

TIBETAN BULLETIN

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama meets British Prime Minister Gordon Brown at Lambeth Palace, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Official residence in London, on 23 May 2008. (photo by Ian Cumming/Office of Tibet, London)



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with framed Honorary Doctorate certificate flanked by Vice Chancellor Brian Roper and Chair of the Board of Governors Peter Anwyl (photo by Ian Cumming/Office of Tibet/London)

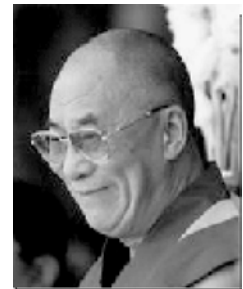
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TIBETAN BULLETIN

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"THE BEST WAY FORWARD IS TO RESOLVE THE ISSUES BETWEEN THE TIBETANS AND THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP THROUGH DIALOGUE, AS I HAVE BEEN ADVOCATING FOR A LONG TIME. I HAVE REPEATEDLY ASSURED THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA THAT I AM NOT SEEKING INDEPENDENCE. WHAT I AM SEEKING IS A MEANINGFUL AUTONOMY FOR THE TIBETAN PEOPLE THAT WOULD ENSURE THE LONG-TERM SURVIVAL OF OUR BUDDHIST CULTURE, OUR LANGUAGE AND OUR DISTINCT IDENTITY AS A PEOPLE. THE RICH TIBETAN BUDDHIST CULTURE IS PART OF THE LARGER CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BENEFIT OUR CHINESE BROTHERS AND SISTERS." - **HIS HOLINESS THE 14TH DALAI LAMA**, IN HIS APPEAL LETTER TO SPIRITUAL CHINESE BROTHERS AND SISTERS

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REGULARS

Central Tibetan Administration condemns sentences imposed on 30 Tibetans, 1 May

In a press statement issued on 1 May 2008, the Kashag (Cabinet) condemned the arbitrary sentences imposed on 30 Tibetans involved in the recent unrest inside Tibet.

The statement reads: "We strongly condemn the arbitrary sentences imposed on the 30 Tibetans involved in the recent protests in Tibet. The penalty imposed on the 30 Tibetans ranges from three years to life imprisonment for merely exercising their freedom of expression. These sentences are disproportionate to what the Chinese authorities said are the "crimes" they committed.

These trials were neither fair nor transparent. The trial decisions did not follow the due process of law and the accused were denied independent lawyers to defend their case.

We fear that many such arbitrary trials will lead to lock up all those Tibetans presently under detention. All such future trials must be open and transparent. Those under trial deserve independent lawyers who can defend their case without fear and favour.

Most importantly, we urge the Chinese government to do away with this pretence of a fair trial and immediately release all those Tibetans presently under detention."

China condemned for slapping unfair verdict on Tibetan protesters

The Tibetan Solidarity Committee (TSC) strongly condemned the Lhasa Intermediate People's court's verdict on sentencing 30 Tibetans from three to life-term in jail, fearing it could also include execution of some Tibetans in the days to come.

China's state media Xinhua reported the slapping of harsh prison terms on

Tibetans for disrupting public services, arson, looting, destroying local government offices and attacking police, after conducting a public trial in Lhasa, on 30 April.

"The manner in which the recent trials were held forewarns of a more severe and unfair punishment to befall on many of the Tibetans currently in custody, to the point of even awarding death penalty," TSC said in a press release.

The committee has urged all the governments of free world, the United Nations Human Rights Council, Amnesty International and Legal organizations around the world to immediately come forward in rescue of Tibetan people from the unjust and unfair judicial process.

Terming the verdict as unjustified, the committee said Tibetan's long-standing unbearable repression compelled them to a spontaneous and peaceful protest rather than killing and looting as allegedly pronounced by the court.

US Ambassador worried over Nepal's harsh handling of Tibetans

The United States Ambassador Nancy Powell expressed official concern about the treatment of Tibetans by Nepalese authorities, in addition to discussing the current political-economic situation in the wake of the final election results with Prime Minister Koirala on 1 May.

Ambassador Powell urged the Prime Minister to ensure that the right to peaceful protest was maintained and that the human rights of Tibetans in Nepal are respected. She welcomed the right to peacefully protest.

Meanwhile, the Sherpa Himalayan community of Nepal voiced their serious concern on the Nepalese government's repressive handling of peaceful Tibetan demonstrators.

Terming the actions as both inhuman and repressive, they said, it is also a very

serious violation of the Interim Constitution of Nepal, which upholds the dignity of the basic human rights.

They also said Tibetans share same religion, culture, language and tradition with us and we are pained to see beating of protesting Buddhist monks whom we revere very highly.

The Sherpa community have urged the government of Nepal to stop the double standard of dealing with the Tibetan refugees.

US supports talks between His Holiness' Envoys and China

The United States expressed support for a meeting between the Chinese government and the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

"In terms of our views on conversations with the Chinese and representatives of the Dalai Lama, obviously, we've been calling for that for a long time. We certainly support the statements, as the President said that the Chinese Government has said they're willing to have this meeting take place," said Deputy Spokesman Tom Casey at a daily press briefing on 2 May.

US President George W. Bush urged China to hold substantive dialogue with the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to address the deep and legitimate concerns of the Tibetan people.

Tom Casey said, "We certainly want to see it take place and believe that dialogue between the Dalai Lama and his representatives and the Chinese Government is really the best way to address some of the fundamental issues in Tibet, and will allow for a real communication and a real discussion of those issues between the Chinese Government and an individual and his representatives, who really is revered among people in the area and who is an important spiritual leader for many."

Responding to a question on what US consider as deep and legitimate concerns of Tibetans, Casey said, "I don't think that we need to catalog for the Tibetan people what their basic concerns are."

"We have a situation in Tibet where people feel that they are unable to freely practice their religion, freely practice some of their cultural traditions and values. And this is an ongoing problem. These are things that we would hope would be able to be discussed," he said.

"Certainly, the Dalai Lama himself has said that he is not calling for any kind of change in the political status of Tibet. He's not calling for independence, but calling for a discussion with the Chinese Government to help resolve some of these issues and allow people to be able to enjoy some of these basic rights," he added.

During their brief visit to China, the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama will take up the urgent issue of the current crisis in the Tibetan areas. They will convey His Holiness the Dalai Lama's deep concerns about the Chinese authorities' handling of the situation and also provide suggestions to bring peace to the region.

Since the Chinese leadership has indicated, publicly as well as in briefings given to foreign governments, its position on the continuation of the dialogue, the envoys will raise the issue of moving forward on the process for a mutually satisfactory solution to the Tibetan issue.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama leads prayers for Tibetan victims, 3 May

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, along with spiritual leaders from the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional Bon religion, presided over a special prayer congregation at Tsuklakhang (main temple), Dharamsala, in remembrance of Tibetan victims of the recent protests in Tibet

European Parliament Urges China for Substantive Dialogue on Tibet, 8 May

The President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pottering urged China to engage in substantive discussions with representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, during his meeting with Mrs Kesang Yangki Takla, Kalon for the Department of Information and International Relations in Brussels, on 8 May.

Mr. Pottering said: "The European Parliament has made it crystal clear to the Chinese authorities in our resolution last month, and I repeat that demand now. China must immediately begin substantive discussions leading to meaningful negotiations, at an appropriately high level, with representatives of the Dalai Lama."

"I have now met the Dalai Lama three or four times and his Kalon reconfirmed to me what he himself has always stated clearly: He is not seeking independence for Tibet but autonomy within the Chinese constitution to enable the Tibetan people to manage their own affairs in the areas of religion, culture, social norms and environment. It is on this basis that results-oriented talks should be opened," he added.

"My exchange of views with Kalon Takla was an opportunity to hear details of the harsh conditions on the ground. The continued restrictions imposed on the media are unacceptable. I reiterate Parliament's call on China to open up Tibet to media and diplomats. There must also be an independent enquiry, under the auspices of the United Nations, into the recent riots and repression in Tibet."

"I reassured Kalon Takla that the European Parliament is looking forward to the visit of the Dalai Lama scheduled for 3 December where he is invited to address a plenary sitting. The Dalai Lama is welcome to come sooner if he so chooses," he added.

Chinese Lawyers suppressed for offering legal service to Tibetans

The 21 Chinese lawyers who signed their signature campaign and openly announced that they would provide legal services to Tibetans arrested as legal representatives and defense lawyers were severely suppressed by the authorities.

Zhou Yongkang, the standing member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and the party secretary of the Central Political and Law Commission, sent a special memo concerning this issue; the law firms where these lawyers are working were forbidden by the bureaus/departments of judiciary to accept the entrust by the Tibetans, and the annual inspection and registration of their law firms would also be postponed.

As for the lawyers themselves, the annual inspection and registration for many of them have also been postponed.

Those who signed their signatures but have not participated in the annual inspection yet will also meet with the same fate that theirs will also be postponed.

The President of the Beijing Bar Association claimed that they would use their wisdom to smash the "rice bowl" for those lawyers who signed their names on the statement.

Since the first ten-day period of April, one after another, the law firms where the lawyers who signed their names are working received the following notice from the Administration Section of Lawyers under Beijing Municipal Bureau of Judicature:

"The lawyers from your law firm are involved in representing some sensitive cases, therefore, the annual inspection and registration of your firms will be temporarily postponed."

The Kashag released a press statement on 3 April 2008 welcoming the legal services offered to Tibetans by the Chinese lawyers in China.

In its press release, the Kashag said, "We are equally encouraged to note that the lawyers, while expressing their serious concern for the well being of the arrested Tibetans, have called upon the concerned Chinese authorities to "obey the constitution, following the legal procedures in dealing with the arrested Tibetans..... no torture throughout interrogation and respect the independence of legal system."

"The Kashag would like to thank all those Chinese lawyers who have taken upon themselves to protect the legal rights of the Tibetans as well as Chinese people and have come forward to save the arrested Tibetans from the onslaught of a regime bent on curbing the fundamental rights of its own people to have a fair and just legal representation."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Prays for Victims in China Quake

In a condolence message, His Holiness the Dalai Lama expressed his deep sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the affected families by the devastating earthquake that struck Sichuan province in China on 12 May.

The message noted: "I am deeply saddened by the loss of many lives and many more who have been injured in the catastrophic earthquake that struck Sichuan province of China,"

"I would like to extend my deep sympathy and heartfelt condolences to those families who have been directly affected by the strong earthquake on 12 May 2008. I offer my prayers for those who have lost their lives and those injured in the quake," His Holiness added.

A strong earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale jolted Wenchuan County, in southwest of Sichuan

Province of China, resulting in nearly 50,000 deaths and large scale property loss, reported China's official Xinhua news agency.

Exiled Tibetans offer Solace to China Quake Victims through Prayers, 19 May

The Tibetan Solidarity Committee organised a prayer congregation at the main Buddhists temple in Dharamshala on 19 May, to offer Tibetan people's deep sympathy and prayers to the families of those thousands of people killed and injured in the two recent natural calamities - cyclone Nargis in Myanmar and the earthquake that struck southwestern parts of China.

On the same day, synchronised prayers were also held in all the Tibetan settlements across India, Nepal, and Bhutan under the aegis of local Tibetan solidarity committees.

In his address during the prayer gathering, Karma Chopel, the speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile said: "The Central Tibetan Administration and all the Tibetan people in exile convey their heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of the devastating earthquake and stands in solidarity with the Chinese people in this hour of grief and sadness."

As a mark of respect, the speaker appealed to all Tibetans to put off protests in front of Chinese embassies until the end of May.

He expressed concern that Tibetans might also have been affected by the earthquake since the largely hit areas by the powerful quake also include Tibetan inhabited areas like Lungu county (Ch: Wen Chuang), Tashi Ling county (Ch: Lixian), Sungchu county (Ch: Song Pan), Trochu county (Ch: Xiao Jing) and Maowen county (Ch: Mao Wen) under Ngaba (Ch: Aba) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) in Sichuan Province.

"In this hour of tragedy, we hope and

appeal to the Central Government of the People's Republic of China to deliver timely rescue and relief to all the affected areas, without any distinction of people and place," he added.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama saddened by the Cyclone Disaster in Burma

In a letter to Mr. Jacob Kellenberger, President of International Committee of the Red Cross, sent on 8 May 2008, His Holiness the Dalai Lama expressed:

"I am deeply saddened by the catastrophe caused in Burma by the recent Cyclone Nargis. I am shocked by the destruction, especially by the high number of people who have perished as a result. This catastrophe has compounded the problems of poverty that already exist in Burma."

Cyclone Nargis hit Irrawaddy river delta region in Burma on 3 May 2008, killing hundreds and thousands of people, and causing widespread damage. The worst-hit areas in Irrawaddy Delta are Bogalay, Laputta, Mawlamyaing Gyun and Pyapon townships.

According to the U.N., the 3 May cyclone may have killed between 62,000 and 100,000, and left up to 2 million survivors facing disease and starvation.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama visits Germany and the UK

His Holiness the Dalai Lama appealed for more cultural autonomy in his native Tibet, but stressed that he did not want to see the territory become independent from China, during his visit to Germany.

"The Chinese earthquake victims are also human beings, they are suffering the same pain so as soon as we heard and also saw pictures ... in Dharamshala, we really felt very, very sad," Reuters quoted His Holiness as saying at an impromptu news conference shortly after landing in Frankfurt on 15 May.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama was

received at the airport by the State Premier of Hesse, Roland Koch and held breakfast meeting with him.

In Bochum, His Holiness met with Juergen Ruetters, Prime Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's most populous state. Ruetters said after the talks that His Holiness the Dalai Lama had briefed him on the meetings between his representatives and the Chinese government held in the aftermath of the freedom demonstrations in March that left an undetermined number of dead.

Condemning the suppression of the peaceful demonstration in Tibet, His Holiness said: "The Chinese political authorities' reaction, as before, was suppression. So it is very sad."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama reiterated his commitment of not seeking independence for Tibet and said we want to live in peace with our Chinese brothers and sisters, Agence France-Presse reported. His Holiness addressed a news conference in the western city of Bochum on the second day of a visit to Germany on 16 May.

