

The Historical Status of China's Tibet

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Chapter VIII

Armed Rebellion in Tibet Opposed The Democratic Reform Through Which Serfs Win Human Rights

The peaceful liberation of Tibet constituted the heaviest blow against activities supporting the idea of “Tibetan independence,” activities that had been conducted for more than half a century. Unreconciled, the Tibetan separatists did their best to obstruct and undermine the implementation of the 17-Article Agreement. Their efforts were highlighted by an armed rebellion that was aimed at defending the feudal system and opposing the Democratic Reform that was granting human rights to the Tibetans for the first time in their history. This rebellion was put down by the PLA troops under the direction of the CPC Central Committee. Still, Xagabba and Van Praag claim these actions in defense of human rights actually “violated the human rights of the Tibetans.” Recent years have seen this fallacy gain increased exposure by the Dalai clique and the international anti-China forces.

The human rights issue in Tibet may be approached from several angles. Here are facts in three fields.

(1) The Tibetans Enjoyed No Human Rights Under Their Feudal Overlords in Old Tibet

In Tibet prior to liberation, there were two antagonistic classes in the Tibetan society: the serf owners and the serfs. The serf owners, who made up about 5 percent of the Tibetan population, owned almost all the farmland, pastureland, and forests and the bulk of the livestock and farming equipment. The serfs, who accounted for 95 percent of the Tibetan population, owned none of the means of production, such as farmland and grassland. Moreover, the serfs, personally owned by the serf owners, had to provide their masters with free corvee labor and rent. At that time, the Tibetans said: “No land is tilled except through corvee and no person is masterless.” Today, Tibetans who are over 40 can still tell you the name of their former overlord.

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There was a clear distinction between the two classes. The serf owners enjoyed absolute power to oppress and exploit the serfs. Such oppression and exploitation found its way into local sayings:

- (a) Buttocks and mouths are not allowed to be on the same line. (buttocks refer to the serfs and mouths to serf owners).
- (b) When everyone is equal, who will be the servant?
- (c) When a lion moves in the snowy mountains, he is a lion. When a lion comes out of the snowy mountains, he becomes an old dog. (This means the nobles have to stay where they are and are not supposed to go among the populace)
- (d) Neck, head and body all belong to the above. (This means the serfs are personally owned by the serf owners)
- (e) Flees that are able to cross a mountain are not able to jump out of the collar. (This means the serfs will not be able to get rid of the rule by the serf owners)
- (f) Fighting officials is committing suicide.
- (g) If you wish to live in an abyss, please go fight the officials; if you wish to be bitten, please go stamp on the tail of a dog.
- (h) The poor have no way out but to eke out a living with hands hugging heads carefully.

Under the serf system in old Tibet, the serfs suffered from corvee labor, excessive rent payments and usury. The exploitation was so stunningly cruel that the Tibetan said that “corvee labor is as numerous as hair.” When the serf owners sent people to press for payments of their debts, they said: “These people are like mules. You need to beat them.” At that time, the serf owners were free to club or whip the serfs. The serfs were often beaten in the face with leather hands, jailed in wooden cages or shackled. The serf owners were in a position to cut off their ears, hands and feet; gouge out their eyes; and even have them executed at will. Many serfs were forced to flee their homes and live as beggars. Numerous such people died on the roadside. In Lhasa, Xigaze, Qamdo and Nagqu, beggars huddled together in large groups. Many were the old, women and children. There were also cases when starving beggars scrambled with dogs for a piece of cow bone cast away by a noble family. Those who succeeded in obtaining the bone would sit by the road to crack the bone with a stone and suck out the marrow. When these people were struggling to keep their heads above water, what kind of human rights could they enjoy?

