

**DENG XIAOPING'S POLICY ON TIBET
(1978 - 1988)**

**Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
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the award of the Degree of**

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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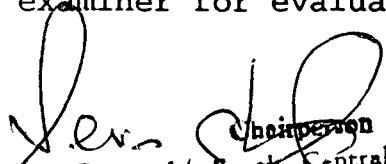
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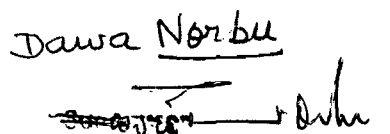
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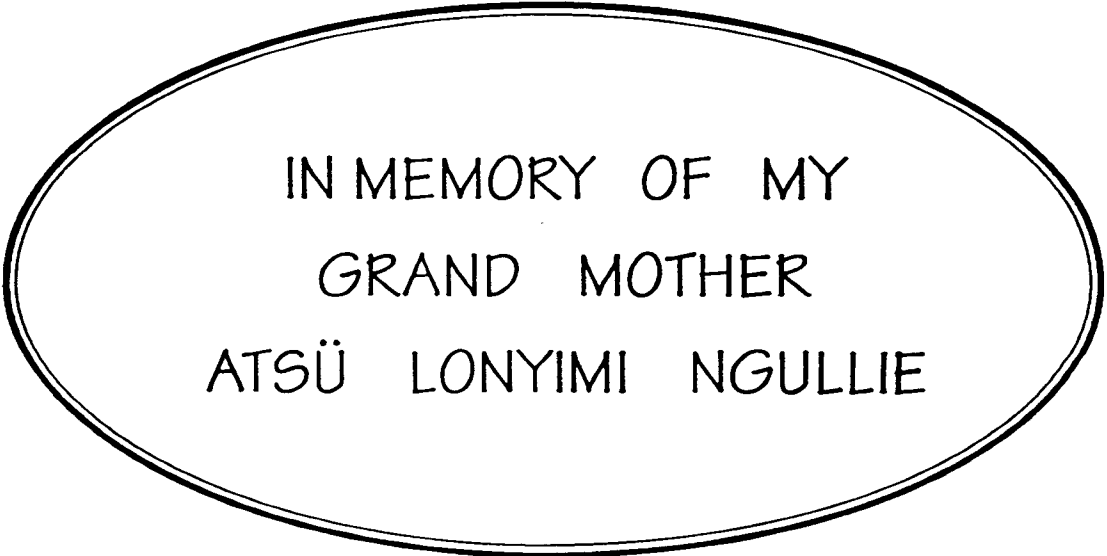
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Certified that the Dissertation entitled "Deng Xiaoping's Policy on Tibet (1978-1988)" submitted by ERANPANI EZUNG is in partial fulfilment of eight credits out of the twenty-four credits required for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy of this University. This dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University. To the best of our knowledge this is her own bonafide work.

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IN MEMORY OF MY
GRAND MOTHER
ATSÜ LONYIMI NGULLIE

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

For centuries, Tibet was known for its inaccessibility; it was one of the most remote as well as most mysterious countries in the world. Geography and climate, in substantial measures, contributed to the mystery in which Tibet lay shrouded. And many outside explorers informed the world by bringing his own romanticized impressions, thereby increasing the mystery that already existed.

The geological theories about this vast, intermountain region say that millions of years ago "...this table land was once the bottom of the Thethys sea." It has been further observed that Tibet "is not quite as flat as a billiard table and loses its regularity, especially in the South-East where by some freak of nature the Meridional chains of Sikang province bar the way. The Himalayan chain sprawls along the entire southern frontier, a fit boundary for a country which bears the poetic name, 'land of the snow.'"¹

This vast Central Asian plateau, called Tibet, averaging about 4,000 metres above sea level and covering an area of 2.5 million sq. kms. is also known as the "Roof of the World".² It is a beautiful land, surrounded with endless chains of

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- 1 Shen, Tsung-Lieu, and Liu-Shen-Chi, *Tibet and the Tibetans* (Stanford, California, 1953), pp.9-10.
 - 2 *China--Facts and Figures: Tibet - The "Roof of the World"*, (Beijing, 1990), p.1.

mountains and snow capped peaks. Many of the great rivers of Asia originate in the Tibetan plateau.

On account of its high altitude and the galleries of sky-touching mountain ranges, Tibet is a bitterly cold desert; dry and windy with scanty rainfall. Greater part of the total geographical area of the land remains covered under eternal snow, whereas the northern part of Tibet is entirely a desert. Moreover, large areas especially in the South-Eastern parts, are covered with natural forests. These have considerably reduced the habitable area. There are stretches, here and there of plain land, valleys and woodlands where the climate is fairly tolerable and favourable for agriculture and pasturage. The staple crop of Tibet is 'ne' (highland barley) in several varieties, which is one of the few crops that can grow at such high altitude. Besides, they also grow corn, rice, vegetables, fruits, etc. in a few low altitude regions.

Regarding habitation, Stein's description projects a more detailed view. "The lie of the valleys and the folds of the mountains ranges, as well as the particular latitude and altitude of a place, give rise to a host of micro climates with a vast diversity of local conditions. And this is evident not only in the natural surroundings but also in the activities of the communities that live in them."³

3 Stein, R.A., *Tibetan Civilization* (London, 1972), pp.21-22.

The population of Tibet according to the recent Chinese estimates is about 4 million. But the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile, reiterates that there are approximately 6 million Tibetans in Tibet.⁴ However, no accurate census was ever undertaken and one has to deal with rough approximations only.

Tibet is rich in natural resources, with more than 5,700 types of high grade plants, 600 kinds of birds and beasts, valuable medicinal substances in several varieties, such as Musk, bear's gallbladder, Chinese caterpillar, fungus, snow lotus etc. Many of Tibet's mineral resources also remain to be explored. Some of the already discovered mineral ores are iron, chromium, copper, lead, zinc, borax, Mica, gypsum, uranium, gold, silver, lithium, chromite etc. Tibet is also rich in geothermal resources. More than one hundred sites of geothermal energy have been found.⁵

Looking at the Sino-Tibetan relation in historical perspective, there is no doubt that Tibet was an independent country until 1949, with all the features of an independent nation. It had its own government, now in exile. It had its own small army commanded by its government, postal system, national flag, currency and taxation. Tibet also maintained independent relations with other countries, especially in the

4 Chinese Newspaper, *People's Daily*, November 10, 1959; see also, *Beijing Review*, vol.31, nos.7 and 8, 1988.

5 *China - Facts and Figures* (Beijing, 1990), p.2.

region, by whom it was recognized.⁶ Till the end of the 17th century, the relations between the two nations were based on equality and mutual respect and dependence. Only when the Tibetans stopped paying attention to its military defence, China used to give military aid in times of crisis.

However, in October 1949, Radio Beijing announced that 'Tibet was a part of China and that the PLA would march into Tibet to liberate the Tibetans from foreign imperialists.'⁷ And in 1950, Communist China took over Tibet, on the pretext of 'liberating' the Tibetans from foreign imperialists.

In May 1951, a delegation was sent to Beijing by the 14th Dalai Lama to hold talks on the independent status of Tibet and the Chinese guarantee thereof. But on 23rd May 1951, this delegation was forced to sign the so-called 'Seventeen-Point-Agreement' on measures for the peaceful 'liberation' of Tibet with a threat of more military action on Tibet. Soon after in September 1951, the PLA marched into Lhasa under the leadership of Cheng-Kuo-Hua, and a military and administrative committee was set up in Tibet. Thus, started the Chinese attempt at the political and cultural integration and assimilation of Tibet with China, through the so-called democratic and liberalized reforms.

6 "Tibet's Case for Self-Determination", H.H.The Dalai Lama of Tibet. *Strategic Digest*, vol.27, nos.1-5, May 1991, p.957.

7 W.B.Shakappa, *Tibet, a Political History* (New Haven and London, 1967), p.299.

The Chinese divided Tibet into three discrete regions for administration. The political boundary, Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) covers an area of only 1.2 million sq. kms. And its population, according to the national census of 1990 is 2.2 million. In 1956, the preparatory committee for establishing the Autonomous Region of Tibet was created with the Dalai Lama as Chairman, Boinquen Erdini as Vice-Chairman and Ngapo Ngwang Jigme as Secretary.

After 9 years of discontent under the Chinese rule, on March 1959, there was a nation-wide Tibetan revolt against the Chinese takeover. The Chinese of course ruthlessly suppressed the rebellion in no time. The Dalai Lama escaped and took asylum in India. And in 1965, Tibet was formally declared an 'Autonomous Region' like the other minority regions of China.

The death of Mao-Zedong, marked a significant turning point in Chinese politics. The struggle for succession that followed, led to the smashing of the 'Gang of four' and the emergence of Hua, Mao's 'chosen one' as party chairman and state premier. But Hua was soon challenged by the surviving victims of the Cultural Revolution, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, a communist revolutionary from the 50s and the deposed former Vice-Premier. He had been purged twice at Mao's personal directions, and made his third comeback to politics in 1977.

In the course of the power struggle he became the single most influential person in Chinese politics. Since then, it is

clear that Deng Xiaoping makes the policy in China, although he has on the whole avoided taking any top position in the ruling institutions.

Deng's leadership, comprising principally of Mao's opponents from the cultural revolution were shocked to see such poverty and misery persisting in 'Socialist China', especially in the villages where the condition was deplorable. Appalled by China's failure, they adopted a new design for development in China, to achieve socialist construction.

This new policy has been determined by the magic catchphrase - the 'four modernization'. The fields are agricultural production, industrial production, military defence, science and technology.⁸ Deng, the chief architect of this Modernization campaign described China's post-Mao reform programme as the 'Second Revolution'. The series of reforms, which the regime enacted, promises new and better days for most people of China.

Deng Xiaoping took special interest in Tibet. It is true that other 'Minority Nationalists' are quite well integrated with the Hans. But the Tibetans have never recognised any affinity with the Chinese. Their language, culture, religion, history and political institutions also differ from Han China. The area of Tibet is also enormous, one eighth of total area of China, even after dividing and incorporating with other Chinese

8 M.Stiefel and W.F.Wertheim, *Production, Equality and Participation in Rural China*, published jointly by UNRISD, Geneva, and Zed Press, London, 1983.

provinces. Its border region is also of strategic importance, especially after the 1962 war with India. Further, the Tibetans had always challenged Beijing's sovereignty rights and had always expressed aspirations for national independence.⁹ For the Chinese, the Tibetan issue had become a thorn in their throats. So along with his 'modernization' reform introduced in 1978, he also took bold initiatives to resolve some of the outstanding 'national' problems such as Taiwan and Tibet.

Deng Xiaoping came up with one country two system formula for Taiwan and Hong Kong. He even offered them special consideration status - allowing them to preserve their present character.¹⁰ The same formula was not applied to Tibet, because China claimed Tibet to be an integral part of China for centuries and treat the Tibetans on par with other 'minorities' of China. So, in order to resolve the Tibetan issue Deng Xiaoping in 1979 encouraged the Dalai Lama to send the first series of fact-finding delegations, to investigate the current situation in Tibet. Beijing obviously believed that the delegation would be impressed by the progress made in Tibet since 1959. But the report which came back was very negative, something which Beijing had not counted on. China was very much embarrassed and mainly because of this report, in 1980 the

9 Dawa Norbu, "The Future of Taiwan in the Tibetan Model (1951-58)", *China Report*, 1987, p.5.

10 See Xinhua (Beijing), September 30, 1981. Also, K.V.S.Rama Sarma, *China - Second Liberation* (New Delhi, 1985), p.197.

CCP General Secretary, Hu Yaobang and Vice-Premier Wan Li, visited Tibet to see the conditions for themselves. They were reportedly shocked at their findings, and on their return, Beijing announced a series of far reaching reforms for Tibet.

Deng Xiaoping followed a moderate and pragmatic policy in his domestic as well as foreign policy. As a result of overall changes in China, a certain amount of leniency and liberalization had been introduced in Tibet. In announcing this new policy, the Chinese authorities made no secret of the objectives of their policy. It was to develop Tibet, strengthen control over the region and to put an end to 'splittist activities', Deng's policy was hardly any different from that of Mao, i.e., both wanted to keep Tibet under China. However, Deng laid less emphasis on oppressing the Tibetan people and they suffered less after Mao's death.

Deng Xiaoping's new strategy on Tibet involves, opening up talks with the Dalai Lama, giving (limited) religious freedom, economic concession and population transfer as a final solution to the Tibetan issue.

In 1978, after a gap of around two decades, Deng Xiaoping initiated a dialogue with the Dalai Lama through Gyalo Thondup, the Dalai Lama's elder brother. And in 1979, a dialogue was first established between the exiled government and Beijing, on the basis of assurance given by Deng Xiaoping that China was willing to discuss "anything except the total independence of Tibet". Since the late 70s owing to change of circumstances,

the Dalai Lama has altered his stand on the Tibetan issue giving priority to economic welfare and happiness of his people, to independence.

The Chinese met the Dalai Lama's basic demand made in 1978 and 79 for economic concessions, after which they came up with 'five point' proposal to the Dalai Lama. By this proposal, the Chinese only wished to address the terms for the return of the Dalai Lama and not the future of Tibet - which was the only issue, the Tibetan delegation had gone to discuss. The Chinese tried to reduce the Tibetan issue to that of the personal well-being of the Dalai Lama. Even the two exploratory talks held in Beijing between the CCP Central Committee functionaries and the Dalai Lama's delegates in 1982 and 1984, did not bring the two parties any closer to solving the issue.

Throughout the Tibetan government's dealing with the Chinese, a sincere and realistic attitude was adopted. The Dalai Lama had gone a long way in accommodating Chinese interest, in his series of initiatives, like the five-point peace plan of 1987¹¹ and the subsequent Strasbourg proposal of 1988. In Washington on 21st September 1987, he introduced an important step towards a lasting solution and laid out plans for the restoration of peace and human rights in Tibet.

Again, on June 15, 1988, in a speech made to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Dalai Lama made a major political

11 See, *The Dalai Lama, Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet* (New Delhi, 1988), pp.5-9.

concession to China. The PRC, he said, could remain responsible for Tibet's foreign policy and defence. But Tibet should have its own Foreign Affairs Bureau dealing with commerce, education, culture, religion, tourism, science, sports and other non-political activities. With regard to defence, China could have the right to maintain a restricted number of military installations in Tibet until such time as demilitarisation and neutralization could be achieved through a regional peace conference and international agreement.¹²

In February 1990, Beijing flatly rejected both the proposals of the Dalai Lama. They objected that in essence, the proposal's assumption was of an independent state prior to Chinese take over in 1950. The Dalai Lama's references to Tibet's past independence are seen as "a necessary part of his continuing plan of separation".¹³ Therefore, from the PRC's point of view, if the Dalai Lama wishes to continue a dialogue with China, he must completely give up the very idea of independence as something either present in past history or as a future goal. "On the question of such major importance to the future of the Chinese nation, there is no room for

12 The Dalai Lama, "Address to Members of European Parliament", *Tibetan Bulletin*, vol.19, no.2, May-July 1988, p.2.

13 Sha Zhou, "What is Behind the Dalai Lama's 'Plan'?" *Beijing Review*, February 19-25, 1990, p.22.

bargaining."¹⁴ But these conditions are not acceptable to the Dalai Lama, for he refuses to re-write Tibetan history.

It is very clear that China's main motive was and still is to persuade the Dalai Lama to return to the 'motherland' in order to legitimize Chinese rule over Tibet. This will also put an end to the Dalai Lama's diplomatic offensives, of visiting western countries to garner support for his cause, which causes frequent embarrassment for China with the outside world. It is also possible that China does not want to negotiate at this time, which would benefit both sides.

Deng Xiaoping's policy of liberalization was introduced in Tibet, in advance of what was being done in the rest of China. Tibet was one of China's most conspicuous failures. It had suffered disastrously from extremism in Chinese politics.

After Hu Yaobang's inspection tour to Tibet in 1980, it was announced that full play would be given to the right of national regional autonomy and that all principles, policies and regulations not suited to Tibetan conditions are to be rejected or modified. The reform included, an end to collectivisation and tax exemption for Tibetan farmers and herdsmen, until at least 1990, and a deliberate policy of reducing the promotion of Han cadres in Tibet. Tibetan culture

14 *ibid*, p.23.

is also to be promoted, as long as it did not clash with socialist orientations.¹⁵

Since then, there has been notable changes in Tibet. Living standards of average Tibetans have improved to a certain extent. A number of prisoners jailed during the cultural revolution, were rehabilitated. Repairing and renovations of monasteries are going on. Massive benefits were reportedly given for the construction of Tibet. It also received subsidies from Central Government and many other commodities which the Tibetans needed were sent from other parts of the country. Production of agriculture and animal husbandry has improved. In 1990 report, the total output value of Tibet's agriculture and livestock breeding come to 789 million yuan.¹⁶

Tibet's industrial base has grown to include more than 250 medium and small sized enterprises, 43 infrastructural projects including hotels, Museum, transportation, energy resources, communication, theatre, urbanization and the works - were put into operation, which claimed to have brought forth tremendous benefit to Tibet.

One major aspects of economic reforms has been the 'open door' policy. China opened the doors of Tibet to the outside world, so that foreign capital can be used to supplement China's resources. It is vigorously promoting tourism too.

15 See, *Foreign broadcast Information Service, PRC, vol.1, no.108, pp.Q3-6.*

16 *Tibet - From 1951 to 1991 (Beijing, 1991), p.62.*

The government has also reported considerable expansion in schools, accommodation and training of teachers, as the level of education is very low in Tibet. In 1990, 130 million yuan was earmarked for the development of education in Tibet. Teaching of Tibetan language in adult as well as primary schools has resumed. But learning standard Chinese is a must for those who want to get good job or go for higher studies. Interviews for jobs are held in Chinese and applicants for University seats are examined in Chinese, which put the Tibetans at linguistic disadvantage.

According to Chinese reports, there are about 37,000 Tibetan cadres in Tibet. Younger generation and Tibetan cadres are trained in Marxist-Leninist ideology. It is true that there are native Tibetans in high position, but they hold no real power. All the real political and economic power is in the hands of Chinese. It is interesting to note that till date, the highest position of power in Tibet has never been held by a Tibetan.

The Chinese openly declared their policy to allow and encourage Chinese settlers from the over-crowded China into a sparsely populated Tibet. Radio Lhasa broadcasts those, who have volunteered to settle in Tibet as model patriots and revolutionaries. The idea is to exhort and encourage more and more settlers into Tibet.

The object of this policy is to 'resolve' China's territorial claim over Tibet by means of a massive and

irreversible population shift, which will render the Tibetans to an insignificant minority and, any resistance against China's rule ineffective. Thousands of Han were imported to be employed in the numerous projects, to the exclusion of Tibetans from any skilled or unskilled job.

The Chinese 'open door' policy has also escalated the population transfer of Chinese into Central Tibet. Each project in Tibet provides an opportunity and employment for Chinese to move and settle there. The opening of tourism, since 1985 also provided impetus to this influx of Han. In 1985, 60,000 Chinese workers arrived in Tibet to 'help' in the construction of Tibet and the latest move points to a continuation of this process.

The Chinese justified their policy, that these people were needed to help develop the economically and culturally backward Tibetans. Foreign aid which helps the development projects in Tibet, provides legitimation for Chinese population transfer policy, even though aids from abroad were well-intentioned. Hardly any Tibetans are getting benefits as Hans were brought in to fill jobs at every level. Unlike the Tibetans, the Chinese are allowed to settle in any part of Tibet, with or without permission, obtain housing and jobs etc. The situation has worsened as a result of recent Chinese decision to remove all checkpoints on the highway leading from China to Tibet.

According to 1990 census, 95.46 percent of total population in TAR are Tibetan nationals and the Chinese account

for 81,200. But the official statistics left out a large number of Chinese settlers not registered, military personnel and large 'floating' population. As for Kham and Amdo, it has already been swamped by Chinese, since the early 50s. The Tibetan government in exile believe that there are 7.5 million or more Chinese settlers in all of Tibetan regions.

The policy of reducing Han cadres in Tibet had been reversed since 1983. With such tremendous influx of Han Chinese into Tibet, they are outnumbering Tibetans everywhere and remoulding Tibet in their own image. Since 1978, the regime has been outspokenly in favour of population control. Over the past years, there have been numerous reports about Chinese practising coercive birth control programmes in Tibet, including forced abortions, sterilization and even infanticide. The Tibetans fear that if the present Chinese population transfer policy continues, Tibetans will fast become a marginalised minority in their own country.

Religion guides every aspect of Tibetan life. The society was a self-sufficient one founded on Buddhist faith. It is said that Tibet used to be full of monasteries. But after the Chinese Communist takeover of 1959, all religious institutions, buildings, artifacts, books and religious scriptures etc. were destroyed and what little is left is seriously damaged. The countryside is littered with ruins of temples and monasteries. Only 13 religious monuments had survived the destruction and thousands of monks and nuns had died of torture. The practice

of religion, both communally and individually was suppressed, often through brutality. As Tibetan culture had been linked closely with the practice of Buddhism, the suppression also represents an infringement on both culture and religious expression. In fact, this was a measure meant to destroy the cultural and spiritual core of Tibetan civilization. Today, according to Chinese sources, there are 70 monasteries either functioning or in the process of restoration.

After so many years of turmoil, normal religious activities have been restored to some extent. Since 1980, more than 27 million yuan have been allocated for repairing monasteries, in an attempt to correct their mistakes. Special funds have been allocated by the country's relic administration to renovate religious structures, including the Potala Palace, the Zhaxilhunbu monastery, Sagya Temple, Norbu Lingka and others.

In recent years, believers have been free to visit monasteries, make pilgrimages to holy sites and travel to visit lamas, even without permission. People are allowed to practice various religious rites, wear rosaries, chant scriptures, fly prayer flags and donate at any time they wish. Most households have small altars.

The Tibetans welcomed these turn of events. However, they are still very apprehensive and cannot trust the Chinese. They fear that the present government could intervene again at any time and impose its alien values on them. And the situation is

not helped by the Chinese government's reluctance to permit as full an expression of cultural and religious freedom as the Tibetans wanted.

On the whole, in this context there are certain shortcomings in the study of Deng's policy on Tibet, which has not been filled up. Most of the writers seem to have concentrated their study on a single aspect, hence, there is no comprehensive work. The aim of this study is to analyse Deng Xiaoping's policy on Tibet as reflected during the past 15 years. Mainly, it will try to identify the major components of Deng's Tibet policy which include, new economic reforms, negotiations with the Dalai Lama, granting of limited religious freedom, and his policy of population transfer as a final solution to the Tibetan issue.

Chapter one gives a brief outline of its history and relations with China, geographical setting of Tibet, its climate etc. It will pay particular attention to Tibet under Mao period (before 1978) and Chinese Second Revolution as contrasting policies in Tibet.

Chapter two would deal with the developments of the last decade; Deng's Modernization measures, which would cover society, environment, science and technology, medical services, banking service system, power and industry, agricultural production, animal husbandry, agricultural production, animal husbandry etc. as applied to Tibet.

