



Last month's riots in Tibet marked the stepping-up of international finance capital's propaganda offensive, not simply against China, but against Communist Party rule in China. This is done under the familiar pretext of protecting "human rights". The People's Republic of China is composed of more than 50 nationalities, of which the 2 million Tibetans are one. Western imperialist leaders are hoping to use Tibetan nationalism as a lever to destabilise multi-ethnic China. This same tactic has been applied against many other multi-ethnic states (e.g. Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia). But to destabilise China, the biggest nation in the world, is no small undertaking. It requires that the world media monopolies systematically mislead the public about events in far-off places. A "public opinion" must be created which is deeply sceptical about every historical fact and statistic which the Chinese government puts forward in its own defence. Western-funded non-government organisations (NGOs) also play a role in muddying the waters, so that the truth about Tibetan society is concealed from the people of the world, who are left in dark ignorance.

The riots which broke out on March 14 in the capital of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) were clearly not spontaneous but planned, since they broke out on the exact anniversary of the 1959 secessionist uprising. The rioters, whom Reuters and other Western media reports described as "monk-led", injured 623 people including 241 police, killed at least 19, and burnt more than 300 shops, schools and private houses. Most of the victims were Han Chinese. A 19-year-old tourist from Canada, John Kenwood, said he saw four or five Tibetan men "mercilessly" stoning a motorbike rider. When the bike rider fell to the ground, they hit him again and again with rocks, he said. A local witness named Ma Youliang claimed that he himself had seen a dozen ruffians beat a girl of fourteen or fifteen black and white with steel pipes and wooden sticks until her faced bled terribly. Two Swiss tourists said they saw a rock-throwing crowd in the Jokhang Temple Square which included five or six monks (Washington Post). Another Swiss tourist, Claude Balsiger, said he saw an elderly Han ethnic man clawed off his bicycle and thrown to the ground, where a rioter smashed his head with a large rock. "Everything that looked Han ethnic people was attacked and beaten up," said Mr Balsiger. An Indian reporter said he was at a loss to see so many lamas clad in long gowns who kicked at shop gates, hurled rocks at passers-by and smashed vehicles with iron rods. The irony is that the monks directing and participating in this violence profess peace and non-violence.

Xinhua newsagency reports that nine monks from the Tongxia Monastery have confessed to the crime of detonating a bomb in a government building on March 23. Police have seized a lot of offensive weaponry in some Tibetan monasteries including 178 firearms, 13,013 rounds of bullets, 359 knives or swords, 3,504 kilograms of explosive, 19,360 detonators and two hand-grenades. Twelve of those killed in the riots were burnt to death. These occurred in four major arson cases,

and all the suspects have now been arrested. One of those confessed to setting fire and throwing LPG cylinders into a motorcycle garage, killing five including an eight month-old boy. A certain Qi'me Lhazom and two other suspects committed the arson at the Yishion fashion store which burnt five innocent young shop assistants to death. All these young women (one of whom was an ethnic Tibetan) have been named. All the victims' families have been described as poor.

No government in the world would tolerate such viciousness. Yet the response of the Western media monopolies has been to gloss over the above-mentioned verifiable facts, and instead criticise the Chinese authorities for their so-called "crackdown". Furthermore, photographs have been cropped to distort them (Time-CNN), pictures from Nepal presented as from Tibet (RTL Germany), and those of wounded people being helped into an ambulance to illustrate a supposed "heavy military presence" (BBC).

The media misinformation blitz has been accompanied by an attempt by certain Western politicians, sundry Hollywood actors, and the human rights NGOs to call for a boycott of the

most elementary principle of diplomacy – respect for another country's sovereignty.

The central figure in the dispute remains the 72-year old Dalai Lama. Originally Lhamo Dhondrub, he was selected as a reincarnation at the age of two. He often says "I am just a simple Buddhist monk"; he is anything but that. Simple Buddhist monks do not receive Norway's Nobel Peace Prize, do not receive a U.S. Congressional Gold Medal, and do not receive millions of dollars from the American National Endowment for Democracy or military assistance from the CIA (for details see M.Parenti: 'Tibet Friendly Feudalism'). A simple monk would not describe the severe violence of March 14 as "peaceful protests", would not condone the Tibet Youth Congress which openly preaches violence, and would not say "high-level autonomy" when he means "independence".

The Dalai Lama does not accept the present status of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, but instead puts forward his "middle way", an ambitious political claim dressed in religious clothing. Under the "middle way", he claims the right to rule not only the TAR, but

before their appointment could be ratified as valid. Even during the late Ch'ing (Qing) Dynasty and the Kuomintang period, when China was weaker than she had ever been, as a result of European imperialism and civil wars, Tibet was not split from China. In 1940 Chiang-Kai-shek, then head of the Chinese Central Government, issued an official decree that the title of 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama be conferred on Lhamo Dhondrub. He was installed with an armed escort of Chinese troops and an attending Chinese minister, in accordance with centuries-old tradition.

