

**THE SUPPRESSION OF A PEOPLE:
ACCOUNTS OF TORTURE AND IMPRISONMENT IN TIBET**



BY

JOHN ACKERLY AND BLAKE KERR, M.D.

**PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
NOVEMBER 1989**

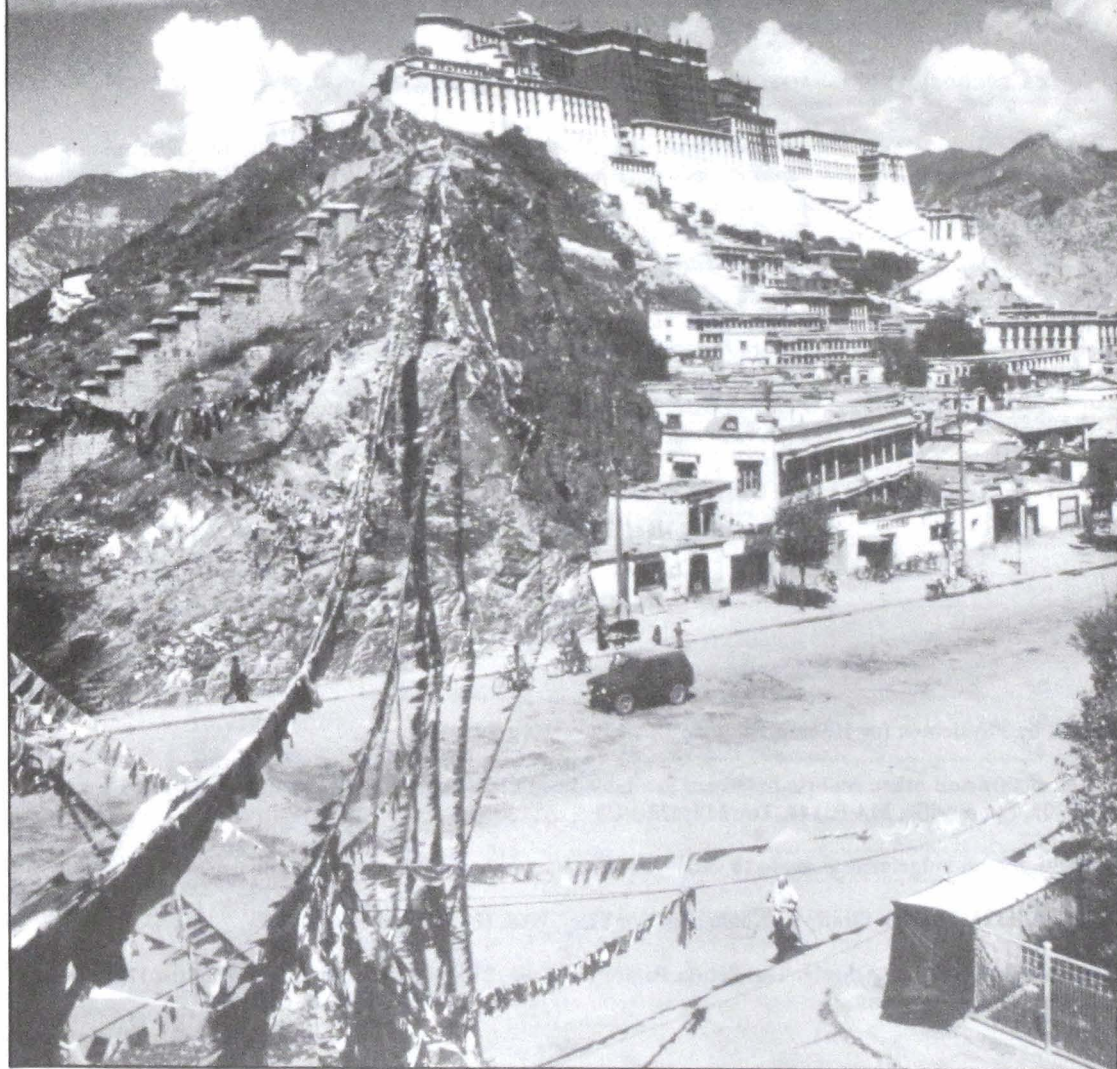
**Special thanks are due
to the J. Roderick MacArthur Foundation
which has provided a grant for the publication
of Physicians for Human Rights reports,
and to the Ford Foundation,
the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation,
the John Merck Fund, and the Open Society Fund
which have made important contributions to our work.**

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PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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Grateful acknowledgement is made to Galen Rowell, John Ackerly and Asupi for the use of their photos.

Cover photo: A Tibetan family in Kham, eastern Tibet, 1986. (Photo: Nancy Lindberg)

Title page photo: John Ackerly. The Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet was constructed during the 17th century and has over 1,000 rooms.

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PREFACE

The Suppression of a People: Accounts of Torture and Imprisonment in Tibet is the first study published by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) originating from independent research. (All other publications of ours to date have reported on findings of fact-finding missions which PHR has organized and sponsored.) The two authors, John Ackerly, J.D. and Blake Kerr, M.D. are young Americans who by chance were in Lhasa, Tibet as tourists in 1987 when the Chinese occupation forces employed brutal measures and mass arrests to bring an end to peaceful protest demonstrations by Tibetan civilians and monks. Witnessing these assaults, including the use of lethal force, Ackerly and Kerr administered first aid to wounded Tibetans, and took photographs which were subsequently published in *The New York Times Magazine*.

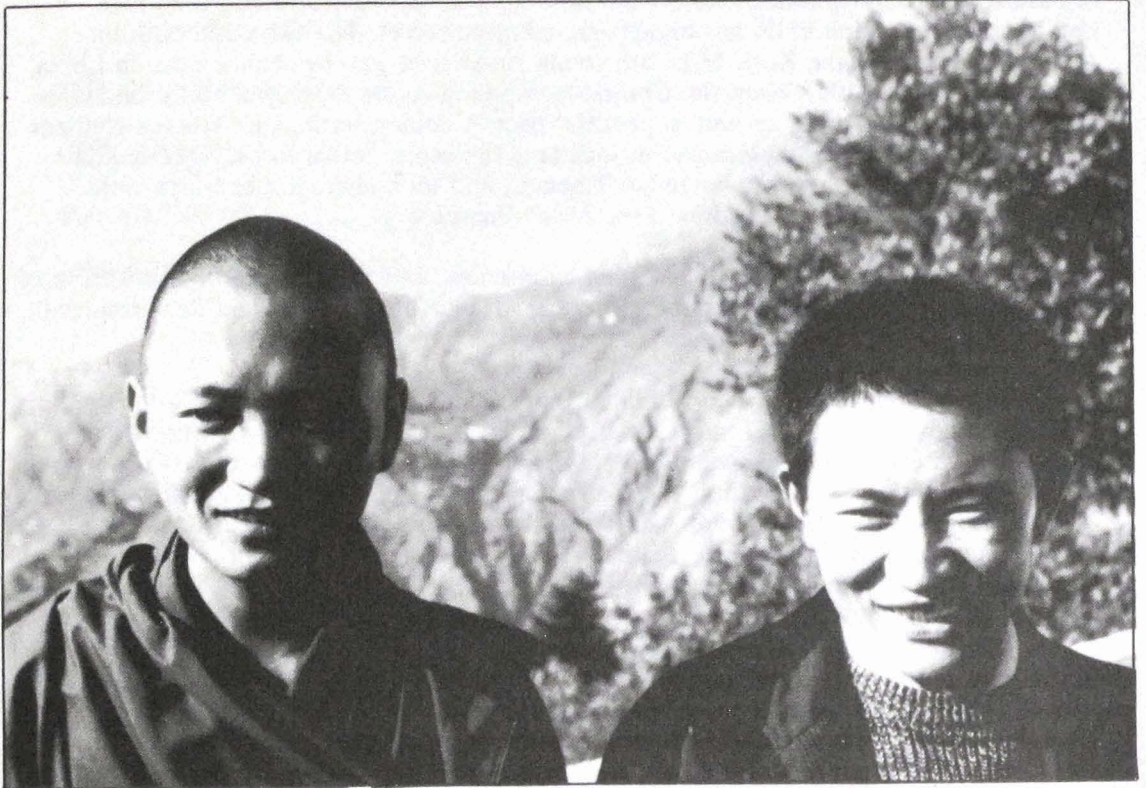
Outraged by the wanton killing and arrest of so many, and the rumored use of torture of many detainees, instead of returning to normal life pursuits, Ackerly and Kerr resolved to continue to study and document the abuse of the Tibetan people.

In the fall of 1988, they traveled to Himachal Pradesh in Northern India since after the fall of 1987 the government of China had barred independent travelers from visiting Tibet. There they interviewed refugees, many of whom provided first hand accounts of torture and cruel conditions of detention experienced in the prisons in the vicinity of Lhasa. While Amnesty International and Asia Watch have previously published studies of the abuse of imprisoned Tibetans, we believe *The Suppression of a People* adds both depth and detail to what has previously been known about conditions and mistreatment in Tibetan prisons.

PHR would like to acknowledge the International Campaign for Tibet which generously offered time and resources for the completion of this project. The International Campaign for Tibet is an independent organization, based in Washington, D.C. which works to promote human rights, democracy, and freedom for Tibetans. John Ackerly presently works as legal counsel for the Campaign for Tibet. Dr. Kerr is a resident at St. Vincent's Hospital, New York City.

It is particularly fitting in 1989 on occasion of the selection of the Dalai Lama as recipient of the Nobel Prize to commemorate the struggle for human rights in Tibet with this study, however painful the observations and conclusions.

Jonathan E. Fine, M.D.
Executive Director
Physicians for Human Rights



Lobsang Jimpa, the winner of the 1988 Reebok Human Rights Award and a friend in Dharamsala, India, Nov. 1988. (Photo: John Ackerly)

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the imprisonment and torture of Tibetans in or near the capital of Lhasa between October 1987 and September 1988.

The documentation of this report began during our 10-week stay in Tibet¹ in the summer and fall of 1987. On September 27, October 1, and October 6, 1987, we witnessed demonstrations against Chinese rule. And on October 1, 1987, when the police fired into unarmed crowds, we witnessed the deaths of three Tibetans. Dr. Kerr documented nine other deaths with confirmed first-person accounts. After the demonstration, while surreptitiously treating some of the injured, Dr. Kerr was told that some wounded Tibetans were denied access to medical care at Chinese hospitals, and that others refrained from seeking medical care for fear of being arrested and imprisoned.²

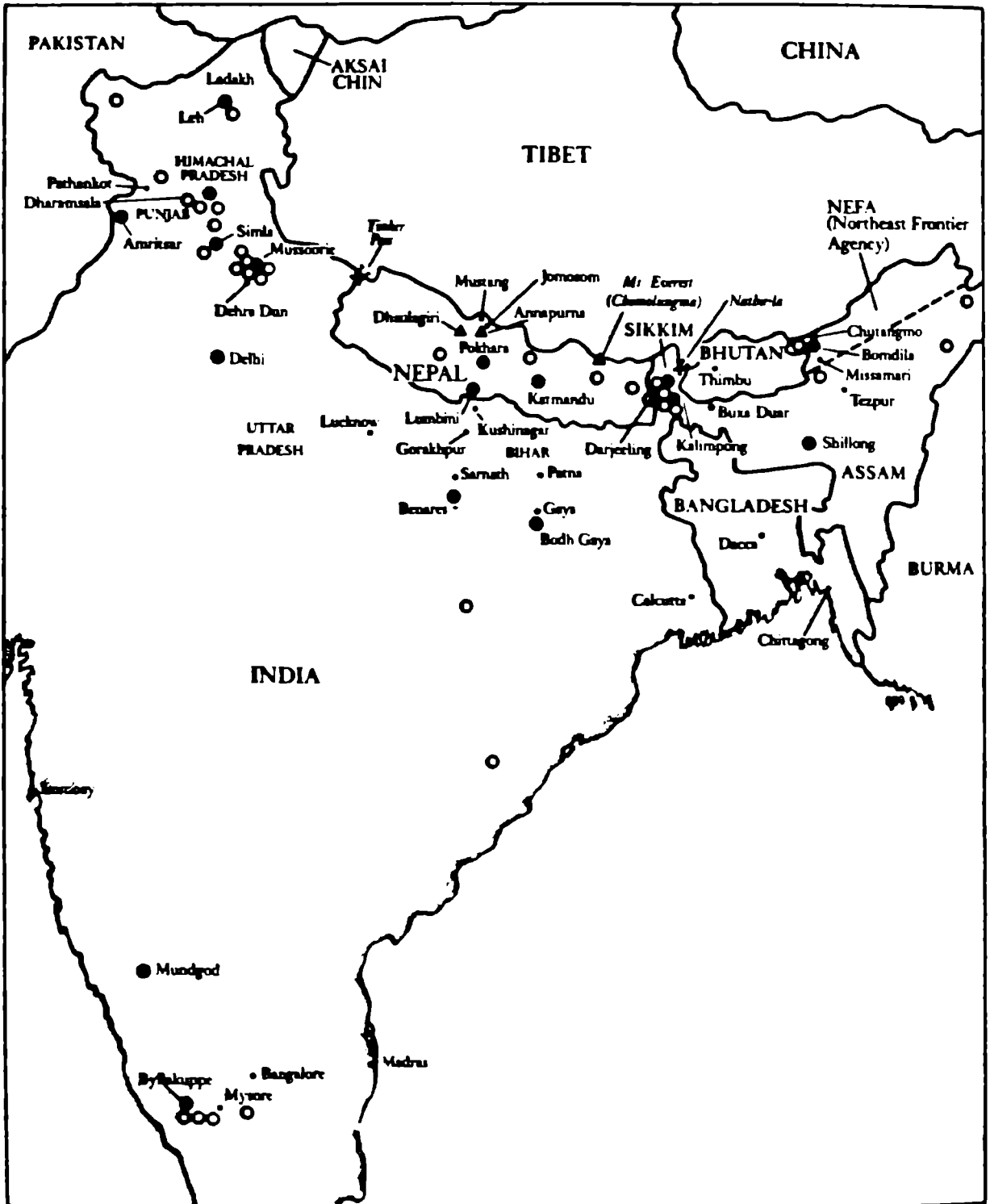
Because of the suppression of indigenous monitoring groups, and China's refusal to permit on-site fact-finding missions, the gathering of human rights information in Tibet is impractical and dangerous. Thus, we decided to interview Tibetan refugees in India, where we were able to conduct in-depth interviews in an environment where the interviewee was safe from reprisals. Since our primary purpose was to collect information about torture and imprisonment, rather than definitively document the physical effects of torture, medical examinations of those interviewed were not performed.

Since our initial visit to Tibet, it has not been possible to systematically gather information on the Tibetan plateau. After the fall of 1987, the People's Republic of China (PRC) restricted access to Tibet for journalists, independent travelers and human rights groups, and with the imposition of martial law in Lhasa on March 7, 1987, these restrictions have been tightened.

¹ Tibet refers to the ethnographic distribution of Tibetans in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), Qinghai province and parts of Gansu province (formerly Amdo) and Western Sichuan and Yunnan provinces (formerly Kham).

² Marvine Howe, "Two American Mountaineers Tell of Witnessing Tibet Protests," New York Times, Nov. 13, 1987.

TIBETAN SETTLEMENTS IN INDIA



THE CONDUCT OF THE INVESTIGATION

With the aid of interpreters, we conducted 17 interviews with Tibetan men and women, including several monks who had been imprisoned and tortured,³ and a former Tibetan policeman who described how he had himself tortured prisoners. The majority of the interviews took place in Dharamsala, northern India, where most Tibetans initially come after fleeing Tibet to see and talk to the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual and temporal leader. We conducted other interviews in Tibetan refugee communities in Kathmandu, New Delhi, Bir and Bylakuppe.

We located victims of torture in Tibetan settlement camps with the assistance of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the Office of Information and International Relations, the Security Office, the Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Delhi and through more informal channels such as the friends and relatives of our Tibetan hosts. Each interview lasted between two and twelve hours, with some of the interviews spread over several days.

Eight of the 17 Tibetans interviewed were victims of torture and imprisonment;⁴ seven were men between the ages of 18 and 25, including five monks from monasteries near Lhasa; one was a 29 year-old female nurse from Lhasa. Of the nine other interviewees, six were men between the ages of 19 and 26 (including four monks), two were men of 34 and 54, and one woman was 19 years-old. All of the 17 had lived in the capitol of Lhasa when they were arrested and later fled to India. Names listed below are pseudonyms except for Lobsang Jimpa⁵ and Kelsang Wangyal who wanted their real names used. These two monks were both beaten and injured by the police during demonstrations but were not imprisoned and so are not listed as torture victims.