"We are not seeking independence, but merely autonomy and more respect for Tibet culture, religion and language," His Holiness repeated.

His Holiness said that it was in China's best interest to improve relations with the Tibetans but that its policy had created resentment well beyond Tibet's borders.

The International community heaped a chorus of condemnation over China's violent handling of the peaceful protests across Tibet last month.

Later in the day, His Holiness addressed some 3,000 people gathered to hear him give a speech on human rights and globalisation. "This should be the century of peace and dialogue," His Holiness told the cheering crowd, calling for all nuclear weapons to be scrapped

and for the world to be demilitarised.

His Holiness added that globalisation must be on the wrong path when it leads to rising food prices, and called for harmony between the world's religions.

On 19 May, His Holiness met with Germany's development minister Wieczorek-Zeul and the foreign affairs committee of the parliament. The minister said they had a frank discussion Monday about Tibetan autonomy and Chinese rule, Agence France-Presse reported.

"I took advantage of the opportunity to let the Dalai Lama inform me about the situation in Tibet, based on his point of view," AFP quoted her as saying. "Of course, we discussed the necessity for cultural autonomy in this context, as well as about the dialogue between the PRC and representatives of the Dalai Lama."

Merkel's spokesman, Thomas Steg, told reporters that Merkel, who is on a seven-day tour of Latin America, was not involved in Wieczorek-Zeul's decision to hold talks with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, but was in no way opposed to it."

His Holiness concluded his 5-day visit to Germany on 20 May with an address to a large gathering in the heart of the capital at Brandenburg Gate - a symbol of a reunited Germany.

Calling for dialogue as a means to end violence, His Holiness said: "The 20th century was the century of bloodshed. I say the 21st century should be one of dialogue."

"[This is] the very place the Berlin Wall disappeared, not by force, but by a popular peaceful movement," His Holiness said, adding, "So I really feel [there is] something very significant [in this]."

The Tibetan's supreme spiritual and temporal leader said: "We are not seeking separation." "Tibet is a poor country, materially very backward," His

Holiness said, noting that the "average Tibetan" wanted to live in a more modern society.

For this reason, His Holiness said it was important that Tibet remain part of China so it could profit from its booming economy.

"We get maximum benefit, provided (there is) autonomy. That is the safeguard of Tibet's unique cultural heritage."

From Germany, His Holiness proceeded to the United Kingdom for a 11-day visit from 20-31 May.

6th Session of the Tibetan Parliament begins 8 September

The members of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile will meet here for the sixth session from 8 to 16 September 2008.

The Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat has issued the announcement on 14 May. The members are informed to report at the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat on 7 September.

Sessions of the Tibetan Parliament are held twice every year, with an interval of six months between the sessions. The annual budget session of the Central Tibetan Administration is convened in March.

The present 14th Parliament consists of 43 members. The election is held after a term of five years, when Tibetans elect ten members each from the three traditional provinces of Tibet - U-Tsang, Do-tod and Do-med.

Tibetans representing the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional Bon faith elect two members each. Three members are elected by Tibetans in the west - two from Europe and one from North America. In addition, His Holiness the Dalai Lama directly nominates one to three members with distinction in the fields of art, science, literature and community service.

Kalon Tripa pays tribute to late Nirmala Deshpande

Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche, executive head of the Central Tibetan Administration, paid tribute to the non-violent struggle of the eminent Gandhian Nirmala Deshpande, who passed away on 1 May 2008.

A memorial meeting in upholding her work and legacy of non-violent principles was held at the India International Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi, on 16 May, Phayul website reported.

Kalon Tripa said her contribution to the Tibetan cause had been immense. "We gather to discuss how to carry on her legacy, her prominence and strive to live up to her achievements. We can pay our respect by continuing the work she started decades ago and by adopting a non-violent stance in our actions," he added.

Earlier on 2 May, Dolma Gyari, the deputy speaker of the Tibetan Parliament in-Exile along with some members of the parliament and Kalon Tempa Tsering, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Delhi, attended the funeral.

Nirmala Deshpande had devoted more than 60 years of her life towards promoting communal harmony and serving women, tribal and the dispossessed.

Born on October 17, 1929 in Nagpur, she joined Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan Movement in 1952 and undertook padyatras across the country to carry Mahatma Gandhi's message of Gram Swaraj. She firmly believed that although it was difficult to practice Gandhian principles, it was the only way towards a truly democratic society.

Kashag appeals for temporary halt of protests to show sympathy to Quake-hit China

The Kashag (cabinet) of the Central

Tibetan Administration issued the following guidelines for implementation by all the Offices of Tibet.

1) Recently many Tibetan and Chinese areas in the Sichuan Province of the People's Republic of China (PRC) have been hit by the earthquake, causing enormous human and property losses. As a way of expressing our solidarity with the quake victims, Tibetans in Tibet have undertaken many relief activities. It is very important for the Tibetans in exile, or Tibetans living in the free world, also to join in this effort and initiate solidarity actions by organising prayer meetings and raising donations.

As advised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his recent visit to the US, the Tibetan and Chinese nationals there have joined together to raise donations in many areas where Chinese reside. It is important for the Tibetans living in other parts of the world also to initiate similar collaborative activities, and explore the possibilities of establishing Sino-Tibetan Friendship Associations through such programmes.

2) In order to express our solidarity with the great natural disaster that befell on China, Tibetans across the world should shun staging demonstrations in front of the Chinese embassies in the respective host countries they live in at least for until about the end of May, this year. And write a letter, or send a message, to the concerned that they are doing so in solidarity with the quake victims.

British PM meets His Holiness, pledges support for Tibet-China talks

Prime Minister Gordon Brown pledged Britain's support for a meaningful constructive dialogue between China and representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, during a meeting with His Holiness at Lambeth Palace, the Archbishop of Canterbury's official residence in London.

PM Brown's office said he held "warm and constructive" discussions with the Tibetan spiritual leader in a 30-minute

closed-door meeting.

A Downing Street spokesman said the "warm and constructive" talks covered a range of issues, "including the importance of the dialogue between the Dalai Lama's representatives and the Chinese authorities and the PM's strong commitment to the human rights of the Tibetan people.

"The PM expressed his determination to work with both sides to encourage reconciliation."

In an interview with AFP on Friday, His Holiness the Dalai Lama expressed concern that violence could flare up in Tibet again if talks between his representatives and Beijing collapse.

"Demonstrations I think will happen, from our past experience. Serious demonstrations, not only demonstrations but also involving violence," His Holiness said, when asked if he feared a resurgence of unrest.

His Holiness said he believed a seventh round of negotiations between his representatives and China would take place in Beijing on 11 June.

The meeting with Brown was "good, very good," His Holiness told AFP.

"He showed genuine concerns and also he repeated the three points the Chinese prime minister has mentioned: not seeking independence, no violence and then (support for) the Olympics," His Holiness said, saying he supported those points as a basis for the talks.

His Holiness said the British government was "willing to help" facilitate "meaningful or constructive dialogue" with Beijing.

The Downing Street spokesman said the pair also discussed the aftermath of the earthquake in Sichuan "and the steps being taken by the UK to assist the people of western China."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will be in Britain until May 30.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Appeal to Chinese Spiritual Brothers and Sisters

Today I would like to make a personal appeal to all Chinese spiritual brothers and sisters, both inside as well as outside the People's Republic of China, and especially to the followers of the Buddha. I do this as a Buddhist monk and a student of our most revered teacher, the Buddha. I have already made an appeal to the general Chinese community. Here I am appealing to you, my spiritual brothers and sisters, on an urgent humanitarian matter.

The Chinese and the Tibetan people share common spiritual heritage in Mahayana Buddhism. We worship the Buddha of Compassion - Guan Yin in the Chinese tradition and Chenrezig in Tibetan tradition - and cherish compassion for all suffering beings as one of the highest spiritual ideals. Furthermore, since Buddhism flourished in China before it came to Tibet from India, I have always viewed the Chinese Buddhists with the reverence due to senior spiritual brothers and sisters.

As most of you are aware, beginning with the 10th of March this year, a series of demonstrations have taken place in Lhasa and across many Tibetan areas. These are caused by deep Tibetan resentment against the policies of the Chinese government. I

have been deeply saddened by the loss of life, both Chinese and Tibetans, and immediately appealed to both the Chinese authorities and the Tibetans for restraint. I specially appealed to the Tibetans not to resort to violence.

Unfortunately, the Chinese authorities have resorted to brutal methods to deal with the development despite appeals for restraint by many world leaders, NGOs and noted world citizens, particularly many Chinese scholars. In the process, there has been loss of life, injuries to many, and the detention of large number of Tibetans. The crackdown still continues, especially targeting monastic institutions, which have traditionally been the repository of ancient Buddhist knowledge and tradition. Many of these have been sealed off. We have reports that many of those detained are beaten and treated harshly. These repressive measures seem to be part of an officially sanctioned systematic policy.

With no international observers, journalists or even tourists allowed to Tibet, I am deeply worried about the fate of the Tibetans. Many of those injured in the crackdown, especially in the remote areas, are too terrified to seek medical treatment for fear of arrest. According to some reliable sources, people are fleeing to the

mountains where they have no access to food and shelter. Those who remained behind are living in a constant state of fear of being the next to be arrested.

I am deeply pained by this ongoing suffering. I am very worried where all these tragic developments might lead to ultimately. I do not believe that repressive measures can achieve any long-term solution. The best way forward is to resolve the issues between the Tibetans and the Chinese leadership through dialogue, as I have been advocating for a long time. I have repeatedly assured the leadership of the People's Republic of China that I am not seeking independence. What I am seeking is a meaningful autonomy for the Tibetan people that would ensure the long-term survival of our Buddhist culture, our language and our distinct identity as a people. The rich Tibetan Buddhist culture is part of the larger cultural heritage of the People's Republic of China and has the potential to benefit our Chinese brothers and sisters.

In the light of the present crisis, I appeal to all of you to help call for an immediate end to the ongoing brutal crackdown, for the release of all who have been detained, and to call for providing immediate medical care to the injured.

World Leaders' Take on the resolution of Tibet issue

"Nobody is asking for independence for Tibet. The Dalai Lama has never asked for that. What is at stake is preserving the autonomy of Tibet." In a statement issued by Costa Rican President and Nobel Laureate **Oscar Arias**.

"Officials from China's Central Government made contacts recently with private representatives of the

Dalai Lama, and the next round of contact will be held at an appropriate time. The PRC's attitude toward contacts and consultation with the Dalai Lama is serious. We hope the contacts to yield positive results." **President Hu Jintao**

"The European Parliament has made it crystal clear to the Chinese authorities in our resolution last month, and I repeat that demand now.

China must immediately begin substantive discussions leading to meaningful negotiations, at an appropriately high level, with representatives of the Dalai Lama. I have now met the Dalai Lama three or four times and his minister (Kalon Kesang Y Takla) reconfirmed to me what he himself has always stated clearly: He is not seeking independence for Tibet but autonomy within the Chinese Constitution to

enable the Tibetan people to manage their own affairs in the areas of religion, culture, social norms and environment. It is on this basis that results-oriented talks should be opened. The continued restrictions imposed on the media are unacceptable. I reiterate the Parliament's call on China to open up Tibet to media and diplomats. There must also be an independent enquiry, under the auspices of the United Nations, into the recent riots and repression in Tibet." **Hans-Gert Pottering**, the President of the European Parliament.

"In all of his recent speeches, the Dalai Lama has stressed that it is the cultural and religious freedom of his people that is the top of his agenda of negotiation. He has not sought political independence for Tibet. It is clear that the international community has not been able to influence China to the degree that it would accept the opening of talks on such a reasonable basis, demanding instead that all Tibetans declare that they are part of China as a precondition for any talks. What is unfolding now in Tibet could lead to such a brutal crackdown as was witnessed in Burma. It is important that Ireland, the European Union and those members of International Community who have dealings with China urges it to return to the path of peaceful negotiations offered by Dalai Lama so that a bloodbath can be avoided." **Michael D Higgins TD**, Irish Foreign Affairs Spokesperson.

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

the importance of further measures for the protection of Tibetan culture and religion. Together with its EU partners, Austria will continue to advocate such moves with conviction and urge Beijing to take them." **Ursula Plassnik**, foreign minister of Austria.

"I strongly demand peaceful solution of Tibet problem. I should say that these riots in Tibet is caused by oppression of human rights and destruction of Tibetan culture by China for all these 49 years. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people always maintained non-violent approach to solve the issue peacefully. Our government demand Chinese government to solve this situation peacefully and respect human rights. Also, I want Chinese government to talk directly with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and make peace with open mind," **Yukio Hatoyama**, MP, Democratic Party of Japan.

"The unfolding tragedy in Tibet should draw the attention of the entire world. I deplore the violent crackdown by Chinese authorities and the continuing oppression in Tibet of those merely wishing to practice their faith and preserve their culture and heritage. I have listened carefully to the Dalai Lama and am convinced he is a man of peace who reflects the hopes and aspirations of Tibetans. I urge the government of the People's Republic of China to address the root causes of the unrest in Tibet by opening a genuine dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama." US senator **John McCain**.

"I co-sponsored the 14th Dalai Lama Congressional Gold Medal Act and co-sponsored the Tibetan Policy Act of 2001, supporting a dialogue between the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama. I have personally met with the Dalai Lama. I asked President Jiang Zemin to

explain China's repression of the Tibetans and their religion during his 1997 state visit to the United States. More than 10 years later, Chinese repression in Tibet continues. This week, Tibetan monks have sent a message to the world that their aspirations for religious liberty remain as strong as ever," **US senator Hillary Rodham Clinton**.

"The German Government is concerned about reports of unrest in Lhasa. We call on Chinese authorities to act with restraint and to deal with protestors peacefully. We urge the Chinese Government to allow peaceful expression of dissent," **Chancellor Angela Merkel**

"We want to see an end to the violence. We have long urged China to engage in meaningful dialogue with representatives of the Tibetan people, as we think this is the best way to achieve a lasting resolution of problems in Tibet," **Helen Clark, New Zealand Prime Minister**.

