

# TIBET

P R E S S W A T C H

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International Campaign for Tibet

## Seven of 18 Tibetans Forced back from Nepal Still Imprisoned

### NEW PRISON IN SHIGATSE DESIGNATED FOR TIBETAN REFUGEES

Seven of the 18 Tibetans repatriated by Nepalese authorities in May (see *Tibet Press Watch* Volume XI, Issue 3) were still imprisoned as of the end of September, according to former prisoners who were with them in a new prison in Shigatse. The new prison, officially named "Tibet's New Reception Center," holds Tibetans caught attempting to flee into exile as well as Tibetans who are returning to Tibet after going to school or visiting family in Nepal and India.

The May 2003 repatriation of 18 Tibetans from Kathmandu to Tibet drew in-

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LYNX PHOTOS

The "New Reception Center," a detention center in Shigatse for Tibetans caught attempting to flee into exile.

## Chinese Premier's Statement on Tibet Raises Questions of Sincerity on Talks

On the eve of his first official visit to Washington, D.C., Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao made a statement on Tibet that calls into question China's sincerity in moving forward with the process of dialogue and negotiations with the Dalai Lama's representatives.

In an interview with the *Washington Post*, published on November 23, 2003, Wen said: "We have taken note of the recent remarks by the Dalai Lama but we still need to watch very carefully what he really does. So long as he genuinely abandons his position on seeking Tibetan independence and publicly recognizes Tibet and Taiwan as inalienable parts of Chinese territory, then contacts and discussions between him and the central government can resume. The door to communication between the central government and the Dalai Lama is wide open."

"The Dalai Lama has clearly and repeatedly stated that he is not seeking Tibetan independence," said Mary Beth Markey, U.S. Executive Director of the International Campaign for Tibet. "He reiterated this during his September 2003 meeting with President Bush," Markey added.

"Wen's remarks, therefore, cast doubt on China's sincerity in moving forward with the dialogue process. This is why world leaders continue to question whether China is genuinely willing to talk to the Dalai Lama," said Markey.

Renewed contact began with meetings between envoys of the Dalai Lama and Chinese leaders in September 2002 and again in May-June 2003. However, there has been scant evidence since then about Chinese interest in moving the process forward.



TENZIN

Hundreds of Tibetans and Tibet supporters rallied to draw attention to Tibet during Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao's December trip to Washington

"The Chinese leadership is either insincere or ignorant of the Dalai Lama's position, and only continue face-to-face meetings can clarify this," said Markey.

### PRESIDENT BUSH LISTS TIBET AMONG "DIFFERENCES IN U.S.- CHINA RELATIONSHIP."

In his remarks at the White House arrival ceremony for Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, President Bush noted that "the growing strength and maturity of our relationship allows us to discuss our differences, whether over economic issues, Taiwan, Tibet, or human rights and religious freedom, in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect."

In a May 2003 "Report on Tibet Negotiations" to Congress, President Bush

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# TIBET

press watch



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## Message from ICT's U.S. Executive Director, Mary Beth Markey

The ICT Board met in early December to approve our strategic goals for the new year. These goals, formulated by ICT staff, reflect both our strategic thinking and our 2003 work in review.

We have been especially mindful of three prominent concerns addressed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his September Washington visit: unchecked Chinese migration into Tibet, the economic marginalization of Tibetans and environmental degradation on the Tibetan Plateau.

His Holiness repeatedly stressed the need for ICT to help find ways to address these concerns. We have also drawn on ideas promulgated during the 4th International Tibetan Support Conference in Prague in October. Finally, we attached estimated dollar figures to our goals and, considering our staffing constraints, produced a plan that we believe is practical and far-reaching.

While our annual goals may change, our overriding goal to garner international support for the survival of the Tibetan nation has not. We are proud of the leadership role ICT plays within the international Tibet movement, affirmed in Prague, and the service we provide in support of the Tibetan people and the Tibetan exile government.

### Major Achievements in 2003


Among ICT's notable achievements in 2003 was the mobilization of considerable U.S. government political and programmatic support. ICT secured two long sought U.S. policy moves. First, with the help of friends in Congress, ICT led an international campaign to nudge the government of Nepal towards a formal refugee policy that reflects international conventions and will help protect Tibetans. Sec-

ond, the State Department has changed its approach to discussing Tibetan issues from its narrow definition of Tibet as the Tibet Autonomous Regions to a view that all Tibetan areas are equally Tibetan, including those that are part of Chinese provinces.

ICT released a comprehensive, expert report on the Golmo-Lhasa railroad, and we are continuing to build on this campaign. And ICT has the daily blessing of sharing our office space with former political prisoner Ngawang Sangdrol!

The ultimate measure of success is the extent to which ICT is empowering Tibetans inside Tibet in their long-term capacity to maintain a distinct identity and modes of resistance. This is also our most difficult challenge as China has accelerated its economic development plans for Tibet and, in the absence of a framework that provides for political and economic self-determination, assimilation is proceeding apace.

ICT has made the central objective of its governmental work to promote a dialogue between the Chinese leadership and the Dalai Lama or his representatives as a means to establish such a framework. We expended considerable staff resources in 2003 to ensure that the U.S. government supports projects inside Tibet that are for Tibetans and implemented by Tibetans, and we expect this will be a major effort in 2004 as well.

ICT's 2004 plan puts emphasis on the Tibet movement's greatest assets: the commitment and creativity of ICT staff and membership, the integrity of the Tibetan leadership, the compelling accounts of human rights abuses from inside Tibet, and the political support for the just cause of Tibet. 



Mary Beth Markey, U.S.  
 Executive Director of ICT



## Premier Wen

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commended the re-establishment of contact between the Tibetan and Chinese leaders and said, "We urge that such contacts continue, and that substantive dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives lead to a negotiated settlement on questions related to Tibet."


Bush also noted in the report that "the lack of resolution of these problems leads to greater tensions inside China and will be a stumbling block to fuller political and economic engagement with the United States and other nations."

Wen's visit focused mainly on trade and economic issues and was seen as heralding the possibility that he will take charge of relations with Washington.

### PROTESTS GREET PREMIER WEN

Around 300 Tibetans and Tibet supporters, including two bus loads of Tibetans from New York, participated in a series of events in Washington, D.C., on December 9, 2003, to draw attention to the Tibet situation during Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao's meetings with President Bush and other American officials.

Among the Tibetans, the speakers included Karma Zurkhang, president of the Capital Area Tibetan Association, Ani Ngawang Sangdrol and Ven. Palden Gyatso, former Tibetan political prisoners. They spoke about the deplorable situation in Tibet and urged the international community to support the Dalai Lama in his endeavors for a negotiated solution to the Tibetan issue.

The rally was organized by the Capital Area Tibetan Association, the International Campaign for Tibet, and the Students for a Free Tibet and participated in by the Tibetan Youth Congress of New York and New Jersey as well as by the Tibetan community in New York. 


## ICT Chairman Richard Gere Visits Washington, D.C.

On November 13, as Congress was winding down for the year, ICT's Chairman Richard Gere made some last minute visits to key congressional and administration officials to thank them for their support and encourage additional assistance to Tibetans in exile and inside Tibet.

