

TIBET and the CIA's anti-China crusade

New Edition

Articles from Workers World,
including Sam Marcy's 1959
"Class War in Tibet."

Updated to include reports
from 2008.

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TIBET SECTION 1

- Anti-China protest made in USA, not Tibet** **1**
Gary Wilson April 24, 2008
- Cultural genocide: In Tibet or New Orleans?** **2**
Larry Hales April 10, 2008
- Nepal's revolutionaries stand with China** **3**
David Hoskins April 10, 2008
- Cuba, Venezuela gov'ts denounce China bashing** **4**
April 10, 2008
- Behind the anti-China Olympics campaign** **5**
Gary Wilson April 3, 2008
- Tibet and the March 10 commemoration of the CIA's 1959 'uprising'** **6**
Gary Wilson March 27, 2008
- MUNDO OBRERO**
- Tíbet y la conmemoración del 'levantamiento' de la CIA del 19 de marzo de 1959.** **7**
Gary Wilson 27 de Marzo

SECTION 2

- Bush greets the Dalai Lama**
- Behind U.S. support for Tibetan feudalists** **10**
Deirdre Griswold June 2001
- What's CIA up to with the Dalai Lama?** **12**
Sara Flounders August 26, 1999
- It was no Shangri-la:**
- Hollywood hides Tibet's true history** **14**
Gary Wilson December 4, 1997
- That's entertainment? It's propaganda**
- Tibet as it never was** **18**
Gary Wilson October 23, 1997
- CIA ran Tibet contras since 1950s** **22**
Gary Wilson February 6, 1997
- The Dalai Lama & the CIA** **23**
Editorial
- Class War in Tibet** **24**
Sam Marcy April 10, 1959

Note: This booklet has been updated. A new Section Two has been added with articles written in 2008. Also, Sam Marcy's "Class War in Tibet" written in 1959 is the final entry.

CULTURAL GENOCIDE: In Tibet or New Orleans?

By Larry Hales

The Dalai Lama claims that China is committing “cultural genocide” against the Tibetan people, and his claims and news of the events unfolding in the regional capital of Lhasa have captured a great deal of attention in the major media outlets in the U.S.

The “cause” of Tibet and the accusation of “cultural genocide” are not new. “Free Tibet” bumper stickers can often be seen at peace rallies, and it would seem that the case of Tibet is a real national liberation struggle of an oppressed people struggling for independence from an imperialist or colonial master.

However, the issue of Tibet has been foisted upon some sectors of the movement in the U.S. in order to weaken China. The relationship between the U.S., with its aim to undermine the gains of the Chinese revolution, and the Dalai Lama and his clique is an old one and goes all the way back to the CIA manufactured “uprising” of 1959.

It is greatly ironic that the corporate media in the U.S., which operate as mouthpieces for the owners and rulers of U.S. society, can use the Dalai Lama’s claim of “cultural genocide,” especially considering that the U.S. has committed genocide against Indigenous people and cut the ethnic/tribal ties to Africa of 40 million Black people.

At a 2002 talk sponsored by the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, Barry Sautman pointed out, “The problems of Tibetans are typical of minorities in the era of large modern states.” Sautman is an associate professor of Social Science at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. (www.international.ucla.edu)

Sautman argues that, though Chinese culture has naturally influenced Tibetan culture, “By not defining cultural genocide the Tibetan exiles can label any changes from 1959 as cultural genocide, although many of these changes could be expected to have occurred without the issue of cultural genocide arising.”

Sautman refutes the claim that Tibet

has been flooded by Chinese migration by showing data that are not denied even by the U.S., which show that most Chinese that go to Tibet usually stay for only a few years and that many who claim to live in Tibet only claim to do so in order to receive higher pensions.

Western culture has infiltrated Tibet as well, as it has many other societies around the world, but this is rarely looked upon as “cultural genocide,” or even as cultural imperialism.

The Dalai Lama is a separatist, connected to the old feudal relations that existed in Tibet before 1959, and his claims that Tibetan society was a free and open society where people lived harmoniously is a misrepresentation of history.

Historian Michael Parenti, in a piece titled “Friendly Feudalism: The Tibet Myth,” states: “Until 1959, when the Dalai Lama last presided over Tibet, most of the arable land was still organized into manorial estates worked by serfs. These estates were owned by two social groups: the rich secular landlords and the rich theocratic lamas. ...

“Old Tibet has been misrepresented by some Western admirers as ‘a nation that required no police force because its people voluntarily observed the laws of karma.’ In fact, it had a professional army, albeit a small one, that served mainly as a gendarmerie for the landlords to keep order, protect their property, and hunt down runaway serfs.” (www.michaelparenti.org)

It is the destruction of the old mode of production and property relations that angers the separatist movement that surrounds the Dalai Lama. The U.S. cares nothing about Buddhism, Tibetan monks or Tibetan culture, so it never mentions how the culture has been preserved, or that Tibet has been a part of China for centuries.

Jin Zhigou, chief editor of the magazine China’s Tibet, says that the Dalai Lama and those that surround him use the fact that people are increasingly interested in Tibetan culture to influence attitudes by crying “cultural genocide.” But what culture would there be to spark anyone’s interest if it were being wiped out and the process

of “cultural genocide” was nearing its fifth decade?

Jin says, “With the continuous social progress and the advancement of productive forces, it’s a natural thing for some cultural phenomena that are attached to relatively backward means of production to fade out of history. ... But the cultural activities closely connected with the salt-transporting, such as singing and dancing, rituals and taboos, have been preserved.”

“We needn’t have to keep black slavery in the United States just in order to enjoy the Blues,” he said. “The disappearance of salt-transporting by yaks won’t lead to the vanishing of the cultural elements it gave birth to.” He points out the millions of yuan, Chinese currency, that have been and are being spent to maintain both the intangible and structural parts of Tibetan culture.

This attempt at cultural preservation is greatly different than what happens in the U.S. The Hurricane Katrina tragedy and aftermath provide a clear illumination.

“The roots run deep in New Orleans” is a popular saying amongst Black New Orleanians. New Orleans is sacred ground, but this has not stopped local, state and federal officials from denying the right to return for evacuees, destroying public housing and entire neighborhoods, denying the right to jobs and re-imagining and attempting to rebuild the entire city for wealthy whites. Is this not cultural genocide?

The capitalist system cares nothing about culture. Capitalism sees culture as a commodity or subterfuge, something to use for profit or to undermine a people. Is this not what has happened to Black culture?

Take hip-hop culture, the musical aspect alone, and look at its history and its current state. Where hip-hop music is now from where it was is the difference between self-determination and a people determining their culture, and a system that is perpetuated by exploitation.

Anyone with a scant knowledge of the history of the U.S. can see its hypocrisy when it comes to supporting the Dalai Lama’s claim of “cultural genocide,” and can see the real motive is to undermine the People’s Republic of China. □

Anti-China protest made in USA, not Tibet

By Gary Wilson

Most noteworthy about the protests in London, Paris and San Francisco that targeted the Olympic Torch on its way to the Beijing Olympics was their character.

Take the events in San Francisco on April 9. The biggest numbers to turn out were not protesters. They were from the Chinese community—thousands according to an NPR report—and came to show their support for China. There may have been nearly as many police—more than 3,000 according to city officials.

The anti-China protests were small in numbers. The Guardian (British) reported about 300 in San Francisco; other wire reports said simply hundreds.

The small numbers might be a surprise if you'd followed the big news coverage leading up to the event. No protest in recent memory has received such major media coverage in the week or two before it happened. Such media coverage gives the impression that a big event is to take place.

The small numbers of anti-China protesters might be attributed to the fact that the protesters claimed to be representing the interests of the people of Tibet, but they were not themselves Tibetan. There were at most a handful of Tibetans.

Actually, there are few Tibetans outside Tibet. The exile community is small—estimates put it at 100,000 to 200,000 at most—and almost all are in Nepal or India. So it is not Tibetans who are in London, Paris or San Francisco, but non-Tibetans—mainly North Americans or Western Europeans—who are protesting against China, claiming that they speak for the Tibetans.

When size doesn't matter

Maybe it wasn't the size of the event that mattered to the big-business-controlled media in the U.S., but rather the message.

FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting) has documented the censorship that dominates the U.S. media. It is a censorship imposed not by the government but by the owners of the media. The political message of an event determines whether it is covered in the news media or censored out.

Most glaring has been the lack of coverage of anti-war protests in all the U.S. media, from newspapers to television and radio.

Several FAIR reports showed the systematic way that the media have ignored or distorted all protests against the Iraq war, for example. Demonstrations that drew hundreds of thousands not only got no attention in the days or weeks leading up to them, but sometimes were never covered at all or were only barely mentioned.

The April 2003 FAIR magazine reported: "In its news coverage in the period before the invasion [of Iraq] began on March 19, the New York Times played down opposition to war and exaggerated support for George W. Bush's Iraq policy—in ways that ranged from questionable to dishonest. ...

"After the invasion began, when more than 100,000 people in New York City demonstrated on March 22, it was front-page news the next day in the Washington Post and the Boston Globe. But the New York Times, whose offices are two blocks away from where the anti-war march started, placed the story on page B11," FAIR concluded.

The contrast with the coverage of the anti-China protests today shows the

political agenda being pursued by the U.S. media. It has nothing to do with the size of the protests.

Washington's hidden role

The anti-China protests were planned in Washington, London and Paris, not in Tibet or the Tibetan exile communities.

In fact, Washington's heavy role in the protests, using Tibet and Tibetans as a cover for an anti-China agenda, has spurred public criticism from no less than the former leader of the Free Tibet Campaign.

Patrick French, once the director of that group in London, wrote an opinion piece that the New York Times published on March 22. He said the exile community led by the Dalai Lama in India is making outlandish demands and claims.

For example, part of what he calls the Dalai Lama's "Hollywood strategy" is to lay claim to a so-called Greater Tibet, demanding territory never considered part of Tibet.