³ We conducted several dozen other interviews with Tibetans who had second hand or hearsay knowledge meaning that they did not witness or talk to the person or event that they described to us.

⁴ One of the victims, Tashi Gyaltzen, a 25-year-old monk from Sera Monastery, was interviewed for us by Michael van Walt, Esq.

⁵ Lobsang Jimpa received the 1988 Reebok Human Rights Award, given to individuals under 30 who in their early lives and against great odds, have significantly raised awareness of human rights.

Torture Victims

Lobsang Dhondup, 18, Sera, monk
Sonam Tsering, 20, Sera, monk
Tinley Chophel, 25, Sera, monk
Tenzin Samphel, 24, Amdo, peddler
Nima Pasang, 22, Kham, peddler
Tenzin Rabgye, 25, Amdo, monk
Yoden Choedak, 29, Lhasa, nurse
Jampey Losel, 23, Lhasa, monk

Others

Thapkey Dorje, 26, Lhasa, policeman
Tenpa Namdol, 21, Drepung, monk
Lobsang Jimpa, 22, Sera, monk
Jigme Norbu, 34, Lhasa, physician
Ngawang Tsering, 54, Lhasa, businessman
Namhla Yege, 20, Lhasa, lumber yard worker
Jamyang Dolkar, 19, Lhasa, guard at monastery
Tenzin Tsering, 22, Sera, monk
Kelsang Wangyal, 22, Jokhang, monk

The statements from each subject were transcribed into English at the time of the interview, signed by the interviewer, the interviewee and the interpreter, and notarized. All except Lobsang Jimpa and Kelsang Wangyal consented to the interviews on the condition that their names be changed for publication to protect their friends and relatives in Tibet.

Most of the interviewees had escaped from Tibet in the last year, and some only days or weeks prior to our interview. For those who had recently fled Tibet, talking about their experiences was often traumatic and anxiety inducing. The interviewees were in the process of being resettled by the CTA of the Tibetan government in exile in one of the designated Tibetan settlements. Approximately 115,000 Tibetans live in exile, 90% of whom are in India and Nepal. Almost all Tibetans in these countries live in settlements governed by the CTA.⁶ The larger settlements in southern India hold over 10,000 Tibetan refugees.

The Indian government restricts access to these settlements, but upon application and with sufficient advance notice, outsiders may be admitted.

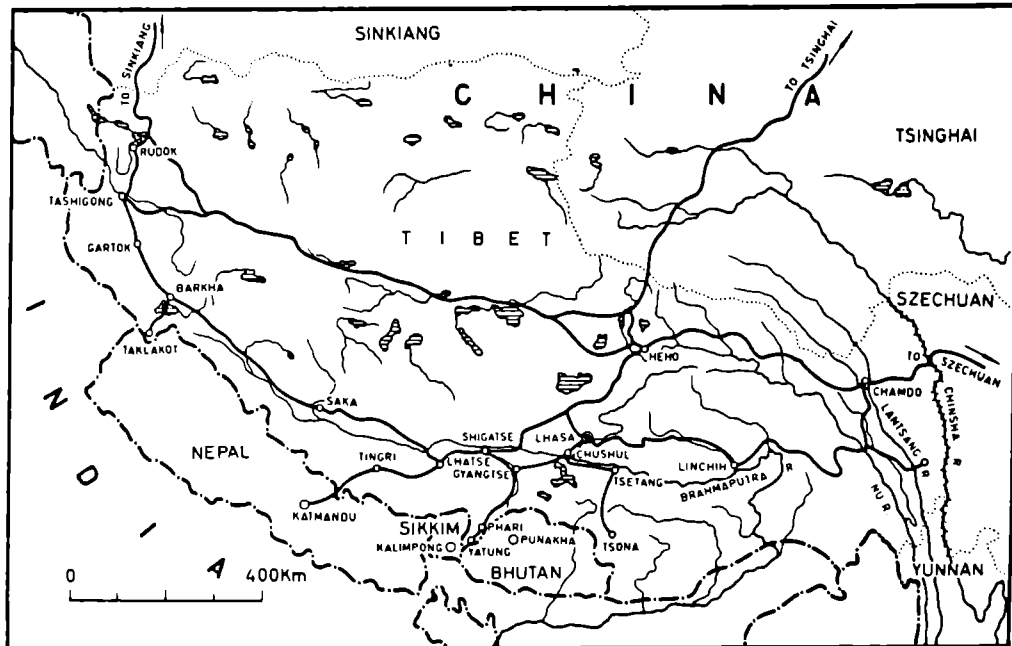
⁶ Tibetans in Exile published by the Information Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Dharamsala, 1981) provides an overview of the administration of the Tibetan settlements.

The interviewees seemed highly credible (with one exception), though often they were unable to provide information with the degree of exactness or specificity that we sought. We gauged credibility by demeanor, ability to describe events clearly, inclination to understate or overstate an experience, readiness to say "I don't know," tendency to editorialize and presence or absence of internal inconsistencies or exaggerations compared to other accounts of the same event or condition.

The one interviewee of questionable credibility had been a policeman in Lhasa. We interviewed him on several occasions and noted contradictions in his testimony for which we were otherwise unable to account. While we deemed some parts of his testimony reliable, we excluded much and did not rely on it in formulating major findings. It is also likely that other interviewees answers to certain questions may not be reliable, such as "Did you give any names during interrogation?" These are noted in the text. We tried to avoid questions that would produce unreliable answers or that the interviewees would be fearful of answering, such as the names of other people involved in political activity who had not yet been arrested.

To guard against an emotional bias from our own profoundly disturbing experiences, and the charge that refugee accounts are inherently subject to bias or exaggeration, we have corroborated allegations of torture in the interviews with those found in other human rights reports, United Nations Special Rapporteurs, the press and taped and transcribed interviews of Tibetans in Tibet. Inconsistencies are noted as such in the report.

MAP OF TIBET



SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The following findings summarize the testimony we received from torture victims and others with direct knowledge of events in Lhasa from the fall of 1987 to the fall of 1988.

1. Thousands of Tibetans have been arrested since September 1987 for suspected participation in demonstrations against Chinese rule in Tibet. Prisoners are commonly imprisoned for several months, though many are held for considerably longer or shorter periods of time.
2. Of the eight Tibetans interviewed who were arrested, all were interrogated, beaten and tortured. Interrogation focused principally on the nature of the prisoner's participation in pro-independence demonstrations, identifying organizers of the demonstrations or other Tibetans present and their unsanctioned political activity, and whether the prisoner had links with the "Dalai clique"- the Tibetan government in exile.
3. Torture of Tibetan political prisoners is routine. They are beaten with gun butts, truncheons and clubs with nails driven through the ends, and shocked with electric cattle prods. These methods are often applied until the prisoner loses consciousness. Other forms of torture include hanging prisoners by their wrists, ankles or thumbs for periods of hours or even days, making them stand for hours, and setting trained guard dogs to attack them. Imprisoned nuns have been violated in their vaginas with electric cattle prods.
4. There are credible reports of Tibetans dying as a result of torture in prison.
5. Prisoners do not receive proper medical attention which is said to be limited only to prisoners who are in danger of dying.
6. Prisoners are often kept incommunicado in cells with no beds or grossly insufficient bedding and are not fed properly, resulting in sickness and rapid weight loss.
7. Some Tibetans injured during demonstrations have been denied access to the People's Hospital in Lhasa. Tibetans admitted to hospitals have been questioned, photographed and/or taken to prison instead of being treated for their injuries, in violation of international standards for medical sanctuary.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

For over 2,000 years Tibet has been an ethnically, culturally and linguistically distinct entity. In the eighth century Tibet emerged as the most powerful state in Asia and conquered large parts of China. In the thirteenth century, however, Tibet came under the domination of the Mongol Empire and developed a priest-patron relationship (Cho-yon⁷) with its Emperors.

In 1720 Manchu troops entered Tibet, as they did again in 1728, 1750 and 1793. Again, the Cho-yon relationship became the basis for Tibet's association with the new invaders. Manchu influence over Tibet reached its peak after 1793 when Manchu officials (Ambans) in Tibet began to supervise, and in some cases to conduct, Tibet's foreign affairs.

Manchu influence steadily fell during the nineteenth century and Tibet was invaded, though not dominated, in 1842, 1856 and 1903 by the Dogras, the Ghorikas and the British respectively.⁸ Then, in 1911, Tibet expelled all Chinese officials and was free of Chinese influence until 1950 when the Red Army overwhelmed an ill-equipped Tibetan force of only 8,000.

The Tibetans, who had never experienced Chinese rule of their internal affairs, resisted the consolidation of Chinese power, which culminated in a national uprising in 1959. During the uprising, more than 87,000 Tibetans were killed by the Chinese army and the Dalai Lama narrowly escaped to India along with more than 100,000 followers.⁹

⁷ The Cho-yon relationship is a uniquely Buddhist and Central Asian religion-political institution formed as a personal bond consisting of the elements of protection by the Patron of his Priest and the Priests commitment to fulfill the Patrons spiritual needs. Walt, Michael van, The Status of Tibet: History, Rights, and Prospects in International Law (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1987), p.123.

⁸ See Tsepon Shakabpa, Tibet: A Political History (New York: Potala Publications, 1988).

⁹ The Dalai Lama's autobiography, My Land and My People (New York: Potala Publications, 1983) contains fascinating insights into his decision to flee.

In 1960 the International Commission of Jurists found that "acts of genocide had been committed in Tibet in an attempt to destroy the Tibetans as a religious group."¹⁰ The following year, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 1723 which called for an end to practices that deprived the Tibetan people of their right to self-determination.¹¹ So far, no substantive action has been taken on these resolutions by the United Nations and now that China occupies a seat in the UN Security Council, this situation will be difficult to change.

In the years following the aborted 1959 uprising, the Chinese put tens of thousands of Tibetans in prisons and forced labor camps where many were executed or starved or tortured to death. At the same time, the Chinese decimated the monastic system by razing over 6,000 monasteries and temples.¹² For the next three decades, the Chinese effectively closed Tibet off from the rest of the world; the horrors to which Tibetans were subjected were largely unknown until the 1980s.

**Tibetans estimate that at least one million of their people,
up to one-sixth of the population,
have died as a direct result of the occupation policies of the Chinese.**

During the Cultural Revolution (from 1966 to 1976) China seemed to be trying to eradicate all vestiges of the Tibetan identity--Tibetan language, dress, religious practices, icons and cultural traditions were largely banned.¹³ Misconceived agricultural "reform," including forcing farmers to grow wheat in an unsuitable environment, led to the first recorded famine in Tibetan history, leaving tens of thousands of Tibetans dead by 1973. Overall, Tibetans estimate that at least one million of their people, up to one-sixth of

¹⁰ International Commission of Jurists. "Report on Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic," Geneva, 1960. The finding was based on four principal facts: The Chinese will not permit adherence to Buddhism in Tibet; they have systematically set out to eradicate this religious belief in Tibet; they have killed religious figures because their religious belief and practice were an encouragement and example to others; and they have forcibly transferred large numbers of Tibetan children to a Chinese materialist environment to prevent them from having a religious upbringing.

¹¹ The General Assembly also passed resolutions in 1959 (#1353) and in 1965 (#2079).

¹² According to "Tibet: The Facts," a report by the Scientific Buddhist Association for the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, 80% of monasteries and temples were destroyed from 1960 to 1966, before the Cultural Revolution.

¹³ See, for example, "Revolutionary Masses of Various Nationalities in Lhasa Thoroughly Smash the 'Four Olds'" Kung-jen Jih-poo, Lhasa, Aug. 28, 1966.

the population, have died as a direct result of the occupation policies of the Chinese.¹⁴

Following a trip to Tibet in 1980, Hu Yaobang, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) General Secretary, recommended a series of reforms that included the withdrawal of a significant portion of Chinese settlers and allowing Tibetans to grow their traditional barley instead of wheat. The settlers were not withdrawn, however, and despite a degree of liberalization in many other spheres, Tibetans feel that they still have little voice or control in determining policies in Tibet. Religion is perhaps the most contested "reform." Some monasteries are being rebuilt and repaired, but the CCP dominated bodies tightly control admission to the monasteries as well as their management, and many traditional methods of teaching and study of Tibetan Buddhism are still forbidden. The lack of genuine separation of church and state was recently made plain when the Buddhist Association of China (BAC) expelled two monks for violating its charter which stipulates that all BAC "members must love the motherland, cherish Buddhism and safeguard the unification of the country."¹⁵



Pilgrims lining up to worship in the Jokhang Temple, Lhasa. (Photo: Galen Rowell)

¹⁴ For a discussion of the estimate that over one million Tibetans have died, see Asia Watch, "Human Rights in Tibet," Washington, D.C., February, 1988, pp.9-10.

¹⁵ Xinhua (Official Chinese News Service), September 21, 1989. One of the expelled monks was Yulo Dawa Tsering.

With the liberalization came the opening of Tibet to tourism, with 43,000 visitors to Lhasa in 1987. October 1, 1987 marked the first of a series of major demonstrations to be witnessed by hundreds of foreign visitors, including the authors of this report. The demonstration began when several dozen monks marched through the Tibetan quarter calling for independence and the release of previously arrested monks. Within hours, thousands of Tibetans had joined the demonstration, and by the end of the day at least a dozen lay dead from Chinese gunfire. By March 1989 foreign visitors had witnessed six major demonstrations in which scores of Tibetans were killed.¹⁶



Monks running into burning police station during pro-independence demonstration to help arrested monks inside to escape. Lhasa, October 1, 1987. (Photo: John Ackerly)

The Chinese imposed martial law on Lhasa on March 7, 1989, months before it was imposed in Beijing -- and it remains in effect today with no end in sight. The decrees give virtually unlimited power to the police and army to detain, arrest and interrogate any Tibetan on the slightest suspicion. The decrees require Tibetans, including all monks and nuns, to carry passes whenever they go outside. Even preschool children "should move about with adults." Tourists are required to stay at the new Lhasa Hotel, run by the Holiday Inn, two miles from the Tibetan quarter and are not allowed off the hotel grounds unless "accompanied by Chinese guides."¹⁷

¹⁶ See Daniel Southerland, "Tourists Seen Playing Role Inside Tibet: Foreign Travelers Supporting Monks," Washington Post, Oct. 11, 1987. By exposing what they have seen, individual travelers have at times acted as a sort of sympathetic, phantom press.

¹⁷ Martial Law Order No. 4. See also Jay Branegan, "Green Uniforms, Crimson Robes," Time, (International Edition), Aug. 28, 1989.

During the 1980s Tibetans began to see a new, insidious threat to the survival of their culture and identity in the form of population transfer of Chinese settlers and cadres. While the numbers of Chinese in different parts of Tibet is hotly disputed, it is undeniable that the China is offering incentives for tens of thousands of its citizens to settle in Tibet. Already, Tibetans have been reduced to a minority in many parts of their traditional homeland.¹⁸ When the Dalai Lama was awarded the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, he said, "The government of the People's Republic of China is practicing a form of genocide by relocating millions of Chinese settlers into Tibet. I ask that this massive population transfer be stopped."



Tibetan killed by security forces during pro-independence demonstration, Lhasa, October 1, 1987. (Photo: John Ackerly)

¹⁸ Michael van Walt, "Population Transfer and the Survival of the Tibetan Identity," paper prepared for the seventh Annual International Human Rights Symposium and Research Conference at Columbia University, 1986.

A Note on Tibetan Medicine

Medicine in Tibet began as one of ten branches of learning originally pursued by all Mahayana Buddhist monks. It flourished for 1,000 years in northern India's great universities before crossing the Himalayas into Tibet in the first century. By the sixth century, Tibetan medicine was widely accepted and practiced in Asia -- 100 medical texts appeared during this time on subjects ranging from diagnosis and treatment of diseases to pharmacology and embryology.

Tibet had several well-established medical colleges, including Melung, south of Lhasa, and Chokpori, the most prestigious one, perched on a hill in front of the Potala Palace in Lhasa. Physicians from all over Tibet trained at Chokpori until 1959 when Chinese artillery razed it. Presently a radio transmitter stands on Chokpori hill.

The Mendzakhang hospital was built in Lhasa in 1916 and since liberalization in 1980, it has begun to reestablish to a certain degree traditional forms of Tibetan medicine. During a tour of the Mendzakhang in 1987, Dr. Kerr learned that Tibetan physicians were in the process of reassembling medical texts that had been destroyed or taken to China during the 1960s and 1970s. In exile, the Tibetan government established the Tibetan Medical Institute, first in several huts in 1961 and now spread over a complex of buildings with in- and out-patient services, mechanized systems of manufacturing pills, a museum, library, pharmacy and astrology department -- an essential part of Tibetan culture.

