

Indo-Tibetan Political Relations:
Past, Present, and the Future of Tibet

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Independent Research
August 10, 2003

Emory-IBD Tibetan Studies Program
Dharamsala, India (Spring 2003)

FOREWARD

Before arriving in Dharamsala, India, my new home away from home, I hadn't the slightest idea of what I was going to focus on for my independent research project. As I became immersed in Tibetan culture in exile, I became fascinated by how comfortably and peacefully the Tibetan people lived outside of their country. They were given land, education, and their own established government – all thanks to the Indian taxpayers. Through my classes, I learned about the history of Tibet and how the Tibetan people endured an undeserved holocaust by the Chinese Communist aggressors. However, with humanitarian assistance from India, Tibetans were not only able to seek refuge in their neighbor, but were also given the basic right of freedom.

It did not take long before I was accepted and welcomed into the lives and friendships of many Tibetans. I began to feel comfortable in their community, and I realized that these people were exceptional in their spiritual and cultural beliefs. Inspired by talks and discussions with resistance fighters, members of the Tibetan government-in-exile, charismatic political speakers, and articles discussing India, Tibet, and China's political history, my interest in the international relations between these three Asian neighbors grew stronger by the day. One day, Lhasang Tsering, former President of Tibet Youth Congress, came to speak to our Culture class. His speech absolutely moved me and afterwards, I was speechless from excitement and anxiety – I had found my research topic. His charisma inspired me to evaluate the history and motivation behind India's claim and stake in the Tibet issue.

As an International Studies major, I have spent most of my college career focusing on comparative political international systems and governments, and the reactions between them. I took my interest in the international world a step further. I had the opportunity to go inside the Tibetan government-in-exile, talk to Tibetan officials and meet Indians who have dedicated half their lives working for Tibet's freedom. This paper is my service to them and my way of saying "thank you." After my interview with Lhasang Tsering, he refused to let me pay for his tea; his justification: "*You* are talking about Tibet...so, I can treat you to tea."

I fell in love with Tibetan people, Tibetan culture, Tibetan religion, and the refugee community. I am grateful for what this research project taught me, whom it allowed me to meet, and for the friends I have made as a result of it. When leaving Dharamsala, I said a quick goodbye to my friend, Phurbu, as I was running to catch my bus to Delhi. He grabbed my hand, looked into my hands, and said, "Keep fighting for Tibet." I made a promise to him that I intend to keep.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Throughout the research process for this paper, I was able to talk to a number of people who answered my questions and helped me obtain information. I am thankful to everyone who took the time to talk to me about Tibet.

First of all, I would like to thank all those people who agreed to be interviewed. I must thank the workers at the Documentation Centre of the Department of Information and International Relations who allowed me to spend hours sorting through their confidential files. I also want to thank my translator, who dropped whatever he was doing to help in a last-minute situation. I thank everyone inside the government for taking time out of their busy schedules to talk to me.

I would also like to thank Manoj Kumar at the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Center (TPPRC) for the abundance of books and resources he willingly gave to me when I visited his office. The resources were most helpful and valuable; I don't think I would have had access to such materials anywhere else.

I am especially indebted to my *Gen-las*, advisors, and mentors. First and foremost, I would like to express my never-ending gratitude to Geshe Pema Dorjee-la for, among the million of things that you already do, arranging a meeting period so that I could speak with the members of Friends of Tibet. It was really so kind of him to think of me and to help me with my research. I would also like to thank Geshe Tenzin Sherab-la for helping me find contacts within the government and offering suggestions of who to talk to.

I would like to say thank you to: Chimmy for contact information; Passang for all his help; and the following members of Friends of Tibet for taking the time to sit down for an interview moments before their bus was leaving: Sethu Das, CA Kallianpur, Ajay B. Agrawal, Tenzin Tsundue, Aspi B. Mistry.

Last, but certainly not least, I must thank my advisor, Tara Plochocki for ALL of her help and support. Her enthusiasm has kept me driven. Her support was endless and undying. I thank her for getting me started in talking to people in the government, setting up interviews, translators, and working to get granted permission for my access to the Documentation Centre. I also want to thank her for the emails of support, cheer, and love. She was a very understanding advisor and mentor and always willing to accommodate and to help in any way possible.

Thanks to my Director, professor, and mentor, Dr. Doyle. It was wonderful to have a second advisor. I appreciated all of her helpful suggestions and for giving me the opportunity to study and conduct my independent research in India. I thank her for helping find "the fire" in my work.

I would also like to thank Samit Shah for providing contacts (phone numbers, emails and all!) of people I should talk to. It was an immense help.

Finally, my sincere thanks to my mother for reading through countless drafts at late hours and for being patient throughout this project.

Introduction

Western-educated Tibetan author Tsering Shakya observes that in recent years, Tibet has attracted a widespread international interest, both socially and politically. Buddhism has made its way across the oceans from Asia to the West, and the political problems of Tibet have been debated in parliaments and covered by the press from around the world. Scholars have seemingly neglected the subject of Tibetan history and politics; perhaps suggesting that Tibet has no recent history.¹ The long tradition of Tibetan studies that has existed in the West has relied mostly on studies geared around Tibetan sociological and anthropological topics, such as Buddhism, religion, ancient history, the arts, and Tibetan society and language.

In Dharamsala, the seat of the Tibetan exile community and the home of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I gained a renewed consciousness of modern Tibetan political issues. Through my studies and research for this paper, I have been able to explore an area of Tibetan history and culture that is so important today. My initial interest in the subject stemmed from my observation and exposure to Dharamsala, the “little Lhasa” of India. I wanted to know more about Indo-Tibetan relations and India’s vested interest in providing not only a home for Tibetans living in exile, but also a place of opportunity for education, health, politics, and, most importantly, cultural preservation. Although events are still developing every day – delegations sent, speeches made – the progress is immeasurable, and yet it seems that no one really knows when Tibet will be free again. After 50 years of Chinese occupation, it is amazing to hear through discussions with Tibetans and Indians the differing opinions on what will happen next for Tibet. I hope that with this paper, I can further explore what the future holds for Tibet and thus give

some insight into what India's and Tibet's relations have been in the past and what India's role will be in the future.

India's long-standing relationship with Tibet has developed historically as a friendship based on culture, religion, and politics. By giving Tibetan refugees a home in exile – land, education, and freedom of religion – India has welcomed the prospect of playing a role in the Tibetan cause for freedom. India's acceptance of Tibetan refugees, crossing the Himalayas to escape Chinese oppression and occupation of Tibet, has been admired and seen as an act of compassion and courage. The Tibetan people living in India have immense gratitude for what India has given to them, and they respect India for her decision to help Tibet in a time of need.

India has played an active political role in Tibet's political history and a huge humanitarian role in the current Tibet issue; however, India has many social and economic problems of her own, as well as political problems with China, Pakistan, and Kashmir, which have limited her political involvement with Tibet. Many scholars believe that Tibet's freedom would help solve India's problems. By providing a place for Tibetans to live in exile, India has given over 100,000 Tibetans a chance to escape the religious persecution of the Chinese communists and reason to hope for a future, free Tibet. Politically, it is difficult for India to do much to help Tibet. Without governmental recognition from any other government in the world, it seems that Tibet has to face the communist giant, China, on its own. However, India can help through guidance and indirect pressure on the Chinese to listen and negotiate with the gentle Buddhists. India has played a role in Tibetan affairs thus far and should not stop now.

¹ Tsering Shakya, The Dragon in the Land of Snows, (New York: Columbia University, 1999), p. 1.

India should realize that if she helps Tibet in the freedom struggle, a free Tibet would help put the Asian world at peace.

India's role in the Tibetan cause has influenced the dynamic of political relations in the Asian international sphere. Politics is most often based on self-interest. Interestingly enough, India's involvement with the Tibetan people has stemmed from ancient historical ties; however, Tibet's independence is crucial to India's national security. Geographically, Tibet is located to the north of India, sharing a borderline of 2,250 km long with India, Bhutan and Sikkim. Tibet's independence is crucial to India's national security because an independent Tibet would act as a "buffer" state between India, China and Kashmir. His Holiness the Dalai Lama once said that if India and China were isolated by an independent Tibet, then their conflicts would cease to exist. At the same time, Tibet is crucial to China's development and security. Its geographical position wedges Tibet between two great powers, and when faced with reliance on one power over the other, China fears that Tibet would naturally choose India. Tibet has always had a spiritual identification with India; however, independence would free Tibet from China, and Tibet would naturally look to India for aid.

The issue of Tibet's status prior to the Chinese invasion in October 1950 continues to be unclear. The Tibetans claim that from 1913 onwards, they regarded themselves as an independent state, acting with an independent government that exercised complete internal and external control over Tibet.² The Chinese, however, have been determined not to admit to Tibet's independence pre-1950, and have instead resorted to describing pre-1950 Tibet as a "hell on earth," without acknowledging any

redeemable features of Tibetan culture and tradition. The Chinese communists claim that with the occupation, they have “liberated” Tibet and have succeeded at unifying China. However, for the Tibetans, before the invasion, Tibet was their home country, a land of contented people living in peace. Chinese communist rule has not only meant the destruction of Tibet’s independence and political identity, but also fifty years of near-genocide of the Tibetan people. These strong, differing views are what make the Tibet issue so sensitive worldwide.

The arrival and gradual expansion of the British in India brought into concern China’s influence over Tibet. The British had their own terms for the relationship between China and Tibet: sovereign and suzerain. However, the influence of the British imperialism moving into the Himalayas was a problem that China could not ignore, and China thus felt a need to take Tibet under their control. China justifies the invasion through a determination to make Tibet look like a place in need of liberation. This idea is not much different from the belief held by many Western colonial powers in civilizing the native cultures in their dominions. The Tibetans hold on to their past independent status, and thus find some sort of glorification of the past in endurance of the present oppression. However, the Chinese regimes never accepted Tibet’s independence, not to mention that Tibet was never able to obtain formal recognition for its independent status.

