

Bay Area Friends of Tibet

**TIBETAN RESETTLEMENT PROJECT**

# 1990 Immigration Act

- Provisions for 1000 Tibetans
- No Government Funds
- Notarized Job Offer Letter
- Notarized Sponsor Letter
- 1993 Completion Date

# 1,000 Tibetans to Be Admitted to U.S.

*New York Times*

Washington

A group of Tibetans and their American supporters are preparing to resettle groups of Tibetans in the United States for the first time.

Until now, only a trickle of Tibetans have entered the United States — a total of 500 in the past 30 years, officials say — largely because Washington has been reluctant to displease Beijing by giving Tibetans either refugee or immigrant status. China claims historical sovereignty over Tibet, reinforced by military occupation in 1950.

Now, under a provision of the 1990 Immigration Act that takes effect October 1, 1,000 Tibetans, their spouses and children will be admitted to this country over three years.

Under the law, introduced by Representative Barney Frank, D-Mass., 1,000 immigrant visas will be made available to "qualified displaced Tibetans."

The law does not refer to the Tibetans as refugees, thereby avoiding a delicate issue that might well anger Beijing.

The law specifically refers to natives of Tibet, their children and grandchildren who have lived continuously in India or Nepal since the enactment of the Immigration Act.

The Tibetans will receive permanent residence and work authorization, but no benefits for three years and no federal funds, things that are generally accorded to refugees.

As many as 20,000 people are expected to apply for the 1,000 visas, people close to the program say, with preference under the law given to people "not firmly resettled" or who are "most likely to be resettled successfully in the United States." About 120,000 Tibetan refugees have been resettled in India and Nepal.

Tibetans normally would not qualify for immediate settlement in the United States. If they ap-

plied for normal immigration visas, they would have to wait for years because there are already too many applicants from China, India and Nepal, officials say.

Under the project, the Tibetans will be grouped in 10 sites around the country, including New York City; San Francisco; Minneapolis; Madison, Wis.; Ithaca, N.Y., and Amherst, Mass.

# Bay Area Friends of Tibet Accepts Challenge – 1991

- 50 Tibetans in Bay Area/ 500 in US
- Outreach
  - ❖ Media
  - ❖ Jobs
  - ❖ Sponsors
  - ❖ Funding
  - ❖ Social Support



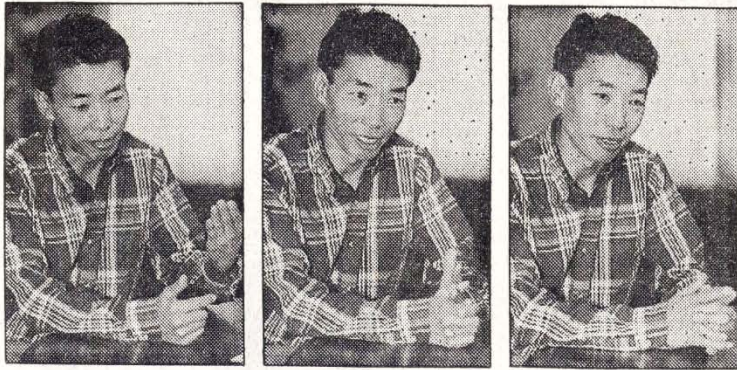
# Peninsula Style

■ **Tibetans have become a minority** in their own country as one consequence of China's takeover. One who escaped, Jigme Yugay (right), continues the resistance from his Palo Alto home. **Wisdom Q&A, C-3**





QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



## Trying to tell the world of Tibet's pain — from his home in Palo Alto

**Q** When and why did you leave Tibet?

**A** I left Tibet in 1959. That's actually the time when most of the Tibetans left. China invaded Tibet in 1949. By 1950, everything that was to be taken over, was taken. The culmination of the rebellion was in Lhasa, March 10, 1959. After that it was pretty sure that there was no hope for Tibetans to stay as a free Tibet. So that's when they started leaving. Eighty percent of the 140,000 or 150,000 Tibetans living in India arrived in 1959. Ever since, refugees have been trickling in, some years more than others, depending on how relaxed the borders are. That's how I came to be in India as a Tibetan refugee.

**Q** Do you still have family in Tibet?

**A** I have some distant cousins. I was one of the fortunate ones who got the entire family out by

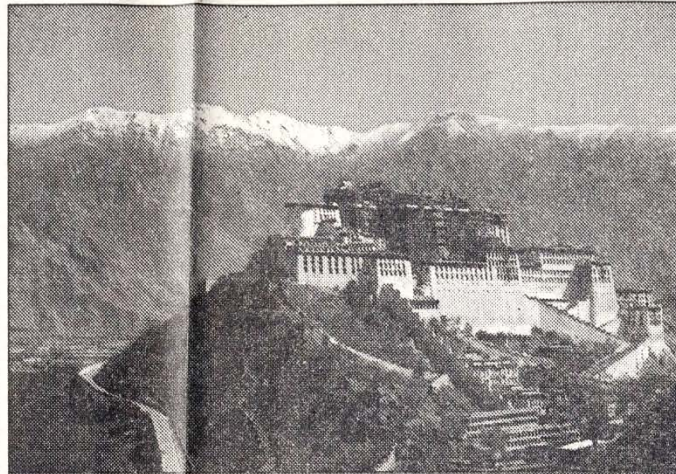
**JIGME YUGAY**

*The president and co-founder of the Bay Area Friends of Tibet, Jigme Yugay, 42, has a passion and a mission of independence for his homeland, which he fled with his family in 1959.*

