

liberal

T I M E S

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Tibetans in Exile

The Struggle Continues...

CONTENTS

Tibet: The Tragedy and the Hope

Tibet has today become the scenario for subtle Chinese genocide. Tibet's culture and national identity are being systematically destroyed and replaced by domineering Chinese substitutes. *By Pema Thinley* 4

The Exile Identity and Democratic Vision

For almost 35 years now, the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies has been governing the exile community and providing a model for free Tibet.

By Ajit Bhattacharjee 8

Political Struggle of the Tibetans

The Tibetan movement for freedom is based on the three fundamental principles of truth, non-violence and democracy; the motivating force behind it being compassion. *By Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche* 12

United States Congress Resolution on Tibet 16

The Role of Youth in the Struggle for Tibetan Independence

The strength of the Tibetan youth has been reflected in Tibetan Youth Congress which serves as a common forum for the youth that are brought up in exile. *By Yangchen Dolkar* 17

Tibetan Women: Nose-dive into Politics with Devotion

Today women in Tibet and in exile have politicised their fight to raise global awareness towards the critical situation in Tibet; to bring to world attention the gross injustices committed by the Chinese against the Tibetan population.

By Nawang Lhamo 19

Tibetans in Nepal: Forging New Politics

Tibetans in Nepal, relying on a firm sense of Tibetan identity have a chance of forging a new kind of politics which will not be based on mere activism.

By Karma Wangdai 23

Increasing Influx of Chinese Population in Tibet

Translated excerpts of the article published in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. *By Erhard Haubold* 26

Heading Towards Troubled Waters: Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

Pakistan is heading towards trouble as the voluntary repatriation of the Afghan refugees has stopped and the UN will terminate its food assistance programme for the refugees from September 1995. *By Fazal-ur-Rahman* 29

Liberal Concerns 32

Readers' Forum 39

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in South Asia

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Tibet, its land, people and centuries-old culture have since time immemorial captivated the imagination of the people across the globe. This mysterious land-the highest plateau in the world, also known as the "roof of the world", is the home to six million Tibetans. History bears testimony to the fact that Tibet enjoyed complete freedom, prior to the invasion of The People's Liberation Army of the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) in 1949, when the peaceful Tibetan way of life was irreversibly destroyed under the pretext of communist reform. What followed for the six million Tibetans under the Chinese occupation has been four decades of unmitigated, brutal political, social and cultural repression, leading to the death of 1.2 million Tibetans and the destruction of 6,254 monasteries and nunneries. Tibet was then fragmented and parts of it incorporated into different Chinese provinces.

Prior to the invasion, Tibet was self governed, it had a National Assembly (Tsongdu), and enjoyed independent and direct relations with India, Nepal, Mongolia, Bhutan and China. Today, Tibet's unique and ancient culture, and national identity are systematically and forcibly being replaced by Chinese substitutes: Chinese business, Chinese language,

Chinese Karaoke bars, Chinese culture, and Chinese people, all in the name of liberalisation and development. At a high level meeting in 1993, it was decided to further flood Tibet with Chinese officials, who are being given incentives to settle in Tibet even after their service or forfeit their pension if they do not do so. This well thought out system of population transfer is aimed at offering the Chinese a final solution to the Tibetan problem by making it demographically impossible for the Tibetans to demand self-government as in the case of Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang (East Turkistan).

The 6 million Tibetans are now overwhelmed by 7.5 million Chinese in Tibet. The very existence and identity of Tibet is steadily being wiped out, and suppressed life under Chinese occupation is demonstrated in the steady increase of Tibetan refugees. The Tibetan struggle based on Non-violence, Truth and Democracy for the preservation of their distinct identity and the cry for a free Tibet have persisted through the exiled community round the

world, making the question of Tibet an ongoing struggle and source of embarrassment for the occupiers.

International awareness, support and understanding of the gravity of the situation is slowly gaining ground. Two World Parliamentarians Conventions on Tibet have been held, the second was recently concluded in Lithuania where eighty members from 21 countries resolved to initiate investigations, hearings and inquiries on the legitimacy of the P.R.C.'s claim over Tibet, and to send an international delegation of parliamentarians to Tibet, Beijing and Dharamsala to publicly report on the current situation. Germany too in the recent past has taken an interest in voicing its concern over the Tibetan tragedy in many fora cutting across party lines. The German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel recently met His Holiness in Bonn and promised further assistance. On the 19th of June, 1995, a hearing on Tibet was raised by the Subcommittee for Human Rights of the Federal Parliament of Germany in the presence of His Holiness, where autonomy for Tibet was supported. Many Non-governmental organisations both here and abroad have also come out in support of the Tibetan Question, one being the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre in Delhi.

Dear reader, this issue of Liberal Times focuses on the Tibetans in exile, touching upon their history, struggle and achievements. Liberals are committed to lead the struggle for human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world, and believe people have a right to their own cultural identity, for we view the world as an indivisible unit, where no part can live in real and lasting peace when so many human beings suffer from brutal political and cultural suppression, poverty and destitution. Our struggle is for a world-wide victory of human and civic rights. We, therefore, strongly feel the facts must be placed in their correct perspective before the reader. The publishing of this issue coincides with the sixtieth birthday of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama. We join the people across the world to wish this noble and great soul a long life.

Jürgen Aker

Photo: Vijay Kranti



Noble Peace
Medallion

Tibet: The Tragedy and the Hope

The high plateau of Tibet, known as the "roof of the world", has today become the scenario for subtle Chinese genocide. Tibet's culture and national identity are being systematically destroyed and replaced by domineering Chinese substitutes:

Chinese people, Chinese culture, Chinese language, Chinese enterprises, etc. With economic liberalisation as the motivating fillip to its population transfer policy, China is trying to wipe out the Tibetan identity and make Tibet a defacto part of China.

by Pema Tshenday



Tibet's Road to "Liberalism"

The People's Republic of China was founded on 1st October 1949. The event was heralded by the people of China as the establishment of a classless society in which the people would be the masters of the destiny of their nation. Sadly, the truth even then was far removed from any such assumption. Mao Zedong and his henchmen had their own vision of China and the world, and the people

were to be mere tools and slaves of their mad ideological experiments.

In an attempt to realise his global vision, Mao wanted to make Tibet an integral part of China through a treaty of accession. But because the Tibetans refused to give up their sovereign rights and identity, the Chinese resorted to threat by compelling the Tibetans to sign an agreement "to be liberated" - the so called Seventeen Point Agreement of 23rd May 1951. But because the "agreement" lacked legitimacy and could not be enforced, China resorted to military invasion of

Tibet. The invasion and the subsequent policies of repression led to the death of more than 1.2 million Tibetans and the almost total destruction of 6,254 monasteries and nunneries. Tibet was fragmented and annexed to different provinces of China.

The military invasion led to the exodus of more

than 80,000 Tibetans who followed their supreme spiritual and temporal leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, into exile. The flight of refugees has escalated in recent times due to many reasons: to escape arrest for having taken part in demonstrations or other activities in support of Tibet's independence; to escape China's coercive birth control regulations; to pursue studies both secular and religious that are denied in Tibet; to escape poverty and hunger because of Chinese immigrants taking over all available means of livelihood from the Tibetans who are being marginalised into fringe existence and to get away from the brooding atmosphere of intimidation and suspicion that has made life in Tibet under Chinese occupation one of constant fear and therefore intolerable. Compiled figures show that between 1980 and September 1994, several thousand Tibetans escaped to India and Nepal for such reasons, and the number continues to rise.

Given the political tragedy that had befallen Tibet and the consequent grave dangers that this posed to the preservation of the Tibetan identity

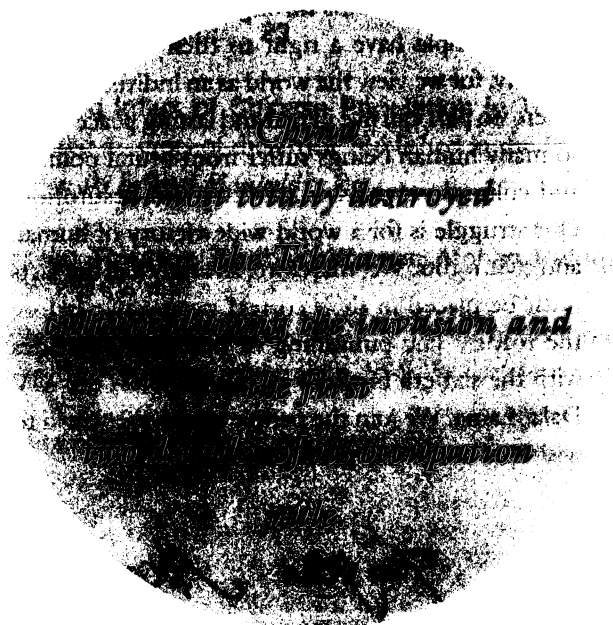
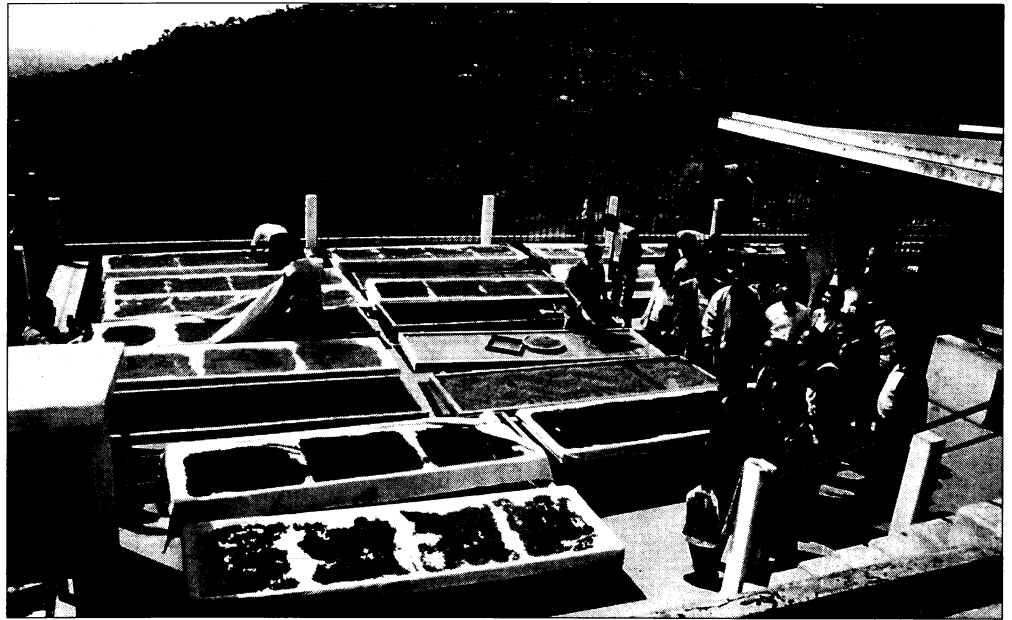


Photo: Iris Gruber

embodied in its arts and sciences, religion, culture, traditions, language and literature, great emphasis was laid on the settlement of Tibetans in compact refugee communities. These were gradually established in various parts of India, but chiefly in the southern Indian state of Karnataka. Other Tibetan settlements are located in the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh, Orissa, Arunachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Sikkim and Madhya Pradesh and in various other parts of India. Refugee settlements were also established in the neighbouring countries of Bhutan and Nepal. Switzerland, Canada and the United States also accepted varying numbers of Tibetans for resettlement. A few individual Tibetans have also settled in other west European countries.

Preserving the Tibetan Culture and Identity

At His Holiness's urging, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India saw to the creation of an autonomous section under the Ministry of Education (now Ministry of Human Resources), known as the Central Tibetan Schools Administration, for the education of Tibetan children in India. The schools' curricula combined teachings of traditional Tibetan subjects with modern secular education. Many other schools were established by or under the guidance of the exile Tibetan administration in all the Tibetan refugee communities throughout India.



Medicines being dried at the Tibetan Institute of Medical and Astro Sciences at Dharamshala.

China almost totally destroyed the Tibetan culture during the invasion and the first two decades of its occupation rule. Even today, there is a continuing policy of discouraging its revival except as exhibition pieces for purposes of tourism or as an international public relations exercise. His Holiness the Dalai Lama had therefore stressed that one of the prime tasks of exile Tibetans was to preserve Tibet's rich culture, traditions, skills and learnings. The education policy and the resettlement of Tibetan refugees in compact communities were two such means adopted for the purpose. The departments of Education and Religion and Culture of the exile Tibetan administration devote full energy and resources to the preservation, promotion and perpetuation of these aspects of the endangered Tibetan civilisation.

Centres and institutions devoted to the preservation and promotion of the Tibetan culture, religion, language, etc. were also set up. Large

number of monasteries and nunneries of all sectarian, denominational and religious affiliations were established. With assistance from the concerned Ministries of the Government of India, the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives at Dharamshala, The Norbu Lingkha Institute at Sidhpur, the Tibet House in New Delhi, the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies at Sarnath, etc. fulfil unique institutional roles for the preservation, promotion and perpetuation of the Tibetan heritage.

Tibetan handicrafts, such as carpet weaving, apron weaving, metal crafts, wood carving and thanka painting are taught in almost all Tibetan refugee communities and also form important means of livelihood for many Tibetans. A Tibetan Medical Institute has also been established in Dharamshala where young Tibetans are taught Tibetan medicine and astrosciences. It has established branch clinics in all the major Tibetan settle-



Knitting a smile.

ments and cities in India. The Tibetan medicine, with its unique holistic approach, has become popular both in India and abroad and the Tibetan doctors are invited to many countries to give treatment.

The Tibetans settled abroad take active part in group activities of all kinds, whether it is organising cultural festivals or protesting against human rights abuses in Tibet, or celebrating important Tibetan national events and festivals. They have thus maintained their distinct Tibetan identity in every sense of the term.

