

CHINA'S NEW WHITE PAPER ON TIBET
*TIBET'S PATH OF DEVELOPMENT IS DRIVEN BY
AN IRRESISTIBLE HISTORICAL TIDE*

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BY

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China's ninth (April 2015) State Council White Paper on Tibet, titled *Tibet's Path of Development is Driven by an Irresistible Historical Tide*, pursues the theme of all previous White Papers: that the issue of Tibet is about progress, development, and inevitable change, to the exclusion of any political issues about Tibet's past or present political status. The fundamental themes of the new White Paper are that Tibet has been a part of China since ancient times, that the elimination of the old feudal system in Tibet was decided upon and achieved by the Tibetans themselves, and that China has helped Tibet onto a path of social progress and economic development.

The most significant part of the White Paper is its denunciation of the Dalai Lama's Middle Way policy as an attempt to split Tibet from China. It declares definitively that China will not dialogue or negotiate with the Dalai Lama on the basis of his Middle Way proposal. The White Paper advises the Dalai Lama to acknowledge that Tibet has been a part of China since ancient times, to give up his attempts to achieve Tibetan independence, and to apologize to the Chinese Government and people for his treason in leading the revolt in 1959. Only then would the Chinese Government be willing to talk to him, and then only about his personal status.

The Foreword of China's new White Paper begins with the statement that the PRC is a unified multiethnic country created through the joined efforts of peoples of all ethnic groups in China. This theme of China's propaganda, along with the assertion that Tibet has been a part of China since ancient times, ignores the reality that although China may have claimed sovereignty over Tibet in the past, it did not achieve actual administrative control over Tibet until the invasion of 1950-51. Tibetans thus did not participate in the creation of the PRC except as victims of China's invasion and occupation. China attempts to dismiss all the political issues of Tibet's former status and of the legitimacy of Chinese rule over Tibet by claiming that there are no such issues. However, China cannot eliminate the political issues of Tibet, at least for Tibetans and the world, by claims of eternal Chinese sovereignty over Tibet that history does not support.

Even the Chinese Communists did not originally claim that Tibet has always been a part of China. They had to admit that Tibet during the Tibetan Empire and Tang Dynasty period of the seventh to ninth centuries was independent of China and even a military rival of China. They therefore claimed that Tibet became an integral part of China only during the Mongol Yuan

dynasty of the 13th century. However, this left open the reality that Tibet was once independent, even so long ago as a thousand years, and thus might claim the right to national self-determination based upon a previous status of independence. Chinese propaganda subsequently began to claim that Tibet had always been a part of China or had been since ancient times in order to eliminate any Tibetan right to national self determination. Also, the Chinese Communists used to refer to Tibetans and other minorities as nationalities and the PRC as a multinational country. But they now use the term “multiethnic country” in order to remove the word national with its implications in regard to national self-determination.

The Foreword of the White Paper claims that Tibet began to enter modern civilization only when it became a part of the PRC. An essential part of China’s propaganda is that Tibet was so hopelessly feudal and backward, and Tibetans unable to rule themselves in a modern manner, that China was justified in taking control of Tibet, changing its social system and dragging it into the modern world. China thus maintains that Tibet had to be liberated and controlled by China before it could achieve “self-rule.” In order to justify Chinese rule over Tibet, the inequalities of old Tibet are grossly exaggerated. However, most Tibetans claim that they have suffered far more under the so-called progressive policies of the Chinese Communists than they ever did under the old feudal system.

The Foreword ends with a denunciation of the Dalai Lama’s Middle Way policy as an attempt to restore the old feudal rule and to achieve Tibetan independence. It ignores the fact that the Middle Way is consistent with Chinese law on regional autonomy and calls for little more than for China to respect its own laws and its own promises of autonomy for Tibetans. The White Paper is divided into five sections: “The End of the Old System Was a Historical Inevitability,” on the former feudal serf system and its natural and inevitable demise; “New Tibet Follows a Sound Path of Development,” on economic development after 1950; “The Essential Intent of the Middle Way Is to Split China,” on the Dalai Lama’s separatist policy; “A Veneer of Peace and Non-Violence,” on the Dalai Lama’s policy on nonviolence; and, “The Central Government’s Policy towards the Dalai Lama,” on China’s policy on Tibetan autonomy and the role of the Dalai Lama.

The End of the Old System Was a Historical Inevitability

This section blames Tibet’s relative backwardness on its theocratic political system. It says that Tibet was a theocratic feudal serfdom long after the rest of the world had progressed beyond such an archaic social and political system. Religion dominated the culture and society of Tibet, hampering historical progress. Monks made up a large portion of society and were dependent upon the labor of others for their living. In addition, their celibacy hindered the growth of the population. Religion dominated the government as well, preventing any secular education or progress and taking most government funding for the support of monasteries. The

monasteries, along with the aristocracy, controlled the culture and society in Tibet and oppressed the serfs who comprised the majority of the population.

The Chinese White Paper claims that monasteries were far from holy places of spiritualism and Buddhist academic study. It claims that they were guilty of the exploitation of the serfs, who were required to work for their support. Reluctant serfs were abused, tortured, and even imprisoned in monasteries if they failed to fulfill their obligations of labor and taxes to the monasteries or other feudal lords. The monasteries were the biggest money-lenders in Tibet, usually charging high interest rates and driving most of the serfs into debt which they could never escape. A favorite theme of Chinese propaganda is also that human beings were sacrificed for certain Buddhist rituals.

The White Paper asks why the serfs did not rise up in revolt, given their merciless exploitation by religion, aristocracy, and government. It says that the answer is that serfs were convinced by the religious theory of karma that their social status was due to their sins of past lives and that there was nothing they could do but try to achieve a better incarnation next time. One way to do so was to be devout to religion and supportive of monks and monasteries. There may be some truth to the argument that the theory of karma was used by the monks and the upper classes to keep the lower classes in their place. However, the primary reason that the Tibetan serfs did not revolt against what the Chinese describe as their cruel repression and exploitation was that they were not as cruelly repressed or exploited as the Chinese claim.

The White Paper claims that the three feudal lords in Tibetan society, namely the monasteries, the aristocracy, and the government, exploited and repressed the majority of Tibetans who were serfs. Serfs who refused to provide labor or were unable to repay debts to monasteries were often imprisoned in both government and monastic prisons. Chinese propaganda exaggerates the torture and poor conditions suffered by Tibetans in those prisons. They have even created museums at some of the old prisons, including the Potala dungeon and the Nangtsesha prison in the Barkor in Lhasa.

China has difficulty in making much propaganda about prisons in old Tibet, given the extensive network of huge prisons and labor camps created in Tibet to repress opposition to Chinese rule. The Potala prison was tiny and could hold only a few prisoners. The Nangtsesha prison had only nine cells. In contrast, since 1950 China has imprisoned thousands of Tibetans in a multitude of large prisons and labor camps where many Tibetans died due to starvation and overwork.

Even before 1959, in eastern Tibet, many Tibetans of the upper classes or important lamas were subjected to *thamzing* and then taken away to prisons or labor camps. After the revolt in Lhasa in 1959 many more Tibetans were imprisoned for participation in the revolt or even just

due to their social status. Many high lamas and government officials were sent to labor camps in Xinjiang. The former Tibetan Army barracks at Drapchi was turned into Lhasa's first prison. Many Tibetans were imprisoned there and many more were sent to the Powo Tramo labor camps in Kongpo. Many more Tibetans worked on the Nanchen Trang hydroelectric dam near Lhasa as forced labor. As more Tibetans were arrested for their participation in or support for the revolt or in the subsequent "democratic reforms," the system of prisons and labor camps in Tibet expanded. Many Tibetans from central Tibet were sent to labor camps in Kongpo or to the notorious Tsala Karpo labor camp in the Changthang. Tibetans from Kham outside the TAR were sent to labor camps in Minyak near Dartsedo or to a mine to the east of Dartsedo. Tibetans of Amdo were sent to Xinjiang or to the system of labor camps in Qinghai. In addition, there were prisons in every Tibetan city and town.

Many Tibetans died at these labor camps, especially during the Great Leap Forward period of 1959-62. The number of Tibetans eventually imprisoned or sent to labor camps was in the tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands. The number who died is also in the tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands. How does this compare to the nine small prison cells at Nangtsesha?