*After crossing the Himalayas to India, Yugay grew up in Darjeeling, West Bengal, and obtained his bachelor's of science degree from North Point College.*

*Yugay arrived in the United States in 1975, shortly after he met and married his first wife, an American, in Katmandu, Nepal.*

*One of 40 Tibetans who live between Santa Cruz and Sacramento, Yugay helped form the Bay Area Friends of Tibet in 1987 when international attention was*



**MORE ABOUT TIBET**

**Next Saturday**

**Tibet: The Road to Independence.** This is a full-day symposium featuring speakers from around the nation and the world talking on the history, religion and culture of Tibet, and the steps that need to be taken for independence. Wheeler Auditorium, UC Berkeley, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Information: Phurpa G. "Phil" LadenLa, conference coordinator, (415) 493-8714.

**Next Sunday**

**Tibet Day at Fort Mason.** This is an annual event in San Francisco featuring Tibetan crafts, dance, food, door prizes and videos. The festival commemorates March 10, Tibetan National Uprising Day. Information: Bay Area Friends of Tibet, (415) 241-9197.

**Ongoing**

The Bay Area Cluster of the **Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project** is looking for sponsors and jobs for the 1,000 Tibetans allowed to immigrate to the United States from India in the next 18 months. Information: (415) 241-9197.

**A COUPLE OF CULTURAL FACTS**

- 1) The Tibetan language is very different from Chinese. It is written in an alphabet, is polysyllabic and has inflected case declension and gender structures adapted from Sanskrit; while Chinese is written in ideograms and is monosyllabic, non-inflected and tonal. Tibetan borrows words from Chinese, Indian, Nepali and Mongolian.
- 2) The cultural identity of Tibet is closely aligned with Buddhism. The Dalai Lama is the spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet. Confucianism and Taoism are the primary religions in China.

**SINCE THE CHINESE INVASION**

- 1) In the national uprising against Chinese occupation in Lhasa in 1959, 87,000 Tibetans were killed and 100,000 Tibetans, including th



# Steering Committee

Phurpa (Phil) Ladenla

Ed Lazar

Sandra McPherson

Kim Morris

Fred Shepardson

Julia Shepardson

Jigme Yugay

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Sharon Bacon

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Rev. Carl Phil

Galen Rowell

Lama Tharchin Rinpoche

Tenki Tenduf-La, MD

Vu Duc Vuong



# Horizons

By Meredith May

From the back of a cave in the Himalayas, Lama Kunga Rimpoche wakes from a fitful day of sleep. The year is 1959 and spiritual leader Rimpoche and his brother have decided to escape. If they stay in their native Tibet, there is a good chance that as Buddhists they'll be imprisoned by the Chinese. Thousands, including their father, are already in work camps. Each time the brothers pray to Buddha, their mother weeps, fearful that the Chinese soldiers will come to execute them or send the younger ones to Chinese schools to indoctrinate them with Maoist philosophy. For the brothers, the solution doesn't lie within the walls of their Tibetan home. If they ever want to find out if their father is alive, if they ever want to see an end to Chinese tyranny, if they ever want to see their mother laugh again, they have to flee.

His brother is stirring next to him on the cave floor. Lama Kunga brushes off the foliage they used to hide themselves from the Chinese soldiers and climbs down into the canyon below to retrieve the horses. It is now night; time to run with the moon to India.

**W**e were so tired we were sleeping on the backs of our horses. It got so bad we started hallucinating. All the rocks and boulders on the ground were turning into dead bodies," says Lama Kunga Rimpoche from his temple in Kensington, 33 years later, and 42 years after the Chinese Communists invaded his serene Buddhist nation, imprisoning his uncle and father, destroying his monastery, his village, and life as he knew it. After living in exile in India, Rimpoche was able to move to the US when he was invited by the University of Wisconsin to help create a new Indian studies department and Buddhist center. Rimpoche came to the Bay Area in 1972 to teach Buddhist philosophy and lead meditation ses-



Kunga Rimpoche

he has converted into the Ewam Choden Tibetan Buddhist Center.

Since his arrival in the States, Rimpoche's life has changed enormously; now he has electricity, central heating, carpets; he watches television (he had heard Americans had people in boxes), and he even drives a gray pickup with a "Free Tibet" bumper sticker. (In 1980, Rimpoche rescued his father, bring-

His father passed away last year. A year after Rimpoche's escape, his mother "died in her prayers" the night before being called to a public trial by a Chinese jury.)

In his homeland, nothing has changed. The 1949 invasion of Tibet, justified on the false grounds that Mao's China was simply restoring historical borders, is still in effect today, making Tibet victim to

a sovereign nation in the world. According to the New York National Office of Tibet, as of 1990, one-fifth of the Tibetan population, 1.2 million people, have died at the hands of Chinese soldiers as a result of starvation, torture, imprisonment, and execution.

"What we hear from refugees who do come out, is that things are under very tight control. everyone

# EAST SIDE STORY

By Chris Duffey

**"Once Tibetan civilization was good like seedlings. It sprouted out and rooted well. I think it will grow again when Tibetans spread like seedlings on a global scale."**

selves on small futon cushions on the floor facing the altar, with their backs to the window. It's raining lightly outside. Rimpoche lights the candles, placing them between bowls of water, a pineapple, and pictures of Buddha.