Livelihood in Exile

Most of the Tibetans in India live in the refugee settlements where they also have their economic base, which consists mainly of agricultural land. But since a single crop yield per year from one acre of land per person is barely enough to support them, many supplement their income with an annual seasonal venture of selling sweaters all over India. The sweaters are bought in bulk at wholesale rates from

Ludhiana, Punjab, and sold in makeshift markets which groups of Tibetans have over the years set up all over India. But for many Tibetans, this seasonal venture is the only means of livelihood.

Most of the Tibetan refugees in India who have successfully completed their school, college and university level education serve in the Tibetan administration's offices and autonomous bodies and the Tibetan refugee schools. The number of those who have joined the Indian employment market is minimal.

The initial batch of Tibetans settled in the western countries and North America were either illiterate or did not have knowledge of the language of their host countries and were therefore employed in unskilled workplaces. But those who grew up and got educated there are now employed at all levels of skilled jobs and in different professions.

Life in Tibet under Occupational Rule

Apart from about one hundred and thirty thousand living in exile, mostly in India and Nepal, the overwhelming majority of the six million Tibetans live in Tibet. Life for them under Chinese occupation rule is one of constant struggle not only for their human and national rights but also for making ends meet. Though there has been economic liberalisation in Tibet, the main beneficiaries are the Chinese immigrants for whom it was indeed intended. Eighty per cent of the Tibetans in Tibet are farmers and nomads who have hardly benefited from liberalisation. The Tibetans in towns and cities have been overwhelmed by the massive influx of Chinese settlers. As a result most of them have lost their

means of livelihood to the Chinese who are grabbing all the new opportunities emerging under economic liberalisation. More and more Chinese settlers are now moving into the townships all over Tibet, thus affecting the livelihood of Tibetan farmers and nomads too.

Another aspect to China's demographic policy in Tibet is the implementation of a coercive birth control policy. Tibetans require permission to get married and have a child. The latter permission cannot be had without the former. Penalties for having a child without permission include monetary fines and for those in employment under Chinese Government, demotion in job and reduction of pay. Pregnant women have often been compelled to undergo abortion for not having obtained the permission to have a child. The coercive aspect of the birth control policy has been officially publicised in several parts of undivided Tibet. A child born in violation of the family planning regulations does not get legal recognition while his or her defaulting parents have to pay fines on an annual basis until the child becomes 18 years old. China says it implements birth control policy in Tibet because the Tibetan population has increased and needs to be controlled.

But this argument does not hold true because China in fact pursues an active policy to increase the population of Tibet by encouraging an overwhelming number of Chinese to move in. In addition, Chinese PLA soldiers stationed in Tibet were recently told

to bring their residence registration card to Tibet where they will be settled after discharge from service. The hundreds of thousands of Chinese settlers in Tibet do not figure in China's national census because they are not registered as residents.

While Chinese immigrants are free to move all over Tibet without any restrictions, Tibetans are tied to their respective local work units or neighbourhood committees through a system of residence registration. Going to another place even for a few days, whether to visit a relative or for pilgrimage or for any other purpose, is forbidden unless prior permission has been obtained.

China's destruction of Tibet's fragile ecology and the environment can truly be described as a crime against humanity. Indiscriminate killing of all forms of Tibet's wild life (many of them unique to the high plateau of Tibet), has rendered many

as highly endangered species. Complete mountains in Tibet have been stripped bare of their virgin forests. Reckless mining all over Tibet has led to all forms of pollution and erosion. China's use of Tibet for the production and stationing of nuclear weapons and for dumping nuclear waste has rendered the Tibetan plateau a potential site for a nuclear holocaust. With the environmental conditions in many Asian countries, including the two most populous countries of the world, being dependent on the situation in Tibet, the adverse implications of China's environmental vandalism must not be underestimated.

Hope and Aspiration

The overwhelming majority of exile Tibetans, both in the Indian sub-continent and the west, have not applied for or taken citizenship of their respective host countries. They all yearn to return to their country, free

of the Chinese occupation rule. Armed with the knowledge and experience of a democratic system of government, the Tibetans seek to establish a government for a free Tibet based on the rule of law and separation of powers.

Their great concern remains the massive influx of Chinese population into Tibet that could effectively render the Tibetans a marginalised insignificant minority in their own country, with all the adverse implications on their demographic, cultural, social and national identity. The territorial integrity of Tibet is also a matter of great concern. Following the invasion, China redrew the map of Tibet, which traditionally had three large provinces of U Tsang, Kham and Amdo. The Western half of Tibet, consisting of U Tsang and the Chamdo part of Kham, was labelled as Tibet Autonomous Region. It is this area alone which China now calls Tibet. A major portion of Amdo was made the Qinghai Province of China. The remaining parts of Kham and Amdo were made parts of the Chinese provinces of Gansu, Yunnan and Sichuan. In these areas the Chinese already outnumber the Tibetans considerably.

Finding a speedy solution to the situation in Tibet therefore remains the main objective of the Tibetan administration in exile and of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. ■

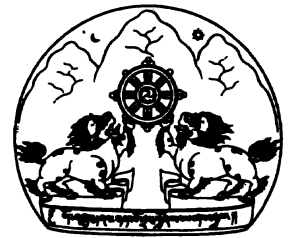
*Pema Thinley is Editor,
Tibetan Bulletin, Dharamsala*

Photo: Vijay Kranti



Tibetan refugee women at work during harvest season in Bylakuppe settlement, Karnataka.

The Exile Identity and Democratic Vision



It was in January 1960, less than a year after seeking refuge in India, that the Fourteenth Dalai Lama had outlined a programme designed to introduce the exiles to the practice of democratic self-rule without losing touch with their own traditions.

For almost thirty five years now, the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (parliament-in-exile) has been governing the exile community and providing a model for free Tibet. The Dalai Lama, consistently resisting pressure, has in the meanwhile been limiting his traditional political powers and has categorically declared that he will play no role in the future government of Tibet.

By Ajit Bhattacharjee

By now the Tibetan exiles are probably unique. Thirty six years - more than the span of a generation - have passed since the exodus began when they followed their ultimate spiritual and temporal leader, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, in seeking refuge in India. Then entire families had escaped with whatever little they could carry over the treacherous little-known passes in the high Himalayan ranges anxious to free themselves from the Chinese oppression. Today, some

130,000 of them are spread over much of the globe, most of them settled on the land provided by the Indian government and in the other adjacent countries of Nepal and Bhutan and a few have even made their way to America. In 1994, 104,686 exiles were in India; 15,000 in Nepal; 1,457 in Bhutan and 4,634 in Switzerland and North America.

Despite the long period of exile spent in places with very different climatic and cultural conditions, the Tibetan exiles have survived as a cohe-

sive community, committed to retain the culture and traditions of their homeland, above all to return to it in freedom. The personality of the Dalai Lama, has provided a focus for the community and at the same time, his self-programmed reduction of his temporal powers has induced self confidence.

Parliament-in-Exile

From the time the Dalai Lama sought refuge in India in 1959, he has concerned himself with the secular education of his people and with the establishment of representative, democratic institutions which would foster the pride and self-confidence required by his people to survive in today's world without losing their heritage. This has meant making them less dependent on himself - a unique exercise in self-effacement, that was initiated soon after the start of his exile.

It was in January 1960, in Bodh Gaya (Bihar) where Lord Buddha attained enlightenment, that the Dalai Lama aged only 25 years then, outlined a programme designed to introduce the exiles to the practice of democratic self-rule without losing touch with their own traditions. It was here that the Dalai Lama advised his followers to set up an elected body with three exile representatives from each of the three cholkas (provincial regions) of Dotoe, Dhome and U-



Potala Palace, Lhasa

Tsang and one each from the four religious sects. The links with Tibet were thus formalised and the process he began, laid the foundation of the first freely-elected representative body in Tibet's history - the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (parliament-in-exile) - which took office on September 2, 1960. Since then, this historic day continues to be observed by the exile community as Democracy Day. The parliament-in-exile governs the exile community and provides a model for their homeland.



Receiving an international support: The 14th Dalai Lama with German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich, at the Foreign Ministry, Bonn, May 1995

Assembly Government Deputies, at Dharamsala

The Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies is situated above the town of Dharamsala in the Himalayan foothills. The tableland of Tibet is not too far from here, but the main Himalayan range - the highest in the world - reminds the exile community of the formidable obstacles barring their return to their homeland. The assembly is situated at the centre of a horseshoe shaped complex housing administrative departments. It is a plain structure, barely able to accommodate the Speaker, seven Kalons (ministers) and 46 deputies. A desk behind the Speaker is meant for the Dalai Lama on occasions when he addresses the assembly. His enlarged photograph and a tankha are the only symbols of Tibet in the utilitarian chamber.

The assembly structure reflects the feeling of impermanence that haunts the exiles. Coincidentally, the word Dharamsala, too, has the same

ring. In Hindi, it means resting place for travellers. The offices of the central exile administration came up there after the Indian Government provided a hilltop bungalow to the Dalai Lama shortly after his arrival from Lhasa in 1959. Every Tibetan exile above the age of nine contributes voluntarily to the administration budget.

A Full Fledged Parliamentary Body

For several years, the exile assembly played little more than a formal role. The deputies lacked experience and the assembly had no secretariat. Initially, the membership varied between 13 and 17. Then, after 30 years of learning and experience in the procedures of self-government, the Dalai Lama felt that it was time that the period of apprenticeship ended and the assembly started functioning like any other responsible democratic legislative body. Consequently, the old assembly was dissolved in May 1990

after he declared his intention to renounce the authority to appoint Kalons (ministers) and regulate other functions of the assembly. "From now on," he declared, "the people's decision will be final. I feel that the Dalai Lama should have no role here. The future assembly will be entrusted with the power of electing the Kalons."

The greatest jump towards achieving self-government after September 2, 1960, was taken on May 29, 1991, with the inauguration of the 11th Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, whereby the Assembly became a full fledged parliamentary body with effective powers over the executive. The number of deputies

rose from 12 to 46, thus giving representation to all sections of the exile community in India and abroad, including the religious sects, which were now greatly outnumbered. The three Tibetan cholkas of U-Tsang, Dotoe and Dhome were now represented by 10 deputies each, the four main Buddhist sects by two each and those belonging to the traditional Bon faith by another two. Two deputies were elected from Tibetan settlements in Europe and one from North America. Three eminent Tibetans were nominated by the Dalai Lama, including the Chairman, Professor Samdhong Rinpoche, who was also appointed Speaker. The exile community being

far-flung and spread over as many as 130 settlements and smaller communities in India and abroad, and also since the exiles have no political parties, the candidates for election are usually proposed by the constituencies, often at pre-election primaries.

Dalai Lama Limits his Own Political Powers

In his inaugural address to the Eleventh Assembly, the Dalai Lama emphasised the basic nature of the reforms which would limit his own traditional powers. He reiterated his determination to withdraw even further from governmental responsibilities in the future. He made it a point to link the reform process with the independence of Tibet. "I have made up my mind that I will not be the head of, or play any role in, the government when Tibet becomes independent," he announced. "The future head of the Tibetan government must be someone popularly elected by the people."

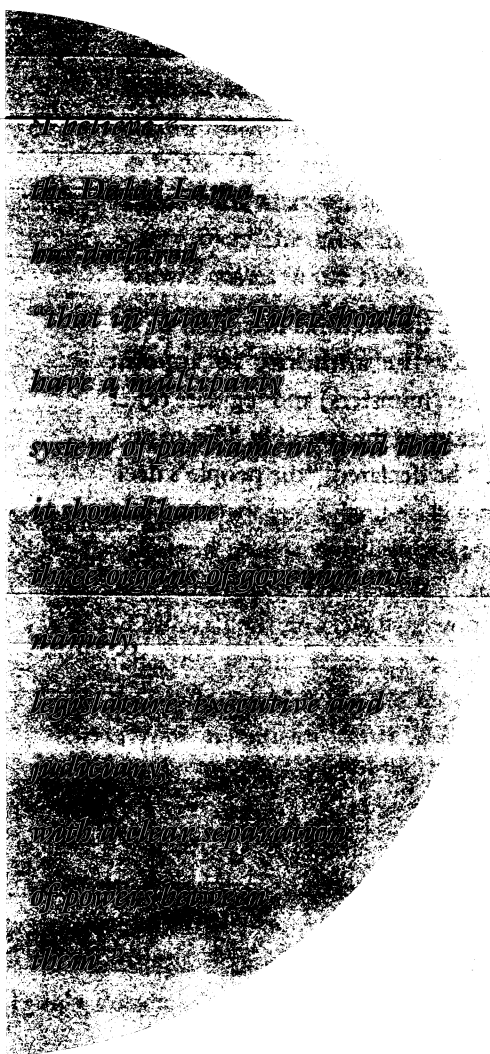
The relationship between the Dalai Lama and the exile community contrasts with the experience of most countries in which authority is wrested by the people from an unwilling monarch. Here, he has been insisting on devolution of powers in the face of popular resistance. The exiles continue to feel uncertain without his leadership; he is equally convinced that they will not gain adequate self-confidence if they continue to depend on him. This unusual conflict surfaced when the Assembly proposed to cancel a provision endorsed by the Dalai Lama that would enable it to annul ordinances promulgated by him when

it was not in session. This was a rare occasion when he exercised his special powers, but against himself - he rejected a popular move to restore his dominance.

Reaffirms Commitment to Democratic Reforms

The Dalai Lama reaffirmed his commitment to democratic reforms in his address to the Assembly. "When we first came into exile in 1959," he declared, "we decided that the future Tibet would move with the times while retaining the virtues of our traditional value system. We decided that though we would borrow the attributes of the modern world, we would retain our own traits." He made the point that the reforms would serve to counter Chinese propaganda suggesting that the exile struggle was aimed at reviving the old authoritarian society in Tibet. They were also bound to have an impact inside Tibet.