The imprisonment of Tibetans for the crime of opposition to Chinese rule did not end when the liberalization period began in 1979. Tibetans arrested for demonstrating against Chinese rule since that time have been subjected to torture and imprisonment for long periods. The evils of the old social and political system in Tibet are a major part of Chinese propaganda about Tibet. China's claim to have liberated Tibetans from this supposed Hell on Earth is a primary justification for the imposition of Chinese rule over Tibet. However, China has a difficult task to convince Tibetans or anyone else that old Tibet was worse than Tibet under Chinese rule.

This section focuses on the inequality in old Tibetan society, particularly that the feudal lords comprised only 5 percent of the population but owned half the land and property. It implies that this was corrected by the Democratic Reform campaign after the revolt in 1959. Former serfs were given title to land in the Democratic Reform, but their land rights lasted only until communization a few years later during the Cultural Revolution. Tibetans supposedly became masters of their own affairs when they achieved Autonomous Region status in 1965, but in fact they had lost all their rights and freedoms to the Chinese Communist Party.

The old Tibetan aristocracy may have owned half the land and property before 1959, but at least they were Tibetan. The result of the Chinese conquest of Tibet and its Democratic Reforms and Socialist Transformation campaigns was that the Chinese became the owners of all land and property in Tibet and Tibetans were dispossessed. In addition, Tibetans lost all their collective and individual rights and freedoms. Their personal, religious, cultural, and economic

rights were all controlled by the Chinese. China claims to have liberated the Tibetan serfs, but in fact all Tibetans became serfs to the CCP.

The White Paper claims that there were virtually no schools in old Tibet and that most Tibetans were illiterate. This ignores the fact that monasteries were schools and most monks were literate. In addition, there were numerous private schools for children of the upper classes. It goes on to say that old Tibet was a filthy and poverty-stricken place and that this was due to the nature of the social system. The Chinese further claim that Tibet still practiced slavery long after the rest of the world had abolished that practice. However, what the Chinese characterize as slavery was just a system of household servitude with little in common with slavery.

This section includes testimony from foreign visitors to Tibet in the past about how backward Tibetan society was at the time. The Frenchwoman Alexandria David-Neel visited Tibet five times between 1916 and 1924. She commented that Tibetan serfs were mired in debt to aristocratic or monastic landowners that they could never hope to repay. This was undoubtedly a problem. However, she also had much good to say about Tibet, none of which the Chinese choose to repeat. A Chinese traveler is quoted saying that Tibetans seemed downtrodden, unhappy, and lifeless due to their oppression. He claims to have seen Tibetan serfs being whipped by their landlords during harvest time. However, this contradicts the accounts of hundreds of non-Chinese foreign travelers to Tibet who reported that Tibetans were characterized by their cheerful demeanors and that most were fairly prosperous or at least self-sufficient. They report that Tibetans were particularly happy during harvest time and sang songs while working in the fields. None reported seeing any being whipped.

The reason that the Chinese exaggerate the inequalities of the Tibetan feudal system is that this is their primary justification for Chinese rule over Tibet. Supposedly, Tibet could never have modernized on its own without Chinese assistance. What they do not care to mention is no such assistance required or justified Chinese control over Tibet. If China were so concerned with assisting Tibet to modernize, it could have provided that assistance by means of foreign aid. The social argument about the nature of traditional Tibetan society is used to obscure the political issue of Tibet. The political issue involves whether Tibet was really already a part of China as the Chinese claim or whether Tibet was a nation of people separate from China and thus had the right to national self-determination. China attempts to deny and obscure any historical evidence that Tibet was not an integral or at least an “inevitable” part of China.

In reality, China had long claimed sovereignty over Tibet but was never able to exercise actual administration there until 1950 or even 1959. Tibetans had clearly expressed their wish for independence before 1950. Tibet had a national identity, a culture distinct from Chinese culture, and a territory administered by a Tibetan government. These characteristics qualify Tibet as a nation and give it the right to national self-determination in international law. The Chinese

argument about the backwardness of old Tibet is nothing more than an attempt to obscure the issue of China's denial of Tibet's right to national self-determination.

New Tibet Follows a Sound Path of Development

The theme of this section is that by expelling the forces of imperialism in 1951 Tibet was able to pursue a path of development based upon Chinese socialism with Tibetan characteristics. Democratic Reforms after the revolt in 1959 ended the feudal theocratic serf system and liberated the Tibetan serfs. The socialist system was established after the creation of the TAR in 1965. Since reform and opening up after 1978, Tibet has experienced growth and progress while preserving the essence of its traditional culture.

The White Paper proclaims that the most important result of the development path chosen by Tibetans is that it ensured the unity of the Chinese nation. It accuses British imperialists operating from India of invading Tibet (in 1904) and attempting to engineer Tibetan independence. A few Tibetans of the upper classes, influenced by the British, who also wanted to preserve their feudal privileges, also supported independence, but Tibetan patriots like the Panchen Lama called on the PLA to enter Tibet in order to safeguard China's national unity and territorial integrity. The CCP decided upon the peaceful liberation of Tibet and achieved that by means of the 17-Point Agreement, which the Dalai Lama formally accepted.

This led to unity of China as well as unity within Tibet since the Dalai and Panchen Lamas were thus reconciled. In 1954 India and China signed a treaty by which India recognized Chinese sovereignty over Tibet and renounced any privileges it had claimed based upon the legacy of British imperialism in Tibet. Since that time Tibetans have been firmly committed to unity with China and have therefore been the recipients of generous economic and development assistance from the Chinese government and people. They have enjoyed a harmonious relationship with China's other ethnic groups, including the Han, and have firmly resisted separatist schemes fostered by the exiled Dalai Lama clique. The central government has devoted large resources in money and people to assist Tibet in its economic development.

China's White paper ignores any Tibetan desire for independence from China and blames all such ideas exclusively on British imperialism. China claims that Tibet was peacefully liberated from foreign imperialism in 1951 and that this was not an invasion because Tibet was already a part of China and all Tibetans were loyal to China except a few serf-owners. However, the truth is, according to the testimony of Tibetans themselves, that few if any Tibetans thought of Tibet as a part of China and almost all preferred that Tibet be independent. This is the essence of the right to self-determination, that a nation of people has the right to decide their political status for themselves. However, China denied Tibetans this right and still attempts to cover up this fact.

China further claims that Tibetans have remained loyal and have opposed separatism despite the fact that China still has to forcibly repress Tibetan opposition. Tibetans were never given any choice about independence, since the Chinese knew very well that given a free choice they would undoubtedly choose freedom from Chinese rule. Tibetans have expressed their opinions on this issue whenever given any chance to do so, which is why China has had to devote so much effort to repression of Tibetan opposition as well as to propaganda such as this White Paper that attempts to deny that Tibetans have any opposition to being a part of China. The very fact that Tibetan opposition has manifested on many occasions and still exists even 65 years after China's invasion and occupation of Tibet is sufficient evidence to refute China's claims of Tibet's unity with and Tibetans' loyalty to China.

This section is divided into several subsections, the first subsection having the title "The development path of new Tibet ensures that the people are masters of their own fate." China claims that after Democratic Reforms, during which the serfs were liberated, and Socialist Transformation, Tibetans achieved control of their own economic development. The White Paper goes so far as to claim that the political system in Tibet is one of "modern democracy," in which "the political rights of the people are fully respected and protected." It says that the people of all ethnic groups in Tibet enjoy the right to equally participate in the administration of state affairs. They exercise this right through the system of Peoples' Congresses, which is the basic political system of China.

The Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) also enjoys ethnic autonomy within the PRC's system of regional ethnic autonomy. This system theoretically gives Tibetans the right to make their own local laws in regard to issues such as language, education, culture, and religion. As an example, the White Paper cites the privilege under which Tibetans are not restricted in the number of children they can have according to China's one-child policy that applies to the Han Chinese. Tibetans may also choose their own public holidays, such as Losar and Shoton. Tibetans also have the theoretical right to be governed by their own officials of the Tibetan ethnic group.

All these rights that Tibetans enjoy are indeed theoretical. They exist in Chinese law but not in reality. Despite Chinese claims that Tibetans gained the right to govern themselves through Democratic Reforms and Socialist Transformation, these so-called reforms were the means by which China gained total control over all aspects of Tibetans' lives. The Chinese became the masters of Tibet and oppressed any and all Tibetan resistance. The Chinese Constitution may speak of democracy and the CCP may pretend to abide by the principle of "people's democracy," but neither Tibetans nor any citizens of the PRC have anything resembling true democracy. Tibetans have no control over their own political system, economy, or culture. China has systematically repressed Tibetan culture and physically destroyed cultural

monuments. Chinese, not Tibetans, control the local economy. The system of peoples' congresses is nothing but a powerless façade behind which Chinese exercise all political power. Tibetan language is deemphasized in education, education is essentially indoctrination, and religious freedom has been repressed. Tibetans are allowed some of their own traditional holidays, but they are also required to celebrate Chinese holidays as well as completely anti-Tibetan farces like Serf Liberation Day. They are specifically prohibited from celebrating the Dalai Lama's birthday.