Chapter three would focus on the talks held between the Dalai Lama's representatives and Beijing. The main highlight would be on the Dalai Lama's two proposals made in 1987 and 1988 and whether his political demands have been met by the Chinese or not.

The fourth chapter would present a picture of the population transfer of Han Chinese into Tibet and the measures adopted by the Chinese to implement this policy. The focus would be the impact of this policy on Tibet in regard to employment, environment and culture as well as considering it as 'final solution' to the Tibetan problem.

One of Deng's Policy was to grant religious freedom. Chapter five would examine the extent of this policy component and the future of Tibetan religion and culture.

Chapter six would be the conclusion and observations made during the course of this study.

CHAPTER II

NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

The year 1976 marked a milestone in the history of the People's Republic of China. Mao Zedong passed away in September 1976 and in October the Party Central Committee arrested the so called 'Gang of Four' led by Jiang Quing, putting an end to the Cultural Revolution. Therefore from 1976, a new era may be said to have started in China. In 1977, the leaders of the post-Mao era declared that the mission for the new era was a socialist modernization of the country. However, until 1978 there was no major change in policy, and Hua Guofeng, installed by Mao, continued as Party chief. From 1978, when the modernization drive was officially launched, changes became discernible. In December of the same year, at the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Central Committee, Deng Xiaoping replaced Hua Guofeng as the leading political force and this ushered in a turning point of far reaching significance.

The Mission for the new era is no longer class struggle but rather, socialist modernization in the field of science and technology, Industrial Production, Agricultural Production and Military defence. This reform policy is referred to as the 'Four Modernization' programme. The aim of the new reform is to make China an industrial power by the year 2000 A.D.

The chief architect of the present modernization campaign is Deng Xiaoping, who described China's post-Mao reform programme as the 'Second Revolution'. He was by and large committed to the goals of the 'four modernization'. By June 1981, Hu Yaobang replaced Hua Guofeng as the Chairman of the Party - a move that had been preceded almost a year earlier by the ascendancy of Zhao Ziyang to the premiership. Thus the political power in China was consolidated in the hands of reform-minded leaders led by Deng Xiaoping. The policies and guidelines expressed by these new leaders are in many ways in direct contrast to those advanced by Lin Biao and the 'Gang of four', who virtually controlled the country from 1966-76. The series of reforms which the leaders enacted promises new and better days for most people of China.

As a result of overall changes in China, a new strategy was defined for the United Front Work Department of the Party, which involves overtures to overseas Chinese, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Dalai Lama, in an attempt to resolve outstanding national issues. In 1979, the Chinese authorities encouraged the Dalai Lama to send the first series of fact-finding delegations to investigate the current condition in Tibet. Beijing without doubt accepted reports from the then party leader in Tibet, Ren Rong, about the improvements in Tibetan living standard, and the general satisfaction of the Tibetan people under the Chinese rule. So in late 1979, the Dalai Lama sent the first delegation to Tibet. Beijing obviously believed

that the delegation would be impressed by the progress made in Tibet since 1959 and that some solution would be reached, whereas, the delegation returned to Beijing with a very negative report, something which Beijing had not counted on. The delegates also informed the Chinese about their shock and dismay at the universal religious and cultural destruction it had witnessed, and the overall poverty and backwardness of the Tibetans. They saw no evidence of material progress in Tibet except massive destructions, not to mention the absence of good roads or buildings. And even after 20 years of communism, the Tibetans showed spontaneous affection and demonstration of support for the Dalai Lama, which shocked the highest reaches of the Party. Beijing was very much embarrassed, to say the least, which led to the sacking of Ren Rong as party Secretary for Tibet and prompted the fact-finding visit in May 1980 by Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang and Chinese Vice-Premier Wan Li to see the condition for themselves. Hu Yaobang apparently was deeply shocked and dismayed by what he saw and heard, of the two decades of communist rule in Tibet. Forced collectivization had left the local economy in ruins, the Tibetan people completely demoralized and a pitifully inadequate infrastructure in the hands of administrators, who were totally dependent on support from China.

Tibet was one of China's most conspicuous failures. It had suffered disastrously from extremism in Chinese politics. Yak herders were driven into collectives, barley farmers were

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forced to plant wheat unsuited to the high Tibetan plateau, in order to feed the Chinese armies as they do not like barley. This precipitated famines - something which was never heard of in the history of Tibet. In fact, Tibet was very much self-sufficient in food before the Chinese take over.¹ Recent research indicates that during the great famines, over 340,000 Tibetans died of starvation.

In the words of Stephen Corry, Project Director of Survival International (UN ECOSOC NGO), "Far from providing the poor with enough to eat, the overwhelming evidence suggests that the Chinese totally disrupted an essentially self-sufficient society and caused, through their brutality and colonialism, massive food-shortages and widespread hunger as the masses were put to work to feed their new masters."² More than a million people died under Chinese repression and torture and more than 6,000 monasteries and temples were stripped of all religious treasures and turned into storage places and garrisons. Hu Yaobang is reported to have told Party cadres "This reminds me of colonialism". He then made a series of recommendations for a new policy that became the basis for the reform in Tibet during the 1980s.

1 *Tibetan Review*, October-November 1974, p.4.

2 Stephen Corry, "China Syndrome", *Natural People's News*, no.6, July/August 1981, passim.

NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

New economic policy was introduced in Tibet, in advance of what was being done in the rest of China, but they also attempted to specifically redress the situation in Tibet. Hu's six point reform policy for Tibet included the following directives:

1. The TAR government should fully exercise its autonomy;
2. Tibetan farmers and herders should be exempt from taxation and compulsory quota sales to the state as well as the assignment of work without pay. They should be free to negotiate prices for the sale of their products.
3. A flexible economic policy should be implemented in Tibet recognizing Tibet's special situation and tailored to Tibet's special needs.
4. Subsidies from the central government should be increased to develop the local economy.
5. Within the socialist framework, efforts should be made to revive and develop Tibetan culture, education and science.
6. The participation of Tibetan cadres in the local administration should be increased and large numbers of Han cadres should be withdrawn from Tibet.³

Hu's directives recognised the uniqueness of Tibet, its special characteristics and special needs. In principle they sounded a positive note, for the first time since 1959,

3 Beijing Xinhua Domestic Service in Chinese, 30 May 1980, quoted in *FBIS*, 3 June 1980, 1(108): Q3-Q6.

acknowledging that Tibet was in fact different from China. They laid the foundation for the economic and cultural developments in Tibet during the 1980s. Since then, there has been notable changes in Tibet.

Tibet's economic reform began with agriculture and animal husbandry. As in China, the rural economy was decollectivized, land and animals were distributed among commune members. Farmland, grassland and forest was to remain under public ownership. The policy of "land being used by households for independent management" was introduced to the agricultural areas, and was pledged to 'remain unchanged for a long time to come'. For pastoral areas, the policy of "livestock being tended by households independently for private use" was carried out and "will remain unchanged for a long time to come". Tibetan farmers and herders were exempted from taxes and all purchases by the state were to be cancelled over a certain period of time. They were allowed to keep their produce or dispose of it for their own benefit. With the exemption from taxes and control over the disposal of their surplus, they could now sell it in order to purchase commodities or use their surplus to rebuild and restaff local monasteries. They were also encouraged to conduct various forms of economic alliances and to develop township enterprises and diversified management, thus promoting the development of a commodity economy in Tibet.

Massive benefits were given for the construction of Tibet and many other commodities which the Tibetans needed were sent

from other parts of the country.⁴ Every year, the central government gives Tibet one billion yuan in subsidies.⁵ Production of agriculture and animal husbandry has improved.

According to statistics, since 1952, the central government has allocated financial and material resources worth about 20 billion yuan to support the construction of Tibet. The Nyang, the Lhasa and other rivers have been harnessed. About 60 percent of farmland can be irrigated and currently, more than 7,500 farm machines, chemical fertilizers, pesticide and improved crop varieties are being used extensively.

In 1990, the total output value of Tibet's agriculture and livestock breeding came to 789 million yuan, its grain production reached 555 million kg., which is supposed to be an all-time high. In spite of the snow disaster in 1990, the worst in 100 years, Tibet's livestock provided a total of 93 million kg. of meat, it turned out 178 million kg. of milk, 8.5 million kg. of wool and 496,000 kg of goat hair.⁶ The number of livestock on hand rose from 9.74 million head in 1952 to 25 million head. The average annual income per peasant was 430 yuan in 1990 and rose to 455 yuan in 1991.

4 *China Daily*, 26 August 1982, *passim*.

5 *Tibet from 1951 to 1991* (Beijing, 1991).

6 *ibid*, pp.62-63.

POWER AND INDUSTRY

Tibet's modern industry has grown to include more than 620 medium and small sized enterprises, such as electric power, mining, wool spinning, hides processing, building materials, construction, chemicals, paper making, printing, textile and food processing etc. These industries employ more than 26,000 workers and staff, of whom Tibetans are said to make up over 60 percent. During the seventh five year plan period (1986-90), the fixed assets in Tibet increased by 1.9 billion yuan, and the total industrial output value grew from 1.7 million yuan in 1956 to 235 million yuan in 1990.

The power industry developed at a fast speed. There are 429 power stations distributed in various places of the region and 667 sets of generators with a combined installed capacity of 147 to 922 kw, producing 280 million kw of electricity a year.⁷ Eighty percent of the counties in Tibet have established hydro power station and 32 percent of townships use electricity. Meanwhile, geothermal, solar and wind energy are used extensively. The Yangbajen geothermal power station, the largest in China has a generating capacity of 25,180 kw.⁸

Since late 1980s, the central government adopted a preferential policy for Tibet's handicraft industry. It has also invested 25 million yuan, in order to stimulate Tibet's

7 *Beijing Review*, May 20-29, 1991, p.21.

8 *Tibet - Four Decades of Tremendous Change* (Beijing, 1991), p.6.

industrial enterprises. With their age-old history, Tibetan National handicrafts are known for their unique characteristics. Tibet now has 120 handicraft enterprises, such as carpets, Pulu, aprons, national costume, iron and wood articles, tourists souvenirs, gold and silver ornaments etc. Some handicrafts with national characteristics have entered the international market, such as carpets, which are well received in Europe and America. In 1990, the total output value of the national industry reached 52.85 million yuan.

The construction of Lhasa Brewery started on May 16, 1988, with 24 million yuan in state investment. It was formally put into production on September 28, 1989, which now produces 5,000 tons of beer annually.⁹

In addition, there are now 6,999 rural enterprises and projects engaged in diversified production bringing in a total income of 320 million yuan in 1990.

Tibet is rich in mineral resources. Reserves in some 70 places have been verified. The reserves of chromium, borax and copper rank first nation-wide. In 1991, there were over 60 mining enterprises. The output of chromium and iron reached 87,000 tons, up by 42 percent over 1986, and cement output was 120,000 tons, a seven fold increase over 1986.¹⁰

During the seventh five year plan period (1986-90), of 123 million yuan in investment in technical transformation, 53.87

9 *Beijing Review*, May 28-26, 1991, p.21.

10 *ibid.*

million yuan was earmarked by the state to update 74 projects of eight industries. Investment in transport and communication was 60 million yuan, energy development was 25 million yuan, some 37.6 million yuan was put into technical renovation of leather, woollen, textiles, and nationality handicraft industries.¹¹

Transport, post and telecommunication have improved remarkably. Over the past 40 years, the state has invested more than 3 billion yuan to develop Tibet's communication and transport facilities. Currently, there are highways totalling 21,720 km and more than 720 bridges, framing a network of 15 trunk lines, such as the Sichuan-Tibet, Qinghai-Tibet, Xinjiang-Tibet, Yunnan-Tibet and China-Nepal highways; and 315 branch lines radiating from the city of Lhasa. The highway network covers every country in the region except Medong, and 77 percent of the townships are accessible by bus. Tibet has more than 20,000 buses, an oil pipe-line, 1,080 km long has been laid between Golmud and Lhasa.¹²

After more than 20 years of efforts, there has been a growth of air flights too. An international air route has also been opened from Lhasa to Kathmandu, capital of Nepal.

As for post and telecommunication, Tibet now has 120 post offices, 71,401 km (one way) of postal routes and 50,725 km (one way) of postal delivery routes in rural areas. Now all

11 *ibid*, pp.21-22.

12 *Tibet from 1951 to 1991* (Beijing, 1991), p.64.

the countries are reached by postal communication and newspapers, and all the townships by mail.¹³

Seven communication-satellite ground stations have been set up in Lhasa, Xigaze, Qamdo, Nagqu, Ngari, Lokha and Nyingchi, opening automatic international and domestic long-distance telephone services. The installed capacity of urban service telephones increased from 460 channels in 1959 to 21,200 channels, with a total of 13,119 telephone sets. Lhasa is linked with all prefectures and some counties by criss-cross network for automatic telephone service.¹⁴

About 74 countries in the region are now accessible by postal communication, and 70 percent of rural areas have access to postal communication. For the convenience of Tibetans, the region's post and communication department have also opened a Tibetan language telegraph business.¹⁵

FOREIGN TRADE AND TOURISM

Since the reform and opening up to the outside world, Tibet's commerce, foreign trade and tourism have developed rapidly. Currently, it has 946 state commercial establishments. More than 880 collective supply and marketing co-operatives and 40,000 private commercial households. In 1990, the region's total volume of retail sales of social

13 *Tibet - Four Decades of Tremendous Change* (Beijing, 1991), p.7.

14 *Tibet - Four Decades of Tremendous Change*, p.7.

15 *Beijing Review*, May 20-26, 1991, p.23.

commodities came to 1.5 billion yuan and the total import and export volume reached 245 million yuan.¹⁶

Tibet has opened its first legal foreign exchange market. Among all of China's provinces and autonomous regions, Tibet is the only one allowed to keep all foreign exchange earnings. With the developments of foreign trade and tourism, an increasing number of enterprises in Tibet possess foreign exchange. As of September 1989, Tibet's total surplus reached US \$48 million.

Since 1980, with the help of the central government and other provinces and municipalities, Tibet has established a group of modern hotels and restaurants and improved its tourist facilities.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Efforts had also been made to support the public health in Tibet. Tibetan farmers and herdsmen were provided with free medical services. From 1973 to the first half of 1987, the central government organised a dozen provinces and municipalities to send 2,600 members medical team to Tibet. In the past four decades, the government had allocated special-purpose funds totalling 700 million yuan for the development of medical services, in Tibet.

Currently, there are 900 medical and public health establishments with 5,000 hospital beds, throughout the region and the number of health workers has increased to 9,000. The

16 Tibet - Four Decades of Tremendous Change, p.88.

central government and many provinces in the interior have set out medical teams to help prevent and control diseases in Tibet.¹⁷

In 1985, the immunization ratio of all children in Tibet reached 85 percent. The population in Tibet increased from a million in the early 1950s to 2.09 million in 1990. The average life span grew from 35 years to over 65 years.

The government also helped train local medical workers and the number of produces of Tibetan medicine increased over the years. Tibetan medicine and pharmacology have had gratifying achievements in both research and treatment. "Pearl 70" and other Tibetan medicines have been proved to have unique curative effects on the treatment of diseases effecting the nervous system such as atrophic gastritis.¹⁸

EDUCATION

To improve the local education, a number of primary schools were built in Lhasa and other places. Former local government officials, living Buddhas and Lamas were appointed leaders and teachers of schools for which board of directors were established and all studies enjoyed grant-in-aid.¹⁹

At present, Tibet has more than 2,400 schools at all levels, with an enrollment of over 170,000 students. School attendance of school children now reaches 54.4 percent and the

17 *Tibet from 1951-1991* (Beijing, 1991), p.75.

18 *ibid*, p.79.

19 *ibid*, p.81.

number of illiterates and semi-illiterates have dropped to 44.43 percent of the population.²⁰ According to Chinese statistics, there are now 12,610 people with a university education, 131,179 people with secondary school education and 408,384 people with primary school education.²¹

Seventeen scientific research institutes have been established in areas such as forestry, biology, ecology, solar energy, astronomy, calender-making, Tibetan medicine and pharmacology with more than ten thousand scientific and technical personnel. On May 20, 1986, the China-Tibetan Science Research Centre was founded in Beijing. They have also developed academic exchanges and technical cooperation with eleven countries.²²

The government has also increased its investment in Tibet's education. In 1989 alone, the autonomous region appropriated 180 million yuan for education, accounting for 15 percent of the locality's total expenditure that year. The children of Tibetan farmers and herdsmen enjoy free boarding and education. Special funds are allocated to improve local school facilities. Teachers are sent from inland areas to improve the teaching quality, and courses are available in inland areas to train Tibetan professionals.

20 *Tibet - Four Decades of Tremendous Change*, p.9.

21 *Tibet - From 1951-1991* (Beijing, 1991), p.85.

22 *Tibet - Four Decades of Tremendous Change*, p.9.

Currently, the region has three universities with a total enrollment of 1,970, some 15 secondary vocational and technical schools with 3,968 students, 68 ordinary middle schools with 23,000 students, 2,398 primary schools with 139,000 students and 40 kindergarten with a total enrollment of 3,000. Adding to these, 18 inland provinces and municipalities have opened 15 junior middle school classes and secondary vocational classes for Tibetans which have combined enrollment of 7,000.²³

The people's congress of the Tibet autonomous region has adopted the regulations concerning the study, use and development of the Tibetan language and determined that equal stress would be laid on the Tibetan and Chinese languages, with an accent on the former. Documents issued by the government and departments under it have to be translated into Tibetan, and Tibetans must be sent first in meetings convened by the government of TAR.

Primary schools for nationality use Tibetan as the language of instruction and Chinese classes are added only in higher grades. All primary schools, middle schools and universities have Tibetan language classes. The government of TAR has set up Tibetan language teaching institutes and the Tibetan language training centre for teachers along with two organisations that have compiled text books in Tibetan, four primary schools as well as high schools.

23 *Tibet: From 1951-91* (Beijing, 1991), p.82.

Tibetan language has been used for newspapers, periodicals, magazines, radio and television broadcasts in the autonomous region. Signs in both Tibet and Chinese languages have been used in all units and for street, road and public utilities markings.

Adult higher education is a major part of Tibet's education programme. In-service training and continuous education are open to teachers, cadres and workers. In 1985, Tibet built its first audio-visual education centre and began television education programme.

The people's congress of the TAR has adopted the provisional regulations concerning the administration of cultural relics and made explicit stipulation for the protection, management and repair of cultural relics. Repairing and renovation of monasteries are going on. The state has allocated a huge amount of funds for the renovation of the Samyai monastery, Drepung and Gandrin monasteries, the Zhasilhunbo Lamasery, Qoikang Temple etc. Since 1978, 14 monasteries have been repaired with more than 5 million yuan allocated by the state and the regional government. In 1989, it has allocated 40 million yuan and organised human and material resources to repair the Potala Palace.

As regard to folk culture, king Gesar, a famous epic, has been spread among the Tibetans through oral presentation and singing. As of now, 62 volumes of the epic in Tibetan have been sold. Tibetan folk literature, drama, music, dance etc. are

said to be well preserved. The traditional calendar continues to be used in Tibet and the TAR edits and prints almanacs and hanging calendars every year. TAR has ten special art troupes, 25 small performances teams and more than 150 amateur Tibetan dramas and art troupes. Many dramas, novels, paintings and photographs produced by Tibetans have won international and national prizes. Modern multi-purpose art centres have been built throughout the TAR.

CADRES

One of the important aspects of the regional national autonomy is to train, select and appoint cadres of national minorities. Currently there are over 37,000 Tibetan cadres, who account for 72 percent of the number of cadres at the regional level and 61.2 percent at the country level. They are supposed to be holding principal leading posts in the local people's congress governments, people's courts and people procuratorates at various levels throughout the region.

According to statistics of 1989, professionals of Tibetan and other minority nationalities amounted to 62 percent of the total in the region. Among them are professors, research fellows, architects, engineers, agronomists, doctors, writers, journalists and artists. They are said to be playing an important role in industry, agriculture, energy, science, technology, communication, culture, education and public health in Tibet.

ENVIRONMENT

According to news from China, June 22, 1994, the Tibet Autonomous Region is China's top area in terms of environmental protection. The atmosphere there is fine and unpolluted. Rivers and lakes in Tibet have fine quality water. Only one small river, the upper and middle reaches of the Duilung River is slightly polluted by industrial and domestic sewage.²⁴

The regulations of the TAR on protecting forests has been drawn up, and the Qomolongma nature reserves and the Tibet wild life preserves have been established. Tibet is rich in natural resources, with more than 5,700 types of high-grade plants, 600 kinds of birds and beasts, and numerous valuable medicinal substances.²⁵ An environmental protection committee was set up in the TAR so as to organise and co-ordinate the environmental protection work throughout the region.

According to Tibetan environmental bulletins, thorough scientific inspections of the air, water and soil show that Tibet's natural radiation index is within state standards on environmental protection.

Presently, 7.17 million hectares of Tibet is covered by forests, and proliferation outstrips consumption. The region's 225,500 hectares of cultivated land is not affected by industrial pollution. Endangered wildlife such as the black-

24 *News from China*, June 22, 1994, p.6.

25 *China - Facts and Figures*, "Tibet - 'The Roof of the World'", p.2.

necked crane, antelope and tiger are well protected here. Due to excessive hunting, the number of bears and musk deers have decreased, and protection measures have been strengthened in recent years to stop wanton killing for economic gain.²⁶

Restrictions have been placed on lumbering and 'he who cuts plants must replant' policy has been adopted and put into practice. As a result, new saplings have been planted in some 9.3 hectares of lumbered areas in Gongbogyamda, the TAR government conducted environmental appraisal for all key construction projects.²⁷ An environmental monitoring station has been set up to inspect the region's environmental changes. Nature reserves have been established as an important aspect of Tibetan environmental protection. Regulations and rules have been devised regarding environmental protection, which have effectively protected the region's ecological environment and human health.

Since the current economic development in Tibet is mainly focused on agriculture and animal husbandry, and its energy, development on geothermal and hydro electric power, there has been little environment pollution compared with other parts of the country.

In order to meet the needs of the people's life, the central government ships great amount of materials and equipment to Tibet every year. In 1989, a total of 612 million

26 *News from China*, June 22, 1994, p.6.

27 *China's Tibet*, no.5, 1994, p.13.

yuan worth of goods were shipped into the region, excluding 195,000 tons of grain and 178,000 tons of oil.²⁸

Since the reform movement, there has been a certain amount of leniency and liberalization in Tibet. A number of prisoners persecuted during the cultural Revolution were rehabilitated. Travel was also allowed for the Tibetans to visit relatives and pilgrimage sites in India. Restrictions on internal travel have also been lifted.

THE OTHER TIBET

China makes much of its development efforts in Tibet - always trying to project happy and prosperous Tibetans, under the Chinese rule. No doubt there has been remarkable development. Tibetans will acknowledge that since the reform, there has been a dramatic improvement in their standard of living especially when compared to the harsh conditions during the period of collectivization and the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution. But things are far from satisfactory even now. Tibet still lags far behind, compared to other parts of China. And in spite of Chinese tall claims and assertions, there are numerous reports of Tibetan refugees, eye witness reports of foreign tourists, media and Tibetans inside, which contradict Chinese claims.