Tibetan and allopathic (Western) medicine start from completely different points. Western physicians make a diagnosis from a patient's history, and confirm it with physical exams and diagnostic tests. Tibetan physicians principally make a diagnosis by carefully feeling the patient's pulse. In the Tibetan exile communities, a very reasoned combination of the two systems of medicine is now in use.

TORTURE AND IMPRISONMENT

Numbers of Tibetan Political Prisoners

Precise figures on the number of prisoners held in Lhasa area prisons are impossible to obtain. Nevertheless, a variety of credible sources estimate that thousands of Tibetans have been arrested in Lhasa since the fall of 1987, and that hundreds of political prisoners remain in Lhasa area prisons. The table on the following page lists some of the estimates.

Clearly, estimates of the number of Tibetan political prisoners fluctuate. Interviewees explained that during the months following a major demonstration, Lhasa area prisons often became overcrowded. And although many prisoners may be released, some will be imprisoned again following the next demonstration. Therefore, at any given time the number of long-term political prisoners may be only a fraction of the number of Tibetans who have been imprisoned for shorter periods of time.

Estimating the number of political prisoners in Tibet is further complicated by the difficulty of distinguishing between political prisoners and common criminals. Many political prisoners are held on nominal criminal charges; only a fraction are charged as "counter revolutionaries." Many others are charged with both political and common crimes. For example, Pemba Tsering, 30, was sentenced in August 1989 to three years in prison for "participating in counter-revolutionary riot activities, taking the lead in shouting reactionary slogans and damaging public property."¹⁹

Asia Watch has reported that many political prisoners are charged solely under criminal statutes that have no political implications, that political beliefs can significantly affect length of imprisonment and conditions of imprisonment (even for common criminals), and that most Tibetan political prisoners are imprisoned because of their involvement in or advocacy of Tibetan independence from China²⁰ or for proclaiming an allegiance to the Dalai Lama. Given that Lhasa only has 40,000 to 70,000 Tibetans,²¹

¹⁹ Xinhua (Official Chinese News Service), "Tibet Sentences March 'Tumult' Participants," Aug. 6, 1989.

²⁰ Asia Watch, Statement on "Human Rights in Tibet," for Hearings of the Subcommittees on Human Rights and International Organizations and on Asian and Pacific Affairs, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, October 14, 1987, p. 8. (Hereafter referred to as "Statement of Asia Watch").

²¹ The real population of Lhasa is not known, probably not even by the Chinese. Most informed estimates hover around the 140,000 mark, of which perhaps 70,000 to 100,000 are Chinese.

there may be few Tibetans who have not had a family member, relative or friend detained in prison.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Estimate/Explanation</u>
March 1989	<u>Wash. Post</u>	600-2,000 detained ²²
March 1988	U.N.	840 arrested ²³
July 1988	U.N.	144 monks missing since March ²⁴
January 1989	State Dept.	13-100 remain in prison ²⁵
March 1989	<u>N.Y.T.</u>	10,000 or more arrested ²⁶
March 1989	U.S. Senate	Names, ages & arrest dates of over 100 political prisoners ²⁷
March 1989	<u>Newsweek</u>	Thousands arrested ²⁸
April 1989	<u>Xinhua</u>	300 remain in prison ²⁹

²² Daniel Southerland, "Tibetan Tells of Torture," Washington Post, Sept. 6, 1988. See also, The Rt. Hon. Lord Ennals & Frederick R. Hyde-Chambers, "Tibet in China," Report published by International Alert (London, 1988), p.36.

²³ United Nations "Report by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. P. Kooijmans, Pursuant to Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1988/32" (E/CN.4/1989/15), p.6.

²⁴ United Nations, Report Submitted by Mr. Angelo Vidal d'Almeida Ribeiro, Special Rapporteur Appointed in Accordance with Resolution 1986/20 of the Commission on Human Rights" (E/CN.4/1989/44), p.11.

²⁵ United States Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1988 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), p.768.

²⁶ Barbara Crossette, "Dalai Lama Sees a Culture Endangered," New York Times, March 22, 1989. While this figure appears high as a number of persons arrested and imprisoned, it is not unreasonable that 10,000 Tibetans could have been detained, at least for a brief period of time.

²⁷ Congressional Record, May 18, 1989, S5737. In his floor statement, Senator Leahy urged Senators to write to Chinese authorities "with the same persistence, diligence, and forcefulness as we have all these years on behalf of Soviet citizens mistreated by their government."

²⁸ "A Firestorm in Shangri-la," Newsweek, March 20, 1989.

²⁹ "Tibet Says 300 Are in Detention," New York Times, April 1, 1989.



Prison in the town of Xinduqiao, Kham area of Tibet. (Photo: Asupi)

Prisons in the Lhasa Area

We received extensive information about Lhasa area prisons, namely Sangyip, Gutsa and Drapchi.³⁰ We also received reports about a prison in Shigatse and scanty information about labor camps in isolated areas such as Kong-po. Recent refugees also tell of a new prison facility established at Dechen Dzong in Toelung, 20 kilometers west of Lhasa. And in the fall of 1989 reports began to come out about the Chokpori detention center, located opposite the Potala, which is reportedly reserved for only a small number of special cases. Tibetans believe that political prisoners are being held in jails or prisons in all of Tibet's main counties and prefectures.³¹

Official Chinese sources contradict this information. According to "Some Basic Facts About Tibet," a paper distributed by the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C., Tibet has only one prison and two labor camps. The names and locations of the prison and camps are not provided. The paper said that Zichang, President of the TAR's Higher People's Court, "laughed at the rumors now circulating abroad about the number of prisons and inmates in Tibet." Zichang said that "97.2 percent of inmates were

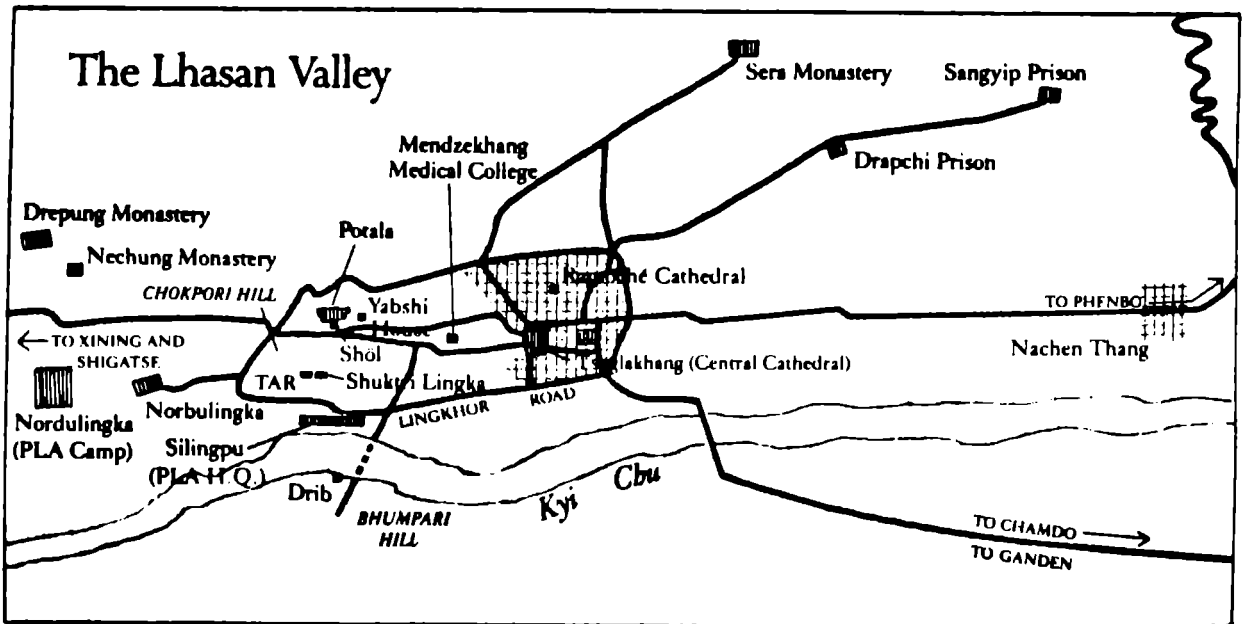
³⁰ For a dated overview of prisons in Tibet see Information Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Glimpses of Tibet Today (Dharamsala:1978), pp.61-66.

³¹ Statement of Asia Watch, p. 8.

convicted on criminal charges and the rest on charges of counter-revolution." It is possible that these percentages have some basis in reality since many political acts have been criminalized, but this is an area in which Chinese statistics and pronouncements are notoriously unreliable.

We did not gain enough information to include details about the labor camps to which prisoners are often sent after or during a prison sentence. It is known that prisoners have been used in logging and mining operations in eastern Tibet and that both high and low security labor camps exist. The latter sometimes pay workers and allow them to live on their own, but workers must remain under supervision and cannot leave the area.

LHASA AREA PRISONS



Gutsa

Gutsa, located three miles east of Lhasa near the Kyichu river, is considered to be a temporary holding facility. After prisoners' crimes are investigated and a formal or informal sentence given, they are often farmed out to the other prisons or sometimes released. Gutsa holds both political and common prisoners and, as Amnesty International concluded in February 1989, "torture and ill-treatment appear to have been particularly frequent at Gutsa."

Lobsang Dhondup, (Dharamsala, 12/3/88), an 18 year-old monk from Sera Monastery, spent a total of eight months in several different prisons. After being badly beaten during the March 5, 1988 demonstration, he was imprisoned in Gutsa where he said every cell was packed beyond capacity. He knew of four buildings in an inner compound. Each building had seven rooms, with eight to 15 prisoners in a room. (He was in the second building, which had rooms #13-20.) According to these estimates there would have been 224 to 420 prisoners in Gutsa at that time. Lobsang estimated that at least half of them were political prisoners. Another prisoner held in Gutsa estimated that there were approximately 400 prisoners in Gutsa, with up to 100 monks, as of August 1988.³²

According to Thapkey Dorje (Bir, 11/1/88), the 26 year-old former Tibetan policeman, Gutsa was built in 1983 and 1984 and has a capacity of approximately 1,000. Another source estimated that Gutsa can hold up to 600 prisoners.³³

Drapchi

Drapchi, located on the northeastern outskirts of Lhasa, was originally built as barracks for Chinese soldiers. During the 1959 popular uprising, the Chinese turned Drapchi into a prison, principally for monks.³⁴ One ex-prisoner estimated that on average Drapchi held approximately 1,700 prisoners.³⁵ Some sources have placed the number of prisoners who died in Drapchi between 1960 and 1965 as high as 10,000.³⁶ Thapkey Dorje said that he thought Drapchi held approximately 700 inmates, and was also often used for political prisoners.

³² Southerland, "Tibetan Tells of Torture."

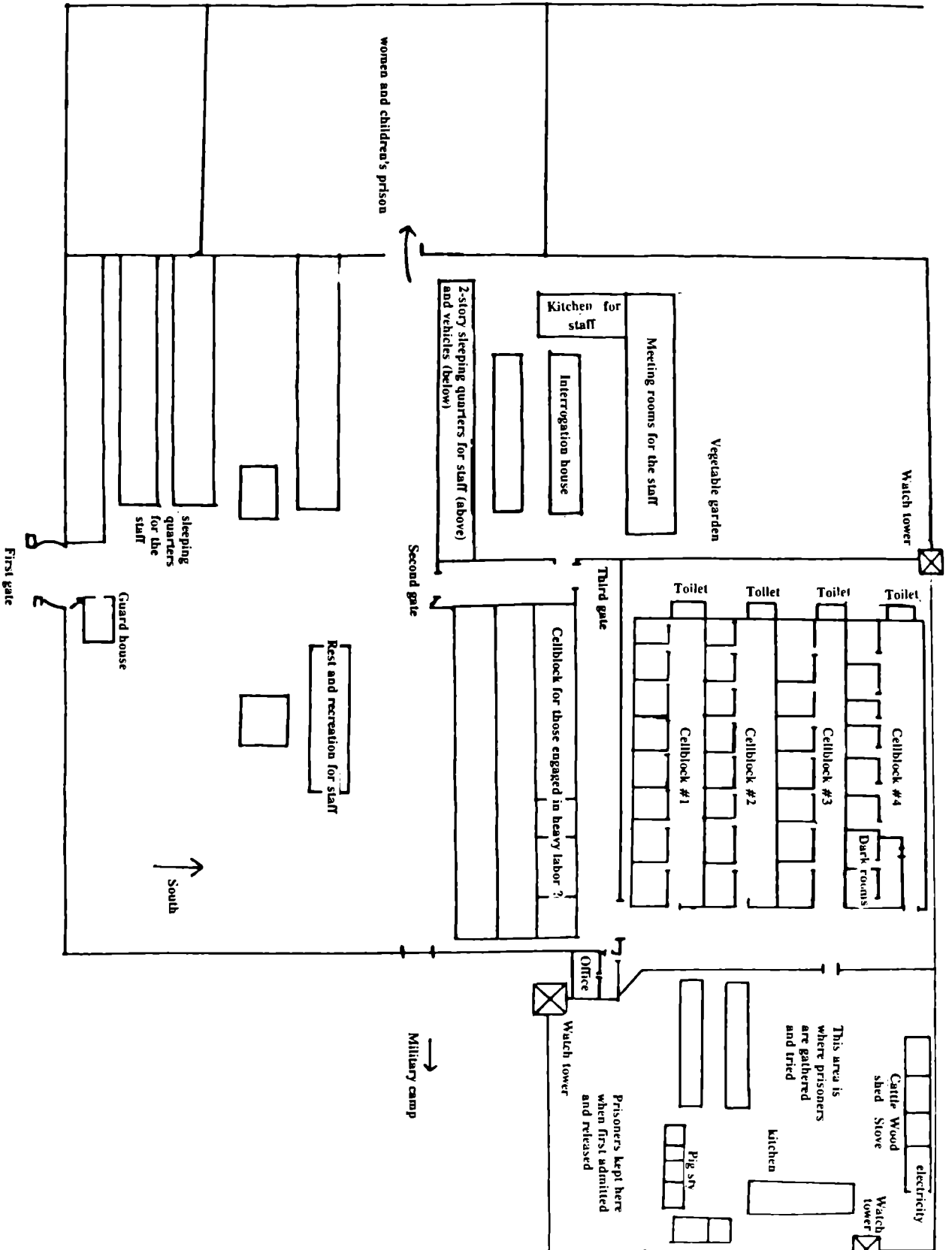
³³ There is some uncertainty as to whether or where women are held at Gutsa. Sonam Tsering, (Dharamsala, 11/25/88), was sure that there were no women kept in the inner compound at Gutsa, where he thought all the political prisoners arrested for demonstrations were being held. He thought there may be a separate prison facility for women named "Chinyugoa," located right behind Gutsa. However, other reliable sources include accounts of women being taken to Gutsa. In this instance and in others, confusion may arise because some consider a facility a separate entity while others perceive it as part of a larger prison.

³⁴ John Avedon, In Exile From the Land of Snows (New York: Random House, 1986) p.304.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Minority Rights Group, "The Tibetans: Two Perspectives on Tibetan-Chinese Relations" Report No. 49, London, 1983, p.20.

GUTSA PRISON



Sangyip

Sangyip can be reached by driving northeast from Lhasa for about ten minutes. Sangyip's Brigade #5 was reported to have 2,000 Tibetan prisoners, the overwhelming majority being political.³⁷ Tinley Chophel (Dharamsala, 11/4/88), a 25 year-old monk from Sera Monastery arrested for participating in the March 5, 1988 demonstration, was in Sangyip for several weeks. He confirmed that most of the inmates there are political prisoners in contrast to Gutsa which has many common criminals.

Utitod

Utitod is a medium or minimum security prison that lies adjacent to Sangyip and could be considered part of the Sangyip complex. However, since it is referred to as a separate facility by those who have been interned there, we have included it here as such.

