



Bay Area Friends of Tibet

n e w s l e t t e r

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Olympic Victory: Sydney Wins, Beijing Loses!

MONTE CARLO -- On September 23, Sydney, Australia was selected to host the 2000 Olympics, beating out Beijing for the Summer Games in a choice of stability over political uncertainties in China.

The competition for the Games had been dominated by Beijing's candidacy -- an ambitious, controversial attempt to bring the Olympics to China despite skepticism about its record of suppressing political dissent.

The Dalai Lama, Tibet's political and spiritual leader, welcomed the decision of the IOC not to give the 2000 Games to Beijing. "It gives the right signal, that the international community supports freedom and democracy. Because of China's past history and great civilization, an international event like the Olympics should be held in a country like China. But, because the present regime is totalitarian and repressive, it would give the wrong signal to the Chinese leadership."

"[The] decision sends a clear message from the international community to the Chinese government that the human rights of the Chinese and the Tibetan people must be respected," said Stewart Johnson, coordinator of the Australia Tibet Council's campaign opposing Beijing's Olympic bid. "If [China] wishes to host the Olympic Games, it must end its illegal military occupation of Tibet, and respect international treaties on arms control, nuclear non-proliferation and human rights," he concluded.

The Chinese government suffered a major national loss of face for its unsuccessful bid to capture the Games. Dejected Chinese citizens seethed at the United States for criticism that they felt cost them the games.

China's disappointment was heightened by a humiliating miscue in the live local

broadcasts of the Olympic announcement from Monte Carlo that left Beijingers with the mistaken impression -- for about five minutes -- that they had won. When the mistake was realized, hundreds of police swiftly cordoned off Beijing's Tiananmen Square and ejected disappointed Olympics fans who had hoped for a celebration.

"When I saw the Australians waving their arms, I felt so shameful," said a member of China's national sports committee attending an announcement party at a northeast-Beijing hotel. "I'm Chinese. That's not what I was waiting for."

The decision represented a significant blow to the Communist Party leadership, which mounted the most vigorous campaign of any nation to win the competition. China's bid had become an urgent political priority this year at a time when the country's economy has surged to world prominence. Communist Party leaders are seeking to validate China's return to the international stage after more than four years of isolation stemming from the June 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown that crushed a student-led democracy movement and the imposition of martial law in China.

Celebrating Beijing's humiliating failure to secure the 2000 Games, Tibetan exiles danced with joy to traditional music at the Majnu Ka Tilla refugee camp in Delhi, India. "We have won, we have won," young boys and girls shouted in a circle, as others beat Tibetan drums and sang songs.

"This is a great victory for the Tibetans," said Tibetan Youth Congress general secretary Lobsang Nyandak. "The Chinese will be very angry and we are sure they will take the anger out on Tibetans living under their occupation." (Source: edited wire reports.)

Boycott Toys and Goods Made in China

During this time of holiday shopping, please remember to boycott toys made in China. Our ultimate goal is to boycott all goods made in China, but we are focusing on toys because toys are one of China's leading exports; the U.S. is the world's single largest toy market, at 35% of the world; and children are our future, and their future should be one in which human rights are respected everywhere.

Many businesses, from large corporate firms such as Levi Strauss & Co. to small local companies such as Busvan for Bargains, have agreed to halt all business with China. Just as economic pressure was an effective way to pressure the South African government to reverse its policy of apartheid, it can also effect change in Tibet. Boycotting goods made in China sends a strong message: We will not allow economic interests to override human rights in Tibet or China.

BOYCOTT



What You Can Do:

- ❖ Get the message out. Don't buy toys or even better, don't buy any goods made in China.
- ❖ Leaflet consumers at Toys R Us stores during the holidays (see our events calendar for details on demonstration on November 26).
- ❖ Talk to small toy store owners.
- ❖ Circulate petitions for toy industry and political leaders.

Contact Linda Pfeifer at (408) 280-5052 to obtain petitions, flyers, balloons and Toycoff Christmas tree ornaments.

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10th Anniversary Campaign

A Letter from BAFoT's President . . .

As Bay Area Friends of Tibet marks its 10th anniversary, I want to thank each and every one of you for contributing your time and talents to BAFoT.

Longstanding members and supporters have many images from the past 10 years, including a few gems: Doc O'Connor's standing vigil in front of the Chinese Consulate in the pouring rain; Pema Wangyal single-handedly cooking 1600 momos for Tibet Day; and Christine Schneider making BAFoT a visible presence by tabling at so many events.

BAFoT's annual "Tibet Days" have been well attended. We have co-sponsored three important conferences over the years: *The Five Point Peace Plan* (1987) in Berkeley; *Endangered Tibet* (1990) at Fort Mason; and *Tibet: The Road to Independence* (1991) in Berkeley. The Resettlement Project has successfully brought 60 new Tibetans to the Bay Area. Our special thanks to all of the coordinators and their volunteers for their unrelenting hours of dedication and sacrifices.

