

The Historical Status of China's Tibet

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Chapter IX

Tibetan People Acquired Ultimate Human Rights

Through Quelling of Rebellion and Conducting the Democratic Reform

Between the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Tibetan Plateau saw earth-shaking changes. Feudal serfdom collapsed and was replaced by the people's democratic system, to the delight of the broad masses of serfs and patriotic personages from all social strata. But Xagabba and Van Praag try every means to present the quelling of the armed rebellion and the conducting of reform as “infringing human rights in Tibet.”

Is this true, or has it, in fact, brought human rights to the Tibetan people? This is easy to answer.

(1) Putting Down the Armed Rebellion

The upper-class reactionary elements in Tibet, who showed no sign of repentance despite the Central Government's long-term patient education and efforts to win them over, directed rebel forces to wage a full-scale attack on PLA troops and local government institutions in Lhasa during the night of March 19, 1959. Under fierce fire, the PLA troops kept shouting to the rebels through megaphones, warning them to desist. But it was fruitless. Six hours after the rebellion began, the PLA troops, its patience exhausted, was compelled to counter-attack at 10 on the morning of March 20. At that time, only about 1,000 PLA troops in Lhasa could be mobilized to fight, while the rebels amounted to about 7,000, with additional aid from foreign forces. But the heroic and combat-hardened PLA officers and men fought for two days and routed 5,360 armed rebels gathered in Lhasa. These rebels were just a disorderly mob who looked strong but were really weak, and could not effectively fight the PLA troops.

On March 28, Premier Zhou Enlai issued a State Council decree, instructing the PLA Tibet Military Area to put down the riots, dissolve the Tibet local government and let the Preparatory

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Committee for the Founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region to exercise its functions and powers.

Following the battle in Lhasa, the PLA troops launched campaigns in Shannan in April, Namco Lake on July 2 and Midika between August and September. They also besieged and suppressed rebels in the northeast Qamdo and Yanjing area, south of Qamdo, between April and August, and sent armed forces to wipe out rebels in southeast Qamdo between August and November.

In 1960, the PLA troops successively launched campaigns against armed rebel forces entrenched in areas between Nganda, Dengqen, Jiali and Zhamog; areas east of Wenquan-Nagqu Section on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway; areas south and north of Tanggula to the north of Baqen; areas between Xainza, Saga and Tingri; areas between the southern bank of the Maquanhe River, north of China-Nepal national boundaries, west of Legze and east of Kunggyu Co Lake; and, the Mangkam and Sa'ngain areas. By the end of 1960, they had almost quelled the activities of large armies of rebels throughout the region.

In 1961, the PLA troops again searched for and suppressed remnants of the armed rebel forces scattered in southeast Qamdo, adjoining areas of Nyingchi, Lhasa and Nagqu and elsewhere. Some rebel chiefs and small armed groups, which the PLA troops failed to annihilate two years ago, were either wiped out or persuaded to cross over to the PLA side.

By March 1962, the rebellion in Tibet was over. The CPC Central Committee adopted sound lines and policies to quell it.

On March 21, 1959, the General Political Department of the PLA issued the Instructions on Political Work for Resolute Pacification of Rebellion in Tibet, stipulating that military action, political persuasion to win over opponents and mobilization of the masses should be closely combined, and rebels should be treated in different ways. In May, the Tibet Work Committee worked out the Decision on Several Policies in the Current Work of Quelling the Rebellion, which was approved by the Central Government. The Decision clearly defined the principles in dealing with the rebels: in line with the policies of combining suppression with leniency, and that the chief criminals should be punished without fail, those considered to have acted as accomplices under duress would not be punished, while anyone performing deeds of merit should be rewarded. The PLA troops should strictly distinguish among four kinds of person: rebel chiefs, core members, firm supporters and ordinary members. Those who participated in the rebellion but willing to cross over to the PLA side, would not be executed, imprisoned or otherwise punished.

The PLA troops strictly abided by all these guidelines in quelling the rebellion.

A. Political Persuasion.

Facing the frenzied rebel attacks, the PLA had to take military actions. While the rebel forces fired at the PLA troops and slaughtered people wantonly, it is absolutely equitable and imperative for the PLA troops to fight back. Deaths on both sides are natural. However, the PLA troops, while conducting military action, made efforts to give part of or most of the rebels a chance to cross over or surrender, fighting as little as possible to cause as few deaths as possible. This was one of the fine traditions of the PLA. As a result, only a small portion of rebels were killed. Most were disintegrated after painstaking political persuasion, with the threat of military attack as the condition. The PLA troops applied various approaches to win them over: giving lenient treatment to captives to dispel their apprehension about crossing over or surrendering to the PLA; distributing materials to explain the Central Government policy toward the rebellion (totaling 300,000 leaflets in three years) to help rebels realize that only by crossing over could they have a bright future; propagandizing on the battlefield through megaphones to shake their will to resist; setting up recruitment centers and sending relatives of the rebels there to urge them to surrender. Among the 5,360 armed rebel forces put out of action during the Lhasa attack, most were captured or surrendered. During the military actions in Jokhang Monastery and the Potala Palace, a large number of armed rebel forces were persuaded to surrender. During the suppression of the rebel forces in Xainza and Saga in the spring of 1960, only 53 were killed and 320 wounded; another 887 rebels crossed over to the PLA side after political persuasion. During the 1961 military campaign against the rebel forces, many chief leaders of the surviving rebel forces crossed over or surrendered to the PLA side. Lama Bagyia, Qamdo rebel chief, surrendered in February, Bobo Ahgong, Xainza rebel chief, came over in March; Gyamcoboin, Mangkam rebel chief, laid down arms in June; and Ngawang Lobsang, Benbo rebel chief, crossed over in July. During the political persuasion to win over Bobo Ahgong, the PLA had sent emissaries 26 times, and in the end won him over. The PLA troops and Tibetans from all walks of life made concerted efforts during the political persuasion, forming a powerful political offensive of the masses. Everywhere across the region, parents, wives and the masses were mobilized to persuade their sons, husbands and other people to surrender. Patriotic persons from the Tibetan upper-ruling class played an important role in this aspect. Dege Galsang Wangdui and Jamyang Baimo wrote to the Living Buddha Penqiu Riwoqe, persuading them to size up the situation. This enabled Penqiu and some others to make up their mind in the end to cross over to the PLA side. During the three years it took to quell the rebellion, people who crossed over to the PLA side after political persuasion made up 42.8 percent of the total rebel forces put out of action. The percentage was up to 70 percent in 1961.

In short, thanks to the PLA's policies of combining military action with political persuasion and mobilization of the masses, most armed rebels were captured or surrendered. Only a small number were wounded and a few killed. On the PLA side, 1,551 died and 1,987 were wounded in the lofty cause of consolidating the unification of motherland, safeguarding peace in border areas and supporting the liberation of millions of Tibetan serfs. The Tibetan people still commemorate this.

