



**CENTRAL TIBETAN
ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE
TO CHINESE GOVERNMENT
ALLEGATIONS**

**Following the Massive Peaceful Protests
that shook the Roof of the World
in Spring 2008**

DIIR PUBLICATIONS

Introduction

Ever since peaceful protests erupted in Tibet, starting from 10 March 2008, the Chinese government has been using the full force of its state media to fling a series of allegations against the “Dalai Clique”. These allegations range from His Holiness the Dalai Lama masterminding the recent Tibet protest to his making attempts to restore feudalism in Tibet.

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) issued a series of responses to these accusations. This publication is a compilation of all these responses in order of the dates they were issued.

We hope this will help all the interested people in understanding the truth behind the Chinese government’s lie about the massive peaceful protests that rocked the whole of the Tibetan plateau in the spring of 2008.

CONTENTS

Introduction

i)

Part One: Chinese Government's Blaming and Shaming Game
(Pgs. 1-12)

Part Two: Chinese Nationalism, Ethnic Tension and
Olympic Games
(Pgs. 13-29)

Part Three: Tibet's Traditional Society and Democracy in Exile
(Pgs. 30-40)

Part Four: One China, Two Communist Parties
(Pgs. 41-53]

Part Five: Monasteries, Weapons and Terrorism
[Pgs. 54-61]

PART ONE: Chinese Government's Blaming and Shaming Game

(Issued on 15 May 2008)

Since 10 March a series of massive demonstrations rocked all over Tibet¹. Beijing made several allegations. Beijing accused “the Dalai clique of masterminding” these demonstrations. Beijing said these demonstrations were “violent” and organised by “terrorists”, and these demonstrations were aimed at “splitting Tibet from the motherland”. Premier Wen Jiabao told the international media on 18 March 2008 that his government had “ample facts and plenty of evidence to prove that the recent riot in Lhasa was organised, premeditated, masterminded and incited by the Dalai Lama clique”.

Official China claims that these demonstrations prove that His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advocacy of non-violence is just lip service. China says Dharamsala has become “the epicentre of lies”, and “the government-in-exile has churned out groundless fabrication since the riot in Lhasa”.

China claims that the appeals issued by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to our Chinese brothers and sisters are his attempt to “stir up more unrest in Tibet”. The Chinese authorities said on 9 April that “the Dalai Clique's statements also attempted to stir up hostility between ethnic groups in Tibet and internationalise the so-called Tibet issue”.

1 *The term TIBET here means the whole of Tibet known as Cholka-Sum (U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo). It includes the present-day Chinese administrative areas of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, Qinghai Province, two Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures and one Tibetan Autonomous County in Sichuan Province, one Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and one Tibetan Autonomous County in Gansu Province and one Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province.*

In fact the war of words is so intense from the Chinese side that they have already published a book called *Lies and Truth*. The lies are all on the Tibetan side and the truth is with Beijing. The book was launched on 4 April in Beijing by Sanlian, a unit of the China Publishing Group. The publishers claim the publication of *Lies and Truth* is the fastest ever in publishing history. The book was commissioned on 27 March and published on 3 April. The publisher of Sanlian, Zhang Weimin told China's CCTV: "We had to frame a response to demonstrate our position. We worked to show the true state of things to those unaware of the truth, and to rebut the axe-grinding, misleading reports of the western media."

The book consists of previously published articles. It regurgitates all the official allegations of Beijing that the "Dalai clique" is behind the current unrest in Tibet. *Lies and Truth* is an attempt to refute "the distortions" of the western media in its reporting of the current problems in Tibet. The book contains a large section in which all the "major achievements in economic, cultural and social development" in Tibet are explained.

Ultimately *Lies and Truth* is aimed at the Chinese people. The sweep of the western media and the breadth of its coverage of China's Tibet headache has shaken the Chinese people's faith in their own government and its handling of the Tibet issue. This has forced Beijing to make an attempt, however feeble, to explain its actions and policies to its own people.

Who is Behind the Unrest in Tibet?

The Chinese government's ongoing accusation that His Holiness the Dalai Lama organised the recent unrest in Tibet is nothing new. Ever since the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, the Chinese leaders developed a rich and well-known tradition of blaming

others for the disastrous consequences of their wrong policies. In a democratic society wrong policies can always be checked and corrected by the ballot box. In China, because of the Chinese Communist Party's monopoly of political power, this is not possible. In order to maintain a semblance of legitimacy, the leaders of the day always find a scapegoat. Not being able to find a scapegoat is to admit your policies. Lord Action once commented on the "undying penalty which history has the power to inflict on the wrong." It comes as no surprise that the Chinese Communist Party believes, as Jasper Becker says, its control over the past is the key to its future and on its ability to cover-up mistakes, however big, depends its survival.

Take the case of the greatest famine in China that took place between 1958 and 1961. About 30 million Chinese died of starvation during this period. At the time not a word of this man-made disaster was heard in the rest of the world. This disaster was brought about by Mao's Three Red Flags, a policy of transforming the whole organisational set-up into a military-like institution that functions with a sense of war-like urgency to attain unrealistic industrial and agricultural growth, so that China could march directly from a primarily agricultural-based to a full-fledged Communist and industrial society. Faced with unprecedented severe criticism from the ranks of his own leadership, Mao blamed the weather. He explained away the deaths of 30 million human beings by finger-pointing. The weather in China was fine but not Mao's policies. Until recently, the world was no wiser.

In 1962, the 10th Panchen Lama submitted a 70,000-character petition to the top Chinese leaders, including Mao. In this document, the Panchen Lama described the real situation prevailing in each and every part of Tibet. The Panchen Lama said that if the situation was not improved it would lead to the eradication of Tibetan Buddhism and culture and to the elimination of the Tibetans as a distinct nationality. Instead of respecting this courageous act and listening

to the Panchen Lama's well-intentioned criticism, Mao condemned him as a "reactionary feudal overlord" and his petition as "a poisoned arrow shot at the Party". The Panchen Lama spent 14 years in solitary confinement and house arrest.

To regain his leadership role, damaged badly by his Great Leap Forward and Hundred Flowers campaign, Mao in 1966 unleashed the horror of the Cultural Revolution on the Chinese people. By 1976, the top and middle ranks of the Chinese leadership were decimated and the country was in chaos. Who was blamed for this mess? Not Mao, but the Gang of Four, which included his wife. Jiang Qing, Mao's wife, during her trials, said: "I was Chairman Mao's dog. Whoever he told me to bite, I bit." Mao, as usual, went unscathed. On the contrary, Deng Xiaoping, who assumed supreme power after Mao passed away in 1976, said that Mao was 70 percent good and 30 percent bad, despite the fact that he himself was a prime victim of the campaign and his son was crippled because of the violence.

The question is, if the Chinese government is able to hide crimes of such enormity from its own people and the world, how much more capable will they be to cover up their mistakes and the suffering these mistakes caused the people of Tibet?

In 1987, 1988 and 1989, Lhasa was rocked by a series of demonstrations. These demonstrations were brutally crushed and martial law was imposed in Lhasa in 1989. Once again the Chinese authorities pointed their accusing fingers at His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Similarly, China blamed the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy movement on "a few reactionaries". This event was the most momentous in modern China's troubled history. What began as a peaceful memorial demonstration following the death of the popular reform leader Hu Yaobang turned into a massive pro-democracy movement. This movement in the heart of Beijing was supported by

an upsurge of protests in most Chinese cities. Troops of the People's Liberation Army fired upon the crowd and the city came under martial law. During the crisis a tearful Zhao Ziyang, premier then, met with the student leaders to end their protest. The students did not have any bad intention towards the Chinese Communist Party. They wanted an end to corruption and democracy, freedom and human rights. But a divided party leadership decided to meet their demands with violence. This ended the career of Zhao Ziyang. He was ousted from the post of the prime minister and was kept under tight house arrest. But the real victim of the brutal crackdown was the Chinese people who deserve so much more than their leaders are able to give them in terms of respect, tolerance, human dignity and rights.

China is yet to give convincing accounts of the great famine from 1958 to 1961, nor of the horrors of the Cultural Revolution and its brutal suppression of the student protests in 1989. The Chinese people deserve an explanation for all this brutality.

The same is true of China's implacable application of brute force to end Tibet's current crisis. Neither blaming His Holiness the Dalai Lama nor using force as a means to resolve China's Tibet trouble is the correct way to handle the crisis. The seeds of the present crisis were sown when China reversed its relatively liberal policies implemented in Tibet.

The Third Tibet Work Forum and the Seeds of the Present Crisis

From July 20 to 23, 1994, Beijing staged the Third Forum on work in Tibet, which recommended the total destruction of an entire civilisation flourishing on the Tibetan plateau for thousands of years.

The Third Forum on Tibet was convened by the top Chinese

leadership and was presided over by the then President Jiang Zemin. The authorities have now enshrined this Work Forum as the most “important strategic policy to rejuvenate Tibet” and have hailed its directives as the new manifesto for party work on the plateau.

The significance of the Third Work Forum lies in the fact that it overturned the more liberal policies laid out for Tibet’s “development” by the First and Second Work Forums held in 1980 and 1984. The first two work forums were initiated by the late Hu Yaobang, then Secretary General of the Chinese Communist Party. This liberal leader is credited with masterminding a series of measures to improve the social, economic and political conditions in Tibet. The brief spell of liberalisation markedly improved the living conditions of the majority of Tibetans and contributed to a more relaxed intellectual and social climate.

All these were reversed at the Third Work Forum. The Third Work Forum policy recommendations contained four key elements. China stepped up the scale of repression in Tibet. External propaganda work was escalated. The pace of economic development in Tibet and its corollary of encouraging more Chinese settlers and businessmen to take advantage of the economic boom on “the roof of the world” were also increased.

