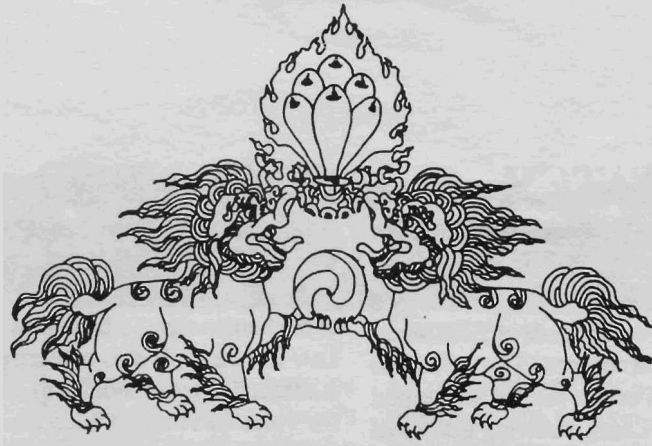


February 1990



BAY AREA FRIENDS OF TIBET NEWSLETTER

URGENT ACTION ALERT

from Tibetan Youth Congress and International Campaign for Tibet

The execution of **LOBSANG TENZIN**, a student of Tibet University, who is among four youths accused of killing a Chinese police officer during the demonstrations on March 5, 1988, is imminent.

Earlier reports about Lobsang Tenzin's execution have now been substantiated by more reports from Tibet. These reports state that it is almost certain Lobsang Tenzin will be executed in March unless international pressure can be brought to bear on the Chinese government. The reasons given are:

- Chinese authorities have regularly used the tactic of executing people just before important occasions to instill fear in the public so that they will not create trouble. This year the Chinese expect trouble in early March due to the anniversary of the March 5, 1988 demonstrations and the March 10, 1959 Tibetan National Uprising;
- Since Lobsang Tenzin already faces the death sentence it would be convenient to execute him; and
- Lobsang Tenzin is seen as a hero by many young Tibetans, having been elected as the Best Student of the Year for 1988 despite his arrest and imprisonment. His execution will be used as an example to dissuade other young Tibetans.

The reports also state that although the death sentence was passed in January 1989 the two-year period of suspension ends on March 5 since that is the date of his alleged crime.

Being helpless themselves, Tibetans in Tibet have put their hope and faith in the governments and people of the free world to save Lobsang Tenzin and, in turn, to save others like him from being executed in the future.

It is imperative that we do everything possible to bring Lobsang's case to the attention of our representatives in Congress, various NGO's and legal forums, the press, and publications. **TELEGRAMS** should be forwarded immediately to the following people:

TIBET DAY

Saturday, March 10 - 11:00 to 5:00
Fort Mason, Bldg. A, San Francisco

- **Panel discussion** chaired by Prof. Mark Tatz of CIIS
- **Slide presentations** by recent travelers to Tibet
- **New Videos** from Canadian Broadcasting Company
- **Photo Exhibit:** "Images of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Nobel Laureate"
- **Tibetan Dance Demonstration** by Chaksam-Pa, The Tibetan Dance and Opera Company, followed by a full length performance at the "Life on The Water" building B, Fort Mason
- **Bazaar-** Tibetan Arts, Crafts, Books, Exhibits & Food
- **Candlelight Vigil** at the Chinese Consulate, Geary and Laguna at 6 pm following Tibet Day Festivities.

URGENT ACTION

Mao Rubai, Vice Chairman of the T.A.R.
Fu Shuji
Hong Gong Xizang
Zizhiqu Weiyuanhut
Lhasa, Xizang Zizhiqu
People's Republic of China (and)

Premier Li Peng Zongli
Guowuyan
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

For more information call Lennis Lyon, 524-7410

WASHINGTON WATCH

On Sunday, January 14th, Michele Bohana, Director of Human Rights for the International Campaign for Tibet located in Washington, DC, addressed Bay Area Friends of Tibet members about legislation in Congress that concerns Tibet. She also shared a preliminary video version of the solemn and joyful occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in Norway in December, 1989. This touching film was shot by Tenzin Sonam and Ritu Sarin, prize-winning filmmakers, who were charter members of BAFT.