Today, tension runs high between China and India as troops are massed on both sides of the Himalayan border. Since the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) invaded Tibet in 1950, Chinese aggression and oppression have made Tibet almost unbearable for its own people to live in. Thousands of Tibetans feel that they have been given no choice

² Shakya uses this as a determining criterion for whether a state is independent or not. He implies that other scholars have indicated the same, but that the issue is debatable and not clearly stated among reliable

but to make the perilous journey across the snow-covered Himalayan mountains in order to seek a life of peace and happiness in India. In 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama also fled to India and joined his people as their leader, espousing a philosophy devoted to the principles of Buddhism and based on love and compassion. China's aggression towards the Tibetan people has been condemned by virtually all nations of the free world and in itself is a violation of international law. Historically, Tibet was subject to foreign influences by the Mongol Khans, the Gorkhas of Nepal, the Manchu Emperors, and the British in India; however, rule by these foreign influences never entailed a loss of independence. Though Tibetans have lost their freedom as a result of Chinese influence, they claim, under international law, that Tibet today is still an independent state under illegal occupation.

The most important aspect of the Tibetan community in exile, spread over India's 37 official settlements, is cultural preservation. It is crucial to the Tibetan people that while living in exile, they still maintain and preserve their culture, race, language, and religion. Despite not having their own free country, there is much pressure from all parts of Tibetan society to ensure that "pure Tibetans" still exist. However, it is difficult, in a diaspora community to maintain Tibetan pride, compassion, and honesty. These special characteristics are deteriorating and are being influenced by outside, foreign influences. Many Tibetans have become too comfortable living in exile, or have left India to go settle in the West. This kind of deterioration is also seen in the Tibetan government-in-exile and in the Dalai Lama's agenda. Slowly the goal of Tibetan independence is changing, from freedom to H.H. the Dalai Lama's "middle way" approach to autonomy, self-government or the right to self-government. Many Tibetans living in exile are just

waiting for the day to return to their country despite its future status; others, however, disagree with HH. the Dalai Lama's agenda for autonomy and only want to see Tibet as a free, independent country.

Looking at Indo-Tibetan political relations pre-1950 and post-1950, it is possible to understand the situation today and what is in store for the future of Tibet. What sort of political relationship has India and Tibet had politically before the Chinese invaded in 1950? How did the invasion change India's policy towards Tibet? What can the Tibetan government-in-exile do to help Tibet's cause for freedom or autonomy? What can the Tibetan people do? Also, how does India's relationship with Tibet affect India's political relationship with China? More importantly, what sort of role, if any, should India play in Tibet's cause? Through discussion with members of the Tibetan government-in-exile, Indian members of Tibet support groups, and Indian officials involved in working on Tibet issues, and as discussed in this paper, it is possible to further understand how India's involvement with Tibet and the Tibet issue evolved and under what circumstances it has changed and will change in the future.

India, China, and Tibet: History of Political Relations

Tibet occupies 1.2 million square kilometers of land and lies between the two largest powers of Asia: China and India. For centuries, Tibet has absorbed cultural and political influences from both these countries. In turn, Tibet has always been of great importance to both of these great powers. For China, Tibet was desired as the “treasure house” of the western region.³ When the British ruled India, they looked at Tibet as being vital to India’s security as well as beneficial to their imperial ambitions. The British sought to gain influence in Tibet like no other Western country had done before. From 1913 onwards, the British and Tibet enjoyed a partnership. The British worked to bring Tibet into their sphere of influence, and Tibet benefited from good relations with Britain by being able to keep the Chinese out.

With the end of the Second World War, the old imperial powers in Asia collapsed. The British were forced to leave India and their imperial ambitions reached an end. On August 15, 1947, India became an independent nation and inherited the political influence and privileges that the British had gained in Tibet. The other major shift in power in Asia came in China. The Japanese had been defeated and expelled, which led to the victory of the Communists in China. This change in power led later to the demise of Tibet as an independent nation. The Republic of China, when it was established, had no influence or authority in Tibet. One of the objectives of the Guomindang regime was to restore relations with Tibet and to somehow gain a foothold in Lhasa.⁴ China attributed its loss of influence in Tibet due to Western imperialist determination to undermine the Chinese. When the Qing Dynasty collapsed in 1911, China was divided and militarily

³ Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon In the Land of Snows*, (New York: Columbia University, 1999), p. 1

weak. Therefore, the Guomindang was unable to assert its claim over Tibet. Moreover, Tibet was convinced of its independent status and determined to oppose any Chinese attempts to gain authority in Lhasa.

Much of Tibet's ability to survive as an independent nation for so long was due to its southern neighbor, British India. However, with the British out of Asia and India now independent, it was questionable how much influence and power India had to ensure Tibet's independent privileges. British India ensured that Tibet remained a natural buffer state between China and itself. However, it was unclear whether the new India would be able to resist the newly merging China. The new India lacked the economic and military power of its former colonial ruler, and upon gaining independence, India's main concerns were internal. India's leaders were mostly concerned with economic development and ending internal discord, which had cost them thousands of lives. Also, relations with the new Islamic state of Pakistan were on the verge of collapse.⁵ These were the main concerns for India at the time the British pulled out, and it seemed like the problems that were about to unfold in Tibet were the least of their worries.

The Indian leaders seemed unaware of the delicate situation in Tibet that they were about to inherit from the British. In March of 1947, the Indian Council for World Affairs, with support from the Congress leaders, held an Inter-Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi. Nehru claimed it to be a landmark in the history of Asia, as it was intended to discuss the role of Asia in the post-war and post-colonial period. Tibet was allowed to participate in the conference; however, it was not represented as an

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 2.

⁵ Tsering Shakya, p. 2.

independent nation due to Chinese delegation protests.⁶ The Tibetans in turn were unsure about whether the international community viewed Tibet as a nation separate from the Chinese or not. This incident should have warned Indian leaders that China was not prepared to accept Tibet as an independent nation, which would later present a major problem for them.

The Asian Relations Conference was a ten-day congregation of delegations from various Asian countries to discuss the future of Asia. Organized and initiated by Indian leaders, it was seen as an effort not to seek narrow nationalism or to create any sort of united Asia, like the United States of America or the European Union, but more to promote peace talks among the different Asian nations. Pandit Jawahrlal Nehru said in his opening speech, inaugurating the Conference on March 23, 1947:

Peace can only come when nations are free and also when human beings everywhere have freedom and security and opportunity. Peace and freedom, therefore, have to be considered both in their political and economic aspects. The countries of Asia, we must remember, are very backward and the standards of life are appallingly low. These economic problems demand urgent solution or else crisis and disaster might overwhelm us.⁷

Following the Conference, a resolution was adopted regarding the establishment of a permanent organization known as the Asian Relations Organization. The Organization was formed based on the following objectives: to promote the study and understanding of Asian problems and relations in their Asian and world aspects; to foster friendly relations and co-operation among the people of Asia and between them and the rest of the world; and to further the progress and well-being of the peoples of Asia. The Conference was organized with the primary purpose of establishing friendly relations among Asian

⁶ Initially, Tibet was represented as independent at the conference by a map showing Tibet separate from China and by a newly invented national flag, which symbolized Tibet's newfound international status. However, the Chinese delegation protested and the map and flag were removed. *Ibid*, p. 3.

countries, and it was made explicitly clear by Nehru and Ms. Sarojini Naidu, President of the Closing Plenary Session, that the issues of border or territorial disputes would not be discussed.⁸ However, it seemed like the goal of the Conference to work towards Asian unity and peace did not develop much further after the conclusion of this Conference. The second conference was scheduled to be held two years later in Peaking, China, but could not take place due to China's political upheaval.

When the Communists came to power in China, it became evident that they had even more of an intention to control Tibet than the previous Guomindang government. The People's Republic of China was established on October 1, 1949, and Chairman Mao announced in Tiananmen Square, "China has stood up."⁹ The communists made it clear that the last remaining goal of the People's Liberation Army was the liberation of Tibet. Nevertheless, the Communists had little influence in Tibet when they came into power; the influence that the Guomindang government had regained in Tibet came to an end. The Tibetan government was determined to declare its independence, and in doing so, it terminated all contacts it had established between the Lhasa government and the Guomindang regime. Tibetans saw no reason why they should succumb to the Communist leaders, especially since they had exercised full internal and external authority from 1913 onwards. Also, the Tibetan government was quick to realize that the new Communist government was much different from the previous Guomindang or any other Chinese government that came before. The Chinese viewed Tibet as an "integral part of China," which had been influenced by anti-Chinese and imperialist forces to establish itself as separate from China. Tibet realized that the Communists' intention to

⁷ *Tibet since the Asian Relations Conference*, (New Delhi: TPPRC, 1998), p. 36.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 59.

declare Tibet as part of China was serious and that the Communist regime was prepared to do anything to reach this goal.

By 1949, about a month after the Communists came into power, Tibet started to seek international support. India was receiving pressure from the US to develop a more active role in Tibet. India was the country that would be most directly affected by any change in the status of Tibet. In fact, Tibet's relationship with the new Republic of India had started badly. In 1947, Tibet requested that India return any Tibetan territories that were inherited or annexed by the British when they were in India.¹⁰ The External Ministry in Delhi was surprised by the Tibetans' requests, and it marked an unfriendly beginning to the Indo-Tibetan relationship. However, only two years later, when Tibet faced invasion from the Chinese, they turned to India for help.

As it turned out, Tibet's maintenance of its independence status now depended on India's perception of its role and strategic goals. Moreover, it depended on India's Prime Minister Nehru. Nehru understood that the Communists coming to power created a shift in the balance of power and would directly affect India; however, he did not have a clear idea about how India should respond to this new situation. Nehru's primary objective was to avoid any direct conflict; however, China's warning of liberating Tibet would bring China in direct conflict with India. India was put in a difficult situation, as it was faced with the responsibility to help defend Tibet from the encroaching Chinese Communists; however, Indian soldiers were not equipped with the military resources effective enough to defend them. India also was concerned about maintaining its own status quo, its independence, and did not want to risk antagonizing China. On one hand,

⁹ Shakya, p. 3.

¹⁰ Shakya, p. 23.

India was concerned with maintaining Tibet as a buffer state between itself and China. On the other hand, they knew that the present social regime of lamas was antiquated and would not withstand skillful Chinese infiltration in an attempt to improve social and economic conditions in Tibet.¹¹

Nehru had some idealistic views about peace in Asia and maintaining a friendship with China; however, he had hoped that China could be persuaded not to invade Tibet. India believed that its support for China would prevent the Chinese from further antagonizing India by invading Tibet. In the end, this was not so, and Tibet's only chance of survival lay in attempting to reach a compromise with the Chinese, but the Chinese would not listen. India at least provided some military aid to Tibet so that it could resist Chinese penetration; however, it was not enough and was seen as more of a symbolic gesture that India had not lost complete interest in Tibet. Protests were made by Indian leaders against the Chinese declaration of the necessity to liberate Tibet; however, the Indian concern stemmed more from India's interest in national security than sympathy for Tibet.¹²

Once the 40,000 PLA troops invaded Tibet, first taking control of Tibet's eastern province capital of Chamdo, Nehru changed his policy. There was practically nothing Nehru could do militarily to remove the PLA; instead, India developed an appeasement policy towards China in an effort to reduce any security threat from China as a result of military occupation of Tibet. However, it is difficult to say whether India's policy promoted or undermined Sino-Indian friendship.¹³ Policy analyst Brahma Chellaney said

¹¹ Comment by Sir G.D. Bajpai, Secretary-General in the ministry of External Affairs, given to British High Commissioner Nye the India Prime Minister in November, 1949. Shakya, pp.24-25.