As regard to agriculture and animal husbandry, there have been some general improvements since the break-up of the communes and collectivization. Food situation has been

21 *Tibet - 1951-1991* (Beijing, 1991), p.67.

improved to a certain extent, but it must be borne in mind that more than 340,000 Tibetans had died of starvation during the famines of 1961-1964 and 1968-1973 - a thing which was never heard of in the history of Tibet. In fact, Tibet had always been self-sufficient in food.

To be fair, the Chinese now admit that their officials in Tibet have displayed the unhealthy tendency of great Han-chauvinism - though they blame most of the disastrous effects on the Cultural Revolution. They have also admitted that Tibetans were forced to grow wheat for the Han settlers, instead of their own staple diet - barley. It is not surprising that the people regard the present growth in market economy as the result of their own individual efforts and gives the government no credit. The Tibetans also takes the benefit of reforms for granted while resenting continuing government interference in their lives and remain fearful of a reversion to the policies of the past.²⁹ Due to past experience, the Tibetans do not trust the state, or its commitment to currently favourable policies, and resent remaining areas of interferences. The potential of state officials to call on the security apparatus to deal with discontent is always present.

Although, commune economy has been dismantled, Tibetans are still subject to wide range of state control over their freedom of action. No doubt herders benefitted from the

29 Melvyn C. Goldstein and Cynthia M. Beall, "The Impact of China's Reform Policy on the Nomads of Western Tibet", *Asian Survey*, vol. 29, no. 6, June 1989.

reforms introduced in 1978 and 1980, but herders still complain of limits to herd size, officials exercising control over state subsidies and loans, movement still being restricted through registration and permits, and merchants and traders being subject to licences and taxes.

The declared value of the gross value of agricultural output per capita for some rural areas of Tibet is between 500-600, well ahead of Chinese average of 276 yuan.³⁰ But this relative prosperity has been partly caused by inflation. There are still indications that some Tibetans are suffering afresh from food shortages. Meat, butter and cheese are still a rarity for many Tibetans. Yet, the Chinese export abroad much food produced in Tibet, as well as sending food, wool, dairy products, etc. to the rest of China. In official language, they are 'offered to the state' and the scale of these colonial appropriation has recently become apparent.³¹

Jasper Becker, *The Guardian* correspondent, said that the Chinese government was unable to control the food situation and that about 100,000,000 Chinese are suffering from malnutrition and that some 30-40 million people may be in danger of starvation in Western China, including Tibet. Grain is being rationed with coupons in cities and Becker estimates that per

30 Graham E. Clarke, "Tibet Today: Propaganda Record and Policy", *Himalayan Research Bulletin*, vol.8, November 1988.

31 Three Months in Tibet, the findings of the Third fact finding delegation sent to Tibet. From Liberation to Liberalisation, Dharmasala, p.124.

capital protein consumption is lower than in most Third World countries. China is at present purchasing grain from the USA and other countries.³²

Further, in March 1990, speaking in the third meeting of the 7th session of the Chinese congress, the Chairman of the TAR's People's government, Dorjee Tsering said that TAR was still a very poor region with a per capita income of only about 200 yuan. Increase in number of beggars is a stark reminder of economic problems faced by the Tibetans there.

Tourists also have reported on the large number of beggars to be seen in Tibet, particularly in Lhasa and, respected journalists such as Dr. Jonathan Mirsky have commented on the poverty and hunger which is still so evident in Tibet.³³ It comes as no surprise that even two Chinese economists Wang Xiaoqiang and Bai Nanfeng considered the Western regions as China's own Third World.³⁴ It is also interesting to note the reported comments of the late Panchen Lama who stated that China is a Third World country and Tibet is a Third World region in a Third World country. Apparently, the cost of living in Tibet is generally much higher than the rest of China, and the goods sold in Tibet are frequently much more

32 Interview with *Guardian* correspondent, Japser Backer, BBC Radio 4, 3.2.1989.

33 *Observer*, 26.4.1987. Jonathan Mirsky, Hongkong Drenlong (April 1988). I discovered the Truth after a Visit to Tibet.

34 Wang Xiaoqiang and Bai Nanfeng, *The Poverty of Plenty*, pp.80-84.

expensive than in Mainland China. Tibetans are also expected to produce food for the Chinese and in turn seek goods only available from the Chinese market.

Today, Tibet is the poorest of China's Western regions and there are good reasons to believe that the average per capita income of Tibetan is about 350 yuan. By any standard, this represents stunning poverty after some 40 years of 'liberation'. Even the Chinese and many foreign tourists have commented on the utter destitution of many Tibetans.

According to Chinese statistics, the level of annual subsidies to the TAR in the late 80s was around 1 billion yuan or US \$270 million. What the Chinese government would not admit is that they have taken out far more from Tibet than it has given. In monetary terms, the volume of Tibetan timber taken to China far exceed the amount of financial assistance it claims to have given. It does not even include the many priceless art treasures, mineral resources such as chromite, uranium, gold, silver, iron, copper, borax, lithium etc. which were shipped to China. Also, it should not be forgotten that the bulk of China's financial subsidy go towards the maintenance of Chinese personnel in Tibet. The Chinese are the greatest beneficiaries, even though subsidies were supposedly meant for the Tibetans. The massive infusion of capital into Tibet has simply subsidized the importation of commodities from China, with no tangible returns in terms of the development of commodity production within Tibet. "The lion's share of the

money provided by the central government has been used to pay goods purchased from the rest of the country."³⁵

The administration and management costs have risen dramatically in Tibet. This means subsidized consumption for the army of Chinese cadres sent to Tibet to oversee its economic development and staff its administration, most of them residing in large towns especially Lhasa. As Wang and Bai reports, Tibet is very much an over-administered society, with a top heavy articulated governmental super structure made up of "all the institutions, one expects to find in developed regions", consuming more wealth from the government subsidies than it generates through increased economic activity.³⁶

Even the items subsidized are those that are consumed by the Chinese rather than Tibetan. The staple diet of Tibet, is barley, however, it is only the price of rice and wheat that are subsidized. By 1985, the price of barley was left to the market forces and was 76 fen a kg. Rice on the other hand was sold at 40 fen a kg, after being brought by the government at 90 fen a kg. Wheat sold at 44-48 fen a kg. after being bought at 112-126 fen a kg.

Subsidies also go to pay Chinese settlers - mostly destitute Hans from Sichuan, Hui, Gansu, etc. and the Tibetans benefit very little from it.

35 *ibid*, p.73.

36 *ibid*, p.100.

Chinese cadres recruited to fill positions in the administration in Tibet receive a variety of incentives, including housing, special salaries, allowances for travel to their home in China and education for their children. The influx of Chinese also negates attempts to reduce the number of Han cadres from Tibet. Hu Yaobang's policy of withdrawing Han cadres from Tibet was implemented for some older cadres, but was quickly withdrawn in early 1980s.

The Chinese officials also provide permits and licences to traders, artisans, food sellers, hair dressers, etc. who are taking advantage of the opportunities. Whereas, for the Tibetans to get permission for travelling, involves long bureaucratic delays. Most Tibetans continue to work in traditional occupations - farming, herding and some forms of trade - while Chinese are recruited for non-traditional work in Tibet like mining, lumbering, construction, factory-work and non-indigenous agriculture.

Tibetan cadres, educated in China and trained to staff the Chinese administration in Tibet, have also been, beneficiaries of the reforms in Tibet. According to Chinese report, there are about 37,000 Tibetan cadres in Tibet. These are the new generation who are trained in Mao-Leninist ideology. These young Tibetan cadres are especially well represented in occupations like journalism, broadcasting, arts and cultural affairs and tourism. However, it is doubtful that the Chinese

would recruit anyone who is sympathetic towards Tibetan independence. That is hardly surprising though.

It is true that there are native Tibetans in high positions, but they hold no real power. They cannot make any decisions without the consent of their Chinese 'subordinates'. Tibet is one of the autonomous regions of the country, but autonomy is at best limited to the rarely exercised right to pass local laws and impose local taxes. Hans occupy all the key posts. It is interesting to note that till date, the post of highest position of power in Tibet, the Party's First Secretary has always been held by a Chinese. In 1959, it was Zhang Guhua, followed successively by Tseng Yunya, Ren Rong Yin Fatang, Wu Jinhua, Hu Jintao and Chen Kuiyuan.

The new phase of economic reforms which involves actively recruiting labourers and personnel in China for work in Tibet, is causing fear and insecurity even in the minds of Tibetan cadres. They find that their own careers are blocked not because they lack the necessary skills but because they are Tibetans. Also, since the outbreak of protests, the Chinese no longer trust Tibetan cadres.

A major aspect of the economic reforms has been the 'open door' policy. By opening its doors to the outside world, foreign capital can be used to supplement China's resources and is an important means to set up its economic development. Deng Xiaoping once said "It is necessary to acquire foreign funds

and technological know-how to help China's economic development".

On May 12, 1992, China announced the creation in Tibet of a 'special economic and technological zone' with incentives and preferential tax policies to attract domestic and foreign investment.³⁷ Letters coming from cadre groups in Tibet in 1992, speak with urgency of the threat posed by foreign investment in the country, with contracts awarded to Chinese contractors and labourer imported from China, while local Tibetans received no material benefits.

In August 1992 a poster appeared in Lhasa denouncing the policy for the further opening of Tibet: "These days, under the pretext of wanting to expand the economy, they are opening the whole of Tibetan region to China. In reality, Tibetans have no rights and are losing their jobs, and it is clear that they plan to make it impossible for us to live in our own land by sending countless Chinese to stay in Tibet." This poster from the underground group calling itself the unified committee of three provinces refer to the growth in housing for Chinese in Tibet and disputes claim that money spent by the government benefits Tibetans. The Tibetan cadres also see themselves being pushed aside and losing the few advantages they have secured through the reform. They know that they will be

37 "Tibet Encourages Foreign Investment", *China's Tibet*, vol.3, no.4, Winter 1992, pp.19-20.

replaced or down-graded as a new wave of Chinese cadres is recruited.³⁸

There are also reports of gangs of unemployed labourers roaming the country looking for work, having been driven out of their occupation by the endless 'influx of Chinese'. "Tibet: A Case Study to Answer" featured in 'Dispatches' BBC Channel 4, estimated that 70 percent of Tibetans are unemployed in Lhasa. Contrary to what the Chinese claim - Tibetans are discriminated in every conceivable way.

Education: Tibet still lags far behind in educational terms. According to 1982 Census, the literacy rate for Tibet was 22 percent compared with 76.5 percent for China as a whole. Since then, the government has reported considerable expansion in school accommodation. But most of the statistics regarding education are supposed to be deceptive. China claims that it has opened around 2,500 primary schools in TAR. However, majority of them cannot be regarded as schools in any sense of the word. Most of the teachers are not, capable of teaching even rudimentary Tibetan language. It is hardly surprising that children are not interested in going to schools.

38 'Open letter' from a group of Tibetan cadres circulated in Lhasa in the Winter of 1993. Title: A Statement concerning the general welfare of Tibet to be distributed among all Tibetans cadres of one flesh and blood, Tibetans who struggle, and the broad masses "signed a section of cadres."

In TAR, the illiteracy rate is 44.63 percent as compared to the rate in China of 15.88 percent.³⁹ Tibetans have access to primary and middle school education, but it is difficult to progress further. Access to better schools and higher education is limited for Tibetans because even if they successfully compete for a seat, Chinese students gets preference for admission. Also applicants for university places are examined in Chinese, which puts the Tibetan students at a linguistic disadvantage. Interviews for jobs too are held in Chinese.

During the Cultural Revolution, use of the minority languages was heavily restricted, a sign of tendency towards assimilation⁴⁰ though according to the 1975 constitution of the PRC "All Nationalities have the freedom to use their own spoken and written language."⁴¹ This guarantee was retained in 1978 and 1982 constitution, and this seems to be the actual trend. Teaching of Tibetan language in adult as well as primary school has resumed. But learning standard Chinese is a must for those who want to get good jobs or go for higher studies.

39 *TIN Supplement: Material and Spiritual Construction, Economic Development and the Propaganda Offensive*, London: TIN, February 20, 1990, p.5.

40 June Tenfel Dreyer, "Language Planning for China's Ethnic Minorities", *Pacific Affairs*, vol.51, no.3, Fall 1978, pp.377-8.

41 Article 4, PR 4, 24 January 1975, p.14.

Recently, the education for Tibetans has improved somewhat, but Chinese is still the compulsory language in all schools, while Tibetan is not a required language.⁴² While teaching of Tibetan has been permitted in some schools, the best schools continue to teach in Chinese medium. In any case, there is little incentive to study Tibetan as no jobs are available unless one is well versed in Chinese.

In 1990, 130 million was earmarked for the development of education in Tibet. In its white paper, the Chinese government also claimed that it has invested 1.1 billion yuan to develop education in Tibet. But the Chinese students residing in Tibet are the Chief beneficiaries of this grant. A study conducted by the Washington, D.C. - based International Campaign for Tibet, concluded, "the government has gone to unprecedented length to provide education and social services to the Chinese settlers to the exclusion of the Tibetans."⁴³

The Chinese frequently give inflated figures supposedly to illustrate their educational achievements, i.e., 6,000 schools started by the people with 200,000 students.⁴⁴ However,

42 "Human Rights in Tibet", *Asia Watch*, pp.49-52. See Donnet, "Tibetan Traditions Slowly Disappearing", *South China Morning Post*, 23 September 1985; also "Lhasa Students Vow to Continue Demonstrations", *South China Morning Post*, 3 January 1989.

43 "Racism Behind Resettlement of Chinese in Tibet", *International Campaign for Tibet* (Washington), September 23, 1991.

44 P.Wangyal, "MRG Report", *Tibetan News Review*, vol.1, no.3/4, Winter 1980/81, p.18.

reports from Tibetans as well as tourists contradict such reports, for example, during the visit of a US delegation led by Senator Leahy in August 1988, regional officials stated that many Tibetan children go without any formal education.⁴⁵

John Billington, director of studies at Ripton school in England, travelled all over Tibet in 1988 and reported that,

In rural areas especially, a large number of children can be seen working in the fields, cutting grass, herding sheep, collecting yak dung and working at stalls. Enquiry reveals that they do not go to school, in most cases because no schools exist. It was sad to hear older people say that there had been schools in the past attached to monastery, but that when the monasteries were destroyed the rural schools have not been replaced. Well off the beaten track, I met elderly nomads who could read and write, it was too often a brutal reminder of Chinese neglect that their grandchildren could not.⁴⁶

Also, the first Australian Human Rights Delegation to Tibet and China in 1991, stated in its report:

Though the delegation noted an official determination to raise education standards for Tibetans; many Tibetan children appear to still go without formal education. Tibetan children in Lhasa area seemingly have access to a very limited syllabus at both primary and secondary levels. Some testified to never having been to school, or having to leave for economic reasons as early as ten years old.⁴⁷

Julie Brittain, who taught English for a year at Lhasa university estimates that less than half the students at Lhasa

45 "US Senate Delegation's Report from Tibet", *Tibetan Review*, December 1988, pp.12-14.

46 Cited in *Tibet: Proving Truth from Facts* (Dharamsala, 1993), p.71.

47 *ibid*, p.72.

university are Tibetans and those are very often the children of cadres or are half Chinese and many of them were not sufficiently well educated to begin the university courses. And the Chinese policy seems to be "this university is virtually Chinese. We need Tibetans to balance it out".⁴⁸

As far as the overall educational situation in Tibet is concerned, there have been few widespread and general improvements in the past few years. But the consensus of opinion is that educational standards are still very low throughout most of Tibet, contrary to what the Chinese claim.

MEDICAL SERVICE

China has invested considerable sums in building hospitals in Tibet, but they are centralised whereas the Tibetans are highly decentralized people, spread across a great area. Tibetan refugees report that due to the coercive birth control practices, forcible sterilization and abortion, Tibetan women suffered in Chinese hospitals make Tibetans fearful of entering a Chinese hospital. There have been numerous reports of Chinese doctors and health personnel using Tibetan patients as guinea pigs to practice their skills. Most of the doctors are said to be unqualified, having failed or performed poorly in their examination in China and thus having little prospects of finding employment in China. Not surprisingly Chinese officials prefer to fly home for medical treatment,

48 *Tibet: The Facts* (Dharmasala, 1990), p.42.

particularly in the light of the fact that failed Chinese medical students are sent to work in Tibet.⁴⁹

Chris Mullin wrote that "even to the casual observer, it is evident that the standard of health care is much lower than in the rest of China".⁵⁰ The health service is not only urban biased, but serves the rich better than the poor. Only 10 percent of the financial outlay for health goes to rural areas. Ninety percent goes to urban centres where Chinese settlers are concentrated and where most of the hospitals are located. And when available, medical facilities are prohibitively expensive for most Tibetans.

Julie Brittain also stated that the Tibetan people favour their own doctors and medicine even when they are insanitary over those offered by the 'modern' Chinese hospitals. Ironically enough Tibetan medicine is growing in credibility in the West and many Chinese are benefitting from treatment by Tibetan doctors. During the year 1987, the Chinese produced various figures concerning the number of hospitals and medical facilities available to ordinary people. Chinese figures usually cannot be fully trusted because most of the time, their assertions are contradicted by very detailed testimonies obtained from Tibetans inside. In some of the reports, they

49 *Tibetan Review*, April 1988; See Accounts written by Julie Brittain in *Tibetan Bulletin*, vol.19, no.4, October/November 1988.

50 C.Mullin, *The Tibetans: Minority Rights Group* (London, 1981), p.12.

alleged that medical facilities are poor or non-existent and priority is being given to Chinese citizens and to Tibetan cadres. Suffering Tibetans were frequently turned away from hospitals or even turned out of bed when Chinese patients arrived needing attention. Tibetans also have to pay for medical treatment and such treatment as they do receive is often inadequate and sometimes even dangerous. Tuberculosis is also very prominent in Tibet.

There are many detailed reports of abortions and sterilizations being practiced in Tibet despite the fact that it is official Chinese policy to exclude minority nationalities from the provision of Chinese family planning legislation. They alleged that forced abortions are practiced upon Tibetan women who have exceeded the birth quotas. A film made in Tibet without the consent of the Chinese carried an interview with a Tibetan doctor who spoke of compulsory abortions and forced sterilization in Chamdo hospital after pregnancies of 3 months, 5 months and even later.⁵¹

Refugees' testimonies belie Chinese Minorities Nationalist Policy of exempting family planning regulations, that it is applied at least as vigorously in Tibet as in Mainland China. Even the Mayor of Lhasa city, Mr. Lhaga, at a meeting in Beijing in March 1989, stated that "In Tibet for example, the population is extremely small because of which Tibet is facing

51 "Tibet: A Case to Answer" filmed by Vanya Kemley, Dispatches Channel 4, 9.11.1988, 8.30 p.m.

difficulties in man power. Therefore we should not pursue the birth control policy in Tibet."

The consequences of the poor health service for Tibetans and the bad state of public hygiene are higher mortality rates for Tibetans. In 1981, crude death rates per thousand were 7.48 in the TAR and 9.22 in Amdo as against the average of 6.6 in China according to the report of the World Bank in 1984 and of the UNDP in 1991. Child mortality rates are also high: a hundred and fifty per thousand against forty three for China. The tuberculosis mortality rate according to World Bank is 120.2 per thousand in the TAR and 647 per thousand in Amdo. It is difficult to obtain reliable figures because statistics for life expectancy in Tibet are not reliable and vary widely. World Bank data suggests an average of around sixty one years for both the TAR and Amdo as against a figure of seventy years for China in 1990, up from 47 years in 1960, according to UNDP 1991. However, an independent source, based on admission made by the Chinese themselves, estimates an average Tibetan life expectancy of around forty years only.

Overwhelming evidence from many different sources, suggests that the Tibetan people undergo a form of health discrimination in contrast to Chinese settlers, which is tantamount to medical apartheid.

ENVIRONMENT

In three decades and more there has been serious environmental destruction of Tibet. There has been massive

deforestation of rich the forest belt of Tibet. In Amdo provinces alone, it is estimated that about 50 million trees has been felled in the last forty years. Southern Tibet has been equally denuded of forests. The Tibetans do not use much timber. Most of the products are sent to other parts of China.

Since 1959, nearly 200 billion yuan worth of timber had been removed according to Chinese official documents and Radio Lhasa in 1990. Immense areas of forests in east and southeast Tibet have been cut down and transported to China with no evidence of reforestation. Recent research now indicates that the Chinese have extracted some 54 billion dollars worth of timber from Tibet.⁵²

Radio Lhasa (2.5.1988), claimed to have deforested some 70 percent of the forest lands of Nagpa, Tarze and Mili and it is estimated that 5000 timber trucks travel east to Sichuan daily.⁵³

Most of the animals once to be found in the forests had either died or moved away in search of food. There were once bears, wolves, wild geese, ducks, black-necked crane, fish, eagles, ostriches and great herds of Tibetan blue sheep, wild yaks, deer and gazelles. Most of the herds have now disappeared, having been machine-gunned to feed the new Chinese population.

52 *Tibetan Review*, July 1989.

53 *Information Office, Tibetan Secretariat*, 19.10.1988.

There is no doubt that the ecology of very large areas has been ruined and that the Chinese are guilty of 'ecocide' in Tibet. This has become apparent in the agricultural sector. Ecological devastation in Tibet has also caused concern in the US Congress.⁵⁴ Most of the areas of Tibet which have been totally devastated have become barren. People and crops in these regions have been seriously affected. This massive deforestation has led to serious soil erosion and floods.

There have also been reports of China dumping radio active nuclear wastes in Tibet. It is not known as to how much of radio-active waste comes out of the top secret ninth academy of the Chinese defence establishment in Tibet. It is known that Tibet has the world's largest uranium reserves and there are reports of many local Tibetans, having perished after drinking contaminated water in the proximity of a uranium mine in Amdo. In 1982, Yin Fatang revealed that the biggest uranium resources in the world are to be found in the mountain of Lhasa.⁵⁵

In 1991, Green Peace exposed plans to ship toxic sludge from USA to China for use as 'fertiliser' in Tibet. And there are other reports of certain European firms negotiating with the Chinese authorities for dumping nuclear toxic waste in Tibet.

The Chinese are also exploiting Tibet's abundant geothermal springs and are using them to produce electricity.

54 US Bill, HR 4570 introduced, 11.5.1985.

55 Radio Lhasa, 13.11.1981.

Some of the electric facilities available to the Chinese in Lhasa are produced from these sources. But the Tibetan villages are routinely bypassed in the provision of basic sanitation, water and electricity. And in the urban areas, only Chinese government offices, settlements and military installations are provided with these services.

Tibet's earth is very rich in mineral resources. There are a minimum of 126 minerals in Tibet. Up to the early part of 1990, revenue to China from the exploitation of Tibet's mineral resources is estimated at 1.5 billion Chinese RMB.⁵⁶ This extensive mining operation has caused further erosion and is destabilizing the fragile slope.

