

POPULATION TRANSFER INTO TIBET¹

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In her testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 28, 1992, Sidney Jones, Executive Director of Asia Watch stressed that the human rights situation in Tibet "is fundamentally different from the human rights situation in China proper... Unlike China, where the charge of "counterrevolution" is used to imprison those who advocate the separation of Party and government, freedom of association, a multiparty system or even the overthrow of Li Peng, the charge is used in Tibet to imprison Tibetan nationalists. There is no pro-democracy movement in Tibet; it is a pro-independence movement, and every single political prisoner there -- without exception, to our knowledge -- is detained for some form of pro-independence activity. Tibet is also different from most of China in that policies which are not in and of themselves repressive become discriminatory and potentially disastrous when applied by a dominant ethnic group to a less powerful one."²

The most notable and damaging of these policies, and the focus of our discussion today, is the transfer of millions of Chinese settlers into Tibet. The practice of population transfer constitutes a serious violation of the rights enshrined in the International Covenants on Human Rights, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other international instruments. Population transfer as a governmental policy was soundly condemned by the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in August of 1991

¹ International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet acknowledges Elizabeth Addison for her contribution to this report. This report relies principally on the following sources: Asia Watch, Merciless Repression: Human Rights in Tibet, New York and Washington, 1990; Lodi Gyari, "Population Transfer into Tibet: The Influx of Chinese and the Survival of the Tibetan Identity," International Conference on the Human Rights Dimensions of Population Transfer, Tallinn, Estonia, January 1992; Lawasia and Tibet Information Network, Defying the Dragon: China and Human Rights in Tibet (1991); Michael C. van Walt van Praag, "Population transfer and the Survival of the Tibetan Identity," Seventh Annual International Human Rights Symposium and Research Conference at Columbia University, New York, 1986, revised, 1988; The International Campaign for Tibet, The Long March: Chinese Settlers and Chinese Policies in Eastern Tibet (1991).

² Sidney Jones, Executive Director of Asia Watch, "Human Rights in Tibet," Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, at 1, July 28, 1992.

and 1992,³ and has been described by some as a crime against humanity.⁴ The UN resolutions note the "deep concern that this practice is a significant factor in the origin and deepening of ethnic unrest and conflict, which contribute towards increasing social, economic, political and cultural instability, thereby threatening world peace and security." Indeed, the PRC's policy of population transfer may leave a legacy of ethnic violence and political instability for years to come. The practice is a significant factor in the growing unrest in Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia, where population transfer has already "virtually destroyed the social fabric" of the Uighurs and Mongols.⁵ If the practice continues, Tibetans may suffer a similar fate.

Population transfer in Tibet is a practice that ignores a range of collective, or group rights, of the Tibetan people, such as their right to popular participation, a healthy environment, and self-determination. In the course of denying Tibetans a forum to express their desire for their collective rights as a people, the PRC abuses most, if not all, of their individual human rights. Rather than seek a political solution to the situation, the PRC attempts to quell unrest by implementing policies such as population transfer, with the effect of reducing the role of Tibetans in conducting the affairs of their own country.

Before proceeding to the specifics of Chinese population transfer into Tibet, we will frame our discussion with a brief review of the general political and human rights situation in Tibet.

Tibet was invaded by troops of the People's Liberation Army in 1949 and 1950. After unsuccessfully appealing to the United Nations, the Tibetan Government signed under duress a "17-Point Agreement" with the occupying forces in 1951. As the PRC moved to consolidate its control of the region and overcome the resistance movement, the autonomy guaranteed under the terms of the agreement was short-lived. Open rebellion erupted in Eastern Tibet in 1956 and in Lhasa in March 1959. According to the PRC's own statistics, 87,000 Tibetans were killed during the 16-month period following the 1959 Lhasa uprising. The Dalai Lama and his entourage narrowly escaped the killing and fled to India. In India, they, along with an estimated 100,000 other Tibetans who survived the hazardous crossing of the Himalaya and the new climate and diseases of India and Nepal, embarked on one of the most successful resettlements of refugees in history.⁶

The Tibetans who remained in Tibet following the 1959 uprising endured the darkest 20 years in Tibet's 2000-year history. More than half of Tibet's 6,000 monasteries were dismantled

³ Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities Res. 1991/28, The human rights dimensions of population transfer E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/L.38, August 22, 1991; Human rights dimensions of population transfer, including the implantation of settlers and settlements, E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/L.40, August 24, 1992.