¹² Dawa Norbu, *Sino-Indian Rivalry Over Tibet*, p. 3.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 4.

that after the invasion, Indian policy developed in such a way that they struggled to come up with a stance that supported Tibetan autonomy both in the Chinese nationalist framework.¹⁴ Shortly after the invasion on May 23, 1951, Tibet's delegation in Peking was forced to sign the "so-called" Seventeen-Point Agreement (Appendix I).¹⁵ The delegation, cut off from the government, the Cabinet, and the Dalai Lama, signed the agreement under the pressure of feeling threatened personally as well as nationally in regards to Tibet's safety. The seal of the Tibetan government affixed to the agreement was forged in Peking.¹⁶ Once in the safety of exile in India, the Dalai Lama repudiated the "agreement" formally on June 20, 1959.

The Seventeen-Point Agreement basically attested to Tibet's loss of identity as a nation-state. The Tibetan government, based in Yatung at the time, heard the stipulations of the agreement announced over Peking radio. The first clause stated that "the Tibetan people shall unite and drive out imperialist aggressive forces from Tibet...the Tibetan people shall return to the big family of the Motherland—the People's Republic of China." Clause two outlined how the Tibetan government was going to accomplish this: the local government would accept the presence of the PLA, helping them to enter Tibet and centralize the national defense. The remaining points of the agreement confusingly stated on one hand that the indigenous government, including the position of the Dalai Lama, would be rendered legitimate, while on the other hand, points of the agreement rendered the government impotent, and thus eliminating it and its authority to conduct foreign relations. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama was stunned by this so-called agreement and

¹⁴ Interview with Brahma Chellaney, Policy Analyst, Center for Policy Research, New Delhi, May 27, 2003.

ordered Taktser Rinpoche to cross the Indian border and make a final appeal of support. The Dalai Lama later promised to seek asylum in India and to publicly repudiate this agreement.¹⁷

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, was only sixteen years old at the time, and while typically the Dalai Lama ascended the throne at age eighteen, due to the pressure and panic of the Tibetan Government, the National Assembly requested that the young Dalai Lama assume full power as Tibet's leader. The Dalai Lama commented, "Under the threat of invasion, we were more in need of unity than ever before, and I, as Dalai Lama, was the only person whom everybody in the country would unanimously follow...I could not refuse my responsibilities. I had to...put my boyhood behind me, and immediately prepare myself to lead my country...against the vast power of Communist China."¹⁸ The Dalai Lama found himself in a difficult situation, and as the Chinese troops moved further into Tibet, he owed it to the Tibetan people to survive as their leader, so he fled Lhasa. He describes this moment: "The day after I escaped from Lhasa, I felt a tremendous sense of relief. Actually the danger was still very much alive. But despite this we were moving freely, on our own, and we had finally come to the point of openly criticizing the Chinese. 'I have the right to say bad things about them,' I remember thinking. That feeling of freedom was very vivid."¹⁹ Tenzin Gyatso hoped to negotiate with the Chinese once he reached Lhuntse Dzong, a large district fort 60 miles north of the Indian border. It was decided that Lhuntse Dzong was not safe and that the

¹⁵ Tibetan comment from *Official Tibetan and Chinese Positions on the Issue of Tibet: Comments on a Xinhua interview on Tibet*, (Dharamsala: Department of Information and International Relations, 1994), p. 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ John F. Avedon, *In Exile From the Land of Snows*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1997), p. 36.

¹⁸ Quoted in Shakya, pp. 48, 49.

¹⁹ Avedon, p. 57.

PLA troops were advancing at a more rapid pace, and that soon the Indian border would be sealed.²⁰ So, the Dalai Lama, leaving his people in Tibet, fled to safe exile in India, where Nehru and the Indian Parliament welcomed him.

India felt that the only way it could help Tibet was by offering the Dalai Lama and his people a place to live in exile. The Chinese “liberation” of Tibet was not at all peaceful as the Chinese described it. The “liberation” caused the death of 1.2 million Tibetans and the destruction of over 6,000 Tibetan monasteries and cultural centers. In Lhasa and its vicinity alone, according to a PLA secret document, 87,000 Tibetans were killed between March 1959 and October 1960.²¹ The Chinese justify this “peaceful liberation” as a means for the Tibetan people to enjoy equality among all nationalities and to embark on “the road of freedom and happiness.”²² However, India still did not want to directly antagonize the Chinese. In 1954, in an effort to satisfy the Chinese appetite, India signed an agreement with China for annexation of Tibet.²³ However, this policy of appeasement toward China proved to be the wrong policy, as it led to the culmination of the 1962 border war.

The conflict of 1962 seemed to develop steadily after the agreement of 1954 was signed. The Chinese considered the agreement one of the first steps in the removal of Indian presence and influence in Tibet. In the late 1950s, there was significant Tibetan uprising, which resulted in an intensification of Chinese patrolling along the border, which led to occasional clashes with Indian forces that were also trying to secure their

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 58.

²¹ Tibetan comment in *Official Tibetan and Chinese positions on the Issue of Tibet*, p. 2.

²² Chinese Spokesman comment in *Official Tibetan and Chinese positions on the Issue of Tibet*, p. 2.

²³ Interview with Brahma Chellaney, 5/27/03.

positions.²⁴ By the summer of 1962, China had decided on boundary arrangements with Pakistan concerning Indian territory. At this time, the frequency of border clashes had increased. Indian policy makers had faith in the “fighting spirit” and leadership of the Indian armed forces; however, the Indians also believed that the Chinese would avoid conflict with India since a war with India would lead to a larger catastrophe.²⁵ However, India’s illusion was shattered when the Chinese onslaught began in late October of 1962. The border war resulted in India’s loss of border territory in the western and eastern sectors, which in turn has led to today’s placement of troops along the Sino-Indian border.

With the invasion of 40,000 PLA troops in Tibet, Tibet found itself in a difficult predicament, where suddenly it sought international support. For decades, Tibet had avoided relying on contacts from the international world, not because of unawareness, but because of fear of opening the country to outsiders. In 1950, however, the Tibetans made an appeal to the United Nations that “the incorporation of Tibet in Communist China through sheer physical force is a clear case of aggression.”²⁶ It seemed that when the appeal reached the UN, the officials were totally unaware of Tibet’s situation and classified the appeal as part of communications from a non-governmental organization. India, the US, and the UK were the only countries that were aware of the Tibetan issue. The Tibetan appeal was dismissed, and the Tibetans asked the Government of India to raise the Tibet issue at the UN. India, however, was not prepared to take this responsibility. Nehru still did not want to antagonize China; however, he was seriously concerned with the developments in Tibet. At that time, the UN was primarily concerned

²⁴ S.K. Bhutani, “The Conflict of 1962,” *Indian Express*, Oct. 21, 1995.

²⁵ *Ibid*

and focused on the Korean War. India, Britain and the US were not prepared to take the initiative in placing Tibet's appeal on the UN agenda; however, all three countries were willing to support a resolution condemning China's aggressive actions.²⁷ In the end, the support for Tibet in the UN came from the El Salvadorian delegation.

The general consensus was that there was nothing the UN could do to help Tibet; however, Indian reasons for not raising the issue of Tibet were based on the false illusion that a peaceful solution could be reached between Tibet and China. However, this belief was clearly unfounded, because Tibet had no intention of settling the dispute peacefully, and instead was relying on international pressure on China to withdraw. Both Britain and India generally decided that any UN resolution would only call on both sides to settle the dispute in a peaceful manner. A stronger resolution that would call on China to withdraw and to restore Tibet's independence would be ignored by the Chinese, and would therefore lead to the demise of the prestige of the United Nations.

After the 1962 war, Nehru's policy of Asian friendship towards China began to undergo some changes. The attack by China was seen as a means of betrayal, so India modified its policy, adopting more of a dual policy. Officially, it maintained its position that Tibet is part of China; however, secretly it aided the Dalai Lama and his government in exile to an extent that annoys China and in turn hampers any development of improved Sino-Indian relations. However, besides the border attack, India also based its dual policy on the fact that China continued to involve itself in internal Indian affairs. China continued to support Pakistan's stand on the Kashmir dispute and has been supplying Pakistan with military arms; also, China refused to recognize Sikkim and Bhutan as

²⁶ Shakya, p. 53.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 55.

territories under the Indian Union.²⁸ However, Nehru still did not take full action against or for the Chinese. His words in an address to the Lok Sabha (the Lower House of the Indian Parliament) demonstrated his position on Tibet:

Tibet is not the same as China, it should ultimately be the wishes of the people of Tibet that should prevail...whether the people of Tibet are strong enough to assert their rights or not is another matter. Whether we are strong enough...is also another matter...surely, according to...the principles I uphold, the last voice in regard to Tibet should be the voice of the people of Tibet and of nobody else.²⁹

India's policy changed dramatically to a more eager policy with Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister. PM Rajiv Gandhi decided that he was going to restore, improve and develop Sino-Indian relations in a "good neighborly and friendly" way. In December 1988, he made a trip to Beijing, where he declared that Tibet was an autonomous region of China and that India was not going to engage in any political activities that would be harmful to China's internal affairs.³⁰ Although Rajiv Gandhi's policy seemingly could not be more different than from India's previous policy under Nehru, it seemed that India's policy towards China and Tibet did not dramatically change under subsequent governments since Nehru. All governments have been supportive of Tibetan refugees and His Holiness the Dalai Lama, but have not been particularly favorable towards Tibet because they have been unwilling to play the Tibet card against China openly. In turn, China has been careful not to provoke India, and the Communists have settled down to a policy of caution, while they continue to undermine Indian interests by supplying weapons of mass destruction to Pakistan and setting up military bases in Burma.³¹ Since India has been unable to successfully defend Tibet against Chinese aggression, it has

²⁸ Norbu, p. 5.