All in all Tibet has vast and virtually untapped mineral resources and an almost infinite-hydro-electric potential, but its timber reserves have been severely depleted. There is also possibility that Chinese hydraulic projects in Tibet may alter river patterns causing floods with serious consequences to both India and Tibet as well as neighbouring countries.

FOREIGN AID

Since the opening of Tibet in the early eighties, there has been an increasing influx of tourists into Tibet. The Chinese opened tourism in order to attract the much needed foreign currency. According to the New China News Agency (Xinhua) more than 20,000 tourists visited Tibet and spent some

56 *Tibet - A Land of Snows: Rich in Precious Stones and Mineral Resources*, Dharmasala: Department of Security of H.H. the Dalai Lama, 1991, p.61.

24 million yuan and they talk of receiving nearly five times as many tourists by the end of the century.

Numerous foreign aids have been coming to Tibet since it opened up. Foreign aid in the form of development projects contributes to, and fuels the exploitation and marginalisation of Tibetans by the Chinese. There is a growing body of documentation indicating that Tibetans are not benefitting from the employment opportunities created through these economic development programmes because Chinese workers are brought in to fill jobs at every level. Foreign aid enters through both public and private sources. Some of these projects are Lhasa leather factory, sponsored by Germany, Yangbachen geothermal project, a joint venture with Italy, and the Yamdrok Yumtso hydroelectric project, sponsored by Germany, Norway and Italy. In addition, there are dozens of projects privately funded by foreign companies and charity organisations and by the United Nations and its agencies such as the WFP project.

These projects have reportedly resulted in the influx of 130,000 Chinese peasants. Tibetan farmers, often heavily in debt for various taxes, are being forced to sign over their property.⁵⁷ These policies are implemented in the name of economic development, sanctioned by foreign aid.

Six hundred and sixty million yuan is allocated for the development of the Yamdrok Yumtso Hydro electric power plant, a massive project whose environmental issues have attracted

57 *South China Morning Post*, January 30, 1994.

international concern, construction labour is provided by the electricity division of the Chinese people's armed police, although according to a Chinese news agent, the road construction around the site has been undertaken by Tibetan labourers.⁵⁸

These 'economic development' measures appear to be intended to serve the needs and interests of the people. Unfortunately for the majority of Tibetans, economic development is not only an illusion, it is an insidious means of slow, but sure, destruction of people. It is not the Tibetans who are benefitting from the developmental improvement but the Chinese military establishment and civilian population. These projects are posing a major threat, socially, economically and culturally, to Tibetan people in Tibet.

Most of the foregoing account suggests the conclusion that conditions have generally improved in recent years. The Central government is much more sensitive to their needs, than in the period from the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s. Since Hu Yaobang's inspection tour in May 1980, there have been reports of a much raised general standard of living, although it is still very low compared with other parts of China. Despite his continuing political protests against the Chinese rule, the Dalai Lama himself albeit grudgingly, has conceded improvements in the standard of living and increased in production.

58 Yang Haibin and Liu Junling, "Pearl on the 'Green Jade' Lake", in the *Quarterly China's Tibet* (English edition), Spring 1990, pp.6-8.

If the Chinese are really sincere about helping and developing Tibet, the real decision making should be in the hands of the Tibetans, who know and understand the needs of the Tibetans, and not Chinese officials, who have China's interest and their own personal interests in mind. Of course, it is doubtful that any government will put its enemies into positions of authority, if it can avoid doing so. It is possible that in this case, faults occur in the system not because of policy, which is good but failure in its implementation, either deliberate or inadvertent. The Chinese officials in Tibet, most of the time fail to implement the government's policies, which is one of the main reasons for the failure of the economic reforms policy in Tibet.

CHAPTER III

BEIJING'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE DALAI LAMA 1978-90

Since 1959, there has been no contact between Dalai Lama and the Chinese government. In December 1979, after a gap of around two decades, Deng Xiaoping initiated a dialogue with the Dalai Lama. Deng Xiaoping took special interest in Tibet. It is true that other 'minority nationalist' are quite well integrated with the Hans, but the Tibetans have never recognised any affinity with the Chinese. Even their language, culture, religion, history, political institutions etc. differ from Han China. They had always challenged Beijing's sovereignty rights and had always expressed a desire for national independence. For China, the Tibetan issue had become a thorn in their throats, which needed to be removed.

Although it took two equally pragmatic leaders, Deng Xiaoping and the Dalai Lama, to break the deadlock, the credit however, must be given to Deng who used his prodigious political skill and his unique standing within the Chinese Communist Party to manage and initiate a dialogue. Following a moderate and pragmatic policy in his domestic as well as Foreign Affairs, Deng Xiaoping took bold initiatives to remove barriers of long standing animosity to resolving outstanding 'National' problem such as Taiwan and Tibet. Hence, it seems hardly fortuitous that Deng Xiaoping who was held responsible during the cultural revolution for the most unrevolutionary

policy in pre 1959 Tibet,¹ once again made the first move to contact the Dalai Lama.

However, the main motive behind the Chinese willingness for a dialogue was and still is to persuade the Dalai Lama to return to the 'Motherland', so as to legitimise Chinese rule over Tibet. Further, his return would also put an end to his diplomatic offensives, of visiting Western countries to garner support for his cause, which causes frequent embarrassment for China with the outside world, considering that the Dalai Lama enjoys excellent rapport with the Western mass media. But the Chinese's worst fear is that he could be used for anti-Chinese purposes by hostile powers. This particularly worries the Chinese given the Soviet interest in the Tibetan question up to 1986.² If the Dalai Lama could be persuaded to return - it would be a feather in the cap of the Chinese regime as it would defuse much of the world-wide criticism of China's handling of Tibet. Their source of potential danger and embarrassment would cease automatically and would also lead to an improvement of Sino-Indian relations, which have been either cool or downright hostile for the past thirty years or so. China also believe that his return would put an end to the Tibetan

1 Dawa Norbu, "The Future of Taiwan in the Tibetan Model (1951-58): Political Analogy and Policy Implications", *China Report*, vol.23, no.1, January-March 1987, p.9.

2 Ngawang Rabgyal, "An Overview of the Tibet-Russia Relationship", *Tibetan Review*, vol.25, no.3 (March 1990), pp.10-13; Israel Epstein, *Tibet Transformed* (Beijing, 1983), pp.51-52.

resistance movement against the Chinese takeover as indicated by pro-independence outburst, in Lhasa since 1987. It is also possible that Deng Xiaoping must have hoped that normalization would give him the success that eluded Mao and Zhou. We can see that China had nothing to lose but to gain everything, if they could persuade the Dalai Lama to return to the 'Motherland'.

Thus, in 1979, a dialogue was first established between the government and Beijing on the basis of assurances given by Deng Xiaoping that China was willing to discuss 'anything except the total independence of Tibet.'

Since the early 70s, especially after the US abandonment of the Tibetan cause and the beginning of the Sino-American rapprochement, there seemed to be a significant shift in the Dalai Lama's posture. The Dalai Lama like his people, has come to the conclusion that he does not have any alternative but to negotiate for a greater autonomy from the PRC. Owing to this change in circumstances, he has altered his stand on the Tibetan question, avoiding the word 'independence' when talking of Tibetans' problems giving priority to economic welfare and happiness of his people. In fact he has said more than once that his main concern is the welfare of Tibetans whereas the issue of his own return is of secondary importance. By these announcements, the Dalai Lama met the basic Chinese pre-condition for negotiations: leaving no room to raise the question of Tibetan independence.

Although there has been no direct contact between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government, there are some indications to believe that the two sides had been in contact - through intermediaries like Gyalo Thondup, the Dalai Lama's elder brother - since as far back as the early 70s. In 1972, there were rumours in Lhasa that the Dalai Lama would be returning to Tibet soon, though the exiled government never made any announcement at that time about any kind of negotiations with Beijing. Beijing obviously must have received some sort of signal from Gyalo Thondup, either on his own initiatives or with Dharmasala's knowledge, and interpreted it as Dalai Lama's desire to end his exile.

It is obvious that by the late 70s, both sides were planning to break the ice. The Dalai Lama started talking about the importance of Tibetans in exile being allowed to visit their relatives in Tibet to assess the conditions there for themselves, and for the Tibetans in Tibet to visit their relatives outside to find out how the exiles were living.³ During that period, the Chinese made no announcement on this move. Only in 1988, it was revealed that the Chinese had made such proposal through Gyalo Thondup.

PARAMETERS FOR SINO-TIBETAN NEGOTIATIONS

Before any discussions could be held on the Tibetan question, Deng Xiaoping laid down three points for the Dalai Lama, through his elder brother, Gyalo Thondup, on 3rd December

3 Dalai Lama's statement, March 10, 1978.

1978. He stated that, "The basic question is whether Tibet is a part of China or not. This should be kept as criteria for testing the truth... so long as it is not accepted that Tibet is an integral part of China, there is nothing else to talk about."⁴ The Tibetan side interpreted this as the agenda for all negotiations except those aiming for total independence.⁵ Secondly, the Dalai Lama was encouraged to send fact-finding delegations to Tibet to investigate the actual situation there. Finally, he agreed to the Tibetan suggestion that fifty Tibetan teachers from India would be permitted to teach in various parts of Tibet.

It was during this time that the Dalai Lama told an interviewer on BBC television that Deng Xiaoping, had invited him to visit Tibet, but he had declined saying that he would not undertake such a visit until he was certain that the 6 million Tibetans were happy and contented under the Chinese rule. This must have prompted the Chinese into asking the Dalai Lama to send fact-finding mission, in order to assure him that all was well in Tibet. The Chinese apparently believed that the delegation would be favourably impressed by the progress made in Tibet.

4 "Gist of the Chinese views conveyed by Jiang Ping Deputy Head of the Central Committee United Front, to the three representatives sent by the Dalai Lama (October 28, 1984) (Beijing, 1984), p.4.

5 Interviews with Tashi Wangdi, representative of his Holiness Dalai Lama, New Delhi, May 29, 1990.

The Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government responded by sending three fact-finding delegations to Tibet in 1979 and 1980, to both inner and outer Tibet. Meanwhile, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which took charge of the Tibetan affairs now, made it known that whatever the findings of the Tibetan delegations in Tibet, it would not be the basis for negotiation. But Beijing would decide on its own, defining the boundary and identifying the issue-areas of Sino-Tibetan dialogue.

Along with the delegation, Beijing invited forty-four foreign journalists based in Beijing to visit Lhasa. And even though Seymour Topping of the New York Times wrote a long report supporting the Chinese claims of happiness in Tibet,⁶ Dharamsala did not give any rejoinder to that. But the delegates secretly informed the Chinese of their shock and dismay at seeing the current condition in Tibet. This prompted Hu Yaobang's visit to Tibet on May 22-June 1, 1988, to assess the real condition for himself. Even Hu Yaobang was reportedly appalled at seeing the deplorable condition in Tibet and he immediately came up with his six-point directives (which has been discussed in the last chapter) to redress the situation in Tibet.

⁶ Seymour Topping, "Tibet's Struggle for Higher Living Standards", *New York Times*, October 28, 1979.

CHINA'S FIVE POINT PROPOSAL TO THE DALAI LAMA

The Chinese met the Dalai Lama's basic demand for economic concessions, made in 1978 and 1979, after which they came up with their 'five points',⁷ proposal for the Dalai Lama. This proposal was conveyed by the Yaobang on July 28, 1981, to Gyalo Thondup, and is the only concrete proposal made by China so far - which Hu emphasized "Our sincere and serious decision".⁸ The first two points contain the assurance that China has entered a new stage of long-term political stability, economic prosperity and friendly relations among all the nationalities, and so there should be no more quibbling over the events in 1959 and that the Dalai Lama and those appointed by him to represent him at talks must be sincere and must not bargain like businessmen. Third, the Dalai Lama and the exiled Tibetans are encouraged and 'welcomed' to live in the PRC, in order to promote national unity and improve relations between the Hans and Tibetan nationalities. The fourth point says that the Dalai Lama will enjoy the same political status and living condition as he had before 1959. It also suggested that he could not go to live in Tibet or hold local posts there. But he will be appointed as Vice-President of the National People's

7 Beijing Review, 3 December 1986, *passim*. The same proposal has been repeated many times since then, and as recently as January 1989, in materials distributed to members of the US Congress by the Embassy of PRC in Washington.

8 Cited in "China's Dialogue with the Dalai Lama 1978-90: Prenegotiation Stage or Dead End?", Dawa Norbu, *Pacific Affairs*, vol.64, no.3, 1991, p.353.

Congress as well as Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee. Lastly, the Dalai Lama would be allowed to make a press statement before entering China, and a grand reception will be held on his return.

By this proposal, the Chinese only wished to address the terms for the return of the Dalai Lama and not the future of Tibet - which is the real issue. The Dalai Lama's only reaction to this proposal was "Instead of addressing the real issues facing the six Million Tibetan people, China has attempted to reduce the question of Tibet to a discussion of my own personal status."⁹ And there is really nothing new in this offer because the Chinese leaders have been saying the same thing ever since 1960s, through their publicity media meant for the Tibetans in exile without any success. The question is not whether the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans in exile can go back. The challenge before the Chinese leaders is to show to the outside world that the six million Tibetans inside Tibet enjoy human rights and freedom and are happy with the Chinese rule.

Because of some discreet international pressure, Beijing announced, on the eve of the Dalai Lama's visit to Britain in 1988, that its proposal was modified in that the Dalai Lama would be permitted to live in Tibet upon his return if he so

9 *The Dalai Lama, Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet* (New Delhi, 1988), p.4.

wished. More recently it has again suggested that he would nevertheless be advised to live in Beijing.

Undeterred by the Chinese unfavourable responses and negative attitude, the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile still continue to make sincere efforts to develop closer contacts and better understanding with the Chinese government. The Dalai Lama, realises only too well that talks with the Chinese government alone can bring about some settlement.

EXPLORATORY TALKS IN BEIJING

Two exploratory talks were held in Beijing between the CCP central committee functionaries and the Dalai Lama's delegates in 1982 and 1984. These talks covered more concrete and specific issues which could become the agenda for future Sino-Tibetan negotiations if both parties show serious interest in a compromised solution to the Tibetan Question.¹⁰

In April 1982, the three member high level Tibetan delegation put forward three proposals for consideration by the Chinese leaders. Juchen Thubten Namgyal stated that the PRC had given a nine-point proposal to Taiwan,¹¹ and that if China is prepared to give so much to Taiwan, it should be prepared to give much more to Tibet because of Tibet's unique historical status and special characteristics which warrant a special

10 Dawa Norbu, "China Dialogue with the Dalai Lama 1978-90, Prenegotiation of Dead End?", *Pacific Affairs*, vol.64, no.3, 1991.

11 See *Xinhua* (Beijing), September 30, 1981.

treatment. The typical Chinese reply to this was that Tibet has already been 'liberated' in 1950 and it is now well on its way to socialism, whereas Taiwan is yet to be 'liberated'. "Tibetans should not turn back the wheel of history". In other words, the 'one country, two system" formula for Taiwan, could not be applied to Tibet, because China claimed Tibet to be an integral part of China for centuries and treat the Tibetans on par with other "minorities" of China.

The Tibetans then, referred to the Resolution of the First All-China Congress of Soviets on the Question of National Minorities (November 1931) to the effect that the Chinese Communist Party "categorically and unconditionally recognises the right of National Minorities to self-determination. This means that in districts like Mongolia, Tibet, Sinkiang, Yunan, Kweichow, and others, where the majority of the population belongs to non-Chinese nationalities, the toiling masses of these nationalities shall have (the) right to determine for themselves whether they wish to leave the Chinese Soviet Republic and create their own independent state, or whether they wish to join the Union of Soviet Republics or form an autonomous area inside the Chinese Soviet Republic."¹² The Chinese reply to this reminder was, "we (CCP) were a child at that time but now we are grown-up".

12 Dawa Norbu, "Chinese Communist views on National Self-Determination, 1922-1956: Origins of China's National Minorities Policy", *International Studies*, vol.25, no.4, 1988, p.325.

The Tibetan delegation urged Beijing to consider the reunification of the entire Tibetan speaking people on the Tibetan plateau, i.e., Kham and Amdo (inner Tibet) into TAR (outer Tibet) into the administrative unit. Beijing of course rejected this demand, though regarding this issue, opinions are divided among the Chinese leaders. Hu Yaobang told Gyalo Thondup in 1981 that "this is a new idea which needs to be considered". Wan Fu also supported the Tibetan demand when he recalled that the late Zhou Enlai assured the Tibetan delegates to the 17 point Agreement in 1951 that the question of reunification of inner and outer Tibet "would be separately looked into".¹³

In February 1983, there were persistent rumours and speculations in the Press as well as among the Tibetan Community that the Dalai Lama would be visiting Tibet in 1985. But Dharamsala announced on December 16, 1983 that Dalai Lama would not be visiting Tibet in 1985. During this time, under the so-called anti-pollution campaign, a new phase of political repression was unleashed in Tibet, leading to the arrest and imprisonment of a number of prisoners.

The second delegation which was dispatched to Beijing on October 24, 1984, also urged the Chinese government to end its latest political repression in Tibet in order to create friendly atmosphere for earnest negotiation. They suggested that more fact-finding Tibetan delegations should be allowed to

13 Tashi Wangdi, interview.

visit Tibet in order to continue the Sino-Tibetan contact. The Chinese were informed of the Dalai Lama's rejection of their five-point proposal and reiterated their earlier demands as well, and also called for the withdrawal of Chinese troops, in order to pave the way for the transformation of Tibet into a zone of peace.¹⁴ The Chinese of course did not accept these proposals. But they did acknowledge that Sino-Tibetan dialogue over the years has promoted mutual understanding. In order to maintain the contact, a fourth fact finding mission was sent to Tibet. However, this delegation was allowed to visit only the Tibetan areas of Gansu and Qinghai provinces.

On October 28, 1984, Jiang Ping, the deputy director of the CCP Central Committee United Front Work Department in Beijing, conveyed to the Tibetan delegates that the Dalai Lama is welcome to return either for a visit or to settle permanently. Jiang reiterated Hu Yaobang's five-point proposal and added that equal status as the Panchen Lama would be given to the Dalai Lama, if he proves himself to be a true Chinese patriot.

Jiang Ping went on to 'prove' that Tibet has been an inseparable part of China since the 7th Century A.D. to 1950, by quoting British India's Viceroy Hamilton and Nehru who stated that China had 'Sovereignty' over Tibet. Tibetans' demand for the reunification of the whole of Tibet and greater degrees of autonomy also was rejected and the Tibetans are

14 *Tibetan Review*, January 1985, p.6.

implicitly told to drop these demands if they want to have any negotiations at all with the Chinese. The Chinese were adamant, that there would not be any changes made to the present administrative status in any of the Tibetan-speaking areas.¹⁵ The Tibetans were also told to concentrate on the question of "Tibetan happiness" as the Dalai Lama indicated in 1978 and 1979. With regard to this, Jiang was convinced that China had poured enough money and material to improve Tibetan living standards and bring about all round development in the region. But there will not be any change in Tibet's present socio-political system. Jiang ended with these remarks "Since the door is wide open, you are welcome to return. But as the solution lies with you, you must change your stand and attitude, otherwise, there won't be any agreement."¹⁶

The Chinese message is that the Dalai Lama is always welcome to negotiate with Beijing, but the terms and conditions must be set by the Chinese authorities which the Tibetan representatives have to accept if they wish to continue the dialogue. Therefore, Beijing's seemingly open door policy towards the Dalai Lama while resolutely refusing to accept any Tibetan demand may be motivated by two factors. To soften or neutralise international pressure on China with regard to Sino-

15 "Gist of the Chinese Views" conveyed by Jiang Ping, Deputy Head of the Central Committee United Front, to the three representatives sent by the Dalai Lama (October 25, 1984) (Beijing: Transcript, 1984), p.4.

16 *ibid*, pp.1-8.

Tibetan dialogue and to buy time until such time as the present Dalai Lama's death.¹⁷ Hence the talks held in Beijing in 1982 and 1984 did not bring the Party any closer to solving the issue.

THE DALAI LAMA'S PROPOSAL

Since September 1987, over fifty Tibetans have been killed, and many more wounded. Major incidents occurred in March and December 1988, when police beat and fired on demonstrators, apparently without provocation. Growing tensions, exacerbated by the large Chinese influx, led to open confrontations between the Tibetan demonstrators and Chinese security forces, particularly in Lhasa.¹⁸ This followed the largest uprising in thirty years, and Beijing imposed martial law in Lhasa on 7 March 1989.

It was against this background, that the Dalai Lama proposed a plan for the restoration of peace, human rights and democratic freedoms in Tibet, generally referred to as the 'five-point peace plan'. Then in June 1988, in an address to members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, the Dalai Lama proposed negotiations with China and announced a detailed framework for such negotiations.

17 Dawa Norbu, n.10, p.360.

18 Asia Watch and Amnesty International reports. See also M.C.Van Watt Praag, "Resisting Chinese Final Solution", *Spectator*, 10 October 1987.

Throughout the Dalai Lama and his government's dealing with the Chinese, a sincere and realistic attitude was adopted, in order to initiate a meaningful, direct and bi-lateral dialogue. The Dalai Lama had gone a long way in accommodating Chinese interest, in his series of initiatives without any success. Hence, he was left with no choice but to make his position public and appeal for international support.

On 21 September 1987, addressing the United States Congress Human Rights caucus, the Dalai Lama laid out a five-point peace plan for the restoration of peace and human rights in Tibet, in the hope that such a plan could form a basis for a lasting solution to the Tibetan question. The five points are:

1. Transformation of the whole of Tibet (inner and outer) into a zone of peace;
2. Abandonment of China's population transfer policy which threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people;
3. Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedom;
4. Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste;

5. Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between Tibetan and Chinese peoples.¹⁹

The Chinese embassy at New Delhi informed the Dalai Lama's representative Tashi Wangdi, on October 17, 1987 that China rejects this proposal and accused the Dalai Lama of widening the gulf between himself and the Chinese government. Despite the uncivil response, the Dalai Lama made earnest effort to clarify the Tibetan position in a detailed fourteen point note, conveyed to the Chinese government on December 17, 1987.

The Dalai Lama on June 15, 1988, at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, made another detailed proposal which elaborated on the last point of the five-point peace plan regarding Sino-Tibetan negotiations, in which he made major political concessions to China. An advance copy of the text of this speech was given to the Chinese government through its embassy in New Delhi.