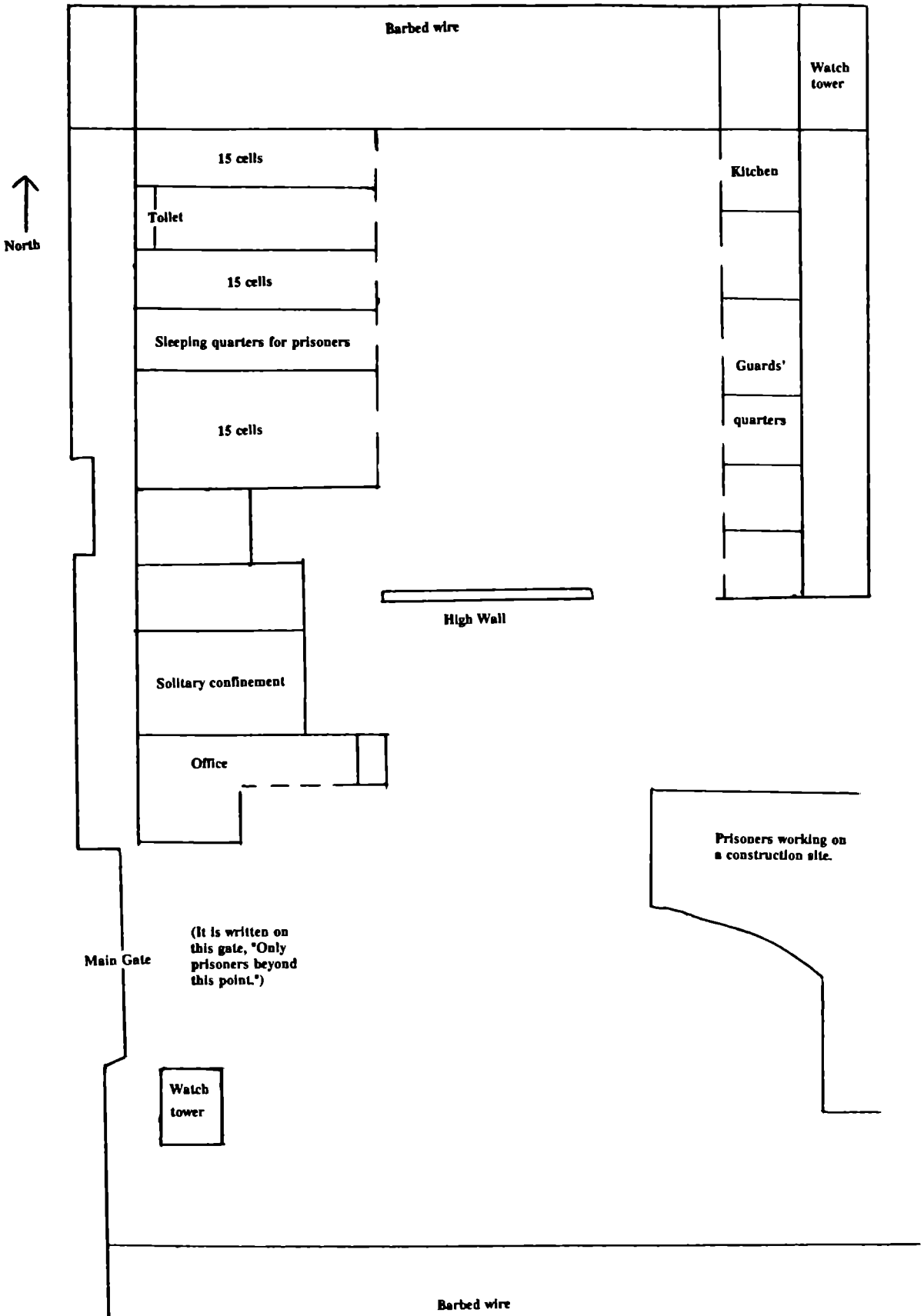
After two weeks in Gutsa prison, Lobsang Dhondup was moved to Utitod prison, where he was put in a cell with 20 other monks who had also been arrested on March 5, 1988. In his building Lobsang counted 15 cells, eight of which were occupied. He thought that his building was for inmates with indefinite terms, and that the three other buildings were for fixed term prisoners. Former policeman Thapkey Dorje said that Utitod held 300 to 500 people and was used primarily for political prisoners.

Titchu

Several interviewees also told us of Titchu prison in Shigatse, Tibet's second largest city located on the road between Lhasa and Kathmandu. Tenzin Samphel (Dharamsala, 12/2/88), a 24 year-old peddler from northeastern Tibet who was caught trying to flee to Nepal, estimated that there were 60 to 70 prisoners at Titchu, all of whom had been caught trying to cross the border or handed over by Nepalese border guards. Five or six prisoners were Chinese and the rest were Tibetan. All were relatively young men and many were monks.

³⁷ John Avedon, Tibet Today: Current Conditions and Prospects (London: Wisdom Publications, 1988), p.23.

UTTOD PRISON



Maintenance of Prisoners

Food

All of those interviewed stated that the food provided in prison was insufficient and nutritionally inadequate.

Sonam Tsering (Dharamsala, 11/25/88), a 20 year-old monk from Sera Monastery gave the following account. His day in Sangyip began at 6:00 when the guards woke everyone up. Sometimes they told him that it was an interrogation day, and he would then have little time to get prepared. If it was not an interrogation day, breakfast would come at 8:00, consisting of a half-filled bowl of thin, watery rice porridge which appeared through a hole in the door. At 1:00 the prisoners were served lunch -- one ladle of boiled vegetables and steamed bread. Dinner was the same as lunch, except that it did not always arrive. Sonam lost weight rapidly.

Sonam, who had also been in Gutsa, said that the food there was much worse than in Sangyip. Often there were no vegetables and no bread. Each day he was fed two momos (steamed dumplings) in the morning and two more at night. Some days, however, he received no food at all. Moreover, water was in scarce supply. One morning Sonam heard the voice of Yulo Dawa Tsering³⁸ in the cell next door, whom he had known before they were both imprisoned. Yulo sounded very weak. He was saying that he was very thirsty and had not been able to sleep all night.

Tenzin Samphel (Dharamsala, 12/2/88) said that in Shigatse's Titchu prison the food was so old and rotten that it gave off an overpowering stench.³⁹ In Utitod prison, according to Lobsang Dhondup (Dharamsala, 12/3/88), the fixed term prisoners⁴⁰ got more food and water and tried to share it with the temporary prisoners but risked severe punishment if they were caught. The easiest way for them to slip food into a cell was when they came to clean the floors of the temporary prisoner building "when a guard wasn't looking." A constant danger was that a Chinese prisoner would tell the guards

³⁸ Yulo Dawa Tsering, perhaps Tibet's best known political prisoner, was sentenced to 14 years for "counter-revolutionary propaganda," and has been adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. Formerly, he was a monk, professor of philosophy and member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

³⁹ For further discussion of food, see Amnesty International, "Torture and Ill-Treatment in Detention of Tibetans Arrested for Alleged Involvement in Pro-independence Activities in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)." London, 1989. Hereafter referred to as AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment". See also Asia Watch, Human Rights in Tibet (Washington, D.C.:1988), pp. 28-29.

⁴⁰ Lobsang said that generally, "fixed term prisoners" have been sentenced although that did not mean they had a "trial." Temporary prisoners are generally untried and unsentenced.

and get the Tibetans in more trouble.

Condition of Cells

Cells typically are no more than a cement room with one barred window and a pail. Mattresses are sometimes absent, and often several prisoners have to share one mattress. In October of 1987, when Sonam Tsering was arrested for demonstrating and taken to Sangyip, he was put in a solitary cell measuring 12 x 10 feet. Although Sonam received his own mattress and one quilt, everyone we interviewed who was imprisoned after March of 1988 said that mattresses and blankets were in very short supply and that prisoners shared.

Sonam said that each cell in Sangyip had a pail for a toilet. Except when he was taken out for interrogation, he was allowed out of his cell only once a day for several minutes to take his pail and empty it out in the bathroom. About once a week he was allowed to wash, but he never had any soap or a towel. The cell had one window, opposite the door. All he could see was the next building, about 20 feet away. He was shifted between several cells. The first one had a bed; the others did not.

**One blanket was given to every two prisoners to share.
Cells were not heated, and during the winter they became bitterly cold....
The average temperature in Lhasa during winter months
is approximately -2° Celsius (28° Fahrenheit).**

After several months Sonam was moved to Gutsa and kept in darkness for 45 days. His cell had no window and no light bulb. He only saw light once a day when he was let out to use the bathroom or when he was interrogated. From other accounts, it appears that it is more common for a single light bulb to be left on 24 hours a day so that the guards can periodically check up on the prisoners.⁴¹

Lobsang Dhondup (Dharamsala, 12/3/88), was beaten and arrested during the March 5 demonstration. First he was taken to Gutsa, where there were no beds or other fixtures in the cell, only a small tin bucket in which to urinate and a thin rug for him and his eleven cell-mates to sleep on. They were given no blankets. One small window provided light for the cell.

Lobsang was moved to Utitod later in March 1988. His cell there had two cement platforms covered with a tarpaulin on which to sleep. One blanket was given to

⁴¹ Tibet Information Network (TIN), Int. #4, p.7 & #5, p.3. A series of unpublished interviews was made available to us by TIN in London, after deleting names and other identifying information to protect the confidentiality of those still in Tibet. These interviews of torture victims were carried out in Tibet and are considered to be of the utmost reliability as they were all taped and carefully transcribed. We refer to them as TIN, Int. #1-11.

every two prisoners to share. Cells were not heated, and during the winter they became bitterly cold. In some instances, the prison provided an extra blanket. The average temperature in Lhasa during winter months is approximately -2 Celsius (28 Fahrenheit).

Sanitation

Prison cells in Tibet do not have running water (few Tibetan homes have running water inside). Prisoners are generally not supplied with even a pail of water in their cells. One pail is provided in each cell to use as a toilet and the prisoner is allowed to empty it once a day. Interviewees stated that the stench from these buckets is particularly bad in the summer. We are aware of only one prisoner who said he was allowed to empty his pail of urine and feces twice each day. He was in Drapchi during the summer of 1988.

Prisoners are not supplied with soap and they have only one set of clothes which often are never washed even during a several month stay in prison. We heard of cases where families have been allowed to leave soap for an incarcerated relative at the prison gates. We do not know, however, if the prisoners received packages left by families. Lobsang Dhondup said that he was never allowed an opportunity to wash himself or his clothes properly during his four month stay in Sangyip and Gutsa.

One man imprisoned in Gutsa from March to April, 1988 stated that "sometimes we were let outside twice a day, sometimes only once. It depends on the guard; some guards let us sit in the sun for half an hour. Some guards put us back in the cell immediately after we had been to the toilet." He said that they were always let out "in a group, never alone. Each cell was taken out one at a time."⁴²

Thapkey Dorje (Bir, 11/1/88), the former policeman, said that political prisoners are generally not let out of their cell except to empty their toilet pail. Common criminals are let out for short periods of time each day unless they are required to work, in which case they can be out all day.

Labor

Our interviews indicate that prisoners arrested during the last year and a half were not forced to work during the initial phase of their incarceration. However, other prisoners have reported that they were made to work within months of their arrest. One said that prisoners had to wash the guards' clothing and carry sand and rocks in Gutsa. A nun explained that "prisoners who had to work had committed less serious crimes."⁴³

During four months in Utitod prison, Lobsang Dhondup was made to work for

⁴² TIN, Int. #5, p.4. Interviews made available by the Tibet Information Network contain testimony that prisoners were let out of their cells more frequently and for longer periods than our interviewees indicated.

⁴³ TIN, Int. #7, p.5.

only one day digging trenches, for which he was given more water, which was scarce. The fixed term prisoners, who may have all been common criminals and who were required to work, got better food and water than the temporary prisoners, who at this time were predominantly political.

Other published reports state that hard labor is common for political prisoners who are serving long sentences.⁴⁴ According to Zichang, the President of the High People's Court of the TAR, "we also follow the policy of helping the prisoners turn a new lease of [sic] life by forcing them to reform through labour."⁴⁵

Access to Prisoners

None of the victims we interviewed were ever allowed a visit from family or friends. However, Yoden Choedak (Dharamsala, 10/31/88), who had been a nurse, was allowed to make a visit to an imprisoned nun. Credible reports indicate that many prisoners have visitation rights, but they seem to be for those who have already been sentenced and imprisoned for periods of several years or more. Visits are rare, if allowed at all, for political prisoners during their first months of incarceration.⁴⁶ In general, prisoners arrested for involvement in demonstrations are almost always held incommunicado until their release,⁴⁷ and access to prisoners depends largely on connections (guanxi). Thus, all of the patterns identified here are subject to exceptions.

We had one report that the wife of a political prisoner was allowed to visit him while he was being tortured in an attempt to extract a confession. However, we could not confirm that her visit was deliberately being used for this purpose.

Tenpa Namdol (Dharamsala, 11/27/88), a 21 year-old monk from Drepung told

⁴⁴ See Asia Watch, Human Rights in Tibet, pp. 29, 35. See also "Statement of Asia Watch," p. 10.

⁴⁵ From "Some Basic Facts About Tibet," a paper distributed by the Chinese Embassy, Washington, D.C., 1989, p.8. For a discussion of labor in Tibetan prisons during the Cultural Revolution, see Information Office, Glimpses of Tibet Today, pp.61-66.

⁴⁶ See also U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports," p.767. A prisoner reported in Asia Watch, Human Rights in Tibet, p.31, that "a small number of people have minor visitation privileges. They can have a visitor on one day of each month. Political prisoners, because they are...such trash...are denied this. Now they can have visitations once every three or four months...for only two minutes. There is a PSB [Public Security Bureau] worker nearby to listen to all that is said.... Only family members can visit....Visitors have to make themselves clearly known to the authorities: 'Where are you from? Who are you going to see? What is your [district] committee? Where is your residence?'"

⁴⁷ AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment," p.1.

us that after some of his friends were arrested, other monks went to Gutsa prison with food and quilts. Prison officials did not allow them to visit the men or leave the food, but did permit them to leave the quilts. Other prisoners have reported receiving clothing and soap but being denied gifts of food and personal letters.⁴⁸

We were surprised to find family members sometimes knew the status of their imprisoned relative before release by word of mouth within the Tibetan community. Members of the Public Security Bureau (PSB), prison guards and hospital employees were all cited as sources. The family may also hear from other families who have an imprisoned member or they may go to the prisons and ask guards.

Duration of Imprisonment

The eight Tibetans we interviewed who had been in prison were incarcerated for periods ranging from four days to eight months. Obviously, others held for longer periods were not, and still are not, available for interviews.⁴⁹

Prisoners are...released earlier if they do not express any anti-Chinese sentiments during interrogation. Nima Pasang, a 22 year-old man who shared a cell with a nun, said that he was sure that they would keep her for a long time because she kept yelling "Long live the Dalai Lama" at her interrogators. "Unless you hide your feelings and keep quiet," Nima said, "they will not release you."

The duration of imprisonment is not necessarily arbitrary. All of those interviewed told us that the Chinese are trying to uncover the leaders of the demonstrations and outspoken advocates of Tibetan nationalism, who, if found, will be held significantly longer. Prisoners are also released earlier if they do not express any anti-Chinese sentiments during interrogation.

Nima Pasang, (Delhi, 12/6/88) a 22 year-old man who shared a cell with a nun, said that he was sure that they would keep her for a long time because she kept yelling "Long live the Dalai Lama" at her interrogators. "Unless you hide your feelings and keep quiet," Nima said, "they will not release you."

After spending two months in Titchu prison for trying to flee to Nepal, Tenzin Samphel (Dharamsala, 12/2/88), said that many of the prisoners had been there for five or six months and could expect to remain in prison for up to two years. They were told

⁴⁸ TIN, Int. #5, p.4.

⁴⁹ For a unique analysis of duration of sentences of political criminals in China, see Wu Yuan-li, "A Statistical Analysis of Judicial Practice and the Human Rights Condition in the People's Republic of China," in Human Rights in the People's Republic of China, ed. by Wu (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1988), pp.297-315.

that this was the statutory maximum length for the crime of leaving the country without authorization.

Jampey Losel, (Kathmandu, 11/20/88), a 23 year-old monk from Lhasa, said that he quickly became "mentally sick" from the torture and could not even tell us how long he had been imprisoned but estimated that it may have been two to four weeks.

Under Chinese law, post-arrest detention without bail is permissible and has even been expanded to include pre-arrest detention for up to ten days.⁵⁰



Face of the 75 ft. high image of Chamba, Buddha of the Future, in Tashilhunpo. (Photo: Galen Rowell)

Prisoners' State of Mind

Several of the monks we interviewed explained how their monastic training made them more resistant to torture. First, the discipline required to meditate for long periods of time helped monks endure the rigors of prison. And second, Buddhist doctrines of patience and compassion for all living things encouraged them to look for good qualities in their captors and to put the horrors of prison into perspective as something that would pass.⁵¹

Sonam Tsering (Dharamsala, 11/25), one of the young Sera monks, said that he did not give any information to his interrogators. As time went on, he became increasingly angry and more determined not to talk to his interrogators. His training as a monk allowed him to focus on meditating in his cell. He did not worry much about his fate because there was nothing he could do about it. Despite promises by the guards to the contrary, Sonam thought the prisoners were treated more or less the

⁵⁰ Chinese Criminal Procedure Law, Art. 41 and Art. 48. See Delores Donovan, "The Structure of the Chinese Criminal Justice System: A Comparative Perspective," University of San Francisco Law Review Vol. 21, No.2/3 (Winter/Spring, 1987), p.265.