B. Different Treatments.

Since the upper-class reactionary forces started the rebellion under the fraudulent guise of “nationality” and “religion,” and serfs were treated as chattels of their owners, the latter had no choice but to take part in the rebellion. These serfs, coerced to participate, had no responsibility for the rebellion. So, the PLA strictly differentiated them from the chief criminals, core members and stubborn supporters of the rebellion. Those who laid down their arms were given travelling expenses and sent back home unpunished. Among nearly 90,000 people involved in the rebellion over the three-year period, only 23,000 were treated as chief culprits, core members and firm supporters by the People's Government. They made up little more than 2 percent of the total population in Tibet.

Among the upper-class participants, there were great differences. Only a small fraction, like Soikang were die-hard elements who had long been outwardly compliant but inwardly hostile to the Central Government, and had engaged in plotting separatist activities. The rest were those who used to behave properly and had cooperated and worked together with the CPC and the People's Government. They included Ranba Namgyai Wangqug, director of the 14th Dalai Lama's Nanjing Office, and Trimoin Soinam Benjor, director of the Administrative Committee in Xarsingma, Yadong County. They were forced to take part in the rebellion when the rebels coerced them to break off contacts with the People's Government. They were neither engaged in many specific activities nor trusted by the armed forces. The PLA treated them in a way different from those stubborn rebel chiefs. For example, Ranba Namgyai Wangqug, a captive in the Lhasa campaign, was detained for only two weeks and set free as soon as things were straightened out. Trimion Soinam Benjor, who fled abroad after the rebellion, got a message from his family to return to surrender. The two were given jobs several years later. To those who engaged in specific activities, but showed good attitude in admitting their guilt and signs of repentance, the PLA gave them only a light sentence, such as several years in prison. For example, Tubdain Dainda and Kana Kecho Deqen were set free in 1964 and Lhalu and Soindo in 1965. The PLA found them jobs later.

Such a practical and rational policy proved popular and quite effective. Many people, coerced into taking part in the rebellion and so not treated as rebels but sent home, had an ardent love for the CPC and the PLA. Some were eager to take part in the Democratic Reform and frontier struggle. Those upper-class persons involved in the rebellion who received lenient treatment, later became patriots who cooperated with the CPC and the People's Government.

Xagabba and Van Praag write that tens of thousands of Tibetans were imprisoned and massacred, trying to leave people with a horrified feeling. But some clear-minded foreigners with ability to differentiate immediately perceived the exaggeration. A confidential investigation report by the US State Department held that the figures of the 1956-59 armed rebel forces and casualties and

death toll on both sides (with claims that up to 40,000 Han people and 65,000 Tibetans were killed or wounded) claimed by some members of the Tibetan upper-ruling class were unbelievable. It criticized Gyaile Toinzhub's exaggeration. (A. Tom Grunfeld [Canada]: *The Making of Tibet*, p.198, translated by Wu Kunmin and others)

A British woman, who was ready to write on invitation a brochure about China's "unruly conduct" in Tibet, refused the task later. She explained that she had to collect "stories" from the refugees herself. But in all fairness, she didn't get what she thought was a "true story." It's impossible to make comment on so many subtle but important questions which someone had stated. The "facts" in the mind of the Tibetan rebels could not be taken as what Westerners held to be "absolute proof." It was dangerous if one failed to realize it. (A. Tom Grunfeld [Canada]: *The Making of Tibet*, pp.216-217, translated by Wu Kunmin and others).

As to the question of who were the two sides of the struggle, we need to go into it in particular. Xagabba and Van Praag regard the Han people and Tibetans as the two sides of the struggle. But facts refute this and give a clear conclusion: It was a struggle between "the broad masses of Tibetan people and patriotic personages led by the CPC" and "few reactionary splittists aided by domestic and overseas reactionary forces." It was a struggle between two classes, not two ethnic groups of Han and Tibet.

In 1958, when rebellion occurred only in parts of the Tibetan areas, many Tibetans stood together with the CPC and the PLA in resolute opposition. During the 74 days when the "religion protecting army" besieged Zetang, Gegong Cering Toinzhub and his three family members had lived and fought together with government officials of the Shannan branch of the Tibet Work Committee and PLA officers and men, and shared weal and woe with them. His property in Phodrang was burnt down by the "religion protecting army." His son Norbu, who just graduated from the Central Institute for Nationalities, died in the fight against the "religion protecting army." But he held out until the PLA main forces came to Zetang. When the 1,600 armed rebels in Bome planned to attack the headquarters of Zhamog County Party Committee, there were no more than 60 people, including PLA soldiers, local cadres and workers and staff. Gyaincain, headman of Xumu, Zhaixi Qunpei, representing the monasteries, the Living Buddha Rabxei and folk artisan Wangmo all moved into the County Party Committee headquarters and took part in the fight to safeguard Zhamog. Prior to the attack, the masses provided information about it. Bema Zhaxi even went into the rebel's lair to gather information and then reported to the County Party Committee. When the rebels fired mortars towards the County Party Committee headquarters, family members of Gyaincain raised their guns and killed a mortar operator. In the 10-day fight, the PLA troops and the Tibetan people stood side-by-side to repulse attacks three times until PLA reinforcements arrived. Incidents of this sort are too numerous to enumerate.

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On March 10 1959, the rebellion swept through Lhasa. Units affiliated to the Tibet Work Committee and the PLA Tibet Military Area mobilized Tibetan upper-class persons, cadres, workers and their families to temporarily move into the institutions. The seats of the Preparatory Committee for the Founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region and the PLA Tibet Military Area alone provided shelter for about 600-700 people, including patriotic celebrities like Pagbalha Geleg Namgyai, Namtoin Goinga Wangqug, Xoikang Tubdain Nyima and Gyainjin Soinan Gyaibo. They joined the PLA to safeguard the government institutions. Some helped carry earth and stones to build shelters; some were enthusiastic in gathering information; some joined the radio station to reveal the splittists's scheme in Tibetan language. On March 20, after the fight began, people including Xoikang Tubdain Nyima used megaphones on the battlefield together with the PLA troops, urging the rebels to give up. They played an active role in splitting the rebel ranks. They took delight in the PLA victories. Some Lhasa residents, seeing the PLA soldiers occupy the Chejiang building, held up their thumbs and expressed their admiration. As soon as the firing stopped and the battle ended, many citizens burnt incense, swarming onto the streets to present hada prayer scarfs to the PLA soldiers, handing over arms abandoned by the rebels and helping the PLA soldiers wipe out the enemy remnants. They cursed and spat when passing those dead Kamba rebels who still wore stolen gold and silver jewelry on their necks and diamond rings on their fingers, and had wads of Tibetan paper money and silver coins stuffed in their waistbands. The patriotic persons, who had long been suppressed by the reactionary forces, greeted each other with well-wishes. At Ngapoi's home, people including Caindi and Manamba sat around, reveled to their heart's content and toasted each other. Zezhong Yuga, who had been targeted by the rebels to be killed and was forced to hide in the PLA Tibet Military Area headquarters, said: "White and black can be distinguished now!"