The Dalai Lama said that he would recognise China's right to run Tibet's foreign affairs and defence by maintaining troops in the Himalayan nation which invaded in 1949, until such time as demilitarization and neutralization could be achieved through a regional peace conference and international agreement. He proposed to make Tibet a self governing, democratic political entity-in association with the PRC. Also,

19 The Dalai Lama, Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet (New Delhi, 1988), pp.5-9.

Tibet should have its own foreign affairs bureau dealing with commerce, education, culture, religion, tourism, science, sports and other non-political activities.²⁰

Aware that the fundamental disagreement on whether Tibet is a part of China or not is an obstacle to an early resolution of the Tibetan question, the Dalai Lama avoided addressing the question of Tibet's future formal status i.e., what degree of sovereignty Tibet would possess and whether it should be referred to as part of the PRC or not. He called for a greater degree of domestic autonomy, which does not conflict with Chinese sovereignty or security concerns, and should include the whole of Tibet - Kham, Amdo and U-Tsang, in association with the PRC. The government should be founded on a constitution or basic law which would provide for a democratic system of government. It would have the right to decide on all affairs relating to Tibet and the Tibetans. This government will be comprised of a popularly elected chief executive, a bicameral legislative branch, and an independent judicial system. He also stated that the social and economic system of Tibet, should be determined in accordance with the wishes of the Tibetan people. And he particularly emphasized on the protection of human rights and democratic freedoms, and the protection of environment.

20 The Dalai Lama, "Address to Members of European Parliament", *Tibetan Bulletin*, vol.19, no.2 (May-July 1988), p.2.

The Chinese leaders were also urged to realise that "colonial rule over occupied territories is today anachronistic. A genuine union or association can only come about voluntarily, when there is satisfactory benefit to all parties concerned."²¹

In order to create an atmosphere of trust conducive to fruitful negotiations, the Dalai Lama called on China to put an end to its human rights violations in Tibet and to abandon its policy of transferring Chinese into Tibet. As far as the Dalai Lama is concerned, his Strasbourg proposal is the ultimate compromise to China. Any future negotiation with China could only take place with Strasbourg as the basis.

CHINA'S RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSAL

China seems to have been caught unaware by the Dalai Lama's Strasbourg proposal. Not even in its wildest dreams could Beijing have imagined the Dalai Lama willing to compromise for a 'self-governing democratic Tibet' in association with the PRC. Quite naturally, the Chinese leaders did not give any reply to the proposal, until February 1990. Probably, the Chinese leaders were also trying to resolve their internal differences, regarding the best course to follow in order to resolve the Tibetan issue.

The Chinese embassy at New Delhi informed the Dalai Lama's representative, Tashi Wangdi that neither of the proposals could be the basis for negotiations. Beijing flatly rejected

21 *ibid*, p.3.

the Dalai Lama's overtures calling them as nothing less than "disguised independence". They objected that in essence, the proposal assumption was of an independent state prior to Chinese takeover in 1950. In other words, the Dalai Lama has violated the Chinese pre-condition for negotiations: the Dalai Lama should renounce any claim to independence for Tibet as something present in the past history or as a future goal.

The Chinese took exception to the Dalai Lama's Strasbourg speech in which he stated that "whatever the outcome of the negotiations with the Chinese may be, the Tibetan people themselves must be the ultimate deciding authority". It is a well known fact that the Tibetan people will not settle for anything other than complete independence and any proposal which stopped short of this would be rejected. The Chinese government is well aware of this and they read the implication in the Dalai Lama's speech, which gave the Chinese an excuse to reject the Dalai Lama's proposal.

Nevertheless, the Chinese officials in Beijing admitted that they were seriously studying the Dalai Lama's proposal. On 21 September 1988, a year after the Dalai Lama's five point peace plan, the Chinese announced that they were willing to meet with the Dalai Lama or his representatives at any place of the Dalai Lama's choosing.²² The Dalai Lama promptly responded by proposing a start to negotiation in Geneva in

22 Embassy of the PRC, Washington, D.C., Press Release on 21, 24 September 1988.

January 1989.²³ The names of the Tibetan team for negotiations were also announced.

The Chinese announcement appeared to be a major breakthrough until it became clear that Beijing attached some conditions to its willingness to talk. They made it clear that it cannot accept any calls for independence or semi-independence for Tibet as the basis for talks and that it wishes to talk to the Dalai Lama or to his own representatives only, like Gyalo Thondup, thereby reducing the Tibetan issue to that of the personal affairs of the Dalai Lama and his family, whereas Dharamsala has attempted to internationalize and legalize the talks.

China objected to the composition of the Dalai Lama's team, which included members of the Cabinet of the government-in-exile the Kashag, accusing them of always having been engaged in 'splittist' activities, as well as the Dalai Lama's western legal adviser, a Dutch international lawyer. They stated that as these talks deals with internal matters only, no foreign involvement in the talks would be tolerated. China seemed to disapprove of everything - even of the way the venue and date for the proposed talks were publicly announced, and said that the most suitable venue for talks is Beijing. But the Tibetans rejected Beijing, saying that a meeting in the Chinese capital would portray the Tibetan issue as an internal

23 "Olive Branch from a God King", *The Economist*, 29 October 1988.

Chinese problem. Beijing again emphasized that the Strasbourg proposal cannot be the basis for the talks. The pre-condition for having the talk-still is to accept and support the unity of the 'motherland'.

The Tibetan government was naturally very disappointed by this communication. Meanwhile, in Lhasa there were more killings as the local authorities were instructed to use merciless repression in handling anti-Chinese activities, according to reports from Hongkong newspapers.

The Strasbourg proposal is certainly not a call for independence. The Chinese misinterpreted Dalai Lama's statement. In fact, it has caused a controversy amongst the Tibetans in Tibet as well as the Tibetans living in exile. Some believed that the Dalai Lama was being realistic and is attempting to achieve some settlement. Others strongly criticized it as a total abandonment of the demand for independence they have been struggling for. They believe that foregoing independence has to a certain extent weakened Tibetans' bargaining position.

As mentioned before, the Chinese government's only condition for negotiations with the Tibetans was formulated in 1979, in Deng Xiaoping's statement that, anything except total independence for Tibet was open to discussion, and it was officially repeated just before the Dalai Lama made his proposal. It was only after the Dalai Lama announced his proposal for a middle way between total independence and

integration into the PRC, in which "we are the masters and China is a helper", that the Chinese leadership rephrased the pre-condition to exclude also semi independence and even disguised independence in any form.²⁴

China wants the Dalai Lama to publicly announce that Tibet has always been a part of China but the Dalai Lama refused to rewrite Tibetan history, though he now recognises the reality of the Communist takeover in 1950, which has now made Tibet an integral part of China.

The only conclusion we can draw from these discussions is that China wants to avoid negotiations, and is interpreting anything short of total integration into the PRC as a form of semi or disguised independence. China is obliged to discuss the Dalai Lama's Strasbourg proposal, if Deng Xiaoping's assurances and the past statements of the Chinese government are to be taken seriously. Even the so called 17 Point Agreement which Tibet was forced to sign in 1951 provided for a semi-independence. Beijing is being plain unreasonable in even wanting to approve of the Dalai Lama's representatives, which is really too much. The Dalai Lama also has every right to obtain legal advice from whomever he wishes. Beijing just does not want to negotiate at this time, which would benefit both sides.

24 See *Xinhua*, 21 and 22 June 1988.

CONTROVERSIES BETWEEN THE PRAGMATIST AND HARDLINERS

Opinions are divided among the Chinese leaders with regard to solving the Tibetan issue. For example, as far as the former CCP General Secretaries Zhao Ziyang and Sha Zhou are concerned, there is no question of dialogue with the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama should return to China and the conditions for his return is that he should stop working for the independence of Tibet.²⁵ On the other hand, Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang believed that the question of Tibet must be resolved through negotiation with the Tibetan leaders. Most of the Chinese leaders have rejected both statements.

Deng Xiaoping, after having taken the personal initiative in 1978-79, handed over the Tibetan affairs to Hu Yaobang, who remained in charge till July 1981. For the Chinese Marxist understanding, the Tibetan question boils down to the role which is to be played by the Dalai Lama. So on 28 July, Hu outlined China's Dalai's policy and handed it over to two departments in the Chinese bureaucracy - the CCP Central Committee United Front Work Department and the Foreign Office for implementation. The former deals with the Tibetan affairs when the Dalai Lama's delegates visit Beijing, and the Chinese embassy in New Delhi transacts business with the Dalai Lama's representatives.

25 *Indian Post*, July 12, 1988; and *Beijing Review*, February 19-25, 1990, p.23.

This handing over of the Tibetan Affairs to the bureaucrats led to the hardening of the Chinese position on the Tibetan issue. Earlier Deng Xiaoping declared in 1979 that the Dalai Lama could discuss with the Chinese leaders 'anything except the total independence of Tibet'. Hu Yaobang was also more receptive to the idea of reunification of both inner and outer Tibet. Moreover, between 1978 and 1985, the pragmatic Chinese leadership permitted four fact finding delegations from Dharamsala to visit Tibet, and all of the delegates were members of Tibetan administration at Dharamsala. In 1982 and 1984 two exploratory talks between the Chinese and Tibetan delegates were held in Beijing.²⁶

By June 1986, the hardliners had the upper hand on the Tibetan issue. The fifth-fact finding delegation was refused on the ground that they must travel on overseas Chinese passport.²⁷ This condition was not applied to the six previous delegations who travelled on identity certificates issued by the Government of India, describing them as Tibetan Nationality and their birth place as Tibet. On September 23, 1988, the Chinese government sent a message that "we will not receive any delegation or fact-finding group designated by the Kashag,²⁸ also indicates the hardening of their position in Sino-Tibetan dialogue.

26 Dawa Norbu, n.10, p.364.

27 *Tibetan Review*, vol.21, no.7, June 1986, p.6.

28 *News from China*, no.40 (New Delhi), September 28, 1988.

Factors like, Hu Yaobang's fall in 1987 and Sino-Soviet rapprochement in 1986 and the Dalai Lama's failure to visit Tibet in 1985 also accelerated the process of strengthening the hardliner's position in Tibet. The pro-independence demonstration in Lhasa on September 27 to October 1, 1987 also might have proved to be the biggest blow to the pragmatic line - providing live ammunition for the hardliners to counter the pragmatic line.

Hardliners included not only some top Han officials in the Party and the army, but also some young Tibetan cadres who had successfully made it to the top and felt threatened, should the Dalai Lama return to Tibet. These native cadres were more vocal in denouncing the pragmatic policy towards the Dalai Lama, and even condemned and accused the Dalai Lama of trying to 'split the Motherland', in order to safeguard their class interest. The pro-independence demonstration in Lhasa was considered as a violation of Deng Xiaoping's cardinal condition for dialogue: no discussion of Tibet independence. Although there is no evidence of the Dalai Lama being involved in any way, they linked the riots in Lhasa with the proposal, blaming him for the violence which broke out six days after his statement. By the year 1990, the hardliner policy towards Tibetan question became very evident. But it must be noted that, whatever differences of opinion they might share in regard to dealing with the Tibetan issue, all factions of the Chinese leadership are unanimous in their view that Tibet is an

inseparable part of China, and that any question of Tibet independence must be rejected outright as the basic precondition for dialogue. However, there is some difference among them on the same issue. Hardliners even objected to the very concept of independence that might have existed in the pre-1959 Tibetan history, whereas Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang might have contented with the Dalai Lama's acceptance of the fact that since 1950 China had gained sovereignty over Tibet and that it is on that basis that he wishes to negotiate an "associate" status for Tibet.²⁹

CONCLUSION

The Dalai Lama is aware that although Deng Xiaoping is known for his realism and flexibility, it is highly improbable that China will accept a federal relationship for Tibet. That country in Beijing's view is only a 'region of China' and will certainly not relax its hold on Tibet. On the other hand the Tibetans will never give up their fight for independence - as all of them long for nothing less than full independence. Unlike some of his dogmatic followers, the Dalai Lama realises only too well that he is in no position to form a rebellion in Tibet and that some understanding with Beijing would serve the interest of his people far more effectively than perennial exile.

Whatever the compulsions that have forced the Dalai Lama into this appeal to compromise and whatever the Tibetan

29 Dawa Norbu, n.10, pp.366-67.

reaction to this, the Dalai Lama had made a major political concession to China vital to China's security interest and sovereignty, but Beijing has not responded in a similar manner. The problem will not be resolved by one side of the Party alone - but will require an agreement between the Tibetan leaders and the Dalai Lama, who is the only person who commands the loyalty of all Tibetans, and the Chinese government in Beijing. The Chinese leaders had to be convinced that a willingness to compromise in the interest of peace and justice is not a loss of face but a big gain for China, as it would earn the country's leaders much respect and would increase their stature in the community of nations.

The only way to start negotiations for peaceful solutions to Tibet's problem is without pre-condition from either side, as is the case up till now. It is true that China had always demonstrated her eagerness to hold talks with the Dalai Lama to return to the 'great motherland', but at the same time the basic terms and conditions for such talks must be Chinese dictated ones and not a compromised solution. Such unequal negotiations cannot bear any results and its likely that the hardliners in the Chinese politics would not be prepared to give away any quarter, in the near future.

It is encouraging to find that an increasing number of governments and world leaders are supporting the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan cause. But the level of support has to be elevated to political and diplomatic actions in order to produce

adequate impact on the Chinese policy towards the Tibetan question. However, some governments are anxious, not to harm relations with China, that few of them have succumbed to Chinese intimidation by prohibiting the Dalai Lama from talking about Tibet, his proposal for peace or his views on non-violence in public when he visits their countries.³⁰ Some Western countries believe that they have too much stakes in the Chinese market which cannot be sacrificed for the sake of Tibet.

The inevitable conclusion we arrive at is that there will not be any further Sino-Tibetan negotiations, at least as long as the present regime in Beijing remains in power. As far as they are concerned, there will not be any change in the future statuses of Tibet under any circumstance. It is possible that China calculated that time is on their side as the Dalai Lama is already in his late fifties and they can hold on for another 20 years or so, by which time they can complete their demographic invasion of Tibet and hope that Dalai Lama will not be around by then. The Hans' belief that Tibet is included in the 'great motherland' is so deeply ingrained, that the strategic and political importance of the territory will, in Chinese eyes far outweigh the presence of the Dalai Lama in Tibet.

30 See "The Quiet Voice of Tibet", editorial, *The Times*, 6 April 1988.

However, the Dalai Lama expresses hope for the next five to ten years by which he believes that the political upheaval in China will produce a new government in Beijing, and this may be more amenable to negotiate, and achieve political settlement, though time and again he stresses that it would ultimately be up to the Tibetan people to decide whether any such settlement should involve regional autonomy or outright independence. Sooner or later, there is going to be a power struggle among the top Chinese leaders. Who will win or which way China will go, is difficult to say. There are several possibilities. If someone of the younger generation will play the same role that Gorbachev played in the former Soviet Union, and ease China into democracy, there is hope of Tibet's independence being restored.

CHAPTER IV

THE ACCELERATION OF POPULATION TRANSFER

CHINESE POLICY AND PRACTICE

The Chinese government denies its policy of transferring Chinese population into Tibet. However, there are numerous evidences which indicate that ~~the~~ government of the PRC is vigorously encouraging the transfer of Chinese settlers from Chinese provinces to Tibet and establishing Chinese settlements throughout Tibet. This policy began as early as 1949, when China started the invasion of Tibet, and is posing the greatest threat to the survival of the Tibetans as a people. Besides, there are also reports of the Chinese government practising various coercive birth-control measures to stem the growth of the Tibetan population.

The object of this policy is to 'resolve' China's territorial claim over Tibet by means of a massive and irreversible population shift, which will render the Tibetans to an insignificant minority and any resistance against China's rule ineffective. It is exactly for this reason that the Dalai Lama refers to the population transfer from China as the "final solution" of the Tibetan problem threatening to convert the Tibetans into "no more than a tourist relic of a noble past".

When Tibet was invaded by the armed forces of the People's Republic of China in 1949-50, Tibet was an independent state in

fact and in law.¹ During the long march, while passing through the snowy mountain (the Jiajinshan) in Western Szechuan, Mao Zedong had perceived Tibet's "difference" to be more fundamental. Speaking of the cattle and grain necessarily taken by his army from the Tibetans, he said, "the only foreign debt we owe is to the Tibetans for the food we took from them". But in the Chinese leader's perceptions over those twenty-five years to 1959, Tibet changed from being a foreign land to being part of China's territory.

The motive behind China's action, though in part political and economic in nature, were primarily strategic: the Tibetan plateau provides a commanding position in Central and Southern Asia giving China access to the entire Indian sub-continent.

Another principal motive for the invasion of Tibet became apparent within months of occupation. Chairman Mao Zedong announced plans to dramatically increase the population of Tibet,² by means of massive population transfer from China to Tibet. Mao admitted in 1952, when contrasting Tibet and Sinkiang that "While several thousands of Han People were in Sinkiang, there are hardly any in Tibet, where our army finds

1 See, International Commission of Jurists, *Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic*, 5-6 (Geneva, 1960).

2 Address by Luishar Thubten Tharda, printed in *Renmin Ribao*, November 22, 1952, quoting speech by Chairman Mao, Union Research Institute, *Tibet 1956-1967*, Document 9, at 45 (Hongkong, 1968).

itself in a totally different minority nationality area."³ He further stated that "Tibet covers a large area but is thinly populated. Its population should be increased from the present two or three million to five or six million, and then to over ten million."⁴ It should be noted that, before 1950, Tibet was populated virtually exclusively by Tibetans.

Since 1950 the Tibetans have been steadily diluted by an increasing throng of Chinese, primarily Han, but including also some people from other races better adapted to the Tibetan plateau.

The signing of the so-called 17 point Agreement was followed by the deployment of thousands of PLA troops in Central Tibet, and over the next eight years the Chinese gradually extended their control over the machinery of government.

Following ethnic invasion of Tibet in 1949, Tibet was divided into numerous zones for the purpose of administration. Large chunks of Tibetan territory in the east were already annexed before the Communist victory by the nationalist regime.

It should be noted that by 'Tibet' the Chinese meant 'TAR'. They left out northern part of Tibet (Kham and Amdo)

3 Mao Tse-Tung, *Selected Works*, vol.5, at 73, 74.

4 *Renmin Ribao*, November 22, 1952.

outside the TAR, which had been sliced and incorporated into other Chinese provinces. Since the early 50s and 60s Kham and Amdo had been swamped by Chinese.

By 1932, a part of two largest Tibetan provinces bordering China were incorporated into China proper. Some areas of Amdo have been annexed by the Chinese provinces of Gansu and Sichuan and Tibet's eastern province of Kham has for the most part, been annexed by the bordering Chinese provinces of Yunnan, Sichuan and Gansu. Today, more than half of the country is under Chinese provincial administration. Tibet's northeastern provinces of Amdo which includes the vast Kokonor lake has been christened Qinghai and is administered as a separate province of China. Within these three provinces, the Tibetan areas are administered as "autonomous" prefectures and districts. Only Central and Western Tibet, comprising slightly more than half of Tibet including the entire province of U-Tsang, is administered as the "TAR".

Communist China which considered Kham and Amdo already a part of China encouraged settlers into the ethnic Tibetan area. Kham and Amdo are the best part of Tibet: fertile and productive, it had a climate much milder than the rest of Tibet. Hence, most suitable for Chinese settlement. Besides, the area is very close to China proper.

Following the crushing of the Tibetan national uprising in 1959 and the flight of the Dalai Lama and some 100,000 refugees, the Chinese adopted policies throughout Tibet which were aimed at destroying the distinct Tibetan identity, culture and religion. Tens of thousands of people were imprisoned or sent to labour camps because of their social background and religious beliefs; temples, monasteries were closed and were destroyed in the decade that followed.⁵ Statistics show that over 1.2 million Tibetans, i.e., more than one-sixth of the population, died as a direct result of the Chinese occupation of Tibet, most between 1956 and 1976.⁶

Thus, it is very apparent that, from the beginning of its occupation of Tibet, the Chinese government's policy is to reduce the Tibetans to a mere minority in their own country which would leave them helpless and at the mercy of the Chinese.

5 See, J.Avedon, *In Exile from the Land of Snows* (New York, 1984), pp.221-319.

6 See, Professor Elliot Sperling, Responses to Supplementary Questions Arising out of the Congressional Hearings on Tibet, October 14, 1987; the *Heritage Foundation*, "Why the World is Watching Beijing's Treatment of Tibet", *Executive Memorandum* no.177 (10.9.1987). See also US Department of State Special Report on the Treatment of Minorities in China, 1987, at 14.

EARLY TRANSFER

Since the beginning of its occupation of Tibet, the Chinese government created incentives to encourage Chinese settlers into Tibet. In a statement to the Legal Inquiry Committee of the International Commission of Jurists on August 29, 1959, the Dalai Lama said: "In 1955, just before returning to Lhasa we had been to see Liu Shoo-Chi. He mentioned to the Panchen Lama that Tibet was a big country and unoccupied and that China had a big population which can be settled there."

State prompted migration policies brought the first civilian into Tibet, especially in Kham and Amdo.⁷ The concentration of Chinese population is highest in these easternmost Tibetan regions. Chinese settlement of these regions followed close on the heels of the invading PLA troops in 1949, when they entered Tibet's easternmost border areas and established military garrisons at every strategic point. Military occupation was not where it ended. A contingent of civilians arrived shortly there after administrative staff and their families - which paved the way for more civilians to establish themselves in force in large towns. Many soldiers were also forced to remain in Tibet as settlers.

7 Cal Yan, "Different Views of Migration in China", *China Daily*, February 14, 1990.

During the early 50s, Chinese settlers from Sichuan were sent to the Kham area and those from Gansu were sent to Amdo to settle. They were allotted plots of land by the Chinese authorities for farming.⁸ By 1959, when China installed its own government in the Tibetan capital, the Chinese population in this eastern half of Tibet had already reached an alarming figure. The number of Chinese settlers in Kham and Amdo was probably over two million by then.

The influx escalated from 1962 onwards when thousands upon thousands of additional Chinese settlers began to be sent into these areas as "builders, workers and technicians". The road builders and workers came into the region to construct the network of highways that would permit the transportation of military supplies throughout Tibet. Government administrators and cadres began to arrive in significant numbers in the early 60s.

While few Chinese lived in the Tibetan provinces of Amdo, prior to 1950, the Chinese settlers today outnumbered the Tibetans three to one. Large number about 175,000 in all entered the region during three mass migration in Amdo in 1955, 1959 and 1965. China also sent large number of prisoners to

8 See, G.Ginsburgs and M.Mathos, *Communist China and Tibet*, 65-66 (The Hague, 1964); Kashag (Cabinet of the Tibetan Government, now in exile) Document 11 (4)7 and 11(4)9.

Amdo, an area which has been referred to as "China's Gulag". The other wave of settlers was launched in the early 1980s.

Kham, with its proximity to China, was the first region to suffer under the Chinese invasion and it is from here that most of the resistance to Chinese occupation first occurred in the early 1950s. The population data are particularly nebulous regarding the Kham region because of the way in which Kham was divided and incorporated into the Chinese provinces.

During the early days of occupation, population transfer into U-Tsang also occurred, but mainly in the urban regions. Hugh Richardson wrote: "Since 1912 no Chinese were in Tibet except for a few traders at Lhasa. There were no Chinese troops and no officials until 1935, when a small party managed to get in. They were regarded by the Tibetans as an unofficial liaison office, and in 1949, they were expelled by the Tibetan government."⁹

According to a Chinese source, the traders in Lhasa before 1949 amounted to fewer than 500 people and included not only Chinese from Sichuan and Yunnan, but business people from Amdo, a few Muslims and a few Nepalis. Lhasa is now flooded with

9 Hugh Richardson, "My Direct Experience of Independence - Tibet 1936-1949", in *Tibet - The Truth About Independence*, The All Party Parliamentary Group on Tibet, UK, 1991.

