

The Panchen Lama Speaks

Published by

The Department of Information and International Relations
Central Tibetan Administration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Gangchen Kyishong

Dharamsala 176215

Himachal Pradesh

India

Preface

Ever since the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1949, there have been hundreds of demonstrations and protests against their illegal occupation of Tibet, the inhumane treatment meted out to Tibetans and the systematic destruction of Tibet's cultural heritage. But unlike other demonstrations, the one on 27 September 1987 received unprecedented international publicity because it was witnessed by a large number of foreigners who were present in Lhasa at the time. As usual, the Chinese authorities not only suppressed the demonstration ruthlessly, but blamed the whole incident on a "handful of splittists instigated from outside."

Six months before the demonstration, the Panchen Rinpoche and other senior Tibetan officials gave a full and frank account of the situation in Tibet in a meeting of the Sub-Committee of the National People's Congress in Peking. In his speech, the Panchen Rinpoche gave a graphic and horrifying account of massacres, mass graves, atrocities, the destruction of Tibet's culture and her natural environment, population transfer, and continued negligence of the economic development of Tibet by Chinese rulers. He also warned of very serious consequences if the wrongs done to the people of Tibet were not corrected.

The Chinese government did nothing except to circulate a Chinese translation of the transcript of the speech as a "secret document" among the top Chinese Communist Party members.

Whenever we raised these issues with the Chinese government we were told that we had no right to do so and they dismissed our legitimate concerns as mere propaganda activities by "a handful of splittists" and "reactionaries".

The Panchen Rinpoche spoke about the "Seventy-Thousand-Character Petition" he had submitted to the Chinese government in the early 1960s, long before the Cultural Revolution, complaining about the deteriorating situation in Tibet. For this he suffered nine years and eight months of imprisonment much of which was in solitary confinement. He was tortured and humiliated during the detention.

At this 1987 meeting, the Panchen Rinpoche also expressed his anguish over the continued ill-treatment of Tibetans, and warned that there is growing discontent in Tibet.

On 6 March 1989 the Chinese authorities formally imposed Martial Law in Tibet. Although it was officially lifted after more than a year, the Australian Parliamentary Human Rights Delegation which visited Tibet and China in July this year reported that in Tibet the "martial law continues to exist in all but name."

It is well known that the Panchen Rinpoche made another scathing attack on Chinese policy in Tibet during his visit to Tibet in January 1989. A few days later he died unexpectedly under mysterious circumstances. The truth behind his tragic death and the controversies surrounding the search for his reincarnation remain in question.

Recently the Chinese government published a “White Paper” on the Human Rights in China. In order to expose the falsehoods of the claims made in this “White Paper”, we have decided to publish this document. The Chinese government cannot dismiss this official transcript as propaganda by the “splittists and foreign agents” since this document was circulated by themselves. They must answer these very serious charges. Today, the onus is on the Chinese themselves to answer for their policies in Tibet.

November 1991

Tashi Wangdi

Kalon

Department of Information and International Relations

Central Tibetan Administration of HH the Dalai Lama

Gangchen Kyishong

Dharamsala (H.P.)

India

Text

The following is the text of the Panchen Lama's Address to the 'TAR' Standing Committee Meeting of the National People's Congress held in Peking on 28th March 1987.

The government's work report and other related matters presented by Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang was received with great appreciation by everyone, and I fully support that.

It is good to speak on all aspects of our country. The policy directions charted by the 3rd Meeting of the 11th Session of the CPC Central Committee were appropriate to the reality of our country. I have no doubt that these will help improve our efficiency and ensure good results. The work report deals with these in detail. I am certain that they will even help us to become a truly modern, powerful, democratic and socialist country. The report contains clear guidelines and directives which should help the government in implementing its policies. These were good ideas which should help the government in formulating its policies. I also appreciate his brief reference to the conditions of different nationalities in China.