Wrapped in an orange cloth over a brown robe called a choshem, he begins his prostrations, kneeling down and kissing the ground, then coming back to a standing position. The class copies him a little less gracefully, and then Rimpoche sits on a cushion to the right of the altar where he leads the meditation chants. There are three different chants, each one lasting about fifteen minutes. The chants have six syllables to represent the six different realms of sentient beings: humans, gods, demigods, animals, the holy ghost, and hell. Rimpoche has been praying to Buddha for peace in the world and in Tibet for as long as he can remember.

Although the press is banned from Tibet, the story of the coun-



# In search of sanctuary by the Bay

Tibetan refugees will try to build a new life here

By John Flinn  
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

Refugees from a Shangri-La that has turned into a nightmare, about 100 Tibetans will be arriving in the Bay Area soon to begin a new and very different life in the land of BART, the Price Club and Geraldo.

For some who grew up herding yaks in a land that hasn't changed

much since Marco Polo's day, it could be a jarring time warp into the 21st century. For others, it will be a breath of fresh air after a life in the overcrowded refugee camps of India and Nepal.

The beneficiaries of a subtle but potentially significant shift in U.S. foreign policy, they're among the 1,000 Tibetans who are being permitted to enter the country under a special, one-time-only provision in the 1990 Immigration Act.

More than 120,000 Tibetans have fled their country since the Chinese People's Liberation Army invaded in 1950.

"At first it will be very confusing

and there will be much culture shock," said Lama Kunga Rimpoche, who came here in 1972 to found the Ewam Choden Tibetan Buddhist Center in Kensington. "But I came here without Western knowledge or even language. If I learned, they will learn, too."

Like many high-level Tibetan monks, Lama Kunga is considered to be the reincarnation of his predecessors. His father, Tsepan Skukpa, who passed away recently, had been a cabinet member in the Tibetan government and held by the Chinese in a forced labor camp for 20 years.

Lama Kunga escaped from Ti-

bet in 1959 after a failed uprising that forced the Dalai Lama, the country's religious and political leader, into exile in India. Like the Dalai Lama, he followed a treacherous route over the crest of the Himalayas, traveling at night and hiding during the day, to avoid capture by the Chinese.

More than 100,000 Tibetans have fled a situation that makes the crackdown at Tiananmen Square pale by comparison. The brutal Chinese occupation of Tibet is, according to the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists, "a prima facie case of genocide."

Since the 1950 invasion, 700,000 to 1.2 million Tibetans have been shot by Chinese troops or have died in prisons or forced labor camps. The Chinese People's Liberation Army has destroyed and looted more than 6,000 Buddhist monasteries, the centers of Tibetan culture.

Since the Chinese invasion 41 years ago, the United States has consistently denied refugee status to Tibetans and permitted fewer than 500 to immigrate here. About 50 of those are living in the Bay Area. But now, the situation is

[ See TIBET, B-3 ]





# Fundraising

## EVENTS

Metropolitan Club

Castro Theater Film Festival

Philip Glass Concert

Tibet Day Santa Cruz

Peter Gold at Lucie Stern

Tibet at the Varsity

## GRANTS

Koret Foundation

Jewish Community Endowment

American Himalayan Foundation

Fred Gellert Foundation

San Francisco Foundation

Palo Alto Kiwanis





# Volunteer Network

- Sponsors
- Employers
- Family Reunification Specialists
- Housing
- Tutors
- Driving & Computer Tutors
- Medical Care
- Airport Volunteers

## PORTOLA VALLEY

# Help for Tibetan refugees

*Julia and Fred Shepardson volunteer with resettlement project*

BY MARJORIE MADER

Julia and Fred Shepardson of Portola Valley are working to help Tibetan immigrants start a new life in the Bay Area.

Julia is the project coordinator for the Bay Area Cluster of the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project which expects to bring the first five of 100 Tibetan immigrants to the Bay Area in mid-March.

Fred heads the project's employment committee, seeking jobs and helping to find housing and sponsors for the newcomers — a tough job in hard economic times.

"Once the Tibetans are here, people in the Bay Area will be just delighted," says Fred. "They will definitely enhance the cultural scene with their music, art, religion, and colorful dress. ...They practice tolerance to a tremendous extent, are hard-working, self-sufficient, and have a wonderful sense of humor."

The Shepardsons' concerns and respect for the Tibetan people, whose homeland was invaded and occupied by the People's Republic of China in 1949, goes back more