Another example French gives is the claim made by the "Free Tibet" groups in London and Washington that 1.2 million Tibetans have been killed by the Chinese since the Dalai Lama regime was overturned in 1959. His own exhaustive research, he says, has turned up no evidence to back this claim.

Such distortions and misinformation are put forward not by Tibetans in Tibet, French says. They are put forward by those with a hidden agenda who are behind the "Free Tibet" campaign.

"The International Campaign for Tibet, based in Washington, is now a more powerful and effective force on global opinion than the Dalai Lama's outfit in northern India. The European and American pro-Tibet organizations are the tail that wags the dog of the Tibetan government-in-exile," French wrote.

Nepal's revolutionaries stand with China

By David Hoskins

While China gears up to host the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, U.S. imperialism and its allies have embarked on a concerted campaign to undermine China's global image and its ability to peacefully host the Olympics.

As workers sit in front of their television sets and watch the nightly news they are faced with an Orwellian contradiction between the images that appear before their eyes and the commentary of the newscasters reporting on the story. The images clearly show rioters, many in monks' robes, attacking motorcyclists and taxi drivers, while shops are being burned to the ground.

The image of a peaceful Tibetan liberation movement led by a benevolent spiritual leader—the Dalai Lama—has been seared into the consciousness of many of the world's workers, particularly young workers and students. It is a carefully crafted image

It is also a lie. The image has helped spearhead a multimillion dollar industry that markets "Free Tibet" T-shirts and paraphernalia and selling Dalai's books extolling his versions of "peace" and world "harmony."

The feudal reality of Tibet was very different. Workers World's Gary Wilson wrote a detailed history of Tibet:

"In the 1940s, Tibet was a feudal theocracy with a dual papacy—the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. By all accounts, the Dalai Lama was considered supreme in political matters." ("It was no Shangri-la: Hollywood hides Tibet's true history," WW, Dec. 4, 1997)

"The vast majority of the people of Tibet were serfs. A small part of the population, about 5 percent, was slaves to the nobility.

"Women were considered inferior to men," Wilson reports.

Capital punishment and the whip were common forms of punishment, according to Gorkar Mebon, the mayor of Lhasa in the 1950s.

"After the overthrow of Tibetan feudalism, in 1959 the serfs opened an exhibition of the torture instruments used against them," Wilson says.

The Chinese Communist Party led a revolutionary struggle to help Tibetans liberate themselves from this barbaric feudal serfdom. Dalai and his allies have never forgiven the Chinese government for liberating the Tibetans.

Nepal's revolutionaries stand in solidarity with China

The revolutionary movement in neighboring Nepal, led by the Communist Party of

Nepal (Maoist), has waged a heroic struggle since 1996 against a brutal feudal monarchy similar to that of pre-revolutionary Tibet. The similarity of their struggles has given the CPN(M) a hands-on perspective of the lies, violations of sovereignty and violence that imperialism is willing to perpetuate against liberation movements.

With this in mind, the CPN(M) issued a statement of unequivocal support for China in the face of U.S.-sponsored violence in that country. The statement "strongly condemns the incident that put at risk the freedom and sovereignty of the Chinese people."

The U.S. and its imperialist allies support a false "liberation" struggle in Tibet against the Chinese government while opposing an authentic revolutionary movement in Nepal against the remnants of an autocratic feudal monarchy.

In neither instance does imperialism genuinely care about democracy, freedom or human rights. In both instances the goal is to undermine China's independence and influence in the region and to ensure that the revolutionary momentum in Nepal does not spread to India, Bangladesh or Bhutan so that private property and capitalist profits will be protected against the legitimate interests of the oppressed peoples.

Cuba, Venezuela gov'ts denounce China bashing

Cuba condemns campaign against China Olympics

By Prensa Latina
Havana

The Cuban government condemned the attempts to organize a politically motivated crusade to make the 2008 Olympic Games in the city of Beijing, China, fail this year.

The Cuban National TV News Report published a statement pointing out the Cuban authorities' opposition to any interference in Chinese domestic affairs.

"A media campaign is being carried out, followed by actions destined to undermine international trust in the capacity of the Chinese government to fulfill its commitments," the text said.

The Cuban statement added that "it is evident these disturbances have been prepared and promoted from abroad."

CNN accused of distorting Tibet events

By Prensa Latina
Havana

Chinese internauts (internet astronauts, tr.) accused CNN and other Western media today of distorting violent actions in Tibet aimed at damaging China's image.

Internauts, according to Xinhua news agency, are using their personal Web sites and chat forums to publish real photos of the events in Tibet, which are later cut and edited by CNN and other media.

A picture widely spread shows participants in riots throwing stones and inflammable bottles against a military truck, but in CNN the image is cut, showing only a bunch of people running.

Xinhua reported that it had tried to obtain some commentary on this from the CNN office in Beijing, but CNN's phones were either permanently busy or else nobody answered the calls.

The slanderous way the information is presented also was highlighted by China Daily, which showed how a German daily newspaper published photos of clashes between Nepalese police and youths, presenting them as taken in Tibet.

The Berlin Morning Post published a photo of a youth of the Han ethnic group—the majority in China—wounded in Lhasa, who the police rescued and took to a safe place, but daily reporters turned him into "a Tibetan insurgent arrested by the police."

Some Western media have intentionally omitted mentioning the cruelty of the rioters, revealing the media's hypocrisy when talking of objectivity and impartiality, said Xinhua.

These media have barely mentioned the five women store workers who were burned alive when the rioters set fire to the commercial outlet.

Venezuela's Chávez blames U.S. for Tibet unrest

By combined wire services

On March 24, Venezuela's socialist President Hugo Chávez charged that the United States was behind the violent protests in Tibet. He said the protests were aimed at trying to destabilize China.

"The U.S. imperialists want to divide China. And they're causing problems there in Tibet," Chávez said in his speech. "They're trying to sabotage the Olympics in Beijing, and behind that is the hand of imperialism."

"We ask the world to support China to neutralize this plan, which aims to sabotage the Olympics," he added.

"You see the images of the violence in Tibet. Who is that against? Against China," Chávez said. "It's the U.S. empire that wants to weaken China, because China is rising up," Chávez said.

Reuters, which could not just report this news, added a commentary: "Leftists in Latin America see the Tibetan independence movement led by the Dalai Lama as a pro-Washington group of conservative monks."

Behind the anti-China Olympics campaign

By Gary Wilson

Can there be any doubt that the U.S. government is behind the attacks on China targeting the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing?

The events that unfolded at the lighting of the Olympic flame March 24 in Greece were most revealing. A protest briefly disrupted the ceremonies. The news reports all said that the protest was about Tibet.

Three protesters were arrested, but then immediately released. None were Tibetan.

The three French men, it turns out, are all from a notorious right-wing organization that's funded by the governments of France and the United States as well as some of the richest capitalists in the world. They all are employees of the outfit called Reporters Without Borders.

Based in France, the group gets funding from the U.S. government's National Endowment for Democracy as well as the Soros Foundation and the Center for a Free Cuba. U.S. State Department Special Envoy Otto Reich is a trustee of the Center. He was also the lawyer for the Bacardi liquor dynasty that was kicked out of Cuba, along with the hated dictator Fulgencio Batista. The president of the Center is Frank Calzón, a former leader of the terrorist organization Cuban American National Foundation.

Reporters Without Borders unmasked

"Reporters Without Borders Unmasked" is the title of a report by Diana Barahona on Counterpunch.org. RWB has an "obsession" with Cuba, which Barahona says can be directly traced to its funding. What may not be obvious is that the Center for a Free Cuba is a front organization for U.S. covert operations against Cuba. It is completely funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, an agency that has long fronted for U.S. covert operations.

RWB does not just target Cuba, though Cuba has been its primary target for many

years—the Cuban press generally refers to RWB as an ultra-reactionary organization with ties to counterrevolutionary terrorists. At the time of the U.S. contra war against the Sandinista government, the RWB carried on operations against Nicaragua.

Today it also has operations targeting Venezuela, Bolivia, Iran, People's Korea, and the Palestinians, according to a report by French journalist Salim Lamrani. ("The deceit of Reporters Without Borders," ZNet.com)

RWB was merely fulfilling its contract with the U.S. government when it carried out the little disruption of the Olympic Games opening ceremony. It got maximum publicity in the compliant U.S. media for its anti-China message.

NED: CIA of the 21st century

The shadowy hand of the National Endowment for Democracy can be found in many of the anti-China reports over the last few weeks.

The NED is a U.S. government agency that does in the post-Cold War era much of what the CIA had been doing during the U.S. counter-revolutionary operations against the Soviet Union. In fact, that's almost exactly how its role was described by the NED's first acting president, Allen Weinstein, who said, "A lot of what we [the NED] do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA." (Washington Post, Sept. 22, 1991)

In the U.S., little is known about the NED except for its public relations handouts. The big business-controlled press usually just repeats what's in those handouts.

Australian writer Michael Barker, in a report last Aug. 13 published by Canada-based Global Research, detailed at that time the rise of groups aimed at breaking Tibet away from China, all of which were NED-funded.

The International Campaign for Tibet, for example, not only is funded by the NED but also has a board of directors that

includes several former assistant secretaries of the U.S. State Department and former U.S. AID officials.

The Tibet Fund is another NED payee, as is the Tibet Information Network and the Tibetan Literary Society, Barker reports. Also getting funds from the NED is the Tibetan Review Trust Society, which publishes the English-only Tibetan Review magazine. Finally, Barker says, the NED also set up the Voice of Tibet short-wave radio station.

About 38 percent of the U.S. government's nonmilitary China-related programs are allocated through the NED. According to the NED's Web site, other recipients of its China funds include the Gu-Chu-Sum Movement of Tibet, the Tibetan Women's Association and the Longsho Youth Movement of Tibet.