²⁹ Address given on Dec. 7, 1950; *Indian Leaders on Tibet*, (Dharamsala: Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, 1998), p. 3.

³⁰ S.K. Bhutani

become natural for India to allow Tibetan political prisoners and followers of the Dalai Lama to settle India.

Originally, much of the burden of Tibet's situation fell on India. As a result of India and Tibet's long history of cultural and social ties, it was obvious that India would feel a responsibility to aid Tibet in some way. Nehru had had no hesitation when granting the Dalai Lama asylum. He was under the opinion that the Chinese would accept the Indian position to grant asylum and not view it as an unfriendly act.³² It was clear that Nehru's assistance to Tibet would extend beyond offering asylum to the Dalai Lama. Despite a memorandum presented by the Tibetans, Nehru was committed to his cautious policy of not intervening directly in Tibet's affairs with China, as India's relationship with China was still most important.³³ When Nehru traveled to Mussorie to meet the Dalai Lama, where he and important Tibetan officials were stationed, and the Dalai Lama conveyed the two central aims of the Tibetans-- to set up a government-in-exile and to make an appeal to the United Nations-- Nehru responded that the Government of India would never recognize a government-in-exile.³⁴ Needless to say, the Dalai Lama was disappointed.

Nehru made it clear that India would not sacrifice its relations with China for Tibet. He supposedly told the Dalai Lama, "Let us face facts. One cannot bring heaven to the people in India even if I wish it. The whole world cannot bring freedom to Tibet

³¹ Interview with Chellaney, 5/27/03.

³² Zhou Enlai told Nehru that in 1950, when the Dalai Lama nearly sought asylum in India, China would have accepted this as international protocol, much like the Chinese had done for K.P. Singh, a Nepalese Communist. Shakya, p. 213.

³³ Four-point memorandum requesting that (1) Government of India should seek some form of guarantee from China for the personal safety of the Dalai Lama; (2) refugees should be allowed to enter India freely; (3) India should send a mercy mission with medical supplies; and (4) India should sponsor the Tibetan case at the United Nations. Shakya, p. 213.

³⁴ Shakya, p. 218.

unless the whole fabric of the Chinese state is destroyed. Only a world war, an atomic war, could perhaps make that possible.”³⁵ Nehru continued to tell the Dalai Lama that independence was an impractical aim, and that if the Tibetans would instead argue for autonomy, then perhaps the Chinese would be more amiable and even world opinion would be more in favor of the Tibetan cause. However, Tibet was not sure how to achieve this if India were not going to help them formally communicate with the Chinese. The Tibetans had placed much of their hope in Nehru, and once he refused to provide political support, many Tibetans felt betrayed by India. They argued that if India stood up for Tibet, then it would have prevented some of the worst actions by the Chinese. As the Chinese moved more and more into Tibet, more Tibetan refugees escaped to India.

Although India could never acknowledge the Tibetan government-in-exile as a legitimate government, after the Sino-Indian war, India changed its attitude and relaxed a little, allowing the Dalai Lama to set up an administration that had complete control over the affairs of Tibetan refugees.³⁶ His Holiness the Dalai Lama re-established the Tibetan Government on April 29, 1959, in Mussoorie. The government-in-exile named the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), was established as a continuation of the Government of independent Tibet. And although recognized by Tibetans, both in and outside Tibet, as their legitimate government, no world power had formally recognized the CTA as a legitimate government. However, recognition of legitimacy among parliaments around the world has increased.³⁷ In May 1960, the government-in-exile moved to Dharamsala, which is now where the Dalai Lama’s residence is also located.

³⁵ Quoted in Shakya, p. 219.

³⁶ Shakya, p. 235.

³⁷ *Introduction to Central Tibetan Administration*, (Dharamsala: Department of Information and International Relations, 2001), p. 1.

The goal of the CTA was to help with the rehabilitation process of Tibetan refugees while working towards restoring the freedom of Tibet. Soon after the inception of the CTA, His Holiness the Dalai Lama worked towards democratizing the administration. On September 2, 1960, the Tibetan parliament came into being, known as the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies. The Assembly is the highest legislative organ of the Tibetan refugee community. It is a democratically elected body and consists of 46 members. Each of the three traditional provinces of Tibet, U-Tsang, Kham, and Amdo, elect ten members, while the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional Bon faith each elect two members. In addition, Tibetans elect three deputies in the west, two from Europe and one from North America.³⁸ Today, the CTA operates as an actual government, and it has all the departments and characteristics of a free democratic government. However, the Dalai Lama has made it clear that when Tibet becomes free, the present government-in-exile will not take power, and instead would be dissolved. If Tibet were free, the Tibetans in Tibet and not any of the members of the exile government would head the government.³⁹

One of the major concerns of both Tibetans living in exile and the CTA is preservation of Tibetan culture. One of the major departments under the Kashag (Cabinet) is the Department of Religion and Culture which "seeks to preserve and promote Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage which is on the verge of extinction in its own homeland."⁴⁰ Over the last 40 years, the Tibetan community in exile has established over 200 monasteries and nunneries in exile with over 20,000 monks and nuns enrolled respectively. Besides monasteries and nunneries, there are also many cultural centers that

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 6.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 3.

promote the study of both spiritual and secular traditions of Tibet. While some of these centers are autonomous bodies and financed by the Government of India, others are financed and administered directly by the Tibetan Department of Religion.⁴¹

By the 1980s, the Dalai Lama realized that after several attempts to enter into dialogue with the People's Republic of China, that he would have to compromise his earlier push for Tibet's independence. In a speech given to the US Congress in 1987, the Dalai Lama states:

Despite the holocaust inflicted upon our people in the past decades of occupation, I have always strived to find a solution through direct and honest discussion with the Chinese. Instead of addressing the real issues facing the six million Tibetan people, China has attempted to reduce the question of Tibet to a discussion of my own personal status. I wish today to clarify the principal issues and to propose, in a spirit of openness and conciliation, a first step towards a lasting solution.⁴²

The peace plan, known as the Five-Point Peace Proposal (Appendix III) called on the following: (1) transformation of Tibet into a zone of peace; (2) withdrawal of China's migration policy, which threatened the existence of Tibetan people; (3) respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental rights; (4) restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment, with abandonment of China's production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste in China; (5) and the beginning of real talks and negotiations between Tibet and China on the future status of Tibet.⁴³

For the first time, the Dalai Lama renounced Tibetan independence, agreeing to keep Tibet within China, while keeping Beijing responsible for Tibet's foreign affairs and defense. However, with this compromise came several restrictions: (1) Tibet would align

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 8.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 9.

⁴² *Dharamsala and Beijing: Initiatives and Correspondence, 1981-1993*, (Dharamsala: Department of Information and International Relations, 1996), p. 15.

⁴³ *Ibid*, pp. 15-16.

itself with China and include all of China's Tibetan regions, making up a "greater Tibet." China refers to Tibet as the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR), with an area of 1.23 million sq. km. The "greater Tibet" the Dalai Lama is referring to is "the region where all Tibetans live," making up an area twice the size of the TAR. (2) Tibet would have a democratic political system completely separate from the rest of China. (3) While Beijing would be responsible for Tibet's foreign affairs, the Tibetan government would have an office that could participate in foreign relations in the "non-governmental arena." (4) China had to limit its status to a "defensive nature," with only a few military installations in Tibet. Wang Lixiong claims in his article, "We Chinese are amazed that the Dalai Lama has such 'lion-mouthed aspirations.'⁴⁴

Following his speech to the US Congress, the Dalai Lama made a second speech in 1988 to the European Parliament in which he presented the Strasbourg Proposal (Appendix IV). In his address, he presents the main points of his thinking for the future of Tibet: "The whole of Tibet known as Cholk-Sum should become a self-governing democratic political entity founded on law by agreement of the people for the common good and the protection of themselves and their environment, in association with the People's Republic of China."⁴⁵ The Dalai Lama presented what he thought to be a compromise, knowing full well that many Tibetans living in Tibet and in exile would debate it. However, he believed it was essential and represented realistic measures in restoring the fundamental rights of Tibetan people while accommodating to the Chinese. He goes on to say, "In the future, Tibet can become a free haven where humanity and nature live in harmonious balance; a creative model for the resolution of tensions

⁴⁴ Wang Lixiong, "The People's Republic of China's 21st Century Underbelly," *Beijing Zhanlue Yu Guanli*, January 2, 1999, p.5.

afflicting many areas throughout the world.”⁴⁶ The Strasbourg Proposal stated unequivocally that the Dalai Lama was prepared to negotiate with the Chinese a status for Tibet other than independence.⁴⁷ Although many Tibetans criticized the proposal, he was personally committed to its ideals. However, the Kashag later withdrew the Strasbourg Proposal because there was no response from the Chinese on behalf of his proposal for negotiation.⁴⁸

What does the future hold for Tibet?

*The future is very open, very large. Anything can happen. If we handle our situation carefully and act in accordance with our beliefs it is possible that things will turn out well in the end. Certain of the predictions concerning Tibet's future make this point and I myself have always been convinced of it.*⁴⁹

- His Holiness the Dalai Lama

About 100,000 Tibetan refugees living in exile in settlements all over India look to the Dalai Lama, who has been an active and crucial component of Tibet's long-standing fight for freedom. Not only a spiritual leader for the Tibetan people, he is also their political leader and has worked to develop better political international relations with China. However, he is also, just a “simple Buddhist monk,” and has some of his own personal beliefs about the future of Tibet.⁵⁰ Living in exile has meant that he has had the opportunity to discuss and negotiate Tibet's foreign affairs with other governments and parliaments around the world, as well with other Tibetans in exile. However, he understands that it is not for the Tibetans living in exile that Tibet's future

⁴⁵ *Dharamsala and Beijing*, p. 46.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 49.

⁴⁷ *Official Tibetan and Chinese positions*, p. 13.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 50.

⁴⁹ Avedon, p. 359.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*

status is so important; it is for the well-being of those Tibetans still living inside Tibet, enduring the hardship of Chinese aggression.