⁵¹ For a detailed, fascinating account of how Buddhist practices and teachings helped one prisoner endure years of imprisonment, see "Jiuzhen Prison: A Tibetan Account" by Dr. Tenzin Choedrak in Seeds of Fire: Chinese Voices of Conscience, edited by Geremie Barme and John Minford (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989). Another thoughtful account of Dr. Choedrak's mental state in prison can be found in a four part series in News Tibet by Dr. Albert Crum, Vol. 22, Nos.1-4.

same whether they gave information to their interrogators or remained silent.

One of the most often mentioned reasons for surviving extended torture was inspiration drawn from the Dalai Lama and the belief that he was praying for them. Whether the prisoners came from the monastic or lay community, they believed that by the Dalai Lama's grace they would recuperate. According to a 26 year-old Tibetan in Sangyip, "I did not think of myself in prison. Food was enough. My thoughts were of His Holiness. I kept myself calm and said my prayers."⁶²

Prison is inherently an isolating, lonely environment, made even more so by rules forbidding prisoners to talk among themselves. Lobsang Dhondup reported that in Gutsa all talking was strictly prohibited in the cell. However, at night the prisoners were able to whisper among themselves and find out about each other. One prisoner in Drapchi was reportedly shackled and shown to the prisoners as an example of the punishment meted out for speaking to other prisoners.

Although we received no accounts of prisoners taking their own lives, the literature contains an unconfirmed report of one prisoner who attempted suicide,⁵³ and a Tibetan policeman who succeeded.⁵⁴



Mt. Kailas pilgrimage. (Photo: Galen Rowell)

⁶² TIN, Int. #2, p.7.

⁵³ TIN, Int. #5, p.8.

⁵⁴ Ennals and Hyde-Chambers, "Tibet in China," p.52. One of our interviewees told us that a Tibetan policeman committed suicide because he had shot a Chinese policeman in the police station on Oct. 1, 1987. We were told that when he realized that he was about to be identified as the assailant, he went home and shot himself in the head with his revolver.

Sanctions Against Former Prisoners

Following release from prison, all of those interviewed said that they experienced various forms of political reprisals or economic sanctions. The virtual surety of sanctions leads many to attempt the dangerous flight through the Himalayas into exile.

Tenpa Namdol, (Dharamsala, 11/27/88) watched as his friends were arrested for raising the Tibetan national flag over his monastery, an act in which he too participated. He thought that it was only a matter of time before one of them gave his name under torture. Fearing retribution, he chose to flee to India, even though this

meant he would surely be tortured if the army caught him trying to escape.

In Utitod prison, Lobsang Dhondup was told in the spring of 1988 that no monk involved in the March 5 demonstration would be allowed to go back to his monastery. But after several months the prisoners heard that an order had come from Beijing telling the local authorities that the monks should be allowed to return to their monasteries if they were not involved in organizing the demonstration. Lobsang said that both the prisoners and the guards were surprised by this order which they heard was the result of international pressure.

Lobsang Dhondup was released from prison after four months and 13 days only to be caught while trying to flee to Nepal and imprisoned again, this time in Shigatse for another three and a half months. Upon his release he and six other Sera monks were prohibited from returning to their monastery. They were told to go back to their villages and abandon their religious livelihood. When Lobsang left for India, the other six monks, including his best friend, had still not been allowed to rejoin Sera Monastery. Authorities were pressuring them, under threat of arrest, to go back to their home town.

Economic sanctions vary from the mundane to the outrageous. Yoden Choedak (Dharamsala, 10/31/88), the nurse, had to pay 20 yuan a day for the food she ate during her four-day imprisonment for participating in Lhasa's October 1st, 1987 demonstration. We were told of others who lost their jobs after being arrested. However, one man said that he was allowed to go back to work after being released from prison and only had his pay docked for the period he was incarcerated.⁵⁵ When Kelsang Wangyal, a 22 year-old monk from Lhasa's Jokhang Cathedral, went to the police station to collect the body of a friend, he found:

My friend was shot by a pistol during the March 5th, 1988 demonstration. He died in the People's Hospital after seven days. In order to get the body back, several of us [monks] went to the police station where, we were told, we had to pay 600 yuan for the body to cover the cost of medicines and an operation. We said we did not have that much money and our names were recorded. Then the police said that if we did not come up with the money, we would all go to prison. We returned the next day with the money and recovered the body.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ TIN, Int. #3, p.3.

⁵⁶ The common collection fee for bodies of people killed in demonstrations or who died while in police custody in Tibet is 300 to 600 yuan (Most Tibetans living in towns or cities earn between 300 and 1,000 yuan per year, significantly less than in China. A New York Times editorial reported the annual per capita income in Tibet as \$110, approximately 385 yuan: "Stand Up for Decency in Tibet," Oct. 8, 1987.)

Patterns of Torture

Patterns of torture are consistent from the Tibetans we interviewed and from other published and unpublished accounts by travelers and human rights groups. The most common pattern is repeated interrogation sessions accompanied by severe beatings and electric shock. If prisoners refuse to state that Tibet is part of China or are suspected of organizing a demonstration or assaulting a policeman or police vehicle, the treatment is much more severe. There is debate over whether the purpose of torture is primarily pragmatic -- to extract confessions and gain information -- or primarily to intimidate and create fear.⁵⁷

In addition to beatings and electric shock, torture techniques include hanging prisoners by their wrists, thumbs or ankles for prolonged periods, submerging prisoners in tubs of cold water or dousing them with water. In general, political prisoners are treated much worse than common criminals.⁵⁸

Chinese and Tibetan party officials, as well as official decrees, have called for the "severe" punishment of "counter-revolutionaries."⁵⁹ Martial Law Decree No. 2, issued on March 7, 1989, states that "the judicial departments must immediately investigate criminals referred to in this decree and punish them severely and swiftly." Decree No. 3 says the "personnel on duty have the right to investigate anyone violating these regulations and may take forceful measures on the spot to apprehend them and hold them accountable." The license to use forceful measures is particularly disturbing in light of reports by Westerners in Lhasa at the time that Tibetans were being shot by security personnel on the spot in their homes.

Role of Security Forces

The imposition of martial law in Lhasa in March, 1989 was followed by reports of extraordinarily high numbers of troops and armed police in and around the capital. The South China Morning Post, for example, reported that 170,000 soldiers made up of 17 divisions of the People's Liberation Army were deployed within striking distance of Lhasa, as well as two or three divisions of the People's Armed Police, numbering about 30,000 officers and men.⁶⁰ Under Martial Law Decree No. 1, the "public security organs and personnel on martial law duty have the right to search people suspected of causing

⁵⁷ See Ronald Schwartz, "Reform and Repression in Tibet," Telos, August, 1989, p.17.

⁵⁸ This is corroborated by testimony from prisoners included in Asia Watch, Human Rights in Tibet, p.30. See also TIN, Int. #7, p.5.

⁵⁹ Text of the Tibet Regional People's Government's Decree No. 1 from Lhasa Tibet Regional (radio) Service in Mandarin, reprinted by Foreign Broadcast Information Service, FBIS-CHI-89-044, p.10, March 8, 1989.

⁶⁰ South China Morning Post (Hong Kong), March 8, 1989.



Soldiers on the streets in Lhasa, Tibet. (Photo: John Ackerly)

riots, places where criminals may be concealed, and other suspicious places.⁶¹

This report cannot cover the exact role and the identities of the various branches of the PRC government and security forces responsible for watching, investigating, arresting, interrogating and torturing Tibetans. However, in Tibet there are few of the ambiguities that exist in some other countries, where it is unclear who is responsible for which atrocity. For example, there are no known private "death squads" such as those in El Salvador.

Also outside the scope of this report is a full discussion of the role of Western countries in training and supplying Chinese police forces in Tibet. However, it has been reported that Chinese security officials have been trained in recent years in the United States,⁶² and anti-riot squads in Lhasa were trained by the Austrian special force "Cobra."⁶³ Yoden Choedak (Dharamsala, 10/31/88), the nurse, also said that she heard that some Chinese police had been trained in Austria.

⁶¹ Text of the Tibet Regional People's Government's Decree No. 1 from Lhasa Tibet Regional (radio) Service in Mandarin, reprinted in FBIS-CHI-89-044, p.10, March 8, 1989. According to some Western observers, the decrees legalized what was already practiced.

⁶² Tai Ming Cheung, "Crackdown on Crime," Far Eastern Economic Review, Nov. 3, 1988.

⁶³ Georg Furbock, "Hilft Wien Chinas Sonder-Polizei in Tibet?" Wiener Kurier, (Vienna), Sept. 5, 1988.

The Public Security Bureau (Gong An Jiu), generally functions as a normal police force, for "investigation, detention and preparatory examination."⁶⁴ The Procuratorate (Jian Cha Yuan), is charged with "approving arrest, conducting procuratorial work (including investigation) and initiating public prosecution."⁶⁵ Very little information is available on the extent to which the Procuratorate is allowed or able to do its job in Tibet. It appears that in the cases of many prisoners the Procuratorate simply is not involved. Indeed, it appears that whatever "trials" are going on may not follow formal judicial procedures and are very expeditious.

Prison guards and officials also have close working relationships with the Public Security Bureau which maintains surveillance over released prisoners. Most officials in the PSB, especially those of higher rank, are Chinese, but there are a number of Tibetan police.⁶⁶

Both Tibetan and Chinese guards torture prisoners. Tibetans, ironically, have both the best and the worst reputations among the prisoners. All but one of our interviewees claimed that the Tibetans were the most brutal torturers. The treatment of prisoners varied widely depending upon the guard.

Although Tibetan guards were reputed to be cruel, they were also in a unique position to help prisoners. Since very few Chinese speak or understand Tibetan, interrogation is generally carried out with the help of these guards, either on their own or as translators. They can thereby confirm where prisoners are being held and what their condition is and communicate this information directly to relatives or friends of the inmate who come to the prisons trying to find a family member, visit or leave food and blankets.

We were told by one ex-prisoner that torture began to let up toward the end of March 1988, when "guards got bored of torturing so much." Another interview provided by the Tibet Information Network asserted that because of the volume of prisoners in March 1988 guards became upset and irritable over having to work long hours without holidays.⁶⁷

Interrogation

Interviewees consistently told us that torture almost always accompanies interrogation, and that interrogation usually takes place within hours of arrest, which is frequently late at night and primarily aimed at uncovering the names of others who were involved in a demonstration or in the underground. The treatment, like everything else,

⁶⁴ Chinese Criminal Procedure Law, Art. 3.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Statement of Asia Watch, p.9.

⁶⁷ TIN, Int. #5, p.8.

seemed to vary widely depending upon the prisoner's attitude and that of the torturer(s). While most of those interviewed said that they were treated no better even if they gave names, one man stated that he was released quickly after he gave names and said that he admired communism.

Yoden Choedak (Dharamsala, 10/31/88) described her interrogation:

Ten days after the March 5, 1988 demonstration, the police came to my work place and took me to the police station, where they produced a thick book that, I was told, contained all of my crimes. They never opened the book. At first I tried to tell the police that I had not done anything wrong. Then women police took me to a different room where they kicked me in the chest. They touched my mouth with an electric stick many times, which felt as though my mouth had been exploded, and I lost consciousness.

Then I was taken to Drapchi prison where Chinese policemen tried to strip me again. I cried as my clothes were being ripped off, with the help of Chinese women police. Then I was beaten all over my body with the electric stick, many times on my breasts, mouth, and head. I lost consciousness from this many times. The male police were Chinese. The women police were Muslims from Pakistan or Kashmir who had been living in Lhasa for some time.

I did not confess to committing any crimes, other than throwing rocks. Before being released from Drapchi, I was told not to say anything about what had happened to me in prison, and that if I ever participated in another demonstration, I would be treated much worse. Ever since, I have had difficulty remembering things and learning new words. I think this is from the electric sticks.

Yoden was treated relatively well, compared to Sonam Tsering, the 20 year-old monk from Sera Monastery who had participated in the October 1, 1987 demonstration (Dharamsala 11/25/88). Sonam told us that on October 3, 1987, the Chinese police and military personnel entered his monastery, beat the monks with cattle prods, AK 47s and clubs with nails in the ends, and took 15 monks to prison, including himself. Sonam was interrogated and tortured with cattle prods and harsh beatings approximately every other day for two months in Sangyip prison, then every third or fourth day for the next two months in Gutsa prison. When his captors came to tie his hands behind his back and take him from his cell for interrogation, they repeatedly asked about who the ringleaders of the demonstration were, and if the Dalai Lama organized the demonstrations. Sonam was never interrogated without being shocked with cattle prods. His torturers told him that he would be sentenced to ten years in prison -- or executed -- if he did not talk.

Interrogation almost always took place in designated rooms, usually in a building separate from the cell blocks. In Sangyip interrogation and torture took place in what

one prisoner referred to as "the information area" and never in the cell. However, another prisoner testified that in Gutsa soldiers came during the night into the cells and "if you were not sleeping, they just hit us." After a month police replaced the soldiers. Tenzin Samphel (Dharamsala, 12/2/88) said that in Titchu prison in Shigatse, beatings occurred everywhere: in cells, in hallways, as well as in interrogation rooms.

The frequency of torture varied, perhaps because, as one victim suggested, the prisoners' captors became bored with the routine. Lobsang Dhondup (Dharamsala, 12/3/88) said he was interrogated approximately once every five or six days by two Chinese police officers via a Tibetan translator. They asked the same questions: who else was involved, who started it, how does the Dalai Lama organize these demonstrations, and so on. Sometimes Lobsang sat cross-legged on the floor, sometimes in a chair with his arms outstretched. In the beginning they beat him and shocked him with the cattle prods, but after a while they questioned him without beating him, or doing so half-heartedly. Another prisoner held for three months reported that he was not tortured after the first three days of his confinement.⁶⁸

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Interrogation also commonly occurs during night raids in the Tibetan quarter of Lhasa. The occupants, including children, are subject to interrogation, intimidation, beatings and arrest. These house-to-house searches were taking place in the fall of 1987 and in March 1988, but they became widespread in March 1989, following the imposition of martial law.⁶⁹

Under Chinese law, "the use of torture to coerce statements and the gathering of evidence by threat, enticement, deceit or other unlawful methods are strictly prohibited."⁷⁰

⁶⁸ From transcript of interview published in the Tibet Press Watch, Vol. 1, p. 41, published by the International Campaign for Tibet.

⁶⁹ See, for example, Andrew Higgins, "Chinese troops round up dozens of Tibetan rebels," The Independent, March 9, 1989.

⁷⁰ Chinese Criminal Procedure Law, Art. 32.

Beatings

According to our interviews, almost no one arrested in Lhasa during demonstrations escapes beating. The severity of the beatings is particularly disturbing -- prisoners are often first stripped naked and then beaten until they are unconscious.

Prisoners are routinely beaten with a variety of objects available to the guards: cattle prods, weapons, iron rods, truncheons, clubs with nails driven through the ends and the guards' fists and feet. Our interviewees said that almost every object in the interrogation room was used as an instrument of torture: telephones, trash cans, chairs and lamps. Prisoners are also kicked and often have their hands tied or shackled. While prisoners were often forced to beat each other during the Cultural Revolution, there were no reports of this happening now.⁷¹

When Nima Pasang (Delhi, 12/6/88) was arrested on March 8, 1988, and taken to Drapchi prison, he was initially put into a small room by himself. Even before the police began to question Nima, they beat him badly. He described how a Chinese policeman held his hair and beat his face into the concrete floor, which ripped open his mouth and broke several teeth. When interviewed seven months later, Nima had a jagged, four-inch scar on his cheek, consistent with his account.

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The former policeman, Thapkey Dorje (Bir, 11/1/88), confirmed that prisoners were nearly always beaten, and that he had himself tortured his own people. "It was very difficult being a Tibetan and a policeman," Thapkey said. "They put pressure on me in group meetings to do many things I did not want to do." Thapkey explained how he beat prisoners' heads against the wall, used a wooden plank to tie the wrists in unnatural positions behind the head and back, and also beat the prisoners against the motion of a joint to break an arm or dislocate the joint. "If a prisoner dies during the beatings," Thapkey said, "the police are not responsible because it is the prisoners' fault. The police have the upper hand and are free to beat prisoners to death."

We were often told that guards repeatedly struck tender spots such as the soles of feet, elbows, knees and abdomens and that prisoners were beaten standing, sitting or lying on the floor. Geshe Lobsang Wangchuk, a prisoner of conscience adopted by Amnesty International, reportedly lost the use of his hands after they were twisted

⁷¹ Accord, TIN, Int. #5, p.7.

during torture.⁷² Another brutal incident occurred on June 12, 1988 when two Tibetans arrested in front of the Lhasa Dance and Performance Hall were allegedly blinded and their spines broken.⁷³

Torture may be avoided or lessened if the prisoner has the right connections, as we learned from Tenzin Samphel. Caught at the Nepalese border and then taken to Titchu prison in Shigatse, Tenzin was not tortured and was hardly even beaten. He attributed this leniency to outside connections who were pressuring the prison authorities, including the prison chief, not to mistreat him.