The next day, after the State Council issued the order to completely put down the rebellion, the 10th Panchen Erdeni sent Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai a telegram, expressing firm support for the State Council decree and willingness to assist the PLA in quelling the rebellion. Pagbalha expressed his cordial support for the State Council order and pointed out that what the upper-class reactionary clique had done fundamentally went against the will of Tibetan monks and people. Sangling Soinam Doje, a patriotic youth from Gyangze, said: "The fight between the rebels and the PLA is a struggle between few people who engaged in treasonable activities in order to exploit and oppress Tibetan people forever and most people who were against treason, endless exploitation and oppression. It is not in the least a problem between the Tibetan and the Han."(Tibet Daily, April 4, 1959)



Poor lamas condemning the armed rebellion

In April 1959, the PLA troops launched the Shannan campaign. Local people, who had experienced to the fullest extent the devastation caused by the “religion protecting army,” warmly welcomed the arrival of the PLA troops. Many offered buttered tea to the PLA officers and men. Some took grass to feed the horses in the hope they could run fast enough to catch rebels. Others drove their yaks and mules to carry grain, goods and materials for the PLA troops.

In February 1960, before the PLA troops started its campaign against the armed rebel forces in Nganda, Dengqen, Jiali and Zhanmog, Losang, a Tibetan, asked the secretary of the Dengqen Party Committee on his own initiative to enter the areas of the rebel forces to gather information. He returned a month later with news that an army of about 1,000 rebels was lying in ambush near Sadeng. The Party secretary immediately led him to the PLA troops, who were just about to go to Benbo by way of Sadeng. As a result, they besieged Sadeng before the rebels were prepared and annihilated all of them (including one parachuted spy trained in the United States). Without Losang's excellent work, the PLA troops would have suffered losses.

During the quelling of the rebellion, the Tibetan masses in many places spontaneously organized various self-defense armed forces. They kept guard and stood sentry, supervised law-breakers, protected crops and livestock, gathered information for the PLA troops, acted as their guides and assisted them in searching the mountains and arresting fleeing rebels. For example, a self-defense team in Dongjiu Village, Nyingchi County caught 13 rebels within two months and assisted the PLA troops in wiping out 140 rebels; Lhaba, a Tibetan serf, arrested three rebels alive after waiting with his dog in the snow-covered mountain for one-and-a-half days. In October 1959, the self-defense armed team in Zayu helped the PLA troops to catch 24 armed rebels in Luoma Village. In March 1960, it overcame some 20 armed rebels who fled from Mangkam and Zogang areas to Golag, Zayu County, to loot, and recovered 700 horses, cattle and sheep. Nangwang Cecun, the bravest of the troops, captured eight rebels and persuaded six to surrender. Once, he was caught by the rebels, but he managed to escape and then led the PLA to destroy 43 rebels. On January 24, 1961, eight PLA officers and men fought together with 15 members of the mass self-defense armed team in Gyamda and killed four rebels, captured four others and seized five guns. Cering Qiongzong, female head of the Bangda Township, Gyaca County and also the person in charge of defense, was enthusiastic in leading the masses to fight the rebels. On April 2, 1961, two rebels blocked her way and forced her to surrender. She denounced and fought with them, dying bravely after being stabbed nine times. To commemorate her forever, local Tibetans displayed her statue and deeds in the local cemetery of the revolutionary martyrs.

Tibetan people played a big role in solving the problem of rear supply for the PLA troops on the scarcely populated Tibetan Plateau where transportation was difficult. They provided animals to transport goods, materials and grain to each battlefield in places away from roads. They organized stretcher-teams to help carry the wounded and the dead from battlefield to the rear.

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Taking the quelling of rebellion as their own task, these local people vied with each other in providing beasts of burden and joining the PLA troops in military operations whenever they were mobilized. During the three years of strife, the number of Tibetans who followed the PLA troops in fighting reached 15,000 persons, contributing a total of 439,000 work days. They provided 104,000 head of beasts of burden to serve the PLA troops for a total of 2.866 million work days. Doje, a Tibetan cadre, and over 10 Tibetans drove more than 100 yaks to support the PLA troops during the Midika campaign. After trekking in the snow for a whole day, he voluntarily patched the worn-out bags. Together with others, he toiled long into the night to put boxes of canned food and barrels of oil which were humidity-resistant at the bottom, and stacked rice and flour bags on the top together. He covered them with a rain cloth and put stones on the top before going to pitch a tent and cook dinner. He had taken part in the activities to support the front 10 times, transporting several hundred thousand kg of grain, and joined the PLA troops in fighting over 10 times. He was wounded more than once in the arms and legs, but each time he successfully accomplished his task.

In Benbo area, some 150 Tibetans joined the PLA troops in military operation, carrying grain and ammunition on their backs because the animals were exhausted. They carried the wounded and dead PLA soldiers to the rear, giving the wounded food and water along the way. Some offered dinner first to the martyrs before they ate themselves. During a fierce fight, Qima Gabu braved gunfire and carried a wounded deputy company commander to a shelter, and then went up the mountain again to help soldiers build defense works. When the fight ended, he threw away everything he had with him and carried the possessions of the wounded instead.

After the Lhasa campaign began, 3,000-plus Tibetan students studying at two schools in the hinterland demanded to be allowed to return to Tibet to take part in quelling the rebellion and in the Democratic Reform. The Tibet Work Committee decided to let these students graduate ahead of time and return to Tibet. These young people, mostly from peasant and herdsman families, constituted a new vigorous force of the Tibet ethnic group for combatting rebellion and promoting the Democratic Reform. Some 500 joined the PLA at their own request, fighting bravely and working hard, and many of them received meritorious action awards. Later, they became good PLA commanders. Chilai of the No.1 Company of a regiment fought alone for an hour against 39 armed rebels entrenched in a mountain cave. He was wounded five times, but still kept fighting. With another four soldiers coming to help, he finally overcame the enemy and was awarded a third-class merit. Norbu Toinzhub, the platoon leader of the No.9 Company of a regiment, was inured to hardships during the long marches and in combat. He always carried heavy grain and ammunition and the bags of other soldiers. In the battle in the north of Tanggula Mountain in March 1960, he captured the deputy rebel chief alive and received a second-class merit. He had acted as platoon leader, deputy company commander and director of a county department of armed forces. Macering of Yadong County fought bravely in every battle and died in a fight in Bome in 1960.

This is how Tibetan people fought the small portion of upper-class reactionary elements. Now, let us look at the support of foreign anti-China forces behind the rebels. These forces mainly included some CIA staff and a few anti-China figures from India and Britain.