Michele strongly urged Californians who are interested in human rights in Tibet to write, or better yet, call their Senators and Representatives in the U.S. Congress to urge them to support any proposed legislation that entails economic sanctions against China. She also emphasized the importance of pointing out that martial law has not been lifted in Lhasa and that China's repression of democracy, self-determination, and human rights continues unabated in Tibet and should be openly condemned along with China's brutal repression of its own people.

She suggested that we also urge support of House Resolution 3705, which provides for 1000 immigration visas to enable additional Tibetans to form communities in the United States.

Michael Van Walt, legal representative of His Holiness's government-in-exile, who also attended the meeting, urged that we respond to newspaper articles that describe or call for abatement of martial law and human rights abuses in China without mentioning Tibet.

Editors and legislators need to be reminded that a serious struggle for self-determination continues in Tibet, made urgent by the continuing population transfer of Han Chinese into the "so-called" Tibetan Autonomous Region. The overwhelming of Tibetan population by Chinese population constitutes deliberate genocide and is the most pressing issue at present. The halting of deforestation and nuclear dumping and the implementing of the Dalai Lama's Five Point Peace Plan are worth mentioning as well.

Please support the Tibetan fight for human rights by participating in letter writing activities at Tibet Day, or, if you cannot attend, start your own letter writing campaign. If you would like to have some sample letters, contact Lennis Lyon, 524-7410. Your letters, postcards, and telegrams to your elected representatives make a difference.

GOOD NEWS

The foreign aid authorization act passed Congress on Jan. 30, 1990. It provides for economic sanctions against China linked to the human rights situation in Tibet and the lifting of Martial Law in Lhasa. It also authorizes 30 scholarships for Tibetan students and professionals to study in the U.S. and provides for voice of America broadcasts in the Tibetan language in Tibet. President Bush, however, retains broad authority over the implementation of economic sanctions against China.

We want to thank all of you who urged members of Congress to support the act. This legislation has sent a strong signal to Beijing leadership that the U.S. Congress, representing the American people find China's treatment of the Tibetan people reprehensible. Those at the office of the International Campaign for Tibet believe it has been the strong constituent support that has moved the legislators. Let's celebrate this victory along the way and renew our efforts to help Tibet.

KEEP INFORMED

• By subscribing to the Tibet Press Watch, you can survey a wide selection of articles concerning Tibet gathered from newspapers and magazines around the world bi-monthly. The annual subscription rate is \$25, though larger donations are welcome! Send your check to the International Campaign for Tibet, 1511 K St., NW, Suite 739, Washington, DC 20005.

• Also available from ICT is "Suppression of a People: Accounts of Torture and Imprisonment in Tibet, A Physicians for Human Rights Report" by John Ackerly and Dr. Blake Kerr for \$5 plus \$1 postage. This report was supported by the J. Roderick MacArthur Foundation, the Joyce Merck Fund and the Open Society Fund. It contains interviews with 17 Tibetan men and women who were familiar with conditions of incarceration and interrogation in Tibet and had escaped to India.

• The January/February 1990 issue of "Yoga Journal" has a cover photo and article on His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

• An upcoming issue of Greenpeace Magazine features Tibet on its cover and has an article by Galen Rowell on the environment of Tibet.

• The Jan/Feb issue of "New Dimensions," the newsletter of New Dimensions Radio, has a cover article on H. H. the Dalai Lama entitled "Inner Peace/World Peace." New Dimensions can be contacted by writing to P.O. Box 410510, SF, CA 94141.

BAY AREA FRIENDS OF TIBET PURPOSE

Bay Area Friends of Tibet is a non-profit public benefit organization. It was set up to study, promote, and actively preserve the Tibetan cultural heritage in all its aspects; to educate the general public in matters pertaining to Tibet; and to assist Tibetans in need.