The Board of Directors' 1992 retreat crystallized the organization's focus and further defined our mission and goals. In recognition of the value of the Tibetan way of life, we reaffirmed our commitment to actively promote Tibetan culture and to advocate the protection of human rights and the environment in Tibet. We formalized our efforts to continue our activities in three important ways: 1) educating the public about Tibet and the Tibetan people; 2) organizing grassroots project and events; and 3) cooperating with other Tibet Support Groups (TSGs) locally and internationally.

Today, the Berlin Wall has fallen and the Baltics are independent. Many of the Eastern Bloc nations have chosen democracy. The Palestinians and the Israelis have recognized each other. And yet, Tibetans are still an oppressed people in their homeland and the transfer of Chinese into Tibet is accelerating.

BAFoT has always been committed to freedom for all Tibetans. We are now intensifying our activities in support of the Tibetan people by

joining forces with other TSGs and Tibet supporters worldwide. BAFoT is now renewing its pledge to Tibet and to the 1.2 million Tibetans who were victims of Chinese occupation. To them, we dedicate a part of our most precious possession: time, for they have selflessly given of theirs.

1.2 Million Hours Campaign

The BAFoT Board has, therefore, launched our most ambitious campaign to date, namely to collect 1.2 million hours of volunteer time by December 31, 1999. We invite every member to participate. Your time contribution can be in any of the following areas: tabling, distributing petitions and leaflets, coordinating events, helping with conferences, etc. We have 15 different grassroots activities to help BAFoT achieve our goal. You can choose to work with a project director or work independently. You can volunteer to be in the BAFoT office or offer your contribution from home at your convenience. We need your help and we are absolutely convinced that every hour of your "personal" involvement will help to tip the scales in favor of the Tibetan people and their cultural heritage.

We have devised a BAFoT Time Sheet on which you can record your hours of volunteer work and every Newsletter will carry the total BAFoT hours accumulated and the names of star performers for that period. According to our calculations, we need around 550 hours/day to achieve our goal, which is tantamount to saying that we need each member to contribute one hour of volunteer time every day. This is a lot to ask, but every hour helps. BAFoT needs your help on this noble task we have set for ourselves.

Finally, Tibet's just cause will eventually triumph and BAFoT, along with all of the other TSGs, will act as a catalyst in restoring genuine peace and human dignity in Tibet!

Best wishes for the holiday season and Tashi Delek.

Jigme Yugay



Executive Director's Message

As 1993 draws to a close, BAFoT is looking forward to intensifying its work for Tibet next year. This year's highlights include two successful Tibet Days, in San Francisco and Santa Cruz, tabling at numerous events including the Himalayan Fair, and attendance at the "Tibet Conference of the Americas" in Washington, DC.

BAFoT contributed significantly to the international effort influencing President Clinton's conditioning of China's Most Favored Nation trade status. Supporters sent more than 1000 postcards to Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi and to Clinton. BAFoT volunteers also collected in excess of 1000 signatures for petitions opposing China's bid for the Olympics, and sent more than 500 postcards to the International Olympics Committee.

In response to BAFoT's urgent action letter on behalf of Tibetan prisoner Gendun Rinchen, volunteer Lozang Gyaeltsaen Gyurmae collected 828 letters that were sent to Winston Lord at the State Department. None of these activities could have occurred without the volunteers who gave their time and energy to these projects.

The Tibetan struggle has reached a new level of urgency, due to the increasing impact of Chinese population transfer into Tibet. His Holiness the Dalai Lama stated in a September visit to Los Angeles that the next few years are absolutely crucial for Tibet -- after that it could be too late. In 1994, BAFoT will step up its involvement with urgent action campaigns and efforts to influence world opinion towards

China. It is only the pressure of world opinion that will force policy change in China. The success of the campaign opposing China's bid for the Olympics testifies to the fact that such efforts can have an international impact. BAFoT will continue to work with the International Campaign for Tibet in Washington DC on projects that will have a similar impact, such as the campaign against the "Splendid China" Potala exhibit (see story on page 8).

In order for BAFoT to fulfill its 1994 goals, we need to increase volunteer involvement. There are numerous ways you can become involved. Because our work is continually expanding, BAFoT is offering coordinating positions to volunteers that will involve responsibility for specific areas of work and/or BAFoT events. I will work closely with these coordinators to provide whatever assistance is needed. There are many other possibilities for volunteer participation, including helping with events and urgent action work. In addition, BAFoT needs an Administrative Assistant and a student intern on a regular basis in the office. Please call me so we can talk over your particular interest in volunteering at BAFoT. This is your opportunity to help Tibet!

Thanks for your support,
Leslie McKim



Resettlement Wrap-Up

Over the last few months, the 60 new Tibetan immigrants and the Tibetan community have gradually taken charge of their own resettlement. To facilitate the reunification of Tibetan families from India and Nepal, community building, and the preservation of Tibetan identity, volunteer resource consultants are assisting with the reunification process, health insurance, medical and dental services, English language training, and job development. Accordingly, the project has formally declared its success and dissolved.

