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Tibet: Endurance of the National Idea

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Tibet: Endurance of the National Idea

by

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and

Eva M. Neterowicz

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PREFACE

In 1989, the Council for Social and Economic Studies published *The Tragedy of Tibet* by Eva M. Neterowicz. This excellent account of China's efforts to occupy and assimilate the Tibetan people was a moving, well-documented, and exceptionally useful tool for studying international relations. In 1993, Dr. Roger Pearson of the Council for Social and Economic Studies and I discussed the book, which was at the time out of print, and agreed that I would update the original study and add additional chapters in an effort to highlight the work's relevance for the study of world politics. Dr. Neterowicz kindly agreed to this project and allowed me to make the necessary modifications. *Tibet: Endurance of the National Idea* is the result of efforts to accomplish those objectives. I revised Dr. Neterowicz's chapters in an effort to take make more explicit points relevant to the study of international relations and added the *Introduction*, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7. I hope that the resultant work has preserved the quality of Dr. Neterowicz's research while also incorporating my own. Since my hand was the last one to touch the manuscript, I accept responsibility for any oversights or shortcomings that the reader may find.

I would like to thank Ann M. Ingram for her valuable editorial assistance on the final draft of the manuscript. In addition, I want to express my appreciation to Sandra Fowler, Krista Williams, Melanie Eichelbaum, Chad Triolet, and John Frazer, the student assistants in the Department of Political Science who provided their patient assistance in the preparation of this study.

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October 27, 1994

Tibet: Endurance of the National Idea

INTRODUCTION

With the collapse of Communism, first in Eastern Europe and then in the Soviet Union itself, the post-World War Two territorial status quo, long accepted as the permanent order, was called into question. This event had implications not only for the nations of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, but also for other Communist Party states. The most powerful of the remaining Communist regimes has been dramatically affected by the fall of what was once a powerful global ideology. With the breakup of the Soviet empire, many of China's national minorities have intensified the reassertion of their traditional identities.

While there are important differences between the demographic situations of the Soviet Union and China, the similarities between the two are striking. They are alike in that the ruling groups in each of these empires, upon coming to power, faced the bitter enmity of most of the minorities within its territory. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) brought most of the Chinese minorities under its control by either force of arms or the threat of military action against people who knew that resistance to the Han Chinese was futile. In a similar fashion, the Soviet Communist Party, an institution that was widely viewed as little more than an extension of Russian power, held sway over the USSR by using brutal, repressive tactics against minorities generally unwilling to accept continued Russian domination after the fall of the Czarist regime. The Chinese, like the Russians, found themselves in control of an empire of which they did not have complete understanding. Upon assuming control, the CCP could call upon the services of only a small group of minorities specialists within the party. As a result, ignorance of minority customs and traditions was widespread and the danger of inadvertently offending people was always present. In apparent desperation, the Chinese utilized the services of Soviet specialists on minorities problems. Considering the terrible shortcomings of Soviet nationalities policies that were developed from the earliest Soviet days by Joseph Stalin, it is not

surprising that the Chinese also encountered significant problems in dealing with the non-Han population. Each nation also followed the practice of giving minorities autonomous regions in which they might enjoy at least some privileges in the pursuit of cultural and linguistic distinctiveness. In each state there was, in effect, a 'social contract' whereby the minorities were to pledge allegiance to central powers in return for certain economic and political benefits. Finally, the Soviet and Chinese situations are alike in that, for both empires, the minorities regions were extremely important by virtue of their holdings of natural resources. Neither nation could afford the loss of territories which were central to their economic programs and vital to the welfare of their dominant ethnic groups.¹

In spite of these and other important similarities, there are significant differences in how each nation has dealt with its minority population. The Soviet leadership was forced to deal with an overwhelming minority population, almost 50% of its national population, while China's non-Han population has never exceeded 8%. As a result of this demographic situation, the nationalities problem became the central challenge to the existence of the Soviet state, while in China it never assumed such a significant and threatening status. It is this demographic disparity that produced the greatest difference between Chinese and Soviet nationalities policy. Severely challenged by the existence of non-Russian groups, the Soviet Communist Party was much more consistent in pursuing a hardline policy that made only relatively minor concessions to the nation's minorities. As late as 1991, Gorbachev's opponents were mobilized in the face of what they saw as the erosion of the 'social contract' which had for years kept non-Russians in a subordinate position. Many Soviet specialists suggested that the timing of the 1991 coup was motivated by the impending conclusion of a new state treaty which would have given much broader freedoms to the USSR's ethnic minorities.

In contrast with Soviet policy, the Chinese method of dealing with ethnic minorities was somewhat more flexible. While it went through phases of severe repression, it also exhibited periods of relative toleration of minority cultures and traditions. During the more repressive periods, the study of local languages was discouraged and, in many cases, made criminal. Often, as during the Great Leap Forward in the 1950s, distinctive styles of dress and other cultural manifestations were prohibited in an effort to encourage national unity. In 1975, Chinese authorities required people to begin working

on Fridays, an especially significant action in Muslim areas in which Friday was the recognized holy day. In the Muslim communities of Xinjiang province, riots followed the issuance of this order. The establishment of communes, an event which took place in the Tibetan Autonomous Region in the 1960s, was another element of official repression of the lifestyles of the non-Han Chinese population.

The most significant turning point in Chinese nationalities policy came in 1971 with the fall of Lin Biao, the hardliner who had long been regarded as Mao's heir apparent. Following his death and the removal from power of key commanders of his military unit, the Chinese Fourth Field Army, language policy became more relaxed and, once again, people were allowed to study different languages. Non-Chinese language newspapers and radio stations reappeared and individuals who had been denounced for their interest in other languages were rehabilitated.

With Deng Xiaoping's political return in 1978, minorities policies became even more tolerant. The motivations for this increased tolerance were, according to June Teufel Dreyer, both economic and political. Certainly, it was an objective of Deng's policy that all minorities be encouraged to support his Four Modernizations program and make their contributions to increasing productivity and thereby improving Chinese living standards. The political motivations, however, were more extensive and included objectives in both foreign and domestic policies. An important foreign policy goal was to improve Chinese relations with the Islamic states, nations whose support could greatly enhance prospects for modernizing the Chinese economy. Improvements in the lot of China's Muslim community would, authorities hoped, significantly improve Beijing's relations with the Islamic states. Another crucial political goal was to minimize Taiwan's fears about eventual unification with the mainland by demonstrating that minorities in the PRC could thrive and enjoy the autonomy that would allow them to preserve many of their distinctive traditions. It was also important, for propaganda purposes, to be able to portray Mao's philosophy as one which was relevant for both Chinese and non-Chinese people. This theme was a major part of Beijing's appeal to the nations of the developing world.²

Tolerance toward China's ethnic minorities had several important consequences. First, Mao's dismissal of the enduring national identities as simply another class issue was repudiated. Second, the party determined that problems in minority areas could be eliminated by ending the backwardness associated with those regions. As a

result, economic development was stressed and officials promoted the creation of a market system. Third, minority areas were encouraged to develop commercial ties with those nations which had an interest in their welfare. Tibet, for example, developed economic ties with Nepal as well as with prosperous overseas ethnic Tibetans. The goal was to encourage individuals who wished to establish economic operations in minority areas, operations which would enhance local economies and relieve Beijing of some of the financial burden of supporting these regions.³

In spite of these innovations, little was accomplished in meeting Beijing's goals for minorities. Authorities claimed that their policy aimed at increasing the numbers of minority peoples, but, in fact, during the eight years for which statistics are available, there was only a small increase in their actual numbers. As a result of tax benefits for ethnic minorities, many people chose to claim minority status for economic reasons. Over half of the increase in minority populations comes from those seeking economic advantage. Nor were the economic improvements that were intended for ethnic minorities realized. During the 1980s, the economic gap between these regions and the Han areas became even greater and many minorities became convinced that they were victims of Han exploitation because they were providing raw materials while the Han were creating the more expensive finished products. Even efforts to encourage foreign contacts failed to bring the desired benefits. Tourists coming to minority areas were, with alarming frequency, shocked by the obvious mistreatment of minorities, while many economic openings, such as those with the so-called Golden Triangle of Burma, Thailand, and Laos, simply opened parts of China up to a renewal of the opium trade. The use of unsterilized needles by drug addicts led to the appearance of an AIDS problem in China.⁴

It is not surprising that China's minority population reacted negatively to Beijing's policies in their regions. Uigurs, Kazakhs, and others engaged in public and often violent protests against central authorities. Of the Chinese minority nations, none has demonstrated its resilience and determination more than Tibet. It is significant that even during the more flexible periods of Chinese policy toward minorities, the Tibetans were still subject to many of the more repressive aspects of Beijing's policy. In a reaction against China's occupation of Tibet, the region has become the site of an increasing number of protests in recent years. In 1994, Re Di, the vice-secretary of the Tibetan Communist Party, complained bitterly about the

increasing number of Tibetans embracing the Tibetan national idea and rejecting Chinese claims that Tibet was an integral party of China.⁵ The history of the Chinese-Tibetan conflict is significant because it demonstrates the endurance of this national idea in the face of Beijing's overwhelming military and political pressure. It is important in that it proves that the utility of military, political, and economic force is limited by a variety of circumstances that are founded in culture and tradition.

Notes

¹ Edward Friedman, "China's North-South Split and the Forces of Disintegration", *Current History*, September, 1993, pp. 269-274.

² June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Political System: Modernization and Tradition*, New York: Paragon House, 1993, pp. 375-378.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 377-382.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 381-386.

⁵ *Foreign Broadcast Information Service - China Daily Reports*, 3 June 1994, p. 80.

CHAPTER 1

Tibetan Society and Culture

As the Chinese Communists massed their population to celebrate the thirty-eighth anniversary of the victory of Mao Zedong and the founding of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1988, almost two thousand miles from Beijing a determined group of Tibetan monks and lay people staged a protest against Chinese Communist rule in their homeland.

Their protest made few demands but had a growing significance. While the world has perceived the leadership of Deng Xiaoping as more benign than that of the radical Mao Zedong, especially during Mao's last years when he launched the destructive Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the situation in Tibet demonstrated that there have been few significant changes in the treatment of the so-called "minority nationalities" by Deng Xiaoping's regime. In fact, the elements of continuity of policy are probably more numerous than the elements of change.

While there are differences among scholars over whether Tibet is legally an independent nation, it is nevertheless clear that the Chinese communists brutally suppressed the freedom of the Tibetan people by military invasion in 1950, increased their oppression in 1959, forced the spiritual and temporal leader, the Dalai Lama, to flee to India, and conducted a systematic persecution of the Tibetan people, their culture and religion ever since.

Tibet's ancient culture and history are very different from those of the Han – the Chinese people who first united China thousands of years ago. Tibet's language, alphabet, culture, folk tradition, literature, customs, and art are notably different from those of the countries surrounding it. In addition, it has a unique religion, based on Buddhism, with its own spiritual and temporal leader, the Dalai Lama. The action of the PRC in October of 1987 made clear what had been obvious since the army of Mao Zedong invaded and subjugated Tibet in 1950 – that a relentless war is being waged to suppress the Tibetan culture and to replace it with PRC-directed communism. Seeking to eliminate any nationalist tradition, the PRC

has waged war not only against the Tibetan culture, but even against the traditional cultures of the Chinese and Mongolian peoples.

In October, 1988, thousands of Tibetans took to the streets to vigorously protest the oppression of Tibet and to demand independence. The last days of September had seen the execution of two Tibetan nationals and the imprisonment of nine others. On October 1, the anniversary of the founding of the PRC, two thousand angry Tibetans stoned and torched a police station in the capital city of Lhasa. On the last day of a major ten-day Buddhist prayer festival in October, thousands of Tibetans gathered to demand independence, and PRC Chinese troops fired tear gas and eventually bullets into the crowd. At least three people were killed, including a monk, and later reports indicated that even more people were killed. The PRC acted quickly to remove foreign visitors from Tibet and to seal off the Tibetan capital to all foreigners.¹ On March 5, 1989, the 30th anniversary of the Tibetan armed rebellion as well as the first anniversary of the 1988 protests, violence returned to Tibet as thousands of Tibetans once again expressed their fury at China's domination of this province. Approximately a dozen Tibetans died and over a hundred people were injured as demonstrators attacked the Regional Office for Receiving Returned Tibetans, the office building of the Lhasa Construction Bureau, and other buildings associated with the process of transforming Tibet into a model of China. Numerous party buildings were also targeted by angry demonstrators.² The events of 1988 and 1989 set a pattern which was to continue into the next decade as thousands of Tibetans resisted the transformation of their nation by the leadership of a Chinese Communist Party which was determined to erase a centuries-old culture and replace it with one widely regarded as foreign.

To comprehend the significance of the current struggle, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the unique Tibetan society as well as Tibetan efforts to preserve their culture and history. Tibet has a civilization and recorded history almost two thousand years old. This nation's provides a unique example of a brave and determined people who, while willing to change to meet the challenges of the twentieth century, still wish to preserve the achievements of their society. Tibet's experiences illustrate that in spite of being subjected to both military and political repression, the idea of nationhood can endure when a people are determined to preserve that concept.

The Setting for Tibet

Western studies of international relations always start with an examination of the components of national power. The case of Tibet is important in that it illustrates the variety of factors that constitute power but it also provides an insight into those factors which act as constraints on power. It is obvious that Tibet enjoys some of the most important attributes of power: impressive natural resources and, especially before it was partitioned, an expansive territory that should give the nation an important military advantage. However, it is apparent that the personal orientations of the Tibetans themselves are such that its natural wealth has not been effectively exploited and the advantages of its difficult mountainous terrain have not overcome the force of invaders equipped with modern instruments of war.

Historic Tibet is a much larger territory than one sees on current maps of the PRC. Over one half of Tibet's original territory was added to nearby Chinese provinces. Viewing a contemporary map of Tibet, only the area of Central Tibet (called U-Tsang) and sections of Eastern Tibet (called Kham) are shown as parts of the PRC-designated Tibet Autonomous Region. Other Tibetan lands include the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, now a part of China's Kansu Province; Ngapa and Kanzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures, which are incorporated in Szechuan Province; and Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, considered part of Yunnan Province. A few Tibetans also live in other areas outside of the PRC's control, such as India and Nepal, but the PRC statistics on Tibet include only those Tibetans living in the "Tibetan Autonomous Region", and therefore do not present a full picture of the Tibetan population.

Nevertheless, one can readily see from a map of the PRC the geographic significance of this area. The Tibetan plateau represents fully one-fourth of China's entire land mass. A region of high elevation, situated on the 'roof of the world,' it possesses a vast potential of unexplored and, consequently, unexploited mineral wealth. Specialists in geopolitics can readily see that it occupies a strategic location on the tense borders of India and the former USSR. As will be discussed later, Mao Zedong viewed Tibet as a strategic block to both India and Russia and sought to make it a site for China's nuclear defenses.

Tibet is a region in which natural resources represent an important potential for national power. Tibet's minerals are an important and relatively untapped source of future wealth. They include iron, coal, asphalt, oil-shale, tin, copper, jade, and zinc. Tibet is also credited

with possessing the world's largest lithium reserves with lithium deposits established at half the world's total. There are also deposits of uranium and plutonium.³

Despite this mineral wealth and the potential that it holds, Tibet remains an underdeveloped country with a limited economic base. Although historically the Tibetans have been self sufficient in food – a very basic diet of wheat, flour, tea, yak meat, etc. – they have suffered in recent years from famine when the Chinese Communists made unreasonable and excessive demands on their limited food resources.

Tibetans are found in two major occupations: herders and farmers, with some commercial pursuits. The country has a large amount of farmland where the major crops are rice, corn, barley, wheat, buckwheat, and broad beans. Farming methods followed age-old customs, utilizing wooden ploughs and yaks until recently when some mechanization has occurred. Forestry is important, with pine, spruce, and fir among the chief lumber products.⁴

Tibet retains the appearance of a vast pastureland with millions of hectares for the grazing of a variety of animals including cows, yaks, goats, sheep, donkeys, and mules. On the Tibetan farm, the yak traditionally occupied a central role, providing tender, lean meat, milk, cheese, and butter. Yak hair and hide is used for boot-making, thread, blankets, clothing and even boats and tents. Yak dung is dried and used for fuel.⁵

Traditional Tibetan society has changed little over the centuries. The recorded history of Tibet began about 127 B.C., but the most significant events in its history occurred between the seventh and tenth centuries A.D., when the country was unified and became a major power in Central Asia. The country's borders remained largely unchanged from the tenth century until the Chinese Communist invasion which then cut off major areas which had long been part of Tibet.

Tibetan culture was influenced by other cultures in the region because of its relations with its neighbors including the Chinese, Mongols, Manchus, Nepalese, Indians, Russians and even the British. While seeking a continued independent status, Tibet fell under the control of other powers in the region: the Manchu Emperors, the Nepalese Kings, the Mongol Khans, and the British rulers in India. Controversy in international law developed when the Manchu Empire fell in 1911 and the ruler of Tibet, the Dalai Lama, asserted full independence. The succeeding Republic of China never officially

recognized Tibet's declaration of independence, but remained too weak and preoccupied (i.e., unifying China, fighting the Japanese, and resisting the Communist threat) to enforce its claims on Tibet. The question became moot when the Chinese Communists sent in troops in 1950, snuffing out Tibetan freedom and independence. From that time onward the Tibetan culture and religion were under siege by the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists who ruled from Beijing.

Tibetan history, culture, and politics can best be understood by examining the religious tradition of Tibetan Buddhism which became the essential fabric of Tibetan society, carefully weaving every aspect of Tibetan life. An examination of this crucial facet of the Tibetan population helps explain why these people have, over the years, been unable to translate their abundant natural resources into a base for national power which would have aided them in resisting the pressures of powerful and expansionist neighbors.

Tibetan Political Development

During the seventh century, the region we now refer to as Tibet was occupied by a group of nomadic tribes. An energetic leader, Tsanpo Songtsen Gampo (620-649), became known as the "father of Tibet" because of his crucial role in creating a unified entity. He subdued the various peoples on the borders of Tibet and arranged matrimonial alliances with neighboring powers (i.e., a princess from Nepal and a princess from China). These two marriages had a great influence on Tibet, for these brides were responsible for the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet.

Other leaders who influenced Tibet's growth were Emperors Trisong Detsen (755-797) and Tritsug Detsen Ralpachen (817-836). Emperor Trison Detson extended Tibetan influence across the Pamirs as far as the empires of the Arabs and the Turks in the west, to Turkestan in the north, and as far south as Nepal. Tibetan armies overran the Chinese provinces of Gansu and Szechuan, and the ensuing treaty confirmed his conquests on the Chinese border.

Tibet's Imperial Age lasted about two centuries. It ended with the assassination of Tsanpo Ralpachen in 836. Two accomplishments were evident during this time: the creation of a unified Tibetan state maintaining regular relations with its neighbors and the formation of a distinct Tibetan state with predominant Buddhist features.

During the middle of the ninth century, the Tibetan ruler Tsanpo Langdarma (836-842) met the same fate as Tsanpo Ralpachen. He was assassinated in 842 and an 'age of assassinations' began. The

ruling dynasty was terminated with this assassination, and the empire collapsed. The once unified area fragmented into a number of principalities inclined toward war with one another.

The fortunes of Buddhism varied in this period. The reign of Tsanpo Ralpachen witnessed the persecution of Buddhism, but after his assassination, Tibet's foreign ties shifted from China to India and Nepal. With this shift there came a renewal of Buddhism and many prominent Buddhist teachers came to Tibet.

As a consequence of these developments, the political role of Buddhism now advanced rapidly. Great monasteries were built, two schools of Buddhism – the Sakyapa and the Kagyupa being the most popular. Social changes influenced political development and Buddhist monks became a new monastic aristocracy which successfully challenged the traditional Tibetan nobility in social, political, and even economic fields. More than a spiritual or intellectual revival, the very nature of Tibetan society was changed: the social, economic, and political landscape was dramatically altered. Tibetan interests shifted away from political and military affairs toward religious and spiritual matters which over the succeeding centuries came to permeate the life of the Tibetan people.

With this new, more pacific interest, the map drawn by Tibetan conquests began to contract. In both the south and the west, Tibetans were forced back to the Tibetan plateau, and subsequent Tibetan history would witness no expansion beyond this area. The Tibetan fighting spirit had been neutralized and the Tang Dynasty, though it was overthrown a century after the Tibetan ruling family fell, managed to recover most of the territory which had been taken from it by Tibet.⁶

While Tibet endured the disintegration of its empire, it would soon face a threat to its independence in its remaining territory. That threat was the power of the Mongols under Genghis Khan (1167-1227). Following his election as the leader of all the Mongols, Genghis Khan made a series of rapid military conquests and created one of the greatest empires the world had ever known. While we do not need to go into detail regarding the extent of the Mongol conquests, suffice it to say that when Genghis conquered Tangut, a region to the north of Tibet, the Tibetan government decided to open friendly relations with the Mongols and introduced them Buddhism. The resulting accommodation established a 'priest/patron' relationship between the Mongol rulers and the Tibetan hierarchy. This agreement became the basis for dealing with the Mongol Yuan Dynasty in

China (1260-1368), and later the Manchu Ching Dynasty (1644-1911) in China.

By 1350, Changchub Gyaltzen (1350-1364) became the ruler of Tibet and helped to bring about further unification and centralization. He retained only a nominal bond between himself and the Mongol Emperor and attempted to revive secular rule and to effect a restoration of Imperial Tibet. He promoted the revival of Tibetan culture and adopted a Tibetan rather than the former Mongolian system of administration. His code of justice had far-reaching implications and was retained as the basis for the administration of Tibetan justice into the twentieth century.

In spite of its physical isolation, international events continued to affect Tibet. As Mongol power waned, China came under the control of a native Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) which demonstrated little interest in Tibet. The Ming Emperors maintained trade and friendly relations with the Tibetans and viewed those relations in the Confucian context which meant acceptance of tributary relations between China and areas neighboring the Chinese Empire. Therefore, it was considered normal and acceptable that the Tibetans, as subject people, paid monetary and economic tribute to their colonial masters. In spite of this relationship, Tibet remained free to maintain independent relations with Nepal and Kashmir.

Mongol influence did not disappear from the area. Despite the decline of their once vast empire, the Mongols continued their ties with Tibet. Buddhist influence continued to grow in Tibet and Sonam Gyatso (1534-1588), a Dalai Lama, traveled to the Mongol court and helped to set in motion the events which would bring about the conversion of the Mongols to Buddhism. The Fourth Dalai Lama, Yonten Guatso (1589-1617), was discovered to have been born to the family of the Mongol ruler Altan Khan, as his great-grandson. The Mongols subsequently helped to establish the rule of the Fifth Dalai Lama as the supreme religious and political power in Tibet.⁷

The great regard for and power of the Dalai Lama over the Tibetan people is an extraordinary phenomenon and it is necessary to understand how this came about in order to fully appreciate his current role in Tibetan affairs.

While some explanation of Buddhist beliefs will be found in the next section, a word should be offered here on the role of the Dalai Lama in Tibetan life. Tsonkapa (1357-1419) founded a new Tibetan Buddhist school as part of a reform movement. The Gelugpa was strictly a religious movement, but soon obtained political influence to

the extent of replacing what was at that time Tibet's dominant school, the Kagyupa. The Gelugpa school spread rapidly throughout Tibet and participated in the establishment of the largest and most powerful monasteries, the Ganden, Drepung, and Sera. When Gedun Trupa, the principal disciple of Tsonkapa, died in 1474, the population believed that he was reincarnated in a newborn child, Gedun Gyatso (1474-1542). Gedun Trupa and Gedun Gyatso were posthumously considered to be the First and Second Dalai Lamas, respectively, and thus the forerunners of the supreme spiritual and temporal rulers of Tibet. The Tibet scholar, Michael C. van Walt van Praag, described the importance of this belief:

The discovery of Gedun Trupa's rebirth and of all his subsequent rebirths as Dalai Lama was based on the belief that human beings who have attained a very high degree of enlightenment can reincarnate voluntarily and out of compassion, in order to help all living beings on their path to final liberation. The Dalai Lama was furthermore recognized to be the embodiment of Chenrezig (the Bodhisattva or emanation of compassion), and the protector of Tibet.⁸

The Dalai Lamas had acquired significant power in Tibet by the end of the sixteenth century. The fifth incarnation, Ngawang Lobsang (1617-1682), known in history as the Great Fifth, found Tibet immersed in religious and regional struggles and called upon Gushri Khan, his Mongol patron, for assistance. Mongol assistance resulted in victory and Gushri Khan presented the whole of Tibet to the Dalai Lama in 1642. This conquest enabled the Great Fifth to rule not only as the sovereign of a unified and independent state of Tibet, but also as the dominant head of the state religion. He retained this power until his retirement in 1679, when a Regent or Desi was appointed to administer the country in his name.⁹ This system of governance remained in force until modern times.

The Tibetan Religious Heritage

Any discussion of the religious heritage of Tibet must begin with the founding of Buddhism in India by Siddhattha Gautama, who was born in the year 563 B.C., and died in 483 B.C. Although he was the heir of the ruling house of Sakhas, he preferred to seek philosophical enlightenment. He renounced his princely authority to found the movement which emphasized compassion, wisdom, and the impor-

tance of study and meditation. Following his death, his followers gathered to meditate on the "Words of the Enlightened One," and their interpretation became the nucleus of Buddhism. Subsequently his followers spread their teachings and established monasteries throughout southern and eastern Asia.¹⁰

The essentials of the teachings included the Four Noble Truths, stated as follows:

Life is inevitably sorrowful – birth, illness, age, and death are all unavoidable, and the quest is to find liberation from the suffering of this existence.