"It is a human nature that whenever your neighbor is in trouble, especially when they belong to the same religion and culture, we have to extend all possible help. We have generally seen that even animals, if attacked by a different kind, collectively resists by shouting, by biting, by crying and by all means in order to try to release from the enemy. We are supposed to be better than animals. Today we have seen and heard about the situation in Tibet. I cannot say whether people who voluntarily pretend not to see and hear are being bribed/ paid or not. But if they blindly choose to jump down the cliff in full sense, I have nothing to say." An excerpt from *Nepali view on Tibet: People in Nepal should support Tibet* by **Ang Dawa Sherpa**, Elected Legislature, CPM, Nepal.

Tibet: Her Pain, My Shame

- by Tang Danhong

Tang Danhong, born in 1965, is a poet and documentary filmmaker from Chengdu, Sichuan. She has made several documentaries in and about Tibet since the 1990s. She wrote the following essay this week and published it on her own blog (hosted outside of China), partially translated by Chinadigitaltimes.net.

For more than a decade, I have frequently entered Tibet and often stayed there for a long time, traveling or working. I have met all kinds of Tibetans, from youngsters on the streets, folk artists, herders on the grasslands, mystic doctors in mountain villages, to ordinary cadres in state agencies, street vendors in Lhasa, monks and cleaners in monasteries, artists and writers. Among those Tibetans I have met, some frankly told me that Tibet was a small country several decades ago, with its own government, religious leader, currency and military; some stay silent, with a sense of helplessness, and avoid talking with me, a Han Chinese, afraid this is an awkward subject. Some think that no matter what happened, it is an historical fact that Chinese and Tibetans had a long history of exchanges with each other, and the relationship must be carefully maintained by both sides. Some were angered by the railway project, and by those roads named "Beijing Road," "Jiangsu Road," "Sichuan-Tibet road," but others accept them happily. Some say that you (Han Chinese) invest millions in Tibet but you also got what you wanted and even more; some say you invest in the development but you also destroy, and what you destroy is exactly what we treasure. What I want to say here is that no matter how different these people are, they have one thing in common: They have their own view of history, and a profound religious belief.

For anyone who has been to Tibet, he/she should sense such a religious belief among Tibetans. As the matter of fact, many are shocked by it. Such attitude has carried on throughout their history, and is expressed in their daily lives. This is a very different value, especially compared with those Han Chinese who

have no beliefs, and now worship the cult of money. This religious belief is what Tibetans care about the most. They project this belief onto the Dalai Lama as a religious persona.

For anyone who has been to Tibet, it should not be strange to see the "common Tibetan scene": Is there any Tibetan who does not worship him (the Dalai Lama)? Is there any Tibetan unwilling to hang up his photo in his own shrine? (These photos are smuggled back in from abroad, secretly copied and enlarged, not like those Mao portraits printed by the government that we Han Chinese once had to hang up.) Is there any Tibetan who wants to verbally disrespect the Dalai Lama? Is there a Tibetan who does not want to see him? Is there any Tibetan who does not want to present Kada [white welcoming scarf] to him?

Other than those voices that the rulers want to hear, have we ever heard the Tibetans' full, real voices? Those Han Chinese who have been in Tibet, now matter if one is a high official, government cadre, tourist or businessman, have we all heard their real voices, which are silenced, but are still echoing everywhere?

Is this the real reason that all monasteries in Tibet are forbidden from hanging up the Dalai Lama's picture? Is this the reason that all work units have officials to check in every household and to punish those who hang up his picture? Is this the reason that the government has people to stop those believers on the pilgrimage path on every religious celebration day? Is this the reason for the policy barring government employees from having their children study in Dharamsala; otherwise, they will be fired and their house will be taken away? Is this the

reason that at all sensitive times, government officials will hold meetings in monasteries, to force monks to promise to "support the Party's leadership" and "Have no relations with the Dalai splitist cliques"? Is this the reason we refuse to negotiate, and constantly use dehumanizing language to humiliate him? After all, isn't this the very reason to reinforce the "common Tibetan scene," making this symbol of nationality more holy?

Why can't we sit down with the Dalai Lama who has abandoned calls for "independence" and now advocates a "middle way," and negotiate with him with sincerity, to achieve "stability" and "unity" through him?

Because the power difference of the two sides is too big. We are too many people, too powerful: Other than guns and money, and cultural destruction and spiritual rape, we do not know other ways to achieve "harmony."

This group of people who believe in Buddhism because they believe in cause and effect and transmigration of souls, oppose anger and hatred, developed a philosophy that Han nationalists will never be able to understand. Several Tibetan monk friends, just the "troublemaker monk" type that are in the monasteries explained to me their view on "independence": "actually, we may well have been ethnic Han in a previous incarnation, and in our next incarnation we might well become ethnic Han. And some ethnic Han in a previous life may well have been Tibetan or may become Tibetan in their next life. Foreigners or Chinese, men or women, lovers and enemies, the souls of the world transmigrate without end. As the wheel turns, states arise and die, so what need is there for independence?" This kind

of religion, this kind of believer, can one ever think that they would be easy to control? Yet there is a paradox here: if one wants them to give up the desire for independence, then one must respect and protect their religion.

Not long ago, I read some posts by some radical Tibetans on an online forum about Tibet. These posts were roughly saying: “We do not believe in Buddhism, we do not believe in karma. But we have not forgotten that we are Tibetan. We have not forgotten our homeland. Now we believe the philosophy of you Han Chinese: Power comes out of the barrel of a gun! Why did you Han Chinese come to Tibet? Tibet belongs to Tibetans. Get out of Tibet!”

Of course behind those posts, there are an overwhelming number of posts from Han “ patriots.” Almost without exception, those replies are full of words such as “Kill them!” “Wipe them out!” “Wash them with blood!” “Dalai is a liar!” — those “passions” of the worshippers of violence that we are all so familiar with.

When I read these posts, I feel so sad. So this is karma...

In the last week, after I put down the phone which cannot reach anyone on the the other end, when I face the information black hole caused by internet blockage, even I believe what Xinhua has said — strangely I do believe this part: There were Tibetans who set fire to shops and killed those poor innocent Han Chinese who were just there to make a living. And I still feel extremely sad. Since when were such seeds planted? During the gunshots of 1959? During the massive destruction during the Cultural Revolution? During the crackdown in 1989? During the time we put their Panchen Lama under house arrest and replaced him with our own puppet? During those countless political meetings and confessions in the monasteries? Or during the time when a seventeen-year-old nun was shot on

the magnificent snowy mountain, just because she wanted to see the Dalai Lama?

Or during numerous moments which seem trivial but which makes me ashamed: I was ashamed when I saw Tibetans buy live fish from Han fish sellers on the street and put them back in the Lhasa river; I was ashamed when I saw more and more Han beggars on the streets of Lhasa—even beggars know it is easier to beg in Tibet than in Han areas; I felt ashamed when I saw those ugly scars from mines on the sacred mountains in the morning sunlight; I felt ashamed when I heard the Han Chinese elite complain that the Chinese government has invested so many millions of yuan, that economic policy favours Tibetans, and that the GDP has grown so fast, so, “What else do these Tibetans want?”

Why can’t you understand that people have different values? While you believe in brainwashing, the power of a gun and of money, there is a spiritual belief that has been in their minds for thousands of years and cannot be washed away. When you claim yourselves as “saviors of Tibetans from slavery society,” I am ashamed for your arrogance and your delusions. When military police with their guns pass by me in the streets of Lhasa, and each time I am there I can see row upon row of military bases... yes, I, a Han Chinese, feel ashamed.

What makes me feel most ashamed is the “patriotic majority”: You people are the descendents of Qinshi Huangdi who knows only conquering by killing; you are the chauvinists who rule the weak by force; you are those cowards who hide behind guns and call for shooting the victims; you suffer from Stockholm Syndrome; you are the blood-thirsty crazies of an “advanced” culture of Slow slicing and Castration. You are the sick minds waving the “patriotic” flag. I look down on you. If you are Han Chinese, I am ashamed to be one of you.

Lhasa is on fire, and there are gunshots in Tibetan areas in Sichuan and Qinghai. Even I believe this — actually, I do believe this part of the facts. In those “patriotic” posts which shout “Kill them!” “Wipe them out!” “Wash them with blood!” “Dalai is a liar!” I saw the mirror image of those Tibetan radicals. Let me say that you people (patriotic youth) are Han chauvinists who destroy thousands of years of friendship between Han and Tibetan people; you are the main contributors to the hatred between ethnic groups. You people do not really “highly support” the authority; rather, you people are in effect “highly supporting” “Tibetan independence.”

Tibet is disappearing. The spirit which makes her beautiful and peaceful is disappearing. She is becoming us, becoming what she does not want to become. What other choice does she have when facing the anxiety of being alienated? To hold onto her tradition and culture, and revive her ancient civilization? Or to commit suicidal acts which will only add to Han nationalists’ bloody, shameful glory?

Yes, I love Tibet. I am a Han Chinese who loves Tibet, regardless of whether she is a nation or a province, as long as she is so voluntarily. Personally, I would like to have them (Tibetans) belong to the same big family with me. I embrace relationships which come self-selected and on equal footing, not controlled or forced, both between peoples and nations. I have no interest in feeling “powerful,” to make others fear you and be forced to obey you, both between people and between nations, because what’s behind such a “feeling” is truly disgusting. I have left her (Tibet) several years ago, and missing her has become part of my daily life. I long to go back to Tibet, as a welcomed Han Chinese, to enjoy a real friendship as equal neighbor or a family member.

Tang Danhong moved to Israel from Chengdu in 2005, and is currently teaching Chinese language at Tel Aviv University.

From This Side of the Himalaya: Time for China to hold out Olive Branch

- by *Lobsang Choedak*

Longstanding grievances and aspirations of the Tibetan people under nearly five decades of China's flawed policies and repressive rule took the form of protests, which engulfed Lhasa on the 49th national uprising day, 10 March 2008. It gradually spilled across large swathes of the Tibetan plateau.

Premier Wen Jiabao blamed His Holiness the Dalai Lama for masterminding the protests in Tibet and sabotaging China Olympics. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration received a barrage of accusations from the Chinese communists government for fomenting riots, which started in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa and spilled across other parts of Tibet.

These accusations remained empty words - as Chinese authorities have been adamant not to allow independent inquiry into the causes of riots. It thus reinforced the fact that blames put on His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration were absolutely baseless. On the contrary, it showed that something is seriously wrong with China's approach towards Tibet.

China's Tibet Blunder

10 March events in Tibet put China's violations of basic human rights in Tibet on the spotlight. There was fire on the roof of the world. How can one remain calm when the roof of house is burning? The official response to the protests by the Chinese authorities received a flurry of condemnation from the international community. But, the Chinese government looked more

adamant to crush the people's voice with violent means, which resulted in hundreds of innocent Tibetans killed, thousands wounded now without medical care and thousands more languishing in prisons. Despite repeated appeals from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, China virtually sealed off Tibet and denied appeals to unfettered media access and medical assistance to injured Tibetans.

The unprecedented upsurge of the Tibetan people's pent up frustrations is the manifestation of China's wrong policies on Tibet. China's policy of "Charm Offensive" of pumping millions of Yuan into Tibet on the one hand and marginalising every aspects of Tibetan identity on the other has failed to cover up the issue of Tibet. Tibetans in their own land have been subjected to inequality and injustice in economic, political or social aspects.

Willy Lam, a Hong Kong based China scholar attributed the cause of escalation of protests in Tibet to the TAR Party Secretary Zhang Qingli, who characterized Beijing's battle with the "Dalai Lama clique" as a "life-and-death struggle between ourselves and the enemies."

During the recent crisis, far from addressing the problem in a conciliatory way, the Chinese authorities acted more belligerent and under the garb of "work teams" stepped up "patriotic education campaigns" particularly targeting Tibetan monasteries. The most provoking tactics employed by Chinese authorities is in hurting the sentiments of Tibetans by forcing them to vilify their supreme leader,

His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The position of His Holiness in hearts of the Tibetan people's is akin to the love and respect offered to parents by their children. It is highly unlikely to get a favourable response in asking children to denounce their parents.

The Chinese government's using force and intimidation in handling the recent protests in Tibet are solely responsible for aggravating the situation.

This time, the Chinese government went to the extreme misstep of whipping up Chinese nationalist sentiment to create a rift between Chinese and Tibetan people and hatred against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. China's state controlled propaganda machinery called the events in Lhasa as "3.14."

Furthermore, it is extremely disingenuous on the part of Chinese journalists and writers working in the official media to link Tibetan non-governmental organisations to terrorists outfits. Tibetan NGOs have never taken to violent means and work within the confines of the "Middle-Way Approach" endorsed by majority of Tibetans - including Tibetans living in and outside Tibet - as proposed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Protests, which marred Olympics torch relay, should not be seen as acts of saboteurs but as an appeal to the government of People's Republic of China to review its hard line policy on Tibet.

Tibetan Efforts to Bring Peace and Progress

Kasur Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari, special envoy of His Holiness the Dalai

Lama, forewarned that Chinese policies - such as authorizing the Communist Party to recognize reincarnate lamas — or by actions Beijing has taken — such as the abduction of the young Panchen Lama, would trigger crisis in Tibet.

Since the beginning of the crisis in Tibet, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration have tried to reach out to Tibetans in and outside Tibet to not to resort to violence. In desperation, His Holiness the Dalai Lama even threatened to resign from leading the Tibetan people. On March 19, with deep concern, His Holiness himself sent a letter to Chinese President Hu Jintao to begin a discussion on a peaceful way forward. His Holiness also proposed to send a delegation to Tibet that he believed could ease anxiety among Tibetans and contribute to the restoration of calm.

To ease the communal hatred whipped up by the Chinese authorities, His Holiness the Dalai Lama made appeals to Chinese people that he is committed to find a genuine solution to the problem of Tibet, ensuring the long-term interests of both Chinese and Tibetans. His Holiness appealed to the Chinese leadership to make sincere efforts to contribute to the stability and harmony of the PRC and avoid creating rifts between the nationalities.