All this raises more questions than answers about what is now happening in China. Many events that are reported to be about Tibet focus on the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Like the disruption of the Olympic torch lighting in Greece, the commentators quoted most frequently in the U.S. media are not Tibetans; most are from the U.S. and say they are speaking for the Tibetans.

While there are problems in Tibet, some acknowledged by the Chinese government, the anti-Olympics campaign appears to be based in Washington, not Tibet.

The current leaders of People's China have chosen what they call the market road to socialism. They attribute their great industrial boom to this policy. But capitalist market relations by their very character breed inequality and promote divisions among peoples, breaking down the bonds of socialist solidarity. Nevertheless, China still retains strong traditions and political, social and economic institutions based on its great revolutionary past.

The question is to what extent rising inequalities may have facilitated the imperialist campaign against China now focused on Tibet. □

Tibet and the March 10 commemoration of the CIA's 1959 'uprising'

By Gary Wilson

Has Tibet become the front line of a new national liberation struggle? Or is something else happening there?

The U.S. news media are filled with stories about events unfolding in Tibet. Each news report, however, seems to include a note that much of what they are reporting cannot be confirmed. The sources of the reports are shadowy and unknown. If past practice is any indicator, it is likely that the U.S. State Department and the CIA are their primary sources.

One frequently quoted source is John Ackerly. Who is Ackerly? As president of the International Campaign for Tibet, he and his group appear to work closely with the U.S. government, both the State Department and Congress, as part of its operations concerning Tibet. During the Cold War, Ackerly's Washington-based job was to work with "dissidents" in Eastern Europe, particularly Romania in 1978-80.

A private international security agency in Washington, Harbor Lane Associates, lists Ackerly and the International Campaign for Tibet as its clients, along with former CIA Director and U.S. President George H.W. Bush and former Pentagon chief William Cohen.

AP, Reuters and the other Western news agencies all quote Ackerly as a major source for exaggerated reports about the clashes that have just occurred in Tibet. For example, MSNBC on March 15 reported:

"John Ackerly, of the International Campaign for Tibet, a group that supports demands for Tibetan autonomy, said in an e-mailed statement he feared 'hundreds of Tibetans have been arrested and are being interrogated and tortured.'"

Qiangba Puncog, a Tibetan who is chair of the Tibet Autonomous Regional Government, described the situation quite differently at a March 17 press briefing in Beijing.

According to china.org.cn, China's state Web site, the Tibetan leader said that allies of the exiled Dalai Lama on March 14 "engaged in reckless beating, looting, smashing and burning and their activities soon spread to other parts of the city. These people focused on street-side shops, primary and middle

schools, hospitals, banks, power and communications facilities and media organizations. They set fire to passing vehicles, they chased after and beat passengers on the street, and they launched assaults on shops, telecommunication service outlets and government buildings. Their behavior has caused severe damage to the life and property of local people, and seriously undermined law and order in Lhasa.

"Thirteen innocent civilians were burned or stabbed to death in the riot in Lhasa on March 14, and 61 police were injured, six of them seriously wounded," said Qiangba Puncog.

"Statistics also show that rioters set fire to more than 300 locations, including residential houses and 214 shops, and smashed and burned 56 vehicles. ...

"Qiangba Puncog also claimed that security personnel did not carry or use any lethal weapons in dealing with the riot last Friday. ...

"The violence was the result of a conspiracy between domestic and overseas groups that advocate 'Tibet independence,' according to Qiangba Puncog. 'The Dalai clique masterminded, planned and carefully organized the riot.'

"According to Qiangba Puncog, on March 10, 49 years ago, the slave owners of old Tibet launched an armed rebellion aimed at splitting the country. That rebellion was quickly quelled. Every year since 1959, some separatists inside and outside China have held activities around the day of the rebellion. ...

"Any secessionist attempt to sabotage Tibet's stability will not gain people's support and is doomed to fail, he said."

Meeting in New Delhi

Whatever is taking place in Tibet has long been in preparation. A conference was held in New Delhi, India, last June by "Friends of Tibet." It was described as a conference for the breakaway of Tibet.

The news site phayul.com reported at the time that the conference was told "how the Olympics could provide the one chance for Tibetans to come out and protest." A call was issued for worldwide protests, a march of exiles from India to Tibet, and protests

within Tibet—all tied to the upcoming Beijing Olympics.

This was followed by a call this past January for an "uprising" in Tibet, issued by organizations based in India. The news report from Jan. 25 said that the "Tibetan People's Uprising Movement" was established Jan. 4 to focus on the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The beginning date for the "uprising" was to be March 10.

At the time the call was issued, U.S. Ambassador to India David Mulford was meeting with the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala, India. U.S. Undersecretary of State Paula Dobriansky made a similar visit to Dharamsala last November. Dobriansky is also a member of the neocon Project for a New American Century. She has been involved in the so-called color revolutions in Eastern Europe.

Phayul.com reports that the Tibet "Uprising" group's statement says they are acting "in the spirit of the 1959 Uprising."

The 1959 uprising

Knowing more about the 1959 "uprising" might help in understanding today's events in Tibet.

In 2002 a book titled "The CIA's Secret War in Tibet" was published by the University Press of Kansas. The two authors—Kenneth Conboy of the Heritage Foundation and James Morrison, an Army veteran trainer for the CIA—proudly detail how the CIA set up and ran Tibet's so-called resistance movement. The Dalai Lama himself was on the CIA payroll and approved the CIA's plans for the armed uprising.

The CIA put the Dalai Lama's brother, Gyalo Thodup, in charge of the bloody 1959 armed attack. A contra army was trained by the CIA in Colorado and then dropped by U.S. Air Force planes into Tibet.

The 1959 attack was a CIA planned and organized coup attempt, much like the later Bay of Pigs invasion of socialist Cuba. The purpose was to overthrow the existing Tibetan government and weaken the Chinese Revolution while tying the people of Tibet to U.S. imperialist interests. What does that say about today's March uprising, that's done in the same spirit?

Tíbet y la conmemoración del 'levantamiento' de la CIA del 19 de marzo de 1959.

Por Gary Wilson

¿Se ha vuelto el Tíbet en la vanguardia de una nueva lucha de liberación nacional? ¿O es otra cosa lo que está pasando allí?

Los medios noticieros de EEUU están llenos con los eventos que se están desarrollando en Tíbet. Cada reporte, sin embargo, parece tener una nota diciendo que mucho de lo que están reportando no puede ser confirmado. Las fuentes de los reportes son turbias y desconocidas. Si las prácticas del pasado son un indicio, es probable que el Departamento del Estado y la CIA sean las fuentes primarias.

Una fuente citada con frecuencia es John Ackerly. ¿Quién es Ackerly? Como presidente de la Campaña Internacional para el Tíbet, él y su grupo parecen trabajar estrechamente con el gobierno de los EEUU, con el Departamento de Estado y con el Congreso como parte de sus operaciones relacionadas con el Tíbet. Durante la Guerra Fría, el trabajo de Ackerly era el de trabajar con los "disidentes" en Europa del Este, particularmente en Rumania en 1978-80.

Una agencia privada de seguridad internacional en Washington, Harbor Lane Associates, cuenta con Ackerly y la Campaña Internacional para el Tíbet como clientes, junto al ex Director de la CIA y el Presidente de los EEUU George H.W. Bush y el ex jefe del Pentágono, William Cohen.

Prensa Asociada, Reuters y las demás agencias del oeste, todas citan a Ackerly como la fuente más importante para reportes exagerados sobre los conflictos que están ocurriendo en Tíbet. Por ejemplo, MSNBC reportó el 15 de marzo:

"John Ackerly, de la Campaña Internacional para el Tíbet, un grupo que apoya las demandas por la autonomía del Tíbet, dijo en una declaración enviada por correo electrónico que temía que 'cientos de tibetanos hayan sido detenidos y estén siendo interrogados y torturados'".

Qiangba Puncog, un tibetano que es presidente del Gobierno Regional Autónomo del Tíbet describió la situación en una

forma muy distinta en una conferencia de prensa en Beijing el 17 de marzo.

Según china.org.cn, el portal en la red de China, el líder tibetano dijo que el 14 de marzo personas aliadas al exiliado Dalai Lama "participaron en golpizas, robos, destrozos e incendios irresponsables y sus actividades pronto se extendieron a otras partes de la ciudad. Esta gente se enfocó en las tiendas callejeras, las escuelas primarias y secundarias, hospitales, bancos, facilidades de electricidad y comunicaciones y organizaciones noticieras. Incendiaron vehículos que transitaban, persiguieron y golpearon a los pasajeros en la calle, y lanzaron asaltos contra tiendas, lugares de teléfonos públicos, y edificios gubernamentales. Su conducta ha resultado en daños severos a la vida y a la propiedad de personas locales, y han minado gravemente el orden en Lhasa.

"Trece civiles inocentes fueron quemados o apuñalados a muerte en el motín en Lhasa el 14 de marzo, y 61 policías resultaron heridos, seis de ellos gravemente", dijo Qiangba Puncog.

"Las estadísticas también muestran que los amotinadores incendiaron más de 300 localidades, incluyendo casas residenciales y 214 tiendas, y destruyeron y quemaron 56 vehículos. . .

"Qiangba Puncog también dijo que el personal de seguridad no llevaba ni usaba ninguna arma letal al tratar el alboroto el viernes pasado.

La violencia fue el resultado de una conspiración entre grupos locales y extranjeros que abogan por la "independencia del Tíbet", según Qiangba Puncog. "La camarilla del Dalai ingenió, planeó y cuidadosamente organizó el alboroto".

"Según Qiangba Puncog, hace 49 años en el 10 de marzo, los dueños de esclavos del viejo Tíbet, lanzaron una rebelión armada con el propósito de dividir el país. Esa rebelión fue aplastada rápidamente. Cada año desde 1959, algunos separatistas dentro y fuera de China han auspiciado actividades en ese día de rebelión. . .

"Ningún intento secesionista de sabotear la estabilidad del Tíbet ganará el apoyo del

pueblo y está destinado a fracasar", dijo él.