The people of Tibet rely on the Dalai Lama for their livelihood and salvation, and the end of him would perhaps be the end of the Tibetan people. However, the Dalai Lama gives rise to the prophecies that he may be the last Dalai Lama. He agrees that “the world is changing dramatically” and there may not be a place for Tibet’s ancient social lineage of lamas. Even if the system of Dalai Lamas continues, perhaps the act of choosing the next Dalai Lama would change; as he says, “I may pick him myself...[then] I can become an extra Dalai Lama. Just a simple Buddhist monk,” he adds, laughing.⁵¹ In regards to the future of Tibet and the possibility of exiled Tibetans returning to Tibet, the Dalai Lama remarks that their situation in India has allowed them to work towards a brighter future for Tibet. However, the people inside Tibet will make the decision on the future of Tibet. The Dalai Lama says, “those people have really suffered. At least we are quite free, but they have really suffered. All credit goes to them. Because of their determination, we are inspired to work. The ultimate decision lies in their hands, not mine.”⁵²

Tibetan Perspective

Not all Tibetans agree with the Dalai Lama, and although they all religiously and culturally follow him, there is some dissent politically, and in regards to the actions of the government-in-exile. Chinese writer, Wang Lixiong claims that the younger generation of exiled Tibetans has “accepted Western democratic ideas [and] do not have the blind

⁵¹ *Ibid*

faith in the Dalai Lama's authority that their parents' generation did."⁵³ He goes on to say that some of these young Tibetans will criticize the Dalai Lama and even question his status. One of the organizations that most encompass the radical Tibetan youth generation in exile is the "Tibet Youth Congress."

Lhasang Tsering, a charismatic man, a patriot, who fought in the Mustang resistance from 1973-1974, served as President for the Tibetan Youth Congress in 1986; however, he resigned from the Youth Congress because he was having problems with his own government who he believed to be trying to undermine what he was trying to achieve. Many of the members of the Tibetan Youth Congress endorse terrorist struggle, claiming that terrorism brings the greatest results at the least cost, with the goal of "making the Chinese so anxious that they will flee."⁵⁴ Lhasang Tsering has said before that he feels that Tibet is being punished for their neutrality and peace-loving tactics.⁵⁵ Therefore, he believes that the use of Tibetan force in China is justified morally because it would be done in an act of defense, and he does not see any reason for the Chinese to negotiate with the Tibetans.⁵⁶

Lhasang Tsering, as a Tibetan, has a unique view on Tibet's cause for freedom that is much different than what the Dalai Lama or even CTA officials have been preaching. According to Lhasang Tsering, he believes that the most logical step for India is to reconsider its situation with Tibet. In his opinion, Nehru's "idealistic" views of peace in Asia and a friendship with China, which led to Nehru's belief that India should not get

⁵² Taken from John F. Avedon's interview with Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama in *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, p. 380-381.

⁵³ Lixiong, p.7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ Lhasang Tsering, "India's Tibet: A Case for Policy Review (Part I)," *World Tibet Network News*, June 17, 2000, p. 2.

⁵⁶ Discussion with Lhasang Tsering in McLeod Ganj on February 28, 2003.

involved with Tibet, was “the most expensive foreign policy blunder.”⁵⁷ Lhasang Tsering believes that the Tibetan Government-in-Exile (TGIE) has been pursuing a policy that is “against the wishes of the Tibetans.” According to him, every Tibetan is divided on reverence and loyalty to His Holiness and the desire for freedom. He attributes India’s policy of receiving Tibetan refugees, escaping the “clutch” of the Chinese, as developing from a combination of both Nehru’s compassion and generosity, but also from Indian culture, which has a history of accepting those who need help. However, he also admits “Tibetans leaving Tibet to come to India may be hurting the cause...almost like sparing the rod to spoiling the child.”⁵⁸ He believes that what has occurred as a result of Tibetans settling in India is that there is still a conscious effort to preserve Tibetan culture and identity, many Tibetans today feel “lost and confused” and are often distracted and going West.

In terms of India’s role in the Tibetan cause, Lhasang Tsering makes a call on all Tibetans to fight the freedom struggle. He believes that His Holiness is the Tibetan people’s greatest strength and greatest weakness. He says, “without disrespect” the sacred status of His Holiness allows for the failure of the Tibetan people to stand on their own feet and to walk. With his “strategy of the mosquito,” he calls on all Tibetans not to just wait for freedom to come to them on a platter. Lhasang Tsering believes that the combined individual efforts of the Tibetan people in China have to occur in order to fight off the Chinese. The “strategy of the mosquito” presents the idea that a man with a gun cannot fight off the mosquito with his gun; he has to use other tactics.⁵⁹ In regards to India’s role, he understands that India has been more than kind to Tibetans, but they

⁵⁷ Interview with Lhasang Tsering in Dharamsala, India, on May 22, 2003.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*

should “be a little kinder” and waken Tibetans from their slumber and “tell us to get our act together with their own interests in mind and in the interests of Tibetans.”⁶⁰

However, he does not support India’s long-standing dual policy, claiming that India has to decide what is best for them to do in its best interest, and if mending their relationship with China is best for their self interest, then they should “tell all Tibetans to get off their soil.”⁶¹ The problem is that the world is unaware of the repercussions of Tibet’s regained independence. Lhasang Tsering claims that leaders of the Western world are more interested in popularity, but really they just need to re-focus on the Tibet issue as a movement towards global peace and stability. He says, “It’s just about standing up to all the resolutions these foreign government have passed.” He suggests that long-term disarmament of India and China needs to occur. Only then can we think about “fixing the hole in the roof of the world that China is creating.”⁶²

If Tibet does not become free, India will be left with a wound extending from Ladakh in the West to Arunachal Pradesh in the East, extending through the entire Himalayan range, some 2,500 km, for which there will be no cure. Like others have remarked, Lhasang Tsering argues that India’s constant border battles for the past four decades have been a difficult and costly burden on India’s economy and an obstacle to its socio-economic development.⁶³ However, when Lhasang Tsering talks about Tibet, he always states, “whatever I say about Tibet, I start by saying, I hope that I am wrong.”⁶⁴

While Lhasang Tsering relies on his “strategy of the mosquito” as a viable solution that needs to come from within China, Tenzin Tsundu argues that if those

⁵⁹ Discussion with Lhasang Tsering on February 28, 2003.

⁶⁰ Interview with Lhasang Tsering on May 22, 2003.

⁶¹ Interview with Lhasang Tsering, 5/22/03.

⁶² *Ibid*

Tibetans living in exile can do something on a massive scale, then the message will reach Tibetans inside Tibet. Tenzin Tsundue, poet and the General Secretary of Friends of Tibet, claims that the problem with Tibetan community is that there is a lack of understanding and a need for political organization. He believes that everything in the exile community is based on religion, which gets messed up in the political sphere, thus not allowing for any rational strategy to be made. He says, “Tibetans, in wake of the Chinese occupation, are never aware of a need for a political revolution, but more concerned with spiritual life.” He believes that Tibet’s problem is internal and that a viable solution would be a heavy, rational political decision. If India can make a political stand with the Tibetans, then he hopes that the rest of the world can also take a stance.⁶³

There does not seem to be a coherent understanding by the Tibetan people on what the future holds for Tibet, and what help they will receive from their long-standing neighbor, India. On one hand, India has more than fulfilled their humanitarian role in helping Tibetans escape religious and social persecution in China. However, they have not politically been able to help in the most major way, by formally recognizing Tibet as independent and taking a political initiative to help get rid of China. The Tibetan Government-in-Exile (TGIE) has been working as best it can to work towards bringing China to the table for further negotiations. They have been sending delegations to China for several years now, but it is a slow and arduous process before any real negotiations may occur between the Tibetans and the Chinese Communists.

According to Joint Secretary of the TGIE, Dawa Tsering, the government in exile is now trying to start a dialogue with the Chinese government. However, in order for the

⁶³ Lhasang Tsering, “India’s Tibet: A Case for Policy Review (Part I),” p. 5.

⁶⁴ Discussion with Lhasang Tsering on 2/28/03.

negotiations to happen, the Tibetan people have to make sure that Tibet and Tibetan culture does not disappear.⁶⁶ However, it will all depend on the Chinese when they want to negotiate. Either India or the establishment of the TGIE should pressure the Chinese indirectly into negotiating with the Tibetans. Dawa Tsering believes that India does in fact play a role in Tibet's fight for freedom, however, it's role is more indirect and unofficial because the Indian government is not really in a position to directly influence China to negotiate with the Tibetans. Nonetheless, Dawa Tsering claims that by giving Tibetan refugees a place to settle and to establish a government, India is indirectly pressuring China. In Dawa Tsering's opinion, India can not really afford direct interest or support because it is not feasible for them or even in their own self-interest. The Chinese have claimed to give Tibetans a "good life" by giving them economic prosperity; however, they are taking away the true values of Tibetan culture. The most important thing that Tibetans can do for Tibet is preserve and protect their culture. If Dawa Tsering were to choose between independence and a good life by keeping Tibetan culture in tact for now and in the long term, he would choose a good life.⁶⁷

Pema Jugney, Chairperson of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies of the TGIE, claims that current developments in the Tibetan cause are going well currently.⁶⁸ He claims that the Tibetan government first has to make their situation and their cause more understandable to China because the Chinese have many doubts about Tibet's cause for freedom. First, they have to work on solving the hesitations and the doubts, and then the process of settling negotiations with China, if China wants, will come later.

⁶⁵ Interview with Tenzin Tsundue at IBD Sarah Campus in Dharamsala, India on April 4, 2003, 8:30 am.

⁶⁶ Interview with Dawa Tsering, Joint Secretary, China Desk, at Tibetan Government in Exile in Dharamsala, India on May 9, 2003.

⁶⁷ Interview with Dawa Tsering on 5/8/03.

However, he says, the Chinese are listening to the Tibetans now, unlike before in 1979. The most recent delegation was sent by the government on May 26, 2003, and returned June 8, 2003. The goal of the delegation was to meet more Chinese communist officers and explain the needs and problems of the Tibetan cause. Pema Jungney seems to have more faith in the Tibetan government's actions than in India's role in helping Tibet politically. He claims that India already has many problems and pressures, so they are unable to politically recognize the TGIE. He says, "India needs a stable government; right now, there are so many parties in the government, so it is difficult to pay attention to so many rules...if India becomes a single-party administration, they can think and play more easily by the rules."⁶⁹

Former Member of Parliament in the TGIE, Dawa Tsering, agrees that relations are progressing and that there is more communication between the Tibetans and the Chinese; however, he says, "we can't expect that after two delegations the dialogue would be started after that."⁷⁰ He claims that the Tibetan people need to have a greater understanding of the Tibet cause. He says Tibetans should "study what the Dalai Lama has said about India, and should give some thought to what he says every time he speaks...[Tibetans] don't understand the importance or value of talking about Tibet and preserving Tibetan culture."⁷¹ According to Dawa Tsering, Tibetans should support His Holiness and try to understand his approach, even if his approach has shifted away from independence and moved towards a "middle path" approach to the Tibet cause.