The Gaxag government of Tibet, formed to cope with feudal serfdom, was a political regime that featured a monk-noble dictatorship. It was reduced into a tool used by the temporal

and secular nobles to exercise joint dictatorship over the serfs and other laboring people. This government offered official positions only to children of noble families and upper-class lamas. None of the serfs were able to be politically promoted. Army officers above the level of Deboin (regimental commander) had to be from the noble class; commoners in the army could be promoted no higher than Ruboin (battalion commander). Law was exploited to serve the serf owners, with the legal codes stipulating that man was divided into nine classes in three categories. Any legal case was judged in accordance with the class of the persons involved; the result often went against the lower-class person and favored the rich and those in power. Any serf who resisted or injured a serf owner would be put to death, while any noble who killed a serf had only to pay some money to the relatives of the serf. Laboring women were at the bottom of the society and exposed to great suffering. Young, pretty female serfs often had to “accompany” the serf owners overnight with the result that many suffered from the humiliation of bearing children of the noble families, being made sex slaves, an act that was more barbarous than those of feudal lords in Europe during the Middle Ages who demanded female serfs spend their first night after marriage with the lord. When the broad masses of the serfs were exposed to devastation, oppression and the outrages of officials and noble, where could they go and enjoy human rights?

Here are three tragic events witnessed in Tibet prior to the Democratic Reform.

In November 1951, when the 18th Army Headquarters had just taken up station in Lhasa, we came across more than 20 Tibetans watching an elderly beggar woman dying. She was nothing but skin and bones, lying on her back in a garbage heap. There were flees frolicking around her bony face, with some crawling into her nostrils. We sent for the local garrison's medical orderly. But by the time the medical orderly had rushed there taking only a matter of minutes, she had already died.

In the spring of 1952, when we were stationed at the Gexei Manor owned by a noble family in Gyangze, we witnessed the manor owner entertaining serfs who had performed well with buttered tea on the first day of the first Tibetan month. But he forced a serf he was displeased with to drink foul water. The serf's arms and legs were held and his nose plugged. When he opened his mouth to breathe, the water was poured down his throat. Such rewards and punishments were often meted out on this particular day. Those punished in this way often fell seriously ill and frequently died.

In July 1955, Gendain and three others from Mangkam drove some 20 mules and horses, loaded with wool, from Lhasa to India. When they reached the Chunpi Village Tax Collecting Station in Yadong, the tax-collecting Tibetan troops collected wool export duties from them and demanded bribes according to the stipulations made by Yadong Chief Manager Muxar. The four paid them, but the Tibetan military tax collector complained the bribes were too small and refused to let them go. The two sides quarreled and finally fought each other with knives. Each

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side lost one man. Gendain and two of his partners fled helter-skelter to Upper Yadong. Muxar and his men found them in a forest. The three were beaten and thrown into a cell used for convicts awaiting execution. Every two or three days, they were forced to the ground and whipped on their back and legs. Under such inhuman shipping, the three screamed at the top of their voices until they fainted. This was not the end as the whipping continued until they had been struck 150 times.

We stood watching the scene with eyes closed in pain. As the 17-Article Agreement stipulated that the existing Tibetan system would effect no changes with the peaceful liberation of Tibet, we were not in a position to intervene. The three were kept in jail. Their ankles were shackled with large wooden planks. They could not lie down and were forced to sit on their bloody legs and buttocks. The ground was damp and their wounds became infected and infested with maggots. Muxar received an order from the Gaxag government, asking him to escort the three to Lhasa for execution. Muxar asked our medical orderlies to give the three medical treatment for fear that they would die in Yadong. One of this book's authors was the PLA medical orderly who went to treat the three.

The above represents only a small trickle of the inhumane acts perpetrated by the ruling classes in old Tibet. In spite of these common cruelties, Xagabba and Van Praag praise the society of Tibet, saying that there was "no need to liberate Tibet, a clean and beautiful place."

In old Tibet, many people had to carry goods weighing 40-75 kg on their back and creep along the zigzagging paths across the Himalayas all year around, acting like beasts of burden. These people, men and women, were often found in the freezing mountains or even snow caves in the cold of winter. They should be counted as coolies who have suffered the hardest lives in the world. In downtown Lhasa, we found numerous tattered tents. They were full of holes and dusty. Standing a mere 1.4 meters high, each covered an area of six or seven square meters but had to house a family of four or five. Each of the family members owned only a ragged coat, a begging bowl, a pot, two bags and several pieces of felt. Their lifestyle was worse than life in any slum in the world. While old Tibet was a hell for these suffering people, it was a paradise for the lamas and nobles, who enjoyed a life more luxurious than the wealthiest in many countries in the world.