Reunión en Nueva Delhi

Lo que está teniendo lugar en el Tíbet ha sido preparado desde hace mucho tiempo. Una conferencia tuvo lugar en Nueva Delhi, India, en junio pasado, auspiciada por "Los amigos del Tíbet". Fue descrita como una conferencia para promover la secesión del Tíbet.

El sitio de noticias phayul.com reportó en el tiempo en que ocurría esa conferencia, que "los Juegos Olímpicos podían proveer la oportunidad para que los tibetanos salieran a protestar". Se hizo un llamado para que se hicieran protestas mundialmente, una marcha de exiliados desde la India al Tíbet, y manifestaciones dentro del Tíbet — todo ligado a las próximas Olimpiadas en Beijing.

Ese llamado fue seguido por otro llamado este enero pasado para un "levantamiento" en el Tíbet, emitido por organizaciones basadas en la India. El reportaje noticiero del 25 de enero decía que el "Movimiento de Levantamiento del Pueblo Tibetano" fue establecido el 4 de enero para enfocarse en los Juegos Olímpicos de Beijing de 2008. La fecha para empezar el "levantamiento" iba a ser el 10 de marzo.

Cuando fue emitido el llamado, el embajador estadounidense para la India David Mulford, se estaba reuniendo con el Dalai Lama en Dharamsala en India. La Subsecretaria de Estado Paula Dobriansky hizo una visita similar a Dharamsala en noviembre pasado. Dobriansky es también miembro del Proyecto para un Nuevo Siglo Americano, una organización neoconservadora. Ella también ha estado involucrada en las llamadas revoluciones de colores en Europa del Este.

Phayul.com reporta que el informe del grupo del "Levantamiento" tibetano dice que está actuando "en el espíritu del Levantamiento de 1959".

El levantamiento de 1959

El saber más sobre el "levantamiento" del 1959 nos podría ayudar a comprender

mejor los acontecimientos de hoy en día en el Tíbet.

En 2002 un libro titulado “La guerra secreta de la CIA en el Tíbet” fue publicado por la Prensa de la Universidad de Kansas. Los dos autores — Kenneth Conboy de la Fundación Heritage, y James Morrison, un entrenador veterano del ejército estadounidense para la CIA — describen orgullosamente cómo la CIA organizó y encabezó el llamado movimiento de resisten-

cia del Tíbet. El mismo Dalai Lama estaba en la nómina de pagos de la CIA y aprobó los planes de la CIA para el levantamiento armado.

La CIA puso al hermano del Dalai Lama, Gyalo Thodup, a cargo del sangriento ataque armado de 1959. Un ejército contrarrevolucionario fue entrenado por la CIA en el estado de Colorado y luego desplegado en el Tíbet por medio de aviones de la Fuerza Aérea de los Estados Unidos.

El ataque de 1959 fue un intento de golpe de estado planeado y organizado por la CIA, al igual que la invasión más tarde de Bahía de Cochinos contra Cuba socialista. El propósito era el de derrocar al gobierno tibetano de entonces y debilitar la Revolución China mientras que unía al pueblo tibetano a los intereses imperialistas estadounidenses. ¿Qué dice eso sobre el corriente levantamiento de marzo que está hecho en el mismo espíritu?

TIBET SECTION 2

Bush greets the Dalai Lama	
Behind U.S. support for Tibetan feudalists	10
Deirdre Griswold	June 2001
What's CIA up to with Dalai Lama?	12
Sara Flounders	August 1999
It was no Shangri-la	
Hollywood hides Tibet's true history	14
Gary Wilson	December 1997
That's entertainment?	
It's propaganda	
Tibet as it never was	18
Gary Wilson	October 1997
The Dalai Lama & the CIA	22
	Editorial
CIA ran Tibet contras since 1950s	23
Gary Wilson	February 1997
Class War in Tibet	24
Sam Marcy	April 1959

Bush greets the Dalai Lama

Behind U.S. support for Tibetan feudalists

By Deirdre Griswold

Very few people who seek an audience with the president of the United States get one. Even heads of state have to line up to see George W. Bush, who boasts of his short work day.

Nevertheless, Bush found time May 23 for a meeting and photo opportunity with the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet.

The Dalai Lama hasn't been in Tibet for over four decades. He left for India in 1959 to become head of a "government in exile" that represented the former Tibetan feudal ruling class.

The White House dismissed the date of the meeting with Bush-May 23, which was being celebrated in China as the 50th anniversary of the day in 1951 when Tibet was declared peacefully liberated from feudalism and imperialist influence-as a mere "coincidence."

Bush's sit-down with the Dalai Lama came just two days after Taiwan's president, Chen Shui-bian, had an unprecedented dinner meeting with about 20 members of the U.S. Congress.

To the Chinese people, these two political acts embracing secessionist elements are further proof that the Bush administration has embarked on a dangerous anti-China strategy with serious military implications.

Covert U.S. strategy vs. official stance

Tibet has been under Chinese jurisdiction since the 13th century. Today it is an autonomous republic within the People's Republic of China.

The U.S. government's official stance, even after the Chinese Communists swept to power in 1949, has always been to recognize both Taiwan and Tibet as part of China.

When Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was overthrown by the Chinese people and fled the mainland to set up a U.S.-backed dictatorship on the island of Taiwan, Washington continued to recog-

nize his regime as the government of all China, including Tibet. So how could it argue later that Taiwan and Tibet weren't part of China?

Unofficially and secretly, however, Washington has fomented the secession of both Taiwan and Tibet ever since it became obvious that the revolutionary regime in Beijing was here to stay. As long ago as the 1950s, the Central Intelligence Agency began training Tibetan mercenaries at Camp Hale in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado (see Chicago Tribune of Jan. 25, 1997, and Newsweek of Aug. 16, 1999).

According to the famous "Pentagon Papers," the CIA made 700 flights over Tibet in the 1950s. Dropping mercenaries into the frozen vastness of Tibet didn't work, however. So in recent years the anti-China forces here have focused on a "Free Tibet" campaign that has made inroads in the United States with its well-financed and synchronized promotion of the Dalai Lama as a deeply spiritual mystic fighting a soulless bureaucracy that oppresses his people.

This view takes advantage of the fact that most people in this country know nothing about Tibet except that it has pretty mountains. They are easy prey for a slick campaign romanticizing the "spirituality" of feudal times.

The Chinese people, however, have a much more recent memory of what it was like when all-powerful landlords ruled the countryside.

Life for the serfs

Nine out of 10 Tibetans were serfs at the time of the Chinese Revolution. They owned no land and had no personal freedom. Another 5 percent were hereditary household slaves.

Their toil was backbreaking. Education for the common people was unheard of.

Conditions were so backward that the wheel had no function except for saying prayers. Roads didn't exist.

Back in the 1930s the British, who had been trying for years to add Tibet to their empire in India and had actually staged several armed incursions made a present of an automobile to the Dalai Lama. Since Tibet had no paved roads, the auto had to be dismantled and carried to Lhasa on draft animals.

The nobles, upper-ranking lamas in monasteries and administrative officials, together made up less than 5 percent of the population. Yet they owned all of Tibet's farmland, pastures, forests, mountains and rivers as well as most livestock.

The current Dalai Lama became part of this owning class when at the age of 2 he was taken from his family by the monks to be groomed as a demigod. Before that he was just a toddler named Lhamo Toinzhub.

Serfs were really slaves belonging to landowners. According to a white paper prepared in 1992 by the Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (available online at chineseculture.about.com): "Sometimes they were traded as payment for debts. According to historical records, in 1943 the aristocrat Chengmoim Norbu Wanggyai sold 100 serfs to a monk official at Garzhol Kamsa, in Zhigoin area, at the cost of 60 liang of Tibetan silver (about four silver dollars) per serf. He also sent 400 serfs to the Gundelin Monastery as mortgage for a debt of 3,000 pin Tibetan silver (about 10,000 silver dollars).

"Serf owners had a firm grip on the birth, death and marriage of serfs. Male and female serfs not belonging to the same owner had to pay 'redemption fees' before they could marry. In some cases, an exchange was made with a man swapped for man and a woman for woman. In other cases, after a couple wedded, the ownership of both husband and wife remained unchanged, but their sons would belong to the husband's owner and their daughters to the wife's

owner. Children of serfs were registered the moment they were born, setting their life-long fate as serfs."

Serfdom, whether in Europe during the most backward feudal period or in China more recently, was a ruthless system of exploitation through usury and corvee-unpaid labor that the landlords assessed on the serfs, like taxes.

The Chinese white paper continues: "Incomplete statistics indicate the existence of more than 200 categories of corvee taxes levied by the Gaxag (Tibetan local government). The corvee assigned by Gaxag and manorial lords accounted for over 50 percent of the labor of serf households, and could go as high as 70-80 percent.

"According to a survey conducted before the Democratic Reform, the Darongqang Manor owned by Regent Dagzhag of the 14th Dalai Lama had a total of 1,445 ke [a ke is about one sixth of an acre] of land, and 81 able-bodied and semi-able-bodied serfs. They were assigned a total of 21,260 corvee days for the whole year, the equivalent of an entire year's labor by 67.3 people. In effect, 83 percent of the serfs had to do corvee for one full year.

"The serfs engaged in hard labor year in and year out and yet had no guaran-

teed food or clothing. Often they had to rely on money borrowed at usury to keep body and soul together."

Class law

Tibetan law divided people into three classes and nine ranks. Inequality was stipulated in the law. The codes said:

- It is forbidden to quarrel with a worthy, sage, noble and descendant of the ruler."
- Persons of the lower rank who attack those of the upper rank, and a junior official who quarrels with a senior official commit a serious crime and so should be detained."
- Anyone who resists a master's control should be arrested."
- A commoner who offends an official should be arrested."
- Anyone who voices grievances at the palace, behaving disgracefully, should be arrested and whipped."