This sorrow arises from the sensual cravings and desires that bind man to this existence and to the chain of rebirth.

Liberation from this continued suffering perpetuated by constant rebirth can be achieved through ending this craving.

Liberation can be obtained through proper moral conduct and enlightenment by following the Eightfold Path.¹¹

The late Christmas Humphreys, who founded the Buddhist Society of London and became Vice-President of the Tibet Society, declared that "Buddhism was from the first a missionary religion." He noted that within a few days of the first sermon Buddha sent his converts into the world with the exhortation to proclaim the doctrine and preach "a life of holiness, perfect, and pure."¹² The Southern School (Theravede) developed in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Siam (Thailand), Burma, and Cambodia (Kampuchea), while the Mahayana School found its great expression in China, Mongolia, and Tibet. As to its growth, he described Buddhism as something which "spread like a tide in Asia."¹³

Buddhism spread along the trade routes to China, eventually reaching Japan, Korea, and, in the sixth century, Tibet. While Theraveda stressed monastic discipline in applying the moral code, the Mahayana took a broader interpretation of the Buddhist beliefs. They incorporated the monastic principles of Theraveda but went beyond this to stress enlightenment for all beings through meditation. This form of Buddhism also stressed the concept of the *bodhisattva*, an awakened being who reaches the state of enlightenment, then, when ready to leave the suffering of continued existence and enter Nirvana, decides voluntarily to be reborn again out of compassion for others in order to help their liberation. This concept in Tibet became linked with the figures of living beings – the so-called Living Buddhas.

The *bodhisattva* is believed to possess the qualities of wisdom and compassion and those who trust in the guidance of the *bodhisattva* must share in the desire for liberation for other beings.¹⁴

An important lesson in the study of international relations is that symbols play a crucial part in political struggles. A constant source for symbolic strength is religion. Major religions are known for their architectural monuments on earth, and just as the Vatican represents Catholicism, the Potala, the greatest Buddhist monastery in Tibet, symbolizes Tibetan Buddhism. This building, an important symbol in Tibet's struggle to preserve its national identity, lends a certain majesty and power to the Buddhist religious faith. One observer, Fred Ward, has described it as "the Magnificent Potala, the sprawling hilltop palace of the Dalai Lama." The palace is the citadel of Buddhist rule and, as the palace of the Dalai Lama, it dominates Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, in a "shroud of isolation." Tibet occupies the world's highest and most difficult terrain, a geographic feature which has kept it isolated for hundred of years after rival fiefdoms began to consolidate in the seventh century. The very name Lhasa, which means "Place of the Gods," notes Ward, became synonymous with the "Forbidden City."¹⁵ The Chinese Communists have turned this magnificent monastery into a museum, but it has retained its elegance. During China's Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1969), the Red Guards were expected to destroy it, but according to some accounts, it was saved from destruction by the intervention of then Premier Zhou Enlai and the regular Chinese army.¹⁶ A more recent visitor, traveler and author Peter Jennings, described the impression it made on him:

For a Tibetan to see the Potala for the first time must be an experience which sends him to his knees. We were given the gift of experiencing this mighty Potala. You can't see it only. You have no choice but to feel it. It overpowers you. I've never been so overwhelmed by a building ... Compared to the drab and dull-colored lands of Tibet, being in the Potala was like standing too close to a star. It was an overload of color. There was every shade of every color: red, blue, green, and so on.¹⁷

The great role religion plays in Tibetan culture and government is best realized by the Potala Palace, the headquarters for the Dalai Lama until he was forced to flee his homeland in 1959. The name *Potala* is adopted from the Sanskrit language and means "Buddha

Mountain." Its architecture is traditionally Tibetan. The first palace for the Dalai Lama was built in the seventh century, but was destroyed by lightning in the eighth century; its successor was devastated by war in the ninth century. The present palace dates from two major constructions in the seventeenth century.

As most observers describe it, the Potala Palace dominates the landscape. The magnificence of the building is emphasized by its thirteen stories which give it a height of three hundred feet and a length from east to west of over one thousand feet. An estimated seven thousand workers labored daily on its construction. A crater behind the palace, which was the source of the mortar for the palace walls, was subsequently filled with water and designated the Dragon King Pool. Estimates indicate that the palace contains over one thousand rooms and about two thousand statues. This building thus represented an edifice of hallways, *sutra* libraries, beautifully decorated prayer rooms, and antechambers. Over the centuries this palace became the home of enormous treasures of silver, gold, and precious stone.¹⁸

The living quarters of the Dalai Lama were located at the top of the White Palace. The main structure was completed during the lifetime of the Great Fifth Lama and the adjoining Red Palace was finished after his death. The bedrooms, sitting rooms and the meeting rooms were all contained here, close to the room where the Dalai Lama sat while chanting the holy scriptures. The remains of the eight Dalai Lamas are entombed in gold *stupas* or rounded tombs. The *stupa* of the Fifth Dalai Lama rises some six stories in height and is covered by more than eight thousand pounds of gold.¹⁹

Another palace which has great symbolic value and reflects the religious heritage of the Tibetan people is the Jokhang Temple. It is located in the center of the old city of Lhasa and was the scene of one of the major demonstrations against Communist oppression in late 1987. The Jokhang Temple is regarded by the Tibetans as one of the holiest of shrines and traces its founding back over thirteen hundred years. The architecture is not purely Tibetan, but reflects other styles and indicates the influence of Indian, Chinese, and Nepalese traditions. Throughout the day, pilgrims prostrate themselves before the shrine. One of its most impressive features is a gilded bronze statue of the Sakyamuni Buddha, sitting on a gold throne surrounded with pillars of pure silver.²⁰ This temple has been described as "the Mecca to the Tibetan faithful." Some pilgrims have been known to travel for years to reach the building, circle it

and prostrate themselves repeatedly at body length intervals before entering to pray in front of the hundreds of statues inside. The building is characterized by its flickering yak butter candles, opulent painted Buddhist murals, great, thirty-foot high statues, richly woven cloth hangings, and the odor of burning butter which pervades the air.²¹

The Drepung Monastery, yet another place of religious and symbolic significance, is located about six miles north of the city of Lhasa. This monastery, founded in 1416, is located high on a cliff and is built in the traditional Tibetan style. At one time, the monastery was the largest of the three great monasteries near Lhasa, and had a population of 10,000 students. The monastery is lavishly decorated and contains many statues of Buddha.²²

The Drepung Monastery, the Sera monastery, and the Ganden monastery are the three once great monasteries close to Lhasa. The Sera, three and half miles north of Lhasa, was founded in 1409 and was one of the most powerful monasteries in all of Tibet. It formerly possessed magnificent statues and great treasures from antiquity, but these were destroyed by the Communists after they took Tibet.²³ When they were founded, they were among the largest universities of the world.

Summary

The Dalai Lama, now in exile from his Tibetan homeland, describes the impact of Buddhism on Tibet as follows:

In Tibet, we see all these aspects of practice as compatible; we do not view *sutra* and *tantra* as contradictory, like hot and cold; we do not consider that the practice of the view of emptiness and the practice of altruistic deeds are contradictory at all. As a result of this, we are able to combine all of the systems into a single unified practice.

To summarize, the altruistic intention to become enlightened is the root, or basis, of the vast series of complete practices. The doctrine of emptiness is the root of the practices of the profound view. In order to develop the mind that realizes the suchness of phenomena higher and higher, it is necessary to engage in meditation. In order to achieve easily a meditative stabilization which is a union of calm abiding and special insight. As the basis for such practice it is necessary to keep good ethics. Thus, the complete system of practice in Tibet is explained as externally

maintaining the Low Vehicle system of ethics, internally maintaining the Sutra Great Vehicle generation of altruism, love, compassion, and secretly maintaining the practice of the Mantra Vehicle.²⁴

Under the Dalai Lama's rule, Tibet was characterized by a combination of the features of both religious and secular states, with a large proportion of its male population entering the monasteries. Although Tibet, because of its strategic location, was challenged by a number of the major powers in the twentieth century – Britain, Russia, China, and India – this remarkable religious-secular entity endured. It was not until the arrival of the Chinese Communists that the very existence of Tibet's ancient religious and cultural tradition was threatened.

Notes

¹ "3 Tibetans Killed in Protests" *Chicago Tribune*, March 7, 1988.

² *Ta Kung Pao*, March 7, 1989, p. 2.

³ Michael Buckley and Robert Strauss, *Tibet: A Travel Survival Kit*, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publication, 1986, pp. 28, 30-31.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Michael C. van Walt van Praag, *The Status of Tibet: History, Rights, and Prospects in International Law*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987, pp. 3-4. The author quotes F. W. Thomas's comment in *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan*, Volume 2, p. 417, that "probably no religion is more potent than Buddhism in damping the fighting spirit." *Ibid.* p. 4.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-9.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁰ Ananada K. Coomaraswamy, *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*, New York: Harper & Row, 1964, pp. 9-10; Clarence Hamilton, *Buddhism*, New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1951, pp. XVII-XVIII. Also see L. Austine Waddell, *Tibetan Buddhism*, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972 (reprint of the 1895 edition).

¹¹ Franz Michael, *China Through the Ages: History of a Civilization*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1986, p. 96.

¹² Christmas Humphreys, *Buddhism: An Introduction and a Guide*, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985, p. 60.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

¹⁴ Michael, pp. 97-98.

¹⁵ Fred Ward, "In Long-Forbidden Tibet", *The National Geographic Magazine*, (February, 1980), pp. 219-220.

¹⁶ Jeremy Bernstein, "Our Far Flung Correspondents (Tibet)", *The New Yorker*, (December 14, 1987), p. 65.

¹⁷ Peter Jennings, *Across China*, New York: William Morrow and Company, 1986, p. 173.

¹⁸ John Summerfield, *Fodor's People's Republic of China Guide 1987*, New York and London: Fodor's Travel Guides, 1987, pp. 500-501.

¹⁹ Bernstein, p. 65.

²⁰ Summerfield, pp. 502-503.

²¹ Ward, pp. 228-231.

²² Summerfield, pp. 500-501.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Tenzin Gyatso (The Fourteenth Dalai Lama), *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, translated and edited by Jeffrey Hopkins and co-edited by Elizabeth Napper, Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1985, pp. 53-54.

CHAPTER 2

Tibet Enters the Twentieth Century

Tibet possessed a unique background as it entered the twentieth century. It had maintained cordial relations with the Chinese government under the rule of the Manchu Ching Dynasty (1644-1911). A turning point was reached in the relationship in 1720 with the open intervention of the Chinese government in Tibetan affairs. When the Dzungar invaders attacked Tibet, the Dalai Lama asked for the assistance of the Chinese, and they responded by sending troops to expel the invaders. The Emperor of China acted as a patron and protector of Tibet by assisting the Dalai Lama and helping to restore effective administration in Lhasa. Tibet continued to conduct its own foreign relations, but Chinese influence increased each time the Chinese government intervened - 1728, 1750, and 1793. This series of interventions taken together constitutes the historical basis of China's current claim on Tibet.

The 1793 arrangement was similar to a protectorate agreement. In 1792 a border dispute with the Gurkha rulers of Nepal led to a Gurkha invasion of Tibet and the Chinese troops joined with the Tibetan troops to drive them out. The Chinese Emperor issued an edict in 1793 introducing reforms and involved intervention by the Emperor in the religious offices of Tibet. The edict seemed to have little practical effect since it was ignored the next time a Dalai Lama was selected. In consequence, the year 1793 represented the apogee of Chinese influence in Tibet. By the beginning of the nineteenth century very little Manchu influence was evident. Tibet conducted battles against the Dogras and the Gurkhas in 1842 and 1856, respectively, and even concluded treaties with them without any intervention or assistance by the Chinese. There was a recognition of a normal role by China and by the Chinese Emperor.

Other powers began to show an interest in Tibet. Britain, for example, attempted to gain influence in China through the treaties of 1842 and sought to use them to gain access to Tibet through the Ching (Qing) Emperor. However, Britain then opened its own

Mission in Lhasa and, like Nepal, opened direct relations with Tibet. The Anglo-Tibetan treaty of 1904 sought to exclude other powers from Tibet, especially Russia, and sought to substantiate Britain's position among the Asian emperors. Treaties signed by Great Britain in 1906 and 1907 with the governments of China and Russia, respectively, modified some of the privileges Britain had secured from Tibet.¹

Emergence into the Twentieth Century

A significant change occurred for Tibet between 1911 and 1913 which would affect its status for the next forty years. The Manchus invaded Tibet in 1910, and the Emperor denounced the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama in turn denounced the Chinese Emperor and broke all remaining ties. International law specialist Michael C. van Praag comments on the significance of events during the following years:

The period from 1911 to 1913 saw the expulsion of Imperial troops and officials from Tibet and the severance of ties with the Manchus; the return of the Dalai Lama to Lhasa and the reestablishment of effective control by his government; and the relinquishment of Tibet's extreme isolationist policies in favor of close relations with Great Britain.²

The year 1911 brought great upheaval in China with the overthrow of the Emperor and the imperial system which had characterized the Chinese government for over two thousand years. A new Republic of China was established and China began a process of government which bore a resemblance to Western-style democracy. The road was not easy. Warlordism and feudalism pervaded China, threatening chaos, and China needed unification under an effective central government. The Chinese revolutionaries, under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and the inspiration of his Three Principles of the People, undertook this task.

Taking advantage of the disruption in China, the Dalai Lama proclaimed Tibet an independent state in January, 1913, and thus began a period in which the Dalai Lama and his regents exercised total control over Tibet, providing Tibet with a unique form of government which united the religious and the secular. In addition to an extensive civil service, Tibet now maintained an army of 10,000 to 15,000 men, mainly deployed on the eastern borders with China, a judicial system which traced its origins back to the fourteenth

century, its own distinctive system of taxation, a telegraph and postal service, and its own currency.³

Without going into excessive detail unrelated to the purpose of the current situation in Tibet, suffice it to say that during the period following the declaration of independence, the Dalai Lama initiated a wide-ranging reform in the land system, modifying a feudal land system which many Tibetans considered unfair. Money and postage stamps were introduced into the country. At a 1914 conference at Simla, India, to which Britain invited representatives from China and Tibet, the Chinese refused to recognize any measure of independence for Tibet. A Tibet-India boundary line was proposed by the British plenipotentiary Sir Henry McMahon, known as the McMahon line, was accepted by the British and Tibetans. India recognized it even after its independence, because it was favorable to India – but the Chinese refused to recognize it.⁴

One of the areas of reform which enjoyed limited success in Tibet was the effort to modernize and strengthen the military, a change which became involved in factional and political struggles. The effort to reform the military began shortly after the turn of the century and reached its peak in the mid-1920s. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama recognized the importance of a strong military establishment to protect the border and culture of Tibet, but the failure of efforts to reconstruct Tibet's army became evident when the much stronger Chinese forces conquered Tibet in 1950 and reasserted control by military means in 1966. The real cause of this failure lay in a lack of communication, isolation, and a lack of time. Although rule by the religious leaders of Tibet caused some conflict with the military leaders in government, the foregoing factors were more important than any incompatibility between Tibetan Buddhism and a modernized society.⁵

Studies of international relations stress the importance of geography as a source of national power and the Tibetan case illustrates the truth of this proposition. The limited success of Tibetan military reform was, to a great extent, offset by geographic factors which worked against invading armies attempting to conquer Tibet. As Donald R. DeGlopper has observed, Tibet's "geography and climate made it a difficult and unwelcome environment in which to campaign." Maintaining an army in Tibet placed severe logistical strains on the invading state hoping to maintain its forces in that region. The prospects of extracting from Tibet's scattered and somewhat nomadic population sufficient revenue to maintain an army

were also limited. Even in the absence of the sort of violent guerrilla campaigns often encountered by invaders, forces entering Tibet found it extremely difficult to maintain a long-term presence.⁶ Consequently, most foreign interventions were limited simply because it was such an expensive environment in which to operate. In short, the Tibetan experience is a clear illustration of the extent to which geography constitutes an important component of national power and strengthens the position of a relatively weak state such as Tibet.

The estrangement between China, undergoing a revolutionary change in government, and Tibet, attempting to establish its independence, came to an end with the restoration of relations between the Republic of China, unified by the Chinese Nationalist Party, and Tibet in 1929. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama welcomed an envoy sent from Tibet. The Nationalist government formally installed the Fourteenth Dalai Lama on February 22, 1940, and established a Tibetan Office when in August of 1949 the Panchen Lama was installed in office.⁷

During the Second World War, Tibet attempted to maintain neutrality, but this neutrality was compromised when the Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek, prompted by military necessity, sought to build roads across Tibet despite Tibetan objections. The Chinese finally backed off and acceded to Tibetan objections.⁸

The Chinese Nationalist government recognized the rights and privileges of the Tibetans and respected their unique system of government, blending the spiritual and secular. While not willing to recognize independence for Tibet, they were willing to permit the Tibetan system to survive within the Chinese sphere. In 1946, Tibetan delegates participated in the conference the Nationalist Government called to draft a new constitution for the Republic of China. Special recognition for Tibet was provided in Article 120 of that document which declared: "The self-government system of Tibet shall be safeguarded."*

The Communist Invasion

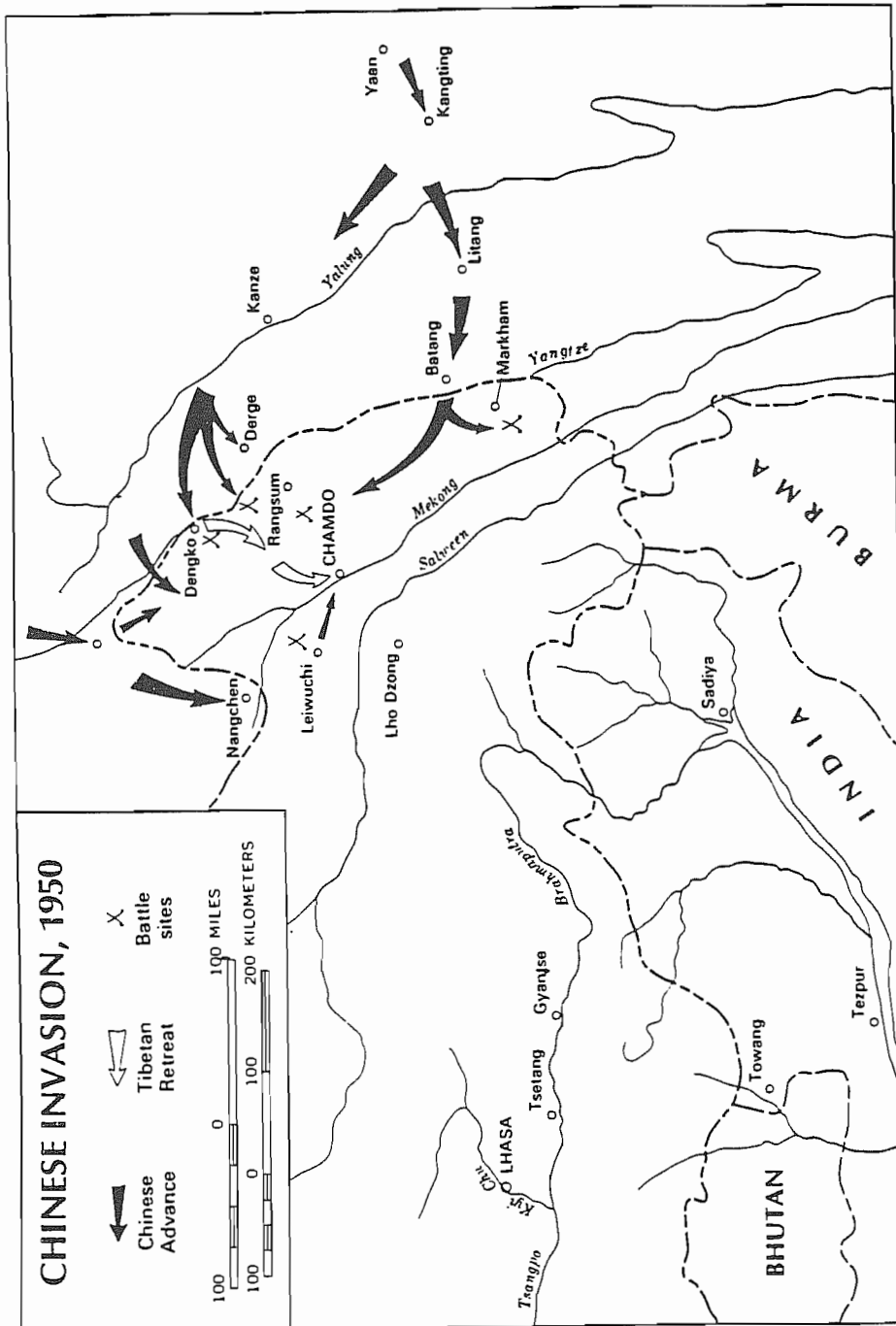
The internal war in China between the Communists and the Nationalists continued after the conclusion of the Second World War and led to the victory of the Chinese Communists when they declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. The Chinese Nationalists left the mainland and established the Republic of China on Taiwan. However, the Chinese Nationalists suffered defeats on the mainland throughout 1949. The Tibetan

government feared continued contact with the Nationalists would lead to a communist invasion of Tibet, and on July 20, 1949, the Tibetan Office of the Nationalist Chinese government was closed.⁹ However, this measure proved inadequate to protect them.

A warning of impending disaster came soon enough for the Tibetans. After only three months after the creation of the PRC, a New Year's Day broadcast in 1950 from Radio Peking (Beijing) proclaimed that the next task was the liberation of Taiwan, Hainan, and Tibet. The propaganda was followed by assertions that Tibet was "an integral part of Chinese territory," and that since Tibet had fallen under the control of foreign imperialists it had to be "liberated" in order to secure the western borders of China.¹⁰ Scholar and Tibetan expert John F. Avedon described the tragic situation the Tibetans faced:

Though the language was novel, the implications were clear. With four decades in which to have prepared defenses now lost, Lhasa finally moved to protect itself. The Tibetan government turned first to the army. Since the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's death its improvement had been ignored. No more than a glorified border patrol, the 8,500 troops possessed fifty pieces of artillery and only a few hundred mortars and machine guns. Enlisted men often traveled in the company of their wives and children; officers, primarily noble officials on brief tours of duty, had no prior military experience. Nevertheless, fresh troops and ammunition were soon deployed to a thin chain of garrison towns lining the western bank of the Upper Yangtze River, Tibet's *de facto* border with China. Both the men and their commanders were confident that, with the aid of the country's greatest natural asset, its lofty ranges, they could hold off the seasoned troops of the PLA (People's Liberation Army).¹¹

Tibet embarked upon a diplomatic initiative seeking support from India, Nepal, Great Britain, and the United States. The result was disappointment as each turned away the Tibetan plea. Only India had official diplomatic relations with Tibet and since the PRC did not recognize autonomy for Tibet, it declined to assist its neighbor. China assured India it had no intention of using force against Tibet. However, by early spring, the People's Liberation Army began its move toward Tibet. In the 1951 May Day broadcast, Radio Peking stressed that only Taiwan and Tibet remained to be liberated. The



Chinese Communists promised regional autonomy for Tibet and religious freedom if it would agree to be liberated peacefully, but the real intentions of the Chinese were soon revealed. A few days after this message the PLA launched an attack across the Yangtze River and captured the poorly defended town of Dengkog.¹²

Almost one year after the successful conquest of the Chinese mainland, an estimated 40,000 the Chinese Communist troops on October 7, 1950, crossed into Tibet at eight points on the border, and attacked on the provincial capital of Chamdo. The Tibetan troops, inferior in training to the seasoned Chinese force and overwhelmed by the number of Chinese Communist troops, met defeat. The Tibetan forces numbered only 8,000. They fought valiantly, but within the first two weeks, about 4,000 Tibetan officers and men were killed and the rest were forced to surrender. The attack shocked the world, but especially the Indians who had been assured and believed the assurance that China would not attack Tibet. India protested the invasion and its protest was endorsed by Britain and the United States. The latter informed India of its desire to help Tibet, but India discouraged any supply of military aid to Tibet and, in effect, washed its hands of the Tibetan situation, purposely seeking a diplomatic solution. Prime Minister Nehru acknowledged, to the disappointment of the Tibetans:

We cannot save Tibet, as we should have liked to do, and our very attempts to save it might bring greater trouble to it. It would be unfair to Tibet for us to bring this trouble upon her without having the capacity to help her effectively.¹³

The PRC was not seeking conciliation. It brazenly accused India and other powers of harboring expansionist designs on Tibet and attempting to interfere in the domestic affairs of China. Communist Beijing proclaimed that it was exercising a sovereign right to "liberate" Tibet and drive out foreign powers in order to guarantee regional autonomy and religious freedom for the Tibetans. The PRC warned against any foreign intervention to assist the Tibetan people.¹⁴

Communist Control Over the Tibetans

Following this military victory, the People's Republic of China moved in swiftly to exert control over Tibet. Even the more pessimistic observers did not realize the full extent of the intention of the Chinese Communists in taking over this ancient civilization.

