

The Historical Status of China's Tibet

WANG JIAWEI & NYIMA GYAINCAIN

Chapter XI

The 14th Dalai Lama's Illegal "Government-in-Exile"

Is a Destabilizing Factor for Asia

The Dalai clique, after fleeing abroad, set up the "government-in-exile" (still called Gaxag government) in Dharamsala, India, in 1960.

In the beginning, the number of Tibetans abroad totalled about 60,000, including the Dalai clique, armed rebels, Tibetan people who were coerced to leave the country after the armed rebellion, Tibetans who resided in South Asian countries before and those who escaped abroad later. But it has risen to 110,000-120,000 after 30 years of growth. Some 90 percent of them now reside in India, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, and several thousand live in some 30 countries in North America, Europe, Oceania and other parts of Asia. Most of the Tibetans living scattered in different places have acquired foreign nationality. But the 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile" has been regarding them as a force for "Tibetan independence" activities.

The 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile" has been launching various activities that infringe on the motherland, the Chinese people and Tibet. In the early years, with support of the CIA and the anti-China forces in India, the 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile" reorganized the "four rivers and six mountain ranges religion protecting army" made up of the armed forces fleeing there after the 1959 rebellion, and in 1960 transferred its headquarters from India to the Mustang area in Nepal. In the winter of 1962, it helped the Indian army set up the Indian-Tibetan "special border troops," who have more than once intruded into the Tibetan border areas to harass and wreck production and construction. Moreover, they vigorously agitated for "Tibetan independence" all over the globe, wantonly slandered the Tibetan people's revolution and construction undertakings under the leadership of the CPC, and viciously sowed dissension between China and other countries, endeavoring to internationalize the Tibet issue with support from overseas forces.

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Since the 14th Dalai Lama had, after the peaceful liberation of Tibet, expressed time and again his support for the Central Government and the 17-Article Agreement, and had done things that were conducive to the maintenance of the unification of motherland and national unity, the Central Government adopted an attitude of waiting and trying to win him over, even preserving his positions as vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee and the head of the Preparatory Committee for the Founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region. However, surrounded by foreign anti-China forces and reactionary separatists from the Tibetan upper strata, the 14th Dalai Lama, with the lapse of time and a changed environment, went further on the road to split China. According to what he did after he had escaped abroad, and under the demand of the Tibetan people and cadres, the State Council made the decision in December 1964 to dismiss him from the post as head of the Preparatory Committee for the Founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region. The NPC also passed a resolution to discharge him from his post as vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee.

The illegal nature of Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile" is crystal clear and there is now little dispute on this question in the world.

Van Praag, however, vigorously plays up the "government-in-exile" and seeks to prove its effectuality and legality, trying to show the legal existence of the "state of Tibet" for its activities. He says that the Tibetan government-in-exile is not an organization set up outside its territory, but a continuity of the legal, accepted Tibetan government in Lhasa. He went on to say that as an independent political entity, the state of Tibet still exists and the legal "government-in-exile" in Dharamsala represents it.

Van Praag's inference is quite ridiculous because:

Firstly, the Chinese Government has never recognized its existence. The Gaxag system in Tibet originated from China's Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and was inalienable from the Central Government of China. Like that in the previous Central Governments of China, the Gaxag system was legal when the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China recognized it in the early 1950s. The one established after the Central Government declared the dissolution of the Gaxag government in March 1959 was certainly illegal.

Secondly, the broad masses of the Tibetans do not accept it. The 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile" has never been admitted and approved by the Tibetan people in China. Many of them remain unaware of its existence.