⁴ Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, Communiqué to International Conference on the "Human Rights Dimensions of Population Transfer," Tallinn, Estonia, January 11 - 13, 1992.

⁵ Jones, supra note 2, at 1.

⁶ The Tibetans have been called "the world's most well settled refugees." Sweeney, "Keeping the Gentle Faith," *Sheffield Morning Telegraph*, June 23, 1983; from Michael van Walt van Praag, The Legal Status of Tibet, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1987, p. 170.

and destroyed *before* China's Cultural Revolution began in 1966. Many of Tibet's treasures, including ancient and irreplaceable religious items, were sent to China. By the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, all but twelve of the monasteries, the primary institutions of Tibetan culture, lay in ruins. In 1984, the Tibetan Government-in-Exile released figures compiled over two decades of the number of Tibetans who died as a direct result of the Chinese occupation. A total 1.2 million Tibetans died from starvation, prisons and labor, execution, torture, and suicide.

In 1959, '61 and '65, the United Nations General Assembly passed three resolutions that condemned the PRC's record in Tibet. The International Commission of Jurists in 1960 found that acts of genocide had been committed in Tibet in an attempt to destroy the Tibetans as a religious group.⁷ India, Nepal, and Switzerland granted Tibetan refugees political asylum, and the United States CIA provided limited assistance to the Tibetan resistance until 1971, when in all likelihood concessions were made when the PRC joined the UN. But for the most part, the international community refused to intervene on Tibet's behalf.

The PRC's bloody response to pro-independence demonstrations in Lhasa in 1987 and 1988, and the declaration of martial law in 1989 sparked an international movement to assist Tibetans in their non-violent struggle. This movement was bolstered by two events: media coverage of the June 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre and the award of the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama.

In August 1991, the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities passed the first United Nations resolution on Tibet in 25 years. Most notable of the numerous parliamentary resolutions expressing support for Tibet is the 1992-93 U.S. Foreign Relations Act, which states:

"it is the sense of Congress that (1) Tibet, including those areas incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu, and Qinghai, is an occupied country under the established principles of international law; (2) Tibet's true representatives are the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in exile as recognized by the Tibetan people..."⁸

Today, China's rule in Tibet is characterized by credible and well-documented evidence of widespread human rights violations which continue to threaten the Tibetans' distinct national, cultural, and religious identity as a people.⁹ Among the most pressing problems are: (1) torture and summary execution; (2) arbitrary arrest and detention; (3) depletion of Tibet's natural resources; (4) destruction of Tibet's cultural and national heritage; (5) repression of access to and dissemination of information and, finally, (6) our topic today, massive population

⁷ International Commission of Jurists, Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic 3 (1960).

⁸ U.S. House of Representatives H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 238, 102d Cong., 1st Sess., Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993, § 355 "China's Illegal Control of Tibet," October 3, 1991.

⁹ Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities Res. 1991/10, Situation in Tibet, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1992/37, Aug. 23, 1991.

transfer of Chinese into Tibet.

Population transfer can be defined as a systematic state policy towards ethnically, religiously or racially distinct people currently under that state's control.¹⁰ It is defined as the movement of large numbers of people from one territory to another, with the passive or active acquiescence of the controlling government. Even though the issue of population transfer has been brought forward by affected peoples as the greatest single threat to their survival, until recently this policy has been largely absent from the human rights and development debates.