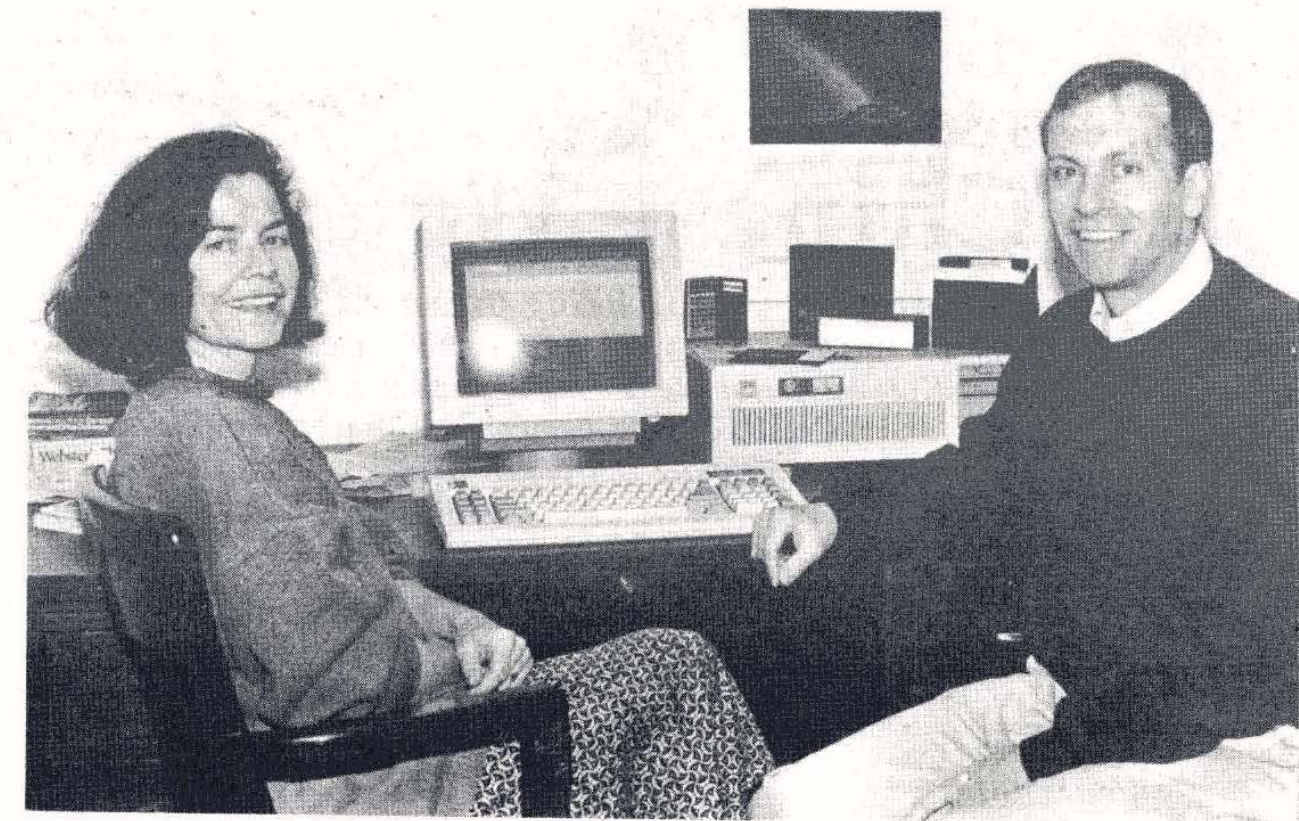


PHOTO BY MARJORIE MADER

**HELPING TIBETANS.** Julia and Fred Shepardson spend much of their time using the computer, talking on the phone and sending out information packets as they seek support for 100 Tibetans who will immigrate to the Bay Area.

Already 400 of the 1,000 Tibetans allotted under the quota have been selected for the resettlement program which involves working with three different bureaucracies — the Indian, United States and Central Tibetan Administration — and lots of paperwork.

Julia believes awarding the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the exiled spiritual leader of Tibet, helped focus the public's awareness and sympathy for the Tibetans.

grade education. One of the three men worked with the Central Tibetan Administration and has a background in bookkeeping and accounting.

The 20-year-old man escaped Tibet on his own when he was 13 and has been living in the Tibetan Children's Village in Dharamsala. The other man, who worked in a handicraft center, has training and skills in construction.

Shortly after their arrival, each of the five will be working at either a pizza parlor in

Project volunteers are searching for jobs such as behind-the-scenes work in hotels, with painting contractors and pizza parlors. They're contacting small businesses and appealing to larger businesses to "do their fair share."

The project also is looking for area doctors and dentists who would be willing to offer their services pro bono. The Tibetans will be screened for tuberculosis and major medical problems before they're selected.



# Tibetans Leave Himalayas For New Beginnings in US

By ASHFAQUE SWAPAN  
Special to India-West

OAKLAND, Calif. — For Lhakpa Dolma, life here is a far cry from what it used to be in Dharamsala, the Indian town known as "Little Lhasa," tucked in Himachal Pradesh, where she lives with a large expatriate Tibetan population.

Dolma taught in Dharamsala's Tibetan school for 11 years before coming to the United States. Her parents left Tibet in 1954, and she was born in Nepal, and has grown up in India. Today she is a housekeeper in Oakland's Hyatt Regency, where "work is very slow," the 37-year-old Tibetan immigrant told India-West.

The former schoolteacher is in the United States today, thanks to the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project's campaign for the immigration of Tibetans who have fled their homeland following Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1950.

Following the campaign, under a special provision of the 1990 Immigration Act, about 1,000 immigrants will be coming to the United States. These immigrants are selected by the administration of the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala.

The immigrants will be settled in the Bay Area as well as in various other cities outside the Bay Area including, Los Angeles, New York, St. Louis, Seattle, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Ithaca, N.Y., Chicago and Boston.

## FIRST BATCH

Dolma belongs to the first batch of 27 Tibetan immigrants who will be settled in the Bay Area, according to Julia Shepardson, project director of the Bay Area Cluster of the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project.

Shepardson has been involved with Tibetan issues since 1972, and is involved with the Bay Area Friends of Tibet, the primary sponsoring organization of the Bay Area Cluster.

Their support is particularly important to incoming Tibetans, because the immigration provisions require that Tibetans have jobs before they enter the country, and they are not eligible for welfare before three years. These organizations have also arranged for sponsors, with whom immigrants live during their first days in the United States to get acquainted with a vastly different way of life.