Like people of other nationalities, Tibetans have become the masters of the country and enjoy all political rights provided for in state laws. In accordance with the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Law of People's Republic of China Governing the Regional National Autonomy, legal Tibetan autonomous governments have been elected through

democratic voting in Tibetan-inhabited areas across the country. They include the people's government of the Tibet Autonomous Region, 10 autonomous prefectural people's governments in Garze and Aba in Sichuan Province, Hainan, Yushu, Huangnan, Golog, Haibei and Haixi in Qinghai Province, Diqen in Yunnan Province and Gannan in Gansu Province, and two autonomous county people's governments in Tianzhu of Gansu Province and Muli of Sichuan Province. These governments were legally elected by over 4 million Tibetans and people of other nationalities. They have, over the past decades, effectively exercised their autonomous rights and led the Tibetan people and people of other nationalities to press ahead with economic construction. Van Praag's statement that the "government-in-exile" in Dharamsala is Tibet's legal government is really ridiculous.

Thirdly, a large number of Tibetans abroad do not accept it. The Gaxag set up in Dharamsala has never won the acknowledgement and support of 100,000-plus Tibetans living abroad, particularly those who escaped from Tibetan-inhabited areas in Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan provinces. Many were hoodwinked, cheated or forced abroad. Some fled to escape the Democratic Reform and other conflicts in their hometowns. Not all of them took "Tibetan independence" as their political aim.

Regionally, Tibetan people in Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai provinces who have been under direct jurisdiction of the Central Government and the rule of headman, baihu (100-household) offices, qianhu (1,000-households) offices and tribal chiefs over the past centuries had more intimate links with people of other nationalities in the hinterland than the U-Tsang in some ways. They have never been under control of the Gaxag government before and could not really accept the rule of the "government-in-exile" comprised of prominent figures from the upper strata of the U-Tsang.

Speaking from the different schools of the Tibetan Buddhism, members of the Gagyü, Nyingma and Sagya sects and followers of the Bon religion among overseas Tibetans kept a distance from the Gaxag, which is mainly composed of members of the Gelug Sect. The Gaxag in Dharamsala, being in the grip of U-Tsang noblemen, recruited some Kamba people to take over government posts and solicited some people from other sects to join their so-called "people's assembly," but they often treated Amdo, Kamba and non-Gelug people unequally concerning such concrete issues as permanent residence and allocation of relief funds. For example, U-Tsang people were usually granted more money and materials (the upper class with power were given much more) than Kamba and Amdo people. This intensified the contradictions inherent between U-Tsang people and Kamba and Amdo people, and between Gelug and other religious sects. This often sets off a wave of anti-Gaxag activities.

For many years, there have been different factions among the Tibetans living abroad which the "government-in-exile" has not been able to unify. For example, the "Tibetan happy

cause society," set up in the 1960s and mainly composed of senior monks of the Gagyu, Nyingma and Sagya sects and the Bon religion and headmen from Amdo and Kamba prefectures, has control over 13 Tibetan-inhabited areas in India (which was thus called the 13 Groups) with tens of thousands of people. They opposed unifying Tibetan-inhabited areas such as Amdo and Kamba with Tibet and putting Gagyu, Nyingma, Sayga and the Bon under control of the Gelug Sect. They ran enterprises and schools themselves, showed no subordination to the 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile," turned over no "independence tax" to it and refused to take part in parades and demonstrations for "Tibetan independence." The "government-in-exile" could not force it to submit. Another group is the "four rivers and six mountain ranges religion protecting army" re-established abroad in the early 1960s. It used to be the only armed force the Dalai clique could order about. But it began to show disobedience to the "government-in-exile" in the late 1960s for various reasons, and was wiped out by the Nepalese army in 1974. The "four rivers and six mountain ranges" now has 30-plus branches and is capable of calling on the Kamba people abroad. They do not take "Tibetan independence" as their aim and have deep-seated contradictions with Gaxag. With direct aid from the Taiwan authorities, the organization, disregarding the 14th Dalai Lama and the "government-in-exile," signed an agreement with Taiwan claiming to be subordinate to the unified leadership of the "Republic of China." This caused the resignation of the whole "government-in-exile" and the disintegration of the "people's assembly," creating big crisis in the Gaxag. The Gaxag "government-in-exile" hated the 13 Groups and the "four rivers and six mountain ranges" to the core. People were sent to smash their headquarters, burn down their houses and assassinate their chief leaders. And they were given no relief materials and their children banned from going to Tibetan schools.