No legal or other mechanism for dealing adequately with the human rights violations inherent in this practice exists. The previously cited UN resolutions noted that the practice can violate "the inherent right to life, the right to liberty and security of person, the right of all peoples freely to determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development and to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources..."¹¹ These individual and collective human rights are guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.¹²

Population transfer policies often single out specific ethnic, racial or religious groups in clear violation of the anti-discrimination principles laid down in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, to which the PRC is a party. Population transfer can lead to discrimination against the original inhabitants in the spheres of housing, employment, education, health care, the use of language and national customs.

An influx of settlers into inhabited territory can also have grave economic consequences for the original inhabitants. Famine, flooding and desertification can result from the introduction of different crops and harvesting methods, and the environmental burdens placed on natural resources by an increase in population.

The imposition of an alien economic structure can also disrupt the original trading patterns upon which the local inhabitants depend. New goods are introduced, designed to meet the needs of the settler population. Business opportunities can be given to the settlers. The original population, on the other hand, may only be able to obtain business permits and travel allowances with great difficulty.

Poverty, homelessness, illiteracy, and increased mortality rates can be the direct results of population transfer programs. In this way, peoples may be systematically reduced to a powerless minority who are treated as second-class citizens in their own country and who are denied opportunities to actively participate in social and political processes. Of course, in the

¹⁰ For a discussion on the definition of population transfer, see: Meindersma, Christa, "Introductory Remarks to the First Session", paper prepared for the International Conference on the Human Rights Dimensions of Population Transfer, Tallinn, Estonia, January 1992.

¹¹ See, supra note 3.

¹² Id.

PRC the question of a lack of popular participation is one that effects not only Tibetans but all individuals living under the administration of the PRC.

Turning our attention now to Tibet, today there is general consensus that Tibetans are now outnumbered by Chinese in cities and larger towns, particularly in Lhasa, Tibet's capital city. For three decades, from 1950 to 1980, the transfer of Chinese into Tibet was a centrally planned and coordinated strategy. The first wave of Chinese came in the form of the invading armies, many of whom were forced to remain in Tibet as settlers.¹³ Another identifiable group were civilian and military road builders and workers. Government administrators, or cadres, began to come in significant numbers in the early 1960's.

Following an inspection tour of Tibet by Hu Yaobang in 1980, it was announced that, in an effort to ameliorate living conditions in the Tibet Autonomous Region, 85% of all Chinese cadres would be withdrawn within three years. But in 1983 that policy was reversed, resulting in a massive influx of Chinese into Tibet, particularly to the Tibet Autonomous Region.¹⁴

Assessing the extent of the latest influx of Chinese settlers into Tibet is a difficult task due to the Chinese authorities' use of population statistics. Only the Chinese who have formally registered as residents in Tibetan areas are included in official immigrant figures. Most recent settlers in Tibet have not registered and, consequently, do not figure in China's Tibet statistics. Population figures are further convoluted because Tibet was split up after the invasion, with much of its territory being incorporated into neighboring Chinese provinces. The Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) accounts for less than half of Tibet's territory prior to 1949 and corresponds roughly to the Tibetan province of U-Tsang. Amdo, Tibet's northeastern province, is now administered as part of the PRC's Qinghai province, with parts of Amdo also falling into western Gansu and Sichuan provinces. Finally Kham, Tibet's southeastern province, has been subsumed into the Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Sichuan.

The highest concentration of Chinese is found in the cities and towns, where they generally constitute the majority of the population. In some places the percentage may be as high as 75%.¹⁵ According to Chinese sources, in 1984 Qinghai had a population of 3.8 million, of which more than 2.5 million were Chinese and only 750,000 were Tibetans.¹⁶ Less than a year later, the total population had increased by almost 150,000, while the number of Tibetans remained the same.¹⁷ The Tibetan population of Kanlho is officially given as 230,000, while

¹³ Wang Xiaoqiang & Bai Nanfeng, Poverty of Plenty, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1991, p. 150 (hereinafter Wang & Bai).