Ours is a country of many nationalities. Apart from the Chinese, there are 55 nationalities, which are in the minority. The leftist trend before, and especially after the time of the Cultural Revolution, has caused the minorities to suffer in many ways. Just recently, a story, entitled "Pasang and Her Relatives", was intentionally published in a journal to ridicule the Tibetans. Last year our representatives from Tibet raised their objection to this story when it was a film-script. We even asked Vice-Chairman Ngabo Ngawang Jigme to express our misgiving about this story to the concerned departments. However, there has been no response. Instead, the film, was awarded a first prize. Another film of this nature, entitled "Compassion Without Mercy", was also given an award. Things like this have been done to other nationalities as well.

In November, last year, a ten-point legal document was circulated with an instruction that we should study it. But this document was silent on the subject of the regional autonomy of minority areas. During the 20th Session of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, we asked the law department how such an important matter was left out of this document. The response was that the study of the laws relating to the government of autonomous regions should be left to the respective minority nationalities.

I strongly objected to this by stating that it should be studied also by the Chinese and especially by the officials, who are in a position to implement it. "It is not that we are not able to exercise power, but that we have not been given any power. A servant is naked not because he does not want to wear clothes, but because his master has not given him any clothes," I said.

Finally, some changes were made, which were announced in the People's Daily. There have been many other instances where problems relating to the minority nationalities were completely ignored. This was the reason why I pointed out the drawbacks of the government in a joint session of the

sub-committee of the 20th NPC Standing Committee Meeting. I had no objection to the importance attached to Hong Kong and Taiwan. But we did not like the way we were pushed aside and totally ignored.

At the time of the liberation, Mao Tse-dong and Chou En-lai proceeded in consultation with concerned nationalities. But what has become of the status of nationalities since then is something I cannot understand. I hope everybody will try to understand it.

Although the minority nationalities constitute only about six per cent of the Chinese population, they own 64 per cent of Chinese territory. Therefore, it is in the interest of China to ensure that there is peace and stability in these regions.

In the State Planning Commission's report, there were many proposals for poverty alleviation in many areas. But the proposals did not say a word on the minority regions. Raising this point in the Standing Committee meetings, I said, "There is nothing wrong in you becoming prosperous first. We will wear threadbare garments and beg for food. But does that do you proud?" I am no expert on the subject of economic development. But that does not mean I am a complete novice. I am certain that if the transport and communications facilities in Tibet were developed and if its energy resources were tapped, we should be able to recover the capital investment within two to three years. We are aware of the economic hardship of the nation. We also know that the nation does not have enough capital resources to invest in all important projects. However, there is nothing wrong with making this kind of decision as a matter of policy.

As I said earlier, the leftist policies implemented in the minority regions during the last more than two decades have been very detrimental. The effects of these policies are being felt in Tibet even today. Good as the present policy of liberalisation is, the Tibetans are apprehensive that it might not last long.

During my visit to Kham last year, I noticed a great deal of devastation caused by large-scale and indiscriminate deforestation. I saw huge landslides caused by this. Industries with the potential to generate high revenue are closed down in minority regions. To take an example, there was a cigarette factory in Taklo-Tron, Yunnan, which could be very profitable. But this factory had to be closed down because of a shortage of trained manpower and the poor quality cigarettes it produced. This despite the fact that it was using high quality raw materials. The industries in Shanghai, on the other hand, do not use high quality raw materials, but they have trained personnel and the best possible technology, resulting in high quality goods and profit.

Special attention should be paid to the minority areas. Industries in minority regions should also be given state help. It so happens that the government starts paying attention only when the industries in these regions are on the verge of bankruptcy. This is either due to lack of concern or a deliberate attempt to put more burdens on the people of these regions. When comrades Hu Yaobang visited Tibet in 1980, he decided to repatriate all the useless Chinese personnel from Tibet. We consider this a wise decision. We definitely need skilled and capable personnel. But what is the point of

having useless personnel. I do not believe that all Chinese are competent. There are both competent and incompetent people among the Chinese.

