

HR China

p.2

A. ...implementation of Article 2.

3. "The P.R.C. has always persisted in a policy of equality of all its nationalities and engaged in helping the minority nationalities develop their economy and culture."

For a reader familiar with the modern history of China and Tibet, an assertion of this type creates some difficulty. Until 1976, all manifestations of Tibetan culture - clothing, hairstyles, manners, religious practices, the very language - were forbidden. Alien Chinese cultural and administrative patterns were imposed and many are still in force. The traditional, self-sufficient economy was devastated and has been made entirely dependent on goods and finance from Peking. This situation was publicly recognized and lamented as far back as in 1981 by Hu Yaobang and more recently by Chinese scientists writing in international publications (ICIMOD-Kathmandu).

"China has made new efforts in promoting ... common prosperity."

Recent film footage shows timber being carted off to China at the rate of one heavily-laden truck every minute, uranium is said to be mined in great secrecy by the Army at several locations, a gold-rush in eastern Tibet has brought tens of thousands of Chinese miners to dig up fragile pastureland, the new factories employ Chinese labor and export the produce to China or even Hong Kong. In clear-cut areas some felled timber is left lying about when the Chinese teams leave, but if a local Tibetan tries to take an abandoned log and is caught, it is labelled "theft of public property".

6. "The central Government (of China) has given Tibet a total of more than 10 billion yuan RMB in the form of financial subsidy since 1952."

This works out at about 26.300.000 yuan a year.

Indeed, three all-weather roads have been built to link China and Tibet, mainly used to bring in troops and settlers, and carry out the timber, uranium, other minerals and a small number of industrial products. One international and numerous small military airports have been built, three or four nuclear facilities, two radar bases and an army camp for every town of any size. The most conservative estimate places 200.000 Chinese troops in Tibet, while others range up to 500.000.

Tibetans value the timber taken by China over the years at 54 billion US dollars. They claim China repaid its debt to the USSR with borax mined by Tibetan prisoners in the 60s. Uranium and other minerals being mined by Army troops is impossible to quantify, but recurrent reports indicate the quantities are large. In June 1981, radio broadcasts described iron ore deposits in central Tibet held 2/5 of China's total reserves, and several thousand tons were being exported annually to serve in ship-building, defense and missile construction. Radio Lhasa announced on

② To date China has found 54 different minerals in Tibet 54

November 18, 1987, that 28 million yuan had been realized that year from deposits of iron ore, borax and gold in the Ngari region alone.

Paintings, statues and scriptures, precious metals and stones were stolen from monasteries, temples and individual Tibetans until the early 70s (this practice has been reported again: when the police invaded the Jokhang Temple in March 1988, during house to house searches in 1989 and 1990; when prisoners are released, they are ordered to pay a large sum for their "upkeep" or forfeit their personal belongings).

The sum of 10 billion yuan may or may not include the amounts provided by the authorities towards restoring some of the thousands of religious buildings damaged or entirely razed on orders from Peking (cf para. 3). Some have indeed been rebuilt, although the Tibetan participation is stated in all cases to be considerably larger than the Chinese share. To give an example, the four main monasteries in Kham were each given the equivalent of 4000 US dollars. In 1986, before the unrest resumed, China announced a profit of 20 million US \$ (80 million yuan RMB) from tourism in Tibet, possibly to stimulate further investment. The main attraction is the rebuilt monasteries, with the monks going through their routine according to new Chinese rules and timing.

10. "The state has granted exemption from ... tax ... throughout the Tibet Autonomous Region since 1980."

This measure was recommended by Hu Yaobang in 1981, and it seems to have been applied for some time, allowing Tibet to emerge to some extent from the unspeakable situation of the 70s, which is said to have moved Hu Yaobang to tears. He also called for the removal of "85 % of Han cadres", but instead, the Han (Chinese) cadres have been slowly reintroducing taxes under the guise of culling herds and protecting rangeland, or simply assessing a businessman's property and imposing arbitrary "taxes". Almost every petition and interview mentions exorbitant taxes:

"Two offices issue business permits and you officially have to pay 30 % of your declared profit on sales. In practice they charge whatever they like." "If you declare 50 yuan, they are capable of charging you on 500 or even 1000 yuan" (a relative of the person interviewed had declared 50 yuan but was taxed on 500, then 1500, 3000 and finally 7000, when he decided to leave Lhasa).