The claim of the Chinese White Paper that Tibetans are masters of their own fate and that they exercise local democracy and autonomy are staples of Chinese propaganda about Tibet. However, no Tibetan would imagine that there is any truth to these claims, nor would they dare to try to exercise any such rights. If Tibetans were really masters of their own fate they would have the ability to determine their own political status. If they had any democratic rights or freedoms they would not have been killed, imprisoned, and exiled for their opposition to Chinese rule. They would not have allowed the destruction of their culture and religion, and they would not have allowed their natural resources to be stolen by China or their country to be overrun by Chinese colonists.

The second subsection has the title "The development path of new Tibet guarantees the common prosperity of all ethnic groups." The title implies that not only have all the different ethnic groups in Tibet prospered together and equally but also that they have been assisted by other ethnic groups outside Tibet, meaning primarily the Han Chinese. This section is full of statistics about how much economic assistance China has selflessly provided to Tibet and how Tibet has prospered as a consequence. Tibetans have benefitted from a constantly rising standard of living, the Paper says. Farmers have been provided with new housing and nomads have been resettled with new permanent housing. The White Paper does not mention the periods of starvation during the Great Leap of the early 1960s due to Mao's misguided policies or the famines due to collectivization in the 1970s. It also does not admit the coercion involved in the current resettlement of nomads.

The White Paper claims that both Tibet's population and Tibetans' life expectancies have risen. It cites a survey showing that Lhasa has been voted the happiest city in China for five straight years. The claim that Lhasa is China's happiest city more likely reflects the fear prevalent in Lhasa rather than any semblance of happiness. The paper further claims that Tibetans enjoy free education but does not mention that much of what Tibetans experience in schools is indoctrination and propaganda.

It cites the development of industry and infrastructure as if those things are meant to exclusively benefit Tibetans. However, most development benefits China and Chinese residents in Tibet more than Tibetans, and often comes at the expense of Tibetans. In particular, mining,

which is a primary focus of China's development plans in Tibet, provides no benefits to Tibetans and is destructive to their environment. Infrastructure development facilitates the removal of minerals from Tibet and the arrival of Chinese tourists and settlers. The railroad to Lhasa has provided little benefit to Tibetans while allowing Chinese to flood into Tibet. The recent extension of the railroad to Shigatse is mostly meant to facilitate the development of a copper mine nearby while providing little benefit to Tibetans.

China's statistics about its economic assistance to Tibet are meant to justify its claim to sovereignty over Tibet as if Tibetans could have done none of this on their own as an independent country. However, Tibet has suffered far more than it has benefitted under Chinese rule. Hundreds of thousands of Tibetans lost their lives as a direct result of Chinese repression of Tibetan resistance. Tibetan culture suffered irreparable damage due to Chinese political campaigns such as Democratic Reforms and the Cultural Revolution. China's misguided collectivization policies further restricted Tibetans' freedoms and caused them great economic damage. The Tibetan economy began to recover only when the Chinese liberalized some of their more repressive policies in the early 1980s. Now, however, China has finally begun to realize some of its ultimate development plans for Tibet, focused upon resource exploitation, which marginalize Tibetans and facilitate Chinese colonization. China's ultimate plans for Tibet provide little benefit for Tibetans while exploiting their environment and flooding Tibet with Chinese settlers.

The third subsection has the title "The development path of new Tibet facilitates the inheritance and spread of the positive aspects of traditional Tibetan culture." Here, the Chinese White Paper attempts the difficult task of explaining how Tibetan culture has been preserved and protected better under foreign Chinese rule than it might have been under native Tibetan rule. The key is that China claims that Tibetans have self-rule. Therefore, they decide for themselves what parts of their culture to preserve, and they are assisted in doing this by the central Chinese government. However, the reality is that not only do Tibetans not have any semblance of self-rule, but they have suffered tremendous cultural loss and destruction due to Chinese rule over Tibet.

The White Paper says that Tibet has succeeded in preserving the Tibetan language because of provisions enacted by the TAR in regard to the use of the Tibetan language in education and regional government. However, the reality is that Chinese has become the dominant language in Tibet. Tibetans are marginalized if they do not speak Chinese. Educational opportunities are severely limited for those Tibetans who do not pursue their education in Chinese rather than Tibetan. China has also curtailed Tibetans' attempts to preserve their own language through informal language classes due to the fear that such gatherings foster nationalistic feelings. Despite China's claims that Tibetans are free to preserve their own

language, the fact of Tibet's incorporation within China demands that Tibetans assimilate in all ways, including language.

The White Paper also claims that regulations passed by Tibetans themselves have allowed them to preserve their own cultural relics. It gives statistics about how many cultural sites are under government protection. The Chinese of course say absolutely nothing about the cultural destruction Tibet suffered after the 1959 revolt when China justified the theft of the wealth of almost all of Tibet's monasteries during the so-called Democratic Reform campaign. The theme of that campaign was that the wealth of the former exploiting class should be confiscated for the benefit of the common people. The CCP defined the wealth of the monasteries as that of the upper class when in fact it was collected due to the devotion of the whole Tibetan people. China then defined the people to whom Tibet's material wealth should be redistributed as the whole Chinese people, including Tibetans, rather than Tibetans alone. China thus perpetrated one of history's greatest thefts by one country of another's national wealth, but now claims that nothing of the sort has happened and that in fact Tibet's cultural treasures have been protected under Chinese rule.

China's White Paper claims that Tibetans enjoy full freedom of religious belief and practice. It is true that Tibetans are allowed to believe in religion, unless they are government officials, but religious practices are highly restricted if they have any nationalistic implications, which many do. In particular, any religious ceremonies or anniversaries having to do with the Dalai Lama are prohibited. Reincarnations must be approved by the Chinese government rather than by the Dalai Lama as is Tibetan tradition. In essence, freedom of religion in Tibet is as restricted as all other freedoms for Tibetans under Chinese rule. Only if someone knows nothing about the reality in Tibet can any of China's claims about Tibetan self-rule, human rights, and religious and cultural freedoms be believed.

The last subsection has the title "The development path of new Tibet is sustainable." The White Paper says that economic development in Tibet is in harmony with the local environment. It claims that there has been no harm to the environment due to development in Tibet. China's development policies in Tibet are therefore declared sustainable because they do not exploit the environment in any harmful way.

The White Paper cites government plans for environmental protection, including the creation of wildlife protection zones; protected forests, grasslands, and wetlands; and grassland and forest revival areas. It claims that Tibet remains one of the areas with the best environmental quality in the world, with most parts of the Tibetan Plateau remaining in their original natural state.

It is undoubtedly true that Tibet still has one of the best environmental qualities of anywhere in the world, but this condition has little to do with any Chinese Government policies or development strategies. Tibet's environmental quality is due to its high altitude and still relatively low population. China's economic development of Tibet has concentrated upon the exploitation of Tibetan natural resources, which has had harmful consequences. If Tibet's environment is still fairly pristine it is only because China has so far been unable to exploit Tibet as much as it would like and as it undoubtedly will in the near future.

China's primary reason for annexing Tibet and the focus of all its development policies has always been to exploit Tibet's natural resources for the economic benefit of China. China began by exploiting the forest resources of Kham and caused so much environmental destruction that it had to ban logging in 2006 after disastrous floods on the Yangtze. Logging was reduced not when Tibet's environment suffered the harmful consequences but when it caused harm in China. China's exploitation of Tibet's mineral resources is now more feasible with the building of the necessary infrastructure like hydroelectric power and roads and rails for transportation of ore to the Chinese interior for refining. Mining has only just begun on a large scale in Tibet but has already caused great harm to areas where mines are located and to water sources that arise in those areas. China's ultimate development plan for Tibet will include greatly increased mining with unavoidable negative environmental impacts.

China has resettled hundreds of thousands of Tibetan nomads with the ostensible purpose of environmental protection of the grasslands and wetlands in the area of the Changtang where the Yellow, Yangtze, and Mekong rivers have their sources. The Chinese say that the Tibetan nomads harm the grasslands by overgrazing, but many international wildlife biologists maintain that Tibetan nomadic practices are more beneficial to the grasslands than harmful. It is beyond dispute that Tibetan nomadic pastoralism has coexisted in ecological balance on the grasslands for thousands of years. The ecological results of the nomads' removal are less certain, but certainly the nomads' lifestyles and economy have been adversely affected. China's purpose in removing the nomads from the grasslands is suspected to be as much about political control as environmental protection. China's economic strategy based upon natural resource exploitation will have negative environmental consequences for Tibetans no matter what China says.