One main target of the current policy of repression is Tibetan Buddhism. Chinese leaders are increasingly alarmed by the proliferation of monasteries and temples which the period of liberalisation spawned throughout Tibet: they are seen as the bastions of Tibetan nationalism. The authorities have set up “Democratic Management Committees” to control monasteries and nunneries and established “Work Inspection Teams” to supervise the “education” of monks and nuns.

What appals the Tibetan people is China’s all-out war on

Tibetan culture. The leadership revived the old aphorisms once served up to the Tibetan people to justify their policies to destroy Tibetan Buddhism during the Cultural Revolution. Bewildered Tibetans were then told that just as there cannot be two suns in the sky, so there could not be both Buddhism and socialism in Tibet. Inevitably Buddhism had to give way to socialism. Today Buddhism is once again being blatantly sublimated to Chinese state power.

A major thrust is underway to break the bond of loyalty between the clergy in Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama in India. Campaigns like “Strike Hard” and “Patriotic Re-education”, unleashed in 1996, are aimed at crippling the rise of Tibetan Buddhism which the authorities suspect is weaning the loyalty of the Tibetan people away from the communist party and towards His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

One salient feature of the “Strike Hard” campaign is how differently it is interpreted in China and Tibet. China’s “Strike Hard” campaigns was started to weed out crime. Tibet’s version was used as a political tool to eliminate those whom the authorities label “splittists”. In Tibet, rather than combating crime, the authorities turn a blind eye to this social disease in the hope that it will erode the traditional morality of Tibetans and undermine Tibetan Buddhism.

In fact, at a secret meeting held in December 1999 in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, Chen Kuiyuan, the hardline Party Secretary of “TAR” recommended to the Central Chinese Government that an all-out effort must be made to eradicate Tibetan Buddhism and culture from the face of the earth so that no memory of them will be left in the minds of coming generations of Tibetans — except as museum pieces.

Chen Kuiyuan stated that the main cause of instability is

the existence of the Dalai Lama and his Government-in-Exile in Dharamsala and these must be “uprooted”. He recommended that Tibet, Tibetan people and Tibetan Buddhism — in other words the very name of Tibet — must be destroyed and the “Tibet Autonomous Region” be merged with provinces like Sichuan.

This total assault on Tibetan culture is heightened by comments made by the current Party Secretary in Tibet. Zhang Qingli said, “The communist party is like parents to the Tibetan people and are always considerate about what the children need. The party is the real Buddha for the Tibetans.” On His Holiness the Dalai Lama Zhang Qingli said, “The Dalai is a devil with a human face but with a heart of a beast... Those who do not love their country are not qualified to be human beings.” On the Tibetan struggle for greater freedoms, Zhang Qingli said, “We are currently in an intensely bloody and fiery struggle with the Dalai clique, a life-and-death struggle with the enemy.”

What Tibetan, Chinese and Foreign Scholars Think of the Tibet Situation

That this hardline policy, and the abusive rhetoric accompanying it, has failed and disastrously so was made amply clear by the recent month-long demonstrations in Tibet. The top Chinese leaders have been informed that this hardline policy is wrong by no less a figure than Baba Phuntsok Wangyal, the founder of the Tibetan Communist Party, who played a key role in cementing Chinese Communist rule in Tibet.

In his letter of 29 October 2004 addressed to President Hu Jintao, he said, “As far as how to solve the Tibetan issue is concerned, since the fundamental nature of the question is absolutely related with domestic matters, so under the premise regarding the sovereignty of the nation it is merely a demand for meaningful autonomy and slight

changes in the administrative division policy. In addition, as to the essence and preconditions of this matter, every one of us can and should reach a common understanding. With this as a base, and after the Central Government and the Dalai Lama have reached a mutual understanding on the principles regarding national sovereignty, appropriate adjustments to the domestic administrative division policy and implementing the right to self-determination, both sides should officially declare in a political statement that friendly relations between them have been restored. Within such a friendly and harmonious environment, regarding the concrete formations, plans, and schedules for unifying the Tibetan autonomous regions — including temporarily establishing a transitional consultative department in order to assure the united autonomy of its fundamental content and destination being achieved — both sides should be strategic, far-sighted and generous, adhering to the brotherly relationship.”

Wang Lixiong, a Beijing-based writer, reinforces Phuntsok Wangyal’s argument. On 28 March 2008 his op-ed piece appeared on *The Wall Street Journal*. In this piece he says that China’s current anti-splittism struggle is wrong. He says, “Having invested their careers in anti-splittism, these people cannot admit the idea is mistaken without losing face and, they fear, losing their own power and position as well.”

Wang Lixiong says, “The most efficient route to peace in Tibet is through the Dalai Lama, whose return to Tibet would immediately alleviate a number of problems. Much of the current ill will, after all, is the direct result of the Chinese government’s verbal attacks on the Dalai Lama, who, for Tibetan monks, has an incomparably lofty status. To demand that monks denounce him is about as practical as asking that they vilify their own parents.”

Wang Lixiong initiated the recent 12-point statement on

Tibet by 30 Chinese intellectuals. In fact, since the statement was first issued, many more Chinese human rights and environmental activists, writers and scholars have signed up. The first point says, “At present the one-sided propaganda of the official Chinese media is having the effect of stirring up inter-ethnic animosity and aggravating an already tense situation. This is extremely detrimental to the long-term goal of safeguarding national unity. We call for this to be stopped.”

The second point says, “We support the Dalai Lama’s appeal for peace and hope that the ethnic conflict can be dealt with according to the principles of goodwill, peace and non-violence. We condemn any violent act against innocent people, strongly urge the Chinese government to stop the violent suppression and appeal to the Tibetan people likewise not to engage in violent activities.” The statement urges the Chinese government to hold direct talks with His Holiness the Dalai Lama to resolve the issue.

Ruan Ming, a speechwriter for former CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang, has a different take on the tense situation in Tibet. Ruan Ming who lives in Taiwan told *The Epoch Times* on 26 March that: “The Dalai Lama has always proposed a peaceful solution to Tibet issue and won the world’s recognition. With that in mind, the CCP has framed the Dalai Lama for having ‘carefully planned and stirred up the event’.” Ruan Ming added, “This is exactly how the CCP framed Zhao Ziyang for the Tiananmen Massacre in 1989 and accused Zhao of ‘splitting the Party and supporting unrest’.”

“The Dalai Lama already said he would resign if the unrest continued. The Dalai Lama is influential globally and if he really retired, the CCP could greatly push and label the Tibetans as terrorists like the Xinjiang independence movement. This will give the CCP an excuse to ignore Tibetan appeals and further repress them.”

On 27 March 2008, more than 70 Tibetologists sent an open letter to President Hu Jintao. In this letter, the scholars said, “As scholars engaged in Tibetan Studies, we are especially disturbed by what has been happening. The civilisation we study is not simply a subject of academic enquiry; it is the heritage of a living people and one of the world’s great cultural legacies...The attribution of the current unrest to the Dalai Lama represents a reluctance on the part of the Chinese government to acknowledge and engage with policy failures that are surely the true cause of popular discontent.”

PART TWO: Chinese Nationalism, Ethnic Tension and Olympic Games

(Issued on 26 May 2008)

Beijing's and Tibetan Approaches to Ethnic Tension

Of deep concern to the Tibetan people is the Chinese authorities' attempt to turn the anger of the Chinese people on the Tibetans. China is playing a dangerously irresponsible game by using the Tibet protests to fuel ethnic tension. The struggle of the Tibetan people is against the wrong policies of Beijing. This struggle is not against China both as a nation and culture nor against the Chinese people. The Tibetan people's struggle is against the policies aimed at Tibet's total assimilation within the Chinese majority. The protests that rocked Tibet recently and continue to rock are to convince the authorities to withdraw these policies and implement ones that give greater freedoms for the Tibetan people.

On 28 March, His Holiness the Dalai Lama issued an appeal to the Chinese people. In this appeal, His Holiness said, "The recent unrest has clearly demonstrated the gravity of the situation in Tibet and the urgent need to seek a peaceful and mutually beneficial solution through dialogue. Even at this juncture I have expressed my willingness to the Chinese authorities to work together to bring about peace and stability...Chinese brothers and sisters — wherever you may be — with deep concern I appeal to you to help dispel the misunderstanding between our two communities. Moreover, I appeal to you to help find a peaceful, lasting solution to the problem of Tibet through dialogue in the spirit of understanding and accommodation."

Biased Chinese Media Reporting Creates Ethnic Tension

However, Beijing is using the full might of its propaganda machinery

to convince the Chinese people that these protests are anti-Chinese. In a society where the citizens receive news and information from government-controlled media, this is stoking the fire of Chinese nationalism. Beijing has played with this fire before. In 1999 after the Belgrade Chinese embassy bombing, China whipped up anti-American sentiments. China refused to accept President Clinton's initial phone to President Jiang Zemin to apologise. The Chinese Communist Party declared immediately after the bombing through the *People's Daily* and other media that the bombing had been intentional, not accidental, and supplied buses to transport demonstrators to the U.S. embassy and consulates across China. Anti-Japanese sentiments were whipped up in 2004 and 2005 during the Asian Football Cup matches in China and over the Japanese textbook controversy. The precision with which these protests have flared and just as suddenly died down led many observers to conclude Beijing's hand in organising them. Both nearly backfired when the protestors shrilly started to criticise the authorities for being weak before the Americans and the Japanese. Fareed Zakaria, Editor of *Newsweek International*, writes: "In the past they have stoked anti-Japanese and anti-American outbursts, only to panic that things were getting out of control and then reversed course."

This biased reporting on the unrest in Tibet and its negative effect on the Chinese public worries Chinese intellectuals. On 22 March, a group of Chinese scholars, writers and human rights activists wrote a 12-point letter. In the first point they say, "At present the one-sided propaganda of the official Chinese media is having the effect of stirring up inter-ethnic animosity and aggravating an already tense situation. This is extremely detrimental to the long-term goal of safeguarding national unity. We call for such propaganda to be stopped."