13. "Tibet may keep all of its foreign exchange income ..."
10 billion includes, pay to PLA, officers cadres etc. their families

But Tibetans are not being allowed to admit foreigners in the few small hotels they run, the shops and restaurants in Lhasa are overwhelmingly Chinese-owned and the monks have to turn over all donations to the authorities. Once again it is the Chinese who benefit from the measure.

14. "In order to meet the living needs of people of minority nationalities and promote economic development ... the State has devoted a large amount of investment in the light industry..."

The managers and the workers are mainly Chinese, the products are exported to China and beyond.

17. "in exploiting mineral resources in national autonomous areas,

the State shall give due consideration to the interests of those areas..."

Throughout these areas, the important cadres and Party members are all Chinese, no Tibetan cadre has any real power or decision-making capacity. The few Tibetans that have tried to express themselves have lost their job or their freedom.

20. Yet Tibetan villages do not get electricity unless a Chinese lives there. Many Tibetan families lack electricity in Lhasa, or get poor service, while Chinese buildings all have light (and water).
22. "The State has organized the economically developed provinces and municipalities to ... provide assistance ... sending intellectuals to border regions, ... encouraged and organized experts, scholars and technicians ... in the minority nationality areas."

The influx of Chinese "helpers" is described in the T.I.N. interviews and in many other statements and petitions. Very few helpers are said to be really qualified. Most seem to be more interested in making money than helping Tibet. At best, their entirely Chinese background, training and outlook means that their presence further hastens the transformation of Tibet into a Chinese area, while impeding the development of local Tibetan methods, talents and attitudes. Those who are teachers benefit primarily the Chinese children.

Why is it necessary to send intellectuals to a country known throughout the world for the quality of its Buddhist scholars, authors, teachers, doctors, painters and more recently the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize winner ?

B. Article 3

23 - 31. The racist attacks on African students in Nanjing have never been recognized as such nor any apology offered. Tibetans and other "minorities" are referred to as "more backward" even in the text of CERD/C/179 Add.1. The discrimination in Tibet is so blatant that it led Lord Ennals to label it "apartheid" in talks with Mr. Tian Jin in August 1988.

C. Article 4

32. "The Chinese Government has always opposed and prohibited any ideology and behaviour of national discrimination and humiliation of minority nationalities."

In modern China, ideology based on Han superiority has been developed and enforced to an unprecedented degree. Only by conforming in outer aspect, thought, word and deed with strict Chinese Communist Party canons can a Tibetan ever hope to be accepted and succeed under Chinese rule. Jigme Ngapo, son of the highest-ranking Tibetan in China, speaks of being considered inferior by his Chinese fellow-students. Former Tibet Party Secretary Wu Jintao, a member of the Yi people (non-Han), was openly derided by Chinese Lhasa residents for showing respect for Tibetan customs and feelings. He was mocked as the "Lama Secretary", whereas he had won the respect and affection of the Tibetans.

He was not given clearance for foreign service exam.

The names of streets, towns, offices, buildings, landmarks and even people have been rewritten in Chinese characters then transliterated into Pinyin until they are almost unrecognizable - when they are not changed entirely. Dekyi Shar Lam is now Beijing Lu, Chamdo is Qamdo, Amdo is Qinghai, Tibet is Xizang. Tibetans serving in the Chinese administration are given Chinese names.

33 - 36 are laudable, but in one case at least, a book that shows Tibetans in an unflattering light, on the basis of distorted tales and myths with a lurid and sensational slant, may well have been banned in China, but it has been translated into at least French and sold in France.

D. Article 5

40. Is one enough ? Why not a majority ?
42. These bodies are staffed by Chinese.
43. The families of the detained are not even notified. What hope is there for any further refinements ?
44. When local people have asked to open their own school, they have often been denied permission. If a Tibetan's child is selected to be sent to China for schooling, there is no declining the honor. Through Chinese control, Tibetan art forms are being sinocized.
47. No freedom of speech.
50. "shall adopt specific measures appropriate to the characteristics of the nationalities concerned."

If that were really the case, there would probably not be any executions in Tibet, where Buddhists prefer not to take life.

51. If this were possible, there would not be any forced abortions and sterilization of Tibetan women, with their alleged consent or otherwise. Health services are entirely inadequate, infant mortality is as high as 100 per thousand as compared to an average of 5 per thousand in China, conditions are difficult and malnutrition is said to have become endemic since the Chinese occupation, not to speak of Buddhist reluctance to kill even animals and insects.