The Essential Intent of the Middle Way Is to Split China

The theme of this most significant section of the White Paper is that the Dalai Lama's Middle Way proposal is contrary to the path that the Tibetan people themselves have chosen, a path that has led to development and progress. The White Paper maintains that the Dalai Lama demanded Tibetan independence after 1959 and gave up that goal only after the United States established relations with China in 1973. It claims that the Dalai Lama and those who organized the 1959 revolt and fled into exile with him still want independence and have adopted a more

moderate path of demanding genuine autonomy only because they cannot hope to immediately achieve their real goal. The Dalai Lama's proposals have since changed according to how much international support the exiled Tibetans had and how strong or weak they thought China was. Therefore, according to China, the Dalai Lama and Tibetan exiles cannot be trusted to adhere to their own Middle Way policy.

The White Paper cites five reasons for China's rejection of the Dalai Lama's Middle Way policy. First and most important is that it denies that Tibet has been an integral part of China since ancient times and instead claims that Tibet was independent until 1951. Tibet would therefore have the right to national self-determination based upon its history of independence. Second, the Middle Way seeks to establish a Greater Tibet that would include not only Tibetans within the TAR but also those in Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan. Third, it demands a high degree of autonomy not subject to any restraint from the central government and it denies the leadership and authority of the central government. Fourth, despite admitting that the central government has authority over national defense it demands that Chinese troops be removed from Tibet and that Tibet be turned into an international Zone of Peace. And fifth, it would negate the multiethnic character of the Tibetan Plateau and require that only Tibetans should have the right to live there.

The White Paper says that the essence of the Dalai Lama's Middle Way proposal is to pretend to acknowledge Chinese sovereignty over Tibet while in fact trying to set up a semi-independent regime under the control of Tibetan independence advocates and to achieve independence in the future. The Middle Way is thus, according to the Chinese, a political strategy for achieving independence in stages. They say that it does not accord with China's history, its Constitution, laws, or basic systems of governance. It also does not conform to Tibet's history, its reality, and its relations with other ethnic groups. And it is contrary to the fundamental interests of all the people of China, including the Tibetan people.

China's White Paper thus dismisses the Dalai Lama's Middle Way proposal as inappropriate for Tibet even though it is in fundamental accord with China's own constitution and national autonomy laws. The Middle Way asks for no more autonomy than is promised in China's own laws. It differs from those laws only in asking for an inclusion of all Tibetan ethnic areas into one combined Tibetan Autonomous Region, which is also in accordance with the CCP's original policy that called for autonomous regions to be established in areas where minorities were in contiguous occupation, which is the case for all Tibetan ethnic areas. The real reason for China's rejection of the Middle Way is that it does not want to allow the degree of autonomy that it itself once promised because those promises were considered temporary expedients and because it fears that autonomy can lead to independence.

China claims that Tibet has been part of China since ancient times, although it admits that Tibet was formally incorporated into China only during the Yuan Dynasty of the thirteenth century. The White Paper claims that the Tibetan people were closely connected with the Han people even before that time, including during the Tibetan Empire and Tang Dynasty period when, it says, Tibet was merely a local government of China. It claims that Tibetans were closely connected with the Han and other ethnic groups in consanguinity, language, and culture and that there has never been a break in economic, political, and cultural connections between Tibet and the rest of China.

It is in regard to the Tibetan Empire period that China's argument is the most false. The Tibetan Empire was totally independent of Tang Dynasty China and established treaties of mutual recognition and frontier boundary lines with China during that time. This period of absolute Tibetan independence gives Tibet the right to national self-determination under international law, which is why China is so anxious to deny it. The claim that Tibet was closely connected with China during that time has little validity. Consanguinity just means that Tibetan territory was near Chinese territory, which is no basis for a Chinese claim to sovereignty over Tibet. Similarly, the Tibetan and Chinese languages are not close, and in any case this is also not any basis for a Chinese claim that Tibet has to be part of China. Tibetan and Chinese cultures are more remarkably different than they are similar, thus providing no basis for a Chinese claim to sovereignty over Tibet.

The White Paper offers much evidence about Yuan Dynasty administration over Tibet, but the Yuan was a Mongol conquest dynasty that ruled China and Tibet separately. The same is true of the Manchu Qing Dynasty, while the intervening native Chinese Ming Dynasty had no administrative authority in Tibet. The Chinese Republic of the first half of the twentieth century claimed sovereignty over Tibet but was unable to exercise it in reality. Thus the claim that there has never been a break in economic, political, or cultural connections between Tibet and China is clearly false. In fact, there were never very close economic or cultural connections, while political connections were often vague or sometimes nonexistent, especially during the Ming and early twentieth century times.

The Chinese White Paper constantly repeats the claim that Tibet has been a part of China since ancient times and has never been independent. However, history refutes that claim. Tibet was clearly independent during the Empire period. It also clearly attempted to establish its independence during the early modern period before 1950. China emphasizes that no country has even recognized Tibetan independence. The reason for this is that Tibet had no need for diplomatic recognition from other countries until its independence was threatened by China. The real issue is whether Tibetans want and deserve independence. Tibet was once independent and thus has the right to national self-determination. Tibetans have repeatedly during their history as well as currently clearly expressed their desire for independence, which China has denied.

The White Paper says that the idea of a Greater Tibet does not conform to China's history and national conditions. A primary reason for the rejection of this idea is because the area in question represents one quarter of the PRC's total territory. This fact reveals why China is so averse to any reunion of all Tibetan territory, even under a system of autonomy no more extensive than what China claims it already allows. What China means when it says that a truly autonomous Greater Tibet does not conform to China's historical and national conditions is that China does not want to give up its historical conquest of the Tibetan Plateau or its ability to exploit Tibet's resources without any interference from Tibetans. That a reunion of all Tibetan territories would conform to Tibet's historical and national conditions is something that China does not want to admit.

The White Paper says that in China's history there has never been any geographical entity like this so-called Greater Tibet. Perhaps in China's history that is true, but in Tibet's history such a political and territorial entity did exist during the Tibetan Empire period when Tibet was not a part of China. The White Paper attempts to ignore this by claiming that even during the Tibetan Empire period the inhabitants of the Tibetan Plateau were multiethnic. However, the reality is that the plateau was almost exclusively Tibetan right up to 1950, which even the Chinese Communists acknowledged by establishing Tibetan autonomous regions, districts, and counties that cover exactly the same territory as the proposed Greater Tibet. China implies that the Chinese were also one of the many nationalities that have long inhabited the plateau along with Tibetans, but the fact is that there were few if any Chinese in most Tibetan cultural areas right up to 1950.

The Chinese Communists' original nationality autonomy doctrine intended that nationality autonomous regions would be established wherever minority nationalities were in contiguous occupation, a condition that applied to all Tibetan cultural territories. The only reason they were not included in one Tibetan autonomous region was truly for historical and political reasons specifically excluded as justifications for divisions in autonomous regions by the CCP's own doctrine. The historical reason was that China had already successfully divided Tibetan territory as far back as the Yuan Dynasty and did not want to give up these territorial divisions. Adjacent Chinese provinces, particularly Sichuan, also did not want to relinquish the territory they had gained through territorial encroachment on Tibet.

The political reason was exactly as the White Paper says, because Tibetan territory constitutes fully one quarter of the territory of the PRC. The reunion of all Tibetan territory would make Tibet appear far too similar to a separate country on China's map. China attempts to deny this reality by claiming that Tibetans were already dispersed in several Chinese provinces, whereas in fact it was Chinese provinces that expanded to incorporate Tibetan territories, all of

which were still contiguous to adjacent Tibetan territories. The CCP maintains that it has logically created Tibetan autonomous political entities wherever appropriate whereas in fact it has perpetuated and justified territorial divisions of Tibetan territory made by previous Chinese dynasties. The ultimate reason that China does not want to allow a reunion of all Tibetan areas is that it fears that a unified Tibetan territory will be used to advocate for an independent Tibet.