For the first time, the assembly then proceeded to elect the seven Kalons comprising the Kashag (cabinet) which had previously been nominated by the Dalai Lama. The Kashag occupies a separate building on the hillside above the assembly. The shift in the power equation came through when a Kalon was heard complaining that formerly the deputies had climbed up the hill to wait on them; now they were summoned down to the assembly. Kalons are required to be present for Question Hour, where the deputies' questions can be as embarrassing as anywhere else. The exile assembly has even devised a Zero



Hour, modelled after the Indian parliament, to enable deputies to raise issues of immediate concern. A Standing Committee of 12 deputies is elected to oversee the working of the administration. They are in session throughout the year.

The assembly proceedings reflect the institutional changes. Deputies no longer accept the line handed down by the Kashag unquestioningly. Searching questions have been asked, for instance, about relatives of the Dalai Lama who have not been as scrupulous as him in financial and other dealings. A brother who had been earlier appointed chairman of the Kashag (equivalent to prime minister) was censured for prolonged absence from office and for unauthorised talks with Chinese officials. He subsequently resigned. A nephew was also criticised for consorting with the Chinese diplomats.

On more than one occasion, deputies have voiced their indignation with Beijing for failing to respond positively to the Dalai Lama's efforts to initiate talks on Tibet's future without preconditions on either side. A resolution was adopted insisting that the next initiative, if any, must come from China. This was implicitly critical of the Dalai Lama's efforts, but he announced that he accepted this limitation.

The Longing for Home Persists

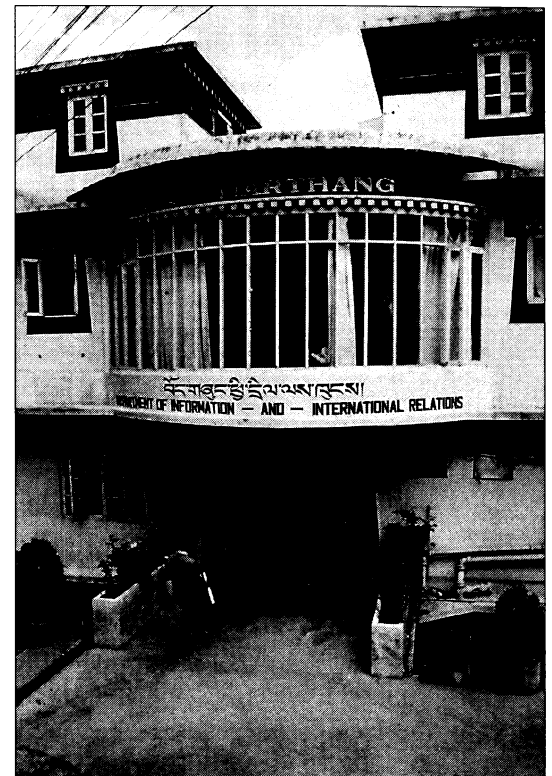
The growth of a mini-secretariat has not dulled the longing for home. The exiles continue to use international permits for identification and travel. They have not sought Indian or any other citizenship; nor will they accept Chinese. The Dalai Lama's emphasis on providing good schools

has borne fruit and the exiles no longer depend on manual labour for their livelihood. Some are doing well, but they all suffer the strains of being rootless, the price of holding on to their Tibetan identity without being able to return home.

The Dalai Lama tries to keep exile spirits alive without overlooking the need to reach out to the people in Tibet. In February 1992, he set out his vision for the future in a document entitled "Guidelines for Future Tibet's Polity and Basic Features of the Constitution." It gives the impression that the return to Tibet is not too distant. At the same time, it holds out the promise of promoting the parliamentary system in Tibet so as to appeal to Tibetans at home who are denied any form of democracy.

"I believe," the Dalai Lama has declared, "that in future Tibet should have a multiparty system of parliament, and that it should have three organs of government, namely, legislature, executive and judiciary, with a clear separation of powers between them... As I have often said, Tibet belongs to Tibetans, especially to those who are in Tibet. Therefore, Tibetans in Tibet shall bear the main responsibility in future Tibet's democratic government."

He has gone on to outline plans for the setting up of an interim government after the Chinese withdrew from Tibet which would set up a constituent assembly. "The interim government will be headed by a President who will assume all political powers presently held by me. The present Tibetan government-in-exile will be



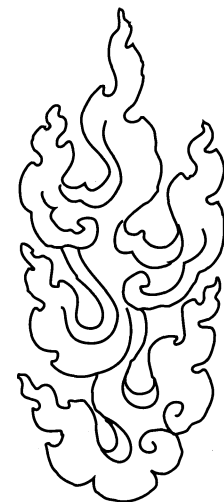
Department of Information and International Relations of the Dalai Lama's government in exile, Dharamshala

considered dissolved ipso facto...". The constituent assembly in turn, will prepare Tibet's new constitution on the basis of the drafts prepared in exile. As for himself, self-effacement would go further, "I have made up my mind that I will not play any role in the future government of Tibet," he has firmly confirmed.

Looking back, the exile community seems to have been transformed. From being virtual destitutes suffering the trauma of leaving their homes and finding themselves in totally different environs, in just over 30 years, the exile community is self-confident and eager to extend their rights and privileges to their brethren at home.

Ajit Bhattacharjee is Director, Press Institute of India, New Delhi

The Tibetan movement for freedom led by His Holiness the Dalai Lama is based on the three fundamental principles of truth, non-violence and democracy; the motivating force behind it being compassion. The ultimate goal is not just political freedom for Tibet, rather the preservation and dissemination of the sublime cultural traditions of Tibet for the benefit of all humanity.



istory bears testimony to the fact that from the outset of Tibetan civilisation, Tibet was an independent and sovereign country. In 1949, after the establishment of the communist government in China, relying on tremendous military power, the Chinese invaded and captured Tibet. To mislead the international

community, the Chinese then formulated the Seventeen Point Agreement which was signed under duress by a randomly designated delegation headed by Mr. Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, who had been taken to Peking as a prisoner of war from Chamdo. With the international community remaining a silent spectator, Tibet attempted for eight long gruelling years to reconcile itself with China on the basis of this Seventeen Point Agreement. But pushed to the limit by the inhuman oppression and torture at the hands of the Chinese and their blatant violation of all the seventeen points of the agreement, there was a spontaneous popular uprising on 10. March 1959 in Tibet that utterly denounced the Chinese occupation.

The Chinese responded to the uprising with unprecedented military force in a ruthless crackdown which compelled His Holiness the Dalai Lama to flee Tibet and take refuge in India in the company of some 80,000 Tibetans who followed him into exile. On arrival to India, the Dalai Lama used the earliest opportunity to announce to the international media, the invalidity of the Seventeen Point Agreement. Since that

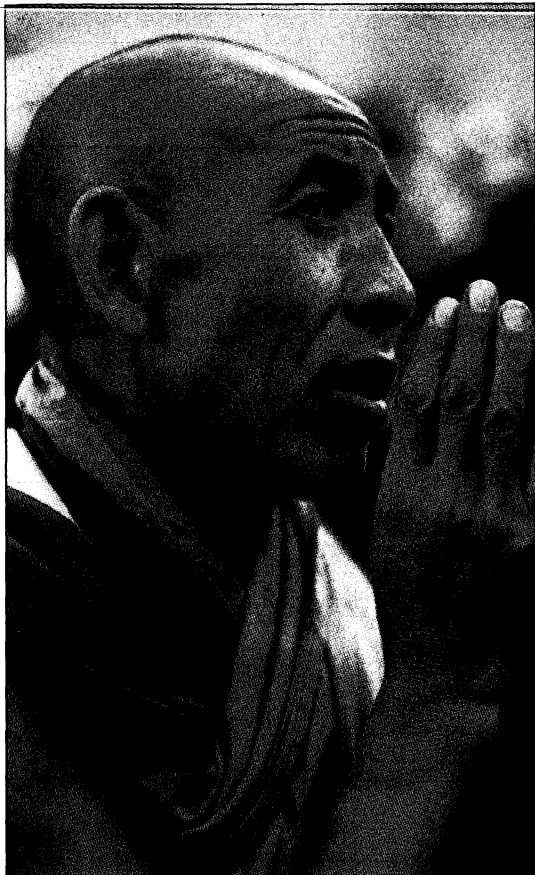
moment, the political struggle for the restoration of Tibet's freedom began in earnest.

To understand our goal and strategies, it is imperative to discuss the nature of Tibet's problem. In fact, the issue is not purely a political one. It is neither an ideological nor an ethnic conflict. Our fight is also not against the Chinese people. The idea that Tibet's freedom must be restored is not politically motivated, nor is it based on any nation-state theory. It is rather unique. The people born in the spiritual land of Tibet have a universal responsibility to the whole world, and the fulfilment of that responsibility is deemed a duty which we have inherited simply by the fact of our birth. If we do not live upto this duty, or if we are unable to act in a way that does justice to our heritage, then we are not worthy of being Tibetans.

Ultimate Goal: Not just Political Freedom

Our responsibility lies in maintaining and disseminating the unique inner sciences and cultural traditions that were preserved and promoted for

Photo: Vijay Kranti



Compassion, the motivating force of the movement.

thousands of years by our countrymen. If the Tibetans do not manage to preserve this heritage and it is allowed to disappear under the Chinese occupation, it will be a great loss not only for the Tibetans, but for the whole world. This heritage cannot be protected if Tibet does not regain its freedom and if natural ecological balance, without exploitation, is not restored to them. Therefore, the ultimate goal is not just political freedom for Tibet. Rather, our ultimate goal is the preservation, maintenance, and dissemination of the sublime cultural traditions of the unique inner sciences for the sake of all living beings. However, without proper means and favourable conditions, it is not possible for the Tibetans to fulfil that responsibility. We, therefore, must first undertake the spiritual practice of liberating Tibet without delay.

Tibet's Right to Independence

Even in strict political terms, Tibet is distinct from China ethnically, linguistically, philosophically, and even in its literary traditions. Indeed, every significant aspect of Tibetan culture is distinct from the Chinese culture. Historically, Tibet enjoyed independence until the Chinese invasion began in 1949. Even now, no Tibetan wishes to remain under Chinese rule. For all these reasons, we have the right to be an independent nation.

In addition, from an international perspective, the presence of a buffer state between the two most populous Asian countries India and China

would promote regional peace. Geographically, Tibet is the highest country in the World and the source of most of Asia's largest rivers; hence, preservation of Tibet's environment is of prime international importance. Tibet is also closely linked to the sta-

and an immaculate method. Therefore, we have carefully outlined the basic foundation, the motivation and the philosophical background for our spiritual practice to liberate Tibet (Tibbat Mukti Sadhana), which may

Photo: Vijay Kranti



Better to perish in non-violent resistance than to perish through non-action.

bility and security of neighbouring countries like India, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar. A free Tibet as a peace zone would be extremely beneficial even for China. As an analogy, if the international community felt that it could not allow Iraq to occupy Kuwait, then there is no reason whatsoever why China should be allowed to occupy Tibet. Until Tibet is freed from Chinese occupation, this stain on the moral record of modern civilisation will not be removed, and the savage law of the jungle will undoubtedly persist into the 21st century.

The History of Our Movement

For the attainment of the above mentioned goal, we must have a pure

be called political struggle. The three basic fundamental principles on which our movement is based are: (1) Truth; (2) Non-violence; and (3) Democracy. Any idea or action which transgresses any of these three basic principles will not form a part of the freedom movement for Tibet led by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The motivating force of our movement is compassion. It is compassion for the people of China, compassion for the people of Tibet and compassion for all sentient beings that motivates us to undertake a peaceful and non-violent movement for liberating Tibet.

The philosophical background of our movement is based on the philosophy of inter-dependence. The nature of the universe is interdependent, and thus ever changing. The freedom of Tibet was lost through causes and conditions created by ourselves, and in order to liberate Tibet (which is certainly possible!), the conducive causes and conditions must again be created by ourselves.

A Model for Free Tibet

In accordance with the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, after the restoration of Tibet's freedom, the State will be a demilitarised zone of peace, free of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; a centre for environmental protection; and, it will follow Buddhist economic principles of avoiding all extremes. Free Tibet will be a spring of the unique culture of the inner sciences, a country that will seek to alleviate the many sufferings inflicted upon the people by modern society. It will be distinctively spiritual and yet a truly democratic nation, replete with those characteristics of the old Tibetan system that stem from a world view based on love, and yet ornamented by those positive aspects of modernity which do not contradict

with the principles of compassion. Free Tibet will epitomise a model polity for the entire world, and it will help maintain peace and goodwill throughout the world, especially in Asia. In order to reflect these ideals in our national life, these have been enshrined in the proposed future constitution of Tibet. The preamble of the draft future constitution states, "We, the people of Tibet, in order to build a just, human and prosperous society guided by the light of eternal Dharma, to secure Tibet as a sanctuary of peace, spirituality and environmental purity, and to ensure ourselves and future generations the blessings of a constitutional democracy founded on the rule of law, and on the eternal ideals of freedom, equality, love, beauty, compassion, justice, non-violence and truth, do hereby establish this Constitution of Tibet."

Gradual Development of the Movement

When His Holiness the XIVth. Dalai Lama became the Head of State in 1950, he inherited the legacy of the previous Tibetan government along with its minute and poorly equipped army. Nevertheless, this small force put up considerable armed resistance at the time of the initial Chinese aggression. Thereafter, a civil resistance movement started sometime in 1955-56 and widespread guerrilla warfare continued until the late 1960's. Therefore, the Tibetan freedom movement cannot claim that it has remained totally non-violent right from its inception,

In exile, His Holiness began to assert his commitment to the principles of non-violence more forcefully, and the movement gradually became more and more non-violent as it was consolidated under his leadership. The 1991 Charter of Tibetans-in-exile clearly affirms the principles of non-violence and renounces all forms of warfare. Thus, the principle of non-violence is a national commitment, and it has gained even more strength and effectiveness,

We, the Tibetans have been engaged in a twofold political movement. Firstly, we have striven for full democratisation of the Tibetan government-in-exile; the ceaseless efforts of His Holiness in this regard for over 30 years, were finally rewarded when the 11th Assembly of Tibetan Peoples' Deputies adopted the Charter for Tibetans-in-Exile in 1991. Today, the government-in-exile is functioning as a completely democratic system under a well defined basic law. This will be the nucleus around which the new polity will grow in Free Tibet.