⁶⁸ Interview with Pema Jungney, Chairperson of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, at the Tibetan Government-in-Exile in Dharamsala, India on June 12, 2003.

⁶⁹ Interview with Pema Jungney, 6/12/03.

⁷⁰ Interview with Dawa Tsering, former Member of Parliament in Tibetan Government-in-Exile in McLeod Ganj on June 13, 2003.

⁷¹ Interview with Dawa Tsering, former Member of Parliament in Tibetan Government-in-Exile in McLeod Ganj on June 13, 2003.

Indian Perspective

"Friends of Tibet" is an Indian-Tibetan support group that works to promote awareness of the Tibet issue among Indians, especially the younger Indian generation. Many of the Indian general population have sympathy for Tibetans, but some of them are not even aware that Tibet was an independent country before 1949. The support group is not more than four years old and was founded in 1999.⁷² They work closely with the Tibetan government in exile, but the members, most of them Indian, work from their private homes. If Tibet becomes free, Friends of Tibet would dissolve.

Friends of Tibet recently met with His Holiness the Dalai who urged them and emphasized at least five times that India's role in Tibet's cause for freedom or autonomy was "most important."⁷³ Member Ajay B. Agrawal said that India will have to fight for Tibet's independence; only then can China be challenged, and it has to happen very soon.⁷⁴ However, Sethu Das, Founder of Friends of Tibet, disagrees and argues that India has nothing to contribute to the Tibet cause, in terms of a compromise; when asked what role India should play, he says, "we have no role to play."⁷⁵ The only way India has helped the Tibetan people is by giving them a life of freedom and independence in exile. However, the Tibetans living in exile live in a variety of locations and settlements, some living in more remote settlements, others living in the business community of McLeod Ganj. Sethu Das does not even consider those Tibetans living in McLeod Ganj as "real Tibetans." He argues that McLeod Ganj is not a real settlement and that the Tibetans

⁷² Interview with CA Kallianpur, member of Friends of Tibet, at IBD Sarah Campus in Dharamsala, India on April 4, 2003.

⁷³ Interview with Ajay B. Agrawal, member of Friends of Tibet, at IBD Sarah Campus in Dharamsala, India on April 4, 2003.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Interview with Sethu Das, Founder of Friends of Tibet, at IBD Sarah Campus in Dharamsala, India on April 4, 2003.

living there are just there because His Holiness the Dalai Lama is there. Many of the Tibetans living in the business community do not care about independence and many of them prefer to “be Indian”, or to have Indian citizenship, rather than Tibetan. Mr. Das argues that many of these Tibetans are living very comfortable lives because of the abundance of financial support received from the West. This flow of funds from the West have caused the Tibet issue to become silent; he says, “to make a person silent, the best way is to give them all the comforts in life...If Tibet becomes free, Tibetans will always be a slave to the West.”⁷⁶

Some debate that India could have played a major role in helping Tibet achieve self-determination and made the mistake of not fulfilling their moral responsibility. L.L. Mehrotra, Former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, claims that the Tibet cause and the Dalai Lama’s demand for the restoration of Tibet’s autonomous status should have received not only universal support, but support from India. He states, “In lending [the Dalai Lama] support, India would merely be discharging a responsibility which has lain on its shoulders now for nearly half a century without being fulfilled. Such support is both a moral responsibility and a strategic necessity.”⁷⁷ The UN General Assembly’s 1961 Resolution provided India the opportunity to make any possible efforts towards achieving self-determination for the people of Tibet. The resolution spoke of Tibet’s right to self-determination and comments on the hope that “Member States will make all possible efforts as appropriate,

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ L.L. Mehrotra, *India’s Tibet Policy*, (New Delhi: Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre, 1997), p. 52.

towards achieving the purposes of the present resolution.”⁷⁸ However, India did not take this opportunity, and by not doing so, denied itself a strategic option of protecting its peaceful and friendly neighbor, but also in conjunction with its basic national and security interests.⁷⁹

L.L. Mehrotra gives possible actions, or “ingredients” of India’s foreign policy that should be followed. He states, “India should press hard for the restoration of Tibet’s autonomy and the return of the Dalai Lama.”⁸⁰ In doing so, India should openly support the Dalai Lama’s Five Point Peace Plan and the Strasbourg Proposal for the restoration of autonomy in Tibet. He also suggests that the Indian Parliament at least adopt “a non-official resolution expressing their sympathy and support for the legitimate rights of the people of Tibet.” Other Parliaments have done so, including the US, the European Union, and Germany. He notes that despite openly expressing support for human rights in Tibet, the relations these countries have had with China have intensified in recent years.⁸¹

⁷⁸ UN General Assembly Resolution 1723 (XVI) of October 21, 1959, printed in Annex 2 of Mehrotra, *India’s Tibet Policy*, p. 61.

⁷⁹ Mehrotra, p. 44.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 49.

Conclusion

It is difficult to pinpoint what India's role will be in the future of Tibet and how long it will be until Tibet is free and its people can live in peace and happiness. One of the major difficulties in India's position is that since Nehru's policy, there has not been much policy change, and it is difficult for the new leaders of India to make up for Nehru's mistakes. However, if a change in Indo-Tibetan political relations could take place, then it would represent a step in the right direction for India in promoting human rights in Tibet and restoring Tibet's right to self-government or independence. If Indians could change the mistake Nehru made by recognizing Tibet as part of China and instead actually recognize Tibet as an independent country, then there is hope that the rest of the world would witness this change and, in turn, be in position to help Tibet.

India could be and should be an example to the international world of policy change. However, India risks a great deal in doing so – her relationship with China and her national security. Some argue, however, that it *is* in India's best interest for the good of national security to help Tibet. In doing so, India would improve Asia's peace and stability as well as minimize her own conflicts with China and Pakistan by helping Tibet. India currently spends about 60 crores every day on building up military troops on the border with China.⁸¹ Now that China has occupied Tibet, India has faced numerous border battles with China's opposing forces. By helping Tibet and restoring Tibet's independence, India would save money on border control and put an end to the border

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Interview with Dawa Tsering, 6/13/03.

problems of the past four decades. The Tibetan Government-in-Exile's slogan reads: "Tibet's freedom is India's security"⁸³

The Indian government has many different parties and many different opinions about what action India should take in regard to China and Tibet. A new group of opinion makers has emerged that says that India should be economically strong and should improve her business relationship with China, even if it is at the cost of sacrificing her relationship with Tibet. At the same time, there are many other opinions stating that since Tibetans have trusted India for all these years, the restoration of the legitimate right of the Tibetan people should be of prime importance to the people of India. India's Economist party, a strong party, feels that India must engage and Tibet should not be an "irritant" for India anymore. The National Democratic Alliance feels the same. The BJP party feels that the security of India is of prime importance, and since one of the major concerns for India has been Pakistan, then that is what India should focus on. However, China has been supplying military arms and weapons for terrorism in Pakistan and Kashmir, so India has to recognize that China has a key role in all political issues in the region.⁸⁴

It is difficult to say when, if ever, the Chinese will give up on Tibet. Besides China's traditional policy of liberating Tibet, Tibet is also crucial to China's development and security. China's policy towards Tibet originally stemmed from two ideas. The first is Chinese nationalism, which attaches great importance to the humiliation China faced under Western imperialism, and thus leads them to think that Tibet's independence would act as part of a conspiracy to dismember China. This view has been consistent through

⁸³ Interview with Pema Jungney, 6/12/03.

⁸⁴ Interview with Jamyang Dorjee, 5/26/03.

regimes from the Qing to the Guomindang and the Communists. Therefore, China has vowed to adopt a policy that incorporates Tibet into China, no matter what the Tibetan people want. The second idea that has shaped modern China is the Marxist economic view of national identity. Once economic disparity and inequality are removed, then ethnic differences would naturally disappear. Since the invasion, China has built roads and railroads connecting mainland China with Tibet in order to secure the border.⁸⁵

Years before the invasion, China and Tibet always disagreed on Tibet's status; however, China did not always have a policy of integrating Tibet into China. Tibetans describe Tibet's traditional relationship with China as one like the Buddhist notions of priest and patron (*mchod-yon*).⁸⁶ This suggests that the relationship was mainly of a religious nature and that Tibet was never in subordination to China. In Tibetan sources, the Manchu Emperor is referred to as Jampeyang Gongma, the incarnation of Manjushri, defining him as occupying a space within a Buddhist sphere exercising some secular authority over Tibet. The Manchu emperors, however, were not concerned with integrating Tibet into China.⁸⁷

It seems that Indian leaders are aware of the pressing situation in Tibet. The Tibetans in exile, under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, are working hard to free their family and friends living inside Tibet from Chinese oppression. However, change can only happen through the power governments have, and it is uncertain when change will occur. People are optimistic, as am I; however, without a formally recognized government, Tibet will not be able to win back its freedom on its own. Tibetans will need the help of others, specifically other world powers, especially

⁸⁵ Interview with Dawa Tsering, Joint Secretary (China Desk), 5/8/03.

⁸⁶ Shakya Tsering, p. 3.

India and even possibly, the US, the EU, and Britain, to act with good will and deep concern for the humanity of the Tibetan people. According to Charles Bell, autonomy status for Tibet may bring more foreign involvement. India should benefit by an increase in trade and by Tibet's dependence on India for military supplies.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.4.

⁸⁸ Charles Bell, *Tibet Past and Present*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992), p. 268.

APPENDIX I: Seventeen Point Agreement

The Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet

May 23, 1951

The Tibetan nationality is one of the nationalities with a long history within the boundaries of China and, like many other nationalities, it has done its glorious duty in the course of the creation and development of the great motherland. But over the last hundred years and more, imperialist forces penetrated into China, and in consequence, also penetrated into the Tibetan region and carried out all kinds of deceptions and provocations. Like previous reactionary Governments, the KMT (Guomindang) reactionary government continued to carry out a policy of oppression and sowing dissension among the nationalities, causing division and disunity among the Tibetan people. The Local Government of Tibet did not oppose imperialist deception and provocations, but adopted an unpatriotic attitude towards the great motherland. Under such conditions, the Tibetan nationality and people were plunged into the depths of enslavement and suffering.