The Chinese White Paper denounces the high degree of autonomy proposal as an attempt to set up a state within a state. It acknowledges that some of the autonomous rights proposed are consistent with China's own regional autonomy system. These noncontroversial rights are those regarding culture, language, religion, education, and environment. However, it says that what the Dalai Lama demands includes issues that undermine Chinese national unity, sovereignty, and the political system. It says that the Dalai Lama demands autonomy in Tibet free of any control from the central government. The autonomous government in Tibet would be established through democratic elections, which are contrary to China's political system. The White Paper denounces these proposals as an attempt to abolish the current political system in Tibet and create a system different from that in the rest of China. It implies that this is just the first step in an attempt to establish actual political independence in Tibet.

The White Paper acknowledges that the proposed autonomous status for Tibet is based upon the One Country, Two Systems policy that China has adopted for Hong Kong and Macau and has proposed for Taiwan. However, China argues that this status is inappropriate for Tibet because those territories were removed from Chinese sovereignty due to imperialist aggression, but Tibet has been an integral part of China since ancient times. Therefore, the issue of resuming sovereignty by means of some arrangement like One Country, Two Systems does not apply. China thus argues that it has no need to offer any incentives to Tibet because Tibet is already under Chinese control, whereas China had to offer something to Hong Kong and Macau to get them to return to China and to Taiwan to try to entice it to return to China. Of course, this implies that the autonomy offered to Hong Kong and Macau and Taiwan were only temporary tactics to get them to return even though China actually promised that their autonomy would be permanent. This was the same strategy that China applied to Tibet in the 1951 17-Point Agreement. China also rejects the argument that Tibet should actually have more autonomy than Hong Kong or Taiwan because Tibetans are a non-Chinese people.

Ultimately, China rejects the high degree of autonomy proposed by the Middle Way because it suspects that it is just an attempt to achieve independence in stages. The Chinese White Paper rejects the Tibetan proposals on the basis that they are completely contrary to China's national conditions and Tibet's reality and they violate China's Constitution, its laws, and its basic political systems. China fears that any degree of autonomy in Tibet, even that which it itself has promised in its nationality laws, can perpetuate the separate Tibetan cultural and national identity and thus perpetuate Tibetan political separatism. China thus finds, having

achieved the conquest of Tibet facilitated by many promises of economic, social, cultural, and even political autonomy to Tibetans, it cannot actually allow any such autonomy in practice. Tibet's national and cultural identity is so distinct and so persistent that China has no option but to repress Tibetan identity in order to eradicate Tibetan separatism and thus keep Tibet within China.

The final two reasons the White Paper cites for China's rejection of the Dalai Lama's Middle Way proposal involve the presence of Chinese, both military and civilian, in Tibet. The Dalai Lama's original Strasbourg proposal, upon which the Middle Way is based, called for the creation of a Zone of Peace in Tibet under which PRC troops would be responsible for international border security but not for internal security within the proposed Greater Tibet Autonomous Region. Similarly, the Chinese central government would be responsible for the region's diplomatic relations with other countries but not for internal cultural, religious, or economic issues within Tibet.

The Middle Way proposal places less emphasis upon these issues of the presence and functions of PLA troops in Tibet. However, the Chinese have focused on this issue to denounce the Tibetan proposal as intended to create a separate state within which China would not be allowed to station military forces. The Tibetan side in response has deemphasized the Zone of Peace proposal because it is indeed perhaps too idealistic to expect that China should abandon its right to station military forces at any place where Chinese sovereignty applies. The intention of the Tibetan proposal was to limit the repressive activities of the PLA and the People's Armed Police within Tibet. However, this would require that China should trust that Tibetan autonomy would not be used to agitate for independence, but this is the fundamental reason for China's suspicions about Tibetan autonomy.

The Tibetan proposal in regard to limiting Chinese colonization in Tibet has also been denounced by the Chinese as equivalent to ethnic cleansing, or the removal of ethnic populations by force. In fact, the Middle Way only proposes a limitation on new migrants to Tibet after the implementation of an agreement, while those who had previously migrated to Tibet would be allowed to stay. In addition, limitations on migration are almost impossible to enforce; therefore, the nature of any such limitations would have to be very flexible.

The need for any such limitation is so that Tibet would not be overwhelmed by Chinese colonization. However, it is based upon the concept that the territory of Tibet should be the habitation primarily of Tibetans in order to preserve Tibetan culture. China, however, has never regarded Tibet as an exclusive territory for Tibetans. The Chinese, in fact, whatever their promises in regard to Tibetan autonomy, have traditionally regarded Tibet as a territory for Chinese expansion. Most Chinese, in fact, think of Tibet more as a territory than a people, least of all a people who should have any exclusive rights to the inhabitation of that territory. This

proposal, like that to limit the presence of Chinese military forces in Tibet, appears to the Chinese as too much like an attempt to create a separate Tibetan state.

A Veneer of Peace and Non-Violence

What the title of this section means is that the Dalai Lama's policy of nonviolence is only superficial, or like a coat of paint covering up the reality that he has repeatedly perpetrated violence against China and Tibet since the 1950s. The Dalai Lama's policy of nonviolence is nothing but a subterfuge to gain international sympathy and support while he has never abandoned the use of violence in order to achieve the ultimate goal of independence.

The first and foremost example of the Dalai Lama's resort to violence is, according to the Chinese White Paper, his instigation of the 1959 revolt. It claims that the Dalai Lama was actively supportive of the revolt, during which Tibetans who wanted democratic reform were massacred. In fact, the Dalai Lama did everything he could to prevent revolt against the Chinese since he and his government had agreed to cooperate with them according to the terms of the 17-Point Agreement.

The Chinese accuse the Dalai Lama of colluding with the American Central Intelligence Agency to organize the Tibetan resistance within Tibet and, after the revolt, to support armed attacks into Tibet from the Mustang region of Nepal. They maintain that the Dalai Lama was at least aware of the activities of the Tibetan resistance with the support of the CIA both before and after the revolt and that he did nothing to stop this anti-Chinese rebellion. This, they say, is incompatible with his policy of nonviolence. Nevertheless, while the Dalai Lama was certainly aware of the CIA assistance to the Tibetan Resistance, it is the Chinese invasion of Tibet and repressive "reforms" that are to blame for anti-Chinese violence in Tibet. During Democratic Reforms in eastern Tibet before 1959, many innocent Tibetans were persecuted simply because of their class status as determined by the Chinese. The Chinese were guilty of the most horrible forms of violence against Tibetans during their repression of the revolt in 1959 and the imposition of Democratic Reforms in central Tibet.

The White Paper further accuses the Dalai Lama of continuing a policy of inciting violence from exile while proclaiming adherence to a policy of nonviolence. It maintains that demonstrations in Lhasa in September 1987 were directly instigated by the Dalai Lama when he proposed his Five-Point Peace Plan in Washington D.C. Although this plan was the genesis of the subsequent Middle Way policy, which asked only for genuine autonomy under the Chinese government, the Chinese maintain that this was a call for independence to which Tibetans in Lhasa responded. Similarly, the riots of March 1989 were, according to the Chinese, instigated by the Dalai Lama and his supporters. The Chinese take no responsibility for the Tibetan

discontent that led to these demonstrations and riots, instead claiming that many Tibetans were actually coerced into participating by the Dalai Lama's separatist supporters.

The reality is that the disturbances of the late 1980s were due to continuing Tibetan discontent with the fact and conditions of Chinese rule. When Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang began their liberalization policies in Tibet in 1979, they did so on the assumption that Tibetans were loyal to China and the CCP and that anti-Chinese Tibetan nationalism was long dead. The Chinese had no reason to think otherwise since Tibetans were unable to express any discontent due to severe Chinese repression of any opposition. Because Tibetans were unable to express their opposition, the Chinese were misled into believing that it did not exist. However, the liberalization period led to a revival of Tibetan religion, culture, and nationalism that was a complete surprise to the Chinese. It was this cultural revival that led to the demonstrations of the late 1980s, and it was Chinese repression of peaceful Tibetan demonstrations that caused the demonstrations to degenerate into riots.

The White Paper goes on to denounce an even more serious riot that took place in Lhasa on 14 March 2008 and led to a series of demonstrations and riots all over Tibet, which the Dalai Lama is also accused of instigating. It complains that many innocent people were assaulted and shops and offices were burned, resulting in the deaths of 18 people, mostly Han Chinese. The White Paper claims that there is ample evidence that the March 14 riot was organized, masterminded, and instigated by the Dalai group. However, it does not give any evidence. It only cites a statement by the Dalai Lama expressing some understanding of why Tibetans protested and pointing out that the demonstrations began peacefully and only degenerated into riots in response to Chinese repression. The White Paper says nothing about the approximately 200 Tibetans who were killed by Chinese security forces in Lhasa and other places or the thousands who were arrested, often tortured, and imprisoned for years after 2008.