TIBETAN PROFILE: Tsewang Tatz

I visited the Tatz family in their comfortable home on Claremont Ave. in Oakland. Their lovely daughter, Pemala (Pema stands for lotus flower, la is an ending denoting affection in Tibetan), had just celebrated her first birthday the day before. She shrieked with delight when I arrived and busied herself with walking, jangling keys and visiting us during the interview. Besides being enormously happy, she has another distinction — she is half Tibetan. Her mother, Tsewang, was born in Tibet in the late 1950's and escaped to India with her mother (Pemala's grandmother) and brothers and sisters in 1960. Tsewang shared with me the saga of how she found her way to the other side of the globe from Tibet where she and Mark now tend their tangerine tree, make house renovations, work full-time, and participate in Bay Area Friends of Tibet and other Tibetan-related activities.

Tsewang's family originated in the 14th century in Tibet with a celebrated Nyingmapa lama, who resided in southwest Tibet near Mt. Everest. Those in her immediate family were farmers who owned their land, living in the prosperous village of Gaynor near Shelkar. Since 1951, Tibetans had seen increasing numbers of Chinese arrive in their country, appearing as business people or tourists. Late in the 1950's it became clear that they were, in fact, soldiers. In 1959 Tsewang's mother, her husband, his brother (she was married to both, according to Tibetan custom), and five children were having breakfast. The Chinese forces in their village announced that the men of the village had to attend a meeting that day. Tsewang's father and uncle reluctantly left for the meeting. In fact, the Chinese took the men to prison in Shelkar Tzong, and from there, Tsewang's mother heard, they were to be sent to other prisons in Tibet.

The Chinese were incarcerating members of noble families or anyone they considered to be connected to the Tibetan government. Tsewang's mother, Palden Gonsar, feared her husband and his brother would be killed. She took the one donkey she had managed to hide when the Chinese took all the horses and donkeys of the village, and in spite of being nearly 9 months pregnant, traveled the two or three miles to Shelkar Dzong early in the morning, in hopes of seeing them and saying goodbye. She saw two big trucks loaded with prisoners who had their arms tied behind them, but she couldn't identify them by their shadows outlined by the truck coverings. She couldn't scream to them, and they couldn't wave. So she climbed above the road where the trucks were to pass, and when they went by, threw the belts from her high Tibetan boots into the trucks. When her husband escaped from prison seven years later and arrived in India, he had her boot belt with him. She and the rest of the family never saw his brother again.

The Chinese soldiers then appropriated the family house, took all the valuables, and relegated Palden, an uncle who was

a monk, and the five children, including Tsewang, to a one-room barn with the animals. They were given no blankets and left their homes so precipitously that the children were missing some of their shoes. The servants were expelled and not even a spoon was left in the main house.

The Chinese routinely bribed servants to tell family secrets and find valuables. They also began to remove Tibetan children from Tibet and send them to China at an early age. Palden Gonsar was about to deliver another child and was slated to be escorted by the Chinese to prison for the birth. She feared they would take her child. She had no idea what to do or where to go. Fortunately, two former servants who had already made their way to India and returned, arrived to help the family escape. They left at midnight. Tsewang remembers being carried across a large river — her feet touched the water, and she looked at the moon in the water with surprise. It was 1960.

Palden Gonsar left one of Tsewang's younger brothers with an aunt in Solukhumbu and made her way with the family to India, where the Indian government had generously granted Tibetans refuge in Dharamsala, Musoorie, and other locations throughout India. A system of Tibetan foster parents was begun in Musoorie with foreign aid (from Switzerland and SOS among others), which allowed Tibetan children to live surrounded by Tibetan culture while they were taught by teachers from India in school, leaving their parents free to work. Tsewang, her brother, and sister, lived in Home #7 with about 23 other children and two foster parents. Sometimes the foster parents were both Tibetan women since so many Tibetan men had been imprisoned and killed in Tibet. Her mother, by now in her mid-30's, made sweaters all winter in Dharamsala and went to Kashmir to sell them in the summer. She had her children at home for two months each year during vacation.