Nationally, the Tibetan Resettlement Project (TRP) has been replaced by the Tibetan Community Assistance Project (TCAP) -- run by Tibetans under the Office of Tibet -- to assist all Tibetans in North America. Two Bay Area Tibetan volunteers recently attended a meeting in New York to establish a relationship with TCAP and to discuss ongoing issues for the Tibetan newcomers.

Locally, all the new Tibetans are working and supporting themselves. Most have repaid their TRP loans and are saving for family reunification. Many of the newcomers are planning short vacations to visit their families in India and Nepal.

Of the new immigrants, four have their driver's licenses and a few have their learners permits. Many are learning computer skills both at work and in courses. One newcomer received her dental x-ray license from the University of California Dental School, two nurses earned

their CNA licenses, and several are studying for their high school equivalency degree. Two men who came last February speaking no English have recently purchased their own two bedroom mobile home. Tenpa Jamyang met President Clinton at his workplace, Chez Panisse, and asked him to help free Tibet!

Each Tibetan had an American sponsor who provided housing, assistance and friendship after the refugees' arrival. Rev. Carl Pihl of the Lutheran Social Services and Don Climent of the International Rescue Committee provided pro bono legal assistance with family reunification. San Francisco General Hospital assisted each Tibetan with health matters. Numerous English language tutors, employers and TRP volunteers have given valuable time and assistance to the Tibetans' acculturation. The commitment of all those who helped make the Tibetan Resettlement Project a success is inspiring! Thank you.

The Tibetan Resettlement Project's financial success is due to the generous donations of the Koret Foundation, the Jewish Community Endowment Fund, the Buddhist Churches of America, Advanced Pacific Technologies, the Aeroflot Foundation, the American Himalayan Foundation, the Fred Gellert Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, and many individuals. TRP and the BAFoT Board of Directors extend heartfelt thanks to all the TRP supporters.

Resettled Tibetans are looking to develop various skills and to find career-oriented employment. We urge friends to keep an eye open for suitable jobs that pay a minimum of \$6.50 per hour. We also need tutors in English, computer skills, and driving. Those with job leads, please contact Gyalden Yuthok, (510) 559-9756. If you would like to tutor, please call Nancy Ableser, (415) 285-8673.

Tibet Day in Santa Cruz

Over 400 supporters of Tibet attended the 2nd annual Tibet Day on August 28 at the Pacific Cultural Center in Santa Cruz. A bazaar featuring Tibetan and Himalayan handicrafts, jewelry, rugs, clothing and religious items was located in the main hall and in the garden. Performances by Chaksam-Pa highlighted the day's activities. Pema Tashi told Tibetan folk tales accompanied by Tenpa Jamyang on flute.

Speakers included John Isom of Eco-Tibet, who gave a slide show about the ecology of Tibet; Lama Tharchin Rinpoche, back for the second time to speak on Tibetan culture; and Ed Lazar on Tibetan independence. Ed's talk was so inspiring that 5 attendees decided to form the Santa Cruz Friends of Tibet.

The wonderful day ended with a talk/slide show entitled "An Introduction to Tibet," given by Richard Lanchester. Thanks to all the volunteers that made this event possible, especially Cyndie Zikmund, who was the event coordinator.

Thank You, Volunteers!

Many thanks to the following volunteers for their work over the last five months: Christine Schneider for brochure work, newsletter, and computer assistance; Howie Plitsch for brochure design; Bonnie McCalla for coordinating the Genden Rinchen vigil and regular office work; Larry Chiang for coordinating tabling; Lozang Gyaeltsaen Gyurmae for urgent action work; Diane Winslow, newsletter. Thanks to: Henry Kwan, Mick Ruthven, Tom Chuptin, Dave McMahan, Jackie Briggs, Tina Wang, Janice Quartieri, Nancy Stalker, Dechen Tsering, Tom Heath, Sharon Zarkin, Nancy Ableser, Matt Thayer, and BAFoT's Board of Directors.

BAFoT's Wish List

- A new copier
- 386-PC computers for donation to new Tibetans
- A large picture frame for a hand-written Tibetan proclamation

Are You a BAFoT Member?

BAFoT operates through the generous contributions of its members. Your membership will enable you to receive the newsletter and stay abreast of events in the Tibetan community. If you are not a member, please join today.

Annual membership \$25
 Family rate \$40
 Student, low income, seniors \$15
 Other \$ _____

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: (h) _____ (w) _____

Please clip and send to BAFoT, 347 Dolores Street, Suite 206, San Francisco, CA 94110 / (415) 241-9197 / fax (415) 626-0865
 BAFoT is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization. All contributions and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

China's "Final Solution" Strategy for Tibet

GENEVA (Aug. 29), Tibet Bureau — Information obtained from sources inside China reveals that the Chinese authorities have decided on strong measures to put an end to Tibetan resistance to Chinese rule in Tibet. These include further flooding Tibet with Chinese settlers and manipulating senior religious circles to create divisions among Tibetans.

The decisions were made at a secret meeting, code-named 512, held on May 12, 1993 at a place identified as Wen Jiangg, a small town close to Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province. Eighty officials attended the meeting, including representatives from all provinces populated by Tibetans. One of the participants was Ambassador Fan Guoqing, until recently China's permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva, who reported that in the international arena Tibet had become a tough issue for China. In an introductory address he also told the meeting that "many countries" rallied against China in summer sessions of the UN Human Rights forums.