Therefore, in old Tibet, only the small handful of serf owners enjoyed human rights. The serfs and other laboring people, who accounted for the majority of the Tibetan population, had no human rights at all.

(2) The Reactionary Ruling Class in Old Tibet Refused to Grant Human Rights to The Broad Masses of Tibetans

The 17-Article Agreement declared that feudal serfdom in old Tibet would be reformed. But the CFC decided to undertake the reform in a peaceful way, just as it had undertaken the peaceful liberation of Tibet. In addition, the reform measures to be taken in Tibet were to be much milder than those in the Han areas.

Deng Xiaoping, the first secretary of the CPC Southwest Bureau, pointed out in 1950: "All reforms in the ethnic minority areas must be conducted by elements from within those areas. Reform is indispensable. Without reform, the ethnic minority areas will be unable to eliminate poverty. Without eliminating poverty, it will be impossible to eliminate the backwardness of the areas. But, this reform must not be conducted until conditions for reform become ripe in these ethnic minority areas." (*On the Minority Nationality Issues in Southwest China*, p.164 *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping 1938-1965*) The 17-Article Agreement also stipulated that reforms in Tibet must be conducted through consultations between the local government of Tibet and the Tibetan people and there would be no compulsion on the part of the Central Government.

In accordance with this spirit, the CPC Tibet Work Committee conducted united front work with members of the ruling class during its prolonged stay following liberation of the region. All other work centered on the united front work. In their contacts with the Tibetans, they worked to influence them instead of mobilizing them to wage class struggle. This stood in sharp contrast with what the CPC did in the Han Area, where practices undertaken included mobilizing the laboring people to clean up bandits and fights despotic landlords, reducing rent for land and interests on loan, enacting land reforms, destroying the old political power and establishing the new political power. Economically, the serf owners suffered no changes in regard to their established economic interests. The broad masses of the Tibetan serfs continued to offer unpaid labor, pay rents and repay loans with interest to their overlords.

Politically, the old power system experienced no change at all. Officials of the local government remained in office. They dominated government affairs, enjoyed the final say in legal cases, collected taxes and had the right to punish and execute criminals. The feudal serfdom in practice in Tibet co-existed with the socialist system practiced in other parts of China, which had experienced land reform and built up a new democracy and socialism. As a matter of fact, China was instituting for the first time the concept later known as "one country, two systems". The CPC paid much attention to finding way out for the serf owners. Some members of the ruling class were given jobs in new organs. For example, towards the end of 1950, when the Qamdo People's Liberation Committee was set up, Ngapoi, Pagbalha, Bamda Doje and Jamyang Baimo were made its vice-chairmen. In 1952 when the PLA Tibet Military Area was formed, Ngapoi and Raogexag were made its deputy commanders-in-Chief. In 1954, the 14th Dalai Lama and the 10th Panchen Erdeni attended the National People's Conference (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The 14th Dalai Lama was elected NPC vice-chairman, and the 10th Panchen Erdeni was elected CPPCC vice-Chairman. These were the

highest leading positions ever held by Tibetan leaders in China. In 1956, when the Preparatory Committee for the Founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region was formed, the 14th Dalai Lama and the 10th Panchen Erdeni became its director and deputy director. Some 2,163 among the 6,000-plus members of the upper ruling class in Tibet were given new official positions, with the remainder to be given new jobs before 1960. Zhou Enlai, Chen Yi and other Central Government leaders repeatedly ensured Tibet's ruling elite that reform in the region would be peaceful, and they were to be given political means and salaries. This reflected an approach that was unusual in Chinese history. The Central Government was treating the exploiting class in an ethnic minority area with economic and political generosity.

What the CPC offered them moved many in the ruling elite, Ngapoi, Raogexag, Cuike and Jigpo trusted and supported the CPC, and worked hard in their new posts. When serfs in some areas began demanding reform, some far-sighted and enlightened people on the ruling class realized that the Democratic Reform would be inevitable and decided to go with the flow. Many volunteered to give up their exploitive positions. Cases in point include Galsang Xerab and Wanggyi, brothers in the Dagenbao Sezhong Yumei family in Doilungdeqen County, who expressed a willingness to share land with serfs once the Democratic Reform was conducted in Tibet.