Electric Shock

The use of electric cattle prods against Tibetan detainees and prisoners is widespread. Asia Watch published the first substantive account of their use in a February 1988 report, Human Rights in Tibet.⁷⁴ Since then, substantive reports of their use have been frequent.⁷⁵

The eight torture victims whom we interviewed had all been shocked repeatedly with electric prods. Sonam Tsering's case is typical. Sonam described the room where he was interrogated and tortured almost every day as an ordinary office outside of the inner compound -- a desk, two chairs and a telephone. The same three Tibetans always interrogated him, and electric shock with one long and one short cattle prod always accompanied the interrogation. Every once and a while a Chinese officer came into the room to supervise.

One of the most disturbing allegations is that of electric cattle prods having been forced into the vaginas of female prisoners, including Buddhist nuns. We received a report that a nun was tied to an electrified metal table, that electric cords were tied around her breasts,⁷⁶ and that a cattle prod was jabbed into her vagina so many times that she became badly infected. Tinley Chopel, 25, (Dharamsala, 11/4) said that another monk told him that an electrically charged belt was wrapped around his waist and then pulled tighter and tighter. Many prisoners also reported that electric batons

⁷² See Asia Watch, Human Rights in Tibet, p. 35.

⁷³ See United Nations, Report by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. P. Kooijmans, p.7.

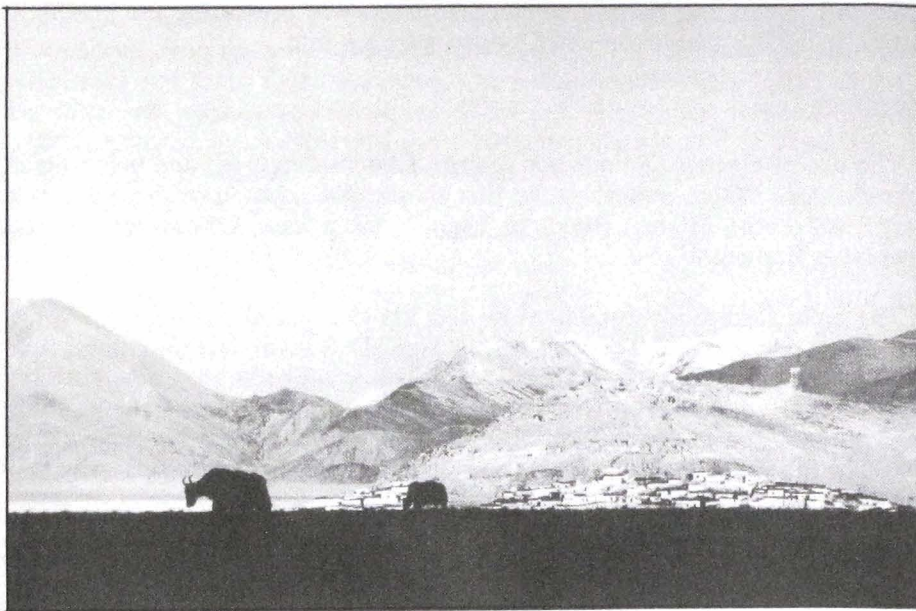
⁷⁴ See also Asia Watch, "Evading Scrutiny: Violations of Human Rights After the Closing of Tibet," Washington, D.C., 1988, p.25.

⁷⁵ U.S. Department of State says that the use of electric prods was "common among those detained following protests in Tibet." See Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1988, p.765.

⁷⁶ Although we heard reports of "electric beds" and wrapping prisoners with electric cords or belts, we were unable to independently confirm them, other than one third hand report of a prisoner tied to a metal wall through which electricity was sent.

were put into their mouths.⁷⁷

Several interviewees told us that the Chinese police used two different kinds of cattle prods: one model, approximately three feet long by one and a half inches in diameter, is longer and thinner than a newer model which is approximately one and a half feet long and two and a half inches in diameter. The Public Security Bureau reportedly first received electric cattle prods in 1980.⁷⁸



Tingri, a trading village on the Tibetan plateau. (Photo: Galen Rowell)

Hanging by Extremities

Victims and others gave many accounts of prisoners being hanged by the thumbs, ankles, or wrists, with arms tied behind backs -- a position known as the "flying airplane." The prisoners are hung from roof beams, cell bars or trees with the toes barely touching the ground or not touching at all. We are not aware of any accounts of prisoners being hanged by their necks or in a manner causing immediate death.

While Lobsang Dhondup was in Gutsa prison during March 1988, one of his cell mates, Phurbu Tsering, 27, a house painter in Lhasa, was accused of participating in burning a Chinese restaurant on March 6. Phurbu's wife had a shop right next to the restaurant. Phurbu had initially been arrested on March 6 or 7, badly beaten for one day in a police station, then released. After being rearrested on March 8 or 9 and sent

⁷⁷ See AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment," p.3.

⁷⁸ Ennals and Hyde-Chambers, "Tibet in China," p.36. One prisoner stated that the PSB formerly did not use the electric baton. See also AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment", p. 3.

to Gutsa, Phurbu was stripped naked and hanged from the ceiling for an entire night. Lobsang learned about this incident later when he saw Phurbu after he had been brought to Utitod prison. Jampey Losel, (Kathmandu, 11/20/88), a 23 year-old monk from a small temple in Lhasa was also hanged upside down by his legs.

The hanging of prisoners by extremities, with certain variations, appears to be common in Gutsa prison. Sonam Tsering said that his captors burned hot chilies under his head while he hung from his ankles. Another monk who had been imprisoned in Gutsa told a Washington Post reporter: "I saw people hanging from ropes tied to their arms behind their backs, suspended with their feet off the ground. Two of the people I saw had their shoulders dislocated by the rope. Many became unconscious as a result."⁷⁹

Another prisoner stated that in March of 1988 he was in Gutsa and saw "hundreds" of people hanging by their wrists "sometimes for a few hours, sometimes for three days and three nights. Some were kept like this for 14 days and 14 nights. Some were left tied to a [lamp] pole. I have seen this."⁸⁰

Other reports of hanging prisoners by extremities come from Drapchi. One prisoner released from Drapchi reported that, "four to five people were hanged in mid-air for a day and a night without any clothes. Some were kept like this until they confessed. They were mostly lay people. Not many monks received such punishment."⁸¹

Cold Water

When Sonam Tsering was moved to Gutsa in the winter of 1988, his captors tied him to a wall, stripped him naked and poured ice water over him. Sonam saw them do this to many of the prisoners that winter. (Temperatures at night and in the shade in Tibet's high altitude can easily drop below freezing, especially in the winter.) Other prisoners have testified to being doused with ice water or held in tubs of cold water and that this practice exists in both Gutsa and Drapchi prisons in winter months.⁸²

Although none of our interviewees said that they had been submerged in an ice bath, several Tibetans stated that they knew of others who had experienced such treatment. Submerging prisoners in tubs of cold water, however, has been reported

⁷⁹ Daniel Southerland, "Tibetan Tells of Torture," Washington Post, Sept. 6, 1988. See also AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment" pp. 5-6 and United Nations, Report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. P. Kooijman, p.7.

⁸⁰ TIN, Int. #4, p.9.

⁸¹ TIN, Int. #8, p.9.

⁸² A prisoner reported to Asia watch that "In winter one is forced to kneel on ice...the pants are rolled up, one is bound tightly and one's [bare] knees are on the ice for an hour." Asia Watch, Human Rights in Tibet, p. 31.

elsewhere as a method of reviving unconscious prisoners.⁸³

Injections

Jigme Norbu, a 34 year-old Tibetan physician (Dharamsala, 10/18/88) who worked in the Mendzokhang, Lhasa's only hospital of Tibetan medicine, described two types of injections used in prisons. One injection makes the prisoner talk freely. Another injection "makes the prisoner go insane, if it did not kill him." The first injection fits the description of what is commonly called "truth serum," or sodium pentothal. One can only guess at the contents of the second type of injection. However, Dr. Norbu had not actually witnessed prisoners receiving injections.

Tinley Chopel, imprisoned for three months in 1988, saw several prisoners who in his words, "became mentally retarded" as a result of prolonged torture or injection. The basis upon which he thought that an injection may have been administered is unclear; nevertheless second and third hand reports of debilitating injections given in prison are common enough to take seriously. Indeed, two monks treated by Dr. Kerr after the October 1, 1987 demonstration told him that more than torture they feared injections reportedly given in prison.

Many Tibetans believe that Lobsang Wangchuk, adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International, was given an injection the day before his release from Sangyip prison. He died the day after his release at the Mendzokhang.⁸⁴

According to another report, a 22 year-old monk in Sangyip prison was given frequent injections of an unknown substance that caused him to become partially paralyzed. The source of the report states that "The paralysis is so severe that he cannot feed himself. When he arrived [at the Tibetan Medical Institute], he could only walk stooped over at a ninety degree angle to the floor."⁸⁵

Trained Guard Dogs

We received testimony of the use of dogs on prisoners in Gutsa and Sangyip prisons, and two accounts of trained dogs used to attack female prisoners (see following section). The incidents in Gutsa have been confirmed by other published reports,

⁸³ See AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment," supra, note 39, p.7 and also, interview transcript published in the Tibet Press Watch, Vol. 1, p. 41, International Campaign for Tibet. We are not aware of any allegations that physicians were involved in reviving unconscious prisoners by this method.

⁸⁴ "Lobsang Wangchuk," Tibetan Bulletin, Vol.18, No.4 (Nov.-Dec., 1987), p.29.

⁸⁵ From interview of a Tibetan who requested anonymity, published in the Tibet Press Watch, Vol. 1, p. 43, International Campaign for Tibet. See also AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment" supra, note 39, p.9.

including one from Amnesty International.⁸⁶ We could not independently confirm the use of attack dogs in Sangyip but believe that the testimony we received is credible, in part because it is so similar to the accounts from Gutsa.

Tenzin Tsering, 22, (Dharamsala, 10/19/88) a monk from Sera Monastery, had a friend named Lobsang who was 26 years old when he was arrested for participating in the March 5, 1988 demonstration. Said Tenzin, "Lobsang was taken the same day to Sangyip prison. After stripping Lobsang, the police tied Lobsang to a stake, hung motor tires around his neck, then let trained guard dogs attack. Lobsang said the Chinese name for the dog is 'Owlie'. They are large, slim dogs, with pointed ears. The dogs tore hunks of flesh from Lobsang's calves and thighs."

The Tibetan policeman, Thapkey Dorje, also confirmed that the Public Security Bureau had dogs trained in China. During the mid-1980s, Thakpey said "we used the dogs to bark at the prisoners, who often told us many things at this time. The dogs are also trained to bite the prisoners on the command [in Chinese] of the master." Another prisoner also said that the dogs were given and understood orders in Chinese.⁸⁷

Nuns in Prison

Reports and allegations of sexual abuse and harassment in Lhasa area prisons filter across the Himalayas. Yoden Choedak (Dharamsala, 10/31/88), told us what a friend, a nun named Ngawang, had told her about her experience in prison.

Ngawang was released in late July. The first time I visited Ngawang in late March she looked very healthy. When Ngawang came out, she had lost a lot of weight and had difficulty walking. She could hardly walk from the damage to her right hip. She had received daily beatings and torture while stripped naked over a four month period. They [police] forced women to run for hours while police beat them with cattle prods. Ngawang was tied with an electric cord, beaten with cattle prods, and had dogs attack her many times. For her, the worst problem was the electric cords tied around her breasts. When the electricity was applied, it made her feel like she was going to die.

I saw Ngawang after she was released. The dogs must have had very sharp teeth because there was one place in her right thigh that had a large hunk of flesh missing. Ngawang told me that she decided to be beaten, instead of running and having the dogs eat her, even if they beat her to death.

⁸⁶ See also AJ, "Torture and Ill-treatment," pp.4, 8.

⁸⁷ TIN, Int. #7, p.1.

The following is perhaps the most well known account of the abuse of a Tibetan nun in prison:

Upon arrival at Gutsa prison, the nun was stripped of all clothing and placed in a room with two trained dogs and two policemen. The dogs were trained to attack whenever she moved. The policemen proceeded to hit her with rods until she tried to move away, at which time dogs would attack, biting and lacerating her arms and legs. During this torture, they continually asked her about her involvement in the demonstrations as well as the involvement of others.

After saying nothing, being beaten, and being attacked by dogs, they placed her in a cell at Gutsa where she remained for approximately three months.... While in prison, she spoke to another nun who was stripped of all clothing and prodded with an electric rod in the vagina and in the mouth.⁸⁸

Four of our interviewees believed nuns were treated more harshly than other prisoners, male or female. Nima Pasang (Delhi, 12/6/88), a 22 year-old from Kham, saw guards come into his cell in Drapchi and start questioning and beating a nun, who was temporarily sharing the cell. When the guards applied the electric prod, she started spitting and yelling "Long live the Dalai Lama!" Then they put the electric prod in her mouth. Afterwards, her mouth was full of blood and they continued to beat her on the pelvis.

In a case reported by Amnesty International, two nuns in Gutsa prison had rubber balls and electric batons forced into their vaginas.⁸⁹ In another case, the electric baton was put into a nun's vagina, then into her mouth. Although we heard second and third hand reports of rape by prison guards, and found one such report in the press, we are not aware of any substantive, unimpeachable reports of rape.⁹⁰

Nuns imprisoned for actual or suspected participation in a demonstration or other unauthorized political activity may be as young as 14.

⁸⁸ From interview transcript published in the Tibet Press Watch, Vol. 1, p. 43, International Campaign for Tibet. The interview took place in Lhasa in July, 1988. The case of this nun is also reported by AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment," p.8.

⁸⁹ Amnesty International, Statement for Hearings on Human Rights in Asia, Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Committee of Appropriations, House of Representatives, 101st Congress, 1st Session, Washington, DC, February 8, 1989, p.20.

⁹⁰ See John Gittings, "Tibetan Nuns Defy Might of China," The Guardian, Nov. 8, 1989. Amnesty International has not received reports of rape as of February 1989, see "Torture and Ill-Treatment in Tibet", p.3.

Other Forms of Torture

We found set patterns of torture to exist in Tibetan prisons, but there are also a variety of forms of mistreatment and techniques of torture that do not fit into any discernable pattern. Also, some traditional practices are notably absent, such as "thamzing," or struggle sessions which were so common during the Cultural Revolution.⁹¹

The 20 year-old Sera monk Sonam Tsering told us that he was forced to eat human excrement in Gutsa. He said it was a joke his captors played on the inmates. Sonam refused to eat it, but they forced him. Once Sonam was brought to a big room full of Chinese and Tibetan prison employees. He was given a plate of food mixed with human excrement and forced to eat it in front of everybody. This practice was corroborated by another prisoner, interviewed inside Tibet, who was also in Gutsa prison between March and July of 1988. A nun also reported that guards gave her food mixed with yak dung and served in a urine container.⁹²

When Nepalese border guards caught Tenzin Samphel they turned him over to the Chinese authorities "in exchange for a carton of cigarettes." His hands and feet were shackled and he was taken to a police station. Later he was tied to two horses and dragged behind them for one and a half hours to a town where the inhabitants and some Nepalese traders gathered to watch the spectacle.

Prisoners have also asserted that guards first placed cattle prods and then chili powder into their mouths, causing edema of the tongue and purulent infections.⁹³

Prisoners, including Sonam Tsering, also reported that they were made to stand for long periods of time, for hours or all night, and sometimes outside. Guards put truck tires around their necks and force them to stand until they collapsed. A special rapporteur from the U.N. noted an extreme case of this torture in which prisoners "were allegedly kept standing for 14 days whilst being interrogated."⁹⁴

At least two reports exist of prisoners being forced to inhale the smoke of burning rubbish.⁹⁵ Prisoners have also been forced to lie in gutters full of running refuse while being beaten. Being burned with lit cigarettes has also been reported, as

⁹¹ Statement of Asia Watch, p.10. See also Avedon, In Exile From the Land of Snows, Chapter 9.

⁹² "Some used sticks ... some beat us with rifles," Guardian, Nov. 8, 1989.

⁹³ TIN, Int. #2, p.2. AI, Statement before Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, p. 20.

⁹⁴ United Nations, Report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. P. Kooijmans, p.7.