The meeting characterized the failure of China to "win over" Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa as a "major blunder." Participants recognized that the European Community had been lost to the "Dalai camp."

In order to counter the growing resistance inside Tibet against the Chinese occupation, the meeting decided to "transfer" large numbers of Chinese settlers into Tibet with the aim of making it demographically "impossible for the Tibetans to rise, as is the case in Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang." Other measures were adopted to "break the unity" of the Tibetan community in exile, and "manipulate" the ranks of Tibetan religious figures and religious affairs.

Political Arrests in Tibet Increase

LONDON -- Political arrests in Tibet have grown by 30% , with 119 people arrested for political offenses by mid-August this year. Tibet Information Network (TIN) has issued a list of 467 current political prisoners in Tibet, compiled from recent reports provided by individuals and unofficial groups in Lhasa.

The continuing increase in arrests is unexpected. It had been thought that the number of political prisoners in Tibet would drop sharply after 1992, when a large number of people were released upon completing

standard three-year sentences for taking part in protests in 1989 that led to martial law for 13 months.

The increase in arrests in 1993 reflects not an increase in street demonstrations but a much greater efficiency and determination by Chinese security forces in tracing down dissidents, resulting in a significant increase in the seizure of underground activists from their homes.

Nearly half of the 1993 prisoners came from the countryside. Fifty-one of the 119 were arrested in rural villages, where there were a series of small pro-independence protests.

Eco-Tibet International Conference in France

PARIS, Reuter -- An international conference on Tibet's environment voiced concern on Oct. 1 that deforestation and the suspected storage of Chinese nuclear waste posed serious threats to the Himalayan environment.

Conference participants cited an International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) report saying China was suspected of storing radioactive waste near its "Ninth Academy" secret nuclear center.

ECO-Tibet/France said they had no evidence of radioactive dumping, but they had credible reports of new, unknown illnesses and deaths among nomads near the plant.

ICT director John Ackerly told the conference Chinese nuclear missiles in Tibet posed a serious threat to world stability. Tibet is the world's only region where four nuclear or potentially nuclear powers -- China, India, Pakistan and former Soviet republics -- border each other.

Travellers at the conference who had visited Tibet cited convoys of timber trucks and floating logs as evidence of widespread deforestation that could alter crucial weather patterns. ECO-Tibet/France said Tibet's forests had been cut in half since 1949.

Weather expert Elmar Reiter said Tibet held the key to the Asian summer monsoon on which tens of millions of people depend for their livelihood. Deforestation, by increasing the sun-reflection factor, could delay the spring warming of the Tibetan plateau, in turn delaying and shortening the monsoon.

ECO-Tibet also expressed concern about wildlife in Tibet, citing evidence that China was offering hunting trips to tourists to shoot wild yaks, deer, sheep, gazelles and foxes.



THE BEAUTY AND TRAGEDY OF TIBET

SKY BURIAL

An Eyewitness Account of China's Brutal Crackdown in Tibet

by Blake Kerr

Forward by the XIV Dalai Lama

"[In Tibet] the Chinese have been brutal . . . Sky Burial exposes this holocaust."

-Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan



"[Sky Burial] captures the beauty, terror, and tragedy of Tibet."

-Dan Sutherland
Washington Post

DR. BLAKE KERR went to Tibet for vacation and a chance to climb Mount Everest. Instead, he wound up in the middle of a Tibetan uprising against China's brutal occupation. In this fast-paced and well-told story, Kerr gives a vivid and eye-opening account of the staunch Tibetan resistance against the Chinese Government's violent campaign to extinguish the Tibetan culture.

Available at fine bookstores or call the Noble Press

1/800/486-7737

Coming Home to Tibet

By Chimi Thonden

I first saw my homeland, Lhasa, Tibet on a family trip in 1985 -- I was 20 years old and had been raised mostly in America. The difference between the country I came to know then and the land I visited two months ago is unimaginable. Eight years is enough time for any city today to change considerably, but in Lhasa it feels as if many lifetimes have passed.

In 1985, there was a feeling of hope and excitement at what the future might hold. Through contact with tourists, Tibetans were relating their experiences to the outside world for the first time. Although there was substantial Chinese presence even then, the Chinese population was largely relegated to the outskirts of Lhasa. The Chinese had initiated construction in some areas, but the central Barkhor area remained, for the most part, Tibetan. If one confined one's visit to the Barkhor area, it was possible to not see a single Chinese person. Today this is inconceivable.

Eight years later, much of Lhasa has been destroyed and what remains is entirely surrounded by Chinese cement buildings, as evidenced by a climb to any elevated point in the city. It is truly tragic that a land once known by the outside world for its mysticism and elusive beauty now resembles any drab communist city in China. Now, the Chinese government is razing many old houses on the Barkhor -- an act comparable to destroying the historic homes of America's founding fathers. But this analogy doesn't suffice because the Barkhor holds a unique position in the Tibetans' lives. As a circular road surrounding Lhasa's holiest shrine, the Jokhang temple, the Barkhor serves as a physical expression of an element essential to Tibetans' religious and spiritual way of life -- circumambulation and religious devotion. Pilgrims come from thousands of miles away (sometimes by way of prostration) simply to circumambulate the Barkhor and receive blessings in the Jokhang. By altering the Barkhor, the Chinese are not only tampering with a historical landmark, but they are subtly altering the very core of Tibet.