Chinese propaganda makes much of the fact that the Tibetan uprising of 2008 was an attempt to disrupt the Olympics, a symbol of peace, friendship, and progress. The Tibetans are accused of opposing all these ideals in order to further their evil separatist goals and of hiding their violent intentions behind an image of nonviolence. The White Paper cites evidence that Tibetans planned to take advantage of the publicity surrounding the Olympics to publicize their own cause. It claims that their cause was not the autonomy demanded by the Dalai Lama in his Middle Way policy but complete independence. It cites the fact that some Tibetan exile organizations called for a "Tibetan people's uprising" to coincide with the Beijing Olympics and that this was a call for violence within Tibet. It is true that Tibetan exile organizations planned to use the Olympics to publicize the issue of Tibet and that some used the slogan of a Tibetan people's uprising, which was meant to commemorate the uprising of 1959. However, this does not mean that they intended to instigate a violent uprising. In fact, as the Dalai Lama said, the

protests in Lhasa began as nonviolent demonstrations and escalated into violence only due to the repressive measures used by the Chinese security forces.

The Chinese White Paper also condemns Tibetans in exile for attempting to disrupt the International Olympic Torch Relay, which was very embarrassing for China. However, the Chinese have only themselves to blame since they attempted to turn the Olympics into Chinese nationalist propaganda, which was easily exploited by Tibetans. No other country since Nazi Germany in the 1930s had put on an international torch relay or had used the Olympics for such nationalist propaganda. The Chinese also do not admit to any legitimate reasons why Tibetans felt compelled to use the Olympics to publicize their grievances or any reasons they should have any such grievances. The White Paper implies that a few Tibetan separatists, instigated from outside, used the occasion to advocate for independence, while most Tibetans were content and had no complaints about the conditions of Chinese rule over Tibet. In fact, what Tibetans call the Tibetan Uprising of 2008 was entirely about Tibetan discontent with Chinese policies. The Chinese also do not mention that demonstrations and riots took place all over Tibet, particularly outside the TAR, which is evidence that Tibetan discontent was very widespread.

Tibetan protests both within Tibet and internationally did arouse Chinese anti-Tibetan nationalism, which the CCP attempted to lead and exploit in order to create support for itself and the government. The result was that Tibetan protests against repressive Chinese policies in Tibet aroused no sympathy among the Chinese people but instead led to even greater repression in Tibet.

The most recent way in which the Dalai Lama is accused of fomenting violence within Tibet is in regard to the series of self-immolations that began in 2009. China maintains that the self-immolations, like all previous Tibetan protests, are instigated from outside in the absence of any legitimate reason for Tibetan discontent with Chinese policies inside Tibet. China takes no responsibility for any Tibetan discontent, claiming that most Tibetans are perfectly content and supportive of the CCP and the government, while a few malcontents are instigated and manipulated by separatist interests from abroad. Chinese officials and media regularly quote Tibetans who testify that their lives have improved greatly due to the benevolence of the CCP. Such testimonies have been a constant theme of Chinese propaganda since the 1960s, when former serfs were organized to recount their sufferings under the feudal serf system as compared to their freedom since liberation.

China admits no negative consequences to Tibetans due to Chinese rule. China claims that Tibetans' lives have greatly improved since liberation; therefore, any complaints they have now should be compared to their situation under the feudal system. China has greatly exaggerated the evils of the old serf system in order to justify its rule over Tibet. However, Tibetans, even those who accept the reality of Chinese rule, feel that they should have the right

to protest against the conditions created by Chinese policies in Tibet. The Chinese, however, tend to think that any such protests are against the fact of Chinese rule rather than just the conditions. It is true that the illegitimacy of Chinese rule over Tibet underlies Tibetan discontent, but China has only itself to blame for that.

China discounts the legitimacy of any Tibetan demonstrations of discontent. Tibetans therefore find they have no legal means for political protest and are thus forced to resort to ever more desperate means, such as self-immolation. However, even this drastic demonstration of Tibetan discontent has failed to elicit any Chinese sympathy. Instead, China maintains that all those who choose self-immolation as a form of political protest are inspired or directly instigated by outside separatist forces. Tibetans are left with no other means of political protest, while China attempts to convince the world with propaganda such as the current White Paper that they have no legitimate reason for any protest at all.

The Central Government's Policy Towards the Dalai Lama.

The final section of the White Paper denounces the Dalai Lama for his treason against China in 1959 and blames him for the failure of all attempts at reconciliation since then. The section begins with this statement: "More than sixty years ago, for the sake of unification of the country, the central government made positive efforts to seek the cooperation of the 14th Dalai Lama to achieve the peaceful liberation of Tibet. However, the Dalai Lama fled abroad in 1959. Even since then the central government has sought to resolve differences with him. But he has repeatedly made choices that are contrary to the wishes of the central government and the people of Tibet."

The White Paper claims that the institution of the Dalai Lama was a creation of the Chinese central government and that the legitimacy of the Dalai Lama derives from China, not Tibet. It credits the Dalai Lama for having made the correct choice in accepting the 17-Point Agreement in 1951 and of having made some contribution to the peaceful liberation of Tibet. However, it says that he then deviated from the correct path.

The Chinese White Paper claims that the title of Dalai Lama was conferred on the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1653 by the Qing Emperor Shunzhi, who issued a gold imperial edict and gold seal to him, thus officially establishing the title of the Dalai Lama and his religious status in Tibet. The White Paper makes no explanation of how, if this was the first time the Dalai Lama title was created, he was the Fifth and not the First Dalai Lama. This is an example of the extreme and even ridiculous Chinese arrogance in imagining that an institution created by Tibetans seventy-five years previously did not actually exist until recognized by China. The White Paper apparently expects the reader to accept without any questions the Chinese claim that a Tibetan institution did not exist until recognized by China.

In fact the title of Dalai Lama dates from 1578 when Altan Khan, a Mongol chieftain, conferred that title upon Sonam Gyatso, a lama of the Drepung Monastery in exchange for Sonam Gyatso recognizing Altan Khan as a reincarnation of Genghis Khan. Sonam Gyatso then became the Third Dalai Lama when his two previous incarnations were retrospectively given the title as well. This was a religious and political arrangement and an alliance between Tibetans and Mongols that had nothing to do with China.

China makes the ridiculous claim that the Dalai Lama institution was created by China in order to maintain that the religious and political leader of Tibet was appointed by China, and that this is evidence that Tibet was and is a part of China. It maintains that subsequent Dalai Lamas were also recognized by China and that their legitimacy derived solely from Chinese recognition. Thus it maintains that the Fourteenth Dalai Lama was also appointed and approved by China and that his successor will be as well.

While it is true that the Qing Dynasty established political dominance and some degree of political authority over Tibet, this did not make Tibet an integral part of China. Tibetans acknowledged some degree of allegiance to the Manchu Qing but rejected any authority of China after the Qing dynasty fell in the early part of the twentieth century. Nationalist China claimed authority over Tibet and pretended to actually exercise authority, but did not have any authority over Tibet in reality. Tibetans clearly expressed their intention to be independent of China. The essence of the issue for Tibetans was that they did not consider themselves to be Chinese or Tibet to be part of China. Thus, current Chinese claims that they have the authority to appoint Dalai Lamas based upon their pretensions to have appointed or recognized them in the past have little credibility for Tibetans. The issue for Tibetans is not about how much China achieved its ambitions to dominate Tibet in the past but about the legitimacy of Chinese rule over the non-Chinese Tibetans past, present, and future.

The White Paper says that the Dalai Lama made the correct choice to accept the 17-Point Agreement in 1951 because he was inspired by the CCP's policy of equality of all ethnic groups and the peaceful liberation of Tibet. In fact the Dalai Lama had little choice but to accept China's terms since his appeal for international support had achieved no response. Despite China's claim of a peaceful liberation of Tibet, it had invaded eastern Tibet and threatened to continue its invasion to Lhasa if Tibet did not capitulate. Tibetan delegates were forced to sign the 17-Point Agreement due to China's threats to continue its invasion to Lhasa. China's so-called peaceful liberation of Tibet was neither peaceful nor was it a liberation. The imperialists from whom China claimed to be liberating Tibet did not exist.

China achieved the Dalai Lama's acceptance of the agreement by both coercion and deceit. The coercion was the use and threat of further use of military force. The deceit was

contained in the promises made to Tibet in the 17-Point Agreement. China promised to allow Tibet an autonomy essentially equivalent to that it had traditionally enjoyed, with the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan government, and the religious establishment retaining all their previous functions and privileges. The promise to allow the monasteries to keep their means of existence, meaning their estates, secured their support. However, many Tibetans opposed the agreement.