The expense of keeping one Chinese in Tibet is equal to that of four in China. Why should Tibet spend its money to feed them? Instead, we should think carefully on how best the money can be used for the development of Tibet. Tibet has suffered greatly because of the policy of sending a large number of useless people. The Chinese population in Tibet started with a few thousand and today it has multiplied manifold. That is the reason why many old Chinese personnel who worked very hard in the initial period are left without any career now. Today, the Chinese personnel come to Tibet accompanied by their families. They are like the American mercenaries. They fight and die for money. This is ridiculous.

Tibetans are legitimate master of Tibet. The wishes and feeling of the people of Tibet must be respected. It is widely believed that Wu Jinhua is going to be replaced. I have been instructed to submit an honest report on him. My report is that he is one of the best officials in Tibet. Amongst other things, he has successfully implemented the nationalities, religions, and United Front policies. Since economic development is our over-riding priority at the moment, we must take a long-term view. We cannot ignore the problems of minority nationalities. Economic development and minority issues must be given equal importance.

A few schools have been established in Tibet. But the equality of education in these schools is very poor. The schools in 16 provinces of China have started Tibetan classes, which naturally demonstrates the government's concern for our people. But this also leads to some problems. First of all, the students are selected on a merit basis which adversely affects the schools in Tibet. It is also a drain on Tibet's resources, as Tibet has to spend a considerable sum of money for them. Secondly, since most of these students are from primary schools, they are separated from their own culture and home at a very early age. Gradually, they will be alienated from their own parents, people and country. What's more, the kind of education they receive in China is not at all appropriate to their needs. I noticed in some schools in Yunnan province that although Tibetan is on the school syllabus, the students don't get to learn much of it. The parents want their children to get a job and stay with them at home after finishing the middle school. This shows that they do not want them to be far away from home.

Last year, I said during a visit to Kham area that the Chinese have very powerful wings and are well-versed in the technology of flying. "They can fly within China and over the Indian Ocean. They can even fly to overseas countries for education. However, only about 30 per cent of them will return home to help the nation. We minority nationality peoples, if given the opportunity to study abroad, can also fly back home. Tibet and other regions of China spend an enormous amount of money on the education of these Chinese students. But if they don't come back after completing their education, then what is the use of spending so much money on them?" I raised this point even in the Standing Committee meetings. There should be a system by which future students to overseas countries should be made to sign a bond promising to serve the nation for a certain period of time.

If they don't return, they should reimburse the entire expenses the state has incurred on their education. Even the students from Tibet should be subjected to the same rule.

Now consider the educational disparity between the Tibetan and Chinese students. Whereas the Chinese students must get an aggregate of 250 points to pass their examinations, the Tibetans need to earn only 190 points. But the number of Chinese students passing the examinations is much higher than that of Tibetans. This is because of the language barrier suffered by the Tibetans. I have personally experienced this. Although I can speak Chinese, I frequently make big mistakes. This is because Chinese is not my mother tongue. I can never hope to compete with the Chinese as far as the Chinese language is concerned. To make matter worse, the Tibetan students who have been sent to other provinces find it difficult to acclimatise to the weather, water, food, and so on and so forth. This cause many of them to fall ill, thus affect their education. When the parents come to know about this, the only way for them to get to see their children is to fly from Tibet. Some students take leave from the school to go home and meet their parents in Tibet. This obviously is a big financial drain on the concerned families.

Last year, some schools in Shanghai and other areas bought vehicles in the name of schools in Tibet, but which were actually used for their own construction work. The authorities, later on, found out about this racket and set the matter right. But it never became public knowledge since everybody conspired to hush it up. Anyway, things have improved slightly since then. Nevertheless, we must make sure that this kind of practice is never repeated.