Mr. Gere started his whirlwind trip to Washington with a meeting with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, where he briefed Armitage and Undersecretary of State Paula Dobriansky on his concerns about the need for increased U.S. assistance to Tibetans, especially those inside Tibet. In a separate meeting with Undersecretary Dobriansky, who also serves as the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, Mr. Gere thanked her for her excellent work as Special Coordinator and exchanged views about the need to keep the Tibet issue high on President Bush's agenda with Chinese leaders. Dobriansky also arranged for Mr. Gere to meet with U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator An-

drew Natsios to discuss current USAID's current and future programs inside Tibet.

Mr. Gere also met with a number of congressional leaders, including Senators Sam Brownback, Dianne Feinstein, Lindsay Graham and Ted Kennedy, and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, as well as staff of the National Security Council and the Asia bureau of the Department of State. For all of his meetings, he was accompanied by the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy Lodi Gyari and ICT Director of Government Relations Kelley Currie.

When asked about the impact of this lobbying visit, Ms. Currie said "Whenever Richard comes to Washington to talk about Tibet, we are able to accomplish so much in a short amount of time. Because he is so knowledgeable about the issues and passionate in the way he talks about Tibet, we are able to utilize his access to policy makers to bring serious attention to Tibet." 

### U.S. REPORTS CONTINUED RELIGIOUS SUPPRESSION IN TIBET

In its fifth annual Report on International Religious Freedom, released December 18, the U.S. State Department comprehensively describes continuing religious suppression by the Chinese government in Tibet.

"This report shows that systematic suppression of religion and culture in Tibet continues to this day," said Mary Beth Markey, U.S. Executive Director of the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT).

"ICT calls on the U.S. government to take tough action with China to match the degree of religious suppression in Tibet that it describes in this report," Markey continued.

This year's Tibet section is the most comprehensive to date, discussing inci-

dents of religious suppression across Tibet, including in Tibetan areas outside the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).

"By listing China among 'totalitarian or authoritarian regimes that control religious belief or practice' the U.S. has demonstrated that there continues to be a significant disparity between Chinese and American values in the area of religious freedom," said Markey.

"The United States needs to act on its findings by working vigorously to move the dialogue between the Chinese and the Dalai Lama or his representatives forward to a mutually acceptable conclusion," Markey concluded.

You can find the text of the Tibet section of the report on ICT's website, [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org). 



## ICT to Hold Fourth Annual Tibetan Youth Leadership Program in 2004

The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) invites young Tibetans in the United States to apply for a week-long leadership training in Washington, D.C., scheduled for March 2004.

The first such leadership program was held in March 2001 with successive sessions held in Washington, D.C., as well as in Brussels.

This program aims to train youth leaders who will not only become the leaders of the Tibetan community in the future, but who will also act now to convert their energy and convictions about issues affecting Tibet into a powerful force for activism and change. Through workshops, discussions, and hands-on activities, participants will learn the art of leadership.

The training will be specifically geared to meet the needs of the Tibetan community for a core group of young,

articulate Tibetan leaders in the United States.

Participants will learn the skills and tools required to become a successful youth organizer, including crucial media and communication skills. Participants will hear from and interact with many distinguished guest speakers who will deal with issues such as lobbying tactics in the context of U.S. politics. They will also visit Congressional offices on Capitol Hill.

Beyond individual leadership training, the program will provide enthusiastic young Tibetans the opportunity to establish relationships with, and learn from, other young Tibetans.

Program Date: March 8-12, 2004. Participants are requested to pay for all or part of their transportation to DC. ICT will provide food and arrange for accommodations during the training period.

**Eligibility:** Open to all Tibetans age 18-28 and applicants must be legal residents of the United States.


**To apply:**

Send a letter (500-700 words) stating why you want to participate in this program and any relevant background or previous experience.

All applications should be faxed, emailed or postmarked by January 21, 2004.

Send application letters to: **Tibetan Youth Leadership Program / Attn: Tenzin Dhongthog** / International Campaign for Tibet / 1825 K Street, N.W., Suite 520 / Washington, D.C. 20006 / Fax: (202) 785-4343.

More information is available under "ICT Programs" at [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tenzin Dhongthog at [tenzind@savetibet.org](mailto:tenzind@savetibet.org) 

## Tibetan Students Lack Right to Education Says UN Official

After a two-week trip to China and Tibet, the UN Special Rapporteur on Education, Ms. Katarina Tomasevski, denounced the state of the education system in China as "in contradiction of international law." Children are denied their rights specifically by being denied the right to choose a religious education and by being forced to pay exorbitant fees for what the government claims is free education.

Tibetans are greatly affected by the forced closures of monastic schools since they are sometimes the only available schools in a region.

A recent example of the restriction of religious education was the closing of the prominent Kirti Monastery School. In July, the school was shut down and its leader detained for a number of weeks. Kirti Rinpoche, a monk involved in run-


ning the school, described the closing as a slow process in which freedoms were incrementally stripped away: first they were asked to fly the Chinese flag in front of their school, then they were instructed to teach Chinese language classes, and finally the school was told to remove the current teaching staff and replace them with Chinese teachers before the school was officially closed.

Although China officially has a policy of nine years of free education for all citizens, government budgets cover only 53% of school funding, leaving individuals to pay up to 47% of the cost of their schooling themselves. Local governments often legally or illegally charge fees ranging from US\$125-2,400. To pay these exorbitant fees, rural and western families often go into debt simply to provide their children a basic education. Ms. Tomasevski said the fees create

"unreasonable financial obstacles for many, many children."

School fees would most likely be unnecessary if China increased its spending on education to the UN's recommended percentage. Currently China spends only 2% of its GDP on education and would have to triple that percentage to get to the recommended 6% level.

The problems the rapporteur detailed mostly affect the poor, migrants, and those in the "Western regions," which means a greater proportion of Tibetans than Chinese have poor educational opportunities.

When Ms. Tomasevski was asked if there was anything that China could be proud of in its educational system she answered simply "no." She will release a full report of the findings from her trip after the Chinese government has had ample time to respond to her findings. 

## European Parliament Calls for China to Drop Preconditions to Dialogue with the Dalai Lama

Parliamentarians from across Europe called on China to drop all preconditions to negotiations with the Dalai Lama and reiterated their call for the immediate appointment of a EU Special Representative for Tibet to facilitate meaningful dialogue between Beijing and Dharamsala during the “European Parliament Forum on Tibet: EU Response to Sino-Tibetan Dialogue,” held at the European Parliament (EP) in Brussels on 12 November.

The parliamentarians also requested that the Dalai Lama again be invited to address the European Parliament about the status of discussions with China. They recommended that, if no progress is made with constructive negotiations in the immediate future, EU Member States should reconsider the EP’s 6 July 2000 resolution which proposed to recognize the Tibetan Government in Exile as the legitimate representative of the Tibetan people.

“China is in a win-win situation: The Dalai Lama is not calling for independence and China’s reputation would be enhanced dramatically if it were to illustrate its clear commitment to undertaking negotiations



*The European Parliament Forum on Tibet*


with the internationally respected Tibetans,” said Mr. Thomas Mann, President of the EP Intergroup for Tibet.

While welcoming the calls made by the Parliamentarians, Ms. Tsering Jampa, Executive Director, International Campaign for Tibet Europe, said: “So far, the EU’s approach to Tibet has been without substance. The appointment of an EU Special Representative for Tibet would show that the EU is serious about Tibet. It would send China a clear signal that the EU is closely monitoring the Sino-Tibetan dialogue process and that it wants to see a time-line for

negotiations.”