And the most destructive Chinese policy of all -- the government's encouragement of millions of ethnic Chinese to settle in Tibet -- accelerates with frightening speed. But what does this policy actually look like in Lhasa today? I viewed the entire cross-section of Chinese society living in Tibet -- from beggars to prostitutes, soldiers, gangsters, petty businessmen, bureaucrats, and rickshaw drivers. It's as if Chinese society has been transferred wholesale to Lhasa.

It's extremely difficult not to succumb to despair when in Lhasa these days. Witnessing such egregious Chinese policies being carried



Although this new building incorporates some elements of Tibetan style, its basic architecture is Chinese. By altering the Barkhor area, the Chinese are subtly destroying the core of Tibet. (Photo: Chimi Thonden)

out in Tibet with still no opposition from any nation, who couldn't argue that Tibet's future seems hopeless? China's presence and influence is omnipresent, and at times it might seem that the Tibetan people themselves are becoming complacent with the situation. However, the seemingly cheerful Tibetan salesman might not venture to recount all his problems. Undercover spies constantly infiltrate the sacred Barkhor area. "There are eyes and ears everywhere. People are afraid to speak, do you understand?" an elderly Tibetan woman whispered to me in public.

"As long as the Tibetan people are here, there is still a chance. Don't forget your people."

Nevertheless, some Tibetans are taking grave chances. They are talking about independence. They maintain their sense of humor and even manage to joke about the Chinese presence: a Tibetan man jokingly told me he enjoyed being called Chinese because now he could eat dog meat, donkey meat, cat meat, and the lot. "If you're Tibetan, you don't eat," he laughed. If there is an opportunity to speak, Tibetans will tell you a great deal. And if you happen to be American, Tibetans will cling to you. Americans don't realize the power, and ironically, the mystique that America holds in Tibet.

An image stands out in my mind: In a dark monastery, a young monk waited for the altar room to clear. He looked around him before he spoke, but he had so much to say that he was

overcome with emotion. He showed me a photograph of the Dalai Lama with George Bush, placed reverently on a plastic encasement of a Buddha statue.

"Bush is no longer America's president. Clinton is," I tell him.

"Yes, they say Clinton is a good man. Will he support Tibet?" I try to explain to him the steps Clinton has taken to condition Most Favored Nation trade status for China. The monk does not seem satisfied.

"Now -- if America doesn't help us, it's all finished. Tibet will be finished."

I had innumerable conversations like this; moments where I felt stronger than ever that we cannot give up hope. How can we when the Tibetans who live under Chinese suppression make such clear demands? Another elder Tibetan man who worked at one of the tourist spots reinforced this idea: "It's very easy to lose hope here. All around you everything seems so bad . . . like it's a lost cause. But remember, remember that the people are still here. As long as the Tibetan people are here, there is still a chance. Don't forget your people."

The Tibetan people are still there, but the Tibetan people can't do it alone. They do need America, and they need Clinton. Most importantly, they need *our* help. Having witnessed the accelerating speed at which sinicization is taking place in Tibet, I cannot emphasize enough what the Dalai Lama has said about the next several years being critical to the future of Tibet. I cannot forget a group of young monks bidding goodbye to me: "Please tell the Americans to support us here in Tibet! And next time when you come, bring a Tibetan national flag."

A Quick Tour of Lhasa

By Greg Alling

"I came to Tibet for the spiritual," one young German tourist exclaimed, "but I found the political." His proclamation was perhaps the most poignant observation made on our one week, one-way tour to Tibet in August. This man had plenty of reason for such a conversion.