The Dalai Lama remained in Lhasa, risking his own life to seek a peaceful transition for his people. In November of 1950, the brother of the Dalai Lama, Takster Rinpoche, who had been held prisoner, arrived in Lhasa. He revealed to the Dalai Lama a scheme in which the Chinese Communist governor of Xining sought to enlist his support to overthrow his brother, the Dalai Lama, in return for which the Chinese would make him the governor general of all of Tibet. The government of Tibet now became aware of the full intent of the PRC plans: a plan to annex Tibet and dismantle its secular and religious government. Further depressing news reached the Tibetan government: the United Nations had declined to take up the case of Tibet.¹⁵

The situation became more desperate as the PRC revealed its decisions to act as a conquering power fully subjugating the people of Tibet. The Tibetan Cabinet sent a delegation to Peking (Beijing) to negotiate with China in the hope of preserving some measure of freedom for Tibet. This delegation arrived in the Chinese capital during the last week of April in 1951. Premier Zhou Enlai presented them with a ten-point plan indicating that Tibet was a part of China and had been peacefully liberated. The Tibetan government representatives refused to sign these documents and a stalemate resulted. The PRC representatives were then presented with a new Seventeen Point Agreement, without allowing any discussion. The PRC threatened them with physical harm and a total military occupation of Tibet unless they signed; the Tibetan delegates were held captive, and agreed to sign without the authorization or approval from the Dalai Lama or the Tibetan Cabinet.

The Seventeen Point Agreement was a formula for disaster for Tibet. Tibet lost its identity as a nation-state. A careful reading of the document tells much about the aggressive nature of the PRC regime and its lack of respect for the culture and the rights of the Tibetan people. The opening section was perfectly in line with the Maoist interpretation of the aggression committed against Tibet: "The Tibetan people shall unite and drive out imperialist aggressive forces from Tibet so that the Tibetan people shall return to the big family of the motherland – the People's Republic of China."

The rest of the agreement called for the dismantling of the defenses of Tibet and its incorporation into the Maoist Empire. The agreement specified that the local government of Tibet should actively cooperate in assisting the People's Liberation Army in consolidating the "national defenses." Referring to the policy toward

nationalities by the PRC, the agreement spoke of Tibet exercising the right of national autonomy under the unified leadership of the communist government. The agreement went on to give paper assurances that the position of the Dalai Lama and the structure of government would be maintained (i.e., "The religious beliefs, customs and habits of the Tibetan people shall be respected, and *lama* monasteries shall be protected"). However, a provision in the agreement provided for the dismantling of the Tibetan army, and its combination into the People's Liberation Army, thus making it part of the national defense forces of the PRC.

The heavy hand of the PRC stretched over Tibetan affairs with the provision that, in order to assure its implementation, the central government of China would establish a military and administrative committee and a military area headquarters in Tibet. The government in Beijing would control "the centralized handling of all external affairs of the area of Tibet," and there would be "peaceful coexistence" with other countries.¹⁶

The Dalai Lama, only sixteen years of age at the time, fled the country, but returned eight months later (August, 1951) to try to work out a settlement with the Chinese and protect the few freedoms remaining for his people.

The Maoist government played a skillful diplomatic and political game. After the agreement was signed May 28, 1951, the next steps appeared puzzling especially for those not familiar with the devious nature of communist conquests. The Chinese continued to promise religious freedom, made lavish gifts to the nobility, banned the use of a Chinese term for the Tibetans which Tibetans had found offensive (i.e., *man-tze* meaning 'barbarian'), and promised to help the modernization of Tibet with new hospitals, schools and roads. The official propaganda pamphlets and publications talked of driving "imperialists" out of Tibet. (Prior to the invasion, notes John Avedon, there had been only six Westerners in Tibet, all of whom had left.) The Communist rulers of China welcomed Tibet back to the "the Motherland."¹⁷

Yet, when the events were fully played out, it was obvious that the Tibetans were simply the victims of one of the many colonial power plays so common in Asia. They were occupied by a foreign army and their culture and religion were under a systematic attack. Efforts to resist the imposition of a destructive colonial administration had eventually led to the deaths of approximately 400,000 Tibetans who wanted to preserve their nation's independence. In commenting on

these events, Takster Rinpoche, the brother of the Dalai Lama, observed that in the beginning "they put their words like honey on a knife. But we could see that, if you lick the honey, your tongue will be cut."¹⁸

Notes

¹ Michael C. van Walt van Praag, *The Status of Tibet: History, Rights, and Prospects in International Law*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987, pp. 126-131.

² *Ibid.*, p. 134.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-137.

⁴ Jeremy Bernstein, "Our Far-Flung Correspondents (Tibet)," *The New Yorker*, (December 14, 1987), p. 70.

⁵ Franz Michael, *Rule by Incarnation: Tibetan Buddhism and its Role in Society and State*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982, pp. 162-163, 165-167. Rejecting the view that only through the Communist imposition of its rule on Tibet could it have become modernized, Dr. Michael states: "In principal, it seems, Tibetan Buddhism could have adjusted well to the modern world." *Ibid.*, p. 167.

⁶ Hungdah Chiu, "Tibet's Political History and Status," Prepared for Panel Discussion on Tibet, March 2, 1988, Resident Associate Program, The Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., pp. 6-7. Professor Chiu maintained during the debate from which the quotes are taken that Tibet is and remains a part of China; the opponent, Michael C. van Walt van Praag, claimed independent nation status for Tibet.

⁷ Bernstein, p. 70.

⁸ Chiu, p. 7.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ John F. Avedon, *In Exile for the Land of Snows*, New York, Vintage Books, 1984, pp. 26-27.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 27-29.

¹³ van Praag, pp. 142-143.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Avedon, p. 35.

¹⁶ "Agreement between the Chinese Central People's Government and the Tibetan government on the Administration of Tibet," Peking, May 23, 1951. See appendix for copy.

¹⁷ Avedon, pp. 37-38.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 38. This is an especially popular reference among Tibetans. Lowell Thomas, Jr. has also quoted an old Tibetan proverb which warns people to "beware of honey offered on a sharp knife." See his reference to this in *The Silent War In Tibet*, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1959, pp. 123, 143.

CHAPTER 3

The Consolidation of Chinese Control

The control exercised over Tibet by the Chinese Communists after their military conquest soon began to undermine the government and religious practices of the Tibetan people. The years 1951 through 1959 saw an attempt by the Tibetans to make the best of a bad situation, but the oppression had so worsened by the latter part of this period that new riots broke out and the Dalai Lama was again forced to flee and to go into exile. Meanwhile the PRC continued its efforts to remake Tibet in the Communist image.

A crucial component of a nation's identity is its social and political culture. As a starting point in its effort to transform Tibet, Chinese authorities focused upon the Tibetan social and cultural system. The extent of the destruction of traditional Tibetan culture requires an understanding of what Tibet was like when the PRC seized control. The previous chapter has outlined Tibet's history and has demonstrated the intricate relationship between religion and government in Tibet, giving special attention to the important role played by the Dalai Lama.

Government in Tibet

The Dalai Lama represented the nominal apex of the Tibetan governmental system. There were two prime ministers who represented a combination of both monastic and lay authority, the two types of authority held by the Dalai Lama. One prime minister was a monk and the other was a lay person. Most of the offices below them were held by other religious and lay officials. The Cabinet of Tibet contained four members including one monk and three lay persons. Falling below the Cabinet one found two separate offices. The Secretariat (Yin-tsang), headed by four monks, was in charge of religious affairs and was directly responsible to the Dalai Lama, and the Finance Office (Tse-khang), which was under the direction of four lay persons and directed the lay functions of state. Either two or three chairmen carried on the other functions of government: agriculture, foreign affairs, taxation, posts and telegraphs, and

defense. The court system was headed by two chief justices.

Tibet also had an operating legislative branch known as the National Assembly. The National Assembly was usually continuously in session, comprising a total of about twenty officials – the eight officials from the Secretariat and the Finance Office, other high lay officials, as well as representatives of the three great monasteries near Lhasa. The Assembly had the power to convene a larger assembly of thirty members to deal with major problems. The largest assembly included some four hundred top officials and dealt with matters of prime importance, such as the discovery of a new incarnation of the Dalai Lama.

The monasteries played an important role in the political and religious life of Tibet. Although exact figures may be difficult to verify, about ten percent of the population may have been monks or nuns. Entry into the monasteries was facilitated by the fact that young boys, from the age of six or seven, could enter the monasteries. The monasteries were also open to people from all social classes and, as a result, the monastic orders were not limited to a narrow stratum of society. The monasteries varied greatly in terms of size and possessions. Most raised their own food and maintained craftsmen to take care of their needs. A few owned large amounts of land, while others engaged in trade or money-lending. However, most of the monasteries had to rely on subsidies from the government, paid for by taxes raised from the lay population.¹

The Dalai Lama has been forthright in admitting some of the problems which contributed to Tibet's difficulties when faced with the communist threat. These problems included: the army, Tibet's geographical and diplomatic isolation, and the religious philosophy which isolated Tibet from international ties. As mentioned earlier, the reforms scheduled for the military forces collapsed as a result of factional struggles. The Dalai Lama noted that the Tibetan army was small, its main purpose being to prevent foreigners from illegally crossing the frontier. As a result, it had never been mechanized and, consequently, it was ill-prepared to resist China's military pressures.

Nations may adopt any one of several orientations toward world politics. The role of Tibet was one of isolationism. This isolationist policy played a role in Tibet's difficulties: it had adopted isolationism because this appeared appropriate to its geographic position. Tibet had chosen to keep foreigners out as a way of avoiding internal tensions that it feared might result from an influx of people with a different value system. Tibetans felt that holding themselves entirely

aloof from the world was "the best way of ensuring peace" but, in retrospect, the policy proved "a mistake." Even when Tibet declared its independence in 1912, the country so preferred its traditional isolation that it did not seek to send ambassadors to other countries or, later, to join either the League of Nations or the United Nations.²

The Buddhist faith was one of peace and non-violence, and in accord with this belief, the Dalai Lama hoped to persuade the Chinese peacefully to fulfill their promises. He noted the dilemma which resulted from this policy:

Nonviolence was the only course which might win us back a degree of freedom in the end, perhaps after years of patience. That meant cooperation whenever it was possible, and passive resistance whenever it was not. And violent opposition was not only unpractical, it was also unethical. Nonviolence was the only moral course. This was not only my own profound belief, it was also clearly in accordance with the teaching of Lord Buddha, and as the religious leader of Tibet I was bound to uphold it. We might be humiliated, and our most cherished inheritances might seem to be lost for a period, but if so, humility must be our portion. I was certain of that.³

A discussion of the role of government deserves a reference to the role of the Panchen Lama. The Panchen Lama, similar to the Dalai Lama, is recognized as an incarnation. The position stretches back as far as the fourteenth century. The Panchen Lama was recognized as second in authority to the Dalai Lama in religious authority but, unlike the Dalai Lama, held no secular authority. While there has been a close relationship historically, a split occurred in the twentieth century, with a rift developing in 1910 at the time of the invasion by Manchu China. The Panchen Lama left to live in Chinese-controlled territory, where he remained until his death in 1937. In 1950, the Communist regime in Beijing brought forth a candidate whom they claimed was a reincarnation of the Panchen Lama and insisted that this candidate be accepted or the negotiations of 1951 would be at risk. Gradually, the PRC government won the acceptance of their candidate.⁴ It then brought pressure on the Panchen Lama to denounce the Dalai Lama, which he refused to do; the Panchen Lama assumed a more important role in Tibet under Chinese Communist influence after the Dalai Lama left the country in 1959.⁵

Communist Consolidation of Power

After their military conquests, the Chinese Communists decided to consolidate their position in Tibet. The result was military domination by the PRC, even to the point of incorporating the Tibetan army into the PRC's People's Liberation Army. The Chinese tried to assign to the Panchen Lama the temporal affairs of government, but the Dalai Lama rejected this proposal, although he agreed to the PRC's Panchen Lama return to Tibet to exercise the traditional religious role of that office. The PRC, in the meantime, took control of all the external affairs of Tibet.⁶

Beijing had sent in military forces. These were followed by Chinese civilians, including propaganda workers (with printing presses and loud-speakers), tradesman and entertainers. More and more Chinese settlers arrived, taking over the better houses and the better shops. It appeared the PRC was attempting to populate Tibet with Chinese Communists. As the traveler and commentator, Lowell Thomas Jr., noted that "the Chinese, however, were committing imperialist aggression on the excuse of opposing imperialist aggression."⁷

The Tibetans adopted passive resistance as a means to frustrate the aims and objectives of the Communist rulers, and the PRC government soon realized that they were failing in their program to "communize" Tibet. The Tibetans even submitted petitions through the Chinese officials complaining that the Chinese had claimed they had entered Tibet to drive out the imperialist aggressors and that the imperialist aggressors had obviously been driven out. Therefore, the petitions concluded, it was time for the Chinese armies to withdraw, since their assistance was no longer needed. The Communists officials were infuriated by this action and threatened to remove from political office any Tibetan officials who refused to take action against the people who submitted the petitions.⁸

The Chinese then sought to strengthen communications between China and Tibet to facilitate more effective control. They connected telegraph wires by 1953 to the major cities and began a program of road and airfield construction. After signing an agreement with India in 1954, the PRC took over the old communications system established by the British, and maintained by Indians after Indian independence.⁹ This action effectively ended Indian influence over the Tibetan media and placed the Chinese in a position of complete media dominance.

The next step included the strengthening of administrative control,

giving the Chinese more power over the bureaucratic structure which controlled the country. The PRC altered the office of the *dzongpon*, an official who headed a local governmental unit called a *dzong*, similar to a county. The *dzongpon* lost what could have been a lifetime position; it became, instead, a term of three or four years. New *dzongpon* were appointed who were permitted to perform their functions only in consultation with the Chinese military officials. These *dzongpon* no longer reported to the Dalai Lama, as in the traditional system of government, but were subservient to the Chinese military forces. A secret society, the Mimang or "People's Party," was formed by innovative Tibetans and served to bypass the Chinese-controlled *dzongs* in order to bring their concerns and grievances directly to the Dalai Lama. Although it lacked formal authority, it did represent a protest movement among the Tibetans to bypass and isolate the Chinese-controlled *dzongpon*. The Chinese attempted to destroy the Mimang by jailing its leaders, by seeking to bribe its members, and by propaganda attacks on the organization, which continued to resist Communist control and reflected Tibetan desire for freedom.¹⁰

The Maoist conquerors also introduced measures to reduce the role of the monasteries in Tibetan religious and governmental life. The Chinese Military District Headquarters in Lhasa established a new Public Security Department and issued an order prohibiting the Drepung Monastery from its ancient role of maintaining order in Lhasa during the traditional Great Prayer Festival of the New Year. The streets were now patrolled by Tibetan and Chinese soldiers; any monks who were arrested were held by the military and turned over to civil authorities for trial only after the festival.¹¹

While the monks resisted these new controls, the Communists also encountered resistance from the working class. They resented the Chinese control and the fall in wages which resulted, especially for road-building crews, after the Maoists took over. The PRC forces resorted to conscript labor with enormous requirements, namely seven thousand Tibetans to work on the Lhasa airport, twenty-thousand for one road building project, and five thousand to clear timber for a Chinese rest camp. Contrary to traditional practice, where conscript labor was used for a local project with limited time, the Chinese program engaged large numbers of Tibetans and sent these to far distant places for long periods, with limited rations, low wages, and the requirement that they even work on Buddhist holidays. The Maoists brought heavy pressure on the Tibetan

officials to provide labor to fill their unreasonable work demands.¹² A major objective of Beijing's policy was the social and political transformation of all minority regions that were to be assimilated into the PRC. Authorities recognized that Tibetan society had a strong family orientation and, therefore, the Chinese officials moved to break this bond. They opened government schools ostensibly to combat the problem of illiteracy, but the Tibetans soon found that their children were forced to learn the Chinese language, Chinese Communist Party doctrines, and that traditional Tibetan culture was attacked in the new classrooms. The Communists established "youth centers," beginning in 1953, at least two in each *dzong*, with sports, theaters, game rooms, etc. designed to entice Tibetan youth. Communist Party cadres taught the Tibetan youth the Chinese Communist songs (e.g., "Mao Zedong, Ten Thousand Years") and required them to participate in study sessions on "Mao Tsetung and Chinese Policies Toward Minorities" and "Monasteries As An Obstacle to Progress." The Chinese encouraged the Tibetan children to apply to go to China, and thousands were sent to China where, separated from their parents and their Tibetan culture, they were educated to become communists who would later be the cadres in a "new" Tibet.¹³

The Communists especially focused on young monks, trying to wean them away from true Buddhism. Lowell Thomas, Jr. describes the methods used by the PRC on the monastic students:

[M]onasteries had much to resist. Their own children – the young student monks – were primary targets of the Communist propaganda. In a barrage of talks and pamphlets these young men were told of an exciting new religion. It was called Buddho-Marxism; it was described as a good way and an easier way. It did not demand the rigid behavior standards of the reformed sects of Lamaism. All young men were encouraged to enjoy the good things of life. Leave the monasteries, marry, and raise families, the pamphlets suggested; forget the stodgy religious books and contribute to the progress of Tibet, part of China. A Buddho-Marxist could drink wine, eat fine food, and have silver in his pockets. Why should the fine young men of Tibet be slaves to the higher priesthood – to which they could obtain, if lucky, only in their own old age?¹⁴

The Communists kept up propaganda techniques designed to

undermine the Tibetan system and bring greater cooperation between Tibetans and the Communists. Films were shown of happy Tibetan families enjoying a new home and a better life because they were cooperating with the Chinese Communist officials. When the films were shown in eastern Tibet, the Tibetans were told that it was a western Tibetan family enjoying these benefits; when the films were shown in western Tibet, they were told this was the story of a family in eastern Tibet. The lamas in the monasteries did their best to protect the people and inform them of the truth. Consequently, the Chinese Communists realized that despite their efforts the Tibetans were still resisting Communism, and that the greatest obstacle was the moral leadership of the Dalai Lama.¹⁵

A New Government for Tibet

While the situation in Tibet had many features which distinguished it from the condition of other non-Han Chinese people under Maoist control, the PRC included Tibet within its policies for the treatment of "national minorities." Such minorities ranged from those which had no written language of their own, and were considered backward socially and politically, to people like the Tibetans, who possessed highly developed, age-old literary cultures, with their own language.

It is difficult to determine the ethnic backgrounds of the PRC's monks. Most, of course, are drawn from one of the fifty-five separate peoples recognized by Chinese scholars but others may be drawn from among the ranks of perhaps as many as five hundred distinctive groups recognized by ethnologists who have studied the ethnic composition of Asia. Such an ethnic mosaic, however, defies efforts to place the Tibetans in a clear context. A much more direct classification has been provided by Alain Y. Dessaint, a specialist on Chinese demography, who maintains that a more general categorization of the regions minorities reveals the existence of only four major ethnolinguistic categories. The inhabitants of China's western and southwestern regions, especially the Tibetan plateau, are classified as Tibetans.

The PRC established a special governmental structure to rule the "minorities" peoples, an arrangement which included five autonomous regions, thirty-one autonomous prefectures, and one hundred and four autonomous counties. This structure was established in 1952 under the "General Program for the Implementation of Regional Autonomy for Nationalities." These "autonomous" areas are now governed under the new "Law on Regional Autonomy for Minorities,"

which went into effect on October 1, 1984.¹⁶

The observer must be willing to read beyond the words of the Communist documents to obtain their true meaning. While the law in Article 10 states that minorities should enjoy the freedom of using and developing their own spoken and written language as well as having the freedom to maintain customs and habits, the same article speaks of the freedom to change customs, a euphemism for forced Maoist "sinification" and communization of the Tibetans. The law states that a proportion of minority members will be considered in making that percentage a part of the governing unit. These "autonomous" regions are to possess some degree of authority to adopt directives relating to local conditions in modification of directives issued for the Chinese population in China proper. However, the final power to interpret the central government's directives remains with the National People's Congress of the PRC.¹⁷

Despite the argument that their policy was based on equality, unification, autonomy, and prosperity for minorities, the PRC's actions brought great hardship for those, who, like the Tibetans, hoped to see the endurance of their national identity by preserving their culture and religion. While some material benefits have resulted, such as roads, economic development, etc., the price has been a loss of autonomy and of the finer, more vital elements of this old and distinctive culture. The first decade of Chinese control over Tibet brought great difficulties until a period of revolt led to a further crackdown and the flight of the Dalai Lama.

Movement Toward the 1959 Crisis

The Dalai Lama sought to minimize the difficulties brought on Tibet by the Chinese conquest. The first great crisis came within the first nine months when the Chinese troops moving into Lhasa demanded additional food rations. The Chinese had initially demanded a "loan" of two thousand tons of barley from the Tibetans, a demand which strained the meager resources in the Tibetan capital. However, a subsequent demand for a further two thousand tons brought disaster to the Tibetan economy. Food shortages resulted and prices increased greatly. For the first time in its long history, the Tibetans faced famine. The Tibetan people, as they were to do again in 1959, in the late 1980s, and the early 1990s, protested strongly.¹⁸

The progressive move toward a Maoist China brought Tibet into yet greater crises. The 1951 agreement had seriously compromised Tibet, and forced its incorporation into the Maoist system. The

growing number of PRC military stationed in Tibet, the sending of Tibetan youth for re-education in China, the "reform" of Tibetan local government, the conscription of labor and the reduction in the authority of the monasteries all helped the PRC to increase its control over Tibet.

In 1954, the Dalai Lama left Tibet on his first visit outside his country, to go to China to meet with Mao Zedong hoping to alleviate his country's plight. While the Dalai Lama was in Beijing, Mao told him he originally expected to govern Tibet direct from the Chinese capital, but he was considering an alternative "Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region." The governing unit would have fifty-one members, with forty-six Tibetans and five non-Tibetans. The Dalai Lama would serve as chairman, and the Panchen Lama with a Chinese official would serve as vice-chairmen. The group would set up subcommittees for religious and lay governance, similar to the Secretariat and the Finance Office of the traditional Tibetan government. The PRC sought to give secular authority to the Panchen Lama. All appointees had to be approved by the Chinese government, in effect the proposal constituted a violation of the Chinese promise not to alter the government of Tibet.¹⁹

While visiting Beijing, the Dalai Lama obtained a clear indication of the true Chinese attitude and intentions during his final interview with Mao. Mao told him that he understood him well, but added:

Religion is poison. It has two great defects: It undermines the race, and secondly it retards the progress of the country. Tibet and Mongolia have both been poisoned by it.²⁰

While visiting China, he found the attack against religion in full force. The Chinese Buddhist monasteries and temples were neglected and almost empty; monks in the monasteries were old and the young were being discouraged from entering. The Tibetan leader realized that the PRC promise of religious freedom for the Tibetan people was an empty promise. He observed later that destruction was likely to be the fate of the entire religious community of Tibet.²¹

The full impact of the Chinese communist policies was also beginning to be felt in Tibet. Changes imposed by relatively peaceful means in Central Tibet were now being imposed by force in the regions of Kham and Amdo. By 1955, groups of the People's Liberation Army traveled throughout the country, disarming the population, seizing personal possessions, and bringing about collectiv-

ization. Many Tibetans in the remote villages resisted, and the PRC retaliated by bringing more and more Chinese settlers into Tibet. The Dalai Lama strove to bring about a peaceful resolution of the difficulties. When he traveled to New Delhi in February of 1957, Mao announced that Tibet was not yet ready for reform and they would be postponed for a minimum of six years. However, the situation in Tibet had become worse. Although the People's Liberation Army had virtually laid Kham waste, the resistance forces continued their efforts.²²

The brutality and cruelty of the PRC's actions shocked neutral observers, although the complete story did not come out until several years after the event. An investigation by the International Commission of Jurists, a human rights monitoring group of lawyers and jurists from fifty nations, revealed the full extent of the situation which the Dalai Lama and the people of Tibet had had to face. The resistance was so intense that one estimate stated that the PRC forces lost 40,000 troops between 1956 and 1958. John Avedon accuses the Chinese Communists of letting "loose a series of atrocities unparalleled in Tibet's history," and summed up the conclusions in the report of the International Jurists:

The obliteration of entire villages was compounded by hundreds of public executions, carried out to intimidate the surviving population. The methods employed included crucifixion, dismemberment, vivisection, beheading, burying, burning and scalding alive, dragging the victims to death behind galloping horses and pushing them from airplanes; children were forced to shoot their parents, disciples their religious teachers. Everywhere monasteries were prime targets. Monks were compelled to publicly copulate with nuns and desecrate sacred images before being sent to a growing string of labor camps in Amdo and Gansu.²³

The Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa to find a critical situation. The city was surrounded by tents which housed over ten thousand refugees. By June of 1958, the revolt had reached Central Tibet with the formation of an army to resist the Chinese. The brutality of Chinese troops intensified in order to suppress the revolt.²⁴

The year 1959 proved a difficult and pivotal year for the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans as the Chinese Communists increased their pressure on Tibet. In essence, it spelled the demise of the hopes of the Dalai Lama that he could protect his people and his country by

appealing to the Chinese through peaceful and non-violent means. The Dalai Lama would learn what so many other governments have learned, Communists have specific objectives and cannot be expected or trusted to deviate from them.

The New Year celebration heralding the year of the earth pig brought thousands of Tibetan monks and lay people to Lhasa in February of 1959. By March, tensions had increased with the arrival of a new Chinese army division in Lhasa and rumors that the Chinese were planning to take the Dalai Lama to Beijing. One rumor that circulated had the Chinese Communists taking the Dalai Lama to attend the Second National People's Congress, which was scheduled to open in Beijing in April of 1959.

Faced with oppression and rumors of the forced removal of the Dalai Lama, over 30,000 Tibetans began a protest. They put up anti-Communist posters and marched to the office of the Indian Consulate General to appeal for help from India. The Chinese troops brutally suppressed the demonstration and opened fire on the Tibetans, killing numbers of them.²⁵ As was evident in the demonstrations of 1987 and 1988, the Chinese did not hesitate to use force against defenseless monks and civilians to enforce their authority.

