

THE PANCHEN LAMA LINEAGE

How Reincarnation is Being
Reinvented as a Political Tool



THE PANCHEN LAMA LINEAGE

How Reincarnation is Being
Reinvented as a Political Tool



Revised and updated edition February 1996
First edition published June 1995

Published by
The Department of Information and International Relations
Central Tibetan Administration
Gangchen Kyishong
Dharamsala - 176215
Himachal Pradesh
India
Phone: +91-1892-22510\22457
Fax: +91-1892-24957
e-mail: tcrc@cta.unv.ernet.in

Lists of specialist publications and audio-video material on Tibet are available from the above address. These include books, pamphlets and news periodicals in English, French, Hindi, Tibetan, Arabic and Chinese.

Preface

China claims there is freedom of religion in Tibet. Events preceding and following the recognition of the new Panchen Lama by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on May 14, 1995 once again expose this claim as a myth.

To justify their political manipulation of a purely religious procedure, the Chinese authorities have re-written and misrepresented Tibet's religious history. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the six-year-old boy, recognized in May 1995 as the Eleventh Panchen Lama by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, has been spirited away to China, making him the youngest political prisoner in the world. In his place they have installed a rival Panchen Lama. Chatral Rinpoche, head of China's official search committee to discover the Panchen Lama, is currently under house arrest on suspicion of collaborating with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the search process. Armed police surveillance and restrictions have been mounted in Tibet to repress any discussion by Tibetans of the controversies surrounding the new Panchen Lama.

Despite all these measures wall posters supporting His Holiness the Dalai Lama's decision have appeared in Lhasa, Shigatse and other major Tibetan towns and cities. On January 28, 1996 a bomb exploded at the house in Lhasa of Sengchen Lobsang Gyaltzen, a Tibetan lama and political appointee who collaborated with the Chinese in installing their choice of Panchen Lama. So far, over 50 Tibetans have been recorded arrested and imprisoned for various expressions of protest against Chinese interference in Tibetan religious matters.

This compilation details the life of the late Panchen Lama and his 1987 statement criticizing Chinese policy in Tibet. It contains condemnations by governments, parliaments and the world media of China's current manipulation of the child Panchen Lama. And it documents how the search for the Eleventh Panchen Lama was conducted and reveals, in the context of religious history, that China's claim to any authority in confirming the reincarnations of Tibet's spiritual leaders is a political fiction.

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

February 1996

Contents

A Portrait of Lobsang Trinley Lhundrup Chockyi Gyaltzen The Xth Panchen Lama

- 3 The Enigmatic Mountain
- 11 The Panchen Lama's Warning to China

Recognition of Gedhun Chockyi Nyima The XIth Panchen Lama

- 29 Announcement of the Panchen Lama's Reincarnation by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- 30 The Process by which the Reincarnation of the Panchen Lama has been Recognized
- 33 Press Statement by His Holiness the Dalai Lama
- 34 His Holiness the Dalai Lama's letter to Jiang Zemin
- 36 Chronology of Events Surrounding the Recognition of the Eleventh Panchen Lama

Chinese Claims and History

- 40 'Dalai Lama's Confirmation of Reincarnation Invalid'
- 42 The History of Discovering Panchen Lamas

International Indictments

- 51 US State Department's Response to Chinese Rejection of the New Panchen Lama
- 52 US Says Lama Dispute Infringes Tibetan Rights
- 54 Australian Senate Resolution
- 55 US Senate Resolution
- 58 European Parliament Resolution
- 60 Press Statement issued by French Parliament
- 62 Blood-spattered Chinese Leaders

- 64 Letter of Support from the Christian Democratic
Faction of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania
- 65 Press Release Issued by the All Party Indian
Parliamentary Forum for Tibet
- 67 Press Statement Issued by the Committee of
International Parliamentarians for Tibet

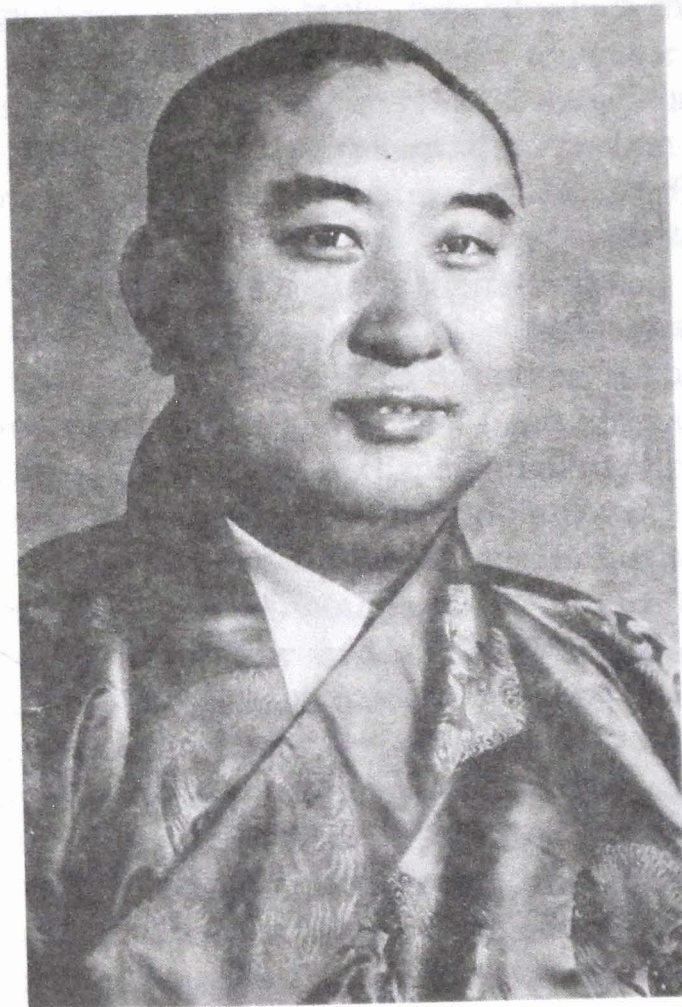
From the Press

- 71 Testing Time in Tibet: The Dragon Tightens its Grip
— *The Times of India*
- 75 An Illegitimate Appointment
— *Pioneer*
- 77 China Finds Religion
— *The New Yorker*
- 79 The Story of Two Lamas
— *The Times of India*
- 83 A Paper Tiger Picks a Panchen Lama
— *Chicago Tribune*
- 86 Chinese Lama
— *Indian Express*
- 88 China's Buddha Complex: For Beijing Nothing is
Sacred
— *The New York Times*
- 90 Divide and Rule: Beijing Seeks to Split Tibetan
Buddhism
— *Far Eastern Economic Review*
- 93 Search for Panchen Lama: Atheist China Fights Dalai
Lama in Picking a Spiritual Leader
— *The Christian Science Monitor*
- 96 Tibetan Tremors
— *South China Morning Post*

The Enigmatic Mountain

A Portrait of Lobsang Trinley Lhundrup Choekyi Gyaltsen

The Xth Panchen Lama



The Enigmatic Mountain

The late Panchen Lama's Beijing residence, near the Academy of Chinese Social Sciences, is a simple, one-storey building. On most days there is always a small crowd of Tibetan and Mongolian devotees waiting patiently outside the metal gate in the hope they will get a glimpse of their spiritual leader. Visitors are usually ushered into his small study-room. On an uncluttered wooden table, behind which the Panchen Lama sits, rests an old, black Panasonic transistor radio. Important visitors are hosted dinner in his large dining-room, across his study. For special visitors, the Panchen Lama normally reserves his favourite dish: boiled mutton leg from Amdo. The walls of the dining-room are adorned with *thangkas* of the complete lineage of the Panchen Lamas of Tibet. Tall book shelves are stacked with Buddhist scriptures.

But one wall, from one end to the other, is adorned with an awesomely huge photograph of Ghang Rinpoche (Mount Kailash). Ghang Rinpoche is perhaps one of the holiest mountains in the world, and the very embodiment of the spirit of eternal Tibet. Worshipped by Buddhists, Hindus and Bonists, this perfect cone-shaped mountain in western Tibet is the abode of both a minor Tibetan deity, Damchog, and the Hindu god, Shiva, the symbol of the creative capability of man, and from the mists of Tibetan antiquity to the ugly tragedy that is Tibet today, Ghang Rinpoche has seen it all.

Like Ghang Rinpoche, the late Panchen Lama himself was a mountain of a man who filled a room by his sheer presence and bulk, and with a voice which changed from a deep growl to a high-pitched squeak. But like a mountain, he was always there, steadfast, firm, unchanging in what he considered his fundamental beliefs and unchanging in his faith in the capacity of the Tibetan people to redeem themselves and their country.

People have viewed the late Panchen Lama variously. Some have even condemned him as a quisling. There are those who consider him a mere pawn on the chessboard of China's Central Asian politics. The foreign media has portrayed him

as the “lama who stayed back”, with the implied pejorative that he is pro-Chinese. However, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-Exile have always considered him a great patriot.

The Tenth Panchen Lama was born on February 3, 1938 in the village of Karang Bidho in Amdo, northeastern Tibet. Almost from the time of his birth, he was caught in the politics of China’s ambitions towards Tibet and Tibet’s stubborn resistance to the Chinese political game aimed at undermining the authority of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government.

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

However, considerable complications preceded his actual recognition. A section of the Ninth Panchen Lama’s pro-China attendants recognized this child on their own in 1941. But a reincarnation of Panchen Lama’s stature would not be accepted publicly in Tibet unless his authenticity was confirmed by the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government. And the Tibetan Government wanted to see all the traditional tests with accompanying religious ceremonies performed before confirming the reincarnation. This delayed the official Tibetan Government recognition. During the interregnum, the Guomindang Government of China exploited the situation to gain a foothold in Tibet. With the fall of the Guomindang Government in 1949, the Communists stepped in and actively exploited the Panchen Lama for their political gains.

The Panchen Lama was only eleven when the commander of the PLA Lanzhou military division sent a telegram in his name to Mao Zedong, requesting the “liberation of Tibet”. In reply, Mao wrote, “The people of Tibet have great love for the motherland. They are opposed to foreign imperialists and willing to join the new united, egalitarian and powerful nation of the PRC.”

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

In 1951 representatives of Tashilhunpo Monastery appealed for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's recognition of the new Panchen Lama. His Holiness bestowed his recognition and the title of Tenzin Trinley Jigme Choekyi Wangchuk.

Following this recognition, the Panchen Lama arrived in Lhasa on April 28, 1952, escorted by PLA soldiers. During his brief stay in Lhasa, the Panchen Lama had two audiences with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His Holiness' impression of the Panchen Lama during those meetings is recorded in his memoirs, *My Land and My People*. His Holiness states that the Panchen Lama "showed a genuine respect for my position, as the customs of Buddhism requires towards a senior monk. He was correct and pleasant in his manners — a true Tibetan, and I had a firm impression of unforced goodwill. I felt sure that left to himself he would have whole-heartedly supported Tibet against inroads of China".

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

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

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

After the flight of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to India in 1959, the Panchen Lama was appointed the acting chairman of the “TAR Preparatory Committee”. In 1960 the Chinese appointed him the Vice-chairman of the National People’s Congress, hoping to use him as their puppet spokesman for their policy in Tibet. However, the Panchen Lama remained a steadfast Tibetan nationalist. He was deeply disturbed to find that China had jailed hundreds of thousands of Tibetan government officials, the high lamas and scholars, the community leaders and citizens from many other walks of life. He complained to the Chinese authorities that they were terrorizing the whole populace of Tibet. The Chinese brushed aside his protest by saying that such mistakes were inevitable in all reform movements.

In his capacity as the Vice-chairman of the National People’s Congress, the Panchen Lama in 1962 visited many parts of



Photo: DIIR Archives

Head bowed, eyes closed, body bent in subsection, the Tenth Panchen Lama faced his Communist accusers during rounds of *ibamzing* sessions in the mid-1960s. His crimes? Daring to write a 70,000-character petition criticizing "reforms" in Tibet and publicly revering His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In 1966 he was seized by Red Guards of the Cultural Revolution and tortured for two months, and then in 1968 he was formally arrested by the PLA, imprisoned and tortured, for a further nine years.