The Chinese White Paper claims that China adhered to its promise not to change the status, functions, or powers of the Dalai Lama. It claims to have treated him with great respect and to have honored him with high positions not only within Tibet but in China's central government. It quotes the Dalai Lama about how satisfied he was with the autonomy that Tibet enjoyed, including religious freedom. During a visit to Beijing in 1954 the Dalai Lama was treated with great respect by China's leaders and he participated in meetings of the National People's Congress. In 1956 he was named as chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region and he acknowledged that the 17-Point Agreement had been fully respected by the Chinese central government and that Tibet enjoyed full autonomy. However, the White Paper says, the Dalai Lama was insincere and he was plotting revolt all the time while he was only pretending to cooperate with the central government.

While China claims that it respected all its promises to not change the status or functions of the Dalai Lama, it altered the Tibetan system of government by the creation of the Preparatory Committee in 1956. It also revealed its intention to alter the Tibetan social system by its Democratic Reform campaign in eastern Tibet, which was the real cause of the Tibetan revolt. It was thus not the Dalai Lama's betrayal that caused the revolt but China's betrayal of its promises to respect Tibetan autonomy and to not change the social, religious, and political systems in Tibet.

The White Paper accuses the Dalai Lama of tearing up the 17-Point Agreement and of instigating armed rebellion. The White Paper cites a statement that he made in 1965 after fleeing into exile in which he said that neither he nor any Tibetan voluntarily accepted that Tibet was a part of China and that they secretly hoped for Tibetan freedom and independence. This Tibetan hope for freedom and independence is denounced by the Chinese as a betrayal of Tibet's "peaceful liberation" and its return to the Chinese motherland. China characterizes its takeover of Tibet as liberation and Tibetan rejection of Chinese control as a betrayal of that liberation while Tibetans see the same events as the loss of their rightful independence.

Even after the Dalai Lama instigated revolt and fled to India the central government did not remove him from his government positions but patiently waited for him to realize the error of his ways and return to Tibet. The only condition was that he should accept that Tibet was a part of China and agree to implement Democratic Reforms. Meanwhile the Chinese Government,

supposedly with the support of the majority of the Tibetan people, had abolished the former Tibetan Government and carried out Democratic Reform.

The Chinese admit no contradiction between their claim to have adhered to the conditions of the 17-Point Agreement and their alterations of the political system in Tibet. Their defense is that Tibetans were supposed to understand the provision of the agreement that certain unspecified reforms would be implemented by the Tibetans themselves when they were ready to do so. What this actually meant was that China would cultivate both lower and upper class Tibetan collaborators whom they could claim were in favor of such reforms. However, the revolt and the exile of the Dalai Lama is sufficient proof that most Tibetans did not want any such reforms. China's "peaceful liberation" of Tibet and its "democratic reforms" were forced upon the Tibetan people against their will and despite their opposition.

The Chinese White Paper complains that when he fled into exile the Dalai Lama publicly abandoned the 17-Point Agreement and denied his previous patriotic stance and promise of loyalty to China. He is accused of taking a path of betraying the Chinese nation. From India he issued a statement claiming that Tibet had been an independent country whose sovereignty was violated by China and he established a Tibetan Government in Exile. Having given up the hope that he would return, the Chinese Government removed the Dalai Lama from his official positions. China then accused him of treason due to his having organized the armed rebellion in collaboration with reactionaries and foreign imperialists.

In 1979, at the beginning of the reform and opening up period under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, China again invited the Dalai Lama to repent his ways and return to China if he would abandon his advocacy of Tibetan independence. The White Paper extols this generous policy with the slogan that "all patriots belong to one big family whether they embrace patriotism earlier or later." Deng Xiaoping met with the Dalai Lama's brother, Gyalo Thondup, in February 1979 and spoke with him about a return of the Dalai Lama to China. The only condition for that return was that the Dalai Lama should openly acknowledge that Tibet is part of China. The discussion between China and the Dalai Lama and any other Tibetans in exile should be considered a domestic issue rather than a negotiation between countries.

The White Paper says that from August 1979 to September 1980 the Chinese Government hosted three Tibetan delegations and two groups of the Dalai Lama's relatives. It does not say anything about any of the delegations being representative of the Tibetan Government in Exile rather than personal representatives or relatives of the Dalai Lama himself. It then accuses the Dalai Lama of failing to take advantage of the goodwill of the Chinese Government and wasting the valuable opportunity for reconciliation. Instead, he stubbornly stuck to his independence stand and even intensified his separatist activities. It accuses some of the

Tibetan visiting delegations of inciting hatred among ethnic groups and advocating independence.

The Chinese White Paper acknowledges only that Deng Xiaoping was willing to discuss the return of the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan exiles if they would give up their treasonous stance of Tibetan independence and accept that Tibet was part of China. It says nothing about any possibility of negotiations about the terms and conditions of Tibetan autonomy. This is a fundamental difference with what Tibetans in exile imagined Deng had offered, which was that “anything but independence could be discussed.” Given this difference in perception, the contacts did not resolve any issues. China accuses the delegations of having stirred up trouble in Tibet, but in fact the Chinese were surprised that the delegation visits revealed that Tibetans were still far from reconciled with the conditions or even the legitimacy of Chinese rule over Tibet.

The White Paper claims that the Dalai Lama continued to misread the situation in 1989 when he thought that the fall of communism in the Soviet Union would mean the same fate for communism in China. He thought that Tibetan independence might be possible if the CCP regime was about to collapse; therefore, there was no reason to continue negotiations at that time. When he was invited to attend the memorial ceremonies for the Panchen Lama, who died that year, he declined, thus missing an opportunity to negotiate with the Chinese Government.

The White Paper claims that the lack of any resolution of the Tibet issue was solely due to the Dalai Lama’s miscalculation that the CCP did not have that much longer in power and thus he could wait for a more conciliatory Chinese Government to take its place, a government from which he could get greater concessions. However, the facts are that it was political events in China rather than the calculations of the Dalai Lama that terminated the series of negotiations begun by Deng Xiaoping in 1979.

Hu Yaobang, who had initiated reforms within Tibet, had lost influence. His promise that the numbers of Chinese in Tibet would be reduced had already been altered in 1984 when a Tibet Work Forum declared that Chinese experts were necessary for economic development in Tibet. By 1987 Hu Yaobang was purged from his position and Deng Xiaoping declared that China would no longer place any limits on the numbers of Chinese living in Tibet, whether officials, military, or civilians. The violations of Hu Yaobang’s promises to reduce the numbers of Chinese in Tibet and to allow more Tibetan autonomy, plus the revival of Tibetan culture and rise of Tibetan nationalism, led to demonstrations and riots in Lhasa from 1987 to 1989. These events changed the situation and hardened Chinese attitudes toward the Dalai Lama.

When the Dalai Lama was invited to the Panchen Lama’s memorial in early 1989 there was little hope from the Tibetan side that China was in the mood for compromise. Whether any progress might have been possible had the Dalai Lama gone to China at that time will never be

known, but certainly the Tibetan side cannot alone be blamed for the failure to reach any resolution to the Tibet political issue. The fact is that China was unwilling to negotiate about anything except the return of the Dalai Lama. Despite what the White Paper claims, the Dalai Lama declined the invitation to attend the Panchen Lama's memorial ceremonies in 1989 because in all previous meetings with Tibetan exiles the Chinese had been willing to talk about the return of the Dalai Lama but not about the situation in Tibet.

Nevertheless, contacts continued with regard to the selection of the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. In 1992, Chinese officials, together with some senior Tibetans, cooperated with Tibetans in exile in the selection of the reincarnation of the Karmapa. A child was found within Tibet who was recognized by the Karmapa sect in Sikkim, the Dalai Lama, and the Chinese Government in Beijing. This precedent was followed in the initial stages of the search for the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. A Tashilhunpo search team discovered a child within Tibet who seemed to be the reincarnation. With the approval of the Chinese Government they sought recognition from the Dalai Lama.

Mutual recognition by Tashilhunpo, Beijing, and Dharamsala would have secured a Panchen Lama acceptable to the Tibetan people both within Tibet and in exile. The Dalai Lama did recognize the Tashilhunpo selection but then made an announcement of his recognition without informing or coordinating with Beijing. China therefore denounced the Dalai Lama's selection, claiming that the recognition was entirely up to the Chinese Government. Nevertheless, the Chinese might have also recognized the same child while maintaining that their recognition rather than that of the Dalai Lama was confirmative. In that way, they could have had a Panchen Lama accepted as legitimate by the Tibetan people. However, they chose to reject the Tashilhunpo and Dalai Lama choice in favor of another child whose acceptance would have to be forced upon the Tibetan people.