Some short-sighted die-hards in the ruling class, however, were not reconciled with the possible loss of the life of luxury they enjoyed by exploiting and suppressing the serfs. They attempted to maintain the feudal system and opposed the reforms instituted by the CPC. When some of the serfs developed an interest in the CPC and demanded reforms with a view to gaining the rights of men and no longer being treated as beasts of burden, these ruling-class elites declared Tibet was to suffer the shockwaves of turmoil. Behind the mask of separatist activities, they incited riots and staged an armed rebellion.

The armed rebellion erupted first in the Tibetan areas of Sichuan Province east of the Jinshajiang River in 1955.

At that time, land reform had been completed in the Han areas in China's interior. The feudal landlord class had been overthrown, and the poverty-stricken peasants had begun to remove the bitterness of thousands of years of oppression for the first time. This exerted a great influence on the Garze Tibetan Autonomous Area in Sichuan Province, which is situated in the midst of the Han areas. Local Tibetan government officials and peasants yearned for the Democratic Reform, but local reactionary headmen boycotted these advances. In the summer of 1955, Galoon Soikang Wangqen Geleg and the Living Buddha Chijiang, who went to Beijing with the 14th Dalai Lama to attend the NPC session, were on their way back to Tibet. When they reached Xinduqiao, west of Kangding, they split into two groups, one going northwest, and the other going southwest. Along the way, they did their best to stir up anti-Han sentiments and to

foment rebellion. When speaking with local headmen and Living Buddhas, they demanded the delay and obstruction of the Democratic Reform. They went on to say that armed revolt may be staged if they failed to boycott and obstruct the reform; this revolt was to be aimed at achieving the independence of Tibet. For this purpose, the local leaders should make contact with foreign nations and maintain contact with the Gaxag government, which would offer them any assistance and aid they might need.

After making contact with the reactionary elements of the ruling elite in Tibet, the reactionaries in the ruling class of the Tibetan areas in Sichuan staged an armed rebellion. Toward the end of February 1956 (the 26th day of the first Tibetan month), the Litang Monastery, which had hosted the Living Buddha Chijiang during his return to Tibet, and the Dajin Monastery, which had likewise hosted Soikang, began the revolt. The rebels besieged and attacked local officials and people close to them, slaughtering hundreds of Tibetans and Han Chinese during the first night. Rebellion spread far and wide in Garze in the following days. With the support of the local Tibetans, the PLA troops suppressed the armed rebellion in Garze. Remnants of the rebellion crossed the Jinshajiang River. While some entered Qamdo, others fled to India.

Seeing armed rebellion in Garze, the reactionaries in the ruling elite of Tibet tried to incite an armed rebellion in Qamdo. In April 1956, the third brother of the 14th Dalai Lama, Jikyabkainbo Lobsang Sandain in Lhasa told Qimai Gongbo, headman of Gyamda County: "The Qamdo area should imitate the areas east of the Jinshajiang River (which meant an armed revolt as had been tried in Garze). Soon after, Qimai Gongbo returned to Gyamda from Lhasa. He gathered together some forces and staged a revolt in the mountains beginning on July 21. They linked up with the remnants of the earlier rebellion and ambushed passing trucks three times in August and September. They looted 21 road maintenance stations, killing eight PLA soldiers and local workers and wounded 14 more.

On September 1, 1956, Gyaboin (company commanders) and Ruboin (battalion commanders) of the 1st through 6th regiments of the Tibetan army declared an armed uprising calling for the troops to "defend various systems inherent to Tibet with out lives, defend the holy religion, and oppose any reform in Tibet."

In various parts of the Tibetan areas, local reactionaries warned those serfs who stood by and worked for the Central Government not to forget they were the property of serf owners. In the spring of 1957, Renqen Wanggyai, an influential headman in Upper Yadong, warned Norbu Toinzhol, one of his ex-serfs who had already joined the CPC and taken up a new job: "You need to fear some people here in Upper Yadong! We headmen own the power bestowed by the Tibetan government to whip you 30 times." Bengen Quzhol, a headman in Garze, once beat Wangqen Puncog, one of his former house slaves who were then studying in classes held by the CPC.