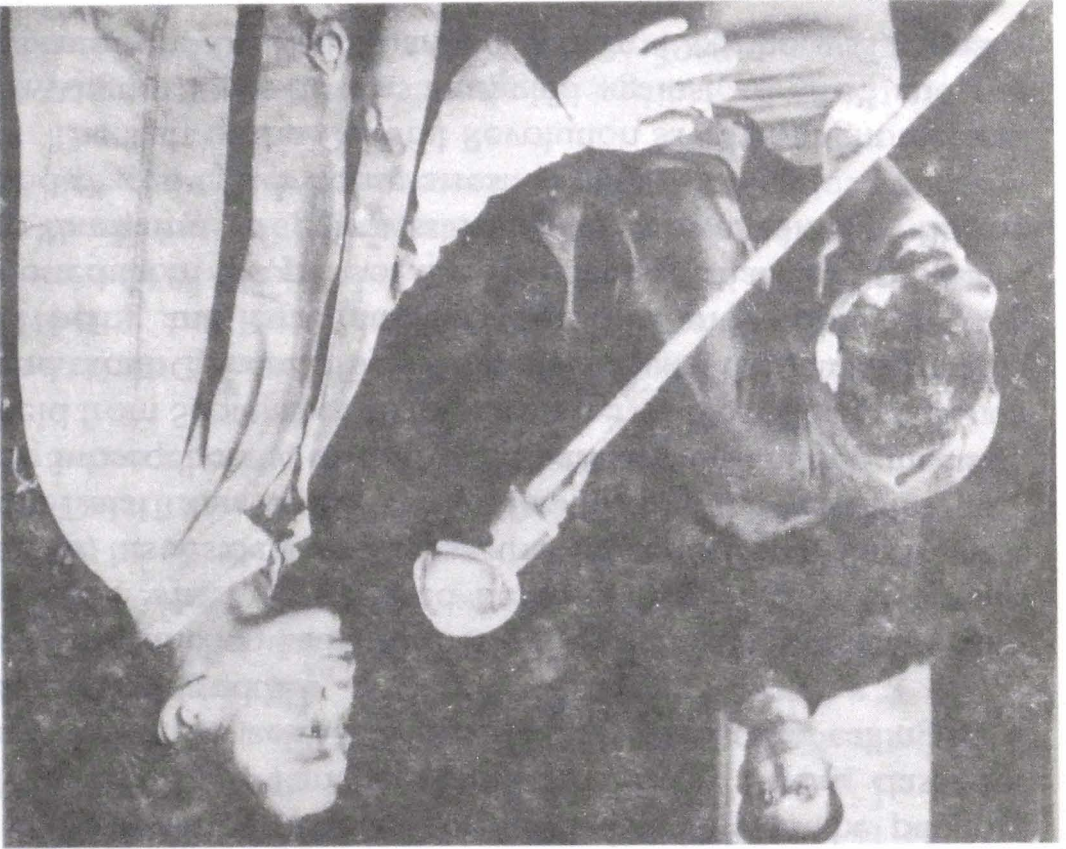


Photo: DIIR Archives

Tibet. In the same year, Zhang Jinwu, the Secretary of the CCP Tibet Work Committee, asked the Panchen Lama to openly denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a reactionary and traitor. But he adamantly refused to do so. Instead, during a religious teaching in 1962 he urged the Tibetans to pray for the long life and success of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Then, on May 18, 1962 the Panchen Lama submitted a 70,000-character petition to the Chinese Government and urged the Chinese authorities to accept his petition in the spirit it was written as it was aimed at improving Tibet's social, economic and cultural plight. Amongst other things, the petition pointed out: "After the introduction of reforms, Buddhism has suffered a serious setback and is now on the verge of extinction. ... Many prisoners died pitiable deaths when the Dictatorship of the Proletariat was being introduced. This has greatly reduced the population of Tibet over the past few years. ...With the exception of old people, women and children, most of the able-bodied men and intelligent people in the Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan were incarcerated."

Chairman Mao Zedong reacted with fury to the petition. Mao called the Panchen Lama "an enemy of our class" for daring to criticize the Chinese policy in Tibet and calling for it to be corrected.

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

Subsequently, at a TAR Preparatory Committee meeting, held from September 18 to November 4, 1964, Zhang Guohua and other Chinese officials bitterly accused the Panchen Lama of being anti-Party, anti-socialism and anti-people. He was ousted from the post of the Committee's chair and subjected to *thamzing* (struggle session). Later, he was taken to Beijing and placed under house arrest.

The start of the Cultural Revolution saw his plight worsen. In August 1966, he was struggled against, tortured and humiliated by the Red Guards. Then, in 1968, he was formally

imprisoned in Beijing's Qin Cheng prison and released only in October 1977.

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

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

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

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

At the TAR Standing Committee Meeting of the National People's Congress, held in Beijing in March 1987, the Panchen

Lama openly criticized the Chinese Government's policy in Tibet regarding education, economic development, population transfer and discriminatory treatment of Tibetans.

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

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

The Panchen Lama's Warning to China

All his life, the Tenth Panchen Lama had engaged in a very difficult, delicate and dangerous balancing act in order to articulate his true thoughts without offending the Chinese masters of Tibet. His first major criticism of Chinese policy in Tibet — the 70,000-character petition submitted in 1962 to Mao Zedong — led to his arrest, *thamzing* and imprisonment.

In March 1987 the late Panchen Lama delivered a second landmark criticism of China's treatment of Tibet during the TAR Standing Committee Meeting of the National People's Congress in Beijing. During this lengthy speech, he repeated many points first raised in the 1962 petition.

The following is extracted from the 1987 speech:

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

Tibet Sidelined and Neglected

In November last year a ten-point legal document was circulated with an instruction that we should study it. But this document was silent on the subject of the regional autonomy of minority areas. During the Twentieth Session of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress we asked the law department how such an important matter was left

out of this document. The response was that the study of the laws relating to the governance of autonomous regions should be left to the respective minority nationalities.

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

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

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

Developing Tibet

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

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

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

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

The Chinese Migrants in Tibet

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

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

Educational Disparity

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

Secondly, since most of these students are from primary schools, they are separated from their own culture and home at a very early age. Gradually, they will be alienated from

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

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

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

To make matters worse, the Tibetan students who have

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

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

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

Nurturing Language and Culture

The government has announced four modernization plans. It is important that we learn from the developed countries. But what we must learn from them is their technological knowhow and scientific way of management. Whoever has

the highest standard of living has the best system. I have not thought much on this point. The Japanese way of life is rather complicated. They have a very highly developed educational system to teach culture, science and technology. If a new book is published anywhere in the world, within thirty days one can read it in their language.

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

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

On the Institute of Tibetology in Beijing

You, Dorjee Tseten (head of the Institute of Tibetology in Beijing) and others!

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

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

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

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

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

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

Owning up to Mistakes

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

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

On the Annexation of Tibet

In the Seventeen-point Agreement, it was emphatically stated that there would be no change in the power of the Tibetan local government until the introduction of democratic reforms. The same promise was made to the Tashilhunpo monastic authorities. However, what happened later could be summed up by this dictum: "Criticizing the old system from the perspective of a new ideology." This kind of practice is not very ethical. A scientist must arrive at his decision according to whatever is proved right scientifically. Tibetan aristocrats had served the government for generations. They were

deeply devoted to the Dalai Lama and turned to him for refuge both in this and the next life. In the same way, the masses have deep respect and devotion. This is an undeniable fact. Later on, however, the aristocrats were accused of being the leaders of the rebellions and persecuted. This, I think, was an absolutely wrong thing to do. Of course, I was criticized and punished for this. But truth is timeless. It always remains the same. Undoubtedly, there were mistakes in my petition. But I have never been wrong in speaking up. The mistakes in the content of my petition are mistakes, both today and in the past. But there should be a clear dividing line, spelling out where I went wrong and where I was right.

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

Quelling the rebellions and introducing reforms was right in principle. But there was a strong leftist tinge to the way this was done. Such things should not happen again and they must be rectified. During the last three decades of communist rule there have been many good things done and many bad things also. These were considered in the Sixth Meeting of the Eleventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China, and were publicized internationally. Owning up to our mistakes will not damage the Party's image; rather it will help build it. Speaking about the former comrades in the Tibet Military Command Centre and the Chengdu Military Command Centre, some comrades told me that they should not have

done what they did. This is a healthy attitude. We frequently say that great achievements were made with your sweat in the liberation and reformation of Tibet and that the people of Tibet will never forget this. This is an honest statement. However, you did make a great deal of mistakes, and these also in Tibet. These too, we will never forget. What I am saying is for the purpose of rectifying these mistakes. If we can do this, we can make progress. I am saying this with the best of intentions.

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

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

possible and then fled to India, which would have been easy since India is near our village. But this man told us to be progressive and patriotic. And this is what we get for following his advice. Now it is not possible for us to flee to India. Our people, both men and women, are being persecuted here. We are experiencing hell on earth."

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

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

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

Mao Zedong said clearly in his speech that he would not only kill the senior Jiang Jieshi, but also the junior ones. Al-

though, I, the senior Panchen, managed to survive, many junior Panchens were killed and tortured in prisons.

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

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

Loyalty and Future Danger

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

Here, I will cite two examples from history. Lenin said that the triumph of the October Revolution in Russia showed that their work with the masses had been good. Stalin did not do good works for the masses. As a result the peoples of minority republics did not support the Russian army in defending the Soviet Union against the Nazi invasion. We have seen films on the Vietnam War. The people belonging to minority races welcomed the PLA, guided them and gave them water,

only because the minority groups were fed up with their regime which favoured the Jing majority race against all the others. The people of the Jing race were very cruel. If others did not submit to them, they would shoot them down, even people of fifty or sixty years of age. We should learn from these historical facts.

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

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

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

The examples I gave earlier are relevant here. It is essential to think about war as this possibility looms large nowadays. Of course, we have the power to prevent it. What

would we do if a war breaks out now? The PLA was successful in the 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict, mainly because the Tibetans provided the logistic service with their backs and pack animals. These days some people are talking about a possible war with India, which is unlikely. However, should it break out, it is questionable whether Tibetans would support the war effort as they did in 1962.

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

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

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

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

in Tibet since they are dependent solely on whatever they can earn with their physical labour.

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

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

(Translated from the original Chinese)

Announcement of
Panchen Lama's Reincarnation
His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Recognition of
Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

The XIth Panchen Lama



Announcement of the Panchen Lama's Reincarnation by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Dharamsala, May 14, 1995

Today is the auspicious day when the Buddha first gave the Kalachakra teaching. The Kalachakra teachings have a special connection with the Panchen Lamas. On this occasion, which also happens to be the Vaisaki, it is with great joy that I am able to proclaim the reincarnation of Panchen Rinpoche. I have recognized Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, born on April 25, 1989, whose father is Konchok Phuntsog, and mother Dechen Chodon, of Lhari district in Nagchu, Tibet, as the true reincarnation of Panchen Rinpoche.

In accordance with the historical and spiritual relationship between the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas the Search Committee for the Reincarnation, primarily represented by the Tashilhunpo Monastery in exile in India and various groups and individuals from all the regions of Tibet as well as from outside, have approached me to perform the examination and divination to determine the reincarnation.

I have taken upon myself this historical and spiritual task with a strong sense of responsibility. Over the recent years, I have with great care performed all necessary religious procedures for this purpose and have made supplications to the infallible Three Jewels.

I am fully convinced of the unanimous outcome of all these recognition procedures performed strictly in accordance with our religious tradition.

I have given Rinpoche the name of "Tenzin Gedhun Yeshe Thrinley Phuntsog Pal Sangpo" and have composed a long-life prayer titled "Spontaneous Fulfillment of the Wishes."

The search and recognition of Panchen Rinpoche's reincarnation is a religious matter and not political. It is my hope that the Chinese Government, with whom I have kept contact

regarding this matter through various channels over the recent years, will extend its understanding, cooperation and assistance to the Tashilhunpo Monastery in enabling Rinpoche to receive proper religious training and to assume his spiritual responsibilities.

The Process by which the Reincarnation of the Panchen Lama has been Recognized

◆ After the demise of Panchen Rinpoche in January 1989, over the years altogether around thirty names of potential candidates for the reincarnation of Panchen Rinpoche have been received both from within and outside Tibet.

The places from which the names of potential candidates have been received are: In Tibet — Lhasa, Damzhung, Danang (Lhokha), Lhari Zong (Nagchu), Gyalthang, Tawu, Toe Gegye, Chamdo, Lhamo, Duejung, Tsa Zong of Malho in Tso-ngon, Amdo in the Nagchu area, Gyazong (Lhokha), Tsethang (Lhokha), Lithang, and Getse (Ngari). In India — Dharamsala and Ladakh.

◆ In 1991, on the third day of the Tibetan Iron-Sheep Year, a divination was performed to find out whether Panchen Rinpoche's reincarnation had been born in Tibet or outside Tibet. The divination revealed that the reincarnation had been born in Tibet.

◆ On August 11, 1991, the second day of the seventh month of the Tibetan Iron-Sheep Year, a divination was performed to find out whether a certain child in Tibet, who was widely thought of as being the Panchen Rinpoche's reincarnation, was authentic or not. The divination was negative.

◆ In 1993, on the third day of the Tibetan Water-Bird Year, a divination was performed to establish whether it was the proper time to commence and finalize the recognition process. The divination indicated that it was not the right time.

◆ A petition dated July 17, 1993 was received through offi-

cial channels via Beijing from Chatral Rinpoche, head of the committee from Tashilhunpo Monastery in Tibet searching for the reincarnation. He explained that in connection with the reincarnation of Panchen Rinpoche two visits had been made to the sacred lake of Chokhor Gyal Lhatso (Lhamoi Lhatso) and one to Rinpong Chamsring Yung Tso in order to observe indications concerning the reincarnation. It was also explained that some other religious investigations had been carried out. These indicated that Panchen Rinpoche had already been born and the search for the reincarnation should be conducted in a direction to the east of Tashilhunpo Monastery and among children born in the Tibetan years of the Snake, Horse and Sheep.

◆ In 1994, on the third day of the Tibetan Wood-Dog year, a divination was performed to establish whether it was the proper time to commence and finalize the recognition process. The divination indicated that it was not the right time.