Way Forward to Peace and Reconciliation

The Chinese leadership must follow late Deng Xiao Ping's aphorism of "seek truthing from facts" to resolve the issue of Tibet. They must develop the courage and wisdom to prove their emphasis of "great patience and sincerity" in conducting talks. The talks can succeed if China fulfills its promise.

They must address the genuine grievances and deep resentments of the Tibetan people inside Tibet, realistically in the spirit of reconciliation.

The Chinese and the Tibetan people share common spiritual heritage in Mahayana Buddhism, since Buddhism flourished in China before it came to Tibet from India. People's Republic of China has everything to gain in finding a mutually beneficial solution to the issue of Tibet. The rich Tibetan Buddhist culture is part of the larger cultural heritage of the People's Republic of China and it will add richness to the nation's economic boom. An open-minded approach by the concerned authorities of PRC government in holding meaningful negotiations on equal footing with the Tibetans will help to materialise this objective.

Encouraging signs came with some suggestions from the mainstream Chinese intellectuals that they felt concerned over the one-sided propaganda of the official Chinese media is having the effect of stirring up inter-ethnic animosity and aggravating the tense situation in Tibet. They suggested that Chinese government to allow Tibetan people's freedom of religious beliefs and the freedom of speech explicitly enshrined in the Chinese Constitution. They opined that Tibetan people should be allowed to express their grievances and hopes and permit citizens of other nationalities freely to criticise and make suggestions regarding the government's nationality policy. They believed in eliminating animosity and bring about national reconciliation, not to increase divisions between nationalities.

Grace Wang, a Chinese student studying at the Duke University set an example of bridging the understanding between Chinese and Tibetans, which is the need of hour.

She had courage to mediate between Chinese and Tibetan protesters, caught up in unnecessary emotion and anger, at her university campus. Her audacity to foster goodwill and understanding between the Chinese and Tibetan people should be encouraged, instead of threatening her life for doing so.

It was equally inspiring that Chinese lawyers based in Mainland China offered their legal assistance to Tibetans arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned by Chinese authorities following the peaceful protests starting March 10, 2008 in Lhasa and other Tibetan areas. The lawyers expressed their serious concern for the well being of the arrested Tibetans, have called upon the concerned Chinese authorities to respect the independent legal system and conduct fair trials of the cases.

The Chinese leadership must view these small developments as an eye opener and take them into consideration for a policy review in building a harmonious and peaceful China.

On his part, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been very sincere and conciliatory in giving up the demand of complete independence for Tibet and instead, on umpteenth occasion, called for a meaningful autonomy within the People's Republic of China. His Holiness the Dalai Lama believed the future of Tibet and China will move beyond mistrust to a relationship based on mutual respect, trust and recognition of common interests.

The recent overtures from the Central People's Government of China to conduct talks in a spirit of "great sincerity and patience" with representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama may augur well to the success of future talks in resolving the core issues concerning Tibet.

CHRONOLOGICAL DETAILS OF RECENT EVENTS IN TIBET SINCE MAY 1, 2008

(last updated: 24 May 2008)

- compiled and edited Tenzin Sonam Gonsar and Kunsang Dorjee, re-edited by Tenzin Dickyi

1 May

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

The Chinese armed forces in their attempt to wipe out any kind of evidence related to the recent protests in Tibet are burning all the dead bodies of people who have been killed since the 14 March protest in Tibet.

On 28 March, around 83 corpses were burnt altogether in an electrical crematorium, which was built by the Chinese government a few years back in the Yabdha Township in Toelung Dechen, under Lhasa Municipality.

Some eyewitnesses accounts confirmed on 15 March and 17 March that dead bodies of several were seen in two army trucks near a gas station (one of the most restricted sites since the protests began).

During a heavy traffic jam around this petrol pump, a few Tibetans reported having seen blood discharges from the two trucks that were carrying dead bodies. There are more reports of dead bodies being transported to Toelung Dechen.

Many injured Tibetans continue to die in People's Hospital with no immediate medical care. Moreover, one monk who was arrested from Drepung Monastery on 12 April also died in prison. Two more women are also reported dead immediately after their release from a prison in Lhasa.

Lhakpa Tsering, a taxi driver in Lhasa was killed after a gun shot to his forehead by the Chinese Armed Forces on 14 March on Lugug Street. He is survived by his 2 year old child. Although his family did receive his dead body, but the local

security forces took the body away claiming that they needed to investigate the body, which was later burnt in Toelung County. His family was just given a bag containing some ashes with his name written on it.

2 May

28 April 2008, Darlag (Ch: Dari) County, Golog "TAP," Qinghai Province – *Tibetan man shot dead by Public Security official*

Following several subsequent peaceful protests in Darlag County since 21 March, countless monks and lay people have been arrested but few managed to escape. Additional armed forces were deployed to catch the escapees and one security official had died in the process. During Chinese official's attempt to arrest protestors on 28 April, Choedhen alias Choetop (age 22) of Pongkor Toema Township was shot dead on the spot.

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

On 28 April, 19 nuns including Dangdug and Tsondue of Shugseb Nunnery, and four monks from the Gangri-Thoekar Monastery have been arrested for organizing a peaceful protest and are currently detained in the Chushul County prison. They protested for the immediate release of all those other nuns detained.

On 15 March evening, few masked people have reportedly beaten some officials of the "work teams." This incident further led to the imposition of more restrictions within the monastery, suspecting those masked people to be nuns from the monastery.

Currently, the armed forces have imposed tight restrictions within the nunnery and

the monastery. There are about 300 nuns in the Shugseb Nunnery and about 20 monks in the Thoekar Monastery.

Derge (Ch: Dege) County, Karze "TAP," Sichuan Province- *Arrest and protests continue*

Tashi Gyaltsen, former abbot and Samphel, a chant master of the Zakhog Monastery were arrested around 8 a.m., on 26 April. On 27 April, around midnight, tutor Lobsang Dhonyoe, Phurga and Tanam were arrested. Meanwhile, Tanam and Phurga were released early in the morning the next day on 28 April. Others still remain detained and their region continues to be under very tight restriction.

On 7 April, some flyers supporting Tibetan independence were found in the neighborhood of Zabharma Monastery area.

Sershul (Ch: Shiqu) County, Karze "TAP," Sichuan Province – *Chinese governmental "work teams" attempt to beef up "Patriotic re-education campaign"*

Chinese governmental "work teams" were hoping to conduct a "patriotic re-education campaign" at the monastery but the monks refused and walked out. Out of 70 monks who study at the monastery, Gelek Thapkey (age 27), Gelek Drakpa (age 28) and Tenzin Phuntsok (age 17) were arrested during one of the protests in March in Lhasa. No available details of where they are being detained.

Lhundrup (Ch: Lingzhi) County, Lhasa Municipality- *A nun Shar Bhumpa in critical condition after receiving beatings for her participation in peaceful protest*

Around 20 people from Gaden Choekhor town who were arrested during the

protests in March, were transferred to Lhasa on 25 April.

Sog (Ch: Sou) Dzong County, Nagchu (Ch: Naqu shen) Prefecture- Man arrested for opposing “patriotic re-education” class

During a “patriotic re-education” class being held on 17 April in Yang-ngae village, Rawa Township, Sog County, Chinese police arrested a man named Chambu Gudup (age 52) from Yonag village.

Labrang Tashi-kyil Monastery, Sangchu (Ch: Xiahe) County, Kanlho “TAP,” Gansu Province – Mid-night Raid in Monastery, three badly injured

On 15 April, the Chinese police performed a late night raid inside the monks’ quarters of Labrang Tashi-kyil Monastery in Sangchu County. Among the many arrested that night, three monks from Gyuerme monastery, and LuShoepa Tenzin, Reptsa Gedun Nagdag, and Sangkhog Jamyang Jinpa were severely hurt and injured by the Chinese police and are currently admitted to a hospital. The location of the hospital is not known.

5 May

Derge (Ch: Dege) County, Karze “TAP,” Kham incorporated into Chinese province of Sichuan- Tight Restrictions imposed at Dza Gonsar monastery

At Dza Gonsar monastery in Dza Bharna Township, Derge County, Chinese governmental ‘work-teams’ pressured the monks in the name of “patriotic re-education” to sign a letter stating that they strictly oppose all “separatists.” Since the monks rejected, the Chinese official surrounded the monastery premises and imposed tight restrictions.

Ngaba (Ch: Aba) County, Ngaba “TAP” Amdo incorporated into Chinese province of Sichuan- Those arrested and injured not receiving proper medical care

On 28 April, additional People’s Armed Police (PAP) were deployed in Ngaba County. Concerned Chinese officials arrived at Namtso monastery, in Mehu-

ruma village and attempted to hoist the Chinese flag. A monk from the monastery who tried to stop them from hoisting the flag was severely beaten by the People’s Security Bureau (PSB) officials.

Many of the monks and laypeople arrested in Ngaba County over the past few weeks are detained in Tawu Chang Yen (located near Chengdu). Many arrestees are suffering from broken limbs and lacking medical attention.

Two additional arrested are being transferred to the prison in Tawu Chang Yen. The two arrested are Ra Tsedak (age 32) and Gondon Sangay (age 35) both from Mehu-ruma village.

Sershul (Ch: Shiqu) County, Karze “TAP,” Sichuan Province- Monks express discontent over so called “patriotic re-education”

Monks from Voen-po monastery, Sershul County were called for a meeting by Chinese governmental “work teams” in Dzamey sub-district to discuss their opposition of “separatists.” Monks were also given orders to fly the Chinese flag on their monastery rooftop. However, the monks resented compelling the “work teams” to rescind their flag order.

On 25 April, around three local people from near Voen-po monastery were arrested and severely beaten by the Chinese police.

Gyalong Sonam Nyendak (age 70) from Voen-po monastery has been suffering from depression due to the intense suppression that has been imposed by the Chinese authorities.

6 May

Tawu (Ch: Daofu) County, Karze “TAP,” Kham (incorporated into Chinese province of Sichuan)

Without any warning or justification, the People’s Security Bureau (PSB) officials arrested Nyima Drakpa (age 41, former monk of Nya-tso monastery) in Bardzi Township. In 1998, he was arrested for suspicion of being one of the first people

to stick pro-independence posters in Tawu County.

Lhasa- Business as usual: Chinese Court imposes arbitrary sentences on 30 Tibetans

On 29 April, a Chinese court imposed arbitrary sentences on 30 Tibetans involved in the recent protests of March 14. Three of them were given life imprisonment sentences and seven were given sentences for over 15 years and the remaining twenty were given three to fourteen year sentences. At Toelung County and Phenpo Lhundup County, protests only took place after 14 March; therefore those sentenced cannot be linked to the 14 March protests in Lhasa.

Sershul (Ch: Shiqu) County, Karze “TAP,” Sichuan Province- Continued repression leads Tibetan woman to commit suicide

The People’s Armed Police (PAP) conducted a raid at a village near Voen-po Gaden Dho-ngak Shedup Dhargeyling. During the raid, altars with portraits of His Holiness the Dalai Lama were mishandled. During one such incident, T. Lhamo boldly shouted that His Holiness the Dalai Lama is our supreme protector and he should be immediately welcomed back to Tibet. She also shouted Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama and demanded an explanation for the arbitrary arrests of A-drel Lama Rinpoche and monks of the local monastery. Few days later, she committed suicide by strangling herself with a rope.

The death toll as of 6 May stands at 205.

7 May

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

At around 9 A.M. on 4 May, seven People’s Security Bureau (PSB) official’s arrived at the home of Akar Tashi (38 years old) in Lathok Yuchu Township in Chamdo County to arrest him for his

alleged involvement in recent Lhasa protest and past political activities. The officials attempted to arrest Akar Tashi which resulted in a scuffle. During the scuffle, Akar Tashi was shot dead by the soldiers and one soldier was stabbed by Akar.

Drakgo (Ch: Luhuo) County, Karze “TAP,” Kham (incorporated into Chinese province of Sichuan) – Tibetan Students shout slogans

Four students (two boys and two girls) from a middle school in Drakgo County shouted slogans such as “Tibet is an independent country” and “His Holiness should be welcomed to Tibet and be enthroned.” They shouted for around 15 minutes.

Drakgo (Ch: Luhuo) County, Karze “TAP,” Kham (incorporated into Chinese province of Sichuan)

Around four to five days ago, Samtenling (also known as Watak) nunnery, in Sibmo Township, Drakgo County, people hung banners for a stretch of almost two kilometers. These banners had pro-independence slogans written in Tibetan and Chinese.

Later, the local authorities sent “work teams” to impart “patriotic re-education” inside the nunnery but nuns walked out in a sign of defiance leaving the work team with no one to re-educate. There are over 300 nuns at Samtenling nunnery.

8 May

Nagchu (Ch: Naqu) Prefecture, Kham (incorporated into “TAR”) – Authorities re-locate Stupas to create space for a park, however, monks and laypeople of the region strongly opposed

Eleven stupas behind the prayer hall of Nagchu Shabten Monastery have been re-located near a crematorium. County and Prefecture officials said stupas were being re-located since they did not look “appealing” to the many tourists who visited the monastery and the original site will be used to build a park.

The stupas are decades old and although there were partially damaged during the Cultural Revolution, Tibetans have repaired the stupas overtime.

9 May

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

Around 4 A.M. on 16 April, huge numbers of People’s Armed Police (PAP) surrounded Ratoe monastery, in Nyethang Township, Chushul County. Monks were summoned to the monastery courtyard and told to give up their arms (if they had any). A raid was then conducted at the monastery.

Portraits of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, political books, others materials and mobile phones belonging to 70 monks’ were confiscated. In addition, the telephone of the monastery was confiscated too.

Following the raid, 50 monks from Ratoe monastery were arrested and taken to Chushul County prison. 32 of the monks are still arrested while others have been released. Thupchok (head of the monastery) and Namkar (a former political prisoner who spent over three years in Drapchi prison) are among those still being arrested.