Any socially conscious person in the United States knows that while everyone is supposedly subject to the same law, it is applied differently to rich and poor. But in Tibet the law itself demanded different punishment for the same crime depending on class and rank.

The law concerning the penalty for

murder said, "As people are divided into different classes and ranks, the value of a life correspondingly differs." The lives of people of the highest rank of the upper class, such as a prince or leading Living Buddha, were calculated in gold equal to the weight of the dead body. The lives of people of the lowest rank of the lower class, such as women, butchers, hunters and craftsmen, were worth "a straw rope."

Servants who injured their masters would have their hands or feet chopped off; a master who injured a servant was responsible only for the medical treatment of the wound, with no other compensation required.

A saying among serfs was, "All a serf can carry away is his own shadow, and all he can leave behind is his footprints."

The Chinese Revolution eventually ended serfdom in Tibet. Those among the former rulers who resisted democratic change were then embraced by the CIA--which according to the Chicago Tribune article gave a special retainer to the Dalai Lama of \$180,000 a year during the 1960s to keep a government in exile in Nepal.

Today's budget for this high-powered anti-China campaign has not yet been revealed.

What's CIA up to with Dalai Lama?

By Sara Flounders

On Aug. 14 the Dalai Lama—a religious figurehead of Tibetan Buddhism—was in New York's Central Park. While in the city he also appeared at three sold-out performances at the Beacon Theatre plus other events—where wealthy individuals could pay up to \$1,000 a ticket to hear him speak.

He had official cooperation, including prominent news articles in each of the three major dailies and subway posters with directions to the park, compliments of the New York City Transit Authority.

According to the New York Times, the Dalai Lama's every move was mapped out and scheduled by the U.S. State Department. Television crews from around the world followed him. And every news or feature story managed to push the issue of independence of Tibet from People's China.

Puerto Rico has about the same size population as Tibet. Puerto Rico has been a U.S. colony for over 100 years. It has had many great and dynamic leaders. Why aren't there similar movies, posters and concerts bankrolled for Puerto Rico's leaders, just to take one example?

Rock bands, movie stars and politicians all honor the Dalai Lama and raise the call for a "free Tibet." This State Department campaign has confused many people who are deeply interested in freedom for political prisoners or in environmental issues. But under a slick cover, this campaign hides an unrelenting attack on the People's Republic of China and the accomplishments of the Chinese Revolution.

The Dalai Lama, with considerable help from the major corporate media, has become a cult figure. Ask anyone who's tuned in to the media. Even if they hardly know anything about politics, they will tell you the Dalai Lama is a good, saintly person, a "holy man," a "spiritual force." His new book, "The Art of Happiness"—co-written with Howard C. Cutler—was promoted until it made the best-seller list for 29 weeks.

But is the Dalai Lama really apolitical? If so, why did this "holy man," who supposedly would not kill an insect, support NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia?

People concerned about social issues should know that, like Pope John Paul and other conservative religious leaders, the Dalai Lama denounces abortion, all forms of birth control and homosexuality.

U.S. imperialism has much experience in using the religious sentiment of millions of people. The CIA formed a bloc with the Pope, who has the allegiance of hundreds of millions of Roman Catholics, to overturn socialism in Poland. It should come as no surprise that the Dalai Lama is also utilized by the CIA.

On the other hand, religious figures who oppose U.S. policy are demonized or become targets of assassination—from Bishop Romero of El Salvador to religious Muslims in Lebanon and Palestine.

Last year Hollywood released two major movies about Tibet. The Hollywood studios love the Dalai Lama, who, we are told, embodies the spirit and aspirations of the Tibetan people. The rich conglomerates that now control Hollywood—Disney and TriStar—both support the organization Free Tibet.

Hollywood glorifies the tiny Tibetan ruling class and its presumed idyllic past in the same way the movie "Gone With the Wind" glorified slavery and the racist ruling class in the old South.

One of these movies, "Seven Years in Tibet," was based on a book written by an Austrian Nazi, Heinrich Harrer. He was involved in some of the most brutal crimes of the fascists in Austria. Harrer ended up in Tibet during World War II on a secret mission for German imperialism, which was trying to compete with British imperialism in Asia. He was accepted into the inner circle of the court life among the Tibetan nobility.

Imperialism vs. Indigenous culture

All over the globe Indigenous societies of North America, Latin America, Africa

and Australia have been decimated. The rich variety of their cultures, music and religious beliefs have been ripped up, stepped on and ridiculed. Native peoples have been crushed all over the world by the very forces who today seem to be so respectfully in awe of Tibetan culture.

Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism would have been of little interest to U.S. or British imperialism had it not been for the great Chinese Revolution, which swept away all the old, corrupt feudal society.

This was a revolution that involved mass movements of millions of poor peasants organizing to distribute the land and throw out the old landlords. This great social upheaval unleashed the creative energy and participation of a quarter of humanity. Yet the Western media instead glorifies the old Tibet.

For over 100 years, the imperialist powers of Western Europe and Japan carved China into spheres of interest, just as Europe carved Africa into outright colonies. Washington opposed these special concession areas only because it wanted unrestricted access to all of China for U.S. business.

In the 19th century, Britain, the dominant power, fought two wars with the Manchu Dynasty for the right to impose the sale of opium on China. In 1904 Britain launched a full-scale military invasion of Tibet. In the Treaty of Lhasa, China was forced to grant two trading areas to Britain and to pay huge military reparations to cover the cost of the British war.

In 1949 the Red Army was close to finally defeating the U.S.-supported Kuomintang army led by General Chiang Kai-shek. Washington then plotted to let Tibet join the new United Nations as an independent country. The effort failed because Tibet had been considered a Chinese province for over 700 years, and even the Kuomintang asserted that China had always included Tibet and the island of Taiwan.

Today as U.S. imperialism grows ever more aggressive, it is moving on several

fronts to push for the separation of Tibet, Taiwan and the western province of Xinjiang from China.

Just as in the Balkans and in the republics of the former Soviet Union, U.S. corporate forces support and encourage separatist movements to break up and control whole areas of the globe that had earlier broken free of imperialist domination.

Life in old Tibet

Pre-revolution Tibet was a completely underdeveloped region. It had no road system at all. The only wheels were prayer wheels. It was an agricultural, feudal theocracy based on serfdom and slavery.

Over 90 percent of the population were landless serfs. They were tied to the land but owned nothing. Their children were registered on the landlord's property books.

There were no schools, except feudal monasteries where a handful of young boys studied chants. Total enrollment in the old-style private schools was 600 students. Education for women was of course absolutely unheard of. There was no health care. There was not one hospital in all of Tibet.

One hundred noble families and the abbots of 100 major monasteries—also from ruling families—owned everything. The Dalai Lama lived in the 1,000-room, 14-story Potala Palace. Traditionally he was chosen in his youth from outside the ruling circles. He remained a pawn under the control of contending advisers from the nobility.

For the average peasant, life was short and miserable. Tibet had one of the highest rates of tuberculosis and infant mortality in the world.

Today Tibet has 2,380 primary schools, along with several professional schools,

where education is conducted in the Tibetan language. Tibet now has 2,623 doctors, 95 municipal hospitals and 770 medical clinics.

Class struggle in Tibet

In 1949 the Chinese Revolution first established Tibet as an Autonomous Region with far more rights than it had under any previous Chinese government. Chinese Communist Party policy was to wait until conditions developed within the oppressed classes of the Tibetan population to rise up and overthrow serfdom.

Serfdom was not outlawed until 1959, ten years after the Chinese Revolution. This happened after a mass movement had isolated the whole entourage of the Dalai Lama.

It's true, however, that Chinese Communists challenged age-old customs in Tibet.

First of all, the Chinese government paid wages to Tibetans who worked on a large national road-building program. This totally disrupted the custom of servitude. Before this, a serf could only survive by working for a landlord, not for wages but for food.

Even more revolutionary was the CCP policy of paying wages to children of serfs and former slaves to attend school and providing them with books, meals and housing. In desperately poor families even young children had had to work for the family to survive. This revolutionary policy gave economic leverage for the first time to the most oppressed layers of this stifling class society.

CIA mobilizes ruling-class resistance

Starting in 1955 the CIA began to build a counter-revolutionary army in Tibet, much like the contras in Nicaragua and, more recently, the financing and training of the KLA in Kosovo.

In the Aug. 16 Newsweek magazine, an article entitled "A secret war on the roof of the world—spooks, monks and the CIA's covert gamble in Tibet" describes details of the CIA operation from 1957 to 1965.

Similarly, a major article in the Jan. 25, 1997, Chicago Tribune described the special training of Tibetan mercenaries at Camp Hale in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado throughout the 1950s.

These mercenaries were then parachuted into Tibet. According to the famous "Pentagon Papers," there were at least 700 of these flights in the 1950s. Air Force C-130s were used, as later in Vietnam, to drop ammunition and sub-machine guns. There were also special bases in Guam and Okinawa for training Tibetan soldiers.

Gyalo Thundup, the Dalai Lama's brother, ran the operation. This was hardly a secret. It was his claim to fame.

The Chicago Tribune article was titled, "The CIA Secret War in Tibet." As this article said so well, "Little about the CIA skullduggery in the Himalayas is a real secret except maybe to the U.S. taxpayers who bankrolled it."

The CIA gave a special retainer to the Dalai Lama throughout the 1960s of \$180,000 a year—a small fortune in Nepal, where it had set up an army and virtual government in exile. Washington also set up special radio stations aimed at Tibet projecting the Dalai Lama as a god-king.

Ralph McGehee, who has written many exposés of CIA operations and maintains a web site, described in some detail how the "company" promoted the Dalai Lama. The CIA's National Endowment for Democracy provided money for the Tibet Fund, Tibet Voice and the International Campaign for Tibet.

It was no Shangri-la

Hollywood hides Tibet's true history

By Gary Wilson

With two major Hollywood movies about Tibet this year, the Tibetan region of China is being put in an unusual spotlight.