◆ In 1994, on the tenth of the first month of the Tibetan lunar calendar, the Nechung Oracle proclaimed, "My teacher, the Meaningful to Behold," (reference to His Holiness the Dalai Lama) "is continuing to seek the reincarnation. If all Tibetans are firmly united in solidarity, an unmistakable reincarnation will definitely be found soon in Tibet." This prophecy was confirmed on the same day by the Tsangpa Oracle.

◆ Again, on March 30, 1994, at the request of the Tashilhunpo Monastery in India, the Tsangpa Oracle prophesied, "The reincarnation had been born in Tibet, and since His Holiness is investigating the matter there is no need for concern."

◆ On December 3, 1994, a divination was performed to establish whether it was the right time to begin and finalize the recognition process. The result was affirmative.

◆ In January 1995, during a Kalachakra teaching at Mundgod, South India, His Holiness commenced the recognition process. A divination was done which revealed that among the potential candidates, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, whose father is Konchok Phuntsog and whose mother is Dechen Chodon of Lhari district in Nagchu, Tibet, was an "extremely good" candidate for the reincarnation of Panchen Rinpoche.

◆ On January 23, 1995, at Dharamsala, after making elaborate offerings before such exalted objects as the Kyirong Jowo (a special image of the Buddha brought from Tibet), the thangka of Palden Lhamo (a female protector of Tibet) etc., special prayers were performed invoking the names of the previous Panchen Lamas. A divination was then performed to determine whether the above-mentioned child, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, was the unmistakable reincarnation of Panchen Rinpoche. The divination confirmed this.

◆ To confirm the result of the previous divination a second divination was performed; this corroborated the first result. Therefore, no doubt remained that the child, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, is the true reincarnation of Panchen Rinpoche and his recognition was finalized.

◆ Again, in 1995, early on the thirteenth day of the third Tibetan month the Nechung Oracle proclaimed that, "there is no need for me, the formless, to do or say anything more. My teacher, the Meaningful to Behold, has already investigated the matter through the mind of the three secrets."

◆ On May 13, 1995, a final divination was performed to determine whether it was appropriate to declare the recognition of the reincarnation of Panchen Rinpoche on the fifteenth day of the third month of the Tibetan Lunar calendar (which corresponded to May 14, 1995) or to postpone it for some time. The divination indicated that it would be better to declare it on the fifteenth as proposed.

The child named Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was born on April 25, 1989, the nineteenth day of the third Tibetan month in the Earth-Snake Year. His father is called Konchok Phuntsog and his mother Dechen Chodron. As soon as he was able to speak he said, "I am the Panchen, my monastery is Tashilhunpo. I sit on a high throne. My monasteries are in Tsang, in Lhasa and in China." Bright and intelligent, he is gifted with a sharp mind. His demeanour is composed and serious and his speech is frank and forthright.

Press Statement

by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Dharamsala, November 29, 1995

The search and recognition of Panchen Lama's reincarnation is a religious matter. Because of the unique historical and traditional relationship between the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas I conducted all the necessary religious procedures with great care and then determined Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the late Panchen Lama. Therefore, my recognition of the Panchen Lama's reincarnation cannot be changed.

On several occasions in the past years I have approached the Chinese Government in this matter without success. Last month again I appealed directly to the Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, to extend his government's recognition to the young Panchen Lama. I had hoped that a personal appeal from my side might facilitate a gesture of good-will from the Chinese Government.

It is unfortunate that the Chinese Government has chosen to politicize this issue and appoint a rival Panchen Lama. In order to lend a veil of religious legitimacy they have coerced senior Tibetan Lamas and monks to participate in a conference held in Beijing under tight security and strict secrecy. It saddens me that once again the religious sentiments of my people have been deeply hurt and offended.

At this moment the safety of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his proper religious training is of particular concern to me. He has not been seen in the public for some months and is reported to be detained somewhere in Beijing. I, therefore, appeal to all governments, religious and human rights organisations for their intervention in ensuring the safety and freedom of the young Panchen Lama.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's letter to Jiang Zemin

Your Excellency,

I am deeply concerned about reports that the whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima from Lhari district in Ngachu, Tibet, whom I have recognized as the reincarnation of the late Panchen Lama, is not known publicly since some time. The institution of the Panchen Lama is of great importance to Tibetan Buddhism and to the people of Tibet.

It is, therefore, extremely important that his monastery, Tashilhunpo, is able to take care of the proper religious training of the young Panchen Lama. This is of concern not only to me, personally, and to the Tashilhunpo Monastery alone but also to the people of Tibet. I appeal, therefore, to Your Excellency for your personal intervention in extending your Government's recognition to the young Panchen Lama. This will be greatly appreciated by Tibetans every where and would ensure the well-being of the young Panchen Lama and facilitate his proper religious upbringing according to our spiritual tradition.

I regret very much that the proclamation of the Panchen Lama's reincarnation has further strained our relationship. Your government has strongly criticized and objected to my proclamation.

I do not wish to raise here again the religious and historical basis for this decision. However, Your Excellency may not be fully aware of the efforts I had made in the past years to communicate with and seek the understanding and assistance of your Government in the search for the reincarnation of the late Panchen Lama. Unfortunately, there has been no response at all from the concerned officials of your Government. On the contrary, to my great disappointment the concerned officials of your Government repeatedly made categorical statements that no involvement on my part in the search of the Panchen Lama's reincarnation will be tolerated.

On the other hand I had a responsibility to honour and uphold the unique historical relationship between the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas. For example, in my own case, I am personally greatly indebted to the 9th Panchen Lama, who took special interest and responsibility in the search of the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama. Furthermore, Tibetans inside Tibet and from abroad have been urging me for early action on this issue since the matter has been pending for too long.

These factors compelled me to proclaim the recognition of the reincarnation on the appropriate auspicious Kalachakra anniversary, on May 14, 1995. I have taken this decision on purely religious grounds in fulfilment of my traditional responsibility. I also took into consideration the need to ensure the religious credibility of the Panchen Lama in the long run in the eyes of the Tibetan people.

The recognition of the Panchen Lama's reincarnation is in no way intended to challenge Your Excellency's Government. To the contrary, whenever possible I have always strived to contribute to an atmosphere conducive to reconciliation and dialogue in our relationship. I hold the firm belief that it is possible for us to find a mutually acceptable and beneficial solution on the Tibetan question. With this conviction, I have consistently endeavoured to enter into negotiations with your Government. Moreover, I still remain committed to negotiations any time and anywhere on an agenda without the issue of independence of Tibet — keeping in mind the long-term and large interests of both the Tibetan and the Chinese people.

It is my sincere hope that Your Excellency will consider this request in a spirit of reconciliation and openness.

Yours sincerely,

The Dalai Lama

October 11, 1995

Chronology of Events Surrounding the Recognition of the Eleventh Panchen Lama

January 28, 1989: The Tenth Panchen Lama, Lobsang Trinley Choekyi Gyaltzen, passes away in Shigatse, Tibet.

March 21, 1991: The Chinese Government is informed, through its New Delhi Embassy, that His Holiness the Dalai Lama wish to assist in the search for the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. His Holiness expresses his wish to send a religious delegation to Lhamoi Lhatso, the sacred lake near Lhasa, to pray and observe prophetic visions in the lake which will guide the delegation to the genuine reincarnation. China rejects this proposal three months later by saying that there is no need for “outside interference”.

July 17, 1993: The acting abbot of Tashilhunpo Monastery and head of the Chinese official search party, Chatral Rinpoche, delivers to Kalon Gyalo Thondup a letter and offerings from Beijing to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The letter records the progress made in the search for the reincarnation.

August 5, 1993: Dharamsala delivers to the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi a reply to Chatral Rinpoche. The reply invites a delegation under him to come to India and discuss matters relating to the search for the Panchen Lama’s reincarnation. There is no response to this letter.

October 17 and 18, 1994: A Chinese individual, with close ties to the Government in Beijing, meets with Tibetan leaders in Dharamsala. During the meeting, His Holiness asks the Chinese man to remind Beijing that he is still waiting for a reply to his letter to Chatral Rinpoche. His Holiness also reiterates the importance of carrying out the search for the Panchen Lama’s reincarnation through strict traditional religious procedures.

January 1995: Dharamsala sends two communications to the

same Chinese individual reminding him of the discussion held in October 1994, and requesting him to urge the Chinese authorities for an early response.

May 14, 1995: His Holiness announces Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, a six-year-old boy in Tibet's northern region of Nagchu, as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama.

May 17, 1995: *Xinhua* news despatch carries a scathing reaction from a spokesman of China's Bureau of Religious Affairs. The spokesman terms His Holiness' action as illegal and accuses him of disregarding "fixed historical convention, undermining religious rituals".

May 17, 1995: Chatral Rinpoche is intercepted in Chengdu, en route to Tibet, and flown back to Beijing to be held incommunicado under house arrest.

May 18, 1995: Chinese launch their campaign to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama's declaration of the new Panchen Lama. Tourists in Shigatse report a sharp increase in troop activity.

Mid-May, 1995: Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and family taken to China. Exact whereabouts unknown.

May 19, 1995: Posters rejecting the Beijing claim for use of the golden urn appear in Lhasa.

May 20, 1995: Dharamsala reacts to the Chinese statement by explaining the historical conventions relating to the recognition of reincarnations, and urging Beijing not to politicize Tibet's spiritual traditions.

May 21, 1995: Posters supporting His Holiness the Dalai Lama's candidate appear in Shigatse.

May 23, 1995: A report from Lhasa suggests that the Chinese authorities have been calling for political re-education meetings to announce a ban on public discussions of the Panchen Lama.

July 12, 1995: Chinese riot police interrupt a major religious ceremony at Tashilhunpo when over a hundred monks had

threatened to stage a demonstration against the Chinese Government's forceful intervention in the selection of the new Panchen Lama.

July 14, 1995: The local Religious Affairs Bureau in Shigatse issues a formal order removing Chatral Rinpoche, Gyatrul Rinpoche and other leading lamas of Tashilhunpo monastery from their posts.

Eight new pro-Chinese leaders, including Sengchen Lobsang Gyaltzen and Lama Tsering, are appointed as the new administrators of Tashilhunpo Monastery.

September 14, 1995: Tibet Information Network, a London-based news monitoring agency, releases a list of 48 Tibetans who have been arrested by the Chinese police in connection with the Panchen Lama reincarnation dispute.

November 8, 1995: China's United Front summons a meeting of 75 Tibetans, including Chinese-appointed Gaden Throne Holder, Bomi, in Beijing. At the meeting, the United Front tables a list of three Beijing-nominated Panchen Lama candidates.

November 14, 1995: The 75 participants at the United Front meeting return to Lhasa.

November 19, 1995: The Chinese-appointed Gaden Throne Holder, Bomi, disappears from his home.

November 29, 1995: Bomi resurfaces in Lhasa to draw lots from the golden urn to select the Chinese candidate for the Panchen Lama position. The lots-drawing results in the selection of a six-year-old boy, Gyaltzen Norbu, from Nagchu area in northern Tibet, as the Panchen Lama.

December 8, 1995: Gyaltzen Norbu enthroned in Tashilhunpo Monastery, the seat of the Panchen Lama, amidst tight security with over 500 PLA soldiers deployed throughout the monastery compound.

January 18, 1996: A bomb detonates at the house in Lhasa of Sengchen Lobsang Gyaltzen, a Tibetan lama and political appointee who collaborated with the Chinese in installing their choice of Panchen Lama.

China's Claims and History



'Dalai Lama's Confirmation of Reincarnation Invalid'

Beijing, May 17, 1995 (Xinhua) — A spokesman from the Bureau of Religious Affairs under the State Council issued a statement here today in an interview with Xinhua with regard to Dalai Lama's act in confirming the reincarnation of a Tibetan boy for Panchen Lama in India. The full text of the statement is as follows:

On May 14, Dalai Lama suddenly declared, in India, a boy from Tibet is the reincarnated child of Panchen. This fully demonstrates the political plot of the Dalai clique in its continuous splittist activities by making use of Panchen Lama's reincarnation after repeated failures in its acts abroad aimed at splitting the motherland.

It is known to all that both the titles Dalai Lama and Panchen Erdini of the Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism were conferred by the Central Government of the Qing Dynasty.

Since the central government announced the system of lot-drawing in the 57th year of the reign of Emperor Qian Long (1792), the finding of reincarnated child for both Dalai and Panchen should follow a religious ritual, under which, several potential reincarnated children were located and the reincarnated child would be selected through lot-drawing in front of the statue of Sakyamuni. And then, the final choice should be forwarded to the Central Government for approval. This has been a historical convention and a fixed rule.

Danzim Gyaco ascended the holy throne for the 14th Dalai Lama in 1940 only under the approval of the Central Government at that time.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council showed great concern over the location of the reincarnated child for the 10th Panchen Erdini after his death in 1989.

On January 30, 1989, the State Council made decision which stipulates that matters concerning the location and confirma-

tion of the reincarnated child are subjected to the approval by the State Council, and made it known to the public. A searching team composed of people from the Tibetan Buddhism circles has done a great deal of work in accordance with religious rituals and procedures, and has made major progress. Now the work is still going on.