No sooner had this demonstration been put down by the Chinese that another rumor alarmed the people. The Dalai Lama had been ordered by the Chinese to attend a cultural program but was told to go without his guards. This directive seemed to confirm the existence of a plot to kidnap the Tibetan religious leader. Crowds estimated at up to ten thousand people surrounded the Dalai Lama to prevent him from being taken away, and the crowd formed its own guard unit to protect him. The Tibetans had again taken to the streets and the Chinese troops again opened fired on them, killing or wounding a number of demonstrators.

The desire for independence and freedom grew stronger among the Tibetans. During the March 12 demonstration, the 1951 treaty was repudiated. This treaty had supposedly granted Tibet autonomous status within the PRC, but had in actuality taken away its freedom and attempted to alter its government, a fact now recognized by most Tibetans. This agreement, which had been imposed on the Tibetans, had effectively resulted in the Chinese Communists taking control over both the internal and external affairs of Tibet. Faced with a continuing clamor for independence, the Chinese Communists blamed "reactionaries" in the Tibetan government and Western "imperialists" for the unrest, and conveniently ignored the real

demand of the Tibetans for independence and freedom from Communist-style "liberation."

Beijing neither remained passive nor sought a peaceful accommodation. More PRC troops began to pour into Tibet, and some even surrounded the Potala, the palace of the Dalai Lama. In order to assert their authority, the Chinese troops fired shells at the sacred palace.

The situation required a quick decision by the Tibetan leadership. The Tibetans sought continued resistance to the PRC while sparing no effort to avoid the capture of the Dalai Lama by the Communists. Dressed in disguise, and mingling unnoticed with the crowd outside, the Dalai Lama successfully executed the plan for his escape. Meeting with other Tibetan officials outside the city of Lhasa, he and his entourage began a long march out of Tibet – through difficult mountain terrain, and with the constant need to avoid the Chinese Communist patrols.

Back in Lhasa, Tibetan demonstrations and resistance, which started on March 17, put the Chinese Communists on the defensive, providing a convenient cover for the escape of Dalai Lama. Two days later, when the Chinese realized that the Dalai Lama had escaped, their troops shelled the palace and began a repressive campaign against the local population, seeking to obtain information about the escape of the Dalai Lama in the hope of recapturing him. Troops armed with modern military equipment were dispatched to patrol the border to prevent the Dalai Lama's escape. The Communists sought to seal off all possible escape routes, but the Tibetans had scored against the Chinese. The Dalai Lama and his party of two hundred successfully avoided surveillance by planes during the day and by Chinese troop patrols at night, and completed a journey of over two hundred miles to cross the India border in only two weeks.²⁶

The Chinese troops took five days to suppress the rebellion in Lhasa, despite the use of harsh and brutal tactics. The city had suffered much damage, with the two great monasteries of Drepung and Sers in flames. The Maoists established a military control committee over Lhasa, and imposed a dark-to-dawn curfew.²⁷

Resorting to its usual propaganda tactics, the PRC blamed reactionaries in Tibet and Western imperialists for the disturbances. According to the official line, the Tibetan people loved the Chinese people and welcomed autonomy under the PRC. The Chinese accused the United States, India, and the Republic of China of

instigating the riots, claiming that they had abducted the Dalai Lama. When the Dalai Lama later issued a statement from India repudiating the Communist allegations, and denouncing the PRC for crimes including the violation of the Seventeen Point Agreement, Beijing could only describe the Dalai Lama's statement as lies. The PRC government maintained that the Tibetan question was an "internal" problem which was not a concern of outsiders. It expressed this view forcefully to the Indian government, denouncing the debate which took place in the Indian Parliament.²⁸

Nevertheless, sympathy for Tibet persisted in India (except in the Indian Communist Party) and despite his desire to maintain friendly relations with China, Indian Prime Minister Nehru granted the Dalai Lama political asylum.²⁹ Unfortunately for Tibet, there was no outcry from other nations.

With the world turning a blind eye to Tibet, the Chinese Communists began more oppressive measures. On March 28, 1959, Premier Zhou Enlai issued an Order of State Council which had the effect of dissolving the government of Tibet. The Dalai Lama denounced the new Chinese-backed government in Lhasa and maintained that the people of Tibet would never recognize it. He established a provisional government at Lhuntse Dzong and promised to maintain a government in exile at the foothills of the Himalayas in the northeast of India.

During the years since the Chinese moved into Tibet, the Dalai Lama has tried to seek a peaceful solution through conciliatory measures. His aim has been the achievement of some type of autonomy for Tibet. In addition, he has sought to minimize violence and to meet difficulties with passive resistance, rather than violence.

However, the PRC had decided on harsh measures in exercising control over Tibet. The Chinese armed forces in Tibet had been increased to one hundred and fifty thousand. When resistance had broken out in Eastern Tibet, the Chinese brutally suppressed it. The Dalai Lama had been threatened with assassination if he did not cooperate. When the officials in the Dalai Lama's government expressed any degree of resistance toward Chinese policies, they lost their positions in the Tibetan government and were sent into exile.³⁰

William C. van Walt van Praag, who taught Tibetan studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies and served one term as the director of the Tibetan Affairs Coordination Office in the Netherlands, has applied his expertise in international law to the analysis of the Tibetan political situation. In viewing Tibet during

this period, he concluded:

In short, Tibet was under military occupation, and the position secured by the Chinese through armed invasion was being maintained by the continued use and threat of force ... Under these conditions the Dalai Lama's conduct and that of his officials between 1951 and 1959 certainly cannot be regarded as constituting free expressions of agreement or consent. Throughout this period Tibet was under military occupation and no Tibetan was in a position to express any opposition to the Chinese without incurring the risk of serious repercussions.³¹

The great explorer and writer Lowell Thomas and his son, Lowell Thomas, Jr., visited Tibet. From his knowledge of world affairs and his experience in Tibet, Lowell Thomas, Jr. described in vivid and dramatic prose the plight of the Tibetans:

The suffering of the Tibetans had never been so great. The Communists now did not try to hide the fact that they meant to crush the people once and for all. More troops were airlifted in a steady stream. Armed vehicles were brought in. A well-planned and co-ordinated attack against the entire resistance movement was begun.

Whole villages had been wiped out. In many others the head men were sent to concentration camps and every able-bodied man put to forced labor. Many of the monasteries, together with their valuable relics and libraries, have been utterly destroyed, the monks either killed or scattered. The border has been sealed in an attempt to stop all traffic to and from the outside, and all radios in Tibet have been confiscated to prevent any semblance of the truth from reaching the people. Food supplies have been controlled in an effort to starve the Tibetans into submission.

"The fact that the Tibetans refused to submit offers little basis for optimism about their country's future."³²

Mao Zedong was indifferent to the cultural and historic treasures of Tibet, as his writings and his letters to the Dalai Lama clearly showed; he regarded religion as a manifestation of cultural backwardness. Tibet was scheduled to be remolded into the new Communist society Mao sought to create. Any institution or any individual who resisted this new direction was expendable. Mao was prepared to conduct genocide against the Tibetan people in order to

accomplish his objectives.

As we have mentioned, the subjugation of Tibet was one of the integral elements in Mao's first five-year plan for economic development. Mao had secured control on the Chinese mainland and under an oppressive regime had begun the economic restructuring of China. He seized financial control of all private enterprise and "nationalized" businesses. Once this was accomplished, Mao began his push for industrialization. He worked closely with China's then ally, the Soviet Union, in pursuing this objective. If successful, it would require a close link to the Soviet economy. Mao also developed a plan for the outlying areas of China where the minorities peoples resided, a plan which included Tibet.

The plan promoted the reclamation of vast tracts of undeveloped land in outlying areas which would help China make up for its deficit in agricultural production as it pursued industrialization. Mao consequently moved large numbers of Chinese for resettlement in the areas of the northwest, northern Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and Chinese Turkestan as well as on the island of Hainan. He believed that over 250 million acres were then available for agricultural development. Since these areas were along or near the border with the Soviets, Soviet support was hoped for and expected. The split with the Soviets in the 1960s ended economic cooperation with the Soviets and Beijing stationed troops in the border regions to protect itself from a possible Soviet attack. In Mao's plan, Tibet possessed not only great potential for agricultural production, but also for the development of key minerals. Tibet and Chinese Turkestan were sources for such mineral deposits as uranium and oil. Chairman Mao hoped to link these areas with China through railroads and other communication links.³²

The Tibetans, while welcoming some modernization, resisted those elements of the Chinese plan which threatened their culture, religious practices, and livelihood. Through negotiations and passive resistance the Tibetan people attempted to modify the sweeping charges demanded by the Chinese plan. Yet, the PRC would accept nothing less than total submission from the Tibetans and were prepared to use brutality to achieve this objective. Sinologist Franz Michael, former director of the Sino-Soviet Studies at George Washington University (Washington, D.C.), vividly describes the tragedy of Tibet under the PRC conquest:

The worst cases of persecution occurred in Tibet, a country

invaded in 1950 by the Chinese. In 1959 the Chinese bloodily suppressed a rebellion that led to the flight of the Dalai Lama and a hundred thousand Tibetans to India, with many more perishing on the way. The subsequent Chinese policy instituted in Tibet must be regarded as one of the worst cases of genocide of the century. Besides exterminating barbarically at least one million of an estimated six million Tibetans, the Chinese systemically dynamited and destroyed (with the exception of fewer than twenty of the most prestigious structures such as the Potala in Lhasa) more than three thousand Tibetan temples and monasteries, after looting them of their treasures. After Mao's death there followed a period of relaxation, but the goal of the Communist policy remained unchanged. It will remain a dark spot on the Chinese name.³³

Notes

- ¹ The Dalai Lama of Tibet, *My Land and My People*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962, pp. 59-61.
- ² *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 61-62, 86.
- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.
- ⁵ Michael C. van Walt van Praag, *The Status of Tibet: History, Rights, and Prospects in International Law*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987, pp. 171-172.
- ⁶ Lowell Thomas, Jr., *The Silent War in Tibet*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1989, pp. 102, 109.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 127-129.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-131, 133.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 136.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 139-141.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 143-144.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 150.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 152-153.
- ¹⁶ "Special Report on the Treatment of Minorities in China," U.S. State Department Document, pp. 2-3, 8.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- ¹⁸ John F. Avedon, *In Exile From the Land of Snows*, New York: Vintage Books, 1986, p. 38.
- ¹⁹ Dalai Lama, pp. 101, 116, 125-126.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118. The Dalai Lama wrote his reaction to Mao's words: "I was thoroughly startled; what did he mean to imply? I tried to compose myself, but I did not know how to take him. Of course, I knew he must be a bitter enemy of religion. Yet he seemed to be genuinely friendly and affectionate toward me" (*Ibid.*, p. 118).

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²² Avedon, pp. 44-47.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

²⁵ Thomas, p. 273.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 274-277.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 278-279.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

³⁰ van Praag, p. 163.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

³² Franz Michael, *Mao and the Perpetual Revolution*, Woodbury, New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1977, pp. 110-111.

³³ Franz Michael, *China Through the Ages: History of a Civilization*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1986, p. 237. Dr. Michael presents a comprehensive view of Tibetan history, government, culture and religion in his work *Rule by Incarnation: Tibetan Buddhism and its Role in Society and State*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982. The subject of the PRC's occupation of Tibet is covered in two articles in *The Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies*: Gary Bullert, "The Chinese Occupation of Tibet: A Lesson from History," Volume 11 (Spring, 1986), No. 1, pp. 17-37, and Julian Weiss, "The PRC Occupation of Tibet," Volume 12 (Winter, 1987), No. 4, pp. 385-399. The issue of Tibet is put in historical context and related to current PRC policy relating to Hong Kong, Macao, and the Republic of China on Taiwan in Julian Weiss, *The New Hegemony: Deng Xiaoping's China Faces the World*, Washington, D.C.: The Council for Social and Economic Studies, 1988.

CHAPTER 4

The Transformation of Tibet

Although we think of confrontations between nations in terms of military moves and political declarations, Tibet's struggle against China was symbolized by the actions of one individual who, in the perceptions of millions of people beyond the borders of China and of Tibet, represented the unique socio-political system of Tibet. Accordingly, the decision for the Dalai Lama to go into exile was a difficult one. As he made his arduous journey toward the Indian frontier, without any means of communicating with the outside world, his escape made headlines throughout the world. On reaching the last major settlement in Tibet, Mangmang, the Dalai Lama received word that the Indian government was willing to accept him as an exile.

While preparing to cross the last mountain range into India, the weather turned bad, with heavy rain, and the Dalai Lama became ill. Despite his illness, he was loaded on the back of a *dzo*, an animal resembling a cross between a cow and a yak. It was on this humble form of transportation that the religious and secular leader of Tibet avoided capture, imprisonment, and possibly even death at the hands of the Chinese Communists. For his journey to India, the Dalai Lama was accompanied by a number of the religious and secular officials, but his military guards turned back to rejoin the battle for Tibet.¹

Seeking International Support

Soon after his arrival in India, the Dalai Lama held a press conference which repudiated the Seventeen Point Agreement. He noted that even though the treaty was signed under duress, it might have been regarded as binding (e.g., a treaty signed by a losing side in a war is binding even though it is dictated by the victor), but the Chinese had clearly violated their own treaty. The Dalai Lama made this observation:

But if a treaty is violated by one of the parties to it, it can legally be repudiated by the other party, and then it is no longer in force. The Chinese had certainly violated the Seventeen Point Agreement, and we were willing to prove it. Now I had repudiated the agreement, it had ceased to bind us, and our claim to sovereignty was the same as it had been before the agreement was signed.²

Students of international relations frequently make note of the role of international law in dealing with disputes between nations. The record of the international system is filled with reminders of the limits of law as an instrument for conflict resolution. The Tibetan case is one more indication of the shortcomings of international law. Following his repudiation of the Seventeen Point Agreement, the Dalai Lama turned to those instruments of the international system which might be of assistance to the Tibetans. The existence of the United Nations actually proved to be a stumbling block since Tibet was not a member. For that matter, the PRC was also not a member, since the China seat was still held by the legitimate government of the Republic of China on Taiwan. The International Commission of Jurists, as mentioned in the previous chapter, did undertake an investigation of the situation in Tibet, thoroughly examining the records and statements of Tibetan and Chinese officials. It noted Beijing's record of persecution, torture, and murder, and that the lamas had been special targets of persecution. The lamas had been humiliated, whipped, and taunted. Some were invited by their Marxist tormentors to perform miracles to save themselves before being put to death. In addition, the Chinese had taken children from their parents, sending many to China for indoctrination, and in some villages they had sterilized both men and women.³ In spite of this record of atrocities, there was little that the legal institutions of the international community could accomplish on behalf of Tibet.

A more immediate question regarding Tibet is why the Chinese authorities turned their destructive attentions toward this small nation. The Dalai Lama offered three explanations for this action. First, Tibet's large geographic area and its small population made it an attractive target to Communist China. Its rapidly expanding population was beginning to move into Tibet in such numbers that it seemed the Tibetans would eventually become a minority in their own country. As a result, the Maoists had brought to Tibet something it had never experienced in its long history: regular periods of famine.

Second, Tibet's rich mineral wealth attracted Beijing as a means of enriching China. Finally, because of Tibet's strategic position, Tibet could support the ultimate objective of the PRC's foreign policy – domination of Asia. As the Dalai Lama later observed:

With modern weapons, its mountains can be made an almost impregnable citadel from which to launch attacks on India, Burma, Pakistan, and the southeast Asian states, in order to dominate these countries, destroy their religions as ours is being destroyed, and spread the doctrine of atheism further. The Chinese are reported already to have built eighteen airfields in Tibet and a network of military roads through the country. Since they know perfectly well that India has no intention of attacking them, the only possible use for these military preparations is as a base for future expansion.⁴

While neither the PRC nor Tibet was a member of the United Nations, two members of the United Nations, Ireland and Malaya, introduced a resolution on behalf of Tibet which was adopted on October 21, 1959. The vote was forty-five in favor, nine against, with twenty-six nations abstaining. United Nations resolutions, of course, have no binding legal effect so the Beijing government chose to simply ignore it.⁵

The PRC Continues Persecution of Tibet

The Chinese Communists, ignoring the United Nations' resolutions and the two reports of the International Commission of Jurists, continued their policy of subjugating Tibet. They felt even more confident of the success of their plans now that the Dalai Lama was no longer in Tibet to lead resistance to their designs. Now that the open military conquest of Tibet had been completed, the instruments of low intensity conflict were applied to the struggle in this remote region.

An especially important facet of low intensity conflict in Tibet was the effort by Chinese authorities to destroy Tibet's institutionalized belief system. In their effort to destroy Buddhism, the Chinese attempted to use elements of the religious community in developing propaganda themes. Forced by circumstances to recognize that Buddhism played such a fundamental role in Tibetan life, the Chinese decided to make indirect and temporary concessions to religion. Accordingly, they attempted to use a distorted form of Buddhism as a means to further subjugate the Tibetans. The theme adopted by

the Communists was that the conquest of Tibet by the PRC would improve Buddhism by reforming it.

During the Sixth World Conference on Buddhism in 1961, the leader of the Chinese delegation, Shirob Jaltso, delivered a speech which focused on Tibetan Buddhism. Shirob Jaltso's speech detailed an official campaign to create an "approved" variant of Buddhism. By denouncing the Tibetan upper class as a "reactionary group" which was attempting to start a rebellion, he credited the PRC with cleansing the monasteries of "the brand of infamy left by the slavery system of the past" and, thereby, of aiding the monasteries to regain "their original purity and magnificence."⁶ In his view, an enlightened Buddhist was a person who would accept Chinese leadership because it was a "progressive" social and political force.

This Chinese Communist spokesman blamed the rebels for the destruction of the monasteries and portrayed the PRC as a dutiful "mother" which had helped rescue the lamas, wipe out reactionary influences on Buddhism, and end the feudalism and serfdom perpetuated by the system. The pure doctrine of Buddha had been restored by these Chinese reforms, he maintained.⁷

During his address, Shirob Jaltso described how the Chinese Buddhist Academy, which had opened in 1956, had established a special Tibetan department intended to provide training for religious service. Thus, the argument advanced the idea that the reform of Buddhism was an outgrowth of the Chinese invasion. Buddhist nations in particular were targeted for this propaganda theme.⁸ In this fashion, authorities were not only developing a theme that would advance local Chinese interests in Tibet, but would also serve the cause of China's foreign policy. In short, once again domestic and international policies were mutually reinforcing.

The Chinese communists tried to use this manipulated form of Buddhism to advance their cause, just as they had earlier distorted Confucianism as a means of advancing their political interests on the Chinese mainland. The Chinese became adept not only in denouncing Buddhism and Confucianism as reactionary doctrines, but also in distorting the teachings of these two great philosophies to make them appear to be in harmony with Chinese Communist party doctrine.

An important feature of a balance of power system is that, in the name of self-interest, many nations will sacrifice what might be regarded as "principle" in order to advance a larger national purpose. The Dalai Lama felt the disappointing impact of this international tendency as Buddhist countries did little or nothing in response to the

destruction of Tibet by the Chinese. Professor Kochi Nomoto wrote in a Buddhist publication (*The Young East*, Winter, 1959) that the low level of Japanese reaction was due to inadequate information. This is hardly a credible explanation. For example, the Japanese Buddhist Federation meeting in 1959 took note of the Tibetan situation but merely sent a resolution of sympathy to the Dalai Lama through Indian Prime Minister Nehru. Also, a few small protest meetings were held at which the participants demanded that the Chinese stop the destruction of Buddhist monuments and institutions in Tibet. Conferences on Tibet were organized by the Buddhist Peace Conference of the Council for Sino-Japanese Buddhist Cultural Exchange and the Study Group for Modern Buddhism. Apart from resolutions expressing sympathy for the plight of the Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhism, there was little political follow-through which could aid the Tibetans.⁹ While the Japanese may well have been shocked by the Chinese actions in Tibet, once again, national interests in a balance of power context made a forceful reaction against the Chinese unlikely.

It is generally recognized that geographic proximity is an important factor in the likelihood that a nation will be involved in war. The geographic proximity of many Buddhist countries to a powerful China is undoubtedly another important factor mitigating against a more decisive reaction against the Chinese. It may have been that Buddhist countries bordering on China feared arousing the hostility of their Maoist neighbors. As a result, even at official Buddhist conferences, little was done to aid Tibet.¹⁰

The Cultural Revolution Comes to Tibet

The Chinese Communists used their worldwide propaganda apparatus to suppress charges of persecution in Tibet by claiming that a great new day had dawned in Tibet. Their regime, they maintained, had "liberated" Tibet and brought a new prosperity to this once backward region. The Chinese party line on Tibet was linked closely to the Maoist personality cult. A publication entitled "Great Changes in Tibet", published in 1972, is representative of this view. The tone is set in a passage by Pasang, who is described as Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region. Pasang describes his birth and the changes which came to his homeland:

I was born in a slave's family in Konka County, Tibet. Under reactionary feudal serfdom, I was a slave for nine years and lived like a beast of burden. Chairman Mao and the Communist Party saved me from slavery and nurtured me to become a Communist and a responsible cadre. My mother gave birth to me, but it is the Party which saved me and invincible Mao Tsetung Thought which sustains me. I want to cheer again and again: 'Long Live Chairman Mao! A long, long life to him!'

October 1 of 1966 is the most unforgettable day of my life. As a representative of the minority nationalities, I met Chairman Mao, the great leader of the people of all China's nationalities, on the Tien An Men rostrum at the Peking National Day celebration rally. As I happily shook hands with the great teacher Chairman Mao, my heart pounded. There were so many things I wanted to say. With tears in my eyes, I said: 'Chairman Mao, we the million emancipated Tibetan serfs are determined always to follow you in making revolution. We wish you a long, long life!'¹¹

The pamphlet is filled with similar claims as to how Mao and the Chinese revolution had brought change and progress to Tibet. These changes were attributed not only to the Communist policy for Tibet from the 1950s, but to the abolition of the original Tibetan government with the departure of the Dalai Lama ("the Democratic Reform in 1959") and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Hsin Mao launched an attack on the Dalai Lama, stating that under the Dalai Lama, Lhasa was not a real paradise but only a "paradise for the bloodsuckers and a hell on earth for the working people". He discussed how "Tibet was peacefully liberated in 1951" and how, as a result of the Chinese occupation, it had "witnessed rapid political, economic, and cultural advances" under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. Drawing on the current battles in China against Lui Shao-chi (Liu Shaoqi), he noted that Mao had "smashed the plot" to restore serfdom which Liu Shao-chi and his group had sought to institute. Great advances were claimed on the Ari Plateau for agricultural and shepherds, and the creation of an industrial base in Linchih was acclaimed. Hung Nung, hailing the agricultural advances, declared that the "Tibetan peasants and herdsmen are redoubling and promoting production."¹²

The Chinese attempted to use such propaganda teachings as these to obscure the truth about what was happening in Tibet following the Dalai Lama's departure and the initiation of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution in the PRC. Mao launched this revolutionary struggle as

an effort to maintain the Chinese Communist Party's control and to involve the young generation in a revolutionary experience. The result was chaos and disruption throughout China. Students attacked teachers, children attacked parents, leading scholars were humiliated, Communist officials were purged, and thousands of Red Guards were unleashed on the country to destroy homes, businesses, and cultural properties. The Red Guards, motivated by Mao's declarations of revolutionary fervor, challenged all authority including that of the military, the county and local governments, and even the Communist Party itself.

