

FROM THE HEART
OF THE PANCHEN LAMA
(Major Speeches and a petition: 1962–1989)

Department of Information and International Relations

Central Tibetan Administration

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For the complete text of *A poisoned arrow*, contact Tibet Information Network;
email: tin@tibetinfo.net

Published by:
The Department of Information and International Relations
Central Tibetan Administration
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala - 176215
India
e-mail: diir@tibet.net

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Chinese.

Foreword

The Tenth Panchen Lama spent his entire life as a hostage of the Chinese government. While the Chinese authorities sought to use him as a rubber stamp to justify their occupation of Tibet and undermine the influence of the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama himself was becoming more and more bitter about Chinese rule in Tibet as he saw the misery, privation and repression suffered by the Tibetan people. He knew he had to speak up for his people. He also knew that doing so would enrage the Chinese authorities and imperil his safety. He had a very delicate balancing act to do.

In 1962 he made the first major criticism of Chinese policy in Tibet. It came in the form of “70,000-Character Petition”, submitted to Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. The petition recorded the mass starvation and imprisonment in Tibet, which he pointed out, was unheard of in Tibet before the Chinese “liberation”. It went on to record the destruction of 97 percent of monasteries in the Tibet Autonomous Region and 98 or 99 percent in the Tibetan areas incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan. This statement clearly shows that the destruction of the Tibetan religion was more or less completed before the Cultural Revolution.

When Mao Zedong saw this report, he denounced it as a “poisoned arrow shot at the Party by reactionary feudal lords.” The Chinese government kept the petition as a State secret. Two years later, the Panchen Lama was condemned as the enemy of the people and spent nine years in prison and five under house arrest.

The outside world had heard about this petition. But no one had seen it till 1996 when a copy of this petition reached the Tibet Information Network (TIN) in London. Only one page was missing from this copy. The TIN, in turn, translated the document into English and published it under the title *A Poisoned Arrow: The Secret Report of the 10th Panchen Lama*.

Prior to this, the Department of Information and International Relations in Dharamsala came upon the Panchen Lama’s another landmark criticism of China’s treatment of Tibet. This was a statement he had made in March 1987 at the TAR Standing Committee Meeting of the National People’s Congress in Beijing. In it, he repeated many of the criticisms he had made in his 1962 petition.

Excerpts from these and three other statements are compiled in this book. The Panchen Lama’s statements destroy the myth that China’s rule in Tibet has benefitted the people of Tibet. His statements should open the eyes of the Chinese government to the fact that a solution to the Tibetan problem could be found only if it respects the Tibetan people’s aspirations and wishes.

Secretary
Department of Information and International Relations
Central Tibetan Administration
Dharamsala
India

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The Panchen Lama

A life on the tightrope

The Tenth Panchen Lama, Panchen Lobsang Trinley Lhundrup Choekyi Gyaltzen, was born in 1938 in the village of Karang Bidho in Amdo, northeastern Tibet. Almost from the time of his birth, he was caught in the politics of China's ambitions toward Tibet and Tibet's stubborn resistance to the Chinese political game aimed at undermining the authority of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government.

After the death of the Ninth Panchen Lama in 1937, the Tibetan Government and Tashilhunpo Monastery organized searches for the reincarnation, which led to the finding of three candidates: two in Kham and one in Amdo. The candidate in Amdo was born Gonpo Tseten and ordained into monkhood under the name of Lobsang Trinley Lhundrup Choekyi Gyaltzen. This child was later to become the Tenth Panchen Lama.

However, considerable complications preceded his recognition. In 1941, a section of the Ninth Panchen Lama's pro-China attendants recognised this child without consulting the Dalai Lama. But a reincarnation of Panchen Lama's stature would not be accepted publicly in Tibet unless the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government confirmed his authenticity. And the Tibetan Government wanted to see all the traditional tests with religious ceremonies performed before confirming recognition. During the interregnum, the Guomindang Government of China exploited the situation to gain a foothold in Tibet.

With the fall of the Guomindang in 1949, the Communists stepped in and actively exploited the young Panchen Lama for their political gains. The Panchen Lama was only 11 when the PLA commander in Lanzhou sent a telegram in his name to Mao Zedong, requesting the "liberation of Tibet." In reply, Mao wrote, "The people of Tibet have great love for the motherland. They are opposed to foreign imperialists and willing to join the new untied, egalitarian and powerful nation of the PRC."

In pursuance of its divide-and-rule policy, the Communist Government of China tried to bring up the Panchen Lama as a rival to the Dalai Lama. In 1951, the Panchen Lama was invited to Beijing to coincide with the arrival there of a Tibetan delegation, which was eventually forced to sign the infamous "Seventeen Point Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet". While in Beijing, Mao counselled the young Panchen Lama to uphold the Chinese Communist Party, the People's Government of China and the People's Liberation Army in Tibet. The Panchen Lama was forced to send a telegram to the Dalai Lama, stressing the importance of implementing the "Seventeen Point Agreement under the leadership of the People's Government of China." At the same time, China stated that the "Agreement" would be signed only after the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government finalized the status of the Panchen Lama. Military invasion of the remaining part of Tibet would be carried out if the "Agreement" failed to materialize, the Chinese threatened.

In 1951 representatives of Tashilhunpo Monastery appealed for the Dalai Lama's recognition of the new Panchen Lama. The Dalai Lama bestowed his recognition with the title of Tenzin Trinley Jigme Choekyi Wangchuk. Following the recognition, the Panchen Lama arrived in Lhasa on 28 April 1952, escorted by PLA soldiers. During his brief stay in Lhasa, the Panchen Lama had two rounds of audience with the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama's impression of the Panchen Lama during those meetings is recorded in his memoirs, *My Land and My People*. The Dalai Lama states that the Panchen Lama "showed a genuine respect for my position, as the customs of Buddhism requires towards a senior monk. He was correct and pleasant in his manners—a true Tibetan, and I had a firm impression of unforced goodwill. I felt sure that left to himself he would have whole-heartedly supported Tibet against inroads of China".

On his way from Lhasa to his monastery in Shigatse, the people of Tibet welcomed the youthful Panchen Lama with full devotion. But they were displeased by the presence of Chinese soldiers in his entourage.

At Tashilhunpo, the Panchen Lama resumed his spiritual training and received all the special teachings of Tashilhunpo monastery from Gyenak Rinpoche. He was tutored also by a hermit-practitioner, Kachen Ang Nyima, from the southern Tibetan region of Dzonga. When Ang Nyima passed away, the Panchen Lama took Kachen Nyulchu Rinpoche Lobsang Choephel as his spiritual teacher.

In 1956 the Panchen Lama opened what he called a “technical school” in Shigatse. The school taught Hindi, Tibetan and Chinese to its 300-odd students, all of whom came from upper-class families in the Tsang region. It also gave training in photography, driving, horse-riding, shooting and other military and surveillance skills. In 1959, soon after the flight of the Dalai Lama to India, the school bought 96 horses to bring the total to 150. The horses were bought on the pretext that they would be supplied to the PLA to help it crush the last pockets of “reactionary resistance”. However, the Chinese suspected that the school was aimed at igniting rebellion and then retreating to India. This was one of the charges brought against the Panchen Lama when he was later arrested.

After the flight of the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama was appointed Acting Chairman of the “TAR Preparatory Committee”. In 1969 he was appointed Vice-chairman of the National People’s Congress. Despite these appointments, the Panchen Lama remained a steadfast Tibetan nationalist. He was deeply disturbed to find that China had jailed hundreds of thousands of Tibetan government officials, high lamas, scholars, community leaders and people from other walks of life. He complained that the Chinese authorities were terrorizing the whole populace of Tibet. The authorities brushed aside his protest by saying that such mistakes were inevitable in all reform movements.

In 1962, the Panchen Lama, in his capacity as Vice-chairman of the National People’s Congress, visited many parts of Tibet. He wrote his impression of the visit in what came to be known as the 70,000 Character Petition.

One evening, in May 1962, the Panchen Lama invited his tutor to his residence in Beijing to tell him that he was going to submit the petition to the Chinese leadership. The alarmed tutor prostrated to the Panchen Lama and said, “His Holiness the Dalai Lama was forced to go into exile to work for the cause of the Buddha, Dharma and sentient beings. You are now the only person the Tibetan people in Tibet can look up to. Should anything happen to you, who else can they turn to?” With tears rolling down his cheeks, the tutor beseeched him not to submit the petition. The Panchen Lama, however, explained that he had an unavoidable responsibility to work for the people of Tibet.

On 18 May 1962, the Panchen Lama met Premier Zhou Enlai and gave him the petition—the original in Tibetan with a Chinese translation. The Panchen Lama urged the authorities to accept the petition in the spirit it was written, which was being an improvement of Tibet’s social, economic and cultural plight. Amongst other things, the petition pointed out, “We have no way of knowing in detail the number of Tibetans who were arrested after the rebellion, but from the appearance of things it may be inferred that the number of people who were locked up reached about ten thousand or more in every area. Therefore, if we say that all these people were the enemy, then we can affirm that hardly anyone is left over among us Tibetans, apart from women, old people, children and a very small number of young men.”

At the meeting place were also present the TAR leaders like Zhang Jinwu, Wang Qimei and Zhang Gouhua. They did not agree with Panchen Lama’s contention and a bitter exchange of words ensued.

The petition was later circulated internally among high-ranking Chinese officials. Mao Zedong, Li Wuhen, Wu Lanfu, Feng Zen and others met the Panchen Lama to discuss this document.

Beijing initially agreed to bring about changes in its work in Tibet. The leaders of the United Front Department came up with four documents to reform its work in Tibet. In August, the Panchen Lama returned to Tibet under the impression that the Chinese leadership was taking

keen interest in his petition and that his efforts to free the Tibetan people from sufferings was bearing fruit.

Then suddenly, Mao Zedong, in a Politburo meeting, criticized the leaders who were supportive of the changes demanded in the Panchen Lama's petition. Taking cue from Mao, some of the lesser leaders made scornful remarks about the Panchen Lama. "By raising his tail, the Panchen is reaching out to the sky", they said. Mao asked Zhang Jinwu, "Are you all nurturing the Panchen as a Tibetan nationality leader? As far as I can see, he is not competent for this position."

When the news of the meeting reached Tibet, the Chinese leaders of the Tibet Work Committee were triumphant. They thought the time had come to make the Panchen Lama pay. In October that year, Tibet Work Committee demanded that the Panchen Lama recant his "blunderous statements". He did not give in. But he was deeply worried about what might become of him. He spent two years immersed in prayers and rituals. He performed divinations and examined his dreams for mystical omens of things to come.

The Panchen Lama further enraged the Chinese leadership in 1964 when he declared before a huge crowd at Shugri Linka, his residence in Lhasa, that he considered the Dalai Lama as his "refuge for this and next life".

In the same year, the Party launched the "Four Cleansing" and "Two Great Education" campaigns. On 18 September, the seventh meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the TAR was convened and during the fourteen days of the meeting, Panchen was bitterly criticized for his 70,000 Character Petition. He was ousted from the post of the Committee's chair and subjected to *thamzing* (struggle session). Later, he was taken to Beijing and placed under house arrest.

The start of the Cultural Revolution saw his plight worsen. In August 1966, the Red Guards struggled, tortured and humiliated him. In 1968, he was formally imprisoned in Beijing's Qin Cheng prison and released only in October 1977.

In a 20-page wall poster, dated 3 March 1979, China's foremost dissident, Wei Jingshen, described the life in Qin Cheng prison as so unbearable that the Panchen Lama, among many other inmates, tried to commit suicide. The Panchen Lama refused nourishment, declaring he did not want to go on living. "You can take my body to the Central Committee," Wei quoted him as having said. The outside world first came to know about the Panchen Lama's re-emergence on 26 February 1978, when the New China News Agency published a report on his appearance at the fifth National Committee of the Chinese Political Consultative Conference meeting in plenary session in Beijing. Till then, even the Tibetans in Tibet did not know whether he was alive or dead.

In 1980 the Panchen Lama was reinstated as Vice-chairman of the National People's Congress. Immediately after his release from prison, the Panchen Lama asked the Chinese authorities for permission to visit Tibet. Permission was granted in June 1982, but elaborate arrangements were put in place to ensure that he did not communicate with "unapproved people".

On reaching Lhasa, he announced, "Tibet is my home and I have a special regard for this land. Although I have not lived here in the past 18 years, my heart has always beaten with those of the people of Tibet. I have always missed Tibet and its people, and have always thought about the welfare of Tibetans." He was to visit Lhasa seven times before his death; and he also toured various parts of Kham and Amdo.