¹⁴ John Avedon, Tibet Today, Current Conditions and Prospects (New York, London: 1987). See, New York Times, May 3, 1983.

¹⁵ Statement by Cheng Fen, New Delhi, November 2, 1987. See, Professor Elliot Sperling, Responses to Supplementary Questions Arising Out of the Congressional Hearings on Tibet, 14 Oct., 1987.

¹⁶ See, Beijing Review, February 27, 1984.

¹⁷ News From China No. 5, 29 Jan., 1985, published by the embassy of the PRC, New Delhi, India.

the Chinese registered in the area number 290,000.¹⁸ These figures do not include Chinese military personnel, nor do they include the inmate population of China's -- indeed the world's -- largest prison camps complex, the so-called "Qinghai Gulag", which is currently estimated to include several million inmates.¹⁹

The Tibet Autonomous Region had, until recently, the lowest concentration of Chinese civilians in Tibet. It is precisely to this region that the Chinese are now being encouraged to migrate. Chinese government sources give the Tibetan population of the TAR as 1.9 or 2.1 million²⁰ and the number of registered Chinese colonizers as 76,000.²¹ But independent observers report that at least 100,000 Chinese live in Lhasa alone, outnumbering Tibetans two to one.²² Chinese settlements have been constructed beside all major Tibetan cities and towns. Tibetans and western tourists report that there are some 85,000 Chinese in Nagchu, 320,000 in the Chamdo area, 170,000 in the Shigatse area, 93,000 in Lhoka, and 150,000 in Ngari. Cheng Fen, a Chinese intellectual who escaped to Nepal via Tibet in October 1987, estimated that 65% of the population of Lhasa is Chinese, 60% of the population of Nagchu and 70% of the population of Chamdo are Chinese. Crowding in the cities has led to a migration of settlers to the countryside, where virgin forests have been cleared to house Chinese communities. Thus, in Powo and Kongpo some 280,000 Chinese are reported to have settled.²³

The fact that Tibetans are a distinct people with a language, culture, religion and historical heritage separate from China is not disputed. Chinese officials frequently refer to the distinct characteristics of the Tibetan people, their culture and history. Most importantly, Tibetans have throughout history considered themselves as one people, distinct from any of their neighbors.

Since the invasion of Tibet by Communist China, all evidence points to the Tibetans' intense dissatisfaction with what they clearly consider to be an alien domination. The continuing resistance to China's rule indicates that this feeling is not about to change. Clearly, the subjective perception of Tibetans' national identity and the will to exist as a separate people is abundantly present.

¹⁸ Radio Lhasa, 7 Aug., 1985.

¹⁹ See, the Heritage Foundation, "Why The World is Watching Beijing's Treatment of Tibet", Executive Memorandum No. 177, 10 Sept., 1987; John Avedon, "Prisons and Prisoners in Tibet", 19 News Tibet 1, at 29 (Jan.-Aug. 1984). See also, The Economist, 15 June, 1985.

²⁰ See, Zhang Tianlu, "Tibet's Population Develops", Beijing Review, 17 Aug., 1987; China Reconstructs, September 1987; Testimony of Prof. Elliot Sperling for Asia Watch, before the House Subcommittees on Asian and Pacific Affairs and Human Rights and International Organizations, 14 Oct., 1987.

²¹ Some Basic Facts About Tibet, distributed by the Chinese Embassy, Washington, D.C. (September 1987). According to China's own statistics, however, the number of registered Chinese workers at state enterprises alone is 56,000 (Zhang Tianlu, supra).

²² See, South China Morning Post, 1 Oct., 1986; The Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly, 29 June, 1987; Intelligence Report, June 1985.

²³ Letter from General Secretary, Information Office, 26 Oct., 1987.