When Tsewang was about 12, a letter arrived, stating that her father had escaped from Tibet and was in Solukhumbu. Palden Gonsar went immediately, but when she was reunited with her husband, who was in his early 30's, she could not recognize him. He was sick with tuberculosis and had been subjected to torture and hard labor during all of the seven years he had been imprisoned. He walked bent over, holding a walking stick, and could barely look up. He had no teeth left. It was 1967. Because of the Chinese cultural revolution, many Tibetans were able to escape from Tibet at that time. Tsewang's parents became foster parents in Musoorie. Her father passed away in 1983.

Tsewang completed school and traveled to Calcutta to undertake secretarial studies for 2 1/2 years. She wished to explore the world beyond her family's home in Musoorie and applied to work at Tibet House in Delhi. She interviewed and was hired as a receptionist. While working there, she met Mark Tatz, a young American scholar who had received a Master's in

TSEWANG'S STORY

Tibetan Studies from the University of Washington and a Ph.D in Buddhist Studies from the University of British Columbia. In the late 60's it became possible for the first time, Mark observed, to study with learned Tibetans who had come to the West. The Rockefeller Foundation funded Tibetan studies at the University of Washington, which became a major focal point in North America for the study of Tibetan language and philosophy. Mark and Tsewang began to date, moved to Dharamsala and were married. They came to San Francisco in 1983 when Mark was offered a position at the California Institute of Integral Studies, where he is presently Director of the Philosophy and Religion Program and teaches Tibetan language and culture and Buddhist philosophy.

"What was it like to come to America from India?" I asked Tsewang.

"I was expecting much more," she said. "I was not surprised by highways or buildings because they had them in Delhi. BART was the big surprise! Not only was it clean, but it went UNDER the bay! No leaks. No problems — what a good job! Why hadn't I heard more about this?"

Mark and Tsewang found a cottage in Oakland and lived there for six years before moving nearby to their present house. Tsewang looked in the yellow pages of the phone book and found a listing for 'Asian Multi-Service' in Oakland, which offered various levels of professional instruction. They told Tsewang that she could go to work immediately because she spoke English and could type. They had never had any Tibetan or Nepalese clients. Tsewang wanted to improve her skills and took English and typing and worked part-time at Burger King — which, she concluded, was mainly a place for teenagers.

Amazingly, Tsewang was not at all homesick. On weekends she visited Lama Lodro and Lama Kunga at nearby Tibetan Buddhist Dharma Centers — and she and Mark mixed with all the visiting high Lamas: Kalu Rinpoche, Dezhung Rinpoche, and the Karmapa, to name a few. Fortuitously, the Bay Area Friends of Tibet came together in 1984 with a demonstration in October at the Chinese consulate to protest killings in Tibet. It turned out that a number of Tibetans had settled the Bay Area — Tashi Norbu and Dorsh, Thepo Tulku, Dawa Chok, and Lobsong Chonjor. Tsewang met Lobsong Chonjor at the Sunday flea market in Berkeley — he was selling Tibetan carpets and bags. She began to speak to him in Tibetan and he understood. "Are you Tibetan?" she asked. "Yes," he answered in Tibetan. Lobsong had been a monk in Kathmandu (Bodanath) after escaping from Tibet. Meeting began in various people's houses who were interested in the Tibetan cause. "Then everything started," she said.

Tsewang gave an overview of Tibetans coming to America. "People like me who came to America were very smart. They wanted something for their personal life. They knew that politics make terrible trouble — this they learned in Tibet. When we lost our country, there was no one to support us; we had not even a spoon, a cup, or a bowl. The Tibetan government

(in exile) was like the Salvation Army. Together with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, we tried — they gave to everyone equally, but there wasn't quite enough to go around. The first generation in exile in India grew up, was educated, and decided they wanted to do something for themselves, for their own nature.

"The Tibetan way of living is very peaceful and jolly. We sing together at night. When I think about what the Chinese did to Tibet — they changed everything. Now, our culture could be lost.