The second point says, "We support the Dalai Lama's appeal for peace, and hope that the ethnic conflict can be dealt with according

to the principles of goodwill, peace and non-violence. We condemn any violent act against innocent people, strongly urge the Chinese government to stop violent repression and appeal to the Tibetan people likewise to not to engage in violent activities.”

In the case of Tibet, the Chinese authorities are stoking ethnic tension in five areas. Agent provocateurs have infiltrated the ranks of Tibetan protestors and indulged in violence to create deep rifts between Tibetans and Chinese. The authorities’ relentless demonisation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is hurting Tibetan sentiments. China’s brutal crackdown on the Tibetans is sowing the seeds of complete distrust in the authorities. The Chinese government’s inflammatory use of the media and biased reporting is creating more misunderstanding amongst the Chinese people. The Chinese government’s active encouragement of overseas Chinese students’ association to counter pro-Tibet protests with protests of their own is contributing to mutual suspicion.

The responsibility of any government is to provide good governance, including ensuring communal harmony. In fact, President Hu Jintao’s stated goal is to create a harmonious society in China. Crackdown and shrill denunciation do not contribute to harmony. China’s hardline action to resolve the issue of Tibet has created the biggest rift between Tibetans and Chinese. The crackdown, the enforcement of the “patriotic re-education” and the media focus on the unrest in Tibet are undermining President Hu Jintao’s establishment of a harmonious society.

In their fourth point, the group of Chinese scholars say, “In our opinion, such Cultural Revolution-like language as ‘the Dalai Lama is a jackal in Buddhist monk’s robes and an evil spirit with a human face and the heart of a beast’ used by the Chinese Communist Party leadership in the Tibet Autonomous Region is of no help in easing the situation, nor is it beneficial to the Chinese government’s image.

As the Chinese government is committed to integration into the international community, we maintain that it should display a style of governing that conforms to the standards of modern civilisation.”

Zhang Boshu of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences wrote a piece on Tibet called *The Way to Resolve the Tibet Issue*. Its English translation is posted on 9 May on www.chinadigitaltimes.net. In his article, Zhang Bozhu writes, “Hu Yaobang especially stressed: ‘Looking down on Tibetan history, language and art is totally wrong... Loving the minority people is not a matter of empty words. Their social customs and habits must be respected. Respect their language, respect their history, respect their culture. If you don’t do that you are only speaking empty words.’ Finally, Tibetan cadres should manage Tibet. Within two years, Tibetans should make up two-thirds or more of the cadres in Tibet. ‘We have been here for thirty years. We have completed our historical mission.’ ‘Today there are 300,000 ethnic Han, including military, in Tibet. How can that ever do?’ The above can be summarized in six characters ‘cut taxes, open up, and withdraw personnel’. These were the ‘emergency measures’ energetically promoted by Hu Yaobang to resolve the Tibet issue.”

Why This Hardline Policy in the Face of Its Clear Rejection by Tibetans

Despite these appeals from some of the most respected citizens of China, why are the authorities intensifying and reinvigorating the very policies that have provoked this desperate reaction from the Tibetan people?

There are three possible reasons. One is to provoke the Tibetans into violence to justify the Chinese government’s own violent retaliation. The other is that the current propaganda blitz is to divert the attention

of the Chinese people from their own pressing problems. The third is to use the protests in Tibet and the huge international sympathy generated for the Tibetan people to stoke Chinese nationalism to bolster the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party.

Ever since the 1959 uprising, the Tibetan people's struggle has been peaceful. China cannot justify the use of force against a peaceful struggle to its own people or to the international community. The demonisation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, denouncing some exile Tibetan organisations as "terrorist" outfits and equating them with Al-Qaeda and the armed struggle in Chechnya and infiltrating the ranks of the Tibetan people and trying to provoke them into violence are all attempts to justify a violent response.

The Chinese authorities know that their hardline policies have generated this desperate reaction from the Tibetans. Even then why are they still pushing ever harder with all these elements of the harsh policies? Regardless of the Tibetan people's clear distaste, the "patriotic re-education" campaign is being pushed harder on the Tibetans. Forcing Tibetans to publicly denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama, stomping on his photos, forcing monasteries to fly the Chinese national flag and the official vilification campaign against His Holiness the Dalai Lama have forced many lay Tibetans and monks to refuse to participate in the campaign.

Premier Wen Jiabao during his recent visit to Laos urged His Holiness the Dalai Lama to use his influence in Tibet to calm the situation. Why is this moderate approach and clear official admission of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's influence on his people not reflected in the policy implementation in Tibet? And if the Chinese authorities really wish for His Holiness the Dalai Lama to calm things down in Tibet, why is he not provided the forum and channel to reach out to his people in Tibet?

Baba Phuntsok Wangyal, the founder of the Tibetan Communist Party and a senior figure in the Chinese leadership, has this answer. His answer is contained in a book called *Baba Phuntsok Wangyal: Witness to Tibet's History* compiled by Tenzin Losel, Jane Perkins, Bhuchung D. Sonam and Tenzin Tsundue, published by Paljor Publications Pvt. Ltd in 2007. The book contains a biography of Baba Phuntsok Wangyal and the three letters he had sent to President Hu Jintao in 2004, 2005 and 2006. In these letters, Baba Phuntsok Wangyal says that there is a well-entrenched vested interest in the Chinese leadership, who have built their careers on the struggle against separatism. Their careers will be blown away when the issue of Tibet is resolved through dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Baba Phuntsok Wangyal quotes a popular saying in Tibet. It goes like this, “These people live on anti-separatism, are promoted due to anti-separatism and they hit the jackpot by anti-separatism.”

In his 2004, letter to President Hu Jintao, Baba Phuntsok Wangyal writes, “To summarise the saying above: ‘The longer the Dalai Lama keeps on staying abroad, and the bigger his influence, the more long-lasting the period of high ranks and great wealth for those anti-separatist groups; on the contrary, when the Dalai Lama restores relations with the Central Government, these people will be terrified, tense and lose their jobs.’ The statement above is not at all far-fetched. With regard to the question of whether or not relations between the Central Government and the Dalai Lama can be restored, this is not only related to shifts of political partiality, resistance and even open objections within the nation, but also to the relations of such and such people and groups and the advantages and disadvantages to them in terms of economic interest.”

Baba Phuntsok Wangyal’s analysis is echoed by Jing Huang, currently a visiting fellow at the University of Singapore’s East Asian Institute. He told Simon Elegant of *Time* that there is “a huge bulwark of

entrenched officials (in the United Front Work Department, the Public Security Bureau, Foreign Affairs, the Religious Affairs department, the Communist Party in Tibet, the Minority Affairs department being the main culprits) who have spent decades shouting about ‘splittism’ and not only can imagine any other approach but would feel it was a threat to their iron rice bowls or livelihoods, which of course it would be.” Thus, Huang says, you have essentially the entire Chinese establishment that administers Tibet opposed to a compromise solution that would inevitably not only have to acknowledge that the policies that they have pursued in Tibet for the last 20 years are a failure but would likely cost them their jobs.

Willy Lam, writing for Jamestown Foundation, says, “As police in various cities were issuing warnings to protestors outside Carrefour supermarkets last Saturday and Sunday, the Hu Jintao Administration has intensified efforts to suppress and contain the ‘splittists’ in Tibet and Xinjiang — and using nationalist sentiments to help achieve its goal. As the nation is being swept by a tidal wave of ‘patriotism’ if not xenophobia, liberal intellectuals who had earlier implored Beijing to consider conciliatory policies toward the two autonomous regions no longer dare raise their voice for fear of being labelled traitors.” Willy Lam, whose piece called Beijing Intensifies ‘People’s War’ against ‘Splittism’ as Nationalism Rears Its Head’ and which was posted on Jamestown Foundation’s website on 29 April, quotes an editor of a Beijing-based magazine who wishes to remain anonymous as saying, “The CCP has used the handy weapon called nationalism to silence those who question the authorities’ handling of Tibet.”

All this leads us to believe that China’s Tibet policy has been hijacked by the hardliners in the leadership who want a Final Solution to the Tibetan Question by using all the might available to them to crush the Tibetan people. The hardliners, more than the national interests of China and the Chinese people, are pursuing their hardline

policy to protect their careers and their private interests.

The present crisis in Tibet has become useful to the Chinese authorities to distract the Chinese people from their very pressing problems. The growing social unrest in China is stoked by rampant corruption, growing inequality between the rich and poor and rising prices. At the same time, there is growing aspiration for freedom and democracy in China. China's Tibet distraction is being used to its full advantage by the authorities to make the Chinese public forget, even momentarily, the daily burden under which they grind and their longing for freedom.

After the first tidal wave of anti-foreign and anti-Tibetan propaganda passed away on the Internet, a more sober assessment of the situation in Tibet is re-surfacing among Chinese bloggers and Internet-users. There are many Chinese who are fed up with the government blasting away about Tibet every day. They say Tibet is everywhere, on TV, radio and in newspapers. The public cannot escape and get respite from the government's onslaught on Tibet even for a minute. Many Chinese wonder what the reason behind this is.

China's Tibet distraction has also become useful for the Chinese Communist Party to stoke Chinese nationalism and thus bolster the party's legitimacy. The need to do this flows from the paradox that is China today. Communism has been swept away from China and yet the Chinese Communist Party survives and flourishes. In his piece, *Why China's Burning Mad*, posted on 24 April 2008, Simon Elegant of *Time* writes, "Having effectively abandoned the Marxist-Leninist ideology that was once the bedrock, China's Communist Party now draws its mandate to govern from two sources — economic growth and nationalist pride." In his book, *China's New Nationalism*, Peter Hays Gries writes, "In 1994 Xiao Gongqing, an outspoken neo-conservative intellectual advocated the use of nationalism derived

from Confucianism to fill the ideological void opened by the collapse of communism.” Jayshree Bajoria of the Council on Foreign Relations, writes, “After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the opening of the Chinese economy by Deng Xiaoping, and the pro-democracy protests of 1989, nationalism was once again revived by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), say experts.”