In disregard of fixed historical convention, undermining religious rituals, disrupting the normal searching process, and negating the supreme authority of the Central Government in the matter concerning the reincarnation of Panchen Lama, Dalai Lama went so far as openly announcing a reincarnated child for Panchen Lama abroad. This is totally illegal and invalid. By doing so, he will surely meet with strong opposition from people of the Tibetan Buddhism circles and other believers.

Despite serious disruption from the Dalai clique, we still believe that the Tibetan Buddhism circles will remove the obstacles and accomplish this sacred Buddhist task for the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama in accordance with the religious rituals and procedures.

The History of Discovering the Panchen Lamas

On May 14, 1995 His Holiness the Dalai Lama announced his recognition of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, a six-year-old boy in Tibet's northern plain of Nagchu, as the reincarnation of the Tenth Panchen Lama. The announcement was received with anger by the Chinese leadership, who interpreted the Tibetan leader's action as illegal and issued a series of publications making a number of baseless allegations and unfounded claims on the traditional status of the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas.

The August issue of *China's Tibet*, an official quarterly journal published from Beijing, was devoted entirely to this theme. We would, therefore, like to issue some clarifications in order to clear away misconceptions that may have been caused by the Chinese publications.

In *China's Tibet*, the Chinese Bureau of Religious Affairs interprets His Holiness the Dalai Lama's recognition as demonstrating the "political plot of the Dalai clique". His Holiness the Dalai Lama has demonstrated absolutely no desire to politicize the issue of the Panchen Lama's reincarnation.

As explained in an earlier chapter, soon after the demise of the late Panchen Lama, His Holiness the Dalai Lama made numerous approaches to the Chinese Government by offering to send a religious delegation to Tibet to assist and participate in the search for the reincarnation. However, China rejected all his initiatives.

Moreover, the child he recognized as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama was born in Tibet and lives there. Reincarnation is a Mahayana Buddhist concept prevailing in Tibet and the Panchen Lama is a religious leader. Therefore, his reincarnation must be decided according to the time-honoured religious traditions and practices of Tibet; no outside authority can impose decisions in this matter. The Chinese Government's meddling in the selection of the Panchen Lama and imposi-

tion of its own candidate is a blatant interference aimed at using the reincarnation for its own political purposes. As one commentator pointed out, the “Chinese presumption in overruling the Dalai Lama, who had selected a different boy in May, is as absurd as if Fidel Castro tried to appoint the next Pope”.

The origin of titles “Dalai Lama” and “Panchen Lama”

The *Xinhua* statement claims that the titles Dalai Lama and Panchen Erdini were “conferred by the Central Government of the Qing Dynasty”. It is clear and undisputed from historical accounts that the title “Dalai Lama” was offered by the Mongol Prince Altan Khan to Sonam Gyatso in Mongolia in 1578, long before the Qing Dynasty was founded in 1644. Sonam Gyatso then became known as the Third Dalai Lama, while his two previous recognized incarnations came to be referred to retrospectively as the First and Second Dalai Lamas.

The title “Panchen” is made up of the first syllables of two words, “pandita”, a Sanskrit word meaning scholar, and “chenpo”, a Tibetan word meaning great. It is a title given to great scholars. All the abbots of Tashilhunpo were also known by this title.

During the reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Tashilhunpo's abbot, Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen, was given the ownership of Tashilhunpo monastery and some estates. Since then his three previous and subsequent incarnations came to be known by the title Panchen Lama.

It is true that in 1731 the Manchu Emperor, Guang-xu, offered the title Erdini to the Fifth Panchen Lama, Lobsang Yeshe. But then, Tibetan lamas also conferred numerous titles on the rulers of China and other neighbouring kingdoms. The exchange of complimentary titles in the form of certificates and seals was a part of diplomatic culture prevailing in Central Asia at that time. It did not in any way signify the superiority of one party over the other. Furthermore, Erdini is a Mongol word meaning “Precious Jewel”, a title shared by many Mongol lamas.

The drawing of lots

The system of drawing lots is merely a part of the procedures undertaken to select reincarnate lamas and is an ancient Tibetan tradition long pre-dating the Manchu rule in China. The Tibetan method involves encasing the names of candidates in dough balls of an equal size and weight. The balls are put into a container, which is then rotated until one ball pops out. The name contained in the ejected ball is declared as the reincarnate. However, the Tibetans do not use this method to select each and every reincarnate; it is resorted to only when all the candidates prove equally promising, making it hard to come to any definite conclusion.

In 1792, the Tibetan Government requested Manchu emperor's help to repulse the Gorkha invaders from Nepal. The emperor sent a large army which helped Tibet drive out the Gorkhas. Since this was the fourth time the Manchu emperor had been asked to send troops to defend Tibet, he wanted some say in Tibetan affairs in order to prevent Tibet from becoming involved in conflicts which might again precipitate requests for the Manchu Court's military involvement. Towards this end, the emperor made a 29-point suggestion for administrative reforms in Tibet. The golden urn was presented in conjunction with an article suggesting it should be used when selecting reincarnations of great lamas. According to this practice, the names of candidates were to be inscribed on ivory or jade tablets and drawn from a golden urn with chopsticks.

The Manchu emperor made this 29-point suggestion in the spirit of the priest-patron relationship then existing between Tibet and the Manchus. It was by no means a decree or order from the ruler to his subjects. This emerges clearly from the statement made by the Manchu imperial envoy and military commander, Fu K'ang-an, who while speaking about the 29-point suggestion, said, "Tibetans may ... decide for themselves what is in their favour and what is not ... and make a choice of their own."

Tibetans, on their part, continued to adhere to their traditional practices and rarely used the emperor's urn. Thus, on the first occasion when the golden urn should have been

employed for the selection of the Ninth Dalai Lama in 1808 Tibetans disregarded it. The urn was not used in selecting the late Panchen Lama also. There have been six Dalai Lamas since Emperor Qianlong made his suggestion in the eighteenth century, and the urn was used in confirming only three of them. It was not used even for selecting the present Fourteenth Dalai Lama. Furthermore, there is no historical evidence to suggest that the system of using the golden urn for drawing lots was established for the express purpose of selecting the reincarnations of the Dalai Lamas and Panchen Lamas. An event in Mongolia — over which Tibet traditionally wielded spiritual authority — was the cause of Emperor Qianlong's suggestion. On the death of the Mongol Lama, Erdini Pandita Khutuktu, a dispute arose over the selection of his reincarnation. It was to avert such complications in Tibet in the future that the Manchu emperor made his suggestion.

In any case, China has no legal right to claim that it had inherited the historical priest-patron relationship between Tibet and the Manchus. The Manchus (the Qing rulers of China) were a distinct Asian Buddhist people, an alien power occupying China. Even the Chinese themselves recognize the Manchus as an alien occupation force. In 1911, when the Nationalist Revolution toppled the Qing Dynasty of the Manchus, Dr. Sun Yat-sen said that China had been occupied twice by foreign powers: first by the Mongols and second by the Manchus.

China's approval never needed

The present Chinese statement claims, as the Guomindang Government did in the past, that they played a decisive role in selecting and installing the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. In reality, the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas were selected according to Tibet's age-old religious beliefs and traditions, and the Chinese Government's approval was neither needed nor sought.

China bases its claim on the report of its emissary, Wu Zhongxin, who claimed that he had approved the enthronement of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. In reality, the Tibetan

National Assembly had confirmed the Fourteenth Dalai Lama in 1939, which was well before Wu set foot in Lhasa. When the enthronement took place on February 22, 1940, Wu Zhongxin, like the envoys from Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal and British India, had no special role to play. Sir Basil Gould, the British Political Officer representing British India at the ceremony, has revealed that the official Chinese version of events was a fiction prepared and published even before the enthronement took place.

On July 31, 1989 Ngabo Ngawang Jigme, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Congress, said: "Last year, at a meeting of the Institute of Tibetology, I spoke about this and my observations concerning related Guomindang documents. I said that we, the Communist Party, need not tell lies based upon Guomindang lies. At the time, Comrade Chang Feng of the United Front Ministry said, 'In future, we will not say that Wu Zhongxin officiated at the enthronement of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama'."

The Chinese statement regarding the new Panchen Lama further alleges that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has disregarded "fixed historical convention, undermining religious rituals" in his method of recognition. It terms the announcement of the Panchen Lama's reincarnation as "illegal and invalid". These are politically-motivated statements with no historical and factual foundations.

Panchen Lama quoted out of context

It is instructive to observe the extent to which the current Chinese communist leadership can go to distort facts to suit its manipulations. Emphasizing the need to draw lots in front of Sakyamuni's statue in Lhasa, *China's Tibet* of August 1995 quoted the late Panchen Lama as having said on January 24, 1989 — four days before his death — that the "best option is to hold a lots-drawing ceremony in front of the statues of Sakyamuni" for his own reincarnation.

Actually, the Panchen Lama made this remark in the context of confirming reincarnate lamas belonging to non-Gelugpa schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Moreover, he was not referring

to the golden urn, but to the traditional Tibetan practice of rolling dough balls.

The Panchen Lama said, "In the past, Gelugpa *tulkus* were recognized chiefly by Gyalwa Yabsey Nyi (Victorious Father and Son, a reference to the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama). There are no problems in this. But when it comes to other schools of Tibetan Buddhism, there are other factors involved. Since the Central Government has asked me to confirm all the *tulkus*, I now have to invite Buddha Sakyamuni himself and seek his help. Buddha Sakyamuni is accepted by all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Even if it entails a delay of one or two days, I will offer *takril* (the dough ball method) and decide the reincarnation among three candidates."

Regarding the selection of his own reincarnation, the Panchen Lama categorically stated that it should be done by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In the January 1988 issue of *China Reconstructs*, an official Chinese publication, the Panchen Lama said, "According to Tibetan tradition, the confirmation of either the Dalai or the Panchen must be mutually recognized".

Whose action goes against the will of the Tibetan people?

China alleges that His Holiness the Dalai Lama's action "will meet with strong opposition from people of the Tibetan Buddhism circles". If Chinese leaders really believe in their own propaganda, then why did they feel the need to arrest Chatral Rinpoche and increase security in Tibet to coincide with the announcement of their own Panchen Lama? Why was it necessary for China to mount a military cordon around Tashilhunpo monastery after His Holiness the Dalai Lama announced Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the Eleventh Panchen Lama? Since this announcement, China re-constituted the search party for the Panchen Lama, replacing its own appointed head of the search party with someone willing to toe the official Chinese line on the issue. Similarly, the six-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents were spirited away, a move by China to avert any public display of veneration to the child chosen by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

By September 1995, China had arrested 49 Tibetans for

expressing support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama. One Tashilhunpo monk even committed suicide rather than succumb to the Chinese pressure to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama's action. And in November 1995 wall posters began appearing in Lhasa voicing support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's choice of incarnation. Protest against China's action is mounting with the explosion of a bomb on January 18, 1996 at the house of Sengchen Lobsang Gyaltzen, the man who collaborated actively with the Chinese in the Panchen Lama issue.

If the people of Tibet were given the freedom to express their true feelings, it would become clear how widespread their support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama is. China's disregard for the Tibetan people's religious sentiment, as displayed in their overbearing attitude towards the recognition of the Panchen Lama's reincarnation, is indicative of the true nature of their rule in Tibet. The reality today is that Tibet is an occupied country under colonial rule, and Tibetans have no say in their own affairs.

U.S. State Department's Response
to Chinese Rejection

International Indictments

May 1985



US State Department's Response to Chinese Rejection of the New Panchen Lama

May 17, 1995

We have seen reports that the Chinese Government's Religious Affairs Bureau has made a statement rejecting the selection of a reincarnated Panchen Lama announced by the Dalai Lama on May 14. We have not yet seen the statement itself. If the reports were true, we would be disappointed that the Chinese Government and the Tibetan Buddhist religious hierarchy have not come to an agreement on this religious question. The Dalai Lama's statement of May 14 suggested that there had been continuing consultations with Chinese authorities concerning the search for the reincarnation. We are disappointed that these contacts seem not to have been fruitful.

We are concerned that disagreements or controversies about the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama might raise additional doubts about the Chinese Government's commitment to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of Tibetan Buddhists. We note that freedom of religious practice is guaranteed by China's constitution.

Although we are not competent to comment on the merits of this religious issue, we would urge both the Chinese Government and the Tibetan religious authorities in exile to continue their contacts and discussions about this.

US Says Lama Dispute Infringes Tibetan Rights

WASHINGTON, Nov 8 (Reuter) — The United States said on Wednesday that a controversy over identifying the reincarnation of Tibet's second holiest lama raised doubts about China's commitment to religious freedom.

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns was commenting on Beijing's elimination of a candidate announced by Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, as the recipient of the spirit of the 10th Panchen Lama, who died in 1989.

Burns said Washington was "discouraged and displeased that various events have occurred over the past couple of weeks which would infringe upon" the religious rights of Tibetan Buddhists.

"We believe that the continuing controversy over the selection of the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama raises additional questions about the Chinese Government's commitment to respect for religious beliefs and the practices of the Tibetan Buddhists," Burns said.

He told a news briefing Washington was especially concerned about reports that senior Tibetan lamas may have been compelled to attend a meeting on the subject in Beijing.

Chinese sources said China has summoned about 75 senior lamas from the Himalayan region to Beijing and they began a meeting on Sunday to complete final ceremonies in the search for the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama.