The second aspect of our political movement is the liberation of Tibet from the present situation. These efforts have also proceeded along two paths. On the one hand, we have sought support from the international community and on the other hand, we have attempted to pursue our goals through direct interaction with Chinese authorities.

In 1959, 1961, 1965, the Tibetan issue was raised in the UNO, and a resolution was passed to preserve human rights in Tibet and to guarantee the right to self-determination to the Tibetan people. Unfortunately, there



*The
1991 Charter of
Tibetans-in-exile clearly
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warfare.*

have so far been no means for implementing these resolutions. Efforts, however, have continued to create international awareness about the plight of Tibet in relation to the political situation, human rights, cultural rights, the environment, religious freedom, and so on. These efforts have led to a slow but steady increase in awareness of Tibet's plight throughout the world. As a result, many people have begun to appreciate the seriousness and gravity of the situation, and support groups and initiatives are increasing day by day throughout the world.

In 1979, Deng Xiaoping initiated a direct dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and stated that all issues were negotiable with the exception of the independence of Tibet. His Holiness and the Tibetan Government-in-exile responded sincerely and cordially to this initiative and attempted to negotiate with the Chinese for about 14 years. Several delegations were sent to Tibet and China, and as a basis for negotiation, His Holiness announced the Five Point Peace Programme in 1987 and the Strasbourg Proposal in 1988. But finally, we realised that the Chinese were not sincerely interested in any dialogue; they simply intended to stall every step taken in this direction and mislead the international community. Again in 1991, His Holiness offered to visit Tibet in order to seek a solution from the people living in Tibet, but this proposal was rejected by the Chinese.

In view of these circumstances, His Holiness the Dalai Lama intends to initiate a referendum amongst Tibetans both in exile and in Tibet. This referendum will be promulgated through various possible means, and it will seek to ascertain the people's mandate for a future strategy and course of action. While waiting for the referendum, a number of individuals and non-governmental organisations are seriously considering the strategy of initiating a peaceful resistance movement in Tibet. The recently proposed but postponed Peace March to Lhasa is an example of this new kind of strategy. A comprehensive programme for a Satyagraha or "Insistence on Truth" Movement is under preparation, and it will include various forms of civil disobedience, non-cooperation and passive resistance which will either be made public at the time of the referendum or launched at an appropriate time in the near future.

A Do or Die Situation

Many people think that since China is ruled by a powerful and ruthless government, such a movement would be simply suicidal and they claim it would not bring any positive results. But consider the present situation in Tibet - the continued violation of all human rights, the ongoing suppression and torture, the persistent

attempts at cultural genocide, the denial of education to Tibetan youngsters, the degradation of the environment, and above all the population transfer that will before long make the Tibetans a microscopic minority in their own land. What is the alternative? The very existence and identity of Tibet is on the verge of being completely wiped out. In short, time is running out. It is a do or die situation. If a Satyagraha Movement does not succeed, all may well be lost. But if we do nothing, all will certainly be lost. Since the very identity of the Tibetan people will disappear in either case, it is much better to perish in non-violent resistance instead of perishing through non-action. That is the reality of the situation of today.

*Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche
is Chairman, Assembly of
Tibetan People's Deputies,
Dharamsala*

United States Commends Res. 2711 Was Adopted March 15, 1992

Whereas, in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993, signed into law by President Bush on October 28, 1991, Congress declared Tibet to be an occupied country whose true representatives are the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in exile;

Whereas, in this same Act, Congress declared that "it is the policy of the United States to oppose aggression and other illegal uses of force by one country against the sovereignty of another as a manner of acquiring territory, and to condemn violations of international law, including the illegal occupation of one country by another";

Whereas the Department of State, in its February 1992 "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices in 1991" annual report, cited "persistent abuses in Tibet", "frequent credible reports from Tibetan refugees of torture and mistreatment in penal institutions in Tibet", "harsh sentences for political activities", and religious and cultural persecution of six million Tibetans;

Whereas the people of Tibet have been long denied their right to self-determination;

Whereas human rights abuses have been routine and harsh in occupied Tibet since the People's Republic of China invaded Tibet in 1949-1950;

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly passed resolutions condemning China's human rights abuses in Tibet in 1959, 1961, and 1965;

Whereas a Subcommission of Independent Experts of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights passed Resolution 1991/10 ("Situation in Tibet", August 23, 1991), condemning recent Chinese human rights abuses in Tibet, including executions, torture and denial of national, religious and cultural identity;

Whereas twenty-two countries, led by the European Community as the main sponsor, formally submitted a resolution ("Situation in Tibet", February 27, 1992) to the full United Nations Commission on Human Rights' annual meeting in Geneva in February-March 1992;

Whereas this resolution ("Situation in Tibet", February 27, 1992) declared its concern "at continuing reports of violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Tibet which threaten the distinct cultural, religious and ethnic identity of the Tibetans," acknowledged United Nations reports on torture, summary or arbitrary executions, religious intolerance and enforced or involuntary disappearances, called "on the Gov-

ernment of the People's Republic of China to take measures to ensure the full observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Tibetans", and invited "the Government of the People's Republic of China to continue to respond to requests by special rapporteurs for information" and requested "the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-ninth session on the situation in Tibet",

Whereas an altered text was offered implying China's sovereignty over Tibet;

Whereas, due to a procedural motion, this altered resolution was not acted on in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights; and

Whereas the United States should take a firm stand against human rights abuses wherever they occur, and should also speak out against the illegal occupation of Tibet;

Now, therefore, be it

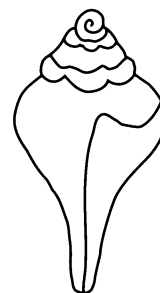
Resolved, that it is the sense of the Senate that -

- 1) the United States Government should support resolutions like the European Community-led resolution on the "Situation in Tibet" submitted to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights;
- 2) the United States Government should vigorously condemn Beijing's human rights abuses in occupied Tibet in all appropriate international forums; and
- 3) the United States Government should raise human rights abuses in Tibet with senior officials of the People's Republic of China.

The Role of Youth in the Struggle for Tibetan Independence

Over the years, the strength of the Tibetan youth has been reflected in the activities and policies of the Tibetan Youth Congress which serves as a common forum for the youth that are brought up in exile. Now almost 25 years since the foundation of Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) in October, 1970, looking back one feels proud that the TYC has emerged as an active and important political force within the Tibetan Community.

By Yangchen Dolkar



Training Ground for Leadership

Over the years, the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) has served as a training ground for the leadership in the Tibetan community. Many of the leading personalities in the community have at one time or another been closely associated with the organisation. More importantly, the TYC has provided a non-partisan forum to mobilize young and old, men and women, in the struggle for freedom. This in itself has generated respect, recognition and support for the organisation among public. TYC today is also the largest non-governmental voluntary organisation with the broadest support base. It has 59 regional chapters spread over 7 countries with 12,000 members. All this has enabled the TYC to play an important role in furthering the cause of Tibetan independence and strengthening democratic ideals within the Tibetan community. Today, it is a forum in which the youth in exile learn about their own culture, society and its strengths and weak-

nesses. It also assists the youth in preserving and promoting their own culture and identity.

Active Participation in Freedom Struggle

The TYC has served as a pathfinder in the Tibetan community - be it in the practice of grassroot democracy or in undertaking campaigns and activities to highlight the Tibetan issue. The organisation has also served as a sort of loyal opposition, critically examining the performance of the Tibetan government-in-exile, and offering comments and suggestions at regular intervals.

Hence, through its ceaseless efforts in furthering the struggle for independence and particularly through its efforts in putting the Tibetan issue on the international agenda, the TYC has attained recognition by the international media and political circles in many countries as an important voice of the Tibetan people. The founding of TYC, therefore, is one of the most important developments within the Tibetan community. This is reflected in China's strong criticism, not only of its policies and activities, but also of its existence.

Over the years, the activities and policies of TYC have evoked the sentiments of the people inside Tibet, particularly the younger groups. This is reflected in the increased participation of youth in the freedom struggle inside Tibet. For example, the majority of the people, who have been taking part in demonstrations or raising their voices against the Chinese atrocities, are young people, who are indoctrinated or educated by the Chinese authorities in Tibet or elsewhere in China. Infact more than half the Tibetan prisoners of conscience detained by the Chinese authorities in various prisons are young and mainly in the age group of 25 - 30 years. The Tibetan youth today have acquired better education and skills and are hence, much better equipped to wage the war for freedom, which is being fought not by sheer might but by wisdom.

Challenges Ahead

However, the challenges before the youth are no less, particularly if one looks at China's repressive policy in Tibet (which is leading to further deterioration of the situation inside Tibet), the growing economic and

military power of China and the changing political scenario across the globe. But the situation should not discourage the Tibetans. Rapid economic reforms and developments in China have given birth to a host of problems: growing inflation, unemployment and corruption at every level; the centre losing control over the provincial states; widening gap between the provincial states; growing dissatisfaction amongst the party cadres; growing hostilities in occupied areas occupied such as Tibet, East Turkistan and Inner Mongolia; confusion over how to handle the situation in Hongkong after 1997; delicate

relationship with Taiwan; and above all the failing health of China's paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping.

The policy makers and administrative officers of the Tibetan government-in-exile should realise the delicacy and seriousness of the situation and try to formulate a concrete policy to deal with the situation. An easy going attitude will not help. It is therefore, impor-

tant that the Tibetans, particularly the youth, should really work hard to strengthen the communication between the Tibetans in Tibet and those in exile, and also between the Tibetans, the Chinese dissidents and the people of East Turkistan and Inner Mongolia. They must strengthen the movement inside Tibet with wider involvement of the people in rural areas and also work for the collaborated efforts of various forces that are struggling to throw the yoke of the People's Republic of China. This in turn implies mobilising the Tibetans in exile to inten-

sify the campaign internationally, educating the people in South and South-East Asia about the long term implications of the growth in China's power on the stability of the region.

This period is crucial in both the history of Tibet and the history of China. As for Tibet, it is not only a question of struggle for independence but also struggle for the survival of a people of a distinct race and an ancient civilization. Time is running out. We must act now to SAVE TIBET before it is completely wiped out from the map of the history of mankind.

The article reflects the views of the author Ms. Yangchen Dolkar who is Information Secretary, Tibetan Youth Congress, Dharamsala. These views need not necessarily correspond with those held by TYC.

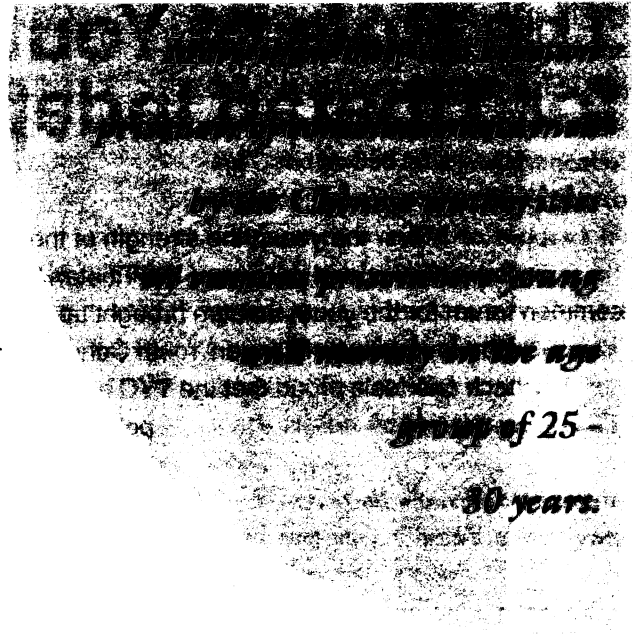
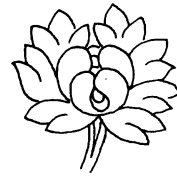


Photo: Vijay Kranti



Tibetan youth protesting in New Delhi demanding UN action on Tibet.

Tibetan Women Nose-dive Into Politics With Devotion



Today Tibetan women in Tibet and in exile have politicised their fight to raise global awareness towards the critical situation in Tibet; to bring to world attention the gross injustices committed by the Chinese against the Tibetan population and their gender specific human rights abuses.

Opposing not only the forced occupation of their country, Tibetan women are fighting against restrictive birth control policies, suppression of religious freedoms, population transfer policies and the unjust imprisonment of Tibetan people.

By Nawang Lhamo

A Historical Perspective

The women of Tibet have always played a vital role in the shaping of Tibet's social, cultural and national identity. Their active involvement in the freedom struggle of their country, therefore, comes as no surprise. Even before 1959, when Tibet was forcibly occupied, Tibetan women were actively participating in the resistance movement. On March 12th, 1959, Tibetan women gathered together in their thousands to publicly protest the invasion of their homeland, an event that marked the begin-

ning of a structured organisation of politically active women. Some 30,000 women took to the streets of Lhasa demonstrating their objection to the presence of the Chinese and many suffered brutal beatings, torture and imprisonment as a result of their actions and voice. However, this event did not deter women from expressing their political beliefs and even today women inside Tibet are politically active, often with life threatening implications. Many have died in the long freedom struggle that has ensued.