Speaking to a gathering of Tibetans during the Monlam festival in Lhasa in 1985, the Panchen Lama said, "His Holiness the Dalai Lama and I are spiritual friends. There are no differences between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and me. Some people are trying to create discord between us. This will not succeed."

At the TAR Standing Committee meeting of the National People's Congress, held in Beijing in March 1987, the Panchen Lama openly criticized the Chinese Government's policy in

Tibet regarding education, economic development, population transfer and discriminatory treatment of Tibetans.

On 9 January 1989, the Panchen Lama arrived in Shigatse to consecrate the newly-renovated mausoleums of the Fifth through to the Ninth Panchen Lamas. On 24 January 1989, the Panchen Lama stated in Shigatse that Chinese rule in Tibet had brought more destruction than benefit to the Tibetan people. On 28 January 1989, four days after delivering this historic condemnation, the Panchen Lama died at Tashilhunpo Monastery.

The mysterious nature of his sudden death has generated a wealth of speculation. Was he killed or did he die a natural death? What has become increasingly plain since his death is the fact that the Tenth Panchen Lama was a Tibetan nationalist and martyr for the cause of Tibet. Constrained from expressing his thoughts and feelings, imprisoned and reviled for over a decade, he was nevertheless one of the harshest and most courageous critics of Mao's policy in Tibet.

A poisoned arrow

The following is excerpted from the 70,000 Character Petition submitted by the late Panchen Lama on 18 May 1962 to the Chinese government and denounced by Mao Zedong as “the poisoned arrow shot at the Party by reactionary feudal overlords”. Two years later, the Panchen Lama was condemned as the enemy of the people and spent most of the following 14 years in prison or under house arrest. This is reproduced from the full-translated text, as published by the Tibet Information Network, London.

Most respected and honourable Premier,

I respectfully petition: I wish to express my sincere thanks for the fact that although you are extremely busy with many great affairs of state and the well-being of the people at home and abroad, you have looked kindly on your humble servant who has boldly begged for consideration, and have granted me an audience. Putting aside my personal purposes, sincere in the interests of the people and for the reputation of the Party, I would like to use today's rare and excellent opportunity to report major matters concerning Tibet, together with that part which should be reported to the central authorities of some of the bitter circumstances in the Tibetan areas with which I became acquainted by direct and indirect methods when I visited provinces including Yunnan, Sichuan and Qinghai, which have jurisdiction over those areas. I ask that you give these a little consideration in your magnanimous heart as well as to those opinions based on these circumstances that call for more attention in future work policy and to use them as a reference for that future work policy. I entreat you to grant strict guidance and criticism, using the heart of parents correcting a child, in relation to those parts which are inappropriate or unfitting.

The democratic reform campaign, which was carried out in conjunction with suppression of rebellion, was a large-scale, fast-moving, fierce, acute and life-death class struggle, which overturned heaven and earth, and so it was possible for some unavoidable errors and mistakes to arise. However, some unnecessary and disadvantageous mistakes were also made during the campaign. Below, I am humbly going to report about some circumstances of a fundamental nature and some serious problems which are representative in nature, from some materials with which I am acquainted.

On suppression of the rebellion

The Party wisely and properly pointed out that to suppress the rebellion required continuous and concurrent implementation of the three policies of military attack, political winning-over and mobilization of the masses, from start to finish. Of these, concerning the political winning-over of rebels, the first point was to carry out the policy of the “Four Don'ts” (Do not kill, do not lock up, do not struggle against and do not condemn) towards the rebels who came to surrender, making no distinction between the leaders and the masses. The second was to carry out a thorough investigation of the specific circumstances of each individual, making distinction between cases and dealing with each case as generously as possible, and offering them a way out. The third point was to expose the clandestine plans and cunning schemes devised for rebellion by the reactionary factions at home and abroad, to declare the criminality of the rebellion, and to examine whether there were any mistakes and defects in our work which could be used by the rebels for spreading rumours.

However, when these points were implemented:

1. Those who put down their arms and surrendered, having realized and regretted taking the wrong road, were not dealt with completely in accordance with the “Four Don’ts” policy, and many people were fiercely struggled against, arrested and imprisoned, and met with severe attack.
2. When dealing with captured rebels, cadres adopted vengeful, discriminatory, casual and careless methods.
3. (This) caused the rebellion to be large scale, to involve many people, to last a long time, to be stubborn in its stance and to rebel to the end. This caused unnecessary delay in the suppression of the rebellion.

On democratic reform

First, concerning the “Three Anti’s”¹ and the “Two Reactions”² in agricultural areas:

When opposing the rebellion it was correct and necessary to declare the criminality of the rebellion, to give the masses of the working people a through class education, including as to who are our enemies and who are our friends, to stimulate a mood of anti-imperialism, patriotism and hatred towards rebels among the people, so destroying the foundations of the rebellion. As for the investigation of the rebels and others who may or may not have colluded with them, due to the fact that the causes, circumstances and characteristics giving rise to the rebellion in each place, and the causes, circumstances and characteristics causing each person to take part in the rebellion certainly had all sorts of differences, these needed through investigation and review. Therefore, it was very important to completely mobilize the masses, for the cadres to carry out a conscientious and careful analysis, and to deal with every aspect of the situation. But when this was implemented, the holding of a couple of meetings and rapid carrying out of few studies was mistaken for the mobilization of the masses, (we) believed everything the activists said; during the campaign, it was only necessary for there to be a lot of problems created in relation to the rebellion and the cadres thought that the work was deep and detailed, and as a result a great storm blew up. Therefore, the Party’s correct principle of neither letting one criminal go, nor treating a single innocent person unjustly was not completely implemented. There were some people who were labelled as rebels because, during the rebellion, they lived in an area where the rebellion was taking place, went to such an area or, passing through such an area, they stayed there for a short time. As regards relationships with the rebels, they indiscriminately labelled as collaborators with the rebels all those who during 1957 and 1958 had new or old contacts or dealings with people from Kham and Amdo, even those who had provided accommodation for people from Kham and Amdo who were passing through. In summary, the majority of the people whom it was unnecessary to label as rebels and many good people who should not have been labelled were all unjustly labelled, arrested and jailed, their property was confiscated and they were dealt with in the same way as the chief criminals of the rebellion. This made people feel surprised and astonished.

Second, concerning land distribution: When investigation is made into whether or not people were rebels, and whether or not they supported and collaborated with the rebellion, we should acquaint ourselves with the cases conscientiously and thoroughly; in dealing with the cases in accordance with the factual situation. However, as I have just set out above, because the investigation was not thorough, careful or in accordance with the actual situation, this led to many people being given the label “black” and to the range of the attack being too broad, and so

¹ Opposition to the rebellion, corvee labour and slavery

² Reduction of rent and of interest

many households whose property should not have been confiscated did have their property confiscated.

Third, concerning the “Three Anti’s” and the “Two Benefits”³ in the animal herding areas: Once they (cadres) arrived in the herding areas they started the “Three Anti’s” and the “Two Benefits” campaigns. They launched a fierce and acute struggle against many herd owners and wealthy herding people, which led to many of these herd owners and wealthy herding people only thinking about how to preserve their own lives; they were unable to carry out management and breeding of their animals. When mobilizing the herding serfs, the cadres only laid particular stress on educating them to oppose the herd owners and wealthy herding people, and they neglected the necessary education about the “Two Benefits” policy. Moreover, when the herd owners or wealthy herding people made any slight complaint, they were struggled against, and so on. Because in this way, the overall picture was not seen, factors were created on the foundation of the “Two Benefits” policy which were disadvantageous to advancing peace among people and the thriving of livestock.

Fourth, concerning categorization into classes: The Party, based on the actual situation in Tibet, proposed a class distinction between the serf owners’ class and the serf class, which included slaves, forming two large classes. But because this work was a great responsibility and very complicated, it was necessary for cadres to cast aside all prejudices which did not correspond with the established policy. They had to carefully investigate and study each person’s individual background, history, circumstances and stand point, and using the method of seeking truth from facts, rely on the actual situation to assign their class and fully consider the rights and wrongs. They had to take the long term view, deal with things as leniently as possible, and apart from attacking without exception those whom it was necessary to attack, the scope of attacks on the remainder had to be strictly controlled, and they had to win over as many people as possible to our side.

Although this was very important, when it was carried out in many or most areas, cadres did the complete opposite, and gave no thought as to whether the movement was carried out with care and whether the quality was good or bad; they single-mindedly sought to be fierce, fearful and acute. They did not look at whether their attacks were correct or not — what was important was the scale and quantity of those attacks. In the midst of this storm, they put the majority of those who had ever held posts as “geng bao” (similar to minor heads of villages — Chinese translator’s note), “cuo ben” (similar to township heads — Chinese translator’s note), monastery administrators and so on, and categorized them as feudal lords and their agents. But if one were to ask whether these people should have been categorized with the feudal lords and their agents, we can say that they should not all have been categorized in this way. As regards “geng bao” and the “cuo ben”, the situation was different in different places; there were some who obtained a feudal living because of their post and so on, and these people can be counted as agents of feudal lords. But there were some who were not like this, who took their turn at a post, and who were persons suited to the post, entreated and pushed forward by the people themselves; they obtained no advantage and would suffer losses, and were agonized victims of vicious beatings by the bureaucrats. To categorize them with the agents of the feudal lords is to muddle up the divisions between the classes. The situation of monastery administrators was the same.

Fifth, concerning mobilization of the masses and the struggle: When mobilizing the masses, although cadres gathered together the masses and made a report or speech about democratic reform mobilization and so on, the masses understood very little of it. This is

³ Benefitting herdsman and livestock owners

because in every place at grassroots level, there were no documents about democratic reform in the Tibetan language, or only part of the documents was there, or that the documents were there but they were imperfect.

In addition, the cadres primarily put their efforts into producing a group of activists who did not care about benefit or harm, truth or falsity, but were only bold in carrying out an acute and terrifying struggle, and they showed off the quantity of their activists to other people. They said to those people among the masses who had such aspirations, using economic benefit to arouse them “You must indiscriminately look for trouble among and raise more criticisms of the feudal lords and their agents, and even some of the middle-ranking and well-off serfs, you must stand in the front ranks of the struggle; only if you do this, will we be able to confiscate more and will we be able to apportion more property to you”, and so on. When some people said that they had no criticisms, they were given all types of labels, such as “you are a running dog of the feudal lords”, “of the feudal lords’ position”, and they were pressurized.

Two great storms have blown up in the places where democratic reform has been carried out.

The first storm was that where people wanted to carry out struggle, even though those who were being struggled against had committed no especially serious crimes or errors, they fabricated many serious, exaggerated, followed their own inclinations, reversed right and wrong and so on. Not only did they unscrupulously frame people ever more fiercely and sharply, violently, arrogantly, boastfully and excessively, without a shred of evidence, and even unjustly persecuting many good people, but also, the people who did these things were praised and rewarded, truth and falsity was not investigated, and the necessary control was not exercised.

The second storm was that the target of the struggle should be confronted in a careful, clear and conscientious manner with conclusive evidence of his crime, in order to break down his imposing appearance. This certainly was not done. Once the struggle had started, there were some shouts and rebukes, and at the same time there was hair pulling, beating with fists and kicking, pinching people’s flesh, pushing back and forth, and some people even used a large “lunshi” (this is a steel tool shaped like a key which is specifically used for fighting — Chinese translator’s note) and clubs to beat them fiercely. This resulted in bleeding from the seven apertures in the heads of those who were being beaten and in their falling down unconscious and in their limbs being broken; they were seriously injured and there were even some who lost their lives during the struggle.

In this situation, needless to say, those people who had committed crimes, that is, people of the middle and upper strata and the middle and well-off serfs, felt extremely fearful and scared. Many innocent people fled to foreign lands, some who were unable to flee ended up in the unfortunate and terrible situation of throwing themselves into rivers or using weapons to kill themselves.

As regards the livelihood of the masses: Owing to the “Five Winds” appearing in some agricultural areas, to the work of grain collection being done too strictly, to the low level of grain which the masses were permitted to retain, so that there was a barely enough grain for consumption, and also to the fact that some of the masses used grain in an inappropriate way, many families ran out of grain. As regards people complaining, some people complained because they really ran out of grain, and some people complained because they had a little bit of grain left and did not want to let others know about it; there were all kinds of situations.