The final three candidates did not include a six-year-old Tibetan boy, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, chosen last May by the Dalai Lama, the sources said.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Tuesday that the Dalai Lama's "arbitrary selection" was "null and void" as it violated religious rules.

China maintains it has final say over the appointment of senior lamas under terms of a 200-year-old agreement.

Burns said the United States could not comment on the mechanism for formally recognizing a reincarnated lama.

But he said: "Freedom of religious practice is guaranteed under China's constitution. And certainly all Americans believe that religious freedom is an essential right.

"We call upon both the Chinese Government and the Tibetan religious authorities in Tibet, and those in exile, to consult closely on this matter in a spirit of goodwill and in a spirit of tolerance," Burns added.

Australian Senate

November 30, 1995

That the Senate: -

a) notes that China has announced the selection of a new Panchen Lama in an attempt to overrule the Dalai Lama's choice of five months ago;

b) expresses:

i) dismay that China's actions represent a further erosion of the international principle of freedom of religion;

ii) expresses support for the candidate recognized by His Holiness the Dalai Lama as being the only legitimate Panchen Lama; and

c) urges China to respect the wishes of the Tibetan people by supporting the Panchen Lama as recognized by the Dalai Lama

(Senator Bourne moved the resolution).

United States Senate

December 13, 1995

104TH CONGRESS - 1ST SESSION

S.J. Res. 43

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Helms for himself, Thomas, Mack, Pell, Feingold,
Moynihan, and Simon.

JOINT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding Wei Jingsheng; Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the next Panchen Lama of Tibet; and the human rights practices of the Government of the People's Republic of China.

Whereas on November 21, 1995, the Government of the People's Republic of China formally arrested Wei Jingsheng, who is known internationally as the father of the democracy movement in China;

Whereas the Government of the PRC has held Wei Jingsheng incommunicado and without charge since April 1994 and has rebuffed international calls to release him;

Whereas Wei Jingsheng has spent all but 6 months of the last 16 years in detention because of his unwavering support for freedom of speech and the development of democracy in China;

Whereas at an October 1995 meeting in New York between President Clinton and President Jiang Zemin of China, the Administration urged the Government of the People's Republic of China to release political prisoners and specifically included Wei Jingsheng and others among such prisoners;

Whereas the treatment of Wei Jingsheng by the Government of the People's Republic of China raises concern over the future of other jailed dissidents in China, including Wang Dan, a student leader in the 1989 pro-democracy movement in China;

Whereas on May 14, 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama announced recognition of 6-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the next Panchen Lama;

Whereas recognition of the successor to the Panchen Lama in Tibet has always been within the authority of the Dalai Lama;

Whereas for the first time in Tibetan history, the Government of the People's Republic of China has imposed on Tibet its own candidate for a new Panchen Lama and has rejected the new Panchen Lama selected by the Dalai Lama;

Whereas Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family have been missing for 6 months and are reportedly being held by authorities of the Government of the People's Republic of China;

Whereas Chatral Rinpoche, who is the head of the original search committee for the new Panchen Lama and who refused to denounce the Dalai Lama's selection of the new Panchen Lama, is also missing and believed to be held by authorities of the Government of the People's Republic of China;

Whereas the Panchen Lama is one of the highest-ranking religious officials of Tibetan Buddhism;

Whereas the rejection of the Dalai Lama's selection of Panchen Lama by the Government of the People's Republic of China, and the selection of its own candidate for Panchen Lama, is seen by many Tibetans as politicizing a purely religious affair and as a violation of fundamental Tibetan human rights;

Whereas since the invasion of Tibet in 1949, the Government of the People's Republic of China has taken any expression by the Tibetan people of their distinct religious or cultural identity as a direct challenge to that government's political control of Tibet;

Whereas Chinese officials have repeatedly maintained that the Tibet Autonomous Region is entitled to manage its own cultural and religious affairs, and the intervention of Chinese government authorities in the selection of the next Panchen Lama is a clear violation of the principle:

Whereas for 3 consecutive years, the United States has been a primary sponsor of resolutions criticizing the human rights practices of the Government of the People's Republic of China in China and Tibet at the annual meetings of the

United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva;

Whereas these resolutions call upon the Government of the People's Republic of China to take measures to ensure the observance of all human rights, invite that government to cooperate with all special rapporteurs and working groups, and request the Secretary General of the United Nations to prepare a report for the United Nations Human Rights Commission on the human rights situation in China and Tibet;

Whereas at the March 1995 meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, the resolution lost by only 1 vote;

Whereas it is important to maintain international pressure on the Government of the People's Republic of China in order to induce that government to respect internationally-recognized standards of human rights; and Whereas in May 1994, the President of the United States pledged strong support for efforts at international forums to criticize the human rights practices of the Government of the People's Republic of China: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That the United States Government should —

(1) press for the immediate and unconditional release of Wei Jingsheng and other political prisoners by the Government of the People's Republic of China;

(2) urge the Government of the People's Republic of China to respect the wishes of the Tibetan people by supporting the selection of the new Panchen Lama by His Holiness the Dalai Lama;

(3) work to ensure the safety of the new Panchen Lama as selected by the Dalai Lama; and

(4) sponsor and aggressively push for the passage of a resolution regarding the human rights situation in China at the annual meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva scheduled for March 1996.

European Parliament

December 14, 1995

The European Parliament,

A. deploring generally the Chinese authorities' relentless persecution of Tibetan Buddhist monks,

B. noting that the Government of the People's Republic of China has announced the selection of a new Panchen Lama, attempting to overrule the Dalai Lama's choice of five months ago, thereby disregarding the religious traditions of the Tibetan people and politicizing an issue that has always been a strictly religious matter throughout the history of Tibet,

C. stressing that this action by the Chinese is liable to create serious unrest in Tibetan society,

D. recalling that on 14 May 1995 the Dalai Lama, freely exercising the powers he enjoys by virtue of his spiritual role, had already recognized Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as being the new reincarnation of the Panchen Lama,

E. whereas Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents, as well as the monk who identified him as the Panchen Lama, have not been seen in public since July 1995,

F. expressing its dismay that the actions of the Chinese authorities represent a further erosion of the principle of freedom of religion,

G. having regard to the riots which followed the government's decision and ruthlessness with which they were quelled,

1. Condemns China's intervention in the nomination of the candidate for the title of Panchen Lama, which is strictly a religious matter, as well as the forced appointment of the candidate imposed by the Chinese authorities;

2. Urges the Chinese authorities to respect the wishes of the Tibetan people by accepting the Panchen Lama as recognized by the Dalai Lama;

3. Requests the Government of the People's Republic of

China to allow Union diplomats to meet Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents, as well as the monk mentioned above, in order to ensure that they are safe;

4. Calls on the Chinese authorities to undertake not to pressure or intimidate Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family in any way, particularly as regards his freedom to perform his spiritual role as the Panchen Lama and thus his free access to the education necessary for his role;

5. Calls on the Chinese authorities to accord full freedom of movement and worship to Tibetan monks, and to respect the Tashi Lhunpo monastery, the historical seat of the Panchen Lama;

6. Calls on the representatives of the Council and the Commission to exert strong diplomatic or other pressure on the Chinese authorities to put an end to their unacceptable treatment of the Tibetan people;

7. Believes that the final decision to proceed with the European Union's Panam Project in Tibet should not be taken until such time as the requests in this resolution are met;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the Dalai Lama, the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Tibetan Government in exile.

(The resolution was passed unanimously with the exception of paragraph 7 which was passed by a majority vote: 93 for, 64 against, 4 abstentions).

French Parliament

Parliamentary Study Group Senate
on the Problems of Tibet Parliamentary Association of
Friends of Tibet

Press Release: December 1, 1995

200 Supporters for a Child Political Prisoner

In the name of the rights of people to exercise their freedom to practice their culture and religion, the Parliamentary Study Group on the Problems of Tibet of the National Assembly and the Parliamentary Association of Friends of Tibet in the Senate, representing 200 deputies and senators, wishes to protest with indignation the politico-religious brutality of the selection, organized by the Chinese authorities, of a new successor to the Tenth Panchen Lama.

According to the traditional religious rituals of Tibetan Buddhism, His Holiness the Dalai Lama last May recognized Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, a young child of six, as the successor to the Tenth Panchen Lama, the second religious authority in Tibet, who died in 1989.

The young child and his family have since "disappeared", and the authorities of the People's Republic of China set into motion procedures to declare their own candidate.

Today, a second child of six years has been chosen by a lottery system as China's officially-recognized successor to the Tenth Panchen Lama. We believe that the entire Tibetan populace will never sincerely accept this Chinese candidate. The Chinese authorities' intervention in a completely religious procedure is, in effect, an implement to interfere in Tibet's political future.

Aware of the grave consequences for the survival of a nation, a people and a culture, the incessant violations of religious freedom and fundamental human rights in Tibet,

we the 200 deputies and senators from the Parliamentary Study Group and the Parliamentary Association of Friends of Tibet denounce this new manipulation by the People's Republic of China in this land.

As well, in consideration that the child Gedhun Choekyi Nyima is the youngest political prisoner in the world, the Parliamentarians announce the organization of a workshop on Children of Tibet next March 6. But already, as have another hundred French cities which support Tibetan prisoners, we the 200 Parliamentarians have decided to support the child, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, and have sent a letter to this effect to the People's Republic of China.

Louis de Broissia
Deputy of Core d'Or
President
Parliamentary Study Group

Claude Huriet
Senator of Meurthe-en-Moselle
President
Parliamentary Association of
Friends of Tibet

(Translated from the original French)

Blood-spattered Chinese Leaders

In China today President Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Li Peng have shot themselves in both feet. Last week they rejected the Dalai Lama's candidate for Panchen Lama, the second most important religious leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and imposed their own choice, the six-year-old son of Communist Party members.

Their interference in the religious affairs of the Tibetan people perpetuates a conflict that will go on for decades. And what are they going to do with the Dalai Lama's choice, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who has been detained since May? The boy will be a perpetual reminder of the absurdity of theist Communist Leaders imposing their religious will to serve a political agenda. We fear he may be murdered unless world leaders vigorously protest.

Thus Jiang and Li shot themselves in the left foot. And yesterday, by setting up a farcical show trial to sentence the famous dissident and Nobel Prize nominee, Wei Jingsheng, to fourteen years in prison for "trying to overthrow the government", they created a martyr — and shot themselves in the right foot.

What fools these despots are — so terrified of freedom of speech that they imprison a man who has done nothing but cautiously speak out in favour of democracy and human rights.

In the short term, Li and Jiang will likely get away with this outrage. The Chinese people are like a man with a gun at his head being told to testify that black is white. Naturally he says, "Yes, sir, that 's the whitest black I've ever seen". But in the back of his mind he curses the tyrant who holds the gun.

Some western "leaders" like Jean Chretien, Canada's Prime Minister, will also say only what the Chinese leaders want to hear. To them, trade with China is a higher priority than people's lives. But, as they face protestors and political op-

position everyday, isn't it obvious that, in the backs of their minds, these western leaders are whispering their contempt for the despots of Beijing?

The point is that most of the time brutal repression and economic power will control what most of the people say. But you can't force them to respect you. You can't control the backs of their minds.

Also, in the long term you can't dictate what historians write. Li and Jiang must be very anxious as they see the Russians rewriting the history of that other great murderer, Joseph Stalin. Do they naively believe that Chinese history books in the middle of the 21st century will applaud the imprisonment of Wei Jingsheng and commend their brutal regime?

So, on this day, Jiang and Li stand nervously before their people with their feet blown off. But, of course, the image doesn't really work because, when you shoot yourself in both feet, you inevitably fall down.

Michael Craig, Co-Chair
China Human Rights Group
Toronto, Canada

December 13, 1995

Letter of Support from the Christian Democratic Faction of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania

Addressed to the United Nations Committee on Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland.

The Christian Democratic Faction in the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania feels concern about the transgressions of human rights in Tibet. The confirmation of Panchen Lama who is second-rank person at spiritual hierarchy of Tibet is a religious act. Because of that it can be made only by the Dalai Lama XIV — spiritual leader of Tibet and no a secular authority.

The intentions of China's government to change Gedhun Chokyi Nyima, who is acknowledged by Dalai Lama as Panchen Lama, to another person infringe upon religious freedom of Tibetans and world-wide recognised human rights.

On behalf of Christian Democratic Faction in Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania..

Ignascas Uzdavinys

Chairman of the Christian Democratic Faction

All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet

Press release: January 15, 1996

We, the members of the All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet, express our dismay and concern at the Chinese Government's attempt to impose a rival Panchen Lama on the millions of Buddhist followers around the world, particularly the people of Tibet. Recognition of reincarnation is a strictly religious matter carried out through well-known age-old religious and traditional practices in Tibet and in the Himalayan regions of India. Disregarding these, China has imposed a Panchen Lama against their wishes for political reason, compromising even its own rigid policies and political ideology.

Chinese Government's high handed interference in the religious matters has not only hurt the beliefs and sentiments of the people of Tibet but thousands of Indians who practice Buddhism. We, therefore, strongly condemn China's violation of religious freedom in Tibet.

We recognise that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has supreme authority to recognise the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. We offer our explicit support to Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the 11th Panchen Lama as recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on May 14, 1995.