Supporters of Tibet have come



*Some of the Tibetans in the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project.*

forward with the idea of "clustering" incoming immigrants. It is a process of resettling members of the same ethnic group in close proximity to each other, uniting friends and family whenever possible, so that immigrants can help support each other as they adjust to a different lifestyle in a different country.

There are about 50 Tibetan Americans who already live in the Bay Area. "They are tremendous-

ly supportive," Shepardson said.

Most of the first batch of Tibetans who have arrived in the Bay Area have some English language skills, Shepardson said, and the task of assisting them has been comparatively easy. It had been a conscious choice to first bring in Tibetans who would adjust more easily, Shepardson added, so that supporting organizations could give themselves time to understand and tackle the challenges of

resettling Tibetan immigrants.

The process has gone smoothly. "We've had no major problems," Shepardson said.

However, many of the new immigrants feel homesick and "some of them have real entry level jobs," said Shepardson.

"Here in the U.S. I found that if you want a better job, you need better skills," Dolma said. Dolma is taking courses on computers at

*[Cont. on page 46]*

# Employers

Alza Corporation

Zia Cosmetics

Zachary's Chicago Pizza

Chez Panisse

Gitane (Everest) Painting

Whole Earth Access

Salem Home

Hyatt Hotels

The Stratford

Wellex

Brilliant Color Cards

Grateful Dead Ticket Office

Mike Collins

Monterey Market

Nut Tree

Stars Restaurant

The Art Peddler

Hillcrest School

John Muir Hospital

Cliff's Variety

Mussi Art Work

REI

Linda Showahut, DDS

Colin Tiura and Daughters

Fulwiler James Construction



◆ TIBET from A-1

## Tibetans adapt to life in Bay Area

only immigration program that reflects a subtle, but potentially significant, shift in U.S. foreign policy.

Fifteen to 17 more should arrive here later this month, and by next fall about 100 Tibetan immigrants are expected to be making new lives for themselves in this strange and exotic new world. They are virtually the first Tibetans allowed into the United States as political refugees since the invasion of their country by China 42 years ago.

Backed by their leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, their mission is to germinate the seed of Tibetan culture on Bay Area soil and keep it alive here while the Chinese systematically eradicate it in their homeland.

They live with American sponsors and work as busboys, hotel maids and shipping clerks — jobs lined up by the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project in San Francisco. They gather frequently to drink Tibetan tea — salty and laced with rancid butter — and pray and meditate together. On Sunday, they all plan to get together in Berkeley to celebrate the Dalai Lama's birthday.

### Talking to machines

Here, and in nine other sites around the country, these refugees are battling homesickness and



EXAMINER/ PAUL CHINN

**Tsultrim Dolma**, one of the first Tibetan refugees granted asylum in the Bay Area, is learning to travel by BART and live at a faster pace.

bet's deep spiritualism. Lhakpa, for example, tries to spend 90 minutes each day praying and meditating.

"Americans have lots of money and possessions, but they don't seem to have peace of mind," Lhakpa said. "From Tibetans they could learn to relax and rely on religion, fate and karma."

Lhakpa taught Tibetan children

Eventually released under an amnesty arranged by the Panchen Lama, the No. 2 man in the Tibetan government, Tsultrim further angered the Chinese by giving an interview to the British Broadcasting Corp. about her treatment.

With her life now in danger, her parents urged her to flee Tibet. Walking by night and hiding by

## Tibet Refugees Get New Home In Bay Area

7 to arrive today under special immigration status

By Dan Levy  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Seven Tibetan refugees, granted special immigration rights by Congress, are scheduled to arrive from India today at San Francisco International Airport to become permanent residents of the United States.

The Bay Area arrivals are the first contingent of 1,000 Tibetan refugees who will be admitted to this country during the next three years under the 1990 Immigration Act, which gave special immigration status to "displaced Tibetans" living in India and Nepal.

"This is the day we've been waiting for," said Julia Shepardson, director of the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project in San Francisco, which is coordinating the living and work arrangements for the three Tibetans who will settle in the Bay Area.

A total of 17 Tibetans are scheduled to arrive today at various locations around the country.

The three who settle here will stay in sponsors' homes in Berkeley for the first three months. They include a 37-year-old woman with a bachelor's degree from a university in Simla, India, who will be employed in a hotel; a 34-year-old man with a bachelor's degree from a university in Punjab, India, who will be employed as a shipping clerk in a cosmetics company; and a 35-year-old man with experience as a construction worker and carpet weaver, who will work at a hotel.

Shepardson said the Bay Area project plans to resettle about 100 refugees, bringing over a group from India each month until the quota specified by Congress is filled.

The refugees are part of approximately 120,000 Tibetans living in exile since fleeing their homeland after 1950, when Chinese troops annexed Tibet and declared historical sovereignty over the region.

The Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled leader, fled in 1959 to Dharamsala, India, and set up a government in exile.