It was very important on the foundation of enhancing the class consciousness of the masses, to thoroughly and conscientiously carry out overall investigation and review, to provide relief for those households which have run out of grain, not to allow the masses to go hungry, and for those households which have grain not to have to hand it over as collective grain without reason. But some cadres failed to do this, and they assumed that the circumstances in some individual households were representative of those in all households, with the result that some

households took advantage of the government, and some households which had genuinely run out of grain were unable to gain relief. Because at that time there was a shortage of grain, people who lacked grain could not obtain it elsewhere. Consequently, in some places in Tibet, a situation arose where people starved to death. This really should not have happened, it was an awful business and very serious. In the past, although Tibet was a society ruled by dark and savage feudalism, there had never been such a shortage of grain. In particular, because Buddhism was widespread, all people, whether noble or humble, had the good habit of giving help to the poor, and so that people could live solely by begging for food. A situation could not have arisen where people starved to death, and we have never heard of a situation where people starved to death. In Tibet during the two years of 1959 and 1960, free exchange of agricultural and animal herding products more or less ceased. Because of this, those people who worked in animal herding were extremely short of grain, and the peasants were short of meat, butter, salt and soda, which resulted in difficulties in life in the agricultural and animal herding areas. In order to solve these problems in their lives, people had to eat many of their animals, which created conditions disadvantageous to the development of production. At the time of democratic reform, it was forbidden to travel back and forth to transport materials and grain, and people's travel to different places was very restricted. Consequently, the supply of goods which the towns needed and which had to be brought in from the countryside was almost cut off. A lot of surplus grain was also collected from the people in the towns; perhaps collection was excessive, and even grain and *tsampa* contained in *thangkbug* (a small leather bag in which one meal of *tsampa* is kneaded) was collected. Families who secretly concealed a few litres of grain and *tsampa* were struggled against, which appears very petty and mean-spirited. Most households were ransacked, and almost all of the residents' own stores of grain, meat and butter were taken away. Because the government supplies of grain, oil and butter to the cities were not supplied universally and in time, or were not supplied properly, many of the residents were very short of grain; some ran out of grain, and were very short of meat, butter, oil and so on: there was not even any lamp oil. Even firewood could not be bought. People were frightened and anxious and complained incessantly, and they were not content in their work. This made the situation in the city very tense; harm was done both to reputation and in reality. In addition, domestic spinning throughout the area stopped for a period, which had an effect on clothing for the masses.

On Dictatorship:

One of the Party's policy principles is that dictatorship should only be exercised towards rebels who obstinately stick to the wrong course, counter-revolutionaries, and the most reactionary of feudal lords and their agents. ...When this was put into practice in Tibet, most of the people whom it was not necessary to arrest and many good and innocent people were unscrupulously charged with offenses, maligned, and categorized with criminals; this has astounded people of integrity. ...The number of prisoners in the whole of Tibet reached a percentage of the total population which has never been surpassed throughout history.

As regards those formally imprisoned who are in labour reform:

Apart from part of the upper strata who were imprisoned in the Tibet military region and a small number of administrative personnel detained in ordinary prisons who were treated in accordance with the Party and State law, in the majority of other prisons, the personnel and the managing personnel principally responsible did not care about the life and health of the prisoners. In addition, the guards and cadres threatened prisoners with cruel, ruthless and malicious words and beat them fiercely and unscrupulously. Also, prisoners were deliberately transferred back and forth, from the plateau to the lowlands, from freezing cold to very warm, from north to south, up and down, so that they could not accustom themselves to their new environment. Their

clothes and quilts could not keep their bodies warm, their mattresses could not keep out the damp, their tents and building could not shelter them from the wind and rain and the food could not fill their stomachs. Their lives were miserable and full of deprivation, they had to get up early for work and come back late from their work; what's more, these people were given the heaviest and most difficult work, which inevitably led to their strength declining from day to day. They caught many diseases, and in addition they did not have sufficient rest; medical treatment was poor, which caused many prisoners to die from abnormal causes. Old prisoners in their fifties and sixties, who were physically weak and already close to death, were forced to carry out heavy and difficult physical labour. When I went back and forth on my travels and saw such scenes of suffering, I could not stop myself from feeling grief and thinking with a compassionate heart "Why can't things be different?", but there was nothing I could do. ...Criminals were being locked up everywhere, but this brought no benefit and only created trouble, and there appeared the dead bodies of many criminals whose crimes did not merit the death sentence. This certainly caused the parents, wives, children, relatives and friends in hundreds and thousands of households to be overwhelmed with grief, and it goes without saying that their eyes were constantly filled with tears. Many people were imprisoned, no matter whether they had or had not committed a crime or whether their crime was large or small; and, in addition, bad management led to many people suffering abnormal deaths.

As regards opposition and protection:

There appeared many people among the cadres who openly and unscrupulously used the argument that there was some merit in vilifying and opposing our precious religion and extinguishing monasteries, lamas and monks, and who aroused the people by all types of direct and indirect means. Therefore, the monastic and secular activists, their hearts inconsistent with their mouths, adapted to changing circumstances, lost contact with reality, turned their backs on the past and made their attack, saying, pure religion itself also must be negated and is incorrect. Consequently, serious leftist point of view, comparable to jumping off a cliff with their eyes wide open, emerged in the cadres' ideology, produced by their extremely erroneous way of looking at things. They thought that as in Tibet the masses had already abandoned faith in religion itself and had opposed it, the time was ripe for opposing and eliminating religion, so when they launched the "Three Anti's" and the "Three Settling Accounts"⁴ movements in every monastery in Tibet, they added opposing religion itself to the practical work, and what is more they put it in the principal position. They blindly, frenetically and fiercely opposed those pure and holy things which should have been protected. Therefore, in relation to the problems of religion and monasteries in Tibet, it was inevitable that this unfortunate phenomenon would be produced, causing people's spirits to be confused and scattered, and causing people to be so heart-broken that they cried out.

The situation as regards implementing democratic reforms in religion and the monasteries:

In relation to formal democratic reform in the monasteries, the existing policies were the "Three Anti's", and in order that these could be perfected, the "Three Settling Accounts" were implemented. But during specific implementation, the first task was opposing religion under the so-called "eliminate superstition" slogan; the second task was destroying statues of the Buddha, Buddhist scriptures and stupas; the third task was making monks and nuns return to secular life by any means possible. These were taken as the principal tasks, and the "Three Anti's" and "Three Settling Accounts" became the tools and strategies for realizing these three tasks. The

4. Settling the accounts of political persecution, of oppression between different ranks and of economic exploitation

nature of the campaign became “killing an innocent sheep is more impressive than killing a guilty wolf”. Consequently, when by any means possible monks and nuns were being made to return to secular life, first of all in the so-called names of “study” and “mobilization” in each monastery, monks and nuns were gathered together in the Great Prayer Hall or in a large room. They were tightly controlled, they studied intensively, and they were forcibly mobilized to carry out mutual criticism both day and night, and a high tide of acute struggle was stirred up. Those who publicly displayed their religious belief were given all types of labels including “superstitious elements” and “disliker of the revolution”, and unbearable and inexplicable struggles and attacks were carried out against them. On the other hand, when the monks were asked whether or not they wished to go back to secular life, if they asked to remain as monks, they were told “You still have not been educated, you have not done away with your superstitions” and were violently struggled against, and many of them were put under surveillance or locked up. Under these circumstances, unless you were made out of iron, there would be no way to ask to remain as a monk. Thus, sixty and seventy year old monks also asked to go back to secular and return to their families. These people had no way to start a family, and also had no strength to engage in production, and they did not want to leave the monastery where they had spent the first half of their lives; this was common knowledge. The fact that these people had no alternative but to go back home is sufficient to prove that a serious problem has arisen, namely that they could no longer live in the monasteries. In some monasteries, work teams drew up a list of monks, and compelled those monks to go back to their families and return to secular life; even more seriously, they went so far as lining up monks on one side, and lining up nuns and secular women on the other side, and forcing them to select someone from the other side. This is practically impossible to explain and account for in the context of the civil rights of males and females to choose their own marriage partners. This is a right with which nobody can interfere and which is stipulated in and protected by our law. In small Buddhist monasteries and hermitages, deep in the mountains, there are many devout followers who have spent their whole lives in practice and meditation, conducting themselves strictly in accordance with their religion; they regard everything in the ordinary world as poisonous, and are pessimistic and world-weary. Because a revolutionary undertaking is also something of the ordinary world, very few of them displayed a welcoming and enthusiastic attitude. This is not only not surprising, it is possible, and normal. But the cadres took this to be the foundation of incorrigibly obstinate reactionary thinking, and placed many of this type of followers under surveillance or locked them up. They carried out grave attacks against pure and holy followers who conducted themselves in accordance with their religion. Concerning the return of monks and nuns to secular life, they enforced adoption of all types of measures without any foundation, and because of this the majority of Tibet’s monasteries had no monks or nuns living in them, and where there were some people living in there it was only very few, and what is more, the standard of their religious accomplishments was low. Although this situation had arisen, some people still said: “Tibet has carried out democratic reform, the broad masses of monks and nuns have obtained their liberation and their right of religious freedom, they have voluntarily gone back to their family and returned to secular life, that is why there are so few monks left in the monasteries.” This statement does not fit with what is acknowledged in the thinking of more than 90 percent of the Tibetan people, including myself. As for the eradication of Buddhist statues, Buddhist scriptures and Buddhist stupas, basically speaking, apart from a very small number of monasteries, including the four great monasteries which were protected, in Tibet’s other monasteries and in the villages, small towns and towns in the broad agricultural and animal herding areas, some of our Han cadres produced a plan, our Tibetan cadres mobilized, and some people among the activists who did not understand reason played the part of executors of the plan. They usurped the name of the masses and put on the face of the masses, and stirred up a great flood of waves to eliminate statues of the Buddha. Buddhist scriptures and stupas, threw them into water, threw them onto the ground, broke them and melted them. They recklessly carried out wild and hasty destruction of monasteries, Buddhist halls, “*mani*” walls and

stupa, and stole many ornaments from statues of the Buddha and precious things from the Buddhist stupas. Because the government purchasing bodies were not careful in making distinctions when purchasing non-ferrous metals, they purchased many statues of the Buddha, stupas and offering vessels made from non-ferrous metals and showed an attitude of encouraging the destruction of these things. As a result some villages and monasteries looked as if they were not the result of man's deliberate actions, but rather they looked as if they had been accidentally destroyed by bombardment and a war had just ended, and they were unbearable to look at. Furthermore, they unscrupulously insulted religion, using the "Tripitaka" as material for fertilizer, in particular using pictures of the Buddha and Buddhist sutras to make shoes. This was totally unreasonable. Because they did many things which even lunatics would hardly do, people of all strata were thoroughly shocked, their emotions were extremely confused and they were very discouraged and disheartened. They cried out, with tears flowing from their eyes: "Our area has been turned into a dark area", and other such piteous cries.

It is difficult to imagine and describe Tibet's Buddhist statues, scriptures and stupas being destroyed like this, but some people still say that "the broad masses of the working people have become conscious, and so they have been destroyed." This is sheer nonsense which comes from a complete lack of understanding of the actual situation in Tibet; therefore, just as in the case described above, at a basic level, we cannot agree. From the circumstances described above, we can prove that religion itself was opposed. Moreover, because cadres made use of their political power and used many different methods to vigorously, publicly and unscrupulously carry out wilful interference with, and prohibit by force, the legitimate religious activities of the monastic and secular masses, those people felt disappointed and hurt, uncompliant and discontented. But because the masses had temporarily and for a short period suffered strict oppression, they were pressurized and had no alternative but to appear slightly indifferent towards religious belief on the surface, but this was a result of great pressure. Because the religion which they deeply believed in and loved had been greatly weakened, and because they were not permitted to believe, religious feelings grew stronger in the thinking of many people, and their belief was deeper than in the past. So, suppressing the wishes of the masses and contravening the will of the people became precisely the reasons for our isolation and was that which brought about failure. This contravenes the instructions of the Party, which have frequently been pointed to and taught, that we should cast aside those actions which cause a serious rift between ourselves and the masses. The people who did these things were truly short-sighted and narrow-minded, and they could only become a laughing-stock.

The situation as regards the monasteries after democratic reform

1. Before democratic reform, there were more than 2,500 large, medium and small monasteries in Tibet. After democratic reform, only 70 or so monasteries were kept in existence by the government. This was a reduction of more than 97 percent. Because there were no people living in most of the monasteries, there was no one to look after their Great Prayer Halls and other divine halls and monks' housing. There was great damage and destruction, both by man and otherwise, and they were reduced to the condition of having collapsed or being on the point of collapse.