Gries writes, “Lacking the procedural legitimacy accorded to democratically elected governments and facing the collapse of communist ideology, the CCP is increasingly dependent on its nationalist credentials to rule.” In an editorial in April 2008, the *International Herald Tribune* notes that “stripped of Maoism as its guiding light, the CCP has fallen back on nationalism as societal glue”.

Jayshree Bajoria of the Council on Foreign Relations quotes Kenneth G. Lieberthal of the University of Michigan as saying, nationalistic protests are a combination of genuine popular outrage and government manipulation to let protest grow, which often helps the Chinese government’s bargaining position as that incident is negotiated with the offending party.

In order to shore up public support for its right to rule, the CCP is portraying the Tibet protests as anti-China. The CCP also portrays the international support and sympathy and the extensive media coverage of the events in Tibet as an international anti-China force. The government’s obsessive and distorted coverage of the Olympic torch relay and the accompanying protests have provoked anti-foreign sentiments in China, including the boycott of French products. Writes Wu Zhong, China Editor of www.atimes.com on 23 April, “Amid increasingly growing nationalism, the few Chinese — such as CCTV anchor Bai Yansong and China Youth Daily’s photo editor He Yanguang — who were brave enough to criticise the boycott as ‘irrational’ and

harmful to Chinese interests, have been bombarded with accusations by angry bloggers.” Mr. B. Raman, a former additional secretary in the cabinet secretariat of the government of India, writing in www.saag.org on 20 April, says, “It is learnt that the protests inside China as well as abroad are being sponsored and directed by the Ministry of Public Security, which is China’s internal intelligence and security agency.”

In Tibet, there is a talk of waging a “people’s war” against the Tibetan protestors. No individual Chinese have stepped forward to lead this war, but the authorities are coming down upon the detained protestors with violence and ferocity unheard since the days of the Cultural Revolution. Protesters are shot dead and those who are arrested are beaten and tortured. Monasteries where protests have taken place are sealed off and deprived of food and drinking water. Bodies of those shot dead are taken away so as to prevent local Tibetans from knowing the cause of death. Tibet has been turned into a war zone.

Chinese Support for Dialogue and Inter-ethnic Harmony

Grace Wang, a student at Duke University in the United States, wrote an op-ed piece in April in the *Los Angeles Times* and reprinted in the *Indian Express* on 21 April. She was the one who tried to mediate between protesting Chinese students and Tibet protestors and was vilified by the Chinese side. She writes, “Trying to mediate between Chinese and pro-Tibetan campus protestors, I was caught in the middle and vilified and threatened by the Chinese. After the protest, the intimidation went online and I began receiving threatening phone calls. Then it got worse — my parents in China were also threatened and forced to go into hiding.”

“Back in my dorm room, I logged into the Duke Chinese Students and Scholars Association (DCSSA) Website to see what people

were saying. Qian Fangzhou, an officer of DCSSA, was gloating, ‘We really showed them our colours!’.”

“I posted a letter in response, explaining that I don’t support Tibetan independence, as some accused me of, but that I do support Tibetan freedom as well as Chinese freedom. The next morning, a storm was raging online. Photographs of me had been posted on the Internet with the words ‘Traitor!’ printed across my forehead. Then I saw something really alarming: both my parent’s citizen ID numbers had been posted. This information could only have come from the Chinese police.”

“I saw detailed directions to my parent’s home in China, accompanied by calls for people to go there and teach ‘this shameless dog’ a lesson. It was then that I realised how serious this had become. My phone rang with callers making threats against my life. I talked to my mom and she said she and my dad were going into hiding because they were getting death threats, too.”

In their 12-point letter, the group of Chinese scholars write, “In order to prevent similar incidents from happening in future, the government must abide by the freedom of religious belief and the freedom of speech explicitly enshrined in the Chinese Constitution, thereby allowing the Tibetan people fully to express their grievances and hopes, and permitting citizens of all nationalities freely to criticise and make suggestions regarding the government’s nationality policies.”

The twelfth and last point in their letter is this: “We hold that we must eliminate animosity and bring about national reconciliation, not continue to increase divisions between nationalities. A country that wishes to avoid the partition of its territory must first avoid divisions among its nationalities. Therefore, we appeal to the leaders of our country to hold direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama. We hope that the

Chinese and Tibetan people will do away with the misunderstandings between them, develop their interactions with each other, and achieve unity. Government departments as well as popular organisations and religious figures should make great efforts towards this goal.”

Sabotaging or Helping the Beijing Olympic Games

One major and consistent accusation the Beijing authorities hurl at His Holiness the Dalai Lama is that he is sabotaging the Beijing Summer Olympics. They cite the outbursts of the Tibetan people’s anger in the streets of towns and villages throughout Tibet and the protests that have dogged the torch relay as evidence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s involvement in this.

Far from sabotaging the Beijing Olympics, His Holiness the Dalai Lama even before China was awarded the 2008 Olympics Games supported the right of Beijing to host the Games. His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his visit to Salt Lake City in the United States in May 2001 said that he supported China’s bid for the Games in 2008 if it promoted human rights in the country. His Holiness said he also wanted to know what the feelings of the Chinese people were on the Games. He further wanted to know what the feelings of the human rights groups were. His Holiness said, “I would like to know their opinion. If they feel this event taking place in China would help to change, then I would support it,” according to the CNN report of 11 May 2001.

We believe that His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s endorsement of Beijing helped China win the bid when the IOC chose the host city in Moscow on 13 July 2001. CNN report of 15 May 2001 says, “The Beijing bid received a major boost last week when the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan Buddhist leader, said China ‘deserves to be the Olympic host’.”

When the 2008 Summer Olympic Games were awarded to China His Holiness the Dalai Lama publicly welcomed this development and said he had supported Beijing's bid all the time. His Holiness the Dalai Lama also said that at the same time it is the right of individuals and organisations to use the Games to peacefully highlight the gross human rights violations going on in China in the hope that these violations would be eliminated.

In his 10 March 2008 statement, His Holiness explains his position on the Olympic Games in China in detail. His Holiness said, "This year, the Chinese people are proudly and eagerly awaiting the opening of the Olympic Games. I have, from the very beginning, supported the idea that China should be granted the opportunity to host the Olympic Games. Since such international sporting events, and especially the Olympics, uphold the principles of freedom of speech, freedom of expression, equality and friendship, China should prove herself a good host by providing these freedoms. Therefore, besides sending their athletes, the international community should remind the Chinese government of these issues. I have come to know that many parliaments, individuals and non-governmental organisations around the globe are undertaking a number of activities in view of the opportunity that exists for China to make a positive change. I admire their sincerity. I would like to state emphatically that it will be very important to observe the period following the conclusion of the Games. The Olympic Games no doubt will greatly impact the minds of the Chinese people. The world should, therefore, explore ways of investing their collective energies in producing a continuous positive change inside China even after the Olympics have come to an end."

In the aftermath of the largest protests in Tibet and the brutal crackdown on the protestors, followed by strident calls for the boycott of the Beijing Olympic Games, His Holiness commented that a boycott was too radical and said that there should not be any boycott.

Another accusation hurled by the Chinese authorities is that the Central Tibetan Administration plotted to sabotage the Beijing Olympic Games at the 5th International Tibet Support Group Conference held in May 2007 in Brussels.

It is a fact that all the TSG conferences were organised by the Central Tibetan Administration since the first conference in 1990. Particularly from the second conference in Bonn in 1996, the Central Tibetan Administration did it in collaboration with the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation. In all these conferences both the CTA and the FNF acted as facilitators. The agenda for the conferences were set by the TSGs and the ownership of the successive action plans and resolutions is with the TSG movement. In fact, at the Prague TSG conference concerns were raised about the appropriateness of the CTA organising the TSG conferences. This concern was put to the vote. The majority of the participants wanted the CTA to continue to organise subsequent TSG conferences.

Apart from facilitating these conferences, the role of the CTA is to explain the CTA's policies and seek the participants' support for the Middle-Way Approach, which seeks to ensure meaningful autonomy for all Tibetans under a single Tibetan administration. This was done by Kalon Tripa, Professor Samdhong Rinpoche, both at the Prague and Brussels conferences. The Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Mr. Lodi Gyari, updated the participants on the progress of the talks between the Chinese and the Tibetan sides.

The Chinese media also said that Paula Dobriansky, the special co-ordinator for Tibetan affairs in the State Department, attended the 5th International Tibet Support Group Conference. She did not attend the conference. This is a clear case of the Chinese media spreading disinformation.

The proceedings of all these conferences were transparent. The opening and closing ceremonies of these conferences were open to the international media, which included reporters from Xinhua. At the time the Xinhua reporters did not file any report that says the “splittists were plotting to sabotage the Beijing Olympic Games”.

Part Three: Tibet's Traditional Society and Democracy in Exile

(Issued 17 June 2008)

The Chinese authorities accuse His Holiness the Dalai Lama of attempting to restore what they call Tibet's old feudal system. They say the ultimate goal of the Tibetan struggle is to achieve this. China's official news agency, Xinhua, on 8 April 2008, quoted the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Jiang Yu, as saying that "the Dalai Lama is the chief representative of the serf system which integrates religion with politics in old Tibet". Jiang Yu said, "Such a serf system, which harbours no democracy, freedom and human rights in any form, is the darkest slavery system in human history."

There is nothing further from the truth than this. His Holiness the Dalai Lama considers himself the free spokesperson for the Tibetan people. It is for the Tibetan people to decide the nature of governance of Tibet in the future. When the time arrives when His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his people in exile can return to Tibet in circumstances that satisfy the majority will of the Tibetan people, then the exile administration will be dissolved and the local government in Tibet will continue to be run by the Tibetans who are currently working in the Chinese establishment. As for His Holiness the Dalai Lama when that day arrives he said he would hold no political office.