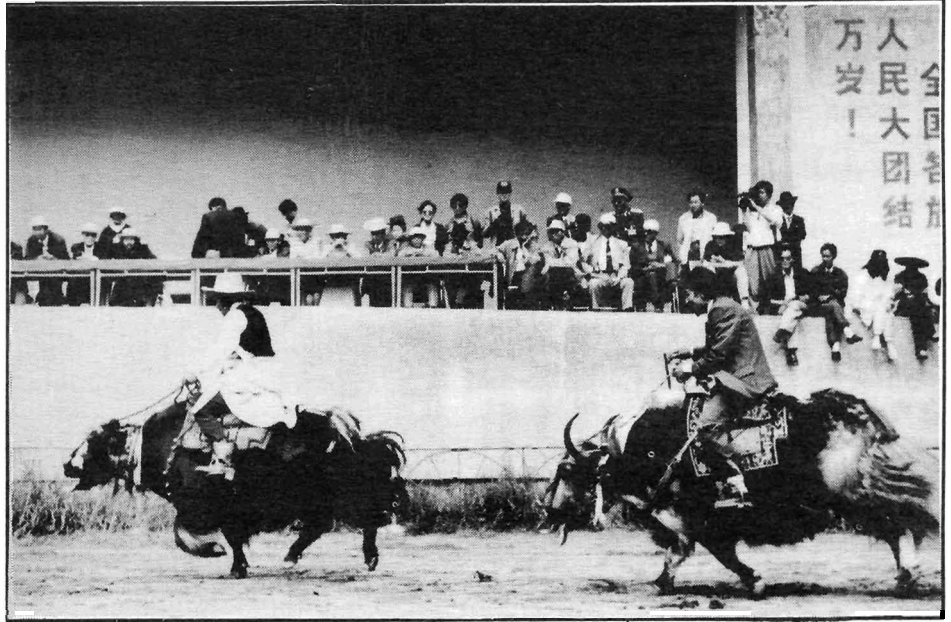
In Lhasa, immediately present are the sprawling office/trade buildings and rows of dirty quick food stalls and cheap goods stores. Uzi-like firecrackers rip across the swelling city daily; in order to count the number of new Chinese stores opened, one could sit on a Lhasan rooftop and listen to the celebrations. Government construction is ferocious and continuous.

Destruction helps fuel the new construction. Around the Barkhor (Lhasa's traditional market and circumambulation route around Tibet's holiest temple, the Jokhang), 50-100+ year-old adobe, stone and wood structures are flattened in a day, cleared in another, and under replacement with concrete skeletons on the third. With 5 year-old concrete buildings nearby being destroyed as well, Tibet looks like a building contractor's dream.

Indeed, when U.S. Senator Max Baucus (MT) visited Tibet in August and was shown in discussion with TAR government leaders on TV, the newscaster reported Baucus' question about Chinese population transfer into Tibet. The official response? The Chinese were not settling in Tibet, they were "coming to construct buildings."

Chinese presence infiltrates everywhere. "Tell us where the Tibetan restaurants are, we don't know the difference," pleaded members of our tour group. Chinese characters dwarf Tibetan script on nearly all signs, including Tibetan-owned businesses. Day-glo Chinese paints adorn not just storefronts and karaoke bars, but the "renovated" walls and pillars of the Potala and Jokhang. Even in the Barkhor, Tibetans sell improperly colored prayer flags made with cheap Chinese dye, Chinese monopolize the Tibetan scarf business, and Chinese petty goods sellers face and obnoxiously impede the clockwise flow of circumambulation.

Socially, Tibetans fill the omnipresent pool halls, drinking spots, dance floors and karaoke bars day and night. Such carousing often leads to senseless rivalry and infighting among the Tibetan youth. Inordinate numbers of these youth have no employment and little opportunity. As a result, thievery is common, thus causing great fear throughout Lhasa. Meanwhile, new Chinese settlers pour into Lhasa daily in search of profit.



Chinese and Tibetan officials attend yak races in Lhasa during the Shoton festival. Thousands of beggars were swept from the city to "villages and prisons" before the officials' arrival. (Photo: Greg Alling)

These current, visual examples of the destruction of Tibet's land, people and culture, are enough to move any tourist to become a defender of Tibet, like the young German. One can simply see the deteriorating situation.

Yet beyond mere observations, the voices of random Lhasans are even more compelling. "No matter how much one steals, fights or causes trouble, the police do nothing," one older woman complained. "But if you shout for Tibetan independence in front of the Jokhang, immediately ten policemen grab you and take you away."

**"You are from America?"
asked so many Tibetans.
"America is great -- when will
we win independence?"**

In a restaurant a group of young Tibetans were debating openly without reservation. Jokingly, one prodded: "You want to show your stuff, go in front of the Jokhang and start shouting FREE TIBET!"

"You are from America?" asked so many Tibetans. "America is great -- when will we win independence?" was a common question. Although I never solicited political comments, surely 90% of the hundreds of people I met offered them. Some who heard me speak Tibetan on the street ran to catch me and share information: "Two thousand beggars were taken and sent to villages and prisons last

month before the Chinese officials came for the Shoton festival. Tell the Americans!" For 6 weeks in Tibet, every day, everywhere, people of every class made similar comments.

Nonetheless, fear of midnight arrest, sometimes with no apparent reason, is constant. Yet compared to three or five years ago, the general fear of tattling neighbors and street spies has lessened. Tongues are looser, perhaps more desperate. Some Tibetans dare to wear outlawed Tibetan national flag pins beneath proud grins. As I taught one monk some English, he insisted that I write **FREE TIBET** in large, bold letters. Those who cannot contain their feelings do shout outside the Jokhang, or during festivals, or in front of Chinese banks. The demonstrators, certain of impending arrest and torture, are fearless.

The voices of Tibet are brave but powerless in the Chinese system, so they address their pleas to the outside world. Today, Tibetans hear Voice of America's Tibetan broadcast daily. Sometimes they hear the Dalai Lama speak on the broadcast. They see pictures of the Dalai Lama with Bill Clinton or George Bush for sale in the market. In fact, they think America will be Tibet's savior.