2. In the whole of Tibet in the past there were a total of about 110,000 monks and nuns. Of those, possibly 10,000 fled abroad, leaving about 100,000. After democratic reform was concluded, the number of monks and nuns living in the monasteries was about 7,000 people, which is a reduction of 93 percent.

3. As regard the quality of the monks and nuns living in the monasteries, apart from those in the Tashilhunpo monastery, who were slightly better, the quality of the monks and nuns in the rest of the monasteries was very low. For most of those monks and nuns who were religious, intellectuals or who conducted their affairs in accordance with their religion, the situation was as

described above; during democratic reform, owing to attacks and so on it was basically difficult for them to live in peace, and because of this they did not live in monasteries, or very few of them did so. In reality, the monasteries had already lost their function and significance as religious organizations.

4. As regards the organization of monasteries after democratic reform, following the elimination of those things which came from the past feudal serf-owning system, a new and perfect organization was needed which was democratic and which cared for both religion and politics. In fact, things did not happen like this. Now, democratic management committees were set up in monasteries in Tibet, managed and led in each case by the monastery itself. But if we ask whether the quality (of the democratic management committee members) was good or bad, this depended on the high or low quality of the majority of the people or the backbone members. Those people (indicates members of the democratic management committee – Chinese translator’s note) were produced from those who were activists during the democratic reform period, and so it depended on the high or low quality of those who were activists during the democratic reform period. The high or low quality of the activists depended on whether the methods of education and mobilization of leaders, responsible people and cadres during the democratic reform period were good or bad, and so we also need to look at the kind of purpose for which that kind of activists was being trained. As described earlier, we think that the activists in the monasteries had to be people who wanted both revolution and religion. However, when this was carried out, it was the complete opposite. Whether or not they genuinely wanted revolution also was not looked at carefully. As long as they received instructions from the cadres at that time, they could act recklessly without looking at advantages or disadvantages, and were regarded as qualified activists. The result was that, among the monks, those who stood in the front ranks of the democratic reform struggle were: those followers who did not understand reason and who took pleasure in contravening religious rules and conducting themselves wilfully, those who coveted other people’s property and sought to obtain great economic profit by means of the struggle, and those who wanted to obtain favours by fulfilling the intentions of the work teams or cadres. Also, among them, those who frenziedly opposed holy, pure and genuine Buddhism, which is peaceful and of benefit to others, were assigned as principal activists, and allowed to play the backbone role in the work. ...After the conclusion of democratic reform, those people were assigned to be chairmen or vice-chairs, or candidates for membership, of the democratic reform committees in each monastery, and the masses of monks and nuns were asked to elect them. The consciousness of the masses of monks and nuns was not sufficiently high, and they did not dare to express their true opinions, and so this did not completely embody the spirit of democratic elections. ...Because of this, although there were some good democratic management committees in the monasteries, these were exceptions; the masses of monks and nuns were, in their minds, discontented with and opposed to more than 90 percent of them.

5. Tibet’s monasteries, under the left-wing responsible persons, were put on the list of things to be eliminated. They continually encouraged actions by monks and nuns which contravened their religious doctrine, and also forced them to take such actions. They coerced them into participating in bad things, where they cast aside good and did evil; what is more, those who took part could gain the glorious title of “progressives” or “activists”, and obtained special care. This caused monasteries to change into places where evil was done.

6. As regards the conduct of monks and nuns in the monasteries after the democratic reform, whether looked at from the religious or the political perspective, it goes without saying that their conduct should be both in conformity with the law and reasonable, it should be regulated, and be sufficient to draw people to admire it. There is absolutely no doubt or dispute about this. But, in Tibet’s monasteries, not only was their conduct not like this, but under conditions narrated above, there was no other way but to act in contravention. Now I shall talk about a few representative situations in the conduct of monks and nuns after democratic reform: the chairman and vice-chairs and the members of the democratic management committee had

illicit relations, went with prostitutes, drank excessively and took other such unscrupulous actions; they regarded ignoring their vows as nothing, and publicly and unscrupulously engaged in liaisons with women within the monasteries, kept their hair long, changed their clothes and carried out other such actions which were completely against the regulations. Not only did they themselves do these things, but they encouraged the masses of monks also to do so, which resulted in their conduct being turned upside down and lacking in moral principles. Consequently, these days, when the conduct of monks is raised, people shake their heads and feel sick.

As regards the future of religion after democratic reform

When Buddhism in Tibet has firm foundations in terms of the transmission of teachings and of enlightenment, the deliberate destruction of this religion must not happen, is very serious and bad. For example, people become old and then they die. This is a universal law. But what if you took a very loveable, much in demand, vigorous and innocent youth and deliberately put him to death? In just the same way, this is the reason why we, all the people of Tibet, feel that it is unendurable that Buddhism has suffered such a huge decline that it is near extinction. As for the actual situation after democratic reform of those monasteries which had monks, most of regular meetings (indicates routine gatherings of monks – Chinese translator), occasional meetings, and occasional ceremonies have basically ceased, and there are no gatherings and debates about scriptures. ...Due to this the sweet dew for “teaching, debating and writing” and “listening, thinking and contemplating” has dried up. Those who have religious knowledge will slowly die out, religious affairs are stagnating, knowledge is not being passed on, there is worry about there being no training for new people, and so we see the elimination of Buddhism, which was flourishing in Tibet and which transmitted teachings and enlightenment. This is something which I and 90 percent of Tibetans cannot endure.

As regards the religious life of monastic and ordinary people after democratic reform

The actual situation which has arisen after democratic reform tends towards the elimination and cessation of religious life of the monastic and secular people. This is extremely serious. People have had to take down the flags from their roofs, it is inconvenient for them to wear protective talismans, the “*jingang* knots”; they have had to hide statues of the Buddha, Buddhist scriptures and stupas which they worship at home: they do not dare to chant scriptures or accumulate merit in public; they do not dare to burn juniper incense to worship the Buddha; it is inconvenient and impossible to worship and make offerings to holy places and well-known statues of the Buddha and stupas, to turn the prayer wheels and make offerings to the “good monks”, to donate to the poor or to carry out other such merit-accumulating activities; the situation has become such that when people become ill, scriptures are no longer chanted and when people die, the “*chaodu*” ceremony is no longer carried out. ...Therefore, for a period, people have said: “We are dying too late, if we had died a bit earlier, we could have had prayers and the “*chaodu*” ceremony, but now death is just like a dog dying, as soon as breathing stops we will be thrown out of the door.”

On the Tibetan nationality

At the time of democratic reform and re-investigation, owing to certain things done by a subgroup of leftists and activists among the cadres, who did not understand the situation, some damage was done to the rights and characteristics of the nationality. The Tibetan language, dress and personal adornment, good customs and habits and other such important national characteristics which should have been respected were also included in the “Three Greats” revolutionary work of “great destruction, great exposure, great construction.” They thought that

everything old was backward, filthy and useless; they made no distinction between what was in fact needed and what was not, everything was mixed up, and a wind of destruction blew up. They neglected the Tibetan language, laughed at Tibetan dress, and said things like “what a waste of material, how inconvenient to wear”; they showed an attitude of dislike towards women’s headdresses and men’s queues, with the result that it was impossible to wear a headdress or keep a queue. They regarded whitewashing the outer walls, flagpoles on the roofs, marriage and funeral ceremonial gifts, monastery gatherings and worshipping the gods, festival entertainments and traditional sports as useless and superfluous, so that most of these practices stopped.

...Democratic life is not fully established; as regards the various nationality rights which should be protected by law, these have not been implemented strictly in accordance with the law. There are, among the cadres, people who are “big nationalists”. They think that they are terrific, they are proud, complacent and opinionated, they favour their own nationality and ignore the characteristics of the Tibetan nationality, they violate the rights of the Tibetans and even forcefully label those who mention the rights and interests of the Tibetans as “local nationalists”.

...Taking the right of autonomy as an example, first of all, we must be able to enjoy the use of our own language, dress and personal adornments. This is important. However, all documents of the Preparatory Committee for the Autonomous Region of Tibet are drafted in Chinese and not Tibetan, and the Tibetans among the Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and committee members mostly do not understand Chinese, and therefore only those documents which (cadres thought) we should see have been translated into Tibetan. They only sought to make a good job of the Chinese version of legally binding resolutions and of public announcements; if the Tibetan version was understandable then that was enough, and it was very infrequent that people paid attention as to whether the Tibetan version was good or bad. Because transportation in Tibet is not convenient, the orders, instructions and notifications given to the subordinate prefectures by the Preparatory Committee were mostly sent first by telegraph, then the formal documents were gradually dispatched, but very few of these documents were in both Chinese and Tibetan versions; also, there is no Tibetan telegraph code book, and so there is no way to use Tibetan by telegraph. Most of the reports presented to the Preparatory Committee were only in Chinese, very few were in Tibetan; from this it will be clear to you that at grassroots level, also, very few used Tibetan. Because the necessity and usefulness of using Tibetan at all levels of government has declined and is currently declining. Tibetan has gradually become a “folk language”. If Tibetan cadres working in all levels of government do not wear Han clothes, they are scarcely treated as human; people see them as offensive, and they are all laughed at and discriminated against. Consequently, most old and young Tibetan cadres now wear Han clothes; have they or have they not voluntarily decided to wear Han clothes? It must be said that there are grounds for doubt. Because: it is impossible for people to dislike their own national costume; they all have some quantity of Tibetan clothes; from ancient times to the present they have all worn Tibetan clothes for work and in their daily life. For instance, old people say: “if we wear Han clothes, we feel cold at the small of our backs, but these days, we have no choice but to wear them.” The masses call Tibetans in Han clothes “fake Han”.

...Under the dictatorship of the masses many detainees have tragically died for no reason, and the responsibility for this is borne by us. In summary, for several years the Tibetans have suffered great losses, and the population in every area has suffered differing levels of reduction. In regions which have been affected comparatively seriously, on looking at the inhabitants, it can be clearly understood that only women, infants and the elderly are left; those of youth and middle age, and knowledgeable people, have become fewer. For us Tibetan people, this is a very dangerous problem.

...In schools, organizations and editing and translating institutions from the Central authorities down to the local level, people have taken themselves to be infallible and made arbitrary distinctions between bad and good in relation to our Tibetan language, they took as a pretext there being insufficient new words in the Tibetan language, and misrepresented this to

say that the Tibetan language is inferior and lacks capability to communicate and express meaning, thus insulting the good name of the Tibetan language. Although it is true that there are insufficient new words in the Tibetan language, it is unheard of in the past and it is difficult to see it happening in the future that any language in the world from its inception could have a rich and adequate vocabulary. Therefore, it is necessary for everyone to abandon pride and complacency in relation to our own language, survey other languages and absorb their merits, in order to develop our language and make it healthy and strong and capable of serving our needs. The point about vocabulary being inadequate should definitely not be grasped in order to slander the language itself. These types of actions are also insults to and discrimination against the nationality itself. There are also more than a few people who, due to their own low level of Tibetan, cannot get their point across or express common things or things depth and they have said that this is the result of deficiencies in the Tibetan language; these people are shameless!

On the United Front

During democratic reform, due to the results of the actions of a few cadres, face-to-face struggle was carried out against many people who were targeted for winning over in the middle and upper strata. There were even more strict controls on feudal lords and their agents and members of their families: they were completely forbidden to come into contact with the working people, and they were excluded from the masses. This caused them many difficulties, great fear and tension. Thus protecting them, uniting with them and winning them over were not carried out properly. This caused people to be astounded and perplexed, discouraged and disheartened. They drifted through their days and felt dissatisfied, so that in fact it was difficult to win over and reform those people properly.

On religion

During the carrying out of democratic reform in the monasteries, some actions were taken in contravention of policies; after democratic reform, the situation was unspeakably bad in the monasteries, the future of religion sank into a grievous state and the monastic and secular people basically had no religious life. The right of religious belief of the citizen contained in the Party's policies and the State Constitution either became partial or existed in name only.