Norbu Toinzhub, a deputy PLA platoon leader who won a second-class medal in putting down the armed rebellion. In 1961, he attended the conference of medal winners held by the PLA Tibet Military Area

Since the US, Indian and British governments explicitly stated that Tibet is part of China, and they understood that supporting the Tibetan upper-class reactionaries to plot rebellion was an action which interfered in China's internal affairs and violated fundamental principles of international laws, they carried out their assistance clandestinely. However, as time went by, the inside stories of CIA meddling in Tibet have been exposed. Incomplete statistics show that in 1957-61, by means of contacts between Gyaile Toinzhub and the CIA, some 170 Tibetan rebels were chosen and sent via India to Japan and later (after 1959) to Hale Camp in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado for training. These spies trained by the CIA were successively parachuted into Litang, Shannan, Benba, Namco Lake, Tanggula Mountain area, Mangkam and Zhongba in eight batches. On CIA orders, they controlled the decision-making power of the rebel chiefs and became the core leading members of the armed rebel forces. During the three-year fight, 25 spies were killed or captured by the PLA troops. Many of the captured, who did not commit suicide as their US teachers had trained them to do to avoid capture, repented that they had been cheated and become a tool of the Americans and reactionary upper class. This was especially due to the inspiration of the PLA's lenient policy and the influence of the Tibet people's emancipation and rapid social progress. Providing many inside stories of how the CIA supported the rebellion, these people became the strongest witnesses. Much material evidence, including arms and equipment seized by the PLA, such as American-made rapid semi-automatic rifles, radio sets and parachutes, are still preserved by the PLA Tibet Military Area. As for how the Indian anti-China figures supported the rebellion, it was no longer a secret.

The Tibet upper-class reactionaries intended to make the rebellion a large-scale struggle between the Han and Tibetans at the beginning. But the results ran counter to their wishes. The Tibetan people, by comparing the CPC with the old Tibetan government and having witnessed events and considered for eight years, finally took the side of the CPC and the PLA. The PLA, with direct support and participation of broad Tibetan cadres and masses, fought a typical class war aimed to emancipate the serfs. It was a real war of the people sharing similarities with the war led by American president Abraham Lincoln to emancipate black slaves 100 years ago. The just nature of it is obvious.

Judging from the unification of a country and maintenance of social order, will the government in any country allow its minorities to announce independence at random? Will it ignore such

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actions that sabotage national unification or allow a few rebels to organize armed forces to wantonly attack national defense troops, government institutions, and enterprises, to commit highway robbery, kill people and set fire to houses, or engage in rape and plundering? So analyzing from the angle of safeguarding national unification and stabilizing social order, the quelling of the rebellion was just and imperative.

It could thus be concluded that the rebellion in Tibet was unjust and illegal, while the quelling of the rebellion was just and legal.

Without question, the fight between the rebels and the PLA troops would cause death. But the root cause of these deaths lay with the upper-class reactionary elements. Had they not plotted riots, there would not have been so many deaths. They should take the responsibility. The CPC and the PLA tried every means possible during the fight to minimize the death toll.

(2) Democratic Reform

On June 24, 1958 Chairman Mao clearly pointed out that “so long as the Tibetan reactionaries dared to plot overall rebellion, the laboring people there would, without question, be emancipated at an early date.” (Manuscripts of Mao Zedong Since the Founding of New China, Vol.7, p.286)

On March 22, 1959, after the Lhasa battle, Zhang Jingwu, Party secretary of the Tibet Work Committee, transmitted a Central Government instruction in Beijing to the work committee in Tibet. The local government of Tibet has torn up the 17-Article Agreement and betrayed the motherland to wage an all-out rebellion. The Central Government holds the work committee must boldly mobilize the masses and conduct the Democratic Reform while quelling the rebellion.

The CPC's working approach in Tibet shifted from the original united front with the Tibetan upper-class to the present direct mobilization of the local masses.

Van Praag says that land reform was imposed on the Tibetan people, who clearly expressed their unwillingness to see their original lifestyle replaced by another imposed on them, and that the Tibetans never benefitted from the Chinese living there. His statements caused people to ask two questions: First, was the Democratic Reform a spontaneous requirement of Tibetan people or was it imposed on them? Was there an internal cause for the land reform in Tibet? Second, has the Democratic Reform brought any benefits to the Tibetan people?

In old Tibet, serfs, no longer able to bear the exploitation and oppression, had spontaneously risen to oppose Tibetan government officials and serf owners many times.

In 1918, peasants and herdsmen in the 39-Tribe area suffered heavy corvee taxes and other excessive burdens. A representative was elected by some 150 households in the Gata Tribe to present a petition to the county government, but instead was locked up by county magistrate. Local people felt it would be better to kill the county magistrate and find a way out, when death would befall them sooner or later under such heavy corvee taxes. Gathering some 40 people, they surrounded the county government, strangled the county magistrate and seized the arms of 45 Tibetan soldiers. The Tibetan government sent heavy troop reinforcements to carry out bloody suppression of the Gata Tribe. The resistance of the masses failed in the end.

Between 1926-28, people in Bome waged a struggle against Gaxag government's exorbitant taxes. This was regarded as the biggest among the anti-Tibet government struggles in the last 100 years. Prince Gelang in Bome, making use of the rebellious spirit of the masses, gathered 300 people at night to attack the encampment of the Tibetan army and killed some 30 officers and men. Later, the Gaxag government sent troops to suppress and inflict a bloodbath on many villages in Bome. In some villages of dozens of households, only three survived.

In 1931, Caiba, a local noble in Gyadui, Rongzi County, Shannan, took a liking to the fertile and densely-populated Gyamei area, under direct jurisdiction of Gaxag, and intended to occupy it as his own. Through bribes, he was given the right to control its taxes and land leasing. Serfs in Gyamei were furious about having to turn over dual taxes to both the Gaxag and Caiba, saying that "one horse can't afford two saddles," and so they beat him to death with stones and cudgels. When the Gaxag government started to suppress this revolt, the serfs there escaped. The struggle lasted 22 years. The Gaxag didn't make the decision that Gyamei was no longer under control of Caiba until Tibet was peacefully liberated in 1951.

Such events are too numerous to be listed.

In old Tibet, many proverbs against the rule of serf owners prevailed among the masses.

- (a) It is revolution day when one's patience is thoroughly worn out.
- (b) The warriors fight tigers when they want to fight. (Tigers refer to serf owners and officials)
- (c) Human beings are classified as high and low but their lot is the same.

It is obvious that in old Tibet, struggles against the serf owners occurred one after another, which constituted the internal cause for the resistance. But, as they lacked the leadership of a revolutionary party and guidance of advanced ideologies, they always failed under the suppression of serf owners.

Fundamental changes took place after the peaceful liberation of Tibet. Though the 17-Article Agreement stipulated that feudal serfdom would remain unchanged, the stark contrast between the CPC, which always fought for the interests of the people, and the Tibetan government, which

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extorted blood and sweat of the people, kept inspiring the knowledge of the broad masses of serfs. Apart from this, the achievements of revolutionary construction in the hinterland exerted a huge influence on Tibet. Urged by various factors, the number of serfs demanding reform in the struggle against serf owners increased year by year.

The rebellion of the reactionary upper class provided further awakening for serfs. Recognizing the reactionaries real purpose of trying to perpetuate the evil feudal serfdom system, the long-smoldering demand for emancipation exploded. They supported the PLA to suppress the rebellion on their own initiative.