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Bengen Quzhol gave the excuse that Wangqen Puncog had not provided him with corvee labor. He had Wangqen cruelly whipped and shackled on September 15, 1957. And Wangqen's family also suffered from cruel treatment.

The reactionaries in the ruling class stuck to the feudal system and stubbornly opposed the Democratic Reform. They refused to recognize the human rights of the serfs and continued to trample them under foot. Although these reactionaries were defending the system of feudal serfdom, they wielded the banners of "national issues" and "religious issues" to incite riots and rebellion aimed at the Han and "the enemies of the religion." Many Tibetan officials and ordinary people saw through their ploy and asked why they should fight the Han. They saw the PLA soldiers as having been sent by the Buddha. They wondered why the ruling elite should foster ethnic hatred. According to Tibetans quoted in *People's Daily*, the locals were asking: "Who is the enemy of the religion? It is true that the CPC does not believe in Buddhism, but the Communists and the PLA troops follow a policy of religious freedom. They respect our religious belief. After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the Tibetan Buddhists conducted religious activities normally. Even the 14th Dalai Lama said at a 1954 NPC session: "Rumors of the CPC and the Central People's Government working to ruin religion in Tibet had been refuted. The Tibetan people have experienced freedom in religious belief." (*People's Daily*, September 17, 1954)

Fighting the Han and fighting the enemy of the religion were excuses used by the reactionaries in the ruling class as a means of preventing the emancipation of the serfs and the recognition of human rights. These actions were aimed at resisting the Democratic Reform and defending the feudal system.

(3) Armed Tibetan Rebels Barbarously Violated Human Rights

The autumn and winter of 1956 saw the reactionaries and rebels in the Kam areas working hard to gain the support of the United States and Great Britain. The American CIA said aid would be forthcoming only when the 14th Dalai Lama had been moved to a foreign country. The reactionaries were aware that their influence over the broad masses was limited. They knew that in order to incite rebellion and continue their "Tibetan independence" activities, they needed the 14th Dalai Lama. At this time, the 14th Dalai Lama was politically neutral, but leaning more closely towards the CPC and the Central Government. The reactionaries decided it was imperative to get the 14th Dalai Lama out of Tibet, where they could influence his stand. They began to form plans for sneaking the 14th Dalai Lama out of Tibet, and completed this task in March 1959.

The March 1959 armed rebellion in Tibet brought the conflict to a new level, moving from regional insurrection to an all out armed rebellion.

In May 1957, the reactionaries in the ruling elite of Tibet gave their support to the Kamba

rebels to form the reactionary organization known as the “four rivers and six mountain ranges*.”

In December 1957, the CIA airlifted Wangdui and another key Kamba rebel, who had received training in the United States, to Shannan in Tibet. In early 1958, Wangdui carried a radio to Lhasa, where he linked up with the reactionaries among the ruling elite and the chieftains of the “four rivers and six mountain ranges.” This made it possible for the Tibetan rebels to use the radio to contact the CIA.

In June 1958, with the tacit consent and connivance of the Gaxag government, the Kamba rebels formed the 4,000-member “four rivers and six mountain ranges religion protecting army” in Chigu County of Shannan, with Anzhugcang Gongbo Zhaxi as this new force’s commander-in-chief. The CIA airdropped arms and munitions to the new army and, at the same time, shipped equipment to them via India. The Gaxag government supplied the “religion protecting army” with food grain and firewood on the sly and let them take away huge amounts of arms and munitions from the Qingkesi Munitions Depot in Gandain, Namling Country.

The “religion protecting army,” which had the support of the United States and the local government of Tibet, ambushed PLA troops and road maintenance workers in Nyemo, Margyang, Odu, Yangbajain, Gonggar and Zhalang. They also attacked the CPC and Central Government organs in Zetang, Zhamog and Dengqen in Shannan. Regional insurrection thus had become a major armed rebellion.