We are concerned that the whereabouts of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, and his parents are not known since July 1995. We are also concerned about Ven. Chatrel Rinpoche, Abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, and others who have been arrested in this connection.

This is a matter of great anxiety to all Buddhists, including the Indians. Although the issue of Panchen Lama's recognition has received international concern and condemnation,

we fail to understand the indifference of our Government on the issue which concerns the sentiment of thousands of our people.

We urge the Government of India to take up the issue of the safety of the young Panchen Lama and others at the highest level with Chinese Government.

(APIPFT has over a hundred members representing all the major political parties of India)

Committee of International Parliamentarians for Tibet

Press release: January 15, 1996

The Steering Committee of the Committee of International Parliamentarians for Tibet expresses its deep anguish at the imposition of a rival Panchen Lama on the Tibetan people. It is unacceptable that the Chinese Government should make it a political issue which essentially is a religious matter.

This decision by the Chinese Government is a blatant interference in the religious affairs of the Tibetan people and in violation of the religious freedom as enshrined in the UN Charter. And it has been justly criticised by the world community.

Last May His Holiness the Dalai Lama recognised Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the late Panchen Lama. His announcement was based on the established religious and traditional procedures. The search and recognition of the Panchen Lama is the sole prerogative of the Dalai Lama. This historical and spiritual role has been followed with respect to all other Panchen Lamas.

We are concerned about the safety and well-being of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima whose whereabouts are unknown since July 1995. We are also concerned about Ven. Chadrel Rinpoche, Abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, Panchen Lama's parents, and other high lamas and monks who have been arrested and imprisoned in connection with the Panchen Lama's reincarnation.

We hold the Chinese Government responsible should anything happen to Gedhun Choekyi Nyima who is the legitimate 11th Panchen Lama.

George Fernandes, Chairman, India; Consiglio Di Nino, Canada; Laima Andrikiene, Lithuania; Walter Marquez, Venezuela; Ylva Annerstedt, Sweden; Ian Revell, New Zealand; Seishu Makino, Japan; Kara-kys Arakchaa, Russia; Namkha Tenzin, Tibet

Testing Time in Tibet
The Dragon Tightens its Grip

From the Press

by A.S. Abrahamson, Editor of *World Post*, November 17, 1989



Testing Time in Tibet

The Dragon Tightens its Grip

by A.S. Abraham, *Times of India*: December 17, 1995

By enthroning a boy of its choice as the 11th Panchen Lama, the Chinese government has extended its hold over Tibet to include even the spiritual life of the people. This is a very significant move. China has always regarded Tibet as part of its territory, and so far has been aggressively furthering what might be called the secularisation of Tibet.

As part of its attempt to "lift" Tibet out of its "feudal" past, China has increased considerably the number of Han settlers (the Hans comprise 95 per cent of China's population), set about "modernising" Tibetan religion, customs and ritual, given the Tibetan language a lesser place in education, and even attempted to change the Tibetans' staple food. Now, it has sought to make the Dalai Lama irrelevant to Tibet by taking over one of his key religious functions: the nomination of the next Panchen Lama.

Limited Autonomy

The Dalai Lama, Tibet's chief spiritual leader, who is willing to return to Tibet from his long exile in India had accepted limited Tibetan autonomy within China, acted within his rights when in May he chose a Tibetan boy, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, as the Panchen Lama. A rigorous search, according to Tibetan tradition, had identified the boy as the incarnation of the previous incumbent who died six years ago. Since July, however, the boy has disappeared.

The Tibetan Kashag (cabinet) has called upon human rights bodies throughout the world "to impress upon the Chinese leadership the importance of ensuring the safety and well-being of the true Panchen Lama". The Chinese have denied that they ever held him in custody at a guest house in Beijing. "He is not missing nor is he incarcerated", said Shen Guofang,

the Chinese foreign ministry spokesman. Nevertheless, the boy's whereabouts are still a mystery.

China has already acted to checkmate the Dalai Lama. It chose another six-year-old boy, Gyaincain Norbu, as the "real" Panchen Lama and, earlier this month, invoking an old Manchu custom dating back to 1792, ceremonially installed him in the presence of a supervising Chinese official and pliant lamas.

The Chinese not only rejected the Dalai Lama's choice but seem to have made it plain that, henceforth, he would not and could not minister to the spiritual needs of Tibetans in Tibet. The Chinese aim is to reduce the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and his followers to a rump of disaffected rebels living outside Tibet.

This represents a hardening of China's stand on the Tibetan question. The more the Dalai Lama tries to put pressure through sympathetic governments in the West and human rights bodies to get Beijing to start a dialogue with him on all issues, including his possible return to Tibet to lead his people, the more China reacts as if the Dalai Lama doesn't count anymore. This attitude is of a piece with the general toughening of China's line on all matters concerning its territory. On Taiwan, it has refused even to consider compromising its claim to that offshore island, which, it is certain, will one day return to it.

On Hong Kong, its earlier willingness to co-operate with the outgoing British has given way to anger at what it considers to be Britain's attempt to saddle it with representative institutions, in the setting up of which China has not had a say. It has announced that it will abolish Hong Kong's legislative council the day the colony reverts to it in 1997.

The reason why China is taking such a tough stance is perhaps that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the discrediting of communism, it fears the West, especially the US, will feel encouraged to isolate the remaining communist states and bend them to its will. This is why it recently invited Mr. Fidel Castro of Cuba, another surviving communist country, to visit Beijing, although, in communism's heyday Mr. Castro was more a friend of the Soviet Union than China's.

Easy Targets

Tibet and the Dalai Lama are, for China, easy targets. It wants to demolish all claims to Tibet's autonomy, even of the kind the Dalai Lama is willing to accept. Its fear of what the Dalai Lama can do to activate the issue of Tibetan autonomy has lessened to the point where it does not seem too bothered any more. The Dalai Lama, it knows only too well, cannot get a single power that counts in the world today to align itself with his cause to the point of using muscle on its behalf. All he can get are sympathetic noises which the US-led West makes periodically.

Why, then, should China go so far as to try and belittle the Dalai Lama in the eyes of his people? China's whole policy in Tibet cannot work unless it has the support of the Tibetans. So long as the Dalai Lama is regarded as the Tibetans' leader, everything the Chinese try and do in Tibet will lack legitimacy — and Beijing knows it.

The bulk of the Tibetans, both within and without Tibet, remain unshaken in their conviction that without the Dalai Lama to guide them, they are lost. He is both their spiritual and temporal lodestar. In addition to ensuring that the Dalai Lama cannot return to Tibet, the next thing the Chinese must try to do is to render him ineffective inside Tibet.

One way is to strip him of the customary right to choose the Panchen Lama, the second most important figure in Tibetan Buddhism. By arrogating to itself the role played by the Manchu emperors of old, and by disregarding the tradition of consulting the surviving lama (in this case the Dalai Lama) when identifying the successor-reincarnate of the dead lama (in this case the Panchen Lama), Beijing has played fast and loose with Tibetan custom and the Tibetan people.

Cozy Arrangement

Unlike the Dalai Lama, the last Panchen Lama, the tenth, did not flee into exile. As a result, he was caught and forced to become the Chinese imprimatur for everything that they wished to do in Tibet. This way, the Chinese got used to dealing with the Panchen Lama and deliberately bypassed

the Dalai Lama. They obviously want this cozy arrangement to continue.

For the present, the policy is clear: deny the Dalai Lama the chance to come back to Tibet, bind Tibet securely to China, and weaken the Dalai Lama's hold over Tibetans inside Tibet by getting the next Panchen Lama (who is still a boy) to fulfil Tibetan traditions, rituals and ceremonies.

That, at any rate, seems to be the Chinese gameplan. Will it succeed? The answer will, in the end, depend not on the Tibetans outside Tibet, but on the vast majority still within. If they become "modern", "secular" and atheistic, as the Chinese are trying hard to make them, and if they weaken their links with their culture to the point where they no longer see themselves as possessing a specifically Tibetan identity, the Chinese will have succeeded.

But this is an uncertain age. Ideologies which once looked rock-solid have splintered. Religion is flowering like it has not done since the Renaissance. New forms of identity have challenged age-old notions of nationalism. Ethnic pride has replaced the old cultural defensiveness.

China itself, despite the gerontocrats who still run it, is changing by the day. How much longer will China be able to keep social and economic reform subordinate to an outdated political system? For the Tibetans, for whom any radical improvement must look very remote, there is only hope in this new spirit of the times.

An Illegitimate Appointment

Editorial, *Pioneer*, New Delhi: December 11, 1995

China's cold-blooded move to anoint a new Panchen Lama — Gyaincain Norbu — is a high-risk strategy that is in keeping with the overall Chinese designs on keeping Tibet subjugated indefinitely. By throwing the weight of the Chinese state apparatus behind a Panchen Lama of its choosing, the Chinese regime has revealed its wishes to consolidate and extend its hold over the religious and temporal affairs of the Tibetans. It also allows the Chinese to deliberately spite the exiled Dalai Lama's choice of the Panchen Lama, thereby driving a formal wedge between Tibetans in exile and those who remain in their country. For the Tibetans in exile the Chinese move will provide a fillip to their struggle and focus the world's attention once more to the calculated Chinese design which deserves to be repudiated in the strongest of terms. It is bad enough that the Chinese have arrogated to themselves the right to misappropriate a ritual that is of extreme religious relevance to the people of a subjugated country, and is more pertinently left to the relevant religious authorities to conduct. What makes it worse is that the Chinese have carefully overlooked the fact that the Dalai Lama himself had determined the new Panchen Lama in accordance of laid down procedures that does not offend the religious sentiments of the Tibetans.

There is also the question of the future and the safety of Dalai Lama's nominee, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. His disappearance should cause serious alarm as it amounts to a flagrant infringement of the six-year-old former shepherd boy's human rights. The world should bring to bear pressure to ensure the safety of the Dalai Lama's choice. The Chinese foreign office spokesman's claim that Beijing does not know the whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima is unbelievable. The studied silence the world has maintained on this unscrupulous

pulous, cynical and potentially malafide “appointment” will surely come as a disappointment of sorts partly because of the way the religion itself has been deeply undermined by the Chinese ploy which further pushes the limits of the notion that politics is the art of the possible. If this “appointment” is allowed to acquire legitimacy, it will lead to a substantial erosion of religious freedom and Tibetan culture. The imposition of curfew and tight security to perpetrate this particular piece of mischief is an indication that China has also not given up reliance on repression as a tool for governance. More importantly, the present lack of international reaction to this appointment will embolden Beijing to carry out more such changes that would fundamentally dilute the individual identity of Tibetan culture.

China Finds Religion

by Orville Schell, *The New Yorker*, Talk of the Town:
December 11, 1995

The unlikely image of Li Peng, the dour Premier of the People's Republic of China, trekking across Tibet astride a shaggy yak and wearing a yellow-fringed monk's bonnet came irrepressibly to mind last week when Chinese Communist Party leaders substituted a six-year-old child of their own choosing for the one who had been sanctified by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of the tenth Panchen Lama, Tibet's second-most-important monk. Soon after the Panchen Lama's death, in 1989, the abbot from Tashi Lhunpo, the Panchen Lama's home monastery, began a search for his replacement. According to Tibetan Buddhist custom, after a wait of several years for the consciousness of a departed *trulku*, or "reincarnation of a high lama," to appear in mortal form, a clerical search committee is appointed and then, guided by dreams, omens, oracles, and prophetic visions, sets off to find the child in whose corporeal form the departed consciousness has been reborn.

Since the People's Liberation Army's occupation of Lhasa, in 1959, the Communist Party has suppressed all such arcane practices as "feudal" and "reactionary," and it has been difficult for the Buddhists to undertake the search for reincarnations. As a result, most monasteries have been left without replacements for their most important religious figures. When Party leaders grudgingly approved the quest for the new Panchen Lama, their intention was to keep firm control of the process. They were therefore infuriated when the list of candidates, instead of being passed directly on to Beijing for approval, was evidently leaked by the search committee to the exiled Dalai Lama, who, exercising one of his traditional religious prerogatives, designated Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the six-year-old son of a Nagqu District herds-

man, as the next Panchen Lama. "Recognition is a religious matter, and not political," the Dalai Lama declared. "It is my hope that the Chinese government will extend its understanding, cooperation, and assistance."

Instead, Party leaders condemned his choice, took the young Gedhun into custody, detained the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo, and then dragooned seventy-five hapless Tibetan Buddhist leaders into rushing to Beijing. Once there, they were lectured by President Jiang Zemin, forced to reject the Dalai Lama's choice as a "fraud," and compelled to prepare another list of children— from which a new candidate would be chosen by lot in Lhasa— for submission directly to the State Council and Premier Li Peng.

The idea that the premier of an atheistic "people's republic" — a Soviet-trained hydroelectric engineer who is best known for his decision to order martial law against student demonstrators in 1989 — should become involved in one of the more mystical practices of Tibetan Buddhism is, of course, ludicrous. But because Beijing's actions risk provoking the kind of pro-independence demonstrations that have so often rocked Tibet in the past, they are also extremely dangerous. Tibetans have repeatedly risked imprisonment, forced labor, torture, and even execution by taking to the streets against their Chinese overlords. Yet in doing so, as the Dalai Lama lamented when he was awarded the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, "they are facing the real possibility of elimination as a people and a nation."