All these were done in order to bring them to submission. But they did all this in vain. The senior monks of the Nyingma, Gagyu and Sagya sects did not collaborate with the the 14th Dalai Lama, and went to Europe, America and Southeast Asian countries to develop their own forces and set up preaching centers. Their spheres of influence and number of followers have far succeeded that of the Gelug Sect abroad. Gaxag and its religious department could do nothing about it.

In addition, there is the "Tibetan youth congress," which has over 10,000 members and is a radical group fighting for the rights and interests of Tibetan noblemen. Stubbornly clinging to "Tibetan independence," they sometimes openly defy the 14th Dalai Lama's instructions and are not fully submissive to the "Gaxag government."

Inside the Dalai clique there are intricate conflicts between senior and junior, moderate and radical, those in favor of negotiation with the Central Government and those opposed, people advocating return to Tibet and those who are opposed to armed struggle, and stubborn supporters of "Tibet independence" and those who are still wavering and hesitating. In the past 30-odd years, the "government-in-exile" has witnessed continuous internal dissension, with its members

intriguing against each other, scrambling for power and gain and counteracting each other's efforts. The 14th Dalai Lama has had to smooth over many things personally, but still failed to solve the basic problems.

With the disintegrating of the Dalai clique, many overseas Tibetans, especially prominent figures, have lost confidence in the "government-in-exile" and returned in groups to China to settle down permanently. They include Doje Balsang (Su Yonghe), the original headman of Heishui, Aba in Sichuan Province, who once represented the three Tibetan-inhabited areas to submit a letter of appeal to the United Nations; Ngalo Qunze, the former head of the "people's assembly;" and Dainba Chilie, secretary-general of the "public security department" of the "government-in-exile." Besides the 10,000-plus Tibetans in exile who returned to China in the 1960s and 70s, another 2,000 have returned to settle since 1979.

Therefore, the "Gaxag government" in Dharamsala is now like a castle in the air which is supported fully by foreign anti-China forces.

Fourthly, no government of any country in the world has ever recognized it as an independent state. After 37 years since it was founded, the "government-in-exile" has never won recognition of government of any country in the world.

The stand of the US government has always been clear-cut. In 1977, the State Department reiterated its political stand toward Tibet: Not a policy or an action has been taken based on the assumption that Tibet is not a part of Chinese territory. The US government does not regard the Dalai Lama as the Tibetan government in any respect. (N.C. Hor [USA]: USA, Tibet and China, p.303, The 21st Century Tibet compiled by Zhang Zhirong) Though presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton have met the 14th Dalai Lama, the US government repeatedly says its stand toward Tibet remains unchanged. On May 16, 1994, the State Department spokesman issued a statement reiterating: It is the long-term American policy that Tibet is a part of China. Neither the United States nor any other country in the world would recognize Tibet as a sovereign state. The United States does not recognize the Tibetan "government-in-exile." (Daily Telegraph, May 20, 1994)

The Indian government's attitude toward the Dalai clique was confined to providing them with "political asylum" only. Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the later government of Deve Gowda more than once stated that "Tibet is an autonomous region of China and an indispensable part of the Chinese territory" and declared many times that the 14th Dalai Lama and the Indian Tibetans are not allowed to conduct anti-China political activities.

Russia does not recognize the "government-in-exile" either. According to an AP report, when the 14th Dalai Lama visited Russia in May 1994, he was not warmly received. Russian diplomatic officials declared on May 19 that they had no link with the 14th Dalai Lama because

they thought Tibet was an inalienable part of China and they cherished their relationship with China.