The Tibetan people are just one of the many national minorities in China. Yet most people in the United States have heard only of the Tibetans.

In China, there are 56 national minorities. Most of the population is Han.

Tibetans are the eighth biggest nationality. In terms of numbers, Tibetans are about 4 million—or .39 percent of China's population.

There are other nationalities in Tibet itself, besides the Tibetans: Moinbas, Lopas, Naxis, Huis, Dengs and Xiaerbas.

But only the Tibetans are stars in Hollywood. No, that's not it. Common Tibetans aren't the stars of Hollywood films. The focus is almost exclusively on a very small group of Tibetans—the former elite of Tibet and the person the media sometimes call the “god-king,” the Dalai Lama.

Hollywood's fictional accounts are presented as based on historical fact. That's like saying the movie “Gone with the Wind” shows what the South was like during slavery, when really it is only a glorification of the slave masters and completely ignores life for African Americans.

The Tibet movies are very much like “Gone with the Wind.” They present the view of a defeated oligarchy, and ignore the reality of those who are oppressed.

The movie “Seven Years in Tibet” not only glorifies feudal Tibet and its aristocrats; it also makes a hero of a Nazi storm trooper—Heinrich Harrer.

So what is the history of Tibet? And why is it getting so much attention now?

For 700 years a part of China

In the 13th century, Genghis Khan and the Mongolians unified China and founded the Yuan Dynasty. This included Tibet. For the next 700 years, Tibet was

an administrative region in China.

The Tibetan Autonomous Region of China today includes Tibet as it was defined in 1911 at the fall of the Chinese empire, plus an area called Chamdo. During the last days of the empire, Chamdo had been part of a province called Sikang.

Today's Tibet includes the territory of “U,” where the Dalai Lama directly ruled, and the territory of Tsang, where the Panchen Lama ruled.

When the promoters of a “Greater Tibet” refer to Tibet, much more is included. They include large parts of adjacent provinces: Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai. This includes the oil-rich Tsaidam Basin.

Today, about 1.8 million Tibetans live in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. There are another 2.1 million Tibetans in the neighboring four provinces.

While a greater part of the Tibetan population lives outside Tibet in these neighboring provinces, this does not make these other areas part of Tibet any more than the big Irish population in Boston makes Boston part of Ireland. There has been a centuries-long migration of Tibetans into these areas, where the Tibetans remain a minority population. Hans have also been migrating to these neighboring provinces.

However, when the promoters of “Greater Tibet” talk of Hans “penetrating Tibetan lands,” they are really talking about these non-Tibetan provinces and a migration process that has occurred over centuries.

The central government was weak after the fall of the Chinese empire, and had little or no influence on domestic affairs in Tibet. But Tibet was still considered part of China.

“No nation has ever publicly accepted Tibet as an independent state,” writes A. Tom Grunfeld in the history book “The Making of Modern Tibet.”

Britain invades in 1903

At the turn of the century, in 1903,

Britain decided that Tibet should come under its influence along with India, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and China. At that time, Britain sent an invading force into Tibet.

Earlier British government expeditions had reported that Tibet was rich with natural resources and even said that “masses of gold were lying around in the rivers.” They may have believed they had found another empire like the Incan empire in what is now Peru, where Spanish conquistadors stole a wealth of gold.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, in July 1903 Lord Curzon, viceroy of India, authorized Col. Francis Younghusband and a military escort to cross the Tibetan border to negotiate a trade treaty.

“When efforts to begin negotiations failed,” the encyclopedia reports, “the British, under the command of Maj. Gen. James Macdonald, invaded the country and slaughtered some 600 Tibetans at Guru. Younghusband moved on to Chiang-tzu (Gyantze), where his second attempt to begin trade negotiations also failed. He then marched into Lhasa, the capital, with British troops and forced the conclusion of a trade treaty with the Dalai Lama, Tibet's ruler. This action brought him a knighthood in 1904.”

British journalist Alan Winnington writes in his book “Tibet” that the treaty “made Tibet as far as possible a British sphere of influence.”

Even then, Britain recognized Chinese “sovereignty” in Tibet—and sent a bill for 750,000 pounds to the central Chinese government for the expenses incurred in the invasion.

Tibet then became an area of intrigue and a pawn in the competition between the imperialist powers, particularly Britain, czarist Russia and Germany. The 13th Dalai Lama, the one preceding the current Dalai Lama, worked closely with the British. And until the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, the Tibetan aristocracy looked to Britain and India,

even sending their children to British schools in India.

According to Winnington, “When [the 13th Dalai Lama] died in 1933, Tibet was more and more becoming a British sphere.”

This is part of the reason Nazi Germany sent an expedition to Tibet in the 1930s. Its defeat in World War I had stripped Germany of its colonies. The rise of the Nazi regime was driven in part by the big German capitalists’ need to expand and gain new colonies, new “spheres of influence.”

Reality vs. romanticized view of Tibet

Reports by the British and German imperialists, primarily, have created the popular image of Tibet in the West.

Books like “Lost Horizon” by James Hilton and “Seven Years in Tibet” by Heinrich Harrer promoted a romanticized view of Tibet.

Harrer’s book is the basis for the Hollywood movie starring Brad Pitt. Leaving aside for a moment the issue of Harrer’s role, what was Tibet like in the 1940s when the story takes place?

Because of its extreme isolation high up in the Himalayas, Tibet might have looked exotic to an outsider. Tibet was a region with no roads, only horse trails. The wheel was unknown. It was practically untouched by industrialization.

But Tibet was not that much different from the rest of the world. It just hadn’t caught up to the 20th century.

“The parallels between Tibet and medieval Europe are striking,” writes Grunfeld in “The Making of Modern Tibet.”

In the 1940s, Tibet was a feudal theocracy with a dual papacy—the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. By all accounts, the Dalai Lama was considered supreme in political matters.

Below the Dalai Lama were the aristocratic lords—owners of the estates, most descended from the ancient kings of Tibet before the Mongol invasion. “Despite claims to the contrary, heredity and ennoblement were the only avenues for joining the nobility,” Grunfeld writes.

“As in all agricultural societies, the source of power and wealth was not titles

but land. Land was divided among three ruling groups: the monasteries, the lay nobility and the Lhasa government,” Grunfeld says.

The Dalai Lama himself was never from a ruling family, for that would have given an individual family domination. Rarely did the Dalai Lama ever reach adulthood, with fierce disputes often leading to murder of the young ruler.

The aides to the Dalai Lama really ruled the local government. The 13th Dalai Lama was one of the few to have survived into adulthood.

The vast majority of the people of Tibet were serfs. A small part of the population, about 5 percent, was slaves to the nobility.

Women were considered inferior to men. Polyandry—where one woman was the wife of several brothers—and polygamy were common.

As in every agricultural society, religion played a big role in Tibet.

Tibetan Buddhism is a distinct branch that incorporates ancient pre-Buddhist beliefs. This makes it unique in many ways.

But the ruling oligarchy controlled religion and the interpretation of its meaning. Tibetan Buddhism was used as a means of repressing the serfs.

Much is made of the Tibetan Buddhist prohibition against killing any life form, including animals or insects. But the death penalty was imposed under Tibetan law for killing a monk.

According to Gorkar Mebon, the mayor of Lhasa in the 1950s, when the death sentence was administered in Tibet before 1949 “it was in the form that made no person responsible for the death: by hurling the person from a precipice or sewing him in a yak skin and throwing him in a river. Lighter sentences were of amputation of a hand, both hands, a leg or both legs, the stumps being sterilized with boiling butter.” (“Tibet,” Winnington)

The whip was also a common form of punishment, Mebon says. “If a person had 300 strokes of it properly applied he would almost certainly die afterwards.” In this way it could be said that the government, in accordance with religious law, had directly killed no one.

After the overthrow of Tibetan feudalism, in 1959 the serfs opened an exhibition of the torture instruments used against them. The exhibition was presented as a show on the “abuse of religion” and the execution of “evil deeds under cloak of religion.”

Heinrich Harrer’s hidden role

During the rule of the 14th Dalai Lama in the 1940s, Tibet was again a center of intrigue. The German Nazis hoped to expand into Asia, particularly into India, Nepal and Tibet, leaving the penetration of China to their ally, imperialist Japan.

This is how Heinrich Harrer ended up in Tibet. His book on Tibet is really a fictionalized account of his adventures.

Who Harrer is and what his role was is of interest not just because of the movie. Harrer by all accounts was a teacher of the Dalai Lama and has remained a close adviser ever since.

“It came as a bombshell five months ago when the German magazine Stern reported that, as early as 1933, Harrer had been a Nazi, a member of the ruthless SA [storm troopers] and, later, the SS [elite protective guard],” according to a report in the October 1997 issue of the magazine Men’s Journal.

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China's liberation in 1949

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But the Chinese Communist Party was not given a chance to carry out such a slow policy. Tibet immediately became the target of not only the British imperialists but the United States imperialists as well.

There were many reasons for the interest in Tibet. One State Department expert even suggested that in the age of rocket warfare, Tibet was the ideal center for controlling all of Asia.

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U.S. forces in Korea march toward China

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landed at Inchon in Korea and were driving up the peninsula. Gen. Douglas MacArthur was threatening to cross the Yalu River and carry the war into China.

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local government. The Buddhist church continued to operate as it had before. Freedom of religion was guaranteed. Reforms in Tibet were not compulsory.

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When the Tibetan oligarchy says the Chinese government did not respect Tibetan customs in the 1950s, this is what they are referring to.

The Chinese did violate local customs. Wages were paid to Tibetans who worked building the roads. This disrupted the custom of servitude. Paying Tibetan children to attend school also gave the serfs economic leverage against the age-old work practices as well as providing avenues for rising out of serfdom.

Some of the old aristocracy of Tibet were like Ngapo Ngawang Jigme and saw that serfdom had to be ended, but others resisted change. These are the Tibetan nobility who turned to the United States and the CIA.