The CPC Central Committee, observing the time and judging the occasion, timely led the million of serfs in Tibet to the Democratic Reform to overturn the feudal slavery system. It was an action in conformity with the demand of the Tibetan people, not something imposed on them. Without the demand of the vast majority of serfs for transformation as the motive, it was impossible for anyone outside to promptly smash a system which had existed for a millennium.

The implementation of the Democratic Reform in Tibet proved effective.

The CPC was circumspect in carrying out the Democratic Reform in Tibet. First of all, it worked out measures to be taken and policies to be adopted. At that time, the demand of the serfs for reform carried all before it. How to start the Democratic Reform, and carry it on differently, with some serf owners involved in the rebellion and some not, and in light of different situations in agricultural and pastoral areas? These were the issues facing the CPC, particularly the Tibet Work Committee.

On March 22, 1959, the Central Government put forward a policy of “conducting reform while quelling the rebellion, first in areas witnessing rebellion and second in other areas.” It stressed that the system of feudal possession must be abolished, but in different ways. The property of



Emancipated serfs condemning the armed rebellion and, at the same time, demanding the Democratic Reform

serf owners who participated in the rebellion must be confiscated and distributed to peasants; that of those who did not participate could be redeemed.

In mid-April, Chairman Mao said a buying-out policy could be adopted toward serf owners who did not take part in the rebellion during the Democratic Reform in Tibet.

In May, the Central Government approved the policies submitted by the Tibet Work Committee. According to them, the Democratic Reform in Tibet would be carried out in two stages. The first step would concentrate on “Three Against and Two Reduction” (movement against rebellion, ula and slavery, and for the reduction of rent and interest charges). The second step would focus on distribution of land. The reform would proceed in full light of characteristics in Tibet, combining mobilization of the masses from below with consultation from above, relying on the laboring people, uniting all forces that could be united and extinguishing the feudal serfdom system step by step and in different ways.

Such measures, lines and policies have pointed out the right direction for the Democratic Reform in Tibet (mainly agricultural areas).

A. Democratic Reform in Agricultural Areas.



Emancipated serfs burning land leases and debentures during the Democratic Reform

The Tibet Work Committee and its branches sent their work teams to the rural areas chosen as trial sites for reform. In June 1959, they started to press ahead with the “Three Against and Two Reduction” movement. The government declared by official order that home slaves should be emancipated and the treatment of persons as chattels of serf owners be abolished before the movement for reduction of rent and interest charges was carried out. The serf owners who were not involved in the rebellion could keep 20 percent of their farm products, and give the

remaining 80 percent to the ex-serfs. As for reduction of interest, all the debts of laboring people to the three estate-holders prior to 1958 were canceled. The debts loaned by serf owners who did not take part in the rebellion to laboring people in 1959 would all be calculated at an interest rate of one cent per month.

During the “Three Against and Two Reduction” movement, work team members went deep into the Tibetans and mobilized them to ferret out hidden rebels. Cadres of the work teams lived and worked together with poor serfs and learnt about their sufferings and demands. They identified and nurtured core members of reform, and held meetings for the masses to pour out their woes

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and denounce the rebels criminal acts of sabotaging the unification of motherland and national unity, opposing the Democratic Reform and persecuting their fellow villagers. The poverty-stricken Tibetans were encouraged to talk about their bitterness at being exploited and oppressed by the serf owners, thus reducing the latter's courage and boosting the farmer's political advantage. Peasants associations, composed mainly of ex-serfs, were set up through vote as mass organizations leading local peasants to distribute land and develop production.

The following is an example of how the movement was carried out in a specific place.

Kesong Manor in Nedong County belonged to Soikang, a big serf owner and rebel chief. It was chosen by the Shannan branch of the Tibet Work Committee for the first trial of the "Three Against and Two Reduction" movement.

The work team held the meeting of serfs on June 6, 1959 to elect their peasants association. Team cadres said: "Soikang escaped during the rebellion and the man who oppressed us has collapsed. Today, we will select our own leader to help us stand up and set up our own organization the peasants association." After announcing the candidates list everyone had deliberated, the ex-serfs, for the first time in their lives, democratically selected their own leader---director Nyima Cering, born into a house slave.

Nyima Cering, who never dared to raise his head before his master in the past, said: "Fellow villagers, we have been emancipated under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the CPC. As the director of the association, I will perform my duties well. I hope we will unite as one family and one person. Only by eliminating the rebels will we be able to live a happy life." His remark drew warm applause.

That evening, the newly-elected peasants association held its first meeting. They discussed how to deal with Gengbo and Puncog Zhamdu, who had served Soikang faithfully for many years. They had indulged in all sorts of evildoing and kicked and whipped serfs whenever they slowed down in their work. During the several months when the rebel forces were entrenched in the manor, Gengbo pressed people for grain and grass and beat them frequently. Puncog Zhamdu took a sub-chief of the rebel forces to a serf's house, where they shut up the senile parents and the sub-chief raped their young daughter. U'gyain, a member of the association, said: "The two did too many bad things. Now, they are in our hands. How would you like to deal with them, killing them or cutting off their legs and hands?" Nyima suggested: "Let's have a rally and bring them here. Those who have woes can pour them out, and those who have been bullied can vent their spleen. Then the two men will be punished by being put to long-time hard work." Everybody present, including U'gyain, agreed to this.

After preparation, Kesong Township held the mass rally to denounce the rebels and local despots. Nyima was the first to speak: "In the past Soikang and Gengbo lived on top of us and trod us

underfoot. Now, we have stood up and can hold such a meeting to denounce bad persons.” U'gyain followed: “Today, we will denounce Puncog and Gengbo. In the past, we dared not pour out our sufferings and bitterness. Now we are free. Puncog and Gengbo helped rebels to rob us. When the rebel forces escaped, they helped them hide boxes of ammunition in the grass, and carried valuables and grains in the warehouses, which were our blood and sweat, to their own houses.”

The masses started to take the floor. An old lady stood up to expose their crime: “They kept many rifles and intended to have the reactionaries return.” Baima Yuzhoin, an unkempt 13-year-old orphan, stood up and said while crying that her father was a poor tralpa slave who died while doing corvee work outside the village for the serf owner. Ever since she was a child, her mother had to do corvee work carrying her on the back. Once



Central Government Representative Zhang Jingwu (fourth left) meeting with Nyima Cering (second left), a serf with Kesong Township

her mother had a row with Puncog while cutting grass. Puncog beat her mother, who crawled back home bleeding and died the next day. Baima Yuzhoin's white-haired grandmother, with tears running down her emaciated face and anger in her eyes, wailed bitterly: “What shall we do fellow villagers? My two granddaughters have no mother now. Their mother has been eaten by the two beasts--Soikang and Puncog.” Everybody tearfully shouted slogans: “Down with the evil feudal serfdom!” eliminate exploitation and oppression!” It was agreed upon before the meeting was held that they would reason things out rather than resort to force, and no weapons like iron-ware or sticks could be brought. But U'gyain took out a stick unexpectedly from her bosom and hit the back of Puncog as he knelt on the ground. As he was hit, he made use of the momentum to fall ahead. His nose hit the ground and started to bleed. Someone encouraged U'gyain: “Good, beat him to death!” But others were not in favor of beating. Nyima pulled U'gyain aside and asked everybody to continue the denunciation. The furor went on for a long time.