China's businessmen.¹⁰ In 1979 and 1980, Chinese figures showed that there were 130,000 Chinese cadres, i.e., government employees, in the TAR alone. This figure did not include Chinese military personnel or private settlers.¹¹ Estimates of Chinese troops in the TAR at the time varied from 150,000 to 600,000¹² while the number of Chinese settlers in the TAR in 1979 is not known, but was probably low.

In 1953, Chinese population statistics put the population of Tibet at 6.34 million: 1.67 million in Qinghai, 3.4 million in Kham, and 1.7 million in the newly created TAR.¹³ At the same time, there could have been no more than a quarter of a million Chinese and Mongolian in Tibet, and they lived only in the border region of Amdo and Kham. Today, the number of Chinese in Tibet is estimated to be between 5 and 7.5 million of which over one million are thought to live in the 'TAR'.

10 Zhou Shaoxi, Tang pu Zhong, Ding Quong Fu, "Paradise of Economic Development", in *Tibetan Literature*, vol.1, Natural Resources Department of Sichuan Province 1993 (Chinese Language), Translated by TYC.

11 Cited in P.A. Donnet, "Tibetan Traditions Slowly Disappearing", *South China Morning Post*, September 23, 1985.

12 See, *New York Times*, July 9, 1964 and January 24, 1965; *Intelligence Digest*, August 1, 1995; Sweeny, "Keeping the Gentle Faith", *Shaffield Morning Telegraph*, June 23, 1983; *The Economist*, May 23, 1987.

13 *The Statesman's Year Book*, 1972-73, at 815.

MASSIVE TRANSFER IN THE 80S AND 90S

Till date, the Chinese have probably sent over 7 million civilian into Tibet, in addition to which they maintain at least 400,000 troops in the country (250,000 of them in the TAR).¹⁴ Since the Tibetan population is, at most six million, the Chinese have already outnumbered the Tibetans on the Tibetan plateau. Recent reports from Tibet and from China show a steady and alarming increase in the transfer of Chinese into Tibet,¹⁵ particularly in TAR. The principal difficulty in assessing the extent of the Chinese influx into Tibet results from the Chinese authorities' use of population statistics. Only the Chinese who have formally registered as residents in Tibetan areas are included in official immigrant figures.¹⁶ Most recent settlers in Tibet have not registered and do not figure in China's Tibet statistics. But even where definite numbers are given by Chinese sources, they are often self-contradictory and not to be trusted.

14 See *Heritage Foundation*, "Why the World is Watching Beijing's Treatment of Tibet", ; *The Economist*, May 23, 1987.

15 See, *Radio Lhasa* (Xinhua in English), April 11, 1985, also J.Avedon, *Tibet Today*, current conditions and prospects (New York/London, 1984).

16 See, Zhang Tianlu, "Tibet's Population Develops", *Beijing Review*, August 17, 1987.

Chinese statistics exclude numerous categories of people, such as large number of 'floating' population - workers who enter the region to cash in on economic opportunities or to work on special government sponsored projects. Further, military personnel, civilians working in military establishments technicians and professional staff brought in under official projects, workers registered elsewhere and who have resided in a place for less than a year and those who entered Tibet before July 1, 1985 are not included.¹⁷

This problem is more pronounced in the TAR where large number of Chinese settlers have arrived since 1984. The urgent need for Chinese personnel to help develop an economically and culturally 'backward' Tibet is generally cited as the justification for this policy, the other reason is to relieve excess population and unemployment in China - the government encourages settlement of Chinese in Tibet. Many come under the government programmes like "giving help to Tibet" or "help Tibet prosper". These people are provided with all opportunities and incentives, unavailable back home and unavailable to the Tibetans. Most of these settlers take up

17 Tibetan population in *China Today*, November 1993, p.6 (Chinese language) Beijing's China's Tibetan Cultural Publishing House and Review of 1990 Census of the TAR, 1992 (Chinese Language).

permanent residence as even the annual wages are 87 percent higher in Tibet than in the Chinese provinces.

By about 1986, China has surpassed its goal i.e. (Tibet's population should be increased to 10 million an estimate made by Mao in 1952). There were 6.2 million Chinese civilians in Tibet; 2.5 million in Amdo, 2 million in Kham and 1.7 million in U-Tsang. In addition, there were 500,000 troops in Tibet.¹⁸

Population transfer has accelerated since the early 80s and has intensified particularly in the 90s in the whole of Tibet especially in the TAR.

Currently, in most cities and towns in Amdo, Tibetans are in minority. The *International Herald Tribune* reported in January of 1983 that Beijing was encouraging young Chinese to move to Qinghai "by appealing to their patriotism and by offering higher wages."¹⁹ According to official Chinese sources in 1984, Qinghai had a population of 3.8 million, of which more than 2.5 million are Chinese and only 750,000 were

18 *Chinese Reference Material*, p.4, in "Summary of the Reference Material from official statements and reports from Chinese as well as from other mass media sources concerning recent development in China and Tibet", Dharamsala, India: Department of International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration 1985.

19 *International Herald Tribune*, January 12-13, 1983.

Tibetans.²⁰ Less than a year later the total population had increased to 3,947,368, of which still only 750,000 were Tibetans.²¹ These figures do not include military personnel nor do they include the inmate population of China's prison "Qinghai Gulag", which currently has several million inmates.²² Most of these prisoners are not allowed to return to China on release. As of 1990, Chinese people outnumbered Tibetans by three to one.

Kham, Tibet's easternmost province, has been subjugated to Chinese colonization since the fifties because of its close proximity to China. As Kham has been divided and incorporated into the Chinese provinces, it is difficult to make accurate assessment of population changes and ratios. Comparisons of the 1982 and 1990 Chinese data are difficult because the data have been categorised differently. In 1990, China did not provide detailed population data by Tibetan prefectures.

Currently, there are over 2 million Chinese settlers in Kham, but less than half of them are not registered. The

20 See, *Beijing Review*, February 27, 1984.

21 *News from China*, no.5, January 29, 1985, published by the Embassy of the PRC, New Delhi, India.

22 *19 News Tibet*, at 29 (January-August 1984), see *The Economist*, June 15, 1985.

Tibetan population is close to 3 million in the region,²³ though Chinese statistics estimate about 1.5 million. The reason for discrepancy is that China does not include in its census those Tibetans living in areas now incorporated into non-Tibetan prefectures. The highest concentration of Chinese is found in the cities and towns where they generally constitute the majority of the population. The Chinese have outnumbered the Tibetans, particularly in the urbanised areas.²⁴ In some areas, the percentage is as high as 75 percent.²⁵

Since the mid 80s, population transfer has intensified in U-Tsang due to government initiated economic reform and development activities. In 1980, Hu Yaobang announced that 85 percent of all Chinese cadres would be withdrawn within three years from 'TAR'.²⁶ But in 1983, that policy was reversed, resulting in a massive influx of Chinese into Tibet,

23 See, U.S.Department of State, *Special Report on the Treatment of Minorities in China*, 1987, at 14.

24 "Data on Tibet's Population", *The Economists*, June 15, 1985; and P.Kedge, "Tibetan Figures Clarified", *The South China Morning Post*, November 3, 1987.

25 Statement by Chen Feng, New Delhi, November 2, 1987.

26 Kulkarni, "Tibetans Adopt Wait and See Stance on Chinese Reforms", *Christian Science Monitor*, July 1, 1981; see also Jiang Shu, "New Changes on the Plateau", *Beijing Review*, May 25, 1981.

particularly in the TAR.²⁷ In the past, U-Tsang had the lowest concentration of Chinese civilians in Tibet. Today there are probably more than two million. It is precisely to this region that Chinese are encouraged to migrate, in order to meet the growing political resistance in the TAR.

Chinese government sources give the Tibetan population of the TAR 1.99 or 2.1 million,²⁸ and the number of registered colonizers as 76,000.²⁹ But independent observers report that at least 100,000 Chinese live in Lhasa alone, outnumbering Tibetans two to one.³⁰ In the entire Lhasa administrative area, Tibetan sources put the Chinese population at 630,000.³¹ Ngabo Ngwang Jigme stated on Radio Lhasa that there were 100,000 Chinese civilians in Lhasa,³² but there are about the same number of unregistered Chinese present in the city. On 27

27 J.Avedon, *Tibet Today, Current Conditions and Prospects* (New York/London, 1987); see *New York Times*, May 3, 1983.

28 See, Zhang Tianlu, "Tibet's Population Develops", *Beijing Review*, August 17, 1987. *China Reconstructs*, September 1987.

29 Some Basic Facts about Tibet, distributed by the Chinese Embassy, Washington, D.C. (September 1987).

30 See, *South China Morning Post*, October 1, 1986; *The Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly*, June 29, 1987.

31 Letter from General Secretary, Information Office, October 25, 1986.

32 *Radio Lhasa*, 23.3.1989.

September 1988, Mao Rubai, Vice Chairman of the TAR, admitted that there were about one million Chinese in this area. In June 1987, even Deng Xiaoping admitted that the Chinese were being encouraged to move to Tibet because, according to him the local population "needs Han immigrants as the autonomous region's population of about two million is inadequate to develop its resources."³³

In 1985, in Lhasa alone, there were 50,000 to 60,000 Chinese civilian residents. From 1985-1988, further influx of Chinese immigrants doubled the population of Lhasa. In 1991 China announced that "technicians from all over China have come to work at various construction sites and about 300,000 workers are prepared to join in the project".³⁴

Chinese settlements have been constructed along side all major Tibetan cities and towns while many Tibetans are made to move to the undeveloped and arid parts of the country.³⁵ Also in the country side virgin forests have been cleared to house exclusively Chinese communities. China behaves towards

33 Deng Xiaoping, during meeting with President Jimmy Carter, June 29, 1987, reported by Reuters. Beijing, June 30, 1987.

34 *Beijing Review*, January 21-27, 1991.

35 See, M.C. Van Watt, "Observations on a Fact-finding Visit to Tibet", January 1987; F. Steenhuis, "Impressions of my Stay in Tibet", April 1987.

the Tibetans like a colonial power, and still worse, has instituted a system of apartheid there. Even the housing for Chinese is kept separate from the Tibetans and the electricity grid spreading slowly over the countryside by-passes the Tibetan villages.

Since January 1992, when Chinese announced its 'open door policy, Tibet has been swamped by more Chinese people of all kinds who have taken advantage of the 'open door' policy. In Lhasa, about 28,000 Chinese arrived between 1987 and 1992. In Nagchukla, some 27,000 Chinese settlers arrived between 1989-1992. In Ngari, 43,860 settlers arrived between 1986 and 1992.

Through its economic development policies more and more Chinese are coming to U-Tsang as they particularly view U-Tsang as "Land of Gold". Projects like UNWFP, project 3357, Yamdrock Yamtso Hydroelectric power project, the Yarlung Tsangpo River Project, one river, two stream projects etc. and many other construction projects, along with approximately 50 foreign assisted ventures in the whole of Tibet, are being undertaken to attract Chinese settlements to Tibet.

The current surge of migration in 1991-92 are because of these development projects. Another 43 major development projects are initiated for the sole purpose. These are

expensive 'show case project',³⁶ targeting the tourist markets. Over 20,000 technicians and large number of construction labourers were initially brought to Tibet from Chinese cities to work on these projects.³⁷ A correspondent of the *Asian Wall Street* in Lhasa warned, "The most significant threat to Lhasa Tibetan identity comes from recent government efforts to increase the number of Chinese settlers in Tibet - an expression made possible by the new tourist revenue".³⁸

TIBETAN REPORTS

Besides reports from the Chinese people, there are numerous reports from outsiders and Tibetan refugees, as well as Tibetans in Tibet, which completely disproves China's official denial of population transfer in Tibet. Radio Lhasa broadcast those, who have volunteered to settle in Tibet as model patriots and revolutionaries. The idea is to exhort and encourage more and more Chinese settlers into Tibet, so as to

36 Ann Forbes and Carole McGranahan, *Developing Tibet? A Survey of International Development Projects*, May 1992, Cambridge and Washington: Cultural Survival and the International Campaign for Tibet, Report No.33, p.116.

37 Zhou Shaoxi, Tang pu Zhong, and Ding Qiong Fu, "Paradise of Economic Development", in *Tibetan Literature*, vol.1, Natural Resources Department of Szichuan province, 1993 (Chinese language) translated by TYC.

38 See *The Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly*, June 29, 1987.

weaken the resistance movement, which will solve the Tibetan problem once and for all.

At a high level secret meeting of Chinese officials on May 12, 1993, it was decided that the further flooding of Tibet with Chinese nationals would offer the final solution to the Tibetan problem. This "solution" is aimed at making it demographically "impossible for Tibetans to rise as is in the case of inner Mongolia and Xinjiang (East Turkistan)".³⁹ It is not surprising that the Tibetans have grave fears for their own survival judging from China's track records. Deng's comment in 1993 on the subject of problem in Eastern Turkistan is taken as an omen of things to come in Tibet. Referring to the "splittist" activities of the Uighurs, Deng noted "it is fortunate that in the past 40 years, we have made population proportions such that splittists can't really do much".⁴⁰ In eastern Turkistan today, according to China's Xinjiang daily, there are 7.2 million Uighur to 5.7 million Chinese.

Thousands of Han were imported to be employed in the numerous projects to the exclusion of Tibetans from any skilled and unskilled jobs. By April 1985, 230,000 new Chinese workers

39 *Tibetan Bulletin*, September-October 1993, p.14.

40 Deng Xiaoping, "Three Major Problems of Communist Power", in *Qian Shao*, a monthly magazine, Hongkong, July 1993, p.18 (Chinese language) translated by TYC.

had arrived in the TAR: 100,000 in and around Lhasa and the remainder in other areas of the TAR. But since then, the number has grown enormously. This great influx has caused food shortages and put many Tibetans out of work.⁴¹ In 1985, about 30,000 Tibetans reportedly lost their jobs to newly arrived Chinese settlers in Lhasa and surrounding areas,⁴² while some 20,000 Tibetans lost their jobs in other parts of TAR.⁴³

Tibetans and Western Tourists report that there were some 85,000 Chinese in Nagchu, 320,000 in the Chamdo area, 170,000 in the Shigatse area, 93,000 in Lhoka and 150,000 in Ngari. Cheng Fen, a Chinese intellectual who escaped to Nepal via Tibet in October 1987, has confirmed that 65 percent of the population of Lhasa is Chinese, while 60 percent of the population of Nagchu and 70 percent of the population Chamdo are Chinese. Chinese similarly outnumbered Tibetans in most other towns and cities.⁴⁴ In the countryside of Powo and

41 *Intelligence Report*, April 1985.

42 See, *The Economist*, June 15, 1985.

43 *20 News Tibet* 1 at 2 (January-April 1985).

44 State of Cheng Fen, New Delhi, November 2, 1987. See M.C.Van Watt, Report on Fact-Finding visit to Tibet, January 1987.

Kongpo some 280,000 Chinese are reported to have settled.⁴⁵ The Chinese have outnumbered Tibetans even in TAR. Yet China's 1990 statistical data suggests that the population of Chinese in the TAR has actually decreased since 1982, from about 91,7000 to about 81,200. As early as 1980, the Tibetans comprised only 42 percent or 50,000 of Lhasa's total population of 120,000. By 1982, the Chinese population had grown from 70,000 to 96,000 and to 136,000 by 1986.⁴⁶ Even in this census, there were many categories of Chinese like military personnel and large floating population, who were excluded from the census.

The situation has worsened as a result of the Chinese government's decision to remove all checkpoints on the highway leading from China to Tibet. Because of this, thousands of 'floating' Chinese workers have swamped Tibet. The government acknowledges their presence but claims that there is no way to control the flood. But instead of restricting the movement the Chinese government allows these settlers to settle in any part of Tibet, with or without permission and obtain housing, jobs

45 Letter from General Secretary, Information Office, October 25, 1986.

46 G.E. Clarke, "China's Reforms of Tibet and Their Effects on Pastoralism", IDS Discussion Paper No.237, Institute Development Studies, Brighton, University of Sussex, November 1987.

etc. In Lhasa alone, this floating population ranges from 40,000 to 100,000.⁴⁷

Even the government of the 'TAR' recognised that this migration created problems for the Tibetan population. In March 1989 Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, Vice President of the Chinese People's National Congress, said that "today because of so many Chinese shopkeepers and settlers coming into Tibet (some 100,000 of them being in Lhasa alone) great disturbance has been caused to public security".

Even in the so called non 'TAR' Tibetan region, the Chinese fourth population census in 1990 put the Chinese population (including a small number of Mongols) at 4,927,369. However it is said that there is at least one non-registered Chinese against every two who are registered. This means that the actual Chinese population, both registered and unregistered in the non 'TAR' Tibetan region of Kham and Amdo is estimated to be about 7.4 million.

The Chinese 'open door' policy has escalated the population transfer of Chinese into central Tibet. China's 'open door' policy refers to two doors, as one Tibetan official observes: when they talk of an open door policy for Tibet, it

47 "Idle transients Told to Leave Tibet", March 22, 1989, and "Warning Over Tibet's Removal of Checkpoints", January 6, 1993, both from the South China Morning Post.

means two doors, not one. There is a little door and a big door. The little door opens to the outside world, and the big door opens to China. The big door cannot open without the little one also opening.⁴⁸

Each project in Tibet provides an opportunity and employment for Chinese to move and settle there. The opening of tourism since 1987 also provided impetus to this influx of Han. Chinese nationals are encouraged through the mass media to move to Tibet. An editorial in Beijing Review explained the central government's policy in terms of the need to revitalize the economy of Tibet and "overcome its economic and cultural backwardness".⁴⁹ Foreign aid which helps the development projects in Tibet, provides legitimation for Chinese population transfer policy, even though aid from abroad were well-intentioned. Hardly any Tibetans are getting benefits as Hans are brought in to fill jobs at every level. The government creates incentives, advertises and then facilitates the move and settlement of Chinese into Tibet.

Population movements are always preceded by the influx of military personnel, road construction and communication

48 *TIN News Compilation*, London: Tibet Information Network, October 22, 1992, p.37.

49 *Beijing Review*, May 27, 1985.

workers.⁵⁰ One analyst of the Tibetan situation observed, "China has a tradition of creating large labour intensive projects in remote areas - serviced and supplied from Mainland China".⁵¹

Wheat is not a staple diet of the Tibetans, but most of China's major development projects including the UNWFP project 3357 are concerned with wheat production, meant to attract Chinese settlement into Tibet. According to a Chinese source "among the complex issues of the development of Tibet, the production of wheat is of primary importance. When this issue is solved, then there will be no problem in getting technology and personnel from the Mainland to go."⁵² The UN project 3357 alone resulted in the influx of 130,000 Chinese peasants into Tibet. At present, there are approximately 50 foreign assisted projects in the whole of Tibet, which provides a front for population transfer on a massive scale.

50 "Tibetan Views of Immigration into Central Tibet. 1992-93", *TIN*, Background Briefing Paper, October 1993, p.12.

51 "Immigration into Central Tibet 1992-3", *TIN Background Briefing Paper*, Tibet Information Network, October 1993, pp.10-11.

52 Xizang Xingshi He Renwu Jinoyu De Jiben Jaocai, People's Liberation Army, Tibet Military Division, Political Science, Pt.1, 1960 (Chinese Language) translated by TYC.

With the expansion of Gongkar airport, China plans to have moved 440,000 of its population into Tibet, by the year 2000, 400,000 by air.⁵³ Military personnel, technicians, professionals, labourers and agricultural workers, related to the major development projects all swell the Chinese population in Tibet.

Even during the early days of occupation, China developed seven major highway projects which employed tens of thousands of workers, mostly PLA personnel, over a two decade period.⁵⁴ And there is evidence that militarization of Tibet has escalated since March 1994. Approximately 30,000 troops are thought to have been moved from inland China - one detachment from Lanzhou and two from Chengdu. This represents a 60 percent increase in the troops in Central Tibet.⁵⁵

Since 1978, the regime has been outspokenly in favour of population control in Tibet. Over the past years, there has

53 Kuo Huang, "Review of Tibet Region", 1986; vol.1 (Tibetan Language: Bod Gongs Shil ajug) a *Chinese Internal Literary Journal*, translated by TYC.

54 *Tibetan Review*, vol.10 (9 and 10), September-October 1975, esp. editorial, "Tibet: From Peaceful Buffer to Military Base", pp.3-6. Dawa Norbu and Kesang Tenzing, "Military Developments in Tibet: 1950-1974", pp.15-19.

55 Abhay Vaidya, "Chinese Military Complexes in Tibet", *Times of India*, March 5, 1994, and *TIN News Update*, "Troops Move into Tibet", London: Tibet Information Network, April 24, 1994.

been numerous reports about China compelling Tibetans to adhere to a strict birth control programme that includes forced abortions, sterilization and even infanticide. In the past these were only refugees' reports, but now these assertions and accusations have appeared in several related publications with ample evidence, which cannot be dismissed.

According to Mrs. Dolkar of Dechen district, who arrived in Dharamshala in 1988, she and 23 women from her district were sterilized against their will and that many hospitals have specific departments which carry out abortions and sterilization. Most of the children delivered, in these hospitals do not survive and the Tibetans refer to them as 'butcher' shops.⁵⁶

Another report involves two small villages in Todung Dechen district, by Mrs. Dechen from village no.2 Seno sub-district. She reported that there are 12 households in her village of which 9 women were subjected to forced sterilizations and in the nearby village of Donkar, out of 29 household, 13 women were sterilized against their will. These

56 *Tibetan Review*, September 1988, "Human Rights Abuses in Tibet", Office of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Secretariat, Dharamshala, India.

sterilizations occurred around the end of 1982 and 1983.⁵⁷ There are also reports of how the Chinese mistreat Tibetan girls. It says "they treat our girls like animals sometimes they take them just to do experiment on."⁵⁸ There are also reports of even more repressive policies being enforced in Kham and Amdo. For example, in "Gansu Parig Tibetan Autonomous District", 2,415 women were sterilized in 1983, of whom eighty two percent were Tibetans. In 1987, 764 women of child-bearing age were sterilized in Zachu district in "Kanze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture"; 660 were Tibetans. Even women well advanced in their pregnancy are forced to undergo abortion followed by sterilization. All these evidences simply cannot be ignored anymore.

As more and more ethnic Chinese are settled in the country the Tibetans fear that if this present population transfer and their family policies continue, Tibetans will soon become a marginalised minority in their own country. and that would be the end of a rich distinct Tibetan culture, religious heritage and identity.

57 *Tibetan Review*, August 1989, "Refugee Accounts of Human Rights Violation in Tibet", Dr. Blake Kerr, pp.9-12.

58 *Daily Telegraph*, 12.3.1988, "Tibetan Monks Held in Sterilisation Protest", Tim Luard.