We from the outside world cannot be 'white knights' in Tibet, but we can help. Take the German tourist's example: in disbelief of a Chinese guide's flow of propaganda, he interrupted. Speaking to the guide's unwitting group, he began, "Before Chinese occupation in 1949, Tibet was an absolute, independent country..." No longer can we and our governments listen to China's lies about Tibet. *We all* must interrupt.

BAFoT EVENTS . . .

Gendun Rinchen Vigil

BAFoT and the Tibetan Association of Northern California (TANC) are sponsoring a candlelight vigil on December 10, Human Rights Day, to publicize the arrests of Gendun Rinchen, Lobsang Yonten, Damchoe Pema and the other detainees in Tibet. Other Tibet Support Groups throughout the world are holding similar vigils, making this an international event. This peaceful demonstration will include silent walking with candles, readings of the names of the detainees, and prayer and chanting.

Please bring matches or lighters to keep the candles burning. Candles will be provided. Help support the Tibetan community and all those interested in human rights and justice in Tibet!

Ganden Jangtse Monks

This unusual evening will feature the sacred music and dance of Tibetan monastic traditions, performed by nine Tibetan monks from Ganden Jangtse Monastery in south India. Their method of polyphonic chanting takes

years to master and requires early training and reshaping of the vocal chords. One Tibetologist said "To truly appreciate this unusual form of music the observer must suspend the imagination and open the mind to the rarefied levels of emotion and consciousness embodied by the structure of the mystical sound." Wearing the classic crested yellow hats, maroon and saffron robes, and brocaded costumes, the monks use long horns, short horns, cymbals, bells, and drums to accompany dances and chants.

Two monks from the tour will be available for private consultations. Venerable Lobsang Thinley, who first enrolled in a Tibetan monastery 63 years ago, is a highly qualified teacher and is noted for his divinations. Venerable Lobsang Tenzin is a Tibetan doctor and will have Tibetan herbal medicines with him. A donation of \$25.00 is suggested for these appointments. Please call Sharon Bacon at (415) 931-4624 for appointment information. This tour is a benefit for the

Ganden Jangtse Monastery and for Tibetan refugees that continue to flee Tibet.

"Prayer for the Enemy"

This new film by Ellen Bruno, award-winning film-maker for the 1990 film *Samsara*, focuses on the powerful and moving testimonies of recently escaped Tibetan nuns seeking refuge in Dharamsala, India. In response to the increased use of violence by Chinese troops in the 1980's, Tibetan Buddhist nuns staged courageous, non-violent demonstrations for religious freedom and independence. These women were imprisoned and tortured for their activities. The film seeks to understand the basis and inspiration for their non-violent actions and allows audiences to experience the voices of women directly affected by Chinese policies towards Tibet.

Tsering Wangmo, who provides the film narration, will open the evening with a live performance of songs. Proceeds from this event will go to Tibetan nuns in Tibet.

Tibet Calendar

Tibetan Sand Mandalas

November 17-20

Exploratorium, San Francisco 563-7337

Tibetan monks from the Drepung Loseling Monastery in India will be creating a colorful sand mandala, one of the most unique and visually striking religious art forms of Tibet. They will also give brief presentations explaining the significance of the mandala.

March and Rally for Free Tibet

Sunday, November 20

Seattle, Washington

Participate in educational demonstrations to coincide with the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation conference and President Clinton's meeting with Chinese President Jiang Zemin. High-ranking officials from many nations and 2,500 international media representatives will be present. Hundreds of people will make Tibet the number one on-the-street visible issue in Seattle. For more information, contact the Tibetan Rights Campaign at (206) 547-1015.

Toycott Demonstration

Friday, November 26, 10:00-12:00 PM

Toys R Us, Serramonte Shopping Center, 775 Serramonte Blvd, Colma

Join BAFOt for this annual event, held on

the day after Thanksgiving, which is the busiest shopping day of the year. A Christmas tree will be decorated with ornaments of yellow ribbons and photographs of Tibetan political prisoners available for purchase. Proceeds will go to the Toycott coalition. For information, call Linda Pfeifer at (408) 280-5052.

BAFoT Board Meetings

Dec. 1, Jan. 5, and Feb. 2 at 7:30 PM

Everyone is welcome to attend our monthly board meetings, held the first Wednesday of each month at the BAFOt office.

Gendun Rinchen Candlelight Vigil

Friday, December 10, 7:30-9:30

Chinese Consulate, San Francisco

Meet at the Chinese Consulate, Laguna and Geary, San Francisco. For more information, call Bonnie McCalla at (415) 364-7024, ex. 219 (day), or (415) 285-2451 (eve.), or Carol Brighton, (510) 849-3167. (See above.)

Ottmar Liebert & Jon Gagan Concert

Saturday, December 11, 8:00 PM

Dominican College, San Rafael

This very special performance, featuring Flamenco Guitarist Ottmar Liebert, will benefit the International Committee of Lawyers

for Tibet, the Tibetan Nun's Project, and the Namgyal Monastery. For more information, call (415) 454-3922.