Such situation could be seen in every rural area across the region. The mushrooming peasants associations enjoyed every right. The reactionary serf owners, who had ridden roughshod over slaves, were swept into the dust in front of the masses, bowed their heads and confessed their guilt. The work team made allowance for serf owners who did not take part in the rebellion by having them denounced in their absence. The serfs and slaves were elated and proud to be the masters of their own affairs. The situation in rural areas altered completely.

The movement proceeded smoothly. Statistics of the five branch work committees in Shannan, Tagong, Gyangze, Lhasa and Xigaze revealed that in areas where the movement was carried on,

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a total of 8.5 million ke of highland barley in usury (one ke of highland barley equal to 14 kg) were cancelled, and 26,000 ke of grains converted from interest were reduced. About 20,000 nangzen slaves made their homes and received a total of 180,000 ke of grains. The per-capita grain for serfs was 700 kg.

In September 1959, the Tibet Work Committee thought it was the right time to carry out the second step of the Democratic Reform---the land distribution. After all-round investigation and research and consultation with upper-class patriots, it formulated the Draft Scheme on Land System Reform in the Tibetan Areas and the Detailed Methods on Carrying-Out Buying-Out Policies. Initial accounting revealed that about 26.8 percent of the noblemen and big and small headmen, 55 percent of the monasteries, and 70 percent of the serf owner agents did not take part in the rebellion. The total volume of means of production purchased from them reached 60 million yuan.

The buying-out policy clearly proved that the CPC had abided by the policy of peaceful reform in Tibet. In fact, Tibet was the only place where the buying-out policy was adopted to eliminate feudal exploitation.

In the autumn and winter of 1959, agricultural areas in Tibet, which had successfully undergone the "Three Against and Two Reduction" movement, entered the stage of land distribution.

Through mobilization, serfs in every place in Tibet realized that the system where serf owners occupied land constituted the root cause of their long sufferings. To be completely emancipated, such a system must be abolished and land allocated to peasants themselves. Land allocation appraisal groups, made up of cadres of the peasants associations, differentiated among serf owners who participated in the rebellion and those who did not, after making a thorough investigation of the farmland. They confiscated the land and other means of production of serf owners who were involved in the rebellion, and allocated one lot to their families to let them earn their own living. They made allowances for those serf owners who didn't take part in the rebellion, leaving them one lot of land and other means of production before buying out the rest, and then allocated the confiscated and bought land and means of production to farming households, trying to satisfy the demands of poor serfs and slaves. The middle-class serfs (including well-to-do) could keep the original land they tilled for serf owners. Some well-to-do, whose original farmlands were twice the per-capita holdings of local people, would have some of the land assigned to others as a kind of adjustment after consultation.

Now let's look at how Kesong Township in Nedong County, the first to undergo land distribution, carried out the policy.

On July 29, 1959, the township peasants association discussed concrete measures to allocate land and selected Kado Village as the number one place to start.

The members of the association and land allocation group arrived at Kado early on July 30. Male and female peasants came along in succession. At the edge of a field, an old man said: "In light of local conditions, if eight ke (15 ke equal to one hectare) of land were distributed, five should be of good quality and three of poor quality." Everybody agreed and they started allocating land. Cering Comu was allocated two ke of well-watered fields. She was so excited that she ran to look at her fields with her baby on her back more than once. Grandma Soinam Qoinzong was assigned a piece of good fallow land. She immediately carried clay bricks and stones to pile them up as a mark. She said to others:



Emancipated serfs in Lhasa received land and land certificates in the fall of 1959

"We had no land for generations. But today we have our own land." Chago, a widow, said: "I used to take my child and engage in temporary job, or go begging with baby on my back. Now I have land. I no longer need to worry about food." The peasants association also called the people allocated land to a meeting and solicited their opinions till very late at night.

On July 31, the next day, the allocation of land went on. Baima Coma, a serf, said: "In the past I did not have even a piece of land as small as the bridge of a bull nose. My husband was told the news of land allocation yesterday evening. He rose early this morning and went to the pigsty to prepare compost, because when we have land of our own, we will have a harvest of our own."

On August 3, Kesong Township started to assign animals. A total of 15 milk cows and young bulls were driven to the site. Deyyai, a nangzen slave, was the first to get a young cow. Everybody clapped and cheered for him. Grandma Qimei Como, who had fed cattle for manorial lords of two generations, was allowed to choose a best cow. She picked up a pregnant cow, and said: "I used to have nothing, not even a piece of land as big as a finger. Now I have house, land and animals. If I work hard, there is nothing I need to worry about."



Emancipated serfs received domestic animals

Horses and mules were also distributed. As for the 180 sheep in the manor, the peasants association suggested keeping them as public property because it was not easy to raise one or two in each family. They would be tended by the original shepherd, whose land would be tilled by others.

Land distribution across the region went on smoothly. By the end of 1959, altogether 57 counties with a total population of 740,000 had undergone the Democratic Reform. Of them, 32 counties with a total population of 430,000 had accomplished land distribution. A 60-year-old

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grandma in Dagze County started to dance when she was allocated land. She cried when other people around applauded for her. Some emancipated serfs were so excited they rolled on the ground. In those days, laboring people in Tibet could not refrain from showing excitement. They often sang and danced far into the night, or even all night.

B. Democratic Reform in Pastoral Areas.

Laboring people in Tibet's pastoral areas have the same strong demand for the Democratic Reform. But things varied from that in the agricultural areas. The biggest difference was that, in pastoral areas, livestock was the herdsmen's means of production and means of livelihood as well, and could be butchered. The slaughter of large amount of cattle and sheep would go against the aim of emancipating productive forces, promoting production and improving people's living standard. Therefore, the CPC adopted a policy of protecting and developing livestock in pastoral areas. In addition, as the major means of production, serf owners only possessed 25-30 percent, while herdsmen and livestock-owners held 70-75 percent. Livestock-owners, taking up only 1 percent of total households, owned 20 percent of the animals. Many poor serfs had a few animals of their own. Some livestock-owners worked themselves, but at the same time employed other herdsmen or leased animals to them. They exploited the herdsmen and hired herdsmen while being exploited slightly by serf owners. Except animals forcibly claimed by serf owners, the operation of other livestock involved dispersed production by individual and private herding sections. It was a capitalistic characteristic for livestock-owners to hire herdsmen. So, livestock-owners were different from serf owners and could be untied. If denunciation was held and cattle and sheep were distributed during the Democratic Reform in pastoral areas, livestock-owners would engage in indiscriminate slaughter of animals. So, ways like allocating means of production applied in agricultural areas couldn't be used in pastoral areas.