The government is soon organising a meeting to discuss education in Tibet. This meeting intends to encourage an in-depth discussion of the education system in Tibet. I feel that educational facilities for Tibetans must be based in Tibet. The utmost efforts must be made to establish all levels of schools in Tibet. When the students finish their upper-middle school, they should be sent for higher education depending on their aptitude and the needs of the region. By this time, they will have a basic knowledge of Tibetan language and a strong sense of affinity to their region which, in turn, will motivate them to give their best to the region. This arrangement, I think, will be a big improvement. I think it is very important for people of every nationality to learn and use their own language. The Central Government has frequently talked about the importance of learning and using the Tibetan language in Tibet. But it has done nothing to ensure its implementation.

The government has announced four modernisation plans. I am no expert on science, but I believe in the Buddhist principle of compassion. It is important that we learn from the developed countries. But what we must learn from them is their technological knowhow and scientific way of management. Whoever has the higher standard of living has the best system. I have not thought much on this point. The Japanese way of life is rather complicated. They have a very highly developed educational system to teach culture, science and technology. If a new book is published anywhere in the world, within 30 days one can read it in their language. In Tibet we have very deplorable translation facilities, especially when it comes to the European languages. It is much worse than in Eastern Turkestan or Inner Mongolia. Last year, when I went aboard for a visit, I

could not find anyone capable of translating between Tibetan and English. Therefore, I had to use a Chinese translator and speak in Chinese. This must have given a very bad impression to the outsiders. This fact proves how poor is the standard of education in Tibet.

In the whole of the Tibet Autonomous Region, no one has been able to translate Physics books into Tibetan. What are the authorities in TAR doing? In Qinghai, they have translated everything, whatever the quality. They are also willing to help the TAR. But the authorities of the TAR have not responded even to this gesture. These officials, in effect, are trying to neglect the Tibetan language completely. This is really a very sad thing. Vice-Chairman Ngabo Ngawang Jigme is scheduled to visit Tibet this year. I am wondering if you can find a way to enact a law for the development of the Tibetan language. If such a thing is done, I can assure you that things will improve even within the next two or three years. 95 per cent of the Tibetans do not speak or understand Chinese. The use of the Chinese language for administrative work in Tibet is aimed only at making things convenient for Chinese officials. Can't you see that using Tibetan for administrative works will greatly help the Tibetan masses? Some people complain that I talk too much. Maybe, yes. But many people have expressed similar discontentment. So angry was Ngabo Ngawang Jigme with the situation, as I have outlined just now, that he banged his fist on the table during a meeting last year. I hope everyone will think seriously over this matter. Development of the Tibetan language is no smaller matter. It is directly related to politics.

You, Dorjee Tseten (*head of the Institute of Tibetology in Peking and former chairman of 'TAR People's Government'*) and others! How can the people who are not well-versed in the Tibetan language and culture hope to do research on Tibetan studies? Many people have told me that there are serious complaints against the Institute of Tibetology, especially against the recruitment system there. In short, there are many things to be done with regard to Tibet work. It is my request that the TAR Party Committee and the TAR People's Government should carefully study the administrative functioning in Tibet and make concerted efforts for improvement.

I also hope that the Central Government will take more interest in the political situation in Tibet and come up with greater economic support for the region. Tibet today has a very big burden. We, the TAR representatives at the National People's Congress, have made some suggestions. In the middle-level offices, the old and infirm officials have now been replaced by young and qualified staff. Nevertheless, there are many among them who still have not got over their leftist hangover, and are guilty of atrocities during the Cultural Revolution. Some of these people have been given promotions despite strong objections among the people. The Central Government has decided not to repeat the policies of the Cultural Revolution. The promotion of these people was based on a campaign called "Repenting for the Past Mistakes and Willing to Change," which was launched only in Tibet. This movement did not originate from the Central Government. But there is no knowing who launched this campaign.

These are not examples of just a few isolated cases in Tibet. Therefore, Tibet should be treated as a special region and special political and economic policies should be formulated for this region. And,

these policies must be implemented till Tibet's acute economic problems are redressed and till its people are satisfied.