The Nepalese government has always acknowledged Tibet as an autonomous region of China and does not recognize the "government-in-exile" as legal. In the early and mid-1970s, the Nepalese government adopted measures restricting its contacts with Tibetans living in Nepal, forbade Tibetans from engaging in anti-China activities on its territory and more than once refused the 14th Dalai Lama's request for a visit.

Other countries hold the same attitude.

Van Praag also mentions, in his book, the "Tibetan constitution" declared by the 14th Dalai Lama in Dharamsala in 1963 but does not say a word about "Tibetan anthem" and "Tibetan map." The "state of Tibet" did not exist before March 1959, along with its symbols---"Tibetan constitution," "national anthem" and "national map." They appeared in foreign countries after the Dalai clique escaped abroad, which aptly demonstrated that the so-called "state of Tibet" was created later.

In the last part of his book, The Status of Tibet, Van Praag says in a tone that seems to show his care about peace and stability in Asia: Rehabilitating and re-establishing an independent state of Tibet does not run against the interests of China. It will, on the contrary, help reduce international tension and promote peace and stability in Asia. If Tibet keeps a permanent neutral position, the high tension between China and India, and China and the Soviet Union will, to some degree, be eased.

There exists no question of restoring and rebuilding the "state of Tibet" because we have expounded and verified the fact that before liberation Tibet did not have the status of an independent state. What Van Praag is saying here is that tension and instability in Asia emerges because China safeguards the full sovereignty of its territory, opposes intervention of foreign forces in Tibetan affairs and the activities of Tibetan separatists. He implies that if only China gives away Tibet and "the state of Tibet" is established could tension and instability in Asia be eliminated. This idea that only by China ceding its territory can peace and stability be guaranteed, after all, is in the same vein with the British idea 100 years ago that only by the British invasion of Tibet can security and stability in India be guaranteed. In the final analysis, Van Praag speaks for imperialism and colonialism. He intends to split Tibet from Chinese territory and separate Tibetan nationality from a multinational country. He claims that his proposal, which undisguisedly infringes the fundamental interests of the Chinese people, does not actually go against the rights and interests of the Chinese people and will in turn ease the high tensions between big countries. This is sheer gangster logic.

The real situation is contrary to what Van Praag has said. The tension and instability that once plagued Asia were caused exactly by Tibetan splittist activities supported by foreign forces to establish an independent Tibet. For example, the imperialist forces launched two invasions into Tibet in 1888 and 1904, twice instigated the Tibetan army to invade eastward in 1917 and 1932. They abetted the pro-British young officers in a conspiracy to seize Tibetan power in 1924, plotted the Razheng event in 1947, sabotaged the negotiations for the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1950, and from 1956-59, plotted to stage armed rebellion in Tibet. Moreover, historical facts after the founding of the 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile" showed that their activities have affected not only the security and instability along the Chinese border but also that in the countries in the Himalayan region:

As soon as the "government-in-exile" was set up, the anti-China forces in many countries made use of it to start a chorus on the Tibetan issue in the early 1960s, causing tension and instability in South Asia and poisoning the international air.

From the 1960s to the early 70s, "the four rivers and six mountain ranges religion protecting army," entrenched in Mustang in Nepal, harassed the Chinese border. In addition, they made panic purchases among the Nepalese, engaged in looting and rape, and confronted the intervening Nepalese police. They became an independent regime on Nepalese soil, seriously disrupting local public order in Nepal. The Nepalese government has more than once sent representatives to meet with its head, Wangdui. But he refused to surrender even when King Birendra himself took up the matter. In the end, the Nepalese government was obliged to use forces to annihilate the troops and kill Wangdui.

In 1974, officials with the "government-in-exile" plotted to subvert Bhutanese power by assassinating the King of Bhutan. They intended to put Bhutan under their control and use it as a base for their "Tibet independence" activities. But the plot was exposed and the Bhutanese government immediately arrested the staff of the 14th Dalai Lama's representative office in Thimphu who planned to kill the king. The Bhutanese government issued a decree requiring all Tibetans residing in Bhutan to take Bhutanese nationality. Those who refused would be expelled immediately. For this, the "government-in-exile" sent its representative to negotiate with the Bhutanese government. This incident lasted for several years, seriously affecting Bhutan's social stability. In the end, the Bhutanese government expelled 3,000 Tibetans who refused to take Bhutanese nationality. Up till now, the Bhutanese government has always maintained high vigilance against the 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile."