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Contrary to the popular image of non-violence that has been built up around the Dalai Lama and his supporters, this CIA mercenary force was armed and murderous. It included contra-style death squads.

The Tibetan mercenaries were trained at Camp Hale in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. They were then parachuted into Tibet by the CIA's Civil Air Transport. According to the Pentagon Papers, there were at least 700 of these flights in the 1950s; these same Air Force C-130s were later used for CIA operations in the Vietnam War. The mercenaries were dropped in with submachine guns and ammunition, according to a detailed report in the Jan. 25, 1997,

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The mercenary army apparently kidnapped the Dalai Lama at that time and took him to India. They needed the Dalai Lama to give legitimacy to

the Tibetan aristocrats' claim to be the Tibetan "government in exile."

Some contend that since the mercenary army's leadership was in the hands of four of the Dalai Lama's six top aides, he had been at the center of planning the armed attack.

Whatever the truth about that, the CIA and the U.S. government has remained the main force keeping alive the so-called government in exile. That is true to this day. According to ex-CIA employee Ralph McGehee, who has written many exposés of the agency, the CIA has stepped up its Tibetan contra operations in recent years, working closely with the Dalai Lama's brother.

An internal matter

The issue of Tibetan self-determination is an internal affair for China and no one outside. The right of self-determination depends on the conditions of the time when it is raised and the international situation, which can be of enormous significance.

China is a state with a considerable number of nationalities. And if there is one aspect where the People's Republic of China stands out for its progressive character, it is its policy with respect to national minorities.

Tibet has been a part of China for centuries. It is not a province that was purchased, like the United States did with Alaska. It is not a conquered territory a thousand miles away like Hawaii.

The kind of self-determination proposed by the "Tibetan government in exile" and the Dalai Lama would be a neo-colony of imperialism and a dagger aimed at the heart of China.

There are unlimited possibilities for self-determination within the framework of the multinational state of China, or any other relationship that is mutually worked out between the Chinese government and the Tibetans in the spirit of socialist solidarity. But it is a problem that is exclusively theirs to work out.



Photo: Tubdain

During the 1959 democratic reform in Tibet, emancipated serfs and slaves were given land and houses. Photo shows them burning all the documentary evidence binding them to their masters.

That's entertainment? It's propaganda

Tibet as it never was

By Gary Wilson

With two major Hollywood movies about Tibet this year, the Tibetan region of China is being put in an unusual spotlight.

The Tibetan people are just one of the many national minorities in China. Yet most people in the United States have heard only of the Tibetans.

In China, there are 56 national minorities. Most of the population is Han.

Tibetans are the eighth biggest nationality. In terms of numbers, Tibetans are about 4 million—or .39 percent of China's population.

There are other nationalities in Tibet itself, besides the Tibetans: Moinbas, Lopas, Naxis, Huis, Dengs and Xiaerbas.

But only the Tibetans are stars in Hollywood. No, that's not it. Common Tibetans aren't the stars of Hollywood films. The focus is almost exclusively on a very small group of Tibetans—the former elite of Tibet and the person the media sometimes call the “god-king,” the Dalai Lama.

Hollywood's fictional accounts are presented as based on historical fact. That's like saying the movie “Gone with the Wind” shows what the South was like during slavery, when really it is only a glorification of the slave masters and completely ignores life for African Americans.

The Tibet movies are very much like “Gone with the Wind.” They present the view of a defeated oligarchy, and ignore the reality of those who are oppressed.

The movie “Seven Years in Tibet” not only glorifies feudal Tibet and its aristocrats; it also makes a hero of a Nazi storm trooper—Heinrich Harrer.

So what is the history of Tibet? And why is it getting so much attention now?

For 700 years a part of China

In the 13th century, Genghis Khan

and the Mongolians unified China and founded the Yuan Dynasty. This included Tibet. For the next 700 years, Tibet was an administrative region in China.

The Tibetan Autonomous Region of China today includes Tibet as it was defined in 1911 at the fall of the Chinese empire, plus an area called Chamdo. During the last days of the empire, Chamdo had been part of a province called Sikang.

Today's Tibet includes the territory of “U,” where the Dalai Lama directly ruled, and the territory of Tsang, where the Panchen Lama ruled.

When the promoters of a “Greater Tibet” refer to Tibet, much more is included. They include large parts of adjacent provinces: Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai. This includes the oil-rich Tsaidam Basin.

Today, about 1.8 million Tibetans live in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. There are another 2.1 million Tibetans in the neighboring four provinces.

While a greater part of the Tibetan population lives outside Tibet in these neighboring provinces, this does not make these other areas part of Tibet any more than the big Irish population in Boston makes Boston part of Ireland. There has been a centuries-long migration of Tibetans into these areas, where the Tibetans remain a minority population. Hans have also been migrating to these neighboring provinces.

However, when the promoters of “Greater Tibet” talk of Hans “penetrating Tibetan lands,” they are really talking about these non-Tibetan provinces and a migration process that has occurred over centuries.

The central government was weak after the fall of the Chinese empire, and had little or no influence on domestic affairs in Tibet. But Tibet was still considered part of China.

“No nation has ever publicly accepted

Tibet as an independent state,” writes A. Tom Grunfeld in the history book “The Making of Modern Tibet.”

Britain invades in 1903

At the turn of the century, in 1903, Britain decided that Tibet should come under its influence along with India, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and China. At that time, Britain sent an invading force into Tibet.

Earlier British government expeditions had reported that Tibet was rich with natural resources and even said that “masses of gold were lying around in the rivers.” They may have believed they had found another empire like the Incan empire in what is now Peru, where Spanish conquistadors stole a wealth of gold.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, in July 1903 Lord Curzon, viceroy of India, authorized Col. Francis Younghusband and a military escort to cross the Tibetan border to negotiate a trade treaty.

“When efforts to begin negotiations failed,” the encyclopedia reports, “the British, under the command of Maj. Gen. James Macdonald, invaded the country and slaughtered some 600 Tibetans at Guru. Younghusband moved on to Chiang-tzu (Gyantze), where his second attempt to begin trade negotiations also failed. He then marched into Lhasa, the capital, with British troops and forced the conclusion of a trade treaty with the Dalai Lama, Tibet's ruler. This action brought him a knighthood in 1904.”

British journalist Alan Winnington writes in his book “Tibet” that the treaty “made Tibet as far as possible a British sphere of influence.”

Even then, Britain recognized Chinese “sovereignty” in Tibet—and sent a bill for 750,000 pounds to the central Chinese government for the expenses incurred in the invasion.

Tibet then became an area of intrigue and a pawn in the competition between the imperialist powers, particularly Britain, czarist Russia and Germany. The 13th Dalai Lama, the one preceding the current Dalai Lama, worked closely with the British. And until the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, the Tibetan aristocracy looked to Britain and India, even sending their children to British schools in India.

According to Winnington, “When [the 13th Dalai Lama] died in 1933, Tibet was more and more becoming a British sphere.”

This is part of the reason Nazi Germany sent an expedition to Tibet in the 1930s. Its defeat in World War I had stripped Germany of its colonies. The rise of the Nazi regime was driven in part by the big German capitalists’ need to expand and gain new colonies, new “spheres of influence.”

Reality vs. romanticized view of Tibet

Reports by the British and German imperialists, primarily, have created the popular image of Tibet in the West.

Books like “Lost Horizon” by James Hilton and “Seven Years in Tibet” by Heinrich Harrer promoted a romanticized view of Tibet.

Harrer’s book is the basis for the Hollywood movie starring Brad Pitt. Leaving aside for a moment the issue of Harrer’s role, what was Tibet like in the 1940s when the story takes place?

Because of its extreme isolation high up in the Himalayas, Tibet might have looked exotic to an outsider. Tibet was a region with no roads, only horse trails. The wheel was unknown. It was practically untouched by industrialization.

But Tibet was not that much different from the rest of the world. It just hadn’t caught up to the 20th century.

“The parallels between Tibet and medieval Europe are striking,” writes Grunfeld in “The Making of Modern Tibet.”

In the 1940s, Tibet was a feudal theocracy with a dual papacy—the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. By all accounts, the Dalai Lama was considered supreme in political matters.

Below the Dalai Lama were the aris-

tocratic lords—owners of the estates, most descended from the ancient kings of Tibet before the Mongol invasion. “Despite claims to the contrary, heredity and ennoblement were the only avenues for joining the nobility,” Grunfeld writes.

“As in all agricultural societies, the source of power and wealth was not titles but land. Land was divided among three ruling groups: the monasteries, the lay nobility and the Lhasa government,” Grunfeld says.

The Dalai Lama himself was never from a ruling family, for that would have given an individual family domination. Rarely did the Dalai Lama ever reach adulthood, with fierce disputes often leading to murder of the young ruler.

The aides to the Dalai Lama really ruled the local government. The 13th Dalai Lama was one of the few to have survived into adulthood.

The vast majority of the people of Tibet were serfs. A small part of the population, about 5 percent, was slaves to the nobility.

Women were considered inferior to men. Polyandry—where one woman was the wife of several brothers—and polygamy were common.

As in every agricultural society, religion played a big role in Tibet.

Tibetan Buddhism is a distinct branch that incorporates ancient pre-Buddhist beliefs. This makes it unique in many ways.

But the ruling oligarchy controlled religion and the interpretation of its meaning. Tibetan Buddhism was used as a means of repressing the serfs.

Much is made of the Tibetan Buddhist prohibition against killing any life form, including animals or insects. But the death penalty was imposed under Tibetan law for killing a monk.

According to Gorkar Mebon, the mayor of Lhasa in the 1950s, when the death sentence was administered in Tibet before 1949 “it was in the form that made no person responsible for the death: by hurling the person from a precipice or sewing him in a yak skin and throwing him in a river. Lighter sentences were of amputation of a hand, both hands, a leg or both legs, the stumps being sterilized with boiling butter.” (“Tibet,” Winnington)

The whip was also a common form

of punishment, Mebon says. “If a person had 300 strokes of it properly applied he would almost certainly die afterwards.” In this way it could be said that the government, in accordance with religious law, had directly killed no one.