CHINESE REPORTS

The government in Beijing officially denies the existence of a policy to relocate Chinese in Tibet.⁵⁹ According to Chinese authorities "Chinese government has never formulated and implemented the plan of immigration to Tibet," rather a few personnel of Han and other nationalities "were sent to provide professional and technical assistance to development projects."⁶⁰

It also claimed that "in recent years, as Tibet has implemented the economic policy of opening up and reforms, some Han and Hui people have gone to Tibet to do business or be craftsmen. These people are always on the move and limited in numbers. They have not emigrated to Tibet."⁶¹

The Chinese government generally denies that it has a policy of population transfer. Its "white paper" reports, "Another lie is the claim that a large number of Han have

59 See Letter from Yue Junging, Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, London, to Lord Avebury, Chairman of Parliamentary Human Rights Group, November 27, 1986.

60 "Question of the Violation of Human Rights and fundamental freedom in any part of the world, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories", Report No.6E.92-10383/4202B of the economic and social council, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 48th session, January 5, 1992, p.37.

61 *ibid*, p.24.

emigrated to Tibet, turning the ethnic Tibetans into a minority".

At the same time, the Chinese publications, such as *News from China*, issued by the Chinese embassy in New Delhi, and the official *Beijing Review* published in Beijing frequently refer to government's encouragement for the settlement of Chinese nation into Tibet. The first indication of Chinese population transfer to Tibet came in 1952, when Mao Zedong himself proposed a five-fold increase in the population of Western half of Tibet, later to be named 'TAR'.

The Chinese government promised favourable treatment in pay and home leave, "to those who go to work in Tibet, Qinghai and other Tibetan plateau areas for a long time."⁶²

Special wage benefits were promised exclusively to college and secondary technical school graduates moving to the "Tibet-Qinghai plateau". Furthermore, in order to encourage them to stay in Tibet, the government announced that "those who wish to stay on after 8 years enjoy, further pay raise. Those who have worked there for more than 20 years and stay on after retirement will have their pension increased by 10 percent."⁶³

62 *Beijing Review*, September 12, 1983.

63 *Beijing Review*, October 10, 1983, at 22 see also *The Economist*, June 15, 1985.

Currently, a special effort is also being made to retire Chinese army personnel and their families in Tibet."⁶⁴

Beijing's government policies and efforts evidently had a tremendous effect, judging from their own report alone. *Beijing Review* reported on 27 February 1984, that Tibetans were now "fighting shoulder to shoulder" with the large number of Hans who have sacrificed the comforts of their home towns and dedicated themselves to modernising the Tibetan areas." In May 14, 1984 *Radio Beijing* reported that "over 60,000 workers representing the vanguard groups to help in the construction work in the TAR are arriving in Tibet daily, where they would be employed in the electricity department, in schools, hotels, cultural institutions and factories."⁶⁵

Again in October 1984, *Beijing Review* reported that "unsparing help is flowing in steadily from China's more developed regions, bringing the much needed labour funds and expertise to the TAR. Sichuan alone sent 10,000 construction workers. Large number of technicians and skilled workers have also arrived from 8 of the provinces and municipalities to join the construction of Tibet's 43 new projects."⁶⁶

64 *Radio Lhasa*, July 21, 1986 and May 23, 1987.

65 *Radio Beijing*, 17.00 hours, May 14, 1984.

66 *Beijing Review*, October 15, 1984.

Regarding these "43 projects", all phases of construction, including designing, building and interior decorating are handled by personnel supplied by the cooperative provinces and cities of China.⁶⁷ In Lhasa alone, 70,000 workers were announced, 30,000 of whom had arrived by the end of the year⁶⁸ and thousand more peddler and craftsmen from more than 20 provinces followed.⁶⁹ In the Shigatse area south of Lhasa, 20,000 Chinese construction workers had already arrived in July. Another 60,000 Chinese "workers" mainly from Sichuan provinces, arrived in the 'TAR' in the Summer of 1985.⁷⁰

Xinhua News Agency also reported that a large number of peasants from China's more developed areas are pouring into remote western areas to earn a living. They have found Qinghai, Tibet and Xinjiang viable areas for selling goods, building houses and roads, renting furniture, clothes and providing other services.⁷¹

67 *Beijing Review*, September 24, 1984.

68 *Intelligence Report*, October, November and December 1984.

69 *Beijing Review*, August 26, 1985.

70 *China's Population*, Beijing 1988.

71 *Radio Lhasa (Xinhua in English)*, April 11, 1985.

Again in 1991, China announced that "technicians from all over China have come to work at various construction sites - about 300,000 workers are prepared to join in the project."⁷²

Furthermore, in spite of the official Chinese policy that "minority nationalities" should be exempted from family planning, there has been serious allegations that such policies are applied at least as vigorously in Tibet as in mainland China. In its "white paper" China denies practising birth control policy in Tibet. It says, "only two percent of the people in Tibet are covered by the family planning policy. In the process of carrying out family planning the government always persists in the principle of 'mainly publicity, volunteering and service' and prohibits any form of forced abortions."

However, there are strong evidences which overwhelmingly indicates that Chinese government is actually practising coercive means of birth control and the Tibetan population undergo a form of health discrimination. On November 5, 1987, the head of the 'TAR' family planning department, Tsering Dolkar, stated at a meeting.

There are 410,024 women of child bearing age, of which 76,220 are married, of them 22,634 have already undergone birth

72 *Beijing Review*, January 21-27, 1991.

control operations, constituting thirty percent of women in the TAR of child bearing age. In 1985, after the science and family planning was announced in the countryside and pastoral areas, there has been a perceptible change in the mental outlook and birth rates in these areas. In 1986, nineteen percent of women in Niyingtri, Lhokha and Shigatse were sterilized.

Further, in a speech, at a meeting in Beijing in March 1989, Mr. Lhoga, Mayor of Lhasa city, stated "In Tibet for example, the population is extremely small because of which Tibet is facing difficulties in manpower. Therefore we should not pursue the birth control policy in Tibet."

China often ridicules the Tibetan government in exile's claim that their population is 6 million whereas according to the Chinese, the total Tibetan population is only slightly more than 4 million. However, the Tibetan figure was corroborated by the Chinese's own state statistical bureau in 1959 and reaffirmed in February 1988 by Huan Xiang, director of Centre for International Studies under the state council in Beijing. He stated that "of the present population of 6 million Tibetans, only two million are living in Tibet, (TAR) while the remaining 4 million are in other provinces of China."⁷³

73 *Beijing Review*, vol.31, no.7 and 8.

From the above reports, we can see that in spite of the Chinese government's denial of implementing population transfer and family planning policies in Tibet - their own reports speak for themselves. Thus, one can well imagine, what is going to happen in future, judging from the Chinese's predictions. In February 1985 the Chinese embassy in New Delhi announced, its government's intention to change both the ecological imbalance and the population lack not just in Tibet but also in other "sparsely populated outlying region". Chinese "migration should be welcomed by the local population and should result in a population increase of sixty million over the next thirty years in those region." It also said, "It is a very conservative estimate. As a matter of fact the increase might swell to a hundred million in less than thirty years."⁷⁴

IMPLICATIONS TO TIBET, HIMALAYAS AND INDIA

The Chinese population transfer policy on Tibet have far reaching effects, not only in Tibet but the Himalayas and India. In the case of Tibet the efforts are more compelling and immediate with Tibetans losing opportunities of employment, housing, education and with no access to the means of

74 "Movement Westward", Reference Material No.2, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, New Delhi, February 4, 1985.

satisfying even basic needs, they suffer discrimination of all kinds possible.

The influx of tens of thousands of Chinese into Tibet also excludes even those Tibetans who are holding high sounding positions, from most positions of real political and decision making power. The communists have brought their own people, the Han Chinese, who are remoulding the Tibetan plateau in their own image.

A systematic effort to crush the spirit and national identity of the Tibetan people is being pursued by the Chinese government. The Dalai Lama has also accused the PRC with practising a form of "Genocide" by relocating millions of Chinese settlers into Tibet. "Tibet today are facing the real possibility of elimination as a people and a nation."⁷⁵

"The strategy of obliterating Tibet's traditional culture has moved into its final stages, and the influx of Chinese workers has reached staggering proportions".⁷⁶ Another report says, "The imposition of an alien system has been accompanied by an influx of people who are part of that system and who enjoy priority access to housing, employment, education, health

75 *Times of India* (New Delhi), 7 October 1989.

76 Vivinen Morgan, "Old Tibet Dies to the Sound of Karaoke", *The Sunday Times* (London), October 17, 1993.

and other social services."⁷⁷ This dominance of Chinese people in Tibet is socially marginalising and stigmatising Tibetans on the basis of just being a Tibetan and thus undermining the foundation of Tibetan culture and identity.

The entire labour force, technical workers, professionals, business operators, shopkeepers are brought to Tibet, pushing the Tibetans out of jobs. Chinese shops also outnumber Tibetan shops by a dramatic margin. Since the mid eighties, when the economic reforms were implemented, Chinese workers have been flooding all over U-Tsang causing food shortages and joblessness for Tibetans. And the influx of 'floating' population is worsening the situation. In one case, 30,000 Tibetans, employed under 16 labour units of Lhasa municipality lost their jobs replaced by Chinese workers. The Tibetans were told to go to the villages to look for work. More Tibetans were put out of work with the arrival of Chinese tradespeople, carpenters, hair dressers, tailors and photographers.⁷⁸

77 Economic and Social Council, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 48th Session, "Question of the violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in any part of the World with special reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories: Situation in Tibet", January 5, 1992, p.67.

78 Michael Van Walt, "Population Transfer and the Survival of the Tibetan identity", presented at the 7th Annual International Human Rights symposium and Research (continued...)

In regard to housing, Tibetans face shortages and discrimination. The Tibetan villages are routinely bypassed in the provision of basic sanitation, water and electricity, and in urban areas, only Chinese government office settlement and military installations are provided with these services. Housing space are exclusively reserved for Chinese settlers and shopkeepers whereas Tibetans reside in the streets in shacks or ten. as many of them have no proper housing. Tibetans also do not enjoy freedom of movement and so cannot move to other towns and villages in search of employment as their Chinese counterparts. This evidence is reported in 1992, "Housing rights of Tibetans living in Tibet are systematically infringed by the Chinese government and its authorities. The violation of housing rights are not isolated instances, but rather the result of policies and laws which comprehensively discriminate against the Tibetan people."⁷⁹

78 (...continued)

Conference at Columbia University, New York, June 13, 1986.

79 Economic and Social Council, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 48th Session, "Question of the Violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom in any part of the world, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories: Situation in Tibet", January 5, 1992, pp.44-45.

Such basic education is denied to Tibetans in several ways-by imposing unaffordable school fees for poor families as access to better school and higher education is limited for Tibetans and, the Chinese students are given preference for admission. Tibetan children also face racial discrimination in schools. They are taunted, criticised and physically assaulted by teachers and students alike for being Tibetan. Tibetan customs and traditions are ridiculed.⁸⁰ All entrance exams as well as interviews for jobs are held in Chinese, thus marginalising and devaluing Tibetan Language. Prospects are poor for those who cannot speak Chinese.

Education programme in Tibet are designed, only to accommodate the growing Chinese population in all regions of Tibet and not Tibetans as one report stated "the government has gone to unprecedented length to provide education and social service to the Chinese settlers to the exclusion of the Tibetans."⁸¹

Chinese population transfer has the strong overtones of racial discrimination. Tibetans are generally considered

80 Interview with Tibetan Refugee, Dharmasala, India, March 1994.

81 "Racism Behind Resettlement of Chinese in Tibet", Washington: International Campaign for Tibet, September 23, 1991.

"backward" and the Chinese claim that "the Chinese settlers are sent to help 'civilize' backward Tibetans and their culture."⁸² China behaves towards Tibet like a colonial power. It is also practising Eugenics or practise of racial purification in its population policies in Tibet and in other 'minority' areas. This has resulted in practises such as compulsory abortions and forced sterilisation.

Environmental degradation in Tibet is directly linked to China's population transfer policies. Population transfer, environmental issues and development issues are interwoven together as far as Tibet is concerned. The largest development projects are among the most environmentally detrimental and involve the influx of large number of Chinese workers. These include mineral extraction projects, timber projects, Yamdrok Yamtso project, irrigation project including UNWFP project 3357 etc. By 1985, timber extraction totalled 2,442 million cubic meters, worth US \$54 billion. The rate of deforestation increases as new roads are constructed to bring in Chinese settlers and military. The vast hillsides are being turned barren due to clear felling. To top it, Tibetans do not

82 Catriona Bass, *Inside the Treasure House - A Time in Tibet* (London, 1990), p.64.

benefit from these exploits as most of the labour is Chinese and the timber is sent back to China.

Further, erosion and destabilization of fragile slopes has been caused by extensive mining operations. Up to early 1990, revenue to China from the exploitation of Tibet's mineral resources is estimated at 1.5 billion Chinese RMB.⁸³

The mad rush for gold mining, most of which is done in haphazard, unregulated way, causing destruction and waste. Active mining of uranium and dumping of waste water from the processing of uranium are dumped into Drakchu river and there is evidence of radiation poisoning of human and animals who reside in the vicinity. This is to develop its nuclear weapon capacity and establish itself as a world super power.

China's destruction of Tibetan culture was dramatic, especially in the early days of occupation. As Tibetan culture has been closely linked with the practice of Buddhism, suppression of religion is a significant infringement on cultural expression. The use of Tibetan language was forbidden in some parts of Tibet and most of the younger generation have no knowledge of Tibetan history. Tibetan cultural values are being seriously undermined. One news reporter commenting on

83 *Tibet - A Land of Snows*, Rich in precious stones and mineral resources, Dharmasala: Department of Security of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 1991, p.61.

the destruction of temples and monasteries in the fifties and sixties stated "The intimidation failed to break the Tibetan dream of autonomy. But where persecution failed, population transfer seems likely to succeed."⁸⁴

Population transfer is one of the major threat to Tibetan cultural survival. Chinese laws dominated Tibet, and even Tibetan language is further marginalised through disuse in public life and Tibetan ways of life are stigmatised.

Even traditional art forms, dances and dramas are suffering sinization. Buildings and artifacts are being destroyed and being replaced with "Tibetan" facades or with Chinese buildings.

The impact of Chinese policies in Tibet, and the practical consequences of population transfer, go far beyond the border of Tibet. Population transfer signifies the destabilisation of both environment and regional strategic situation. Its policies in and on Tibet have global implications, especially the Himalayas and India. These include political, strategic and environmental dimensions. Deforestation is altering the ecological balance of lakes and rivers and the pollution of major river sources endangers the lives and livelihoods of millions of people of surrounding countries of the Himalayas.

84 Vivien Morgan, n.76.

China's militarisation and nuclearisation of the region has equally serious implications from the strategic standpoint. It poses a real threat to neighbouring countries of Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. Extensive nuclear facilities in several parts of Tibet has the potential of China emerging as a new super power, and endangers the balance of global power, peace and stability especially in India.

CHAPTER V
LIMITS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Tibet's earliest religion was known as Bon, founded by Shenrab Minco of Shangshung in Western Tibet. But with the advent of Buddhism, the Bon religion diminished its influence. However, Tibetan Buddhism has taken much from Bon religion, to form Lamaism with Tibetan characteristics.

Buddhism flourished in Tibet, in the seventh century and spread throughout Tibet. It has had a profound influence on the economy, culture, politics and arts of life. To Tibetans, Buddhism is not a mere system of belief; it encompasses the entirety of their culture and civilization and constitutes the very essence of their lives. Of all the bonds which tied and defined Tibetans as a people and as a nation, religion was undoubtedly the strongest.

It is said that Tibet used to be full of monasteries, temples and hermitages, together with resident monks and nuns. Huge monasteries which were more like cities, such as Ganden, Sera, Drepung and Zhaxilhunpo etc. became high seats of learning, and every Tibetan Buddhist home had its altars.

There were at least 5,259 monasteries with about 592,558 resident nuns and monks. The monasteries were also the real 'treasure houses' of the Tibetan people.

The national identity became indistinguishable from its religion. And the society was also a self-sufficient one

founded on Buddhist faith. Hence, Buddhist folklore and teachings regulated people's lives, festivals, holidays, work ethics, family chores as well as national issues. All in all, religion guides every aspect of Tibetan life. And until its occupation by China, Tibet remained a proud and independent Buddhist nation.

VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

When the process of annexation of Tibet was underway, the Chinese communists proclaimed that no restrictions would be imposed on the practice of religion. Even in the so called 'Seventeen Point Agreement' of 1951, it pledged to protect and respect Tibetan religious traditions and explicitly stated that the traditional status, functions and power of the Dalai Lama would not be altered, and that "the policy of freedom of religious beliefs laid down in the common program of the Chinese people's political consultative conference will be protected."

Despite these proclamations and promises, the Chinese soon began to undermine the traditional social system and religion of Tibet. People were told that believing in religion is blind faith and so they should condemn it. Mao Zedong said that, "but of course, religion is poison. It has two great defects: it undermines the race, and retards the progress of the country. Tibet and Mongolia have both been poisoned by it."¹

1 Cited in *Tibet: Proving Truth from Facts*, DIIR Publications, 1993, p.80.

The Chinese considered the Tibetans to be an uncultured, superstitious nation, who used religion as their opium. The prevailing prejudice was well summed up in the famous exchange, after an amiable discussion between Maozedong and the Dalai Lama at the end of the 1949 People's National Assembly in Beijing, when the former said in final dismissal, "All this religious business is fine but you as I know it is eyewash".²

Since the Chinese takeover of Tibet, virtually all religious, historic and cultural buildings, monuments, artifacts, books and religious scriptures have been destroyed and what little is left is seriously damaged. 6,254 monasteries and temples in all provinces of Tibet, the cultural and spiritual core of the Tibetan civilization, have been razed, their invaluable artifacts either destroyed or sold for foreign exchange on the Tokyo and Hongkong antique markets. According to officials of the TAR government, 80 percent of the destruction occurred before the start of the so-called Cultural Revolution, that is between 1956 and 1966.³ "Tibet suffered particularly severely from extremists' policies and depredation of the Red Guards".⁴ Thousands of monks and nuns had died of

2 Cited in William Peters, "The Unresolved Problem of Tibet", *Asian Affairs*, June 1988, p.150.

3 Pu Quiong, Vice Chairman, TAR regional government, at news conference in Lhasa on July 18, 1987. Reported in *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, July 20, 1987. See, The Heritage Foundation, "Why the World is Watching Beijing's Treatment of Tibet",

4 "China's National Minorities", *Foreign and Commonwealth Office (U.K.)* (January 1987), p.4.

torture and starvation. The practice of religion both communally and individually was suppressed often through brutality. When it was over in 1976, only 13 religious monuments had survived the destruction.⁵

Today, if we take the favourable figure the Chinese give, there are 70 monasteries either functioning or in the process of restoration. The countryside is littered with ruins of temples and monasteries. These were measures, meant to destroy the cultural and spiritual core of Tibetan civilization.

RESTORATION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM - CHINESE VIEW

One area of culture which is of immense importance to most of the minority nationalities is religion. The state constitution of 1975 and 1978 gave citizens the right to believe or disbelieve in religion and to propagate atheism.⁶ They have the freedom of religion and this right is protected by law. All religions are equal and the state treats them equally.

Further, the 1982 Constitution affirmed freedom of religious beliefs, and outlaws' discriminations against any citizen because of belief or disbelief in religion. It protects normal religious activities. It then brings forward

5 See T.Jhundup, "A Brief Summary of Conditions in Tibet", *To News Tibet* 1, at 5 (January-April 1985); D.Bonavia, "Mistakes on the Roof of the World", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 8, 1980.

6 1975 Constitution, Article 28, PR 4, 24 January 1975, p.17; 1978 Constitution, Article 46, PR 11, 17 March 1978, p.13.

a few strictures: No one may make use of religion to engage in activities that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the state: Finally, it declares that no religious body or affair may be subject to foreign domination.⁷

Since the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Party Central Committee in 1978, various Party and state policies including the policy of ensuring religious freedom, have been implemented in Tibet.⁸ The Central Government and the autonomous regional authorities have concerned themselves with religious affairs of Tibet and firmly adhered to relevant policies.

Since 1980, millions of Yuan have been allocated to repairing monasteries to satisfy the wishes of religious believers and to correct the 'leftists' mistakes'. To date, 1400 monasteries and other religious institutions have been repaired, refurnished and opened to the public in Tibet, and some 34,000 lamas and nuns have taken up residence in these establishments. The monasteries have three sources of income: (1) alms from worship, (2) production and commercial activities, (3) government grants.⁹

7 1982 Constitution, Article 36, BR 52, 27 December 1982, p.16.

8 *China - Facts and Figures* (Beijing, 1990), p.8.

9 *Tibet: From 1951-1991* Compiled by *China's Tibet and Beijing Review* (Beijing, 1991), p.103.

Normal religious activities have been restored in Tibet after 10 years of turmoil.¹⁰ In recent years believers have been free to visit monasteries to worship, practice various religious rites such as death ceremonies, chant scriptures and donate at any time they wish. People are also allowed to wear Tibetan clothes, carry rosaries or even pictures of the Dalai Lama.

The Tibet Branch of China Buddhist Association and Buddhist Association in all prefectures and cities in the region have been reinstated. The Tibet Buddhist Academy has been founded and all large monasteries have opened Sutra learning classes.¹¹

In 1986, in response to the request of the local religious followers, the Monks were allowed to hold the Monlam (the great prayer festival), for the first time in twenty years.¹² This is a major religious event that takes place in Lhasa once a year. And in spite of the 1987 demonstrations, the Chinese government let the Monlam festival take place in 1988, as it

10 *China Daily*, 29 April 1983.

11 *Tibet: From 1951-1991*, n.9, p.103.

12 "Under the Care and Concern of the Party Central Committee [sic], the people's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region has decided to reopen the Grand prayer Ceremony Festival, which has been closed for 20 years since the beginning of the 'Cultural Revolution'. *The Grand Buddhist Prayer Ceremony Festival in Lhasa*, undated, no author, no publisher, apparently the souvenir book of the 1986 Monlam celebrations produced in Tibet.

had in the previous two years, to show to the world at large that its liberalisation policy in Tibet remained intact.

Tibet also has opened an institute of Buddhism, and famous living Buddhas and scholars are invited there to teach religious literature and history. *The Journal of Buddhism in Tibet*, published in Tibetan language by the Tibetan Branch of the Chinese Buddhist Association, is devoted to studies of Buddhism and history of various monasteries. Some large monasteries print and publish their own Buddhist scriptures with government authorization. The awesome collection of religious sutras and books enshrined in the Potala Palace are being sorted out. Local calligraphers have been organised to copy the eight-volume Dengur Sutra.¹³

In an attempt to correct the 'leftists mistakes' special funds have been allocated by the country's relic administration to renovate religious structures including the Potala Palace, the Zhaxilhunpo Lamasery, Samye monastery, Sagya temple, Norbu Lingka etc. 'Six main halls of the Sera Monastery have been restored to their formal splendour with the help of the country. Now, buttered lamps in the Buddhist halls burn all day long and each day two or three hundred Buddhists come to worship. Monastery received more than 800 tourists from 66 countries."¹⁴

13 *Tibet: From 1951-1991*, n.9, pp.103-4.