In 1949, basic victory was achieved on a nation-wide scale in the Chinese people's war of liberation; the common domestic enemy of all nationalities - KMT reactionary government - was overthrown; and the common foreign enemy of all nationalities - the aggressive imperialist forces - was driven out. On this basis, the founding of the People's Republic of China and of the Central People's Government was announced. In accordance with the Common Programme passed by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the Central People's Government declared that all nationalities within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China are equal, and that they shall establish unity and mutual aid and oppose imperialism and their own public enemies, so that the People's Republic of China may become one big family of fraternity and cooperation, composed of all its nationalities. Within this big family of nationalities of the People's Republic of China, national regional autonomy is to be exercised in areas where national minorities are concentrated, and all national minorities are to have freedom to develop their spoken and written languages and to preserve or reform their customs, habits, and religious beliefs, and the Central People's Government will assist all national minorities to develop their political, economic, cultural, and educational construction work. Since then, all nationalities within the country, with the exception of those in the areas of Tibet and Taiwan, have gained liberation. Under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government and the direct leadership of the higher levels of People's Governments, all national minorities have fully enjoyed the right of national equality and have exercised, or are exercising, national regional autonomy.

In order that the influences of aggressive imperialist forces in Tibet may be successfully eliminated, the unification of the territory and sovereignty of the People's Republic of China accomplished, and national defence safeguarded; in order that the Tibetan nationality and people may be freed and return to the big family of the People's Republic of China to enjoy the same rights of national equality as all other nationalities in the country and develop their political, economic, cultural, and educational result of the

talks is that both parties have agreed to establish this agreement and ensure that it be carried into effect.

1. The Tibetan people shall be united and drive out the imperialist aggressive forces from Tibet; that the Tibetan people shall return to the big family of the motherland - the People's Republic of China.
2. The Local Government of Tibet shall actively assist the People's Liberation Army to enter Tibet and consolidate the national defences.
3. In accordance with the policy towards nationalities laid down in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the Tibetan people have the right of exercising national regional autonomy under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government.
4. The Central Authorities will not alter the existing political system in Tibet. The Central Authorities also will not alter the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama. Officials of various ranks shall hold office as usual.
5. The established status, functions, and powers of the Panchen Ngoerhtheini shall be maintained.
6. By the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama and of the Panchen Ngoerhtheini is meant the status, functions and powers of the 13th Dalai Lama and of the 9th Panchen Ngoerhtheini when they were in friendly and amicable relations with each other.
7. The policy of freedom of religious belief laid down in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference will be protected. The Central Authorities will not effect any change in the income of the monasteries.
8. The Tibetan troops will be reorganised step by step into the People's Liberation Army, and become a part of the national defence forces of the Central People's Government.
9. The spoken and written language and school education of the Tibetan nationality will be developed step by step in accordance with the actual conditions in Tibet.
10. In matters related to various reforms in Tibet, there will be no compulsion on the part of the Central Authorities. The Local Government of Tibet should carry out reforms of its own accord, and when the people raise demands for reform, they must be settled through consultation with the leading personnel of Tibet.
11. In matters related to various reforms in Tibet, there will be no compulsion on the part of the Central Authorities. The Local Government of Tibet should carry out reforms of its own accord, and when the people raise demands for reform, they must be settled through consultation with the leading personnel of Tibet.
12. In so far as former pro-imperialist and pro-KMT officials resolutely sever relations with imperialism and the KMT and do not engage in sabotage or resistance, they may continue to hold office irrespective of their past.
13. The People's Liberation Army entering Tibet will abide by the above-mentioned policies and will also be fair in all buying and selling and will not arbitrarily take even a needle or a thread from the people.
14. The Central People's Government will handle all external affairs of the area of Tibet; and there will be peaceful co-existence with neighbouring work. The Central People's Government, when it ordered the People's Liberation Army to

- march into Tibet, notified the local government of Tibet to send delegates to the Central Authorities to hold talks for the conclusion of an agreement on measures for the peaceful liberation of Tibet. At the latter part of April, 1951, the delegates with full powers from the Local Government of Tibet arrived in Peking. The Central People's Government appointed representatives with full powers to conduct talks on a friendly basis with the delegates of the Local Government of Tibet. The countries and the establishment and development of fair commercial and trading relations with them on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and mutual respect for territory and sovereignty.
15. In order to ensure the implementation of this agreement, the Central People's Government will set up a military and administrative committee and a military area headquarters in Tibet, and apart from the personnel sent there by the Central People's Government it will absorb as many local Tibetan personnel as possible to take part in the work. Local Tibetan personnel taking part in the military and administrative committee may include patriotic elements from the Local Government of Tibet, various district and various principal monasteries; the namelist is to be prepared after consultation between the representatives designated by the Central People's Government and various quarters concerned, and is to be submitted to the Central People's Government for approval.
 16. Funds needed by the military and administrative committee, the military area headquarters and the People's Liberation Army entering Tibet will be provided by the Central People's Government. The Local Government of Tibet should assist the People's Liberation Army in the purchases and transportation of food, fodder, and other daily necessities.
 17. This agreement shall come into force immediately after signatures and seals are affixed to it.

Signed and sealed by:

Delegates of the Central People's Government with full powers:

Chief Delegate: Li Wei-han (Chairman of the Commission of Nationalities Affairs)

Delegates: Chang Ching-wu, Chang Kuo-hua, Sun Chih-yuan

Delegates with full powers of the Local Government of Tibet:

Chief Delegate: Kalon Ngabou Ngawang Jigme (Ngabo Shape)

Delegates: Dzasak Khemey Sonam Wangdi, Khentrung Thuptan, Tenthar, Khenchung

Thupten Lekmuun Rimshi, Samposey Tenzin Thundup

APPENDIX II: CTA Organizational Structure

APPENDIX III: Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet

His Holiness the Dalai Lama
Address to Members of the United States Congress
Washington, D.C.
September 21, 1987

This peace plan contains five basic components:

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

Let me explain these five components.

1. I propose that the whole of Tibet, including the eastern provinces of Kham and Amdo, be transformed into a zone of "Ahimsa", a Hindi term used to mean a state of peace and non-violence.

The establishment of such a peace zone would be in keeping with Tibet's historical role as a peaceful and neutral Buddhist nation and buffer state separating the continent's great powers. It would also be in keeping with Nepal's proposal to proclaim Nepal a peace zone and with China's declared support for such a proclamation. The peace zone proposed by Nepal would have a much greater impact if it were to include Tibet and neighboring areas.

The establishing of a peace zone in Tibet would require withdrawal of Chinese troops and military installations from the country, which would enable India also to withdraw troops and military installations from the Himalayan regions bordering Tibet. This would be achieved under an international agreement which would satisfy China's legitimate security needs and build trust among the Tibetan, Indian, Chinese and other peoples of the region. This is in everyone's best interest, particularly that of China and India, as it would enhance their security, while reducing the economic burden of maintaining high troop concentrations on the disputed Himalayan border.

Historically, relations between China and India were never strained. It was only when Chinese armies marched into Tibet, creating for the first time a common border, that tensions arose between these two powers, ultimately leading to the 1962 war. Since then numerous dangerous incidents have continued to occur. A restoration of good relations

between the world's two most populous countries would be greatly facilitated if they were separated - as they were throughout history - by a large and friendly buffer region.

To improve relations between the Tibetan people and the Chinese, the first requirement is the creation of trust. After the holocaust of the last decades in which over one million Tibetans - one sixth of the population - lost their lives and at least as many lingered in prison camps because of their religious beliefs and love of freedom, only a withdrawal of Chinese troops could start a genuine process of reconciliation. The vast occupation force in Tibet is a daily reminder to the Tibetans of the oppression and suffering they have all experienced. A troop withdrawal would be an essential signal that in the future a meaningful relationship might be established with the Chinese, based on friendship and trust.

2. The population transfer of Chinese into Tibet, which the government in Peking pursues in order to force a "final solution" to the Tibetan problem by reducing the Tibetan population to an insignificant and disenfranchised minority in Tibet itself, must be stopped.

The massive transfer of Chinese civilians into Tibet in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a distinct people. In the eastern parts of our country, the Chinese now greatly outnumber Tibetans. In the Amdo province, for example, where I was born, there are, according to Chinese statistics, 2.5 million Chinese and only 750,000 Tibetans. Even in so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (i.e., central and western Tibet), Chinese government sources now confirm that Chinese outnumber Tibetans.

The Chinese population transfer policy is not new. It has been systematically applied to other areas before. Earlier in this century, the Manchus were a distinct race with their own culture and traditions. Today only two to three million Manchurians are left in Manchuria, where 75 million Chinese have settled. In Eastern Turkestan, which the Chinese now call Sinkiang, the Chinese population has grown from 200,000 in 1949 to 7 million, more than half of the total population of 13 million. In the wake of the Chinese colonization of Inner Mongolia, Chinese number 8.5 million, Mongols 2.5 million.

Today, in the whole of Tibet 7.5 million Chinese settlers have already been sent, outnumbering the Tibetan population of 6 million. In central and western Tibet, now referred to by the Chinese as the "Tibet Autonomous Region", Chinese sources admit the 1.9 million Tibetans already constitute a minority of the region's population. These numbers do not take the estimated 300,000 - 500,000 troops in Tibet into account - 250,000 of them in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region.

For the Tibetans to survive as a people, it is imperative that the population transfer is stopped and Chinese settlers return to China. Otherwise, Tibetans will soon be no more than a tourist attraction and relic of a noble past.

3. Fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms must be respected in Tibet. The Tibetan people must once again be free to develop culturally, intellectually, economically and spiritually and to exercise basic democratic freedoms.

Human rights violations in Tibet are among the most serious in the world. Discrimination is practiced in Tibet under a policy of "apartheid" which the Chinese call "segregation and assimilation". Tibetans are, at best, second class citizens in their own country. Deprived of all basic democratic rights and freedoms, they exist under a colonial administration in which all real power is wielded by Chinese officials of the Communist Party and the army.

Although the Chinese government allows Tibetan to rebuild some Buddhist monasteries and to worship in them, it still forbids serious study and teaching of religion. Only a small number of people, approved by the Communist Party, are permitted to join the monasteries.

While Tibetans in exile exercise their democratic rights under a constitution promulgated by me in 1963, thousands of our countrymen suffer in prisons and labor camps in Tibet for their religious or political convictions.