Ganden Jangtse Monks Benefits

Saturday, December 18, 7:00 PM

Hidden Valley Resort, Carmel Valley

For ticket information call Jo Stollard at (408) 375-9357.

Sunday, December 19, 7:00 PM

Trustees' Auditorium, Asian Art Museum Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

Sponsored by BAFOt. Tickets: \$15, available through city box office at (415) 392-4400. For more information, or for appointments with Tibetan monks, call Sharon Bacon at (415) 931-4624. (See above.)

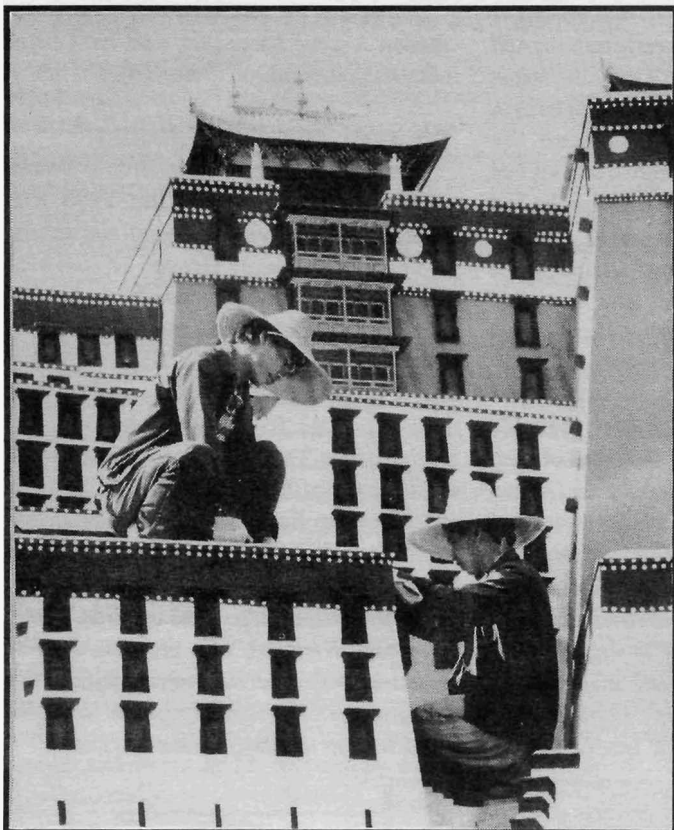
"Prayer for the Enemy," a documentary

Sunday, January 15, 7:00 PM

Trustees' Auditorium, Asian Art Museum Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

This performance will be sponsored by BAFOt. Tickets are \$10, \$15 & \$20. For more information call BAFOt at (415) 241-9197. (See above.)

Volunteers are needed for all BAFOt sponsored events. Join the fun!


URGENT ACTION


Construction workers from China finish the replicated Potala Palace at "Splendid China," a 76-acre, \$100-million theme park two miles from Florida's Disney World. (Photo: Splendid China)

The Potala in America? Disney China Features Exact Replica

On December 18, 1993 a Chinese theme park will open less than two miles from Disney World. Nearly half of the 60 exhibits focus on religion or "minorities" subjugated by China that continue to be persecuted by the Chinese government. Yet the park will portray China to the American public as a picture of tolerance, tranquility and openness.

The \$100 million theme park, called "Splendid China," is part of an external propaganda policy by Beijing in an effort to show how well it treats Tibetans, Mongolians, Uigurs, Miao and a host of other peoples whose cultures are being suppressed, and in some cases obliterated.

Splendid China's promotional materials state: "Headlining the outstanding reproductions at Splendid China is...the imposing Potala Palace, the former home of the Dali [sic] Lama...[that]...Florida style, towers over the landscape at Splendid China." The real Potala Palace was looted and shut by the Chinese for decades and today exists as little more than a museum controlled by the Communist Party.

The inclusion of the Potala Palace in this combination commercial/political initiative "is an insult to Tibetans everywhere" according to Lodi Gyari, President of the International Campaign for Tibet. "American visitors should realize that they are participating in a propaganda exercise," Gyari said.

The International Campaign for Tibet, BAFoT and other Tibet support groups are currently organizing a campaign to remove the Potala Palace exhibit from Splendid China. Please contact BAFoT for an action packet on Splendid China. Demand the removal of the Potala exhibit.

Write to: Mr. George Chen, President, Splendid China, 3000 Splendid China Blvd., Kissimmee, FL 34747. Phone (800) 224-6226 or (407) 397-8800; fax: (407) 396-7392.

(Source: International Campaign for Tibet)

This May Be Your Last Issue

Due to the generous contributions of BAFoT's members, special events, and donations, BAFoT has been able to hire an Executive Director. However, some financial adjustments have become necessary. Soon, non-profits will not be eligible for bulk mail discounts. Therefore, BAFoT will no longer be able to mail its newsletter to non-members on our mailing list. This will reduce our costs and in the long run make BAFoT a more effective organization.

If you are not a member, please complete the membership form located on page 3. Your membership will enable BAFoT to continue its work for Tibet. If you choose not to join, BAFoT regrets that this will be your last newsletter.

BAY AREA FRIENDS OF TIBET

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