To characterise Tibet's old society as "feudal" or "serf system" is not an accurate portrayal of traditional Tibetan society. It is true that traditional Tibetan society — like most of its Asian contemporaries, especially China — was backward and badly in need of reforms. However, it is completely wrong to use the word "feudal" from the perspective of medieval Europe to describe traditional Tibetan society. Tibet before the invasion, in fact, was far more egalitarian than most Asian countries of that time. Hugh Richardson, who spent a total of

nine years in Lhasa as British India's last, and independent India's first, representative, wrote: "Even communist writers have had to admit there was no great difference between the rich and poor in [pre-1949] Tibet." Similarly, the International Commission of Jurists' Legal Inquiry Committee points out: "Chinese allegations that the Tibetans enjoyed no human rights before the entry of the Chinese were found to be based on distorted and exaggerated accounts of life in Tibet."

Even the Tibetan Government based in Lhasa was far more representative than its counterparts elsewhere in Asia. In his autobiography, *My land and My People*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama states, "The National Assembly could be convened in three forms. Its smallest form, which was almost continuously in session, included the eight officials of the Yig-tsang and Tsi-khang, together with other high lay officials and representatives of the three great monasteries near Lhasa — about twenty representatives in all. This nucleus assembly could convene a larger body of about thirty members to consider specific problems, and on matters of great importance, such as the confirmation of the discovery of the new reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, a full assembly of about 400 members from all the official and non-official levels were called into session."

In terms of social mobility and wealth distribution, independent Tibet compared favourably with most Asian countries of the time. The Tibetan polity before the Chinese occupation was not theocratic as China wants us to believe. The system of rule was referred to as Choesi-Sungdrel, which describes a political system based on the Buddhist tenets of compassion, moral integrity and equality. According to this system, the government must be based on high moral standards and serve the people with love and compassion, just as parents care for their children. This system of governance is based on the belief that all sentient beings have the seed of Buddhahood and should be respected accordingly.

The Dalai Lama, head of both the spiritual and secular administration, was discovered through a system of reincarnation that ensured that the rule of Tibet did not become hereditary. Most of the Dalai Lamas, including the 13th and the present 14th, came from average, yeoman families in remote regions of Tibet.

Every administrative post below the Dalai Lama was held by an equal number of monk and lay officials. Although lay officials hereditarily held posts, those of monks were open to all. A large proportion of monk officials came from non-privileged backgrounds.

Furthermore, Tibet's monastic system provided unrestrained opportunities for social mobility. Admission to monastic institutions in Tibet was open to all Tibetans, and all nationalities, including Chinese, Mongols, people from India from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh. Large majority of monks — particularly those who rose through its ranks to the highest positions — came from humble backgrounds, often from far-flung villages in Kham and Amdo. This is because the monasteries offered equal opportunities to all to rise to any monastic post through their own scholarship. A popular Tibetan aphorism says: “If the mother's son has knowledge, the golden throne of Gaden [the highest position in the hierarchy of the Gelugpa School of Tibetan Buddhism] has no ownership.”

The peasants, whom Chinese propaganda insists on calling “serfs”, had a legal identity, often with documents stating their rights, and also had access to courts of law. Peasants had the right to sue their masters and carry their case in appeal to higher authorities.

Ms. Dhondub Choedon comes from a family that was among the poorest in the social strata of independent Tibet. Reminiscing on her life before the Chinese occupation, she writes: “I belong to what the Chinese now term as serfs of Tibet... There were six of us in

the family... My home was a double-storeyed building with a walled compound. On the ground floor we used to keep our animals. We had four yaks, 27 sheep and goats, two donkeys and a land-holding of four and a half khel (0.37 hectares) ... We never had any difficulty earning our livelihood. There was not a single beggar in our area.”

Throughout Tibetan history, the maltreatment and suppression of peasants by estate-holders was forbidden by law as well as by social convention. Starting from the reign of Emperor Songtsen Gampo in the seventh century, many Tibetan rulers issued codes based on the Buddhist principle of “Ten Virtues of the Dharma”. The essence of this was that the rulers should act as parents to their subjects. This was reflected in Songtsen Gampo’s code of 16 general moral principles, and the code of 13 rules of procedure and punishment issued by Phagmodrupa in the 14th century, and revised by the Fifth Dalai Lama in the 17th century.

There were some punishments, sanctioned by law, in the past which included mutilation such as the cutting off of a hand or foot and putting out an eye. Such punishments were never lightly used but were decreed only in cases of repeated crime. Flogging was the principal punishment. Even in the 19th century although the power to inflict mutilation existed in theory it was only rarely put into practice. Capital punishment was banned in Tibet, and physical mutilation was a punishment that could be inflicted by the Central Government of Lhasa alone. In 1898, Tibet enacted a law abolishing such forms of punishment, except in the cases of high treason or conspiracy against the state. The 13th Dalai Lama issued a regulation conferring on all peasants the right to appeal directly to him in case of mistreatment by estate holders.

All land belonged to the state which granted estates to monasteries and to individuals who had rendered meritorious service

to the state. The state, in turn, received revenues and service from estate holders. Lay estate holders either paid land revenues or provided one male member in each generation to work as a government official. Monasteries performed religious functions for the state and, most vitally, served as schools, universities and centres for Tibetan art, craft, medicine and culture. The role of monasteries as highly disciplined centres of Tibetan education was the key to the traditional Tibetan way of life. Monasteries bore all expenses for their students and provided them with free board and lodging. Some monasteries had large estates; some had endowments which they invested. But other monasteries had neither of these. They received personal gifts and donations from devotees and patrons. The revenue from these sources was often insufficient to provide the basic needs of large monk populations. To supplement their income, some monasteries engaged in trade and acted as moneylenders.

The largest proportion of land in old Tibet was held by peasants who paid their revenue directly to the state, and this became the main source of the government food stocks which were distributed to monasteries, the army, and officials without estates. Some paid in labour, and some were required to provide transport services to government officials, and in some cases to monasteries. Land held by the peasant was hereditary. The peasant could lease it to others or mortgage it. A peasant could be dispossessed of his land only if he failed to pay the dues either in kind or labour, which was not excessive. In practice, he had the rights of a free-holder, and dues to the state were in the form of land tax paid in kind rather than cash.

Small sections of the Tibetan population, mostly U-tsang (Central Tibet) were tenants. They held their lands on the estates of aristocrats and monasteries, and paid rent to the estate-holders either in kind or by sending one member of the family to work as a domestic servant or agricultural labourer. Some of these tenant farmers rose to

the powerful position of estate secretary. (For this, they were labelled by the communist Chinese “agents of feudal lords”). Other members of these families had complete freedom. They were entitled to engage in any business, follow any profession, and join any monastery or work on their own lands. Although they were known as tenants, they could not be evicted from their lands at the whim of estate holders. Some tenant farmers were quite wealthy.

Kham and Amdo regions had, since early times, remained in numerous and contiguous compact societies, or social groups. Similar to Central Tibet, the economic mainstay of the people living in these areas were farming and pastoral nomadism. These areas were administered either by a chief lama or by a chieftain, or by both. They held their posts hereditarily. Many of them, however, enjoyed recognition from the Central Government of Tibet based in Lhasa. As regards the high lamas of the monastic institutions, the process of identifying their reincarnations was mostly undertaken by the Lhasa Government. The final degree for the religious education of all senior lamas, in particular, must be obtained from the three Great Monastic Seats in Lhasa, and this recognition from the central monasteries is considered the highest in the academic lives of lamas and tulkus. The other important posts of the respective monasteries were also appointed on the same basis. There were nearly 4,000 monasteries in Kham and Amdo regions, and each of these monasteries had its own, permanent estate. If we draw a map of these estates over which the monasteries exercised authority, we can say with absolute certainty that there was not a single area in Kham and Amdo that did not fall under the administrative jurisdiction of the monastic estates.

The 13th Dalai Lama had abolished the system of demanding free transport from the local land-holding peasants by officials travelling on duty and had fixed charges for the use of horses, mules and yaks. The 14th Dalai Lama went one step further and ordered that in future

no transport service should be demanded without the special sanction of the government. He also increased the rates to be paid for transport services.

Foreigners like Charles Bell, Hugh Richardson, and Heinrich Harrier, who lived and worked in independent Tibet, were impressed by the average standard of living of ordinary Tibetans, which they said was higher than in many Asian countries. Famine and starvation were unheard of in Tibet until after the Chinese invasion. There were, of course, years of poor harvests and crop failures. But people could easily borrow from the buffer stock held by the district administrations, monasteries, aristocrats and rich farmers.

When the 14th Dalai Lama assumed the throne, he constituted a reform committee to introduce fundamental land reforms, but the Chinese communists, fearing that these would take the wind out of their sails, prevented His Holiness the Dalai Lama from carrying out his proposed reforms. In his autobiography, *My Land and My People*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama writes, "I managed to make some fundamental reforms. I appointed a Reforms Committee of fifty members, lay and monk officials and representatives of the monasteries, and a smaller standing committee to examine all the reforms that were needed and report to the larger body, and thence to me."

In 1959, after his flight to freedom, His Holiness the Dalai Lama re-established his government in India and initiated a series of democratic reforms. A popularly-elected body of people's representatives, the parliament-in-exile, was constituted. In 1963 a detailed draft constitution for future Tibet was promulgated. Despite strong opposition, the Dalai Lama insisted on the inclusion of a clause empowering the Tibetan parliament to revoke his executive powers by a majority of two-thirds of its total members in consultation with the Supreme Court, if this was seen to be in the highest interests of the

nation.