For years, the government in Beijing has officially denied the existence of a policy to relocate Chinese in Tibet. At the same time, Chinese publications, such as News From China, issued by the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi, and the official Beijing Review, published in Beijing, frequently refer to government encouragement of the settlement of Chinese nationals in Tibet. Even Deng Xiaoping has admitted that Chinese were being encouraged to move into Tibet because, according to China's supreme leader, the local population "needs Han immigrants as the [Autonomous] region's population of about two million was inadequate to develop its resources."²⁴

The PRC's motives behind this enormous and costly undertaking are manifold. The Chinese word for Tibet, Xizang, translates as "Western Treasure House" or "Western Store House". Tibet has lived up to its Chinese name, providing the Chinese government with a steady income from the exploitation of Tibet's natural resources. While the PRC publicizes its strategies to develop the "backward" Tibetan regions, in fact Tibet's wealth of natural resources enriches China.

The Chinese have determined that Tibet contains very rich mineral resources. The pressure on the Chinese government to deplete Tibet's mineral resources is real; Xinhua News has acknowledged that China is expected to run through its own supplies of seven mineral essential to its economy by the year 2000.²⁵ According to one survey published by the Chinese, Tibet has the world's largest deposits of uranium and borax, half the world's supply of lithium, the second largest copper deposits in Asia, and the largest supplies of iron and chromite in China.²⁶

China suffers from timber and paper shortages²⁷ and has attempted to redress these needs by logging Tibet's forests at an ever-increasing rate. The Chinese government asserts ownership over all forested land and therefore does not pay the Tibetans for the value of the timber extracted.²⁸

China's development strategy for Tibet also serves to alleviate population and employment pressures elsewhere in China by providing jobs for Chinese workers in factories and projects in Tibet. According to He Bochuan, the greatest single threat to the Chinese nation is

²⁴ Deng Xiaoping, during meeting with President Jimmy Carter, June 29, 1987, reported by Reuters, Beijing, June 30, 1987.

²⁵ Xinhua General Overseas News Service, April 27, 1991 from International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet, The Relationship Between Environmental Management and Human Rights in Tibet 10 (July 14, 1992).

²⁶ Tenzin Phuntsok Atisha, "A Profile of Tibet's Devastated Ecology", Tibetan Bulletin, August-September 1990, at 10, citing Tibet: A General Survey (Peking: 1988).

²⁷ "Paper Mills Turn South for Wood", Xinhua News Agency, Feb. 14, 1992.

²⁸ Lawasia and Tibet Information Network, Defying the Dragon: China and Human Rights in Tibet 89 (1991).

population growth.²⁹ Because over two-thirds of the population are under 30, creating employment opportunities is the first priority of government policy.³⁰ Chinese officials at the Forestry Bureau in Trango, for example, candidly admitted to a fact-finding team in 1991 that the Forestry Bureau only serves Chinese settlers, providing them with 1100 jobs, including housing, meals, laundry, long vacations, and paid transport back to their hometowns.³¹

Government-induced migration of Chinese into Tibetan areas may also be motivated by strategies aimed at reshaping the demographic composition of the region. Outnumbering and assimilating the Tibetans with loyal and patriotic Chinese renders the area politically stable -- a necessary pre-condition for the government's development plans to succeed. Isolating Tibetan resistance movements or intimidating those groups by an overwhelming military presence effectively counters movements for independence or self-determination. By manipulating the demographics of Tibet, the Chinese government is able to control the disputed territories and maintain policies to Sinocize Tibetans. This systematic Sinocization of Tibet threatens not only our culture and way of life, but even our very existence as a people.

The imported workers and government cadres have imposed development schemes to appropriate Tibet's natural resources for the benefit of China proper, leaving Tibetans economically and culturally impoverished. The first famines recorded in Tibet occurred during the occupation when Tibetan farmers were forced to grow winter wheat instead of barley for export to China proper. In order to meet China's demands for wheat, the government did not permit the usual fallow season for the land, and the results were disastrous. Tibet suffered two devastating famines, from 1961-64 and 1968-73,³² in part because the land was stripped of its nutrients and became barren.