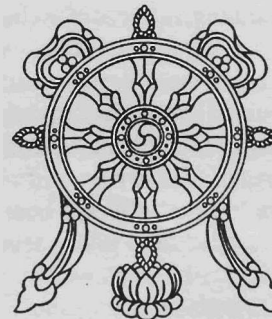
"For Pemala, for example, when she grows up — we want her to know her background. We would be pleased with whatever she can do for her culture. For us, I think, it is better, not worse, to be in America. Mark knows even more than I do about our history and literature. We can educate Pemala. She can get a better education here. Sometimes we talk with our Tibetan friends about sending our children to India where they can see more Tibetans in daily life. But, most important, is health. More and more Tibetans are coming here. Maybe we can have a Tibetan Sunday school. As far as we are concerned — Pemala can join Mark's students when she is old enough. I can teach her Tibetan when I come home from work."

Tsewang worked for a while in a Montgomery Ward warehouse, getting up at 4:30 am and working until 2:30 and then dashed off to her check-cashing job around the corner at 3 in the afternoon. She was off work at 7 in the evening. When the warehouse closed, Wards sponsored Tsewang to study at the Alameda Technical College for 9 months. She studied computers, English, typing, and business math. After attending a job fair at the Hyatt Regency in San Francisco, she got a job with the Information Store in San Francisco, where she does library research on computers. She loves it. When she leaves for work, Mark and Pemala are asleep. When she comes home, they are waiting for her. Then Mark leaves. Tsewang would like to bring her sister to America to spend time with Pemala and teach her Tibetan.

"What if you could return to Tibet?" I asked.

She replied, "America is like your in-law's home. Tibet is my home. I will visit both families — it's like having a summer and winter house."

- Interview by Carol Fields



BAFT NEWS

Bay Area Friends of Tibet welcomes back Michael and Lynn Van Walt from a very long and productive exile in Washington, DC. Michael, a founding member of BAFT, is the legal representative of the Tibetan government-in-exile and author of "The Status of Tibet" and a pamphlet on Chinese population transfer into Tibet. Michael has given numerous speeches and news presentations on the Tibetan political situation.

We also welcome back two pillars of the Bay Area Tibetan community, Dorsh Devoe and Tashi Norbu. Dorsh and Tashi, also founding members of BAFT, were in India for an extended stay. We hope to feature their comments on life in India vs. life in the Bay Area in a future issue of our newsletter.

Doc O'Connor, super activist and member of BAFT's Board of Directors, will be leaving in February for India, to attend a Tibet Support Group Conference in Dharamsala. From there Doc will be traveling in India and, hopefully, Tibet. She has agreed to be our foreign correspondent. We wish her a safe and inspiring journey and look forward to her reports.

Also attending the Conference is Ed Lazar, member of BAFT BOD and Director for Humanitas. Canyon Sam, who has helped create a local TV show on Tibet and done numerous slide presentations to support Tibetan nuns, will also be leaving for Dharamsala and points east. The Bay Area will be very well-represented at this unique gathering in Dharamsala.

A newly-elected Board of Directors was formed in December. Returning members are Gabriel Aiello, president; Tashi Choekyi, vice-president; Phil Ladenla, treasurer; Doc O'Connor; and Jigme Yugay. New members are Dorsh Devoe, co-secretary; Steve Evans, co-secretary; Michael Sautman; Ed Lazar; Bob Palais; Michael Van Walt; and Eva Herzer.

The following committees have been formed and are listed with their committee chairperson and phone numbers:

- Events - Tashi Choekyi, 408-356-7649
- Urgent Action Letter Writing - Lemnis Lyon, 524-7410
- Newsletter - Carol Fields, 524-0593 and Pat Aiello, 945-1522
- Membership - Gabriel Aiello, 945-1522

CALENDAR

Slide Shows/Lectures on Tibet

- February 20, Tuesday, 7:30 pm, Community Congregational Church, 145 Rockhill Drive, Tiburon
 - February 22, Thursday, 8:00 pm, Albany United Methodist Church, 980 Stannage, Albany
- For info, call Ida Salis, Tibet Resource Center, 924-9193

Losar Celebration

- February 25, Sunday, 5 pm, Mark & Tsewang Tatz's house, 5413 Claremont, Oakland. For info, call 524-0593.

CALENDAR

Tibet Day March 10 - See front page.