The remaining monks of Ratoe monastery are being forced to attend the so-called patriotic re-education classes.

13 May

Karze (Ch: Ganzi) County, Karze “TAP”, Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan) – Nuns and monks protested at county headquarters

Lobsang Choeden, Palden Tsultrim and Lobsang Tenpa (age 20), monks from Karze monastery, in Karze County, peacefully protested at county headquarters on 13 May. However, all of them were arrested.

A day before, on 12 May, ten nuns peacefully protested at county headquarters which resulted in their arrest by the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and People’s Armed Police (PAP). Few nuns, including Tagha, were also severely beaten.

Rebgong (Ch: Tongren) County, Malho “TAP”, Amdo (incorporated into Chinese Province of Qinghai) – Court imposes arbitrary sentences on 3 Tibetans

On 24 March, a Chinese court imposed arbitrary sentences on 3 Tibetans from Dowa area, Rebgong County, for allegedly leading anti-Chinese government protests in Dowa area on 17 March. The three arrested were Chak Dhargyal, age 17, sentenced for 2 years, Choepa, age 20, sentenced for 1 year and 9 months, and Talo, age 19, sentenced for 9 months. The exact duration of their sentences is not known and they haven’t been given the opportunity even to meet their family.

Thewo (Ch: Thewo) County, Kanlho “TAP”, Amdo (incorporated into Chinese Province of Qinghai) – Over 100 people arrested for participating in peaceful protest

A big group of local people from Drak Gham Village, Thewo County, has undertaken peaceful procession, while carrying the portrait of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and shouting pro-independence slogans, towards the county headquarters.

They were stopped and dispersed by PSB and PAP officials and some even received beatings.

Few days later, county’s PSB and PAP officials arrested and detained over 100 lay and monks (including monks from Lhasol monastery, Drak Gham Village). Pema Kyab and Sonam Lobsang, both lay were hospitalized after sustaining severe injuries from beating.

Some arrestees were released after punishing them with a fine ranging from

1000 yuan to 5000 yuan. Some are to be sentenced later.

Lhasa – Whereabouts of some arrestees turning unknown

The whereabouts of Passang Dhondup, who was arrested on 14 March from his residential area of Karma Kunsang (East Lhasa) for participating in the Lhasa protests, became unknown. His father's name was Lobsang Soepa (late). He has a wife and children. His brother Tashi Tsephel (former monk of Drikung Thil monastery) disappeared after Lhasa protest on 14 March. Tashi Tsephel was imprisoned earlier for five years for his political involvement.

15 May

Karze (Ch: Ganzi) County, Karze “TAP”, Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan) – 52 nuns from Pangri-Na nunnery arrested for participating in a peaceful protest

Over 60 nuns from Pangri-Na nunnery, in Sib-ngo Township, Karze County, undertook a peaceful protest on 14 May at county government office. 52 nuns were arrested during the protest, while being severely beaten, by the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and People's Armed Police (PAP). Whereabouts of the remaining nuns who have escaped arrest are unknown.

No Specific Date

Karze (Ch: Ganzi) County, Karze “TAP”, Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan) – Chinese government shooting film conveying false picture of the nature of protests by Tibetans

Chinese government has been shooting a film every evening for the last few days, with a performing group merely consisting of PAP officials, at the old airport (known as Mara-thang) near Karze monastery, Karze County.

The film contains deceitful scenes showing Tibetan protestors engaging in violent acts (such as striking Chinese

PSB and PAP officials), and then, as a result, PSB and PAP resorting to violent means for self-protection.

There is a likely plan that this film could be used for propaganda purpose to deceive the international communities. Therefore, this issue requires special focus from all of us.

17 May

Karze (Ch: Ganzi) County, Karze “TAP”, Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan) – Three different protests took place on the same day

Four nuns (Yeshe Choetso alias Yigha, age 36, Gyalgha Lhamo, age 54, Deyang, age 31, Choetso, age 25) from Gaden Choeling nunnery, in Karze County, were arrested after they peacefully protested at the county government office at around 4 PM local time on 14 May. With this, three different peaceful protests were held on the same day in Karze County.

Serthar (Ch: Seda) County, Karze “TAP”, incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan – A monk arrested for protesting at county

Bhumgha, a 22-year monk, protested at Serthar County on 14 May. He was arrested thereafter by Public Security Bureau (PSB) personnel. He was born in Gonjo (Ch: Gongjue) County, Chamdo Prefecture. However, the name of the monastery where he resides is not known. PSB said that he is a resident of Larung Ngarig Nangten Lobling monastery in Serthar County to which he has denied. It is said that additional People's Armed Police personnel have been deployed at the county.

Sangchu (Ch: Xiahe) County, Kanlho “TAP”, Amdo (incorporated into Chinese Province of Gansu) – One of the monks of Labrang Tashi-khil monastery who protested in front of media was arrested

Drakpa, a monk from Gyuto monastery (part of Labrang Tashi-khil monastery in

Sangchu County), was arrested by local PSB in the beginning of May. He is one of those who protested in front of Chinese the media group, who visited Labrang in April, informing them of the prevailing human rights abuses and demanding freedom. Currently, no information is available about him, including where he has been detained. On 18 March, a protest was held by the monks of Thangsar monastery and lay people from Gitsang and Meygya villages, in Mey-shul Township, Sangchu County. 23 monk protestors were arrested. Many of them were released later, and some of them were also fined with cash.

Due to the continued restrictions imposed on the Monastery and villages by the PAP personnel, monks are not being able to conduct their major annual prayer ceremony. It is said that there are around 110 monks in Labrang Tashi-khil monastery.

19 May

Karze (Ch: Ganzi) County, Karze “TAP”, Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan) – High lamas, trulkus and senior monks are being arbitrarily arrested

Trulku (reincarnated lama) Phurbu Tsering, head, and Khado, deputy head, of (Trehor) Pangri-Na nunnery, Karze County, were arrested at around 4 PM on 18 May by Public Security Bureau (PSB) personnel.

Trulku Phurbu Tsering has been taking the prime responsibility of Pangri-Na and Ya-tsek/Yarti nunneries. He has established a home for destitute and aged people and two medical stores as well for the welfare of local people. He is a monk revered by all the local people. The local people have great concern for his arbitrary arrest.

Recently, numerous high lamas, *trulkus* and senior monks, throughout the three traditional provinces of Tibet, are being arbitrarily detained and harassed which has led to deterioration of their health. This is a matter of great concern to us.

Jampa Dorjee (lay) and another one from the same area were also arrested on the same day. Details are not available.

21 May

Karze (Ch: Ganzi) County, Karze “TAP”, Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan) – A series of peaceful protests carried out at County government office.

On 19 May, Dorjee Gyaltzen and Tashi Wangyal, both lay, from Tharmey Village, Karze County, undertook a peaceful protest at County government office. They were arrested thereafter by People’s Armed Police (PAP) personnel.

Similar peaceful protests were carried about the past two days. On 18 May at around 10 A.M., Jampa Dorjee, Palden Thinlay, Kunga Thinlay, Tsehog, and Jamyang Tsering, all monks from Karze monastery, shouted slogans at County government office. They were arrested thereafter by PAP personnel.

On 17 May, Thupten, Loong Sonam, Yeshi Jigmey, Choephel, Choe-nga, Pema Yangchen, and another woman were immediately arrested by PAP personnel when they carried out a peaceful protest at County government office.

During the above protests, they strongly demanded that “His Holiness the Dalai Lama must be welcomed back to his own country,” “freedom for Tibet,” “immediately release all the arrestees” etc. They also shouted slogans wishing long life for His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

All the above protestors were severely beaten by PAP personnel. The situation in Karze is extremely tense these days. Authorities imposed heavy restrictions on local people in the aftermath of a series of protests at County office.

No Specific Date

Tawu (Ch: Daofu) County, Karze “TAP”, Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan) – People undertake a distinct peaceful means to protest against Chinese government

For around two weeks, Tibetan drivers in Tawu County stopped running their taxis and other goods carrier vehicles as a mark to show their solidarity with those Tibetans killed and are suffering Chinese repression and to protest against Chinese government.

The concerned local Chinese authorities, in turn, offered to provide concession on road tax for those who would resume running their taxis and goods carrier vehicles. However, the drivers continue to stop running taxis and other vehicles.

23 May

Karze (Ch: Ganzi) County, Karze “TAP”,

Kham (incorporated into Chinese Province of Sichuan) – Peaceful protests continue amidst heavy restrictions

Loyang and Tenzin Ngodup, both monks from Tse-tsang monastery, situated in Karze County, staged a peaceful protest at County government office in the afternoon of 20 May. During protest, they called for “freedom for Tibetans,” “His Holiness the Dalai Lama must be welcomed back,” “Long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama” etc.

Some nuns from Nyagey nunnery, Karze County, were arrested for protesting at County office in the morning of the same day.

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

Dr. Yangzom and her husband Shilok were arrested, without any notice, by Lhasa Public Security Bureau (PSB) personnel at around 10:00 P.M. on 7 May. Dr. Yangzom, a retired staff, after her many years of service at Lhasa People’s Hospital was arrested for treating injured victims and her husband was arrested for his alleged involvement in passing information related to protests in March to outsiders. They both live in the area under Key-ray Neighbourhood

Committee in Lhasa and their current whereabouts are unknown.

No Specific Date

Chinese authorities release hundreds of detainees in TAR areas, while keep on arresting many in eastern Tibet

Beginning from 6/7 May, groups of people who have been arrested and detained from Meldro Gungkar (Ch: Mozhugongka) County, Lhundrup (Ch: Lingzhi) County, Taktse (Ch: Dazi) County, etc. are being released.

Out of over 500 people arrested earlier from Lhundrup County, around 300 have been released this month, including a group of around 35 nuns from Shar-Bhumpa nunnery. Among those released, a group of people from Lhasa prison were sent to their respective families in Lhundrup County at night of 18 May.

Some of the released people are suffering from injuries. **Kunga** (around 60 years of age) from Meldro Gungkar County succumbed to injury after around three days of his release and passed away.

(With this, total death toll rises to 207)

Such incidents wherein people succumbed to injuries immediately after their release have been prevalent much earlier. For instance, Nechung, a woman from Ngapa (Ch: Aba) County in Ngapa “TAP” died immediately after her release in the previous month.

On 5 May, three people including Lobsang Dawa, a monk from Gaden, were released from Chushul prison, in Chushul County, after completing their 10-year prison term. They were handed out to their respective families through County PSB office. He was arrested in 1996 for opposing the so-called patriotic re-education in Gaden monastery.

Some former-political prisoners are being arrested, without any explanation, by Lhasa PSB personnel in the aftermath of protests in March. They are secretly detained in a county nearby Lhasa. The

members of their families have not been told why they had been arrested.

24 May

Sog (Ch: Sou) County, Nagchu Prefecture (Ch: Naqu Shen), "TAR" – A 15-year boy protested against Chinese government and was arrested
On 9 May, Sonam Gyalpo, a 15-year boy, shouted slogans such as "Tibet is an

independent country", "long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama" at the market intersection in Sog County. He was arrested by County Public Security Bureau (PSB) personnel and taken away to Nagchu Town.

Sog (Ch: Sou) County, Nagchu Prefecture (Ch: Naqu Shen), "TAR" a 19-year monk arrested for allegedly scattering pro-independence posters

In April, many pro-independence posters were found scattered in Nagchu Town and Sog County. Chokdhen Tsultrim, a 19-year monk from Zendhen monastery in Sog County, was arrested on 20 April from Nagchu Town for his alleged involvement in scattering the posters. Currently, he is being detained in Sog County prison.

Statement by Special Envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Kasur Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen



(Photo: Kasur Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari (right) special envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen, addressing media persons in Dharamsala, 8 May 2008)

Envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen and I had the honour of briefing His Holiness the Dalai Lama immediately after our arrival yesterday from China. Kalon Tripa, Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, joined us in the briefing. We also briefed the Deputy Speaker, Mrs. Dolma Gyari, this morning. The Speaker, Mr. Karma Choephel, is currently on an official visit.

On 4 May 2008 in Shenzhen, China, we met with Executive Vice Minister Zhu Weiqun and Vice Minister Sithar of the

United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party. We would like to express our appreciation to the hosts for accepting our suggestion to hold this informal meeting in Shenzhen as well as agreeing to a meeting of principals without aides. Executive

Vice Minister Zhu Weiqun and Vice Minister Sithar were our counterparts for the last several years. This long relationship made it possible to have open and frank discussions in a friendly and respectful atmosphere, despite the prevailing tense and grave situation in Tibet.

Our main purpose of seeking this urgent informal meeting was to discuss the critical situation in Tibet. There were strong and divergent views on the nature as well as the causes of the recent tragic events in Tibet. These views were expressed in a frank and candid manner. On our part we rejected categorically the accusation made against His Holiness the Dalai Lama of instigating the demonstrations and unrest in Tibet. Instead we made it clear that the events in Tibet are the inescapable consequences of wrong policies of the authorities towards the Tibetans, which goes back several decades. The recent crisis in Tibet is a clear symptom of deeply felt grievances and resentment of the Tibetans with these policies. The task at hand is to address the legitimate concerns of the Tibetan people in a realistic and constructive way.

We have stressed the importance of ending the current repression throughout Tibet. We have called for the release of prisoners, to allow those injured to be given proper medical treatment and give unfettered access to visitors, including the media. We

have also called for an end to the "patriotic re-education" campaign which is deeply resented by the Tibetan people.

We also rejected the accusation that His Holiness the Dalai Lama is sabotaging the Olympic Games 2008. On the

contrary, we made it clear that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has consistently and unambiguously supported the Beijing Olympic Games right from the beginning.

Despite major differences on important issues both sides demonstrated a willingness to seek common approaches in addressing the issues at hand. In this regard, each side made some concrete proposals, which can be part of the future agenda. As a result an understanding was reached to continue the formal round of discussions. A date for the seventh round will be finalised soon after mutual consultations.