Widespread deforestation has also wreaked ecological havoc, contributing to the devastating floods and landslides in 1981 and '82. The exploitation of salt and coal already provides China with considerable income, and large quantities of meat from Tibet are being exported by the Chinese, so that meat is difficult to get in Tibet. A major new source of income and foreign exchange for the PRC is the fast growing tourism industry in Tibet. Many construction projects, including government hotels and restaurants, have been completed. The labor is Chinese and the job opportunities created by tourism are being filled by new Chinese immigrants.

Chinese educational policies minimize Tibetan language, Tibetan culture and Tibetan history from the school curricula. Many Tibetans have boycotted the educational system because they see it primarily as an instrument of Sinocization. By law, all schools must teach in Chinese, except those schools with a majority of Tibetan students, which have the option of

²⁹ He Bochuan, China on the Edge 1 (1991).

³⁰ Id. at 9.

³¹ The International Campaign for Tibet, The Long March: Chinese Settlers and Chinese Policies in Eastern Tibet 8 (1991).

³² Michael van Walt van Praag, The Legal Status of Tibet, pg. 171.

using Tibetan materials.³³ However, with the prevalence of Chinese language in banks, post offices, bus stations, police stations, tax bureaus, hospitals and all other government institutions, few schools teach Tibetan. The result is that Tibetans are becoming illiterate in their own language while being forced to read and write in Chinese in order to get a good job or pass middle school and university entrance examinations.

Opportunities for Tibetans to study overseas are also limited. In contrast to the many thousands of Chinese students who study abroad each year, no more than half a dozen Tibetans have been granted the same privilege.

The Chinese-dominated system which directs the economic life of urban centers in Tibet also causes widespread discrimination in recruitment and promotion practices. Chinese workers receive larger "hardship" bonuses, preference for accommodation in the Work Unit compound, and three months paid vacation every one and a half years. Within mixed Tibetan and Chinese work units, Tibetans dominate the manual, unskilled positions, while Chinese fill most of the executive posts.

Many of the state-run "Help Tibet Prosper" projects have transferred whole work units from China, to the exclusion of local labor, even for unskilled jobs. Consequently, Tibetan unemployment is reportedly a major problem in urban areas throughout Tibet.

There is also considerable doubt about the real level of expertise of some of the government-sponsored "experts" coming to Tibet. Unqualified Chinese are attracted to work as teachers in Tibet by the promise of a college level certificate after five years of service. Tibetans in Tibet say there is no serious commitment to training or employing Tibetans. As a typical example, in 1987, China International Travel Service, the largest travel agency in Tibet, recruited 300 new guides from Beijing, Chengdu and other areas of inland China. Most of the new recruits were recent graduates in their 20's, unskilled in the industry, and uneducated about the culture and history of Tibet.³⁴

In 1988 a communist party official stated that the goal of development in Tibet was that the west should supply the raw materials for the development of eastern China, while at the same time becoming a ready market to consume the goods and commodities produced by the east.³⁵ The reality has become an economic nightmare from which the communist government appears incapable of waking. Since 1967, according to prominent Chinese economists Wang Xiaoqiang and Bai Nanfeng in their influential book The Poverty of Plenty, government spending in Tibet has been funded entirely by central government subsidies.³⁶ In fact, while financial subsidies from Beijing have grown at a compound rate of about 15 per cent, local

³³ Compulsory Education Law of the Peoples Republic of China, Article 6.

³⁴ Report of a tourist industry manager in Tibet, The Long March, at 83.

³⁵ Statement of Zhao Ziyang, Beijing Review, 16-22 may 1988, p. 17.