Most Tibetan refugees are living in camps in India and Nepal. Only about 500 Tibetans have been

# Sponsors

- Nancy Ableser
- Ellen & Robert Ansel
- Fadhilla Bradley (3)
- Margo Brumme
- Dawa Chok
- Tashi Dhondup & Tsering Wangmo
- Carol Fields (2)
- Dianna Goodman
- Lucille Green
- James Harder (3)
- Lobsang Gyaltsen (2),
- Mark & Elizabeth Henderson,
- Jeanne & Herbie Herbert(2)
- Eva Herzer
- David & Barbara Hunt
- Bill & Dolma Kane
- Jamyang Lama
- Patti & Lyle Larson
- Melanie & Marc Lewart
- Dianne Libero
- Henry & Linda McHenry
- Bonnie Mintun & Tim Hoban
- Lucas Myers(2)
- George Nandor
- Jan Potts (2)
- Liz Rezner & Bennett Dubiner (2)
- Thomas Rosin & Gail Wread,
- Denny Sargent
- Alan & Laurie Senauke (2)
- Steven Sklar & Sharon Pollack
- Fred & Julia Shepardson
- Kendra & Huston Smith (3)
- Susan Sopcak & Bob Spence (2)
- David Spitzer
- Pastor Ross Merkel - St. Paul Lutheran (5)
- Francis St. Amant & Nancy McClure
- Carol Sundell
- Marc & Tsewang Tatz (2)
- Jan Tiura & Joe Brennan (2)
- Lisa Tracy
- Margo & Gordon Tyndall (2)
- Judy Weitzner
- Cindy Zikmund & Dave McMahan



## Tibetans try to adjust to U.S.

Immigrants expect  
to go home someday

By Tom Lochner  
Staff writer

KENSINGTON — The fog-shrouded East Bay hills lack the grandeur, if not the charm, of the 15,000-foot high Tibetan plateau. But when the incense burns in a small room near Kensington's Colusa Circle, the atmosphere comes strikingly close to similar rooms on the Roof of the World.

It's where Dhondup Tsering, a 35-year-old Tibetan, meditates several times a day, sitting in the lotus position in front of an altar bearing the pictures of Lord Buddha and the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of the Tibetan diaspora.

The room is in the house of Nancy McClure and Francis St. Amant. McClure, a graduate student in clinical psychology at John F. Kennedy University in Orinda, and St. Amant, the director of customer services for a software company, are Tsering's American sponsors. Tsering will live with them for the next three months. Then he'll probably share a home with other Tibetans.

Tsering was in the first group of three Tibetans to arrive in the United States under the Immigration Act of 1990. He arrived on April 17 and went straight to Kensington. Under the act, 1,000 Tibetans will be allowed to enter the United States before it expires in October 1993.

"It's a monumental first step,"



Times/Herman Bustamante J

Please see **TIBETANS**, back page

**DHONDUP TSERING** meditates before an altar in his temporary home in Kensington.



# Tibetan Dorji describes his goals

## Dorji, exiled from Tibet, hopes for a new life here

By STEVE TRACY  
Half Moon Bay Review

When Moss Beach resident Tamdin Dorji was seven years old he walked with his family over some of the most rugged mountain passes in the world in an effort to flee a country "liberated" by the Chinese. Whole families of refugees threw themselves into rivers and chasms in despair, according to Dorji.

Dorji was born in Tibet in 1953, in the midst of that country's take over by the Chinese.

Arriving safely in India, Dorji and his sister enrolled in school in the Indian Tibetan community, while their parents returned to their homeland. The school was for Tibetans only, and Dorji attended from 1961 until 1972. When he graduated, he served the community, looking after Tibetan children for a charitable organization, SOS, which he said was similar to UNICEF. For 19 years, he worked in the organization's offices and on construction sites.

There are about 129,000 Tibetans in India, and more, especially children, continue to arrive. "The children are not getting educated in China," Dorji said.

the trip.

Although his father died in Ladakh, India, close to the Pakistan border, Dorji's mother joined him in India and died last year at 82.

Dorji has been in the United States five months, arriving in San Francisco via Tokyo after a 22-hour plane trip. As part of a Tibetan refugee resettlement project, Jan Tiura and her husband Joe Brennan, members of Friends of Tibet, sponsored Dorji — providing free room and board for the first three months of his stay, while he looked for work. Eventually, he found employment on a construction crew based in Princeton but working on a job site in Los Gatos. Recently, that project was completed and Dorji was forced to look for work elsewhere, landing a job in Oakland in a grocery.

Fortunately, Dorji has friends there and will share an apartment with four Tibetans he has known since his school days or from work within the Indian Tibetan community.

Dorji doesn't know how to drive, although he's beginning to learn. He takes the bus and BART to Oakland.

"Working in construction I don't find easy for me," he said. "Now 40, I can't do all this hard labor." His hopes for his future in the United States involve learning some electronic skills. "I've started learning computer also."

Dorji speaks English, which he learned in India, as well as Tibetan and Hindi, the official language of India.

One thousand Tibetans are





# Dedicated Volunteers

- Chaksampa
- Nancy Ableser
- Gyalden Yuthok
- Jeanne Herbert
- Christine Schneider
- Lama Kunga Rinpoche
- Sandra McPherson
- Tashi Norbu
- Cyndie Zikmund
- Barbara Kosner
- Nora Sage Murray
- Tara Sullivan
- Nancy Nielsen, RN
- Dr. Marc Leiberman
- Jamyang Lama
- Nancy Harris, MD
- Barry & Nancy Weavers
- Jamyang Singe
- Greg Alling
- Joseph Terbitian
- Lionel Biron
- AND MANY OTHERS...