In the 1980's, the political activity inside Tibet concentrated mainly on non-violent protests, following the Buddhist principles of non-violence as set forth by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. The first demonstration led solely by nuns took place in December 1987 and set the precedent for an increased participation by women in the public political sphere. Today, Buddhist nuns constitute one of

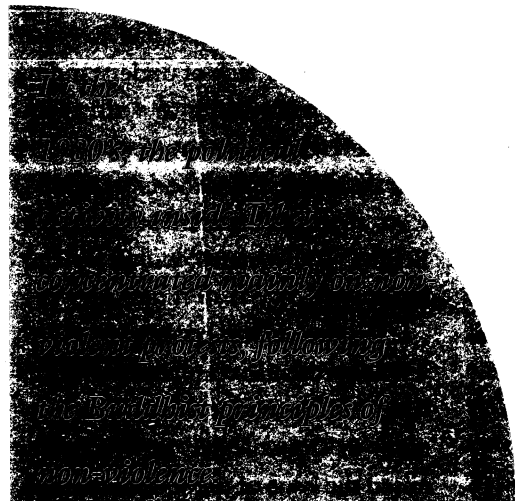
the greatest protesting forces in Tibet. In Tibet, women are routinely arrested, imprisoned and tortured without trial with the result that the total number of political prisoners in 1995 exceeds four hundred and fifty.

Tibetan Women in Exile

While our brave sisters are fighting a public and private battle under Chinese occupation, Tibetan women in exile are continuing their fight. With the formal re-establishment of the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) in 1981, Tibetan women joined together in common voice to rally for political freedom. Today, TWA has successfully initiated greater public awareness and involvement through festivals of Tibetan culture, workshops on women's issues, discussion sessions on Tibetan political issues and attendance at global governmental and non-governmental meetings.

International Politics and Strategies for Change

It has been the intention of TWA to facilitate the freedom struggle of



Tibet by accessing the wider international audience. In June 1993, a TWA delegate was sent to the World Human Rights Conference in Vienna and at every available opportunity the issue of Tibet was raised. Where possible the focus of the discussion was directed towards gender specific human rights violations including the enforced birth control policies, sterilisation and abortions inflicted by the Chinese regime on Tibetan women. To gather support for Tibetan women, UN delegates, government officials and NGOs were approached, and it was at this forum that TWA began its lobbying for representation at the forthcoming Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September 1995.

Since then, Tibetan women have participated in many preparatory conferences world-wide in the lead up to the Beijing conference - an event considered to be one of the most powerful forums for the presentation of issues affecting women in the twentieth century, and appropriately titled: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. What could be more relevant to the struggle of Tibetan women

both inside Tibet and in exile than the pursuit of peace and equality?

From the Manila NGO meeting in November 1993, the New York conference in March 1994; the Nordic Forum in Finland in August 1994; the ECE meeting in Vienna in October 1994; and most recently the final preparatory conferences in New York in April 1995; Tibetan women representatives still await the final decision from the UN as to whether they will be granted official authorisation to participate. Under unethical pressure from the Chinese it is likely the issue of Tibetan women will be buried.

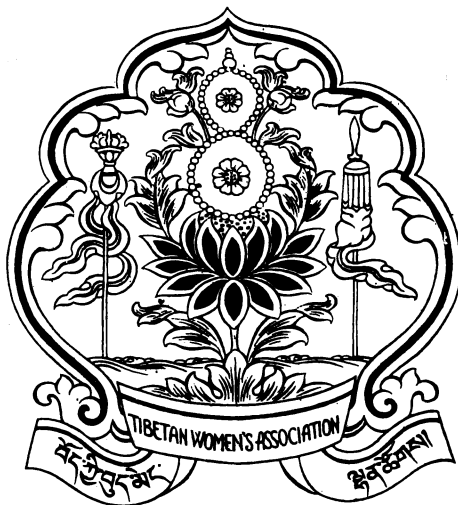
While many organisations and individuals have suggested Tibetan women boycott the Beijing event, TWA prefers instead to seek participation so that the voice of Tibetan women in exile may be heard. Being a United Nations event, the Tibetan women feel that for the agenda to be

credible, there should be a true and fair representation of women from all over the world. While China has indicated that Tibetan women from Tibet have been included in their official Chinese delegation (the All China Women's Federation), the TWA fears that these women are under the supreme control of the Chinese government and will be nothing more than their political puppets. TWA

seeks to represent the true voice of Tibetan women and feels it is their moral duty to present the issues affecting women in Tibet and in exile.

Taking every opportunity to raise their voice in all major world conferences, in September 1994, TWA delegates took part in the international Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo where the important issues of population control in Tibet were addressed (including enforced birth control and the massive migration of Chinese settlers to the Tibetan plateau). However, at this forum women recruited by China to speak on behalf of Tibetan women, were paraded as "true representatives of the Tibet Autonomous Region" and their sheer lack of understanding of the Tibetan issues as well as culture and language were discouraging and shocking. TWA, therefore, greatly fears that the women presented in Beijing as "Tibetans" would be similar.

Furthermore, in March 1995, TWA representatives attended the UN World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen at which they raised the issue of the socio-economic



Logo of the Tibetan Women's Association

conditions and discriminations against Tibetan women in Tibet - highlighting the subtle procedures employed by the Chinese government to limit opportunities available to women in Tibet, policies that affect education as well as employment and health care.

Local vs. Global

But while the participation of Tibetan women in the international sphere has helped bring about change, we are similarly active in India and the local communities. Edu-

cott the proposed Summer Olympics in Beijing in the year 2000 and it later petitioned world-wide support to attend the Beijing conference : a task that procured over 8000 signatures which were presented to the secretary-general of the UN conferences, Mrs. Getrude Mongella in New York in April this year.

In addition, the Tibetan freedom struggle was recently highlighted by a Peace March from Dharamsala to Delhi (originally proposed for Delhi to Lhasa) and while this event was not particular to women, the vice-

movement. The Peace March also helped in stimulating constructive relationships between local Indian communities and the Tibetan community. The solidarity between the two nations was warmly acknowledged and aided the Marchers in their long journey.

And finally, to highlight both the involvement of women in the political campaign for freedom and the increasing focus on women's issues, TWA organised the International Year of the Tibetan Women from March 12, 1994 to March 12, 1995. During this year many gatherings of Tibetan women from all over the world

organised demonstrations, festivals, video screenings, lectures and public gatherings to discuss the political situation of Tibet and its women. The most successful culmination of this special year was a gathering of over 1300 Tibetan women in Delhi on September 27th, 1994 commemorating the 1987 uprising in Lhasa: the second largest uprising of Tibetans since 1959.

Non-Violence: The Greatest Weapon

Though the strategies adopted by the Tibetan freedom struggle are modified according to the global political climate, TWA is constantly trying to learn from the endeavours of others. However, at every stage Tibetan women are conscious of the Buddhist principle of non violence and promote it with spirit and conviction.

Non-violence remains the greatest weapon that the Tibetan people wield in the face of their enemy, and the faith and tenacity of a non-vio-

Photo: TWA



Tibetan school children demonstrating against arrest of nuns in Lhasa in New Delhi.

cating the local people is a powerful way of transporting change in a global context. Within our host country, the Tibetan women in exile have organised numerous festivals of culture and tradition (most recently in Bombay, January 1995).

TWA also directed a national and international campaign of petitions asking for world-wide support to boy-

president of the Peace March organising committee was a woman, an unusual proportion of participants were women and key members of the organising committee were also women who acted as the main facilitators and administrators. Their participation ensured the success of the event and also helped in mobilising Tibetan women for the freedom

lent struggle has been justly rewarded by the international arena with the award of the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize being conferred on His Holiness the Dalai Lama. On the other hand, the notion of non-violence is viewed with fear and ignorance by the Chinese powers who have difficulty in comprehending it.

Towards a Free Tibet

Today, the Tibetan women are participating in one of the most poignant political struggles of their time. However, our determined activism could not have been so successful or as strong without the support of many international NGOs, individuals, official bodies, parliamentarians, human rights workers and supporters of Tibet, whose kindness and sincerity towards our plight is warmly recognised. In fact the very presence of Tibetan women at international symposiums has affected and influenced many people's perception of the Tibetan political issue and has succeeded in

gathering support not only for the Tibet issue but the issue of women in particular. A significant amount of media attention and coverage of Tibetan women at these events has also helped in promoting their cause. To all our brothers and sisters who share our dreams for a peaceful and just world we say thank you.

Many people ask the Tibetan Women's Association : "What are the chances of freedom being attained?" Our reply is calm but determined. To the exiled women working solidly for the return to their homeland, freedom is not a chance, it is a reality. Slowly, steadily and carefully, TWA and Tibetan women are making a mark, chal-

lenging the norms and struggling for their human rights. It is our hope that the presence and influence of TWA is being felt : like ripples in the ocean that would ultimately revolutionise into shock waves-a tidal wave of change! ■

Ms. Nawang Lhamo is General Secretary, Central Executive Committee of the Tibetan Women's Association, Dharamsala.



Tibetan girls demonstrating in Dharamshala demanding release of Tibetan political prisoners in Tibet.

Important Resolution on Tibet UN General Assembly Resolution 2079 (XX) New York 1965

The General Assembly

Bearing in mind the principles relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

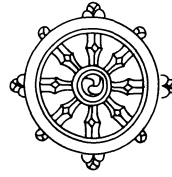
Reaffirming its resolutions 1353 (XIV) of 21 October 1959 and 1723 (XVI) of 20 December 1961 on the question of Tibet,

Gravely concerned at the continued violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet and the continued suppression of their distinctive cultural and religious life, as evidenced by the exodus of refugees to the neighbouring countries.

1) Deplores the continued violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet;

- 2) Reaffirms that respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is essential for the evolution of a peaceful world order based on the rule of law;
- 3) Declares its conviction that the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Tibet and the suppression of the distinctive cultural and religious life of its people, increases international tension and embitters relations between people;
- 4) Solemnly renews its call for the cessation of all practices which deprive the Tibetan people of the human rights and fundamental freedoms which they have always enjoyed;
- 5) Appeals to all States to use their best endeavours to achieve the purposes of the present resolution.

Tibetans in Nepal: Forging new Politics



With exile having become a way of life and affluence and normalcy creeping in, it may seem that the Tibetans in Nepal are becoming complacent and losing sight of their goal. Yet, Tibetans in Nepal relying on a firm sense of Tibetan identity, have a chance of forging a new kind of politics which will not be based on mere activism

by Karma Wang

As long as the identity of exile
Tibetans is firm, there is cause
for hope.

In the sixties, there were just a handful of Tibetans in Kathmandu, most of them Tibetans from Lhasa married to Newaris engaged in trade with Lhasa before 1959. Since then, the number of Tibetans settled here has grown considerably, mainly drawn from India by Kathmandu's liveability, and its emergence as the boom town of the Himalayan region, beckoning entrepreneurs of all hues.

Today, out of some 130,000 Tibetans in exile, living mainly in India but also as far afield as the United States, Switzerland, and Canada, the approximately 15,000 Tibetans living in Nepal could well be the richest community in exile.

However, as far as activities aimed at furthering the cause of Tibet go, the community in Nepal, at least superficially, seems markedly tame. For instance, at community gatherings commemorating the Tibetans' uprising against the Chinese, the birthday of the Dalai Lama, or on the anniversary of his being awarded the Nobel peace prize, Tibetan school children

sing the national anthem, monks recite prayers, and everyone throws tsampa in the air shouting "Lha Gyalo" (May the Gods be Victorious). Sometimes, placards are paraded and slogans shouted - Tibet belongs to Tibetans, China out of Tibet - and that is it. As always, the Nepali police steps in to put a quick stop to these mild political expressions and the government delivers its fierce and repeated avowal to disallow any "free Tibet" activities on Nepali soil.

Yet, despite this seemingly passive role, it is wrong to think that the Tibetan community in Nepal is politically irrelevant just as it is wrong to think that marches and slogans are signs of a vibrant political culture. As Tibetans tread the realm of normalcy with the fifth decade of exile looming, as exile becomes a way of life and the cause seems less urgent, the community in Nepal is at the verge of forging more enduring, more mature politics.

More than the other exiles, the Tibetans in Nepal

are the ones for whom it may be said that they have tasted "good life". Having surmounted the problems of poverty, Tibetans here are moving towards normalcy and normalcy is where the other Tibetan communities are also headed.

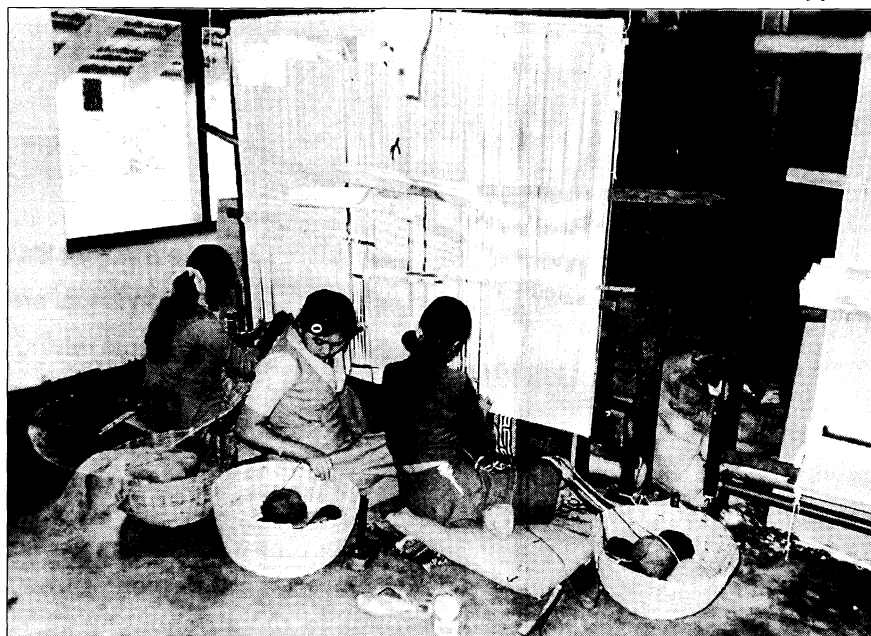
Unlike tiny "communities" scattered in the West, the Tibetan community in Kathmandu is big enough to allow its members to lead their own lives as they choose to. Equally im-



portant, the people and the cultural landscape of this Himalayan capital - with its Buddhist and Central Asian elements - make Kathmandu a natural milieu for Tibetans compared to most other places in Asia or in the West.