On the situation in brother provinces⁵

In the great family of the motherland, apart from the Tibetan area of Tibet, there are also some Tibetan areas and many Tibetans in Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan and other provinces. Because we are all one nationality, with one religion, we are very fond of each other and on very friendly terms and very concerned about each other's joys and sorrows. Where the happiness of someone else is increased, it is as if our own happiness is increased, and we feel very happy and proud. Similarly, if someone else suffers or is in difficulties, it is as if we are suffering or in difficulties, and we feel depressed and anxious. Whether work in each Tibetan area is good or bad has a direct good or bad influence, both profound and moving, in other Tibetan areas. So any victories and achievements, whether large or small, obtained by brother Tibetan areas, are like victories and achievements obtained in Tibet itself. Disasters and losses created by errors and mistakes in the work in brother Tibetan areas are, similarly, like disasters and losses created by errors and mistakes in the work in Tibet itself.

...I am going to make a concise but comprehensive report about three important questions: in relation to mistakes and errors which have appeared in the work in Tibetan areas in

5. This title has been added for ease of reference. It is not in the original petition

brother provinces, even though there are different degrees of severity, basically, apart from the errors and mistakes which occurred in Tibet which had their own Tibetan characteristics, they had all of the other errors and mistakes, and these were longer in duration, more serious and more leftist than in Tibet. Therefore, once men, women, young and old people among the masses in many of these areas encountered a Tibetan leader such as myself, they could not stop themselves from talking about their sufferings, and there was the tragic sight of tears flowing from their eyes. Any sensible person can see from this how serious the situation was.

On dictatorship

We have no way of knowing in detail the number of Tibetans who were arrested after the rebellion, but from the appearance of things it may be inferred that the number of people who were locked up reached about ten thousand or more than ten thousand in every area. Therefore, if we say that all these people were the enemy, then we can affirm that hardly anyone is left over among us Tibetans, apart from women, old people, children and a very small number of young men. Now, if we say that there are both enemies and those dear to us among those who were locked up, that is even more absurd. To arrest and lock up all people without distinguishing between good and bad contravenes every just law in the world. Moreover because our State is a people's democratic dictatorship, this is in serious contravention of this principle. So, from whatever point of view we consider it, among those responsible personnel who were in charge of the dictatorship in the Tibetan areas, those cadres who hankered after and were bold in arresting people and who were unreasonable unscrupulously played about with the peaceful and free life of innocent people of all strata. This is fundamentally bad both within and outside the country, both now and in the future. As regards the treatment of the huge numbers of prisoners who were locked up who were no good and looking for trouble, this was even worse than in Tibet itself. In particular, as a result of them deliberately moving those prisoners to places with an environment and climate to which they were not accustomed, huge numbers of people died from abnormal causes, creating a phenomenon where not all the prisoners' corpses could be buried. Therefore, hundreds of thousands of parents, wives, children, friends and relatives of those who died of abnormal causes were extremely grieved, their tears welled up, and they wailed and cried bitterly. This situation occurred everywhere and is difficult to describe.

On nationality rights

Because rebellions have taken place in the majority of Tibetan areas, this has produced in a portion of our cadres and military officers behaviour such as disliking Tibetans, maliciously discriminating against Tibetans, violating their national characteristics and prohibiting their customs and habits. For example, grassroots level cadres said: "Tibetan costumes are a waste of material, they are inconvenient, and the clothes and adornments are backward." They publicly prohibited them, and did not allow the masses to wear their own national costume. In order to eliminate national costumes and adornments, they used their political powers, and adopted all types of methods to collect adornments from the masses. In particular, later on for example, they confiscated the property of many households, and without distinguishing between black and white and without any foundation, and did many other things which were in contravention of the policies of the Party and the various laws and decrees of the State. In these Tibetan areas, although by your favour autonomous prefectures and counties have been set up in order to carry out nationality regional autonomy, owing to the conduct of the cadres not only did the Tibetan people not completely enjoy the autonomous rights which were stipulated in the policies of the Party and in various laws and decrees of the State, but also, because rebellions occurred in most of the Tibetan areas, many people were lost in the battle. This is the first point. Second: many people were arrested and imprisoned during and after the period of suppression of the rebellion,

which caused large numbers of people to die abnormal deaths. Third: for a period, because the life of the masses was poverty-stricken and miserable, many people, principally the young and old, died of starvation or because they were physically so weak that they could not resist minor illnesses. Consequently, there has been an evident and severe reduction in the present-day Tibetan population. Needless to say this was not only harmful to the flourishing of our Tibetan nationality, but it was also a great threat to the continued existence of the Tibetan nationality, which was sinking in to a state close to death. Therefore, it was quite natural that every member of the nationality, on seeing and hearing about this situation, had unendurable feelings of bitterness and sadness.

On religion

...There is no monastery which corresponds with the standards; the number of monasteries and of monks in the Tibetan areas in brother provinces has been reduced by between 98 percent and 99 percent, in comparison with before the suppression of the rebellion; religious intellectuals and the “good monks” who conducted their affairs in accordance with their religion have been excluded and eradicated and frenziedly attacked, with the result that monasteries where monks remain exist in form but the substance has been lost. Authority within the monasteries has been given to people who are completely detached from reality and who attack religion, which is peaceful, altruistic, and holy, like mad wolves, and so monasteries which were for carrying out religious activities have become bases for opposing religion. As for the tasks of monasteries: because they have cast aside their allotted religious activities, they have become crippled production units; although there are monasteries, they have lost their significance as monasteries, and so, practically speaking, there are no monasteries.

As for the future without religion, in Tibetan areas in brother provinces, after suppression of the rebellion, owing to various types of direct and indirect obstruction by lower level Party and government cadres, even the names of the activities of “teaching, debating, writing” of Buddhist scriptures, which were as vast as the ocean, are no longer heard; needless to say, even the name of religious culture can be seen to be disappearing. Under these actual circumstances, the future of religion has in reality been destroyed; therefore, in fact, religion has no future.

In Tibetan areas in brother provinces, basically speaking, the monastic and secular masses do not have a religious life. In the majority of areas, after suppression of the rebellion, under obstruction by the grassroots-level cadres, even daily scripture lessons could only be chanted in secret. When the cadres saw their lips moving, they would question them closely, and they suppressed religious faith and religious activity in the same way as they treated counter-revolutionary activity, so that the monastic and secular masses could not lead their religious life in freedom. Basically speaking, in fact, the masses do not have a religious life.

...After the suppression of the rebellion in Tibetan areas in brother provinces, that owing to serious leftist conduct in the area of religious work, more than 90 percent of the Tibetan population apart from children felt extremely astounded and so became utterly confused. Consequently, now when one talks to Tibetans about Buddhism, they cannot help but be grieved and shed tears, and say: “Our area has been turned into a dark place. When we die, it is just like a dog dying” and other such bitter words.

On the lives of the masses

In the Tibetan areas of the two provinces of Sichuan and Yunnan, for the past few years, the living requirements of the masses have not been satisfied in a manner which accords with the production strength of that area, and the standard of living is low. However, I do not have a complete grasp of the details, and so I will not state them here. I have a slight knowledge of the

living conditions of the masses in the Tibetan areas of the two provinces of Qinghai and Gansu, so I will say a little.

...In some places a majority of men capable of labour, and in other places not a few men capable of labour, were arrested and locked up, and so manpower was severely reduced. The women, old people and children who remained were extremely worried about their fathers, sons, husbands, relatives, friends and loved ones who had been arrested and locked up, and so they could not put their minds at ease and painstakingly work hard in order to carry out and improve, without exaggeration, agricultural and animal herding production. In particular, after suppression of the rebellion in the Tibetan areas, methods of reform were not based on the wishes, demands and level of consciousness of the majority of the remaining masses of the people. Many took blind and rash advances and crude force as the two main things. Therefore, the problems which occurred during the reform were much more numerous than those in Tibet.

...For people's communes to be established, more than a few conditions, including external economic conditions and internal ideological condition, must be ripe.

...In every Tibetan agricultural and animal herding area in the two provinces of Qinghai and Gansu, there was no careful consideration of whether or not of conditions were ripe, and within a short period of time there was an irresistible trend of establishing large scale people's communes, which gave a lot of trouble to those peoples who did not yet have the appropriate conditions for establishing people's communes.

The errors and mistakes which occurred in other areas of these two provinces all existed in every Tibetan area. The public ownership system and the collective ownership system, which must exist in the socialist stage, were mixed up together. Not only was the necessary distinction not made between the public and the collective, but also the majority of things which should have belonged to the individual were put into the category of things belonging to the collective, with the result that the individual owned nothing except for a few very simple necessities. The people say: "In the people's communes, every person only has three personal belongings, a set of clothes, a set of bedclothes, a bowl and a pair of chopsticks." This saying has, in these provinces, already become fact.

...From the above, the wind of forceful orders blew fiercely in every area. In addition, because of many errors and mistakes of this type, not only was serious harm done to agricultural and animal herding production, but also the lower levels collected up grain without giving detailed consideration to what the masses needed to eat, so that they could attain the targets given to them by the upper levels. Although the targets were attained, it was said that each person in the broad masses of the working people only had about five kilos of grain per month, but some places did not even have this amount. After public canteens were set up, they did not pay attention to the wishes of the people but forced them to join in, and so the masses did not even know whether the amount of grain provided actually reached this standard, which was already very low. Because the amount of grain was not enough to feed even those with the lowest requirements, the fire of bitterness and hunger was ignited, and so dregs of fat, grain husks and so on which formerly in Tibet were fodder for horses and donkeys, bulls and oxen, became hard to get and were considered nourishing and fragrant foods. Also, in order to make the food appear more and to dispel one day's hunger and bitterness, the responsible people in the canteens, apart from gathering together a lot of grass, which was more or less edible, even gathered together tree bark, leaves, grass roots and grass seeds, which really were not edible. After processing this, they mixed it with a bit of foodstuffs, made it into a thin gruel like pig food and gave it to people to eat, and even this was limited in amount and could not fill their stomachs. Because the anguish of such severe hunger had never been experienced in Tibetan history and was such that people could not imagine it even in their dreams, the masses could not resist this kind of cruel torment, and their condition declined daily. Therefore, in some places, cold and other such minor infectious diseases caused a percentage of people to die easily. In some places, many people directly starved to death because the food ran out; therefore, in some

places, there was a phenomenon of whole families dying out. The mortality rate was critical. These were abnormal deaths all caused by lack of food, and in fact they all should be counted as having starved to death. For example, in Wendu monastery of Xunhua county in Qinghai province, I specifically convened a forum of more than three hundred grassroots-level cadres and representatives of the masses of the Tibetan, Han and Sala nationalities. In the meeting, the people, and principally the grassroots cadres, said: "From 1959 until the first half of 1961, the difficult circumstances in the lives of the masses in the Xunhua area were unimaginable and difficult to describe. In every village, a percentage of people miserably starved to death." Not only did they say this with bitter tears, but they also emphasized: "Before, although we had good harvests, our lives never improved, but now we only think about survival. In these bitter living conditions, we have no way to lift our morale for production and work hard at it, and so it is difficult for us to have a good harvest; from now on, if the state will only let us fill our stomachs, then we will be able to strive for a good harvest" and so on. Although the masses of workers said many things which were true, because I am fearful of being too long-winded, I have just given the above. In short, it is barely possible to describe the lives of the masses of the agricultural and animal herding peoples in areas of various nationalities, including Tibetans in the two provinces of Qinghai and Gansu. This really should not have happened and it is not good for the reputation of the Party and the State, both at home and abroad, now and in the future. This time, when I was visiting and inspecting several places in Qinghai province, many Tibetan people came to pay religious homage to me, overcoming various types of obstruction by the grassroots cadres.

No matter whether they were men or women, old or young, as soon as they saw me, they thought of the bitterness of that period, and they were unable to prevent tears flowing from their eyes. A few brave people among them said through their tears: "Do not let all living creatures starve! Do not destroy Buddhism! Do not extinguish the people of our snowy land! These are our wishes and our prayers!"

The Panchen Lama
18 May 1962

Unity is imperative

The following is excerpted and translated from the Tibetan transcription of the late Panchen Lama's taped statement in Lhasa at the Monlam Festival of 1986:

I have come for this Monlam festival and taken the complete responsibility of organizing it and presiding over it. I am neither highly learned nor do I have any ability. However, the Party and especially the people of Tibet have placed their trust in me. Therefore, I have to shoulder this responsibility whether I have any ability or not.

I hope and pray that soon the All Knowing (the Dalai Lama) will be able to return to Tibet and officiate all the religious functions, including the Monlam festival. He has recently given Kalachakra initiations in India, which is a great service to Buddhism and sentient beings. His Holiness and I are spiritual friends. We have no differences between us. However, some people are spreading rumours and trying to play up the past differences between the Gaden Phodrang government and my monastery. I would like to tell them not to play up such matters, as doing so can only be detrimental to the cause of Buddhism and the Tibetan people.