# HOPE

# INCARNATE

Despite hardships,  
Tibetans embrace  
life in a new land

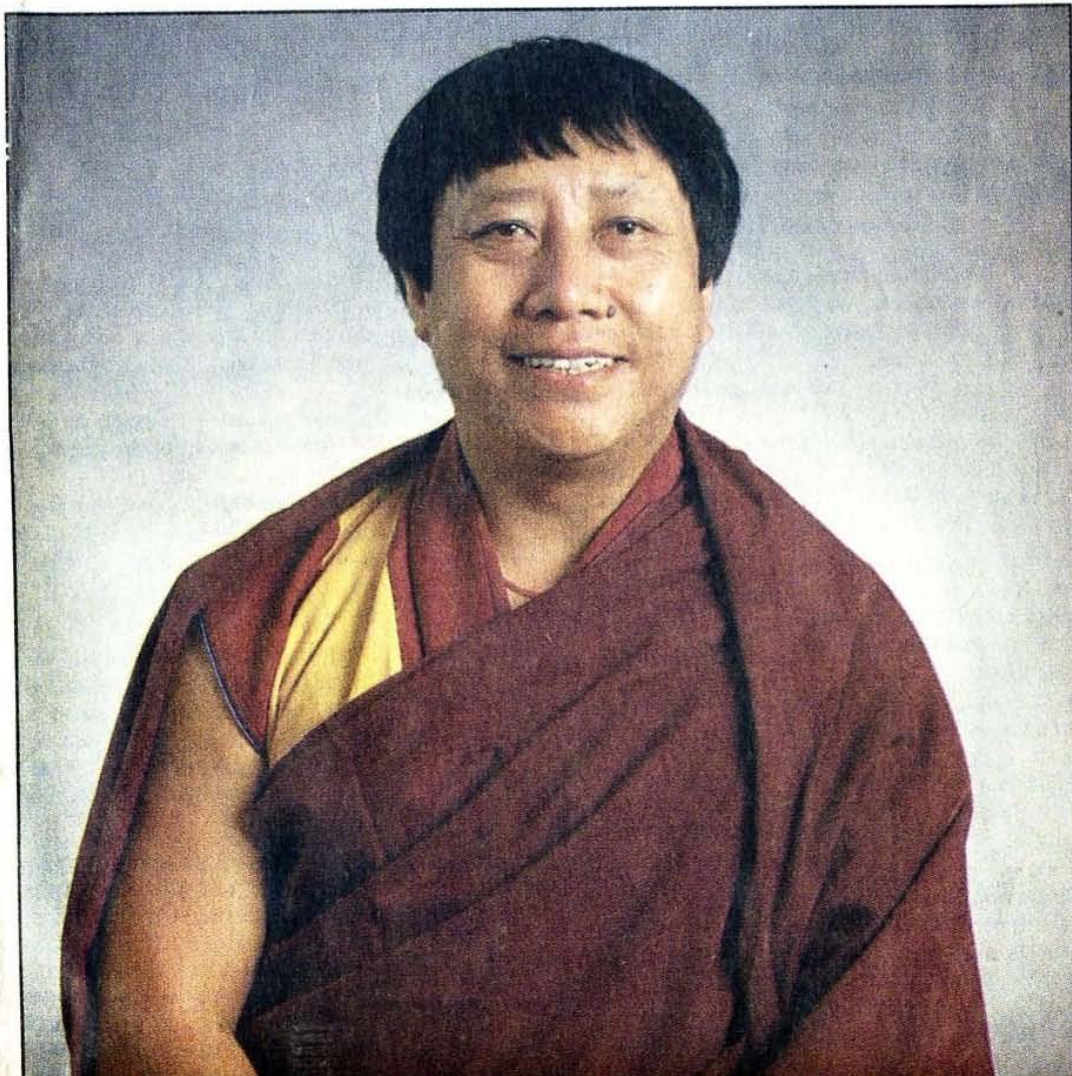
By **DANA PERRIGAN**  
Reporter Feature Writer

**W**hen Vintul Rinpoche was 8 months old, he was placed on a throne in a Tibetan monastery and proclaimed the eighth incarnation of a celebrated lama.

Along with the title, Rinpoche — which means “something precious” — inherited the estate and monasteries that had belonged to his recently deceased predecessor. To assist him in their operation, the infant had his own estate manager and personal attendant.

Although Rinpoche is still regarded as an incarnate lama with the rank of Tshogchen Tulku in Drepung Monastery, he no longer has his estate. It was confiscated by the People's Republic of China, which invaded Tibet in 1949 and has occupied the country ever since. His monasteries lay in ruins, destroyed by communist soldiers. His estate manager was tortured to death. His personal attendant died in a Chinese prison.

“Everything, you see, was taken away,” says Rinpoche, who immigrated to the U.S. in January. “Nothing remains. If I went back to Tibet, I'd have nothing to go back to.”







Enterprise photo/Todd Hammo

Phur Sang, far left, plays a 'lingbu,' the Tibetan word for flute, recently for fellow Tibetan immigrants, left to right, Tsultrim Dolma, Tsering Lhamo and Karma Tenzin. The

immigrants have lived and worked in Vacaville for that past year, with help and guidance provided by local supporters, including several Davis residents.

## Tibetan immigrants make a new life in U.S.

◆ Refugees from violence in their homeland, peaceful people seek jobs and wait to see loved ones again

By DANIEL J. FRANCISCO  
Enterprise staff writer

VACAVILLE — It's been more than a year since a group of Tibetan immigrants moved to Vacaville, and although life in a new nation has been challenging, they say they enjoy the freedoms that the United States offers them.