The relative affluence attained by Tibetans in Nepal is a powerful factor contributing towards normalcy. Kathmandu's Tibetan elite may actually be even better off than fellow-countrymen in the West. Tibetans control some 40 to 60 percent of Nepal's carpet industry, its largest for-

Photo: Vijay Kranti



Tibetans contribute a major share towards Nepal's carpet industry.

eign exchange earner and employer. Other Tibetans, owning small hotels, restaurants, tourist shops and stalls are also doing well by almost any standards. Many live in mansions, and drive a Pajero landcruiser (cost US \$ 50,000). Some send their children to the best schools in the region, including Kathmandu's American International School, at fees of several thousands of dollars per annum.

By the way, the Dalai Lama is not a Tibetan.

Not surprisingly, Nepal has the largest number of exiles who have opted for citizenship. Estimated at 3,000 to 5,000, this is far more than the number of Tibetans who have taken up U.S., Swiss, Canadian or any other citizenship except Indian. Thousands of Indian-born Tibetans are entitled to Indian citizenship even though few have claimed it.

The Dalai Lama is not a Tibetan.

All things considered, the community in Nepal has travelled a great distance, from refugeehood to near assimilation. While a level of stability is necessary for any exile group to survive, the fact that it can breed contentment, can make any group lose its appetite for its own cause.

To observers, it might seem as if this is happening to the Tibetan community in Nepal. Additionally, the fact that Tibetans live with crippling constraints on activism placed by the Nepali government, even something as benign as the public display of the photograph of the Dalai Lama can rattle the embassy of the People's Republic in Kathmandu.

In not wanting to ruffle the Chinese sentiments, many Nepali officials, intellectuals, and journalists frequently give vent to their exaggerated fears of

"free Tibet" activities being carried out on the Nepali soil.

In fact, there is little going on. Too little, as many politically active Tibetans in neighbouring India, who still deride Tibetans in Nepal as being "only interested in business," would say. By and large, Tibetans are anxious to comply with the rules (given what they have to lose), although many Tibetans admonish themselves for this.

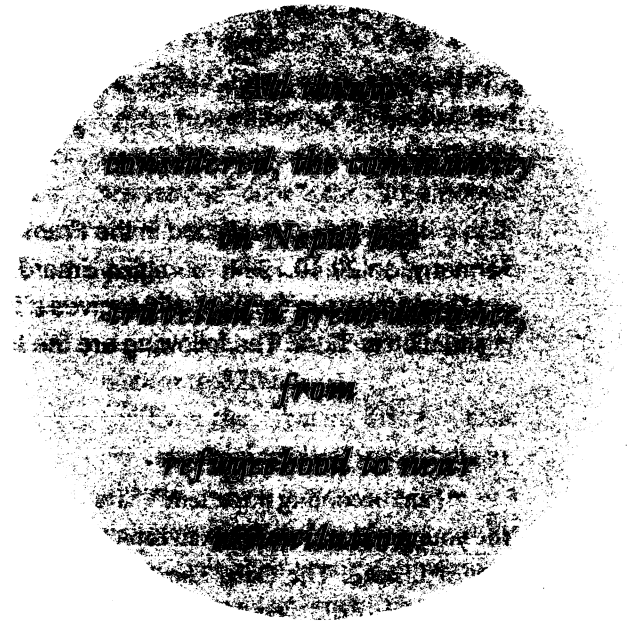
The situation

Those critical of the Tibetans' political inaction here have to consider several things. First, the Tibetans in Nepal contribute significantly to the upkeep of Tibetan institutions in exile, whether in India or Nepal, be it monasteries or schools. Much more importantly, the Tibetans in Nepal have developed the capacity to sustain their own institutions and are committed to doing so.

Secondly, the politics of Tibetan

exiles has been a simple, though no less effective, strategy of winning public support. More than anything, its relative success has rested on Tibetans, individually or collectively, enacting the cultural enterprise of being Tibetans, which implies a commitment to the notion of Tibet and Tibetans.

The community in Nepal can show that normalcy, engendered by success in exile, need not be a threat to their cause. Potentially, the community has the chance of forging a new kind of politics which will be more enduring because it will be based on something more than activism.



A firm Tibetan identity

Ultimately, the sustenance of the Tibetan cause rests on a firm Tibetan identity, which must inevitably undergo change. The identity is part of a cultural way of being, the self-expression of an ideology, history and culture, and is part of a conscious act, that is, the identification with a construct of self and community. That will endure as long as Tibetan - or human beings for that - need it.

In this Tibetans here may not be so different from Tibetans in Tibet who, despite arguable material gains and the onslaught of sinocisation, want to and thus continue to remain Tibetans.

Karma Wangdai (pen name) is a freelance editor / journalist and an observer of Tibetan politics based in Kathmandu, Nepal

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In an article published in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ), Germany, on 29.10.1994, journalist Erhard Haubold who visited Lhasa and Dharamsala in October 1994, gives a first hand account of the present situation in Tibet. The following are the translated excerpts of the article.

"I am becoming impatient", says the young man in the Tibetan capital city of Lhasa. "The Dalai Lama, living in Indian exile since 1959, has not achieved anything with his soft policy against China. ... The elite are abroad; the monasteries, the best educational institutions have been destroyed; the Tibetan civil servants are farmers who earn well whereas it is the Chinese behind them who pull the strings; our language is dying out, it is hardly suitable as a modern commercial language and anyway examinations and employment interviews are held in Chinese." Behind the new

facades which are meant to depict "Tibetan Autonomy" in Lhasa or in the south-west situated temple city of Shigatse (where the Panchen Lama had resided), empty buildings lie concealed. In Lhasa, the majority of the population of 20,000 people are already Chinese and in Shigatse, the proportion of Chinese is said to have increased from 30 to 50 percent in two years time.

*The Tibetans
living in exile are
complaining about the
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reducing them to a
minority in their
own country.*

(...) At a secret conference held in Sichuan last year, the Chinese leadership is said to have decided on a massive population transfer in order to solve the "Tibet Problem" ... so much so that those living in exile now fear that Tibet will get "demographically inundated like Inner Mongolia" so that no more protests and demands for independence can be made.

As per the figures given by the Dalai Lama, there are six million Tibetans and seven million Chinese living in Tibet, if one takes the 1951 boundaries of Tibet into consideration. Even in the "Tibet Autonomous Region" (TAR), with less than two million people, Tibetans constitute a bare majority. The Chinese on the contrary talk about 95.46 % Ti-



Chinese soldiers are being encouraged to serve in Tibet after retirement.

betans and 3.7% "Members of the Han-nationality". But here too, they are merely taking into account the autonomous region (U-Tsang), which constitutes less than fifty percent of the region which the Tibetans regard as their homeland. The regions comprising Amdo and Kham in the east have been annexed to the Chinese provinces following the occupation of Tibet - even here the sinocisation has been significantly increasing since years. Exile groups claim that in the city of Xining in Amdo province, for every 2000 Tibetans there are 700,000 Chinese and that in the re-

ing approximately 100,000 traders, prostitutes and bar owners in Lhasa alone. These people do business in the summer and avoid the harsh winter on the "Roof of the World" by moving to Inner China in winter. The soldiers were recently encouraged to settle down in Tibet after the end of their service.

The eyewitness confirmed that trade and administration in Tibet is controlled by the Chinese. From amongst 31,000 small enterprises (restaurants, beauty parlours, tailors, carpenters) in Lhasa, practically

eign investors who are mainly Chinese from Hongkong, Taiwan or Singapore. Due to poor school education (for which the Chinese administration is responsible), many Tibetans cannot "cope"; the elite amongst the Tibetans send their children preferably to Indian schools. As a result the number of refugees has again been rising since 1990, from 2500 per annum to 3700. (...)

Even the Tibetans living in exile are complaining about the ethnic infiltration which is reducing them to a minority in their own country and is resulting in their losing their national and cultural identity which could lead

to their becoming mere temple administrators and pieces of tourist attraction, with all the political and economic power being wielded by the Chinese. They criticise the school policy whereby in an ever increasing number of schools, Chinese is becoming the medium of instruction, especially in the natural science subjects. (...) With 45%, the illiteracy rate is three times as high as in the rest of China. "Our mood has become desperate, since every day brings with it more Chinese", says Professor Rinpoche, a close advisor of the Dalai Lama and president of the exile parliament. Even the 14. reincarnation himself agrees that the policy of "middle path" against the Chinese has "more or less failed". Anyway, the Strasbourg

Declaration (1988) of the Dalai Lama (Autonomy for Tibet, responsibility for foreign policy to remain with Peking) has been rejected by the Youth Congress and its 13,000 members. (...)



An uncertain future ahead...

gion Haidong, there is a one is to ten relationship. In the official Chinese figures, neither are the soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (which are estimated to be minimum 250,000 in Tibet) included nor are the traders, and other fortune seekers included, who in the western province constitute a "floating population" compris-

26,000 are in Chinese hands. And this trend is likely to strengthen further. As in the other far flung provinces, Chinese settlers in Tibet get higher salaries and credits; they also need not adhere to the regulation of "one child per family". The economic opening up of China has further attracted for-

Negotiations at a Standstill

In a talk with this newspaper, the Dalai Lama said that for over a year now, the negotiations with Peking are at a standstill, since Peking wants him to recognise that Tibet was never independent and has always been a part of China. But "this would be a lie". He does not exclude the fact that the

Chinese leadership is only trying to win time while carrying out its "final solution" to the Tibet problem through "flooding Tibet with Chinese soldiers". Many Tibetans are feeling disappointed and discouraged and the criticism of Dalai Lama's policy is growing. (...) Many politicians in Dharamsala believe that it would not help to wait for the time "after Deng

Xiaoping": No Chinese leader would like to loosen his grip on Tibet. The Dalai Lama is waiting for the political liberalisation in China, which will follow the economic opening up; the end of Marxism and the attractiveness of the Buddhist way of thinking even for the young Chinese - even though the "situation in Tibet at present is hopeless". ■

Photo: DIIR, Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamsala



Picture shows bodies of nuns (of Gyan Nunnery in Lhasa) who have been beaten by the Chinese police after they had demonstrated on 10 December 1988 - International Human Rights Day. Location is the Barkhor police station in Lhasa. Blood can be seen in the foreground.

The woman standing in the background is now dead. Her name is Tsamla, she was imprisoned in Sargyip

prison near Lhasa and fell ill due to many beatings.

Tsamla, age 39, was arrested for allegedly hitting members of the security forces on the arms and hands with an iron bar as they fired into unarmed demonstrators in the square in front of the Jokhang-Temple in Lhasa. Tibetan witnesses believe that in this way Tsamla saved the lives of many demonstrators.

She was sentenced to 2½ to 3 years imprisonment.

In May 1991, she was admitted to the Sargyip prison hospital where it is said that she underwent surgery and subsequently died. One report from Lhasa alleges that she was subjected to medical experimentation, but there is no clear evidence of this. It is not known if her family has demanded a post mortem. ■

Published on 20 November 1991 by the Department of Information and International Relations of the Tibetan Administration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Dharamsala.

Pakistan is heading towards more trouble as the voluntary repatriation of the Afghan refugees has stopped and the UN will terminate its food assistance programme for the refugees from September 1995.

s a consequence of the former Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, about

3.5 million Afghans entered into Pakistan to seek asylum. Though the majority of them voluntarily returned to their country in 1992, today their number still amounts to over 1.5 million. Pakistan is neither a party to the 1951 UN Convention relating to the status of refugees nor is it a party to its 1967 protocol. However, in maintaining the traditions of its humanitarian policy, the Government of Pakistan is abiding by the convention's provisions.

As a result of the large number of refugees, the Government of Pakistan has established a Chief Commissariat for Afghan refugees in 1980, under the Ministry of State and Frontier Regions (SAFRON).

To cope with such a large number of refugees and to co-ordinate the assistance provided by UN agencies and a large number of non-governmental voluntary organisations, the government of Pakistan established a Chief Commissariat for Afghan refugees in 1980, under the Ministry of State and Frontier Regions (SAFRON).

Although all incoming refugees were required to be registered, there have always been a large number of refugees (approximately 500,000) who entered Pakistan illegally. The refugees were grouped into a number of Tented Refugee Villages (TRVs), each comprising a maximum of 10,000 refugees. The TRV administration is responsible for all aspects of welfare and discipline within the TRVs. The refugees have been provided with shelter, food, water and bedding and other facilities like health care, education and vocational training at each TRV. There are a total of 350 TRVs in Pakistan, with a concentration of 70% in North Western Frontier Province (NWFP), 25% in Baluchistan and 5% in Punjab.

Pakistan's policy towards refugees has been very lenient. Unlike the situation in many other countries, they were given complete freedom to move within the country. No restrictions were placed on the carrying of weapons, holding of meetings and making of political statements. Neither were they prevented from applying for jobs or carrying out any business. The continuous stay of the world's largest number of refugees in Pakistan for almost one and a half decade has, however, resulted in serious socio-economic and political problems.

Due to lack of adequate security arrangements for the refugees, frequent killings, kidnappings and armed clashes have been reported.

Various Problems of Refugees

Increased burden on the government

The Government of Pakistan alone bore the burden of Afghan refugees during the period from April 1978 to January 1980. In the following years, Pakistan has been sharing about 40% of the total amount spent on the maintenance of refugees. The shortfalls between the pledges made by the donor countries and the actual requirements of the refugees has been made up by Pakistan.