What Ringzin Wangyal said regarding the handling of unrest in Tibet was quite true. In 1959 there were rebellions in Tibet. Forces were dispatched to quell the disorder, which was a right decision and should not be gainsaid. However, a lot of innocent people were also persecuted. Many mistakes were made in the way the crackdown operations were mounted. The authorities did not make any distinction between those guilty and not guilty of participation in the disturbances. People were arrested and jailed indiscriminately. There were no interrogations. On sight Tibetans were taken to jail and beaten. Things like this are still commonplace in Tibet. We should consider this as a serious matter. We should examine and investigate these practices and bring the guilty to book. This is the way by which we will be able to assuage people's resentment. Isn't this what we are here to discuss?

Ngabo Ngawang Jigme (Vice-Chairman of National People's Congress and Chairman of 'TAR People's Congress'): That is right.

In the past, I was punished for submitting 70,000-character petition. I had clearly mentioned these facts in that petition. In fact, I said the same thing as Ngabo about the way senior officials of the former local government of Tibet functioned. They had a well-established structure and legal system. The aristocrats, who were members of the government, were banished, wearing a white chuba (Tibetan garment) and riding a red ox, if they failed to carry out the instruction of the government. What would you do if this sort of thing happened to you? A career is important to everyone.

In the 17-Point Agreement, it was emphatically stated that there would be no change in the power of the Tibetan local government until the introduction of democratic reforms. The same promise was made to the Tashi Lhunpo monastic authorities. However, what happened later could be summed up by this dictum: "Criticising the old system from the perspective of a new ideology." This kind of practice is not very ethical. A scientist must arrive at his decision according to whatever is proved right scientifically. The Tibetan aristocrats had served the government for generations. They were deeply devoted to the Dalai Lama and turned to him for refuge both in this and the next life. In the same way, the masses have deep respect and devotion. This is an undeniable fact. Later on, however, the aristocrats were accused of being the leaders of the rebellions and persecuted. This, I think, was an absolutely wrong thing to do. I had clearly recorded these facts in my petition. Of course, I was criticised and punished for this. But the truth is timeless. It always remains the same. Undoubtedly, there were mistakes in my petition. But I have never been wrong in speaking up. The mistakes in the content of my petition are mistakes, but today and in the past. But there should be a clear dividing line spelling out where I went wrong and where I was right.

Talking about Lhoka, first the Khampa guerrillas were based there. But when the Dalai Lama passed through there, people happily donated butter, barley flour and other provisions without being asked. This was, of course, a spontaneous gesture of love by the people. Later on, the people who served them were treated as active members of the resistance. How can you do such a thing? This is

something that everyone should know. Speaking about myself, those days whenever I passed by, people would show love and devotion to me. Now should this be construed as a politically motivated act? Amongst other things, they showed respect to me because they were religious-minded and it is a Tibetan custom. Due care and consideration must be shown to customs and traditions that are special to Tibet.

Quelling the rebellions and introducing reforms was right in principle. But there was a strong leftist tinge to the way these were done. Such things should not happen again and they must be rectified. During the last three decades of communist rule, there have been many good things done and many bad things also. These were considered in the 6th meeting of the 11th National Congress of CPC, and were publicised internationally. Owning up to our mistakes will not damage the Party's image; rather it would help build it. Speaking about the former comrades in the Tibet Military Command Centre and the Chengdu Military Command Centre, some comrades told me that they should not have done what they did. This was a healthy attitude. We frequently say that great achievements were made with your sweat in the liberation and reformation of Tibet and that the people of Tibet will never forget this. This is an honest statement. However, you did make a great deal of mistakes, and these also in Tibet. These too, we will never forget. What I am saying is for the purpose of rectifying these mistakes. If we can do this, we can make progress. I am saying this with the best of intentions.

