Therefore, sometimes, we get carried away by the political freedom and are unable to think of how our society will evolve or what will happen to it after regaining it. Mere resolutions will not help at all. If we pass a resolution that everybody should become a compassionate Bodhisattva, it cannot come about. For this, every one — young and old have to make efforts so that it can be implanted in the minds of the people. Such thoughts should imbibe noble character in people. Otherwise merely passing resolutions on this will not help. In writing, these things certainly appear proper and grand in form. But in reality, if these things go from bad to worse, if the nobility of character degenerates, then I feel that we shall have failed in our duty.

What can I do? I have no other means than talk about it with people. I feel that from all of you on the side of the administration as well as the Parliament, proper directives should be given to preserve our cultural traditions and nobility of character by every possible means in the community.

Now it is enough. You may be getting weary of my speaking on this always. But I consider this very important. If we have this in us, Tibetans will definitely have respect. In future, we can be proud of Tibet in the world and others will surely admire us. Otherwise, we cannot be an economic power. We have no sea route. Perhaps we can be rich by extracting the natural resources. But these are not very important. Therefore the traditional nobility of character must always be borne in mind. This, I feel, is very vital. On one hand, we say that we should accumulate good fortune. Good fortune can be accumulated if one has nobility, a good heart, an altruistic mind and leads a virtuous life. If one person tries, the individual fortune will increase. If a family strives, the family fortune will prosper. Adding them up, the fortunes of our society will increase. This is the same as performing puja (religious rituals) for internal good fortune. On the contrary, if the character of one’s body, speech and mind is so vile that it is bound to go downhill, and even then if one performs puja or recites the mani mantra, will there will be any use? Very difficult.

Another point is about my Taiwan visit about which I had especially explained at the recent meeting. The Kashag can explain to you about it
and the Chairman knows about the recent happenings. You were also there? (pointing to the Vice-Chairman) It is important that you should know about these matters. Otherwise, till now, we had placed the Taiwanese and Chinese in one category calling them the dual red-black Chinas but recently a big change has taken place. You should know about the necessity and the reasons as well as the long and short term purposes of this change. In our society also, some of the people have followed the directives of the government sincerely and remained steadfast. We have been talking about those who have been visiting Taiwan and being paid by them; it is possible for them to think that the Dalai Lama may be in the same category if they do not know the facts properly. Some guilty persons may interpret otherwise. They may justify their misdeeds by saying that the Dalai Lama is also visiting Taiwan. But it is not the same. How did I go to Taiwan? If people do not know about this, there is the danger that some may try to do strange and meaningless things in the society. So whether you deem it necessary to debate it in the Parliament or draw up a document — and I think there is a clarification paper in the Kashag — this matter should be properly understood in the community. So far, those people in our community who have remained steadfast, adhering to all the instructions of the government, have left a good record. Those people who till now have been flouting all the orders of the government and indulging in wrong things their record of misdeeds still remains and they have not been cleared. What was the purpose of my visit? It was to stop the misdeeds of these people forthwith. These activities do not benefit the government of Taiwan. For the people of Taiwan, it has caused disgrace and serves no useful purpose. A good impression of the Tibetan community will benefit the government and people of Taiwan. Otherwise what is the use if they are placed at par with the duo red-black Chinas? So in a situation where we could not explain things properly they thought it was a mistake, which they could not rectify at once or do anything about it. Thus we are now trying to find a new way. Although I cannot assure you of a hundred percent result, by following this course we will have no regrets. The main thing is that we are striving to improve our common interest. I thought that you should know this too.
As I said before, I came to the Parliament today not because I had something new to tell you. According to the Charter, I have to come to the Parliament once a year. So I came to say, 'I am here'. I have nothing more to say. Everyone must work hard. Thank you.
Appendices
Appendix I
UN General Assembly Resolution 1353 (XIV) New York, 1959

The General Assembly, recalling the principles regarding fundamental human rights and freedoms set out in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1948,

Considering that the fundamental human rights and freedoms to which the Tibetan people, like all others, are entitled include the right to civil and religious liberty for all without distinction,

Mindful also of the distinctive cultural and religious heritage of the people of Tibet and of the autonomy which they have traditionally enjoyed,

Gravely concerned at reports, including the official statements of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to the effect of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet have been forcibly denied them,

Deploring the effect of these events in increasing international tension and embittering the relations between peoples at a time when earnest and positive efforts are being made by responsible leaders to reduce tension and improve international relations,

1. Affirms its belief that respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is essential for the evolution of a peaceful world order based on the rule of law;

2. Calls for respect for the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people and for their distinctive cultural and religious life.
Appendix II
UN General Assembly Resolution 1723
(XVI) New York, 1961