With the exiled Dalai Lama unable to intervene on behalf of his people, and with Communist Party leaders unwilling even to talk with him about compromise, Tibetans are left confronting a painful paradox: while most countries lack leaders of real moral stature, they have a leader with enormous stature but no country. If China's policies don't change, Tibet may soon be without a functioning religion and a culture as well.

The Story of Two Lamas

**by Shobhan Saxena, *The Times of India*:
December 11, 1995**

The Chinese say may you live in interesting times. However, two six-year-old Tibetan boys — Gyaincain Norbu and Gedhun Choekyi Nyima — seem to be going through tough times and carrying the burden of history on their gentle shoulders. In the heated political atmosphere of the otherwise cold roof-of-the-world, the two boys have become mere pawns in a battle on which, probably, hinges the future of Tibet. Nyima, Dalai Lama's choice for the 11th Panchen Lama, was last seen in July. No one seems to know his whereabouts. And on Friday, amidst chanting of prayers, beating of drums and the supervision of a Chinese official, Norbu was installed as the new Panchen Lama, the second most important position in Tibetan Buddhism.

As the reports of the installation ceremony at Tashi Lhunpo monastery in Xigaze trickled out of the chilly ranges of Tibet, the mood of exiled Tibetans in Dharamsala and Delhi heated up. Protest marches were taken out. Dalai Lama's government-in-exile issued statements condemning the Chinese move as "illegal and invalid". Norbu was called a "pretender Panchen Lama" and appeals were issued for the safety of Nyima "the real Panchen Lama". And when all this was happening, the government of India decided to maintain a stoic silence. "No comments," was the South Block's official reaction.

But more important than the Indian government's cryptic response is the question — does the beginning of Norbu's reign as the new Panchen Lama signify the end of Dalai Lama's power and influence over Tibetans living in Tibet? And what message is the Chinese government trying to convey to the world, particularly the West which has been attacking it for its "poor human rights record"? Sino-watchers are divided over the possible intention and motive of the Beijing rulers in "interfering" in the spiritual matters of Tibetans.

The controversy started last July when the Chinese government rejected Dalai Lama's selection of Nyima as the new Panchen Lama. The Communist Party bosses flayed Dalai Lama for "promoting Tibetan independence." He was also accused of trying to split the nation and senior monks were asked to find another Panchen Lama. Thus started a fresh search for the Panchen Lama and allegations and counter-allegations between the Chinese mandarins and Dalai Lama's office. Like the never ending game of ping pong, the tussle continues even today with the Chinese calling Dalai Lama the biggest stumbling block to peace and the Noble Prize winner accusing the Chinese of destroying the distinct culture of Tibet and suppressing the Tibetan people.

"If you forget for a minute what happened during the Cultural Revolution then this is the first time that the Beijing government has interfered in the theological affairs of Tibet," say Prof. G.P. Deshpande, eminent Chinese expert at Jawaharlal Nehru University. The active role played by the Communist Party officials in the selection and enthronement of the Panchen Lama symbolises a major shift in Chinese policy and signifies the fact that even the theological affairs of Tibet should be controlled from Beijing — a new development.

Ever since the Red Army platoons marched into Tibet in 1959 and Dalai Lama and his followers fled to India, the Chinese concentrated on changing the demographic profile of the region to assimilate Tibet into the "Chinese mainstream." A slight change was noticed in China's attitude after bloody riots broke out in Lhasa in 1987. The Tibetans got some concessions after that turmoil. They were exempted from giving national taxes and also allowed to travel, with Chinese passports, to Nepal to meet their relatives.

"The Chinese tried to suppress Tibetans for more than 30 years and having failed in that they are now trying to win their hearts through different tactics," says Jampal Chosang, secretary at Dalai Lama's Bureau. He insists that the selection of Panchen Lama is a religious matter and it should be left to Dalai Lama who is the supreme spiritual leader of Tibetans.

The Chinese officials, however, reject the claim and say

that there has not been any change in Beijing's policy. Tibet is an integral part of China, they maintain and describe Dalai Lama's action as "running counter to the dignified and deeply-felt religious rituals of Buddhism and a calamity for Tibet and its religion". Dalai Lama was accused of flouting the norms by not carrying out the "golden urn ceremony" for the selection of Panchen Lama. Later, Norbu was selected through this ceremony only. "Norbu was literally hand picked by the Chinese," says Chosang alleging manipulation by the Chinese officials.

The "serious concern" of the Chinese officials for Tibetan Buddhism and its rituals baffles some Sino-watchers because China is officially an atheistic state. But the reason behind this new found love for Tibetan Buddhism is not confusing at all. The Communist rulers, by installing the Panchen Lama of their choice, have given a loud and clear message to the West, to the Tibetans and all those provinces in China which may have nationalist aspirations.

China has been at loggerheads with the West, particularly the United States, over the question of its human rights record. China's Tibet policy has often been used by the Western world to put pressure on Beijing. But this time they have told the West, in unequivocal terms, that the Chinese are the sole masters of Tibet and no criticism of its policy will be acceptable. Also, President Jiang Zemin and his comrades know that the size of the Chinese market is such a big lure to the West that it will not be able to put any substantial pressure on it. After all China continues to enjoy most-favoured-nation status from the U.S. despite Washington's "strong reaction" to "Tiananmen Square Massacre". "The Chinese are probably trying to test if they can get away with this move also," comments Prof. Deshpande.

The Chinese government has always been trying to check Dalai Lama's influence in Tibet. The late Panchen Lama was encouraged to speak up against Dalai Lama. "They have installed Panchen Lama of their choice so that he can be manipulated to speak in favour of Beijing," says Chosang. Diktats have been issued to monks to stay away from Dalai Lama, he adds.

Interestingly, during the enthroning ceremony, the new Panchen Lama expressed his gratitude to the Beijing rulers and said he loves his motherland and the Tibetan religion. By saying so, the tender Lama sent out a signal to all those regions of China where provincial emotions are running high.

After China decided to go for economic liberalisation and opened its doors to foreign investment, some provinces have witnessed a building of ethnic and nationalist aspirations against domination by Han Chinese. By openly installing their Panchen Lama in Tibet, all people with any secessionist ambition have been, in fact, asked to curb their aspirations.

In the middle of this controversy, India's decision to keep quiet is not without reason. South Block officials feel that "in the last few years, the Sino-Indian ties have improved" and New Delhi will have to react very cautiously keeping the fact in mind that Dalai Lama has his government-in-exile in India. However, Prof. Deshpande feels that "India is too weak a power to say anything to a politico-economic giant like China."

In fact, even protests in the West have been very low-key. The exiled Tibetans are wondering how to counter the Chinese move. And a large number of Tibetans in Tibet turned out at the Xigaze monastery on Friday to watch the enthronement ceremony probably not knowing that Dalai Lama has chosen a different Panchen Lama. A new chapter in the life of Gyaincain Norbu and in the history of Tibet seems to have started.

A Paper Tiger Picks a Panchen Lama

by Lee Feigon, *Chicago Tribune*, Op-Ed:
December 8, 1995

Tibet will not be free until China is free. Just as Latvia, Lithuania and the other captive republics of the Soviet Union did not achieve independence until the Soviet Union became democratic, it is unlikely Tibetans will gain their autonomy before China's authoritarian government is eliminated. But that possibility inched closer to reality with China's recently announced selection of the next Panchen Lama, a move that included a renunciation of the candidate picked by the exiled Dalai Lama. How could this act hasten the independence of Tibet? Just as Soviet leaders lost power when their credibility unravelled, now the Chinese government's controversial decision to become the supreme arbiter in the selection of the Panchen Lama has revealed the vulnerability of its own rulers.

The Panchen Lama, Tibet's second most holy and revered leader, is not just a religious leader. He has historically been Tibet's second most powerful political leader as well. In the past, the communists acknowledged this by appointing the old Panchen Lama to a number of high-profile, though relatively powerless, political positions. Now by publicly proclaiming that they have to select Tibet's next Panchen Lama, the Chinese are acknowledging that their own civil government is inadequate and that the new Panchen Lama must continue to exercise a major political role in Tibet.

In the United States, this would be as if the Clinton administration were to say that President Clinton was the head of the government in all 50 states, but that in Hawaii one of the descendants of the old island kings could also rule, though Clinton, of course, would be the one to de-

cide which of the descendants would have that power. Right now, even in Hawaii, few people pay any attention to who the real descendants of the old kings are and virtually no one, even pure-bred Hawaiians, vests them with any authority. But were the U.S. president to get involved in this process, most Americans would ask why the president didn't have enough authority to govern in Hawaii without also appointing a king to help him rule. The president would quickly become a laughingstock, not just in Hawaii, but in the other 49 states as well.

Similarly, if the Chinese government had let well enough alone and simply allowed the Tibetans to pick their own Panchen Lama, it would have showed that China's communist rulers were not defensive about their own leadership. Their government could have gradually extended its own authority and little by little eroded any position of Tibetan leadership until its power was hardly greater than that enjoyed by the present-day descendants of the old Hawaiian kings. This, in fact, is precisely what most Tibetans feared the Chinese were doing. But now the Chinese have overreached themselves, revealing their administrations to be on shaky ground not only in Tibet but in China.

Moreover this is not the first time a Chinese government's attempts to interfere in the selection of a Panchen Lama has led it astray. In 1942, the Tibetan government was in the midst of conducting the search for the new Panchen Lama when a Tibetan who was a member of the Chinese Central Executive Committee of the Guomindang government of Jiang Kaishek unilaterally proclaimed that a boy living in China was the new Panchen Lama. The Tibetan government refused to confirm this, but in 1949 the Guomindang government was driven out of the Chinese mainland by the communists and the Panchen Lama, approved by the old Chinese government, quickly transferred his allegiance to the Chinese communists, much to the chagrin of the Dalai Lama. It was this man who died in 1989 and whose successor the Chinese are now trying to pick.

The communists' experience with the old Panchen Lama, if not that of the Guomindang government, should at least have given them pause. For almost 20 years the Panchen Lama served as an ineffectual pawn of the Maoist government. But he never totally buckled down to them, and in the 1960s during the Cultural Revolution, the communists threw him in jail for 14 years. He languished in a cell near a former Red Guard named Wei Jingsheng, the man who in the late 1970s became China's most respected democratic dissident leader. Wei, whom the Chinese have recently re-imprisoned, later wrote about the incident and became a supporter of the Tibetan cause.

Though Tibetans and their supporters today worry that in picking a new Panchen Lama the Chinese will undermine further the authority of the traditional Tibetan leadership and erode what little hope the Tibetans have of restoring their state, the fate of the last Panchen Lama should make them feel much better. The Guomindang government's interference in the selection of a new Panchen Lama had no effect on the old Tibetan government. It was simply another factor in undermining the authority of a decaying Chinese regime. Later, the mistreatment of the Panchen Lama, in spite of his long years of support for the Chinese, not only aroused the ire of his Tibetan compatriots against the Chinese, but helped build sympathy for the Tibetans by dissidents such as Wei Jingsheng. The Chinese communist interference this time in the selection of a new Panchen Lama may have more dire implications for the Chinese than for the Tibetans.

Chinese Lama

Editorial, *Indian Express* December 4, 1995

It is unfortunate that Beijing has thought it necessary to meddle in the religious affairs of the Tibetans by appointing a six-year-old candidate of its own choice as Panchen Lama. This attempt to nullify the selection earlier in the year of another child, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, for a position in the Buddhist hierarchy which is second only to the Dalai Lama's, is bound to stoke the fires of discontent within Tibet. The Chinese authorities themselves seem to expect an adverse reaction to their decision and have taken the precaution of declaring a curfew in major Tibetan towns. By declaring it is the "patriotic" duty of Buddhists to accept the Chinese candidate, they evidently intend to intimidate Tibetans into acquiescence. But Beijing cannot hope to pull the wool over the eyes of ordinary people even though its sponsorship was accompanied by all the ceremonial trappings. The dissemination of news is strictly controlled within Tibet but it cannot be long before most Buddhists learn, if they do not already know, exactly why there are two young contenders for Panchen Lama's position and which of the two has the sanction of their religious leaders. It will be difficult to disguise the fact of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima's 'discovery' by an official committee following appropriate ritual procedures or the child's disappearance after word got out that he had received the Dalai Lama's blessings.

From the days of the Chinese emperors, Beijing has tried to exercise authority in Tibet by retaining a degree of control over key Buddhist leaders who carried out religious as well as secular functions. The Panchen Lama succession crisis should be seen in that context. In Beijing's eyes it is important for the next Panchen Lama to lend legitimacy to its rule in Tibet in the way that the last Panchen Lama appeared to do so by spending the remainder of his life in China after the Dalai Lama fled Tibet in 1959. Whatever political role the

Chinese would like the new Panchen Lama to play, they cannot deny that he will also occupy a religious position as head of a major monastery. As such he must be acceptable to the people and the clergy. By foisting a candidate on them, Beijing will be depriving them of religious freedom over and above the political and other restrictions imposed on them. Even by the standards of autonomy Chinese leaders profess, what is going on must be judged duplicitous and unjust.