I will tell you a more personal story at this point. The Government of the Kashag spearheaded the rebellion. Those of us at the Labrang (Monastic Institutions) were not a party to any agitation. In the beginning, we were told great things about peaceful reforms and policies of fraternal relations. However, when the reforms were undertaken, people belonging to our establishment were subjected to untold sufferings. This filled people with disgust and disbelief. Most of the members of the local Tibetan government fled from Tibet. A handful, who stayed back, were praised and appointed to government jobs as shining examples of a progressive element. Our people who stayed back in solidarity with China were subjected to unthinkable sufferings. Being in Lhasa, as I was at that time, I did not suffer so much. But all my family members were subjected to "Thamzing" (Public Struggle Sessions).

There was one woman, a wife of one of my staff, who was also arrested. One day, when she was called into the interrogation chamber, she muttered, "This man called Panchen has caused me so much suffering that I will die of depression." This utterance led the authorities into believing that she would say something incriminating about me. This was a much-awaited chance for the authorities to take up punitive measures against me. They immediately called the scribes to record her testimony. Then she went on, "We made a big mistake by following this man called Panchen and not participating in the fight against the Chinese. If he had led us in rebellion against the Chinese, our condition today would be much better than this. Because, initially, we would have killed as many Chinese as possible and then fled to India, which would have been easy since India is near our village. But this man told us to be progressive and patriotic. And this is what we get for following his

advice. Now it is not possible for us to flee to India. Our people, both men and women, are being persecuted here. We are experiencing hell on earth.”

Ringzing Wangyal, you said that those who have stayed back in Tibet are better off than those who fled. This is true. Speaking about my personal experience, in 1979, when the five-man delegation sent by the Dalai Lama came to Tibet, my father had to go to Tibet for some personal work. But no one cared for him. He was not even allowed to enter into the TAR territory and had to wait in the rain. On the other hand, each of the Dalai Lama’s delegation had the service of a chauffeured car. They were even offered the service of a translator and security guards. Actually, in old Tibet my father was much higher in rank than those delegation members. There were only two people with the rank of “Gung.” One was the Dalai Lama’s father and the other was my father. However, my father had to suffer this humiliating treatment because he was a progressive element. I am saying this not because I want to settle old scores, but to advise you to see to it that all factors are taken into consideration when we implement our policies.

If there was a film made on all the atrocities perpetrated in Qinghai province, it would shock the viewers. In Golok area, many people were killed and their dead bodies were rolled down the hill into a big ditch. The soldiers told the family members and relatives of the dead people that they should all celebrate since the rebels had been wiped out. They were even forced to dance on the dead bodies. Soon after, they were also massacred with machine guns. They were all buried there.

Actually, the rebellions did not occur in all these areas. In Kham, of course, there were rebellions in many places. In Jharoong Parpo and Mili, both in Amdo, the nomads collected their guns and gave them over to the Chinese authorities. They were praised and garlanded during a special function. After the function, they were driven to their villages where they were immediately arrested and imprisoned for a long time. There were some very old people among them. In Amdo and Kham, people were subjected to unspeakable atrocities. People were shot in groups of ten or twenty. I know that it is not good to speak about these things. But such actions have left deep wounds in the minds of the people. There are some officials who always leave behind a bad legacy. What is the purpose of doing this? The guilty must, of course, be punished. But what is the use of leaving behind a bad legacy. People who persist in doing this are really stupid. But there are some who consider these people very wise and capable. Comrade Wu Jinhua has a plan to investigate the methods and mistakes made by some of the officials in putting down the Tibetan rebellion. I feel this investigation needs to be done with the utmost diligence.

Dorje Tseten (Present head of the Institute of Tibetology in Peking and former chairman of TAR People’s Government’): In my opinion, three serious mistakes were made at that time. a) People were arrested indiscriminately; b) In terms of region, there were very severe and wide-scale atrocities against the people in Chamdo, Nagchu and Lho-Dzong; c) Every member of the old, local government, who had attended the meeting, were arrested irrespective of whether they participated in the rebellion.

Even Sampho would have attended the meeting if people had not hurled stones at him. The officials had to attend the meeting. They had been ordered to do so. It is not justified to say this is a tantamount to participating in the rebellion. This is completely illogical.