4. Serious efforts must be made to restore the natural environment in Tibet. Tibet should not be used for the production of nuclear weapons and the dumping of nuclear waste.

Tibetans have a great respect for all forms of life. This inherent feeling is enhanced by the Buddhist faith, which prohibits the harming of all sentient beings, whether human or animal. Prior to the Chinese invasion, Tibet was an unspoiled wilderness sanctuary in a unique natural environment. Sadly, in the past decades the wildlife and the forests of Tibet have been almost totally destroyed by the Chinese. The effects on Tibet's delicate environment have been devastating. What little is left in Tibet must be protected and efforts must be made to restore the environment to its balanced state.

China uses Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and may also have started dumping nuclear waste in Tibet. Not only does China plan to dispose of its own nuclear waste but also that of other countries, who have already agreed to pay Peking to dispose of their toxic materials.

The dangers this presents are obvious. Not only living generations, but future generations are threatened by China's lack of concern for Tibet's unique and delicate environment.

5. Negotiations on the future status of Tibet and the relationship between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples should be started in earnest.

We wish to approach this subject in a reasonable and realistic way, in a spirit of frankness and conciliation and with a view to finding a solution that in the long term interest of all: the Tibetans, the Chinese, and all other peoples concerned. Tibetans and Chinese are distinct peoples, each with their own country, history, culture, language and way of life.

Differences among peoples must be recognized and respected. They need not, however, form obstacles to genuine cooperation where this is in the mutual benefit of both peoples. It is my sincere belief that if the concerned parties were to meet and discuss their future with an open mind and a sincere desire to find a satisfactory and just solution, a breakthrough could be achieved. We must all exert ourselves to be reasonable and wise, and to meet in a spirit of frankness and understanding.

APPENDIX IV: Strasbourg Proposal (1988)

Address to Members of the European Parliament by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
Strasbourg, June 15, 1988

We are living today in a very interdependent world. One nation's problems can no longer be solved by itself. Without a sense of universal responsibility our very survival is in danger. I have, therefore, always believed in the need for better understanding, closer cooperation and greater respect among the various nations of the world. The European Parliament is an inspiring example. Out of the chaos of war, those who were once enemies have, in a single generation, learned to co-exist and to co-operate. I am, therefore, particularly pleased and honored to address this gathering at the European Parliament.

As you know, my country--Tibet--is undergoing a very difficult period. The Tibetans--particularly those who live under Chinese occupation--yearn for freedom and justice and a self-determined future, so that they are able to fully preserve their unique identity and live in peace with their neighbors.

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

Our history, dating back more than two thousand years, has been one of independence. At no time, since the founding of our nation in 127 B.C., have we Tibetans conceded our sovereignty to a foreign power. As with all nations, Tibet experienced periods in which our neighbors - Mongol, Manchu, Chinese, British and the Gorkhas of Nepal - sought to establish influence over us. These eras have been brief and the Tibetan people have never accepted them as constituting a loss of our national sovereignty. In fact, there have been occasions when Tibetan rulers conquered vast areas of China and other neighboring states. This, however, does not mean that we Tibetans can lay claim to these territories.

In 1949 the People's Republic of China forcibly invaded Tibet. Since that time, Tibet has endured the darkest period in its history. More than a million of our people have died as a result of the occupation. Thousands of monasteries were reduced to ruins. A generation has grown up deprived of education, economic opportunity and a sense of its own national character. Though the current China leadership has implemented certain reforms, it is also promoting a massive population transfer onto the Tibetan plateau. This policy has already reduced the six million Tibetans to a minority. Speaking for all Tibetans, I must sadly inform you, our tragedy continues.

I have always urged my people not to resort to violence in their efforts to redress their suffering. Yet I believe all people have the moral right to peacefully protest injustice. Unfortunately, the demonstrations in Tibet have been violently suppressed by the Chinese police and military. I will continue to counsel for non-violence, but unless China forsakes the brutal methods it employs, Tibetans cannot be responsible for a further deterioration in the situation.

Every Tibetan hopes and prays for the full restoration of our nation's independence. Thousands of our people have sacrificed their lives and our whole nation has suffered in this struggle. Even in recent months, Tibetans have bravely sacrificed their lives to achieve this precious goal. On the other hand, the Chinese totally fail to recognize the Tibetan people's aspirations and continue to pursue a policy of brutal suppression.

I have thought for a long time on how to achieve a realistic solution to my nation's plight. My Cabinet and I solicited the opinions of many friends and concerned persons. As a result, on September 21, 1987, at the Congressional Human Rights Caucus in Washington, D.C., I announced a Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet. In it I called for the conversion of Tibet into a zone of peace, a sanctuary in which humanity and nature can live together in harmony. I also called for respect for human rights and democratic ideals, environmental protection and a halt to the Chinese population transfer into Tibet.

The fifth point of the Peace Plan called for earnest negotiations between the Tibetans and the Chinese. We have, therefore, taken the initiative to formulate some thoughts which, we hope, may serve as a basis for resolving the issue of Tibet. I would like to take this opportunity to inform the distinguished gathering here of the main points of our thinking.

The whole of Tibet known as Cholka-Sum (U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo) should become a self-governing democratic political entity founded on law by agreement of the people for the common good and the protection of themselves and their environment, in association with the People's Republic of China.

The Government of the People's Republic of China could remain responsible for Tibet's foreign policy. The Government of Tibet should, however, develop and maintain relations, through its own Foreign Affairs Bureau, in the fields of religion, commerce, education, culture, tourism, science, sports and other non-political activities. Tibet should join international organizations concerned with such activities.

The Government of Tibet should be founded on a constitution of basic law. The basic law should provide for a democratic system of government entrusted with the task of ensuring economic equality, social justice and protection of the environment. This means that the Government of Tibet will have the right to decide on all affairs relating to Tibet and the Tibetans.

As individual freedom is the real source and potential of any society's development, the Government of Tibet would seek to ensure this freedom by full adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the rights to speech, assembly, and religion. Because religion constitutes the source of Tibet's national identity, and spiritual values lie at the very heart of Tibet's rich culture, it would be the special duty of the Government of Tibet to safeguard and develop its practice.

The Government should be comprised of a popularly elected Chief Executive, a bi-cameral legislative branch, and an independent judicial system. Its seat should be in Lhasa.

The social and economic system of Tibet should be determined in accordance with the wishes of the Tibetan people, bearing in mind especially the need to raise the standard of living of the entire population.

The Government of Tibet would pass strict laws to protect wildlife and plant life. The exploitation of natural resources would be carefully regulated. The manufacture,

testing and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and other armaments must be prohibited, as well as the use of nuclear power and other technologies which produce hazardous waste. It would be the Government of Tibet's goal to transform Tibet into our planet's largest natural preserve.

A regional peace conference should be called to ensure that Tibet becomes a genuine sanctuary of peace through demilitarization. Until such a peace conference can be convened and demilitarization and neutralization achieved, China could have the right to maintain a restricted number of military installations in Tibet. These must be solely for defence purposes.

In order to create an atmosphere of trust conducive to fruitful negotiations, the Chinese Government should cease its human rights violations in Tibet and abandon its policy of transferring Chinese to Tibet.

These are the thoughts we have in mind. I am aware that many Tibetans will be disappointed by the moderate stand they represent. Undoubtedly, there will be much discussion in the coming months within our own community, both in Tibet and in exile. This, however, is an essential and invaluable part of any process of change. I believe these thoughts represent the most realistic means by which to re-establish Tibet's separate identity and restore the fundamental rights of the Tibetan people while accommodating China's own interests. I would like to emphasize, however, that whatever the outcome of the negotiations with the Chinese may be, the Tibetan people themselves must be the ultimate deciding authority. Therefore, any proposal will contain a comprehensive procedural plan to ascertain the wishes of the Tibetan people in a nationwide referendum.

I would like to take this opportunity to state that I do not wish to take any active part in the Government of Tibet. Nevertheless, I will continue to work as much as I can for the well-being and happiness of the Tibetan people as long as it is necessary.

We are ready to present a proposal to the Government of the People's Republic of China based on the thoughts I have presented. A negotiating team representing the Tibetan Government has been selected. We are prepared to meet with the Chinese to discuss details of such a proposal aimed at achieving an equitable solution.

We are encouraged by the keen interest being shown in our situation by a growing number of governments and political leaders, including former President Jimmy Carter of the United States. We are also encouraged by the recent changes in China which have brought about a new group of leadership, more pragmatic and liberal.

We urge the Chinese Government and leadership to give serious and substantive consideration to the ideas I have described. Only dialogue and a willingness to look with honesty and clarity at the reality of Tibet can lead to a viable solution. We wish to conduct discussions with the Chinese Government bearing in mind the larger interests of humanity. Our proposal will therefore be made in a spirit of conciliation and we hope that the Chinese will respond accordingly.

My country's unique history and profound spiritual heritage renders it ideally suited for fulfilling the role of a sanctuary of peace at the heart of Asia. Its historic status as a neutral buffer state, contributing to the stability of the entire continent, can be restored. Peace and security for Asia as well as for the world at large can be enhanced. In the future, Tibet need no longer be an occupied land, oppressed by force, unproductive and scarred by suffering. It can become a free haven where humanity and nature live in

harmonious balance; a creative model for the resolution of tensions afflicting many areas throughout the world.

The Chinese leadership needs to realize that colonial rule over occupied territories is today anachronistic. A genuine union or association can only come about voluntarily, when there is satisfactory benefit to all the parties concerned. The European Community is a clear example of this. On the other hand, even one country or community can break into two or more entities when there is a lack of trust or benefit, and when force is used as the principal means of rule.

I would like to end by making a special appeal to the honorable members of the European Parliament and through them to their respective constituencies to extend their support to our efforts. A resolution of the Tibetan problem within the framework that we propose will not only be for the mutual benefit of the Tibetan and Chinese people but will also contribute to regional and global peace and stability. I thank you for providing me the opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

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New Delhi Information: If travel to Delhi, I recommend staying in the Tibetan settlement, Majnu-Ka-Tilla. There are lots of good restaurants, cyber cafes, STD booths, travel agents all within walking distance, however, location is rather far from main area of New Delhi. I recommend staying at **Green House**, H. No. 33, Tibetan New Camp, New Aruna Nagar, Majnu-Ka-Tilla, Delhi – 11054; Ph.: 23812420. The rooms are very comfortable (complete with air cooler, which makes Delhi in June somewhat bearable), reasonably priced, and the staff was MOST helpful with anything I needed.