Although all incoming refugees were required to be registered, there have always been a large number of refugees (approx. 500,000) who entered Pakistan illegally.

In the areas where the Afghan refugees have been concentrated, their presence has taken its toll on the people and the area, especially in the NWFP and Baluchistan. The public and goods transport system has been taken over by the Afghan refugees. Most of the vegetable and fruit dealers are Afghans. They have also cut deep into the market for unskilled labour by working at cheaper rates. Rents of houses and prices of property have been pushed up. Wheat, rice, sugar, tea and livestock are being smuggled into Afghanistan.

A changed demographic complexion

The refugee population has also changed the demographic complexion in many areas. Cities like Peshawar, Quetta and Karachi have been flooded by refugees. The population of Peshawar has gone up from 300,000 to approximately 900,000 and in Quetta city every fourth person is an Afghan. In Quetta division there are 900,000 locals and 800,000 refugees. In Karachi there are 100,000 illegal Afghan immigrants. In places like Kurram Agency and Pishin, refugees outnumber the locals. Over the years the presence of a large number of refugees has caused so much pressure on the locals that some have been forced to migrate to other areas of Pakistan.

A threat to internal security

Afghan refugees are a major factor behind the profuse inflow of drugs and guns into Pakistan. Unregistered refugees in Karachi are said to be involved in drugs and gun-dealing businesses. A handgun costs between \$ 50 - 100, an AK-47 Kalashnikov between \$300 - 500. The number of drug addicts after the arrival of refugees has increased manifold. According to some survey reports, the number of drug addicts in Pakistan has reached up to 3 million.

Afghan refugees are affiliated to various Mujahideen political organisations which have contacts with Pakistan's political and religious organisations. This has resulted in the supply of weapons to religious and political parties enabling them to establish militant wings of their respective parties. Refugees have a direct involvement in the political life of

Pakistan, which has been resented by the politicians and the people of Pakistan.

Ecological damages

The presence of 3.5 million refugees and a very large number of their livestock has caused serious damages to the ecology of NWFP and Baluchistan. Constraints on water resources, deforestation, soil erosion, pollution, are among the major concerns for Pakistan.

In most of the cases the refugees in the TRVs are living in very unhygienic conditions. They are exposed to severe weather conditions resulting in outbreak of malaria, diarrhoea and other such ailments. Due to lack of adequate security arrangements for the refugees, frequent killings, kidnappings and armed clashes have been reported. The unregistered refugees living in cities are subjected to police harassment. The assistance provided to them remains insufficient to help them maintain their former social and economic status in Afghanistan. Economic hardships have forced many to indulge in prostitution, drug and gun-dealing businesses.

Future of the Afghan Refugees

Out of the original 3.5 million refugees, about 1.6 million have voluntarily returned since April 1992. In 1995, according to SAFRON, the total number of registered refugees staying in Pakistan are 1.55 million. The number of unregistered refugees is said to be over 0.5 million. Out of this number about 123,000 refugees entered into Pakistan following the ongoing fighting among different fac-

tions of the Afghan Mujahideen since February 1994. The prospects for further repatriation are very grim. Security conditions in Afghanistan and the absence of services such as health and education facilities as well as employment opportunities are the main impediments to their return.

Since 1990, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) officials have been categorically stating that UNHCR's general assistance to the Afghan refugees in Pakistan cannot be sustained indefinitely.

In October 1994, the idea of giving permanent settlement to the refugees in Pakistan as an alternative solution to the refugee problem was floated by UNHCR in its executive committee meeting in Geneva. The government of Pakistan has declined the request and refused to grant permanent settlement to a large number of Afghan refugees for various socio-economic and political reasons.

The recent UNHCR and World Food Programme survey reports suggest that the great majority of Afghan refugees still in Pakistan have in fact achieved self-sufficiency over the years and are no longer in need of UN assistance. Pakistan, however, does not agree with this assessment. The UNHCR will consequently spend only \$20 million on Afghan refugees in 1995, compared to the \$26 million it spent in 1994. About \$6 million of 1995's aid will go to the Afghans who want to return to their

country. According to Pakistani sources, the UN aid for refugees will end by September 1995.

A Difficult Situation

The decision to end UN aid was taken despite Pakistan's objections that this would increase the hardships for the refugees and put more bur-

gees who are well equipped with light arms. The situation will become more explosive if the Afghan Mujahideen organisations and the religious parties in Pakistan back the refugees against



den on Pakistan. Pakistan alone cannot meet the food and other requirements of 1.5 million Afghan refugees. Neither can it afford to push the refugees to repatriate because that will destroy the goodwill created in the hearts of Afghans by hosting them for 15 years. Forced repatriation has political and religious implications. In case a decision is taken for forced repatriation, that might result in a direct confrontation between the law enforcement agencies and the refu-

the government's decision. On the other hand, the refugees frustrated due to the absence of food assistance might resort to extreme actions, which could lead to a serious law and order situation. Not having found a clear cut solution, Pakistan is now gradually drifting towards a very complicated phase of its refugee problem.

Fazal-ur-Rahman is Research Fellow at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad

liberal

CONCERNS

Peace is something most of us earnestly desire. Yet, peace seems to be eluding the "Pearl of the Indian Ocean". The attempts to bring about a settlement to the 13 year old raging civil war mainly affecting the north and east of Sri Lanka have still not met with any success. The earliest peace attempt was the All Party Conference in 1984, which could not achieve any consensus. In early 1985, talks were held in Thimpu with the mediation of India, but this measure too, brought forth no worthwhile results. In 1987, with the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord, devolution measures were undertaken, and extensive

powers were devolved to nine directly elected provincial councils with a view to meeting minority demands for greater autonomy. Consequently, the first cease-fire was declared. Then, all the peace-loving people of Sri Lanka had hoped that this would ease the suffering of the land. Yet, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the main group demanding a separate state called Eelam, did not fall in line with the Accord. This resulted in the Indian Peace keeping Force (IPKF) coming over to Sri Lanka and trying to tame the tigers. In 1990, LTTE

had direct consultations with the Sri Lankan Government which resulted in the withdrawal of the IPKF. A second cease-fire was declared which merely resulted in the LTTE amassing more arms and regrouping. Between 1991 to 1993, a parliamentary select committee tried to bring about some viable solution but to no avail.

The current peace process commenced on 8th. January 1995 with the declaration of the third cease-fire. The peace pack-

age offered by the government included a rehabilitation package of Rs. 40. billion. Much progress was made in this regard. The embargo on items sent to the north was lifted and was restricted to only those items which could be used for military purposes. The ban on fishing was lifted. Two principal routes to the Jaffna peninsula were opened. The LTTE however, never gave the green light for the commencement of reconstruction work, neither did they open up their ends of the roads.

In the context of reaching a political solution, the government has suggested that discussions be held simultaneously with rehabilitation activities and has even suggested foreign mediation. LTTE has not agreed to these proposals and finally on 19th. April 1995, it ended the cease-fire with the now familiar pattern of appeasement and betrayal with the help of a unilateral declaration. For the third time in eight years, the LTTE had agreed to a truce, used the time to regroup and then launched a series of surprise attacks bringing about a great loss to life and property. The tiny island is plunged yet again into a tense situation with the third Eelam war looming on the horizon.

As in every war in the history of mankind, one of the gravest problems is that of refugees. At the outset of

Photo: PIB



The Prime Minister Sri P.V. Narayana Rao with the Sri Lankan President Mr. Chandrika Kumaratunga at the inaugural session of the Indo-Sri Lankan Summit in New Delhi on May 2, 1995.

this conflict, thousands of civilians had fled to neighbouring India where this mass of humanity had been squeezed into 171 refugee camps in Tamil Nadu. Since then, during times of cessation of hostilities, most of these people have returned to Sri Lanka. Today, people from all ethnic groups

have become refugees in their own country. The Sinhalese and Muslims who live in the north and east are being forcibly removed from those areas by LTTE terror tactics. The Tamils are fleeing from the north and the east due to the immense hardships they have to face in a war strewn land and due to forced conscription of their children by the LTTE.

Apart from the economic concerns of the government due to the refugee problem, a graver concern is

the human angle. Thousands have become homeless, paying their dues in blood, ruin, mental trauma, and insecurity. The only solution to all these maladies is lasting peace. That elusive Peace can only be brought about by understanding the realities on both sides of the coin, only when every citizen starts acting with sincerity, restraint and responsibility. ■

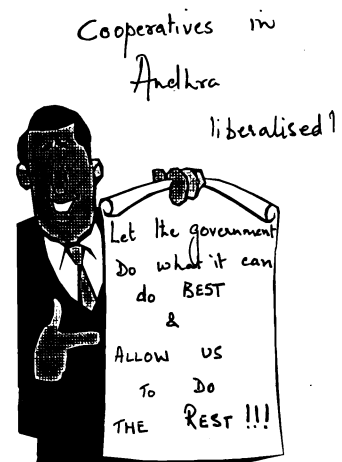
Liberalisation Penetrates the Cooperative Sector

In a historic breakthrough, Andhra Pradesh became the first Indian state to liberalise cooperatives by freeing them from government control through a path-breaking legislation. On May 4, the Andhra Pradesh legislative assembly unanimously passed the AP Mutually Aided Co-operative Societies Act, 1995. This Act restores to cooperatives not dependant on the government for equity, the autonomy they have been seeking. Thus, the first step towards democratisation of cooperatives has been initiated.

Under the new Act of Andhra Pradesh, cooperatives are now guaranteed the same freedom to conduct their own affairs on the basis of their own bylaws (subject to limited restrictions) as other forms of enterprises. Members can now fully own and control their cooperatives, select their own auditors and conduct their own elections. The cooperatives no longer need to take the prior approval of the Registrar of Cooperatives on matters

relating to staff patterns, staff remuneration and service conditions, nor do they need to take permission regarding investments. Earlier, even to invest in their own businesses, they required the Registrar's approval. Co-operatives, however, will not be permitted to invest their funds in any speculative manner. The passing of this law has been a major victory for the Co-operative Development Foundation, Hyderabad which had long been striving for such a law.

India has over 340,000 cooperative societies with a total membership of 160.4 million. The sector, with a combined share capital of Rs 53,250 million, has provided production credits approximating Rs. 55,000 million. Dr. V. Kurien, chairman of the National Dairy Development Board, said that a three-pronged drive would



be launched to bring about changes in economic policy regarding cooperatives; to motivate State governments to change their respective Co-operative Acts and to strive for reforms in the Central Multi-State Act on cooperatives. ■

SAPTA to be operationalised

This year on 8th December, 1995, SAARC will complete 10 years of its existence. Considering the initial scepticism, this itself is by no means a small achievement. There have been several resolutions, declarations and studies carried out by SAARC. More than a dozen commit-

ment (SAPTA) will finally become operational by the end of this year. The tariff concessions between the seven countries have been finally agreed upon and signed. More than 500 products have been agreed upon for the preferential exchange of tariffs with concessions ranging from 7.5% to 100% on the normal import

most important pillar of SAARC co-operation. Secondly, the member nations of SAARC are opening up their economies to the world, wooing foreign investments in manufacturing, trade and services. The import barriers are being knocked down one after the other. There is also no justification left in keeping the doors closed to the next door neighbours. Thirdly, the world has witnessed a proliferation of regional blocs like the European Union, Mercosur, ASEAN, NAFTA, APEC and many others which have clearly demonstrated the benefits of co-operation at the regional level.

Photo: PIB



tees have been instituted to galvanise co-operation amongst the seven countries on issues like poverty eradication, agriculture, illiteracy, food security, rural development, science and technology, women development, meteorology etc.. Beyond that the forum had been written off by most sceptics as a non-functional talking platform. But the Eighth SAARC Summit held in New Delhi from 2-4 May, 1995 proved contrary to their expectations.

The single most important achievement of the summit was that SAARC Preferential Trading Arrange-

ment (SAPTA) will finally become operational by the end of this year. The tariff concessions between the seven countries have been finally agreed upon and signed. More than 500 products have been agreed upon for the preferential exchange of tariffs with concessions ranging from 7.5% to 100% on the normal import

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But for any movement to survive and grow, people-to-people co-operation is a must. It is indeed heartening to note that at the non-government level, the will to break the barriers is stronger than at the official level. This collective will of the people will pave way for policies to translate into harmonious relations among the countries. The SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), the apex chamber of this region, is one such forum striving towards more intense and wide ranging economic co-operation. On the basis of the several seminars which were organised on SAPTA by SCCI, it has recommended ways of achieving meaningful co-operation. While emphasising the need to include services within the framework of SAPTA, it has suggested that a fast track approach be adopted in exchanging tariff concessions by means of a sectoral approach and accelerated tariff reductions.

Though the operationalisation of SAPTA by December 1995 will be a significant achievement, it does not call for celebrations. The number of items exchanged and tariff concessions agreed upon are too small to make a meaningful impact on trade within the member nations. The barriers to movement of goods in transit through a third country still need to be eased

out. Besides, visa restrictions among some of the countries will have to be removed at bilateral levels in order to enhance trade within the region. There is hope in the fact that at the Delhi Declaration adopted at the Eighth SAARC Summit, all the heads of State or Government have basically agreed in principle to the setting up

of a SAARC Free Trade Area (SAFTA). As a first step, it is significant that no country has opposed this proposal. Although there is already something close to free trade between Bhutan, Nepal and India; Sri Lanka has shown enthusiasm about this. Yet, the fact remains that efforts need to be doubled to ensure meaningful co-operation within South Asia and that SAPTA should become a milestone towards the realisation of SAFTA. ■

Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung Elects New Board of Directors

On April 26, 1995, the Board of Trustees of the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung (FNSt) held a meeting to elect a new Board of Directors. The meeting was pre-

sided by Dr. Martin Bangemann, Commissioner of the European Union, former Federal Minister for

Economic Affairs and former Chairman of the Free Democratic Party of Germany (FDP).