³⁶ Wang & Bai at 69.

revenue has actually decreased by an alarming 14 per cent per year.³⁷

Tibetan political resistance, crushed by brutal retaliation at so many levels, has taken on new life in the failure of Chinese government plans to change the Tibetan culture into a consumption-oriented society in the image of industrial China. Wang and Bai and other economists have identified Tibetan persistence in maintaining the traditional, self-sufficient way of life as the primary obstacle to integration into the Chinese economy. They complain that attachment to traditional ways and values enables Tibetans to lead contented lives without bicycles or watches, as well as vegetables, poultry, fish and Chinese winter wheat. They recommend that this existing state of self-sufficiency must be transformed through re-education and by shifting away from a natural economy towards a dependent commodity economy.³⁸

If the present Chinese policy is successfully implemented, Tibetans will, before long, be reduced to a small and insignificant minority in their own country in the same way as the Turkic peoples of Eastern Turkistan and the Mongolians of Inner Mongolia have been. In Eastern Turkistan, which the Chinese now call Xinjiang, the Chinese population has grown from 200,000 in 1949 to between 5.3 and 7 million, probably surpassing the 6 million native Uighurs. In the wake of the Chinese colonization of Inner Mongolia, Chinese now outnumber the Mongols by 8.5 million to 2 million in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.³⁹

On May 12, 1992, China announced the creation of a "special economic and technological zone" in the Tibetan Autonomous Region to lure potential investors from overseas and the Chinese mainland. The plan calls for preferential taxes and low land-use fees. The announcement has provoked many question concerning the intent and effect of this shift in policy which will probably increase the influx of Chinese settlers into Tibet.

As for the future, Chinese predictions speak for themselves. A report entitled "Movement Westward", issued by the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi, highlights Beijing's intention to "change both the ecological imbalance and the population lack" not just in Tibet but also in other "sparsely populated outlying regions." Chinese migration should be welcomed by the local population, according to the Embassy report, and should result in a population increase of 60 million over the next 30 years in those regions. The report adds: "This is a very conservative estimate. As a matter of fact, the increase might swell to 100 million in less than 30 years."⁴⁰ No mention is made of the ability of Tibet's fragile environment to accommodate such an increase in population.

The International Commission of Jurists has asserted that, "Whatever else it may mean, the principle or right of self-determination of peoples must surely include the right of people

³⁷ Id. at 70.

³⁸ Wang & Bai at 146.

³⁹ See, The Dalai Lama, "A Vast Sea of Chinese Threatens Tibet", New York Times, August 9, 1985. See also, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (U.K.), China's National Minorities (January 1987).

⁴⁰ Reference Material No. 2, New Delhi, February 4, 1985.

who inhabit a disputed territory to determine their own future."⁴¹ China's population transfer is therefore not only a violation of the Geneva Convention's prohibition of transfer of civilians into occupied territory, but also inevitably an infringement of the Tibetan people's right to self-determination.

The Tibetan people seek the right to live as a people and to freely determine our own political, cultural and religious destiny. As the International Commission of Jurists noted in their 1960 report on Tibet and the PRC:

"The picture of the Tibetan people which emerges is of a sturdy, cheerful and self-reliant nation living in peace with its neighbours and seeking to a remarkable degree to cultivate the faith and mysticism which is known to so few people outside Tibet. No-one, least of all the Dalai Lama, pretends that reform was not necessary, and it would in fact have been carried out by the Tibetan Government but for the obstruction of the Chinese. What has happened to these people and what is still happening to them is a matter for the conscience of all who respect the rights of a peace-loving nation and people, even if they know very little of Tibet, or of Tibetans, or of the religious faith from which they are being torn."

In conclusion, China's attempt to impose its "final solution" on the Tibetans by flooding the country with Chinese settlers is, by any standard, a violation of the Tibetan people's human rights. The practice has far-reaching effects for the Chinese people as well. It not only threatens to jeopardize the ecological balance of the entire region, but it also sets the stage for future ethnic conflict and bloodshed.

⁴¹ International Commission of Jurists, "Israeli Settlements in Occupied Territories," in The Review of the International Commission of Jurists, No. 19, at 32 (December 1977).