14 *China Daily*, 29 April 1983.

The Potala or the Winter Palace of the Dalai lama in Lhasa, is an ancient world famous castle-like structure. Refurbishment began in 1989 to restore this rare cultural landmark to its former glory, with 40 million Yuan government grants. It has now been completed. During the period of construction, however, the Potala remained open to domestic and overseas pilgrims and tourists.¹⁵

In 1990 June, the State Council, endorsed a Plan to build the stupa and memorial hall in the tenth Panchen Lama's honour in the Zhaxhilhunpo monastery, with a special grant from fund, and was expected to be completed in three years time.¹⁶

Thus, as a result of the reforms, Tibetans have been able to restore much of the traditional culture that had been suppressed during the Cultural Revolution and a wide range of traditional practice, beliefs and customs have come out in the open. Most Tibetans' homes, both rural and urban have altars with religious statues, pictures (including pictures of Dalai Lama), the holidays of the Tibetan calendar are publicly celebrated in traditional way. Divination is openly practiced and the services of religious specialists are sought for the performance of beneficial rites. Monasteries have been rebuilt and restaffed with young people.¹⁷

15 *Tibet: From 1951-1991*, n.9, p.107.

16 *ibid*, p.108.

17 Ronald D.Schwartz, *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising* (London, 1994), pp.198-9.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM - TIBETAN VIEW

The 80s acknowledged the 'mistakes' of the Cultural Revolution and Movement to correct the wrongs initiated by Deng Xiaoping after Hu Yaobang's visit in 1980, attempted to undo the damage of Cultural Revolution by allowing the Tibetans to practise their religion and culture once again.

This freedom of religion includes limited and selective renovation of places of worship, and allowing a people a degree of ritual practices - such as making prostrations, circumbulating places of worships, offering butter lamps, reciting mantras, turning prayer wheels, burning incense, putting up prayer flags, wearing rosaries, making donations, visiting monasteries, holy sites, Lamas and even travelling to India for pilgrimage as well as visiting relatives sometimes even without permission.

But it should be noted that, while the Party policy calls for freedom of religion as well as "freedom to propagate atheism" it says that religion has been the root of Tibetan backwardness.¹⁸ This official cultural policy is sharply different from Tibetan perception of long standing Chinese attitude towards Tibetan culture. Tibetans are characterised as backward and savage, their religion primitive and superstitious.¹⁹ They offer freedom to Tibetans at the same

18 *Indian Express* (New Delhi), 30 July 1979.

19 Schwartz, n.17, p.216.

time reinforcing negative valuations of traditional Tibetan culture.

Prostrations, turning prayer wheels and burning incense etc. conforms to the understanding of Tibetan religion which is incorporated into Party's policy for allowing the expression of voluntary religious faith. Religion is thus conceived as harmless superstition, at best a decorative feature of minority nationalities.²⁰

It is not surprising that despite the improvements and revival of traditional Tibetan culture, Tibetans remained concerned and they have good reasons. The Tibetans say that the rebuilding of monasteries, the acquiescence in religious activities etc., are just an eyewash - intended to mislead superficial visitors and can earn hard currency from tourists, interested in ancient buildings and religious practices. While they overlook open demonstrations of religious fervour by the Tibetans - which the tourists can see, they impose restrictions in the real teaching and practice of religion.

The Dalai Lama, in his March 10, 1987 statement said, "The so-called religious freedom in Tibet today amounts to permitting our people to worship and practice religion in a merely ritualistic and devotional way. There are both direct and indirect restrictions on the teaching and study of Buddhist

20 Ronald D.Schwartz, "The Anti-Splittist Campaign and Tibetan Political Consciousness", in Robert Barnett, ed., *Resistance and Reform in Tibet* (London,), p.228.

philosophy. Buddhism thus, being reduced to blind faith which is exactly how the communist Chinese view and define religion.

Religious freedom implies the right to prepare for future lives, which implies unselfish actions for the benefit of others. As one Drepung Monk concludes, "reciting Om Mani Padme hum, visiting temples and making offerings to deities are not considered real freedom of religion".²¹

It should be noted that almost all Chinese state sponsored reconstruction of monasteries, monuments, etc. have been highly selective, intended only to serve their political and economic aims. These serve as museums to attract tourists rather than living cultural and religious institutions.²²

Most of the rebuilt and renovated monasteries including the "state-sponsored" ones came through the initiatives of Tibetans who contributed their labour, material and finances, who even went to the extent of repopulating monasteries and nunneries. This rebuilding of monasteries in the 80s, has been for the Tibetans a collective project, an attempt to restore the traditional relationship between the community and Buddhism as social institutions.²³

Also, reconstruction and renovation of monasteries can be done only after receiving permission from the Chinese Bureau of Religious Affairs which is usually given after long delays and

21 Schwartz, n.17, p.73.

22 ibid, p.58

23 ibid, p.58.

much reluctance. However, it should not be forgotten that far more money is taken from the monastery than is returned to the monks for operating expenses and reconstruction.²⁴ Limited number of monks allowed to join these monasteries serve more as showpieces for tourists, in most cases, caretakers rather than true religious students and practitioners.²⁵

The Chinese government has control over all religious institutions. It has also placed limitations on the number of monks allowed in each university and has also laid down criteria for admission to a monastery. Any person under the age of 18 years cannot become a monk, the candidate should have the consent of parents and also obtain formal approval from the monastery's democratic management committee and permission is refused if the candidate's parents are not from a "good political background", etc.²⁶

Monks and nuns are also closely watched and great efforts are made to restrict their contact with tourists. Raidi explained to the officials of the monastery that "it is necessary to teach the monks to abide by the law and behave themselves."²⁷ Thus, the government put a series of

24 *ibid*, p.60.

25 Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamsala, *Tibet: Proving Truth from Facts*, Himachal Pradesh, India, 1993, p.83.

26 *ibid*, p.84.

27 *Lhasa Xizang Regional Service in Mandarin*, 14 October 1987, in *FBIS*, 15 October 1987, p.20.

restrictions on religious practice in the monasteries. Monks are also forced to live in cramped quarters with many sharing a single room, as well as absence of monetary support for food and clothing and other necessities. This is because the Chinese administration is unwilling to allow the monasteries to take effective responsibility for their own affairs, making decisions and managing their resources according to their own priorities.²⁸ The government even interferes in the disciplining and expulsion of monks, which is the responsibility of the assembly of monks and its elected leaders, not the Democratic Management Committee and the Chinese administration, who had no place interfering in the traditional procedures and rules of the Buddhist Sangha.²⁹

The Chinese have also clearly stated that while individuals are free to worship, they may not influence others to practice religion - which is to say that the older people may not teach the younger generation. Toleration of religion remains an expedient, party members are still required to be atheists, accepting the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of religion, which is understood as a historical phenomenon pertaining to a definite period in the development of human

28 Schwartz, n.17, p.65.

29 *ibid*, p.66.

society, and is expected to "disappear naturally through the long-term development of socialism and communism."³⁰

People are allowed to carry on religious activities "within the scope of the permission of the policy and law". Cadres are instructed to work harder in order to promote the natural extinction of religion. This fact alone reveals that the facade of religious freedom in Tibet is a means to deceive the outside world.

The issue for the Tibetan is not individual religious freedom but the role of the monasteries in society. The restrictions on religious practices and the government control over the monasteries are seen by almost all Tibetans as directly interfering with the traditional relationship between the monastic community and laity.

Furthermore, while expressing "liberal religious policy" the Chinese still minimize the restoration of religious sites, just enough to satisfy the needs of religious practitioners. Particular emphasis is placed on curtailing voluntary contributions to religious institutions. The restoration and maintenance of the monasteries must be authorized by the government and financed by government appropriations.³¹

This continuing interference by the state in religion and in cultural life remains a source of frustration and resentment

30 1982 Party directives known as "document 19" translated and printed in Donald E. MacInnis, *Religion in China: Policy and Practice* (Maryknoll, N.Y., 1989), p.10.

31 *ibid*, pp.8-26.

against the Chinese. Restrictions on rebuilding monasteries or travel for pilgrimage and on religious practice and teaching confirm negative perception of the state, which at any time may revoke the little present freedom.³²

There is no doubt that the freedom to practice religion is universally appreciated by Tibetans. But at the same time they know that the government is the final arbiter of how far this process can go and their knowledge (fear) that the current government could intervene again at any time and impose its alien values has left feelings of vulnerability, anxiety and anger. This is not surprising, judging from their past experience. It will take a long time to forget the first two decades of Chinese rule.

EROSION OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

In recent years, despite an atmosphere of greater leniency and return of outward religious practice to a certain degree, there is still very little, real religious freedom in Tibet. And more recently, it now appears that erosion of religious tolerance has set in, with full force. By the last week of 1989, definitive signs emerged that the authorities had started to re-impose explicit restrictions on religious practice.³³ The drive to impose Chinese culture and value on the Tibetan people is being carried out with renewed fervour. It is now

32 Schwartz, n.17, p.199.

33 Robert Barnett, "The Iconography of Demonstrations in Tibet, 1987-1990", in Robert Barnett, ed., *Resistance and Reform in Tibet* (London, 1994), p.239.

clear that the relaxation of religious and cultural policy was a way to placate popular discontent while mobilizing support for the economic reform in Tibet and to ultimately win the acceptance of Chinese rule.³⁴

The functions of the monasteries are regimented through state bureaucracies, keeping police and para-military forces at the monasteries. There is lack of text books and teachers, and those who are suspected of having independent thoughts are arrested and tortured. Tibetans are arrested for carrying pictures of the Dalai Lama because the Chinese allege that it has political significance. Even a ban has been put on the prayers composed by the Dalai Lama even though it has no political content.³⁵

It is no wonder that, even the late Panchen Lama on September 28, 1988 called for the eradication of Chinese "Administrative interference in the religious activities in Tibet (TAR) and other Tibetan inhabited regions and increased Tibetan regulation of religious affairs."³⁶ Again in 1989, he said that "leftists" mistakes Chinese code for religious intolerance still pose a more serious threat to Tibet than the "rightist" errors of separatist militants.³⁷

34 Schwartz, n.17, p.209.

35 *Tibet: Proving Truth From Facts*, n.24, p.85.

36 *ibid*, p.85.

37 *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), 30 January 1989.

By December 1989, the government had issued statement that declared both tsampa throwing and mass juniper branch burning to be illegal. They become political crimes and tsampa throwers at least were declared in neighbourhood meetings that month, would be liable to three years imprisonment.³⁸ This is because on October 5, 1989, following the news of the Nobel Peace Award to the Dalai Lama, the Tibetans celebrated by burning incense and tossing handful of tsampa in the air over each other. These were prohibited after the officials became aware of the significance of the celebrations. Orders were also given, not only to arrest but shoot Tibetans throwing tsampa and burning incense. The PLA went searching for Tibetans with bags of tsampa and flour covered fingers.³⁹ Later, there were reports that a number of people were arrested.⁴⁰

Disturbances occurred during the closing days of 1989, and the Chinese authorities in 1990 cancelled the Monlam festival for two consecutive years, and monasteries were allowed to hold ceremonies within their own confines. By cancelling the festival, they renounced the symbolic centre of their claim to

38 The injunction against tsampa throwing was repeated in neighbourhood meetings in Lhasa before the anniversaries of December 10, 1989 and March 5, 1990, when the authorities expected further protests.

39 "Tibet: Government Threatens to Shoot Demonstrators, Says Tibetans", *TIN, News Update* (London), March 6, 1990.

40 (Xizang Ribao) *Tibet Daily* (Lhasa), October 18, 1989, in FBIS, November 1, 1989.

tolerate religious practice in Tibet. It had been cancelled in 1989 too,⁴¹ and the imposition of martial law followed as a result of demonstrations by the Tibetans. The cancellation in 1990 indicated that, even with the full force of military rule behind them, the Chinese could not put into practice the rhetoric of religious tolerance.⁴²

Since March 1989, there had been an informal ban on the commission of new monks to monasteries and the rebuilding of monasteries destroyed by the Chinese before 1975, appear to have stopped in some regions.

The claim of tolerance was further weakened in between December 1989 and April 1990, when more than 200 monks and nuns were expelled from monasteries and nunneries near Lhasa and returned to their home and families,⁴³ because they were suspected of supporting the pro-independence movement.

The number of nuns expelled were much higher and they were also forbidden to wear robes or shave their heads or to rejoin their former nunneries or other nunneries, and allowed to worship in local monasteries only if they return to their family homes in the evening.

41 NCNA Xinhua , February 5, 1989, in SWB, FE/0379 B2/2, February 8, 1989.

42 Robert Barnett, "The Iconography of Demonstrations in Tibet, 1987-1990", in Robert Barnett, ed., *Resistance and Reform in Tibet* (London, 1994), p.249.

43 See *Defying the Dragon*, 1991, pp.18-19.

A compilation made in the autumn of 1991 of Tibetans imprisoned for political offence since the outbreak of protest in 1987, identifies 360 prisoners by name of whom 120 were released.⁴⁴ Two-thirds of these imprisoned were monks and nuns. One-third of the prisoners were women, 80 percent being nuns.

All major religious ceremonies were also forbidden except when official approval had been granted. Following the imposition of martial law the major monasteries of Ganden, Sera and Drepung etc., had permanent encampments of PLA soldiers. The Chinese also moved their tanks into the capital. The positioning of the tanks outside the Jokhang temples in March 1990 symbolised an end to the commitment to liberalisation that had begun exactly one decade before.⁴⁵

However, these reports did not represent a verbal form of the policy of relative religious tolerance, they involved a tightening of bureaucratic controls over religion which the state had always retained but not always chosen to exercise.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the drift of these developments was clear, the

44 "Political Prisoners in Tibet", *Asia Watch and TIN*, February 1992.

45 Robert Barnett, "The Iconography of Demonstrations in Tibet, 1987-1990", in Robert Barnett, ed., *Resistance and Reform in Tibet* (London, 1994), p.253.

46 1982 Constitution, Article 36. Also see, Thomas Herber, "China and Its National Minorities - Autonomy or Assimilation?", *Armonk* (New York, 1989).

Chinese state was finding itself forced to make incursions into the thin but crucial fabric of religious tolerance in Tibet.

All this makes it clear that the real policy of the Chinese remain, to eradicate religion from all parts of China, including the occupied territories such as Tibet. *The Red Flag* makes this perfectly clear.⁴⁷ Tibetans however refused to give up their religion.

CONCLUSION

In the light of these events, the Chinese authorities appeared to have become involved in a struggle over symbols in which they were constantly caught on the defensive.

The Chinese position on religious tolerance was progressively invalidated as they found it harder to separate the attack on nationalism from that of the politico-religious symbols used by the pro-independence movement.

The religious issue was and still is regarded by the Chinese leaders as central to the Tibetan question.⁴⁸ And they are aware that religious repression would definitely antagonise the Tibetan people irreconcilably. The Chinese justify the restrictions by saying that it makes perfect sense,

47 *The Red Flag*, 16.6.1983, the ideological organ of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. See *Tibetan Review*, February 1985, "Religious Freedom in Tibet - A Closer Look", by Paula de Wys-Kooltin; also *Tibetan Review*, March 1987, "Experiencing the 'Religious Freedom in Tibet Today'" by Ngawang Chojor.

48 "Yang Shangkun Discusses Tibet with NPC Deputies", *NCNA (Xinhua)*, March 31, 1989, in *SWB*, FE/0425 C1/5, April 4, 1989.

because they impose conditions which in one way or another limit the autonomy of religious institutions and the growth of the individual elements of religion, which for Tibetans are intimately bound up with national consciousness. They view the repressive policies as a response purely on the level of security; and not the collapse of a commitment to liberalisation, although they clearly indicate so by, Tibetans and Western standards.

For their part, Tibetans never perceive the toleration of some religious practices as constituting religious freedom. They cite a whole series of restrictions on religion, which they sometimes try to ignore, or work around the restrictions. Sometimes they get away with it, but they are always aware that the policies can be quickly reversed.

And as for the future of Tibetan religious culture the Chinese statements speaks for themselves. An official document entitled, 'Policy on Nationalities and Religion' brought out in 1991 states, "we should oppose all those who work to split the motherland in the name of nationality and religion. There should be no hesitation in taking harsh decisions to deal with any political disturbances carried out in the name of nationality and religion, and in doing so the state's political, judiciary, and even military forces should be used."⁴⁹ Judging from this such documents, it is not

49 Cited in Tibet: Proving Truth from Facts, n.1, pp.85-86.

surprising that the Tibetans claimed that the Chinese are still aiming to totally eliminate Tibetan religion and culture.

Thus, with the re-introduction of specific restrictions on Tibetan religion and culture, the Chinese put at risk, their entire claim to reform.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The emergence of Deng Xiaoping as the supreme leader in China had made an impact on the new policy in Tibet since 1978. Deng Xiaoping's new policies are reflected in the New Economic Policy, negotiation with the Dalai Lama, acceleration of population transfer and relaxation of some degree of religious freedom or toleration.

In this conclusion we briefly state some of the highlights of the chapter already covered and some of the conclusions from the study.

When Deng Xiaoping came to power it was one of his major objectives to start a process of reconciliation with the Dalai Lama. This began in 1978. Deng's position was that China's doors to negotiations with the Dalai Lama are open to discussion except the question of Tibetan independence which is ruled out. These negotiations continued from 1978 to 1988 as we have described in the chapter. The negotiations reached a deadlock on the following grounds; Hu Yaobang who took a particular interest in the Tibetan question fell out of power and died. The Sino-Soviet relations began to improve by 1986. Thus Chinese fear of external intervention was removed. These are the main reasons for the deadlock in the dialogue.

However, Chinese underlying suspicion was that the Dalai Lama harboured hopes of independence which the Han nationalists

wanted to erase once and for all from the pages of history. Thus even now Beijing keeps on reiterating that the doors of negotiations are open but no question of Tibetan independence or political autonomy will be tolerated. Thus, in the final analysis Chinese refused to concede to the Dalai Lama's political demands as reflected in his 1987 and 1988 proposals.

The only concession that China made was in the economic field. This was clearly reflected in Hu Yaobang's six-point directives made after his visit to Central Tibet. Hu's directives recognized the uniqueness of Tibet, its special characteristics and special needs. Firstly, the TAR government was to fully exercise its autonomy though it should be noted that this autonomy does not extend to the political plane and refers mainly to economic decentralization. Secondly, Tibetan farmers and herdsmen were exempted from taxes and quota sales to the state as well as assignment of work without pay. They were allowed to keep their produce or dispose of it for their own benefit. Thirdly, a flexible economic policy was implemented in Tibet recognising Tibet's special situation and tailored to Tibet's special needs. Fourthly, subsidies from the central government was increased to develop the local economy. Fifth, within the socialist framework, efforts were made to revive and develop Tibetan culture, education and science. Lastly, the participation of Tibetan cadres in the local administration was increased and large number of Han cadres were withdrawn from Tibet.

It appears China was quite sincere and serious as far as the economic reforms were concerned and the results and benefits of the economic reforms are visible both at the regional and grass root level as reported by the Chinese press and witnessed by some Tibetan and Western visitors.

But along with the economic reform especially since early 1990s when Lhasa was declared a Special Economic Zone came the Chinese immigrants in increasing numbers. Chinese justification for this population transfer which is in fact indirect colonisation of Tibet in terms of the need to send skilled labour from China into Tibet where skilled labour is scarce. However, the fact is Chinese immigrants were given special incentives such as better access to education, housing and jobs etc. which were denied to the sons of the soil. We can see their strategy as a Chinese disguised policy to colonise Tibet so as to make it impossible for any Tibetan demand for self-determination as well as to strengthen the social basis of Chinese security system in Asia and the Himalayas.

If China was fairly sincere to implement the economic reform in Tibet, as studies suggest, Chinese masters are less sincere in granting the Tibetans religious freedom. As a propaganda stance, Beijing declares that there is full religious freedom in Tibet. But this is mostly cosmetic. Small numbers of historically important monasteries are restored and were protected during the Cultural Revolution.

But over 90 percent of the monasteries and nunneries were destroyed. Above all, Chinese practice of their policy in Tibet indicates that their religious freedom is meant for the old and not certainly for the party cadets and young people. Thus it is clear that China still works on the assumption that religious influence in Tibet will die and if not it is the ultimate party policy to eliminate religion from Tibetan society. This is reflected in the number of party official documents which were published in the West and Tibetan refugee media.

Deng Xiaoping pursued a carefully drafted policy on Tibet which had Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic stand. The first part of his strategy was to bring back the Dalai Lama to China because the Lama outside China creates problems and embarrassment for the Chinese government. When the Dalai Lama refused to accept the terms and conditions laid down by Deng Xiaoping, Beijing hardened the process of negotiation. This convinced the Chinese leaders to pursue a hard-line policy on Tibet, i.e., to accelerate the population transfer to Tibet as a final solution.

The religious policy and new economic policies were designed to win the loyalty of the Tibetan people to the Chinese state. But the revolt in 1987 and 1988 in Lhasa and other places indicated that Tibetans were not reconciled with the Chinese new economic and religious policies. This in turn led to harsher policies and restrictions on Tibetan religious

activity and movement within and outside Tibet. Thus we once again see the Chinese are accelerating the population transfer as the final solution to the Tibetan unrest. This means Chinese leaders hope that once Tibet is flooded with Han population Tibetan resistance to the Chinese rule would be neutralised and diminished greatly. That is Beijing envisaged a final fate for Tibet similar to those of other minorities like the Mongols and the Manchus.

We observe the following component in Deng Xiaoping's policy on Tibet which marked a considerable departure from the previous policies, first, Deng Xiaoping tried to appease offensive policy which included negotiation with the Dalai Lama to bring him back to China and appeasement policy towards the Tibetan people such as the new economic policy and limited religious freedom in order to win their loyalty. Secondly, when these appeasement policies failed, Deng Xiaoping's policy resorted to the final solution to the Tibetan question by Han population transfer. These are the lines of policy suggested by this dissertation as evident during the period 1978-88.

The period covered in this study witnessed the rise of Deng Xiaoping as a paramount leader in China and as a result his views on Tibet are reflected in the Chinese post-1980 policy towards Tibet. However, after initiating the dialogue with the Dalai Lama, Deng Xiaoping handed over the Tibetan question to Hu Yaobang to implement and carry on the new policy. But it appears Deng's ideas were not strictly followed

by the Chinese bureaucrats due to domestic and international changes which we have discussed earlier. Now it is the hard core Han nationalist Chinese bureaucrats in the party state and the PLA which make the prospects of negotiation problematic until a new generation of leaders emerge in China.

While China refused to concede to the Dalai Lama's political demands i.e, genuine political autonomy, this period witnessed overall relaxation and liberalisation which the Tibetan people did not have for decades especially during the Cultural Revolution. This relaxation is particularly evident in economic and cultural spheres, which we have analysed in this study. The future of Tibet from this perspective will depend on political and economic changes both at the national and international levels as well as Western and Indian support for the Dalai Lama's proposals.

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