...To my sorrow, much old thinking persists. Old wounds are opened up to create bad blood between the U and Tsang regions, and between the Gaden Phodrang government and my monastery. Also, people tend to talk in terms of U-Tsang, Khampa and Amdo. This is not good. We all are children of Father Boddhisatva Monkey and Mother Rock Ogress. We are all inhabitants of the Snowland of Tibet. It is worse than useless to talk in divisive terms.

If we look back at the history of Tibet, we see that Tibet suffered as a result of breakdown of unity since the reign of King Lang Tharma. If we are united, the Tibetan nationality will progress and Buddhism will flourish. On the other hand, if we are divided, Buddhism and the Tibetan nationality will suffer set back. Our people will also suffer misery. Therefore, I would like to request all of you to shun divisive attitude. The monasteries also should not talk in terms of you and us.

In the past, when we were suppressed under the leftist policy, none of us dared utter a word of protest. It is not good to open up old wounds now that happier times are coming. If we are all united, Tibet will progress and our nationality will join the circle of developed nationalities. Our region will then be as developed as any other region in the Great Motherland. We will also be successful in our efforts to promote the Buddhist religion. I request all of you to keep this in your mind.

The Panchen Lama's warning to China

The following is excerpted and translated from the late Panchen Lama's criticism of China's treatment of Tibet. The Panchen Lama made this statement in 1987 at the TAR Standing Committee Meeting of the National People's Congress in Beijing. During this lengthy speech, he repeated many points first raised in the 1962 petition.

Ours is a country of many nationalities. Apart from the Chinese, there are fifty five nationalities which are in the minority. The leftist trend before, and especially after the time of the Cultural Revolution, has caused the minorities to suffer in many ways. Just recently a story entitled *Pasang and Her Relatives* was intentionally published in a journal to ridicule Tibetans. Last year our representatives from Tibet raised their objections to this story when it was a film script. We even asked Vice-Chairman Ngabo Ngawang Jigme to express our misgivings about this story to the concerned departments. However, the film was awarded a first prize. Another film of this nature, entitled *Compassion Without Mercy*, was also given an award. Things like this have been done to other nationalities as well.

Tibet sidelined and neglected

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

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

Finally some changes were made which were announced in the *People's Daily*. There have been many other instances where problems relating to the minority nationalities were completely ignored. This was why I pointed out the drawbacks of the government in a joint session of the sub-committee of the Twentieth National People's Congress Standing Committee Meeting. I had no objection to the importance attached to Hong Kong and Taiwan. But we did not like the way we were pushed aside and totally ignored.

At the time of the liberation, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai acted in consultation with concerned nationalities. But what has become of the status of nationalities since then is something I cannot understand. I hope everybody will try to understand it. Although the minority nationalities constitute only six percent of the Chinese population, they own sixty four percent of Chinese territory. Therefore, it is in the interest of China to ensure that there is peace and stability in these regions.

Developing Tibet

In the State Planning Commission's report, there were many proposals for poverty alleviation in many areas. But these proposals did not say a word on the minority regions. Raising this point in the Standing Committee Meeting, I said, "There is nothing wrong in you becoming prosperous first. We will wear threadbare garments and beg for food. But does that do you proud?" I am no expert on the subject of economic development. But that does not mean that I am a complete novice. I am certain that if the transport and communication facilities in Tibet were developed

and if its energy resources were tapped, we should be able to recover the capital investment within two or three years. We are aware of the economic hardship of the nation. We also know that the nation does not have enough capital resources to invest in all important projects. However, there is nothing wrong with making this kind of decision as a matter of policy. As I said earlier, the leftist policies implemented in the minority regions during the last more than two decades have been very detrimental. The effects of these policies are being felt in Tibet even today. Good as the present policy of liberalization is, the Tibetans are apprehensive that it might not last long.

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

Special attention should be paid to the minority areas. Industries in minority regions should also be given state help. It so happens that the government starts paying attention only when the industries in these regions are on the verge of bankruptcy. This is either due to lack of concern or a deliberate attempt to put more burdens on the people of these regions. When Comrade Hu Yaobang visited Tibet in 1980, he decided to repatriate all the useless Chinese personnel from Tibet. We consider this a wise decision. We definitely need skilled and capable personnel. But what is the point of having useless personnel? I do not believe that all Chinese are competent; there are both competent and incompetent Chinese.

The Chinese migrants in Tibet

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

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

Educational disparity

A few schools have been established in Tibet. But the quality of education in these schools is very poor. Schools in sixteen provinces of China have started Tibetan classes, which naturally demonstrate the government's concern for our people. But this also leads to some problems. First of all, the students are selected on a merit basis which adversely affects the schools in Tibet.

It is also a drain on Tibet's resources as Tibet has to spend a considerable sum of money on them.

Secondly, since most of these students are from primary schools, they are separated from their own culture and home at a very early age. Gradually, they will be alienated from their own parents, people and country. What's more, the kind of education they receive in China is not at all appropriate to their needs. I noticed in some schools in Yunnan province that although Tibetan is on the school syllabus, the students don't get to learn much of it. The parents want their children to get a job and stay with them at home after finishing middle school. This shows that they do not want them to go far away from home.

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

Now consider the educational disparity between the Tibetan and Chinese students. Whereas the Chinese students must get an aggregate of 250 points to pass their examinations, Tibetans need to earn only 190 points. But the number of Chinese students passing the examinations is much higher than that of Tibetans. This is because of the language barrier suffered by Tibetans. I have personally experienced this. Although I can speak Chinese, I frequently make big mistakes. This is because Chinese is not my mother tongue. I can never hope to compete with the Chinese as far as the Chinese language is concerned.

To make matters worse, the Tibetan students who have been sent to other provinces find it difficult to acclimatize themselves to the weather, water, food, and so on and so forth. This causes many of them to fall ill, thus affecting their education. When the parents come to know about this, the only way for them to get to see their children is to fly from Tibet. Some students take leave from the school to go home and meet their parents in Tibet. This obviously is a big financial drain on these families.

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

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

Nurturing language and culture

The government has announced four modernization plans. It is important that we learn from the developed countries. But what we must learn from them is their technological knowhow and scientific way of management. Whoever has the highest standard of living has the best system. I have not thought much on this point. The Japanese way of life is rather complicated. They have a very highly developed educational system to teach culture, science and technology. If a new book is published anywhere in the world, within thirty days one can read it in their language.

In Tibet we have very deplorable translation facilities, especially when it comes to the European languages. It is much worse than in Eastern Turkestan or Inner Mongolia. Last year, when I went abroad for a visit, I could not find anyone capable of interpreting between Tibetan and English. Therefore, I had to use a Chinese interpreter and speak in Chinese. This must have given a very bad impression to outsiders. This fact proves how poor the standard of education is in Tibet.

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

On the Institute of Tibetology in Beijing

You, Dorjee Tseten⁶ and others!

How can people who are not well-versed in the Tibetan language and culture hope to do research on Tibetan studies? Many people have told me that there are serious complaints against the Institute of Tibetology, especially against the recruitment system there.

In short, there are many things to be done with regard to Tibet work. It is my request that the TAR Party Committee and the TAR People's Government should carefully study the administrative functioning in Tibet and make concerted efforts for improvement.

I also hope that the Central Government will take more interest in the political situation in Tibet and come up with greater economic support for the region. Tibet today has a very big burden. We, the TAR representatives at the National People's Congress, have made some suggestions. In the middle-level offices, the old and infirm officials have now been replaced by young and qualified staff.

6. Head of the Institute of Tibetology in Beijing

Nevertheless, there are many among them who still have not got over their leftist hangover, and are guilty of atrocities during the Cultural Revolution. Some of these people have been given promotions despite strong objections from the people.

The Central Government has decided not to repeat the policies of the Cultural Revolution. The promotion of these people was based on a campaign called, “Repenting for the Past Mistakes and Willing to Change,” which was launched only in Tibet. This movement did not originate from the Central Government. There is no knowing who launched this campaign.

These are not the examples of just a few isolated cases in Tibet. Therefore, Tibet should be treated as a special region, and special political and economic policies should be formulated for this region. And, these policies must be implemented till Tibet’s acute economic problems are readdressed and its people satisfied.

Owning up mistakes

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

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

On the annexation of Tibet

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

Talking about Lhoka, first the Khampa guerrillas were based there. But when the Dalai Lama passed through there, people happily donated butter, barley flour and other provisions without being asked for them. This was, of course, a spontaneous gesture of love by the people. Later on the people who offered these things were treated as active members of the resistance. How can you do such a thing? This is something that everyone should know. Speaking of myself, in those days whenever I passed by, people would show love and devotion to me. Now should this be construed as a politically motivated act? Amongst other things, they showed respect to me because they were religious-minded and it is a Tibetan custom. Due care and consideration must be shown to customs and traditions that are special to Tibet.

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

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

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

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

Actually, rebellions did not occur in all these areas. In Kham, of course, there were rebellions in many places. In Jharoong Parpo and Mili, both in Amdo, the nomads collected their guns and handed them over to the Chinese authorities. They were praised and garlanded during a special function. After the function they were driven to their villages where they were immediately arrested and imprisoned for a long time. There were some very old people among them.

In Amdo and Kham, people were subjected to unspeakable atrocities. They were shot in groups of ten or twenty. I know that it is not good to speak about these things. But such actions have left deep wounds in the minds of people. There are some officials who always leave behind a bad legacy. What is the purpose of doing this? The guilty must, of course, be punished. But what is the use of leaving behind a bad legacy. People who persist in doing this are really stupid. But there are some who consider these people very wise and capable. Comrade Wu Jinhua has a plan to investigate the methods and mistakes made by some of the officials in putting down the Tibetan rebellion. I feel this investigation needs to be done with the utmost diligence.

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

In Qinghai, for example, there are between one to three or four thousand villages and towns, each having between three to four thousand families with four to five thousand people. From each town and village, about eight hundred to one thousand people were imprisoned. Out of this, at least three to four hundred people died in prison. This means almost half of the prison population perished. Last year, we discovered that only a handful of people had participated in the rebellion. Most of these people were completely innocent.

In my 70,000-character petition, I mentioned that about five percent of the population had been imprisoned. According to my information at that time, it was between ten to fifteen percent. But I did not have the courage to state such a high figure. I would have died under *thamzing* if I had stated the real figure. These are serious matters as far as Tibet is concerned. If we pay only lip service to these kinds of mistakes and do nothing to redress them there will be equally serious consequences. People may not like what I am saying. But I am saying this out of my love for the motherland.

Loyalty and future danger

When I was in East Turkestan, I told the cadres there, “Your work will be put to test if there is a foreign invasion of East Turkestan. What people say in meetings is all lies. We should not believe in them. You will be thought to have done a good job here if the people of East Turkestan rise up in support of the PLA in the event of a Soviet invasion of this province.”

Here, I will cite two examples from history. Lenin said that the triumph of the October Revolution in Russia showed that their work with the masses had been good. Stalin did not do good works for the masses. As a result the peoples of minority republics did not support the Russian army in defending the Soviet Union against the Nazi invasion. We have seen films on the Vietnam War. The people belonging to minority races welcomed the PLA, guided them and gave them water, only because the minority groups were fed up with the regime which favoured the Jing majority race against all the others. The people of the Jing race were very cruel. If others did not submit to them, they would shoot them down, even people of fifty or sixty years of age. We should learn from these historical facts.

In 1964, when I was called to Beijing, some leaders told me, “You are turning against the Motherland. Are you trying to start a splittist rebellion? Even if the whole of the Tibetan population is armed, it will only make over three million people. We are not scared of this.” On hearing this, I felt very sad and realized how it is to be without freedom. First of all, I have never

harboured such a thought. Secondly, even if I wanted to launch a splittist movement, how can I enlist the support of the whole population of Tibet? Who would dare do it under the prevailing situation? Even if someone did, he would be exterminated immediately.

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

That is why it is essential to think about the welfare of the minority nationalities during peacetime. We should make sure that the people of these nationalities are happy as part of the motherland. If this happens, they will be happy to work with the Chinese people in developing the nation. On the other hand, if you cling to the attitude that you will always rule and suppress the minority nationalities, then there will be serious problems in the future.