⁹⁵ See TIN, Int. #8, p.9.

has the practice of pointing pistols at prisoners' heads under threat of death.⁹⁶

Deaths from Torture

Several of the ex-prisoners we interviewed said that they were aware of prisoners dying in prison. Amnesty International has also reported several cases of prisoners dying as a result of torture, including that of Tenzin Sherap, who is believed to have been tortured to death in prison in mid-March 1988. Pictures of his face when his family came to collect him at the morgue further substantiated this claim.⁹⁷ Another ex-prisoner interviewed in Lhasa said that two died in prison on or about March 5 [1988] from severe beatings.⁹⁸

Another U.N. rapporteur, Mr. S. Amos Wako, reported that "during 1987, in Drapchi prison, a number of persons were executed without trial after having been tortured."⁹⁹ He further reported:

On 10 May 1988, a Khampa [a person from Kham, in eastern Tibet] from Kanze died in a Lhasa hospital as a result of severe beatings in Gutsa prison. On 12 June 1988, in Lhasa, Tsangpo, aged 35, died as a result of severe beatings after he had been arrested, together with two other men, by the Lhasa Tengton Chue branch security police.¹⁰⁰

One of the most well known cases of death from torture is that of Geshe Lobsang Wangchuk, who died on November 4, 1987 apparently as a result of prolonged mistreatment and torture during 18 years in prison.¹⁰¹

It is not known how many of the deaths resulting from torture are intentional, although many reports of secret executions now exist.¹⁰² According to sources of the

⁹⁶ AI, Statement before Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, pp.21-22. See also "Some used electric sticks ... some beat us with rifles," The Guardian, Nov. 8, 1989.

⁹⁷ AI, "Torture and Ill-treatment", p.2.

⁹⁸ TIN, Int. #8, p.11.

⁹⁹ United Nations, "Report by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. S. Amos Wako, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/38." p.12.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p.13. See also, United Nations, Report by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. P. Kooijmans, p.7.

¹⁰¹ See Tibetan Bulletin, Vol.XVIII, No.4, p.29, Nov.-Dec. 1987. According to one official Chinese source, Geshe Lobsang Wangchuk had received due medical treatment and died of liver cancer. See also, supra, note 20, p.7.

¹⁰² On January 19, 1989, China announced the sentencing of 27 Tibetans, one of whom was sentenced to death. See AI, Urgent Action on Yulo Dawa Tsering, Lobsang Tenzin and Sonam Wangdu, Jan. 27, 1989.

Bureau of the Dalai Lama in Delhi, important political prisoners have been secretly killed without trial since the imposition of martial law in March 1989.

Before he left Lhasa in 1986, ex-policeman Thapkey Dorje (Bir, 11/1/88), accompanied prisoners while they were being paraded through town and to the execution site. He outlined the following scenario, the accuracy or applicability of which we have been unable to confirm:

Prisoners to be executed get barley beer and good food, not much, the day before the execution. Then they are taken to a special house where they are tied. The next morning, the prisoner is given an injection to become senseless. The injection is similar to the one given before an operation to knock the person out, but only a little. Prisoners are then put in a police truck with a motorcade of at least 20 police vehicles. Five police with guns are in the truck with the prisoner, who is fully tied with his hands behind his back to a plank, while announcements are made to the general population with loudspeakers. Then the prisoner is taken near Phenpo, where a grave is dug. A military jeep comes from a different direction with a person who specializes in executing prisoners. He wears glasses; his face is wrapped so people can't see his face. He shoots the prisoner in the back of the head. If the prisoner does not die, he cuts the nerves in the spine. When they are sure the prisoner is dead, the relatives are told they can come and get the body and give it to the vultures. The prisoner is buried if no one comes for the body.

Several interviewees complained of lingering effects of torture during the weeks and months following their release. However, they added, some prisoners were intentionally not released from prison until their wounds healed, so there would be no proof of mistreatment.

MEDICAL CONSEQUENCES OF TORTURE

Although we did not conduct physical examinations or laboratory tests, we could observe physical signs of torture in two of our interviewees. One monk had approximately 15 healed scars around the crown of his head which, he stated, were from Chinese police beating him with cattle prods and clubs with nails driven through the ends.¹⁰³ Another had a laceration on his lip that had healed in a jagged scar.

Several interviewees complained of lingering effects of torture during the weeks and months following their release. They told us that many released prisoners had to recover from lacerations, deep bruises and loss of sensation in certain areas of the body as a result of being tied or manacled. However, they added, some prisoners were intentionally not released from prison until their wounds healed, so there would be no proof of mistreatment.

Sonam Tsering (Dharamsala, 11/25/88) told us about Gutsa prison in the winter of 1988 when some of the prisoners sustained "damage to their kidneys," "brain damage," and "broken bones." We were also told that a monk known as Dawa from Rato Monastery went "crazy" under torture. Nevertheless, we were unable to evaluate these

¹⁰³ Kelsang Wangyal (Dharamsala, 12/1/88) the 22 year-old monk from the Jokhang Temple, showed us 15 cm X 3 cm healed scars on the crown of his head. This is his account of what happened when Chinese police stormed the temple on March 5, 1988: "It took one hour for the police to get everyone out. The police used tear gas, they beat the monks with clubs with nails driven through the ends, AK 47s, cattle prods. They beat everyone all over their bodies: on the head, arms, backs, and legs. Many of the monks were bleeding. Nine people that I saw died in the first hour. I do not know how many people died in prison afterward. Sixty-four people were taken from inside the Jokhang to prison. A Chinese policeman was killed. He was hit by stones while taking photos on the roof of the Jokhang. Then he was thrown off the roof. He died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital. I was bleeding badly from wounds to the head, and from the mouth, because of too many beatings to my chest. I also had bruises all over my body, on all limbs."

claims medically. That major long term damage results from torture is evident; Dawa was noted to babble incoherently as a result of torture and had to be helped by other prisoners to eat and use the toilet. Another monk named Kelsang Dhongod from Jokhang Temple was so badly beaten by the police that he could still only perform menial light tasks, such as rolling up scriptures, six months after his release.

More disturbing reports of the consequences of torture include broken bones, untreated infections, deafness, impairment of memory and speech, and the inability to recognize friends. Tortured prisoners were also seen to have persistent blood coming from the ears and mouth and in their urine, bruises over their entire body, and severe weight loss. One friend taking care of a released prisoner also noted wounds where dogs had bitten the victim's legs.

In the winter of 1988 an American physician named Christopher Beyrer treated recent refugees from Tibet in northern India. After seeing approximately 50 people a day for 12 days, Dr. Beyrer reported that: "I believe my clinical judgement to be sound when I assert that these people have been victims of systematic physical torture."¹⁰⁴ Of a 50 year-old Tibetan woman he wrote:

I examined both ankles and found them to be deeply bruised and swollen. The patient also had a loss of sensation over both feet. There was no evidence of fracture. I inquired about possible injury and at that point in the examination the patient became tearful and explained that she had been manacled about the ankles for 18 days in an unheated cell and beaten about both legs, feet, back, shoulders, arms, and hands at intervals throughout her internment. As her feet began to swell the metal manacles became so tight she'd lost all feeling in both feet. This was slowly resolving since her release. The emotional and psychological effects of her torture were still very much with her.¹⁰⁵

Dr. Beyrer also examined and found that this woman had a cardiac arrhythmia and a heart murmur.

She had been interrogated for three consecutive days with an electric prod, which she described as flinging her across her cell each time she was struck with it. This treatment ended when she eventually lost consciousness. She had been having cardiac symptoms ever since.¹⁰⁶

We encountered several documented consequences of torture in the literature.

¹⁰⁴ Christopher C. Beyrer, M.D., New York State Journal of Medicine, June 1988.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

For example, guards reportedly stomped on the head of Tsering Nyima, a prisoner in Drapchi, and he is now almost deaf.¹⁰⁷ According to one report, a Tibetan tortured three months before still had infected hands and fingers "from being broken and split open the first few days of his arrest."¹⁰⁸ Another ex-prisoner complained of severe backaches and painful ribs when he bent, as a result of the beatings.¹⁰⁹

Even without the benefit of on-site investigation, it is clear from the information gathered by ourselves, Dr. Beyrer and others that victims of torture in Tibet are likely to be left with long term physical problems.

Psychological Implications of Torture

Torture has profound psychological implications for victims and their families. During our interviews, victims told us that since their torture they continued to have serious problems with depression, paranoia, headaches, and visual disturbances consistent with post traumatic stress syndrome. Having experienced severe stress beyond normal human capacity, torture victims can be expected to confront a range of adverse symptoms, including nightmares and insomnia.

Jampey Losel (Kathmandu, 11/20/88), the 23 year-old monk who told us that he quickly became "mentally sick" from torture, said he spent 15 days in the Tibetan hospital upon his release to recuperate. When we talked to him in a hiding place in Kathmandu he was still mentally unstable, though coherent and willing to relate what he could. Tinley Chophel, a 25 year-old man from Lhasa (Dharamsala, 11/4/88), reported that he knew several monks who "became mentally retarded" either from prolonged torture or an injection.

The most insidious consequence of torture may come from injections given to some prisoners before their release. These injections are said to render the prisoner unable to speak normally, to pronounce words or be understood, or to answer questions or recognize friends. From our interviews alone it is impossible to distinguish the adverse affects of an injection from those of torture or electric shock. We are aware of one reported case of a torture victim becoming extremely depressed after his release and committing suicide.

¹⁰⁷ The Washington Post also reported on a prisoner going deaf from torture. Daniel Southerland, "Tibetan Tells of Torture," Sept. 6, 1988.

¹⁰⁸ From interview transcript published in the Tibet Press Watch, Vol. 1, p. 41, the International Campaign for Tibet.

¹⁰⁹ TIN, Int. #8, p.11.



Blake Kerr, M.D. with patient after October demonstration. (Photo: Asupi)

DENIAL, DELAY AND DISRUPTION OF MEDICAL CARE

Outside of Prison

In the fall of 1987 the authors found that some Tibetans wounded in demonstrations feared arrest if they went to the hospital, and that Lhasa's People's Hospital, on occasion, refused to treat Tibetans injured during demonstrations. One Tibetan man who had been shot in the calf was taken to the People's Hospital where a Chinese surgeon removed the bullet. As soon as the sutures were in place, the man ran away and told Dr. Kerr later that if he had not fled, he believed the police would have taken him to prison. Both of these allegations have since been confirmed.¹¹⁰ Following the December 10, 1988, demonstration, Amnesty International reported that "accurate casualty figures were hard to establish because many Tibetans refused to be admitted to the hospital, fearing arrest."¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ John Pomfret, "China Declares Martial Law in Tibet," Associated Press, March 7, 1989. See also interview transcript published in the Tibet Press Watch, Vol. 1, p. 43.

¹¹¹ Amnesty Action, January/February, 1989, p.4.

In March 1989 the Associated Press quoted a tourist as saying that during rioting, Lhasa's "hospitals were only treating Chinese, leaving injured Tibetans to fend for themselves."¹¹²

There are conflicting reports about the treatment of Tibetans injured during demonstrations. It is evident that many Tibetans have been treated for injuries following demonstrations, but the quality and timeliness of such care remains controversial. In addition, questions have been raised about collusion between hospital employees, including physicians, and the police. Further research is needed to determine the extent of access to patients' records and the role of physicians in granting that access. One man said that those who were badly injured were indeed taken to the hospital,¹¹³ but some Tibetans who were admitted to the People's Hospital were later



Tibetan boy shot in the abdomen by security forces during pro-independence demonstrations. Lhasa, October 1, 1987. (Photo: John Ackerly)

¹¹² John Pomfret, "China Declares Martial Law in Tibet".

¹¹³ TIN, Int. #5, p.7. The South China Morning Post (Hong Kong) published a picture on March 8, 1989 showing three medics in white tunics carrying an injured or dead person, allegedly from the scene of a demonstration. Neither the caption nor the article states whether the person being carried is Tibetan or Chinese and it is not apparent from the photo. Nor is it known whether the medics are Tibetan or Chinese or whether the person is being taken to the People's Hospital or the Tibetan Medical Institute.

found to have been transferred to prisons. At least four other Tibetans are known to have remained at the People's Hospital because they reportedly died there.

In Prison

We received only one second hand account of a prisoner being taken to the hospital after two months of regular interrogation and torture sessions, allegedly because prison authorities were afraid she would die from a vaginal infection after being repeatedly violated with the cattle prod. A recent article reported that another woman was tortured so badly she had to be sent to the hospital to receive "treatment which, if successful, will allow the woman to return to prison."¹⁴

We were unable to interview any prison physicians and have no substantial evidence that physicians are actually taking part in torture... [Yet] it is evident that physicians in Tibet's prisons are not providing medical attention to the extent warranted by internationally recognized standards.

Several interviewees said that prison physicians provided health care only when the prisoner's life was in danger. One 25-year-old nun said, "When I became unconscious [from torture], they poured cold water over me. A doctor came and asked [if] I were sick. When I said I didn't feel well, they beat me again. Some medication was given."¹⁵ The Tibet Information Network received a report that in Drapchi, "There was no proper medical treatment. They just gave a tablet for any kind of complaint. Severe cuts and wounds only were taken care of by a doctor."¹⁶

We were unable to interview any prison physicians and have no substantial evidence that physicians are actually taking part in torture. However, the revival of critically injured prisoners is viewed by some prisoners as a means of keeping them alive so that they may be interrogated and tortured further. Nima Pasang (Delhi, 12/6/88), who had his face repeatedly slammed against a concrete floor in Drapchi, stated that he was given no medical attention even though he was still bleeding profusely from his mouth and his upper left lip was almost torn off. From this and other testimony it is evident that physicians in Tibet's prisons are not providing medical attention to the extent warranted by internationally recognized standards.¹⁷

¹⁴ John Gittings, "Tibetan nuns defy might of China," Guardian, Nov. 8, 1989.

¹⁵ TIN, Int. #7. p.3.

¹⁶ TIN, Int. #8, p.11,

¹⁷ See Amnesty International, Ethical Codes and Declarations Relevant to the Health Professions, 2d Edition (London, 1985).

In Gutsa one inmate reported that there was a Chinese doctor in the prison but prisoners were only given treatment if they were dying.¹¹⁸ However, another prisoner stated that he was treated by one of two Chinese doctors in Gutsa. He received a bad cut in the head and stated that it was really not well treated. He said that prisoners are only taken to see a doctor if they are bleeding badly.¹¹⁹ Amnesty International reported from their sources that "medical care was minimal and only those critically ill could see a doctor or go to a hospital."¹²⁰

The United Nations Special Rapporteur wrote that a prisoner who had been taken to a Lhasa hospital on May 10, 1988, died as a result of severe beatings in Gutsa prison.¹²¹ Still, even these interviews and the rest of the literature cannot confirm whether Chinese or Tibetan physicians are present for, or participate in, the interrogation and torture of prisoners.

Violations of Medical Sanctuary

Following the March 5, 1988 demonstration, many Tibetans were taken from local hospitals to local prisons. In one documented case, three monks, Tagu, 36 (Jokhang), Lobsang Phuntsok, 41 (Ganden), and Kelsang, 22 (Jokhang) were taken from the Norbulingka TB hospital by March 12.¹²² Gyaltzen Tharchin Jampa Tenzin, the monk who was badly burned and whose picture appeared in Time and the New York Times Magazine, was also reported to have been arrested in the hospital.¹²³

Kelsang Wangyal (Dharamsala, 12/1/88) a 22 year-old Jokhang monk, said he was caught and beaten with an iron rod on March 5. He fell to the ground and covered his face while he was being kicked. He lost consciousness, and when he woke up he saw 12 bodies, all badly beaten, bloody and seemingly dead, but he could not be sure. He could not move.

After a while several jeeps came with Tibetan doctors from the Tibetan (Mendzakhang) hospital. They picked him up and put him in the back of the jeep. As they were leaving the square, Chinese police stopped the vehicle and assaulted the Tibetans, including the doctors. Some of the doctors were injured and bleeding themselves while they tended to the injured monks.

¹¹⁸ TIN, Int. #3, p.3.