In 1990 further democratic changes were introduced by increasing the strength of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (ATPD) — the de facto parliament — from 12 to 46. It was given more constitutional powers such as the election of Kalons (ministers), who were previously appointed directly by the Dalai Lama. The Supreme Justice Commission was set up in 1992 to look into people's grievances against the Administration.

In 2001 the Tibetan parliament, on the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, amended the exile Tibetan constitution to provide for the direct election of the Kalon Tripa (the chairman of the Cabinet or Kashag) by the exile population. Since the establishment of the new system the Tibetan exiles have elected the Kalon Tripa two times.

Years in exile have also seen the growth of a strong and vibrant Tibetan civil society with its own distinct voice and vision. The emergence of NGOs like the Tibetan Youth Congress, the Tibetan Women's Association, the Tibetan National Democratic Party, Gu-Chu-Sum, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy and many others in the fields of education, health, culture and environment, have strengthened the roots of democracy in exile and have also served as a forum for the training of future leaders. The degree of the openness of the exile Tibetan community is reflected by the fact that in the late 1970's a Tibetan Communist Party appeared on the exile Tibetan scene.

Looking to future Tibet, in February 1992 the Dalai Lama announced *The Guidelines for Future Tibet's Polity and the Basic Features of its Constitution*, wherein he stated that he would not "play any role in the future government of Tibet, let alone seek the Dalai Lama's traditional political position". The future government of Tibet, the

Dalai Lama said, would be elected by the people on the basis of adult franchise.

In the 10 March 2003 statement, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said, “It is necessary to recognise that the Tibetan freedom struggle is not about my personal position or well-being. As early as in 1969 I made it clear that it is up to the Tibetan people to decide whether the centuries-old institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not. In 1992 in a formal announcement I stated clearly that when we return to Tibet with a certain degree of freedom I would not hold any office in the Tibetan government or any other political position. However, as I often state, till my last day I will remain committed to the promotion of human values and religious harmony. I also announced then that the Tibetan Administration-in-Exile should be dissolved and that the Tibetans in Tibet must shoulder the main responsibility of running the Tibetan government. I have always believed that in the future Tibet should follow a secular and democratic system of governance. It is, therefore, baseless to allege that our efforts are aimed at the restoration of Tibet’s old social system. No Tibetan, whether in exile or in Tibet, has any desire to restore old Tibet’s outdated social order. On the contrary, the democratisation of the Tibetan community started soon upon our arrival in exile. This culminated in the direct election of our political leadership in 2001. We are committed to continue to take vigorous actions to further promote democratic values among the ordinary Tibetans.”

Part Four: One China, Two Communist Parties

(Issued on 19 July 2008)

Two Different Chinese Responses

Some senior Chinese officials complain, based on what they term as His Holiness the Dalai Lama's "contradictory statements", that there seems to be two Dalai Lamas. The same mystery overwhelms us. There seems to be two Chinese Communist Parties, as well. This is perhaps in line with China's own present political arrangement of one country, two systems. One Chinese Communist Party seems warm, responsive and transparent as judged by the swift manner President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao handled the earthquake disaster in Sichuan. China's international image was immeasurably enhanced by China's efficient organisation of its rescue and relief efforts.

The other Chinese Communist Party is tight-fisted, paranoid and caught in a Cultural Revolution time warp. For example, to deal with the Tibet protests, the authorities decided to wage "a people's war". For a responsible government of a major power in the world to "wage a war" against its "own people" is out of tune with the tradition of China's own revolutionary past and certainly out of step with civilised behaviour. Consider, beyond the glare of the international media spotlight, the Chinese authorities, without remorse and mercy, cracked down on peaceful protestors. They beat the protestors, arrested them, tortured them to obtain confession and imposed long prison terms. While their colleagues elsewhere in Sichuan were desperately trying to save lives, the PLA and PAP in the Tibetan areas of the province were more concerned about arresting Tibetans involved in scattered protests, which continue to this day, than saving the lives of the quake victims.

The vanguard of the “people’s war” is the People’s Armed Police (PAP). Its main mandate is to ensure domestic security. The PAP’s total strength is 800,000. The members of the PAP were the ones, in their blue track-suit, who accompanied the Olympic torch-relay around the world. The PAP is the organisation that has been charged with cracking down on the peaceful Tibetan protestors. Against the backdrop of the Tibet protests, the news Bulletin of the PAP in April issued a call to arms. The issue said, “The drums of war are sounding, a decisive battle is at hand. For the sake of the Chinese nation’s image and for the honour of the People’s Armed Police, let us not forget our duty.”

In contrast, during the earthquake catastrophe, the Chinese people were shown the face of the good Chinese Communist Party. The official response to this disaster was immediate, sincere and effective. Despite a ban by the Propaganda Department on reporters from travelling to the earthquake zone, no punishment was meted out to the media organisations which ignored the ban. In fact, Chinese reporters rushed to Chengdu to report the disaster and the relief efforts. In the face of this, the order was rescinded. Grassroots organisations and private individuals swung into action to help in the rescue and relief efforts. Private donation efforts raised millions of dollars to help the victims. In the face of public pressure, the authorities held a three-day mourning for the quake victims, a level of mourning matched only by the one given to the likes of Mao Zedong. As Nicholas Kristof said in his op-ed for *The New York Times* on 22 May 2008, the Chinese Communist Party treated its people, this time, as “citizens, not subjects”.

In Sichuan the media is allowed in. In Tibet the media, even now, is strictly barred. In Sichuan the government appeals and gratefully accepts foreign aid. In Tibet, despite the request of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, international medical teams are prohibited

from travelling to the region to treat the injured. “Playing up the response to the earthquake while restricting coverage of repression in Tibet could prove a shrewd move, rather than one that cascades into instability,” writes Philip Taubman of *The New York Times*, reprinted in the *Indian Express*, 26 May 2008.

Why This Discrimination?

This discrimination stems from the fact that in Tibet, the authorities show the ugly face of the Chinese Communist Party to the people. This side of the Chinese Communist Party treats the Tibetans as subjects. There is a long list of what they can or cannot do. The Chinese Communist Party believes that the Tibetans cannot think for themselves. Despite bitter Tibetan opposition, the authorities continue with their “patriotic education” campaign to force Tibetans to express their loyalty to the Party and China and denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In fact, the authorities are determined to go on with the hardline policies, including the Chinese government arrogating to itself the right to choose the reincarnation of Tibetan lamas. All this ignited the current open Tibetan resistance.

The discrimination also stems from the fact that as far as the issue of Tibet is concerned the authorities have allowed the hardliners in the leadership to shape China’s Tibet policy. We have made this case elsewhere in our response. As we have mentioned elsewhere, the uncompromising and unflinching statements from this set of people is a cause for alarm and concern. A senior leader of “Tibet Autonomous Region” in trying to formulate the authorities’ hardline policy to deal with the crisis in Tibet said, “For years we have looked after our people (spies and agents) outside. Now it is time to put them to work (cause destruction to the exile community).”

Class Struggle Over in China, Not in Tibet

Class struggle in Tibet today is alive and kicking. This is based on what the Chinese Communist Party in a letter dated 27 August 1958 said to the Qinghai authorities. This letter is a guideline in how to handle the major uprisings that had erupted amongst the Tibetan tribes. The letter said, “In a society of classes, the issue of nationalities is in essence the issue of class. If you cannot recognise the essence of classes, no effective decision on the issue of nationalities can be taken.”

In China class struggle and socialism have become history. According to a news report filed in the 19 October 2001 issue of *South China Morning Post*, the then Chinese foreign minister, Tang Jiaxuan, upbraided a reporter from Taiwan for calling China “communist”. The Chinese foreign minister said, “This is Shanghai, a big city on Chinese soil. How dare you call us Communist China. Communist China has become history. Such a term no longer exists.” In China the term class struggle also does not exist. In fact, in an effort to burnish Jiang Zemin’s Three Represents theory, businessmen and entrepreneurs are welcomed to be members of the Chinese Communist Party.

In Tibet, the authorities’ struggle toward the “Dalai clique” is framed in terms of class struggle, with no compromise, no retreat and no quarter given or expected. Class struggle is the highest form of struggle. On this struggle depends the very survival of the Chinese Communist Party. From the perspective of the CCP, it is a life-and-death struggle, of you die and I live.

It is in this vein, Zhang Qingli stated, “We are currently in an intense, bloody and fiery struggle with the Dalai clique, a life and death struggle with the enemy.” He also called His Holiness the Dalai Lama “a wolf in sheep’s clothes and a devil with a human face but with a heart of a beast”.

Behind this life-and-death struggle against the Tibetan people are the hardliners in the leadership who have advocated Sinicisation for China's "assimilation problem" of minorities, particularly the Tibetan case. These hardliners have also been responsible for the policy, announced last year, that henceforth the CCP would recognise all the reincarnate lamas of Tibet, which strikes at the very heart of the Tibetan people's beliefs and their value system. These hardliners in the leadership are supported in their views by Meng Jianzhu, the minister for Public Security, who was in Tibet during the crisis to supervise the clampdown, Zhang Qingli, the party secretary in the "Tibet Autonomous Region", and Jampa Phuntsok, the governor of the region.

There are different views within the leadership regarding how to handle the issue of Tibet. Mark Maginer, reporting for the *Los Angeles Times* in a report that appeared on 5 June, says, "And Beijing is making more use of good-cop, bad-cop tactics. On the issue of Tibet, for instance, some arms of the government decried the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, even as other parts called for negotiations."

That there are two schools of thought in the Chinese central government on how to handle the issue of Tibet is admitted by the Chinese state media. For example, China's official news agency, Xinhua, in its commentary by Yi Yan, republished on its website, www.chinaview.cn of 1 July 2008 admits this. The commentary is titled *The Choice for Dalai Lama*. It says, "If the Dalai Lama wrongly gauges the support the West gives him, and takes for granted the good intentions of the central government, or tries to seek a prey that is beyond reason, or even encourage and instigate his radical followers to engage in violence, once again, Beijing will surely be enraged. Under that circumstance, it will force the central government to give up on him, once and all. There exists such advocacy in the central government

now.”