Speakers at the EP Forum on Tibet included: Mr. Pema Jungney, Chairman of the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies; Mr. Harry Wu, Executive Director, Laogai Research Foundation; Mr. Dalip Mehta, former Ambassador and Secretary of the Indian Foreign Ministry; Mr. Elmar Brok, Chairman of the EP Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy; Mrs. Jetsun Pema, President of the Tibetan Children’s Village; Mr. Kelsang Gyaltzen, Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the European Union; and Mr. Hans-Gert Poettering, Chairman of the Group of the European People’s Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats, the PPE-DE, in the European Parliament.

The Forum was organized by the European Parliament’s Intergroup for Tibet in association with Bureau du Tibet, Brussels, and the International Campaign for Tibet Europe.

The full text of the resolution adopted at the Forum is available at ICT’s website, [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org) 



### You can leave a lasting legacy for Tibet

Please remember the International Campaign for Tibet in your will or estate plans.

For information about these types of contributions, please contact Joel Gysan at 202-785-1515 ext. 24 or [joelg@savetibet.org](mailto:joelg@savetibet.org).



## Light of Truth Essay Contest, Third Place Essay

*Following is an excerpt of the Third Prize winning essay (translated from Tibetan) of ICT's 2003 Light of Truth Essay Contest, written by Sonam Dorjee.\* The full text is available at the Light of Truth Essay Contest page under "ICT Programs" at [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org)*

When a people needs to protect its culture, that people must find a unique way of vitalizing and protecting that culture and establish a direction of progress.

So long as we live in this world, it follows that each one of us are tied to the responsibility of protecting our culture. During the years of separation between exiled Tibetans and homeland Tibetans, there has been little space for interaction and few facilities for the single-minded preservation of Tibetan culture; under a political regime like that of China's, such space is not easily available.

However, to explore all possible means is the responsibility of Tibetans everywhere – and those who live in exile are doubly responsible for protecting our unique cultural heritage and fulfilling the hopes of those both in and outside of Tibet. Yet at this moment, most of the exiled Tibetans are preoccupied with earning a livelihood and plagued by internal disharmony.

It is true that we in exile cannot contribute directly to the progress of the Tibetans inside Tibet. All dedicated Tibetans, led by officials and scholars, should persuade the more well-to-do exiled Tibetans to provide financial support to their brethren in Tibet through charitable trusts and funds. These resources can be channeled to Tibet in the name of citizens from other countries, and used toward the development of existing schools and monasteries, and improving the livelihood of local Tibetans.

From the perspective of a refugee, it is not an easy task to help others financially. But this is an era when financial clout allows one to interfere in numerous issues. For instance, in 1997, somewhere around Rebkong, Amdo, a foreigner by the name of Yufu founded a middle school intended for Tibetans, and named it Yufu Middle School. Today that school has grown into a bustling community center for youths of that area. Moreover, some Europeans have founded a school called "Gedun Choephel Middle School," in the area which is currently in the process of improving. By creating such and such projects, those concerned about the cultural education of the villagers can lay the foundations for a favorable environment. In Dhomey, Ragya Jigme Private School is a cultural-religious center that resulted from the tireless efforts of director Jigme la. By gathering financial resources in order to help a people achieve an attainable goal, he has set an example that should be emulated throughout the three provinces of Tibet.

We should commit our unwavering moral and financial support to these centers that are founded for the sole purpose of preserving our

cultural heritage. Though the Tibetan Government-in-Exile is not in a position to provide direct help for those inside Tibet, it should try its best in providing help in the name of TSGs (Tibet Support Groups) and Tibetans residing abroad (who are citizens of other countries). If the cultural centers are kept vibrant and alive for an extended period of time, there is no doubt that our goals of cultural preservation will be achieved. Similarly, when well-to-do Tibetan exiles also shoulder the responsibilities toward their country and people, thereupon doing their share in initiating projects aimed at the development of homeland Tibetans, they perform the highest form of religious and cultural service to their people and will be the pillars of history from this generation to future generations.

As it is our responsibility to eliminate the suffering of Tibetans in general and protect our culture as best we can, each individual should participate in initiating projects that keep our culture alive. The central goal of this people, especially this generation, is to create an environment that provides religious and cultural education, and to create opportunities of studying both the ancient wisdom and modern education of Tibet. While re-establishing schools and renovating old monasteries in Tibet, it is important to make efforts to take advantage of the rights provided for minority peoples under rules set down by the Chinese government.

I believe that there is not too much opposition from the Chinese government against development that is in keeping with the laws legislated for the minority peoples. If we nurture our greed instead of seizing opportunities like these and initiating various projects and enterprises, it is the same as advancing toward our own doom.

By knowing how to seize the opportunity, Alak Maniwa, who was raised and educated in exile in India and later returned to Tibet, established many primary and middle schools and expanded many existing schools in more than ten villages in and around Tso-ngon, Amdo. This led to a dramatic decrease in the villagers' illiteracy; and the parents, who are devoted to their tradition, send their children to those schools so that the children grow up into respectable adults who are well versed in the Tibetan language and culture. Those rooted in their own culture and tradition from a young age are able to use the Chinese facilities to their own advantage. When opportunities are created for Tibetan youths who have much devotion to their culture, one does the greatest service to this generation of Tibetans and makes the greatest gift to the future generations of Tibetans.

As per Chinese government policy, it is difficult to receive higher education without a considerable amount of money. Therefore, many youths with financial problems at home do not get the opportunity to attend universities although they are very motivated to study. We in exile should try to find financial support for these students. A system has taken root in China whereby many stu-

dents go to school on the help provided by foreigners; so such efforts will not face much objections.

There are many opportunities whereby foreigners and exiles can help the Tibetans inside Tibet, and exile Tibetans should make sure that these opportunities are seized. On the one hand, the exile Tibetans put a lot of effort into publicizing the cause of Tibet and there are a few foreign institutions, trusts and funds that continue to support causes in Tibet, such as the reputed Drangchar Publication being supported by the Trace Foundation in the United States. It must be considered our fundamental goal to suggest and advise the Tibet Support Groups on the myriad of ways to help the financially deprived Tibetans.

Our main weakness is not the absence of culture and tradition but the absence of a favorable environment to practice them; such an environment should be created by those living in Tibet as well as in exile. It is a practice of the highest purity to engage in activities aimed at supporting the culture that is indispensable to a people's identity. Thus, even though the homeland Tibetans are prevented from raising the banner of the Tibetan people, it is important for them to nevertheless use the facilities provided for minorities, and to secure the development of the Tibetan people.

Many years ago, through the good offices between the Tibetan Exile Government and the United States, as per the order of the Exile Tibetan Government, over two thousand Tibetans have been sent to the United States. The Exile Government undertook that step with the expectation that it might strengthen the preservation of Tibetan culture and secure the long-term welfare of the Tibetan people. However, to date, in spite of the high number of Tibetans who use the citizenship of their new countries of residence to visit Tibet, there are very few Tibetans who have done so with the goal of developing the people and preserving the culture. It is extremely sad that even with the knowledge that many exiles survive on the donations of foreigners, those who have helped such schools and institutions are few. Moreover, Tibetans who live in various foreign countries are often said to be too busy to even stop and think about issues concerning our people. I would also like to suggest that to change this precarious situation, it is important to have proper network of communications and enhance the efficacy of announcements.