After the overthrow of Tibetan feudalism, in 1959 the serfs opened an exhibition of the torture instruments used against them. The exhibition was presented as a show on the “abuse of religion” and the execution of “evil deeds under cloak of religion.”

Heinrich Harrer’s hidden role

During the rule of the 14th Dalai Lama in the 1940s, Tibet was again a center of intrigue. The German Nazis hoped to expand into Asia, particularly into India, Nepal and Tibet, leaving the penetration of China to their ally, imperialist Japan.

This is how Heinrich Harrer ended up in Tibet. His book on Tibet is really a fictionalized account of his adventures.

Who Harrer is and what his role was is of interest not just because of the movie. Harrer by all accounts was a teacher of the Dalai Lama and has remained a close adviser ever since.

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CIA ran Tibet contras since 1950s

By Gary Wilson

While the CIA's contra death squads in Central America are generally well known in the United States, its operations in the Tibetan region of China are virtually unknown.

According to a Jan. 25 report in the Chicago Tribune, "Little about the CIA's skullduggery in the Himalayas is a real secret anymore except maybe to the U.S. taxpayers who bankrolled it."

The Tribune report is titled "The CIA's secret war in Tibet." It is the first major report on this contra operation in a corporate-owned newspaper in the United States, although this news has been reported many times in the pages of Workers World newspaper.

Tibet has become a chic topic. It is a favorite of the rich conglomerates that control Hollywood, including Disney and TriStar, which are making movies about it.

Actors like Richard Gere have become vocal champions of Tibet's overthrown supreme ruler, the Dalai Lama.

While they like to quote extensively from the Dalai Lama's rarefied speeches about his noble intentions and his pacific nature, none will honestly confront the real history. It matters less what the Dalai Lama says than what he does.

Up until the time when his rule was overthrown, the Tibetan region of China was dominated by a feudal oligarchy. While most of the population lived in extreme poverty, the Dalai Lama lived richly in the 1,000-room, 14-story Potala Palace.

In 1950, the Chinese People's Liberation Army entered Tibet. They secured the borders and controlled foreign affairs. The Dalai Lama continued to live in his palace. But in 1959, the Dalai Lama led a bloody uprising against the Chinese government.

After the uprising failed, the Tribune reports, the Dalai Lama went into exile in India where the CIA set up and trained the Tibetan contra army.

The Tribune writes that "Air Force pilots working with the CIA" asked potential recruits one question: Do you want to kill Chinese?

These recruits were trained at U.S. military bases in Okinawa, Guam and Colorado. They were then dropped into the Tibetan region of China by "American pilots who would later carry out [secret] operations in Laos and Cambodia during the Vietnam War," the Tribune reports.

"By the mid-1960s, the CIA had switched its strategy from parachuting commandos into Tibet to setting up the Chusi Gangdruk, a grizzled army of 2,000 ethnic Khamba fighters, at secret bases across the border in pro-U.S. Nepal," the Tribune reports.

The Tribune report adds: "For years, the only way Tibetans could get a hearing in the world's capitals was to emphasize our spirituality and helplessness," said Jamyang Norbu, a leading Tibetan intellectual who joined the guerrillas briefly as a teenager. "Tibetans who pick up rifles don't fit that romantic image we've built up in Westerners' heads."

The Dalai Lama has always refused to answer any questions about his ties to the CIA, the Tribune writes, even though much of the contra operation in India was coordinated by "his elder brother, a businessman named Gyalo Thondup."

The Tribune report claims that U.S. government support for the Dalai Lama's contra operations ended in the 1970s. But those familiar with U.S. covert operations around the world don't buy it.

Ex-CIA employee Ralph McGehee, who authored many exposés of the CIA, says that the CIA is a prime mover behind the new 1990s campaign promoting the cause of the Dalai Lama and

Tibetan independence. And a key player in the new operation is none other than the Dalai Lama's eldest brother.

Already, three bombs are known to have been detonated in Tibet this year. The most recent was on Dec. 25 outside a Chinese government office in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa.

Ever since the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia in 1917, the capitalist powers have glorified tyrants thrown over by workers. To the Western press, the Russian czar, a brutal and cruel dictator, became a near poet-king.

The prevalence of anti-communism as a near religion in the United States has made it easy to sell slave masters as humanitarians. The Dalai Lama is not much different from the former slave owners of the Confederate South.

He was an owner of slaves until 1959. He ruled over a harsh feudal serfdom.

And while the Dalai Lama says he will no longer own slaves and he will no longer claim his royal rights over the serfs of Tibet, it's only because the Tibetan workers and peasants have won their freedom and won't let the oppressive conditions return.

China had a successful socialist revolution. Every day since that victory, the former exploiters have been overtly and covertly trying to foment a counter-revolutionary overturn.

While the socialist state was crushed in the Soviet Union, it hasn't been in China, even though the socialized character of the economy has been diluted by widespread capitalist investment.

None know this better than the U.S. ruling class.

It's the reason that Clinton's new secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, declared a "hard line" against two countries in her first news conference Jan. 24: China and Cuba.

EDITORIAL

The Dalai Lama & the CIA

No government agency has been more directly peopled by members of the capitalist ruling class than the Central Intelligence Agency. Set up to do the dirty political work of the Cold War, it was the creation of rich white men from the “best” families and schools. Typical is George Bush, a CIA director from a rich oil-connected Connecticut/Texas family who went on to become president.

The CIA’s objective has been to promote U.S. imperialism. Its methods have been wily as well as brutal. The defection of a number of agents during the 1960s-70s period of political upheaval shed light on the agency’s trick of setting up rival unions, human-rights organizations, societies of all kinds that sounded liberal, even progressive, but were controlled by the U.S. ruling class. With their access to almost unlimited funds, contacts, and approval in the imperialist media, they undermined working-class and popular organizations.

For a while, the CIA’s fronts were so exposed—“burned,” in the trade—that it seemed to have pulled back from this kind of work.

But now, according to Ralph McGehee, author of many exposés of the CIA and compiler of a large electronic database about the agency, the CIA is escalating such operations around the world.

McGehee gives details about what he sees as a growing CIA campaign to needle China by promoting the cause of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan independence.

In this country, all kinds of pro-Tibetan groups have sprung up. It seems strange this cause should stir much passion here, considering that its heroes are a medieval theocracy that would take Tibet in the same horrible direction the Taliban have moved Afghanistan. But it’s getting a lot of backing and feeds on anti-communism, the closest thing to an official religion in this country.

McGehee calls the National Endowment for Democracy a “CIA surrogate.” He says it has provided money to the Tibet Fund, Tibet Voice, the International Campaign for Tibet, and other projects. The CIA-front American Society for a Free Asia sponsored a tour by Thubten Norbu, eldest brother of the Dalai Lama, back in the 1950s. Norbu

turned up recently leading a well-publicized march from the Chinese Embassy in Washington to New York.

Radio Free Asia, a U.S. mouthpiece, started broadcasting to China last September. It will eventually be heard in Tibet, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, north Korea and Vietnam.

All this is still in the realm of propaganda. But that is not the only weapon being used. Three bombs are known to have been detonated in Tibet this year. The most recent was on Dec. 25 outside a Chinese government office in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa.

There are many genuine movements of the oppressed for self-determination. Do those who are organizing the lamentation over Tibet care about the oppression of Puerto Rico, for example, or the subjugation of Black, Latino and Native peoples inside the United States? And, while they champion the former Tibetan rulers, do they care about the ordinary Tibetan people, mostly peasants, whose lives improved greatly after liberation from the rule of this parasitic caste in 1959?

Class War in Tibet

By Sam Marcy

When the Chinese Communists marched into Tibet some 10 years ago, they didn't attempt to overturn the ossified social and political institutions characteristic of this feudal, theocratic state. A military, bureaucratic overturn of social relations without the support of the masses has all too frequently brought results contrary to those desired.

Take the example of some of the states of Eastern Europe, such as Hungary, where the Soviet army overturned the capitalist relations, without mass popular support. To this day these countries are standing invitations to capitalist counter-revolution.

The Chinese, we believe, used sound judgment in 1950, when they simply made Tibet an autonomous region within the Chinese Republic. They subsequently signed an agreement with the Tibetan government, which gave the Chinese People's Republic control over no more than the foreign policy of Tibet, and the

right to maintain the Chinese Army within its borders.

And this is as it should have been. For it was patently obvious that there was no mass support at least none that we in the West knew of, for revolutionary socialist reconstruction of the country, at the time. But this rightly cautious policy of the Chinese, and their respect for national minorities within the framework of the Chinese Republic, cannot be viewed as ends in themselves regardless of all consequences.

The rebellion that took place last month, and which may still be in progress, is a grim reminder that we are not living in the epoch of isolated states, relatively self-sufficient national economies and a world system, whose economic and political bonds are relatively loose. Imperialism long ago put an end to that.

We are now living in the epoch where two social systems are in mortal combat, and where one or the other must emerge as victor. There can be no such thing under these circumstances as a "free" "independent" Tibet, removed from the

arena of world struggle, and quietly pursuing its independent destiny.

From an abstract point of view it would seem that the application of the Leninist slogan of self-determination for Tibet, even up to and including the right of separation, is the correct principle to apply. But the world struggle does not permit it. If U.S. imperialism can spend millions and millions of dollars in the form of the Seventh Fleet, with its guided missiles and A-bombs to "guard" the tiny islands Quemoy and Matsu, what would the U.S. do in the case of a "free" and "independent" Tibet? Merely to pose the question is to answer it.

The correct answer to the question of Tibet we believe lies in this: that the Socialist rights of 650 million people involved in building a new social order are far greater than the bourgeois-democratic rights of an ancient, ossified, and decadent nobility disguised in the form of a theocracy, even though they may still command the greater portion of the population at this time.

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