The General Assembly,
Recalling its resolution 1353 (XIV) of 21 October 1959 on the question of Tibet,
Gravely concerned at the continuation of events in Tibet, including the violation of the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people and the suppression of the distinctive cultural and religious life which they have traditionally enjoyed,
Noting with deep anxiety the severe hardships which these events have inflicted on the Tibetan people, as evidenced by the large-scale exodus of Tibetan refugees to the neighbouring countries,
Considering that these events violate fundamental human rights and freedoms set out in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the principle of self-determination of peoples and nations, and have the deplorable effect of increased international tension and embittering relations between peoples,

1. Reaffirms its conviction that respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is essential for the evolution of a peaceful world order based on the rule of law;
2. Solemnly renews its call for the cessation of practices which deprive the Tibetan people of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, including their right to self-determination;
3. Expresses the hope that member states will make all possible efforts, as appropriate, towards achieving the purposes of the present resolution.
Appendix III
UN General Assembly Resolution 2079
(XX) New York, 1965

The General Assembly, Bearing in mind the principles relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Reaffirming its resolutions 1353 (XIV) of 21 October 1959 and 1723 (XVI) of 20 December 1961 on the question of Tibet,

Gravely concerned at the continued violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet and the continued suppression of their distinctive cultural and religious life, as evidenced by the exodus of refugees to the neighbouring countries,

1. Deplores the continued violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet;
2. Reaffirms that respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is essential for the evolution of a peaceful world order based on the rule of law;
3. Declares its conviction that the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Tibet and the suppression of the distinctive cultural and religious life of its people increase international tensions embitter relations between peoples;
4. Solemnly renews its call for the cessation of all practices which deprive the Tibetan people of the human rights and fundamental freedoms which they have always enjoyed;
5. Appeals to all states to use their best endeavours to achieve the purposes of the present resolution.
Appendix IV
UN 43rd Sub-Commission on Human Rights, Geneva, August 1991 Resolution 91/10: Situation in Tibet

The Sub-Commission of Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the International Bill of Human Rights and other international instruments in the field of human rights,

Concerned at the continuing reports of violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms which threaten the distinct cultural, religious and national identity of the Tibetan people,

1. Calls upon the government of the People’s Republic of China to fully respect the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Tibetan people;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to transmit to the Commission on Human Rights information on the situation in Tibet provided by the government of China and by other reliable sources.
Appendix V
Withdrawal of Strasbourg Proposal

Ever since direct contact was made between Dharmsala and Beijing in 1979, His Holiness the Dalai Lama took a number of initiatives to find a negotiated solution to the Tibetan issue. Two high level delegations were sent to Beijing in 1982 and 1984 to have exploratory talks with the Chinese leaders. In September 1987, His Holiness put forward a Five-Point Peace Plan, and a year later, in June 1988, His Holiness presented a more detailed proposal for negotiations with the Chinese government in an address in Strasbourg.

Even after the imposition of martial law in Tibet in March 1989, His Holiness the Dalai Lama suggested a meeting of representatives from both sides in Hong Kong as a measure of mutual confidence-building and to discuss ways and means for the early start of serious negotiations on the basis of the Strasbourg Proposal.

However, judging from the official statements and the experiences of our recent contact with the Chinese government, it is clear that the present leadership lacks a sincere commitment to finding a solution to the issue. At the same time, the situation in Tibet continues to be very grave and serious. The unabated repression of the Tibetan people and the continued massive influx of Chinese into Tibet are causing serious political, social and economic problems.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama made it very clear in his statement of March 10 this year that because of the closed and negative attitude of the present Chinese leadership he felt that his personal commitment to the ideas expressed in the Strasbourg Proposal had become ineffectual, and that if there were no new initiatives from the Chinese he would

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1 For want of proper response to the Strasbourg initiative it was withdrawn by the newly-elected Kashag (Cabinet) of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile in Dharamsala. This announcement was made by Chairman of the Kashag, Kalon Gyalpo Dhondup, on September 2, 1991.

2 Vide pp. 430.
consider himself free of any obligation to the proposals he had made in his Strasbourg address. He, however, remains firmly committed to the path of non-violence and in finding a solution to the Tibetan issue through negotiations and understanding.

Under these circumstances His Holiness the Dalai Lama no longer feels obligated or bound to pursue the Strasbourg Proposal as a basis for finding a peaceful solution to the Tibetan problem. We once again urge the Chinese leadership to abandon the policy of repression, the continuing violation of human rights, and the systematic destruction of Tibetan identity through the massive transfer of Chinese into Tibet, and to show a positive attitude for finding a negotiated settlement. On our part, we are open and willing to consider any realistic initiative by the Chinese leaders which takes into account the historical facts, the changing situation of the world, the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Tibetan people, and the long-term mutual interest of both Tibet and China.
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