*\*Sonam Dorjee is a 24-year-old Tibetan who was born to farmers in the village of Gylwogang, in Rebkong, Amdo. Since April 1999, Sonam Dorjee has studied at the Tibetan Transit School and is currently at the Academy of Tibetan Culture at the Norbulingka Institute where he graduated with a B.A. While currently studying for his M.A. and learning English, Sonam Dorjee also continues to write poetry and essays for publication in Tibetan.*





## VOICES FROM THE FRONT LINES

**“There is always the chance of an eruption”**

*An interview with a Tibetan shopkeeper:*

**Q: How old are you and where are you from?**

A: I am 23 years old. My hometown is in Amdo.

**Q: When did you come to Lhasa and why?**

A: I came to Lhasa two years ago. I did not want to stay in Labrang. There was nothing to do for me except getting married and do household work, raise kids and all that. Prospects in Lhasa are much better, as modernization and development are much faster here than in other parts of Tibet.

**Q: Why did you not go to university?**

A: My family has its own business, but still university is far too expensive. We just could not afford it. Therefore, I decided to go to India instead. I have been there twice, but I had to come back, because my mother became very ill.

**Q: Was it easy to get this job in Lhasa?**

A: I had the help and support of good friends. If you do not have any connection, it is not that easy.

**Q: How do you feel about modern Lhasa these days?**

A: Well, it is nice to live in a city with the comfort of running water and electricity. But the Chinese influence here is much too big. This is not longer Tibet, this is China already. The control by the authorities is very strict here. One has to watch his word here. Police sent out undercover spies, who check out people's opinions. While in my hometown we can have a Dalai Lama picture hanging in the living room, this is absolutely impossible here. You would be in great trouble. In Lhasa we are free to do what we want as long as our activities are within the rules. As soon as we start to push the line a little bit, the authorities hit back at once.

**Q: What do you think of Chinese then?**

A: My favorite Chinese are those from Hong Kong. Usually they know about the problems here and have money to spend. They are interested; they want to understand. Young, educated Chinese from Beijing and Shanghai are not bad either. They might not know too much about what is going on here. However, they see with their own eyes when they are here. Then some of them start to ask questions. They ask me if life here is the same, as they know from TV programs back home. So we start talking and they might get a more realistic view. The worst are Chinese tourist, who come to Tibet and just think of it as another tourist attraction without any understanding of our culture and traditions.

**Q: Do you think there will be a change in Tibet at any time?**

A: Maybe. I gave up to listening to either the Chinese side or the Indian side in telling us what to do. I have to find my own way. I will study, try to improve my skills and then find a career. If things change, ok. If not, I hope to have a good job and make a nice living.

**Q: So you do not care about the situation anymore?**

A: Well, of course I do. However, it is not so easy anymore. I have this rather good job here, which gives me the chance to follow my dreams. On the other hand, I have a very bad feeling in my stomach every morning, when I think about how all this is possible.

**Q: Would you say, that is a general feeling upon Tibetans?**

A: It is hard to say. Everybody live his life here, trying to get along. Inside many of us are sad and angry about all the things that happened. I do not know what will happen, if anger and sadness get too much. There is always the chance of an eruption.

**Seven Tibetans Still Imprisoned**

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international headlines and condemnation of the Nepalese government. In August, Nepal said that it would not repatriate Tibetans in the future.

The 18 deported Tibetans spent 11 days at a Nyalam prison near the Tibet-Nepal border before being transferred to the “New Reception Center” in Shigatse on June 10, 2003. Former prisoners from Nyalam reported to ICT that the 18 were beaten badly and tortured with electric batons. Prisoners also reported that some of the 18 deported refugees were subjected to even more sadistic torture, such as having sewing needles inserted in between their finger nail and flesh, which in one case was apparently done to revive one of the 18 who was unconscious.

“The worst fears of the international community – that these 18 deportees would be brutally tortured – are coming true,” said John Ackerly, President of ICT.

“We know that international attention has improved the treatment of some prisoners, but international headlines and concern do not seem to have helped these refugees, who did nothing more than try to flee to freedom,” Ackerly said.

Former prisoners from Shigatse say that seven of the 18 were still in prison as of the end of September. The name of the new prison, Tibet's New Reception Center, is ironically similar to the refugee reception centers in both Kathmandu, Nepal, and Dharamsala, India. The literal translation of the sign posted in front of the new prison in Shigatse is “The new reception center in the Snow lands” (Tibetan: khangjong nelenkhang sarpa). “Snow lands” is a traditional name for Tibet. In Kathmandu,

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## Most Venerable Kabje Bakula Rinpoche: 1917-2003

By Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari

I realize that I contribute often to the Milestones page, usually to pay homage or remembrance to a departed friend. Though it is a painful and obviously not welcome task, I consider it of great importance that we not forget those that have stood by us, particularly in times of great need, and that we pay them the respect and honor that they so greatly deserve.

I write now to pay homage to the Most Venerable Kabje Bakula Rinpoche, who passed away in New Delhi on November 4th.

Bakula Rinpoche dedicated his whole life to public service, especially for the people of Ladakh, where he was born to a royal family on May 21st, 1917. Almost single-handedly he led the people of Ladakh into the modern era while firmly maintaining the strong Buddhist cultural tradition of the area. He is recognized and referred to as "The Architect of Modern Ladakh."

His impact went far beyond Ladakh, however. As a Cabinet Minister in the Jammu and Kashmir government, as a member of the Indian Parliament, and as a member of the Minority Affairs Commission of the Government of India, his contributions towards the advancement of the well-being of minorities and disenfranchised millions in India were unparalleled.

For these contributions he was presented with the second highest honor in India, the Padma Bhushan, by the President of India.

The highest-ranking Indian Buddhist leader, Bakula Rinpoche was also a great scholar. He was recognized by the great 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama as a reincarnation of Bakula Arhat, one of the Sixteen Arhats (direct disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha), and spent several years studying at the great university of Drepung in Lhasa, where he obtained the highest Buddhist degree, Geshe Lharamba.

No Indian leader has felt the suffering and the destruction that has been perpetuated on Tibet more so than Bakula Rinpoche, as he was part and product of the Tibetan culture and religion - and an illustrious one at that.


I had the great honor and privilege of being a close friend of Rinpoche's for many decades and even worked with him in the establishment of the Indian Parliamentary Group for Tibet, the first such parliamentary group ever established, in the late 1960's. Rinpoche would take me with him to the lobby of the Indian parliament and, member by member, would bring them over to be enrolled in the group. Of the 90-odd members of Parliament that joined in the first year, the majority of them were brought on board single-handedly by

Bakula Rinpoche, who was then himself a member of the Indian Parliament.

His assistance to the Tibetan people was not limited to helping His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tibetan government in exile. He would help any Tibetan who came to him and asked for help with their personal problems. I know that the Tibetans asked much of him, because, for us, he was not only a supporter but one of our leaders.

Bakula Rinpoche also served with distinction as India's ambassador to Mongolia for ten years, including during the time of the breakup of the Soviet Union. It was a very crucial time for Mongolia and her people. Not only did Rinpoche ably represent India, but he also played a crucial role in helping Mongolia rediscover its own culture and religious identity.