We welcome the recent statement of President Hu Jintao that his government is "serious" about the dialogue and his acknowledging that His Holiness the Dalai Lama is being "conscientious and serious". This statement is encouraging at a time when there is growing skepticism about China's sincerity in resolving the Tibet issue through dialogue.

I Pray for China's Leadership

His Holiness the Dalai Lama talks to Der Spiegel



Tenzin Gyatso, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, leader of the Tibetan people, discusses the uprising in his native Tibet, why he doesn't support protests against the Olympic torch relay and his proposals for a compromise with Beijing.

SPIEGEL: Your Holiness, have you already received your invitation for the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in Beijing?

His Holiness: The Chinese have chosen a different option: not to invite me, but to exclude me. And to blame me. Just yesterday, the Tibet Daily in Lhasa wrote some harsh words about me, once again. Your fellow journalists, there are very inventive.

SPIEGEL: Some of the expressions we remember from the last few weeks include: criminal, traitor, separatist and then, coming from the head of the Communist Party of the Tibet Autonomous Region: "A wolf in monk's robes, a devil with a human face but the heart of a beast." Does this name-calling hurt?

His Holiness: Oh no, not at all. You forgot "demon," by the way. These are just empty words. If using this sort of language to describe me makes the Chinese officials happy, then they should continue. I will also be happy

to provide a blood sample, so that scientists can determine whether I am man or beast. But what I do condemn to the fullest and consider a serious human rights violation is when the Chinese authorities force the Tibetans in my native Tibet to vilify me and, while threatening them, to compel them to denounce me in writing.

SPIEGEL: Beijing admits to this approach, calling it a "patriotic education campaign ..."

His Holiness: ... which, in truth, is a violation of religious freedom and, therefore, of the laws of the People's Republic.

SPIEGEL: Despite the name-calling — even concurrently with it — the Chinese political leadership has made overtures to meet with you. Does this make any sense to you? And do you feel that the Communist Party leaders in Beijing truly believe that you have agitated the people in Lhasa and other parts of Tibet, or even incited them to commit acts of violence?

His Holiness: I don't know whether they believe it, but if they do, perhaps they should go to Oslo and have the Nobel Peace Prize taken away from me. No, of course I am committed to nonviolence — I have been for my entire life and will always be. I have asked the Chinese authorities to come here to Dharamsala and examine all of my documents and speeches, to which they will be given access. And then they can present evidence for their accusations.

SPIEGEL: But you cannot deny that in addition to the peaceful demonstrations by monks, which were brutally suppressed, Tibetan youth in Lhasa have also been guilty of looting and arson.

His Holiness: I assume that this was the case. I condemn it, and it makes me sad to see my fellow Tibetans acting in this way — even though it was most certainly the result of deep-seated disillusionment and despair over being second-class citizens in their own country. But this is no excuse for violence. I have proposed an international investigation of the events in Tibet, to be completed by a recognized, independent institution. But one thing is certain: It was, for the most part, innocent Tibetans who suffered under the brutality of the police and military. We deplore the loss of more than 200 lives. But we too lack a complete and detailed picture of what happened and is still happening in Tibet.

SPIEGEL: Where do you get your information?

His Holiness: We have little that is exclusive: the occasional call on a mobile phone, or an e-mail. Of course, these new media are heavily censored, but it is difficult for Beijing to get them completely under control.

SPIEGEL: What was your reaction when you received the first reports of the atrocities, and when you saw the first images of the dead?

His Holiness: I wept. I was sitting with the prime minister of our government-in-exile, and we were both wiping the tears from our eyes. So much suffering, so much despair. I was simply sad, deeply sad.

SPIEGEL: But not angry?

His Holiness: Sometimes an angry word slips out, which is bad enough. But no, anger is foreign to me, because anger means wanting to do harm to someone. My faith helps me overcome such negative emotions and find my

equilibrium. Each of my Buddhist rituals is part of a process of giving and taking. I receive Chinese mistrust, and I send out compassion. I must admit that it hasn't always been easy for me in recent weeks.

SPIEGEL: Have you also prayed for the Chinese, including the perpetrators?

His Holiness: Despite all fears and worries, I am at peace with my subconscious, so that I can perform my duties quite normally. I have no trouble sleeping. Perhaps this is because I also pray for the Chinese, of course. For their leadership. And also for those who have blood on their hands.

SPIEGEL: You aren't just praying for the Chinese. More recently, you are also negotiating with them once again, through two of your representatives. These emissaries have just come here to Dharamsala to deliver their report to you on a series of talks with Chinese negotiators in Shenzhen. What is your assessment of the meeting?

His Holiness: During this informal, one-day meeting, my two envoys and their Chinese counterparts agreed to hold a seventh round of formal talks as soon as possible. A day will be set in the coming days following mutual consultation. In the meeting, there were considerable differences over both the cause and nature of the recent unrest in Tibet. But despite their differing views, the two sides showed a willingness to agree to a joint approach to overcoming the problems at issue in Tibet.

SPIEGEL: This sounds more like a discussion of procedural issues.

His Holiness: In this spirit, both sides offered concrete proposals that can be used as the basis for formal talks in the next round.

SPIEGEL: Is that progress?

His Holiness: We must seek truth from facts, as Deng Xiaoping liked to say, and rightly so. In any event, this time the mood was apparently pleasant. The other side took a respectful and not an aggressive stance. But this is still far from a breakthrough. The recent meeting in Shenzhen was merely a dialogue, but at least the Chinese side, for the first time, sought out this dialogue in advance, as a meeting with Dalai Lama representatives, and announced it in the press.

SPIEGEL: Many assume that Beijing only made the offer to engage in a dialogue for tactical reasons, to stop the wave of worldwide criticism of Beijing's behavior in Tibet, to give it time to conduct the Olympics without having to face protests. And to be able to say to Western leaders: Look, we are negotiating. Are you being hoodwinked by the Communist Party leadership?

His Holiness: Indeed, talks for the sake of talks are pointless. I am only interested in serious discussions to address the core of the problems. They are highly welcome, and without preconditions. But they must be conducted in a way that is transparent for the outside world — enough of the secret talks behind closed doors. Of course, the international pressure on Beijing has worked. I can only encourage every free society, especially Germany, to keep up the pressure. The whole world must help us. The Chinese are very much concerned about their international reputation.

SPIEGEL: And what, specifically, do you want from China?

His Holiness: The Chinese must finally admit that there is a Tibet problem. This is supposed to be the focus of the next talks to which we just agreed. Unlike earlier unrests, this time they not only affected Lhasa, and not just the so-called Tibet Autonomous

Region. The protests encompassed all Tibetan-speaking parts of China. Even Tibetan students at Beijing University were demonstrating. This overwhelming and complete rebuff of the Communist Party government and its policies can't just be ignored. Beijing must know that something has gone terribly wrong in the last 50 years.

SPIEGEL: What?

His Holiness: Everything they have tried. Oppression and torture didn't do any good in Tibet, and political reeducation has failed. Political indoctrination and the resettlement of more and more immigrant Han Chinese in Tibet did not succeed in muzzling the Tibetans. Then Beijing's Communist Party leaders tried programs to improve the standard of living and pumped money into infrastructure projects, only to discover that the Tibetans valued their cultural independence and spirituality far more. After years of oppression, the Tibetans simply no longer trust the Chinese. Now the people in power in Beijing, those nine members of the Politburo whose decisions affect 1.3 billion people, stand at a crossroads. I hope that they will choose a fundamentally new policy, a realist policy.

Part 2: 'I Welcomed the Awarding of the Games to Beijing from the Start.'

SPIEGEL: What do you see as potential solutions? And in what direction do think Beijing will go?

His Holiness: Our policy of extensive autonomy for Tibet offers the best prospects. The Tibetans must have the power to decide on all issues relating to culture, religion and the environment. This is something completely different from being an independent state. Under international law, this new Tibet would also be part of the People's Republic of China, which would remain responsible for

foreign and security policy. If Beijing would agree to such a model, I can guarantee you that we would no longer have such unrest and such a crisis as we have now. This is the one variant, the positive one.

SPIEGEL: Is there a negative variant?

His Holiness: There is a risk that the Chinese leadership believes that it no longer stands a chance of pacifying Tibet, and that it has lost the loyalty of the Tibetans forever. At the same time, the Chinese want to completely control a country with such rich natural resources. In that case, they will oppress our people even more brutally, eventually turning them into an insignificant minority in their own homeland. Variant number two is a Tibet for Han Chinese. It would be the end of all dialogue with us, and the end of all measures to build trust.

SPIEGEL: Which road is Beijing likely to choose? Will there already be a sense of it on June 20 in Lhasa, when the controversial Olympic torch is carried through the Tibetan capital and more demonstrations are a possibility?

His Holiness: I have advised my countrymen in Lhasa and elsewhere, including San Francisco, not to stage demonstrations against the Olympic torch. I don't know what the point would be. Perhaps I will make another appeal. The Chinese are constantly accusing me of sabotaging the Olympic Games and the torch relay. In truth, I welcomed the awarding of the games to Beijing from the start.

SPIEGEL: Many Tibetans see the torch relay from Mount Everest, which is sacred to the Tibetans, along with the Lhasa route, which passes your former seat of government, the Potala Palace, as a provocation. Don't you?

His Holiness: If times were calm, I wouldn't get upset about it. But now I

do understand the protests, without supporting them, of course. I also counseled the organizers of the so-called peace march, from here in Dharamsala to the border of the People's Republic, to cancel the plan, because it could lead to clashes with the armed border guards. But all I can do is dispense advice, not suppress other opinions. I hope that the Chinese will not use all of this as an excuse to commit another bloodbath.

SPIEGEL: Your nonviolent path is losing support among your countrymen in exile, even though you continue to be revered as a symbol of Tibet. The militants in the Tibetan Youth Congress, who insist on fighting for independence, are gaining influence. The Chinese leadership recently dubbed the TYC a "terrorist organization."

His Holiness: Of course I understand the impatience of the young. But they have no concept, just emotions. I have been familiar with such dreams for many years, and I had hoped that they had subsided long ago. Aside from the moral question, what would this mean? That the Tibetans should take up arms to achieve their independence? Which arms, and where would they come from? From the mujahedeen in Pakistan, perhaps? And if we get the weapons, how do we get them to Tibet? And once that armed war of independence has begun, will the Americans come to our aid? Or the Germans?

SPIEGEL: Of course not. Nevertheless, some Tibetans believe that you are too willing to compromise. Your role model, Mahatma Gandhi, preached both nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience. Non-cooperation with the occupiers and provocative marches through the country seemed like a good idea to him.

His Holiness: You're right. And yet there is one big difference: Gandhi was

free to argue his case in a court of law. Try doing that in Lhasa. The British imperialists were bad enough, but no comparison with the Chinese of today — they are far worse. And, besides, I believe that a hunger strike to the death would be an inadmissible act of violence. One doesn't stand a chance against the Chinese with that sort of thing.

SPIEGEL: Now you are condemning the People's Republic rather broadly. China is certainly no constitutional state. But there are unmistakable signs of a slowly growing civil society: courageous journalists, lawyers and environmentalists. And China's economic progress is phenomenal.

His Holiness: That's true. You should know that I am a great fan of the "harmonious society" that the party leadership is currently promoting. But words must also be followed by actions. I am certainly optimistic about China in the long term. It is difficult to violently suppress people in the long run, as the example of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries has shown. China's society is already in flux today, and this has led to many positive changes. The Chinese are rediscovering religion. Former party leader Jiang Zemin is a Buddhist, and so is former Prime Minister Zhu Rongji. Many businesspeople and artists have also begun showing an interest in Buddhism. Exciting and certainly nonconformist essays critical of the regime are appearing on the Internet. This could lead to growing sympathy and solidarity with the Tibetan cause.

SPIEGEL: Are you homesick for Tibet?

His Holiness: Homesick? No. Home is where you feel at home and are treated well. This is, of course, the case in India, but also in Switzerland, in the United States — and in Germany, which I like very much.

SPIEGEL: Have you given up hope of seeing Lhasa again, and the Potala Palace, where you grew up and ruled the country?

His Holiness: Oh no, not at all. I am optimistic that I will be able to return one day.

SPIEGEL: When and under what conditions?

His Holiness: I already consider myself semi-retired today. The day-to-day business of government is already handled by the cabinet led by Prime Minister Rinpoche, which was democratically elected here in exile. I would like to retire completely in a few years.

SPIEGEL: You recently said, during the days of the worst violence in Lhasa and the militant protests here in Dharamsala: “If things go out of control then my only option is to completely resign.” Some interpreted your remarks as an open threat to the radicals from the Youth Congress, that they could no longer count on your support. Others saw them as a hidden threat to China’s leadership, as the last, best chance to seek a compromise.

His Holiness: It was meant the way I said it. I look forward to a life as a simple monk. Well okay, perhaps there was a bit of a warning to it, in the sense you mentioned.

SPIEGEL: The Chinese will demand other concessions from you before they will even consider allowing you to return to Lhasa. After all, you claim to speak for all Tibetans, and you have called for extensive autonomy for a Greater Tibet, which includes both the current Autonomous Region and parts of the provinces of Qinghai?

His Holiness: ... where I was born?

SPIEGEL: ... Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan, or close to a quarter of the

landmass of the People’s Republic.

His Holiness: It is my moral obligation to speak for 6 million Tibetans, and the cultural rights and freedoms must apply to all Tibetans — as it is stated in the Constitution.

SPIEGEL: Can you even resign as the Dalai Lama, essentially handing in a religious and political title and its obligations?

His Holiness: I will no longer play a political role or a pronounced spiritual role. When the day of my return comes, when a certain measure of pluralism, freedom of opinion and rule of law has returned to Tibet, I will relinquish all of my historic authority to the local government.

SPIEGEL: Will you be the last Dalai Lama? To what extent do you intend to be involved in the process of choosing your successor?

His Holiness: We discussed this issue within a high-ranking group here in Dharamsala just the other day. There are various models, but the key factor should be the will of the Tibetan people. I have already considered a referendum on this question. Everything is possible: a conclave, like in the Catholic Church, a woman as my successor, no Dalai Lama anymore, or perhaps even two, since the Communist Party has, astonishingly enough, given itself the right to be responsible for reincarnations.