Tibet would suffer additional horrors during this period of disruption between the factions of the left and the right of the Chinese Communist movement. The Cultural Revolution directly affected Tibet from 1966 until 1969 but its aftermath was felt until Mao's death in 1976. This decade of destruction had an enormous impact on the Tibetan nation. In addition to the loss of historical treasures, the most critical aspect of the Cultural Revolution was a renewed effort to establish socialist communes, something the Tibetans had successfully avoided until then.¹³

The attempt to impose communes on the Tibetans had started as early as 1962. The Tibetans had resisted the communes because they viewed them not only as a vehicle to deprive them of ownership of the land, their tools, and all other instruments of production, but also as a form of mass imprisonment. With the advent of this new policy, people were forced to sign documents "requesting" the communes and to relinquish all their possessions. A compensation rate was set, far below the actual value of the property, and the Tibetans were to receive this compensation over a three to five-year period. In fact, they never received any of the promised compensations as the Chinese Communist officials later determined that they could be compensated only when the communes started making a profit. Each commune consisted of one hundred to two hundred families, roughly about one thousand people. Conditions were harsh. The Tibetans were required to work from early morning until late evening; the rules were so brutally enforced that the corpses of those who died while on work details were not buried for days. Children as young as six or seven and people in their eighties were forced to work in the communes. People experienced reduced rations as well as new taxes. The sole result of the communes was to bring famine to Tibet once again.¹⁴ The best estimates have determined that tens of thousands of Tibetans died during the famine of 1968-1973. This brought the

final toll of Tibetans who had died as a result of the Communist conquest of their nation to one million or one-seventh of the entire population.¹⁵

The Proletarian Cultural Revolution also brought new attacks on the religion and culture of Tibet as the Red Guards attempted to seize power from the Tibetan Chinese Communist Party Central Committee. On December 22, 1966 it issued a declaration stating:

We will rebel against the handful of persons in authority in the Party taking the capitalist road. We will rebel against persons stubbornly persisting in the bourgeois reactionary line! We will rebel against all the monsters and freaks! We will rebel against the bourgeois Royalists! We, a group of lawless revolutionary rebels, will wield the iron sweepers and swing the mighty cudgels to sweep the old world into a mess and bash people into complete confusion ... To rebel, to rebel and to rebel through to the end in order to create a brightly red new world of the proletariat.¹⁶

Mao's Cultural Revolution embraced all of China, even its outlying regions. The areas occupied by minorities, like the Tibetans, proved the most vulnerable. These were the centers of reaction, according to the Communists, and the places most in need of revolutionary change. Many of the Chinese officials in these regions were targeted for failure to reform the "decadent" societies under their control. When the Cultural Revolution officially came to Tibet on August 25, 1966, the Red Guards invaded Tibet's leading monastery, destroying or defacing ancient frescoes and images. Irreplaceable historic manuscripts were burned; many sacred monasteries were converted into barns for pigs and other farm animals, and Mao's picture was prominently displayed throughout the city of Lhasa.¹⁷

The Red Guards took special delight in ridiculing, defacing, or destroying every aspect of Tibetan culture, especially the religious features of Tibet. Religious pictures on walls were painted over; the sacred prayer flags were ripped down and replaced by the Communist red banner. Even under the "democratic reforms" of 1959 there had been a strict adherence to discipline; now the Tibetans had even more to fear as the Cultural Revolution degenerated into mob violence. Some Tibetans committed suicide rather than face torture at the hands of Communist gangs; violence was perpetrated against moderate Chinese Communists as well as against the Tibetans. In his perceptive study of the Tibetans, John Avedon noted that the Red

Guard faction "vied for preeminence in the work of demolishing every vestige of Tibetan culture". He wrote that had it not been for the refugees who fled to India, even the memory of Tibetan culture might have been erased:

Everything Tibetan was destroyed; everything Chinese and Communist adopted. The practice of religion was officially outlawed. Folk festivals and fairs were banned, traditional dances and songs, incense burning and all Tibetan art forms and customs prohibited ... All over Tibet people with "bad" class designations, who had not as yet been imprisoned, were dragged into the street and paraded in paper dunce caps – beaten and spat upon as they passed, tags listing their "crimes" pinned to their naked chest – in processions led by Red Guards beating drums, cymbals, and gongs.¹⁸

The lamas, who sought only peace and contentment in accordance with their Buddhist religion, had heavy religious statues lashed to their backs while merchants and members of the former nobility were forced to carry heavy vessels, the kind normally used to store grain, on their backs as they were marched through the streets. But the Cultural Revolution fell most heavily on the monasteries. Massive destruction began, as frescoes were destroyed, manuscripts burned, and buildings destroyed. While gold, silver, and other precious metals were stolen, a Tibetan Revolutionary Museum was established in the village of Shol, just below the Potala, and became a mandatory stop for all visiting delegations who came to Tibet. As a propaganda supplement to these brutal attacks, radio broadcasts portrayed the Dalai Lama as a political corpse, a bandit, and a traitor.¹⁹

In spite of these actions, there was an endurance of the national idea among this region's embattled population. The Tibetan spirit was not crushed by the atrocities of this era and by 1969 there were indications that another Tibetan rebellion, much like the one in 1959 which led to the Dalai Lama's departure, had been launched against Chinese domination. The 1969 revolt, coming on the heels of the Cultural Revolution, expanded from a struggle against the commune system into a call for independence from Chinese Communist control. In one incident, over one thousand people attacked local Communist officials and, after suffering defeat, fled into the hills. These rebels were eventually captured by the Chinese troops who subjected them to a public execution along with their leader, a Buddhist nun. Approximately twenty county units participated in the 1969 rebellion,

but the Chinese authorities brutally suppressed resistance in every region, holding public trials and sentencing many of the participants to death.²⁰ It is possible that the 1969 uprising may have resulted in as many deaths as the more widely publicized 1959 rebellion.

The end of the Cultural Revolution and the deaths of Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong in 1976 brought a glimmer of relief and the hope that the fanaticism which had afflicted Tibet might now be ended. The end of the extreme policies of this era saw a relaxation of revolutionary rhetoric and a renewed tendency to accept at least some of the distinctive features of China's minority populations.

Notes

¹ The Dalai Lama, *My Land and My People*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962, pp. 211, 215-216.

² *Ibid.*, p. 220.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 221-223.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 230. The Dalai Lama wrote about the intended effect of the resolution: "I had hoped that the Chinese cared about international opinion, but this resolution had no noticeable effect on them. Nevertheless, it is always right to protest against injustice, whether or not the protest can stop the injustice; and we were encouraged that such a large majority of the representatives of the nations had supported our plea" (*ibid.*).

⁶ Ernst Benz, *Buddhism or Communist: Which Holds the Future for Asia?*, Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1965, p. 196.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 196-197.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 198-199.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 198-200. Ernst Benz served as professor of Church and Dogmatic History and Director of the Ecumenical Institute at the University of Marburg, Germany, and devoted extensive study to the significance of Buddhism for the future of Asia.

¹¹ "Great Changes in Tibet", Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972, p. 1.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

¹³ John F. Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, New York: Vintage Books, 1986, p. 293.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 293-298.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 278. The author includes text from the "Inaugural Declaration of the Lhasa Revolutionary Rebel General Headquarters, December 22, 1966".

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 280-281.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 288-290.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 288, 291-292. The author's Chapter 10, "The Long Night, 1966-1977," provides a moving description of Tibet and its suffering under the Proletarian Cultural Revolution; *ibid.*, pp. 279-319.

²⁰ Jigme Ngagpo, "Behind the Unrest in Tibet", *China Spring Digest*, Vol. 2 (January-February, 1988), No. 1, pp. 24-25.

CHAPTER 5

Tibet in the Post-Maoist Era

Following the death of Mao Zedong, Tibetans might have hoped that there would be a period of relaxation with the initiation of new Chinese Communist Party leadership dominated by Deng Xiaoping. Undoubtedly, conditions in this era were better than they were during the Cultural Revolution, but their long-term prospects are only marginally better. Some political controls were relaxed, and, as will be explained in the next chapter, efforts were made to strengthen the Tibetan economy. In a small concession to religion, some of the monasteries destroyed during the Cultural Revolution were rebuilt, even though the historic treasures that were destroyed cannot be recovered. But the Dalai Lama remained in exile, and there was no evidence that the PRC had abandoned its goal of destroying Tibetan culture and religion and turning Tibet into an area for Chinese colonization. It is obvious that in Mainland China, Deng Xiaoping's methods may be more restrained than those of Mao Zedong, but it is only a change in strategy and not in objectives. It is only a respite in the PRC's normal pattern of behavior as Beijing seeks massive development through the "Four Modernizations" program. However, if any doubt existed about the ultimate program or objectives of the Deng Xiaoping regime so far as Tibet is concerned, this doubt was expelled by examining the conditions which led the Tibetans to a another revolt in 1987, and the brutal suppression of this revolt in 1987 and 1988.

As we examine this stage in the development of the Tibetan situation, it is necessary to imagine a map of Tibet in which one sees the "Tibet Autonomous Region" situated in the heart of Asia, located on a high plateau between China and the Indian subcontinent and covering an area over 500,000 square miles. Approximately six million Tibetans live within this region and another 115,000 Tibetans live in exile in places such as Nepal and India. The map, therefore, does not give one a complete picture because it obscures the territorial adjustments that Chinese authorities made in an effort to dilute the Tibetan population.

Chinese military forces in Tibet

Fully one half of the area of Tibet is actually under separate Chinese provincial administration as a result of a territorial division made by the Chinese Communists in 1951. For example, most of Amdo, the northeast province of Tibet (which includes the region known as Kokonor), has been renamed Qinghai, and is thus administered as a separate province of China, while a small area of Amdo has been annexed by another Chinese province, Gansu. Kham, an eastern province of Tibet, has been annexed by the nearby Chinese provinces of Yunnan, Sichuan, and Gansu, as well as by the province of Qinghai. The Tibetan areas within these Chinese provinces are administered as "autonomous" prefectures and districts. These regions contain four million Tibetans. The "Tibetan Autonomous Region" (TAR) is located to the southwest of this area and actually comprises slightly more than half the original Tibetan nation and contains the most important cities: Lhasa (the capital), Shigatse, Guantse, and Chamdo.¹ Journalist Laura Pilarski has observed that Tibet's "lost territories" contain some of the most valuable human resources of the original Tibetan nation.²

Aside from the geographical partition of Tibet, two major crises face this nation: (1) the Chinese military forces which brutally suppress any hopes for Tibetan independence, and (2) the Chinese policy of population transfer which threatens the Tibetans with becoming a minority in their own country.

To understand PRC policy, reference must be made to Mao Zedong's view of Tibet, and its importance as an economic and political center. It was first seen by Beijing as an area for economic development with the aid of the Soviets, but after the split between the two Communist powers, it was perceived as a buffer zone for protecting China from a Soviet attack and as a base from which Chinese nuclear weapons might command the very center of the Soviet Asian empire. Mao sought to accomplish this development by a dramatic increase in Tibet's population. He planned a five-fold population increase by means of a massive movement of Chinese into Tibet. The national uprising in 1959 led to a further decline in the Tibetan population, as many Tibetans died and tens of thousands were imprisoned or sent to labor camps. The Tibetan government-in-exile has estimated that over one-sixth of the population, or 1,200,000 Tibetans, has died as a direct result of the PRC invasion of Tibet. Despite a change in style, Deng Xiaoping's Tibetan policy differs little from Mao's policy on population resettlement.

The Chinese statistics for the years 1979 and 1980 revealed that a total of 130,000 Chinese cadres who were government employees remained in the Tibet Autonomous Region, supported by Chinese troops numbering anywhere between 150,000 to 600,000. The announcement, in 1980, that Chinese cadres would be withdrawn within three years was never fulfilled. In fact from 1984 there was an increased influx of Chinese residents. Recent statistics indicate that Beijing has sent about 6.2 million civilians into Tibet, while maintaining about half a million troops in the country. Despite denials by PRC officials, the evidence remains strong that a deliberate policy is being followed to overwhelm the Tibetans in their own country. Statistics which have been gathered show that:

The Tibetan population is about 6 million and the estimated 6.2 million Chinese civilians in Tibet (with up to half a million troops) demonstrate that the Chinese already outnumber the Tibetans on the Tibetan plateau.

Amdo Province: the Chinese outnumber the Tibetans in Amdo Province (now known as Qinghai) three to one. Previous to 1950, few Chinese settlers lived there. (Current population: 800,000 Tibetans; 2.5 million Chinese).

Kham Province: the Tibetans are still in a small majority here, with 2 to 3 million Tibetans in the province to about 2 million Chinese. However, the close location to one of the most populous Chinese provinces, Sichuan, makes this area one of the most vulnerable for Tibetans.

The Tibetan Autonomous Region has the lowest concentration of Chinese (1.7 million), but it is this area in which Chinese settlers are now being encouraged to move as new communities are established for the Chinese, and Tibetans are to move into the more arid and less developed parts of Tibet.

The two largest cities in Tibet, Lhasa at 200,000 and Shigatse at 50,000, have taken on a Chinese appearance, with neighborhood buildings resembling Beijing architecture more than traditional Tibetan architecture.

Other cultural discrimination is obvious, with schools providing better instruction to the Chinese. The Chinese language is used on radio programs, and Chinese publications stress the need for both skilled and unskilled labor to move to Tibet. Chinese who remain in Tibet after retirement receive larger pensions.

Tibetan unemployment is increasing as the distinct Tibetan culture and economy is supplemented by the new settlers with the

different culture.³

After a thorough study of this situation, legal scholar and Tibetan expert, Michael C. van Walt van Praag, has concluded:

The real fear exists that if the present Chinese policy is successful – and indications are that it is – Tibetans will be reduced to a small and insignificant minority in their own country in the same way as the Manchurians, the Turkic peoples and the Mongolians have been. Early this century, the Manchus were a distinct race with their own culture and traditions. Today only 2 to 3 million Manchurians are left in Manchuria, where 75 million Chinese have settled. In Eastern Turkestan, which the Chinese now call Xinjiang, the Chinese population has grown from 200,000 in 1949 to 7 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 million in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. The 4 million Hui, or so-called Chinese Muslims of the Ninxia Hui Autonomous Region, have been entirely encompassed by Chinese settlers.⁴

John Avedon, a widely recognized specialist on Tibet, has termed this Chinese policy of mass movement of population into Tibet as "Chinese apartheid," although in the case of Tibet the immigrant labor controls the government, whereas in South Africa the immigrant labor does not control the government. He notes the developing crisis in Tibet: Tibetans face growing unemployment and an annual inflation rate of 300 percent which has reduced the per capita income to just \$110 annually. Faced with this meager income, the average Tibetan still lives in an antiquated house lacking heat, running water, and electricity. Seventy percent of the population are considered illiterate with only one of every five children finishing primary school. The average life span is forty years with infant mortality at the rate of one in six.⁵

The poor condition of the average Tibetan is in sharp contrast to the PRC immigrants who benefit from the system. Those settlers who are dispatched to this region as a matter of Beijing's policy receive at least a third more in income than the average Tibetan. These immigrants receive guaranteed jobs as well as modern housing and enjoy generous support to meet their medical and nutritional needs. Although schooling is limited, two-thirds of the seats in school are reserved for the immigrants. The Chinese outnumber the

Tibetans, 7.5 million to 6 million. Although Deng Xiaoping has claimed that the Chinese immigrants are only there to help build Tibet and that they will eventually leave, the great building boom in Tibet and the pension bonuses for those who settle there are a strong indication that they will likely stay. More recently, as is discussed in the next chapter, there is an expansion of benefits that includes special tax breaks. Avedon points out that this pattern is part of a deliberate Chinese Communist policy with an obvious purpose:

The Sinocization of Tibet is no more accidental than its military occupation. Given the region's chronic unrest, typified by ongoing executions of political dissidents, the internment of almost 4,000 political prisoners in the capital city of Lhasa, and the presence of one Chinese soldier for every ten Tibetans in central Tibet alone. Sinocization is the requisite corollary to open force: a subtle but effective means to submerge the identity of Beijing's most intransigent subject race.⁶

American television journalist Tom Brokaw, visiting Tibet for a television special, also observed the presence of Chinese everywhere. Most of the workers in hotels and manufacturing plants are Chinese and the signs in the cities are in both the Tibetan and Chinese languages.⁷

In its long history Tibet has had numerous conflicts with its neighbor, China, and, as mentioned previously, has previously been invaded by China. However, in the case of these earlier invasions the purpose of the Chinese government was only to gain political control and not to destroy the Tibetan people, their culture, or their religion. The invasion by the People's Republic of China has been of a different nature – seeking not only total political power but the gradual destruction of all that was unique to Tibet in a forceful and brutal manner. The suppression of religious freedom, the continuing military occupation, the outlawing of any signs of Tibetan nationalism, and the constant flow of Chinese settlers into Tibet is something never experienced by Tibet in its entire history. The combination of these acts threatens the very existence of the Tibetan people and culture.

The 1987 Crisis

As the oppression of the PRC Communists continued, even under Deng Xiaoping, new disturbances occurred late in 1987 and early in

1988. The significance of the events of this period can be best appreciated by viewing the circumstances which led to the protests. As the agenda of the international community began to include matters which had previously been ignored, the Tibetan crisis became a focus of international concern.

In the United States, there was a growing concern over human rights conditions in China. This concern eventually prompted the United States House of Representatives to pass a resolution criticizing the People's Republic of China for human rights violations in Tibet and for its military occupation of the country. Passage of the resolution increased both official as well as popular interest in Tibet's plight.

In response to this interest, the Dalai Lama scheduled a trip to the United States. Concerned about the possible implications of this visit, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China sent a message to the U.S. State Department urging that U.S. officials prevent the Dalai Lama from making any political statement during his visit. Upon his arrival in Washington, D.C. in September, 1987, the Dalai Lama outlined a five-point peace plan for Tibet in an address to the U.S. Congressional Human Rights Caucus on Capitol Hill, an event which was widely covered in the U.S. news media. On September 22, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution which praised the Dalai Lama as a spiritual leader of Buddhism and as a world leader advancing the cause of peace. A letter was sent to PRC officials by Members of Congress endorsing the Dalai Lama's peace plan.

For the Tibetans, foreign policy had an immediate domestic impact. Chinese officials in Beijing decided that it was time to assert additional power over the Tibetans. On September 24, just two days after passage of the Congressional resolution praising the Dalai Lama, Chinese troops in Tibet forced almost 15,000 Tibetans to listen to a denunciation of the Dalai Lama's visit to the United States. As an especially dramatic warning to dissidents, a Tibetan nationalist, Kelsang Tashi, was publicly executed, two others were sentenced to death, and eight more imprisoned.⁸

Three days later, twenty-one Tibetan monks, joined by five laymen, conducted a peaceful demonstration at the most sacred shrine of Tibetan Buddhism, the Jokhang Temple. They carried Tibetan flags, forbidden by Chinese Communist law, and demanded independence for Tibet. The Chinese arrested these demonstrators and accused them of committing "counterrevolutionary acts," a charge punishable by death.⁹ The PRC then launched an attack on the U.S.

government for its refusal to silence the Dalai Lama during his visit in the U.S.¹⁰

The first week of October provided a shock to the Beijing authorities – and revealed the brutality of the PRC government. The date October 1st has special significance for the Chinese Communists because it was on that day in 1949 that Mao Zedong solidified his control over the Chinese mainland and proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China. On that same day in Lhasa, thousands of Tibetans demonstrated for independence. The PRC troops opened fire, killing a seven-year-old child and injuring over one hundred people. The Communist forces even arrested various foreigners in Lhasa, and on October 5, the official PRC newspaper in Tibet, the *Tibet Daily*, threatened "severe punishment" for those who participated in the October 1st demonstrations and failed to surrender by October 15.¹¹ On the 6th of October, the Chinese attacked 100 monks from the Drepung Monastery while they were marching to Lhasa and arrested several monks suspected of supporting the resistance movement.¹²

As the Chinese flew reinforcements to Tibet, the three leading monasteries in Tibet appealed to the United Nations to help end Chinese rule in their country.¹³ Once again, however, great power status prevailed over the international community's concern with human rights conditions and the only response to the Tibetan appeal was rhetoric.

As part of the crackdown, the Chinese ordered foreigners out of Tibet and prohibited entry by foreigners into Tibet. This action was in strong contrast to their recent efforts over to promote tourism in the area. Telephone and telex links between Tibet and the outside world were severed. Officials told travelers that tickets to Lhasa would not be available for ten days and also stopped issuing visas in Nepal. Consequently, every major point of entry for Tibet was sealed off in order to prevent the world outside from gaining knowledge of what was happening.¹⁴

The Dalai Lama issued a statement referring to the brutality which now once again affected his homeland:

I am deeply shocked and grieved by the loss of lives and the persons injured during the recent demonstrations in Tibet by the Tibetan people against the Chinese rule. I still believe violence is not a solution to any problem. I appeal to all human rights groups and supporters of freedom and justice to prevail upon the

Chinese Government to stop the execution of innocent Tibetans and release those imprisoned.¹⁵

Testimony to the Tibetan Suppression

The Tibetan people were fortunate that the initial acts of Chinese oppression occurred in full view of visiting foreigners who were able to bring the story of the persecution of the Tibetans to the outside world. Interestingly enough, some of the reports noted that at least three foreigners who were sympathetic to the Tibetans had thrown stones at the Chinese police as the latter acted to suppress forcefully the Tibetan demonstrators. Some of the foreigners even filmed the protests and the police action. Monks protected the foreigners and helped them evade the police.¹⁶

Charlene L. Fu was one of the first Western reporters to reach Lhasa after the October 1 demonstration and spent a week in the area until she and thirteen other journalists were expelled. She reported seeing truckloads of police, armed with machine guns, circling the Tibetan capital and helmeted police equipped with machine guns patrolling the main roads of the city. She reported that communication was cut off with the Lhasa Hotel, the major Western hotel in the Tibetan capital, and announcements ordering foreigners to leave were posted around the city. She described an interview with one of the young monks at Jokhang Temple, where more than twenty plainclothes police stood guard ready to suppress any further demonstrations. More than 100 monks were arrested but she was able to interview one monk who expressed the hope that Communist rule in Tibet would end and that Tibetans hoped other countries would support Tibet's claim to freedom.¹⁷

A letter signed by Robbie Barnett on behalf of a "a Committee of 45 Westerners in Lhasa" described the events between September 27 and October 1st. It reported armed police trying to break up the demonstrations by Tibetans and the arrival of reinforcements who fired into the crowd to clear a pathway between a school and the police station. These shots were fired near the south side and to the front of the Jokhang temple. The police continued shooting into the square from the roofs of buildings. Tibetans and foreigners were seized, taken into a school building, although the foreigners were released after their film was confiscated. The police station was set afire. This letter also described how the Westerners decided to act as witness to the event and how they attempted to treat the wounded with the limited medical supplies they had available. They summed

up their report by noting that:

We have been asked to treat one woman with severely burnt arms, one woman bullet in breast, and one man bullet in chest, but contacts have failed to keep rendezvous, due to police activity we assume. We arranged more for tomorrow. We have first-hand accounts of four other monks shot (left leg, right leg, left hip, right shoulder) and three other monks shot dead. So confirmed total is six and seriously wounded 13. Local people say 12 dead, plus one Chinese policeman killed, and many wounded, including children. No Tibetan had guns at any time that we saw.¹⁸

Two Americans, Dr. William Blake Kerr, a medical director, and John Ackerley, a lawyer, told the press in New Delhi, India, that they had witnessed the riots but did not participate in them. Dr. Kerr and Ackerley were arrested September 28 for possessing a Tibetan national flag. The two were held for questioning before being ordered to leave Tibet within ten days. Dr. Kerr treated the wounded as part of his ethical duty and reported that he saw six Tibetans die and treated fourteen others for wounds. Kerr noted that the Tibetans were treated as second-class citizens and that religious freedom does not exist in Tibet.¹⁹

Other reports during this dramatic event described the Communist crackdown. Tourists described strict security between the city of Lhasa and the airport, cancellation of local bus service, and a 10 p.m. curfew. The police seemed everywhere. The PRC controlled media stressed how much the Chinese were doing to create a prosperous Tibet and directed criticism against the Dalai Lama, but noted that:

Tourists returning to Kathmandu said the Lhasa streets are swarming with armed soldiers and plainclothesmen. Some of the plainclothesmen were also openly carrying automatic weapons. The Sera, Drepung, and Ganden monasteries are still sealed. All buses coming to Lhasa are being checked thoroughly. Between Shigatse and Lhasa alone, a distance of 200 kms, there are seven roadblocks where the police check everyone's identity card.²⁰

U.S. Focus on the Tibetan Situation

The protests in Tibet took place while the Dalai Lama was visiting the United States and attracted great attention in Washington, D.C. A special Congressional hearing was held on the human rights situation in Tibet and some Members of Congress participated in a

press conference on the issue. The Dalai Lama met with the Human Rights Caucus on September 21, 1987. The group is a bipartisan legislative service organization of the U.S. House of Representatives which was established in early 1983 to focus on human rights abuses throughout the world and to encourage Congressional action in the observance of human rights. At the time of the meeting, it was headed by Democrat U.S. Representative Tom Lantos of California and Republican U.S. Representative John Porter of Illinois. A statement released by the Human Rights Caucus noted that as many as one million Tibetans have died as a result of political instability, imprisonment, and widescale famine. This document also noted that over 6,000 monasteries have been destroyed, and that much of the art and literature of Tibet has been destroyed, lost or removed from Tibet.²¹

U.S. Representative Gus Yatron (D-Pennsylvania) stated that despite claims of improvement in the human rights situation of Tibet, organizations such as Amnesty International and reports by Tibetan exiles have indicated that existing conditions in the area are still "deplorable," with a continuation of "disappearances, torture, and executions."²²

Representative Lantos appeared at a demonstration in support of the people of Tibet on the steps of the U.S. Capitol with the Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Claiborne Pell (D-Rhode Island) and U.S. Representative Benjamin Gilman (R-New York). The PRC, rejecting concerns about human rights issues, insisted that such criticism was simply a continuation of efforts to interfere with the internal affairs in Tibet.²³

Both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate passed amendments to the State Department Authorization bill condemning Chinese human rights violations. The House passed a measure in June of 1987 and the Senate in November of 1987. Agreement on similar wording by both branches came on December 1st when adopted and President Ronald Reagan signed it on December 22, 1987. The bill condemned the human rights abuses but also called for the support of the Dalai Lama's five-point peace plan including the release of political prisoners, tying sales of arms to China to respect for human rights in Tibet, and granting scholarships and other aid to Tibetan refugees.²⁴ The PRC expressed strong objections to the measure, insisting that Tibet had been a part of China and that such matters were China's internal affairs. The U.S. action, Chinese authorities maintained, threatened the continuation

of bilateral relations between the U.S. and the PRC.²⁵

Human Rights Raises Growing Concern

The members of U.S. Congress and the U.S. President were not alone in expressing continuing concern over the situation of human rights. The American Buddhist Congress passed a resolution criticizing the transfer of population and asking Beijing to begin negotiations with the Dalai Lama.²⁶ Although the issue received more attention because of the disturbances in the fall of 1987 and early 1988, the crises in human rights in Tibet has long attracted the attention of concerned humanitarians, religious leaders, and political leaders from throughout the world.