When on his speaking tours abroad, such as his current one in the U.S., the Dalai Lama describes the old Tibet he once ruled in idyllic terms: "Amid the wide open spaces of an unspoiled environment...a society dedicated to peace and harmony. We enjoyed freedom and contentment." But as Lenin said in 1916, "Facts are stubborn things...and they have to be reckoned with, whether we like it or not." Documents preserved at the Archive of the TAR show how the Thirteen and the Sixteen Laws (the Tibetan legal codes which operated until 1959) were applied. Five per cent of the people, namely the high clergy, aristocrats, and government officials, owned all arable land in Tibet. The remaining 95 per cent of the people were serfs ('chabas') and house slaves. As in medieval Europe, the serfs were bonded to the owners' land for life, which they worked without pay, medical care or schooling. They had to meet the landowners' every need, including sexual ones. One sentence in Article Three of the Thirteen Laws reads: "Persons of low social status who quarrel with those of high status shall be arrested." "Despite having to pay an astonishing array of taxes, corvée (unpaid) labour, and interest to the monastic usurers, the Tibetan serf got nothing in return. Old Tibetan society was a strange and backward mixture of feudal and slave relations of production, combining the worst features of both. The serf missed out on both the feudal lord's reciprocal obligations (*noblesse oblige*) and the slave owner's self-interest in caring for his own property. All legal rights were on the side of the landowner. They could and did torture their serfs by chopping off their feet and hands, gouging out their eyeballs, cutting off their tongues or pushing them off cliffs. They did this legally, because they were protected by the Thirteen and Sixteen Laws. Article Four of the Thirteen Laws stipulated: "Those who loot, kidnap, steal and kill, commit armed robberies or rebel against the authorities shall be punished corporally by: gouging out the eyes; cutting off the foot, tongue or hand; being pushed off a cliff; drowning; or execution."

This idyllic Shangri-La state of "peace and harmony" was ruled by the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, while living richly in his 1000-room, 14 storey Potala Palace. The Tibetan ruling theocracy taught the poor and afflicted that they were being punished for wicked ways in previous lives, whereas conversely the rich were receiving their

This idyllic Shangri-La state of "peace and harmony" was ruled by the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, while living richly in his 1000-room, 14 storey Potala Palace. The Tibetan ruling theocracy taught the poor and afflicted that they were being punished for wicked ways in previous lives, whereas conversely the rich were receiving their due reward for past and present virtue. The calm of this supposed paradise of human rights was rudely interrupted by the Chinese Red Army's great victories of 1948-49 in Manchuria.

2008 Beijing Olympics. Nancy Pelosi of the Democratic Party, who holds the third-highest office in the U.S., openly urged people to come to San Francisco and use the passage of the Olympic torch to demonstrate against China over Tibet. Every criticism of another country's "human rights record" contains an implicit claim to the moral high ground, in effect: "My own human rights record is irreproachable, perfect." However it is noticeable that the U.S. President has this time not been very vocal about Tibet. He has preferred to leave the running to his lesser satellites in Canada and Australia. Inexperienced Australian Prime Minister Mr Rudd (Labour Party) has been eager to win headlines such as "Rudd confronts China on rights" by following in the footsteps of his predecessor, who was formally appointed "Deputy Sheriff" by President G.W. Bush. Looking to create an undeserved profile for themselves, such opportunists have yet to learn

the entire region of the adjacent Qinghai (Tsinghai) Province, parts of Gansu (Kansu), Sichuan (Szechuan), and Yunnan provinces, and the Xinjiang (Sinkiang) Autonomous Region. This area, which has been christened "Great Tibet", contains no less than 2.4 million square kilometres, or one quarter of China's total territory. No such entity has ever existed.

In the square in front of the Jokhang Monastery there still stands the Tang-Tubo Alliance Monument, erected in 823 AD. Its inscription contains the words: "The two sovereigns, uncle and nephew, having come to agreement that their territories be united as one, have signed this alliance of great peace to last for eternity!" In 1259 the Mongol Emperor Kubla Khan (grandson of Genghis) unified the whole of China and officially incorporated Tibet in it. Since then, despite several dynastic changes, Tibet has always remained under Chinese jurisdiction. All the Grand Lamas and Dalai ('Ocean') Lamas knew they required recognition from the Emperor

Contd. on page 13

Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna International  
Co-ordinating centre - Australia

Separatist  
Violence in

Tibet