Schools would teach Tibetan properly, would teach Tibetan history and philosophy. Health services would be available to Tibetans on a non-discriminatory basis. Restaurants and canteens would serve beef and barley instead of cabbage and pork !

52. Cf Committee Against Torture, AsiaWatch Report, International League for Human Rights Report, Amnesty International, 1987-1990.

53. 1986 Administrative Penalties:

- a) Torture is rampant in Lhasa jails, the police routinely beat suspects, sometimes until unconscious.
- b) people disappear, monks and nuns are sent home or to labor camps - even children have been sent to labor camps.

- c) Chinese throughout Tibet have been observed by numerous tourists and visitors to insult Tibetans openly and loudly, mock them if they speak poor Chinese, tell slanderous tales about them and often resort to disrespectful physical gestures. In Geneva and New York, Chinese diplomats have been known to refer very disparagingly to Tibetans, their country and their culture, and have insulted their leader the Dalai Lama even in the General Assembly (Nov. 1989).
- q) The postal service hasn't delivered letters from India since 1987, none from Tibet reach exiles in India.

54. There is massive evidence of systematic maltreatment of people in custody by public security officials, specially Tibetans. They are given less food and sometimes no bedding in jails, in a city that lies at 12.000ft.

55. It is difficult for a Tibetan to travel inside Tibet, let alone leave the country. They require special permits to live in Lhasa and other towns, whereas Chinese do not.

57. Returning Tibetans are paid handsome salaries (10.000 yuan p.a.) by the Chinese authorities. Since 1987 travel has become increasingly restricted when not banned outright. Refugees continue to make the hazardous journey to India: over 5000 since 1985.

59. ... "the State has appropriated over 27 million yuan RMB to renovate temples and monasteries in the Tibet Autonomous Region."

Renovate ? "Rebuild" would seem more appropriate ... and the 27 million yuan is offset by 20 million US\$ in tourist income in 1986 alone.

The Tibetans have been cautiously and quietly rebuilding their temples and monasteries ever since the Chinese relaxed their tight control slightly in the early 80s. During the first years the workers were often arrested and their tools confiscated. Later, their work was tolerated, then permitted and finally some funds were even provided by the Chinese authorities, with much publicity. The official subsidy represents a very small percentage of the actual cost of rebuilding the monasteries or temples, the main cost has been borne by Tibetan donors.

... "at present there are 234 monasteries in Tibet open to the public and 743 places for religious activities which can fully satisfy the needs of the people with religious belief."*

The authorities do not seem to realize that if people were satisfied they would not risk their lives to protest. China's cadres have been told all their lives that "religion is poison": how can they be expected to look kindly or even dispassionately upon religious activities ? Let alone "without (active) discrimination". As for the

"restored 'Summon Delivery' (...) which was once suspended".

'Summon Delivery' is the Chinese rendering of what the Tibetans call MönLam, a New Year religious ceremony introduced by Venerable Je Tsongkhapa in the XVth century. It was banned by the Chinese for twenty years, reinstated in 1986 and by 1988 had become such a tourist attraction and symbol of the new liberality that the reluctant monks, protesting the earlier arrest of many of their teachers and superiors, were compelled to attend under threat of expulsion or arrest. The

so called

authorities promised to release key figures if the monks attended. On the last day, no one had been released. The monks protested, and in the ensuing chaos, a dozen monks or more are said to have been beaten to death within the temple by the police. A videotape of brutal action outside the building was shot by the police and a copy that has been smuggled out of China lends credence to this possibility.

60. ... "religious academies ... reopened or established..."

The authorities have created a Buddhist School of Dialectics in the monastery of Nechung, near Drepung. It is designed to accommodate the young reincarnations of well-known teachers, and mold them in the Chinese pattern. Official Chinese publications proudly recount how they prefer to watch television instead of studying. It is said the school is deteriorating. (Until recently, it was forbidden to "recognize reincarnations"; now it has been announced that the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama must be recognized according to the rules of the Chinese Communist Party.)

The monks and nuns have been struggling to study and meditate despite a considerable number of obstacles:

The authorities appoint committees to oversee both the religious and the worldly affairs of the monasteries. The committees appoint abbots, which was always the prerogative of the monastic community or of the Darai Lama. In one case a married woman has been appointed to oversee a monastery, a gross display of insensitivity that strains every ounce of Buddhist tolerance the monks can muster. Usually, the "abbot" is a trusted informer or at least easy to control.