China's Buddha Complex For Beijing Nothing is Sacred

By Pico Iyer, *The New York Times*, December 3, 1995

The choosing of divine leaders is seldom left to atheists. In Tibetan Buddhism, finding the highest spiritual incarnations is a matter of the highest spiritual importance, involving year-long monastic search parties, elaborate batteries of tests given to every prospective lama, the careful study of dreams and portents, and, finally the imprimatur of the Dalai Lama himself. It is neither a beauty pageant nor a lottery.

So when the Chinese Government declared on Wednesday that it had found the new Panchen Lama — Tibetan Buddhism's second-highest religious authority — by drawing of lots, it was more than the latest slippery gambit in China's 45-year occupation. It marked a worrying escalation in the extent to which Beijing seems ready to mock and even appropriate everything that is sacred to Tibetans.

The Chinese presumption in over-ruling the Dalai Lama, who had selected a different boy in May, is as absurd as if Fidel Castro tried to appoint the next Pope.

Of course, the political manipulation of religion is an ancient tradition in all societies. Even before the occupation, many Dalai Lamas were puppets of shrewd Tibetan regents. And the ironies of the Chinese ploy are obvious: that they seem prepared to endorse the lama system they have long derided now that they have decided to manipulate it, and that they defended their actions by referring to outdated Manchu treaties similar to those they deem irrelevant in matters of Hong Kong. The communists are also, presumably, claiming to be better Buddhists than the Dalai Lama.

What makes the Panchen Lama dispute so important is that the ongoing chess game between the most populous nation in the world and a tiny government-in-exile is nearing its endgame: the Tibetans have already lost their country and much of their heritage, and now they are in danger of being

stripped of their spiritual leadership.

The Dalai Lama is 60 years old. He has repeatedly said that he may well be the last in the 604-year-old lineage, an obvious attempt to pre-empt a succession struggle upon his death, when Tibetans, who have relied on him for more than a century, will likely have to deal with a Chinese appointed "Dalai Lama."

If China's selection of the Panchen Lama is not universally challenged, its leaders will have won by showing that spirit can be trumped by politics.

From the time Chinese troops swarmed into Tibet in 1950, they have tried to hit Tibetans where it hurts most: in the heart of their belief. Not just by killing 1.2 million Tibetans and by destroying all but 13 of the country's 6,254 monasteries. And not only by diluting Tibetan racial stock through forced inter-racial marriages that amount to "ethnic cleansing." But most effectively by broadcasting their contempt for faith itself.

It would be easy for Westerners to say that China's takeover of the incarnation process is of concern only to a far away mountain land. But it would be untrue. Beijing's actions are an assault on anyone who believes that some things are sacred, beyond expediency. And as China continues its conversion of a complex tradition into a thing for tourists (it is now building six new hotels in Lhasa), we must ask ourselves how far we are willing to acquiesce in the remorseless eradication of a culture.

Divide and Rule

Beijing Seeks to Split Tibetan Buddhism

by Matt Forney, *Far Eastern Economic Review*:
November 30, 1995

It isn't like China's leaders to quote ancient imperial edicts, or promote a selection process that involves drawing jade lots from a golden urn. But Beijing apparently believes that etchings on a 200-year-old stone tablet and a mystical lottery system could be useful weapons in its battle with the Dalai Lama — and, by extension, the soul of Tibet.

In mid-November, the Chinese Communist Party's United Front Department sequestered more than 100 Tibetan monks at a Beijing hotel. Their brief: to authorize a "search committee" to identify the 11th incarnation of the Panchen Lama, the faith's second-most-important leader after the Dalai Lama, from a shortlist of three candidates approved by Beijing.

This could precipitate Tibet's first religious succession crisis in 45 years. In May, the Dalai Lama, who is in exile in India, had announced that a six-year-old boy born near Lhasa was the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, who died in 1989.

Many Tibetans believe that, by forcing the identification of another candidate, China is pursuing a long-term agenda: It wants to influence the choice of the next Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama traditionally approve each other's incarnations. "It's not a hard and fast rule, but it is generally done that way," explains Robert Barnett of the Tibet Information Network in London. This arrangement is meant to "pre-empt potential disputes" that could arise from claims that the mystical process of identifying the lamas was mishandled.

Beijing is now making just such a claim. It has denounced the Dalai Lama's May decree as "totally illegal and invalid". The government did not openly state that the Dalai Lama's choice, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, was not the Panchen Lama,

but it gave ample play to those who dispute the decision. The state-owned *China's Tibet* devoted a special August issue to their views. A typical sample, from a local official in Shigatse, home of the Panchen Lama's Tashi Lhunpo monastery: "This ridiculous announcement goes against the law, religious rituals and historical precedents."

However, most influential monks in Tibet were guarded in their comments. Significant religious decisions must enjoy the support of Gungthang Rinpoche, a senior monk at the Labrang Monastery in Gansu province. His comments in *China's Tibet* were cleverly equivocal: "Lots should be drawn from the golden urn in front of the statue of Sakyamuni," one of the Buddha's many titles. "This means the Sakyamuni will make the choice."

Tibetans read between those lines, and find a subtle subtext. They agree that the lots should be drawn, but only if there is a severe disagreement over the identification. Could Gungthang Rinpoche have meant that the Dalai Lama had already resolved the disagreement? They also point out that the most recent Panchen Lama was identified without a cosmic lottery.

Communist leaders, led by Politburo Standing Committee member Li Ruihuan, have been promoting the lottery, quoting an edict issued by Emperor Qianlong of the Qing dynasty, that can be found on a stone tablet in Beijing's Yonghegong Temple. The emperor argued that drawing lots made the enigmatic selection process more transparent.

Many Tibetans say the Dalai Lama's choice unsettled Beijing because it was the first time he appointed a senior monk, from his own Gelukpa sect, who is not in exile. His previous appointees were either born overseas or smuggled to India immediately after appointment. The Dalai Lama's message, many devout Buddhists say, is that the struggle for his homeland's future now lies in the hands of Tibetans living there.

Not if China can help it. Since the Dalai Lama's announcement, all but two members of the senior clergy at Tashi Lhunpo monastery have been replaced on Beijing's orders, and 48 monks who refused to condemn the announcement have

been detained. One committed suicide, according to Tempa Tsering, the Dalai Lama's spokesman in India.

Also missing is the Dalai Lama's choice as Panchen Lama. Gedhun and his family are said to be under house arrest in Beijing. The former head of the Tashi Lhunpo "search committee," Chatral Rinpoche, has also been detained. "We fear for his life," says Tsering.

Still, Tibetans say that Beijing's effort to divide the faith will fail. Already, Lhasa supports a bustling blackmarket in photographs of the boy chosen by the Dalai Lama, despite the risk of a jail term for those caught in possession of such pictures. "If there are two Panchen Lamas, we'll know which is more important when the nomads travel to receive New Year blessings," says the scion of a Tibetan aristocratic family. "I predict few will turn to Beijing's choice."

Others say Beijing's actions may actually have brought factions of the Buddhist clergy closer. The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama have been at odds for two lifetimes — when the 13th Dalai Lama tried to impose a new tax system in Tibet, the 9th Panchen Lama resisted, and fled to China in 1923. Their relationship has been, at best, uneasy since then. "Beijing may have created a united front against itself," says Barnett.

Search for Panchen Lama

Atheist China Fights Dalai Lama in Picking a Spiritual Leader

**By Sheila Teft, *The Christian Science Monitor*,
November 14, 1995**

The quest for a small boy destined to become one of Tibetan Buddhism's most powerful leaders threatens to further split the former Himalayan kingdom now controlled by China.

The drama surrounding the selection of the new Panchen Lama, a key religious figure in Tibet, mirrors Beijing's unsteady grip on the region and resistance to what it regards as challenges to its sovereignty. Hardening itself against growing international criticism, China said yesterday the new Panchen Lama, the second-most influential monk among Tibetan Buddhists, could be announced soon and attacked the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled god-king, for disrupting the search.

Last week, Chinese authorities summoned about 75 senior Tibetan lamas (or monks) to a secret conclave in Beijing for final ceremonies in choosing a young boy believed to be the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama who died in 1989. The Beijing-approved rites involved three final candidates selected through a series of ancient tests.

Earlier, the Dalai Lama, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate exiled in India since an aborted uprising in 1959, criticized China for rejecting the boy unveiled by him six months ago. He charged that Beijing is forcing the lamas to choose a rival candidate.

Last May, a Beijing-sanctioned search team at the Tashi Lunpo monastery in Tibet, the traditional seat of the Panchen Lama, had selected the six-year-old son of a Tibetan herder, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

The Dalai Lama infuriated the Communist leadership by preempting them and identifying Gedhun Choekyi Nyima himself as the 11th Panchen Lama. But China nullified the choice

as illegal and declared it would continue the search. The whereabouts of the designated boy are unknown.

The abbot at the Tashi Lunpo monastery, Chadrel Rinpoche, is reported to be under detention on suspicion of tipping off the Dalai Lama and under pressure to denounce the Dalai Lama's choice. Chinese officials, who say the monk is in nearby Sichuan Province for medical treatment, have named a pro-China clergyman as the new head of the selection team.

"These activities are entirely illegal and invalid and have been opposed resolutely by people from the Tibetan Buddhism circles and religious believers," said Li Ruihuan, a senior Communist Party leader, as quoted in the official English-language *China Daily*.

"The struggle centering on the reincarnation is not accidental. It has exposed once again the reactionary nature of the Dalai Clique," said Mr. Li. The article prominently featured a photograph of Chinese President Jiang Zemin and other party officials posing with the Tibetan lamas in Beijing.

"This controversy is likely to open up new rifts in Tibet," says an Asian diplomat here, explaining that senior Tibetan leaders already are divided over how to handle the region's contentious relations with China. After the communist victory in China, the Army invaded Tibet in 1950. Despite a vast Chinese military presence and a majority Han Chinese influx into Tibet, a pro-independence insurrection continues to simmer. To deepen its hold over Tibet, China last week announced it will step up economic assistance to the region, which lags economically behind other Chinese provinces.

"No one will ever accept a Panchen Lama who lacks the blessing of the Dalai Lama," says the diplomat, "except the Chinese government."

China's insistence on sanctioning the new Panchen Lama has been denounced by angry Tibetan Buddhists overseas. "China's actions are in deliberate and total disregard for the potential of Tibetans to manage our own religious affairs," says Lodi Gyari, president of the Washington, D.C.-based International Campaign for Tibet, a human rights group and frequent critic of China. This sends a message to Tibetans ...

that China has little intention of loosening its iron grip over Tibet.

“If China recognizes another Panchen Lama, for the remaining period of China’s occupation of Tibet, it will be a major point of contention between this Chinese government and Tibetans,” he says. “A candidate chosen by an atheist government disregarding the unique historical and religious traditions of Tibet will be unacceptable to the Tibet people.”

Tibetan Tremors

Editorial, *South China Morning Post* September 14, 1995

The Dalai Lama is known for gentle humour. So he should appreciate the faintly comic sleights of protocol with which the White House handles his visits to Washington. The Vice-President receives him; then the President “drops by”, as if for a chance cup of tea and a chat.

Thus the fiction is preserved that a man who excites almost as much loathing in Beijing as Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui has not been officially received by Bill Clinton. No one is fooled — least of all the Chinese authorities, who protest each time. But the US is trying to repair relations with Beijing without being forced into new concessions. With such little touches of farce, Washington sends the mixed signals it wants China to receive.

The message is that Mr. Clinton will not be more accommodating to Beijing than before. But he will not risk any initiative, either — and that is a pity. The Dalai Lama has provided him with a line to explore. He has called for closer relations, but also pressed the US administration to encourage talks between China and his government-in-exile. Beijing does not want talks. It has called for all-out struggle against the Dalai Lama. It refuses to recognise his spiritual authority (to the extent of rejecting his choice of reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, Tibetan Buddhism’s second highest figure). It conducts a programme of ethnic swamping, bringing in thousands of Han Chinese to overwhelm native Tibetans and their culture, and it ruthlessly suppresses protests.

Such policies are counter-productive. The best way to pacify Tibet would be to recognise the legitimacy of the Dalai Lama and meet his demand for Tibetan autonomy over domestic affairs under Chinese sovereignty. That autonomy was conceded under the 17-point Agreement of 1951, but was repudiated by both sides after Tibetans rose at China’s flouting of its provisions.

Reviving the agreement, reinstating the Dalai Lama and offering guarantees of freedom of religion and assembly and other rights given to Hong Kong would help China's international reputation.

When the Tenth Panchen Lama died in Tibet in January 1989 the circumstances of his death were as uncertain as the events of his life. But with political and media attention focussed on the current controversy over his reincarnation, the late Panchen Lama's role in modifying China's rule and repression in Tibet is increasingly clear. History will see him as a patriot and hero.

But while Beijing's leaders failed to mould the Tenth Panchen Lama into their tool in controlling Tibet, they are now promoting and grooming a child of their own choice as the Eleventh Panchen Lama. Meanwhile, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the child confirmed in May 1995 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama as reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, has disappeared with his parents; the hierarchy of his monastery stand deposed and detained.

This publication lays out historic and contemporary truths to clarify China's reinvention and manipulation of the religious history and practices of Tibet. It also reproduces international condemnations of China's action and media comment.