Britain has established the Parliamentary Human Rights Group, an independent all-party group of more than one hundred members from both Houses of Parliament, the objective of which is to increase awareness in the British Parliament on international human rights abuses, to undertake fact-finding missions, and to publish reports about its human rights concerns. Lord Avebury, the Chairman of the Group, initiated correspondence with the Chinese Embassy in London on the human rights situation in Tibet, exchanging a series of letters between November 19, 1985 and March 3, 1987. The correspondence raised the issues of the persecution of Buddhism, the population transfer of Chinese into Tibet, and the maintenance of defense forces in Tibet. The Chinese proved evasive and eventually discontinued further correspondence on the subject.²⁷

A Chinese dissident, Chen Feng, discussed the tearing apart of the traditional system of religion and politics in Tibet and the efforts to destroy religion in order to replace it with Marxism and Leninism. He noted that the PRC military hardware and troops in Tibet are intended for use against the Tibetan people.²⁸

An informal fact-finding tour, conducted March 29 to April 9 by former Labor Party Secretary of State for Health and Social Affairs, Lord David Ennals, concluded that Tibet was undergoing "a reign of terror" imposed by the PRC officials, and that conditions were worse than the nationality troubles in the Soviet Union. The report made reference to the March 5 demonstration and noted that it had been suppressed under conditions described as "severe." In a report which covers a wide range of issues, the section which concentrates on the current brutality occurring in Tibet deserves special attention:

A major problem in Tibet is the relative youth of military and military police, which combined with frustration at the Tibetans' attitude and orders to reestablish order, results in extremely brutality in their treatment of prisoners.

Repeatedly we heard of how "electric cow prodders" were used both during the riot and as a means of torture. Only since leaving Tibet have we learnt that the personnel of the Public Security Bureau were issued with electric batons throughout China in 1980, and the severity of the charge they give can cause extreme pain and be temporarily disabling to an individual. With the wire coils unravelled they are used to strip the flesh from legs and arms. This was largely discovered from bodies which people were notified to collect from the hospital mortuary, with the requirement that they pay \$150 collection fee. This used to be a common practice during the Cultural Revolution.

At first we treated these reports with reserve but the consistency of the reports, the calibre of the witnesses and their undoubted fear left us in no doubt as to the veracity of the reports from people who had been detained.²⁹

The Continuing Crisis

The Chinese Communist crackdown on the Tibetans continues in the short term and long term, and the Tibetans are under siege in their own land. Before leaving the plight of the Tibetans, we should focus on the conclusions of the reports detailing on the human rights abuses in this tortured land. *Asia Watch* was organized in 1985 to promote human rights in Asia and is affiliated with *America Watch*, *Helsinki Watch*, and *Human Rights Watch*. *International Alert* is a non-governmental alliance of groups and people who work for economic and social development as well on the protection and promotion of human rights. *Asia Watch* issued a February, 1988 report with a July, 1988 update; *International Alert* issued an August, 1988 report. In its February report, *Asia Watch* observed:

The moderation that may be said to characterize some of the policies implemented in the TAR (Tibet Autonomous Region) during the present decade does not extend into the realm of free political discourse of full religious freedom in spite of governmental insistence to the contrary.³⁰

The report noted that Tibet may be considered a private affair only to the extent that "believers keep their faith within carefully

prescribed limits" and that these limits "can only be intended to hamper the propagation of religion in Tibet." The report added that religious institutions are not independent but are linked to the official Communist-sponsored Buddhist organizations and the "management board for cultural relics." Thus, Article 36 of the 1982 Chinese Constitution and Article 11 of the 1984 Law on Regional National Autonomy for Minority Nationalities, provisions which govern religious practices in Tibet, allow for wide interpretation of such terms as "disruption of public order" and "foreign domination."³¹

The *Asia Watch* document detailed the work of the Public Security Bureau which maintains "effective surveillance" over the Tibetan population in most of the towns and cities. Those who speak out for Tibetan freedom are watched most closely; those who possess the Tibetan flag are charged with a major crime. Arrests are made during the middle of the night and the suspects are taken away and the interrogation is conducted in a PSB branch bureau in secret. Months or even years may elapse between the arrest and the official sentencing. Torture is used such as shackling the prisoners' arms and legs and "electric batons" are used. The *Asia Watch* report notes that even after interrogation and sentencing, abuse continues and with regular beatings of prisoners, restrictions are enforced against prisoners talking to one another, food is sparse and of poor quality, prisoners are required to work long hours at difficult tasks, and struggle sessions are conducted. Thus, it concludes that "torture is part of the prison routine in Tibet."³²

The *Asia Watch* Group details the names and persecutions of political prisoners in Tibet.³³ The report also covers population transfers and provides evidence of discrimination against Tibetans by the Chinese officials, such as preferences for Chinese over Tibetans for jobs and housing in Tibet.³⁴

The July Report of *Asia Watch* describes a continuation of the persecution of the Tibetans with a special part on a list of additional political prisoners from both Tibetan exile sources and reflective of names from Tibetan exile lists and the lists of Amnesty International. The report also updates the March 5 riots, not covered in the February report and an event which received much less international attention than the fall 1987 demonstrations because the PRC had effectively closed Tibet off and few foreigners were present. The report details the continued efforts of arrest, imprisonment, torture, and terror. *Asia Watch* observed:

By itself, the extent of injuries reported by the official Chinese media (more than 300 members of the security forces wounded, of whom more than 30 reportedly required hospitalization) indicated the March 5 incident far exceeded the demonstrations of September and October in violence and numbers involved.³⁵

The International Alert report confirmed the general tone of the above observations and has been referenced earlier. This document placed special emphasis on the curtailment of freedom of speech in Tibet and the role of the Public Security Bureau which operates on the assumption that plots exist even when there is evidence to the contrary. Suspects, upon being arrested, are assumed to be guilty and Public Security officers set out to extract as much information as possible from the detainee. In the introduction to the report, Lord Ennals notes the important connection between domestic and international concerns:

Since our return further demonstrations have occurred in Lhasa on a smaller scale than in March and there has been growing concern worldwide about the welfare of groups of Tibetans held by the Chinese and under threat of death. From recent travels in the United States and Europe I have discovered widespread concern about the situation in Tibet and an increasing amount of informed criticism of Chinese attitudes.

The denial of human rights in Tibet must be dealt with not by continuing repression and force, but by statesmanship and in a genuine wish for peace. Urgent action is needed to avert a situation that would bring damage to China's reputation and to the Tibetan people.³⁶

Notes

¹ Michael C. van Walt van Praag, "Population Transfer and the Survival of the Tibetan Identity"; prepared for the Seventh Annual International Human Rights Symposium and Research Conference at Columbia University, June 13, 1986.

² Laura Pilarski, *Tibet: The Heart of Asia*, Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1974, p. 11. She also notes the key characteristics of the major cities: Lhasa is the capital and the "Vatican of Lamaism"; Shigatse is an important administrative center; Gyantse represents an economic center and a wool market; and Chamdo is a regional headquarters located on a significant trade route which leads eastward into China.

³ van Praag, 1986.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

⁵ John Avedon, "China and Tibet: Conquest by Cultural Destruction," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 24, 1987, p. 23.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ "Tom Brokaw on Tibetan Situations," *Tibetan Review*, September, 1987, pp. 7-8.

⁸ *The Washington Post*, September 30, 1987.

⁹ *The New York Times*, October 1, 1987.

¹⁰ *The Washington Post*, September 30, 1987.

¹¹ Reuter News Services report, October 2 and 5, 1987.

¹² *The New York Times*, October 10, 1987.

¹³ *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 6, 1987.

¹⁴ *The Chicago Tribune*, October 8, 1987.

¹⁵ *Statement of His Holiness The Dalai Lama*, October 3, 1987, issued by the Office of Tibet, New York, New York.

¹⁶ *The New York Times*, October 10, 1987.

¹⁷ Charlene L. Fu, *Associated Press* dispatches, 1987.

¹⁸ "Westerners' Account of Lhasa Demonstrations," *Tibetan Review*, November, 1987, pp. 5-8.

¹⁹ "U.S. Tourists Deny Involvement in Riots," *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

²⁰ "Since the Demonstrations," *ibid.*, p. 9.

²¹ "Dalai Lama to Make Major Political Statement at Meeting with Congressional Human Rights Caucus," *Congressional Human Rights Caucus Release*, September 21, 1987.

²² "Human Rights in Tibet," Statement of the Hon. Gus Yatron, October 14, 1987.

²³ "Lantos; Tibetan Demonstration Gets Reactions," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, November 19, 1987, pp. 2-3. A survey of the Tibetan situation prepared for Members of Congress by Kerry B. Dumbaugh, Analyst in Asian Affairs, Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division, can be found in "Tibet: Disputed Facts About the Situation in Tibet," *Congressional Research Service*, Document Number 88-40F (Revised May 3, 1988).

²⁴ "Reagan Signs Tibet Bill," *Tibetan Review*, January, 1988, p. 5.

²⁵ "China Warns U.S. on Tibet," *ibid.*

²⁶ "American Buddhist Congress Passes a Resolution on Tibet," *ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁷ "Human Rights Situation in Tibet: British MPs Dissatisfied by Chinese Explanations," *Tibetan Review*, October, 1987, pp. 10-13. Informative articles may be found in the account by Robert Barnett and Nicholas Meysztowicz, "The Lhasa Riot and After: General impression of two western tourists," *Tibetan Review* (January, 1988), p. 15; and the account by Rupert Wolfe-Murray which appeared in London's *Daily Telegraph*, November 16, 1987, *ibid.*, pp. 15-16. See also the editorial, "Stand Up for Decency in Tibet," *The New York Times*, October 8, 1987, and John Metzler's View, "In Tibet, religion and culture is under siege," *China Post* (Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China), March 23, 1988.

²⁸ Chen Feng, "A Chinese Dissident's Perception of Tibet," *Tibetan Review*, November, 1987, pp. 14-17. Among the comments the author makes the following is worthy of special attention: "Peking destroyed most of the monaster-

ies in Tibet. After the Dalai Lama become a refugee in exile, the traditional system of political and religious unity was completely torn apart. Peking knows that a nation cannot be without soul for even one day; thus hundreds of thousands of young Tibetans were sent to Peking to be indoctrinated in the Communist System. They returned to take over the traditional place of the lamas with Communist theory replacing the holy scriptures" (15). He also comments: "Tibet is deeply rooted in Buddhism, and Peking tried its best to stop the voice of Tibet and replace it with the voice of Communism" (16).

²⁹ Don Oberdorfer, "British Official Blasts Chinese 'Terror' in Tibet," *The Washington Post*, May 11, 1988; Lord Ennals and Frederick Hyde-Chambers, "An Informal Fact-finding Visit to Tibet," *Tibetan Review*, July 1988, pp. 9-14.

³⁰ "Human Rights in Tibet," Washington, D.C.: *An Asia Watch Report*, February, 1988, p. 13.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 25-31.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-40.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-57.

³⁵ "Evading Scrutiny: Violations of Human Rights After The Closing of Tibet: Supplement to the *Asia Watch Report* in Tibet," Washington, D.C.: *Asia Watch*, July, 1988.

³⁶ "Tibet in China," London, England: *An International Alert Report*, August, 1988.

CHAPTER 6

The Tibetan Crisis in the Post-Communist Era

The collapse of communist power in the USSR and Eastern Europe carried the Tibetan crisis beyond the parameters of the four decades following China's invasion. This series of dramatic events, which spanned the period from 1989 to 1991, raised questions about the territorial *status quo* within the communist empire of Central Eurasia and required a broader re-examination of the concept of what constituted a nation. Throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, nations are in the process of defining themselves. Nationalism, long thought to be eroded under the force of modernization, is now seen as one of the most powerful forces shaping the development of contemporary political structures. The collapse of Europe's communist regimes intensified nationalist aspirations in that region and undoubtedly revived the hopes of Tibetans who saw a parallel between their situation and that of the Baltic republics, which had been forcefully taken into the Soviet Union.

Although China, with 56 different nationalities, is a multi-ethnic state, its minority population, 91 million people, accounts for only 8% of the national population. Therefore, a re-examination of the question of what constitutes a nation is less devastating for China than it was for the USSR. The Chinese situation is also less acute because China is a unitary state which is formally and in reality centralized. Chinese provinces, unlike their Soviet counterparts, are usually organized on the basis of territorial units instead of nationality groups. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule – Tibet, Xinjiang, Ningxia, Guangxi, and Inner Mongolia – and these are the regions that pose difficulties for Beijing. The ethnic problems of these regions, though modest by Soviet standards, are aggravated by a pattern of regionalism – authoritarian north versus modernizing south – that compounds this dilemma. Moreover, economic demands, particularly the need for development of China's south-west and the tensions between local governments and private enterprises, further complicate the problem of these regions. Finally, it is

important to note that in spite of attempts at forced assimilation, China's ethnic minorities are evidently taking steps to sharply define their national identities, becoming more rather than less distinct as groups. Significantly, this is a process that seems to be coinciding with the integration of Chinese minorities into the Chinese economic and political system.¹

As noted previously, the violence of the Tibetan-Chinese relationship since 1951 and the suppression of Tibet's religious and cultural heritage have made Tibet one of China's most difficult challenges. The latter 1980s, described in previous chapters, were times of frequent and violent anti-Chinese protest, a period in which the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and other security organizations were called upon, in official terminology, to "put down many riots and incidents of troublemaking."

After a period of relative tranquility, there were outbursts of opposition in Tibet. As mentioned previously, the events of 1988 were especially significant because they were evidence of the return of open resistance to central authority. The protests in 1989, building on the activism of 1988, were of profound significance not only because of what they demonstrated about the Tibetan situation but also because they were an indication of just how far Chinese authorities would go to maintain control. Anti-Chinese demonstrations in Lhasa in March, 1989, prompted a violent and rather well publicized response from the People's Armed Police. In actions which would be imitated a few weeks later in Tiananmen Square, the police killed over 100 monks, nuns, and civilians who happened to get in the way. These actions were reinforced by the imposition of martial law. The renewal of protests early in this decade was a reminder of Tibet's continuing and even growing volatility. Overseas Tibetans and those Tibetans who reside elsewhere in China have protested against Beijing's brutal repression of Tibetan nationalists and have supported many of the aims Tibet's resistance movement.²

Contemporary Dissidence in Tibet

There are several specific complaints that Tibetans have raised with regard to Chinese involvement in their region. One of the concerns which is most often mentioned is that the demographic character of their homeland is being radically altered by Han migration. Independent Han migration to minority regions of China has, of course, been a fact of life for centuries but it became a state sponsored initiative after the communist victory over the Nationalists.

From the early 1980s until early in this decade, approximately six million Chinese moved into Tibet or those regions such as the Amdo Province which were formerly part of Tibet. Tibet has been dramatically affected by this process but, in 1993, Gyaincain Norbu, the region's pro-Chinese governor, challenged claims that the Tibetans were being overrun with his statement that fewer than 4% of the people of Tibet have a Han Chinese ethnic background while approximately 96% of the population is ethnic Tibetans. In fact, governmental figures which are based on the smaller territory of what is now formally Tibet claim that the Tibetan population stands at 2.1 million while there are only 79,000 Han Chinese who are permanent residents. This figure does not take into account that large regions which were formerly part of Tibet have now been officially taken away and are overwhelmingly populated by Chinese settlers. Nor does it count the numerous Chinese military and security personnel who serve in Tibet. Looking at the original Tibetan territory, Tibetan exiles claim that there is a total Tibetan population of 6 million and a permanent Chinese presence of 7.5 million. It is, of course, those areas taken from traditional Tibet which have been most devastated demographically. In describing conditions in Qinghai Province, formerly the Tibetan Amdo Province, a Western journalist described the plight of Tibetans who had never even seen Chinese until the years after China's occupation of Tibet. Tibetan shepherds, he maintained, now find themselves deprived of their traditional pastures and have been forced to move into the mountains in order to graze their sheep. While the communists have brought "roads, trains, x-rays, television and a measure of prosperity, ... they have also brought their own people ...", a fact that has aroused considerable resentment on the part of natives of the region.³

The movement of ethnic Chinese into the area has been supplemented by the practice of forced sterilizations and forced abortions of Tibetan women. Abortions have even been performed as late as six or seven months into pregnancies and there have been reports of truckloads of women being taken away for abortions or sterilizations. Defenders of Chinese policies in Tibet argue that family planning policies are more relaxed in Tibet and that Tibetan peasants are allowed to have as many children as they wish and normally have anywhere from three to five.⁴

An equally important concern is that Tibet has been singled out for investment ventures by Chinese authorities. Tibetan regulations, unlike those in most of China, do not require that Chinese entrepre-

neers be local residents in order to set up business in Tibet. As a result, since the late 1980s, the region was flooded by thousands of Chinese, many of them mere teenagers dispatched by their poor rural families in Sichuan province, the traditional gateway to Tibet, who have come in hopes of making a "fortune" off the region's growing tourist trade and other local opportunities. Consequently, Tibetans have come to fear that their traditional way of life is being eroded by the emergence of the bicycle and shoe repair shops, foreign restaurants, pedicab operations, bars and dance clubs more characteristic of Shanghai than Lhasa. Tibetan locals, realizing that Chinese immigrants operate most of these new business enterprises, have begun to fear a loss of Tibet's national character. Moreover, many of this new entrepreneurial class were seen as exploitive, charging excessive prices that placed severe strains on local residents. Complaints about high prices charged by Chinese merchants led to five days of violent demonstrations against Chinese occupation in May, 1993. Many arrests, injuries, and even deaths resulted from clashes between PLA troops and thousands of demonstrators.⁵

It is important to recognize that during the 1980s, Chinese reforms resulted in economic advancement for all of the country, including the minority areas. However, not all regions of this enormous country derived equal benefits from the changes. The coastal and lowland regions of China, because of fortunate circumstances, enjoyed by far the greatest benefits from this process. By comparison, minority living standards, including those of the Tibetans, already behind those of the Han regions, fell even further behind. Consequently, Tibet continues to face severe economic hardships as well as a sense of relative deprivation in comparison with other regions. Many protestors in recent demonstrations have carried signs and chanted slogans about economic hardships and other references to the difficulties of survival in an economy that has experienced 75% increases in the price of basic commodities. The prospect of dramatic increases in the costs of basic fuels stimulated a sense of both panic as well as hostility toward the Chinese and the Tibetan communists who supported them. Widespread corruption among government workers intensified popular resentment against authorities.

The emphasis on economic modernization, regardless of the intentions of the authorities, has often prompted negative responses among the Tibetans because of the issues and the side-effects of this process. Among the most relevant of these issues is the question of who will direct the programs and who will benefit from those

programs. The impression that such programs advance the Han population more than the Tibetans has become a source of discontent and has intensified resistance rather than acceptance of the changes. Even the more or less uncontroversial instances of modernization, such as improvements in the road network, have worked against the Chinese because they have supported improvements in communications critical of the "modernizers". Thus, improved communications have meant that dissident information has spread more quickly and into the previously isolated rural areas. While the Chinese suggest that they have brought "civilization" to a "barbarian" Tibet, the Tibetans regard the Chinese as little more than "outsiders" intent on colonizing their country.⁶ In short, there have been severe limits to the positive results to be achieved by such an endeavor if only because of the complex and interdependent relationship among economic, social, and political concerns.

Some of the most recent demonstrations in Tibet are clear evidence in support of the argument that modernization is a sensitive process which is very difficult to control and direct. The 1993 disturbances illustrate this phenomenon and show how the Chinese authorities have become captives of a process that they set in motion. The protests began as an economic dispute but the confrontation was quickly transformed into a political one. Demonstrators complained about the consequences of central policies in Tibet and eventually Tibetan flags were unfurled in Lhasa's main square. The flags, of course, drew further attention to Tibet's persistent independence movement and were a reminder of the persistence of the national idea among these remote people. The arrests of several flag wavers intensified the political drama, heightened nationalistic feelings, and eventually led the European Community to protest the Tibetan human rights situation.

The process of modernization undertaken by authorities in Beijing has had a dramatic impact on environmental conditions throughout the nation. Tibet in particular has felt this impact. Therefore, the ecological devastation of Tibet, an event which mirrors the destruction of the Soviet environment, especially that of non-Russian areas, under Moscow's direction, has become another important concern activating resistance to Chinese control. The clear-cutting of ancient forests, a common Chinese practice in Tibet, has been particularly destructive in that it has escalated the erosion of the region's topsoil. As a result of China's forestry policies, the once flourishing forests of Tibet have been devastated and a total of over 100,000 square miles

has been completely deforested. This figure, it is important to note, constitutes one-sixth of the Tibetan land mass.⁷

The mining of Tibetan mineral deposits, conducted with complete disregard of environmental requirements, has had an equally devastating ecological impact. Uranium mines have been an especially important source of environmental damage in Tibet. In 1993, there were numerous reports that for two decades China had been using Tibet as a dumping ground for nuclear wastes. One nuclear research site in particular, the Northwest Nuclear Weapons Research and Design Academy, has produced enormous amounts of nuclear wastes since the 1960s. Suspicions that authorities have failed to enforce safety standards for radioactive materials have been fueled by the extremely high incidence of cancer in locations near nuclear waste storage facilities. Because of indifference to environmental concerns, many Tibetans have suffered significant health problems after eating meat which had been exposed to radioactive contamination. Loose controls at nuclear sites have made it possible for ordinary citizens to enter these areas, even those in which nuclear tests were conducted in recent years, and remove items which they regard as useful. Consequently, parts from airplanes and tanks as well as artillery pieces have been taken away by people who innocently thought they could convert them to safe personal use. Local officials who don't understand the threat posed by nuclear residue have not been inclined to prevent such dangerous activities.⁸ In another action, completely unrelated to any form of economic modernization, China has used Tibet as a base for nuclear weapons as well as powerful non-nuclear weapons. With increasing frequency, Tibetans have objected to these actions not only because the Tibetans themselves are a peaceful people but also because they realize that such sites are having significant, negative ecological effects. Recently, activists have maintained that there were three such weapons sites with missiles targeted against India.⁹

The Scope of Dissent

Chinese officials have long argued that most Tibetans support their administration of Tibet and that dissident activities are confined to Lhasa and nearby localities. In recent years, however, it has become obvious that dissidents are active in many other communities. Reports of protests, leafletting activities, and demonstrations in support of the Dalai Lama in remote Tibetan towns indicate that unrest has spread well beyond the confines of Lhasa. An especially

significant demonstration took place in Shigatse, the site of a monastery where monks were responsible for choosing a new Panchen Lama, the second most important Tibetan religious figure, second only to the Dalai Lama. The purpose of that demonstration was a demand that the Panchen Lama be chosen only with the approval of the Dalai Lama, an arrangement that would have limited Chinese influence on the selection process thus barring selection of a pro-Chinese Tibetan.¹⁰ Activism, according to numerous reports, has also spread into Tibetan communities in Sichuan and other Tibetan communities outside Tibet. In addition, the ranks of dissidents have expanded considerably in terms of the types of people involved and it is no longer the case that only members of the Tibetan religious community are participants in this cause. Businessmen and teachers are increasingly appearing among the ranks of those arrested for their involvement in dissident activities. This confirms suggestions that demands for independence have spread into Tibet's professional and intellectual community and are no longer limited to the Buddhist faithful.¹¹

Official Responses to Unrest

Chinese authorities have used a variety of tactics in their effort to suppress the Tibetan independence movement. In many respects, the Chinese have been especially repressive in dealing with Tibet while in others they have been somewhat relaxed and generous. The military and political weapons that they have used emphasize the repressive features of Beijing's Tibetan policies while their social and economic initiatives have underscored their ability to appear generous in dealing with dissidents in this remote region. The repeated condemnations of "splittists" have been a key element in their political strategy. Party propagandists describe the "splittist philosophy" as a remnant of the class struggle. While they argue that the class struggle has been eradicated as the "major contradiction", officials suggest that it does persist in Tibet and that, in this region, the "class struggle will continue to exist for a long time ... and may worsen under certain conditions." Since the "domestic and international class struggles are always linked together," it is inevitable, they maintain, that the Tibetan class struggle has intensified with the increase in international attention to the Tibetan situation. Without outside interference, authorities argue, resistance to Tibet's incorporation into

China would have faded and eventually died. In 1993 Gyaincain Norbu denounced what he described as "evil plots of splittists at home and abroad to split the motherland" and suggested that they were the main threat to the security of Tibet.¹²

Beijing's political campaign has not been limited to repetitious denunciations of "splittism." Rather, it has been supplemented with a comprehensive educational campaign in Tibetan schools. As part of this effort at political socialization, party officials demand that public schools intensify those general elements of their curriculum which stress Tibet's role as part of the PRC. The objective of this program is to inculcate a belief that Tibet and China are part of one historical entity and to encourage students to reject the "hostile forces abroad" which are, with the aid of the Dalai Lama, attempting to interfere with China's internal affairs. Special booklets aimed at juvenile readers, classroom lectures, party and Communist Youth League activities, special report meetings, and seminars for all students are the instruments that are used for dissemination of officially sanctioned themes.¹³

Propaganda, of course, has not been restricted to the classrooms of Tibet but has been routinely extended to the general population. One of the best illustrations of this occurred in 1991 on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the "peaceful liberation of Tibet" by the Chinese. Elaborate and lavish plans for the ceremony commemorating this event were developed by the Chinese. A major propaganda theme developed for the official program was that "economic modernization" and social advancement were consequences of China's occupation of Tibet. While the New York City-based Tibet House organized numerous events during that same period to celebrate Tibetan culture and, by implication, to criticize Chinese actions in Tibet, the Chinese authorities claimed that Tibet's liberation was being celebrated in 28 different nations, glibly suggesting that the Tibet House events constituted acceptance of China's role in the region. In order to prevent disruption of the official events, Chinese authorities placed restrictions on travel to Lhasa and surrounding districts. Overseas Tibetans, likely to object to official themes, were excluded from visits to Tibet during this time.¹⁴ In addition to limiting contacts with overseas Tibetans who might limit the impact of official propaganda themes, authorities have also taken steps to ban the relay into Tibet of programs of the British Broadcasting Corporation and other agencies of the Western news media.¹⁵