"We came here for the opportunity to improve our lives," Karma Tenzin said Tuesday during an interview at the Vacaville apartment where he lives

with four other Tibetan immigrants.

"We have freedom here," he said. "You don't have to fear what you say here. Anybody is allowed to say anything."

Tenzin and other Tibetans will be on hand tonight at the Davis Shambala Center to discuss Tibet and the circumstances the nation has faced since China invaded it in 1949. The center is located at 129 E St., Suite D-2, in Orange Court.

The two-hour discussion begins at 7 p.m. and is open to the public. Davis residents participating in the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project are hosting the event.

Through the efforts of the resettlement project, provisions to allow 1,000 Tibetan immigrants to settle in cities

throughout the United States were included in the 1990 Immigration Act.

Since that time, immigrants have settled in different areas of the nation including six in Vacaville.

While their families continue to live in Nepal, a country to which hordes of Tibetans fled following the Chinese occupation of Tibet, the immigrants want to carve out a life in America and hope to move their loved ones here in the future.

"Yes, it's difficult to be away from your family," said Tenzin, who is married and has eight children.

"But Tibetans have faced so many difficulties already. Compared to past experiences, I think it's been nothing



# TIBETANS

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he said, referring to the separation.

Two of Tenzin's roommates — Tsultrim Dolma and Phur Sang — are also working to bring their families to the United States. Aside from saving enough money for their families to settle here, the Tibetans have to comply with immigration laws that prevent their family members from arriving in America for two to three years.

"It's hard. We talk on the phone and write letters," said Dolma, whose husband lives in Nepal. "But I only have my husband, so I think it will be easier (to move him here)."

In the meantime, Bonnie Mintun and her husband Tim Hoban, along with other Davis residents, are doing their best to assist the immigrants by sponsoring their stay in the United States.

Sponsors have to assure that the immigrants will not become government charges while helping them adjust to living in a new environment.

The immigrants are also required to have a job waiting for them before they are allowed to move to the United States. Most of

the Tibetans who live in Vacaville work for the Alza Corp., a pharmaceutical company.

And the Tibetans will receive a much-needed vacation later this month when they travel to Nepal to visit their families and celebrate Losar, the Tibetan New Year. They will remain with their

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*"We have freedom here. You don't have to fear what you say here."*

— Kama Tenzin,  
Tibetan Immigrant

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families until the end of March before returning to Vacaville.

As for Friday's discussion, Tenzin and his roommates said it will give them an opportunity to inform others about the situation that has crippled their homeland.

The Chinese invasion and subsequent occupation of Tibet has resulted in the death of more than 1 million Tibetans, the destruction of thousands of Buddhist monasteries, the depletion of valuable Tibetan natural resources and the suppression of all

forms of social and cultural expression, according to refugees.

"Tibet was an independent nation before the Chinese invasion," Sang said. "Tibet does not belong to the Chinese.... The United States must help. We need a powerful country to speak out against the Chinese. We are fighting for the truth."

Dolma reiterated Sang's comments by stating, "We want human rights for Tibetans."

Imposing economic sanctions against China and imploring the United Nations to decry China for violating Tibetans' human rights are measures that must be implemented if there is any hope for Tibet's independence, according to Tenzin.

"Tibetans are non-violent people. We've made many non-violent efforts to gain our independence. Unfortunately, violence is the only thing people notice in this world. If there is not violence, people sit back and watch," he added.

Meanwhile, Tenzin and Dolma are the only local immigrants who have yet to gain full-time employment, although they are both currently working part-time at Alza.

So Mintun is encouraging Davis business owners or anyone else interested in employing the Tibetans to contact her at 757-2335 or Mark Henderson, another sponsor, at 757-1793.





Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel photos

Tsewang Youngdoug is happy to be living in the United States, but can't forget atrocities that have occurred in his homeland.

# SAD MEMORIES OF HOME

Refugee Tsewang Youngdoug can't forget the way the Chinese have treated the Tibetan people

By **CHRIS WATSON**  
Sentinel staff writer

In 1959, China invaded and occupied Tibet. The Tibetan religion was outlawed and the Tibetan people





# SUPERIOR CALIFORNIA

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### ROADS WEST

By Walt Wiley

mile country of 6 million people between India and China in the highest mountains on earth, the Himalayas, has been occupied by China since 1948.

The Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual and political leader, fled in 1959 and established a government in exile in Dharmasala, India.

Still, the peaceable, devoutly Buddhist Tibetans have not been regarded as refugees by the U.S. government so they have been denied entry to the country.

But a 1990 law allows 1,000 Tibetans to immigrate so Tagudh and a half-dozen fellow Tibetans have moved to Vaca-

ville in recent weeks to take jobs in a pharmaceutical factory in a program sponsored by an organization called the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project.

"It's our hope that we can get established, bring our families here, but we all have the goal of going home," said Tagudh, 39, an intense fellow whose speech becomes passionate when the subject turns to Tibet.

Julia Shepardson, director of the resettlement project's operations in Northern California, said she had been hoping to find places for 100 of the 1,000, but the tight job market is forcing them to scale back their goal to perhaps 60. So far, they have found slots for 26.

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From left, Tagudh Youngdoug, Lobsang Dhar-chen and Tashi Samdup have moved to Vacaville in recent weeks to take jobs in a pharmaceutical factory in a program sponsored by an organization called the Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project.

Bee/Walt Wiley





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**Tibetan Resettlement Project**

**Bay Area Friends of Tibet**