Dorje Tseten: The three mistakes I pointed out earlier are very serious. At that time, the order was: “Since the senior Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan, the junior Chiang Kai-sheks must be finished off.”

Mao Tsedong said clearly in his speech that he would not only kill the senior Chiang Kai-shek, but also the junior ones. Although, I, the senior Panchen, managed to survive, many junior Panchens were killed and tortured in prisons.

Dorjee Tseten: *At that time there was an official saying which goes thus: “Unless the middle-level leaders are finished off, the people will never be able to raise their heads.” I mean people were persecuted irrespective of whether they had participated in the rebellion. This shows that the leftist tendency was strong in Tibet right from the beginning. After Comrade Wang Tai-ho was disgraced in 1959, a nationwide campaign was launched to oppose the rightist elements. This was how the seeds of leftist elements were sown. The seeds even started flowering at that time. Personally speaking, we have also made mistakes. But in 1959, a large number of Chinese cadres were sent to Tibet. At that time, the leftist influence became firmly rooted in Tibet. Those cadres immediately started the commune system, long before the democratic reforms were completed. In my view, the commune system in Tibet was planned long before. These matters need to be carefully analysed. Perhaps, the armed forces did not understand everything.*

Ngabo Ngawang Jigme: *I have no knowledge that the armed force misunderstood anything. When we were having the 4th meeting of the 6th session, last year, Dren Minyin (a high-ranking military official) came to my house and asked me what the participants of the meeting thought about the crackdown operation in 1959. I said there was no particular opinion, only that the scale of the operation was too big. Dren Minyin, in reply, asked me, “Didn’t the Panchen say that it was a correct step?” Dren Minyin said that he had read this in the news digest. That was the first time I realised that the armed force did not have a clear idea. In reality, it was not wrong to suppress the rebellion. Only the scale of atrocities was too high.*

In Qinghai, for example, there are between one to three or four thousand villages and towns, each having between three or four thousand families with four to five thousand people. From each town and village, about 800 to 1,000 people were imprisoned. Out of this, at least 300 to 400 people of them died in prison. This means almost half of the prison population perished. Last year, we discovered that only a handful of people had participated in the rebellion. Most of these people were completely innocent. In my 70,000-character petition, I mentioned that about five percent of the population had been imprisoned. According to my information at that time, it was between 10 to 15 percent. But I did not have the courage to state such a huge figure. I would have died under Thamzing (Public Struggle Session) if I had stated the real figure. These are serious matters as far as Tibet is concerned. If we pay only lip service to these kinds of mistakes and do nothing to redress them, there will be equally serious consequences. People may not like what I am saying. But I am saying this out of my love for the motherland.

When I was in east Turkestan, I told the cadres there, “Your works will be put to test if there is a foreign invasion of East Turkestan, what people say in meetings is all lies. We should not believe in them. You will be thought to have done a good job here if the people of East Turkestan rise up in support of the PLA in the event of a Soviet invasion of this province. Here, I will cite two examples from history. Lenin said that the triumph of the October Revolution in Russia showed that their work with the masses had been good. Stalin did not do good works for the masses. As a result the people of minority republics did not support the Russian army in defending the Soviet Union against the Nazi invasion. We have seen films on the Vietnam War. The people belonging to minority races welcomed the PLA, showed them ways and gave them water only because the minority groups were fed up with their regime, which favoured the Ching majority race against all the others. The people of the Ching race were very cruel. If others did not submit to them, they would shoot down people even fifty or sixty years old. We should learn from these historical facts.

In 1964, when I was called to Beijing, some leaders told me, “You are turning against the motherland. Are you trying to start a secessionist rebellion? Even if the whole of the Tibetan population is armed, it will only make over 3 million people. We are not scared of this.” On hearing this, I felt very sad and realised how it is to be without freedom. First of all, I have never harboured such a thought. Secondly, even if I wanted to launch a secessionist movement, how can I enlist the support of the whole population of Tibet? Who would dare do it under the prevailing situation? Even if someone did, he would be exterminated immediately.