The rebel army, cloaked in “nationality” and “religion,” perpetrated all kinds of evils on the Tibetans and Tibetan Buddhism. The “religion protecting army” looted Tibetan houses, raped Tibetan women, damaged lamaseries, killed ordinary Tibetans and persecuted patriotic monks. In Maizhokunggar County, 84 Tibetan houses were looted by the new army in May and June 1958. The rebels even stole butter lamps used in Buddhist worship. On August 2, they slaughtered Tibetans, including three lamas, and wounded five others in Zhamdo Village. At Kaisung Manor, inhabited by 59 serf households, the “religion protecting army” repeatedly raped and looted over a period of 10 months, taking away some 14 tons of highland barley, huge amounts of wheat flour and butter, all the horse fodder and the strongest mules. Every woman in Zetang area was repeatedly raped. In Qonggyai, Baidi and Nanggarze, the “religion protecting army” went so far as to rape nuns. In Yadong and Pagri, the army forcible took away mules belonging to the Tibetans. The bailiff of the Donggar Monastery in Upper Yadong, who resisted the ransacking, was killed on the spot. Galsang, a Tibetan nurse with the Yadong Clinic, was raped alongside the highway. In

* The four rivers refer to the Jinshajiang, Huanghe, Nujiang and Lancangjiang rivers; and the six mountain ranges to the Sermo, Cawa, Mangkam, Boboin, Maza and Moyarao mountain ranges. The term “four rivers and six mountain ranges” was used in Tibetan classics to describe the Kam area in Qinghai. The Tibetan rebels used the phrase to incite the Tibetan people throughout the Kam area in Qinghai to rise up in opposition to the motherland.

Gamba County, the rebel army slaughtered the magistrate sent by the Panchen system. Puncog, a Tibetan tailor in Nedong County, was killed because he opposed the rebellion. His heart was torn from his body as a warning to others. In Baqeng, the eyes of Burde, a Tibetan herder, were gouged out for delivering letters for the PLA troops.

The atrocities perpetrated by the “religion protecting army” found their way into archives kept by the Gaxag government. By August 1958, the Gaxag had received more than 70 reports of murder and looting. Some local Tibetan officials also complained about the atrocities in reports filed with the Gaxag government. For example, the magistrate of Gonggar County reported: “On the 28th day of this month, more than 200 Kamba cavalymen from Zhadui and Yangzhog...forced us to prepare housing, horse fodder and daily use articles for them. The sum was very large...The ordinary people suffered a lot from them.” (*History of the Tibetan Revolution*, p.117)

The Tibetan rebels slaughtered the PLA officers and men in an extremely cruel way. On November 25, 1956, Purbaboin, the rebel chief in Mangkam attacked the PLA troops stationed at the Chuka Ferry by the Langcangjiang River, killing 21 PLA soldiers below the rank of company commander. On September 17, 1958, when the “religion protecting army” attacked a vehicle of the PLA Tibet Military Area Clinic in Woyu County, all the 16 PLA clinic members in the vehicle were killed. The rebels stabbed with bayonets the wombs and bellies of female doctors and nurses. On December 18 and 19, the rebel army ambushed PLA trucks in Gonggar and Zhalang, destroying nine trucks, and killing 93 and wounding 35, including one deputy regimental commander and the deputy director of the Shannan Work Committee.

In early 1959, as the rebel forces expanded in strength, Soikang and Neuxur from the ruling elite felt this was the opportune time to take the 14th Dalai Lama out of Tibet. They provoked riots in Lhasa by firing on the PLA troops. When the PLA troops returned fire, the two kidnapped the 14th Dalai Lama under the pretext of protecting him.

The 14th Dalai Lama had suggested they watch a theatrical performance in the PLA Tibet Military Area courtyard on March 10, 1959. At this time, the reactionaries put their plans into effect. They spread rumors among the Tibetans, saying the PLA was planning to take the 14th Dalai Lama to the PLA Tibet Military Area courtyard and had him killed. “The Han plans to use helicopter to take the 14th Dalai Lama to Beijing from the PLA Tibet Military Area Command. They urged the Tibetans to stop the 14th Dalai Lama from going. More than 2,000 Tibetans, believing the rumors, surrounded Norbu Lingka, depriving the 14th Dalai Lama of his freedom. In front of Norbu Lingka, Kainqung Pagbalha, a patriotic member of the ruling class, was killed by the rebels. His body was tied to a horse, with his head on the ground. The rebels drove the horse through the streets, terrifying the locals.