With Bakula Rinpoche's passing, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has lost a close and dependable friend and the Tibetan people have lost a true champion. His absence will be felt far beyond India and his legacy will forever be remembered and cherished.

For me, the loss is very personal. My only consolation is that I had the honor of meeting with him just two days before he passed. As a devout Buddhist I pray for his swift return. 

## Seven Tibetans Still Imprisoned; New Prison in Shigatse

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

the commonly used name of the refugee reception center administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the Tibetan Refugee Reception Center (Tibetan: bhoeme kyabjol nelenkhang).

The New Reception Center is set off from residential or commercial areas to the southwest of Shigatse across from a marshy area known in Tibetan as Dechen

Podrang. Dechen Podrang is the traditional summer residential area for the previous Panchen Lamas and was often used for public religious sermons and blessings.

The facility had been used as housing and office headquarters for a Chinese construction company. The construction company closed two years ago. During the SARS outbreak in the PRC last summer, some of the buildings inside the com-

pound were reportedly used for a short time as an emergency epidemic center, according to local government workers in Shigatse.

According to former inmates, there were approximately 300 prisoners in detention at the New Reception Center in June 2003 and in November there were an estimated 450 to 500. Nearly all of the pris-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



## Tenzin Delek Rinpoche Campaign

One year since Tenzin Delek Rinpoche received a life sentence, repression continues in his home region


December 2, 2003 marked the one-year-anniversary of the death sentence of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, a prominent and well-respected monk-leader from Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Though the charges against Tenzin Delek Rinpoche are for "separatism" and "incitement to cause explosions," his arrest is most likely politically motivated, as the Chinese authorities have produced no evidence of his involvement in illegal activities. The anniversary was commemorated by international action, including over 1,500 letters sent to the Chinese Minister of Justice through the International Campaign for Tibet alone. Tenzin Delek Rinpoche is currently more than one year through the two-year reprieve of his sentence since the suspension included time served before his trial. His reprieve expires on April 7, 2004.

China has failed to disclose information regarding Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's legal case or his whereabouts or well-being. It is known that three people remain missing and two detained in connection to Tenzin Delek Rinpoche. More information has also been released regarding former prisoner Tserang Dhondrup, arrested for collecting signatures on a petition to free Tenzin Delek Rinpoche. While in prison, both his legs were broken and he was completely blinded for defending Tenzin Delek Rinpoche and refusing to cooperate with Chinese authorities. The extensive torture left him physically and mentally handicapped.

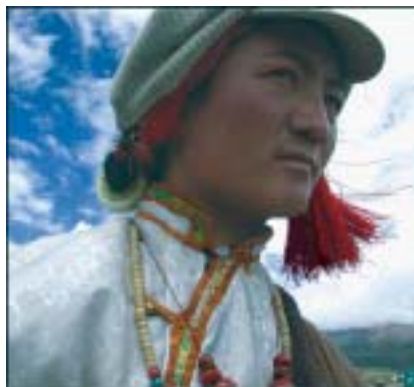
In Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's home region of Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Tibetans continue to resist the restriction of their religious and political freedoms. The most prominent display of Tibetan defiance occurred in August 2003 when a five-foot Tibetan national flag was hoisted atop a radio transmission tower, though smaller pro-independence acts occur almost weekly.

Authorities have responded to the increasing incidents by inspecting businesses and homes for photographs, videos, CDs, books or tapes of the Dalai Lama. Families found with these illegal materials were told that

they were no longer eligible for government benefits and were threatened with land confiscation.

While it used to be that Tibetan protests were more centralized and confined to the Lhasa area, the trend since the mid-1990's has been increased subversive activity in regions outside Lhasa and even outside the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Arrests are now more frequently occurring outside the TAR in surrounding Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture areas. 

### Join ICT's Friends of Tibet Monthly Giving Program



The Friends of Tibet monthly giving program is a small, select group of ICT members who care deeply about the Tibetan people and cause.

By contributing a small amount each month through an automatic credit card donation or bank transfer, the Friends of Tibet provide a vital and stable source of funds from which ICT can draw to take immediate action.

Further information about this program is available on our website at [www.savetibet.org/donate](http://www.savetibet.org/donate) or contact Michelle Lee at (202) 785-1515 ext.25

## UPDATE:

### PHUNTSOG NYIDROL

New action has been taken to help free Phuntsog Nyidrol, 34-year-old Tibetan nun and longest serving female political prisoner in Tibet. United States Representative Tom Udall (D-NM) has sponsored a resolution calling for the government of China, as an act of goodwill, to release of all prisoners of conscience. Phuntsog Nyidrol is specifically mentioned by name. House Resolution 157 currently has 63 other co-sponsors and is in an excellent position to be put up for a vote when Congress reconvenes after the new year.


International action on behalf of a prisoner has been shown to improve their situation. Former political prisoner Ngawang Sangdrol says though she didn't know at the time why someone's treatment would improve, she can see now that prisoners were treated better when their cases received more international attention.

Phuntsog Nyidrol was only 20 years old when she was arrested in 1989 for taking part in a peaceful protest. Unlike the four other nuns she was with who received relatively short sentences, Phuntsog Nyidrol was sentenced to nine years in Drapchi Prison. Her sentence was extended in 1993 when she, Ngawang Sangdrol, and twelve other nuns (the "Drapchi 14") recorded and smuggled out of prison songs about their love for the their country, their people, and the Dalai Lama.

Upon her release in 2002, Ngawang Sangdrol urged for the release of Phuntsog Nyidrol, saying:

"I am very worried about Phuntsog who still has two years of her sentence to go. She is very ill and has been terribly affected psychologically by the beatings and torture. It is very important for me that she be released from prison and allowed to get medical help."

Phuntsog Nyidrol received a sentence reduction of one year, a Chinese official reported, because she had "shown signs of repentance" in recent years. She is now due for release in March 2005.

You can help free Phuntsog Nyidrol by asking your Congressman to sign on as a co-sponsor to HR-157! Contact your representatives through ICT's Online Action Center at [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org) today. 

## Tibetans Still Imprisoned, New Prison in Shigatse

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

oners are Tibetans who have been caught at the Nangpa pass or near the Friendship Bridge border crossing near Dram, the main commercial border crossing into Nepal from Tibet.

Approximately 2,500 Tibetan refugees escape into exile annually, traveling through Nepal en route to India. Human rights organizations and the UNHCR often only learn of arrests by Chinese border patrols, or of deportations of Tibetan refugees by Nepalese officials, when refugees make a successful re-attempt at escape.

Refugees who are caught coming back from India or Nepal are reportedly treated much more harshly and receive longer sentences than those who are caught trying to leave Tibet, according to former inmates. Tibetans who have served sentences in the New Reception Center or at Nyari prison in Shigatse report that most individuals caught at the border serve a prison sentence of three to five months, receive beatings and torture regularly (most commonly being hit with an electric baton), and must perform hard labor, usually road building in and around Shigatse.

Tibetans detained for trying to flee Tibet without papers are rarely provided with any judicial hearing or proceeding. Reports emerging from the new prison in Shigatse indicate an even more lawless and extra judicial character. Former inmates have told ICT that many prisoners are released after serving three to five months and paying a fine typically ranging from 1,700 to 5,000 yuan or (US\$212-625). However, family members often have to pay double the amount of the fines or more in bribes. One relative reported that he had to visit the prison seven times and bribe officials with bottles of liquor and meals before they would accept payment of the fine.