Another element of the political campaign against Tibetan dissidents is the State Security Law. Passed in 1993, this law was, in the words of Li Hui, an official in Tibet's State Security Department, intended to "defend the political power of the people's democratic dictatorship and the socialist system" In practical terms of its application in Tibet, the 1993 State Security Law has been an instrument in Beijing's propaganda war against separatists. According to Li Hui's report, the law has had several effects on Tibetan security organs. First, the state security police have devoted a great deal of time to studying the law. Second, they have distributed "more than 2,000 wall charts and more than 20,000 booklets on the law." Third, they have worked to mobilize and "exploit public opinion" in support of this legislation through a variety of instruments, including such things as dramatic presentations on television. Finally, in a move that is particularly significant for what it tells us about "security" problems, they have focused and intensified "propaganda and education" efforts for specific groups. In his explanation of this component of their program, Li Hui complained that "leaders and functionaries at some units handling external relations have ... gone so far as to create obstructions ...", thus making it difficult to advance state security work. Because of this attitude, Li Hui explained, there had not been an adequate effort to enforce the State Security Law in certain regions. Enforcement was especially lax in "rural and frontier regions" where some "units and individuals" have completely ignored the demands of the new law.¹⁶

The specific purpose of the State Security Law was clarified with Li Hui's discussion of how the law related to Tibet's dissident movement. "Hostile forces" outside Tibet, he explained, have never stopped their efforts to undermine China's state security. Li Hui charges that, as part of their campaigns against China, external forces are manipulating the Tibetan separatist movement. As a result, members of the separatist movement are attempting to get political, economic, scientific, and military secrets which they can pass on to foreign powers. In addition to acting as agents for foreign intelligence services, the so-called "splittists" are, in Li Hui's view, linked with outside activists who hope to de-stabilize the Chinese political, economic, and social system. The State Security Law, he maintains, will help officials "expose the splittists" and will encourage average citizens to oppose their efforts to undermine the Chinese state system.¹⁷

Military instruments have played an important role in the

suppression of Tibetan dissent. By the time of the 1991 anniversary of Tibet's occupation, the combined strengths of security forces in the region – army, Public Security Bureau, and People's Armed Police – was more or less equal to the entire Tibetan population and in 1994, Lodi Gyara, president of the International Campaign for Tibet, reported that there are as many Chinese soldiers in Lhasa as there are Tibetans.¹⁸ One observer noted the irony of a situation in which decorations proclaiming the success of the Chinese mission in Tibet were being displayed as convoys of military vehicles moved into the city and city streets were being patrolled by heavily armed Chinese soldiers.¹⁹

A more sophisticated role for the Chinese military in dealing with Tibet was reflected in a development program of the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) which, over a period of five years, utilized civilian aircraft to transport Chinese troops to Tibet. Utilization of this airlift capability, something which was an important part of China's overall military reform program, gave the PLA the capability of rapid deployment to the region in times of crisis. It was also an important and useful innovation in that it protected the health of troops by eliminating an arduous overland journey which otherwise would have been made by trucks. For the PLA, this innovation served the dual purpose of promoting regional security while simultaneously advancing PLA military reforms. The intensity of the effort was demonstrated by the fact that in a period of four years over 400 airlifts were conducted. In order to support this dramatic increase in air traffic, the runway at Lhasa's Gonggar airport was expanded, making it the longest in China. This expansion also supported efforts to reduce Tibet's physical isolation. Another example of the use of the military to respond to official fears of unrest came in December, 1993, when for the first time, Tibetan military recruits were stationed outside Tibet. While authorities asserted that this measure was intended to reduce Tibet's isolation from the rest of China, it also served the purpose of taking young Tibetans out of their homeland during a time of unrest, thus removing them from the site of a conflict in which they might well have chosen to resist Beijing's control over Tibet. At the ceremony marking their departure, officials described service outside of their homeland as a great opportunity for the young men to increase their understanding of their country and to "broaden their horizons."²⁰

An examination of military promotions in the early 1990s indicates that central authorities are especially willing to recognize and reward

those who have effectively directed programs to suppress the independence movement. The Chinese, like so many others, have learned the utility of the promotion list as an instrument of policy. The promotion of Zhang Zhu, the political commissar of Tibet's Regional People's Armed Police Corps and the individual who directed the effort to suppress activists involved in the 1993 unrest, illustrates this. In recognition of his efforts, Zhang Zhu was promoted to the rank of major general and accorded the praise normally reserved for national heroes of the highest order. Zhang Zhu was hailed as a great military leader who was responsible for successfully countering the efforts of "anti-Chinese" forces determined to destroy China's state system and, in particular, preserving Tibet's stability.²¹

The history of counter-insurgency efforts demonstrates the importance of having military forces lay what is seen as a "constructive" rather than a purely repressive role. One of the best illustrations of the value of this tactic was the civic action programs of the Bolivian military in the late 1960s when that nation was threatened by an insurgency led by Che Guevarra. The Chinese military seems to be aware of this lesson and, perhaps as a result of this, its efforts to improve regional stability have not been confined to the purely repressive but have also included civic action programs designed to win popular support. One of their programs has included an effort to, as they put it, "protect the monasteries" by establishing patrols which presumably prevent vandalism aimed against monasteries. The Chinese military has, in addition, supported various local construction projects, often joining with carpenters and others at construction sites. Natural disasters have given the military another valuable opportunity to show that it plays a constructive role in Tibet and should, therefore, be regarded as an ally. One of the most mundane projects undertaken by the Chinese forces has been its best publicized effort. In the early 1990s, the military began a street maintenance program in which PLA officers and soldiers stationed in Lhasa would attempt to improve the appearance of the city's streets by keeping them swept and cleared of litter. In another important move, Chinese authorities began to recruit pro-Chinese Tibetans who could be trained as officers for the Chinese army. Hoping that their presence among the officers corps would improve the PLA's relationship with the locals, authorities elevated numerous pro-Chinese Tibetans into service as military officers. In 1993, authorities claimed that two-thirds of the PLA officers were ethnic Tibetans and that four former Tibetan serfs

were now serving as PLA major generals.²²

The effort to give Chinese efforts a greater Tibetan complexion has included a focus on the Buddhist religious community. As part of this endeavor military training teams were sent to many of Tibet's largest monasteries in the late 1980s. The objective of the training teams was to encourage monks to develop a greater sense of responsibility. As part of this, military authorities set out to modify the Buddhists scriptures in such a way as to include "national defense" as part of that religious doctrine. This tactic is an intensification of earlier efforts to create a Marxist variation of Buddhism and reflects a more sophisticated view of how to deal with the persistence of the Buddhist faith in Tibet.

The cultivation of Tibetan religious leaders is another important part of official efforts to make their programs more palatable to the local populace. The official objective is to identify local religious figures who might, in some way, become advocates of Beijing's policies in Tibet. From time to time, buddhas and lamas who are members of the Chinese Buddhist Association have produced declarations of Chinese responsibility for whatever progress has taken place in Tibet over the past four decades. At the same time, spokesmen for the Chinese Buddhist Association have argued that "reactionary forces abroad" are involved in a campaign to sever Tibet from the Chinese socialist family of which it is, they claim, a historic component.

Chinese efforts to enlist elements of the Buddhist religious community to support Beijing's Tibetan policies have not been limited to these relatively restrained measures. In an effort to ensure that those who do not respond to official efforts to support Chinese policy, Tibetan officials are asking that the Chinese Communist Party "closely monitor Tibetan monasteries and places of worship." Chen Kuiyuan, first secretary of the Tibetan Communist Party, said that such an action was necessary because "criminals" had been using religion as a cover for illegal activities. In Chen's view, a campaign to disrupt the "historic unity" of the Chinese people, with China including Tibet, was being mounted by both domestic and foreign separatist forces. An important vehicle for this campaign, according to Chen, is Buddhist religious organizations. Not surprisingly, Chinese officials have underscored this view with restrictions on the nation's religious orders. Those restrictions were made public late in 1993 with the announcement of limits on the number of monks and nuns who could be granted admission into the Buddhist order. As

justification for these limits, the leader of one of Tibet's monasteries, the Dajin Monastery, declared that monasteries in Tibet were simply too poor to support a large number of monks and nuns. Many monks, he explained, were required to live on alms from worshippers because the monastery didn't have sufficient funds to support them. The restrictions, therefore, were justified as a measure that would help make the monasteries self-supporting institutions. An additional justification for the restrictions, the leader insisted, was that having fewer members in the order would probably improve the quality of the membership and keep out individuals such as those politically activist nuns and monks who have supported Tibet's independence movement. In addition to limits on membership in the order, Tibetan officials instituted a series of new regulations to limit the activities of monks and nuns. One of the most significant regulations was the prohibition on monks entering tea houses, restaurants and other places where political activists gather. Under the regulations, monks have to obtain permission in order to be away from the monastery for a period of more than two weeks. Monks who violate this regulation are subject to dismissal from the order and face the prospect of other legal actions against them. Increased physical security around many of Tibet's monasteries is another indication of a determination to monitor the activities of the religious community. In 1994, officials established a network of blockade and military checkpoints on the roads to monasteries in the vicinity of Lhasa. In many cases, military installations have been established next to or within sight of monasteries.²³ Religious orders associated with political activism have been subjected to especially severe measures, a fact that was illustrated at the Garu nunnery, an institution located a few miles north of Lhasa, in 1993. At the Garu nunnery, a political "re-education" unit was instituted in an effort to correct what officials saw as the "political immaturity" of the members of the order. The Garu nunnery is one of Tibet's largest and has a long record of support for Tibet's independence movement. In recent crackdowns, many nuns were imprisoned because of their political activism. Officials have indicated that if the activism of the nuns continues, the nunnery may be subjected to the ultimate sanction of a complete shutdown.²⁴

Repressive measures taken against Tibet's religious institutions have been accompanied by a general increase in official efforts to suppress religious activities in China. Members of the Christian underground, estimated by 1993 to have reached 60 or 70 million, have increasingly been detained, fined, and often tortured. Fines for

organizing "illegal" religious meetings, generally imposed by Public Security officials in rural areas, range from as little as \$67 to as much as \$938. Because permits for such meetings are rarely granted, all religious services are subject to severe financial penalties. Since the fines are rarely accompanied by any documentation, they amount to little more than official robbery for which no appeals can be made to higher authorities. In some provinces, Christians' livestock, crops, and even furniture are confiscated. Uncooperative Christians are often tortured while many have simply disappeared.²⁵

In view of the inconsistent record of outright repression as a weapon against especially determined ethnic groups, the Chinese have offered modernization as an alternative to nationalism. Consequently, authorities recognize that their security interests are better served by successful economic programs. With the demonstrated ability of Tibet's independence movement to draw upon economic grievances as well as political and social concerns, Chinese authorities obviously recognize the importance of developing sound economic policies for the region. The 1993 riots in Lhasa demonstrated the volatility of this combination of motivations as popular protests against price increases on essential commodities led to several days of demonstrations against Chinese rule. Tibetan officials have been candid in admitting that economic conditions in Tibet have been poor and that the per capita income of its population is well below China's national average. Speaking at the 7th National People's Congress, Chen Kuiyuan, secretary of Tibet's regional party committee, admitted that Tibet's industrial and agricultural rates were a source of economic difficulty. Tibet's economic reforms, Chen Kuiyuan argued, would enhance the economic standing for all minority areas and, in so doing, would strengthen China's national unity.²⁶

Against the background of reform policies designed to improve the standards of living of PRC citizens, authorities have taken steps to initiate programs that will also improve the material benefits enjoyed by Tibetans. Each year, Beijing dismisses Tibetan taxes due the central government and extends anywhere from \$200 million to \$300 million in economic subsidies. According to recent figures, only 3,282 Tibetan families pay taxes. In fact, Tibetans are the only Chinese ethnic group which benefits from such generous taxation policies and Chinese officials consistently justify these measures as necessary to promote Tibet's economic and commercial development. In addition to these generous tax policies, Chinese officials have been boasting that the "market economy", another instrument for promo-

tion of greater material benefits, was being established in Tibet. Tibet's "market economy" features more important preferential taxing policies as well as program extending loans for entrepreneurial projects and measures which would allow individuals to lease land. In connection with the programs of this "market economy", authorities have approved numerous joint projects between Tibetan enterprises and enterprises in cities elsewhere in China. As a tribute to the emergence of a new entrepreneurial class, the number of individual businessmen in Lhasa increased dramatically. In 1980, there were only five hundred Tibetan private commercial endeavors. By 1994, this number had risen to 14,000, most of which are, authorities insist, operated by local ethnic Tibetans. According to official statistics, there are 40,487 individual households involved in some aspect of private industrial and commercial ventures and 29,483 of them are Tibetans. In 1994, officials opened a securities exchange operation in Lhasa as part of an effort to encourage commercial growth.²⁷

The success of Chinese economic policies, according to Beijing, is seen not only in the emergence of a "market economy", but is also demonstrated by increases in Tibet's gross domestic output. GDP for 1993, they insist, had risen above the 1992 GDP figure by 8.1%. Even agriculture, that most difficult segment of any nation's economy, has, according to authorities, improved under the force of Beijing's policies. As evidence, they cite what they describe as six consecutive years of increasingly abundant harvests. Extensive capital projects in energy, transportation, and telecommunication have been an important feature of central policies for Tibet. Under plans which were announced in 1994, all of southwest China, including Tibet, is to become a major source of hydroelectric power for the Chinese nation.²⁸ This plan, not only of great significance for the PRC's national economy, will also do much to intensify the development of Tibet. Another component of the developmental plan for Tibet has been an important upgrading of the region's highways. By 1994, the Heihe-Gamdo Highway was complete and important renovations were being undertaken on sections of the China-Nepal Highway as well as the road networks leading into Qinghai Province and into Sichuan.²⁹ Improvements in the road network of this isolated region are essential for improving tourism and foreign trade, both of which are crucial for the development of south-west China. An emphasis on foreign trade, in particular, has emerged as an economic mainstay for the region and rose by 55% in 1993. The stress on tourism, some-

what restrained because of Chinese concern over who might actually visit Tibet, has led to an increase in the number of tourists coming into Lhasa. In 1994, 26,000 foreign tourists visited Tibet, an especially significant figure because in the recent past most foreigners had been barred from the area. Yet, there are limits to the Tibetan reform process and, while most economic specialists recognize that the region's greatest potential might lie in the development of a tourist industry which would attract considerable amounts of hard currency, the Chinese authorities refuse to make concessions on this point. From the viewpoint of communist authorities, such a developmental strategy was, because of the intensification of political dissidence the region, regarded as far too risky.³⁰

Following the violence of 1988 and 1989, authorities recognized that the difficult relationship between Tibetans and Chinese might be eased through simple and obvious measures such as better communications. In order to facilitate this, Hu Jintao, after arriving in Tibet in January, 1989 to become head of the Tibetan Communist Party, required Chinese cadres under the age of 45 to take a course in the Tibetan language. Many governmental departments began to devote half a day each week for language instruction in the office.³¹

Where the more sophisticated or specialized responses to unrest have fallen short of their goals, Chinese authorities have not hesitated to supplement them with the direct and often brutal methods most commonly associated with dictatorships. By 1994, it was known that Lhasa alone had six prisons which, at any time, held hundred of political prisoners. According to human rights analysts, from 1993 to 1994, the number of political prisoners held in Lhasa's six prison camps rose by 30%. Many of the prisoners were held incommunicado and were often subjected to endless interrogations and beatings. Elsewhere in Tibet, while the exact number of regional prisons and labor camps is unknown, it is widely believed that it is a system capable of holding large numbers of dissidents. There have been reports that in recent years thousands of Tibetans have died in the notorious Xining labor complex in Qinghai province, a huge region which was once part of Tibet and is now believed to hold perhaps ten million Chinese prisoners.³² Official designation of a variety of seemingly harmless activities, such as the possession of a book by the Dalai Lama or the display of a Tibetan flag, as criminal offenses and a large network of informers guarantee that this penal system is always full and that tens of thousands of Tibetans live in fear.³³ The highest communist officials of Tibet are determined to maintain such

repressive measures, a commitment that was underscored in 1993 by the Communist Party's call for a further crackdown on so-called "separatists." Charging that some party cadres speak as though they are loyal supporters of the party's policies in Tibet while they are, in fact, secret supporters of the Dalai Lama, the leadership has called for a purge of suspected cadres. In moves associated with this declaration, a large number of accused "separatists" were sentenced to prison terms averaging seven and one-half years. In addition, the mayor of Lhasa, who had consistently supported party policies on the Tibetan dissidents, was removed from his position because the leadership felt that his actions against demonstrators were reserved while two pro-independence demonstrators were executed.³⁴

Tibet as a Contemporary International Issue

As was noted previously, Tibet has enjoyed inconsistent success in attracting other nations to join it in resisting its incorporation into China. The British and U.S. historical record illustrates the difficulties inherent in enlisting such support. Because both nations have sought good relations with the Chinese, they have avoided recognition of Tibetan independence, fearing that such an action would be seen as an effort to detach Tibet from China. British and American commercial interests have often been the motivations of a policy that seemed to ignore Tibetan protests.³⁵

Yet, in spite of this historical record of reluctance, the Tibetan issue has made its way onto the international agenda, especially in recent years. Apparently contained since the end of China's self-imposed isolation in the early 1970s, it re-emerged as an international issue in the post-communist era. As Tibetan resistance again assumed an active, militant tone, the attention of world governments was increasingly focused upon Tibet's plight. The Dalai Lama, continually traveling around the world visiting governmental leaders and opinion-makers, served as a constant reminder of an atrocity of the 1950s and informed all who would listen that the consequences of the Chinese invasion of Tibet were still being felt with dramatic and tragic impact.

In April, 1991, the Dalai Lama enjoyed one of his most important diplomatic and political triumphs when he met with the President of the United States. President George Bush, in meeting with the Dalai Lama, combined both Tibetan and U.S. interests by, firstly, calling attention to shortcomings in China's human rights policy and, secondly, coupling criticisms of Chinese human rights violations with

a denunciation of China's arms sales policy, a policy which was associated with the promotion of instability in regions important to American interests. Shortly after meeting with President Bush, the Dalai Lama also met with members of the U.S. Congress who joined in denouncing China's continued occupation of Tibet. A Congressional resolution formalized the United States' opposition to China's role in Tibet and attempted to pressure Beijing to modify its behavior in that region. U.S. interest in the Tibetan situation was reflected in its decision in 1991 to change immigration policy in order to allow 1,000 Tibetans, classified as refugees, to enter the United States. In the previous twenty years, only 500 Tibetans had entered the U.S. and no American administration had been willing to extend refugee status to displaced Tibetans.³⁶

The change of administrations in the United States did not inhibit the American concern for the Tibetan situation. In April, 1994, the Dalai Lama met with President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore for a discussion of China's violations of religious and cultural rights in Tibet. Although the administration did eventually renew its most favored nation trade relationship with China, administration spokesmen declared that China's human rights record, especially as it related to Tibet, was one of the factors taken into account in making a decision on MFN renewal.³⁷ Just prior to a meeting between the U.S. Secretary of State and the Chinese Foreign Minister, Chinese authorities, obviously aware of U.S. and Western concern over its Tibetan human rights record, released two Tibetan dissidents who had been detained though not yet charged with any specific offenses.³⁸ In spite of renewing most favored nation trade status with China, the U.S. government continued to support many of the concerns of the Tibetan resistance movement. In 1994, the U.S. Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, raised an important concern for Tibetans when he asked the Chinese government to provide information about 106 people believed to be imprisoned in Tibet because of religious or political views.³⁹ It is, however, important to note that while the United States supports protection of human rights and argues that the Tibetans have the right to enjoy a distinct cultural identity, it does recognize Tibet as being, in a political sense, part of China. The administration's concern for protecting human rights in Tibet was reflected in a specific demand that Chinese officials agree to open a dialogue with the Dalai Lama.⁴⁰ The position of the U.S. Congress is somewhat more emphatic. Evidence of the Congressional attitude appeared in the

1994 foreign relations authorization bill which described Tibet as an "occupied sovereign country".⁴¹

Unrest in Tibet has routinely motivated foreign criticism of China's human rights record and forced Chinese authorities to respond in a manner that has made the Tibetan issue more and more of an international issue. When thousands of Tibetans protested against price increases in the spring of 1993, Chinese authorities responded by suggesting that foreign intervention rather than local conditions had caused the disturbances. While the Chinese Foreign Ministry insisted that the incident was a purely "internal" matter, *Ta Kung Pau*, a Beijing-owned newspaper published in Hong Kong, insisting that local residents were pleased by official suppression of the protests, argued that foreign "secret agents", working with local provocateurs, had sparked the riots. According to the paper, "secret agents" entered Tibet as tourists and, taking advantage of local problems, encouraged residents to oppose Beijing's authority. The "secret agents", according to *Ta Kung Pao*, were working in conjunction with "anti-Chinese forces" and "pro-Dalai Lama separatists", evidently in an effort to embarrass the Chinese government as the United States was considering renewal of most-favors-nation trade status for China.⁴² In 1994, Chinese authorities arrested and deported two American tourists who had been accused of distributing tapes of the Dalai Lama's teachings.⁴³

While the immediate post-Maoist era brought some modest improvements in the Tibetan situation, it did little to alter the difficult circumstances of Tibet's population. However, the years since 1989, a period that we generally describe as the post-communist era, have brought more dramatic and fundamental changes. These changes have involved intensification of popular resistance to continued Chinese occupation of Tibet as well as other minority areas such as Xinjiang Province. For the Tibetans and other minorities, the message of the breakup of the Soviet Union was that national identities can endure in spite of decades of repressive colonial policies. Consequently, the Tibetan national idea is being reasserted today by people who, in most cases, have known only Chinese control. The activism of this younger generation of Tibetans, like the struggles of the millions of Soviet citizens who resisted Moscow's control, is further evidence of the resiliency of nationalism as an important political force in the latter twentieth century.

Notes

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- ² *Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report - China*, (FBIS) 1 February 1993, p. 56.
- ³ Nicholas D. Kristof, "In Corner of Tibet, Chinese Now Predominate", *The New York Times*, 9 September, 1991, p. A6.
- ⁴ *FBIS-China*, 24 May, 1993, p. 72; Paul Ingram, "The Tragedy of Tibet", *Contemporary Review*, September, 1992, p. 124; and Nicholas D. Kristof, "To Beijing's Surprise, the Tibetans are Still Restive", *The New York Times*, 7 October 1990, p. A4.
- ⁵ *Facts on File*, Vol. 53, No. 2741, 10 June 1993, p. 436.
- ⁶ John Bray, "China and Tibet: An End to Empire?", *The World Today*, December, 1990, pp. 221-223.
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- ⁸ Sheryl WuDunn, "Nuclear Dump Site Reported in Tibet", *The New York Times*, 19 April 1993, p. A18.
- ⁹ *Facts on File*, Vol. 53, No. 2738, 20 May 1993, p. 365.
- ¹⁰ Nicholas D. Kristof, "Protests in Tibet Reported on the Rise", *The New York Times*, 21 June 1992.
- ¹¹ *South China Morning Post*, 9 April 1990, p. 10.
- ¹² *Xizang Ribao* (Lhasa), 15 November 1993, p. 3.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 11 October 1993, p. 2.
- ¹⁴ Nancy Nash, "Forced Celebrations", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 25 April 1991, pp. 18-19.
- ¹⁵ *Foreign Broadcast Information Service: Daily Reports - China*, 10 March 1994, p. 89.
- ¹⁶ *Xizang Ribao* (Lhasa), 22 February 1994, p. 1.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ¹⁸ *Eastern Express* (Hong Kong), 5 March 1994, p. 6.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- ²⁰ *Jane's Defense Weekly*, 19 February 1994, p. 27, and *FBIS-China*, 25 January 1994, p. 90.
- ²¹ *FBIS-China*, 4 January 1994, p. 61.
- ²² *FBIS-China*, 13 January 1993, p. 45.
- ²³ *Eastern Express* (Hong Kong), 5 March 1994, p. 6.
- ²⁴ *South China Morning Post*, 22 July 1993, p. 10, and *FBIS-China*, 2 December 1993, p. 53.
- ²⁵ *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), 24 December 1993, p. 7.
- ²⁶ *Kyodo* (Tokyo), 24 June 1993, p. 2.
- ²⁷ *Xizang Ribao* (Lhasa), 4 February 1994, p. 1.
- ²⁸ *Foreign Broadcast Information Service - Daily Report, China*, 21 March 1994, p. 71.

- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 24 March 1994, p. 75.
- ³⁰ *FBIS-China*, 25 January 1994, p. 90.
- ³¹ *FBIS Daily Report* (China), 7 March 1989, p. 48.
- ³² Paul Ingram, "The Tragedy of Tibet", *Contemporary Review*, September, 1992, p. 122, and *Eastern Express* (Hong Kong), 5 March 1994, p. 6.
- ³³ Melissa Mathison, "Where is Gendun Rinchen?", *The New York Times*, 2 October 1993, p. A10.
- ³⁴ Nicholas Kristof, "Communist Party Chief Calls for a Purge in Tibet", *The New York Times*, 14 February 1993, p. 11.
- ³⁵ DeGlopper, p. 87.
- ³⁶ *Congressional Quarterly*, 20 April 1991, p. 1002, and *The New York Times*, 31 August 1991, p. A14.
- ³⁷ *The New York Times*, 30 April 1994.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, 14 January 1994.
- ³⁹ *Foreign Broadcast Information Service - Daily Reports, China*, 17 March 1994, p. 4.
- ⁴⁰ *The New York Times*, 28 April 1994, p. A10.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 5 May 1994.
- ⁴² "China: Beijing Plays Down Tibet Riot, Blames Foreign Agents", *FBIS Trends*, 2 June 1993, pp. 24-25.
- ⁴³ *Tibet Press Watch*, Vol. VI, August-September, 1994, p. 1.