SPIEGEL: And what is the most likely scenario?

His Holiness: I was unanimously asked to take part in choosing my successor and to keep the institution alive. But I hope that there is still plenty of time, and that I will have another 10 or even 20 years to think about things. Of course, if we are still in exile then, my successor will presumably have to be found somewhere in India, certainly outside Tibet.

SPIEGEL: You travel around the world a lot ...

His Holiness: ... and that’s the way it will remain for a long time. Even if I am to return to Lhasa, I would like to continue traveling. I consider myself a citizen of the world and am very interested in the relationships between science and Buddhism. My main goals are to promote fundamental human values and exchange among the religions. Then comes Tibet.

SPIEGEL: You will be coming to Germany for a few days again next week — a country you visit often.

His Holiness: Yes, I like being in your country very much. I will give talks and probably meet with a few politicians.

SPIEGEL: The chancellor will be traveling in Latin America at that time, but Norbert Lammert, the president of the German parliament, and Jürgen Rüttgers, the governor of the state of North Rhine Westphalia, apparently want to meet with you.

His Holiness: Well, let’s hope that the Chinese can contain their protests this time.

SPIEGEL: You know that you are especially popular in Germany, and that more Germans name you as a role model than the pope, who is German?

His Holiness: I cannot account for that. It puts me to shame.

SPIEGEL: Your Holiness, we thank you for this interview.

Interview conducted by Erich Follath and Padma Rao at the exile headquarters of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala, India.

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Hope for a Better Tibet Policy

by William Lam

The question of “Who lost Tibet” is bound to haunt the Chinese Communist Party at least through to the 18th CCP Congress of 2012, when Party General Secretary and President Hu Jintao is set to hand over power to the “Fifth Generation” leadership headed by Vice President Xi Jinping. The ongoing disturbances in Tibet and four neighboring provinces, as well as the possible boycott of the opening ceremony of the Olympics by several Western countries, could become the biggest blot on the legacy of President Hu.

A revision to the CCP’s longstanding tough tactics against Tibetans as well as the “splitist Dalai Lama clique”—which the Hu leadership has accused of instigating the current anti-Beijing conspiracy—is unlikely in the near term. Yet the possibility cannot be ruled out that after 2012, Fifth-Generation stalwarts like Mr. Xi and Vice Premier Li Keqiang might undertake a reappraisal of Beijing’s policies toward increasingly restive ethnic minorities.

To assess the impact of the Tibetan disturbances on the Chinese political landscape, it is instructive to gauge the extraordinary nature of this frontal assault on the CCP’s authority. In terms of numbers and geographical distribution, the series of protests that first hit Lhasa, capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region on March 10 is the most horrendous display of anti-Beijing and anti-Han Chinese sentiments since the 1959 Tibet Insurrection, after which the Dalai Lama fled to India.

According to reports in internal news digests for senior CCP cadres, more than 30,000 Tibetans took part in nearly 100 “mass incidents” of varying size in Tibet and the

provinces of Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai and Yunnan. The March 2008 cases of what Beijing calls “beating, looting, smashing and burning” are thus much more serious than disturbances in February and March 1989. That culminated in ruthless suppression when then Tibet Party Secretary Hu Jintao ordered the paramilitary People’s Armed Police to use live ammunition against the “rioters.”

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There seems little doubt that authorities in both Beijing and Tibet have to bear at least political responsibility for faulty intelligence and inadequate precautionary measures to forestall these blatant acts of defiance. In internal briefings to cadres nationwide, President Hu and his colleagues had warned that underground groups in the two regions would, in collusion with “hostile, anti-China elements in the West,” stage incidents to embarrass Beijing in the run-up to the Olympics in August. More People’s Liberation Army units as well as PAP officers were ordered into Tibet and Xinjiang before snowfall last year. Blanket surveillance and arrests of suspects began in earnest in the winter. For instance, police shot dead two suspects and arrested 15 ethnic Uighur activists during a PAP swoop on an underground, “terrorist” group in Urumqi last January.

Despite all this, PLA, PAP as well as state security of officers guarding Tibet failed to anticipate that recalcitrant lamas and their followers throughout Tibetan communities in five provinces could stage a quasirebellion of such magnitude. Since the 1989 riots, PAP officers and

state security agents have been stationed inside major monasteries within the TAR. Yet Tibetan and central authorities seemed to be caught off guard by the 10 May rally, which marked the 49th anniversary of the 1959 insurrection.

Local and foreign eyewitness to the March 14 riots—in which 13 Han Chinese were allegedly killed—said they were surprised that few police were on hand during much of the rampage. Authorities in the neighboring provinces of Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai and Yunnan were also slow to respond to demonstrations in towns and counties with large Tibetan communities.

And then there is Beijing’s failure to win the hearts and minds of Tibetans despite record amounts of transfer payments to and massive commercial investments in the autonomous region. The central government spent 96.87 billion yuan (\$13.8 billion) in the TAR in the four decades from 1965 to 2005. Since 1993, 90% of the revenues of the TAR administration came from Beijing’s largesse. The region’s GDP reached 34.2 billion yuan in 2007, meaning that Tibetans have a comparatively high per capita GDP of 12,000 yuan (\$1,712). Many coastal and even central provinces and cities have to observe “aid-Tibet quotas,” meaning they must regularly help the TAR through means including building factories and helping local farmers and technicians. The registered capital of domestic Chinese enterprises in Tibet was 22.3 billion yuan in 2007, up 54% from five years ago.

Yet from the Tibetan point of view, capital outlays are just one more way Beijing tries to Sinicize the region. The two-year-old Qinghai-Tibet Railway, which was built at a cost of \$4.2 billion, is seen as a symbol of

Beijing's effort to control the ethnic minorities through Han Chinese migration, or what the Dalai Lama has called "demographic aggression." In non-winter months, an estimated 6,000 Chinese—mostly tourists but also traders—flock into Lhasa every day. The capital's population has swollen to 300,000 with Han Chinese outnumbering Tibetans by two to one. Radical monks in the TAR say that if no action is taken, the erosion of Tibetan culture will become irrevocable within a few years.

The extent and ferocity of the March protests means that despite the mass arrests of monks and other "instigators," Tibet remains a time bomb that could at any moment shatter Beijing's increasingly fragile control over the Himalayan redoubt. Moreover, Chinese authorities' repeated broadcast of propaganda footage of Lhasa "rioters" attacking defenseless Chinese residents has further exacerbated antagonism between Tibetans and Han Chinese.

Who then will have to shoulder the blame for this colossal policy failure? Given the fact that President Hu is the only member of the Politburo Standing Committee with experience in the TAR, he can hardly shirk responsibility for growing instability in one of China's most strategic regions. Moreover, as chairman of the Central Military Commission since 2004, Mr. Hu is responsible for the deployment of PLA and PAP units around the country.

Much more important is the fact that most of the cadres running western China are protégés of the 65-year-old supremo. Having spent 21 years of his career in Gansu, Guizhou and Tibet provinces, Mr. Hu has taken a personal interest in the appointment of top officials in TAR, the Xinjiang Autonomous Region and neighboring provinces. Many of these "western warlords" are veteran members of the Communist Youth League faction—

which is headed by Mr. Hu, who ran the league from 1983-85.

The most senior of these Hu cronies is Politburo member Wang Lequan, who headed the CYL's Shandong branch in the 1980s. Mr. Wang owes his promotion to the Politburo in 2002 to Mr. Hu, who has kept his protégé in the top Xinjiang post for 12 years. While Mr. Wang fights what he calls "wreckers, separatists and terrorists" among the Uighur population, he advises President Hu on the overall policy of "pacification" of ethnic minorities through a mixture of economic aid, iron-fisted control, and relentless Sinicization.

The cadre who bears direct responsibility for the Tibet mess is TAR Party Secretary Zhang Qingli, who doubles as political commissar of the PAP's Tibet command. Mr. Zhang, a former deputy to Mr. Wang in the XAR, was appointed to his current post in mid-2006. The 56-year-old Mr. Zhang worked closely with Mr. Hu in CYL headquarters in Beijing. It was Mr. Zhang who, at a meeting of cadres in Lhasa on March 15, first characterized Beijing's battle with the "Dalai Lama clique" as a "life-and-death struggle between ourselves and the enemies." Using language reminiscent of the Cultural Revolution, Mr. Zhang said "we must wage a people's war to counter separatism and to maintain stability." Famous for his acerbic tongue, Mr. Zhang once called the Dalai Lama "a wolf in monk's clothes, a devil with a human face."

Other members of Mr. Hu's "western China clique" who have failed to, in Deng Xiaoping's words, "nip the forces of instability in the bud," include the party secretaries and governors of the four provinces of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan. A look at their careers demonstrates the CYL faction's stranglehold on top slots in this crucial part of China. Like Zhang Qingli, newly appointed Sichuan Party Secretary Liu

Qibao worked with Mr. Hu at CYL headquarters in the mid-1980s, while Qinghai Party Secretary Qiang Wei and Yunnan Governor Qin Guangrong are former chiefs of provincial-level CYL party committees. This runs counter to Deng Xiaoping's famous "credo of the five lakes and four seas"—officials from different backgrounds and factional affiliations should be considered for important posts.

The central government units that play a pivotal role in Tibetan and Xinjiang affairs—the National Nationalities Affairs Commission and the National Administration for Religious Affairs—are also dominated by Mr. Hu's trusted associates. Both the just-appointed NNAC minister, Yang Jing, and his predecessor Li Dezhu are former bosses of provincial CYL party committees. And NARA director, Ye Xiaowen, headed the Guizhou provincial CYL when Mr. Hu was party secretary of the province from 1985-88. Li Dezhu, who served as NNAC minister from 1998 until early this year, was an exponent of Sinicization as a solution to the "assimilation problem" of minority groupings. An ethnic Korean, Mr. Li has warned in recent speeches that "hostile enemy forces in the West" are behind a conspiracy to "Westernize and divide and rule" China through establishing beachheads in regions with large ethnic minorities. Both Messrs. Li and Ye were behind the Draconian policy announced last year that the reincarnations of deceased lamas—including the successor of the Dalai Lama—must be ratified by Beijing authorities.

At least in the near term, none of Mr. Hu's allies in Tibet and neighboring areas are expected to be penalized for "losing Tibet." (So far, only a mid-ranked Tibet official, Danzeng Langjie, has been sacked apparently for mishandling the March crisis.) There is also little possibility of Beijing fine-tuning, let alone reversing, its take-no-prisoners approach toward Tibet in

general and the “Dalai Lama clique” in particular. This is despite the fact that the Nobel Peace Prize laureate is an advocate of nonviolence and has tenuous control over factions within the “free Tibet” movement. The younger, radical leaders do not rule out nonpeaceful tactics against their Beijing oppressors.

It is perhaps for fear of further alienating global opinion that the CCP leadership has reiterated its willingness to “reopen dialogue” with the Dalai Lama. While visiting Laos in late March, Premier Wen Jiabao repeated a pledge he made at the National People’s Congress a fortnight earlier that “the door for negotiation remains open” provided that the Lama would recognize that Tibet and Taiwan were “inalienable parts of the Chinese territory.” Chinese sources familiar with Beijing’s Tibetan policies say, however, that as PAP and state security personnel go about rounding up more monks and “rabble-rousers” in the run-up to the Olympics, the possibilities for talks are remote.

In the meantime, free-thinking intellectuals as well as members of the

CCP’s marginalized liberal wing have urged the authorities to consider reverting to the more magnanimous Tibetan policy initiated by disgraced party chief, Hu Yaobang. In the early 1980s, the late Hu, an early leader of the CYL and a patron of President Hu, won a broad following among Tibetans for the zeal with which he went about repairing damages done to monasteries and Buddhist relics during the Cultural Revolution. The late Hu also reduced the number of Han-Chinese cadres in TAR and was the first to invite emissaries of the Dalai Lama to Beijing for “reconciliation talks.”

Another big-name advocate of tolerant policies toward ethnic minorities was deceased party elder Xi Zhongxun. An ally of Hu Yaobang, Xi ran the CCP’s Northwest Bureau, which was in charge of provinces such as Gansu, Qinghai and Xinjiang in the 1950s. Brushing aside objections from diehard conservatives such as Chairman Mao Zedong and General Wang Zhen, Xi masterminded conciliatory measures that prevented bloody confrontation with Tibetans and Uighurs. Xi’s eldest son Xi Jinping, a former governor of Fujian

province and party boss of Zhejiang province, is due to become China’s party chief in 2012 and state president in 2013. There is no definite indication that the younger Xi is as liberal as his father, or that he would want to challenge the scorched-earth ethnic policy initiated by President Hu. However, it is in the interest of every new CCP supremo to establish his credentials by exposing—albeit in an indirect fashion—policy mistakes of his predecessor. Deng savaged Mao’s legacy. And the Hu-Wen team has launched a crusade to rectify former President Jiang Zemin’s penchant for putting coastal development above improving the livelihood of disadvantaged sectors, including peasants in western China.

Despite his long experience in western China, President Hu has turned Tibet and swathes of Sichuan, Qinghai and Gansu into a virtual powder keg. And the possibility remains that to win back Tibet—and to establish his credibility—Mr. Xi may yet attempt to resurrect the more rational minority policies associated with his father.

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MY CHINA, MY TIBET

Caught in the Middle, Called a Traitor

By Grace Wang

I study languages — Italian, French and German. And this summer — now that it looks as though I won’t be able to go home to China — I’ll take up Arabic. My goal is to master 10 languages, in addition to Chinese and English, by the time I’m 30.

I want to do this because I believe that language is the bridge to understanding. Take China and Tibet. If more Chinese learned the Tibetan language, and if Tibetans learned more about China, I’m convinced that our two peoples would understand one

another better and we could overcome the current crisis between us peacefully. I feel that even more strongly after what happened here at Duke University a little more than a week ago.