The monks need permission from the civilian authorities to perform their internal rituals. They must in turn perform rituals and debate at inappropriate hours to suit the tour groups' schedules.

Monks and nuns are told they must work full-time for a minimum of three years and in many cases five years before being allowed to study. This is a tragedy, because they are already in their early twenties and may lack even a good command of the Tibetan language. They have so much to learn and only a few hours in the early morning or late at night to study! The traditional Tibetan cursus took a good twenty years to master...in optimum conditions, concentrating exclusively on one's studies in a congenial atmosphere.

The little time available is further eaten up by weekly and sometimes daily sessions of political indoctrination, known as "re-education". This effort has backfired, by increasing the monks' and nuns' political awareness, when they had initially retired to the monasteries to focus on religious studies. During the year of martial law (March 1989-1990) no gatherings for teachings or debate were authorized - only those for political re-education.

The monasteries are often surrounded for weeks and months by the Army or the police, openly displaying their weapons. In some areas, Chinese officials live in the monastery with their wives and children, Chinese civilians run tourist shops, play music, drink and smoke, all of which are prohibited by the monks' rules.

Armed security officers disguise themselves to monitor monks coming and going outside the monasteries.

37 monks were expelled from Drepung Monastery in April/May and immediately taken away to their home region by police who had been summoned in advance. They were among the best students, likely candidates for the highest degree. Most of them were in debating, scripture and philosophy classes; they each had one or two younger students of their own. The Chinese have not given any specific reasons for their expulsion. They will no longer be allowed to shave their head, perform offering ceremonies for the lay people or accept their hospitality. They are virtually under house arrest.

Another example of discrimination: the Chinese authorities do not allow candidates from Sichuan, Yunnan, Qinghai or Gansu to join Drepung officially. They can get a room to live in, but are not allowed to attend the daily prayers, share the offering tea, etc. with the other monks.

61 - 67. Reports allege that while all Chinese children go to school, few Tibetan children outside the main towns go to school. Many sources state that Tibetan children are expelled for the slightest misdemeanor, whereas Chinese children are not. Tibetan children are given noticeably inferior schooling, (see TIN interviews) they are not allowed to study English unless they abandon Tibetan and join the Chinese stream. Even so, it is difficult for a Tibetan child to gain admittance to the (superior) Chinese stream schools. This is the only way to get higher schooling, as entrance exams are given in Chinese. (This is said to greatly favor Chinese candidates who have failed in China but easily gain admittance to Lhasa University.)

Why not set up good institutions in Tibet instead of sending children to second-rate "Minority Institutes" in China ?

Tibetans have a world-wide reputation for scholarship, why can they not be trusted to set up schools on their own ? Tibetan individuals have been denied permission to set up primary and secondary schools by the local authorities.

68. "Giving Assistance to Tibet" has been described by Tibetans as another program to send Chinese without special qualifications to Tibet and justify giving them jobs, accommodation, etc

70. Ordinary Tibetans say they are often refused service or given inadequate care. There are numerous allegations of medical malpractice, experimentation, abortions and sterilizations against the patient's will, etc.

75. Tibetans complain that songs, music, dancing and plays from Chinese-occupied Tibet have taken on a decidedly Chinese tone.

76. No longer 100 % Tibetan

80. Since 1986 only. These days, 4000 families have been evicted from their homes in the center of Lhasa, ostensibly to improve their housing, in fact to widen the streets for better crowd control (see Australia-Tibet Council publication). The new buildings are more expensive, and for the first time, Chinese will have shops in the old part of Lhasa.

In the countryside, local officials are taking cattle or ordering them killed as a "tax".

Dozens of Tibetans report being presented a huge bill for "food and lodging" when they are released from prison. When they say they cannot pay, the officials benevolently accept their belongings in lieu of payment.

The principles set out in paragraphs 84 to 89 seem to be honored in the breach rather than the observance, cf Amnesty reports, Asia Watch study for the Committee Against Torture, 1990, etc. Similarly, wanton cruelty against Tibetans seems to be more the rule than the exception, although there is hope, post-Tiananmen. An attempt has been made to cover some of the points in the comments on CERD/C/179/Add.1