The examples I gave earlier are relevant here. It is essential to think about the war, as this possibility looms large nowadays. Of course, we have the power to prevent it. What shall we do if a war breaks out now? The PLA was successful in the 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict, mainly because the Tibetans provided the logistic service with their backs and pack animals. These days some people are talking about a possible war with India, which is unlikely. However, should it break out, it is questionable whether Tibetans would support the war effort as they did in 1962.

Some of our comrades are hesitant to implement the new policies. These people have no sense of military strategy. They also have no knowledge of politics. If there were disturbances in Tibet, the government would call an emergency meeting and order Ngabo and me to tackle the situation. We would, of course, be happy to do whatever we could. But if nothing is ever done for the people, how could we hope to help the government when there is trouble?

I always speak very rudely. But it is only for the good of the nation. I have nothing to gain personally from it. Personally, I am quite happy. I feel that I am the happiest man in China. Therefore, you should think in broad terms.

What are we gaining from the leftist practices in Tibet? Those with leftist ideology are suppressing everything. When Comrade Hu Yaobang was disgraced recently, the leftist officials exploded firecrackers and drank in celebration. They commented that the stalwart supporter of the Tibetan people had been defeated. They also said that Wu Jinhua, Panchen and Ngabo would not be able to return to Tibet. Why can't we be allowed to return to our homeland? But, as it turned out, they celebrated a bit too early. These are the people who are trying to drive a wedge between the Tibetans and the Chinese. We are members of one family. How dare they say that the Tibetan supporter had been defeated?

I would request everyone to think carefully and work for the welfare of the Tibetan people. Tibet always faces financial problems. The government has approved a large budget for Tibet. But where has the money gone? Isn't it true that the bulk of the money has been misappropriated by the officials and technicians. This is the reason why many projects could not be implemented. We must do something to help the people in Tibet since they are dependent solely on whatever they can earn with their physical labour.

There are so many things we are unable to do, because we do not have the capability. There is not much attention given to the study and use of the Tibetan language. If Tibet is the most religious region, it goes without saying that the study and use of the Tibetan language should be promoted. But many wrong things have been done. In 1958, when I was in Qinghai, I heard that an official document stated this policy: "First the rebellion should be suppressed. Then in launching the campaign to prevent future rebellions, a clear nationality and religious policy-decision should be taken."

In retrospect, we should have thought how such a policy could be formulated for the future. Although there may be peace and stability today, many minor disturbances will occur. But it is good to think about the entire problem. There is at the moment racial harmony, peace and stability. But we should not be satisfied with this. What are we going to do if there are disturbances in the future?

Tibetan religion and culture should be the foundation of Tibetology

**The following is translated from the transcription of the Panchen Lama's taped statement
to the meeting of the Institute of Tibetology in Beijing, 1988**

Comrade Ngabo, Tian Jingren and other leaders are present here at this meeting of the Institute of Tibetology. Comrade Jiang Ping and Dorje Tseten read out the work report and future plans of the Institute of Tibetology. Comrade Ngabo gave a very useful speech.

First of all, I would like to congratulate you for your success in organizing this meeting. I don't have much to say, I will just make a few suggestions.

When the Institute of Tibetology was first established, I said the following at Mingzou Wenghua Gong (The Palace of Nationalities Cultures): "Tibetology should have a foundation. Tibetan culture and religion are its foundation. We have so far treated Tibetan culture and religion with disdain, not with respect. Unless we preserve Tibetan culture and religion, the work of the Institute of Tibetology will be baseless. It will be like a river without a headwater and a tree without roots." I said this at that time. Even today, I believe in this.

Why do I say this? It has been 1,300 years since Tibet developed its written-language. Some of the speakers pointed out that written Tibetan was developed earlier. Let's us leave aside this contention, because, for practical purposes, the Tibetan written language was developed about 1,300 years ago. From then to 1959—whether we remained backward or made mistakes—we managed our life on the world's highest plateau by using only Tibetan. Whether the Tibetan written language is adequate or not, we had everything written in our own language, be it Buddhism, crafts, astronomy, astrology, poems, logic. All administrative works were also done in Tibetan. We never had to take recourse to any other written language.

There were then two regions in Tibet. The government of what is now known as the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) as well as the Tibetan brethren living outside the TAR used Tibetan as the sole administrative language. They never used any other language. If we look at individual regions, the monasteries of Kham and Amdo used only Tibetan language. They preserved their local traditions with the help of Tibetan language only. No doubt, they took the help of Chinese monks to write letters for inter-district and inter-provincial communications. But for running internal affairs, Tibetan language was adequate. In short, for 1,300 we managed well with our own language. We never had to take recourse to any other language.

However, as Ngabo stated earlier, leftist influence since 1959 has made it very difficult to use the Tibetan language. We have reached a deplorable situation, where there are very few people who can read and write Tibetan. Last year, 1987, Ngabo and I made a decision to visit Tibet. As chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress, Ngabo took part in the deliberations of the congress meeting and I supported him.

Joining forces, we insisted that henceforth the teaching and use of Tibetan language should be promoted. That a resolution had to be passed to this effect is a matter of disgrace. But this is what really happened. There was an urgent need for such a resolution. We couldn't do without this resolution. From the theoretical point of view, our having to pass this resolution showed the backwardness of the situation. And from the logical point of view, it was a matter of disgrace.

The land, which managed itself well with its own language for 1,300 years, lost its written language within two decades of its liberation under Communist Party leadership. Now, a

resolution had to be passed, at our insistence, to promote the use of Tibetan language in Tibet. This is a disgraceful development in the world.

We worked tenaciously for this resolution. Sometimes we even quarrelled with the authorities. Being a short-tempered man, I sometimes banged my fist on the table, making some people angry. Comrade Ngabo also spoke for this. Similarly, Phuntsok Wangyal, Phutsok Tashi and others worked with us. Finally, with strong support from Comrade Wu Jinhua and company, we just about managed to push this resolution through. Sometime after that, an announcement was made to implement the resolution from this year onwards. Now it remains to be seen how it works.

There was a newspaper commentary, headlined: "Is it right to impose Tibetan language in Tibet? This is our question to the Tibetan people." This article shows that not only the Chinese people, quite a number of Tibetans also oppose the use of Tibetan language in Tibet. Several people had signed this article and all the names were Tibetan. These Tibetans had come out in the open to oppose the use of Tibetan language in Tibet. I want to tell them that they have little knowledge of law, nationality issue and history. They are pitiable.

What do I mean by law? The constitution provides that the most widespread written language of a nationality must be used in order to fulfil the aspirations of that nationality. It is true that the number of Tibetans literate in Chinese has increased. But still more than 90 percent of Tibetans cannot read or write Chinese. Tibetan is undoubtedly the most widely read language in Tibet. Therefore, those who speak against the use of Tibetan are going against the constitution, against the nationality law, and against the autonomy law. They do not have the knowledge of law. People like Stalin said that every nationality should have the right to use its own spoken and written language. Anyone who knows anything the nationality issue agrees that language is its lifeblood.

What do I mean by history? For over 1,300 years, we Tibetans had managed very well with our own language. The use of Tibetan language came to an end in 1959. This is our history. That is why I would like to say to them, "Ya-nga Nying-je" (expression of pity), or "Nying Maje", to use an Amdo phrase. (The audience laughs.)

Here, we are talking about Tibetology. Of course, my sympathy and support are with your research efforts. Nevertheless, I will continue to stress the importance of cultural and religious foundation. I wonder whether the written Tibetan will survive or die in the TAR and other Tibetan areas. Setting yourself a lofty target, you have published this big book in Tibetan. This is great, really a big service.

I, for one, am concerned as to whether written Tibetan will be allowed to survive or die. That is why I would like to repeat what I said last year: Tibetology is rooted in Buddhism. Right from the beginning, we Tibetans have been a cultured nationality. Our culture is rooted in religion. Buddhism has shaped the perception and value system of Tibetans. Just as Confucius and Menzi were the source of Chinese culture, Lord Buddha's teaching has informed every aspect of our civilization. Therefore, it is not possible to attempt a work of Tibetology without any reference to Buddhism.

Buddhism is not a simple religion. It is a very profound and vast religion, encompassing not only spirituality, but all aspects of learning. Buddhism has strongly influenced every aspect of Tibetan learning. It is impossible to do Tibetology research if you do not have knowledge of Buddhism. If you do not have knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, you cannot hope to do research on the communist system. Isn't it absurd to say, "I will not have anything to do with Marxism-Leninism, but will at the same time do research on the communist system?" I say that one must

understand Buddhism before doing any research in Tibetology. But quite a number of people refer to Tibetan Buddhism by the Chinese word “taoyan” (Irkesome).

Before 1959, there were over 5,000 monasteries in the Tibetan areas. All of them, or most of them, were destroyed. One hundred percent of the monasteries suffered damage. 99.98 percent of them were destroyed. Only seven or eight survived. And, each of the surviving monument is in a state of disrepair. The Potala Palace is in the best condition. But even the Potala’s interior has suffered degradation. That is what I say that the Tibetan monasteries suffered 100 percent damage. Tibet’s history and culture, as well as the legacy of thousands of years of efforts by Tibetan workers fell victim to this massive destruction. That is the reason why we so highly cherish the surviving monuments, artefacts, and literature.

Tibetology must give a high priority to Buddhism. Buddhist learning must be preserved. The religious policies must be fully implemented in Tibet. Let me draw an analogy here. Recently, we participated in the Olympic Games, but did not do well. Why? Because of the overall decline in our sporting standard and degeneration in the dedication of our sportsmen and sportswomen. I am saying this to drive home the importance of foundational development. I mean to say that there should be an improvement in the research activities and spiritual instruction in the monasteries. I am trying to say that a handful of senior people in research activities cannot hope to achieve much as you do not have the foundation of social and grassroots level involvement. The same is true of Tibetan written language. Whether we talk about Tibet or Tibetology, it is extremely important to promote the use of Tibetan language, to implement the religious policies fully, and to improve conditions for the instruction and learning of Buddhism in the monasteries.

However, some people cannot make up their minds. From last summer, the disease of leftism has recrudesced in the brains of some people in Tibet. That is why they started complaining that we were going too far in implementing the religious and language policies. This, I would like to point out, shows that their vision that is shorter than that of rats. This is my second point.

My third point is this: Your goal at the Institute of Tibetology is work for the solidarity of Motherland and unity among the nationalities. I have no complaint against this. However, your work must be professional and scientific. It wouldn’t do to take the easy way out and produce fabricated works without any scientific basis. If you, as advanced people, exaggerate the points that support your hypothesis and underplay or expunge the facts that run against your interests, even fools, as Ngabo pointed out, would hear the truth from elsewhere. As for educated people and historians, they would laugh at your works. Therefore, your works must have factual basis. If you sift through a huge amount of materials in order to produce self-serving distortions, your work will be like a house built on sands. A house built on sands will fall at the slightest of a tremor. Even if there were no tremors, the house would tilt, for the sands would not be able to withstand its weight. Therefore, I request all of you to show respect to the Tibetan written language.

My fourth point is this: This document of your action plan repeatedly uses the word “Xizhang”. I don’t think this word is appropriate. Your job is do research in Tibetology as a whole, not only on the Tibet Autonomous Region, which is known as Xizhang. The scope of Tibetology encompasses all Tibetans. There are about four million Tibetans in China. Out of this, about two million live in the TAR. The remaining two million live in four other provinces. I think your institute should actually be called Xizhang Zhou Yanjiu Zhongxin (Tibetan Nationality Research Institute). If you use the word Xizhang alone, Tibetans living in other areas will complain against this. Of course, the TAR is the most important of the five Tibetan regions. When we use the word “Tibetology”, it should also encompass the people of Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh since they are all ethnically Tibetan. I would like to remind you of this here. This is all I have to say in the fourth point.

On recognition of tulkus

The following is excerpted and translated from the Tibetan transcription of the late Panchen Lama's taped statement at Tashilhunpo Monastery, Shigatse, on 24 January, three days before his death on 28 January 1989.

At the outset, let me thank you all, the monastery administrators, well-known lamas and tulkus (reincarnated lamas) who have travelled long distances from different parts of the Tibet Autonomous Region, Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan to attend the consecration ceremony of Shar Tashi Namgyal Chapel, where the tombs of the Fifth through to the Ninth Panchen Lamas are enshrined.

...Today, I would like to speak on the Communist Party's religious policy. I am sure you all will voice your opinions after I have finished speaking.

First, you all have shown a great deal of concern for the issue of recognizing reincarnated lamas. The masses have also expressed their hopes and aspirations regarding this matter.