The rebels also wounded Sangpo Cowang Rinzin, the deputy commander of the PLA Tibet Military Area and a Galoon official of the Tibetan government. In the Potala Palace, the rebels

pointed their guns at Lama Lobsang Rinchen, forcing him to join their ranks. When hundreds of rebels captured the Jokhang Monastery, they forced lamas there to take up guns and join them in fighting. They drove those lamas who persisted in chanting Buddhist scriptures out of the halls. Then they defecated and urinated in the scripture halls and stole the golden statues. They killed Lama Qenrao Gyamba who voiced opposition to their behavior.

The rebels forced ordinary people to demonstrate in the street and shout such slogans as “independence for Tibet.” They organized the headquarters of the rebel army and gathered Tibetan troops to join the rebels in putting up road barriers. The rebel army of 7,000 who had gathered in the ensuing days fired on the PLA Tibet Military Area. On March 17, Soikang, Neuxur and rebel leaders kidnapped the 14th Dalai Lama and his relatives at Norbu Lingka on the excuse that “the Han have fired two artillery shells outside the northern wall of Norbu Lingka, threatening the life of the 14th Dalai Lama.” They crossed the Lhasa River and fled Shannan.

Prior to this, Political Commissar Tan Guansan and the 14th Dalai Lama had exchanged three letters. From the letters of the 14th Dalai Lama it is evident that he had no intention of fleeing Tibet. On the night of March 19, the armed rebels launched a full-scale offensive against the CPC organs in Lhasa, thus beginning the all-round armed rebellion in Tibet.

The rebellion was suppressed, and the rebels fled helter-skelter. As they did, they persecuted patriots and ordinary Tibetans. Anzhugcang Gongbo Zhaxi, a leader of the rebel army, wrote a letter to the Living Buddha Doje Palmo at the Yamzhog Sangding Monastery, forcing her to leave the monastery. Relatives of the Living Buddha were terrified. The rebels kidnapped the Living Buddha Doje Palmo. While on their way to Bhutan, she saw the troops of the rebel army killing, looting, and raping in Lhozhag. The locals fled into the mountains. When the 10,000 Tibetans kidnapped by the armed rebels were refused entrance into Bhutan, they stayed exposed to the elements in the surrounding fields. Suffering from cold and hunger, they missed their homes very much. Some who tried to flee were executed. One lama from the Zhaibung Monastery, who was involved in the rebellion, fled to Kadaquede Monastery in Sangri County of Shannan. Relying on the force of the “religion protecting army,” he raped two young lamas. When one refused to be raped again, the lama killed the young lama. There was also internal fighting and killing among the rebel forces, especially when they were fleeing. This happened between the rebel leaders and ordinary rebels, between Kamba rebels and rebels from the U-Tsang area, and between rebels representing different factions. The Living Buddha Doje Palmo overhead stories about Kamba rebels fighting Tibetan troops for food and horses, with losses inflicted on both sides.

What the rebels did to patriotic Tibetans and the ordinary Tibetan masses, the PLA officers and men, Party leaders and ordinary workers, lamaseries and lamas, as well as their internal fighting, show that they were not fighting the Han only; the Tibetans suffered the most; they waved the banner of protecting religion, but were doing many things that violated Buddhist

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doctrines. They were nothing but bandits who violated human rights. No wonder many Tibetan condemned them by saying: "They are not a 'religion protecting army' but a 'religion destroying army' ... They are simply bandits who will burn in hell."

The armed rebels were used as pawns by the reactionary serf owners to defend the dark, reactionary, barbarous and cruel feudal serf system. The oppressive and exploitive nature of the reactionary serf owners inevitably found expression in the activities of the armed rebels. Xagabba was a serf owner himself and an important member and representative of the rebels. It is sheer hypocrisy for one who trampled human rights under foot to now claim that the CPC is violating human rights in Tibet.