Trying to mediate between Chinese and pro-Tibetan campus protesters, I was caught in the middle and vilified and threatened by the Chinese. After the protest, the intimidation continued online, and I began receiving threatening phone calls. Then it got worse — my parents in China were also

threatened and forced to go into hiding. And I became persona non grata in my native country.

It has been a frightening and unsettling experience. But I’m determined to speak out, even in the face of threats and abuse. If I stay silent, then the same thing will happen to someone else someday.

So here’s my story.

When I first arrived at Duke last August, I was afraid I wouldn’t like it. It’s in the small town of Durham, N.C.,

and I'm from Qingdao, a city of 4.3 million. But I eventually adjusted, and now I really love it. It's a diverse environment, with people from all over the world. Over Christmas break, all the American students went home, but that's too expensive for students from China. Since the dorms and the dining halls were closed, I was housed off-campus with four Tibetan classmates for more than three weeks.

I had never really met or talked to a Tibetan before, even though we're from the same country. Every day we cooked together, ate together, played chess and cards. And of course, we talked about our different experiences growing up on opposite sides of the People's Republic of China. It was eye-opening for me.

I'd long been interested in Tibet and had a romantic vision of the Land of Snows, but I'd never been there. Now I learned that the Tibetans have a different way of seeing the world. My classmates were Buddhist and had a strong faith, which inspired me to reflect on my own views about the meaning of life. I had been a materialist, as all Chinese are taught to be, but now I could see that there's something more, that there's a spiritual side to life.

We talked a lot in those three weeks, and of course we spoke in Chinese. The Tibetan language isn't the language of instruction in the better secondary schools there and is in danger of disappearing. Tibetans must be educated in Mandarin Chinese to succeed in our extremely capitalistic culture. This made me sad, and made me want to learn their language as they had learned mine.

I was reminded of all this on the evening of April 9. As I left the cafeteria planning to head to the library to study, I saw people holding Tibetan and Chinese flags facing each other in the middle of the quad. I hadn't heard anything about a protest, so I was curious and went to have a look. I knew

people in both groups, and I went back and forth between them, asking their views. It seemed silly to me that they were standing apart, not talking to each other. I know that this is often due to a language barrier, as many Chinese here are scientists and engineers and aren't confident of their English.

I thought I'd try to get the two groups together and initiate some dialogue, try to get everybody thinking from a broader perspective. That's what Lao Tzu, Sun Tzu and Confucius remind us to do. And I'd learned from my dad early on that disagreement is nothing to be afraid of. Unfortunately, there's a strong Chinese view nowadays that critical thinking and dissidence create problems, so everyone should just keep quiet and maintain harmony.

A lot has been made of the fact that I wrote the words "Free Tibet" on the back of the American organizer of the protest, who was someone I knew. But I did this at his request, and only after making him promise that he would talk to the Chinese group. I never dreamed how the Chinese would seize on this innocent action. The leaders of the two groups did at one point try to communicate, but the attempt wasn't very successful.

The Chinese protesters thought that, being Chinese, I should be on their side. The participants on the Tibet side were mostly Americans, who really don't have a good understanding of how complex the situation is. Truthfully, both sides were being quite closed-minded and refusing to consider the other's perspective. I thought I could help try to turn a shouting match into an exchange of ideas. So I stood in the middle and urged both sides to come together in peace and mutual respect. I believe that they have a lot in common and many more similarities than differences.

But the Chinese protesters — who were much more numerous, may be 100 or more — got increasingly emotional and

vocal and wouldn't let the other side speak. They pushed the small Tibetan group of just a dozen or so up against the Duke Chapel doors, yelling "Liars, liars, liars!" This upset me. It was so aggressive, and all Chinese know the moral injunction: Junzi dongkou, bu dongshou (The wise person uses his tongue, not his fists).

I was scared. But I believed that I had to try to promote mutual understanding. I went back and forth between the two groups, mostly talking to the Chinese in our language. I kept urging everyone to calm down, but it only seemed to make them angrier. Some young men in the Chinese group — those we call fen qing (angry youth) — started yelling and cursing at me.

What a lot of people don't know is that there were many on the Chinese side who supported me and were saying, "Let her talk." But they were drowned out by the loud minority who had really lost their cool.

Some people on the Chinese side started to insult me for speaking English and told me to speak Chinese only. But the Americans didn't understand Chinese. It's strange to me that some Chinese seem to feel as though not speaking English is expressing a kind of national pride. But language is a tool, a way of thinking and communicating.

At the height of the protest, a group of Chinese men surrounded me, pointed at me and, referring to the young woman who led the 1989 student democracy protests in Tiananmen Square, said, "Remember Chai Ling? All Chinese want to burn her in oil, and you look like her." They said that I had mental problems and that I would go to hell. They asked me where I was from and what school I had attended. I told them. I had nothing to hide. But then it started to feel as though an angry mob was about to attack me. Finally, I left the protest with a police escort.

Back in my dorm room, I logged onto

the Duke Chinese Students and Scholars Association (DCSSA) Web site and listserv to see what people were saying. Qian Fangzhou, an officer of DCSSA, was gloating, “We really showed them our colors!”

I posted a letter in response, explaining that I don’t support Tibetan independence, as some accused me of, but that I do support Tibetan freedom, as well as Chinese freedom. All people should be free and have their basic rights protected, just as the Chinese constitution says. I hoped that the letter would spark some substantive discussion. But people just criticized and ridiculed me more.

The next morning, a storm was raging online. Photographs of me had been posted on the Internet with the words “Traitor to her country!” printed across my forehead. Then I saw something really alarming: Both my parents’ citizen ID numbers had been posted. I was shocked, because this information could only have come from the Chinese police.

I saw detailed directions to my parents’ home in China, accompanied by calls for people to go there and teach “this shameless dog” a lesson. It was then that I realized how serious this had become. My phone rang with callers making threats against my life. It was ironic: What I had tried so hard to prevent was precisely what had come to pass. And I was the target.

I talked to my mom the next morning, and she said that she and my dad were going into hiding because they were getting death threats, too. She told me that I shouldn’t call them. Since then, short e-mail messages have been our only communication. The other day, I saw photos of our apartment online; a bucket of feces had been emptied on the doorstep. More recently I’ve heard that the windows have been smashed and obscene posters have been hung on the door. Also, I’ve been told that after convening an assembly to condemn me, my high school revoked my diploma and has reinforced patriotic education.

I understand why people are so emotional and angry; the events in Tibet have been tragic. But this crucifying of me is unacceptable. I believe that individual Chinese know this. It’s when they fire each other up and act like a mob that things get so dangerous.

Now, Duke is providing me with police protection, and the attacks in Chinese cyberspace continue. But contrary to my detractors’ expectations, I haven’t shriveled up and slunk away. Instead, I’ve responded by publicizing this shameful incident, both to protect my parents and to get people to reflect on their behavior. I’m no longer afraid, and I’m determined to exercise my right to free speech.

Because language is the bridge to understanding.

Grace Wang is a freshman at Duke University. Scott Savitt, a visiting scholar in Duke’s Chinese media studies program, assisted in writing this article. Washitong Post, 20 April 2008.

FOR TALKS TO SUCCEED, CHINA MUST ADMIT TO A TIBET PROBLEM

China should view the Dalai Lama as a partner, not an opponent

Michael C. Davis

Under the glare of the Beijing Olympics, China’s failed policies in Tibet have moved to the front pages of newspapers worldwide. Under international pressure Chinese officials resumed their dialogue with the representatives of the Dalai Lama on May 4. The parties agreed to continue the ongoing dialogue that began in 2002 and included six rounds of meetings. Chinese officials emphasized that they’ll approach these renewed meetings with “great patience and sincerity.” Chinese officials have long promised that anything can be discussed if the Dalai Lama stops seeking independence, which the Dalai Lama has repeatedly said is not his goal. The talks can succeed if China proves its promised sincerity by first

acknowledging that there is a Tibet issue and the Dalai Lama’s representatives are the best interlocutors to resolve it.

The depth of Tibetan anger about Chinese policies, expressed during March demonstrations, shocked the world. Tibetans who took to the streets faced certain Chinese crackdown. The world was disappointed by the toxic Chinese official reaction and by the rather nationalistic popular demonstrations that followed the Olympic torch around the world. High Officials labeled the Nobel Peace Laureate Dalai Lama a “wolf in monk’s robes,” a “serial liar” and a “slave owner.” Is sincerity likely in the face of this continuing vilification?

For the Chinese, hosting the Olympics symbolizes China’s emergence on the world stage as a responsible great power, and indeed, people expect a high standard of behavior from an Olympic host. While the Tibet issue is generally seen as posing a serious challenge to Beijing, it can also offer an opportunity for China to prove its sincerity and responsible behavior. China has historically set up obstacles to successful dialogue on Tibet, yet can now take steps to demonstrate its sincerity.

First, China should accept at face value the Dalai Lama’s repeated statements that he does not seek independence. A protracted discussion about the “true intentions” of this highly respected

Tibetan leader serves no purpose. Both sides have long conceded that Tibet should remain part of China and that it should be autonomous. The Dalai Lama has proposed “genuine autonomy” under what he calls the “middle way” approach. The Chinese side has not offered a response through six years of protracted discussions.

Second, China should drop its attacks on traditional Tibetan governance. The Chinese side has long accused the Dalai Lama of formerly running a feudal theocracy, as if this is what awaits an autonomous Tibet. Surely China was equally feudal before the founding of the People’s Republic of China. But these accusations are irrelevant since the Dalai Lama proposes to step down from any temporal role and to establish democracy, human rights and the rule of law under his “middle way” approach.

Third, in these discussions China should avoid its oft-stated historical title claim. Chinese officials are fond of arguing that Tibet has for centuries been “an inseparable part of China” as a strategy to deny that there is a Tibet issue. If independence is off the table and the goal is autonomy, this claim is irrelevant. Even if such history were taken seriously, it is not clear it would work in China’s favor. China’s claim of 700 years of imperial patronage offers little that would justify a modern state’s claims to territory. Of more relevance to autonomy, China never directly governed Tibet until the PRC took over in the 1950s. It is uncontested that through these long centuries Tibet remained largely Tibetan. Chinese census data reports that the Tibet Autonomous Region, the largest Tibetan area, is still 92 percent inhabited by ethnic Tibetans today.

Fourth, China should accept that the Tibet issue is one of human rights rather than insist that the only issue is national unity. A superficial examination of reality refutes this claim. In the heady days after the Chinese revolution, the Chinese failed to live up to their obligations, imposing repressive radical leftist

policies. China’s former party leader, Hu Yaobang acknowledged this in the 1980s and apologized. Human-rights violations continue, and the Dalai Lama recently asked China to end repressive policies, release prisoners, open Tibet up to the media and stop the “patriotic reeducation” campaign which denigrates traditional Tibetan culture.

Fifth, China should avoid using its own constitution as an obstacle to settlement. On its face, the Chinese constitution allows greater flexibility than Chinese officials concede. The Chinese Constitution allows for two forms of autonomy, including the type of national minority autonomy now applied to Tibetan areas and the more substantial autonomy reflected in the creation of special administrative regions, as now applies in Hong Kong. The former, applied nationwide to implement Communist Party control in designated minority areas, offers little genuine autonomy and does not seem to allow the level of autonomy proposed under the “middle way” approach. Chinese officials have argued that the Hong Kong model cannot be applied in Tibet because Tibet has not involved the regaining of sovereignty and has already undergone democratic and socialist reform. Tibetan efforts to push forward their genuine autonomy model under either approach have proven futile. Even a superficial look at Tibetan history refutes the claim that sovereignty has never been an issue and that Tibet has always been an inseparable part of China. The failure of democratic and socialist reform in Tibet and nationwide is equally obvious.

Sixth, China should stop viewing genuine autonomy as “splittist.” Officially the country has 55 national minorities. Would other minorities demand the same treatment or would Tibetans use autonomy as a platform for independence? That Tibetans have long been considered distinctive among these groups is evident in the 1951 “17-point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet,” the only agreement of its kind entered with a so-called national minority. Practically, only one

other minority in China poses such risk – the Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang. Because of assimilation or location, other minorities are not likely to seek independence. A peaceful and fair Tibetan settlement, in fact, would offer a positive example for the Uighurs.

Seventh, China should abandon the constant suspicion of foreign interference. China is too big and powerful a nation to wallow in this victim mentality. In an age of ethnic wars and terror, the treatment of a domestic indigenous minority is increasingly a matter of international concern. With the September 2007 passage of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, standards for the autonomy of indigenous ethnic groups have become more concrete. While China claims not to have any indigenous peoples, these standards may still provide a useful guideline. Tibetans are clearly distinctive as to their land, history, language, culture, religion, customs and traditions.

Eighth, China should simply enter into negotiations with the Tibetan side over the boundary of an autonomous Tibet. Historically dividing Tibet into 13 areas, China has objected to the Tibetan request that all contiguous Tibetan-populated areas be united into one autonomous Tibet. Tibetans argue that since they are not seeking independence this should not be a problem. Compromise that considers current ethnic distribution and the protection of Tibetan culture should be possible.

The suggested actions offer a yardstick by which China can prove its sincerity and win the confidence of the Tibetan people and the world. The Dalai Lama is the rare negotiating partner with the capability to win over even the more skeptical segment of the Tibetan community. China should take advantage of this opportunity.

Michael C. Davis is a professor of law at Chinese University of Hong Kong. For further analysis of this issue see Michael C. Davis, “Establishing a Workable Autonomy in Tibet, Human Rights Quarterly, Vol 30, 227-58, May 2008.

Tibetan Media

Sheja (official Tibetan monthly)
Department of Information & International Relations,
Dharamshala-176215, HP, India
Email: sheja_editor@gov.tibet.net
Web: www.tibet.net/tb/sheja

Tibetan Freedom (official Tibetan weekly)
Department of Information & International Relations,
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Email: tibfreedom@gov.tibet.net
Web: www.tibet.net/tb/tibfreedom

NewsTibet
241 E. 32nd Street
New York, NY 10016
Email: tendar@igc.org
Web: www.tibetoffice.org

Tibet Bulletin (official Chinese bi-monthly)
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