Taking these factors into consideration, the CPC adopted more stable general policies for the Democratic Reform in pastoral areas. The ownership of means of production would remain unchanged, except that animals of serf owners and livestock-owners who participated in the rebellion were confiscated and distributed to the shepherds and poor herdsmen (families of the rebels were given animals equal to ordinary level of local herdsmen according to the number of their family members). Generally no denunciation, no distribution of livestock and no open division of class were conducted in the pastoral areas.

On September 1, 1959, the Tibet Work Committee issued an instruction, emphasizing the long-term central task to protect livestock and pastureland and stipulating the major task to fully mobilize the masses, completely put down riots and start the "Three Against and Two Reduction" movement during the Democratic Reform in pastoral areas.

During the movement, the special rights of the three big estate-holders, including corvees, forceful occupation of pastureland and treatment of persons as chattels, had to be abolished, the

old system of leasing animals was transformed, with the rent negotiated between and set by herdsmen and livestock-owners largely according to the ratio of rent reduction in farming areas with 80 percent of the farm produce going to the tillers and 20 percent to the manorial lords, forming a new and rational leasing system in pastoral areas. The herdsmen and livestock owners should sign mutually-beneficial contracts. The livestock-owners could not treat herdsmen with cruelty. They were equal in terms of law. The livestock-owners had no right to dismiss herdsmen, who could not quit without good reason during the term of their contracts. In addition, the livestock-owners must promise to improve the treatment of herdsmen, who, in turn, had to promise to attentively raise the livestock.

These lines and policies guaranteed sound and smooth implementation of the Democratic Reform in Tibet's pastoral areas.

The “Three Against and Two Reduction” movement unfolded gradually in every pastoral area in the latter half of 1959. Cadres of the work teams lived and grazed animals together with herdsmen, talked with them heart to heart and learnt about the rebels criminal act in damaging the pastoral areas.

Armed rebel forces had wreaked serious havoc in pastoral areas. They robbed about half the cattle and sheep in some tribes in Nagqu County. They seized 22,000 head of cattle and 22,000 head of sheep among the total 24,000 head of cattle and 26,000 sheep in a tribe in Amdo County, causing great difficulties in their production and living. Work team members widely publicized the working lines and policies in the pastoral areas, conscientiously mobilized the herdsmen to distinguish between the bad and the good, ferret out rebels, seize guns and expose serf owners exploitation and oppressive acts, and stabilize the life of herdsmen and protect animals from being wantonly slaughtered. On this basis, the work teams confiscated the animals of serf owners and livestock-owners involved in the rebellion and practiced the policy of “animals to the shepherds,” allocating livestock seized from the rebels to poor herdsmen. Meanwhile, they implemented the policy of no denunciation, no allocation of animals and no division of class, making those livestock-owners who did not take part in the rebellion feel at ease to engage in production. Following this, the poor and hired herdsmen were instructed to sign mutually-beneficial agreements with livestock-owners. As a result, the livestock-owners felt satisfied and believed in the CPC's policy while the herdsmen were willing to develop animal industry. Livestock-owners in Nagqu said: “So long as they do not allocate our cattle and sheep, we are willing to do everything we are told.”

Sangxung pastoral area in Nagqu County started to undergo the movement in April 1960. With help from the work team, every township elected the herdsmen's associations, whose core members were all hired and poor herdsmen who were oppressed and enslaved greatly in the past. These associations assumed the functions and powers of government at township level. Upon

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their establishment, the former tribal headmen went to their local association politely, according to the rules, if they needed help, and obeyed those people who had once been trodden underfoot.

Herdsmen's associations gathered herdsmen in Sangxung together to expose the guilt of Weise Namgyai, a serf owner agent and a rebel, and pour out the bitterness they had suffered for generations. Following this, they confiscated the cattle and sheep of the serf owner and livestock-owners who participated in the rebellion and assigned them to poor herdsmen and hired herdsmen. In Golug, they confiscated a total of 6,217 head of cattle, 1,417 sheep, 26 goats and six horses. Except that the six horses were saved for the Golug as collective property, other animals were all distributed among poor and hired herdsmen. These herdsmen, who had no cattle and sheep or little livestock, said excitedly: "Now we all have black and white animals (black animals referred to yak and white to sheep)." Zhaxi Puncog, a hired herdsman who used to work for Weise Namgyai and had no cattle and sheep, was given 16 head of cattle and 35 sheep; Danzin was allocated 20 head of cattle and 45 sheep; Baima Caita got 20 head of cattle and 45 head of sheep; Qiongdan Doje received 16 head of cattle and 35 head of sheep. Besides, every household was assigned a tent and a set of simple furniture and some clothes and food.

These hired herdsmen, poor as church mice in the past, could not even afford to marry. Now, with their new property, they could afford to do so. Danzin and Baima married soon after.

With the enhancement of political status, the hired herdsmen gained an economic guarantee. They enjoyed an annual wage which was divided into three classes according to work done: 180 yuan, 150 yuan and 100 yuan. They said:

"In the past we ate and put on what the masters gave us. We did our utmost to work hard with an empty stomach and thin clothes but had to worry about being scolded. We never had a day off even if it rained or snowed, but went on day by day, year in and year out, never daring to dream of sleeping one night inside a tent. We were a human being during the day and a dog at night. Sometimes we felt so sad we even thought of suicide. Now we have our own tents over us and our own property at home, with our own sheep and cattle grazing in front. We own a debt of gratitude to the CPC which we shall never be able to repay."



Emancipated serfs celebrating the Ongkor (Bumper Harvest) Festival

The movement proceeded smoothly across the whole pastoral areas, with a total population of 280,000. In the first half of 1961, the movement had been carried on in areas with a total population of 250,000, and accomplished in areas with a population of 210,000.

Sonorous songs of herdsmen to celebrate their new-born lives echoed across the vast northern Tibet grasslands.

Implementing the buying-out policy constituted an important part in carrying out peaceful reform and continuously uniting the upper class. By March 1961, Tibet had handled buying-out formalities for 900,000 ke of land (15 ke equal to one hectare) and 820,000 head of livestock of some 1,300 households of serf owners and their agents who did not take part in the rebellion, and officially granted them certificates. The Central Government spent a total of 45 million yuan for the purchase. People who received certificates included Ngapoi Ngawang Jigmei, deputy director and secretary-general of the Preparatory Committee for the Founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region, Namdain Gongya Wangqug and Sangpo Cewang Renzin, vice-chairmen of the CPPCC Tibet Committee, and Ceke Toinzhol Cering, mayor of Lhasa. In Xigaze, when the State Government institutions presented a buying-out certificate worth 5.92 million yuan and buying-out currency of 453,000 yuan to the Tashilhunpo Monastery, it was warmly welcome by people from all walks of life.