This is an extraordinary admission to make. During the student demonstration on Tiananmen Square in 1989, the prime minister, Zhou Ziyang, was forced out of office because he suggested that there were two ways of thinking in the leadership regarding how to deal with the protesting students.

Policy differences over Tibet at the highest leadership level are confirmed by leakages to the media. Michael Sheridan of the Sunday Times on 13 July said that a more hardline approach to deal with the issue of Tibet was published in the April and May editions of the *Xizang Tongxun*, a classified publication restricted to party officials. He said translations of these were handed over to his paper in Hong Kong. In these documents, Michael Sheridan says, “Internal Communist Party documents have revealed that China is planning a programme of harsh political repression in Tibet despite a public show of moderation to win over world opinion before the Olympic Games next month.”

“A campaign of ‘re-education’ has been outlined in confidential speeches to meetings of Communist party members by Zhang Qingli, the hardline party secretary of Tibet...

“Zhang has admitted behind closed doors that the Chinese authorities in Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, face ‘a tide of encirclement’ and that anti-Chinese violence in March ‘destroyed social stability.’” He has warned that “final victory” is far off.

Our question is, why has the hardliners managed to define China’s Tibet policy and not the moderates?

China’s two top leaders’ view on the issue of Tibet and the role of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is widely divergent from the

views held by the hardliners. As mentioned elsewhere, during a visit to Laos at the end of March, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao told the international media, “Provided that the Dalai Lama renounces claims of independence, and in particular exerts his influence to stop the present violent activities in Tibet, and acknowledges that Taiwan and Tibet are inseparable parts of China, we can continue to resume dialogues with him.”

In late March, President Hu Jintao in a call to President Bush said, “If the Dalai Lama truly relinquishes independent Tibet claims, and stops splitting the motherland, and especially stops inciting and planning the violent and illegal actions in Tibet and thereby harming the Beijing Olympics and acknowledges that Tibet and Taiwan are inseparable parts of China, we agree to continue dialogue with him.”

During a visit to Japan later, Chinese President Hu Jintao said his government’s attitude to the dialogue with the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama was sincere. President Hu Jintao, as reported by Reuters on 7 May 2008, speaking after a summit with Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, said China’s recent talks with representatives of Tibet’s exiled Buddhist leader the Dalai Lama had been “conscientious and serious” and said that the two sides had agreed to continue contacts.

Commenting on the attitude of these two leaders of China to the Tibet issue, Cao Xin, a political analyst, says, “The response of China’s two topmost leaders reflect the reality that Tibetan Buddhism has powerful and perpetual influence on the Tibetan people, and it is also a reality that the Dalai Lama has profound influence on the Tibetan people as the religious leader of Tibetan Buddhism.”

The writer says, “Based on the above-mentioned realities, some pragmatic policy changes should be considered. First, we need to

distinguish between the majority of Tibetan religious believers and the government-labelled 'Dalai clique'. Given that the Dalai Lama is the only religious leader the Tibetan devotees recognise, religious faith and worship toward him cannot be handled simply as a typical political issue and should not be labelled as splitting the Motherland. This is in accordance with the policy of regional autonomy, and we must uphold it as the bottom line.”

Cao Xin wrote this commentary in 2 April issue of *Southern Weekend*, an influential newspaper published out of Guangdong, the most dynamic of the Chinese provinces.

The tragedy is that the accommodating views of China's top leaders and the thoughtful analysis of these views are virtually shut out from and certainly drowned by Xinhua's shrill and almost hysterical denunciations. If name-calling could be a substitute for real policy, then Zhang Qingli could bag the Olympic Gold hands down in this category. If Zhang Qingli and his ilk think that shouting down people, rather than listening to their concerns and addressing them, is the right way to go about tackling China's Tibet mess he and his like are doing no service either to his country or to those under whom they serve. Replicating policies in Tibet that have spectacularly failed elsewhere is inviting disaster.

The Question of the “Splittist” Flag

On 31 March, Xinhua published a commentary by its writer, Cao Kai, entitled Dalai Lama a Politician, Not a Simple Monk. Apart from regurgitating the usual allegations, the writer says, “To make this government in exile status (sic) more credible, the Dalai Lama and his supporters produced a ‘Tibetan national anthem’ and ‘Tibetan national flag’, which had never existed before 1959.”

These days the Chinese authorities call the Tibetan flag by various names. It is condemned as a “reactionary”, “splittist” or “separatist” flag. It is sometimes called “the flag of the Tibetan government-in-exile”. The Chinese state media also refer to it as the “Tibetan independence flag”. Sometimes the Chinese authorities refer to it as the “snow lion flag”.

One of the strange complaints of the Chinese authorities against the Tibetan exiles’ use of the Tibetan flag, as implicit in these words of frustration and outrage, is that the Tibetan refugees had not sought permission from the Chinese authorities for the use of the motif of the flag: the snow mountain and the snow lion. A report that appeared in *China Daily* on 11 April and reprinted in Xinhuanet.com the next day says this about the use of the snow mountain and snow lion. “They also used the image of our pure snow mountain and the just dauntless lion to make their so-called ‘snow lion flag’, a cunning tactic to deceive kind-hearted people.”

The Origins of the Tibetan National Flag

The Tibetan national flag is not an exile Tibetan invention. It has, in its various incarnations down the centuries, become a part of the Tibetan identity. The Tibetan flag with the snow mountain and the two snow lions existed long before communist China invaded Tibet. The origins of the Tibetan national flag go back to the time of King Songtsen Gampo in the 6th century. The various regiments of his army used different banners. One particular regiment, the Yu-ru To, had a standard emblazoned with a pair of snow lions facing each other. Another regiment, the Ya-Ru Ma, had a battle standard with a single snow lion. The Tsang-Ru Lag regiment had an upright snow lion, leaping toward the sky. This tradition of having the snow lion in the banners and battle standards of the Tibetan army continued down the centuries till the Great 13th Dalai Lama standardised the present

flag, which since then became the standard around which the Tibetan people rallied.

The Tibetan Flag's International Appearance

The September 1934 issue of the *National Geographic Magazine* devoted a feature on the flags of the many nations of the world. One flag mentioned is the Tibetan national flag. We reproduce below both the cover of that particular issue of the magazine.

“With its towering mountain of snow, before which stand two snow lions fighting for a flaming gem, the flag of Tibet, is one of the most distinctive of the East,” says the September 1934 issue of the *National Geographic* magazine.

The Tibetan flag's first appearance at an international gathering, as far as we know, was at the Asian Relations Conference held in New Delhi in 1947. In a letter to Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru, independent India's first prime minister, said, “You know that there is going to be an Inter-Asian Relations Conference in the last week of March in Delhi. This Conference has assumed an unusual importance and it is going to be very representative indeed. Almost every country of Asia from the west to the east and south, including the Arab countries, Tibet, Mongolia and the countries of South-East Asia as well as the Asian Republics of the Soviet Union will be represented by leading men.”

Tibet's participation at the Asian Relations Conference is discussed at length in a new book, *Tibet: The Lost Frontier*, by Claude Arpi. The Indian invitation to Tibet for the conference was received. “Sometime in early March 1947, the delegation departed from Lhasa,” writes Claude Arpi. “They journeyed first to Dromo in the Chumbi Valley, where they were joined by a messenger of the Kashag

bringing a Tibetan flag, which they were requested to hoist during the Conference.”

Tibet: The Lost Frontier says, “The plenary session of the conference was held in the Purana Qila. The leaders of each of the thirty-two delegations were sitting on the dais behind a plate with the name of the country and the flag of the country. Tibet had its won flag with the snow-covered mountains and the two snow lions representing the dual powers of the Dalai Lama. There was a huge map of Asia behind the delegates on which Tibet was shown as a separate country.”

The Tibetan delegation composed of eight members, led by Teiji Sampho Tsewang Rigzin, and assisted by Khenchung Lobsang Wangyal, met with Mahatma Gandhi and presented him with *Khatas*, greeting scarves. Gandhi-ji admired the fine silk and on enquiry where the silk was made, he was told it was made in China. Gandhi-ji gently advised the members of the Tibetan delegation that Tibet should start making its own silk.

Sampho Tenzin Dhondup, the son of the head of the Tibetan delegation, writes in his memoir, *My Life's Turbulent Waves*, “For the actual session, two seats were reserved on the dais for the two Tibetan delegates with a complete picture of Tibetan national flag on the front part of their table. A picture of the Tibetan national flag was also displayed on the table of the two Tibetan ambassadors. The picture depicted the snowy mountain with a pair of snow lions facing each other. And on the table was a wooden tablet inscribed ‘TIBET’ in emboldened English.” Reproduced below are two photos of the historic event.

Mao and the Tibetan National Flag

Even Mao Zedong had heard about the existence of the Tibetan national flag. In his address to the parliamentarians at the 4th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet held from 18 to 19 November 2005 in Edinburgh, His Holiness said, "Let's now come to the Tibetan national flag. I think some of the present Chinese officials when they see this flag (pointing at the Tibetan national flag) they become angry. They feel it is the sign of a splittist. When I was in China, on one occasion, Chairman Mao asked me whether we have a national flag or not. With a little hesitation, I said, 'Yes.' Then, Chairman Mao encouraged me by saying, 'You should keep the Tibetan national flag along with the red flag.'"

In his biography, *A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Political Life and Times of Bapa Phuntso Wangye*, the founder of the Tibetan Communist Party, touches on this incident. He recounts, "Mao perceived that the Dalai Lama was concerned by his question and immediately told him, 'That is no problem. You may keep your national flag.'"