In addition, each prisoner must sign a document that states that they will never again attempt to leave the People's Republic of China to go to India and family members also have to sign as guarantors that the prisoner will not try to flee again.


"If I left, my relative would have to go to prison in my stead," said one former prisoner.

The tactic of securing guarantors for former political prisoners has been used by the PSB in Tibet to ensure probationary



*Nyalam prison, near the Tibet-Nepal border, where the 18 deported Tibetans spent 11 days before being transferred to the "New Reception Center" prison.*

stipulations are followed, as well as to make certain that former prisoner do not try to flee into exile.

The head of Tibet's New Reception Center is reportedly Chinese and spends little time in Shigatse, while his deputy is a Tibetan from Derge. There are approximately 160 employees at the detention facility, excluding police, army and paramilitary security personnel, former inmates have told ICT. Of the employees, less than 20% are Tibetans, prisoners say. 

## China Constructs Road to Stem Flow of Tibetan Refugees to Nepal

The Chinese government has recently completed construction of a paved road to Gyaplung, just 6 kilometers from the glaciated Nangpa La (Nangpa Pass) on the Nepal-Tibet border in its effort to stem the flight of Tibetans from Tibet, according to ICT sources in the region. Nangpa La, at over 19,000 feet above sea level (5,716 meters), is the primary escape route into Nepal used by Tibetan refugees fleeing Tibet.

Gyaplung is poised to become the highest elevation Chinese border patrol station at over 16,000 feet above sea level. The new road to Gyaplung will allow easy trans-

port of infrastructure building materials to this high mountain region. Currently, border security personnel must pitch tents in the area when patrolling, as there are no permanent structures. Gyaplung, itself, is a traditional Tibetan encampment made of low-rise stone huts used by traders along the historical yak caravan trading route.

Road construction was completed within the last three months and the road reaches the rocky encampment of Gyaplung at the foot of the Nangpa La glacier, according to traders in the region. In order to bring in heavy road-making machinery, a bridge was constructed at Dzibuk village

last year.

Road construction was a joint effort of People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the People's Armed Police (PAP), according to local reports. The PAP is a paramilitary unit formed from the PLA in the early 1980s, and is responsible for internal security, border control, and protection of state installations, including prisons. The PAP is the primary body that patrols the high mountain passes where Tibetans attempt to escape into Nepal.

The main PAP border patrol station is currently located at Tragmar, some 25 ki-

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



## China Constructs Road to Stem Flow of Tibetan Refugees to Nepal

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE


lometers to northwest of the Nangpa La. Tibetan refugees most often negotiate the Tragmar-Nangpa La area (2-3 days) by night to avoid the border patrols. They have usually walked for four days to a week before arriving in the Tragmar area. Last year, the Tragmar patrol station installed flood lights to illuminate the area when security personnel are patrolling in the area, traders and refugees have recently reported to ICT.

At Tragmar border stations, small concrete cells are used to hold Tibetans caught trying to flee into Nepal. Reports from Tibetans who have been held in Tragmar indicate that they are usually kept for 2-3 days before being transferred to

Nyari prison in Shigatse where they spend two to three months. The reports come to ICT after the refugees have made a successful re-attempt to flee into exile.

Chinese security along the Nepal-Tibet border has tightened significantly in the last two years. Specifically in the Nangpa La region, security personnel are known to fire on Tibetan refugees trying to flee over the mountain terrain.

On January 2, 2002, The Tibet Information Network quoted a Xinhua report saying, "During the Strike Hard campaign, officers and men of the Tibetan border patrol units have had to brave freezing condi-

tions and extreme discomfort in order to carry out their duties of preserving stability in the border regions of the Motherland. As a crossing point, Nangpa-La mountain pass has always been a 'golden route' for people trying to steal across the border. Patrolling the mountain pass at Nangpa-La is a duty that has to be carried out every night by the officers and men of the unit and involves a two-hour walk from the unit's temporary station to Nangpa-La. Wearing leather hats and thick padded greatcoats, they have to wade through three waist-deep streams and traverse two mountains that are snow-capped even in summer." 

## Tibetans Fired upon by Chinese Border Police

Last year, there were separate eyewitness reports by Western mountain climbers of Chinese border police firing upon Tibetan refugees as well as pursuing refugees across Nangpa La into Nepalese territory. Nepalese police in Namche Bazaar, the main trading village south of Nangpa La, spoke frankly to ICT human rights monitors last year shortly after a shooting incident.

"During our investigation of the Chinese border incursion, we collected at least a dozen spent rifle shell casing as far south as Khanjung on our side of the pass," a police official in Namche told ICT human rights monitors. No public reprimands of the Chinese were made by Nepalese authorities at the time.

In mid October of this year, a group of 34 Tibetan refugees was fired upon by Chinese border security while attempting to cross into Nepal over Nangpa La. The incident took place two kilometers above Gyaplung at the glacial lake of Tso Tangyura where the group of refugees was spotted by border patrols.

"When the machine gun fire started hitting around us, we ran in all directions," a

25-year-old refugee told ICT in Kathmandu. "We ran back where we came from just trying to avoid the army. After hiding from the gun blasts for many hours, we climbed over Nangpa La in the middle of the night and walked the entire day on the Nepal side as we were so scared."

The same 25-year-old individual told ICT that only 17 members of the group of 34 successfully made it over the Nangpa La while the others were caught by the border security. It is not known if any of apprehended 17 were shot.


In early September of this year, a 17-year-old girl died after evading the border police at Tragmar by falling in a crevasse on the Tibet side of Nangpa La.

"We decided it would be safer to move at night but we lost our way," a companion of the deceased girl told ICT after arriving in Kathmandu in October.

"My friend slipped and fell into the deep ice crack. We all tied our belts and shirt together attempting to pull her out but the makeshift rope kept snapping. After some time, we couldn't hear her voice coming from the ice crack anymore."

On November 14, 2003 China's ambassador in Nepal, Sun Heping, reiterated his government's stance that it would do what is necessary to stop Tibetans from fleeing Tibet. "There is no Tibetan refugee problem between us (China and Nepal) but those who have been creating problems are illegal immigrants crossing over to Nepal," AFP quoted Sun as saying.

The Chinese envoy was further quoted in the pro-Chinese Nepalese journal, *The People's Review*, as saying Tibetan refugees entering Nepal do so "forcibly and without any valid reason and have already become an international nuisance and problem all over the world."

Approximately 2,500 Tibetans annually escape from Tibetan enroute to India. Approximately a third of those refugees are children under 18 years who are seeking a Tibetan language education unavailable to them under Chinese rule. Approximately one quarter of the refugees who successfully escape Tibet are monks and nuns who flee due to Chinese repression of religious beliefs and practices. 



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*THU JE CHE! (THANK YOU!)*

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*Please accept our sincere apologies for any mistakes or omissions.*

## How You Can Help ICT

Please consider expanding your support for the people of Tibet. We need to make sure that we are prepared to help the process of dialogue that began in 2003, to secure more releases of political prisoners, and to promote the Dalai Lama's message of non-violence.

Listed below are a few ways that you can support Tibetans through gifts to ICT. All gifts to ICT are fully tax-deductible.