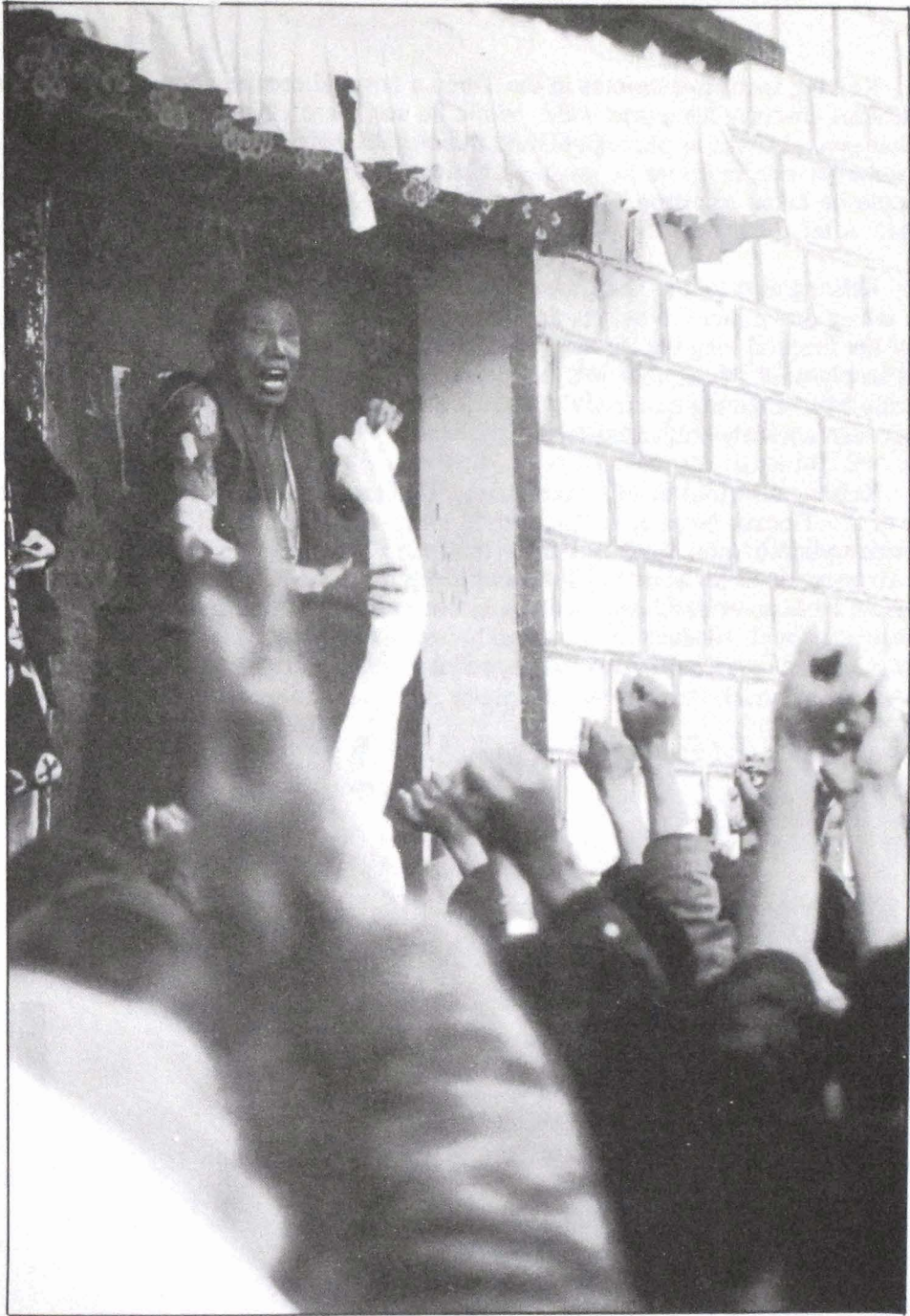
¹¹⁹ TIN, Int. #5, p.6.

¹²⁰ AI, "Torture and Ill-Treatment," p.4.

¹²¹ United Nations "Report by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. S. Amos Wako, pursuant to Economic and Social Council Resolution 1988/38," p.13.

¹²² These three monks are on the prisoner list published by Asia Watch in "Evading Scrutiny" (#249, 250 and 251).

¹²³ See John Ackerly, "Fire in Tibet", New York Times Magazine, Nov. 11, 1987.



Burned monk waves a Khata, a traditional white Tibetan scarf, during a demonstration against Chinese rule of Tibet on October 1, 1987. (Photo: John Ackerly)

Kelsang spent two months in the Tibetan hospital recuperating from a concussion and bruises covering his entire body. While he was there Chinese police came to the hospital several times to photograph and interrogate the patients. The police told him that someone else said that he was seen hitting a police man and if he did not confess he would be taken to prison. Kelsang said he thought they were bluffing and denied the charge. After some time the police left.

Kelsang also told us that one night the Tibetan hospital staff prevented the police from taking one patient to prison, and that after this incident some of the patients snuck out of the hospital long before they would have been discharged, including several who could barely walk. One, a 23 year-old Sear monk named Sopa, was arrested and taken from the Mendzakhang on April 5, 1988. He was freed in June of 1988 with other prisoners in a widely publicized release.

Kelsang also told us of a man named Thubten Namdrok who was arrested in front of the Tibetan hospital on October 1, 1987. Kelsang did not know whether the man was trying to enter the hospital for treatment. He was released in February 1988, then arrested again on March 5, 1988 and is reportedly still in prison. Kelsang decided that since he himself had been involved in two demonstrations and had argued with the Chinese at several re-education sessions, he was likely to be harassed and arrested again. He decided that rather than live under such conditions, he should join a monastery in exile. Kelsang snuck through the mountains to Nepal and made his way to Dharamsala.



Chinese security vehicles set on fire by Tibetans after police attacked peacefully demonstrating monks. Lhasa, October 1, 1987. (Photo: John Ackerly)

THE CHINESE RESPONSE

We cannot in this report present a thorough discussion of the Chinese position on human rights. However, a few comments will highlight the animosity of the Chinese officials toward Western concern and the seeming lack of any productive dialogue. China has vehemently and consistently regarded concern for human rights in Tibet as "interference in China's internal affairs."

In a rare response to a request from Asia Watch to allow a fact finding mission in Tibet, Wu Zurong, the First Secretary of the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C., replied in December 1988: "...we are unable to make accommodation for those visitors who wish to visit China for investigating the human rights situation in Tibet, for problems in Tibet are the internal affairs of China which brook no foreign interference."

Moreover, China claims that Tibetan and Western concern for human rights is really just a "pretense to separate the motherland" and "restore the reactionary feudal serf system" in Tibet.¹²⁴

Official statements from China about its perspective on human rights stresses that priority should be given to gross violations resulting from racism, colonialism and occupation, and to collective human rights, such as self-determination.¹²⁵ Ironically, these are exactly the conditions that many believe exist in Tibet.

The flip side to giving priority to collective human rights is that individual human rights, particularly of those regarded by China to be "criminals," are diminished. Mr. Han Xu, former Ambassador to the United States said in letters to members of Congress, that it is "untenable" to allege that Tibetans arrested for demonstrating could have their human rights violated since they themselves had violated "state law and other citizens' human rights." In a more recent official paper defining socialist human rights, Jiang Bin explains that when a person "threatens social security, his own safety will not

¹²⁴ See, for example, *Xinhua*, "NPC Foreign Affairs Committee's Statement on U.S. Senate's So-called Resolution," March 19, 1989.

¹²⁵ Ma Jun, "Human Rights: China's Perspective" *Beijing Review*, Nov. 28-Dec. 4, 1988, p.22.

be guaranteed by law."¹²⁶

Chinese authorities have yet to admit publicly that any torture is going on in Tibet. Mao Rubai, Vice Chairman of the government of the Tibet Autonomous Region, denied the use of cattle prods and hanging of prisoners while on a visit to Washington in August 1988.¹²⁷ Similarly, in response to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, the Chinese transmitted a letter stating that "no cases of torture and ill-treatment had been found."¹²⁸ The Chinese delegate to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, Zhang Honghong, called the allegations cited by the Special Rapporteur "incredibly absurd" and "shear [sic] fabrication."¹²⁹

Nonetheless, in a possibly tacit admission of the existence of mistreatment and torture, an official newspaper called the Tibet Daily published "seven prohibitions" issued by the Lhasa Municipal Justice Committee on May 20, 1988. The prohibitions stated that security officials should not "beat or curse the masses, abuse police equipment," or "use torture to extract confessions."

¹²⁶ Jiang Bin, "What Are Socialist Human Rights?" Jiefangjun Bao (Beijing), Aug. 11, 1989, printed in FIBIS, CHI-89-166 (August 29, 1989), p. 23.

¹²⁷ Washington Post, Aug. 26, 1988.

¹²⁸ United Nations, Report by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. P. Kooijmans, p.7.

¹²⁹ "Allegations of Torture Rejected," China Daily, Feb. 24, 1989.

CONCLUSION

There can be no doubt that the use of arrest, imprisonment and torture of large numbers of Tibetans continues to be an integral part of China's effort to suppress Tibetan nationalism.

The June massacre of students in Beijing has opened the eyes of the world to the current repressive regime of the People's Republic of China and may help increase and awareness of the atrocities being committed against the Tibetan people and the propaganda campaign to disguise these atrocities. However, in the short term, the ascendancy of hard liners in Beijing portends continued and increasing use of force against Tibetan advocates of human rights, democracy and independence.

Similarly, the hard liners may also use the decision to award the Dalai Lama the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize to further repress the Tibetan people. In announcing the prize, the Nobel Committee emphasized "the struggle for the liberation of Tibet," an emphasis which brought vehement criticism from Beijing. The Dalai Lama's acceptance should raise world awareness of human rights abuses in Tibet and cause governments to address the Tibetan issue more directly than they have over the past 40 years. We hope that this concern and attention will lead to the improvement of prison conditions, cessation of the use of torture, and the release of political prisoners.

Accurate information is essential to the promotion of human rights. Although we believe this report to represent the most accurate, detailed and comprehensive documentation of torture in Tibet to date, human rights documentation in Tibet remains scanty. China's continued denial of human rights abuses in Tibet and its refusal to allow fact finding missions illustrate the tremendous task that lies ahead. However, significant work can be done now in the Tibetan exile communities in India and also in Nepal. For example, Western and Tibetan physicians have yet to make a concerted effort to document and treat the long term physical and psychological effects of torture suffered by refugees.

The treatment of political prisoners in Tibet is incompatible with international standards of human conduct and decency, and at odds with China's ratification of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading treatment or Punishment in October of 1988. We are gravely concerned that the assault on human rights in Tibet today threatens the very existence of a Tibetan identity. Thus, we urge the international community to use all available means to encourage China to respect the human rights of the Tibetan people.

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APPENDIX

MARCH 1989 MARTIAL LAW DECREES IN TIBET

Order No. 1 of the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region (March 7, 1989)

In accordance with the martial law issued by the State Council, the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region has issued the following orders:

1. Start from zero hour of March 8, 1989, a martial law will be enforced in Lhasa city proper and in the area west of Lhamo township, Dazi county and east of Dongga Township, Duilong Deqing County.
2. During the time of the enforcement of the martial law, assemblies, demonstrations, strikes by workers, students and other people, petitions and get-togethers are strictly forbidden.
3. Traffic control measures will be implemented in the martial law enforces area. People and vehicles entering and going out of the area must go through formalities according to the regulations and receive security inspections.
4. Without permissions, foreigners are not allowed to enter the martial law enforced area. Foreigners who are now in the martial law enforced area must leave within a definite time, except those who have permissions.
5. Firearms and ammunition possessed illegally should be taken over. People who are not entrusted with the task of enforcing the martial law are not allowed to carry firearms and ammunition and other dangerous articles.
6. Public security organs and people entrusted with the task of enforcing the martial law have the right to search the riot-creating suspects and places where criminals are possibly hidden.
7. Those who resist to carry out the martial law and instigate others to do the same will be severely punished according to the law.

Dorjie Ceiring
Chairman of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region

Order No. 2 of the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region (March 7, 1989)

In order to safeguard the unity of the motherland, ensure the safety of citizens and personal property and protect public property from violation, the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region specially issues the following orders:

1. It absolutely bans anyone in any case and in any form to instigate split of the

country, create riots, group people to attack government offices, damage public property and undertake such sabotaging actions as fighting, smashing, robbing, and arson, etc.

2. Once the above-mentioned action happens, public security and police force and the PLA men on patrol have the right to take necessary and strong measures to put the action down at once. Those who make above-mentioned action will be detained right on the spot, and if resistance occurs, police and army men on duty can deal with them according to the law.

3. Any government institutions, units, mass organizations and citizens must immediately send criminals either found in operation or detected afterwards to judicial organs.

4. The judicial organs should make investigations of the crimes as soon as possible, handle cases without delay and give them heavy punishment in accordance with relevant decisions and articles of "The Decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on Heavy Punishment to Criminals Who Seriously Violate Public Security" and "Criminal Law."

Dorjie Ceiring
Chairman of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region

**Order No. 3 Of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region
(March 7, 1989)**

In accordance with the martial law of the State Council, the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region has decided that traffic control will be enforced during the time of martial law. It specially issues the following orders:

1. All kinds of motor-driven vehicles can not pass without the special permit or provisional passes issued by the traffic police brigade of the Lhasa Public Security Bureau. The persons who have the provisional pass must go through the designated way and within the fixed time.

2. Cadres, staff members must have identity cards or certificates issued by their units; the officials and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army and the police force must have armyman's permits; the officials and soldiers of the public security departments must have employee cards or the identity cards on patrol duty; students in schools must have their students identity cards or school's certificates; those without jobs must have their resident identity cards or their certificates issued by the household committees or relevant organs; those from out of Lhasa must have temporary residence certificates; monks and nuns must have the certificates issued by the democratic management committees of their monasteries; the preschool children should move about with adults.

3. All kinds of motor-driven vehicles on entering the martial law enforced area must show the certificates issued by the People's Government of county level or above, and apply for provisional passes. Persons from out of Lhasa on entering the martial law enforced area must have certificates issued by the People's Government of county level or above and must go through formalities for temporary residence within 5 hours after entering the area; cadres, workers and staff members of the Tibet Autonomous Region back from holidays and official business can enter the area with certificates which establish their identities.

4. Motor-driven vehicles and persons leaving the martial law enforced area must be approved by leaders of county level or above and have their unit's certificates.

5. Motor-driven vehicles and persons passing within the martial law enforced area or entering and going out of the area must receive security inspection by police and army men.

6. If any persons violate the above-mentioned orders, the people on patrol duty have the right to examine them according to the different cases, adopt mandatory measures on the spot, and even look into responsibility for a crime.

Dorjie Ceiring
Chairman of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region

**Order No. 4 of the People's Government
Of the Tibet Autonomous Region
(March 8, 1989)**

In order to ensure the security of aliens in the martial law enforced area the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region issues the following orders:

During the time of the enforcement of the martial law in Lhasa City, aliens must not enter the area without permission. Aliens now in Lhasa must observe "martial law" issued by the State Council of the People's Republic of China and Orders of the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Foreign guests to Lhasa invited by the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region and by other government organs must show "the Pass of the People's Republic of China" (which is called "Pass" for short below) issued by the Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of the Region when entering and going out of the area.

Foreign specialists and foreign staff members of joint ventures working in Lhasa must show "Pass" issued by public security authorities when entering and going out of the area.

Aliens who have obtained the right of residence in Lhasa must show valid residence identity cards when entering and going out of the area.

Foreign tourist groups organized by tourist agencies now staying in the region can enter and go out of the area only if they are accompanied by Chinese guides with "Pass" issued by the public security authorities.

Unorganized foreign tourists now staying in Lhasa must leave in the time fixed by the public security authorities.

"The Pass" will be obtained at the Foreign Section of the Lhasa Public Security Bureau with "Residence Identity Card for Alien" issued by the public security authorities.

Dorjie Ceiring
Chairman of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region

**Order No. 5 of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region
(March 8, 1989)**

In order to fully reflect the policy of "leniency towards those who confess their crimes and severe punishment to those who refuse to do so, atone for a crime by good deeds and render outstanding service to receive awards," and to resolutely crack down the separatists and those who have committed serious crimes of fighting, smashing, robbing, and arson, the People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region has issued the following orders:

Those who have plotted, created and participated in the riots, who have committed fighting, smashing, robbing, and arson, and who have given shelters to criminals and booty, must surrender themselves to the police at once, so that they can receive leniency.

Those who know the facts of separatists' activities and crimes of fighting, smashing robbing and arson etc. should expose and report the cases to their units or to the public security authorities. These people should be protected. Those who retaliate against people who inform against them shall be severely punished.

Dorjie Ceiring
Chairman of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region

**Order No. 6 of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region
(March 8, 1989)**

All the people on patrol from the public securities, the police force and the People's Liberation Army must strictly keep discipline in order to fulfil every task under the martial law. The People's Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region issues the following orders:

1. Obey orders in all actions.
2. Stand fast at posts, and perform obligation faithfully.
3. Strengthen unity and cooperate closely.
4. Carry out policies firmly and patrol in a proper way.
5. Implement strictly "The Regulations for the Use of Weapons and the Police Instruments by the People's Police."
6. Protect earnestly the public property and the life and the property of the people.

Dorjie Ceiring
Chairman of the People's Government
of the Tibet Autonomous Region

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