Part Five: Monasteries, Weapons and Terrorism

(Issued on 13 October 2008)

As the Tibetan protests — popularly known as the March incident — unfolded on the Roof of the World, the Chinese government relied on brute force to silence the Tibetan voices, leading to a large number of peaceful Tibetan demonstrators being arbitrarily arrested, beaten, tortured, killed and disappeared. In order to justify their heinous actions, various functionaries of the Chinese establishment have been spewing various and sundry lies to pass the buck of the unrest in Tibet to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his exile Administration. China has, employing the full force of its state media and the Public Security Department, ratcheted up its external propaganda efforts to sell its lies to — or rather misinform — the international community that “large quantities of weapons (guns, knives, spears, etc.) have been hidden in the monasteries of Tibet, and these bear evidence of the violent nature of the Tibetan people”.

In a press meeting held on 1 April, the spokesperson of China’s Public Security Department, Wu Heping, said, “We have found a considerable number of weapons, including guns, in some of the monasteries in Lhasa.”

Again, the 10 April issue of *Sichuan Daily* carried a long story — which appears to be nothing more than a trumped-up one — about the authorities having conducted a raid on the Kirti monastery [located in Ngaba (Ch. Aba) Tibetan Autonomous County in Sichuan Province] and, as a result of it, their having confiscated 30 guns and 33 swords from that monastery. The piece also alleges that these weapons testify to the Tibetan people’s indulgence in violence.

In reality, all these constitute nothing but a mad behaviour

on the part of the Chinese military to blame the Tibetan people for something they are not responsible at all. In a frenzy of madness, they have committed what can be described as an aggravated burglary by making their intrusive entry into the Tibetan monasteries and taking away swords, spears, or other symbolic implements closely associated with the pantheon of wrathful deities — tutelary or protective — belonging to the Tibetan spiritual world. In order to link the Tibetans to violence, they have also forcibly taken away explosives bought by Tibetan labourers with due permission from the relevant authorities for construction purposes.

Monastic institutions — as everybody knows — are not just the centres of learning for the ecclesiastical community; these are also the main repositories of the ancient artefacts and cultural relics of Tibet. Moreover these monasteries are, for the Tibetan people, the ultimate places for seeking spiritual refuge. A monastery has assembly halls, temples, libraries, printing houses, chapels housing protective deities and fierce spirits, etc., all of which have their own unique identities and functions. For example, Protector Shrine is the place where a devotee makes his or her offerings to the protective deities. Here, one will come across numerous wrathful images of Dharma-protecting and guardian deities. Each of these deities carries symbolic implements such as swords and spears, which is unique to — and identifiable with — that particular deity. These implements are attributed to the concerned deities by historical tradition; it is not something that came into being after the communist Chinese set foot in Tibet.

If the Chinese government is audacious enough to claim — based on these symbolic implements of the protective deities they have confiscated from the monasteries — that the Tibetan clergy is violence-oriented, then what do they have to say about the Buddhist temples or monasteries in China, where the sculpted images of the Four Worldly Kings, or the Jikas Gods, holding symbolic implements

like swords, bow and arrow, long spears, etc., are hung on the doors?

Similarly, in most of the Chinese monasteries, images of Guangong (a historical warrior figure) are erected as local deities or guardians. These images also carry symbolic implements such as long swords and spears. Do these, then, not indicate that Hashangs — or the Chinese priests — are making preparations for violence?

Looking back into Tibetan history, there were numerous incidents where Tibetan hunters and butchers had pledged to give up their profession of killing, or slaughtering, animals by wilfully offering their weapons such as guns and knives to the monasteries. Likewise, there were many cases where the two feuding communities, families, or even individuals, had decided to end their animosity by offering their weapons to the mediating monasteries. The monasteries, in turn, accept these weapons gladly so that these do not fall in the hands of wrong persons and store — or sometimes display — them in the chapels housing protective deities and fierce spirits as a way of encouraging other people to tread the same path of non-violence. This tradition among the Tibetan people is indeed laudable. However, the Beijing government presents these very weapons looted from the monastic stores as evidence before the international community to prove that the Tibetan monks are harbouring an evil desire to revolt against China. This behaviour of the Chinese government is — far from being a civilised one — akin to the behaviour of a brigand.

In sum, the Chinese government — while looking down upon, or showing scant respect to, Tibet's unique culture, customs and traditions, etc. — goes about doing anything that it feels like doing by conducting raids on the Tibetan monasteries and taking away the treasured possessions, including the statues of deities adorned with expensive jewellery, of these monasteries. Still, Beijing blames the Tibetan clergy for violence, which, in fact, was a peaceful expression of

their discontentment. Devoid of truth and reason, this whole drama of having found large quantities of weapons in Tibetan monasteries — as if these monasteries are preparing for a war against the Chinese regime — is nothing but an exaggerated account of the current unrest in Tibet.

TYC and Al Qaida

The state media launched a barrage of propaganda that tried to link some parts of the “Dalai clique” with Al-Qaida and the East Turkestan Independence Movement. For example, in the first week of May, a Tibetologist who goes by the name of Liu Hongji wrote a piece in Xinhua, the official news agency, in which he stated, “The TYC has become a terrorist organisation as concepts of violence have taken root within it...The group’s shadow was evident when the police confiscated a large number of guns and ammunition in some monasteries in China’s Tibetan-inhabited regions after the March 14 riot,” the scholar said.

We cannot speak on behalf of the Tibetan Youth Congress. The TYC is more than capable of speaking for itself. We are making these comments in so far as China includes the TYC in its broad and all-encompassing term, “the Dalai clique”. To call a democratically-elected organisation a “terrorist” with links with Al-Qaida is based on the assumption that those who hear this claim are total fools or is an attempt to harden the Chinese leadership’s attitude to the Tibetans. Whatever the real reason for making such absurd claims, the truth is that the TYC is based in India, an open and plural society where free flow of information is cherished. This allows the concerned authorities of India to make an informed judgement of organisations that flout, or does not flout, the laws of the host country. Till now, the Government of India in its considered judgement has not declared the TYC as a terrorist outfit and within the exile Tibetan community the youth body is recognised as a respected organisation.

Begging More Questions than Answers

A section of the Chinese leadership's shrill denunciation of the TYC as a terrorist organisation stands in sharp contrast to the leadership's dismissive attitude to the same organisation in the early 1980's. In those days, the TYC was dismissed as a "fly flapping its wings against the king of the mountains".

Why has a humble fly metamorphosed into a "terrorist" organisation in the eyes of the Chinese leaders?

The answer lies with the hardliners in the leadership. They want China, the whole leadership and the Chinese people, to recognise the "Dalai clique" as a "terrorist" organisation so that they could deal with it accordingly.

But before the wiser section of the leadership and the Chinese people as a whole are convinced by both the arguments and the evidence produced by the hardliners, they need answers to some questions.

The first question is, if the arms found in the monasteries are truly smuggled by TYC into Tibet under the very noses of the Public Security Ministry, the PLA, the PAP and China's well-placed informers, why weren't transaction prevented in the first place? China has put in place the tightest restrictions on the movement of people, ideas and goods anywhere else in the world. Why did the shipment of such large catchment happen in the first place? Isn't this a major dereliction of duty on the part of China's security forces?

Let us for the sake of argument assume that the TYC was smart enough to ship these arms under the noses of the ever vigilant Chinese security forces into Tibet, why were these let to be allowed into the monasteries without the security forces noticing? The monasteries in

Tibet are placed under intrusive surveillance and why were the presence of these weapons in the monasteries not known to the authorities? And why bring out these weapons only when protests took place in Tibet. Isn't it the duty of the security forces to catch "criminals" and expose their "crime" as and when they happen? Why wait this long?

Where were these weapons made? Usually, the brand of the weapons would give clear indication of the source of the weapons. Why has not the spokesperson for the Public Security Ministry informed the international media where the weapons came from?

PLA Soldiers in Monks' Robes

The Chinese government accuses His Holiness the Dalai Lama of being "a wolf in monk's robes." Ever since the 1959 Tibetan Uprising, the PLA soldiers have been in the habit of doing exactly this: posing as Tibetan monks in order to sow dissension, create distractions and to serve as agents provocateur to incite un-suspecting Tibetan masses into actions that justify quick, military response.

For example, in a book (published in 1992 by the DIIR) about the suffering of the Tibetans in Chinese prisons, a former treasurer of Namgyal Monastery, Venerable Gyaltzen writes that during the 1959 Uprising in Lhasa, Chinese soldiers dressed as Tibetans climbed the Chakpori, next to the Potala Palace and burned incense and strung prayer flags so as to give the impression to the Tibetan public that the Tibetan side had won in the fighting in Lhasa. This was also done to draw out the Tibetan fighters from their hideouts to make it easier for the PLA soldiers to shoot at them.

On 5 March 1988, Tibetans staged a massive protest demonstration on the streets of Lhasa. At the time, the Chinese

government ordered a large number of Chinese officials and soldiers to disguise as Tibetan monks and lay Tibetans and deployed them throughout the city. This is based on an account given by Venerable Bhagdro, a former political prisoner.

During the 1989 demonstrations in Lhasa, the Chinese government came up with the strategy of waging a four-pronged war on Tibetan protestors. As part of this strategy, about 300 Chinese agents and spies were planted within the Tibetan clergy and general public. On the morning of 5 March, they were made to go to the Barkhor and other troubled areas of Lhasa to help the regional and city public security bureaus in deliberately creating disturbances. Their plans included the following: 1) to set aflame the great prayer flag — *Gaden Darnyon and Shar Kyareng Darchen* — erected at the north-east of the Jokhang Temple, 2) to encourage the local Tibetan residents to destroy and loot the Lhasa Municipality's Grain Store and the Tibet-Gansu Joint Emporia. This information comes from a book written by Tang Daxian. The book is called *The Bayonet Pointed Directly at Lhasa* and has been translated into Tibetan and published by the DIIR in 1992.