CHAPTER 7

Options for Resolution of the Tibetan Crisis

Students of international relations are accustomed to thinking in terms of how problems can be resolved. The Tibetan crisis, however, with its periodic explosions, has existed since the Chinese occupation of the region in 1950 and, consequently, has become almost routine. International problems viewed as routine are, all too often, accepted as part of the natural order and simply ignored by those speculating about a resolution of those problems. It is, therefore, important to summarize the nature of the current situation and to consider various options by which the Tibetan problem might be resolved and to evaluate those options in terms of their feasibility.

It is possible to identify a series of steps that have been taken by the Chinese authorities in an effort to mold Tibet into Beijing's desired image. Most of these measures are not unique to the Tibetan situation and can be observed in many regions of the world in which powerful forces are attempting to subdue nationalist aspirations. In 1993, A. M. Rosenthal, writing in *The New York Times*, prepared what he referred to as a "guide for ethnic cleansers" which summarized many of the official measures being taken in places such as Tibet and Yugoslavia. First, authorities attempt to remove as much of the indigenous population as possible without destroying the entire native infrastructure. The plan is that, eventually, it will be completely replaced but that such an action is not possible immediately. Second, authorities will set out to remove native civic leaders and replace them with individuals loyal to the dominant power. Third, it is necessary to destroy most places of worship and arrest native religious leaders. Fourth, the "cleansing" power will ban the teaching of the local languages and bring in teachers who will support the complete restructuring of society. Those youngsters who represent the target region's best and brightest will be sent to schools in the "cleansing" nation where they will be transformed into supporters and agents of that power. This was one of the steps taken by the Soviet Union shortly after it invaded Afghanistan and Chinese authorities have practiced this for years in Tibet. Fifth, there must be a strict

regime of political repression and authorities will employ imprisonment and physical punishment in order to enforce political controls. Finally, there will be a population transfer in which citizens of the "cleansing" power will permanently relocate in the target nation.¹2 Russians, of course, practiced this throughout the non-Russian regions of the USSR and the Chinese are intensifying this effort in Tibet. City planning maps for Lhasa in the year 2000 indicate that the traditional Tibetan districts will be severely reduced, being limited to little more than the Jokhang and Potala palaces which are designated as cultural and tourist sites.²

These steps give us a picture of the Tibetan situation. The question to be asked is whether or not this situation constitutes what we must regard as a crisis? A crisis is, according to the traditional definition, a problem which requires resolution within a short period of time. The best illustration of an international crisis has been the Cuban missile crisis of October, 1962. The consequences of an unacceptable situation drove decision-makers toward a resolution of this crisis within a matter of days. The situation in Tibet is very different from that in Cuba in 1962. Most importantly, it is not a military crisis yet is a more or less typical example of low intensity conflict and is a situation which could, under certain circumstances, expand in terms of violence if not territory.

The Tibetan unrest is a reminder of the continuing resiliency of nationalism in the contemporary world. The activism of the Tibetan resistance is consistent with the new nationalisms of the post-communist world. That nationalism has demonstrated a potential for violence, as in Yugoslavia. Moreover, studies of the causes of war typically make note of the fact that a continuing repression of legitimate popular aspirations is something which promotes violence. The repression of Tibet must, therefore, be regarded as a threat to peace, even if it is localized. In short, Tibet represents a problem which has assumed the dimensions of a crisis on numerous occasions. The violent outbursts of 1988, 1989, 1990, 1992, and 1993 indicate that the Tibetan problem is becoming an acute situation that routinely threatens to become violent. Under these circumstances, it is appropriate to view it as a crisis.

Is there a need for this problem to be resolved? Can the status quo endure indefinitely? As it stands, it represents a challenge to Beijing's authority and, under certain circumstances, could threaten China's stability. From time to time, it becomes an important item on the agenda of the world community and, as such, forces Chinese

authorities into a more isolationist posture.

The first option to be considered is the complete suppression of Tibet's independence movement. The suppression of Tibetan nationalism and the full assimilation of Tibet into China is the option pursued by Chinese authorities. Certain conditions are necessary to support this option. The first is international acceptance of this situation. A second condition is political and military resolve by Beijing and a willingness to accept the sanctions and protests that might follow as a result of the activities of overseas Tibetans. An important condition likely to be associated with this option is the continuation of discrimination against Tibetans in their own homeland. As a result of discriminatory policies, Chinese enjoy a significant advantage over Tibetans in getting housing, in access to higher education, and in hiring for the more desirable jobs. For the most part, Tibetans are forced into unskilled jobs and menial labor and are limited in their acquisition of technological skills. Even health care and provision of food reflect official discrimination in favor of the Chinese. For option one to work, Tibetans must be will to accept policies which force them into inferior positions relative to the Chinese newcomers.

A second option is autonomy within China. This is the position that has long been advocated by the Dalai Lama. Rejecting militants' calls for violence against the Chinese, the Dalai Lama has called for extensive Tibetan autonomy within China. Under his plan, Tibetans would have the right to select their own government but Chinese authorities would continue to control foreign relations and national defense. Certain conditions are necessary to support this option. The first is that Beijing must be willing to grant specific freedoms to Tibet. This would include broader rights for Tibetans and an end to cultural repressions. It also requires that the Tibetan leadership, including the Dalai Lama, must be willing to compromise. By 1994, the prospects for this option had, according to the Dalai Lama, declined because of pressure from Tibetans who had grown weary of efforts to negotiate with Beijing over this matter. These pressures, the Dalai Lama insisted, were forcing him to reconsider his policies toward the Chinese government and, perhaps, to seek international support for an independent Tibet.³

A third option is complete independence for Tibet. Many in the overseas Tibetan community support the option of full Tibetan independence and reject the more moderate position generally taken by the Dalai Lama. Pursuit of this option raises some important

questions. The first is: could Tibet survive as an independent state? The easiest response to this question is the argument that there is historical justification for Tibetan independence. It is also important to recognize that there are other independent nations comparable to Tibet in terms of both economic and political resources. Undoubtedly, Tibet's economic self-sufficiency could be difficult to attain but, in this respect, it would not be alone. Certain conditions are necessary to support this option. The first is international support for independence. That support might need to take the form of a willingness on the part of other nations to grant concessions to China in return for this action. Another necessary condition for achievement of this option is a weakened China which could feel compelled to make such an important concession in return for needed benefits from wealthy Western supported of Tibetan independence. Militant Tibetan students, such as those who have often demonstrated in New Delhi, with increasing frequency are calling for guerrilla warfare as a way of achieving this objective. While the prospects for such an endeavor may at first glance appear poor, the experience of the Soviets in Afghanistan indicates that a powerful force can be defeated if the terrain and the adversary pose the necessary difficulties. The Tibetan terrain is certainly a formidable obstacle for any outside military hoping to subdue Tibet. A serious Tibetan insurgency might well be a decisive factor in promoting Chinese acceptance of this option. However, the non-violent orientation of the Tibetans themselves is very different from that of the Afghans who faced the Soviet Army and works against the prospects of an insurgency.

Another important question associated with the third option is whether or not China could survive. This question is relevant not because Tibet by itself is so important to China but because the Chinese claim upon Tibet is similar to the claims which also justify Chinese control over Inner Mongolia, Manchuria, and Xinjiang (East Turkestan). If you consider, therefore, all four of these regions and calculate the consequences of their collective loss from China, there emerges a picture of a China which would not be like the present nation. Many of the minority areas have rich and important natural resources, resources that are especially valuable to a China that has embarked on an ambitious course of domestic reforms. Not only do the collective minority areas possess significant amounts of oil and minerals, they also produce an estimated 80% of China's milk and meat and have equal amounts of the nation's livestock. Taking away all of these regions would lead to a dramatic reduction in the size of

the Chinese nation. In fact, it would be less than half its present size and would lose its borders with India, Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Korea. Its border with the former Soviet Union would be reduced to a mere fraction of what it is today.⁴ The loss of territory, prestige, and productive capacity associated with such an event might well leave China incapable of enduring as a state.

It is, of course, possible that the Tibetan problem will not be resolved, that the Tibetans will continue to resist assimilation, and that Chinese authorities will be unable to suppress the national idea that endures in the minds of so many Tibetans. This situation has existed for forty years without resolution and, perhaps, it will exist for yet another forty years. The world offers countless instances of such difficult confrontations, many of which have been far more costly than this one. If an impasse is what the future holds for Tibet, those of us who are students of international relations will continue to examine the struggle of these people who have, against overwhelming odds, been able to endure and to preserve their belief in their nationhood. While our speculations about this tragic problem will do little to ease the burden of the participants in the clash of interests, they will certainly enrich our understanding of culture, ethnicity, religion, and the other forces which drive the political process as we approach the next century.

Notes

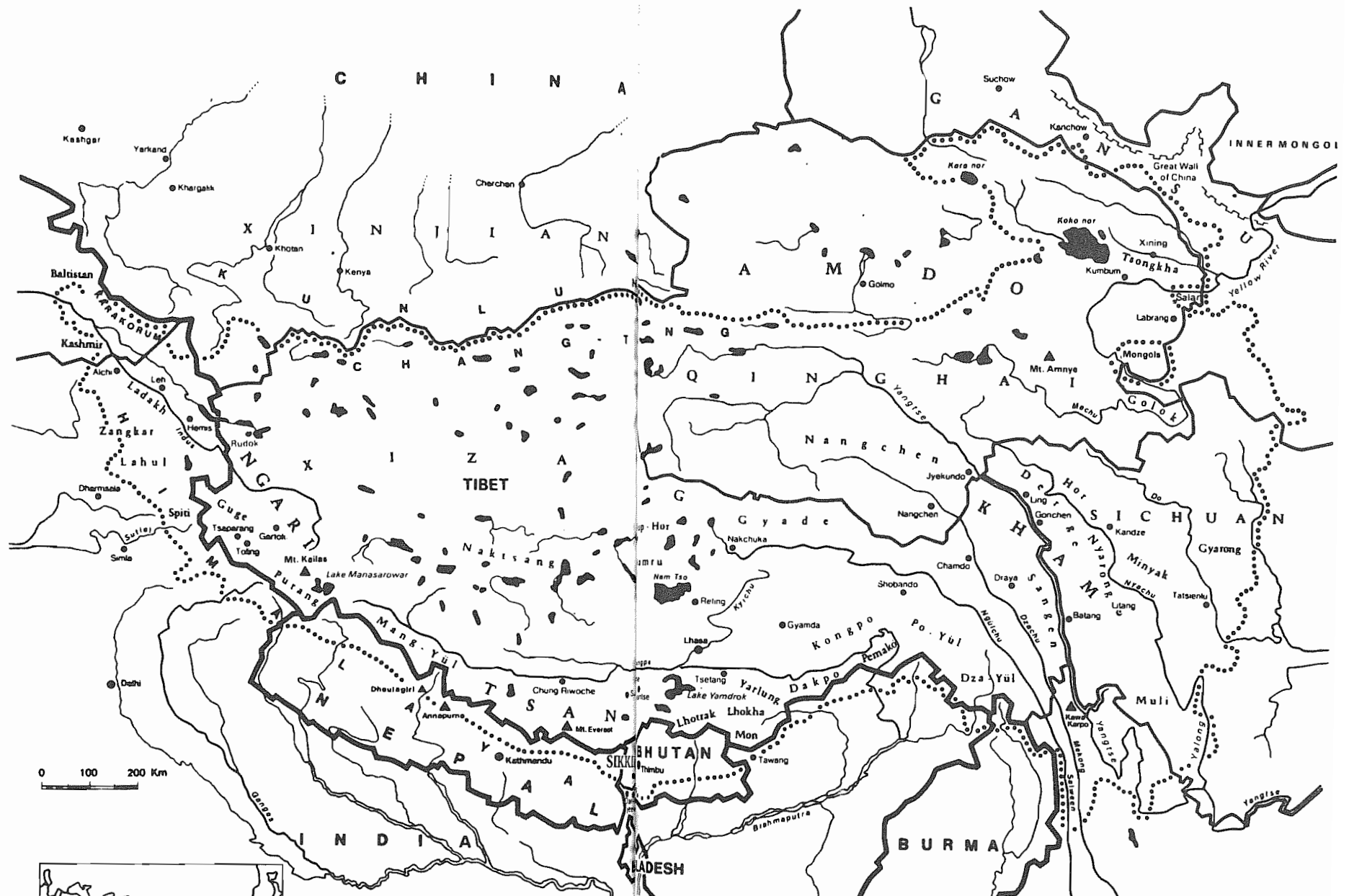
¹ A. M. Rosenthal, "Guide for Cleansers", *The New York Times*, 27 April 1993, p. A21.

² *Eastern Express* (Hong Kong), 5 March 1994, p. 6.

³ *The New York Times*, 11 March 1994.

⁴ Paul Ingram, "The Tragedy of Tibet", *Contemporary Review*, September, 1992, p. 122.

MAP OF TIBET



0 100 200 Km



TIBET

- Extent of the Tibetan people
- National borders
- Province borders

- INDIA States
- TSANG Traditional Tibetan provinces
- QINGHAI Chinese provinces

- Indus Rivers
- Lakes
- ▲ Annapurna Mountains

APPENDIX

Extract from Congressional Resolution

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
100TH Congress, 1st Session, H. Con. Res 191

Whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet is a spiritual leader to millions of Buddhists throughout the world, including many in the United States:

Whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama has persistently promoted justice, offered hope to the oppressed, and upheld the rights and dignity of all men and women regardless of faith, nationality, or political views;

Whereas his Holiness The Dalai Lama is a world leader who has admirably and with dedication advanced the course of regional and world peace through adherence to the doctrine of nonviolence;

Whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama has, through his example, his teachings, and his travels, furthered mutual understanding, respect, and unity among nations and individuals; and

Whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama will be visiting the United States in September 1987: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress welcomes His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet on the occasion of his visit to the United States, commends him for furthering the just and honorable causes that he has championed, and offers him the greetings and good wishes of the people of the United States.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD - SENATE
S 13530 October 6, 1987

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN TIBET BY THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

(a) FINDINGS.- The Congress finds that-

(1) on October 1st, 1987, Chinese police in Lhasa fired upon several thousand unarmed Tibetan demonstrators, which included hundreds of women, children, and Tibetan Buddhist monks, killing at least six and wounding many others;

(2) on September 27, 1987, a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa calling for Tibetan independence and the restoration of human rights in Tibet, which was led by hundreds of Tibetan monks, was violently broken up by Chinese authorities and twenty-seven Tibetan Buddhist monks were arrested;

(3) in the wake of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's five point peace plan, which was presented to the U.S. Congress during his visit to Washington at the invitation of Congress on September 24, 1987, Chinese authorities in Tibet staged, on September 24, 1987, a mass political rally at which three Tibetans were given death sentences, two of whom were executed immediately;

(4) on September 22, 1987, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the House Human Rights Caucus signed a letter to His Excellency Zhao Ziyang, the Prime minister of China, expressing their "grave concern with the present situation in Tibet and welcome(d) His Holiness the Dalai Lama's (five point) proposal as a historic step towards resolving the important questions of Tibet and alleviating the suffering of the Tibetan people...(and) express(ing) their full support for his proposal."

(5) beginning October 7, 1950, the People's Republic of China invaded and occupied Tibet, imposed military rule, and continues to exercise dominion over the Tibetan people through the presence of a large occupation force;

(6) over one million Tibetans perished in 1959 to 1979 as a direct result of the political instability, executions, imprisonment, and widescale famine engendered by the occupation of Tibet by the People's Republic of China;

(7) after the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950, particularly during the ravages of China's Cultural Revolution, over 6,000 monasteries, the repositories of 1,300 years of Tibet's ancient civilization, have been destroyed and their irreplaceable legacy of art and literature either stolen or removed from Tibet;

(8) Tibet's vast mineral, forest, and animal reserves are being systematically exploited by the People's Republic of China, with limited benefit accruing to the Tibetan people;

(9) Tibet's economy and education, health and human services remain far below those of the People's Republic of China as a whole;

(10) the People's Republic of China has undertaken a massive population transfer, entailing the immigration of millions of Chinese onto the Tibetan plateau in an apparent effort to make the Tibetan people a minority in their own

homeland;

(11) the arrest and execution of Tibetan political and religious prisoners continues with thousands of Tibetans currently interred in labor camps;

(12) Tibet, a nation dedicated to the principles of mutual coexistence for a millennia, has been militarized by the Chinese;

(13) His Holiness the Dalai Lama, spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people, in conjunction with the 100,000 refugees forced into exile with him, has worked tirelessly for almost thirty years to secure peace and religious freedom in Tibet;

(14) since 1959, India has generously provided refuge and resources for Tibetan exiles so that they may maintain their unique culture and religion in the hope of returning to their homeland;

(15) the People's Republic of China continues to ignore United Nations General Assembly resolutions 1353, 1723, and 2079 calling for a cessation of human rights violations in Tibet and for implementation of the right of the Tibetan people to self-determination;

(16) 91 Members of the Congress signed a letter to President Li Xiannian of the People's Republic of China on July 24, 1985, expressing support for direct talks between Beijing and representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-exile, and urging the Government of the People's Republic of China "to grant the very reasonable and justified aspirations of His holiness the Dalai Lama and his people every consideration," and

(17) there has been no evidence of any such consideration being granted by the Government of the People's Republic of China

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICIES-It is the sense of the Congress that-

(1) the United States should make the treatment of the Tibetan people an important factor in its conduct of relations with the People's Republic of China;

(2) the President should meet with his Holiness the Dalai Lama to express United States support for his efforts for world peace and particularly his efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Tibetan problem;

(3) the United States should urge the Government of the People's Republic of China to actively reciprocate the Dalai Lama's efforts to establish a constructive dialogue over the future status of Tibet;

(4) the United States, through the Secretary of State-

(a) should address and call attention to the rights of the Tibetan people, as well as other non-Chinese within the People's Republic of China as the Uighurs of Eastern Turkestan (Sinkiang), the Mongolians of Inner Mongolia, and the Manchus of Manchuria, and

(b) should support efforts to maintain Tibet's identity and preserve Tibetan culture and religion, both inside Tibet and among those in exile;

(5) congressional delegations should visit Tibet (including the areas of Kham and Amdo) and the Tibetans in exile in order to witness the progress being made and the problems faced; and

(6) the President should instruct the United States Ambassadors to the People's Republic of China and India to work closely with the Tibetan people to find areas in which the United States Government and people can be helpful.

(c) Any notification submitted to the Congress pursuant to the Arms Export Control Act with respect to any sale, licensed export, or other transfer of any defense articles or defense services to the People's Republic of China shall be accompanied by a Presidential determination that the Government of the People's Republic of China is acting in good faith and in a timely manner to resolve human rights issues in Tibet.

(d) Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the Congress of the human rights situation in Tibet and the transfer of millions of Chinese to Tibet.

(e) Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated for the Department of State for "Migration and Refugee assistance" for each of the fiscal years 1988 and 1989, not less than \$200,000 shall be available only for assistance for Tibetan refugees.

(f) For each of the fiscal years 1988 and 1989, the Director of the United States Information Agency shall make available to Tibetan students and professionals who are outside Tibet not less than 15 scholarships for study at institutions of higher education in the United States.

Mr. Pell. Mr. President, this amendment, proposed by the Senator from North Carolina my friend, Mr. Helms, and I, directs the attention of all people to the cruel treatment, the rape of Tibet that has been going on in the last few days and has been going on for the last few decades.

Tibet, a country with a proud history and independent tradition, in the past was occupied, as we all know, by the Chinese in the late 1950's and since then has been a very harsh regime. I recognize that the Chinese have taken steps in the last few years to unscramble the omelet, to undo some of the damage that was done about 10 or 15 years ago by their people.

But, nevertheless, the tragedy of Tibet continues. The maltreatment of Tibet citizens continues. All told, I think the Senate should take a note of that fact, and that is exactly what the Senator from North Carolina and I seek to do.

Two weeks ago the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as well as the House Foreign Affairs Committee, hosted His Holiness the Dalai Lama here in the United States Capitol. The Dalai Lama raised at that time a five-point peace plan for the resolution of problems confronting the people of Tibet under the rule of Beijing. The plan, simply stated, called for improvement, in the human rights and democratic freedoms of the people of Tibet. It was a peaceful plan, and called for the transformation of the whole of Tibet into a work zone of peace.

Immediately in the wake of peace initiative, Chinese authorities saw fit to crack down on Buddhist monks and native Tibetans in Lhasa in the most severe manner. They publicly executed three monks, jailed numerous others, and when the Tibetan people reacted in peaceful protest, continued their crackdown, resulting finally in the traffic events of this week.

In protest of the Chinese action Tibetan monks and people demonstrated in front of a Chinese police station where some 30 monks were held in detention. During the ensuing struggle, Chinese police fired on the demonstrators, killing and maiming several men, women, and children. Today it is reported

that Chinese troops are being airlifted to the area, giving every indication that the crackdown will continue.

APPENDIX: EXTRACT FROM CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTION 93

**FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD
THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 1987, VOL. 133
AMENDMENT
HOUSE RESOLUTION 1777**

**TITLE VII - HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN TIBET
BY THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

Sec. 701 Findings

The Congress finds that-

(1) the People's Republic of China imposed its rule over Tibet through military force in 1949, and continues to exercise dominion over the Tibetan people through the presence of a large occupation force;

(2) over one million Tibetans have perished since 1949 as a direct result of political instability, imprisonment, and widescale famine;

(3) after 1949, particularly during the ravages of China's cultural revolution, over 6,000 monasteries, the repositories of 1,300 years of Tibet's ancient civilization, were destroyed and their irreplaceable national legacy of art and literature either stolen or removed from Tibet;

(4) the Tibetan's standard of living, health, and human services remain far below those of the People's Republic of China as a whole;

(5) Tibetans and others are concerned about the political, cultural, and economic implications of the policy of the People's Republic of China of encouraging large numbers of Chinese to move to Tibet;

(6) there are credible reports, confirmed by Amnesty International, of Tibetans being incarcerated and killed for the nonviolent expression of their religious and political beliefs;

(7) His Holiness the Dalai Lama, spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan people, in conjunction with the 100,000 refugees forced into exile with him, has worked tirelessly for almost thirty years to secure peace and religious freedom in Tibet, as well as the preservation of the Tibetan culture;

(8) in 1959, 1961, and 1965 the United Nations General Assembly called upon the People's Republic of China to end the violations of the Tibetan's human rights;

(9) 91 Members of the Congress signed a letter to President Li Xiannian of the People's Republic of China on July 24, 1985, expressing support for direct talks between Beijing and representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans in exile, and urging the Government of the People's Republic of China "to grant the very reasonable and justified aspirations of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his people every consideration," and

(10) there has been no evidence of any such consideration being granted by the Government of the People's Republic of China.

Biographical Sketches of the Authors

Ms. Eva M. Neterowicz is a researcher, writer, and public policy analyst residing in Washington, D.C.

Born in Reading, England, Ms. Neterowicz, who is of Polish descent, came to the United States at an early age, when her family settled in Chicago, Illinois. She received her early education in Chicago and attended Northwestern University (Illinois) before transferring to the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service where she received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Foreign Service, in 1976 with a concentration in International Politics. She took courses at the University of Maryland and then completed her studies at the American International University in Arizona, where she received a Master's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Finance and International Business.

Her background in international development was utilized in a number of positions on Capitol Hill, where she held legislative staff positions with Illinois U.S. Representatives Phil Crane, Daniel Rostenkowski, and Edward Derwinski, as well as with California U.S. Rep. Barry Goldwater Jr. She worked on international economic and trade issues for Representative Rostenkowski - a member (and presently Chairman) of the House Ways and Means Committee - and in international affairs for Representative Derwinski, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. Neterowicz's expertise brought her service on the transition team for President-elect Ronald Reagan in 1980-81, where she served as the U.S. State Department liaison for Jeanne Kirkpatrick (Later United Nations Ambassador) and as a foreign policy analyst for international issues for the Department of State Transition Team.

She has worked with public policy firms organizing seminars on international affairs and also served with The Hemispheric Center of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research of Washington, D.C., conducting forums and research on a variety of international issues within the scope of the Center.

In 1981, she was selected to serve as the Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Territorial and International Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior. She held that Assistant Secretary for the Office of Territorial and International Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior. She held that position until 1984, when she left government service for the private sector. In her position as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary she focused on key issues dealing with the Pacific Basin. Her responsibility included work with public and private groups for economic development with key Members of Congress on Pacific regional issues, and special assignments on budgetary and policy matters. Her interest in politics and international affairs has stimulated her interest in the growing influence of the People's Republic of China, including both its domestic and international politics. In that context, she

overall position on the international scene. Her interest in international law, political and social development, in the evolving policies of Communist states worldwide, and her concern for human rights, led to her present study of the impact of Beijing policies on the population of PRC occupied Tibet.

Dr. Stephen R. Bowers is an Associate Professor of Political Science at James Madison University.

Dr. Bowers is a native of Tennessee and completed his graduate work at the University of Tennessee. He has also studied at the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Service Institute in Washington, D.C.

In 1987, He joined the faculty of James Madison University where he has been responsible for courses in International Relations and Comparative Politics. Prior to coming to JMU, he worked in Special Operations for the U.S. Army. Dr. Bowers has written extensively on the affairs of communist and post-communist states. His works include *Ethnic Politics in Eastern Europe*, a monograph published in London by the Institute for the Study of Conflict, as well as numerous articles in journals such as *East European Quarterly* and *Jane's Intelligence Review*.