**Donations** can be made through personal checks or through select credit cards (Visa or Mastercard). You can also donate through our website with ICT's secure online network at [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org).

**Monthly Friends of Tibet Giving Program** - ICT also has a Friends of Tibet monthly-giving program. We can automatically deduct the donations from your credit card or bank account, which will make it easier for you. And, you can cancel your contribution at any time. Friends of Tibet will receive special updates on the most recent issues affecting Tibet.

**Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), The United Way & Workplace Giving** — Please consider selecting ICT for a donation this year in your CFC, United Way or workplace giving campaigns. Look for ICT in the organization handbook under "International Campaign for Tibet."

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**Planned gifts/Bequests** - A gift included in your will or living trust is one way to establish a lasting legacy. By extending your commitment to the Tibetans into the future through a bequest in your will, you can significantly help ICT's programs.

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**For more information** about these ways to give to ICT or how ICT raises and spend its funds, please look on our website at [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org) or contact Joel Gysan, ICT's Membership Coordinator, or Michelle Lee at (202) 785-1515 or [members@savetibet.org](mailto:members@savetibet.org).

Reprints



THE WASHINGTON POST WEEKEND/FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2003

[ The Washington Post ]

ON SCREEN

# From Tibet, A 'Cry' to Melt Hearts

By DESSON THOMPSON  
Washington Post Staff Writer

**T**HE BERLIN WALL is down. Apartheid has been dismantled in South Africa. But as the heartbreaking "Tibet: Cry of the Snow Lion" makes clear, Tibet continues to suffer under the inflexible yoke of the People's Republic of China.

There appears to be no hope for the Tibetans, whose spiritual government, led by the Dalai Lama in absentia, overwhelmingly repudiates this occupation. Whoever controls this breathtakingly beautiful region of the world, as the filmmakers make clear, also controls central Asia.

This is no hyperbole. News footage in the film, past and present, shows China's systematic, jackboot-of destruction of a culture, including the oft-quoted figure of the death of 1.2 million Tibetans since the 1950 invasion of the non-Chinese nation.

That destruction continues today on every conceivable level: The once-holy city of Lhasa teems with Chi-



UPI/REUTERS/DAVID J. PHILLIPS

A young lama from "Tibet: Cry of the Snow Lion," a heart-piercing chronicle of genocide and cultural annihilation.

nese soldiers who have free rein over the Tibetans. They can, and do, beat, torture and kill citizens for almost any reason, from displaying the Tibetan flag to even mentioning the Dalai Lama. Many of these soldiers are seen relaxing in the red light district, a brand-new phenomenon in Tibet that caters almost exclusively to the Chinese military.

The movie, narrated by Martin Sheen and voice overs from a host of other luminaries, including Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon, is no visual travelogue about the wonderful peaks of Everest. Most of it was shot

in Betacam SP before being transferred to film. It's about the misery of a nation. Directed and photographed by Tom Posay, who took 10 years (and nine journeys into Tibet) to

make this, the documentary provides a bracingly clear vision of the events that have led to this.

We see the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1949, which the Chinese government described in Orwellian terms as the "Peaceful Liberation of Tibet." There are scenes of the September 1987 shooting of citizens who were demonstrating against occupation, including footage of Jampa Tenzin, a monk who (during the unrest) rescued prisoners from a burning police station, only to be captured, tortured and killed by the Chinese. We hear from political activists who have spent as many as 33 years as political prisoners; scores of historians, scholars, activists and Tibetans. There is a Chinese activist who is committed to Tibetan freedom, as well as Chinese spokesmen for the communist government who speak of the "distortions" that have led most of the world to its moral conclusions. And we see much of the 14th Dalai Lama,

whose doctrine of nonviolent protest continues to be Tibet's main weapon.

"What the West has done," says former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Jeane Kirkpatrick, "is avert its eyes while genocide takes place in Tibet."

And on and on. Each revelation seems more disturbing than the next. But Chinese treatment of Tibetans is only half the heartbreak. The other is the amazing resilience of the Tibetans, who are overwhelmingly Buddhist. Their beliefs teach them to carry no rancor toward their occupiers. One day, says one Tibetan, maybe Tibet will be free. And maybe Tibet and China will be friends. Of all the heart-piercing moments in the film, this statement is surely one of the most powerful.

**TIBET: CRY OF THE SNOW LION** (Unrated, 106 minutes) — Contains brutal violence and intense thematic material. At the American Film Institute Silver Theatre through Thursday.

# ROLL CALL POLITICS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2003

# Climbing

February 2004 #227

## OFF THE WALL



DAVID J. PHILLIPS

Jimmy Chin, Rick Ridgeway, John Ackorly, and Conrad Anker were just a few of the luminaries attending the Eastern Sierra MountainFest.

## SENATOR AND A GENTLEMAN



Tom Ichniowski/Out

Golden Globe-winning actor Richard Gere (right) shares a laugh with Sen. Edward Kennedy outside the Senate chamber on Wednesday.

# The Boston Globe

DECEMBER 8, 2003

JOHN KENNETH KNAUS

## China's opportunity to resolve Tibet issue

**DURING CHINESE** Premier Wen Jiabao's current visit to the United States he is certain to hear calls asking him and his colleagues to work out a resolution to what would seem to be a solvable problem, but one that has troubled our two countries' relations for more than half a century.

Four years ago former President Carter noted to then President Jiang Zemin that China's relationship with Tibet would prove a significant litmus test about the direction China is headed in the 21st century. His observation was based on the results of a survey trip that four American scholars made to Tibet with the cooperation of President Jiang. They concluded that it was quite ap-  
pro-

propriate for the United States and the American people to be concerned about Tibet, to observe carefully its evolution, to assist in the efforts to develop Tibet and improve its educational system, and to encourage a reconciliation between the government of China and the Dalai Lama and his followers.

In the intervening years there seems to have been some progress made toward reactivating a dialogue between the Chinese government and representatives of the Dalai Lama. But the goal of a mutually acceptable agreement which would permit His Holiness to return to his country and over-

come from there his unique spiritual influence over his people and their fellow Buddhists worldwide is yet to be achieved.

Failure to utilize this potential would be a compounded tragedy.

Dalai Lama enjoys

### Restoring mutually productive ties with the Dalai Lama.

For the Tibetans, it would condemn them to live in a state of perpetual resentment over what they regard as the deprivation of the one individual whose presence in Tibet embodies the guarantee of their spiritual and cultural heritage. For China, it would be a loss of an opportunity to benefit from

the presence of the one person who is best able to guarantee peace along their centuries-old troubled border and to share as his host, rather than as his adversary, in the unique respect that the Dalai Lama enjoys

within the international community.

It is a critical time in the world, and China has the opportunity to provide an example of peaceful resolution of a conflict that would be not only a litmus test of how China will be regarded by this generation and those to come but also what people everywhere are looking for today. What the Dalai Lama is offering in his middle way of compassion is not a

surrender of political position by either side, nor a passive yielding of pluralities.

The present Dalai Lama has replaced the old image of Tibet as a Shangri-la, remote from the cares of a disinterested world, to the site of a situation where men of good will could find peaceful solutions to difficult problems. This means an active search for a way for both sides of the Yangtze to live together in mutual peace and prosperity thereby providing a refreshing example for all minority peoples and those confronting seemingly intractable boundary issues everywhere.