Chaksam-Pa: The Tibetan Dance and Opera Company

- March 10 Performance at Tibet Day
- April Performances through Asian American Arts Festival - Performances in East Bay, San Francisco and the Peninsula. Call 641-9139 or 776-8999.

Bay Area Friends of Tibet

- General meeting - April 28, 2 pm - check BAFT phone line for meeting place, 648-2040.

International Committee of Lawyers for Tibet

- Executive Board meeting - Feb. 21, 6 pm
 - Educational Seminar - April 5, 6 pm
 - General meeting - April 25 5:30 pm
- For meeting places and info call Janice Sperow at 677-7653

ONGOING EVENTS

VIGIL

Yes, the Vigil at the Chinese Consulate continues. This is your opportunity to receive friendly waves, honks, and shouted encouragement at Geary and Laguna in SF, while registering your disapproval of Tibetan treatment at the hands of the People's Republic of China. The vigil takes place each Saturday from 10 am to 12 pm at the Consulate and is coordinated by Christine Schneider, 752-7702.. Though you may participate on any Saturday (please bring a sign), we have divided up basic responsibility as follows:

- East Bay - 1st and 5th Saturday of every month
- South Bay - 3rd and 5th Saturday of every month
- San Francisco - 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month

Until martial law is lifted in Lhasa, the press is allowed to enter Tibet, the PRC negotiates with H.H. the Dalai Lama's government, massive population transfer of Chinese into Tibet ceases, political prisoners are released, and self-determination is restored, we must send an unequivocal and steady signal to China that Tibetans and their friends around the world strongly protest repression in Tibet. Peaceful pro-Tibetan protests continue at Chinese embassies and consulates throughout the world.

TIBET ALIVE

Local artists have created a weekly program aired on Channel 25 in San Francisco on the 4th Monday of every month at 10:30 pm. The program on the 26th of February is on Chaksam-Pa, the Tibetan Dance and Opera Company.

PROJECTS

Heart of Kindness is a one hour television documentary about His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his ideas on non-violence and the human family. Taped in July during his visit to LA for the Kalachakra initiation, the documentary is intended for worldwide television distribution. A half hour version has been prepared for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as part of their prestigious "Man Alive" series. This was broadcast in November 1989 and was very favorably received by the press and a viewing audience of around one million. The CBC measurement of viewer enjoyment gave a rating of 84 out of a possible 100.

All funding has been provided by private individuals on a sponsorship basis and not as a financial investment. Donations range from \$50 to \$5,000 with an average of \$1,000. All sponsorship funding is passed through Thubten Dhargye Ling, the Buddhist Centre that hosted the Dalai Lama's visit. Since TDL is a non-profit organization, all sponsorship funds are tax-deductible. The half hour version, which cost \$85,000, has been made possible by the generous donations of cash and/or facilities by many individuals, and the one hour version, which will cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000, is being made possible in the same way.

This project is structured on a genuine non-profit basis with all revenue or royalties generated through sales of HEART OF KINDNESS being channelled back to Tibetan refugee and charitable organizations unless it proves necessary to give financial guarantees to ensure completion. If no purchasers are forthcoming then this project will be distributed as free programming. However, interest in the Tibetan cause is high because of the reception of the Nobel Peace Prize by the Dalai Lama.

The unprecedented consent of the Dalai Lama to have a small camera crew accompany him continuously throughout the 18 day visit has resulted in some quite extraordinary and intimate material. This has created a unique opportunity to introduce the Dalai Lama and his ideas for a more peaceful planet to television audiences around the world. Provided that funds continue to come in for this project sufficient to ensure completion and distribution by the late spring, the project will succeed in bringing to the world's television screens a singular piece of programming about the Dalai Lama himself and his ideas on individual kindness as the catalyst for world peace.

For more information on how you can help support HEART OF KINDNESS, call or write to Martin Wassell, 10483 Wellworth Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024 (818)840-7225, daytime or (213)445-8939, evening.

BAY AREA FRIENDS OF TIBET
103 CASTLE ROCK ROAD
WALNUT CREEK, CA 94598