The Chinese considered the Dalai Lama's premature announcement of his approval as a challenge to the Chinese Government's final authority in the reincarnation and, therefore, a challenge to the legitimacy of China's claim to sovereignty over Tibet. The Chinese chose confrontation with the Tibetan people rather than ignore what was little more than an offense of diplomatic protocol on the part of the Dalai Lama. The result is that China now has a Panchen Lama who is not considered to be the real reincarnation by the Tibetan people. Had the Chinese really wanted to cooperate with the Dalai Lama and respect the feelings of the Tibetan people they could have easily ignored the Dalai Lama's unilateral recognition.

The White Paper claims that despite the Dalai Lama having declined an invitation to attend the Panchen Lama's memorial ceremonies in Beijing in 1989 and having unilaterally announced his choice for the Panchen Lama's reincarnation in 1995, the central government continued to offer to dialogue with him. In 1997 the Chinese Government stated that it was

willing to negotiate with the Dalai Lama about his own future as long as he genuinely abandoned separatism and any activities likely to divide the country. He was also required to openly acknowledge that Tibet and Taiwan are inalienable parts of China and that the government of the People's Republic of China is the only legitimate government representing China.

In 2003, according to the White Paper, the central government made it clear that the leadership of the CCP, the socialist road, and the system of regional ethnic autonomy should be upheld in Tibet. The central government also said that it would talk only with private representatives of the Dalai Lama; it would not talk with any representatives of the Tibetan Government in Exile because it was a separatist political group that does not represent the people of Tibet and does not have any legitimacy or qualifications to engage in talks with the central government. Any such talks would discuss only the future of the Dalai Lama and some of his followers. Any negotiations would be limited to seeking solutions for the Dalai Lama to completely abandon separatist claims and activities and to gain the forgiveness of the central government and the Chinese people. The political system of autonomy in Tibet or any alterations in that system were not up for discussion.

Based upon these conditions, the White Paper states that the Chinese Government received 13 visits by private representatives of the Dalai Lama between 1979 and 2002 and ten more visits from 2002 to 2010. However, to the disappointment of the central government, the Dalai Lama remained committed to his Middle Way proposals, which were contrary to the Chinese Constitution and were aimed at splitting the country. Therefore, all talks and negotiations were unsuccessful.

China accuses the Dalai Lama of having instigated the protests inside Tibet in March 2008 in an attempt to sabotage the Beijing Olympics. It is true that some Tibetan exile organizations wanted to use the opportunity presented by the Beijing Olympics to publicize the situation inside Tibet. Tibetans within Tibet were also aware of that opportunity, but there is no evidence that the protests that began in Lhasa in March were directly instigated from outside. The real reason for the protests all over Tibet in March and April of 2008 is Tibetan discontent with the conditions of Chinese rule, none of which China is willing to admit. Similarly, the international protests against China's Olympic Torch relay, which so embarrassed and angered China, are evidence of worldwide disapproval of China's policies in Tibet.

The Chinese White Paper declares that the failure of dialogue and negotiations was entirely due to the Dalai Lama's insincerity and his unwillingness to abandon his ultimate goal of Tibetan independence. However, the Chinese side never had any willingness to discuss anything but the personal situation of the Dalai Lama. China was unwilling to discuss the issue of Tibet, meaning the terms and conditions of Tibetan autonomy, even when the Dalai Lama's Middle Path policy is essentially in accord with Chinese policy.

For the Tibetans the issue of Tibet derives from China's broken promises to allow any genuine Tibetan autonomy, and ultimately derives from the Chinese invasion and annexation of Tibet against the will of the Tibetan people. However, the Chinese were unwilling to admit any issues in regard to Tibetan autonomy because the issue of Tibet's political status within the PRC ultimately involves questions about the legitimacy of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. Because China was not willing to acknowledge any issues in regard to the legitimacy of its sovereignty over Tibet, it was also not willing to discuss Tibetan autonomy.

What the White Paper does not admit is that there was never any basis for negotiations, given the Chinese conditions. The Chinese side was never willing to discuss anything about the situation inside Tibet or the conditions of Tibetan autonomy. China's dilemma is that it cannot allow any real autonomy in Tibet, even one theoretically allowed by its own laws, or even talk about real autonomy, because of fears that autonomy might lead to a revival of Tibetan nationalism and separatism and ultimately to a renewed movement for Tibetan independence. China was only willing to discuss an unconditional return of the Dalai Lama in order to finally resolve any remaining issues regarding Tibet. And even that willingness was suspect. Whereas in the early 1980s Chinese leaders may have really wanted the Dalai Lama to return, by the 1990s their anti-Dalai Lama rhetoric and propaganda indicated that they did not really want him to come back. China made any negotiations almost impossible, which leads to the suspicion that it had wanted to create an appearance of a willingness to negotiate only in order to assuage its many foreign critics, including many Western governments that were constantly encouraging China to dialogue with the Dalai Lama. China now seems less concerned with what its foreign critics think and seems to have lost interest in giving even the appearance of a willingness to negotiate.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the Chinese White Paper claims that the Dalai Lama has never been sincere in his dialogues with the Chinese Government. It maintains that he has changed his position according to his interpretation of the state of international politics and that his only consistent position is that he has always hoped to divide China and achieve Tibetan independence. China, in contrast, has always been consistent in its policy toward the Dalai Lama. China's policy is that it will negotiate with him about his personal status only when he acknowledges that Tibet has been a part of China since antiquity and when he abandons his policy on Tibetan independence and stops all his separatist activities. Tibet's path of development is imposed by history and chosen by the people, says the White Paper, and the Dalai Lama and his Middle Path policy are contrary to the inevitable course of Tibet's history as an integral part of China.

The Chinese White Paper constantly repeats the claim that Tibet has been a part of China since ancient times and has never been independent. However, history refutes that claim. Tibet was clearly independent during the Empire period. It also clearly attempted to establish its independence during the early modern period before 1950. China claimed sovereignty over Tibet at various times in the past but did not achieve actual control over Tibet until the invasion of 1950-51. There was thus no so-called peaceful liberation and Tibetans did not participate in the creation of the PRC except as victims of China's aggression and occupation. China attempts to dismiss all the political issues of Tibet's former status and of the legitimacy of Chinese rule over Tibet by claiming that there are no such issues. However, Tibet clearly should have the right to national self-determination according to international law.

China's White Paper dismisses the Dalai Lama's Middle Way proposal as inappropriate for Tibet even though it is in accord with China's own constitution and national autonomy laws. It differs from those laws only in asking for an inclusion of all Tibetan ethnic areas into one combined Tibetan Autonomous Region, which is also in accordance with the CCP's original policy that called for autonomous regions to be established in areas where minorities were in contiguous occupation, which is the case for all Tibetan ethnic areas. The real reason for China's rejection of the Middle Way is that it does not want to allow any real autonomy, even of the type that it itself once promised, because it fears that autonomy can lead to independence.

Chinese propaganda grossly exaggerates the inequalities of the Tibetan feudal system because the abolition of that system is a primary justification for the imposition of Chinese rule over Tibet. The Chinese try to use this social argument about feudalism to obscure the political issue, which is about the legitimacy of Chinese rule over Tibet. China claims that its development policies in Tibet are beneficial to Tibetans, but many of China's political campaigns, social reforms, and economic development in Tibet have proven enormously destructive to Tibetan society and culture. China further claims that Tibetans have supported the CCP from the time of the 1951 peaceful liberation to the 1959 revolt and democratic reforms to the present and that they oppose separatism, but the fact is that Tibetans have consistently opposed Chinese rule and China still has to forcibly repress Tibetan opposition.

The Chinese White Paper declares that the failure of dialogue and negotiations was entirely due to the Dalai Lama's insincerity and his unwillingness to abandon his ultimate goal of Tibetan independence. However, the reality is that China is unwilling to discuss the issue of Tibet because China fears that autonomy could lead to a revival of Tibetan nationalism and separatism. China has many justifications for the imposition of its rule over Tibet, but none can answer the question of why China will not allow Tibetan self-determination. China has many excuses for why it will not negotiate with the Dalai Lama, but cannot admit that the real reason is because it refuses to allow any real Tibetan autonomy.