Those who may counsel waiting for the Dalai Lama to die with the expectation that the problem will thereby go away are condemning the people of China, the Tibetans, and the watching world to a continuing situation of stagnation and universal loss.

China's new leaders have both the opportunity and the responsibility to restore the mutually productive relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government that their predecessors at great periods of their country's history have enjoyed and to complete the initiative toward reconciliation begun by their colleague Deng Xiaoping now so many years ago. There would be an achievement most worthy of the gratitude of a conflict-weary world and an act of courage and foresight that would consolidate China's evolving relationship with the United States in our mutual pursuit of peace.

**John Kenneth Knaus is a research associate at the Fairbank Center for East Asian Research at Harvard University and the author of "Oyashima of the Cold War: America and the Tibetan Struggle for Survival."**

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# Panel examines Beijing/Dalai Lama negotiations

*Although some say tensions have abated, discussion proves situation is far from tractable*

By Ken Gewertz  
*Harvard News Office*

Twice this year, delegations representing the Dalai Lama have gone to Beijing to hold talks with officials of the Chinese government. Many have interpreted these discussions as a sign that tensions between Beijing and the Tibetan religious leader are easing, and that the next step may be a visit to China by the Dalai Lama himself.

On Nov. 21, a panel at the Kennedy's

School's JFK Jr. Forum discussed the subject of "Negotiations Between the Dalai Lama and Beijing." Two of the panel members were Tibetan and two Chinese. The moderator was Ezra Vogel, the Henry Ford II Research Professor of the Social Sciences and a noted authority on East Asia.

While none of the panel members spoke in an official capacity, their interaction suggested that while tensions may be easing, a real accord between China and

Tibet's government in exile is still some distance away.

"Right now, the Chinese government has all the cards. Time is on its side. It's willing to listen, but not to all sorts of accusations and loose talk," said Zheng Shiping, an associate professor of comparative politics and international relations at the University of Vermont. Born in China, Zheng earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Fudan University in Shanghai and a

*(Continued on next page)*

## China/Tibet: Hope and skepticism

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Ph.D. from Yale.

"I challenge the idea that time is on the side of the Chinese government," said Lobsang Sangay, a Tibetan activist and scholar, currently an S.J.D. candidate (doctor of juridical science) at Harvard Law School. "That is based on the perception that when the Dalai Lama dies, these problems will be resolved, but I believe that with the passing of the Dalai Lama, Tibetans will become more radicalized."

The Dalai Lama left his country in 1959 after China brutally squelched an uprising in Tibet. He now lives in Dharamsala in northern India. Speculations about what would happen after the Dalai Lama dies accelerated last year when rumors circulated that the 68-year-old leader had stomach cancer. The Dalai Lama has denied these rumors and reports that he is in good health.

One of the questions most at issue in the discussion was the extent to which Tibetans actually enjoy autonomy in what is officially designated by the Chinese as an autonomous region. Bhuchung Tsering, a Tibetan-born journalist who is currently director of the International Campaign for Tibet, said that lack of real freedom was obvious from the number of Tibetans crossing the border.

"Every year thousands of Tibetans flee to India. Why do they do this? The GNP is lower in India than in China. This is evidence that the Tibetan people don't enjoy cultural freedom."

Hu Xiaojing, a Chinese-born lecturer in Harvard's Sociology Department who has studied Tibet's transitional economy, took exception to this assertion.

"A lot of people are also going back to Tibet. Also a lot of Tibetans use India as a jumping-off place to go to the United States to earn money," she said.

Both Tibetan panel members emphasized that independence for Tibet was not an issue and hasn't been since 1978 when former Chinese ruler Deng Xiaoping indicated that the problems of Tibet could be resolved if Tibetans stopped talking about independence.

"The Dalai Lama realized that the survival of the cultural identity of Tibet was more important than independence," said Tsering. "This is the middle way approach."

And yet there seemed to be some disagreement about where autonomy ended and independence began. Another issue was the fact that the boundaries of the Tibetan autonomous region do not include the entire Tibetan population, a situation that Sangay claimed was in violation of the Chinese constitution.

"The Chinese government feels that if this territory is given to Tibet, it will be used as a springboard for independence," he said.

But when Vogel asked whether rearranging the boundaries to include Tibetans currently outside the autonomous region would be acceptable to China, Zheng replied, "I don't think it would be possible to change the boundaries. It would just be a waste of time."

"We should look at this issue from a different perspective," said Tsering. "Let's put the emphasis on the survival of the Tibetan people. I don't see why this can't be accommodated within Chinese limitations. To the Chinese, the idea of a 'Greater Tibet' seems very sinister. But the survival of the Tibetan people would be acceptable."

Vogel asked whether the Dalai Lama's position of relinquishing an independent Tibet in return for cultural and religious survival really had the support of Tibetans around the world. Sangay asserted that the Dalai Lama did represent the vast majority of Tibetans.

"Let the Tibetan people vote whether they accept the leadership of the Dalai Lama. I guarantee he would get 70, 80, or even 90 percent."

But while Zheng did not dispute the Dalai Lama's popularity, he said that he found the religious leader's statements to be rather vague and expressed doubts about his effectiveness as a political leader.

"I think the Dalai Lama needs someone like a prime minister, someone to pay attention to details. He needs someone like a Henry Kissinger."

Sangay replied by emphasizing the benefits that would accrue to the Chinese if they proved themselves willing to negotiate the conditions of Tibetan autonomy.

"If you resolve the dilemma, it will benefit China's image. If a Chinese leader resolves the issue of Tibet and shows that China is changing, he may be the first Chinese to win the Nobel Peace Prize."

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## The Washington Post

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2003

### Noted . . .

**Richard Gere**, the chairman of the board of the International Campaign for Tibet, proved yesterday that he really is a hands-on emissary.

In less than 12 hours, Gere lobbied everyone from Deputy Secretary of State **Richard Armitage** to Sen. **Sam Brownback** (R-Kan.), who brought him to the Senate floor, to House Minority Leader **Nancy Pelosi** (D-Calif.). Gere was lobbying for human rights, funding for global HIV and issues involving Tibet . . . **Al Gore** doesn't believe television is having a positive effect on society, saying that democracy is endangered because of the tube's "quasi-hypnotic influence." In short, TV is making our society complacent. "It pushes us toward the least common denominator," he told the crowd Tuesday at Middle Tennessee State University. "If people are just staring at a little box for four hours a day, it has a big impact on democracy." Funny remarks coming from a man who is currently in talks to launch his own 24-hour cable news channel . . . Radio talk show host **Rush Limbaugh** will return to his program Monday after completing a five-week treatment program for his addiction to painkillers, his brother told Internet personality **Matt Drudge**.



**Richard Gere**, a real man about town yesterday.

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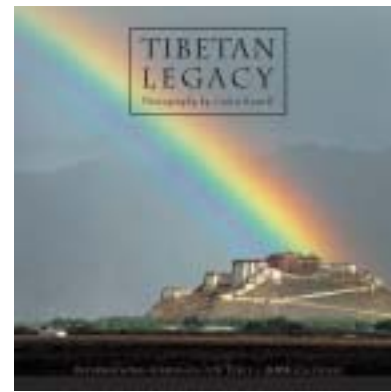
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