The following persons were elected to the new Board of Directors:

Chairman:	Dr. Otto Count Lambsdorff, MP
Vice-Chairmen:	Prof. Dr. Elke Mehnert Dr. Wolf-Dieter Zumpfort
Treasurer:	Dr. Günther Storch
Executive Board Member:	Rolf Berndt
Members:	Prof. Dr. Hubertus Müller-Groeling Helmut Schäfer, MP and Minister of State, Foreign Affairs

The new Chairman, Dr. Otto Count Lambsdorff, was born in 1926 in Aachen as a descendant of a well known noble family from the Baltic Region. During his distinguished career in public life, he was Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Chairman of the Free Democratic Party of Germany (FDP) and President of Liberal



From left to right: Helmut Schäfer (MP), Rolf Berndt, Prof. Dr. Elke Mehnert, Dr. Wolf-Dieter Zumpfort, Dr. Otto Graf Lambsdorff (MP), Prof. Dr. Hubertus Müller-Groeling, Dr. Günther Storch.

International. He is an honorary chairman of the FDP and a member of its executive committee. A forceful personality with a sharp wit and an accomplished orator, he has fought ceaselessly both within and outside the government for keeping Germany's economic policy firmly tied to the principles of free market economy and free trade. His international status as

one of the most eminent liberal statesmen will be a great asset to the FNSt.

For the last twenty years, he has worked closely with Mr. Berndt, the new Executive Board Member. Mr. Berndt, an economist born in 1946 in the Siegerland region, worked in the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs before assuming the post of Managing Director of the FDP in

1983, a post which he left in June 1995 after being elected to the Board of the FNSt.

At a time when Liberalism is facing a difficult political status in Germany, the new leadership of the foundation will greatly strengthen its ability to communicate the liberal message effectively. ■

Open Learning Programme in Entrepreneurship Launched

The Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI) has launched a unique entrepreneurship development programme through the distance education mode called Open Learning Programme in Entrepreneurship (OLPE). With the first two batches having enrolled in January 1995, the course is now available in five Indian states namely Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

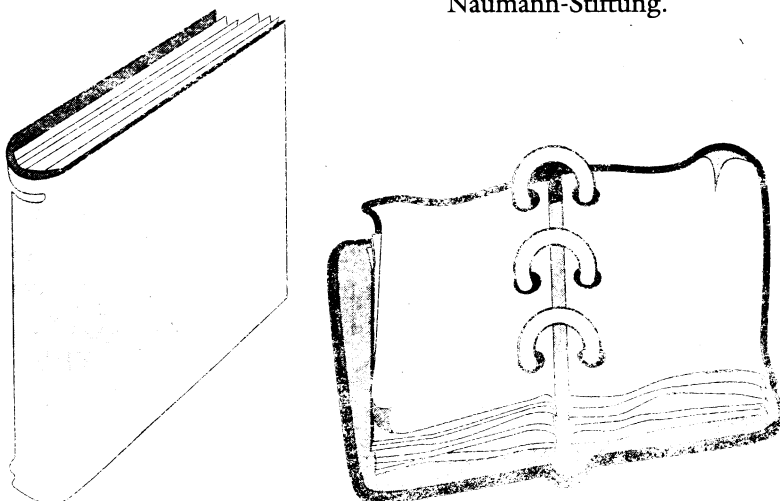
Realising that one of the best methods for generating massive self-

employment and job opportunities is through rapid growth of small and tiny enterprises, a need was felt to supplement the existing entrepreneurship development programmes with new methods so as to reach a larger segment of potential entrepreneurs across the country. EDI, with its distinctive record of providing quality entrepreneurship training has thus launched OLPE as a joint collaborative effort with the South Asian Regional Office of the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung.

The programme being basically self-instructional will provide the learner with an opportunity to learn at his own pace and convenience. Targeted at unemployed graduates, women and non-graduate employees with three years experience, final year college students, diploma holders and existing entrepreneurs, the programme has 3 major components :

- a) Motivation and reinforcement of entrepreneurial traits;
- b) Facilitating decision making process of setting up new enterprises and
- c) Facilitating successful and profitable operation of the enterprise.

Since the objective behind the programme is to enable prospective entrepreneurs to set up their own enterprises, the correspondence training will be supplemented by personal counselling. For this, a team of counsellors is being identified and trained. EDI is also planning to link up with state-level entrepreneurship organisations and trained trainers to help and support the programme participants in preparing project reports, making loan applications and clarify-



ing various concepts related to enterprise formulation, management and implementation. The duration of the programme is eleven months : 9 months training and 2 months follow-up. Enrolments will be made in January, April, July and December. A cer-

tificate in entrepreneurship will be provided on successful completion of the course. At the moment OLPE is being translated into various regional languages so that maximum numbers can derive benefit from the programme.

Detailed information on OLPE can be obtained from :
Entrepreneurship Development
Institute of India
Near village BHAT
P.O. Box Chandkheda - 382 424
Ahmedabad (Gujarat) *

60th. Birthday Celebrations of His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso The XIVth. Dalai Lama

On the 6th. of July, 1995 the world celebrates the 60th. birthday of Tenzin Gyatso, the XIV Dalai Lama. A monk statesman from Tibet, the Roof of the World, the Dalai Lama is worshipped by his followers all over the world as an incarnation of Avalokiteshwara, the Buddha of Compassion and Mercy. His profound and unshakeable faith in 'Ahimsa', i.e. non-violence, 'Karuna' i.e. compassion and 'Maitri' i.e. universal brotherhood have made him a unique messenger of goodwill and peace in these testing times.

As a practising master of philosophy, his techniques of achieving higher consciousness through constructive social participation and positive human behaviour and his successful experiments with social spirituality have provided viable alternatives in dealing with present day complex situations. No wonder this has made him a true representative of the great traditions held by Gautam Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi. The conferring of the Noble Peace Prize for 1989 on him is only a symbol of the esteem in which the Dalai Lama is held by the world today.

In a celebration lasting three days (4.-6. July 1995) at New Delhi, a number of leading philosophers, thinkers and leaders from all over the world will be gathering to felicitate this living and loving legend of our times on his 60. Birthday. They will be participating in the symposia organised to exchange views on the major thrust areas on which the Dalai Lama has been concentrating during the past three decades. The themes of these symposia are :

1. Non-violence, Compassion and Visions for the twenty first century;
2. Time and Transcendence;
3. Inner and Outer Disciplines;
4. Divergence and Convergence of Sciences and Spirituality.

The main purpose apart from felicitating the Dalai Lama on his 60. Birthday is to disseminate his message of universal brotherhood, peace and compassion; to promote closer understand-



ing among religions and cultural traditions of the world; to generate awareness of ecological harmony and environmental protection and to endeavour for the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings on earth.



LIKE ANY OTHER NATION, TIBET AND TIBETANS ARE ALSO ENTITLED TO HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO PRESERVATION OF THEIR SEPARATE IDENTITY AND WAY OF LIFE. TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE AS LONG AS THEY REMAIN UNDER FOREIGN MILITARY OCCUPATION.... TIBETANS HAVE ENDLESS FAITH IN THEMSELVES AS WELL AS IN THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THEIR STRUGGLE. WE WON'T STOP TILL THE GOAL IS ACHIEVED.

The Dalai Lama Speaks

We should not forget that we all are going to gain if we succeed in creating a world of peace, justice, equality and mutual respect. We cannot insure our existence and survival unless we develop a sense of universal responsibility based on morality.

Whenever human rights violations take place in Eastern European countries, an immediate response comes from the West. That has always made great impact on the people involved. But in our case hardly any voice has been raised from outside. We expect that the human rights organisations, activists and governments should look at our case more rationally. Tibetan people should not be ignored because some governments or some business houses lose money by criticising China for its wrong doings.

Since the world comprises individual human beings, world peace and harmony at the international level can be achieved only if we individuals have a sense of universal responsibility. This means we have to develop the same feelings for the other people's sufferings as we have for ourselves.

Compassion brings you new hope, freshness and mental tranquility. It can help you develop a certain kind of determination. That determination, generally speaking has almost no possibility of bringing disaster.

Quoted from the book 'The Dalai Lama Speaks' by Vimal Khenpo

READERS FORUM

Dear Readers,

We would like to thank you for the encouraging response you have been sending us over the past two years on Liberal Times. Our main objective behind publishing Liberal Times is to create a forum for liberal policy in South Asia. In each issue of the journal, we try to focus on a particular field (e.g. civic society, small scale industries, human rights, economic liberalisation to name a few) in which the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung is playing an active role in South Asia. Your critical remarks on the articles and constructive suggestions on how we can improve are indeed very valuable to us.

Do keep us posted !!

Editor

I have found the articles very informative and educative. My students also feel the same about the magazine. The latest issue of Liberal Times on women in SAARC countries, documents the trends in these countries very well.

*K. Stevenson; Lecturer
Osmania University
Hyderabad*

I recently went through your publication 'Liberal Times' in a library (Vol. III, No. 1, 1995) and found it very useful and informative. I even went through the minute details of some of the articles. I would like to request you to include my name in the mailing list for our use in the department. I assure you, it will interest a large number of readers at the institute.

*Guru Prasad Mohanta
Reader in Pharmacy
Annamalai University
Tamil Nadu*

Liberal Times gives a real opportunity to learn about the NGO movement growing in South Asia. Thank you for upholding freedom and truth and thank you once again for giving the voiceless a chance to raise their voice. I liked the article on Tibetans protest and the Chinese Diplomat's fascist action to suppress the truth and the voice of the Tibetan people. The Tibetans must raise their voices against these killers and Tianenmen every day. I want to receive Liberal Times regularly.

*Amit Roy
Secretary
National Federation of Parents for
Drug Free Youth; Calcutta*

I am engaged in doing some research work on some socio-economic conditions relating to women in LDCs. In this connection your journal will be of immense help to me in keeping track of the changing situation.

*Sri Sibrannan Misra
Reader, Department of Economics
Visva-Bharti University, Shantiniketan*

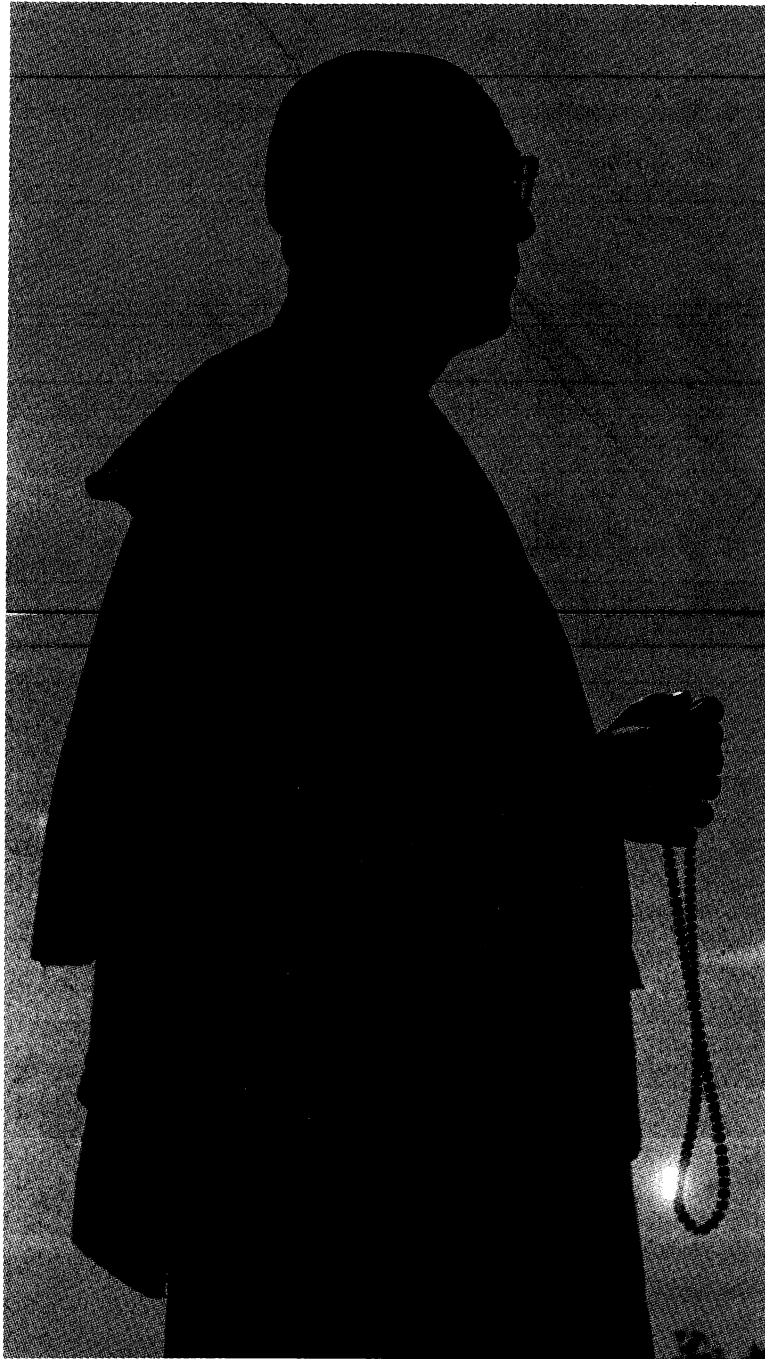
I got your reference from the SAARC Secretariat library. I found the Liberal Times copy 4/94 (Is South Asia Open for Business) extremely useful. I would like to have all the latest issues of Liberal Times.

*Alamgir Hossain
Journalist with Daily Ittfaq
Bangladesh*

I recently got a chance of reading your paper 'Liberal Times'. I find it very useful and would like to read it regularly.

*Elvis Joshi; Journalist
Vishwabhooni Daily; Kathmandu*

liberal TIMES



"On a very personal level I always think of myself as a monk, a humble Bhikkhu and as a person who has lost his country."