The rebellion in Tibet was started by a few who had no sense of timing and were completely ignorant of politics and military strategy. If you really want to fight a war, you have to have a sense of timing. You should be sufficiently powerful. You should know your own might and that of your enemy. Without these elements, you cannot hope to win a war. You cannot fight a war with a few outdated rifles. The rebels of that time were ridiculously naive. However, if something like that happened in the event of a foreign invasion, then it would be a serious matter for our nation.

That is why it is essential to think about the welfare of the minority nationalities during peacetime. We should make sure that the people of these nationalities are happy as part of the motherland. If this happens, they will be happy to work with the Chinese people in developing the nation. On the other hand, if you hold the attitude that you will always rule and suppress the minority nationalities, then there will be serious problems in the future. The examples I gave earlier are relevant here. It is essential to think about war as this possibility looms large nowadays. Of course, we have the power to prevent it. What would we do if a war breaks out now? The PLA was successful in the 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict, mainly because the Tibetans provided the logistic service with their backs and pack animals. These days some people are talking about a possible war with India, which is unlikely. However, should it break out, it is questionable whether the Tibetans would support the war effort as they did in 1962. Some of our comrades are hesitant to implement the new policies. These people have no sense of military strategy. They also have no knowledge of politics. If there were disturbance in Tibet, the government would call an emergency meeting and order Ngabo and

me to tackle the situation. We would, of course, be happy to do whatever we could. But if nothing is done for the people all the time, how could we hope to help the government when there is trouble.

I always speak very rudely. But it is only for the good of the nation. I have nothing to gain personally from it. Personally, I am quite happy. I feel that I am the happiest man in China. Therefore, you should think in broad terms. What are we gaining from the leftist practices in Tibet? Those with leftist ideology are suppressing everything. When Comrade Hu Yaobang was disgraced recently, the leftist officials exploded firecrackers and drank in celebration. They commented that the stalwart supporter of the Tibetan people had been defeated. They also said that Wu Jinhua, Panchen, and Ngabo would not be able to return to Tibet. Why can't we be allowed to return to our homeland? But, as it turned out, they celebrated a bit too early. These are the people who are trying to drive a wedge between the Tibetans and the Chinese. We are the members of one family. How dare they say that the Tibetan supporter had been defeated?

I would request everyone to think carefully and work for the welfare of the Tibetan people. Tibet always faces financial problems. We also have a problem of air transportation. With great difficulty, we managed to buy two passenger aeroplanes. But due to many problems they are not flown. Prime Minister Chou Enlai helped us in many ways. He laid on oil pipeline to Tibet. But now the government is increasing the price of oil, once again. If this happens, our transport facilities will come to a standstill. We are guilty of several things. The government has approved a large budget for Tibet. But where has the money gone? Isn't it true that the bulk of the money has been misappropriated by the officials and technicians? This is the reason why many projects could not be implemented. We must do something to help the people in Tibet since they are dependent solely on whatever they can earn with their physical labour.

Ngabo: Tibetan manufactures almost nothing. Industry is almost non-existent. Farms produce is the only thing Tibet produces.

There are so many things we are unable to do, because we do not have the capability. There is not much attention given to the study and use of the Tibetan language. If Tibet is the most religious region, it goes without saying that the study and use of the Tibetan language should be promoted. But many wrong things have been done. In 1958, when I was in Qinghai, I heard that an official document stated this policy: "First the rebellion should be suppressed. Then in launching the campaign to prevent future rebellion, a clear nationality and religious policy-decision should be taken." In retrospect, we should have thought how such a policy could be formulated for the future. Although there may be peace and stability today, many minor disturbances will occur. But it is good to think about the entire problem. There is at the moment racial harmony, peace and stability. But we should not be satisfied with this. What are we going to do if there are disturbances in the future? Although the government has not been able to come up with enough money for the nationalities affairs, the liberalisation policy provided some assurances of flexibility for the minority nationalities.