Between 1987-89, the "government-in-exile" sent people into Tibet, where they incited riots in Lhasa many times. They recklessly instigated national hatred, threatened and assaulted Tibetan people and personages from all walks of life who were opposed to "Tibetan independence," burned down houses of government institutions in Lhasa, robbed shops, smashed

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various public utilities, killed public security officers, and even tried to assassinate leading officials of the Tibet Autonomous Region. Their activities have severely sabotaged Lhasa's production and construction undertakings, causing tension and instability in Tibet and neighboring areas.

The "government-in-exile" also exerted influence on the Indian social order. With financial aid from foreign forces, some Tibetans in exile could engage in non-agricultural sectors such as commerce, trade and handicraft industries and live a life better than ordinary Indian farmers. As their businesses grew, these Tibetans made profits by cruel exploitation of poor Indian farmers. With the increasing economic disparity, their relationship became tense. Indians in Himachal Pradesh and Deccan nursed great grievances against Tibetans living there. And some Tibetans did not abide by local laws, which intensified the tense relationship. On August 29, 1991, a Tibetan in Chanddla in northern India murdered an Indian youth and escaped, arousing fury among Indian residents. About 30 Indians beat up some Tibetans. Soon Indians intercepted a jeep of the "government-in-exile" and beat the driver and the passengers. Following this, some 250-300 Indians swarmed into the Tibetan community, shouting radical slogans against the 14th Dalai Lama and local Tibetans. They smashed their houses, burned down vehicles and cut telephone lines and water pipes. When the Tibetan who murdered the Indian youth was discovered in Dharamsala, the local authorities accused the Dalai clique of hiding the criminal on purpose, and launched a campaign to oust illegal foreigners and anti-social factors. The chief of the Kangra District, issued an order on September 16, to investigate all the Tibetans living in the district. In the spring of 1994, Tibetans living near Dharamsala once again came to blows with local Indians, and another Indian was beaten to death. This time over 1,000 furious Indians encircled the institution of the 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile," dashed toward the 14th Dalai Lama's residence but did not break in thanks to the efforts of the police. Shouting slogans like "This is our place," they vehemently demanded the "government-in-exile" to leave. For a time, when the Indians and the Tibetans were locked in a fierce fight, the "government-in-exile" had intended to move to Bangalore, southern India. It was able to remain in Dharamsala only through the conciliation of the Indian government. These were only episodes of how the "government-in-exile" affected the Indian social security.

It is clear that the activities of the 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile" constitute a source of instability in some Asian areas. Without the 14th Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile," not only China's internal national unity would be closer, but its relationship with India, the United States and Britain would improve and develop greatly. The international political atmosphere would improve in one way and the insecurity would disappear.

It is thus concluded that the 14th Dalai Lama's government is an illegal political organization neither recognized by the Central Government and domestic Tibetans, nor favored

by Tibetans living abroad and not recognized by any government in the world. Now deep in a predicament, it is just a question of time whether it will fall apart or die out.

It should be said that giving up activities of "Tibetan independence" and dissolving the "government-in-exile" is not against the interests of the Dalai clique. Instead, it would create a prerequisite for the 14th Dalai Lama, who has met with countless setbacks and suffered numerous hardships in the past 30 years abroad, to end his stay in the abyss of misery and return to the motherland. So long as the 14th Dalai Lama is willing to do so, he and his followers would be welcome again by people of all nationalities for their contributions to the unification of the motherland and national unity. We look forward to the day when the 14th Dalai Lama could face up to history, admit the truth and gain enough courage to take this wise route.