The tradition of recognizing reincarnated lamas began in Tibet and Mongolia over seven centuries ago. ...It began with the Kagyud school of Tibetan Buddhism. Subsequently, other Buddhist schools adopted this tradition. Historically, the system of recognizing tulkus and looking after them by their respective monasteries have been very effective in preserving and promoting the Buddhist teachings, taking care of the monasteries, fulfilling the spiritual needs of the local faithfuls and preserving the culture of nationalities. As a result of this, the ordained and common masses have venerated the tulkus and placed their hope in them.

Looking back at the history, one can see that most of the lamas and tulkus were conscientious. They were able to preserve and promote the Buddhist teachings. ...A small number of lamas and tulkus did bring bad name to Buddhism. But on the whole, positive elements far outweighed the negative ones. About forty or fifty years back, before the liberation, Tibet and Mongolia saw a decline in religious faith. Particularly, in the fifties, seventies and eighties — after the liberation of 1959 in the case of the Tibet Autonomous Region — the destruction of Buddhism was carried out. I am saying this to drive home the point that the quality of lamas and tulkus started declining about 15 or 20 years before the liberation. The decline did not start immediately after the liberation. But the fifties, seventies and eighties saw a complete reversal in the state of Buddhism. In those decades, the leftists hijacked the Party's religious policy and did not implement it with fairness.

...In the past, most of the monasteries in the Tibetan areas enjoyed special authorities. Particularly, the monasteries in the Tibet Autonomous Region became part of the Three Feudal Lords. The monasteries enjoyed special position as serf owners. They oppressed and exploited the mass of peasantry and serfs. This is against Buddhism. And the mass of peasantry and serfs were justified in wiping out this system.

When the rebellions in Tibet were being quelled in 1959, I told the Central Government to cleanse the monasteries by abolishing their special power of oppression and exploitation, which has stemmed from the corrupt influence of feudal serf system. I hoped that this would benefit the common masses. I was certain that the bulk of religious personages would have accepted this. If our suggestion had been acted on, the monasteries would have been rid of the corrupt influence of feudal serfdom and would have lived up to the teaching of Buddhism, making them conducive places for religious practitioners and personages. It would have served to purify Buddhism.

Unfortunately, what happened was completely contrary to what we had requested for. Buddhism was destroyed together with feudal serfdom. For those of us, who believe in Buddhism, the images are the medium through which we receive the inspiration of wisdom. But for non-believers, they are nothing more than spiritless clay sculptures. However, it must be accepted that they are the work of art. Our scriptures teach us not only religion, they also contain a large body of knowledge in the form of history, arts, literature, astrology, meteorology, natural science, etc. All these were destroyed. Even the monastic buildings were destroyed. Certainly, the buildings can never be feudal serf system. Similarly, the scriptures cannot be feudal serf system.

Most of the monasteries in Tibet were destroyed. Only a small number of them were protected. But the monk population in these monasteries had greatly dwindled. Yes, although the monks were present, religion itself suffered destruction. I reported all these to the Central Government when I visited Beijing in the winter of 1959. There may have been monks that year in the remaining monasteries, but there were not enough practitioners. There were not enough prayer meetings, either. Therefore, I told the Central Government that it would not do to let this situation continue. I said, "A section of practitioners must be looked after and their living expenses paid for by the State. The rest of the monks must be made to work and pay for their own expenses. If all the monks were made to work, no one would have the time to study religion." Mao listened to my suggestion and approved it. In that year, there were a considerable number of monks in Tibet.

Before the democratic reforms, there were about 100,000 monks in the Tibet Autonomous Region. Some put the figure at 150,000 while others put it at 200,000. However, after the democratic reforms the monk population was estimated at 20,000. The Central Government approved a plan to provide state grants to 5,000 monks, while the remaining 15,000 monks must join the work force and fend for themselves.

When I returned to Tibet, we planned to distribute the grants to practitioners from all schools of Buddhism in an attempt to allow them to specialize in their respective disciplines. That was in 1960.

In 1962 I went down (to China) and submitted a long petition. It contained 70,000 characters and detailed my findings in Tibet, especially in the Qinghai region. The petition came to be called the 70,000-Character Document of Reactionaries. In that document, I wrote in great length about the state of Buddhism in the Tibet Autonomous Region, Kham and Amdo. When I first submitted this petition, the Central Government held numerous meetings and promised changes in Tibet. Then came the Eighth Party's Fifth Meeting in August 1962. During this meeting, Mao launched his great slogan, "Never Forget the Class Struggle." This campaign slammed the label "revivalist of the feudal system" on my head. Thus I came to suffer the first bout of cold. Although my ailment was not noticeable in the beginning, I was sneezing silently.

In 1964 the Seventh Enlarged Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region was held. During the meeting, I was criticized, struggled and educated. I was confined in darkness. This is my personal story. Other spiritual figures suffered the same fate or even worse. My big name ensured me a slightly better treatment. The sincere practitioners of religion in monasteries and those with allegiance to religion were branded with different labels and jailed. Some of them were sent to education-through-labour camps and told to reform their thoughts. Of course, there is nothing wrong if we were told to reform our past feudal thoughts and our old social thoughts. There is nothing wrong if we were told to respect the leadership of the Communist Party and follow the socialist path. There is nothing wrong if we were told to develop solidarity with the proletariat and work for the unity of the motherland and nationalities. This is a good socialist attitude and I support it.

But such were not asked of religious practitioners. Instead, the practitioners were asked to oppose religion and criticize their spiritual masters. Those who burned scriptures and destroyed religious images were hailed as brave. What is the good of religious practitioners who indulge in these actions? What we are saying is that we cherish Buddhism more than our lives. We cannot give in to the exhortation to destroy religion. I feel that although we should reform our thoughts, it should be done discriminatingly. But the fact that we were exhorted to destroy religion is extremely ridiculous. It is evil and unachievable. Resistance to this exhortation led to long imprisonment of spiritual figures, lamas, tulkus and geshe (doctors of philosophy). Poor food and living conditions in prison claimed the lives of many of them. Those who survived the prison ordeal were found to be suffering from mental trauma when they were finally released from prison. I need not go into this at great length as you all are well aware of it. Many lamas perished during those years. Since their tulkus have to be found, we are now having to recognise tulkus *en masse*.

One point is that the democratic reforms started in Kham and Amdo in 1957–1958 and in the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1959. The lamas and tulkus who were in the age group of 10 to 20 in that period were then barely able to read the Tibetan alphabet and could understand only the rudiments of Buddhism. They were, of course, not imprisoned. But they had to bear the political stigma of belonging to the feudal and capitalist classes. This stigma condemned them to suffer a great deal of oppression and humiliation. Now in their forties and fifties, they have become a class of uneducated lamas. On the other hand, the lamas who had managed to study before the democratic reforms are very old now.

Thereafter, the Party smashed the Gang of Four and the 11th Communist Party Congress held its Third General Body Meeting. Before that, the Party had acted illegally for three decades. Some good things were definitely done in those decades. But serious mistakes were also made. We should reflect on those decades and rectify the mistakes while continuing to improve on the good deeds. The good deeds refer to the Four Basic Principles of the Communist Party of China. It was right to implement these basic principles and we should continue with this. The mistake was the leftist excesses, for which we should continue to make amends. Not only should we refuse to accept the Cultural Revolution, we should in fact criticise it. There were other campaigns which may have been considered right in the past. But they are now found to have both right and wrong elements. This discrimination between right and wrong became possible as a result of the Party's new and sincere practices. The new practices led to the revival of the new religious, nationality and United Front policies. I use the word "revival", because these policies were put in abeyance during the Cultural Revolution.

...During the Cultural Revolution, the Fifth National People's Congress met in 1974. But it said nothing about the State Nationalities Affairs Commission. We heard only of the State Council and not of the State Nationalities Affairs Commission. Therefore, how could there have been a nationality policy then? Even the Political Consultative Committee meeting was not held. The Political Consultative Committee is a very important body where all the entities outside the Communist Party — i.e., the democratic party factions, nationalities, religious groups and non-Communist Party personages — hold discussions and support the Communist Party as a united front. Even this body was put on the backburner in 1974. This is how the United Front and religious policies were abandoned. It is for this reason that I say that the nationality, religious and United Front policies were revived after the Third Meeting of the 11th Communist Party Congress.

The systematic implementation of the United Front policies, which followed the Third Meeting of the 11th Communist Party Congress, was very important to us. The red clothes we are now wearing is due to the development since then. We now have the right to read scriptures resoundingly. The monasteries are now allowed to have images. Although the images may not be like those in the past, we can at least have bronze ones. All these we owe to the basic change in policy since the Third Meeting of the 11th Communist Party Congress.

Mr. Zhang Qingzu, deputy head of the United Front, addressed the gathering in Chinese at this ceremony. Most of you understand Chinese. He said, "The Communist Party of China rectified its past mistakes and built all these tombs. It is a measure of the Communist Party's greatness that it is able to admit its mistakes and make amends." This is indeed very good. This strikes a deep chord in the human mind. No one is infallible.

...We do not need too many tulkus. The quality of tulkus, however, should be good. According to our past spiritual tradition, I, Panchen, have been given the authority to recognise tulkus. In matters of recognising tulkus, the higher political authorities will accept decisions made only by me and no one else. This is the third point.

The fourth point is that I have also been entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the tulkus are brought up to love the nation and religion. I have to look after the spiritual training of existing tulkus. Besides, I have to look after the spiritual training as well as the literary and political education of the future generation of tulkus so that they grow up to love the nation and religion. This is a big responsibility, a heavy hat on my head.

...There are lots of complications in recognising tulkus. Why this is so? In the past a child born one or two years after the passing away of a lama is recognised as his tulku. Now if the tulkus of the lamas who passed away in 1957 through to 1959 and in the sixties are recognised today, can they be brought up as educated lovers of the nation and religion? Wouldn't it be like the saying: "Teaching gait to an old horse". It would not do unless we have the old tradition and customs changed. Everyone asks for an authentic tulku. In the past, most of the tulkus were recognised by the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas. Most of the people ask for authentic tulkus. This means he should be the authentic incarnation of the consciousness of the previous body.

When my previous body was asked by Atruk (not audible here) to recognize an authentic reincarnation of the Kubum Monastery lama, he said, "Would not it be better to have a tulku who can serve Buddhism and monastery than one who is merely an authentic reincarnation?" But that man insisted on an authentic tulku, saying he would not mind the tulku's ability to serve Buddhism and the monastery. And he was shown a paralytic child.

To clarify this matter further, the Seventh Dalai Lama was born before the death of the Sixth. From the point of view of our spiritual tradition, there is no need for a full year to pass before the reincarnation is born. A realized being can manifest himself in many forms at the same time. He need not rely on the passage of his previous body's consciousness. In Buddhism, it is possible for tulkus to be born before the death of the previous body or a very long time after the death of the previous body. It is not impossible. There is a practice of waiting for nine months and twenty-plus days for the birth of a reincarnation. As I see it, this is not necessary. It only makes things so complicated. How can one make a tulku out of a nomad in his twenties or forties! This is my first opinion.

My second opinion is that the tulkus should be recognised when they are about 10 years old. The reincarnation could be younger if the lama has passed away recently. If the lama had passed away a long time back, we should recognise a reincarnation who is about ten years old. This is the age when it is possible to gauge the child's character, intelligence and religious propensity. If the recognition of tulkus is aimed at preserving and promoting Buddhism and administering the monasteries, it is not necessary to look for someone who is merely an authentic reincarnation. Everyone should keep this in mind. I think that someone with the knowledge of Buddhism, gentle character and ability to serve the cause of Buddhism is better than a mere authentic reincarnation. This is what I feel personally.

Before recognising any reincarnation, I will examine the background and birthplaces of all the candidates. But finally we have to shortlist three top candidates and examine them thoroughly from every point. Even after doing this, it is improper for me to make unilateral decisions. In the past the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas approved the tulkus of Geluk

lamas. There was no problem in this. However, the other schools of Tibetan Buddhism have different ways of doing this.

Now that the Central Government has asked me to finalize all the tulkus, I will invite Jowo Sakyamuni himself and seek his help. Jowo Sakyamuni is revered by the followers of all schools of Tibetan Buddhism. I will select the reincarnation from the top three candidates by rolling dough balls in front of the statue of Jowo Sakyamuni. If there is still a mistake, then I will invite the Buddha himself. This is my opinion. ...Today, you have the opportunity to air your views on the issue of selecting tulkus.