In a word, the Democratic Reform in Tibet was not only eagerly expected, demanded on their own initiative, participated in spontaneously and supported wholeheartedly by the broad masses of serfs, but also favored, backed up and supported by upper-class patriots. The great and just movement received support not only from the masses but also upper-class patriots. The political leadership of the CPC, manifested through publicity, mobilization and formulation of lines and policies which were regarded as the external factor, played a big role in the Democratic Reform. But the decisive factor was the Tibetan people's long-standing reform desire and the support from the upper-class. Without it, the Democratic Reform would not have started and made achievements.

The Democratic Reform was imperative and correct, as was soon revealed. The initiative of emancipated peasants and herdsmen reached an unprecedented high. In 1959, the first year of reform, the gross grain production in Tibet increased by 4.8 percent from the previous year. In 1960, it rose by 12.6 percent, and the amount of livestock rose 10 percent.

The Tibet Plateau witnessed epoch-making changes.

Let's have a look at Lhasa:

In the past, emaciated serfs and slaves would prostrate themselves before their masters to beg them to extend their debt terms. Now, debt collectors sent by their masters asked them in a low voice about repayment. They would leave quietly when the former serfs told them to wait.

Old nangzen slaves, young girls and even children used to groan under the whips of the masters and lords. Now walking out of the red lacquered gates, they said boldly to their masters: "We are

free. We are no longer cattle and sheep serving you. There is now warmth in the world.” A 108-year-old man in Lhasa used to crawl along the roadside to beg. Now, the neighborhood committee found him a house, gave him food and buttered tea and sent for a doctor when he was ill. The faltering old man cried: “Am I dreaming?”

All these changes stemmed from the victory over rebellion and the conducting of the Democratic Reform. For the first time, the laboring people acquired human rights politically to be the masters of their own affairs and human rights economically for subsistence and development. This is the maximum human rights in Tibet. The Tibetan people, enjoying the human rights for the first time, expressed their heartfelt happiness through new songs:

Himalayas are high enough, but have a summit.

Yarlung Zangbo River is long enough, but has its source.

Tibetan people suffered enough, but saw daylight. The bitter turned into the sweet after the CPC came!

The CPC and the Central Government openly admitted that they instituted a kind of dictatorship---the people's democratic dictatorship. Those parties and personages, who talked glibly about “human rights, democracy and freedom” as if they have never practiced dictatorship, were not so honest.

Almost all modern capitalist countries in the world have exercised dictatorship over the proletariat, the laboring class and their colonies. This is common. In old China, it was the landlords and bureaucratic bourgeoisie who exercised dictatorship over the broad masses of Chinese people. How many people died under the butcher's knives of Kuomintang regime and groaned in the prisons of this political power? The Gaxag government was a local political power in old China and a power of serf owners practicing dictatorship over the serfs.

With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the old ruling class collapsed. The roles of dictator and people under dictatorship were reversed and a new political pattern of people's democratic dictatorship emerged. Take the example of Tibet after the rebellion was crushed and the Democratic Reform began. The democracy was initiated for Tibetan people who accounted for 95 percent of the total population, while the dictatorship was exercised on the reactionary elements on the upper ruling class and chief rebels who made up only 5 percent of the total population. These few people were only allowed to behave themselves and were prohibited from speaking and taking actions randomly, otherwise they would be punished. This policy was carried out in the past and would continue in the future, because if we did not do so, revolution in Tibet would fail and people there would suffer again.

The logic of Van Praag on human rights is that it was not violation of human rights when the few reactionaries on the upper ruling class severely exploited, oppressed and practiced dictatorship against the serfs; but it was a violation of human rights when emancipated serfs exercised a necessary dictatorship over the few reactionaries on the upper ruling class to protect their newly-acquired rights for subsistence and development, and for becoming masters of their own affairs. Who could accept such a logic?

We hold a different view on human rights from Van Praag. We care much about the issue of human rights and are willing to discuss it with anyone on equal terms. But if someone, appearing as a human rights hegemon insisting that “only I speak of human rights...you are the one who violates human rights” tried to interfere in China's internal affairs, the Chinese people, including Tibetans, will not listen.

New China exercised dictatorship on reactionaries but would not eliminate all of them physically. With the exception of a few who had committed the most serious crimes, every means would be tried to remold them into a new type of person. We did just this in Tibet. Many rebel chiefs, or key rebels, after studying and being remolded during imprisonment and under the huge influence of the Democratic Reform and social progress, gradually followed up with the steps of historical progress. According to their attitudes of confessing their crime and other behavior, the people's government released them as soon as possible, and arranged work and accommodation for them. They included Tubdain Dainda and Kana who were released in 1964, Lhalu and Soindo, who were set free in 1965, as well as a number of officials of the former Tibetan government and local powerful persons who were set free in 1978, including Xoikuba and Dundui Qiuying. They felt lucky to be able to live a new life and make contribution to the construction of new Tibet. Many of them, like Xoikuba, went abroad to reunite with their families. Their words revealing their gratitude towards the CPC were touching. Lhalu, in his book *Recalling the Road I Took*, talked about many of his experiences: He was met and instructed by Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai when he led a Tibetan delegation to Beijing in 1955; how he was misguided to participate in the 1959 armed rebellion; how he was denounced at a 10,000-people mass rally in Lhasa in 1959 after he was arrested, and how the PLA soldiers protected him from being beaten at the mass rally; finally, his repentance during his imprisonment. He took up farming after he was set free on special amnesty on August 31, 1965, was given a job in 1977, and became vice-chairman of the CPPCC Tibet Committee in 1983. He was so excited that he shed tears when he met Li Weihan at the CPC United Front Work Department in Beijing. He wrote in the end: “I am 70 years old now. My whole life was full of hardships. Looking back on Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou's kind instructions, thinking of my own behavior in the old society, particularly during the rebellion, I felt deeply guilty. I am determined to work hard for the people, for the unification of the motherland, for building a united, prosperous and civilized new Tibet in the remaining years of my life to make up my past crimes. (Lhalu Cewang Doje: *Recalling the*

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Road I took, Vol.3, Chinese edition, pp.11-24, Tibetan edition, pp.26-49 Selected Materials on the History of Tibet) Lhalu became a different person. He is now working for what he promised.

Other people like Tubdain Dainda and Kana were well remolded and later did a lot of work conducive to the construction of new Tibet till they died.

Therefore, the people's democratic dictatorship New China instituted was the most humanistic. New China was recognized internationally as one of the countries which best remolded its criminals. Making those who had committed crimes against people and who had been imprisoned come back to the people and acquire human rights again was a unique and good way to correctly safeguard the human rights.

Xagabba and Van Praag mount attacks on New China who most extensively and distinctively safeguards human rights, but never condemn the former Tibetan government and armed rebels who barbarously and brutally violated the human rights of the Tibetan people. They look with hatred on the facts that the Tibetan people, who made up 95 percent of region's population, are emancipated and have acquired ultimate human rights. But, they back the reactionary serf owners, who made up only 5 percent of the total population and infringed the human rights of the broad masses of serfs, and encourage them to engage in restorationist activities. All these elements demonstrate that they have never been real defenders, but rather trampers on human rights. They encourage violation of the human rights under the guise of human rights.